

The conversation is between Micky O (MO) and Charlie Brown (CB), discussing Tim Winton's book Cloudstreet.

MO: I've just finished Tim Winton's Cloudstreet and was surprisingly pleased with the book having read other texts of his and not enjoyed them.

CB: I read that book some time ago and thought it was the foulest, crudest, most disgusting book I have ever read. The language was far too coarse and too descriptive in parts.

MO: But that's the beauty of the book. The language ~~is~~ used, so clearly describes <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ period in which the book ~~was~~ covers. It highlights the class of the Pickles and Lamb's, their Australianness and the surroundings and situation they're in.

CB: I just can't stand the 'Carns' and 'Loves', it's all just too trashy and uncivilized.

MO: The book wouldn't be half the book it is without the language.

Ok if you didn't enjoy the language, surely you enjoyed the descriptions on the landscape



and environment throughout the book??

CB: Winton's focus on the river did give a calming tone and flow to the book all the way through.

The detailed descriptions of the bush when Quick leaves are also quite significant. I think...

to interrupt.

MO: Sorry, but did you pick-up the religious and spiritual messages that underpinned some of the situations? Like Quick in the bush, going into solitude has been compared to Christ's time in the wilderness. There are quite a few throughout the book.

CB: I hadn't thought of the book in that way at all, but I can't say that I want to associate ~~an~~ Christ with such a book.

MO: You know when Fish drowns at the end, knowing and embracing his destiny, that ~~is~~ <sup>could be</sup> another religious moment, like Christ at the Last supper. Isn't it lovely when ~~to~~ the narrator, Fish says at the end 'Being Fish Lamb. Perfectly. Always. Everywhere. Me.'

I can feel the real sense of wholeness for Fish



there, can't you?

CB: I think you have got far too involved with this book. <sup>The whole book is</sup> ~~It's~~ a shambles, the chapters are just a whole lot of little subheadings that confused you.

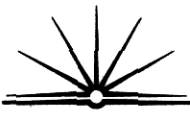
MO: Look at it this way, the book begins with the two families celebrating their 20 years, and it also ends this way. It's like a cycle, and the 20 years in the middle are just a split second of Fish's life.

CB: Now you really have lost me. This book is just about two families and a constant comparison between them. Hardworkers and the ~~the~~ lazy, the religious vs the sacrilegious, the good vs the evil.

MO: That's not always true though, both families do good and both do evil.

CB: But the Lamb's are mainly good, hardworking, religious, while the Pickles are ~~unhappy~~ lazy and evil.

MO: But Leeter has trouble knowing what to



believe in, he even says 'I just wish I knew what to believe in.'

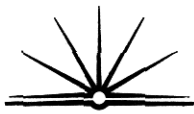
CB: Whatever you say, you seem to be the expert on the book now.

MO: That's not what I'm trying to prove, I can just see that a book like this could be offensive and not enjoyable to a lot of people, but underneath there are a lot of important values.

CB: And those would be... Sex? Drinking? Adultery?

MO: Try, the importance of family, need for communication, value of religion, spirituality and fate, importance of mothers, importance of place and belonging, the value of landscape and environment, solitude and childhood memories and nostalgia. Once you can see all these values you ~~too~~ will appreciate the text.

CB: I can't see how this will change my opinion. It's just grotesque, goes against



everything I ~~but~~ believe in. You know me,  
this is not my type of book.

MO: I know, I know, but there are so many  
aspects of this book, that we have talked  
about that can be appreciated. The language,  
the structure of the book as a whole and  
the values within it, all these combined  
make the book so good, while also making  
it complex and often misunderstood.