

MONASH UNIVERSITY NEWS

Girls outshine boys in uni completion rates

By JOSIE GIBSON

Female students have a higher chance of completing their university course – and are likely to take less time to do so – than male students, new research shows.

And mature-age students who are more often part-time are less likely than younger students to complete their courses, Monash academics

Dr Chandra Shah and Associate Professor Gerald Burke have found.

The study is part of a wider project by the Monash-ACER Centre for Economics of Education and Training and Centre of Policy Studies aimed at predicting possible mismatches between supply and demand of qualified personnel in the labour force.

The findings, to be published in the international journal *Higher Education*, provide a useful tool for educators and

policy-makers, by enabling them to chart the flow of students through Australia's university system.

In their study, the Monash researchers analysed Federal Government statistics on student enrolments and completions to project student progression through courses and potential problem areas. The data included fields of study as well as the age and gender of university students across Australia.

Australian graduation rates are somewhat lower than those for the United Kingdom but in general concur with the results on large differences between male and female completion rates. According to Dr Shah, a partial explanation for the lower Australian rates is the relatively higher proportion of Australian students who enrol on a part-time or external basis, the type of enrolment that is associated with lower completion rates.

The researchers cautioned, however, that the data did not enable them to investigate the causes of the differing completion rates across courses or demographic groups.

"Our analysis raised many questions requiring further investigation," Dr Shah said. "Apart from student characteristics, institutional factors may also be significant in explaining the variation in completion rates."

A meeting of minds and cultures



East met West recently at Monash University's Gippsland campus when a group of Tibetan monks held a weekend program of cultural and religious exchange. Hundreds of people passed through Switchback Gallery during the Gyuto monks' visit, hearing talks on meditation, stress management and world peace, and observing the construction of a mandala sand sculpture. "It was a great success, and a real community event," according to centre head Ms Julie Adams. Photo by Rachel Harris.

VC's Christmas message

The people and achievements that have made the pages of Monash News in 1999 highlight our fundamental obligation as a university to participate in the life of the broader community.

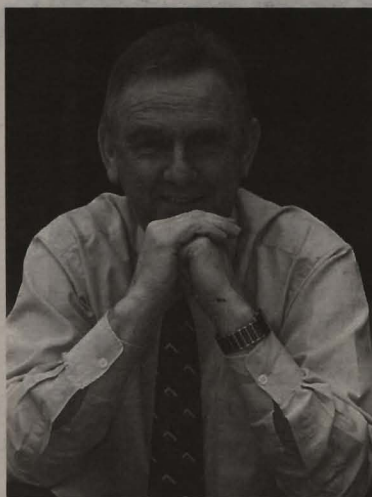
Monash must communicate in a regular way – with schools, business, government and the communities around our seven campuses – about the work we do. That is why *Monash News* was started.

This publication reports the achievements and views of Monash people and the accomplishments this year have been numerous. I hope you have enjoyed reading about some of what we do well.

It has been a challenging but ultimately rewarding 1999 for staff and students at Monash. I look to 2000 with much promise.

I wish you a very happy and relaxed break.

Professor David Robinson
Vice-chancellor and president



Scientists facing a grim task in rural Kosovo

By DAVID BRUCE

In Kosovo, the graves are beginning to freeze as winter sets in. A team of forensic scientists has taken a break from the arduous task of exhuming bodies as evidence for the International Criminal Tribunal.

For three weeks in October, Professor Stephen Cordner, head of Monash's Department of Forensic Medicine, provided much-needed support to a weary British team in rural Kosovo.

Forensic pathologists rarely talk about their awful duties, out of respect for the dead and their families, but Kosovo has challenged that stance.

"People in Kosovo are very keen that the world knows what they have been through – that it is not forgotten. It is terribly important that the historical record knows that this has happened," said Professor Cordner on his return to Australia.

Professor Cordner worked on two death sites in villages outside of Prizren, in a predominately Albanian part of Kosovo. Autopsies were carried out in a disused motor vehicle garage that lacked hot water and electricity.

The first lot of graves contained 36 men, in their 50s, 60s and 70s and one 15-year-old boy. All had multiple gunshot wounds. At a second site, Professor Cordner's team



Professor Stephen Cordner.

found almost 250 spent gun rounds in a room where a family of 16 had been shot. Among the dead were an 18-month-old baby and four other children under 10.

As distressing as this work was, Professor Cordner said he felt welcomed by the Kosovars. "There is actually a slight sense of elation among the villagers. Most are thinking how lucky they are just to be alive. And there is immense gratitude to the international community, both for intervening militarily and for its continued involvement in the country.

"The locals are extremely grateful for the work of the forensic teams, who they invited in to complete this

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Super window a dream to clean

BY FIONA PERRY

The humble aluminium window – difficult to clean, maintain and slide – has been superseded by a revolutionary new super window designed by a Monash design team.

The group of Design department academics, along with several Monash graduates, has joined forces with James Hardie Windows to create the Quantum window – a new window system that eliminates problems associated with the traditional aluminium window.

Design team leader Mr Arthur de Bono said the new design had the elegance and body of a timber window, with improved security, weather-proofing, ease of operation and cleaning.

"The Quantum window has challenged traditional thinking about windows," he said. "Many components, such as the sealing, sliding, rolling and operating mechanisms on this design, have been reversed, so that they function beautifully."

The 'fins' that have been part of the traditional aluminium window's waterproofing system collect dust and dirt and make the window hard to clean, according to Mr de Bono.



Quantum window design team leader and head of Monash's department of Design Mr Arthur de Bono. Photo by Craig Wetjen.

"To avoid these problems, the Quantum window has a flat sill and frames. The large surfaces of metal make the window easy to clean, keep water out, and make it more stylish, substantial and secure," he said.

Mr de Bono said the importance of the window lay in the visual consistency it allowed.

"With this design, you can now have various types of windows, such as a sliding and double-hung window, next to each other, and maintain a consistent visual theme.

"For the first time, we have a window that makes a significant contribu-

tion to the architecture of the building, as opposed to aluminium windows that just allow the light in and keep the weather and wind out."

The holistic orientation of the project, incorporating aesthetic, manufacturing and functional elements, was a major reason the design team took on the job, Mr de Bono said.

"And from the viewpoint of James Hardie Windows, the Monash design team could offer a broader resource base, with expertise in engineering, prototyping and design, than you would find in a conventional design consultancy."

BRIEFS

Monash graduate to head ABC

Monash graduate Mr Jonathan Shier will take over as managing director of the ABC next March.

Mr Shier (BEC 1971, LLB 1974), who will replace incumbent Mr Brian Johns when his term expires, has worked for pay and commercial television in Europe since leaving Australia more than 20 years ago.

The Communications Minister, Senator Richard Alston, said Mr Shier would bring a unique perspective to the ABC.

Medical unit marks 50th milestone

Monash staff with links to the Alfred and Baker Medical Unit have been invited to attend celebrations marking the unit's 50th anniversary this month.

Established in 1949 by the Alfred Hospital and the Baker Medical Research Institute, the unit occupies an important place in the history of cardiovascular medicine in Australia.

Anniversary celebrations will culminate with an open house and black-tie dinner on 15 December.

For more details, contact Meetings First on (03) 9853 5538.

Monash lecturer in political contest

A Monash researcher is running for election to the Victorian parliament.

Mr Bob Stensholt, director of the Monash-based Australian Mekong Research Network, will contest the Burwood by-election on 11 December caused by the resignation of former premier, Mr Jeff Kennett.

CSIRO award for smooth operator

Monash Mathematics Professor Joe Monaghan has been presented with a CSIRO award for his work on smoothed particle hydrodynamics (SPH).

A technique for simulating complex fluid dynamics problems, SPH was invented by Professor Monaghan and two other colleagues in 1977 to help simulate astrophysical systems such as the dynamics of stars, the interaction of galaxies and the evolution of the universe.

In the last decade, SPH has been extended to other problems and is being used as a key tool in Monash's recently opened Epsilon laboratory for work on tsunamis and other natural disasters. For more on the Epsilon laboratory, see page 4.

Art of a gala opening



Hundreds of people crowded Monash's \$9 million Art and Design building at Caulfield campus recently for the official opening by the university's chancellor, Mr Jerry Ellis. A special guest was Victoria's new Arts Minister, Ms Mary Delahunty, pictured (right) with Monash dean of Art and Design Professor John Redmond at the Space and Time: Monash Alumni exhibition in the faculty gallery. Photos by Michael Silver (Photonet).

A grim task in Kosovo

Continued from page 1

work. At one funeral I attended, they gave three cheers for us."

In the New Year, when winter subsides and the ground thaws, the forensic teams will return to their task. Pathologists from the Monash University Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine may again be asked to assist.

"I may not put myself at the head of the queue to go back," explained Professor Cordner. "But I, and others here, will respond to the need if asked.

It's a life-changing experience for all of us involved in it. It is very important that the work gets done."

Professor Cordner said this sort of work represented a new dimension in the discipline of forensic pathology which, up to now, has essentially operated in a domestic jurisdiction.

"This is the first time forensic evidence has been so meticulously and thoroughly collected for a war crimes investigation," he said.

Making a DIFFERENCE

Do you know a Monash graduate who has MADE A DIFFERENCE to his or her community?

If so, why not ENTER the 'Monash: Making a difference' photographic competition?

Capture their story and be in the running for a DIGITAL CAMERA valued at up to \$1000

For full details and entry conditions, phone (03) 9905 5329, fax (03) 9905 2097, email monashmag@adm.monash.edu.au

Entries close on 4 February 2000.



Mapping the brain's super processor

BY PETER GOLDIE

As neuroscientists address the relationship between mind and brain, they move closer to understanding the most complex processes at the centre of our existence.

As with many areas of research, the best clues to how something functions normally are to be found in the damage created when something goes drastically wrong.

Dr Jason Mattingley, a Logan research fellow at Monash's Neuropsychology Research Unit, is looking at cognitive impairment in patients who have suffered damage to the brain following stroke.

His aim is to understand more about how the mind selects input, organises it and acts upon it.

"For a significant number of stroke sufferers, ongoing problems with speaking, concentrating or remembering can be more debilitating than the more obvious physical condition", Dr Mattingley said.

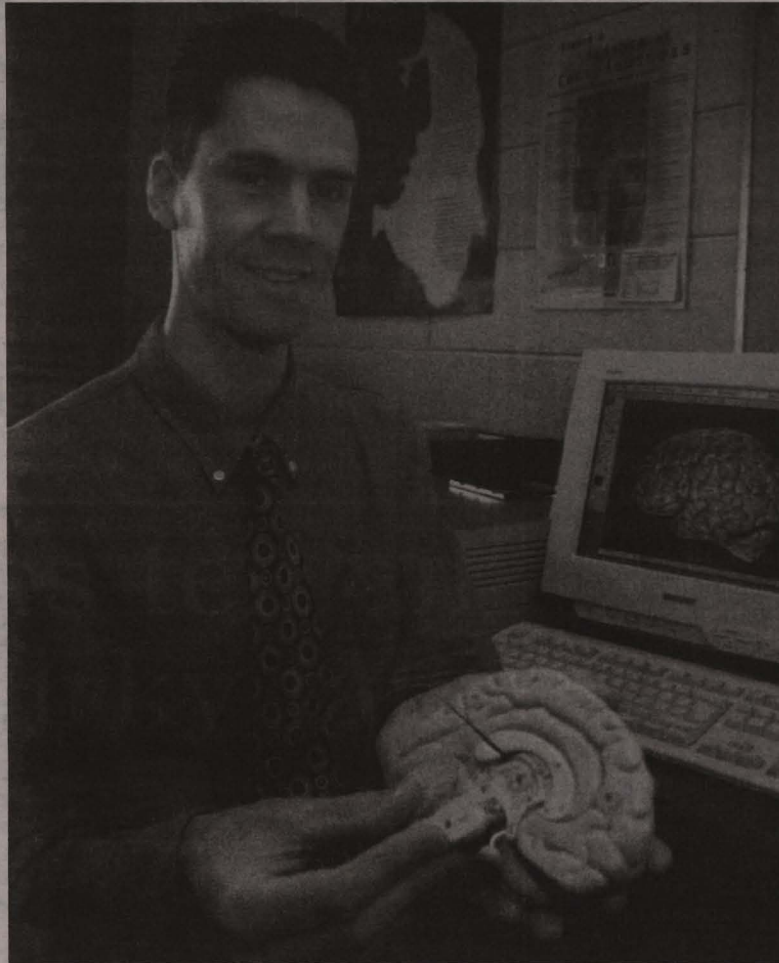
"We are very interested in understanding why so many individuals lose their ability to pay attention to their surroundings after a stroke."

The range of mental impairment following stroke is vast, and in some cases can provide a unique window on the workings of the mind.

"Some stroke sufferers are no longer able to recognise the faces of their friends and relatives, even though they can recognise most other everyday objects normally," Dr Mattingley said.

"Other patients have the reverse problem - they recognise familiar faces but can't tell a toaster from a teapot. The brain evidently deals with faces and everyday objects in a modular way, and either module can be damaged in isolation by a stroke."

In his work, Dr Mattingley is concentrating on a condition called unilateral neglect, in which selective attention and awareness are impaired for sensory inputs occurring on the side of



Dr Jason Mattingley. Photo by Richard Crompton.

the body opposite the side of the brain damaged in the stroke (usually the right hemisphere).

The assault on the internal workings of the mind is taking place on three fronts. The research unit has developed sensitive computerised tests of vision, touch and hearing used to establish how attention acts on incoming sensory inputs and how it is damaged after a stroke.

The unit also uses detailed images of the living brain using positron emission tomography (PET) and functional

magnetic resonance imaging, to determine which areas are active during particular cognitive tasks, and to localise regions of abnormality.

"In addition, we can map subtle moment-to-moment changes in the brain's electrical activity while a person is engaged in different cognitive tasks, using electrodes attached to the scalp," Dr Mattingley said.

"Together, these methods will help us to pinpoint impairments of selective attention and to design appropriate treatments tailored to each individual."

European partner in new Monash venture

BY DAVID BRUCE

Monash staff and students are now able to share research interests and conduct exchange visits with colleagues at Europe's oldest university, the University of Bologna in Italy.

Following an agreement signed between the two universities at the end of last month, academics from across the range of disciplines will be encouraged to find areas of cooperative research and teaching. The most likely areas of cooperation will be in the fields of medicine, economics, fine arts and the humanities.

In one of his last projects before retiring from Monash, Professor John Maloney, deputy vice-chancellor (International and Public Affairs), signed the agreement with rector Professor Fabio Roversi Monaco following a ceremony in the Great Hall at the University of Bologna.

"This agreement offers many exciting opportunities for staff and students at Monash," Professor Maloney explained.

"The University of Bologna is very interested in the integration of Australian universities into the operations of universities of the European

Union. And, in contrast to what we find in Australia, the culture of strong government support for the university system is evident throughout Europe, particularly in Italy."

Under the agreement, each university will pay for the travel costs of its staff and students while accommodation costs will be borne by the host institution. It is also expected that joint seminars and discussion groups will be held on topics of common interest.

The opportunity for Monash to develop a partnership with Bologna arose through the existing research links of Institute of Reproduction and Development, part of Monash's Faculty of Medicine.

Professor Adrian Walker, of the Centre for Baby Health Research within the IRD, said that over the past five years, research cooperation between the two institutions had developed in the areas of sleep physiology, IVF and other fields of reproductive medicine.

The University of Bologna recently celebrated its 900th birthday and claims among its former teachers two popes - Alexander III and Innocent IV - and past pupils Dante, Petrarch, Copernicus and Erasmus.

Study to investigate Cambodian lake

BY JOSIE GIBSON

A pilot study by a Monash University researcher will investigate the problem of sediment build-up in Cambodia's 'Great Lake', the Tonle Sap.

The project will provide the first scientific data in more than two decades on the history and future viability of the massive freshwater lake which dominates central Cambodia and provides nearly two-thirds of the country's fishery resources.

Funded by a \$14,000 grant from AusAID through the Mekong River Commission, the study is being carried out by Dr Dan Penny, a paleoecologist in Monash's School of Geography and Environmental Science.

"Scientific work done in the 1970s more often than not is relied upon as a basis for making management decisions," Dr Penny said. "That information, while it's good, is not up-to-date. This research has been crying out to be done."

The Tonle Sap holds major cultural, economic and environmental significance not only for Cambodians but also for users along the extensive Mekong River system.

The lake feeds the Tonle Sap River, which flows into the Mekong. In a unique annual event, when the Mekong catchment floods during the May-October monsoon, the Tonle Sap River flows back into the lake, which acts as a natural spillway.

When the river reverts to its natural flow, monsoon waters are released to the Mekong, providing water for dry season irrigation in Cambodia and Vietnam.

However, it is feared that deforestation and other factors have caused the Tonle Sap to fill up with sediment, threatening its long-term survival.



The Tonle Sap. Photo by AP/AAP.

Dr Penny spent 10 days last month in Cambodia taking core samples from three sites, which he will analyse in an attempt to pinpoint the rate and degree of sedimentation. He expects to report to the Mekong River Commission and the Cambodian environment minister in early 2001.

The project is being undertaken under the auspices of the Monash-based Australian Mekong Research Network.

Network director Mr Bob Stensholt said Dr Penny's research would be crucial in efforts to effectively manage and rehabilitate the Tonle Sap.

"It is described as the 'lungs' of the Mekong, which underlines how important it is to the region," he said.

Monash teaches ministers the art of good government

BY DAVID BRUCE

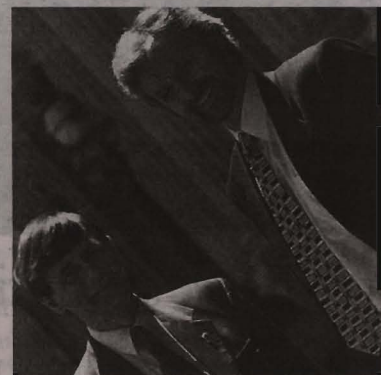
A group of former senior parliamentarians has joined forces with academics to entice sitting MPs back to the classroom to learn the art of good government.

Monash Mt Eliza Business School's International Centre for Management in Government has branched out from its successful Master of Public Policy and Management into short, intensive programs tailored specifically for members of parliament.

The centre has already secured one high-profile group of students. Just before the new Victorian Government took office, the whole front bench sat in the Legislative Council committee meeting room at Parliament House to learn about good governance and ministerial responsibility.

Premier Steve Bracks's frontbench were the first students from a current government to undertake the program, although the interest shown from other states and internationally suggest they will not be the last.

The Program, 'Ministers: The Keys to Success', was designed by Dr Ken Coghill, a former Speaker and member



Dr Ken Coghill and Dr Graeme Hodge.

of the Victorian parliament for 17 years who is now an associate director of the centre. He is assisted by other former long-serving parliamentarians Mr Alan Hunt and Mr Race Mathews.

"There is a triple bottom line that is now talked about in the world of business," Dr Coghill said. "You need to consider the financial costs, and now also the social and environmental costs, of what you do. We expect more from our governments than simply the financial bottom line."

It was extremely unusual for a university to be engaged with government in this way, he said. The skills being

taught were quite different to those normally taught in a business school.

"Government members have an extremely complex set of responsibilities and require a unique range of skills," he said.

"How does a new minister get his policies implemented? How do you deal with a department that has just been dealing with a government with a different agenda? What are the rules on accountability?"

"If you look at the ministers who have been brought undone in recent times across the Australian political landscape, few have suffered because of policy questions. They have been undone by process questions, by their lack of understanding of proper accountability procedures."

The centre's acting director, Dr Graeme Hodge, said the mix of former government members and senior academics provided a rare pool of expertise.

"I don't know of any business school in the world that has former ministers and speakers of parliament as part of their permanent academic staff," he said.

"The traditional university system is usually not so well versed in the realities of day-to-day government."

Schools



Change of Preference Days

The Monash Change of Preference Days give Year 12 students the opportunity to ask faculty staff questions about selection and courses once they have obtained their VCE results.

Metropolitan region

Wednesday 15 December
10 am - 2 pm

Robert Blackwood Concert Hall
Clayton campus
Special faculty-based information sessions at Clayton are:

- Science - 10.30-11 am
- Pharmacy - 11-11.30 am
- Radiography and Medical Imaging - 11.30 am - 12 noon
- Business and Economics - 12 noon - 1 pm
- Medicine - 12 noon - 1 pm

A free barbecue will also be available between 11.30 am and 1.30 pm at the Clayton campus.

Gippsland region

Tuesday 14 December
4-7 pm

Crofton Hatsell Room
Gippsland campus

Peninsula region

Thursday 16 December
10 am - 1 pm

George Jenkins Theatre
Peninsula campus

If you can't make it to one of the Change of Preference sessions, you may wish to obtain a copy of our free *Change of Preference Guide* or just call and have a chat to us. Contact Prospective Students Office staff by telephone on (03) 9905 1320 or email mci@adm.monash.edu.au

Final call for Enhancement 2000

Year 11 students who may be studying a Year 12 subject this year will receive their unit 3 and 4 CAT grades and study score on 10 December. Students who have performed well academically may wish to continue their extension with a Monash University Enhancement subject.

Applications can still be lodged for the Year 2000 program. High-achieving students are encouraged to forward their applications as soon as possible. For more information, contact the Prospective Students Office on (03) 9905 3836.

Experience science this summer

Some interested students might end up swapping the beach for the laboratory this summer as part of the annual Siemens Science Experience.

The highly successful program, sponsored by the Siemens electronic and electrical group, will be held at Monash University's Clayton campus from 18 to 20 January.

The program of talks, demonstrations and excursions provides students starting Year 10 with valuable information on science subjects and careers in science and engineering.

For more information on the Monash program, call Mrs Lorraine Curtis on (03) 9905 1345.

Happy holidays

The staff of the Monash Prospective Students Office would like to extend their best wishes to all school students and staff for a happy and safe summer break. We look forward to seeing you again in the new school year.

Beowulf: predicting the unpredictable

BY COREY NASSAU

The epic poem *Beowulf* tells the story of the hero who displayed great strength and courage to defeat a monster called Grendel.

Today, modern technology has ensured that the name Beowulf, while retaining the attributes of both hero and conqueror, has evolved to represent something entirely different - the ability to solve complex problems and perform simulations at lightning speed.

The 1999 Beowulf is the approach to building a supercomputer as a cluster of off-the-shelf personal computers running programs to enable parallel processing. This allows each chip to process a separate part of any single task simultaneously, enabling large and data-intensive tasks to be completed faster.

The Beowulf computer shared by the Mathematics and Earth Sciences departments at Monash University is part of the newly-opened Earth Process Simulation Laboratory (Epsilon), and was put together in a weekend by two research students.

The set-up, currently a cluster of 10 linked 500-megahertz PCs, is expected to nearly double by the end of the year and has required a specially designed airconditioning cupboard to prevent the processors overheating.

Professor Joe Monaghan, of the Mathematics department, believes Beowulf is the most economical way of accessing processing power



Professor Joe Monaghan with the Beowulf cluster. Photo by Greg Ford.

similar to that of a supercomputer without spending millions of dollars.

"By running numerous computers together, it is possible to access the processing power that each offers as a combined speed. This allows complex calculations and simulations to be performed," he said.

Professor Monaghan and his team are using the computer to solve a range of geological problems to try and build some level of predictability into the unpredictable.

"We are calculating how rocks are broken up as they fall down a slope

during an avalanche, how coastal avalanches fall and how waves are produced when these rocks hit water. This is a major problem in fracture dynamics and of vital importance in hazard research," Professor Monaghan said.

The Beowulf is also tackling astrophysical problems, performing simulations which track gas and dust particles - up to one million at any one time - to try to understand how they form planets.

As part of the program to understand star formation, researchers are using the computer to study the dynamics of interactive binary stars. And in Earth Sciences, Dr Mark Jessel

has used the Beowulf to study how rocks react under stress and how mountains are formed.

According to Professor Monaghan, the simulations have produced useful and sometimes unexpected results which are all important in understanding the nature of these hazards and phenomena.

"New applications of Beowulf to volcanoes will allow us to explore the inside of the volcanic outburst, which is completely inaccessible through mere observation," he said.

"Beowulf is a tremendously exciting development."

Monash senior staff move on

Monash Arts dean Professor Homer Le Grand has been appointed interim dean of Science until a new dean takes up the position.

Announcing the arrangement, vice-chancellor Professor David Robinson said Professor Le Grand, who will continue as dean of Arts during this period, is well known for his belief that top-class universities must have strong faculties of arts and science.

"Professor Le Grand has the full support of heads of departments and associate deans in Science and is an ideal person to assist the faculty to take the critical decisions necessary at this time," he said.

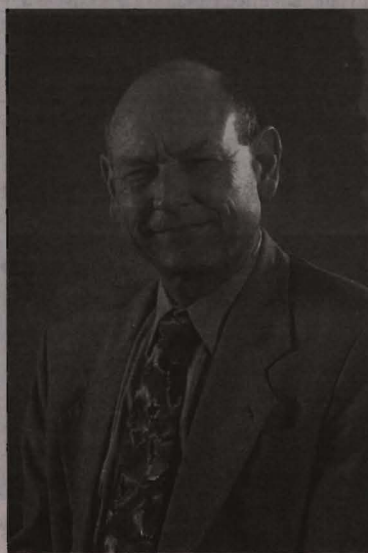
Professor Ron Davies, who has been dean of Science at Monash since 1996, will leave the university this month.

"I'll be dependent on the good will, good sense and advice of colleagues to ensure that the faculty not only maintains its current strengths, but also secures its future," Professor Le Grand said.

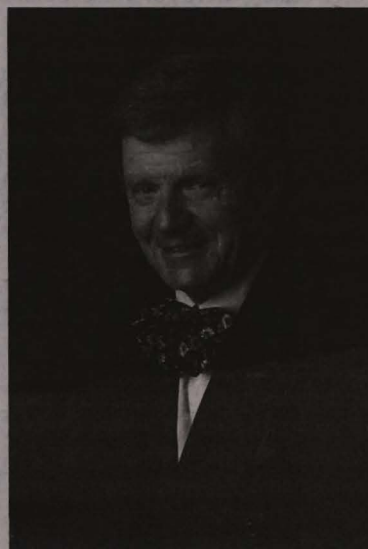
Monash has also recently farewell general manager Mr Peter Wade and deputy vice-chancellor (International and Public Affairs) Professor John Maloney.

Mr Wade left the university in late October after 14 years of service, while Professor Maloney retired to Perth in November.

Deputy vice-chancellor (Research and Development) Professor Peter Darvall has taken on the Public Affairs portfolio vacated by Professor Maloney.



Professor Homer Le Grand.



Professor John Maloney.

MONASH CHANGE OF PREFERENCE DAYS



There's still time to change!

Now that you have your VCE results, you may want to rethink your course preferences. Our Monash Change of Preference Days will give you everything you need to know about all courses at all Monash campuses. So come along and discover how at Monash, the world is your campus.

Clayton campus:	Wednesday 15 December 10 am - 2 pm Robert Blackwood Concert Hall
Gippsland campus:	Tuesday 14 December 4 pm - 7 pm Crofton Hatsell Room
Peninsula campus:	Thursday 16 December 10 am - 1 pm George Jenkins Theatre

For more information or for a copy of our free *Change of Preference Guide*, phone (03) 9905 1320, fax (03) 9905 3168 or email mci@adm.monash.edu.au



Business slow to recognise value of training

BY CHRISTINE GILES

Research by Monash University is helping Australian businesses understand the value of developing and measuring human capital in the pursuit of economic success.

The Monash-based Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET) hopes to encourage greater investment in training by promoting awareness of the contribution of human resources to balance sheets and profits.

CEET research fellow Ms Fran Ferrier said case studies of seven leading Australian enterprises – chosen for their innovation in measuring and developing employees' knowledge and skills – showed that while progress was slower than expected, indications were optimistic for the future.

"We were a little disappointed because some companies were not as far ahead as we had hoped, but in all of them there were signs that if we go back in 12 months, things will be substantially different," she said.

"Quite a few businesses are making public commitments to developing

and understanding the value of human capital, but when it comes to actually measuring it, we're a long way behind Europe and the US, where it's been going on very strongly now for about a decade.

"We're trying to learn from the overseas experience, but also coming up with our own system because of the particular context Australia is in."

The Australian research, done in partnership with the Graduate School of Management at Macquarie University in NSW, formed the basis of a report to an OECD international symposium in Amsterdam in June. The symposium examined the broader issue of intellectual capital and the development of indicators for its measurement.

"Human capital is just one part of what firms now call intellectual capital, which includes a wide range of things like internal systems and processes such as databases, research and development and customer relationships," Ms Ferrier said.

"It's often referred to as the difference between market and book values of companies."

Ms Ferrier said CEET hoped to expand its research over the next three years to examine links between



Monash CEET research fellow Ms Fran Ferrier. Photo by Craig Wetjen.

human capital development and the impact on investment in education and training in Australia.

There were also plans to produce an enterprise information and self-evaluation kit to increase awareness

about intellectual capital and outline some of the management methods and techniques used to measure it.

CEET is keen to hear from businesses that want to help develop the kit and also from professional associa-

tions or enterprises interested in the research.

Ms Ferrier can be contacted on (03) 9905 2808. Research papers can be viewed at www.education.monash.edu.au/centres/CEET

Law students help ease crisis in Family Court



Easing the burden are members of Monash's Family Court Support Program at Dandenong Court (left to right): social work student Ms Johanna Kent, program administrator Mr Genis Wylde, program solicitor Ms Kerry Townsend, and law students Mr Zev Wagen and Mr Douglas Potter.

BY FIONA PERRY

Burgeoning numbers of unrepresented Family Court litigants are being eased under a new program initiated by the Monash Law faculty and the Dandenong Family Court.

Under the Family Court Support Program, devised by the faculty's Family Law Assistance Program (FLAP) and the court, Monash law students are the first to be allowed to assist unrepresented clients in matters in court, for one day each week.

It is estimated that about 40 per cent of people at the Dandenong Registry of the Family Court of Australia are currently unrepresented.

The Family Law Assistance Program, based at Monash-Oakleigh Legal Service, is funded by the Federal Attorney-General's Department under the Clinical Legal Education Initiative Program.

The court program sees final-year law students involved in negotiations, drafting minutes, seeking adjournments, and appearing at the court under the supervision of FLAP solicitor Ms Kerry Townsend.

The student appearance program involves students currently undertaking the 'Advanced professional practice' subject in family law at Monash. These students have already completed the professional practice subject and have usually made two student appearances in either minor criminal matters or divorces.

Unrepresented clients are also offered personal support and referral by Monash social work students undertaking professional practice placements with FLAP.

According to Ms Townsend, the students' new work at the Family Court in Dandenong complements the work already undertaken by law students at the Monash-Oakleigh Legal Service as part of their degrees.

"Appearing at the court in matters is the next step in the work these students do in preparing FLAP clients to represent themselves in court," she said.

"The project will not only provide an invaluable community service to those having difficulty in accessing justice, it will also provide our students with important experience in their training as lawyers."

The program is being assisted by the Family Court, which is providing facilities; Legal Aid, which is providing a duty solicitor; Court Network, which is assisting with the assessment and referral of clients; and Relationships Australia and the Family Mediation Centre, which will discuss mediation and make referrals.

The program was the initiative of FLAP solicitor Ms Kerry Townsend and program administrator Mr Genis Wylde, who approached the Family Court with the proposal to help reduce the unprecedented demand of unrepresented litigants.

Perfect pet helps with housework

BY DEREK BROWN

Mr Kurt Ramholdt spent more than three months designing the perfect pet – one that doesn't need to be fed, won't get sick and even helps you clean the carpet.

As part of his industrial design course at Monash, Mr Ramholdt has created Oliva, a noisy vacuum cleaner that complains and whinges if left too long without being taken for a 'walk' – a design that has won him this year's Victorian Design Award.

Mr Ramholdt, who was awarded prize money and an overseas trip for his entry, said the vacuum, if left in a cupboard or under a bed, begins to make the noise of a whining dog.

"I was inspired by the Japanese tamagotchi, which are electronic creatures that you have to feed and play with to keep alive. I thought it would be cute to design a vacuum

which is also an electronic pet," he said.

Oliva began as a university assignment to make an innovative design for a household appliance and soon took on a life of its own.

"I always hated it when the vacuum cleaner got stuck around corners, so I tried to come up with a design that would ensure this didn't happen," Mr Ramholdt said.

The vacuum cleaner is equipped with wheels on coasters similar to the bottom of an office chair, which allow it to manoeuvre around corners easily by spinning the wheel stem. In the new design, Mr Ramholdt saw the shape of an animal to which he added a dog's whine – and Oliva was born.

Mr Ramholdt hopes his design will be developed further and that Oliva, or its offspring, will help encourage young Australians to clean their rooms. His entry is on display at the South Melbourne office of designer R. G. Madden.



Mr Kurt Ramholdt with Oliva. Photo by The Herald and Weekly Times.

Melbourne's Golden Mile

By KAY ANSELL

To walk with Monash history Professor Graeme Davison through Melbourne's streets is to be swept back in time and space.

This familiar city was anything but staid, says Professor Davison. From gold fever to property boom to bust, Melbourne's history has been peppered with larger-than-life characters who have left their marks on its streets.

Discovering them is part of the joy of Professor Davison's latest project, *Melbourne's Golden Mile*, a walking trail of the city's central grid, set out in a new booklet that combines maps with historical morsels.

Following the walk's numbered plaques on the sidewalk, it is easy to

imagine visiting Collins Street in the 1880s land boom, and perhaps bumping into Irishman Patrick McCaughan, a corpulent dandy who sported white spats, a top hat and an extravagant moustache. McCaughan owned the southern frontage of Collins Street and built the flamboyant Olderfleet and the original Rialto buildings.

Less attractive was the odour emanating from the urinal behind the Rialto (and still there) which contributed to the city's infamy as 'Marvellous Smellbourne'.

The Golden Mile is a not-for-profit project and partnership between Monash, the Museum of Victoria, the Melbourne Convention and Marketing Bureau, Heritage Victoria and other bodies. It originated from a conversation between Professor Davison, Mr Gary Grimmer, director of the bureau,

and Mr Ray Tonkin, director of Heritage Victoria, about the need to better market the city's cultural heritage.

Professor Davison's fascinating pathway through history begins at the waterfront, with Melbourne's foundation in the 1830s, near the old Customs House, and ends with Federation, at the Exhibition Buildings, where Australia's first federal parliament opened in 1901.

In between are 10 precincts grouped under themes or chapters in the city's story, ranging from the raffish 'Rush to be Rich' to a maturer goal of attaining 'Heights of Respectability'.

The natural starting point is the Immigration Museum, housed in the former Customs House on Flinders Street - once Melbourne's front door.

A newcomer in the 1850s who arrived in the usual manner, by boat, would have stepped off the water and into near chaos, says Professor Davison. The city was a staging post for the goldfields: "The area would have been crammed with people getting off ships, the air filled with all kinds of accents - Scottish, English, German and Chinese."

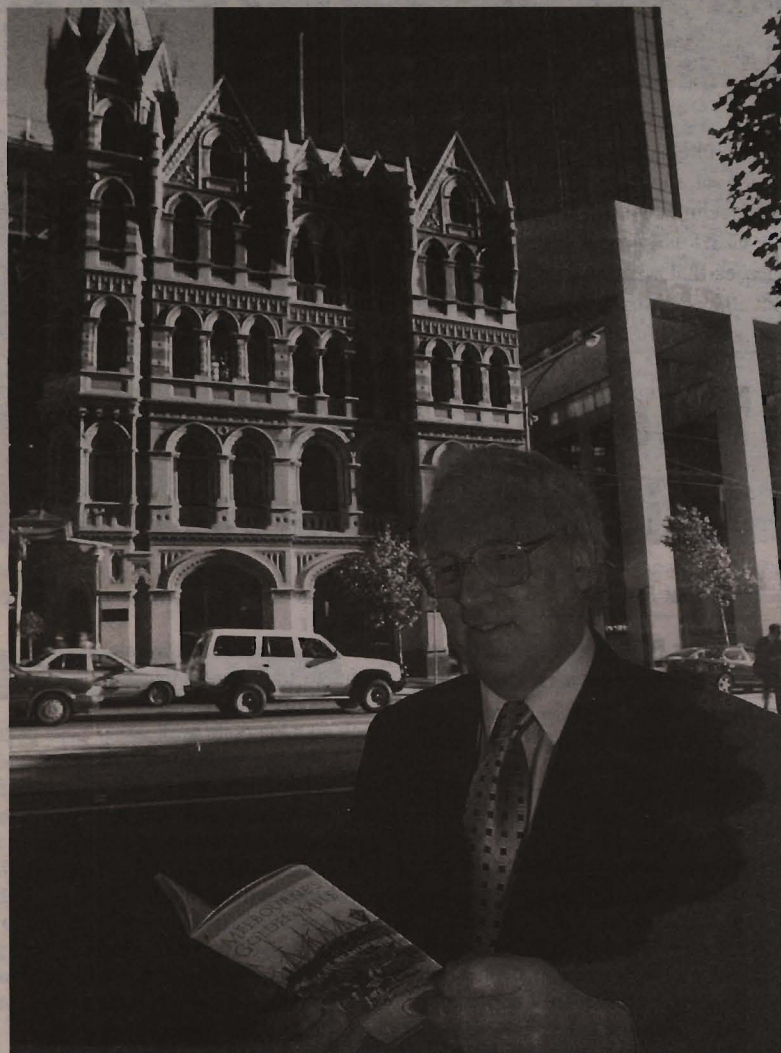
Just getting off the wharf into muddy Melbourne would have been a struggle, he says. "The local merchants were always complaining about the difficulty of access and the dangers of fire in the warehouses down there, in what is now the nightclub belt."

As the prosperity of gold fuelled the later property boom, the timber fire traps gave way to solid office blocks that were among the tallest in the world at that time.

The ANZ Gothic Bank, where the booklet was launched recently by Premier Steve Bracks, is proof of how far the city had come in just under 50 years. Regarded by experts as the country's finest Gothic Revival building, the bank was also home to George Verdon, its general manager, who lived in a suite above "like a Venetian magnate", says Professor Davison.

Professor Davison hopes the Golden Mile will later be linked to another Monash project in development, a book and web site - the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne*, due out in 2001.

Melbourne's Golden Mile costs \$2 and is available from the Immigration Museum, Melbourne Town Hall and other tourist information centres.

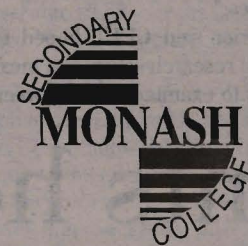


Professor Graeme Davison pictured in front of the historic Rialto building in Collins Street, Melbourne. Photo by Christopher Alexander.

Stone the crows!



Mime artist Albert Stone caught Engineering faculty staff Ms Margaret Evans, left, and Ms Marie Ferdinands by surprise at the recent opening of Engineering building 72 at Monash's Clayton campus. The ceremony featured a poignant account by Mr Malcolm Stewart, grandson of building namesake Sir Alexander Stewart, of his grandfather's contributions to engineering practice and education. Photo by Greg Ford.



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A fishy business in Australian rivers

By DEREK BROWN

A Monash postgraduate student is knee-deep in the waters of Australian rivers this spring and summer, trying to make life easier for Australia's freshwater fish.

According to Mr Lindsay White, a postgraduate student from the Centre for Catchment Hydrology, certain species of Australian fish don't swim as fast as some of their overseas counterparts and have trouble using existing fishways.

Fishways are structures made to allow migratory fish to pass artificial barriers such as dams, weirs and culverts. More than 7000 artificial barriers to fish migration exist in Victoria and New South Wales alone.

"Most of our fishways were designed for salmon who swim faster, leap higher and withstand greater turbulence than most Australian fish. This means most fishways are generally ineffective," he said.

Since most Australian fish in coastal streams, and many in inland streams, need to migrate at some stage during their life cycle, Mr White believes there is a need for in-depth research into the problem.

He says there has been a substantial decline in the numbers of certain species of fish, both coastal and freshwater, such as the Australian grayling and the trout cod.

"The upstream migration of many fish is blocked by dams and weirs, reducing their ability to access suitable breeding and feeding habitats,

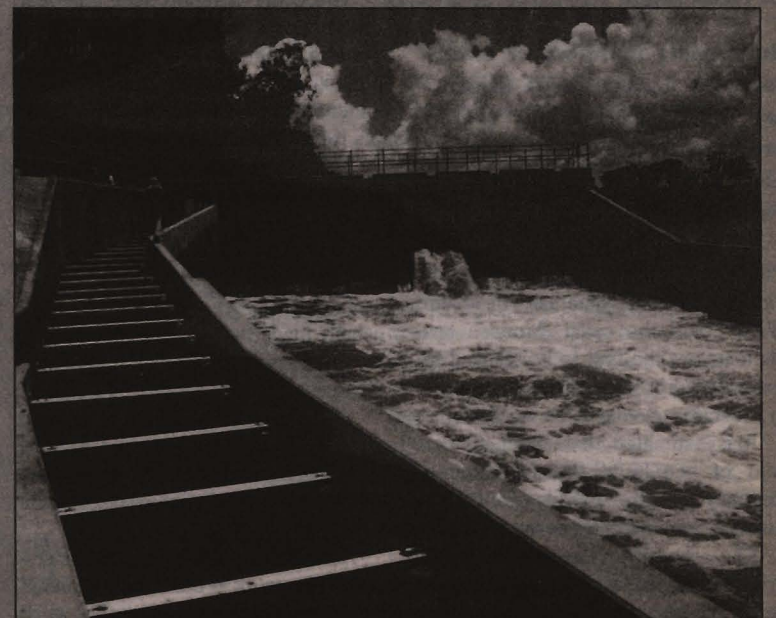
and making them more vulnerable to predators," he said.

"Along with competition from introduced species, loss of habitat, and overfishing, artificial barriers form a great threat to these species."

Mr White will travel to water systems in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland to study fishways as part of his doctoral research.

He plans to look at the hydraulics or flow characteristics of water at the entrance to and within fishways, to assess how effective they are in helping Australian fish navigate rivers and streams.

"By showing how fishways can be improved, I hope my research will ultimately help increase fish population numbers," he added.



Many Australian fishways inhibit fish migration and are the cause of a decline in fish numbers, according to Monash researcher Mr Lindsay White.

Public spending should be measured in more than just economic terms

How much is happiness worth? Far more to society than economists would have us believe, says Professor Yew-Kwang Ng, who argues for a new approach to the balance sheet.

OPINION

There is evidence to suggest that once people have satisfied their basic biological needs, spending more on purely material things will not make them happier.

Therefore, for a rich country like Australia, perhaps it is public spending, especially in areas such as education, research and environmental protection, rather than private consumption, that can increase both individual and community happiness.

But economists tend to measure public expenditure only in terms of dollars, and not in terms of 'happiness' outcomes, which is society's ultimate objective. By using money as their measure, they inadvertently overestimate the cost of public spending.

This argument is supported by the fact that there is only a very small

correlation between income and happiness levels across countries.

For example, while it is true that some European countries in the north do score highest on happiness with high incomes per capita, many southern and western European countries – including France, Italy, and Spain – score significantly lower on happiness than African countries and East Asia, including Japan, the country that leads in income.

Further, although Singapore's per capita income level is 82.4 times that of India, both countries' happiness scores are exactly the same. And both countries' happiness levels are still significantly higher than that of Japan.

In addition, within the one country over a period of time, the correlation between income and happiness levels becomes non-existent. For example, since the 1940s, the real income per capita of the US has trebled. However,

the percentage of people who regard themselves as 'very' happy hovered at around 30 per cent.

Since 1958, real income per capita in Japan has increased by more than five times. However, its 'average' happiness measure hovered at around 59 per cent, also without an upward trend.

"... perhaps it is public spending ... rather than private consumption, that can increase both individual and community happiness."

But there are factors that correlate with happiness much more significantly than 'income'. For example, the married, employed and those with a religious belief are much happier. The percentage of married people who regard themselves as 'very' happy is double that of single people.

Those who strongly value extrinsic goals – such as fame, wealth and image

– relative to intrinsic goals – such as personal development, relatedness and community – are less happy.

Using more objective indicators of the quality of life, the picture is not much different. Analysing 95 quality-of-life indicators, covering education, health, transport, inequality, pollution, democracy, and political stability from 1960 to 1990, Dr W. Easterly of the World Bank found that income was significant at the 5 per cent level for 40 indicators. Only 23 out of these 40 indicators demonstrated improvement in the quality of life associated with rising income. In fact, the report found that almost as many indicators showed significant deterioration in quality of life.

These quite surprising results are not due to worsening income distribution, as there is evidence that the income share of the poor improves with growth.

The quality of life of any country, it seems, depends less on its own economic growth or income level than on scientific, technological and other breakthroughs at an international level. And these depend more on

public spending than on private consumption.

The failure of income to increase happiness and quality of life is probably partly related to the environmental disruption effects of production and consumption, which include pollution, congestion and deforestation.

National governments tend to under-spend on items such as research and environmental protection because of the global and long-term nature of these projects.

These considerations all suggest that public spending in these areas may be far below optimal levels.

If an increase in private consumption does not translate into an increase in happiness at the individual social level, then public spending that ultimately reduces private consumption may be costly in dollar terms but surely not in happiness terms.

Professor Yew-Kwang Ng is a professor of economics at Monash University. This article is based on Professor Ng's book, Efficiency, Equality, and Public Policy: With a Case for Higher Public Spending, to be released by Macmillan (London) in early 2000.



Artwork by Elizabeth Dias.

Democracy and free markets in Asia

The Asian financial crisis has reinforced the inextricable link between political and economic development. Mr Darby Higgs discusses the criteria for a free market.

OPINION

Markets, like all institutions, can be subject to abuse. Throughout the region we have seen political power used to try to influence economic processes, often with the justification that the intervention was to secure 'national interest'. However, when the processes of government are not open to scrutiny, there is every incentive for individuals, government and business to look after their own interests first. It is also extremely unlikely that the economy will be operating efficiently.

What are the requirements for a free market? Classic economic theory lists large numbers of buyers and sellers of infinitely divisible goods and perfect knowledge by all participants. It is easy to dismiss this flat earth/level playing field model as interpreted by economic purists. However, in practice all economic activity takes place in some sort of a market, so we need to set criteria for how a free market should operate.

A basic test for a free market is to look at what non-economic factors are

influencing it. These factors are usually the result of someone using political power to protect their ability to extract an economic rent from the system. Intervention can take the official form of subsidies, tariffs, licences, state-operated monopolies, as well as less overt restrictions such as bribery and nepotism.

Official intervention is invariably justified by appealing to wider social goals, but market intervention is rarely shown to be the most efficient or effective means of achieving those goals.

These interventions are manifestations of political power; and in systems where political power is unevenly distributed, the scope for abuse is much greater.

The answer lies in the development of democratic institutions. Where there is great disparity in power between buyer and seller, abuses and inefficiencies will occur. All players need to be bound by the rule of law

"Governments ... need to establish appropriately regulated markets while managing the social impacts of change..."

and all must have recourse to remedies in the case of abuse. This can only happen where democratic values permeate all levels of society.

Governments in the region need to establish appropriately regulated markets while managing the social impacts of change in the current system. The issues of social safety nets and the development of human capital resources are even more pressing.

At the APEC summit in Auckland in September, regional leaders reiterated their joint desire to strengthen markets as a means of improving living standards for all citizens in the region. The goal is to make markets the mechanism for mutual benefits of all players rather than another forum for the abuse of power.

Mr Darby Higgs is deputy director of Monash University's Australian APEC Study Centre.

East Timor and the war crimes question

The acts of violence perpetrated in East Timor following the historic self-determination referendum on 30 August have outraged the consciences of Australians. Ms Alison Duxbury looks at how those responsible might be brought to justice.



A woman cries at a mass in Dili dedicated to the remembrance of East Timorese who died following the vote for independence from Indonesia. Photo by AP.

OPINION

Rallies held in Melbourne and other cities have demonstrated enormous public support for the East Timorese people following their decision to vote for independence over continued Indonesian rule. Despite the Indonesian Government's agreement to ensure security in East Timor during and after the vote, thousands of people have been killed or forced to leave their homes.

Following news of the bloodshed, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, called for the establishment of an inquiry into the situation in East Timor. The Security Council, the peak United Nations body dealing with international peace and security, also condemned the widespread and flagrant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and demanded that those responsible be brought to justice. The question remains: just how will this be achieved?

While there are many international treaties that protect human rights, as yet there is no adequate mechanism for prosecuting those who are responsible for gross violations of such rights. This does not mean that individuals have gone unpunished in the past. Most notably, the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg held German officials and military personnel responsible for crimes against humanity committed in World War Two.

More recently, the Security Council has used its extensive powers to establish the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Located respectively in The Hague and Arusha, Tanzania, these tribunals have tried those accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

It has yet to be seen whether the Security Council's call for responsibility to be attributed for crimes commit-

ted in East Timor will result in a similar mechanism being established.

The international community has not been inactive in relation to East Timor. At a special session in September, the Commission on Human Rights took up Mary Robinson's proposal to institute an inquiry. It is only the fourth time that the commission has held a special session, the other three occasions relating to the conflicts in the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

By a majority vote, the commission decided that the Secretary-General should establish an inquiry to gather and compile information on possible violations of human rights and acts which may constitute breaches of international humanitarian law committed in East Timor.

The inquiry is broadly representative of the world's regions, comprising experts from Costa Rica, Germany, Papua New Guinea, Nigeria and India. Its mandate is to consider violations that have occurred since the announcement of the ballot in January this year. However, already there has been criticism of delays in the implementation of the inquiry process.

At the completion of the inquiry, the Secretary-General may make recommendations for further action. Included in those recommendations could be the establishment of a war crimes tribunal, similar to those already in existence for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

The implementation of such a proposal would be no easy task. Any one of the five permanent members of the Security Council may decide to use its veto power to prevent the establishment of a tribunal.

Both Russia and China voted against the Commission on Human Rights' resolution to establish an inquiry, indicating that they may also exercise their right of veto in the Security Council against any proposed tribunal. Additionally, as Indonesia has indicated that it does not consider the

commission's resolution to be binding, it is unlikely to cooperate with any investigations held by a tribunal.

If such a tribunal were to be established, a number of matters would need to be considered. These include the location of a tribunal, whether it could adjudicate on violations occurring prior to the announcement of the August vote (for instance, over the last 24 years), and whether it could consider human rights abuses over the border in West Timor.

The compatibility of an international tribunal with any domestic trials that may take place in East Timor would need to be clearly spelt out. Wider issues, such as the role of a war crimes tribunal in the reconstruction of East Timor, would also need to be addressed.

The difficulties in establishing a tribunal to try crimes committed in East Timor highlight the importance of the international community's decision in Rome last year to adopt the Statute for the International Criminal Court.

When established, the court will be a permanent mechanism for prosecuting individuals responsible for breaches of international criminal law. However, as the court will not have retrospective jurisdiction, even when established it will not be able to try those responsible for crimes in East Timor.

The prospects for an East Timorese war crimes tribunal remain uncertain.

Initiatives such as the Rome Statute and the United Kingdom's decision to extradite General Pinochet to face trial in Spain demonstrate that international criminal law is a rapidly developing area. It would appear that those who commit horrendous crimes against international law may no longer have anywhere to hide.

Ms Alison Duxbury is a lecturer in the Faculty of Law at Monash University.

Land reform back on Indonesian agenda

By SUE McALISTER

Former President Soeharto's decision to halt land reform in Indonesia after he seized power in 1965 helped bring about his downfall three decades later, according to a Monash researcher.

Ms Damai Pakpahan, a masters candidate in the Department of Politics, witnessed the massive anti-Soeharto demonstrations in Jakarta last year.

"I noticed that many former land reform activists were taking a leading role in the disturbances," she says. "This was because the new, younger political activists simply had no experience in organising direct action, which was banned and severely punished under the authoritarian Soeharto regime."

Ms Pakpahan's thesis, 'Students, NGOs and land disputes in Indonesia', is timely, because the demise of the Soeharto and Habibie governments has, for the first time in more than 30 years, made land reform a possibility.

She says former President Soeharto and his family and supporters, especially in the military, acquired huge land holdings by halting the process of land reform begun under the Soekarno government, freezing laws relating to land reform and banning organisations formed

by peasants, who comprise about 70 per cent of the population.

This not only left millions of peasants landless, it also contributed to the degradation of the environment as land previously used for food production was turned, for example, into golf courses and tourist resorts.

"Opposition to what was going on was met by violence, imprisonment and accusations that activists were communists - which will make land reform difficult, even under the new, more democratic government of President Abdurrahman Wahid," Ms Pakpahan said.

"Activists must build up grassroots support and organisations, getting peasants, low-paid workers and women involved in a strong mass movement. But, in areas such as East and Central Java, where many suspected communists were killed in 1965, people are still frightened of how the police and military might react to them forming any kind of organisation."

The National Land Agency is now investigating the Soeharto Government's land deals. Ms Pakpahan says the former president "must be brought to court, and his assets, and those of his family and political and military cronies, must be redistributed, if there is to be any hope of justice and stability in Indonesia."



Land reform is a key issue facing Indonesia's new President Abdurrahman Wahid, according to Monash masters student Ms Damai Pakpahan. Photo by Greg Ford.

BRIEFS

Millennium lawyers to be surveyed

Monash's Law faculty, in conjunction with the Law Institute of Victoria, will undertake an ambitious survey of Victorian lawyers over the next two years.

The survey will aim to establish how lawyers will be defined in the future, whether they will be identified with state-based groupings, national or international bodies, and what the desirable characteristics and values of tomorrow's lawyers will be.

It will also question lawyers on the best means of promoting and enhancing services to clients while maintaining ethical and professional behaviour, and will ask how the practice of law can be pursued in a way that allows for balanced lives and satisfying careers.

The results of the survey are expected to be a formative influence on the redesign and ongoing evolution of the undergraduate law curriculum.

Professor made an academy fellow

Monash English scholar Associate Professor Philip Ayres has been elected a fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities.

Associate Professor Ayres is the author of a number of critical works and biographies on Malcolm Fraser, Sir Douglas Mawson and a forthcoming volume on Sir Owen Dixon.

Justice theme for Menzies lecture

The social justice message of Sir Robert Menzies had largely been forgotten by Liberals committed to economic rationalism, according to the federal Member for Kooyong, Mr Petro Georgio.

Mr Georgio, a former state Liberal Party director, said the party's founder had not only embraced enterprise and initiative but was also committed to equity and the redistribution of wealth.

"I do not believe we can meet our responsibilities - to the weak, to the poor, to those in need - whilst subjecting them to unfettered market forces," said Mr Georgiou, delivering the 1999 Menzies Lecture at Monash University Caulfield campus.

The Menzies Lecture series was started in 1978 by the Liberal Club at Monash. A collection of more than two decades of lectures was published in October.

The Olympics – coming soon to a city near you!

Scandals surrounding the Sydney Olympic Games have tarnished the event in the eyes of some Australians. Yet, as Professor John Rickard points out, Melbourne faced similar controversies in the lead-up to 1956, which became known as 'the friendly Games'.



Artwork by Elizabeth Dias.

OPINION

"The 2000 Olympics will be the greatest peacetime event in Australia's history."

Those are the words of Rod McGeogh, who was chief executive officer of the company which organised the Sydney bid for the Games.

Admittedly, he was writing in 1994, before the Phil Coles saga, before the marching bands fiasco, before the premium tickets scandal.

But, of course, the publicity attracted by these controversies is a measure of the importance of the Olympic Games as an international event, an event which, in its origins in the late 19th century, might be seen as an early form of globalisation.

The Games can also be seen as a recognition of the city in modern culture. It is cities which bid for the Games, not nations.

Six American cities competed in the bidding for the 1956 Games, which, in the end, Melbourne secured by one vote over Buenos Aires. So what claims can the Sydney Games make as a national event?

Melbourne 1956 makes an interesting comparison. Monash Professor of

history Graeme Davison has pointed out that while in Benedict Anderson's phrase we might see the nation as "an imagined community", there is an important sense in which nations define themselves in relation to an imagined audience.

In 1956, Melbourne was very conscious of presenting to the world an attractive image of 'the Australian way of life', a phrase which had recently come into vogue.

The focus of this 'way of life' was not the bush mythology of old, but the suburban reality of modern Australia.

So the residents of Heidelberg worked hard to provide a welcoming environment to the athletes in the Olympic village, while an official barbecue, a demonstration match of Australian Rules football and a 'Meet the Australians' campaign were organised.

Although Melbourne had already experienced its first wave of postwar European immigrants, they played little part in the Australian image promoted.

We were reminded of their presence, however, when the Cold War cast its shadow on the Games. It was alarming that only weeks before the official opening Britain and France invaded

the Suez Canal, and Soviet Union troops marched into Hungary.

Although anti-Communism was a potent force in 1950s Australia, Games organisers and the press were determined that the sanctity of the Games as an oasis of international goodwill be protected, and immigrant communities were reprimanded when they threatened anti-Russian demonstrations.

It was considered a measure of Australia's success in this regard that the 1956 Olympics became known as 'the friendly Games'.

The Cold War has gone away, though the threat of terrorism remains a cause for uneasiness. But what is the image of Australia that will be revealed to the world in 2000?

One possible 'agenda' was disposed of in the recent referendum. When a republic began to look like a possibility, the conjunction of the Games, the new millennium and the centenary of Federation suggested a tempting scenario.

Would this not provide the perfect moment to define Australia to the world by taking the final, symbolic step towards nationhood?

But if that scenario has been thrown onto the scrap heap, Prime Minister

Howard's decision to forego opening the Games himself indicates that the issue lives on.

The Governor-General will be playing the part of the head of state of an independent nation, even if he remains the Queen's representative.

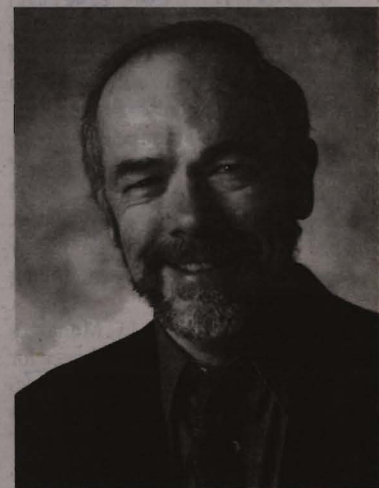
But the mystery of Australia's constitutional arrangements is hardly likely to be a high priority for those who plan opening ceremonies and the like.

The official Games web site has plenty of information about Sydney, but relatively little about Australia, except of a tourist nature. A visitor to the web site would be hard put to learn anything about our system of government.

It is worth recalling that the planning of the Melbourne Games had also involved much argument and controversy. But the trauma of preparation was obliterated by the Games themselves, and especially by the memorable closing ceremony.

This 'ceremony of comradeship', in which national groupings were dissolved in 'a hotchpotch of sheer humanity', was the idea of a Chinese Australian boy, John Ian Wing.

It took on a particular significance in the context of the tensions of the Cold



Professor John Rickard.

War and was, for those who were there, a profoundly moving experience.

Will the Sydney Games surprise us with some such epiphany? Or should we reconcile ourselves to the glitz and hype of a media event? In any case, we know who will have the best seats!

Professor John Rickard is honorary professorial fellow in the Department of History and the National Key Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University.

Artist works to see big picture

By KAREN MEEHAN

Christopher Headley is an artist who relishes the opportunity to "work big".

His successful PhD thesis, undertaken in the Monash Gippsland Centre for Art and Design, included drawings so large they had to be photographed from a plane.

Headley's thesis, described as "ambitious and innovative" by his examiners, created public artworks for sites made obsolete by technological progress.

Old quarries, abandoned factories and disused railway yards are some of the 'non-spaces' that, according to Headley, "we ignore or refuse to see" because of their perceived ugliness. Headley's large-scale, environmentally sensitive projects reinterpret and rebuild these sites, giving them new life as public spaces.

An established public artist for the past 10 years, Headley is inspired by the earthworks of the ancients, such as Britain's Giant of Cerne Abbas, or South America's famous Nazca lines.

His unique PhD 'drawings' - some as large as 300 metres square - were 'sketched' directly onto the ground, using non-permanent markings such as gravel, sand or paint.

A drawing on the Hattah salt lakes, for instance, was made by exposing a line of the black alluvial deposit found immediately underneath the white salt pan, whereas the red soil of an abandoned railway yard in Adelaide was marked out with white gravel lines, like a tennis court.

Like the ancients, Headley worked on his huge drawings without complex equipment. He simply scaled up from graph paper sketches, only guessing at the final result until it was captured by aerial photography.

On the salt lake, Headley and a colleague used a makeshift plough made

from Vespa wheels and old farm tools to mark out an intricate design, which mimicked the rugs of the area's early Afghan camel traders. The two artists laboured on the dry salt plain for a week under a blazing February sun, wearing kaffiyeh head coverings in honour of the lake's past visitors.

Schemes for Adelaide detailed in the thesis include turning a closed landfill site into an amphitheatre in the shape of an enormous thumbprint, and the redevelopment of an abandoned riverside factory using giant dolphin motifs.

After years of experience in the field, Headley views creating public art as a highly challenging experience, fraught with politics, bureaucracy, compromises and long time lines.

But the important role of public art, he affirms, is that it is able "to broaden the spectrum of art visible to the public" in their everyday lives.

Found objects tell an outsider's quirky tale

By JOSIE GIBSON

When American artist Steve Mayse set about recording his time in Melbourne, he thought of conversations he had overheard and icons he had seen.

Quirky things like 'He will clean your glasses with his tongue', which, according to a Polish woman he had met, meant convincing others to see one's point of view.

Unlike most people's, Mayse's memories didn't end up in a diary but in an exhibition at Monash University's Caulfield campus, which is on until 17 December.

Completed in less than a month during Mayse's recent Monash residency, *Stories By Assemblage* comprises two dozen panels made largely of found objects ranging from cereal boxes and coffee lids to bits of wood and wire. The only expense was a few student-grade acrylics.

The narrative meanders from race-course to tram track, from a solitary blue singlet on a washing line to a power station and a freeway, in a personal distillation of Melbourne life.

An associate professor of art and design at the respected Kansas City Art Institute, Mayse has completed commissioned work for some of North America's biggest companies.

He calls himself a three-dimensional artist, unrestricted by notions of boundaries between the fine arts and visual communication disciplines. *Stories By Assemblage*, while highly sculptural, features strong, telling imagery.

Mayse's residency in Monash's Fine Arts department was a chance for him to assess an Australia nearly 25 years on from his first exposure as a teacher in outback NSW.

Of *Stories By Assemblage*, he wrote: "I have become inspired again, not unlike in 1975, with the beauty of texture, the found object, natural colour, the simplicity of process, the challenge of a limited palette, the seduction of work and story-telling, and the energy of possibility that seems to be part of the groundwater of Australia."

What: *Stories By Assemblage*

When: Until 17 December

Where: Fifth floor, C building, Monash University Caulfield campus

Who: For details, call Mr Dan Wollmering in the Fine Arts department Sculpture Studio on (03) 9903 1574.

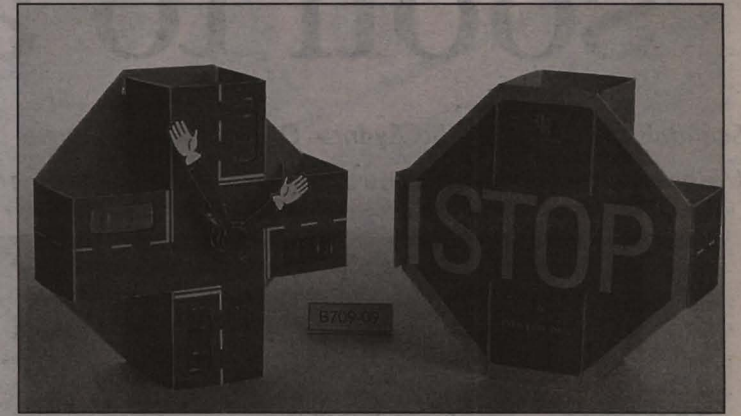


In one of his more well-known works, 'Four Steps to Recovery', Mayse suggests a contemporary man in need of psychiatric help again.



Artist Steve Mayse. Photo by Andrew Barcham.

Good things come in innovative packages



This promotional clock for Cross Roads won Monash student Haydn Kwan an award for the folding carton design which shows the most original structural and creative design, and is technically feasible. The brief: to design a desk clock.

The Department of Design at Monash University has cemented its reputation as one of the country's best by dominating the prestigious Australian packaging design awards.

Monash students put up a strong performance at the recent Southern Cross Package Design Awards, winning 21 awards, including 10 major categories.

A highlight was the award for education in packaging design, which carries \$20,000 worth of computer equipment.

Australia's best design institutions vie for the annual student design awards, which run concurrently with the Australian Packaging Awards for industry. The student awards attracted a record 520 entries.

The coordinator of visual communication in the Department of Design, Mr Russell Kennedy, said

Monash's performance had underlined a successful marriage of innovation and production credibility.

"Innovation is the catch-cry, but the Australian packaging industry, by its nature, produces conservative outcomes," Mr Kennedy said.

"Market forces, technology limitations and the high cost of re-tooling often limit adventurous packaging results. That's why the promotion of young talent with fresh ideas via the awards is so important."

Mr Kennedy said students were encouraged to achieve a creative solution while also understanding and respecting commercial realities - to a point.

"We don't want students producing what has already been produced - that would be pointless," he said.

"It would not push the students intellectually or advance the plot in the story of Australian packaging."

Adornments make a powerful statement

Two new exhibitions focusing on adornment and cultural identity have opened at the Monash University Gallery in Clayton.

Circles About the Body includes the work of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists from Tasmania and mainland Australia and explores the role of adornment in making cultural statements.

Past Pacific features jewellery and adornments by New Zealand artist and jeweller Niki Hastings-McFall.

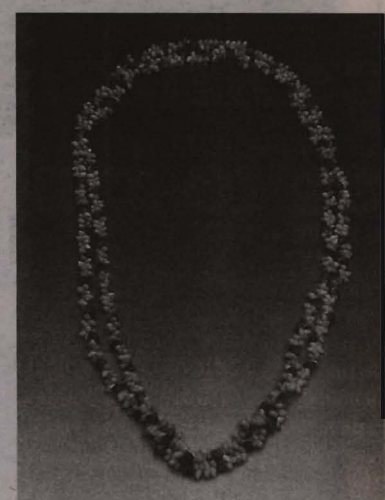
In Western culture, personal adornment is a powerful means of projecting identity. In indigenous cultures, too, adornment carries potent messages, not only about perceptions of self and social obligations, but also about stories linked to cultural memory.

However, according to *Circles About the Body* curators Doreen Mellor and Ray Norman, relatively little attention has been paid in Australia to the rituals, ceremonies and functions of adornment.

"It has tended to be focused on 'the object'," they say. "This exhibition asks questions such as: Are there hidden cultural imperatives that are silent except through objects of adornment?"

The breastplates and lei in *Past Pacific* acknowledge the history and classical adornments of the region, challenging traditional practice through unusual materials and designs.

Lei are perhaps the most recognisable form of Pacific culture, and woven through Hastings-McFall's are narratives relating to environmental issues,



'Palawa Women' by Joan Brown, one of the works in *Circles About the Body*.

colonialism, Christianity and the urbanisation of some Pacific Islanders.

Similarly, she reworks the breast-plate form, originally produced for protection during warfare, to reflect designs and materials from her immediate environment.

Circles About the Body and *Past Pacific* artist Marion Marshall and Hastings-McFall will give free talks at the Monash University Gallery in Clayton on 6 December at 6 pm.

What: *Circles About the Body* and *Past Pacific*

When: Until 19 February (closed 18 December to 11 January)

Where: Monash University Gallery, Clayton

Who: For details, call the Gallery on (03) 9905 4217.

Religious diversity a boon for Australia

BY DEREK BROWN

Religious diversity is often a source of conflict for many nations, exemplified by such unfortunate social outcomes as street curfews and school-ground hatred.

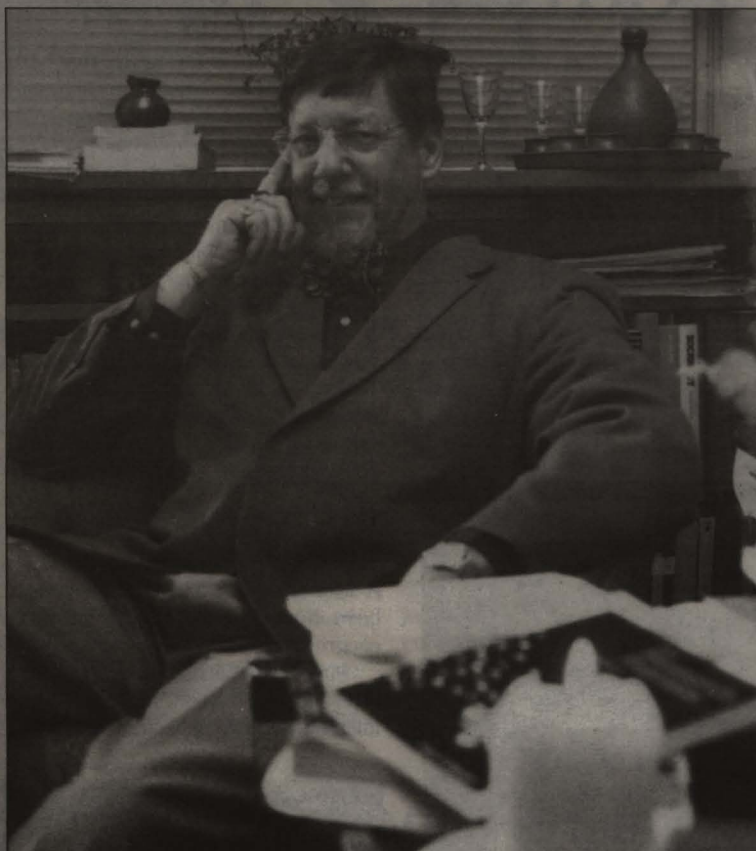
That Australia has been generally free of such hatred is mainly due to our tolerance of different religions, claims a Monash academic.

According to Monash sociology Professor Gary Bouma, editor of a new book titled *Managing Religious Diversity*, even during the Hanson period, when Australia was seen internationally as a prejudiced nation, we were still comparatively tolerant.

"At the high water mark, support for Hanson comprised about 10 per cent of the population - the full quota of fringe racist and nationalist groups who would have supported her in any case," Professor Bouma said. "When Hanson displayed religious intolerance, saying all migrants should be Christian, her support quickly plummeted."

Australia, he says, had a long history of religious tolerance: "Religion was forced onto early convicts, who used it as a focus for resistance. Therefore, despite many attempts by religious groups who tried to colonise Australia, the country remained somewhat open and non-committal."

Professor Bouma argues that religious diversity is a positive resource for a society, and is of



Professor Gary Bouma. Photo by Richard Crompton.

value to society in and of itself, in the same way biodiversity is valued.

"When there is a lack of diversity, groups can find themselves isolated, but when religious diversity is accepted, cultural or political diversity is usually also embraced."

"Now that we have reached the end of the millennium, people are taking charge of their own spiritual prac-

tices without recourse to religious traditions or authorities. This plurality is vital to the strength of the nation."

Managing Religious Diversity includes a collection of papers from leading academics, presented at a 1998 conference on religious diversity hosted by the Australian Association for the Study of Religions.

New book honours Australian cinema

BY DEREK BROWN

Despite having lived in the shadow of British and American cinema, the Australian film industry has created a wealth of talent, according to a Monash academic.

Coeditor of *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film*, Dr Brian McFarlane believes that Australia has, over the years, created a substantial film history and warns against comparing our industry with Hollywood's output.

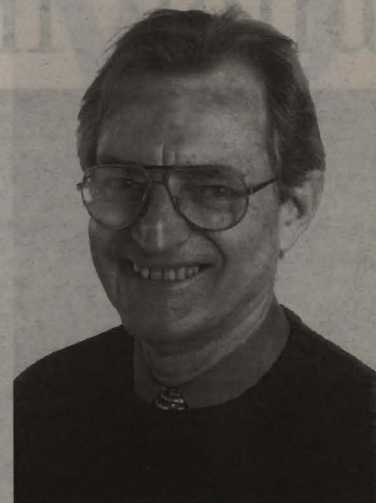
"I think economic failures are always going to outnumber the successes in any film industry, but Hollywood is able to survive these sorts of disasters because it is always producing something new," Dr McFarlane said.

"Even though Australia is unable to compete at this economic level, we still have a vibrant film industry which has produced numerous notable films such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Crocodile Dundee* and *Priscilla*, and 'given birth' to world famous actors like Mel Gibson and Nicole Kidman."

The survival of Australia's film industry was hard won, he added, and was built in part by film critics and producers who worked to build up an industry that had been reduced to documentaries and newsreels.

"When I first became interested in film during the mid-1940s, the Australian film industry was all but dead, withering in the shadow of films from Britain and the US."

"At the time, there was little to keep the industry going, though it picked up



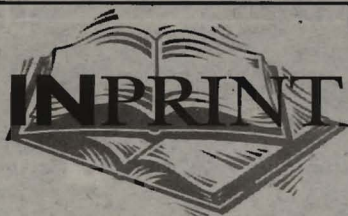
Dr Brian McFarlane.

in the early 1970s with a new renaissance of Australian productions, particularly ocker comedies such as *Alvin Purple* and *Don's Party*."

In recent years, the influence of Hollywood and US cinema on Australian film, with the creation of genre films and "tighter closure to plots", can clearly be seen, Dr McFarlane added.

"We have moved away from the British style of movie, which is very introspective, to produce films which are a little more flamboyant."

Dr McFarlane hopes *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film*, which he coedited with Geoff Mayer and Ina Bertrand, will offer some insights into the work of some of Australia's finest actors, producers and screenwriters.



Researching Teaching

Methodologies and practices for understanding pedagogy

Edited by John Loughran
(Falmer Press RRP: \$46.00)

As a high school science teacher, John Loughran was always looking for interesting ways of teaching his students but had trouble finding the time among the day-to-day demands of school life. *Researching Teaching* is his attempt to address the issue by exploring the practices and method-

ologies used to research the knowledge base of teaching.

Bringing together many key issues of current interest in teacher education including teacher as researcher, self-study and curriculum innovation, *Researching Teaching* acknowledges the value of teachers and teaching by placing them and their perspectives at the centre of research.

Associate Professor John Loughran is the director of pre-service education and professional development in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. He has conducted major research into the area of teaching and learning and was a high school science teacher for more than 10 years.

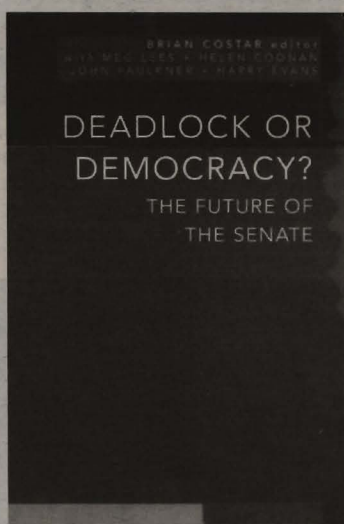
Deadlock or Democracy?

The future of the Senate

Edited by Brian Costar
(UNSW Press RRP: \$9.95)

In 1975, Governor-General Kerr dismissed the Whitlam Government when the Australian Senate blocked supply, and consequently brought the House of Representatives to a standstill. With the ability to break government but having no role in forming it, the Senate's power has been a source of contention for more than 90 years.

Deadlock or Democracy? puts forward a range of views about the future



of Australia's Upper House, from an argument that the present structure of the Senate undermines the capacity of governments to govern effectively, to a defence of the present system with support for minor reforms.

Professor Brian Costar is head of the School of Public Policy and Social Justice at Monash University and co-editor of *The Kennett Revolution: Victorian Politics in the 1990s*. Contributors to the book include Liberal Senator Helen Coonan, Australian Democrats leader Meg Lees, ALP Senator John Faulkner and Clerk of the Senate Harry Evans.

ARTS BRIEFS

End-of-year shows for students

End-of-year exhibitions are showcasing the talents of Monash Art and Design students.

An exhibition of work by fine arts students is on at the Caulfield campus until 9 December. *The D-Block Exhibition* features the work of graduating students and honours candidates in painting, print-making, sculpture and tapestry.

Graduating applied arts students also put their work in ceramics, glass and metal on display in the just-ended exhibition, @ninetynine.

Meanwhile, artwork by final-year Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts) students is on show at the Switchback Gallery at Monash's Gippsland campus until 28 January. The works range from painting and photography to sculpture and ceramics.

Flautists sought for summer school

A flute summer school will be held at Monash University's Performing Arts Centre at Clayton in January.

The school will be run by Mr Peter Bartels, a lecturer in solo performance in the Monash School of Music, and Ms Elizabeth Koch, Ms Helen Williams and Ms Gudrun Beilharz.

The summer school, from 20 to 23 January, is open to flautists with at least two years' playing experience. For more details, telephone or fax (03) 9898 7657.

Lecturer's work in touring show

Photographs by Gippsland photography lecturer Ms Susan Purdy are in a group exhibition, *Water Medicine*,

mounted by the John Curtin Gallery at Curtin University, WA.

Water Medicine, whose catalogue cover features Ms Purdy's work, will tour Australia for the next two years.

Ms Purdy also had five images represented in the recent National Photographic Purchase Award 1999 at the Albury Regional Art Gallery. Works included in the exhibition were selected by Ms Judy Anear, senior curator of photography at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Graduate wins art prize

Victorian artist Graham King has won the Aurora Australia Art Prize and Exhibition held recently at the Marist-Sion College in Warragul.

The prestigious Gippsland competition attracted more than 300 entries.

King completed undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the Gippsland Centre for Art and Design at Monash.

Street-based flavour for artists

Two staff members from Monash's Art and Design faculty took part in a public art project as part of the recent Melbourne arts festival.

Out of Place, a 56-metre long work on the hoardings of Federation Square on Swanston Street, displayed work by eight artists, including Sarah Stubbs and Brett Jones from the Department of Design.

Jones curated the work, which brought together manually, mechanically and digitally-produced media in a contrast with conventional street-based information such as advertising.

Researching

Methodologies and Practices for Understanding Pedagogy

All books featured in 'Inprint' are available or can be ordered at Monash's four on-campus bookshops.

• CITSU (Caulfield) (03) 9571 3277 • Clayton (03) 9905 3111 • Gippsland (03) 5122 1771 • Peninsula (03) 9783 6932

Moves to save greater bilby from extinction



The bilby is now found only in very small, fragmented populations.

By KATHLEEN RYDER

A Monash University team has embarked on research aimed at conserving an endangered Australian native – the greater bilby, or rabbit-eared bandicoot.

The Animal Gene Storage Resource Centre of Australia (AGSRCA) has been awarded \$53,000 to conduct the two-year project.

The centre is a joint venture between Monash's Institute of Reproduction and Development and the Zoological Parks Board of NSW (Taronga and the Western Plains Zoos of NSW). AGSRCA projects focus on Australian native species which are classified as endangered or threatened, rare and domestic species, and animals used for specialised medical or veterinary research.

In the case of the greater bilby, the AGSRCA team is working with the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia to isolate and retain samples of the animals' genetic resources, to prevent further population decline and enable the resources to be used to create a stable breeding population.

The greater bilby is usually blue-grey in colour with a long snout, strong

claws and small, sharp teeth. Its long ears are used both for hearing and radiation of body heat. The females are unique marsupials whose pouches open backwards.

In the wild, a changing habitat, competing for food with other animals and being stalked as prey have put the greater bilby on the endangered list.

Before European settlement, the bilby inhabited more than 70 per cent of the Australian mainland, with numbers in the millions. It is now confined to about 15 per cent of its former range, existing in very small, fragmented populations. In captive populations, its survival is threatened by in-breeding and genetic drift.

The Monash team of Dr Ian Gunn, Ms Eliza Curnow and Ms Catriona MacCallum is studying captive bilby populations at the Monarto Zoo in South Australia and Dubbo's Western Plains Zoo.

"We are looking specifically at the oestrus cycles of the female bilby, the hormone levels and behaviour patterns, in order to better understand reproduction of the species," Dr Gunn explained.

The team will use the data to help in the application of assisted reproduction techniques (ART). To perform ART, the

researchers will need to mesh the collection and transportation of semen from the male with the female's ovulation.

"We hope these techniques will succeed in building the bilby's population to the point that some animals can be released back into their natural habitat, shielded from predators," Dr Gunn said.

A current trial has involved the release of 20 animals bred at Monarto onto a predator-free island off the South Australian coast.

In Australia since European settlement, the loss of wildlife species has been devastating, with at least 19 mammal, 20 bird and three amphibian species now extinct. Hundreds of other species are threatened with extinction, mainly due to habitat loss.

AGSRCA research projects develop and apply recent advances in reproductive biology, embryology (manipulation of embryo development to improve breeding efficiency), cryobiology (freezing of tissues and cells), molecular cellular biology and ART.

According to Dr Gunn, the goal is simple – to save animals and the environment for future generations.

For more information about the greater bilby and other AGSRCA programs, contact Dr Ian Gunn on (03) 9594 7300 or fax (03) 9594 7311.

BRIEFS

Workshop examines info security

IT specialists from more than 10 nations attended an International Information Security Workshop held recently at Monash Malaysia.

The workshop, co-hosted by Monash University and two Japanese institutions, examined issues ranging from electronic money and secure payment methods to encryption, network security and electronic voting schemes.

Professor Robin Pollard, head of the School of Business and Information Technology at Monash Malaysia, and Professor Eiji Okamoto, from the Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, were general co-chairs.

IOC honour goes to Monash student

A Monash postgraduate student has been honoured at an international congress on sports medicine.

Mr Trevor Allen received a young investigator award at the fifth International Olympic Committee World

Congress in Sydney recently for the best congress presentation in basic science by presenters under the age of 35.

Mr Allen's paper outlined his research linking muscle damage in eccentric exercise to muscle length rather than muscle force.

Uni health service gets accredited

The Health Service at Monash University's Clayton campus has become an accredited medical practice.

The service, which handles 28,000 consultations a year, has been accredited by Australian General Practice Accreditation, an agency which rates medical facilities and work practices within the general practice environment, based on standards advised by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

It is the first university health service in Australia to be accredited by the agency, according to the head of the Clayton service, Dr Craig Blandy.



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Heal thyself – and have a good laugh

The health benefits of a host of holistic practices will be put to the test at the 1999 Healing Arts Festival this month.

From massage and music therapy to African dancing, fire-twirling and acro-balance, the three-day program is packed with activities appealing to those with an interest in non-orthodox medicine.

Organised by Monash University's Complementary Medicine Unit, the second annual festival starts on 9 December in the beautiful surrounds of the Ankahook-Lorne State Park, west of Melbourne.

The event is the brainchild of Dr Marc Cohen, director of the Complementary Medicine Unit and vice-president of the Australian Integrative Medicine Association.

With a three-year course in Chinese medicine on top of his medicine degree, Dr Cohen is a strong proponent of the holistic approach.

He regularly takes his medicine students on forays to east Gippsland, where they learn about meditation, yoga, vegetarianism and other personal skills.

A believer in the health benefits of laughter and happiness, Dr Cohen has been known to don a clown suit in a bid to raise smiles and awareness of the healing powers of humour.

"We are living in exciting times," Dr Cohen said. "Over the last decade, many scientific studies have proven the health benefits of ancient techniques such as meditation, lifestyle practices, personal creativity and group sharing, as well as healing modalities such as acupuncture and herbal medicine.


"These techniques have reached a level of recognition where it is no longer possible to dismiss them as placebo or reject them as being unscientific."

Dr Cohen said it was important for doctors to know about complementary therapies for no other reason than their patients would be using them.



Dr Marc Cohen addresses medical students at a recent retreat. Photo by Greg Ford.

"A good doctor-patient relationship is the cornerstone of good medical care, yet this can't be accomplished if patients are afraid to tell their doctors about their use of complementary therapies, or if doctors are seen to be dismissive of these therapies without knowing much about them."



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MONASH UNIVERSITY NEWS

Published monthly by Public Affairs, Monash University
 Edited by Fiona Perry (03) 9905 2020, fax (03) 9905 2097
 or email monashnews@adm.monash.edu.au

Views expressed by contributors in *Monash News* are not necessarily endorsed by Monash University.

Printed by Westgate Park Print Centre, Port Melbourne, Victoria.
 No responsibility is accepted by the printer for anything contained in *Monash News*.
 For media inquiries, contact David Bruce on (03) 9905 2040.

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