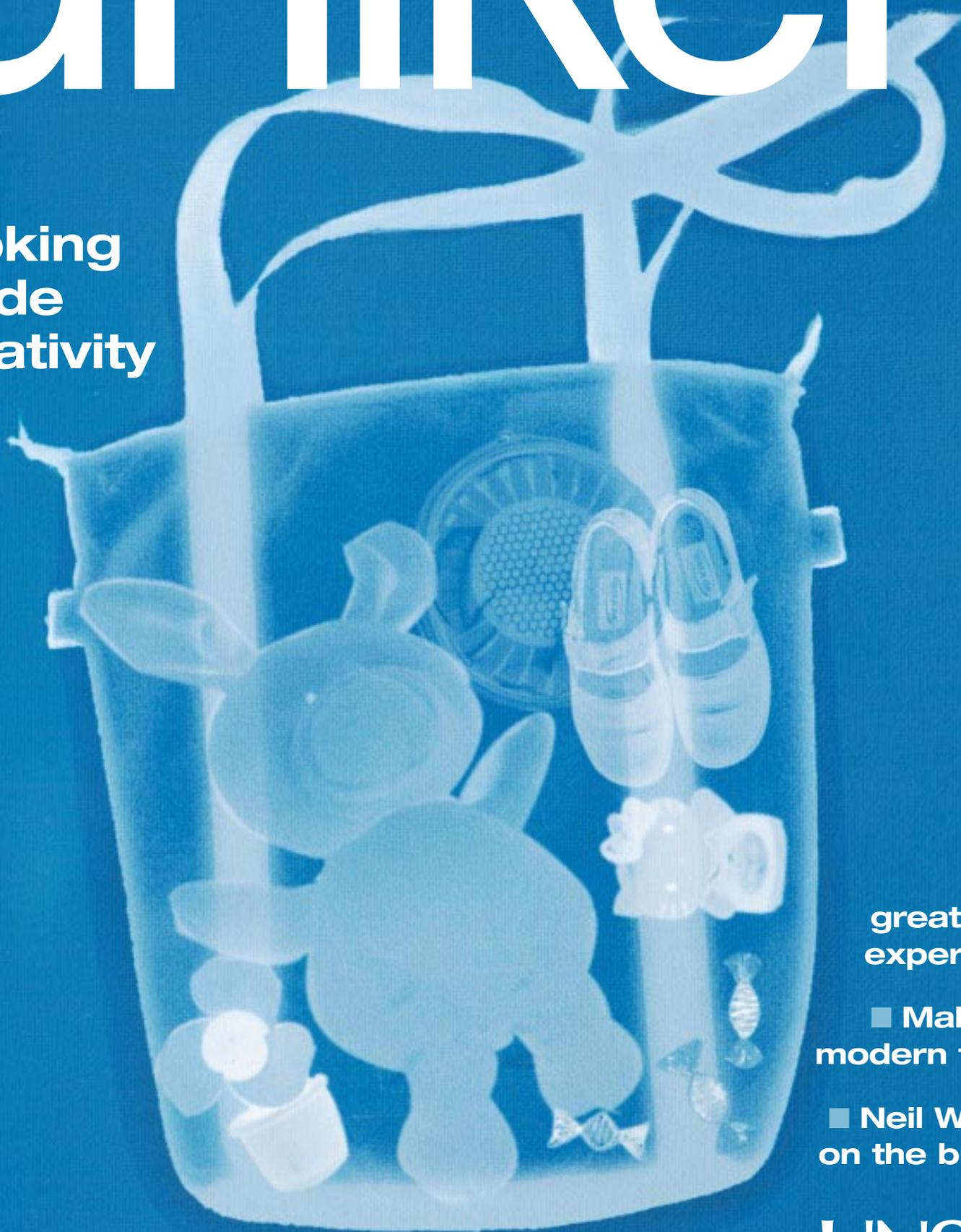


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uniken

**Looking
inside
creativity**



■ **The
great violin
experiment**

■ **Making a
modern treaty**

■ **Neil Warren
on the budget**

UNSW

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UNSW media office
T 02 9385 3644
F 02 9385 2837
E uniken@unsw.edu.au
www.unsw.edu.au/news/pad/uniken.html

Editor
Louisa Wright

Editorial team
Judy Brookman, Alex Clark, Susi Hamilton,
Denise Knight, Mary O'Malley, Sarah Wilson

Design and production
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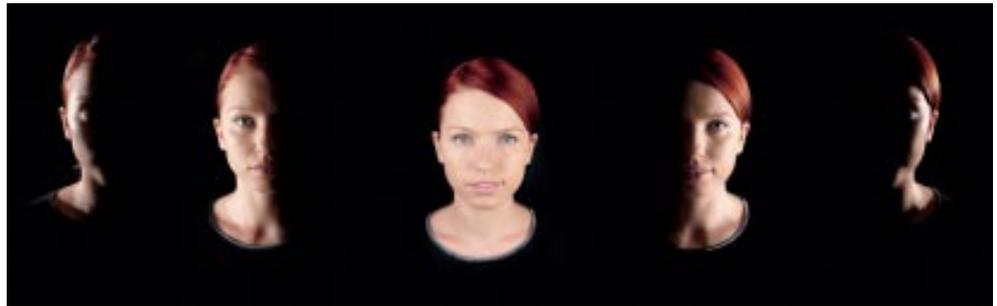
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Group of Eight



Science takes the gender lead

The first faculty-based Gender Equity Committee has been established at UNSW, in the Faculty of Science, to address the issue of under-representation of women in science. Dean of Science Professor Mike Archer formed an advisory committee earlier this year and findings to date suggest the problems differ from school to school and at different academic levels but there are also some common factors across the faculty.

Five projects funded under the Gender Equity Grants Initiative over the past two years have explored innovative practices and strategies. They include the *Women in Science: Distinguished Visitors Program*; the establishment of a database of women working in materials science and engineering; and the collection of data for a gender equity profile in physics. Professor Archer hopes that Science's experience will provide leadership across campus in this area. ♦

Young Scientist of the Year

10 June is the deadline for applications for British Council Australia's Young Scientist of the Year Award. Applicants should be graduate scientists or engineers, preferably under 35 and keen to get the 'inside story' on the news media. The prize is a trip to the UK in September to report live from the 2005 British Association Festival of Science for *The Australian* and British Council Australia's website. The award is designed to give an early-career scientist a first-hand look at how newspapers operate, to enhance their ability to work with journalists throughout their career and to encourage them to share their experiences. More at www.britishcouncil.org.au. ♦



Renaissance fellowship

Dr Monica Azzolini of the School of History is heading to Italy next month, having won a nine-month residential Fellowship at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence. Dr Azzolini's research and teaching interests are the history of Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, especially Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Italy she will work on her book manuscript on medicine and natural philosophy in Renaissance Milan, completing her primary research in state archives and national libraries.

The Harvard Center is devoted to the advanced study of the Italian Renaissance in all its aspects. Each year, an international selection committee nominates twelve to fifteen scholars to become I Tatti Fellows. Dr Azzolini joins a distinguished group of Australians who have received this fellowship in the past 30 years. These Australian scholars are now international leaders in the field of Italian Renaissance studies. ♦

Gong, gong, gong

Three UNSW chemists have won the three most prestigious prizes awarded annually by the Royal Australian Chemical Institute. Professor David Black (Science), Scientia Professor Tom Davis (Engineering) and Dr Christopher Barner-Kowollik (Engineering) were honoured, respectively, with the Leighton Memorial Medal, The HG Smith Medal and The Rennie Medal. The UNSW Chemical Society hosted a reception in their honour, followed by a lecture by Dr Barner-Kowollik on the topic of his winning nomination. ♦

Alumnus at Alcatel

French telecommunication giant Alcatel has appointed Mike Quigley as President and COO. Alumnus Quigley (science and electrical engineering) is tipped to succeed the present chairman and CEO. He's not the only UNSW electrical engineering graduate at Alcatel: Ron Spithill is executive VP and chief marketing officer. ♦

Honorary awards

The University has awarded honorary doctorates of letters to historian Gianfranco Cresciani, broadcaster Rachael Kohn and artist Imants Tillers.

Described by Bob Carr as 'the foremost historian of the Italian migration to Australia', Cresciani has written a series of books and articles about the Italian experience in this country, including his groundbreaking *Fascism, Anti-Fascism and Italians in Australia*. Kohn, presenter of *The Spirit of Things* and *The Ark* on ABC Radio National, was honoured for her contribution to religious understanding in Australia, while Tillers was cited for both his internationally acclaimed body of work and his contribution to critical thinking in the arts.

An honorary doctorate of science was awarded to economist and industrialist Giancarlo Elia Valori. The award recognised Valori's academic eminence as well as his support, as President of the Industrialist's Union of Rome, for Australian industries in Italy and the European Union. Valori is credited as being largely responsible for the resurgence of commercial exchange between Italy and NSW. ♦

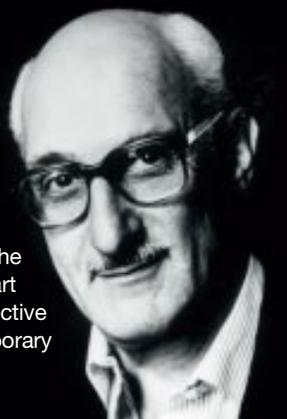
Designing the future

Five companies have been short-listed in an international design competition to develop the first stage of the UNSW Asia campus in Singapore. The successful firm will develop and implement a master plan for the 22-hectare greenfield site at Changi and design the library building. The winning design will be announced in Singapore on 28 June.

This is the first in a series of design competitions for UNSW Asia. Round two will be launched in October for the science/engineering and academic/administration buildings. UNSW Asia will be Singapore's first foreign university and the first wholly owned and operated research and teaching campus to be established overseas by an Australian university. ♦

Challenging indifference

Prominent Australian author David Malouf has delivered the inaugural public lecture of the Australian Human Rights Centre, based at the Faculty of Law. Titled *Challenging Indifference*, the lecture was given at the State Library of NSW last month as part of a series designed to encourage effective community engagement with contemporary human rights debates. ♦



UNSW's new Chancellor

The University Council has elected leading businessman and philanthropist David Gonski as UNSW's next Chancellor. He is the first alumnus of the University to be appointed to the role.

Mr Gonski will take up the appointment on 1 August 2005, upon the retirement of Dr John Yu, who has served as Chancellor since January 2000.

David Gonski has been a Member of the Board of Directors of the UNSW Foundation since 1999, and has played a major role in both providing and attracting philanthropic support for the University.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Mark Wainwright described Mr Gonski as one of Australia's most distinguished business leaders, with a deep commitment to corporate responsibility, the arts, education and community service.

"David has already contributed much to this University through his work on the UNSW Foundation," Professor Wainwright said. "He will now play a key role as Chancellor in the corporate governance of the University, and I am confident he will provide inspired leadership at a time of considerable challenge for not only this University but the entire higher education sector."

Mr Gonski is chairman of Investec Bank (Australia), the corporate advisory firm Investec Wentworth, Coca-Cola Amatil, the Australia Council and the National Institute of Dramatic Art. Directorships include the ANZ Banking Group and the Westfield Group. He is also President of the Board of Trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales. He is also a member of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership and is widely regarded as one of the foremost thinkers in Australian corporate law.

Born in 1953 in Cape Town, South Africa, Mr Gonski migrated to Australia with his family at the age of seven. He attended Sydney Grammar School and graduated BCom LLB from UNSW in 1977. He practised as a solicitor with the firm of Freehills, becoming a partner at the age of 25, before leaving to co-found an investment bank.

Mr Gonski was appointed to the Order of Australia as an Officer (AO) in 2002 for services to the community and received the Centenary Medal in 2003. In the same year he received an alumni achievement award for his outstanding leadership and innovation in the field of business and commerce.

Mr Gonski's appointment was confirmed by the University Council at its meeting on Monday 23 May. Nominations from the wider UNSW community were considered during the selection process. ♦

For the record

The agreement does not matter that much because in the end Peter Costello can make whatever grants he thinks fit.

Professor George Williams, Gilbert + Tobin Centre for Public Law, on the fight between NSW and the Federal Government over the GST distribution agreement – Sydney Morning Herald

We lose highly creative people when we teach them [that] there is [only] one way to solve a problem.

Professor Art Benjamin, magician and visiting mathematics professor – Independent Weekly

We want these cells to integrate with the body – and that is the Holy Grail for most of the scientists at the present moment.

Dr Kuldip Sidhu, Diabetes Transplant Unit and Prince of Wales Clinical School, on his team's research milestone in stem cell techniques – Wentworth Courier

There are so many shining stars at uni now that presenting a strong CV has gone way beyond having good marks and playing lots of sport.

Fourth year science/commerce student Fiona Zhou on the competition for highly paid entry-level positions – Australian Financial Review

It is quite obvious that the people in 'doof doof' cars are risking their own safety and endangering other people because they are not as aware of what is happening around them.

Dr Emery Schubert, School of Music and Music Education, on evidence that music affects driver behaviour – Daily Telegraph

Anti-psychotic drugs work like jumper leads to a car battery, kick-starting recovery in some cases of depression.

Professor Gordon Parker, School of Psychiatry, on a trial that added anti-psychotic therapies to conventional antidepressants – Illawarra Mercury

If workplace agreements are going to deliver increased wages, there are two options: one is proper indexation of university funding or the alternative is students will be asked to contribute more.

Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee head John Mullarvey on government requirements that the higher education sector introduce workplace agreements – The Australian

It's a sad ending for a national icon.

Dr Alan Wilton of the School of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences on his work that shows dingoes being replaced in the wild by feral dogs and dingo/dog hybrids – The Bulletin

The banks push as many people as they can into internet banking, which is supposed to be low cost, and then they slug them with fees.

Khalid Hajaj of the Financial Services Consumer Policy Centre on the introduction of fees for internet banking transactions – The Age

The first lecture

By Braham Dabscheck

I am looking at them. They are looking at me. It is the first lecture. I have distributed the course handout. I am standing still, looking into a sea of faces, attempting to establish my presence. As I do, I wonder what this group of students has in store for me. Who will be hardworking and conscientious, driven by an internal demon or an intellectual curiosity that not even they understand, that it is my duty to spark? Who will do enough to obtain passing grades or do moderately well? Who will have personal and other problems that will make their progress difficult? Who will be too distracted by boredom to bother even trying?

I am waiting for silence. Usually it descends. If it does not, I ask for it. It is always granted. This is the first lecture. I haven't, so far, given any reason not to listen to me. Then I begin. I introduce myself; provide details of how to contact me. I take them through the course handout. I tell them what the course is about, how it is organised, assessment, textbooks and reading guide. But I am doing more than this.

This is the first lecture; the most important lecture in any course. This is the lecture where I have to convince them that I can teach them something, that they can learn from me, that the course is worthwhile. This is the lecture where I have to bind them to the course. The only way I can do this is to demonstrate my enthusiasm for the course and the love of learning. If I am not enthusiastic, why should they be? Students will tolerate anything from teachers except indifference. They will not tolerate someone who carries the air of not wanting to be there.

I wonder if I am coming across as someone infused with the love of learning or an old hack explaining the terrible fate that awaits those who hand in their essay late. I feel drained and exhausted. I have distributed the course handout. It is the first lecture. They are looking at me. I am looking at them. ♦

Associate Professor Braham Dabscheck of the School of Organisation and Management teaches and researches industrial relations, sports regulation and human rights. This article first appeared in *The Australian's Higher Education Supplement*.



Alex Clark

Campus camera

Local MP and UNSW law alumnus Peter Garrett was among the speakers at last month's Library Lawn rally called in protest at the Federal Government's intended legislation to introduce voluntary student unionism. "I got good value from the student union and I think that it's absolutely essential for the lifeblood of the university community that these unions remain," Mr Garrett said. ♦

The great violin experiment

By Dan Gaffney

It may be a century before scientists can dispute a widely held belief that stringed instruments improve with age or playing. They're only three years into an experiment that aims to settle the question and, so far, they haven't proved it wrong.

"Whether it is a product of the passage of time, the exposure to the atmosphere and its variations, or the amount of playing, many violinists believe that oldies are goodies, and spurn inexperienced instruments," said professor of physics Joe Wolfe, co-author of a research paper published last month in *Acoustics Australia*.

The study centres on twin violins created in 2001 by renowned violin-maker Harry Vasiliotis. Crafted from 80-year-old timber originally put aside to make a cello, the violin bellies were made from adjacent areas of the same slab of spruce, while both backs came from the same sample of maple.

One of the pair was bought by Michael Lea, curator of music at the Powerhouse Museum, and the other by Sydney musician Romano Crivici.

"Harry has a reputation for making fine instruments reproducibly," said study co-author Dr John Smith. "When we heard that both Romano and the Powerhouse were getting 'Harrys', we knew there was a natural experiment in the offing."

One of the consequences of the violins' origin is that they have similar acoustic properties, so any noticeable divergence over time will shed light on the belief that age and/or regular use improves the virtues of stringed instruments.

Since 2001, one has been maintained in controlled, museum conditions and played rarely. The one belonging to Romano is his usual instrument for performance and practice.

These improvements could occur independently of any change conferred by ageing or the intrinsic mechanical properties of the instrument

The violins have been assessed on three occasions by subjecting them to a series of mechanical, acoustical, aural and playing tests. They were first compared when new; while physical tests in the laboratory could tell the two instruments apart at that time, a panel of expert players and listeners could not.

"There is a widespread belief that a new instrument changes very early in its life due to the physical stresses that playing exert on the instrument," said lead author Ra Ina, who conducted much of the experimental testing at the UNSW Acoustics Lab.

"The soundboard – the top part – of the violin needs to have a certain degree of flexibility in order to vibrate and produce musical notes as it's played," said Mr Ina, now a research associate at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

"That flexibility means microscopic fractures might occur in the glue that holds the instrument together. Those physical changes might be one reason that musicians speak of a new instrument's voice 'opening up' with six months or so of being played."

The violins were compared for a second time three years later with the same result: physical tests in the laboratory could detect differences but a panel of expert players and listeners could not. A third test just a few days later showed the same result, even after modifying the bridge, strings and soundpost of Romano Crivici's instrument.

"Three years' playing isn't enough, it seems, to make a substantial difference," Professor Wolfe said. "But three years isn't long for an instrument of which there are examples – such as the famed Stradivaris – still being played after hundreds of years."

Professor Wolfe and his colleagues believe it's possible that stringed instruments might improve through the 'evolution' of their adjustable components. "Players change the acoustic properties of an instrument – for better or worse – by modifying components such as the size and style of bridge, the type of string and the position and other properties of the soundpost," Dr Smith said.

"There could also be 'selection pressure'. Inferior instruments that cannot be improved by modification will usually have a lower market value and be played by less experienced players.

"However, those that acquire a better reputation and market value will in general be sought and played by more experienced players. These improvements could occur independently of any change conferred by ageing or the intrinsic mechanical properties of the instrument.

"Time will tell." ♦

Heeding the call: native title internships

By Denise Knight

An internship scheme developed in response to a critical shortage of lawyers working in the area of native title has attracted a record number of students this year, far exceeding the expectations of program organisers.

“There are major issues with recruitment and retention – for example, in the last six months, 25 percent of lawyers working for Native Title Representative Bodies have left the system,” said Richard Potok, Visiting Fellow at the Faculty of Law and author of a recent report into the professional development needs of lawyers working at NTRBs. “The performance of NTRBs and their lawyers is crucial to the effective functioning of the native title system. If the



Noel Pearson,
Richard Potok and
Patrick Dodson
at UNSW

Native title is still alive and an absolutely critical part of the law for Indigenous people, but there is a need for much more rigorous advocacy

work of the bodies is impaired, the native title system slows inexorably, impeding the fulfilment of Indigenous aspirations and industry development.

“During our research it became apparent that a lack of awareness of the opportunities to work in native title law is one factor contributing to low application rates. The internship program is a first step in turning that around.”

So far the response has been “overwhelming”, Mr Potok said. Since the first intake of two students in 2003, interest has increased significantly. More than 160 students from 19 universities across Australia have applied for the mid-2005 placements. The following intake will be for the summer break at the end of this year.

The program has the support of Indigenous leaders Noel Pearson and Patrick Dodson, who made a rare public appearance together to urge law students to consider working in the area.

Speaking at the Faculty of Law, Mr Pearson said: “Native title is still alive... and an absolutely critical part of the law for Indigenous people, but there is a need for much more rigorous advocacy.”

Mr Dodson told the students that as a lawyer at an NTRB, “You’re required not just to be an expert on native title law, and its

questions and unresolved issues, but you can also be expected to know how to respond to questions about the Constitution, commercial law, incorporation, charitable trusts or all sorts of other bodies that you need to establish.

“That’s a very enriching thing but it can be frightening for a young lawyer out in the sticks and someone’s asking them what section 51 of the Constitution really means.”

For final-year law student Prue Gusmerini, working as an intern at the Cape York Land Council earlier this year was an “incredible and all-consuming experience”.

“I hadn’t dealt with Native Title before I went to Cairns,” she said, “and not only are you dealing with a new area of law but also dealing with a cultural group that a lot of people haven’t had contact with, so you’re going to have to communicate freely with Indigenous claimants and also understand the sensitivities that exist within their own communities.

“It’s definitely moved me towards working in native title or Indigenous policy areas.”

Richard Potok’s report is available online at www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/projects/research.html. ♦

When will they grow up? The new adulthood

By Alex Clark

Time Magazine calls them ‘twixters’, others call them ‘kidults’ or ‘adultescents’, but whatever the name a new social phenomenon is taking shape. Young people in their 20s and 30s are often accused of refusing to grow up, never settling down and generally giving adulthood a wide berth. But according to PhD student Harry Blatterer, media commentators and marketers alike are admonishing this group using an outdated definition of adulthood rooted in the post-WW2 era.

“The social markers of adulthood are having kids and getting married young, independent living and, particularly for men, long-term employment,” Harry said. “When we measure young people’s lives against these markers they are clearly not ‘grown up’.”

Harry undertook in-depth interviews with 12 people between the ages of 25 and 35 and substantial historical and social research to understand the changing meaning of adulthood.

“We have an idea of adulthood that emerged in the post-WW2 era when there were higher levels of affluence, people found employment more easily and stayed in those jobs for longer which meant planning their future lives was more secure.

“Today casual employment is on the rise, making it difficult to move out of home, free tertiary education no longer exists and there is less social pressure to get married and have kids at a young age.”

Harry argues that, just as our parents’ generation achieved certain social markers of adulthood, today’s young adults are just integrated into society. The difference is, however, that today this integration is no longer predicated on stability but on flexibility as demanded by current social conditions.

“Imagine if you went to a job interview today and said ‘I’d like to work for your company for the next 30 or 40 years’, they would think you are crazy,” he said. “Likewise if you met someone and after two weeks said to them, ‘I’d like to get married and have a couple of kids’, they would also think you were a bit odd.”

Harry believes the problems lies in the continuing presence of what he calls the ‘standard adulthood’ model. “Young people feel trapped between this standard model and the new model,” Harry said. “The expectations they feel don’t actually gel with the opportunities that are available to them nor with their desire to be flexible.” ♦

Harry Blatterer has been researching his PhD, *Without a Centre that holds: The Redefinition of Contemporary Adulthood*, in the School of Sociology and Anthropology.

This is the first of an occasional series looking at doctoral research areas. Suggestions of candidates for this column should be sent to l.wright@unsw.edu.au

Making a modern treaty

By Denise Knight

Australia is unusual, almost anomalous, in not having a treaty with its Indigenous peoples. With the reconciliation debate back on the agenda, new research looks at how modern treaty-making could work in Australia.

This analysis is contained in a book, *Treaty*, recently launched at the Sydney Writers' Festival by independent MP Peter Andren. It is the culmination of a three-year ARC research project, run by George Williams and Sean Brennan of the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law at UNSW with project partners Larissa Behrendt and Lisa Strelein.

"We try to map out how you could do this in Australia and why you might decide to go down this path," said Treaty Project director Sean Brennan. "We can confidently predict that the sky wouldn't fall in if we pursued a treaty or agreement. It can be done – it's not impossible."

treaties or like agreements with governments. It's going on right now in places like Canada.

"So it's very easy to get past that first position and look at the merits of the issue rather than decide it's simply impossible and shut down the whole debate."

One of the most important questions asked by the researchers is whether or not a treaty would make any practical difference in people's lives. The answer is a resounding yes.

"Rather than a distraction from practical issues of health, education and employment, a treaty relationship can be the vehicle for moving things forward," Mr Brennan said. "That is the story in New Zealand where Maori-government relations are filtered through the Treaty of Waitangi. In Canada, treaties and agreements are closely linked to social and economic development. In the US, self-determination has been called 'the only

We can confidently predict that the sky wouldn't fall in if we pursued a treaty or agreement. It can be done

"We're not prescriptive about what a treaty would look like because it's up to the parties to decide on that. While the book looks at a spectrum of possible agreements, we pay particular attention to a constitutional amendment," he said.

The authors make it clear that they are not neutral on the question of whether there should be a treaty or not. "As a minimum, we all agree the treaty idea has sufficient merit to warrant a closer look."

One of the stumbling blocks in the debate to date, they argue, is that it frequently doesn't move beyond entrenched positions on the issue. "The Prime Minister, for example, says a nation does not make a treaty with itself," Mr Brennan said. "We say it's possible for Indigenous peoples to make

anti-poverty policy that has ever succeeded' by researchers at *The Harvard Project*."

While the issue of a treaty has come in and out of political consciousness, it has refused to go away. "In the 1970s, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser entertained the idea of a treaty; on the other side of government Bob Hawke considered it at the end of the 1980s. It emerged again at the end of the 90s in the context of reconciliation and that's the framework within which it's likely to be debated in the foreseeable future."

Treaty takes the position that many implications of the Mabo decision have not been addressed and people have turned back to the treaty idea at the end of the 1990s in part because of frustration at the limitations of native title.

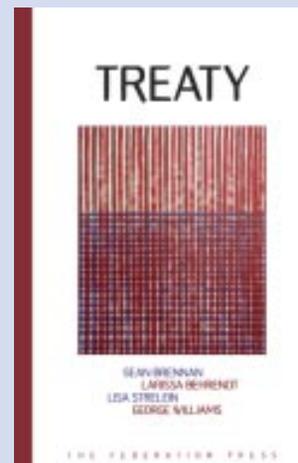
"Our research shows that a treaty is one feasible path. It's used in comparable countries with considerable success, and there's reason to believe it could address practical issues as well as issues of principle in Australia. It's certainly worthy of serious debate in Australia," Mr Brennan said. ♦

Treaty by Sean Brennan, George Williams, Lisa Strelein and Larissa Behrendt (pictured left to right) is published by Federation Press. The Treaty Project at the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law, through its partnership with Reconciliation Australia, also received funding from the Myer Foundation.



The authors at last year's forum on Indigenous Health and the Treaty Debate

Extracts from *Treaty* foreword



Malcolm Fraser

The current government has promoted the idea of 'mutual obligation' involving what are called Shared Responsibility Agreements with local communities. It has thus opened a debate concerning agreements with Aboriginal people. These agreements involve a number of regional arrangements. Will that be all that is necessary, or will an over-riding, all-embracing agreement also one day be consummated?

I support the idea of an agreement or regional agreement which would, above all, recognise the dignity and the self-esteem of the Indigenous population, in addition to providing a framework for self-government, self-management or advancement of opportunity.

Marcia Langton

Will agreements that settle the grievances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians lead to a formal place for Indigenous people in the Constitution of modern Australia? That place – one that accords the first peoples their rightful status as the original peoples and acknowledges the need for restitution of what was taken from them – must be found beyond the limits of the legal framework. The political settlement of these issues is well overdue. These are just some of the profound issues dealt with by the authors in this lucid account of the legal, social and political aspects of the debate about treaty-like arrangements between Indigenous peoples and the Australian state. ♦



Janet Chan

Looking inside creativity

By Alex Clark

Creativity has become a cultural obsession in Australian society. No longer a captive of the arts, the meaning of creativity and the way it is fostered remains a mystery across many professions and industries. This is an area that fascinates Professor Janet Chan of the School of Social Science and Policy.

“What does it mean, beyond being a slogan? We all want to be creative or innovative but is creativity a universal concept or is it something very specific to each field?” said Professor Chan, who has been awarded a \$575,000 ARC grant to examine the concept. “Creativity research has largely been conducted by psychologists, cognitive scientists and philosophers. Not many sociologists have ventured into it.”

Professor Chan believes her sociological expertise will enable a greater understanding of how a culture of creativity is fostered, transmitted and maintained among research communities over time. “Understanding the

creative processes of artists and scientists is critical for a nation that aspires to lead the world in science, technology and other innovations.”

The Federal Government has even made ‘maximising Australia’s creative and technological capability by understanding the factors conducive to innovation and its acceptance’ one of the goals of the National Research Priorities.

Her five-year study will compare the practices of graduate students, early-career researchers and established scholars at two research sites: the University’s Centre for Quantum Computer Technology, a research centre in science and technology, and the iCinema Centre for Interactive Cinema Research, a research group working at the intersection of art and technology. Professor Chan will add to this a parallel project already underway with Neil Brown from COFA examining creative artists.

No longer a captive of the arts, the meaning of creativity remains a mystery across many professions and industries

“I want to look at how organisational cultures foster creativity and innovation. It’s quite a spectrum comparing artists to scientists. In the normal conception of things scientists tend to work in groups, are more bound by the rules of science and experience greater competition to make discoveries and get published. In comparison artists experience less social prestige and tend to work alone,” Professor Chan said.

“The interdisciplinary work at iCinema is another component altogether. I want to get a sense of how each group sees their work and how they transmit that knowledge and innovative spirit onto the new generation of researchers.”

By interviewing cohorts of students and researchers over three years and spending three months in each of the centres, Professor Chan will test her preconceptions. “I’m really interested in the day-to-day practice rather than examining it retrospectively,” she said. “When people talk about how they achieved a breakthrough, their memories can often become a little fuzzy, so a longitudinal approach coupled with observation is crucial.” ♦

More than a life of crime

After three decades studying the criminal justice system, Janet Chan’s career has taken a creative turn. Her research interests have traversed criminology, sociology and art. Now she has science in her sights. Her accomplishments have been fuelled by an enthusiastic determination, and more recently, a creativity that has made for a rich life.

Professor Chan was born in Hong Kong, the youngest of seven children. Her father died when she was an infant. Following her mother’s death when she was 17, she moved to Canada to join her eldest sister who was trained as a nurse in Australia but was unable to stay and work there under the White Australia Policy. Professor Chan studied maths and science at the University of Toronto. “My family was very poor and uneducated. Back then I never would have thought I could become a university professor,” she said.

By 1980 she had completed two Masters degrees, one in epidemiology and biometrics and the other in criminology. “After the first one, I got a job doing medical research with statistics which led to a position in the Toronto Center of Criminology. I loved it,” she said. One of her research projects at the centre involved observing the work of journalists and three highly regarded books on crime and the news media were the result.

In 1984 Professor Chan moved to Australia with her family. Finding a job almost immediately with the Australian Law Reform Commission, she began her PhD in Sydney University’s law school. In 1990 she took up a lectureship at UNSW where she continued her work in criminology focusing on policing. The subsequent years have seen her interest in understanding work culture expand from the media and policing to creativity in science, technology and the arts.

Recent years have also seen her realise a lifelong ambition of becoming an artist. “I’d always wanted to be an artist ever since I was a kid, it’s a bit like some of the police I interviewed – they always wanted to be a cop,” she said. “But I’d always suppressed it as being impractical and unrealistic. Then one day I came across a line in a book that went like this: ‘Do you know how old I’ll be by the time I become an artist?’ and the answer was, ‘Just as old as I’ll be if I don’t become one’. So I stopped going to amateur art classes and on the basis of my portfolio got into the Master of Arts at COFA.”

In 2003 the curator of the Delmar Gallery saw Professor Chan’s major work, *Through a scanner’s eye* (pictured opposite page), as part of COFA’s graduation exhibition and requested



This painting by Janet Chan is part of a nine-canvas work called *Borders of the risk society* (2002)

its inclusion in one of the Gallery’s exhibition, *Imaging the Object*.

After completing her third Masters, she is now part way through her fourth – in Fine Arts – but any plans she had to retire from research and take up full-time artwork have vanished. “The sociologist in me wouldn’t die and the more my imagination was stimulated, the more I could see new ways of doing my research. I think there is creativity in research, in writing books. I think I’ve changed my mind about what art is.”

Amid Professor Chan’s research and creativity she has also established a highly respected criminology program at UNSW, and is proud of her contribution to the School of Social Science and Policy in the position of Head from 1999 to 2004. “Having been a researcher my whole life and running away from being a Head of School, I couldn’t believe how much I enjoyed it,” she said. “The difference you can make just by making the administration more transparent is so rewarding.”

Professor Chan has also been involved in mentoring women across the University through the Women’s Research 21 groups and through staff development. “It’s been a great opportunity working with women across diverse faculties whether it’s writing your first research proposal or helping with career planning.

“My first ARC application was in 1992 and after two attempts I was finally successful. So I always reassure people in the workshops that despite feeling discouraged you’ve got to try and try again.” She has now received seven ARC grants with a 100 percent success rate for applications.

People often say she works too hard but Professor Chan considers it all play. “You’ve got to be happy and enjoy what you do and I find it can be very satisfying living in your own imagination – I do live in the real world but you have to allow yourself to have no constraints once in a while. Little do they know, I live a very rich life.” ♦

The crossroads of ethics and research

By Susi Hamilton

The generation of stem cells, evaluations of the justice system for young offenders, the safety of children's playgrounds and the behaviour of injecting drug users are just some of the topics considered at the monthly meetings of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University.

The central role of the committee in approving research was recently highlighted following criticism of a study, approved by the committee, which found high levels of mental illness in immigration detention centres. The paper was criticised by a psychiatrist, whose report was revealed to have been funded by the Federal Government.

The volume of work that goes before the committee has increased so dramatically in recent years that two measures have been implemented. In 2003, the decision had been taken to allow projects deemed to have minimal ethical impact to go before nine Human Research Ethics Advisory panels, which are discipline-based groups in each faculty. Then, in March this year, the original committee of 18 people – eight lay people and ten academics – sat for the first time as two separate committees.

"Before the committee split in two, the paperwork for each meeting was at least two feet in depth," said the committee's Presiding Member, Professor Andrew Lloyd of the School of Medical Sciences. "Most

the NHMRC guidelines, but the committee needed to become fully conversant with these," said Professor Bernie Tuch, of the Prince of Wales Clinical School, who was leading the research.

"There was a lot of back and forth to provide the committee with what it needed. But we were optimistic that the committee would provide approval. It is essential for academic life in order to provide the checks and balances that are needed."

The National Statement includes stipulations about the membership of each Human Research Ethics Committee. Each must include four lay members of the public, including a layman, a laywoman, a minister and a lawyer.

"According to surveys on campus, 90 percent of people believe in God. So it makes sense that we reflect that in the make-up of a committee like this," said Reverend Andrew Moore, the minister at Unichurch and former GP who sits on one of the committees. "There hasn't been a time where I have had to stand up and disagree with the research."

"We are all there to complement each other. That's why it is such a diverse group," said Julie Jenkins, a full-time mother of two, who has a background in human resources. "It allows you to look at what is happening in the news and in the world of science and you feel like you are contributing."

It is often difficult to see all of the ethical issues when you are closely involved with the project – another reason why independent evaluation is so important

committee members found that it took them up to eight hours of reading, ahead of the meetings which ran for up to six hours."

The two committees, which conduct evaluations according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (1999)*, consider about 400 research projects each year that have substantial ethical impact.

"There are a burgeoning number of projects which fall within the brief of human research ethics," Professor Lloyd said. "While academics in the Faculties of Medicine and Science have generally been putting their research proposals before the committee for many years, other faculties have entered the game fairly recently and are on a learning curve about expectations. Similarly, members of the committee are learning more about the types of research conducted outside the traditional biomedical sciences.

"We do get complaints from researchers who say that their work is getting bogged down in the process. While there is an inevitable time delay in getting a research project started, the Ethics Secretariat and Committees work very hard to make the process as timely as possible."

One of the longest decisions related to the use of embryonic stem cells. The committee sought independent advice from ethicists and researchers and it took several months from the start of the application process in 2003 until the committee approved the research.

"Sometimes it is a bit frustrating, knowing that what we were doing was consistent with the law and with

"I am strongly opposed to the notion of imposing an unnecessary obstacle to research in the form of a Human Research Ethics Committee," Professor Lloyd said. "We always look at ways in which we can try to help the researchers fit within the constraints of ethical guidelines and various legislation. We have an educative role."

Professor Lloyd points out that it is very unusual for an application not to ultimately be passed, although often there are some amendments needed. "I don't think I have ever had one of my own projects which has been passed without comment. Like everybody else, there are often things I need to fix up, to make sure the proposal meets the appropriate expectations. In my experience it is often difficult to see all of the ethical issues when you are closely involved with the project – another reason why independent evaluation is so important."

A similar process is followed by UNSW's Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC), which considers about 200 research projects annually. Any research or teaching involving animals must be approved by ACEC, which uses the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes. The code's application at UNSW is overseen by the NSW Animal Research Review Panel.

The ACEC committee is also made up of research scientists and community members, including at least one veterinarian, a representative of animal welfare organisations and a lay member of the community.

For more information about both committees, see www.ro.unsw.edu.au. ♦

Drugs, money and research

By Alex Clark

Dr Nicolas Rasmussen of the School of History and Philosophy of Science has debunked the myth that cosy relationships between medical researchers and drug companies are a new phenomenon. Some of his research, published in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, reveals that the current problems surrounding the pharmaceutical industry's influence on clinical investigators were created during the 1930s.

During this period, members of the medical community rigorously sought to improve standards of pharmaceutical drug testing. While their reforms were successful in disciplining the drug industry, an unintended consequence saw deep relationships form between clinical trial investigators and sponsoring drug firms.

Dr Rasmussen's research delineates the three types of relationships that emerged and how they influenced the medical literature – 'freelancers', the 'efficients' and 'friendly experts'.

"Freelancers are the independent clinical experts motivated primarily by advancing medical science," Dr Rasmussen said. "They approach pharmaceutical companies to use newly developed drugs in their studies and keep companies abreast of what's happening. Draft papers are sometimes seen before being published in medical journals but companies don't exert overt pressure over the final literature."

Back in the 1930s academics were seduced into thinking they weren't corruptible and that their involvement was in itself beneficial to public health

The efficients are at the extreme opposite and lack almost any independence, according to Dr Rasmussen. Important at the start of a drug's development, efficients are researchers commissioned to carry out a study that has been designed by the drug company to create a market. If the study turned out unfavourably, it would not see print. "By accepting funding under these conditions, the researcher forgoes the freedom to publish what they like – in fact the drug company will usually edit the copy to ensure their message is published." Often highly respected people in academic medicine accept this 'efficient' role.

Even in the 1930s, drug firms would draft the research protocols for efficients to follow. Dr Rasmussen believes this second group has grown worse over the years to the point that researchers commissioned to do studies often don't even set pen to paper. "A medical marketing company will write it instead, send it to the professor who signs his name and gets paid – it's called ghost authorship," he said.

The third kind of collaborative relationship that developed, the friendly expert, share features from both groups. "These clinical researchers are funded and work closely with the sponsoring firms to produce particular results, but they do play a major role in designing the studies and usually select areas of mutual interest and benefit to both themselves and the company."

Dr Rasmussen's research also demonstrates the shifting morality regarding ethical research. "Back in the 1930s, academics were seduced into thinking they weren't corruptible and that their involvement was in itself beneficial to public health," he said. "Today we are much more suspicious of corrupting experts. The potential for commercial bias in the



literature caused little concern during the 1930s compared with the great pains drug companies go to now to disguise it."

Most informants today are bound by non-disclosure agreements but, as an historian, Dr Rasmussen has obtained access to company documents in the public domain because of their past use as evidence in lawsuits. "Drug companies would never permit this kind of access today and it's not in the interests of the co-operating researchers to divulge information either."

"The drug industry is currently under scrutiny for manipulating and even inventing new diseases in order to make their drugs more saleable," Dr Rasmussen said. "From the laboratory all the way to the bedside, the entire medical literature has become tainted. This has a negative impact on medicine and public health."

"Clinical research literature is a source of definitions, symptoms, causes and therapies of diseases. Research journals are where medical researchers describe newly discovered illnesses. Reforms are crucial to halt the corrosion of medical research integrity."

Dr Rasmussen argues that reforms may need to go beyond a universal enforcement mechanism for strict sponsorship disclosure, which does not yet exist, and consider separating the required regulatory clinical research drug firms must conduct, from the commercially neutral pursuit of medical science.

"Leading journals could agree to exclude all sponsored clinical studies, setting themselves apart from lesser journals or those privately published in marketing materials that include studies with commercial backing," Dr Rasmussen said. "The time has come to take a stand in defence of the autonomy of medical knowledge." ♦

Putting a face to the dead

On the eve of Christmas 1944, Nazi security forces rounded up and executed every male between the ages of 17 and 32 in the town of Bande in Belgium, because of possible involvement in the resistance. This is one story of civilians caught in the crossfire of the Battle of the Bulge.

“I wanted to tell the story of the non-combatants, the ‘collateral damage’.

We talk a lot about ‘collateral damage’ but the phrase was never used during WW2,” said author Peter Schrijvers of the School of History. “Studies of any of the European land battles barely mention what happened to civilians – some historians make it appear as if there were no civilians present to begin with.”

Dr Schrijvers’ interest in the Battle began when he spent time in the Belgium Ardennes as a teenager in the 1980s. He was shocked by the stories of the bloody killings during Hitler’s final, desperate attempt to penetrate the Western front. Within six weeks, three percent of the civilian population had been killed. Two decades on, Dr Schrijvers has written his third book, *The Unknown Dead: Civilians in the Battle of the Bulge*.

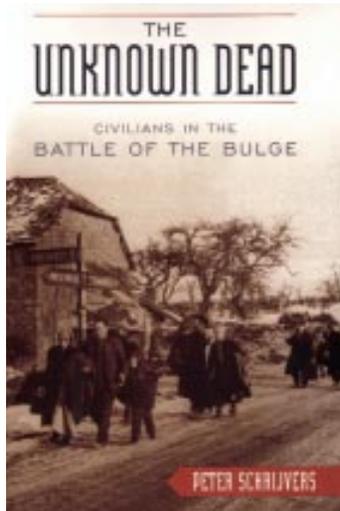
As German soldiers fought on the Eastern front a process of barbarisation began. Troops fighting the Russians stopped making distinctions between soldiers and civilians and the slaughter continued when they were transferred to the Ardennes. Nazi security forces systematically closed in behind German ranks to find and execute civilians involved in the resistance.

Hitler’s forces weren’t the only ones responsible for killing civilians in the Battle of the Bulge. Of the 3000 locals who died, Dr Schrijvers was surprised to discover a third of these were killed by allied air forces, which targeted towns located on rivers or close to bridges and flattened them. “In order to stop the German offensive they turned them into what they called ‘choking points’ but sadly none of the civilians were warned,” Dr Schrijvers said.

Dr Schrijvers searched Belgian municipal and parish archives as well as unpublished diaries and memoirs at the Centre for World War II in Brussels. “These diaries and memoirs provide real insight into the experiences and feelings of civilians at the time. Compared to events such as the bombing of London, Hamburg or Tokyo, where many more civilians were killed, you can dismiss 3000 deaths as insignificant in the WW2 context,” he said. “But that traumatic experience is something people left behind will have for the rest of their lives. By focusing on the individuals affected we get a much better idea of what 3000 lives means.” ♦

Alex Clark

Dr Peter Schrijvers is a Lecturer in the School of History. *The Unknown Dead: Civilians in the Battle of the Bulge* is published by University Press of Kentucky.

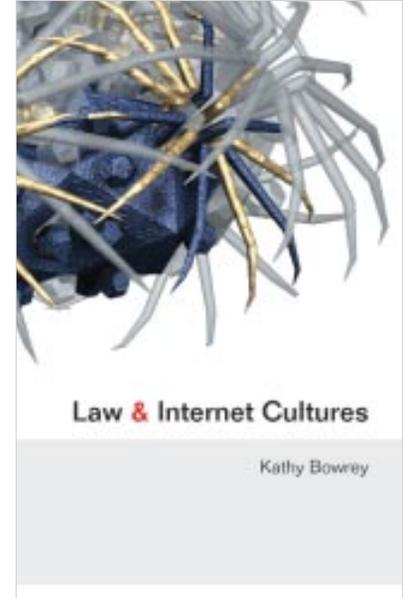


Put down that mouse

Who decides what email you can send and receive? Who decided what software you should use on your computer? Why is there a Committee for the Moral Defence of Microsoft?

We have all integrated technology into our lives, both at work and at home, at unprecedented rates and law lecturer Kathy Bowrey argues that we have not stopped to think about all the technological regulations attached to that use.

In her book, *Law & Internet Cultures*, she outlines the way people can innovate or be prevented from innovating, and the way in which large corporations and software engineers interact with laws and create limitations on technology use. She raises the profile of sociopolitical questions about global technology and the information market looking at communication flows and networks, the major corporate and industry players as well as regulatory incompetence.



Society takes for granted the ability to connect and expect to be able to post and download and play whatever we want. It’s what the marketers insist the internet is for

Rather than seeing internet regulation as only about technical questions, Ms Bowrey is interested in how communities of designers, engineers, artists, lawyers, consumers and activists participate in moulding the internet environment.

Society takes for granted the ability to connect and expect to be able to post and download and play whatever we want. It’s what the marketers insist the internet is for. Anti-spam laws can keep the pipes open and copyright laws can stop file-sharing, but laws can’t be easily imposed on communities that associate the internet with openness and freedoms.

“Most law making in the digital age has been in the interest of big technology business and it’s very unbalanced,” Ms Bowrey said. In order to bring some balance to intellectual property laws, there are movements to develop new global notions of citizenship that include basic communication rights.

This could be of major importance to the developing world. “Maybe human rights law could be used to better develop the knowledge infrastructure,” Ms Bowrey said, “allowing access to scientific materials and databases: information and technologies badly needed in the developing world.”

Her book develops a narrative about how different people and communities, in creating and using the internet, interact because “internet regulation is a product of their stories”. ♦

Kathy Bowrey’s research areas are related to intellectual property law, especially copyright and cyberlaw. She is especially interested in understanding the way law constructs and interacts with diverse cultures and communities. *Law & Internet Cultures* is published by Cambridge University Press.

A sustainable winter: tips from the Ecoliving Centre

By Sarah Wilson

“As nature follows seasons, so should we,” Cameron Little, program co-ordinator at UNSW’s Ecoliving Centre, said. “With each new season we can look forward to a change in our lifestyle.” Here are a few ideas for the winter months that will save money, energy and ultimately the environment.

Eat seasonally

Winter is a great time to eat longer-lasting, hardy vegetables such as potatoes, onions, parsnips, beetroots, swedes, parsnips and carrots. While these kinds of vegetables make hearty soups and stews that leave you feeling satisfied, they are also comfort foods, perfect to keep out the winter chill. Great accompaniments to these dishes are hot drinks such as tea, hot chocolate and even mulled wine.

“By buying seasonal fruit and vegetables, the produce you eat has a better chance of being produced locally,” Cameron said. “This means less time, effort and money was needed for the final product to appear on your table.”

Rug up

Unearth your winter woollies that have been in hibernation at the back of your wardrobe. Jumpers, long pants and socks make you feel cosy in the cooler months. Enjoy the texture of natural fibres such as lambs wool slippers and mohair jumpers.

“Instead of reaching for the heater, throw on a jumper, climb under a doona or cuddle up to your partner while watching TV,” Cameron said.

Conserve heat

“Only heat the rooms you are in, and close off doors to keep the heat in,” Cameron said. “Drafts that creep in under doors can be eliminated with carpet snakes and any gaps between your windows and window frames can be stopped with sealant.”

Insulation bats installed in roofing make excellent temperature regulators in all seasons and are cheap and long lasting.

The five Rs

The lifestyle tips above can be implemented on a daily basis but when purchasing new household items, particularly larger, longer lasting goods such as a washing machine or heater, you have the opportunity to make a greater positive environmental impact.

Five principles can help you make environmentally friendly purchases:

■ **Rethink:** Do I need this product? Establish your basis for buying a new item and consider the impact it will have on the environment. For example, to reduce the water use in your house there are many options available. When purchasing a new washing machine, look for the AAAA water conservation ratings. Water-efficient showerheads and tap aerators can help reduce your water usage. There are biodegradable detergents such as Planet Ark and Aware brands available at major supermarket chains.

Approach problems from a different angle, for example, if you know you use a lot of water, consider installing a rainwater tank.

When buying dishwashing products look for products with an NP rating – this means No Phosphorus. Phosphorus is a plant nutrient that causes damage to our waterways. “Try to stick to natural products as much as possible and avoid products that are unhealthy for you and the environment – they are usually the same thing,” Cameron said.



“When choosing a heater, look for one with a thermostat,” Cameron said. “The thermostat will help regulate the temperature of your house.” Set your thermostat to the optimum level for your house. When the house reaches this level, the thermostat will kick in and automatically switch off the heater, saving you money and energy.

■ **Refuse:** Avoid products with excessive packaging and products whose packaging is neither recyclable nor biodegradable. “Environmentally sensitive options are becoming more and more available in shops; if one particular shop cannot show you environmental alternatives, go to another shop,” Cameron said.

■ **Reduce:** We live in a throwaway society where excess is acceptable, according to Cameron. “When you can, grow your fruit and vegetables at home, even if it just means potting some herbs on your balcony. They will be healthier, fresher and cheaper.”

■ **Reuse:** Rather than throwing out something, think about how you could give it a second life. Grey water, for example, can be reused. Households can rig up a system where water from the house can be used on gardens, in toilets and in the washing machine. Note that grey water (from washing machines) should not be used for cooking or drinking.

When shopping, bring your own reusable bags.

■ **Recycle:** “Food and garden leftovers are only ‘waste’ if we waste them,” Cameron said. “Food scraps can be placed in a home compost bin or fed to a home worm farm – your garden or pot plants will love the result.” ♦

**By Dr John Yu AC
Chancellor**

Council met on 23 May 2005

New Chancellor election

Council noted the result of the election and confirmed as its next Chancellor, Mr David Gonski, AO, to serve for a term of four years, to commence on 1 August 2005.

Mr Gonski is the first UNSW alumnus to be elected to the role of Chancellor and I believe his election represents a major milestone in the maturity of the University. There is no need for me to elaborate on his many contributions to the community or to refer to the great successes he has enjoyed in his professional and business life. I am confident that the leadership of Council could not be in better hands. I wish him well.

Vice-Chancellor selection process

Council noted the advertisement for a new Vice-Chancellor and an information booklet for interested parties. The advertisement will appear shortly.

UNSW Asia progress report

Council approved the constitution of UNSW Asia as a wholly owned controlled entity of UNSW, and noted a progress report on activities relating to the establishment of the campus. It also approved an initial suite of existing degree programs to be offered there.

AUQA progress report

Council received a report from Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Quality Improvement), Adrian Lee, on the preparations being made for the audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency in October 2005. A Performance Portfolio has been developed through a process of extensive consultation and will be submitted to AUQA on 11 July. Council will be involved in workshops in late May and will consider the portfolio at its June meeting.

Creation of a separate postgraduate student association

Council noted the advice on the proposed separation of the Postgraduate Board from the UNSW Student Guild and the formation

of a separate postgraduate student association. It requested that the Guild enter negotiations with those students desiring the establishment of a separate postgraduate association with a view to its establishment.

Voluntary Student Unionism

Under the Vice-Chancellor's Report, Council noted the results of the consultation with student organisations regarding the impact of VSU on essential services. The report is available at www.vc.unsw.edu.au/councilreports.htm.

Council minutes

Council minutes and other information can be accessed by all members of the University via the Secretariat Services website (www.secretariat.unsw.edu.au).

For further information on matters relating to Council or its Committees, please contact Victoria Eyles, v.eyles@unsw.edu.au, 9385 3068 or Helen Parks, h.parks@unsw.edu.au, 9385 3072.

The Chancellor is the chair of Council.

Academic Board passes UNSW Asia program proposals

3 May 2005

The Academic Board considered a proposed review of the Academic Promotions Policy, designed to clarify documentation of applicants' contributions to teaching and learning. Comments included the need for a similar review of the sections of the policy concerning research and service, suggested improvements to committee and appeal processes, the need for greater clarity in the balance between quantitative and qualitative indicators, and the weighting of referees' reports. There was majority support for the concept of independent teaching review committees. The Board will consider a revised policy in due course.

In consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, I drafted the UNSW response to the Commonwealth Government Discussion Paper, *Building Better Foundations for*

Higher Education, and invited comment from the Board. The response has now been forwarded to Council members. The UNSW response will be submitted to the Minister for Education, Science and Training by 20 May.

We assessed the proposed undergraduate programs for offer at UNSW Asia, and commended the depth and quality of the documentation. The proposal has been developed under the principle of 'one university – two campuses' and will provide ease of transfer between campuses and programs. The teaching approach was acknowledged as innovative. The scope and level of courses is aligned with those at Kensington and the proposal addresses both General Education and graduate attributes. The selection of programs and plans in the initial rollout had been strategically determined on the basis of available educational and employment market research.

The Board recommended that Council

approve the proposal to introduce the Bachelor of Science (Advanced), Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Design, Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of International Studies, Bachelor of Media and the grouping of these as combined programs for offer at UNSW Asia, and the proposal to introduce the Master of Conservation Biology as a joint program between UNSW and the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

The Academic Board approved the revised Master of Arts in Couple and Family Therapy and Master of Business and Technology; and the co-option of Associate Professors Tim Hesketh and Tony Koppi to the Asia Liaison Committee.

If there are issues you would like me or Academic Board or its Committees to consider, or if you would like to attend a meeting, please let me know via a.dooley@unsw.edu.au or 9385 2393.

**Tony Dooley
President, Academic Board**



Liz Tancred and Simon Tancred

Dr Liz Tancred is a senior lecturer in the Department of Anatomy. Liz won a Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Award in 2001, Faculty teaching awards in 1994 and 1997 and is the co-author of the acclaimed *Brainstorm*, an interactive program to support the learning of human neuroanatomy. Her brother Simon Tancred is program manager of the Adult Migrant English Program at the Institute of Languages. They have an older brother.

The Tancreds were army brats. In the early 1960s they lived in Sydney's Victoria Barracks; from 1967 to 1970, their career army father was Brigadier of the Commonwealth Brigade in the Straits of Malacca, while the kids went to boarding school in Canberra. The holidays in Asia left their mark on Simon, who travelled in Asia, studied Asian history, then completed a DipEd to become an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher – in order to keep travelling. In 1988 he joined UNSW's Institute of Languages. Simon recently spent two years in Prato, near Florence, and returned to the Institute in January.

Simon

I was probably influenced in my choice of UNSW for my Arts degree because Liz was already here. And she's stayed here ever since! People have one of two responses to a military background: either they stay put in one place, like Liz, or they get the travel bug, like me.

I thought [after graduation] that my future would be in Asia, but I had better see Europe first. I fell in love with Italy and spent five years teaching in Milan. Two years ago, I was asked by Monash International to set up an English Language Centre in the Monash University Centre in Prato, which is in a beautiful restored palace in the centre of an industrial town in northern Tuscany.

Liz and I are very good friends, and our worlds and our friends have overlapped. But in some ways Liz remains very much the older sister – she is fiercely loyal and has firm opinions about most things and doesn't mind setting me on the right track! She's always been a point of reference for me. She provided a place to stay and was always good for a loan.

I have great professional admiration for Liz but she is modest to a fault. She's done all these things, and does them with great commitment, generosity, intelligence and a direct no-bullshit style. Apart from her work with the school, she has achieved a lot of other things such as

Brainstorm, and the V-C's teaching award, and she's the uni rep on the NTEU [National Tertiary Education Union] and chairs AMC accreditation committees and things.

Probably my most vivid memories of her while I was studying was when she was tutoring. I would visit once a week or so when we were both free. I would open the door with trepidation because as often as not she would be preparing for a tute and there would invariably be a limb or a torso or something on the bench. I reminded her years later, and she said, "Now you mention it..." and reached over and pulled out a bucket with a brain in it.

Liz

I'm very teaching-focused, involved in teaching and course administration and course design. Even in my early days of teaching I was producing teaching resources, and now I'm director of the Education Media Unit [in the School of Medical Science]. It's true – I've been here ever since I left school. We were picked up and moved every two years and so I stayed where I first put down roots. Simon just kept moving.

I grew up in a male-dominated family and I spent my weekends being dragged from football to athletics. Our father was very sport-oriented – he represented Australia in high jumping in the 1938 Commonwealth Games –

and both brothers were superb athletes so it made me a bit tomboyish in my interests, although I resisted cricket until I was 17 when we got stuck in a holiday unit in the rain and I had no choice but to watch the Test. Now we go to the cricket together.

Simon's restless. These days he takes walking tours in Italy every European spring. He set them up himself, exploring all the options off the beaten track. The first ones were in the wine country in Tuscany, and this year he's in Sicily. He's been doing it for about 14 or 15 years.

He was coming home from Europe once years ago and asked me to collect him from the airport. I got up at 5 to meet that early flight, and he didn't turn up. I got a message that he would arrive the following day, so I get up at 5 again and he still doesn't turn up. And we heard nothing from him for a whole week. Dad was frantic and even called Interpol.

It turned out that Simon met some guy in Rome who had to get home urgently and Simon had swapped tickets with him for the next day's flight, but that had landed in Dhaka [Bangladesh] too late for the connection and he had absolutely no money and no way to contact anyone. He had to wait a week for the connecting flight and then sleep in a paddock near Singapore Airport before finally turning up in Australia. ♦

Louisa Wright

A Budget all cashed up but down on vision?

By Neil Warren

The phrase most commonly used to describe the financial outcome reported in the latest Commonwealth Budget is ‘an embarrassment of riches’. However, this embarrassment of riches has resulted in what could best be called an embarrassing response. What is most disappointing is the lack of any attempt to invest wisely in the future of all Australians.

Business has claimed that the budget overlooks the urgent need for infrastructure investment. Welfare groups are concerned about the impact of the welfare-to-work package on the incomes of the less advantaged groups such as supporting mothers and the disabled.

The education sector, particularly tertiary education, has been left completely out of consideration. Despite the impact of the government’s education reforms and the appreciating dollar on this sector, its response has been a deafening silence.

Aboriginal groups too have deplored the lack of attention given to Aboriginal health issues or to progress in the resolution of native title issues.

So what does this Budget deliver?

Essentially, it is about tax cuts. It’s not even about tax reform or investing in Australia’s future. It’s also not about improving equity of the overall tax system. For high-income earners, it’s about ‘carrots’ (or incentive) arising from pushing out the upper income tax thresholds. But when it comes to welfare groups it is definitely not about ‘carrots’. Instead, it’s all about ‘sticks’, moving supporting parents and the recently disabled persons onto the Newstart allowance, which is not only less generous than current benefit entitlements but subject to a more stringent income test.

Moreover, where this Budget has sought to present itself as forward-looking and visionary, it has also failed.

Take the case of the welfare-to-work package. Instead of developing a broad-based and equitable strategy, it has sought to quarantine most current recipients of disability and supporting parent pensions from the changes. Not only does the reform create two classes within the same welfare group – current recipients as against future recipients – the reforms do not include adequate levels of support for future recipients to facilitate entry into the workforce by those less able.

The government has made much of the Future Fund, into which it is depositing accumulated fiscal surpluses. However, on closer inspection, the reality is that this fund is designed to meet unfunded Commonwealth superannuation liabilities. It is not designed to put away today funds designed to meet the broad needs of tomorrow arising from an ageing population – except, of course, to the extent that it impacts on the Commonwealth through its need to fund future superannuation entitlements.

In the case of education, while its strategy on schools and technical colleges is worthy, it disappoints because it fails to adequately recognise the importance of a strong and vibrant tertiary education sector in ensuring the continuing enhancement of the skills of all Australians.

Instead of investing in Australia’s tertiary education, this government seems intent on focusing its efforts on benefiting from other countries’ investment in their education system. Instead of funding future skill needs through broad-based investment in education, it was announced that immigration levels would be increased some 20,000 more than originally planned to meet skill shortages. As a short-term measure, this is probably unavoidable; but what is unfortunate is that it is not accompanied by a recognition that significant tertiary education should be a high priority for this government, not a low priority as is so clearly the case.

However, education should not feel alone in its neglect by the Commonwealth Budget. While politicians have been quick to point out that inadequacies in our export infrastructure have hindered the delivery of goods to foreign markets and therefore impacted adversely on our trade deficit, they seem bereft of ideas on how to address this issue. Instead, their response seems to be to shift the responsibility for this situation onto state governments and the private sector – although they have indicated that they might take control of the ports.

At best, this budget is about short-term solutions and taking the line of least political resistance. It’s not about vision and the development of long-term strategies. It is also not about introducing broad-based reforms which give priority to both equity and efficiency considerations.

While ever this approach is taken, investment in education will be a low priority and Australia will ultimately pay the price for the short-term view – and sooner than many think. ♦

Associate Professor Neil Warren is the Associate Director (Research) of ATAX, part of the Faculty of Law. His research interests include public sector economics, taxation policy and distributional issues, and fiscal federalism.

