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uniken

Changing face of Law

A new building for a new era

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UNSW

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On the cover: View of atrium from front entrance of the new law building. Photo by Katie Pashley.

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Group of Eight

Linking to **success**

UNSW will receive just on $6 million in grants from the Australian Research Council in the second round of linkage grants for 2006, the highest level of funding of any university.

The ARC has awarded UNSW a total of $3.9 million for 19 projects. In addition, a grant of more than $2 million has been made to the Australian Graduate School of Management. The 20 grants bring with them contributions from industry partners of an additional $8.3 million.

Professor Robert Wood and Dr Shayne Gary from the AGSM receive $2.1 million over six years for research in the area of flexible expertise and leadership capabilities. The grant will fund research at AGSM's newly launched Accelerated Learning Laboratory, which is supported by Macquarie Bank, ANZ Banking Group, Brambles, Qantas, IAG, Booz Allen Hamilton and Egon Zehnder International. This is the largest grant made to any UNSW project in the current funding round.

The iCinema Centre for Interactive Cinema Research at UNSW's College of Fine Arts has been awarded $520,000 for a groundbreaking virtual heritage project. The project involves the development of an interactive installation re-envisioning the UNESCO World Heritage site of Hampi in India through stereoscopic photography and computer animation. The work will premier at the Lille Cultural Capital Europe Festival in France later this year. This is the only grant awarded in the visual, performing arts and design sector from across Australia in the current ARC round.

Other successful projects include research to improve methods for early detection of child psychopathology ($300,000 over four years to a team led by Professor Mark Dadds of the School of Psychology) and work on the use of microbes to clean up polluted environments, focusing on contaminated groundwater at Botany ($327,000 over four years to a team of researchers from the Faculties of Science and Medicine).

"This continues UNSW's very high success rate with linkage grants," said Professor Les Field, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). "We will now receive a total of $13 million in ARC funding in the two rounds of linkage grants for 2006, the highest of any university, as well as the highest number of grants.

"It is particularly pleasing in this latest round to see the success of research projects in non-traditional areas, such as accelerated learning and the visual arts. I congratulate all of the researchers involved," Professor Field said.

Research star wars: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the controversial RQF, page 4

UNSW tops tally of finalists in **Eureka Prizes**

UNSW has achieved a record 18 finalists in this year's Australian Museum Eureka Prizes, more than any other institution in the awards' history. The finalists are drawn from the fields of medical research, neurology, microbiology, quantum computing, toxicology, nanotechnology, epidemiology, oceanography, and climate and environmental science. The winners will be announced on 22 August.

Carrick recognises **teaching stars**

The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education has honoured 17 UNSW staff members for their "outstanding contributions to student learning". The University was awarded a total of nine citations as part of the 2006 Australian Awards for University Teaching.

"I am delighted to see the commitment to teaching by UNSW staff rewarded in such a public way," says Professor Richard Henry, Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Quality Improvement).

The following academic and professional support staff members were honoured: Rick Bennett and Simon McIntyre, COFA; Richard Buckland, School of Computer Science and Engineering; Shirley Carlon, Atax; Dr Dominic Fitzsimmons, Dr Ian Collinson, Dr Monica Kerretts, Geoff Quick and Shivaun Weybury, The Learning Centre; George Hatsidimitris, School of Physics; Dr Frances Miley, UNSW@ADFA; Suzanne Mobbs, Office of Medical Education; Dr Carmen Moran, School of Social Work; and Dr Noel Whitaker, Dr Will Rifkin, Dr Helen Dalton and Michelle Kofod, Faculty of Science.

The Carrick citations, awarded for the first time this year, are part of the Federal Government's expanded program of national awards designed to recognise and reward teaching excellence in the higher education sector. The focus of the awards this year was team teaching. The citations will be presented at a ceremony on 8 August in the John Niland Scientia Building.

Mentoring matters: Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence winners, page 12

Fast forward for gifted kids

Skipping a grade or two can be of enormous benefit to gifted students but is often discouraged in Australian schools, according to Professor Miraca Gross, Director of UNSW's Gifted Education, Research, Resource and Information Centre (GERRIC).

GERRIC has been awarded an international grant of $500,000 from the John Templeton Foundation of Pennsylvania in the United States to investigate the under-usage of academic acceleration.

"Research has identified 18 ways gifted and talented students are able to successfully move ahead of their peers," says Professor Gross. "However, teachers and principals are often wary of allowing students to do this in case they miss out on necessary work or in case it harms them socially or emotionally." Professor Gross and GERRIC's Director of Research, Professor Karen Rogers, will lead the investigation. Both are internationally recognised for their research on acceleration.

Bright young things on campus … participants in last month's Poppyseeds Program for academically gifted children in pre-school and kindergarten.

The right stuff

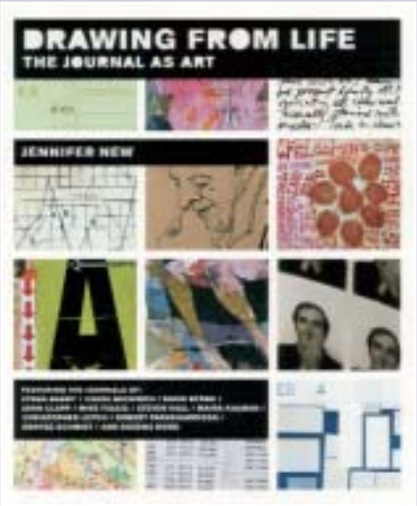
PhD law student Ben Bildstein has developed an internet search tool that only extracts information that can be used freely and copied without restriction.

Bildstein presented the prototype at last month's *Unlocking IP* conference, hosted by UNSW's Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre, which is leading a three-year ARC linkage research project to investigate how Australia's digital commons, comprising both the public domain and public rights created by open content and open software licensing, can be expanded and protected. It involves five industry partners and a number of researchers from around Australia.

"We believe this area of intellectual property could work better for everyone – authors, administrators, distributors and end users – if the licences were both simpler and more flexible," says the centre's director, David Vaile. "The challenge is to apply a combination of licences that fit the particular business model, we can't assume one size fits all."

The metasearch engine piggybacks multiple search engines simultaneously to find unlicensed Australian material, says Bildstein, who worked on the prototype with Professor Graham Greenleaf, the project's chief investigator, and Philip Chung, Executive Director of AustLII. For more information on the prototype see www.unlockingip.org/au/

Last word: Graham Greenleaf on the national ID card proposal



The art of memory

The Artistic Construction of Memory exhibition was held at UNSW last month as part of the International Conference on Memory. The exhibition was designed to reflect and extend the conference's scientific themes and showed many of the ways that artists record and render memories in their artistic practice. Posters also incorporated writing on memory by philosophers, filmmakers and researchers from around the world. It featured the work of nine international artists and writers, among them COFA's Deborah West, Vaughan Rees and Liz Williamson and Emma Robertson, who curated the exhibition. Charles Santoso was the designer.

Spin doctors make something from nothing

Electronic devices are always shrinking in size but it's hard to imagine anything beating what UNSW researchers have created: a tiny wire that doesn't even use electrons to carry a current.

Unlike in a conventional electrical wire, the "hole quantum wire" exploits the gaps between electrons. The holes can be thought of as real quantum particles that have an electrical charge and a spin. Quantum wires are microscopically small, in this case about 100 times narrower than a human hair. Manufacturers are keenly interested in them because they hold the potential for new high-speed electronics applications, known as spintronics, and powerful quantum computers.

Associate Professor Alex Hamilton and Dr Adam Micolich, who lead the UNSW Quantum Electronic Devices group say the discovery puts the team at the front of its field in the quantum electronics revolution. "Research groups around the world have been trying to make these devices for more than a decade and we're the first to do so successfully," Professor Hamilton says. "We really do have a big lead now."

New members for UNSW Council

A number of new members have joined the UNSW Council following recent elections and new ministerial appointments.

Newly elected members include Scientia Professor Mark Bradford, who fills one of the four academic staff positions; Jennifer Till, non-academic staff member; Kirstin Hunter, undergraduate student member; and two new graduate members, Darren Challis and Tina Clifton.

The new ministerial appointments are Wal King, CEO of Leighton Holdings and Matthew Grounds, joint head of investment banking for UBS Investment Bank, Australia. Peter Mason, Paul Pearce MP, Jillian Segal and Susan Ryan have been re-appointed. A full list of members is available on the UNSW website.

It's a super choice

Both workers and industry investors do not make rational decisions when it comes to superannuation, according to research presented at the 2006 *Australian Colloquium of Superannuation Researchers.*

Choice in retirement funding was the theme of this year's conference hosted last month by the Centre for Pensions and Superannuation in the Faculty of Commerce and Economics. "It is just over a year since workers have been able to change super funds as they wish," said Centre director, Professor John Evans. "If we can understand how people make choices in regards to superannuation, we can try to pass on information in a more effective way, which will in turn help people make better-informed decisions," he said.

For the **record**

Cell therapies do need to be found for treatment of chronic disorders such as diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease and stem cells of embryonic origin may well be the answers required.
Professor Bernie Tuch, director of the Diabetes Transplant Unit, expressing his disappointment to the NSW Premier's decision to reject expert recommendations to extend human stem cell research – Sun Herald

Reform of our dysfunctional federal system of government is long overdue. Rather than promoting good government and enabling change, it is often a hindrance to getting things done. The signs have been there for years in areas such as health and education.
Professor George Williams, director of the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law – Daily Telegraph

Our regulatory system for complementary medicines is very good compared to most places in the world. But one area where the whole field could be improved is access to good information about the veracity of claims.
Professor Ric Day, St Vincent's Hospital – Weekend Australian

Practitioners working with disadvantaged, overseas-born women should give consideration to women's knowledge of SIDS prevention if current low rates of SIDS deaths are to be maintained.
Dr Lyn Kemp, UNSW's Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity – The Age

Our sense is that East Timor needs its friends more than ever to help it through a very difficult time. But we are very hopeful that we'll be able to bring human rights advocacy forward later this year and learn from what has happened.
Patrick Earle, executive director of the Diplomacy Training Program in the Faculty of Law – Campus Review

You can achieve substantial improvements quite quickly from a good national affordable housing agreement which provides some public money, but also one of the key goals is to attract a lot more private investment into certain kinds of housing.
Professor Julian Disney, director of the Social Justice Project and chairman of the National Housing Conference – The Age

Research **star wars**

The Research Quality Framework (RQF) looms as one of the biggest unknowns hanging over the future of university research in Australia, writes Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) **Professor Les Field**.

From its inception, the RQF has been controversial. It has been clouded by concerns that it might be used as a mechanism for shuffling scarce research resources around the sector; that it may not be done in a sufficiently rigorous fashion to have international credibility; and, most worryingly of all, that it could develop into a juggernaut that would take significant resources to service.

Not surprisingly then, there has been much jostling, lobbying and positioning to influence the shape of the RQF. The issue threatened to blow apart the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC) along Group of Eight (Go8) and non-Go8 lines as the sector struggled to find common ground on the direction the framework should take.

The United Kingdom has announced it will abandon its Research Assessment Exercise, on which the Australian RQF has been modelled. When Julie Bishop took over as Federal Minister for Education at the beginning of 2006, it was a politically "bold" move to continue down the track of a UK-style RQF, but now the UK is moving in the direction of a simpler, more metrics-based assessment scheme.

While Julie Bishop has stated the government remains committed to an RQF, she will take a fresh look at the process. If we continue to go down this path, we need to have an eye for the cost–benefit or return-on-investment in terms of the resources required to run the framework, and what we expect as an outcome.

One of the most vexed questions in the RQF is the proposal to assess research "impact" – a term that has proved very difficult to define and very easy to manipulate. Australia is unique in looking at measuring impact as part of the exercise and it's not hard to understand why. It is not easy to get a snapshot of research impact. The real applications of many of the most important discoveries always take some time to filter into the system – the highest impact research necessarily stands the test of time. There has been considerable pressure, particularly among the non-research intensive universities, to diffuse the meaning of impact and introduce the notion that this should be more a measure of "community engagement" or "community service". We must be crystal clear that the take-up or transfer of research is the key to the real meaning of impact.

Many Australian universities have run trial or "mock" RQFs on the pretext of positioning for the new regime. UNSW is not running a trial RQF and will not do so until the goalposts are absolutely fixed. Shadow-boxing is a waste of time and valuable resources and any realistic trial of a phantom framework is a serious imposition on staff who are busy getting on with the business of doing research.

> We must be crystal clear that the take-up or transfer of research is the key to the real meaning of impact.

Apart from the additional impost of a new reporting regime and the need to collect and collate even more data, we must also be careful to avoid the pitfalls of assessment exercises that have been implemented overseas. There is no question that the RQF environment concentrates our attention on research stars. In the UK this immediately reinvigorated the sport of "poaching", which is now becoming widespread in Australia. If overseas trends are any indicator, there will be more pressure to employ staff with established track records, so we will have to be very careful to protect and nurture our early career researchers.

Like most other research-intensive universities, UNSW welcomes any move to better quantify research excellence and quality as long as it provides good international benchmarks which validate the true quality of Australian research and researchers. ■

Secret agent targets godfather gene

A new class of experimental drug that has the potential to treat a diverse range of health problems such as cancer, heart disease and arthritis, is being developed by UNSW researchers. By **Susi Hamilton**.

Levon Khachigian

"Our experimental drug is like a secret agent that finds and latches onto its target within the cell and destroys it," says Professor Levon Khachigian, a molecular biologist and the senior author of a paper published last month in *Nature Biotechnology*. "It is a pre-programmed 'molecular assassin'."

That target is c-Jun, an important disease-causing master regulator gene, which appears to be involved in a host of conditions. The experimental drug works unlike anything currently on the market, at least in pre-clinical models, by switching off this "godfather gene", explains Professor Khachigian, who is based in the Centre for Vascular Research in the Faculty of Medicine. "We are entering a new era of 'smart drug' therapy and this work has potential to treat a wide spectrum of diseases."

In a series of papers published on the therapy, the UNSW researchers showed that c-Jun is not found in normal tissue but is highly expressed in a number of areas involving inflammation and aggressive vascular growth.

"Conventional anti-inflammatory drugs are associated with a whole host of side effects," says Professor Khachigian. "Our therapy may potentially avert some of these."

The team is hoping to perform the first human tests early next year, involving up to 10 people with non-melanoma type skin cancer, who will be injected with the drug, Dz13, over a two-month period. Professor Khachigian says the drug would attack both the tumour and the blood supply that feeds its growth. It has already been shown to be effective on a variety of skin cancers in pre-clinical models, one of which is featured in a paper in *Oncogene*.

We are entering a new era of "smart drug" therapy and this work has potential to treat a wide spectrum of diseases.

"If such a trial was to be successful, it would be a significant development given the high rates of skin cancer and because the main treatment currently is surgical excision, which can cause scarring."

"The biological methods that Professor Khachigian has described are in fact the key stage that indicate we have gone from something on paper that might work to something in biology that does work," says Professor Bernard Stewart, head of the Cancer Control Program of the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Health Service.

Other health problems to which the drug could readily be applied include age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and diabetic retinopathy. AMD is the most common cause of blindness in Australia.

The same technology has also been used by Professor Khachigian's group in work focusing on a different master regulator, Egr-1. The research, published in the *Journal of Thrombosis and Haemostasis,* shows that heart muscle damage after a heart attack is halved by the drug. ■

Private health insurance rebate "unsustainable"

New research from the Faculty of Commerce and Economics has cast doubt on claims that a rise in the number of people with health insurance would relieve pressure on public hospitals.

"The rebate is a blunt instrument," says Professor Denzil Fiebig of the School of Economics. "It relies on the notion that people with private health insurance are going to use it and take the pressure off the public system. It's clear from our research that that is not the case." This is despite an increase in private cover of 50 percent.

The number of people with health insurance is decreasing again. It could be because people are disillusioned with what private insurance has to offer and part of that could be increased premiums.

The Federal Government has spent more than $2 billion every year on the 30 percent private health insurance rebate since it was introduced in 2000.

"Fifteen percent of people are members of a health fund because of the financial incentives put forward by the government," says Professor Fiebig. "For a lot of people, especially in the higher income brackets, it is clear that they are facing a negative price if they don't have insurance, because otherwise it will be taken away in tax."

The researchers used figures from the 2001 Australian Bureau of Statistics National Health Survey to identify four broad categories of people with insurance, including those who took up insurance because of the government rebate – described by the researchers as "financial" types.

According to Professor Fiebig, this group is no more likely to use the private hospital system than the public one. "This may be because they're happy with the public hospital system, or it may be because of the out-of-pocket expenses they would face – even with private health insurance – in the private system."

The three other categories of people identified by the study are those who want choice; those who seek security; and those who have health as their primary motivator. Forty-three percent of people list a combination of reasons for taking up insurance.

"The irony is that those who are the recent converts to insurance are not using the private hospital system, yet those who have been in for five, 10 or 15 years have a windfall gain," Professor Fiebig says.

"Interestingly, the number of people with health insurance is decreasing again. It could be because people are disillusioned with what private insurance has to offer and part of that could be increased premiums."

Professor Fiebig, who is president of the Australian Health Economics Society, is also a chief investigator on one of the largest NHMRC grants ever to be awarded to the social sciences. The $6.9 million project, *Evaluating health policy by understanding consumer and provider decisions about health care*, will be completed in 2008.

He presented the findings on private health insurance to the Econometrics Society Australasian Meeting in Alice Springs. The co-authors are Elizabeth Savage and Rosalie Viney from UTS's Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation.

Susi Hamilton

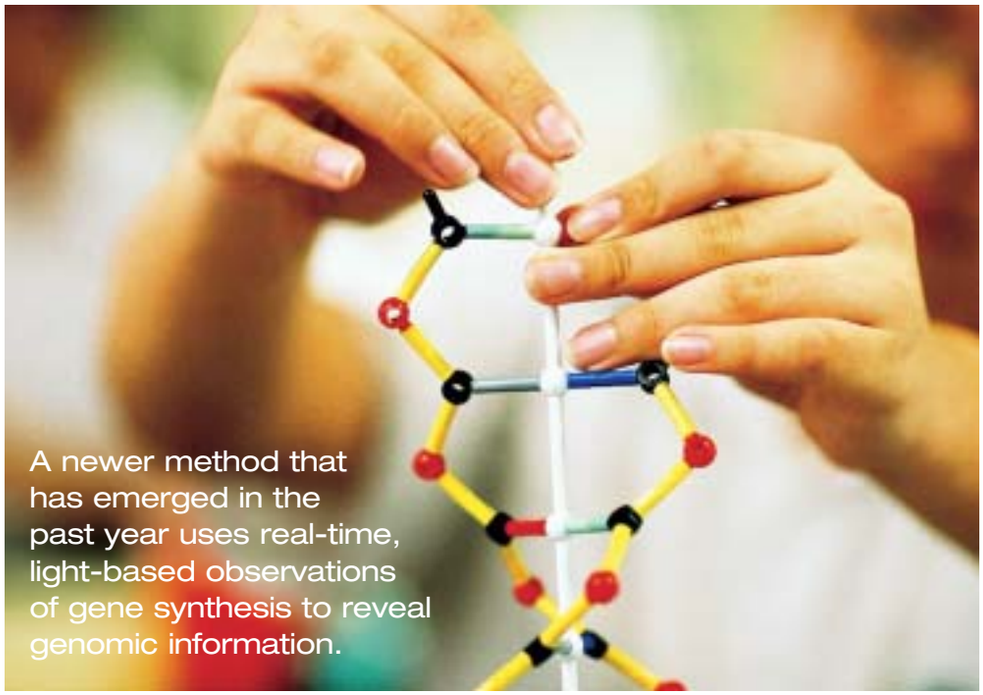
New way to crack genome code

Australian and US scientists have pioneered a new hybrid method for genomic sequencing that is faster and cheaper than current technologies.

The breakthrough will be welcomed in medical and biotechnology circles where there is rising demand for genome-sequencing technologies. The new method combines the best of new and old code cracking methods for "fingerprinting" the genetic basis of life.

Researchers from UNSW and the US-based J. Craig Venter Institute published the findings in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*. "Cracking the entire genetic code of an organism is expensive and until recently has relied in its fundamentals on a 30-year-old technology that involves a physical separation of gene fragments," says Dr Torsten Thomas, a study co-author and senior research fellow in the School of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences.

"A newer method that has emerged in the past year uses real-time, light-based observations of gene synthesis to reveal genomic information. It produces genomic information up to 100 times faster than the old technology."



A newer method that has emerged in the past year uses real-time, light-based observations of gene synthesis to reveal genomic information.

Using the genomes of six ocean bacteria, the scientists compared the utility and cost-effectiveness of the old and new methods to show that a hybrid approach was better than either method on its own. They found that combining the advantages of the two sequencing methods in a hybrid approach produced better quality genomic information.

"The new hybrid approach has generated exceptional results for several marine microbes and we hope that our findings will kick-start other genome projects that were previously constrained by economic considerations," says Dr Thomas.

Dan Gaffney

Exploring a **world of difference**

Diversity may have become a corporate catchcry, but new research from the AGSM shows ignoring differences may be counterproductive, writes **Lachlan Colquhoun**.

Modern organisations are hugely diverse, complex collections of people from a myriad of backgrounds. Simple categories such as sex, racial group or age, or more artificial groups such as temporary and permanent employees, executives and non-executives form the basis of this diversity.

So in a world which has, ostensibly at least, embraced diversity, how does this impact on the organisation and its performance? AGSM Associate Professors Prithviraj Chattopadhyay and Elizabeth George have made this their study, with the ultimate goal of understanding "if difference matters".

Basing their work on research conducted in US corporates, among Australian tertiary students, in an Australian government organisation and the hospital-based medical profession in Queensland, they have explored areas of demographic difference and self-categorisation, testing the basic hypothesis that the wider the real or perceived differences, the less engaged certain employees will be with the organisation.

Focusing on similar values or common goals can help bring the skill sets of a diverse group of people together.

"Our research questions are based on how these differences affect how you deal with other people," says Professor George. "How do they affect how much you like your co-workers, how does it affect your trust or your sense of obligation in the organisation, and your psychological contract with it? Our argument is that if difference affects these things negatively – and it can – then organisations need to think about how those differences may be harming the organisation."

Professor Chattopadhyay says an aspect of the research is understanding how difference impacts on "citizenship behaviour", the concept also known as "employee engagement". "Organisations are becoming more flexible so it is harder to actually define roles, and the flipside of that is that there are many things outside of the basic role which are important to the organisation's performance, so anything that can be done to improve that sense of citizenship is going to have an impact," he says.

The research of Chattopadhyay and George has covered a range of situations. In one study, Professor Chattopadhyay randomly selected work groups in four US organisations. Across the board, the study found both racial and age diversity had a negative impact on organisational self-esteem and peer relations.

In an Australian research project, data from 101 research scientists working in a government organisation was used to examine relationships between gender and work group identification, task conflict and emotional conflict. Some scientists were working with each other in a co-located situation, while others were working remotely through virtual channels. The study found that differences in the gender make-up of the workforce had a more negative influence on the attitudes of the co-located work groups than those working remotely. If you don't see colleagues on a day-to-day basis, gender differences don't seem to matter as much.

At the core of self-categorisation is a quest for identity and belonging, which is driven by a desire to create a positive sense of oneself through membership in a high-status group. "Identities help us negotiate social and work situations, so these questions are important at a very basic level," Professor Chattopadhyay says.

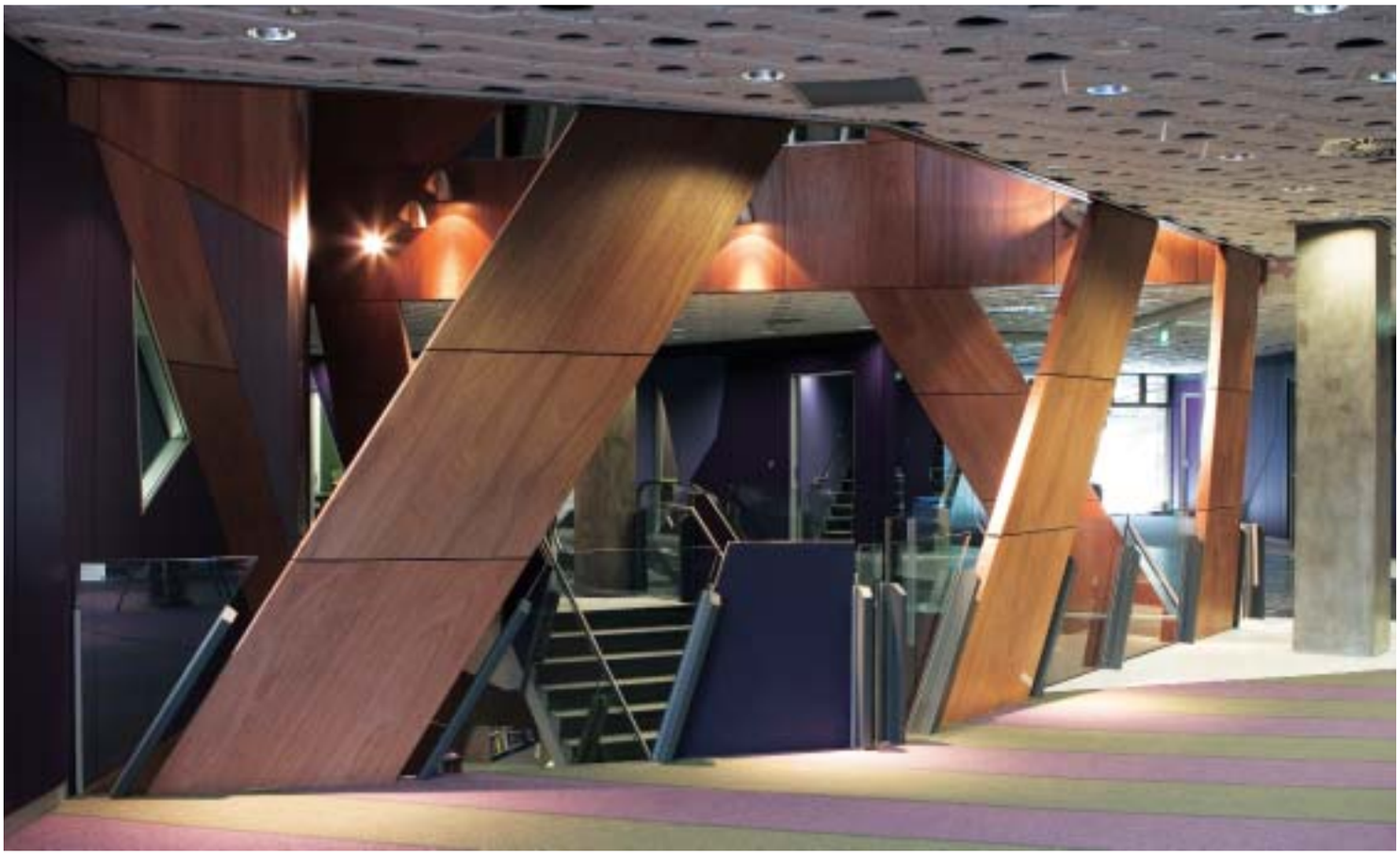
Ultimately, the research on difference points the way to organisational performance, although this is not a specific area of study for the researchers. It suggests differences which do exist – such as those of gender, age or race – should be acknowledged and not glossed over. "Often people are told 'forget that you are male or female, just focus on being an employee in this organisation' – well that leaves you open to some kind of backlash," says Professor George.

Differences, she argues, have a particularly negative effect when they are "salient" in a situation where a person's identities conflict. "Organisations can put in place measures to minimise value conflict. The differences will always exist but focusing on similar values or common goals can help bring the skill sets of a diverse group of people together, and that has a very real impact on the organisation." ■

This is an edited excerpt from an article published this month in the AGSM's 2006 annual magazine.

Changing face of Law

The University's new law building will be officially opened next month, marking a key milestone in a major redevelopment of the Kensington campus. For the Faculty, a purpose-built home – a dream for more than three decades – provides an exciting opportunity to "reinvigorate its mission in a new era". **Alex Clark** reports.



Overlooking the University Mall on lower campus the new law building is hard to miss. With its distinctive façade, the building's open and low-rise design reflects the Faculty's interactive teaching style and philosophy of community engagement.

It also brings the Faculty together for the first time, after years of being scattered across campus and surrounding suburbs. The School of Law, the Australian School of Taxation (Atax), the Faculty's research and community centres, the law library, the Centre for Continuing Legal Education and the Kingsford Legal Centre are now all under one roof.

It's a stark contrast to the Faculty's somewhat modest beginnings. Three wooden huts along a barren stretch of sand on lower campus provided the first of many "temporary" homes.

Photos by Katie Pashley

UNSW's law school began life 35 years ago in wooden huts

The new building is a tangible sign of the maturity and standing which the Law Faculty has achieved since its humble origins in 1971. It now has the home it so richly deserves.

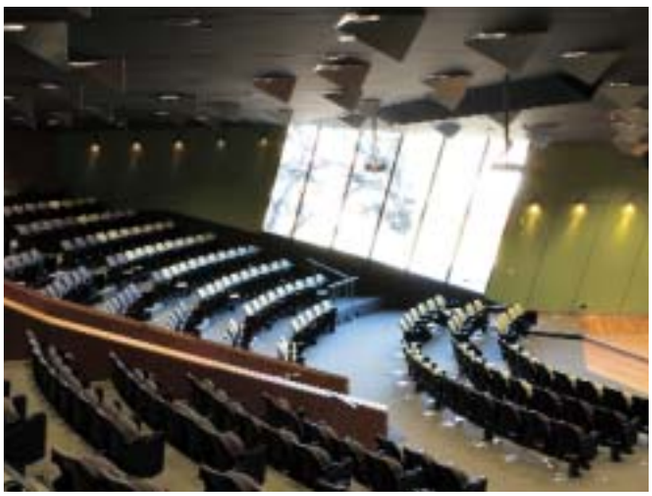
The task of establishing Sydney's second law school from scratch was given to Hal Wootten QC, who was appointed Foundation Dean in 1969. Disenchanted by his own legal studies, Wootten was inspired to create a law school in which "students mattered", and by 1971 he had achieved just that.

"The fine new building takes my mind back to those huts where the law school was born," Wootten says. "They are remembered with affection because all of us, staff and students, had the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of a potentially great institution."

The University's Chancellor, David Gonski, was among the first wave of law students, graduating from UNSW in 1977. "It was my great good fortune to be taught at the law school," he says. "The new building is a tangible sign of the maturity and standing which the Law Faculty has achieved since its humble origins in 1971. It now has the home it so richly deserves."

Professor David Dixon, Law's Senior Associate Dean, believes "renewing and reinvigorating" the Faculty's original mission is key to its future success.

"The building provides much more than just a new physical space," he says. "It's an opportunity for us to initiate new projects and to respond to the demands of a new generation of students, drawing the professions, business, public institutions and the community into our research and teaching programs. "The Faculty is particularly focused on the development of research, notably the top-quality applied research for which UNSW has a distinctive reputation. This means exploring both the potential and the problems of law, justice and rights in local, national and international contexts," says Dixon. "We have exceptional staff at every level, as well as brilliant students, so I am very confident about our future." ■



The building will be officially opened on 21 September by the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, Murray Gleeson.

Raising the bar

Four storeys high, the "bold and innovative" law building was designed by Melbourne architects Lyons to promote interactivity between staff and students. It features light-filled atria spaces, open staircases, landscaped courtyards and an agora running up through all floors.

The new teaching spaces are available to all faculties but have been specifically designed for the humanities with an emphasis on small interactive classes. There are 13 classrooms with 40-plus seats, two "Harvard"-style lecture rooms with 90 seats and a 350-seat auditorium equipped with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment. Other features include a new Moot Court and student lounge.

Courting success

To coincide with the new building, the Faculty launched the Law Endowment Campaign last year to raise funds to support key research, social justice and scholarship initiatives over the long term. The first phase of the campaign aims to establish an endowment fund of $10 million through partnerships and gifts from the legal profession, business and alumni. To date, $4 million has been raised. "There has been such an enthusiastic response shown by a broad range of supporters to the campaign and we are grateful to all those who have contributed so far," says Richard Alcock, Chairman of the Law Endowment Fund.

For more information contact Amanda Hansen, Law Development Officer a.hansen@unsw.edu.au.

The big picture

The new building is a significant addition to UNSW and is a key part of the North Mall Development Zone (NMDZ) project to rejuvenate middle and lower campus. The NMDZ is the single biggest building project undertaken by the University and is part of its overall campus development strategy.

The precinct also includes a new state-of-the-art analytical centre (due to be completed in October), three building refurbishments and extensive landscaping. Refurbishment of levels one and two of the Dalton Building is due to be completed this month, with the ground floor to be finished by March 2007.These refurbishments will provide computer teaching laboratories for the Faculty of Science and a home for the School of Chemistry. Refurbishment of the Heffron Building is due to be completed in July 2007 and will create a new space for the Faculty of Commerce and Economics.

Karen Mork

All that jazz

Professor James Donald's *Black Stars* research project is ensuring the stories of two remarkable performers are not forgotten. **Barbara Messer** reports.

The entertainer Josephine Baker once uttered the words, "The white imagination sure is something when it comes to blacks." She was referring to her role as an African American dancer, singer and actress in the 1920s and '30s, in which she played exotic, erotic creatures from the African continent – a far cry from the reality of being an ambitious young woman from the slums of St Louis.

Like Baker, performer Paul Robeson had a major impact on the way Western audiences perceived racial difference in post-war Europe, according to Professor James Donald of the School of Media, Film and Theatre.

The names of Baker and Robeson came up in Donald's earlier research on an avant-garde film journal of the late 1920s called *Close Up*. He is now revisiting their stories as part of a three-year ARC-funded project called *Black Stars*.

The clue to the research, Donald says, is Baker's comment about "the white imagination". "My first monograph, *Sentimental Education*, studied education not just as a set of institutions but also as an identity-defining narrative. My second book, *Imagining the Modern City*, looked at the city not just as bricks and mortar, but also as a category of thought and experience. What's emerging could be seen as an eccentric history of the modern European imagination."

"Understanding why Robeson and Baker were so popular shows how people used ideas about 'race' and 'America' to make sense of the experience of modernisation at an imaginative level," says Donald. "Many historians explain this away as a vogue for primitivism, a kind of inverted racism. But there is more to it than that. Revealing the strange cultural logic of racialised discourse in an earlier period may provoke us to see the contingency of our own ways of thinking about 'race', and realise how odd they will look to historians in 80 years time!"

> As academics it is part of our responsibility to explore these stories so we don't lose a sense of history.

Robeson and Baker have all but slipped from the pages of our history of popular culture, despite the fact they lived wonderfully salacious and unorthodox lives that make today's celebrities appear positively bland.

Baker moved to Paris in 1925 where her voluptuous yet athletic body and near-naked performances brought her instant success. She was a muse to artists, sculptors and architects, worked for the French Resistance, and married no less than six different men. She refused to perform to segregated audiences in Las Vegas, and adopted 12 children from different cultures – her "rainbow tribe".

Robeson was an actor and singer who was one of Europe's most popular performers of the era. He was also a scholar, author and political activist, who moved to the Soviet Union as a socialist and returned to the States a black activist – only to have his passport revoked by the US government.

Professor Donald can cite hundreds of little-known stories about the pair, such as Robeson's final overseas tour to Australia, where he performed to construction workers at the Sydney Opera House. Today, most people don't appreciate Robeson's impact on Indigenous Australians in their quest for racial equality.

"There is a real issue regarding the loss of cultural memory. We need to remember what may appear trivial, because these may be the traces of how people experience change. As academics it is part of our responsibility to explore these stories so we don't lose a sense of history. And by making comparisons over time and space, you remind people that things are how they are through an extraordinary series of accidents," he says.

In other words, the lives of Baker and Robeson – both on and off stage – can offer valuable insights into modern concepts of race, modernity and cosmopolitanism. Sadly, both performers suffered lonely endings and died within six months of each other in the mid-1970s.

Professor Donald is writing a book on the significance of these performers in the culture of modernism between the World Wars, which is due to published within the next three years. ■

Mentoring matters

Uniken has been profiling the winners of the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence for 2005 throughout the year. In this issue, we focus on mentoring. By **Susi Hamilton**.

Karen Mork

Professor Denis Wakefield has been honoured for excellence in research supervision. He's "one of my all time heroes", says former PhD student Dr Ute Vollmer-Conna (pictured).

It's a measure of Denis Wakefield's success as a mentor that he often collaborates with his former protégées. Some of the leading researchers in the Faculty of Medicine are former students, among them Andrew Lloyd, Nick Hawkins, Nick Di Girolamo, Ute Vollmer-Conna and Peter McCluskey.

"I set out years ago to attract more physician scientists into this school and one of the best ways of doing that is to act as a role model for students and to encourage them to pursue a career in medical science," says Professor Wakefield, the head of the School of Medical Sciences (SOMS).

And the strategy is paying off. Over the last decade there has been a six-fold increase in the number of postdoctoral fellows in the SOMS – from seven to forty-five.

"I strongly believe that the best measure of success as a research supervisor is the achievements of your students," he says. "I'm enormously proud of their work. I have been very lucky in having such fantastic students, and to have helped contribute to their successes is extermely rewarding."

Professor Wakefield has been recognised for his achievements in this area with the Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Award for Research Supervision Excellence.

"I see teaching as a natural extension of research; they are not disconnected in any way. If you are doing research it means that you are at the forefront of information and understanding. What better way to be able to pass on the excitement of change and how ideas evolve."

Professor Wakefield experienced that excitement himself as a student at UNSW some 30 years ago. "There were several teachers who inspired me, both during my undergraduate degree and in my early career as a clinician at St Vincent's Hospital." He lists pathologist Athol Lykke and renal physician at the Prince of Wales Clinical School, Graham McDonald, as strong influences in his student days, and credits immunologist Ron Penny, formerly of St Vincent's Hospital, as profoundly shaping his career.

"Ron Penny is an inspiring person with a wonderful knowledge and understanding of medicine. He was very influential in changing the direction of my life because he got me interested in immunology and then immunology of the eye, which has been my main area of research ever since."

The power of mentoring is central to the way Professor Wakefield operates. "I have an ongoing relationship with most of my former students," he says. One of those is Dr Ute Vollmer-Conna, who did her PhD in psychoimmunology when no-one else in Australia was researching the field.

"I came from a psychology background and had no medical training, yet Denis was still prepared to take me on," she says. "He's prepared to take a gamble and is truly supportive of interdisciplinary work, which is what I do. He supported my doctorate financially and was happy to teach me the lab skills that I needed to bridge the disciplines … he is one of my all time heroes," says Dr Vollmer-Conna, who has since become an internationally renowned figure in the field.

> I strongly believe that the best measure of success as a research supervisor is the achievements of your students … I'm enormously proud of their work.

Professor Wakefield's responsibilities seem daunting. He juggles running the largest school in the Faculty, a number of demanding research projects, clinical responsibilities and teaching. Last year, he supervised five PhD students. "There are competing interests, but it's a matter of managing your time and I think for the most part I'm good at that. I've also got great people working with me," he says. "We are really fortunate in that we enjoy a degree of autonomy and flexibility in universities that you don't get in any other walk of life."

Professor Wakefield is planning to use the prize money from his teaching award to establish an award for postgraduate supervision in the School of Medical Sciences. ■

A passionate **teacher**

"I always tell my students this story," says Dr Eva Segelov, Director of Medical Student Education at St Vincent's Clinical School. "I was on a jet boat in New Zealand and the driver was having a great time, going 'whoo-hoo' and making 360s and I thought, 'Why am I an oncologist?' But you have to do something you think is worthwhile and where you think your efforts will make a difference."

For Dr Segelov, that is in two areas: oncology and medical education.

"I saw the need for a unifying position that was clearly identified as someone who knew about teaching and looked after the area," she says of the role she developed at the South Western Sydney Clinical School in 2000. She established a similar position at St Vincent's two years ago.

Dr Segelov's success has been recognised with a Vice-Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence. "Medical education is vital because it shapes how the students will be as doctors and their attitudes," she says. "You can't divorce the teaching of a doctor from being a doctor because they are the product of what we teach."

We are not making identical chocolate bars on a factory line ... people have different strengths and weaknesses, and we are helping them to be the best doctors they can be.

Dr Segelov's duties in medical education have been varied: from helping redesign the medical curriculum and engaging clinicians in how to be better teachers, to giving students feedback and conducting research.

"I did a molecular-based PhD. My interests have shifted not just to being a teacher, but also to being an educator and a researcher in medical education. I felt it was riding the crest of a wave – the Learning and Teaching Unit at UNSW has done enormous amounts to promote this area."

Dr Segelov sees the teaching process as being beneficial to both the students and clinicians. "Teaching is an intellectual field. It's essential to being a good clinician. A lot of the skills I have learnt through my teaching have made me a better practitioner – the skill of reflection, communication and acknowledging the differences between people.

Dr Eva Segelov

"We are not making identical chocolate bars on a factory line," she laughs. "People have different skills and interests, and strengths and weaknesses, and we are helping them to be the best doctors they can be."

Dr Segelov is clearly passionate about her work, but she's upfront about the challenge of combining career and family. "I am not complaining but I want to be recognised for what I do," she says. "It is not easy being a woman in oncology and academia and having a 'normal' family life. I am very fortunate to have a very supportive husband, but I am like any other woman who has three children. You learn to be efficient and to prioritise. I value my work so much and I couldn't live without it – not above my family, but a very close second, because it defines who I am." ■

Lifelong **lessons**

By Alex Clark

Teachers who encourage students to follow their passions rather than push them to achieve a perfect TER score have a much greater impact, according to a new book by Associate Professors Ann Game and Andrew Metcalfe.

Teachers Who Change Lives sidesteps the current debate over problems in the education system focusing instead on the positive attributes that inform good teaching.

The authors, both from the School of Sociology and Anthropology, have interviewed a number of respected teachers and high-profile "pupils" including Betty Churcher, Helen Garner, Michael Kirby, Stephanie Alexander, Raimond Gaita and Greg Chappell, who reveal the significant classroom experiences and influential teachers that helped shape their lives.

Writer Helen Garner credits her primary school teacher Mrs Dunkley for teaching her everything she knows about language. "What she taught me was how to analyse sentences and how to construct them correctly. It was like being given the basic equipment for what I ended up doing."

The best teachers, says Metcalfe, are those that "teach their designated subjects by way of lessons in life". Former Olympic swimmer Shane Gould agrees: "Some teachers only teach a technique, but a good teacher shows how technique is part of a way of life."

The importance of "learning for life" comes through strongly in many of the interviews. "You can only learn to be a champion cricketer if cricket is teaching you about life. I am a committed learner for life," says Greg Chappell.

Ann Game says the immediacy with which people talk about their teachers confirms that "they never leave them behind. Their teachers are still with them today, in the studio, on the stage, or in the courtroom," she says.

"The teachers I had were marvellous and I owe a lot to them," says High Court judge Michael Kirby. "I remember each one of them quite vividly … they're clattering around in my brain." ■

Andrew Metcalfe and Ann Game have been teaching together for more than 15 years and received a Vice-Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence in 2003. *Teachers Who Change Lives* is published by Melbourne University Press.

The problem with pseudoscience

By **Barbara Gillam**

In the psychology section of any bookstore you will find a huge array of books on self-help, psychoanalysis and theories of personality, advice on how to bring up kids, improve your sex life, reduce stress and so on. The business section will have more psychological material on leadership, working in teams and how to be successful. There is obviously a huge market for such things.

Unfortunately, most people don't stop to ask how reliable all this advice is. Imagine if the physics section was taken up with just anybody's theories of the origins of the universe or the nature of matter, or the chemistry section with alchemy. We would not tolerate it because we know science can provide much better, factually based information.

People are not stupid. They probably know most of the stuff in the psychology section is dubious, but assume that's all there is. They think mental and emotional issues are subjective and intrinsically unscientific and there is no way to decide among views except by their appeal to the reader. This is very sad for a number of reasons.

First, because most people, including policy makers, are unaware of the enormous amount of interesting and reliable information provided by scientific psychology and the power of its methods in deciding among rival views of mental and emotional life and human behaviour generally.

It is also sad because low expectations lead to a tolerance of poor outcomes. So "models" of human behaviour with little or no validity are regularly taught even in universities – outside psychology departments – and serve, rather alarmingly, as the basis for policy in government and industry.

A notorious example is the widespread use of courses consisting of weird, even dangerous, outdoor experiences claimed to build trust and company spirit by those who make money out of them. Other examples are the use of the pseudoscientific technique of "neuro-linguistic programming" in teacher and communication training, and the huge popularity of the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator for selecting individuals in business, despite the fact that years of psychological research have shown people cannot be adequately described as types. Another case is the strong opposition (based on flawed analogies with speaking) by proponents of the prevailing "model" of reading to the routine use of phonics in teaching reading, despite overwhelming research by cognitive psychologists showing its effectiveness, and even its necessity, for many readers.

It should not be just a matter of choosing your favourite model in areas where scientific evidence exists. As in any science, if strong evidence has accumulated over time in good studies, one acts on that. Psychology is full of such investigations. Here are some examples.

Whenever there is a disaster, scores of counsellors appear, many with little training. Is this a good idea? It is believed that counselling prevents people from getting post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). We now know that only a relatively small percentage of people are likely to get PTSD and psychologists have good criteria based on extensive research as to who they are likely to be. It is critical that these people get early, good professional help – but it is not clear that counselling, no matter how well-intentioned, is doing much for the rest and it may even be harming some.

It is very frustrating as an inheritor of a proud scientific tradition – psychology has been a science for well over a century – to be asked by new acquaintances and even academic colleagues: "I suppose you want to psychoanalyse me?"

Psychological research is beginning to have a big impact in criminal law, especially with regard to police behaviour and eyewitness testimony. Legal procedure is sometimes based on intuitions about human behaviour that are over-optimistic. It is known, for example, that people are not only surprisingly poor at remembering unfamiliar faces and noticing details of clothing, but also that their memories for events may be seriously altered by the way they are questioned. "Framing effects" also strongly influence economic and medical decisions, as demonstrated by psychologists Kahneman and Tversky. Kahneman received the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2002 for upsetting the conventional wisdom in economic theory that decision-making is rational. The strategies and short cuts that people use in making decisions of all kinds is now a major area of psychological research.

Psychologists know a great deal about stress and its alleviation, and apply a number of very effective techniques that are far less time-consuming and costly for the patient and taxpayer than psychoanalysis and similar therapies. The contribution of the evidence-based approach that psychology represents in the mental health field has recently been recognised by the government in allowing Medicare rebates for psychological services.

These examples illustrate the enormous value of psychological research in many aspects of life. It is very frustrating as an inheritor of a proud scientific tradition – psychology has been a science for well over a century – to be asked by new acquaintances and even academic colleagues: "I suppose you want to psychoanalyse me?"

Frankly, I have more interesting things to do. ■

Barbara Gillam is Scientia Professor of Psychology and ARC Professorial Fellow at UNSW.

FIRST PERSON

Lucy Taksa

Associate Dean (Education), Faculty of Commerce and Economics

I started at UNSW as an undergraduate student and proceeded to undertake PhD research on the diffusion of scientific management from the United States to Australia during the early 20th century. After getting my first academic position at UTS, I came back to take up a position in the School of Industrial Relations and Organisational Behaviour.

My research has focused on the evolution of employment relations and management ideas and strategies in specific organisational contexts. I have been fortunate enough to receive ARC and other external grants to focus this work on the NSW Railways and specifically, the Eveleigh Railway Workshops. I am currently investigating the impact of human, cultural, and social capital on organisational culture and cross-cultural relations in this organisation, whose 100-year history provides an avenue for understanding changes in public sector management.

Using the case of the migrant women who were employed as train cleaners at Eveleigh during the late 1970s and '80s, I am examining the extent to which inter-cultural tensions between employees from various ethnic backgrounds affect the reception and implementation of diversity management strategies (with my colleague, Dr Dimitria Groutsis, University of Sydney and PhD graduate of FCE). We hope the findings can help organisations minimise obstacles to successful investment in such initiatives.

What do you like most about your job?

In my various roles in the Faculty, most recently as Head of the School of Organisation and Management and Director of the Industrial Relations Research Centre, I have had the good fortune to meet, work with, and learn from an immense number of enthusiastic, talented and committed people from across the multiple communities that make up this complex organisation. In my current role as Associate Dean (Education), I am particularly pleased by the commitment shown by my counterparts from across the University, and by staff members more generally, to the implementation of improvements in learning outcomes for students and for scholarship in learning and teaching.

Why is the study of organisations and their history important?

Organisations pervade all aspects of life. They can function effectively for the benefit of all stakeholders or they can be dysfunctional. Poor relations between organisational members prevent the delivery of quality outcomes (products and services), which can have an impact on other members of the community, the environment and future generations. To ensure good relations, we need a broad understanding of problems from a long-term perspective informed by respect of different views and interests. Scholarship in organisational studies, management, employment and work provides a means to achieve such ends and a good foundation for the implementation of improved organisational structures and processes.

Pet hate?

The view expressed by Henry Ford in an interview with Charles N. Wheeler in the *Chicago Tribune* on 25 May 1916: "History is more or less bunk."

What are you reading/listening to at the moment?

Loretta Baldassar and Ros Pesman, *From Paesani to Global Italians: Veneto Migrants in Australia* – a wonderful account of transnational networks and identities – ideal for my research.

Ben Lee and Angelique Kidjo both draw on diverse musical traditions and have great rhythm.

Best advice you've ever received?

From my mother: "Always try to put yourself in the other person's shoes."

Favourite expression?

"Those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it." (George Santayana, *A Life of Reason*, 1916). And we all know that repeating mistakes is costly psychologically, socially and financially.

Who or what inspires you?

People who see things from multiple perspectives, care about others and have a well-developed (and dry) sense of humour.

Your ideal dinner party guest list?

The Governor of NSW, Marie Bashir, the NSW Supreme Court Chief Justice, Jim Spiegelman, and retired High Court judge, Mary Gaudron. I would also invite Miles Harvey, author of *Island of Lost Maps: A True Story of Cartographic Crime*, whose investigation of the theft of archival maps from American university libraries intrigued me.

What would you have done in another life?

A radio DJ or an investigative journalist.

What are you good at?

Talking, laughing and learning. ■

LAST WORD

By Professor Graham Greenleaf

If it walks **like a duck ...**

The government's proposed "smart card" is very similar to the vetoed Australia Card, argues **Professor Graham Greenleaf**.

Twenty years ago the Hawke–Keating government announced a national identification (ID) system with a patriotically named "Australia Card" as its centrepiece. It received very high public support and was the ostensible cause of a successful double-dissolution election that resulted in a Labor victory. But within 18 months it was so despised by most Australians that it was withdrawn after a fatal drafting flaw was found in its enabling legislation.

Its successor, the Tax File Number system, removed the card and the central computer register, and added more serious privacy protections. Although a reasonable political compromise at the time, within a few years Treasurer Keating had reneged on promises not to expand it and "data matching" had linked it to the social welfare system. Trusting politicians to protect privacy is risky.

Two decades later the Howard government vehemently denies that its proposed "health and social services access card" is a national ID card, saying it rejected such an option. To decide whether this really is a national ID card, comparison with the Australia Card proposals is worthwhile.

The new card will be effectively compulsory and near-universal for adults, and in exactly the same way as the Australia Card, it will be impossible to carry on a normal life (e.g. obtaining Medicare payments) without one. The Australia Card was primitive compared with its 21st century successor – a "smart card" which will have considerable chip storage capacity. The data on the face of the new card is much the same as it was for the Australia Card: a unique, universal, compulsory national ID number; name; photograph; signature; and card expiry date. This data will be replicated on the chip, plus an up-to-date address, date of birth, details of children and other dependants. The chip will also hold extensive optional data including medical information, and an "electronic purse" for which the only confirmed use to date is to make emergency welfare payments directly to the card. And there is no reason to expect that the chip capacity will be exhausted by these uses. Every aspect of the stored content of the "smart card", its accessibility and security, presents far greater dangers than did the Australia Card.

> Every aspect of the stored content of the card, its accessibility and security, presents far greater dangers than did the Australia Card.

As with all ID systems, the card is only the visible part. The back-end computer systems are just as important. Both ID systems depend on a central register: the Australia Card Register in 1987 and now the Secure Common Registration System (SCRS). While the first contained little more than identification information and current address, the SCRS is also going to contain a copy of all the emergency contact, medical and other information "to allow lost cards to be replaced", concession status, and a copy of all documents initially produced by a person to establish their identity, such as birth certificates. A bigger "honey pot" to feed ID fraud would be hard to imagine, but the government's consultants claim it "will not contain any sensitive personal information".

The SCRS will be the only comprehensive photographic database of Australians and will allow "one-to-many-matching": a national, searchable, photo library. It may be capable of being used to search for photos of people appearing in CCTV tapes, or in photos taken at demonstrations or strikes. But fortunately no such uses are proposed.

The proposed extent of networked access to the two registers is much the same as far as government agencies are concerned, but this time every time a person visits a GP or pharmacist their card will be used to check their eligibility for non-permanent concessions.

The Australia Card came with a legislative package which included flawed measures to limit proliferation of uses of the number and card. So far, not even this level of legislative control is proposed for the 2006 card. The government has established a taskforce to examine such issues and advise generally on privacy and consumer aspects of the proposal, headed by Professor Allan Fels. Its only concrete contribution so far, a discussion paper, says next-to-nothing about the Australia Card and ignores the many points of comparison, although it does concede that the card will be, in effect, compulsory. It calls for submissions while ignoring that the public has no access to the Privacy Impact Assessment commissioned by the government or the most important parts of the government consultant's report, and so is in no position to make informed submissions.

This time around the government has a docile rather than a hostile Senate, so no deliverance is going to come from that direction. We need a national debate about whether we want a national ID card: otherwise we will get one. ■

Graham Greenleaf is co-director of UNSW's Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre. He has recently published a research report, *Quacking Like a Duck: The national ID card proposal compared with the Australia Card*.