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A photograph of an underwater environment. A scuba diver is positioned in the center, facing upwards towards the surface. The water is a clear blue, and sunlight filters down from above, creating bright highlights on the diver and the surrounding coral reefs and sea fans. The overall atmosphere is serene and suggests a vast, exploreable space.

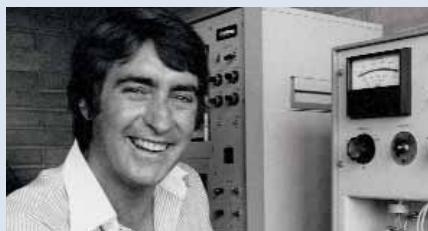
Sea of opportunities

Experts' guide to
commercialising
research

- Farewell Mark Wainwright
- Women in leadership program
- International HIV vaccine trial

UNSW

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From the Vice-Chancellor

In this, my final column in *Uniken*, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all my UNSW colleagues, members of Council, alumni and friends of this great University for all your support during the almost two years that I have been Vice-Chancellor. While many projects that I have initiated have yet to be completed, I hope history will show that my short term as Vice-Chancellor has been a useful one.

UNSW today is a vastly different institution to the one I joined fresh from a PhD in Canada on 4 March 1974. My then School of Chemical Technology was merged with Chemical Engineering in 1980 and in the late 1990s my old Faculty of Applied Science was disestablished. I make this point because I believe there will always be changes in universities, most of which are highly beneficial to the future success of the organisation, even though we sometimes believe that such changes will be catastrophic. Institutions that can plan and implement change will continue to thrive, but those with only a glorious dream of the past will be left behind in the race.

Two initiatives of which I am particularly proud are the establishment of a Graduate Research School and the staff dining facility in the Tyree Room of the John Niland Scientia Building. The dining room – looking over this great campus – has given the University a badly needed location for visitors and colleagues to meet. The Graduate Research School had been on my mind for many years and I am delighted with its great success in its first year.

One plan that I have persistently put forward is a major expansion of on-campus student housing. This is urgently needed if UNSW is going to be a truly great university. The UNSW Council recently approved the development of a plan for a new student housing project on High Street, east of Gate 2. I shall watch the development of this project with great interest along with UNSW Asia, the AGSM/Faculty of Commerce and Economics initiative and no doubt other major initiatives under the leadership of the new Vice-Chancellor. I am leaving Fred Hilmer and his team with many challenging projects which will make UNSW an even greater university than it is today.

Again, many thanks and best wishes to you all. It has been a great ride!

Mark S Wainwright

Tribute to the outgoing Vice-Chancellor who retires this month after 32 years at UNSW, page 6.

Field notes



Antarctica is widely considered the last pristine wilderness on Earth, but the impact of human activities is beginning to be felt under the ice. At longstanding research stations, contaminated sediments from abandoned tips reduce marine biodiversity and change the structure of local communities. UNSW PhD students Graeme Clark and Nicole Hill have just returned from a six-month research visit to Australia's Casey Station where they conducted ecological research using custom made "dry-suits" and scuba equipment. Their work is part of the expanding Antarctic subtidal research program run by Dr Emma Johnston in the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences. "It is very exciting to be working in such a novel environment," Johnston says. "Unfortunately, the animals and plants are being challenged by some of the same pollutants usually found in warmer waters."



**Marepe, Cabeça Acústica (Acoustic Head), performance at Barra Beach, São Paulo, 1996.
Courtesy of the artist and Galeria Luisa Strina.**

Biennale of Sydney

Ivan Dougherty Gallery at COFA is one of the venues for the 15th Biennale of Sydney – Australia's largest contemporary visual arts event. Featuring 85 artists from 44 countries, the festival (8 June–27 August) showcases some of the world's most innovative and challenging contemporary art across many genres. The conceptual framework for this year's event is "zones of contact". IDG's exhibition (8 June–15 July) will feature works by artists from the Philippines, Latvia and Turkey. There will be a free artists' talk on 8 June at 3.30pm. COFA is also hosting a free Biennale of Sydney symposium on 11–12 August. For bookings, phone 9385 0726.

AGSM ranked top business school

The *Financial Times* (UK) 2006 ranking of executive programs placed AGSM as the leading business school in Australia for the fifth successive year with an international ranking of 39. AGSM's Open Enrolment Programs, with a ranking of 30, were placed as the leaders in the Australian market.

AGSM's Director Executive Programs, Graeme Gherashe, says the result is testament to the quality of the program's team. "Our faculty are world-class academics with international reputations in their respective fields and our program delivery team are highly competent professionals."

The *Financial Times* annual survey of executive education programs is one of the most prestigious worldwide. It independently assesses, via client evaluation, faculty quality, course design, new skills attained, value for money and intention to continue working with the institution.

IR in Howard's Australia

UNSW has published the first comprehensive scholarly review of the Federal Government's industrial relations changes. The current issue of *Economic and Labour Relations Review* is devoted to an examination of Work Choices legislation (2005). It has been released by the Industrial Relations Research Centre (IRRC) and the Centre for Applied Economic Research (CAER), both in the Faculty of Commerce and Economics. The journal is available online at <http://www.elrr.unsw.edu.au/>.



Brain boost

The UNSW Brain Sciences Consortium has been awarded \$4 million from the NSW Government for a range of initiatives that will benefit people with depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. The initiatives include: new brain imaging technology; funding for the clinical assessment and management of mood disorders; evaluating a radical new anxiety treatment approach; and the establishment of a new Chair in clinical schizophrenia research.

The Consortium was established last year to facilitate multidisciplinary research opportunities in neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology and neurology. It involves researchers from the Faculties of Science and Medicine, Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, the Black Dog Institute and the Garvan Institute of Medical Research.

Foundation year kicks off in Singapore

The UNSW Foundation Year Asia program in Singapore was officially launched last month. The first intake of 30 students commenced the program in February at the UNSW Asia School, which is currently located at the Temasek Polytechnic campus. The students, drawn from Singapore and the region, are undertaking a 40-week pre-university course that follows the same syllabus as the program in Sydney. Students who successfully complete the inaugural Foundation Year Asia program will be eligible for a place at UNSW Asia, which opens next year, or UNSW in Sydney.

Fight for the right to health

United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Professor Paul Hunt, visited Australia last month at the invitation of the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP), which is affiliated with the Faculty of Law. Professor Hunt worked on the program's Indigenous human rights and advocacy training course in Darwin and gave a series of public lectures across Australia.

Defence studies centre launched

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, Senator Sandy MacDonald, recently launched the Defence and Security Applications Research Centre (DSA) at the Australian Defence Force Academy (UNSW@ADFA).

The Centre's director, Associate Professor Hussein Abbass, said: "Our research will cover a wide spectrum of areas in both military and civilian security. These include safety issues in land, sea and air; crowd behaviour and dynamics; domestic stability; surveillance and intelligence; the spread, management and control of epidemics and bushfires; and policies and standards."

The Rector of UNSW@ADFA, Professor John Baird, said the DSA would be the single point of entry to research in defence and security applications on the campus.

For the record

I think there are differences in natural anxiety levels between women and men, so that women are more anxious, and that's been biologically useful.

Professor Gavin Andrews, director of the Anxiety Disorders Clinic at St Vincent's Hospital – Sydney Morning Herald

National guidelines are currently being developed for water recycling. However, they do not yet include replenishing drinking water supplies as a use for recycled water. Given the growing interest in such practice, Australian governments must now urgently address this shortcoming.

Dr Stuart Khan, Centre for Water and Waste Technology – Courier Mail

Psychologists have demonstrated how easy it is to create false memories and how unreliable people's memories can be – but we don't yet know how to tell accurate memories from inaccurate memories.

Dr Richard Kemp, School of Psychology – Sydney Morning Herald

The invisible assets that most organisations rely on to create value in today's knowledge economy (e.g. human capital, informational systems) are not recognised on the balance sheet.

Christina Boedker, School of Accounting – Australian Financial Review

If either the Coalition or Labor is serious about getting Australian women into the workforce, they need to assist employers to accommodate our children and not expect our children to accommodate our employers.

Cathy Sherry, School of Law – The Age

Strengthening business education

The proposed move to integrate the Australian Graduate School of Management and the Faculty of Commerce and Economics has progressed with the establishment of working parties reporting to management and steering committees. By **Mary O'Malley**.

The University announced last month that it was moving to strengthen its position as the leading provider of business education and research in the Asia-Pacific region.

At a recent combined meeting of AGSM and FCE staff, Vice-Chancellor Designate, Professor Fred Hilmer, said the opportunity had become available with the dissolution of the joint-venture agreement with the University of Sydney, which expressly limited the capacity for collaboration between AGSM and FCE.

Vice-Chancellor, AGSM and FCE Advisory Committee Chairs, and the Presidents of the Academic Boards. Proposals will then be submitted to AGSM and FCE Faculty Boards and the UNSW Council.

AGSM is recognised as Australia's pre-eminent graduate business school and one of the leading business schools in the Asia-Pacific region. FCE is a regional leader in undergraduate and postgraduate business education and research. Integration will deliver critical scale: by combining the two entities the University can deliver the depth

AGSM is recognised as Australia's pre-eminent graduate business school ... FCE is a regional leader in undergraduate and postgraduate business education and research

An Integration Management Committee, comprising Professor Alec Cameron, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Resources); AGSM Dean, Professor Rob McLean; and Acting FCE Dean, Professor John Piggott, has established 10 working parties which are working to a set of guiding principles.

The areas that the parties are looking at include strategy and organisational structure; business model; research; postgraduate coursework; marketing and branding; alumni and development; communications; administrative structure, resources, processes and systems; accommodation; and academic contracts.

Professor Cameron will take the recommendations of the working parties to a Steering Committee consisting of the

and breadth of disciplines required to meet the increasingly competitive international market for business education. This will strengthen UNSW's position as a regional leader in business education, give the University a competitive edge internationally and provide a strong platform for growth.

"There are many details of implementation to be worked through, which will require consultation with staff and other involved parties," says Professor Cameron. "I am moving immediately to put reporting and consultation processes in place. I am hopeful that we will be able make this vision a reality sooner rather than later."

Meanwhile, AGSM and FCE are making plans for joint projects in the coming months. ■

UNSW hosts Nobel Laureate for Economics

Professor Edward C Prescott, the Nobel Laureate for Economics 2004, was the guest speaker at the Faculty of Commerce and Economics' 2006 International Thought Leadership Lunch held on 30 May. The topic of his address was, "Why the US and Australian economies are doing so well and how they can do better."

Professor Prescott is one of the world's most respected macroeconomists. He received the Nobel Prize (jointly with Finn E Kydland) for his contributions to dynamic

macroeconomics: the time consistency of economic policy and the driving forces behind business cycles. He is the W.P. Carey Professor at Arizona State University and the Senior Monetary Advisor for the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

Sponsored by Barclays Global Investors, proceeds from the event go towards the Faculty's Scholarships Appeal Fund for talented and disadvantaged students. A full copy of Professor Prescott's speech is available on the FCE website at www.fce.unsw.edu.au. ■

HIV vaccine trial shapes international research

UNSW's National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research is part of an international clinical trial to test a novel HIV vaccine that could potentially prevent infection or delay the course of HIV progression in people exposed to the virus. By Dan Gaffney.

The Sydney trial – run by the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR), through St Vincent's Hospital – is part of an international study involving 3000 people at an increased risk of acquiring HIV in the United States, Canada, South America and the Caribbean. The NCHECR is currently enrolling 100 HIV-negative volunteers aged between 18 and 45.

Developed by Merck, Sharp and Dohme, the vaccine uses a disabled version of a common-cold virus to deliver synthetic copies of three HIV genes. The genes are designed to prompt the body's "killer" T-cells, which seek and destroy human cells infected by HIV.

"The way the vaccine is designed is that certain genes from HIV have been inserted into the virus that causes the common cold, which is called an adenovirus," says the trial's principal investigator, Dr Tony Kelleher, clinical immunologist at NCHECR. "But there is no chance that a person can acquire HIV from the vaccine because there is not enough genetic material from the virus within the vaccine to allow an infective particle of HIV to be formed."



A vaccine is essential to stem the HIV epidemic ... boys at a group home for children with AIDS in Cambodia.

What we know about the vaccine so far is that it's safe and it produces the sorts of immune responses that we want in humans ... now we need to take it to the next step to see if it's actually effective at preventing HIV infection

In earlier smaller trials, the vaccine generated strong and durable cellular immune responses against HIV. The new trial is a "proof of concept" study that will test the vaccine to see if it prevents HIV infection or results in lower HIV levels in the blood of people who become infected with HIV.

"What we know about the vaccine so far is that it's safe and it produces the sorts of immune responses that we want in humans," says Dr Kelleher. "Now we need to take the vaccine to the next step to see if it's actually effective at preventing HIV infection. We don't know that yet. It looks like it does in animal models, but the only way to prove it absolutely is to test it in humans."

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) supports the trial but says it's important not to have false hopes. "The vaccine trial is a great way for Australians to participate in an important international research effort, but right now, condoms used with lubricant are the only significant proven means of protecting yourself from HIV," says AFAO's Executive Director Don Baxter.

People eligible for the trial will receive a detailed consultation before taking part and will be actively monitored throughout. As the efficacy of the vaccine is unknown at this stage, all volunteers will receive recurrent counselling on how to reduce their risk of acquiring HIV infection.

The international trial is being co-sponsored by the Division of AIDS at the US National Institutes of Health and the HIV Vaccine Trials Network. ■

Exporting policy expertise: UNSW researchers have developed a model to forecast the HIV epidemic, page 14.

Landmark for Cambodia's HIV clinic

A free HIV/AIDS treatment program in Cambodia – the country with the highest prevalence of infection in Asia – last month enrolled its 1000th HIV-positive patient.

Established in 2003 as a partnership between Cambodia's Ministry of Health, the Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche, and UNSW's National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR), the Cambodia Treatment Access Program (CTAP) is providing treatment for HIV/AIDS.

The program is providing an important new model of HIV/AIDS service delivery, according to NCHECR's Deputy Director, Professor John Kaldor. "The CTAP program in Phnom Penh

operates as an outpatient clinic, rather than being associated with a hospital like many other HIV/AIDS treatment programs.

"Being supervised by Cambodia's Ministry of Health, the service supported by CTAP operates under best-practice standards in healthcare delivery. The clinic provides a high level of training and skill development to healthcare professionals across a number of disciplines, making the program more likely to be sustainable long term," says Professor Kaldor, whose experience working with Cambodia's public health programs dates back to 1999.

"The CTAP clinic provides a means of supporting high-quality HIV/AIDS care across

the country through its training capacity, both within the clinic and through national curricula. It is also a good setting in which to conduct high-quality research, and NCHECR has several collaborative research programs in development there."

On reaching the landmark, NCHECR's Director, Professor David Cooper, said: "This milestone is a great achievement and demonstrates the positive impact CTAP is having in support of Cambodia's response to HIV/AIDS. It is a real testament to the commitment and hard work of everyone involved and demonstrates the benefits of adopting a collaborative approach." ■

Making his Mark

After 32 years at UNSW, Vice-Chancellor Professor Mark S Wainwright is retiring this month. *Uniken* pays tribute to his distinguished career.

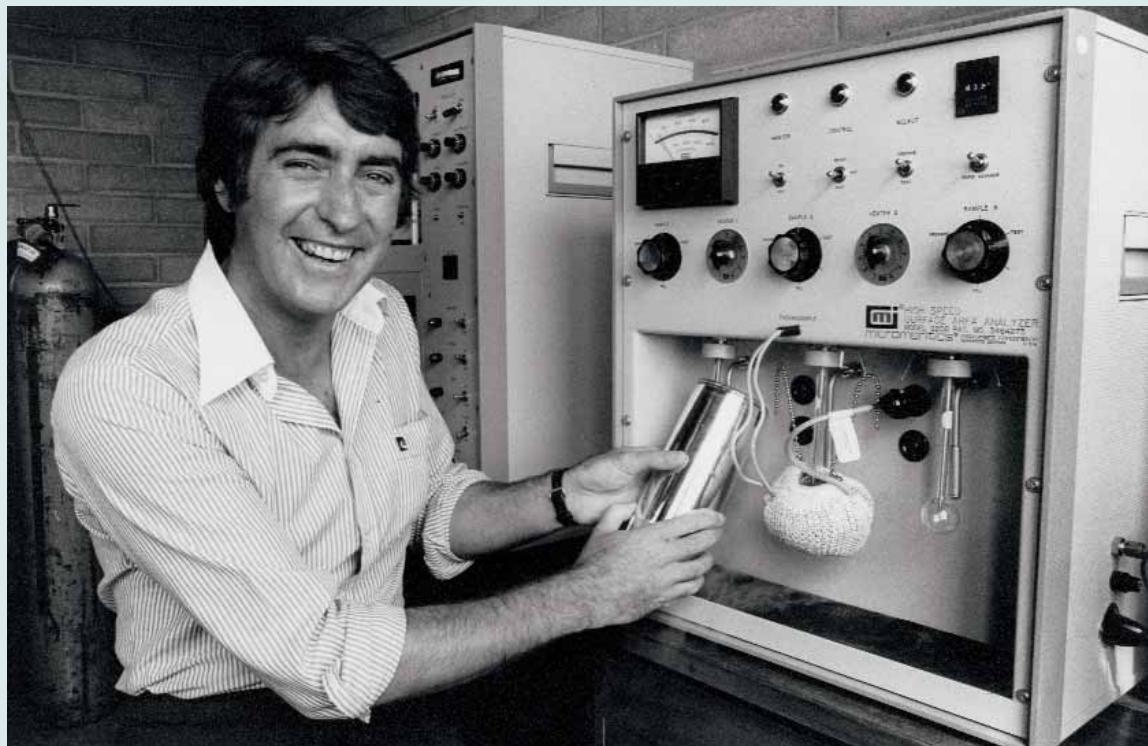
Mark Wainwright never intended taking up an academic career. But after completing a Masters degree at the University of Adelaide and a PhD at McMaster University in Canada, he landed at UNSW. It was a perfect match that has lasted more than three decades.

Mark joined as a lecturer in the School of Chemical Technology in 1974. His innovative style was apparent even then, applying for the position by audio cassette. He soon became internationally renowned for his work in catalysis, and in 1989 was awarded a Personal Chair in Chemical Engineering.

Described as a "visionary" Dean of Engineering – a position he held for a decade – Mark positioned the Faculty as the national leader. He expanded its research base and introduced many groundbreaking initiatives such as the first industry advisory board. Several key partnerships in Asia boosted the Faculty's international profile.

In 2001 Mark was promoted to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & International), during which time he laid the foundations for UNSW Asia, as well as further strengthening the University's research profile. He was appointed Vice-Chancellor and President in 2004, the same year he was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). As Vice-Chancellor, Mark has initiated and developed a range of significant projects, including the establishment of the Graduate Research School.

The UNSW Council has noted Professor Wainwright's "outstanding contribution to the administration and management of the University", conferring on him the title of Emeritus Professor.



Above: Mark operates a high-speed surface area analyser, as featured in *Uniken* 1979. Below: Mark with Chancellor David Gonski.

Let the tributes flow ...

I have known Mark since I joined the chemical engineering department more than 30 years ago. He has a delightfully dry sense of humour, is responsive to people's needs and, without fuss, gets the job done in a thoroughly professional manner. He is trustworthy and possesses candour, common sense and integrity; he also treats everyone he encounters with due respect, regardless of their station in life.

Professor Peter Farrell, Chairman of ResMed

I first worked with Mark when we were both Deans. I thought then that UNSW was lucky to have such a dedicated and competent person developing and leading our pre-eminent position in Engineering. We are even luckier that he was prepared to take on the Vice-Chancellor role when he did. I am looking forward to his future involvement and contribution to the University.

Professor Fred Hilmer, Vice-Chancellor Designate

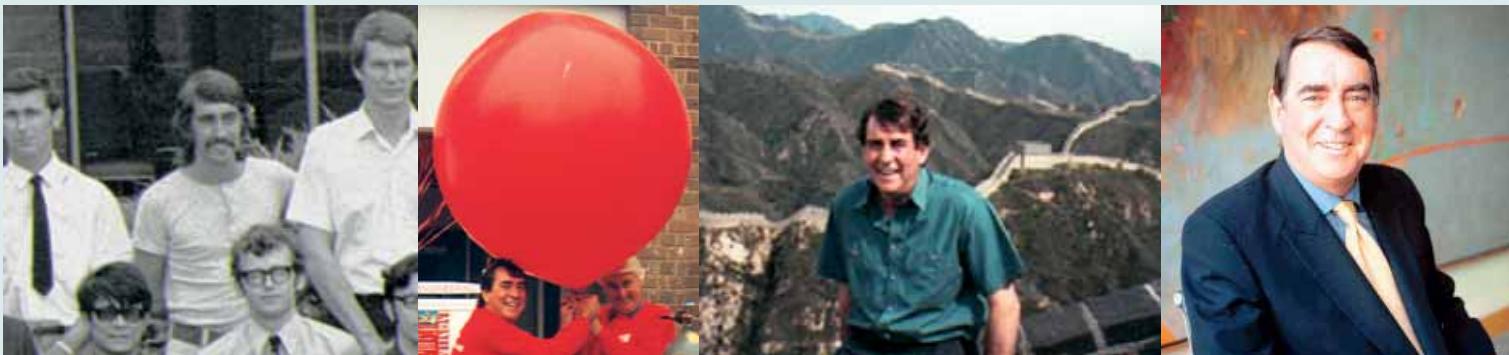
Mark's great love of UNSW has fuelled his numerous contributions over many years, none of them more telling than his leadership as Vice-Chancellor at a very difficult time for the University. A fine academic and an equally fine human being, Mark leaves UNSW greatly enriched by his service.

John Niland, former Vice-Chancellor

Mark is the quintessential academic professional. After a brilliant academic career he slid into administration not as a progression to that career, more as a way of giving back to UNSW which he so loved. Mark recognised the three most important assets of UNSW: the people who work there, the students and the alumni.

Cathy Harris, former Deputy Chancellor





The many faces of Mark: (l-r) as a student, dean, international ambassador, and VC. Below: with Engineering colleagues.

Mark has done more than anyone in the last two years to refocus UNSW. He has been a fabulous colleague to many people here, been quietly supportive of younger scholars, and has vigorously promoted initiatives which have strengthened the University. It has been a personal pleasure to work with him.

John Ingleson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Mark Wainwright and I were Deans together. I admired him then, and still do, as being amongst the most honest and straightforward people with whom I have ever had dealings. Mark's word is his bond and he can be counted upon to hold resolutely to the spirit of any agreement.

Gavin Brown, Vice-Chancellor, University of Sydney

UNSW is a leading international university thanks to Mark's vision and tenacity. We enjoy connections at the highest levels throughout Asia and beyond because of the relationships he established over the past 15 years. In 2002, Mark secured the UNSW Asia initiative.

Jennie Lang, UNSW International

I really hope that Mark can be persuaded to return to the research laboratory after his spell at the top. He has been sorely missed by his colleagues, his students, and by the international catalysis community.

Professor David Trimm

When MSW joined the School, budgets for new staff were tiny indeed. Mark managed to negotiate \$250 for his first piece of equipment ... a very simple "toy" unit normally used for introductory teaching. However, with some DIY modifications, it led to much of his research in kinetic aspects of catalysts.

Mark was and remains a handyman, and a colleague of great modesty.

Professor Bob Burford

I have greatly valued Mark's essential decency and his open-minded approach to resolving issues. He cares passionately about UNSW and its future, and I shall miss his wonderful sense of humour.

Melanie Harris, Office of the Vice-Chancellor



Mark has made an enormous contribution to our University. He has on the one hand been a stabilising influence and on the other, has not been scared to instigate changes and take bold steps. History will, I believe, show him to have turned the tide and repositioned the ship.

David Gonski, Chancellor

Mark is a wonderful mentor to me and many colleagues in the Faculty. Perhaps his most endearing trait is his willingness to listen.

Professor Rose Amal

Under Mark's leadership the Faculty became the largest and most successful in Australia ... the Faculty Christmas parties were legendary. Always sociable and approachable, Mark managed change very successfully.

Brendon Parker, Dean of Engineering

When Mark was appointed Dean in June 1991 there were only four staff in the Faculty office. Mark would arrive at about 7.45am and open

I was fortunate in my honours year, 1974, to be assigned to do my research project under the supervision of a brand new lecturer – Dr M S Wainwright. From Mark I learned to enjoy research, to develop a scientific curiosity and how to motivate others. I went on to become his first PhD student. It is not an overstatement to say that this was the defining moment of my professional career.

Professor Neil Foster

the office, turn on the fan and open the windows in summer, or turn on the heaters in winter. I started to arrive before Mark and do "the opening of the office thing". He would then get in before me and I would get in before him. As a result we ended up arriving well before 7.30am until we called a truce.

Dr Tony Robinson, former Associate Dean

Mark is genuinely interested in and cares about people. During his 10 years as Dean, the Faculty experienced major expansion. We all remember these years as extremely exciting and challenging.

Robyn Horwood, Executive Officer, Engineering

I worked with Mark for 15 years, starting in 1986 when he was an Associate Professor. He is a very fair person and it was a privilege to work with him.

Maureen Noonan, former PA

A farewell reception for the outgoing Vice-Chancellor will be held on Tuesday 13 June from 4pm at the John Niland Scientia Building. All staff are welcome. RSVPs to Alyson Wills on vcreception@unsw.edu.au or 9385 2884.

Compiled by Denise Knight and Mary O'Malley.

Sea of opportunities

Steering your research to commercial success

Before you tell the world about your latest innovation, think twice. Has it been protected by a patent? If not, how do you go about it? And how will you negotiate the path to commercial success? **Mary O'Malley** explores the issues.



Asksed to name two common misconceptions about commercialisation of research, Tony Romagnino from UNSW's technology transfer company is quick to respond. "Most researchers new to the game underestimate the personal commitment required to commercialise research and think that raising money can be fast and easy," says the General Manager of Technology Commercialisation at NewSouth Innovations (NSI).

NewSouth Innovation's (NSI's) Canadian-born Romagnino, who has steered many deals to success in the tough US marketplace, knows all about the highs and lows that researchers experience when they enter the dizzy new world of patents, licences, joint ventures and spin-off companies.

Becoming familiar with the language and culture of the business world is just one of the challenges university researchers face when translating research outcomes into commercial realities.

"What researchers have accomplished is one out of a thousand parts of what will be required to get a product to market," he says. "It is the earliest part of a very long process."

Many pitfalls lie between research and royalty cheque, as Professor Branko Celler has discovered. He has worked his way to the marketplace without a formal business background or the backing of an organisation such as NSI. Formerly the Head of the School of Electrical Engineering and Telecommunications, Professor Celler was seconded from the University earlier this year to run a start-up company called Medcare Systems, commercialising the Home-Telecare technology he developed with Professor Nigel Lovell at UNSW.

"The process was very difficult, very rocky," he says. "And the reality is that we spent two-and-a-half years trying to find funding in Australia

through venture capitalists and we found funding in the UK in three months with a significant industry player. We lost two years of market impact and now have competitors that we wouldn't have had otherwise."

But the hard slog is paying off. After less than a year in the market, the company has just won a \$1.75 million Commercial Ready Grant from AusIndustry to fund a new telehealth platform. It will have the flexibility and capacity for volume manufacturing that will enable the products to access world markets.

Despite the possible hardships, NSi's Tony Romagnino encourages researchers to take the plunge with their technology, as they can do exceptionally well. "People want to commercialise for different reasons: some to further their academic career, some for fame and fortune, and some for entrepreneurial reasons. All those returns are available in a best-case scenario," he says.

Peter Farrell, who began his career as a chemical engineer and served in the Faculty of Engineering throughout the 1970s and 80s, is a rare example of an entrepreneur who bridges the gap between scientific invention and the business community.

A Visiting Professor at UNSW, he is Chairman and Chief Executive of ResMed, one of the world's most successful medical device companies. ResMed began life almost 20 years ago, when Professor Farrell bought the rights to a device that treated obstructive sleep apnoea. The company is now global and a major developer and supplier of devices for sleep-disordered breathing, with a market capitalisation of almost \$4 billion.

To help researchers meet the challenges of commercialisation, the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM) and the faculties of engineering and science at UNSW joined forces late last year to launch an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative.

The program includes plans to set up a Centre for Innovation, Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship with the aim of building strong, ongoing connections between industry, investors and university researchers.

Professor Farrell has provided \$500,000 over five years in seed-funding for the initiative and hopes the new Centre will provide the catalyst for Australia to develop "a strong, viable entrepreneurial culture where innovation thrives".

Developing the right mind-set for commercialisation should start early in the research process, says Tony Romagnino. "We understand how important publishing is for our academics but we want to make sure they do things in the right order. So before you talk to any publication or go to conferences, talk to NSi. Be careful, or your opportunity may be lost forever. If something becomes public domain you can't do a thing with it. Educate yourself about IP," he advises.

"A researcher needs to look at the process of commercialisation just like they would their own research plan. Ask yourself the following questions: what milestones do I need to accomplish to get my invention to market and what differentiates my invention from everyone else's? Learn the process, ask a lot of questions, look for peers who have achieved success and find people you are comfortable working with. Make sure you always have your end point in mind."

Below are two examples of the 19 UNSW technologies that NSi is showcasing at the Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia Conference later this month, together with advice from the researchers involved.

Gravity Oil-Water Separator

The opportunity

The Extended Gravity Oil-Water Separator (EGOWS), developed by David Tolmie and Peter Stone from the Water Research Laboratory in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, is a simple tank-and-siphon system that protects the

Overseas companies shine with UNSW technology

Though it is the clear desire of many researchers to find manufacturers in their own country, sometimes the opportunities lie offshore in countries with larger populations, enthusiasm for the product and lower overheads.

But the benefits to Australia are certainly not lost, says Professor Martin Green, one of the multi-award-winning researchers behind UNSW solar cells which still set a world record for efficiency.

"I think successful Australian operations need to work on the world stage," says Professor Green, who has just been awarded a prestigious ARC Federation Fellowship, making him one of the first researchers to receive this honour for the second time.

UNSW technology for generating electricity from the sun currently underpins two major international manufacturing operations – CSG Solar in Germany and Suntech Power Co in China.

CSG Solar is now in mass production of modules of crystalline silicon on glass (CSG) – the result of 10 years research by the world-renowned photovoltaics experts from UNSW. It is a technology that promises to make solar energy price competitive with retail electricity for the first time.

With UNSW, Wuxi-based Suntech is about to launch a new solar-cell technology that will overcome a fundamental weakness of cells that have been on the market for the past 20 years.

Suntech was one of last year's most successful floats on the New York Stock Exchange, achieving a 41 percent increase in its price on day one. Its director, Shi Zhengrong, did his PhD with Professor Green, laying the foundations for a close partnership with UNSW.

"They have the technology and very low-cost manufacturing operations in China. The University is doing very well out of its collaboration with Suntech," says Professor Stuart Wenham, who with Professor Green has developed some of the world's most successful solar-cell technologies. They were both recent finalists in the European Inventor of the Year awards.

Professor Green points out that Australians still control both these operations and rewards are being reaped by Australia in various ways – CSG has its research base here and royalties will start to flow now it has products; Suntech is generously supporting the Centre for Photovoltaic Engineering and its students.

Professor Wenham says while he would be keen to see more manufacturing opportunities in Australia, so far few companies have expressed interest.

"We've been well supported by [Australian] government research funding and even in taking the product to pilot production," he says. "It seems that when we get to the final stage, when we've done a demo and we know it's going to work, there are no opportunities in Australia."

"In general we've given good terms to licensees to keep the technology in Australia. We charge half the royalty rate if a product is manufactured in Australia."

Professor Wenham says many more companies have expressed a desire to work with UNSW, particularly in the Asian region where renewable photovoltaic energy is seen as the most attractive long-term option.



Stuart Wenham (back), Shi Zhengrong and Associate Professor Armin Aberle from the School of Photovoltaic Engineering and Renewable Energy.

environment by removing oil from water. The system can capture and process episodic run-off from industrial environments and retain catastrophic oil spills. Effluent released from the EGOWS contains down to below 10 parts per million, which meets regulatory requirements for disposal back into the natural environment.

The system requires no power and is simple to implement. Applications for the EGOWS include the electricity power industry, oil-water run-off in industrial sites, oil refineries, road/sea/air terminals and highways.

Commercialisation status

The EGOWS technology has two patents and has been successfully licensed by NSi to Australian companies. Potential international licensees are currently being sought in the US and Europe.

Researcher's tips

"A fundamental thing I have realised is that just because you have a good invention it doesn't mean your ideas will be adopted by the market," says Dr Tolmie. "You need a good business plan and some idea of the market opportunities, and it helps if you know or have access to someone who understands the commercial world. Finding an organisation that can carry the marketing costs has been a tricky task. You need an organisation that is already serving a similar market. Fortunately for us there are parties out there, but this does take time and a lot of effort is required to bring them into action."

Biosensors

The opportunity

Professor Justin Gooding and colleagues in the School of Chemistry have developed portable biosensor devices that provide rapid, on-site tests for the detection of molecules, such as pesticides, drugs and bacteria.

The biosensor exploits specific biological recognition molecules, such as antibodies, peptides or enzymes, which are integrated with signal transducers that measure electrical or optical changes when the biomolecule recognises its target.

Applications include the detection of trace concentrations of compounds for environmental monitoring, medical diagnostics, forensic science, and disease prevention.

Commercialisation status

The technology has been patented and the preferred commercialisation strategy is to produce and engineer the device with a licensee already involved in the biosensor device market. Funding is being sought from interested parties to support further development of a range of immunosensors for the detection of different toxins.

Researcher's tips

"It's a slow process," Professor Gooding says of negotiating with investors. "Nothing is decided until they sign on the dotted line. You need to build a relationship first. This helps things happen. For a company to invest in your research you need them to believe in you. Having a champion in the company that supports your cause is crucial."

Want to know more?

July is *Innovation Month* at AGSM. Peter Farrell will be one of the guest speakers at the Innovation Policy Panel to be held at the Scientia on 3 July. Eric von Hippel from MIT will give an address entitled *Democratising Innovation* at the AGSM's city campus on 25 July. For more information see the website at www.agsm.edu.au.

Contact NSi: Anthony (Tony) Romagnino, General Manager – Technology and Commercialisation at a.ramagnino@nsiinnovations.com.au or phone 9385 6585. ■

Signalling the way forward

Researchers need to think beyond the science of their technology if they hope to enter the business realm, says Professor Peter Steinberg, one of the key figures behind Biosignal Pty Ltd, a company based on UNSW research.

"Scientists typically view the science as the be-all and end-all of the process, when in fact there are all sorts of commercialisation issues to be aware of, such as the market domain, the competitive space for your particular product, investor interest, and the nature of the investor market," says Professor Steinberg.

Synthetic analogues of natural antibacterial compounds derived from seaweed – the development of which is being led by Dr Naresh Kumar in the School of Chemistry – are being incorporated into products and commercialised through Biosignal Pty Ltd.

Discovered by Professors Steinberg and Staffan Kjellerberg (pictured), of the Centre for Marine Biofouling and Bioinnovation, these compounds prevent the formation of bacterial biofilms on surfaces ranging from the lining of lungs and medical devices to ship hulls. The compounds inhibit but do not kill bacteria, thus minimise drug resistance, which is



currently a concern with most antibiotics.

Biosignal was established in 1999 and successfully listed on the ASX (BOS) in 2004 with a market capitalisation of about \$25 million and currently has title to 11 unique patents.

"To make your way forward requires a

combination of asking business people for advice and gaining sufficient experience so that you can understand what the business people tell you," says Professor Steinberg. "Of course, the converse is true – it helps if business people can talk a bit of science as well."



Women with **altitude**

A leadership program developed to help address the lack of women academics in senior roles at UNSW is winning rave reviews from participants, writes **Denise Knight**.

"I already feel better equipped to deal with leadership issues," says Associate Professor Emma Robertson from COFA's School of Design Studies. She is one of 20 women taking part in the first Academic Women in Leadership Program which is being piloted this year.

"Absolutely inspiring" is how Associate Professor Rae Frances, Head of the School of History, describes the course. "It is definitely helping women to feel more confident to put their hands up for bigger roles."

According to UNSW's Director of Equity and Diversity, Jude Stoddart, the overwhelming response to the course reveals there is no lack of enthusiasm from women academics to take on senior leadership positions. "We had nearly 70 applications for 20 places," she says.

The Equity and Diversity Unit led the development of the program which explores issues of inclusive leadership and decision making in a university context and provides a unique opportunity for participants to develop their individual leadership style.

The initiative has been strongly supported by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mark Wainwright, who chairs the Gender Equity Strategy committee. He agreed to fund the pilot program for a year but at the official launch both he and the Chancellor, David Gonski, said they were committed to seeing it go beyond this.

"The excellent response supports our belief that this program is timely and relevant and there is a large number of women who aspire to contribute as future leaders in academia," says Professor Wainwright.

"I have personally found my involvement in all aspects of the Gender Equity Strategy both stimulating and professionally satisfying. I look

forward to the program providing a lasting legacy of well-qualified, talented women taking up leadership positions at UNSW."

The program, which runs for eight days over the academic year, is the culmination of extensive research, consultation and analysis. It features workshops, guest speakers, shadowing and mentoring by senior academic staff, executive career coaching, and group learning projects.

For Associate Professor Prem Ramburuth, the course couldn't have happened at a better time. In April she was appointed Head of the

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School of Organisation and Management. "This program has given me a lot of confidence in my new role," she says. "It has made me realise how I can meet the many challenges that the position presents, and how I can make a real contribution. The course is interactive and practical, which helps make the learning all the more relevant. There is a great deal of sharing of experiences about how things can be done effectively."

Emma Robertson says one of the important areas for her has been learning about how to manage in a constrained working environment – a reality in a university workplace. After four

Above: at the official launch of the leadership program in February with the NSW Governor Professor Marie Bashir.

years as the Presiding Member for COFA, she is currently on long service leave. "My tank was empty. But through the process of doing the course I feel like I've been filled up again and I'm ready to re-engage." She adds that it is "critical that the program continues as there are many other women who are desperate to do this course".

Participants have also identified the opportunity to build formal and informal networks with other women at UNSW as a key benefit of the program. "I believed I could be much more effective in my role if I could take part in a course targeted at developing leadership skills," says Associate Professor Frances. "And a big part of the motivation was knowing that there would be 19 other women in the same position."

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Robert King, whose portfolio covers both equity and human resources, says that it is important that we are able to "draw on the widest pool of talent available for the University's future leadership. I'm delighted to support such an initiative being included in our suite of leadership programs."

The Academic Women in Leadership program is run by Rosamund Christie, an adjunct faculty member of the AGSM and an independent trainer, facilitator and coach. A program advisory committee including senior women academics will assist with the evaluation of the program later this year. ■

First Person: Jude Stoddart, page 15

Australia cut out of the picture?

The Howard government's legislation to amend the Migration Act will have a number of disturbing effects on Australia's refugee, human rights and foreign policies, argues **Anthony Burke**.

Exicising Australia from the Migration Act will enable the offshore processing of asylum seekers at remote places such as Nauru, Manus or Christmas Islands. Refugee-status decisions will be made by immigration department (DIMIA) officers with no provisions for review by the Refugee Review Tribunal or the High Court.

The real results of the changes, if passed, will be to see all asylum seekers (including children) incarcerated in long-term detention in remote areas with poor facilities, while their claims are assessed and third countries are sought to give them asylum. This means that people could remain in detention even if they are found to be refugees but there is no country willing to take them.

The apparent willingness of the Australian government to be bullied by a foreign power over a significant matter of national policy is worrying

The Bill was sparked by the furore within Indonesia over Australia's granting of temporary protection visas to 42 West Papuan asylum seekers in March. This hysterical reaction has since produced a minor crisis in the bilateral relationship with Jakarta. In its wake the Prime Minister John Howard stated that "national interest" rather than international law should be a factor in refugee decisions, and that we "have a legitimate interest in the bilateral relationship with Indonesia". The apparent willingness of the Australian government to be bullied by a foreign power over a significant matter of national policy is worrying.

The plans have been criticised on human rights grounds by Amnesty International, who argued that they breached Australia's commitment under Article 31 of the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees that "it will not penalise refugees based on their method of arrival". The National Council of Churches and refugee advocacy organisation A Just Australia pointed out that the measures breach a dangerous threshold. As bad as the measures taken against the Tampa group in October 2001 were, "they concerned secondary movers ... Papuan refugees, on the other hand, are fleeing directly from a country of persecution". The measures also replay all the problems associated with the failed "Pacific Solution" on Nauru and are a major step backwards on recently hard-won "reforms" to Australian policies of asylum detention and assessment.

Under the new regime, children will be detained again, and the government will be insulated from the kind of scrutiny and checks advocated by last year's *Palmer Inquiry* into wrongful detention. Most disturbingly, asylum seekers will have no protection against wrongful decisions by DIMIA officials and remain vulnerable to refoulement to the countries from which they originally fled. These concerns have motivated a number of Liberal backbenchers to oppose the Bill in the Coalition party room, however, it is unclear if any will go so far as to oppose the legislation.

Anthony Burke is a senior lecturer in the School of Politics and International Relations and the author of *In Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety*.

Courage-free zone

With coffers overflowing and tax collections well above expenditure needs, the federal budget presented the perfect opportunity to truly reform the taxation system, laments **Neil Warren**.

This year's budget has some parallels with Dorothy's journey on the way to the Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz*. Remember her confrontation with the lion?

Although it exhibited considerable aggression and noise, the lion lacked the courage of its convictions and was sternly reprimanded by Dorothy for its actions. But by no means was the lion cowardly; it simply lacked the conviction that would have given it courage.

True to form, the Treasurer followed the same script. Courage was only shown where the ground was familiar and the issues addressed uncontroversial. What resulted were benefits for the self-employed, high-income earners, middle-income families and the baby boomers, who all found themselves in clover. The rest – low-income families, singles and even the aged – gained only marginally.

The problem is that somehow we were all led to believe it was going to be so much more, that the lion had courage.

There is no doubt changes in the taxation of superannuation are a tax reform that will significantly affect Australia's savings. From 1 July next year savings into superannuation will be taxed at a flat rate of 15 percent. Previously, the rate was 31.5 percent for average workers. For high-income earners, until July 2005, it was 46.5 percent.

But what about the rest of the budget? In fact, what we got was more of what the government is comfortable with. In 2003, those on

low incomes saw their low-income tax offset increased from \$150 to \$235 and this budget announced it would now rise to \$600. Last year this group saw the lowest marginal tax rate reduced from 17 percent to 15 percent. For middle and upper-income groups, the budget also gave them more of the same. Since 2003, the income tax thresholds have been progressively increased.

The really big winners from this budget are high-income earners and those soon to retire. But even here the government did not have the courage to fully address the issue of top marginal tax rates. True, it increased the top threshold from its present \$95,000 to \$150,000 from 1 July, but it could not muster the courage to cut the top rate of 47 percent by more than two percentage points. Although it reduced the 42 percent rate to 40 percent for incomes between \$75,000 and \$150,000 there was anticipation that the top rate would also be reduced to 40 percent.

On tax reform, we need courage and confidence to push forth and take up challenges, and recognise that although we might make some mistakes, we can learn from these and move forward, leading Australia to a competitive future. ■

Neil Warren is associate professor of economics at Atax, where he has recently been appointed as Head of School.

State of the nation

The characters and dramatic events that have shaped New South Wales have been captured by historian Beverley Kingston in the first history of the state to be published in over a century. By Alex Clark.

While other states managed to maintain their own identity, after 1901 NSW seemed submerged in the federation or seen as the Australian archetype," says Beverley Kingston, an honorary research fellow in the School of History. "While it's difficult to disentangle the first 50 years of white settlement, NSW rapidly developed its own history."

Beginning with the convict colony at Port Jackson, Kingston exposes the myriad of influential characters as she traces significant events of the past 235 years. Her favourites include former Premiers George Reid, who governed NSW prior to Federation and Joe Cahill, who brought the Opera House to Sydney's foreshore. "Reid wouldn't get anywhere in politics today, he's so unattractive," jokes Kingston. "But he was so good in politics because he could read the mood."

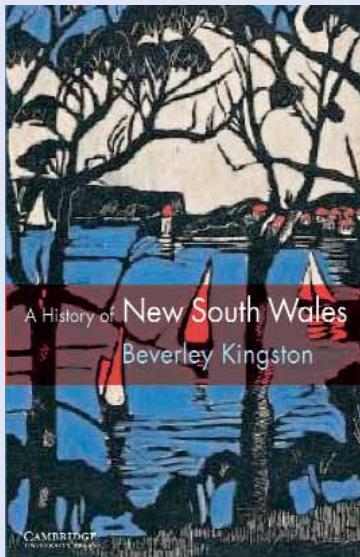
From first contact between Aborigines and Europeans to the impact of World War I and the move to ban more war memorials because they made people miserable, Kingston recalls the struggles and triumphs of groups and individuals.

"People wanted to hold on to the good things that had come out of the war like 'mateship,'" says Kingston. "But it simultaneously had a very depressing effect, particularly on children. The Minister for Education, Tom Mutch, banned war trophies in schools during the early 1920s."

Kingston, who taught Australian history at UNSW for more than 30 years, was aware of the scant background material available to students and leapt at the invitation from Cambridge University Press to author the first in a series of historical accounts of Australia's states and territories.

As NSW editor of the working party for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for more than 10 years, Kingston has drawn on her fascination for people's lives, both public and private, to tell a story distinct to NSW. "I love memoirs, letters and biographies, I've read more biographies than I can remember." ■

The former premier, Bob Carr, whose resignation in August 2005 completes Kingston's historical account, launched the book at the Royal Mint in Sydney on 23 May to mark the 150th anniversary of the NSW Parliament's first sitting.



The author playing in front of the family air-raid shelter in the backyard in Manly in 1942.

“On election night March 2004, Bob Carr was described as the best Liberal premier New South Wales has ever had. Democracy, as De Tocqueville observed of eighteenth-century America, is inherently conservative. Of all the Australian states, only New South Wales shares with the United States something of the eighteenth-century ethos. Yet there is a sense, too, in which NSW Inc. has always existed. The state enterprise begun as an experimental gaol has continued ever since as an experiment in survival for the creation of wealth.

EXPORTING POLICY EXPERTISE

Throughout the Asia-Pacific region, UNSW academics are taking a leading role in providing high-level policy advice, research, and training to governments, international agencies and aid organisations.

As part of an international series, *Uniken* is featuring a selection of these projects which cover a broad range of fields including health, education, energy and governance.

Forecasting the HIV epidemic

UNSW researchers have developed a model to project the future course of the HIV epidemic in PNG, Indonesia and East Timor. As **Dan Gaffney** reports, the study – commissioned by the Australian government – has prompted warnings that PNG could face an AIDS epidemic as catastrophic as Africa's.

What might happen in Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Indonesia if the resources and commitment given to preventing and treating HIV/AIDS remain unchanged for the next 20 years? And what if these countries enhance their political and resource commitment to preventing and treating the disease?

The Australian government, through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), last year commissioned UNSW's NSG Consulting to conduct an HIV Epidemiological Modelling and Impact Study to answer these pressing questions.

Researchers from the University's National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR) and National Centre in HIV Social Research undertook the study. The report, *Impacts of HIV/AIDS 2005–2025 in*

due to savings on treatment and care costs, and warns that a failure to contain the epidemic could have negative impacts on regional security and stability, particularly in PNG and Indonesian West Papua.

The Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, drew on some of the study's findings in warning that PNG could face an AIDS epidemic as catastrophic as Africa's, if action wasn't taken urgently to tackle rising infection rates.

He said in February that the progression of the disease through the region could "halt and then begin to reverse Asia's economic growth", with financial losses possibly reaching \$24 billion a year by 2010. This would threaten the "very source of our business success in recent years, the sustained growth of our markets in the Asia-Pacific".

Forecasting the likely pattern and impacts of HIV/AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region is vital for governments to be able to make informed decisions about scarce health resources

– John Kaldor

Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and East Timor, describes the likely impact of HIV/AIDS in these countries under three policy scenarios: baseline (current policy approach), medium and high response levels.

Under current policy settings, HIV/AIDS is projected to have devastating human, social and economic impacts, particularly in PNG and in some Indonesian populations.

By 2025, one in ten Papua New Guineans could be infected with HIV and more than 70 percent of medical beds might be occupied by people with AIDS, a consequence that would be overwhelming for the health system. In 20 years, Indonesia would see an epidemic with almost two million people infected with HIV, 166,000 infants orphaned in West Papua, and AIDS deaths totalling 1.5 million. East Timor would have one in three sex workers infected with HIV and an HIV prevalence of six percent among men who have sex with men.

The Australian government passed the report to the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, PNG and East Timor earlier this year.

Professor John Kaldor, Deputy Director of NCHECR, said he hoped the study would help inform policy decisions. "Forecasting the likely pattern and impacts of HIV/AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region is vital for governments to be able to make informed decisions about scarce health resources," he said.

The report also points out that the shift in programs needed to make a real impact in reducing HIV/AIDS rates will require strong political commitment from governments as well as more resources for primary healthcare and education.

It emphasises that investments in preventing the spread of HIV would have long-term economic impacts

The United Nations has estimated that more than eight million people in the Asia-Pacific region are living with HIV and that this figure may reach 20 million by 2010 if immediate action is not taken to curb the spread of the virus.

In February, the Federal Government added an additional \$25 million over four years to its existing regional HIV/AIDS funding through a grant to the Clinton Foundation, which aims to provide improved access to HIV diagnosis and treatment in PNG, Vietnam and China. ■

The report is available at www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/hivaids/pdfs/hivaidsSynopsis.pdf.

NSG Consulting has implemented more than 300 projects across 25 countries. As the University's commercial education, training and consulting arm, its core business is the management of multidisciplinary international development projects for multilateral development banks, bilateral donors, UN agencies, academic institutions, consulting firms and international NGOs. "NSG Consulting seeks to identify, develop and manage a range of international opportunities that produce positive social, cultural and political outcomes for regional communities and enrich the international capacity and reputation of the University," says Program Director, John Arneil.

NSG Consulting is the legal and financial entity for UNSW academics to engage in consulting, and provides project management, financial services and insurance coverage to support staff.

First person

What do you like most about your job at UNSW?

The position is diverse, challenging and there are real opportunities to make a difference to the lives of staff and students – I have never been bored! For example, one pilot project we initiated has created a real pathway to the University for students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. Under the new Access Assist Scholarships, 20 young people will have fee-free places (no HECS debt) and scholarships of up to \$6000. Such opportunities will change their lives immeasurably. Where you live, or who you are born to, should not be the determinant of your access to education ... after all many of us here owe much to our own free education.

Projects such as the Gender Equity Strategy for Academic Staff produce fascinating insights into the often unintended consequences of policies and practices that can limit the scholarly opportunities for women and hence the ability of the organisation to draw on the intellectual capital of all staff. Running a gender analysis through the system has also provided real insights into the effectiveness of a range of institutional practices that have implications for men as well as women.

Through this work I get to meet some fascinating people with such diverse backgrounds socially, culturally and in the way they see and give meaning to the world. Most people working at the University have a strong commitment to the public good and I am heartened by their interest, generosity and goodwill to others.

Pet hate?

When someone's first response to an idea is to say "we tried this X years ago and it did not work" ... we all need to remember that the world and opportunities change.

What are you reading/listening to at the moment?

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak and I am currently listening to The Necks, Joe Zawinul, Arvo Part and The White Stripes.

Best advice you've ever received?

From my Dad: "Always make sure you can look yourself in the eye." Closely followed by: "Don't ruin a good scotch by adding water."

Favourite expression?

Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will (apologies to Gramsci). Too much of a good thing can be wonderful (thanks to Mae West).

Who or what inspires you?

My old friend, Pat McDougal, who went into the mills at 14, was a single parent by 18, worked in a factory until 45 and then did a degree and postgraduate teaching course. She became a teacher and leader back in her own community. Unjustly, she died two weeks before her retirement and never got the PhD she had promised herself.

Which famous people would you invite to a dinner and why?

I would like to host a dinner party with a group of women and men from the University to discuss the meaning of gender and how it shapes our institution. It would need to be an open and honest dialogue to explore our similarities and differences and how we experience and enact gender between us. If we did come to any understandings then we would be famous. Any offers?

Failing that, dinner for two with George Clooney!

What does equity mean to you? Why is it important?

In a rich country like Australia, everyone should have the right to not only have their basic needs met but also the opportunity to develop their talents and skills and participate fully in society. But given we do not all start with the same opportunities we need to recognise that and create the conditions for people to really have the fabled "fair go". At UNSW, we live in a diverse community. Values like fairness, equity and respect for



Jude Stoddart
Director of Equity and Diversity

difference are important to maintaining social harmony and ensuring everyone contributes as richly as they can. Our students are the leaders of the future, if we can win respect for these values here, hopefully they will take them with them.

What would you have done in another life?

A photojournalist.

What are you good at?

Spotting injustice. Seeing how the big picture can translate into opportunities at a more local level and mobilising ideas, energy and sometimes resources to level the playing field.

Having interesting, adventurous holidays in remote places (you won't get me on the mobile phone!).

What do you most value?

Honesty in friendship.

What amazes you most?

How many sides there can be to a story ... it sometimes seems a wonder that human beings can communicate at all.

We call ourselves a civilised country, when some non-Indigenous Australians think that it's acceptable that our fellow Indigenous Australians have a life expectancy 17 years less than our own and \$36.7 billion worth of tax cuts stand alongside the deprivation, unemployment and ill health we see in some Indigenous communities. ■

LAST WORD



By John
Pace

Time to manage the peace in Iraq?

Former Chief of the Human Rights Office of the UN Mission in Iraq and Visiting Fellow in the Faculty of Law, John Pace, asks what went wrong with human rights in Iraq's transition.

The invasion created in the minds of many Iraqis the hope and expectation that they would no longer have to fear for their safety and security, and that a new era of freedom and respect for human rights was about to dawn.

Sadly, this has not been the case; since the invasion, the situation of human rights has continued to deteriorate. Already in his first report in July 2003, the UN Secretary-General had shared the concerns registered by Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello. A second report, in December 2003, confirmed further deterioration regarding human rights activities, largely attributed to the parallel deterioration in security.

What went wrong? The serious human rights situation resulted from a number of complex factors.

In the first place, on the purely civilian level, the state structures for the protection of the individual did not function. The dissolution of the police force and of the army created a vacuum in protection. The reconstruction

were prisoners of US forces). With the large majority of these detainees being innocent, there is little doubt that many of them are prone to becoming terrorists once they are released.

A third factor is the failure to ensure a sufficiently inclusive political process; this strengthened the hand of those elements in the opposition who advocate violence, and weakened the more moderate groups. The political "dialogue" was partly conducted through acts of violence. Some of this violence has since developed into what the media conveniently label "sectarian", namely Shi'a vs Sunni – not entirely correct.

A fourth factor is the presence of private security groups, many of them foreigners, whose lucrative income for providing security is the best incentive to perpetuate insecurity. Given immunity by the Coalition Provisional Authority shortly before it handed over to the interim (Allawi) Government in June 2004, these groups have grown in size and diversity of operations and remain above the law.

Talk of peace appears remote, even derisory. The international community has yet to be given the opportunity to fulfil the objectives of the UN Charter to ensure the dignity of the people of Iraq.

of these two essential arms of the state has been too slow. The non-functioning of the administration of the justice system created an environment in which crime expanded exponentially, including criminal acts perpetrated as acts of terror.

The general instability was further compounded by the "war on terror". The presence of such large numbers of US forces in Iraq provided an attraction for those groups who considered America their enemy. They made their way to Iraq where they targeted the US military and other installations, including those considered vital for the reconstruction of the country. Groups such as Al-Qa'eda that had never set foot in Iraq before the invasion, now made it their battle ground in their war on the US.

The military engagement in the quest for terrorists compounded the threat by creating large numbers of detainees for prolonged periods, (as of 28 February 2006, there were a total of 29,565 detainees of which 14,229

The lack of security and the corresponding increase in violence brought about an exodus of international governmental and non-governmental organisations, a situation that remains largely the case at present.

The restoration and reconstruction effort has been further hampered by a lack of definition of the role of the UN and that of the US. Two levels of communication persist with the Iraqi authorities: a largely bilateral course by the US, and a multilateral one followed by the UN in accordance with its mandate, in which the US also participates. And there is no real coordination between the two, in so far as the reconstruction and restoration efforts are concerned. The military dimension where the US is acting on behalf of the Iraqi authorities, complicates the relationship further.

Thus the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate. The chaos has become part of the landscape; it is almost taken for granted. Talk of peace appears remote, even derisory. The international community has yet to be given the opportunity to fulfil the objectives of the UN Charter to ensure the dignity of the people of Iraq. The time has come for some meaningful action on the future – to put a stop to the slide into chaos – that implies competent management of the peace and the end of the present military engagement. ■

Dr John Pace completed his two-year term as Chief of the Human Rights Office of the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq earlier this year. He is a former director of the University's Australian Human Rights Centre and is a board member of the Diplomacy Training Program. He is currently undertaking a major research project focusing on the evolution of international human rights standards.

Left: A young Iraqi boy reads in broken English to the Australian patrol during a routine night patrol.

