

MEDIA RELEASE

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MUP has repackaged an old fashioned and unsexy genre to make essays modish and exciting.
Fiona Gruber, The Weekend Australian, 19.7.08

LITTLE BOOKS ON BIG THEMES - MAY 2009 RELEASES

Building on the hugely successful series of 2008, in May 2009 MUP will release the third instalment of its Little Books on Big Themes. In these exciting new volumes, more of Australia's leading thinkers will confront life's largest challenges in some of our smallest books.

When society seems to demand confidence and certainty, **Leigh Sales** asks, how much courage does it take to admit doubt, especially self-doubt? In this personal essay, *On Doubt*, one of Australia's most respected journalists argues in favour of a doubtful mind.

In *On Beauty* **Susan Johnson** explores the role of beauty in our lives, and in her life in particular: 'Sometimes I think my whole life has been one long search for beauty. I am Australian and as such I should be embarrassed to write a line like that, in a land where one must speak of beauty in whispers.' Johnson writes of where her search has taken her, how 'beauty enters the body like desire', and how beauty is nothing less than 'life's call to order, life's bid to save it from itself'.

Julian Burnside's grandparents lived in a world of handsome cars, elegant tennis parties and coiffed women. As a five year old, he saw privilege before he heard the word or learned its meaning. In *On Privilege*, a powerful broadside that takes in politicians and infamous legal cases, Julian Burnside asks: what is privilege and who has it?

In *On Resilience*, **Elisabeth Wynhausen** explores what it means to survive and to thrive in a world of rapid change. Wynhausen tells of an extraordinary, inspirational character and reflects on the mysterious quality that is resilience. A humorous, irreverent essay that arrives at both contentment and joy.

And with his trademark eloquence and humour, Robert Dessaix, one of Australia's eminent writers, tackles humbug in the modern world. In *On Humbug*, Dessaix dissects the tide of mumbo jumbo, where words fall short of what they mean and motivations are not always as they appear.

Leigh Sales, Susan Johnson, Julian Burnside, Elisabeth Wynhausen, and Robert Dessaix will be available for interviews in May. For more information please contact Maria O'Dwyer at MUP on 03 9342 0350 or email modwyer@unimelb.edu.au

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