



Mediation comes under the spotlight

BY KAY ANSELL

Family law can be a minefield of big legal bills and broken dreams, so having a mediator to help both parties reach agreement outside court must be better. Right?

Not necessarily, says Monash researcher Ms Becky Batagol. There is

an underlying assumption held by all key players in the family law arena that mediation is better than court processes because it is cheaper and quicker.

But such assumptions are neither right nor wrong – just untested. “What we’re saying is let’s look a bit closer,” she says. ‘Looking closer’ will involve a

three-year research program as the basis of her doctorate, which has immediate relevance to the Federal Government’s recent changes to the delivery of government-funded family mediation services.

The proposals have seen community-based organisations increasingly take

over family and child mediation under the Family Law Act, a role previously shared with mediators within the Family Court.

Behind this move is another apparent assumption that the Family Court system does not have a role in encouraging couples to seek mediation, she suggests.

Her study, ‘Community-based mediation: bargaining in the shadow of the law?’, will investigate whether the law influences couples in seeking mediation, the mediation process itself, and the impact of mediation, assessed three months later.

Given more time, she explains, she would have liked to have followed up again after five years, because overseas research suggests that the greater the interval after the mediation, the more unhappy women feel about the result. Previous research has noted that mediation may reinforce the existing power imbalance in a relationship.

This may be due to the nature of the process, in which the couple bring their past relationship “with all its ups and downs” into the mediation room. The power imbalances inherent in any relationship tend to favour men in financial and property issues.

Lack of legal or financial advice in community-based mediation may exacerbate that. As well, despite screening procedures, mediators may not detect the subtle intimidation of one partner



Researcher Ms Becky Batagol.
Photo by Greg Ford.

by the former spouse, she says, if family violence has been an issue.

Ms Batagol’s doctorate will be supervised by Victoria’s Law Reform Commissioner and professor of law at Monash Professor Marcia Neave, and undertaken with the backing of the Justice Research Centre. Monash lecturer in law Dr Sandra Caspi Sable will be a research consultant.

The high emotional and financial cost of family breakdown is shared by the community, Ms Batagol says. “An objective assessment of community-based mediation on which to base law reform proposals could have widespread benefits for years to come.”



Sights and sounds bring a culture alive

The amphitheatre at Monash’s Clayton campus recently resounded with the bright colours and melodious sounds of traditional Torres Strait Island songs and dances, performed by the 2000 Thursday Island State School Dance Team. The team of 13 boys and nine girls aged between nine and 12 years performed using shakers, bows and arrows, bamboo clackers, paddles and drums. The troupe performed at Monash as part of their annual tour. Through their songs and dances, they hope to teach audiences about the lifestyle and culture of the Torres Strait Islanders. Photo by Greg Ford.

\$14 million boon for research

BY DAVID BRUCE

Monash University researchers in science, engineering, information technology and medicine have received \$14 million in competitive research grants from the Victorian Government.

The Minister for State and Regional Development, Mr John Brumby, speaking at Monash University’s Clayton campus, recently announced the allocation of \$54 million for 14 projects under the Science, Technology and Innovation Initiative Round One Infrastructure Grants.

Monash was the most successful Victorian research institution, attracting a share of the funds in five of the competitive grants, either alone or as part of a consortium. The focus for the Round One grants was on projects with the best prospect of making an enduring difference to Victoria’s competitiveness as a world-class location for research and development, innovation and commercialisation.

Monash deputy vice-chancellor (Research and Development) Professor Peter Darvall welcomed the

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First female deputy chancellor appointed

BY JUNE YU

Long-standing Monash Council member Dr June Hearn has been appointed as the first female deputy chancellor of the university.

Dr Hearn, who replaces Dr Geoffrey Knights in the position, said she was extremely proud to be the first woman to have been appointed.

"I'm looking forward to working closely with the chancellor, Jerry Ellis, and my co-deputy, Paul Ramler, in assisting the Council to act as a forum for robust debate and as a cohesive unit working for the future of Monash," she said.

Dr Hearn has carved out a long and distinguished career in higher education, and has been a pioneer for women in many areas previously dominated by men.

She was the first female senior lecturer at the Graduate School of



Deputy chancellor Dr June Hearn.

Business Administration at the University of Melbourne.

In 1982, Dr Hearn moved into academic management at the then Victoria College (Deakin University), where she was head of the Toorak campus, foundation dean of the

Faculty of Arts and the college's only female dean.

She also became the first female chief executive officer in higher education in Victoria when she took up an appointment at Hawthorn Institute of Education in 1987.

Returning to the University of Melbourne in 1997, she became inaugural director of Hawthorn International Education Ltd.

Her consultancies extend across government, industry and union sectors and have included training programs and research and evaluation projects in education, industrial relations and management.

Dr Hearn holds a bachelors and a masters degree as well as a doctorate from the University of Melbourne and has published widely on higher education, industrial relations and migrants. She takes up the position on 1 January 2001.

Monash law professor retires

BY FLEUR HABERFIELD AND FIONA PERRY

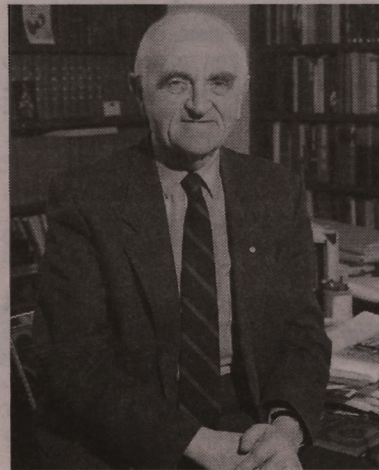
Law scholar and humanitarian Professor Louis Waller will retire from Monash University this month after 35 years of distinguished service.

From the first days of teaching foundation law subjects at Monash, Professor Waller was instrumental in the development of the Law School as a teacher, scholar and former dean.

His interests in law and medicine resulted in the introduction of subjects such as 'Elements of forensic medicine', while 'Legal issues in medicine' was the first subject of its kind to be taught to both law and medicine students.

Professor Waller was also the driving force behind the establishment of the first Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Medicine degree in Australia.

He has published several books and contributed more than 30 articles and chapters in his areas of expertise, which included criminal law, legal education, evidence, the administration of criminal justice, forensic medicine and issues of medical technology and law reform.



Professor Louis Waller.

But it has been Professor Waller's commitment to help find solutions to some of society's most difficult and controversial problems that has characterised his illustrious career.

His involvement in community issues has ranged from institutional legal reform and Aboriginal rights to IVF and medical ethics.

A former Victorian Law Reform Commissioner, Professor Waller was a member of the Law Reform Advisory

Council and foundation chairman of the Victorian Law Reform Commission.

His work with the Red Cross included a role as foundation chair of the International Humanitarian Law Committee and a member of the Geneva Conventions Disseminations Committee.

He was also foundation president of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and chairman of the Criminal Law Working Group.

A lifelong interest in the intersection between the law and medicine saw Professor Waller chair several medical ethics committees, including the Victorian Government's Committee to Consider the Social, Ethical and Legal Issues arising from In-Vitro Fertilisation and the Committee of Management of the Monash Centre of Human Bioethics.

In honour of Professor Waller's service, the Monash Law School is currently raising funds to establish the Louis Waller Chair in Law. The candidate will exemplify Professor Waller's qualities of scholarship, intellectual rigour and services to the community.

For more information, contact Ms Fleur Haberfield on (03) 9905 5324.

\$14 million boon for research at Monash

Continued from page 1

announcement. "We are thrilled with the success of our colleagues and welcome the constructive actions of the Victorian Government," he said.

The successful Monash projects with their total grants are:

Monash Research Cluster for Biomedicine - \$2 million

Located on the Clayton campus, the cluster will foster developments between academic researchers and the biomedical industry through new medical imaging facilities, a structural biology facility, and advanced DNA capabilities.

National Printing Laboratory - \$910,000 over three years

The establishment of this laboratory will allow access by hundreds of small-to-medium-sized printing operations to the latest research developments in printing technology. The laboratory is a collaborative venture between Monash and leading industry players including

Note Printing Australia, Amcor Packaging Australia, PaperlinX, Visy Industries, Sicpa Australia, and Fletcher Challenge Paper Australasia.

Victorian Bioinformatics Consortium - \$4.89 million over three years

Bioinformatics is an emerging field of research combining information technology, applied mathematics, molecular biology and genetics. Monash's faculties of Medicine and Information Technology are combining with the State Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and the CSIRO Division of Mathematical and Information Sciences to develop techniques for the scientific and commercial exploitation of DNA sequencing projects. The grant will fund up to nine researchers and two doctoral fellowships.

Victorian Neuroscience Consortium - \$13.34 million over three years

This consortium of Victoria's leading neuroscience research groups will expand with new infrastructure and up to 25 new professorial research

positions to focus on key areas such as neurodegenerative diseases, brain cell development, clinical science and animal behaviour. It aims to attract investment from international pharmaceutical companies. Monash's Institute for Neurological Diseases will join with researchers at the University of Melbourne and the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre.

Alfred Medical Research and Education Precinct - \$8 million over three years

The Monash Medicine School is a major player in this ongoing development at the Alfred Hospital in Fitzroy. This grant builds upon earlier funds committed by the Victorian Government for the precinct, which will combine the research and teaching expertise of Monash, the Alfred Hospital, the Macfarlane Burnet Centre, the Baker Medical Research Institute and other institutions and biotechnology companies.

BRIEFS

South African judge presents keynote speech

South African High Court judge Justice Frans Malan presented the Monash Law Faculty Foundation keynote speech at Minter Ellison last month.

Justice Malan's speech examined how banking and commercial transactions in South Africa are affected by English legal concepts and the provisions of the country's constitution and Bill of Rights.

Justice Malan is a highly respected scholar and academic in banking and commercial law. Prior to his appointment, he was a dean of Law at Rand Afrikaans University in South Africa.

Boost to scholarships increases access

The doubling of Monash Merit and Equity Scholarships from 25 to 50 awards each year, starting from 2001, aims to make a university education a reality for more students.

The increase in scholarships means that the number of students being taken into the Monash-backed program now equals the number formally supported by the Federal Government before funding was withdrawn in 1999.

Chair of the Coursework Scholarships Committee Professor Merran Evans said Monash was one of the few Australian universities to offer scholarships to students based on social, financial and other circumstances.

"The increase in scholarships demonstrates Monash's commitment to achieving equitable access for students," she said.

Survey to support female rural doctors

The results of a state-wide survey by Monash's Centre for Rural Health will be used to develop programs to support female doctors in rural areas.

The survey was completed by 140 of the state's female GPs and 18 women specialists working in country areas.

Results indicated that 62 per cent of female rural doctors entered rural practice because they were attracted

by the environment, 24 per cent because their partners had jobs in the country and 18 per cent because they enjoyed the opportunities that came with practising medicine in country areas. Forty per cent of respondents had been raised in a rural area.

The Commonwealth-funded Rural Workforce Agency of Victoria will use the survey to develop and implement programs to support women in medicine in rural areas.

Book wins New South Wales Premier's Prize

A book on the history of modern Sydney has won a Monash academic the New South Wales Premier's Prize for 2000.

Sydney's Century: A History, by Professor Peter Spearritt, head of Monash's School of Political and Social Inquiry, won the prize for its "outstanding contribution" to understanding the development of modern Sydney.

The award was presented by New South Wales Premier Mr Bob Carr at a history fair in Wollongong last month.

The book, which is published by the University of New South Wales Press, traces the development of the city from Federation celebrations in 1901 to the 2000 Olympic Games.

Japanese hosts sought for visiting students

Monash's Japanese Studies Centre is seeking host families for Japanese university students for a period of three weeks early next year.

Centre spokesperson Ms Veronica Kelly said the centre's new intercultural program was an opportunity for people to broaden their horizons, have fun and earn some money.

The centre is looking for families or students willing to welcome a Japanese student into their homes, and to experience and share different cultures and lifestyles.

For more information, contact (03) 9905 2260 or email japanese.studies_centre@arts.monash.edu.au



A distinctly 'Australian' brand of human rights: Our geographic location and our notion of a 'fair go' characterise the Australian approach to human rights, said Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Alexander Downer at a public forum hosted by Monash's Castan Centre for Human Rights Law last month. Speaking on the forum, topic 'Making a real difference to Human Rights', Mr Downer said human rights were central to Australian foreign policy, with "effectiveness" and "practicality" the guiding principles of our actions. Photo by Greg Ford.

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Researchers urge caution when buying children's Christmas gifts



Monash researchers claim the current craze for scooters has caused children's injuries to skyrocket. Photo by AAP.

BY STUART HEATHER

Parents are being urged to consider safety this Christmas when buying children's gifts, especially those that involve the risk of falls.

A Monash University study has found that 41 per cent of children admitted to hospital with non-fatal injuries, and about the same number who presented for emergency attention, were involved in falls.

Ms Karen Ashby and Ms Maria Corbo of the Monash University Accident Research Centre said the current craze for scooters has caused reported injuries to skyrocket. About 100 children were treated by public hospital emergency departments in Victoria during the first nine months of the year after falling from their scooters.

"Common scooter-related injuries are similar to those involving bicycles or skates, with fractures, sprains and open wounds to the head and face, wrist and hand," Ms Ashby said.

The researchers recommend that parents buying a child a scooter also

buy an appropriate helmet and knee and elbow guards – although helmet use may not be optional for much longer. One state, South Australia, determined recently that under its road regulations, scooters are "wheeled recreational vehicles", therefore requiring helmets to be used.

Ms Corbo said children should wear closed shoes while on a scooter and that parents should supervise as children, especially younger ones, "learn the limitations of the scooter, and themselves".

While older male children (those aged between 10 and 14) traditionally make up the largest group reporting falls from bicycles, in-line skates and skateboards, scooters appeal to both boys and girls across a broad range of ages.

According to the researchers, there is a common misconception that these types of injuries are "accidental, random and unavoidable". But, they say, appropriate design, construction, supervision – and where necessary, regulation and

enforcement – will reduce both the incidence and severity of injuries.

Better safety measures will not only benefit the children and families affected, but also the broader community. Child falls accounted for 23,000 hospital admissions across Australia in 1996-97, while in the 1995-96 period the estimated 'total lifetime cost' of these types of injuries was \$458 million.

The continuing high incidence and severity of child fall injuries has led the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to target this as a high priority requiring 'immediate attention'.

It is an area in which research does make a real difference. As a result of research into unsafe children's cot-beds, a new Australian Standard became mandatory from 1998. Playground and nursery equipment is also subject to ongoing research and improvement.

The Accident Research Centre's recent report on child fall injuries (published in *Hazard*, No. 44) is funded by VicHealth.

Artworks from the political struggle return to the new South Africa

BY DAVID BRUCE

Part of South Africa's rich cultural and political history safeguarded in Australia for almost 30 years has been returned for display on Monash's new campus in Johannesburg.

The gift of 17 pieces of artwork includes 15 pieces classified as 'township art' and two from the Rorke's Drift Art Commune. The works of the black South African artists were adopted by

the black consciousness movement of the late 1970s as symbols of the political struggle.

The artists were befriended and supported by Australian diplomat Ms Di Johnstone during her posting to South Africa between 1974 and 1976. For her efforts, Ms Johnstone was regularly subjected to harassment from the authorities, while the artists were regularly beaten and jailed.

Pro vice-chancellor of Monash South Africa Professor John Anderson unveiled the collection at the official campus launch last month. One of the pieces, a 1975 self-portrait by Mr Michael Maapola, was later presented to the artist.

In spite of not having seen the portrait for 25 years, its return evoked strong memories of a past era. "Yes, I remember this work very well," he said. "I am pleased, very pleased, to see it back in South Africa again."

Now a professional artist based in Pretoria, Mr Maapola recalled how the work was completed in a township under the strict rule of apartheid. "I was always involved in politics, and as an artist I was making statements through my art. I have lost count of how many times I was picked up and thrown into jail, which happened almost every time I did a painting. But as an artist I just couldn't stop, because I loved my work so much."

Some of the artworks were purchased by Ms Johnstone at covert exhibitions. Others, she said, were given to her by the artists.

"The Australian diplomatic mission, among others, sponsored art exhibitions at diplomatic premises, but the authorities at the time did not look kindly on such events and attempted to prevent them. At one stage, I was even evicted from my apartment after holding an exhibition of township art," Ms Johnstone said.

"I had always hoped to return the artwork to South Africa, and I feel the time is now right for these works to be displayed for everyone's general enjoyment, and importantly, to ensure that the artists also have access to them."

The collection will be on display at the Johannesburg campus next year.



South African artist Mr Michael Maapola with a 1975 self-portrait completed under the strict rule of apartheid, now returned to South Africa after 25 years.



'Monash' the dog and building foreman Laurence on site in South Africa.

'Monash' rules South Africa

Monash University South Africa has its first resident and mascot – 'Monash' the dog.

The light brown puppy of uncertain breeding and excitable temperament has taken occupancy of the campus site, currently under construction in Roodepoort, Johannesburg, under the watchful

eye of his owner, Laurence, the building foreman.

'Monash' has taken on the role of greeting all new visitors to the site, but when his welcoming gestures prove overwhelming, he is secured in the vehicle holding yard until he calms down.

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MONASH

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Distance studies not appropriate for everyone, a national study reveals

BY DAVID BRUCE

Undergraduate students who study by distance education, one of the fastest growing areas in higher education, are far more likely to fail than their on-campus colleagues.

A national study by Monash researcher Mr Ian Dobson and Dr Raj Sharma from Swinburne University of Technology found that 18.7 per cent, or almost one in five subjects attempted by distance education undergraduate students, produced a fail grade. On-campus students had a subject failure rate of 11.6 per cent.

The study looked at performance data for all Australian undergraduate students from 1989 to 1999 across all

fields of study. Over that period the numbers of distance education students enrolled in Australian universities almost doubled from 48,409 to 94,010. This compares with an overall university enrolment increase of 55 per cent.

Mr Dobson believes that universities and governments could consider more appropriate levels of support, both academic and financial, for distance education students to help reduce both the trauma and cost of such high levels of student failure.

"Some students are, in a sense, at risk if they pursue study by distance education," Mr Dobson said.

"But at the same time distance education provides some students with their only opportunity to gain a univer-

sity qualification. They live in rural or isolated areas, or they have lifestyles or working hours that don't suit a typical on-campus university study program."

About 60 per cent of students enrolled in distance education courses live in urban areas, and many of these students are likely to have reasonable access to on-campus facilities.

"Some urban-located students, particularly those in full time employment, no doubt find distance education best meets their study needs. The development of a learning environment, which mixes both on- and off-campus delivery, could be particularly important for these students," Mr Dobson said.

"We should be alarmed to know that almost one in five subjects attempted by distance education undergraduates does not result in a pass.

"In its current context, distance education appears to be inappropriate for some groups of students, and universities should be identifying these students before they commence their studies. Since failure comes at a cost, both personal and economic, universities should be doing more to match the right subjects with the right students."

The analysis found clear trends in the failure rates that related both to the type of student and the type of course being attempted. Those students most at risk were young, male, or attempting subjects such as maths

and computing, business and economics, or engineering.

Age was an important determinant of distance education success, with one in four subjects failed by students aged under 24.

"Considering this age-linked factor, it would be preferable for younger undergraduates, and in particular school-leavers, to first have exposure to an on-campus learning environment, perhaps with an element of distance education later in their course," Mr Dobson said.

Results of the study were presented at the Innovations in Higher Education 2000 Conference, University of Helsinki, in September 2000.

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Internship gives students a head start in politics

BY COREY NASSAU

Monash arts/law student Ms Melissa Gaddie was one of only two Victorians who attended the Millennium Youth Parliament in England last month, after being selected as a joint winner of the President's Prize for the most outstanding Victorian Parliamentary Internship.

Ms Gaddie, who has had a long-standing passion for politics, undertook her internship with the Member for Frankston East, Mr Matt Viney. During her internship, she produced a report tackling the drug problem, titled 'Local community forum to address the drug issue in Frankston'.

"My starting point was to spend a night with the paramedics to observe overdose victims, because I thought it was important for me to see, first hand, the human side of the issue," she said.

"I spent about one day each week in the electoral office, and the remainder of the time interviewing people and gathering data before holding the forum, which was a great experience."

Third-year politics students from Monash and Melbourne universities have been taking part in the Parliamentary Internship Program since 1993.

Under the program, each intern is assigned to a Member of Parliament for one semester to work on a special project and to obtain practical experience within the political system.

According to Professor Brian Costar, from Monash's School of



Ms Melissa Gaddie attended the Millennium Youth Parliament in England last month after being named the most outstanding Victorian Parliamentary Intern. Photo by Greg Ford.

Political and Social Inquiry, the program gives the university a good profile in parliament because the students write impressive reports.

"This is not work experience. The reports are well researched and presented and parliamentarians greatly appreciate them," Professor Costar said.

"Occasionally they may even lead to full inquiries, as was the case with the intern paper which made recommendations on the Sydney-centric nature of the ABC."

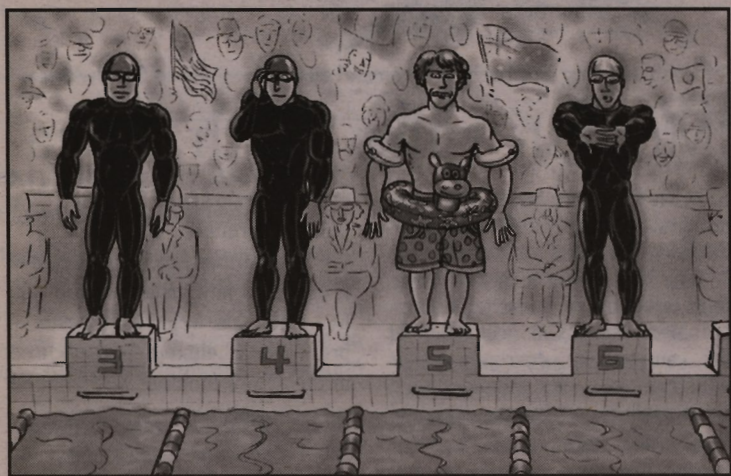
Professor Costar said the intern program was also important because it gave students the opportunity to build

on the theoretical knowledge developed in the classroom.

"The internship is a controlled entry into the real world. We don't spoon-feed these students because we want them to come out and say 'I did this'."

With both Steve Bracks' and Peter Costello's electoral officers being ex-interns, the future looks bright for Ms Gaddie if she chooses to enter the political arena.

"The internship was a fantastic experience which I found very empowering. It was amazing to have something so practical and tangible as part of my university experience," she said.



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MONASH
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Renowned author gains Monash doctorate

BY JUNE YU

Distinguished writer and former Monash student Dr Peter Carey was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters at a Monash graduation ceremony last month.

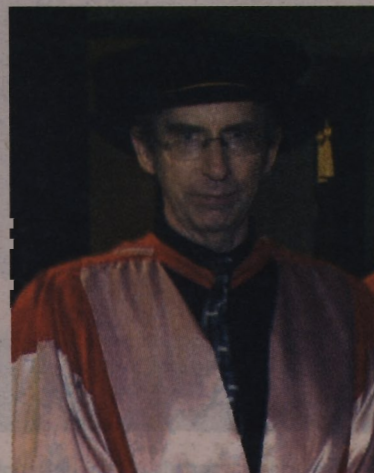
Dr Carey's works include seven novels, a children's book and two volumes of short stories.

He has won the prestigious Miles Franklin Award three times for his novels: *Eliot*, *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Jack Maggs*. The award is presented annually for a novel or play of the highest literary merit written by an Australian about Australian life.

Oscar and Lucinda was also made into a film and won the internationally acclaimed Booker McConnell Prize in 1988, while *Jack Maggs* scooped the 1998 Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Dr Carey's latest work, *True History of the Kelly Gang*, was published last month.

Dr Carey now teaches at Columbia University, New York; holds an honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of Queensland and is a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

He was among the first intake of students enrolled in Monash's Faculty of Science, before he abandoned chemistry to pursue a literary career.

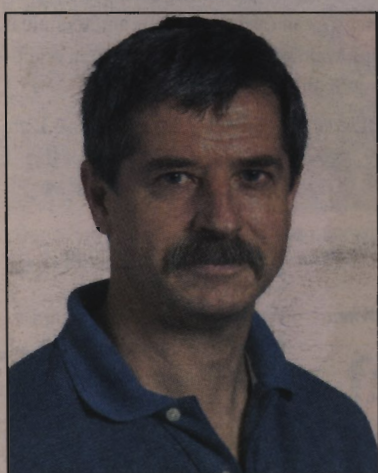


Dr Peter Carey

Is democracy inevitable in the People's Republic of China?

Despite some limited signs of democracy at the national and local levels, democracy in China is still a long way off, predicts political scientist Dr Dennis Woodward.

OPINION



Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the post-1978 reform era initiated by Deng Xiaoping, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has undergone dramatic changes.

China's economy has largely made the transition from a centrally planned socialist economy to one in which market forces generally prevail – a socialist market economy.

Greater liberalisation, first evident in the rural sector where a return to household farming replaced the collectives, was subsequently extended to the urban sector with the allowance of private enterprise and the opening of China to foreign trade, loans and investment under the open door policy.

These economic reforms necessitated a relaxation of controls by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-dominated state. This saw an upsurge in calls for greater political freedom in the form of a democracy movement.

Thus there was the democracy wall movement of 1978-79 before its suppression and a revived movement in late 1986 marked by student demonstrations. The massive demonstrations of 1989, centring on occupation of Tiananmen Square, were ultimately savagely repressed by People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops acting under martial law.

The determination of the CCP to resist any challenge to its monopoly of power has been reinforced by what it sees as the lessons of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

A besieged mentality has been expressed in fears that the capitalist West is seeking China's peaceful evolution from socialism to capitalism and that advocates of greater human rights and democracy for China are seeking to undermine the party's hold on power.

In response, the Chinese leadership has maintained that as a sovereign state it will not accept any interference in its internal affairs, and has sought legitimation by means of both economic development and an assertive nationalism.



Artwork by Elizabeth Dias.

Despite this, there are those who see China's democratisation as inevitable. This view is based on a number of assumptions.

Firstly, the movement towards democracy is considered part of an historical trend: the end of the Cold War has seen the demise of all but a few former socialist states (whose days are numbered) and the triumph of liberal democracy.

The Chinese leadership has maintained that as a sovereign state it will not accept any interference in its internal affairs.

Secondly, the growth of democracy is directly linked with economic development. Since China's economy has been growing at spectacular rates since the reform period began, projections of continued economic growth

are often accompanied by the assumption that once a given level of economic development has been attained, there will be pressure for democracy.

The rise of an affluent middle class is also seen by some as the agent for democratisation. Growing economic power is translated into political power in this view. The obvious rise of such a Chinese middle class is heralded as the precursor of democratisation.

There is a related view which sees the seeds of democracy in the emergence of civil society. This view draws heavily on both the historical emergence of a sphere outside state control in western Europe which was instrumental in the growth of democracy there and on the more recent conscious use of civil society in undermining communism and achieving democracy in eastern Europe.

The applicability of this model to China is debatable. It has been condemned for its Euro-centrism and there have been serious doubts raised with regard to the degree to which the various associations and groupings which have emerged in the reform period are independent of control by the party-state.

It would appear that there has been a deliberate effort to regulate and channel any emerging interest groups by means of a corporatist system of government licensing combined with harsh measures meted out to any groups which try to establish themselves outside the state-sanctioned system. Crackdowns on 'free trade unions' and religious sects such as the Falun Gong are obvious examples of the latter.

There are two other areas in which developments give hope to those who posit a democratic future for China. At the national level, the National People's Congress (NPC), which is the official government law-making body, has experienced something of a renaissance.

Long seen as simply a rubber stamp dominated by the real centre of power, the CCP, it has emerged in the reform period on a much more institutionalised basis with regular meetings.

Moreover, it has at times shown itself to be not totally compliant of party desires. There have been debates questioning policy – notably opposition to the Three Gorges Dam project – and instances where NPC members abstained or voted against

persons and policies which had CCP endorsement.

Whether the NPC could grow into (or be permitted to become) a rival centre of power to the CCP is yet to be seen, but were the party to lose its monopoly of power, the NPC would provide an institutional basis for the establishment of democracy on a national level.

At the local level, perhaps the most promising developments in a democratic direction are taking place with the introduction of village elections in many parts of China.

These should not, however, be seen as the product of spontaneous democratic desires by the local populace nor as the result of the CCP being persuaded to the virtues of genuine democracy. Rather, it has promoted village elections as the solution to problems which it has encountered with party controlled village government.

Put simply, village elections have proved themselves to be an effective remedy to rural unrest which has weakened compliance with party policies.

Opposition to particular party policies (such as the one-child policy) or what are seen as unfair taxes and levies imposed on peasants for infrastructure, welfare or development purposes have sparked significant rural disaffection.

Hence, village elections in which non-party candidates (and even non-party-endorsed candidates) have been allowed to compete with and defeat party members serves two purposes.

It acts as a check on the behaviour of party officials and it gives village government a degree of legitimacy which helps to defuse unrest and increase acceptance of government policies.

This is not to say that village elections are not genuine. However, it is to

Village elections have proved themselves to be an effective remedy to rural unrest which has weakened compliance with party policies.

caution against an overly enthusiastic view that China is being swept towards democracy at the basic level.

Village elections are far from universal. They are not all totally free and the relationship between elected village officials and pre-existing (and continuing) local party secretaries is far from clear-cut.

Village elections might represent a democratic future for China but they still have an extremely long way to go to achieve such a goal.

Dr Dennis Woodward is senior lecturer and acting head of the School of Political and Social Inquiry at Monash University. This is an extract of a paper given by Dr Woodward last month to the Melbourne China Study Group at the Museum of Chinese Australian History.



Students from Beaconhills College on stage for the recent Monash Schools Drama Festival. Photo by Greg Ford.

Teenage hopes and fears revealed at Monash Schools Drama Festival

BY SUE MCALISTER

The recent Monash Schools Drama Festival not only showcased the high standard of performing arts in our secondary schools, it also provided a window on the hopes and fears of young Australians from a range of backgrounds.

This year's festival – the fifth – was run by Monash's Performing Arts Precinct and featured short, original works by groups of students from 17 state and private schools in and around Melbourne.

Festival coordinator Mr Tim Clarke said the festival had three main aims: "It gave years 9 and 10 students a chance to perform their work in a professional setting; it gave their teachers

a chance to support them in this; and it exposed students to what other schools were doing. At the same time, it promoted Monash as a centre for the performing arts – a number of participants go on to study drama here."

The festival also revealed a lot about high school students, Mr Clarke said. "In fact, boys' schools tended to lean towards themes of death and destruction, murder and retribution. One boys' school did a spooky piece about the Apocalypse.

"Two girls' schools did moving pieces on identity and non-conformity, and the repercussions of people going missing. Several works looked critically at the media; one was a thriller about cults. But we also had fun with satires and cabaret-style performances."

Three schools tackled prejudice against indigenous and Asian Australians, and impressed Mr Clarke with their approach. "One piece that examined how Asians are portrayed in society featured Asian Australian girls wearing footie beanies and scarves and saying racist things about Asians. It was quite challenging."

The festival started on 3 November, with 19 groups comprising no more than 12 students each. From these, four groups were chosen to participate in a Highlights Night, followed by a Statewide Showcase at Monash's Alexander Theatre, where one group from the Monash Festival performed alongside groups from similar festivals around Victoria.

ARTS SCENE

Exhibition shows international outlook

Three artists from Australia, Japan and India have joined forces to create *Another Landscape – History/Life/Language*, an exhibition that aims to accurately reflect a diversity of cultural outlooks.

Judith Wright (Australia), Kaoru Hirabayashi (Japan) and Nalini Malani (India) have contributed works that express each individual's interpretation of the idea of 'landscape'.

Judith Wright's work will include projections of body parts, moving in murky liquids and dim light. Kaoru Hirabayashi explores language through intricate Japanese characters. Nalini Malani has contributed a video work that explores the landscape of a widow's memory as she struggles to take care of her family.

The exhibition began in Japan, went to Bombay, and concludes at the Monash University Gallery. It will run from 5 December to 16 December 2000 and from 16 January to 24 February 2001.

For more information, contact the Monash University Gallery on (03) 9905 4217.

Young artists enter the fast lane

An exhibition of work by fine arts graduate students at Monash's Caulfield

campus reveals a love of freedom and a keen interest in creative expression.

Fast Lane Exit is an eclectic selection of painting, drawing, sculpture and printmaking exhibits that mix mediums, expressing the themes that run through the students' work without restrictions. The works also feature unusual substances such as plastics or recycled rubbish.

Fast Lane Exit will open on 22 November and will run until 13 December.

For more information, contact the Faculty of Art and Design on (03) 9903 2707.

Final-year show reveals student talent

From the beautiful yet repelling sculptures of the body's internal organs to a photographic record of life in a country town, the *Switchback Final Year Show* reveals a number of original approaches to concepts such as the body and emotional boundaries.

Displaying work by 14 final-year visual arts students, the exhibition clearly represents each of the students' individuality, while the show as a whole reflects their creative aspirations.

The *Switchback Final Year Show* will run until mid-February at the Switchback Gallery at Monash's Gippsland campus. For more information, contact Ms Rosemary Abbott on (03) 5122 6261.

Short course show – an act of faith

Students and staff from the Monash Short Courses Centre are giving the public a chance to view their ceramic, pottery and mosaic creations in a new exhibition called *Fire, Earth and Acts of Faith*.

The exhibition includes pieces by artist-in-residence and Golden Ceramic Award winner Ms Hui-Fen Deng, pottery and mosaics tutor Ms Jennifer McNabb, and sculpture tutor Ms Gaye Roberts.

Running until 9 December, the exhibition will take place at the Monash Short Courses Centre on the university's Clayton campus. Some items on show will be for sale. For more information, contact the centre on (03) 9905 3810.

Smashing Pancakes wins national award

A Monash staff member received a national award last month for a play that focuses on community violence.

Recently performed in Greece, *Smashing Pancakes*, by Ms Sarah Vincent from Monash's Development Unit, was announced as the Victorian winner of the Australian Violence Prevention Award 2000.

The award is a joint state and Federal government scheme which recognises programs in each state to counter community violence.

Monash art enters uncharted waters in new millennium

BY SUE MCALISTER

Things will become crystal clear at Monash in January, when the university's Caulfield campus will host the 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association of Glass Artists (Ausglass).

The event's title, *Uncharted Waters*, sums up its aim – to intrigue, excite and inform both artists and the public by focusing on the future of glass art. It will highlight new techniques and concepts and showcase the versatility and beauty of glass.

Featuring a distinguished list of international and Australian speakers, the four-day conference, at the Faculty of Art and Design building, will be accompanied by exhibitions, lectures, discussions, workshops and demonstrations, tours, walks, parties and fringe events.

Event director Ms Pamela Stadius said the conference would be a mecca for both international and Australian glass enthusiasts.

"The entire venue will be flooded with the beauty and magic of glass – it's guaranteed to be an outstanding success," she said.

The conference celebrations will feature the opening of the Glass Studios in the Faculty of Art and Design building, where demonstrations by internationally renowned glass artists will take place daily.

Speakers will include Czech Professor Sylva Petrova, currently working in Britain, who will discuss present and future directions of glass; Mr Brett Littman, from the US, who will address postmodernism and glass; and Dr Robert Bell, who will present an Australian perspective. Mr Wilhelm Derix from Germany will focus on the possibilities of architects, designers

and artists working together on architectural glass in Europe and the US, while Mr Gerry Cummins will focus on Australian heritage glass conservation.

The Monash Glass Studios will host two Ausglass workshops, which, says Ms Stadius, "will provide a challenging opportunity for participants to extend their skills and experience with this medium".

The Faculty of Art and Design Gallery will exhibit work by all Ausglass members and students, and also present the trade display and exhibition, where artists can exchange ideas and technical information, and view the latest in equipment and literature.

What: *Uncharted Waters* – The 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association of Glass Artists

Where: Art and Design building, Caulfield campus

When: Workshops: 15–23 January (other workshops will run concurrently at RMIT University and Holmesglen Institute of TAFE); Conference: 24–27 January; Fringe: 22–23 January; Trade Display and Exhibition: 24–26 January; Auction: 27 January; Exhibitions throughout January.

Who: For more details contact conference director Ms Pamela Stadius on (03) 9528 2160 or at pamela@hilink.com.au; Ausglass at ausglass@vicnet.net.au; or Monash Glass Studio Coordinator Mr Nick Wirdnam on (03) 9903 2548.



'The Wall #3' by Ian Mowbray, an Adelaide-based artist who will present an Ausglass workshop.

Emotions in the workplace becomes today's hot topic

By SANDRA BUCOVAZ

The sometimes cold rationality of the corporate workplace may be in for a bit of a change if a predominantly Australian-led study of emotions in the workplace continues to gather momentum.

To date, the new wave of interest has been academia-based, but researchers are now looking for input from management from a cross section of industry in order to devise an emotions-based model appropriate for the workplace.

It is hoped that management styles in the new millennium will better acknowledge the impact of emotions in the workplace and the importance of being able to identify and be responsive to them.

Organisations need to create work environments that are more conducive to people's emotional wellbeing, according to Associate Professor Charmine Härtel from Monash University's Department of Management.

Dr Härtel, Professor Neal Ashkanasy from the University of Queensland's School of Management and Associate Professor Wilfred Zerbe from the Faculty of Management at the University of Calgary, are part of an international research team leading the renewed interest in emotions in the workplace.

In 1998, they organised the first major international conference on emotions in organisational life. The



Associate Professor Charmine Härtel says organisations need to think more about employees' emotional wellbeing. Photo by Greg Ford.

biennial conference was held again this year.

The team recently released a book, *Emotions in the Workplace - Research, Theory, and Practice*, which draws on some of the papers presented at the 1998 conference as well as contributions from other leading scholars in the field. A second book is under way with significant input from Australian academics.

Dr Härtel, together with Professor Ashkanasy and Professor Cynthia Fisher, a professor of management at Bond University, has secured a total of \$356,000 in two Australian Research Council grants to research emotions at work. Dr Härtel is currently seeking

potential industry partners to participate in the project.

"It would be fair to say that most of the groundbreaking work in this field is coming out of Australia," she said.

The struggle between emotions and rational behaviour is as old as humanity. The current focus on quality of life has contributed to a renewed interest in people's emotional wellbeing in the workplace.

Key negative emotions that have been identified in the workplace include anger, envy, frustration, aggression, shame, fear and embarrassment, while pride, job satisfaction, enthusiasm and joy are among the more positive ones.

2001 - an art odyssey

By SUE MCALISTER

Next year promises to be a great year for art enthusiasts at Monash's Art and Design Faculty Gallery at the Caulfield campus, according to gallery manager Mr Malcolm Bywaters.

"We're hosting a diverse and stimulating series of exhibitions, featuring works in glass, multimedia art, photography, prints and drawings," he said.

"Our exhibitors will range from Monash students to established artists, including one of Australia's greatest, Fred Williams."

January

The Ausglass conference, Australia's leading glass artists' conference, will bring together glass practitioners from around the country and overseas. It will be accompanied by exhibitions and workshops (see story page 6).

February

Monash will host a selected survey of art and design by some 12 masters degree students. Survey curator Mr Bywaters says the exhibition "will demonstrate the high quality of visual product achieved by our art and design masters and PhD candidates".

March

Supported by the Japanese Consul General, *The Beauty of Japan Photographed* will feature works by four of Japan's leading 'establishment' photographers. It will coincide with a visit by two Japanese industrial designers from Chiba University in Tokyo.

April

The gallery will present an exhibition of sexual and gender-based imagery by

established artist and staff member Mr Ross Moore.

June

A cutting-edge, contemporary exhibition, curated by Ms Samantha Comte, will reflect what is happening in Melbourne's art scene as well as elsewhere in Australia. "It will be filled with youthful vigour, and will have that 'right here and right now' feel to it," said Mr Bywaters.

July/August

A large-scale exhibition of drawing, curated by Monash staff members Mr Geoff Dupree and Mr Ken Smith will be held along the lines of a festival of drawing, including seminars and practical workshops. The catalogue essay will be by staff member and *Age* art critic Dr Robert Nelson.

September

This month will feature an exhibition of the paintings, prints and drawings by important Australian artist Fred Williams. "This is the blockbuster exhibition for the year," said Mr Bywaters.

October

The gallery will present a dynamic multimedia presentation by new technology visual artist and staff member Mr Troy Innocent, who was recently awarded a \$35,000 state government grant.

November

A selected survey of the best art and design work being created by Monash's third-year honours, masters and PhD students will go on show. For more information about these events, contact Mr Bywaters on (03) 9903 2882, fax (03) 9903 1867, or email malcolm.bywaters@artdes.monash.edu.au

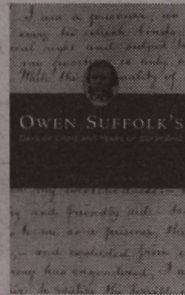


'Asiatischer Winter', 1996, glass panel by Ursula Huth, a German artist presenting a workshop at Ausglass.



Owen Suffolk's Days of Crime and Years of Suffering

Edited by David Dunstan
Australian Scholarly Publishing
RRP: \$55.00



Owen Suffolk began his autobiography, *Days of Crime and Years of Suffering*, in his cell on a prison hulk moored in Hobson's Bay in 1858. The book describes his experiences as a convict transported to Australia from Victorian England for a series of petty crimes.

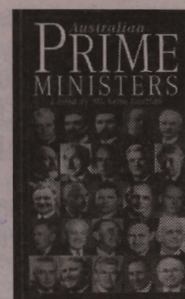
A rarity among convicts, Suffolk was middle-class, literate and well-spoken. His autobiography, an impressive document of the Victorian era, caused a sensation when published in newspaper serial form in 1867.

The autobiography, which has been republished in full with illustrations, a scholarly introduction and notes, provides an entertaining and poetic, if not always truthful, account of life in Australia's early prison system.

Editor Dr David Dunstan is a lecturer in the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University.

Australian Prime Ministers

Edited by Michelle Grattan
New Holland
RRP: \$40.46



While citizens of the United States are often able to recite by heart a list of their nation's presidents, Australians are notoriously ignorant of their own prime ministers. *Australian Prime Ministers* is a wide-ranging and fascinating book that attempts to rectify this lack by highlighting the politicians who have led Australia from the time of Federation into the 21st century.

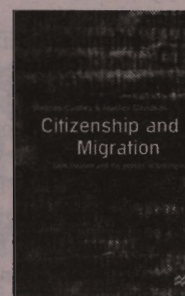
Some of Australia's foremost historians, biographers and political analysts have come together to create a series of chapters on the lives and parliamentary careers of each prime minister, with a focus on their social, cultural and political backgrounds.

Professor Brian Costar, head of the School of Public Policy at Monash University, joined Monash graduate Mr Peter Vlahos (LLB BJuris 1987, DipInternationalLaw 1996) to produce two chapters on Country Party prime ministers. The first looks at Sir Earl Page, a caretaker prime minister for 19 days in 1939, and the other focuses on Sir Arthur William Fadden's 40-day term in 1941.

Professor John Rickard, honorary professorial fellow from the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash, contributed an analysis of Sir Joseph Cook, an English working-class immigrant who rose from pitboy in a coalmine to become prime minister of Australia from June 1913 to September 1914.

Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging

By Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson
MacMillan Press
RRP: \$42.31



In a world of international migration - where millions of people live in more than one country, have multiple citizenships or do not live in their country of citizenship -

governments are struggling to control the social, economic and cultural lives of their nations.

In *Citizenship and Migration*, authors Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson argue that new approaches to citizenship are needed to take account of collective identities and diverse social alliances.

Professor Alastair Davidson is a former lecturer in politics at Monash University, and Professor Stephen Castles is research professor of sociology and director of the Centre of Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies at the University of Wollongong.

POSTscript

The third volume of *Henry Hawke's Richardson: The Letters* marks the final chapter in the trilogy of letters of one of Australia's greatest writers. The editors of the collection, Professor Clive Probyn and Associate Professor Bruce Steele, are from the English department at Monash University.

Gram-Positive Pathogens by Professor Julian Rood from the Faculty of Medicine at Monash has been released by ASM Press. It addresses the mechanisms of gram-positive bacterial pathogenicity.

If you are a member of the Monash community and have a forthcoming book, contact monashnews@adm.monash.edu.au

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Antidote to plagiarism in the electronic age

If research being conducted by PhD student Mr Krisztian Monostori comes up trumps, literary copycats will be forced to think twice next time they consider lifting text from another person's work to pass off as their own.

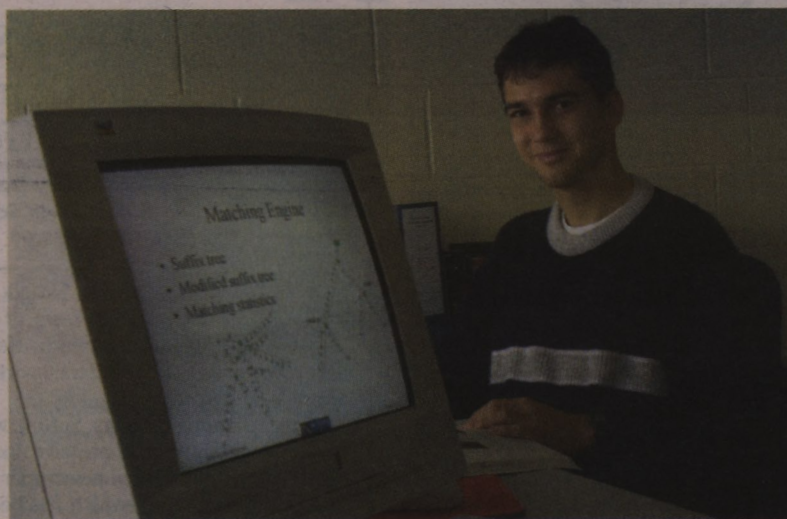
Mr Monostori, from the School of Computer Science and Software Engineering, is currently developing an advanced algorithm aimed at the detection of plagiarism.

"Because technology has made access to information so readily available, there is a growing need to have better methods of policing the way in which original texts are used," he said.

According to Mr Monostori, his algorithm is a breakthrough because it utilises what is known as a 'suffix tree' to search a repository of documents much faster and more accurately than other currently available methods.

"Suffix trees have been used in many other areas such as file-compression and DNA-matching in molecular biology. But algorithms so far haven't used suffix trees for plagiarism detection," he said.

"This method uses a two-stage approach, with suffix trees used in the second stage to find the exact positions and lengths of matching chunks of text."



PhD student, Mr Krisztian Monostori is using algorithms to detect plagiarism.

By using this algorithm to build a structure for a particular document, it can then be quickly compared to a repository of documents to test for overlapping content.

While the most obvious application of Mr Monostori's research will be to aid in the detection of plagiarism in student essays and research papers, it will also prove invaluable for identifying illegal documents on the internet.

"Unauthorised copies of documents often end up on the web. The package I am developing will help search and identify these cases of copyright infringement," he said.

While Mr Monostori is currently focusing on applying his research to the detection of plagiarism, he believes the research may also have applications in designing new and more advanced internet search engines.

Students scoop the pool in national design competition

BY SUE McALISTER

Being chained to a desk may soon become more of a pleasure than a pain, thanks to some award-winning designs from Monash University students.

The Monash industrial design students have scooped the pool in an Australia-wide competition to design an office for the future.

The students won the top three prizes with designs which took into account ergonomics, commercial viability, style and comfort. Twenty design schools were invited to compete in the competition, run by Danish company Linak.

First-place winner Mr Nicholas Tozer won \$5000 (or the equivalent airfare and accommodation to visit the Interzum 2001 furniture exhibition in

Germany next May) with his 'M-desk' design.

Consisting of two vertical, transparent acrylic legs and a number of variable laminex flat surfaces, the desk has a split-level effect and can be adapted to a number of different configurations.

"I'm absolutely delighted - and it's great for Monash as well," Mr Tozer said. "I'm grateful to Linak for giving me and the other students the opportunity of entering the competition. It was a good learning process as I got to work on the prototype of my design, which Linak produced."

Mr Joseph Ganino won second place (and \$1000), and Ms Joanne Fleming won third place in the contest. They incorporated a variety of materials into their designs, including stain-

less steel and glass, creating an interesting variation in textures and a high technology look.

According to industrial design lecturer Mr Selby Coxon, the three students were successful because they showed they were sensitive to product possibilities.

"They understood the potential of materials and structure in the development of new ideas that were creative and relevant and, importantly, commercially viable.

"We're also actively working to encourage women to take up industrial design and this recognition of Joanne's talent shows what we've known all along - women make very good industrial designers!"

Danish-based company Linak has subsidiaries around the world, including Australia. The company designs and manufactures products which improve ergonomics by using memory computers to make height adjustments to surfaces to suit the users of hospital beds, patient lifters, chairs, tabletops and even car seats.



(L to R) Mr Guy Topolansky, sales engineer for Danish design company, Linak, with award-winning industrial design students Mr Nicholas Tozer, Ms Joanne Fleming and Mr Joseph Ganino.

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