

MONTAGE

NEWS FROM THE CAMPUSES OF MONASH UNIVERSITY

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Focus on the media: its use and abuse

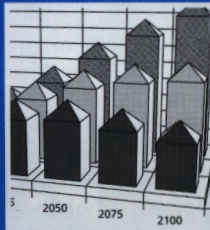
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Picture: RHONDA JOYCE

Running smoothly

They may look like university staff out on a leisurely jog, but these six men could be classified as super fit. Each runs about 100 kilometres every week in preparation for his next marathon.

The six – (from left) Mr Ian Dobson, Mr Clive Vernon, Dr Bob Birrell, Dr Mike Heffernan, Dr John Sheridan, and Professor Peter Dixon – competed recently in the 42 kilometre Melbourne Marathon.

Dr Birrell – last year's winner in the 55 to 60-year-old category in a time of 2 hours 54 minutes – had to withdraw from this year's race at the 17 kilometre mark.

Dr Sheridan completed the race – his first marathon – in 2:48, Mr Dobson completed in 3:24, Mr Vernon in 3:14, Professor Dixon in 3:54, and Dr Heffernan in 3:36. It was Mr Dobson's 30th marathon.

About 3000 contestants, including Steven Moneghetti and many international runners, competed in the event.

Jerry Modiga of South Africa won in a time of 2:15.

Medicine comes out a winner

Monash University's Faculty of Medicine won accolades this month from the Australian Medical Council (AMC).

The AMC endorsed a glowing report on the faculty's "many strengths" before accrediting the undergraduate degree into the next century.

A team of independent medical experts prepared the landmark report after an extensive on-campus investigation earlier this year.

The eight-member assessment team predicted continued success for the faculty, especially in the progressively growing area of university-hospital relations.

World-standard medical research, successful curriculum reform and innovative student selection techniques were also praised in the report.

Chaired by Adelaide University's Professor Barrie Vernon-Roberts, the assessment team included representatives of other Australian universities and drew together expertise from all major disciplines.

AMC accreditation lets Monash medical graduates continue to apply for registration as medical practitioners for the next 10 years in any Australian state or territory.

Monash medical dean, Professor Robert Porter, was "absolutely delighted" by the AMC decision.

"But I expected nothing less," he said. "The report paints the faculty as being a leader, both nationally and internationally, which is something we've been striving for."

"It contains valuable comment on the strengths of the faculty and pays particular tribute to work in many areas."

Individual departmental successes earmarked by the team included the Department of Community Medicine, which was described as the Australian leader in community and rural medicine.

The faculty's "internationally competitive" medical research was saluted in the report, along with the administrative and committee structures in place to manage the faculty's integrated curriculum.

"The faculty, viewed as a whole, has an outstanding record of research achievements, with high productivity in published works, an excellent record of securing competitive funding from agencies external to the university, and an impressive number of higher degree and diploma enrolments," the report said.

"The faculty deserves the active support which it receives from the university and the teaching hospitals, and has skillful leadership and an effective administration structure to continue and consolidate its achievements."

The assessment team's faculty visit from 15 to 19 March coincided with the final stages of the implementation of the restructured medical curriculum at all levels of undergraduate study.

The report applauded the faculty's curriculum reform, commending the strong support of its teachers and the enthusiasm and satisfaction of its students.

"Taking into account that the new curriculum has only been finally introduced into all six years of the course in 1993, it is evident that the faculty has made major achievements in course integration within its new curriculum," the report said.

"In its present stage of development, the curriculum is well balanced and shows valuable integration between pre-clinical and clinical studies, especially in the early years of the course."

Monash also "benefited greatly" from the "strong and effective leadership" of the faculty's dean, Professor Porter.

There were effective mechanisms in place to obtain feedback from students on teacher quality, such as the 24-hour student diary system, the report said.

Moreover, the faculty was responsive to the student feedback and was well set up to evaluate the curricular offerings and student feedback.

Continued overleaf

The odds on envy are high

Most people would be overjoyed to win a national lottery just once in their lifetime, but imagine taking off the first division twice ... in four months.

Mathematicians who claim this is not quite as freakish as it may seem point to Ms Evelyn Adams, who achieved the unlikely double in the US in 1986.

In fact, several Harvard University statisticians have calculated that the likelihood of one person somewhere in America winning the lottery twice in such a short period of time was close to one in 30.

Sparked by an article about Ms Adams in the *New York Times*, Dr Malcolm Clark of Monash's Department of Mathematics decided to explore the probability of one person winning Tattsлото twice.

Ms Michaela Smale, an honours student under his supervision, took on the task last year and found that there is an 80 to 95 per cent chance that someone in Australia will win first division in Tattsлото twice in a five-year period.

"Michaela made the calculations based on figures supplied by Tattsлото," Dr Clark said. "She had to make some assumptions about how people play the game – for example, what proportion of people have multiple entries as distinct from system entries."

The probability of a single Tattsлото entry winning first division is one in 8,145,060, which is the number of ways six figures may be selected from 45. Most people think that the chance of winning Tattsлото twice is this number squared – roughly one in 66 million million.

"But this calculation is fundamentally flawed on several counts," Dr Clark explained.

Continued overleaf

NOW & THEN

25 YEARS AGO

The Monash University Child-Minding Centre is now operating at 12 Beddoe Avenue, Clayton, from 9 to 5.30 pm daily ... Fees: 30 cents per hour regular booking; 40 cents per hour casual booking.

15 YEARS AGO

The scandal aroused by David Williamson's new play, currently running at the Alexander Theatre, is at present only a ripple, but could become a tidal wave ...

Keen-eyed workers at the Diamond Creek library, checking back through David Williamson's file of overdue notices, have been able to identify the volumes he had out on loan during the composition of his best-known works.

It was quickly established that *Don's Party*, his most famous play, and the basis of a successful Australian film, had been adapted almost word for word from an obscure Restoration comedy, *The Tunbridge Election* or *The Wandering Wives*.

This is a riotous melange of drinking and wenching set against the background of the election of 1678, the results of which are announced in the course of the play by the town crier. The principal characters, Lord and Lady Donsbury, are Whigs who mock two of their guests

for being Tories; however the boot is on the other foot when the Tories are victorious.

Further research has also revealed:

- Williamson's play about life in an engineering department of a tertiary college, *The Department*, is adapted from a mediaeval miracle play, *The Building of the Ark*. In the original, Noah and his assistants meet to discuss the problem of the ark being proved unseaworthy. In the end, God (corresponding to the cleaner in Williamson's version) proves it can float after all by "turning on" a heavy downfall of rain.
- *Jugglers Three*, Williamson's play about Vietnam veterans, is borrowed from a Goldoni comedy *I tre Giocolieri* about the personal relationship of soldiers returning from the war of the Spanish Succession.
- *The Club*, his most recent success, is derived from an Elizabethan history play, *The Famous Victories of King Hildebrand*, with the knights and barons of the original cleverly converted into football players and committee members.
- *The Removalist* is a version of a traditional Punch and Judy show. The plot is as follows: Punch beats Judy. Judy calls the Bailiff. The Bailiff beats Punch. Punch beats everyone in sight. The Bailiff's assistant beats Punch. Punch dies.

(Editor's note: The preceding was written in 1978 with tongue firmly in journalistic cheek.)

FIVE YEARS AGO

A retired Monash academic saw years of hard work and planning completed last week with the opening of the new Coronial Services Centre of Victoria.

Vernon Plueckhahn, former associate professor in pathology and immunology, and now honorary professor in forensic pathology, was involved "from day one" in a joint Monash - State Government project to establish coronial services of world standard in Victoria.

THIS MONTH LAST YEAR

A blood test for the detection of cancer has been developed by researchers at the Centre for Molecular Biology and Medicine.

The new test can be used to detect cancers of the digestive tract, particularly stomach and large bowel cancer, and will significantly boost rates of detection.

Cancers of the digestive tract are the most common worldwide, with 7300 new cases detected in Australia annually, compared with 4900 new cases of lung and breast cancer.

THE SPIKE



Eastward no!

Seems at least two wagonloads of Clayton personnel headed recently for the badlands of Gippsland have strayed. Badly.

To err on the conservative, they have become somewhat geographically embarrassed. No, hang it, let's be explicit. They have got lost. Gold-plated lost. Missing the Warragul turn-off at Dandenong and taking the South Gippsland Highway instead lost.

Ending up in Yarram more than several kilometres from where they wanted to be lost.

From our dizzy heights, we can only assume they eschewed - for pride or whatever reason - the Melways, or plumped for the scenic (read 'coastal') route, just for a frisson.

No, we don't know who they are. We can only pray they have nothing to do with planning, salaries, personnel ... anything that demands a dash of perspicacity.

So long blues

Forget the blues. It's the greys from now on.

That low-sheen paint into which the administrative parts of Clayton campus have been uncereemoniously dipped recently apparently is known officially as Monash Grey.

Kind of takes the gloss off things. The perfect riposte to the enduring "how are you feeling this Monday morning?" may be found, after all, on the lid of a paint tin.

Fresh out of doors

Now we are convinced it would take something approaching a nuclear winter to upset an agenda.

An important meeting in these parts was brought to an abrupt halt the other day by the sound of ripping veneer and assorted grunts.

Just like astonished actors watching the curtain rise before showtime, the attendees did a fair imitation of incredulity as workers tore down office panels about them.

But no one balked. The gathering continued.

Must have been the first meeting in which no one had their back to the wall.

Strong support for medical faculty

From previous page

"The faculty is strongly supported by its staff and students, the medical, nursing and administrative staff of hospitals involved in its teaching program, and the Department of Health of Victoria," the report said.

"Also, it enjoys strong support from general practitioners and others involved in the delivery of primary health care.

"With the active support which it receives from the university and teaching hospitals, the faculty has a highly effective organisational structure to continue to consolidate its many achievements."

The faculty was also praised for successfully establishing a computer network, allowing the development of computer-assisted learning in the course.

Establishing the medical "informatics" unit was a valuable move for the faculty, not only providing an excellent database, but also making Monash a national leader.

The report also commended the faculty's teaching, describing it as well organised and integrated, delivered by committed teachers and valued by the students.

Academic staff were of "impressive quality", evident through the ability of departments to attract high levels of research grant support and substantial numbers of postgraduate students.

The high quality of graduates was also discussed in the report. The "thriving" Association of Monash Medical Graduates was the "best evidence" of success.

"Anecdotal evidence, collected by surveys of hospitals in preparation for the assessment visit and by members of the assessment team during the assessment week, supports the contention that graduates are thoughtful, competent and have good communication skills," it said.

"Graduates were seen to contribute well to hospital activities and successfully completed postgraduate training."

The report said students believed their workloads were at times heavy, but "not unreasonably so". It said the students clearly



Professor Robert Porter.

enjoyed both the preclinical and clinical years of the course.

The faculty's commitment to developing high-level communication skills by students was regarded as an important feature of the revised curriculum.

While identifying many positive attributes of the course and its teaching, the report also highlighted some matters that required attention from the faculty.

The assessment team called on the faculty to provide progress reports on the undergraduate curriculum reform, along with an effort to further reduce formal teaching during the clinical years.

It also ordered a review of the tradition of completely dissecting the human body, which was "no longer considered an essential component of teaching in anatomy".

The report also called for an investigation into arrangements for counselling students, who were considered to be "under very heavy pressure".

Professor Porter said he would address each matter by consulting staff and students.

"We'll deal with every issue raised in the report along the lines of the quality enhancement guidelines adhered to by the entire university," he said.

Australia's health ministers founded the AMC in 1985 to oversee the standard of undergraduate medical education and govern accreditation.

Winning twice is not so remarkable

From previous page

"It is not valid to multiply probabilities as when finding the likelihood of two or more independent events. Such multiplication would only be valid if you wanted to find the probability that a particular person, specified in advance, will win twice," he said.

"The true question is: What is the chance that somebody, out of about 2.5 million people who buy Tattsлото tickets each week, wins first division at least twice in a given period of time?"

In February 1990, the *New York Times* quoted Dr Persi Diaconis of Harvard University: "Suppose I'm standing in a large field and I put my finger on a blade of grass. The chance that I would choose that particular blade may be one in a million."

"But it is certain that I will choose a blade. So if something happens to only one in a million people per day and the population of the United States is 250 million, you expect 250 amazing coincidences every day."

Already one person in Australia has won Tattsлото twice.

"This is not at all remarkable," according to Dr Clark. "Rather, our calculation indicates that it would be unusual if no one had won Tattsлото twice."

Dr Clark says that although working out such probabilities involves only basic mathematical principles, Ms Smale spent about 400 hours on the thesis.

"There were 21 variables that Michaela needed to account for," he said.

Ms Smale's honours thesis was even more remarkable given that she has a severe sight disability. Deciphering pages of figures using a magnifying lens was painstakingly slow.

For the mathematically minded, further details of the formulas and assumptions used by Ms Smale are given in the latest issue of *Function*, a magazine for secondary school students published by the Department of Mathematics.

MONTAGE

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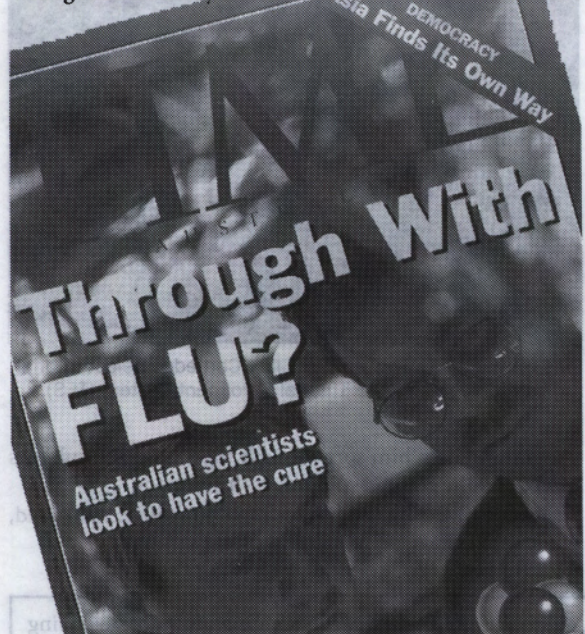
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Monash makes *Time*

A Monash University research project has made the cover of *Time Australia*.

The recent cover story, 'Through with Flu?', highlighted the discovery by Monash scientists of a compound that may cure and prevent the influenza virus (see *Research Monash*, Issue 4, 1993).

The cover pictures Dr Mark von Itzstein of the Victorian College of Pharmacy and Dr Peter Colman of the CSIRO.



Death in the back pocket

Death in the back pocket has nothing to do with recession-induced lifeless wallets.

Rather, it is a new book that has been billed as Australia's first football murder mystery.

Co-written by Monash English lecturer Dr Peter Fitzpatrick and his sister-in-law, psychologist Ms Barbara Wenzel, the paperback seems to have won the support of many football fans.

"Although it has only been out for a few weeks, I gather it is selling quite well," Dr Fitzpatrick said. "It is about a female dietician who knows the politics of the game but has a sceptical view about football on the whole. The other main character is a male journalist who is a football devotee."

When gun full-forward Rick Danzig, known to his fans as 'The Dancer', is tackled to the ground during a match and is dead on arrival at the local hospital, the dietician and journalist are called in to solve the mystery.

"They complement each other in their very different perspectives," says Dr Fitzpatrick.

Not only are the characters very different, so too was the book's launch. Four footballers – Paul Couch, Peter Dean, Doug Hawkins and Dean Rice – lugged a coffin with contents unknown around Princes Park one Saturday afternoon before finally depositing it in a hearse.

A few worried fans were put at ease when the coffin's cargo, the book, was eventually revealed by Carlton footballer Mil Hanna.

The book, which costs \$12.95, is available from the Monash Bookshop.



From left: Peter Dean, Paul Couch and Doug Hawkins lead the funeral procession with a difference.

Universities set to share costs

Monash University's administrative and management records are about to be standardised under a radical national suite of integrated information system software.

The Core Australian Specification for Management and Administrative Computing (CASMAC), an initiative of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC), could replace all existing information systems within five years.

The university's deputy general manager, Mr John White, says the new system – to be introduced in 30 of Australia's 36 universities – will take "old, tired, and out-of-date information systems and raise them all to a standard platform".

At present, Monash uses several systems: MARS (finance), MUSIS (student records), ISIS (human resources), and ad hoc systems developed for research management and physical resources, including assets management, capital stock flow, maintenance, and recording.

The systems leave a lot to be desired, Mr White said. "We could hardly call them the cutting edge of information technology."

According to AVCC executive director Mr Frank Hambly, CASMAC will bring to a halt the tendency for each university to develop its own system.

"In the past it has largely been at the discretion of university officers how they go about tasks such as enrolment or setting up lecture timetables, resulting in a range of systems of varying sophistication and integration," Mr Hambly said.

Saving time and effort

"The AVCC has become increasingly aware of the potential for universities to save a lot of time and effort by banding together to share systems in areas where information requirements and information and administrative activity are similar.

"In particular, this improvement in information systems will streamline the provision of data requested by the Department of Employment, Education and Training."

CASMAC, which has been undergoing intensive development over the past 18 months, is based on the British Management and Administrative Computing (MAC) initiative.

A steering committee of the AVCC, set up to deal with the Australian requirements, developed CASMAC, a specification for six integrated products: finance, student records, human resources, physical

resources, research and consultancy, and executive information.

It is expected CASMAC will provide at least 80 per cent of a university's requirements. Additional functions will be customised as required.

"Executive information is poorly serviced at Monash but is needed desperately," Mr White said. "Senior administration is not receiving extensive strategic information. In order to provide that advice at present, information is being aggregated and assimilated across a range of functional areas.

"With the devolved structure at Monash, faculties are expected to plan ahead, so the vice-chancellor, senior staff and deans must have relevant material at their fingertips."

CASMAC software will be developed on two software platforms: the first using Powerhouse, and the second Oracle. The software will be tailored to fit university hardware.

Universities have divided into two families or groups: the UniPower group, using Powerhouse (developed by the supplier CHA, developers of the MAC system), and the UniOn group, which uses Oracle.

Those universities that have declined to join the two collaborative groups are developing systems that will be CASMAC compliant.

The financial advantage of joining the standard gauge was a particular motivation, Mr White said. Negotiations with CHA are continuing.

"The 20 universities that chose to join UniPower, including Monash, will pay about \$7.5 million for the suite of six modules and \$3 million for unlimited use of Powerhouse's full range of products, a total of \$10.5 million split 20 ways," he said.

DEET has agreed to contribute \$4.8 million to participating universities to help defray implementation costs.

The need for dramatic improvement in information systems at Monash became apparent at the time of the merger three years ago.

A major outcome was the introduction of MUSIS in November 1991. The system, since upgraded, has been coping with the demand but the memory of design and implementation difficulties lingers.

"The system was developed in indecent haste and the ramifications are well known," Mr White said.

Now that MUSIS is running more smoothly, the university's most pressing need is for a finance system to replace the existing old-style batch-processing system. A working committee of administration and faculty staff set up to investigate alternatives found that CASMAC suited the university's needs closely.

"Our express target was to replace the finance system," Mr White said. "But the significant advantages of other products in the CASMAC suite are too good to be ignored. Financially, we are light years ahead."

The six products from CASMAC are likely to cost Monash about \$400,000, compared with off-the-shelf purchases or in-house development costs of more than \$3 million.

"To get products so close to our requirements at such a hugely reduced cost certainly justifies the exercise," Mr White said.

Leading development

Subject to training and testing, Monash could begin to introduce the new finance systems from January 1995. The university also seems likely to become the lead site for the development of the financial package.

"The human resources system could then be introduced at a strategic time, as will research and consultancy, physical resources and executive systems," he said.

"Data conversion from existing systems would be a relatively minor task. CHA, the product supplier, would provide assistance with the interface. Monash's responsibilities lie in the areas of user-training – attitudinally as well as in skills development and customising of the products."

Such a large-scale project needs a focus, Mr White said. To help coordinate the development and implementation of the information systems, a new Information Systems Centre has been established at Monash.

The Information Systems Centre consists of a small group of experts from within the university who will work closely with AMIS (Administration and Management Information Systems), the Computer Centre and administrative and faculty groups to bring CASMAC into operation. The centre's staff will also play major roles in the national development of the products.

Move over Doogie Howser

Victoria's would-be doctors tested their mettle among hundreds of human body parts at Monash University's anatomy museum this month.

Nearly 300 year 11 students saw "the real thing in 3D" as part of the Monash Junior University Program (JUP).

The future medics were sorted out from the accountants during the tour of the facility, according to anatomy laboratory manager Mr Alan Kreibich.

"It's definitely not for everybody," Mr Kreibich said. "At least 10 per cent of every group were nauseated by the whole idea and wouldn't even bother looking."

Regardless, JUP organisers said the anatomy museum was the most popular attraction in the three-day program.

Teenagers experience all facets of life at Monash in the JUP program – from lectures and practical sessions through to living on campus in the Halls of Residence.

JUP coordinator Ms Rosemary Martin said the Monash Course and Careers Centre organised the event to give secondary students a clearer picture of tertiary life. "The program gives students a feel for university and helps stimulate interest in studying at Monash," she said.

"It is important for those students who may not have considered tertiary education because of distance or circumstance."



Brentwood High School students Ms Sarah Lausborg (left) and Ms Heather Mogle get hands-on experience with one of the Anatomy Museum's many 3D displays.

Timing is more than academic

Arranging a tutorial timetable so that there's time for hockey, basketball, and a part-time job has never been straightforward.

But thanks to a new computer program, more than 3000 students in the David Syme Business School will now find this twice-yearly task a lot easier.

The Tutorial Enrolment System (TES) informs students of how many places are available in each tutorial or lecture group, or if two selected times clash. It also provides specific information about each group, such as if a tutorial is only available to part-time students.

TES was designed by six third-year Bachelor of Computing (Information Systems) students under the direction of academic staff and a faculty services officer in the Faculty of Business and Economics, Mr David Ross.

After enrolling in their subjects, students can access one of 50 computers running TES. They simply select the tutorial and lecture times that best suit their schedule.

As each entry is made, the system adjusts instantly so that no class can be over-enrolled, and no student can enrol in two tutorials for the same subject.

According to Mr Ross, the new system overcomes a lot of problems experienced in the past. "Now we don't have to deal with a room filled with 800 or more tutorial lists. We found that students would sometimes fill in more than one tutorial list for the same subject, which meant that other students missed out," he said.

Beginning this year, students in the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology have been using TES for subjects offered by the Business School.

The program is accessible through the Telnet network, which means that business students on Frankston campus can also select their subjects in this way.

According to Mr Ross, enrolling for a full range of tutorials and lectures should take no more than 10 minutes. But as the program works on a first-come-first-served basis, those students who are last to enrol may face greater difficulty putting together a suitable timetable.

"We have tried to keep the system as fair as possible. Each semester we alter the alphabetical order so that one group of students does not always get first choice," he said.

The number of available terminals to make subject selections will increase this year to about 100.

"Admittedly, there were a few glitches in the system to begin with," Mr Ross said. "But we have employed one of the students who designed the program, and he has ironed out most of the problems."

"When we did a data integrity check at the end of the first semester enrolment, we found a 100 per cent success rate."

Mr Ross is so pleased with TES that another industrial experience group from the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology is working on a timetable development



Ms Samantha Hollow and Mr Elliot Cartledge select tutorial timetables using the Tutorial Enrolment System (TES).

program to help him sort through the 180 to 200 subjects offered by the Business School each semester.

"Some of these classes have only 30 students enrolled, while others have up to 500," Mr Ross said.



We need to plant trees that will encourage birds to stay, says Dr Beth Gott.

Watching our birds

Monash University's myriad species of native birdlife is under scrutiny amid concerns that numbers are dwindling.

Staff from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology are preparing a report on bird numbers and their relationship to native plants on Clayton campus.

Senior technical officers Mr Peter Fell and Mr Graeme Farrington will lead the study, assisted by the department's honorary research associate, Dr Beth Gott.

Mr Fell will prepare the report based on personal observations and research dating back more than 20 years.

As a Monash student and employee, Mr Fell has seen many changes to the natural face of the campus. He said the university's gardening policies are exceptional for boosting native vegetation but need to take into account their effect on local fauna.

"We need to assess the links between the vegetation and the native birds and animals," he said. "Areas surrounding the university have changed over the years too, so we also have to account for this."

Dr Gott will present the group's findings and recommendations to the August Grounds Committee meeting.

As a committee member, Dr Gott said the group is concerned about planting the correct species on campus.

"We need to make sure that we're planting trees that will encourage birds to stay," she said. "I'm concerned with the plants because I'm a botanist. We want to label significant plants and look at how they encourage birdlife."

University policy is to plant only natives, except in enclosed courtyards.

Get the picture on Open Day

Open Day is a window on the world of university life – an opportunity for prospective students to "get the picture", a theme highlighted by this year's Open Day.

A Hollywood-style poster and movie previews are two of the novel approaches Monash is taking to promote its 1993 Open Day.

Monash launched its advertising and promotions campaign on radio 3MMM, one of the top-rating FM stations, early in July. The 45-second advertisement invites teenagers to "get the picture" in two ways: by coming to the Monash Open Day on Sunday 1 August and by telephoning a competition line for complimentary tickets to the movie premiere of *Sleepless in Seattle*, a romantic comedy starring Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan. The movie premieres will be held at Hoyts Chadstone, half way between the Clayton and Caulfield campuses.

Marketing manager Ms Susanne Hatherley says the promotion aims to generate interest in the Monash Open Day and to create the impression of a university

that is in tune with its target market: secondary school students.

"Most universities hold their open days in the same six-week period. There is a clutter of open day advertisements. Our campaign is designed to distinguish Monash as the most interesting and innovative university. We also want to convey the message that Open Day can be fun," she said.

The radio campaign will be supported by press advertisements in *The Saturday Age*, *The Sunday Age* and *The Herald Sun*. Last year, more than 35,000 people visited the four Monash campuses – a measure of the level of community interest in university life.

But as chairman of the Monash Open Day Committee, Professor John Bigelow points out that it is not enough for the university just to open its doors.

"For many of our visitors, Open Day is their first close encounter with a university and the experience can be overwhelming," he said.

"When you realise that a campus such as Clayton is set on 100 hectares and has

more than 60 buildings, it is not surprising that first-time visitors can find the experience intimidating, particularly if they are secondary students trying to make decisions.

"Open Day is particularly important for secondary school students considering higher education," Professor Bigelow added.

"It is the ideal opportunity to meet with academics, students and counsellors to talk about course and career options. We encourage students to attend as many open days as possible. This is one way for students to shop around for their future."

To help students make this important decision, Open Day will focus on providing a warm welcome. One hundred student guides in distinctive academic gowns will offer tours on three campuses – Caulfield, Clayton and Frankston.

There will be central counselling areas on the Clayton and Caulfield campuses, where visitors will be able to talk with careers counsellors and attend a series of special interest lectures on topics ranging from managing in the modern world to sex at Monash.

Also, each faculty will showcase its research and teaching talents with a range of special activities.

Adding to the image

Deadlines are the name of the game for Monash University's advertising officer Ms Adrienne Dooley.

Meeting strict time constraints amid buzzing telephones and fax machines is the challenge of the job, according to the energetic Ms Dooley.

Hundreds of advertisements come under her eagle eye every year.

"I really enjoy advertising because there's always something different going on," she says. "Courses and general advertising involves a lot of contact with the people, which I like."

Ms Dooley's introduction to advertising was at the former Caulfield Institute of Technology. She was working as a secretary in the information office when she was asked to take over advertising and administration responsibilities, starting a new 14-year career.

Subsequently, Ms Dooley joined the public relations team at Chisholm Institute of Technology and has moved into the Monash Marketing Unit with ease.

Known for her happy disposition, Ms Dooley's work links her to three metropolitan campuses, the university departments

and centres at the Alfred, Caulfield and Fairfield hospitals, and Monash Medical Centre. In her Clayton office, the telephone rarely stops ringing.

A typical day in Ms Dooley's life involves meeting near-impossible deadlines, with tasks ranging from providing estimates to proofreading. Her work, she says, could be divided into two sections: processing advertisements and administration.

Processing revolves around cost estimates, bookings, editing, proofreading and close liaison with the university's advertising agency, which places and produces the copy.

Administrative tasks include managing booking forms and purchase orders, along with closely checking invoices in conjunction with the Finance Branch.

While answering the constant inquiries, Ms Dooley also coordinates the presentation of Monash University's high-quality image to the general public.

She also liaises with departments and centres to boost awareness of advertising opportunities in publications outside the university.



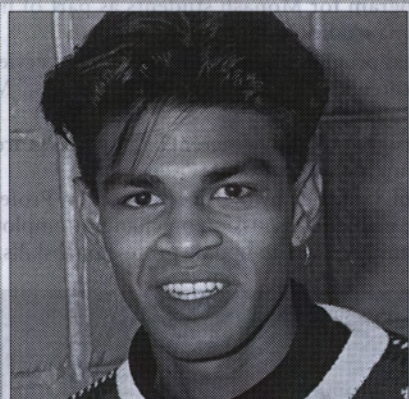
Monash advertising officer, Ms Adrienne Dooley.

Most of her workload is centred around the advertising of university courses, promotions and scholarships.

'Peak time' for Ms Dooley starts in August and runs through to February. During this time she may process and administer more than 20 advertisements a week.

Ms Dooley is available to answer any advertising inquiries on extn 75 2581.

"There's no racism on campus, at least not that I can see. There's racism in the general community, but university life is different."



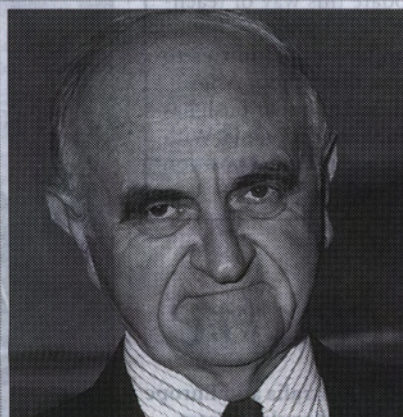
"There's a lot of people from overseas or with international backgrounds, but I haven't experienced it [racism] at Monash. It exists in Australia and, in time, I'm sure it will solve itself, but I can't see the situation changing straight away."

"Yes, but in different ways. A lot of people are scared of anything that's new or different and some people just don't know how to cope. I suppose there's a lot of ignorance."

"I haven't seen any evidence of racism on campus, but I'd be surprised if it didn't exist. I don't think the university is immune to racism."



"I certainly haven't witnessed any [racism]. I feel that whatever level of racism exists on campus is a reflection of what exists in the broader community because the population at Monash is so diverse."



"I'm sure you'll find people on campus with racist feelings, but racism, as a distinct manifestation on campus, I've never noticed, and I've been around for a substantial time."

"Personally, I haven't experienced it, but I've heard stories from other students."

"Racism isn't apparent in my course because it's so small and multicultural – graphic design is fairly sheltered. I wouldn't say that there is no racism on campus though."



"I haven't encountered racism yet, but I think there's racism everywhere. I'm a Christian and I think that's the only way to combat the problem."



"I don't come across racism here and lecturers I speak to haven't mentioned it as being a problem."



"I believe racism exists everywhere, but I haven't seen much evidence of it here. I suppose it must exist."

"I don't think racism exists at all on campus. I believe there is more racism in the broader community than on campus simply because of the greater population."

"No, I've seen no sign of racism at all on campus."



"Racism isn't visible on campus. I deal with full fee paying students all the time and there are very few reports of racism. At least one example of racism at Monash, however, has come from the war in Bosnia. One student felt that they were being treated differently because of their background.

"I think Monash is a microcosm with-
in the broader community. There are
other issues that should be highlighted
more than racism. For example, sexual
harassment seems to be a big problem."

With demand for university places at an all-time high, fierce debate has resulted from the apparent rapid increase in the number of overseas students attending Australian universities.

The study also found there had been no change in the 'big five' source nations or in their order of ranking. Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia and China remain the main feeder countries to Australia's universities.

The study, conducted by Mr Ian Dobson of the Budget and Statistical Services Branch, was drawn from data obtained from the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

The growth of overseas students has been most spectacular at the undergraduate level, increasing by more than 65 per cent over the period. But the actual increase in the proportion of overseas undergraduates to total undergraduate enrolments has been relatively modest, rising by only 1.5 per cent in the four-year period.

Between 1989 and 1992 the total number of overseas research students increased by 38 per cent, compared with 70 per cent for local students.

(DEET defines an overseas student as one who is not an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a holder of a permanent entry permit.)

Higher education enrolments throughout Australia in 1989 and 1992

New era at the club

Aromatic smells, a slick new menu, and value-for-money meals signal a fundamental change at the University Club on Clayton campus.

In what may be one of its best moves, the club took over its own catering in June this year under the direction of new manager Mr Joe Borg.

Head chef Mr Marcus Gropel, one of the club's three new chefs, says his decision to come to Monash was influenced by Mr Borg's expertise.

"I knew that although things might not be that busy at Monash yet, Mr Borg would do his utmost to turn it into the best university club in Melbourne. So far, members seem to be enjoying the change."

The club's new coffee bar, which serves cakes, coffee, and home-made pastries, is open from 10.30 am to 3 pm. The food bar and a la carte lunch service runs from 12 pm to 2 pm, and the dinner service in the private dining room from 5.30 pm to 8 pm.

Cooking up a storm: the club's new head chef, Mr Marcus Gropel.



Insight program: an Australian first

An innovative workshop to help mature-age students foster greater understanding of local government was held this month.

Monash Insight, the first program of its kind in Australia, draws on the experience of similar programs in the UK and Hong Kong.

According to program coordinator Ms Jenny Green, the one-day workshop for 48 mature-age students, presented by Knox and Waverley city councils, was a great success.

"The program exposed students to a wide range of skills and gave them an opportunity to participate in case studies and panel discussions," Ms Green said.

"MAPS will be looking to organise further insight programs focusing on other business sectors next year."

Ms Green, an administration officer with the Mature Age and Part-time Students Association (MAPS), adapted the insight program for Monash students as part of her graduate diploma studies in careers education.

"The overseas programs are geared to give an overview of managerial careers for all undergraduate students," Ms Green said.

"Monash Insight is slightly different because it is geared exclusively for mature-age students."

The program, launched by the vice-chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, included discussion on changing employment markets and the need to update professional skills.



Professor Mal Logan (left) with Cr Graeme Frecker from the City of Waverley at the launch of the Insight program.

Monash tenders to upgrade teachers

Primary school teachers in Hong Kong could soon be studying for a Monash masters degree following recent talks with the University of Hong Kong.

The head of the Monash Faculty of Education, Professor Ray Anderson, and Professor Len Cairns of the Gippsland campus recently took part in a week-long series of meetings with Chinese education authorities with a view to developing courses for the Hong Kong market.

In particular, Monash tendered to upgrade Hong Kong primary teacher qualifications.

Professor Anderson believes that the Faculty of Education is best able to provide further education in the form of a masters degree to upgrade the qualifications of teaching staff.

"Hong Kong is in desperate need to improve the qualifications of primary and kindergarten teachers," he said.

The proposed course would include two units at Monash during the Hong Kong summer and four units by distance education.

Professor Anderson says that such a course would take into account cultural educational differences.

"At kindergarten, primary and secondary levels in Hong Kong, we found much larger classes, more teacher-led work, less inquiry from students, and more rote learning and competition than in Australia. Kindergarten children have an academic record and do homework. Our course would have to accommodate this way of teaching," he said.

Professor Anderson says similar opportunities to upgrade teacher qualifications exist throughout Asia.

"Already there are links in Fiji, and a similar push has been proposed in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. With our distance education facility, we are in a good position to take advantage of these new opportunities."

Music library at the touch of a button

A listing of the extensive 3MU music library is now available on the university's computer network.

The list, which holds more than 3000 albums, 1900 singles and more than 300 compact discs, is available to anyone with access to the university computer network (the listing is located on MFSO1 and MFSO2 in the 3MU directory of the 'K' drive).

Station manager Mr Peter Freeland says the service will help with music requests.

The station, which broadcasts a daily service in the union building between 8 am and 6 pm, will run a series of week-long broadcasts on the FM-band this year.

"Last year we received about 800 calls for song requests, people making comments on the programs and offering positive feedback," Mr Freeland said.

Over the past year, the station has undergone an extensive refit, including renovation of the broadcast and production studios, and the purchase of state-of-the-art audio equipment. A grant of \$60,000 was provided by the Monash University Union Board for the work.

The station, which also has a recording studio available for hire, is staffed by students and plays a diverse mix of music.

Cultural centre

Building academic bridges between Australia and Europe is the task set for London's Sir Robert Menzies Centre.

Monash vice-chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, recently attended a board meeting at the centre. His participation at the meeting reflects the key role Monash is playing in the push to promote Australia through British and European higher education institutions.

Professor Logan said the centre provides Britain and Europe with a deeper understanding of Australia's culture. He said the facility also highlights Australia's role in the world and encourages Australian studies in European higher education.

The centre is a base for visiting Australian scholars and facilitates access to all major libraries and institutions in the area.

Originally known as the Australian Studies Centre, the facility was established with Australian Government funding in 1982 within London University's Institute of Commonwealth Studies. The Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Foundation of Australia took over funding responsibility in 1988 and the centre was renamed in honour of the long-serving prime minister.

Teaching, postgraduate seminars, public lectures, research, conferences, scholarship and fellowship programs, and publications are the centre's core activities.

Uni punters get free rein

It was fun, frivolous and free. Students and staff were able to brush up on their punting skills at the Monash Race Day, held on Saturday 24 July.

All races had a university connection – the feature event being the Sir John Monash Stakes.

The annual Monash Race Day, which has been held for the past two years, is sponsored jointly by the university and the City of Caulfield.

Organiser Mr Peter Cunliffe said the annual race day has built up a strong following.

"It's a lot of fun and a great day in which everyone can get involved," Mr Cunliffe said.

"The day acknowledges our special relationship with the Victorian Amateur Turf Club and the use of their facilities to conduct university examinations."



Spreading the healthy word

Student nurses embarked on a health promotion campaign recently to spread their health and lifestyle message to the Frankston community.

The campaign, which aims to enhance public awareness of health and lifestyle issues, also provides clinical experience for students enrolled in the Bachelor of Applied Science (Nursing) degree.

The program was a joint activity between Monash and the Frankston Health Care Centre. According to Ms Joan Yalden, a lecturer in the Caroline Chisholm School of Nursing, it is a valuable learning experience for students.

A popular event at the local shopping centre: student nurses measure the blood pressure, pulse rate, height and weight of passers-by.

"During the four-day activity, students practised communication and interviewing skills, and measured and recorded blood pressure, pulse rate, height and weight," Ms Yalden said.

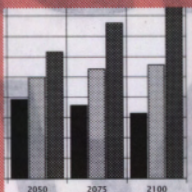
"The students really enjoyed the experience and received a lot of positive feedback."

The program offered free health consultations and information, health screenings and referrals to local health care professionals.

Ms Yalden said the program shares resources with local agencies. It has become a popular event at the local shopping centre in the past five years.

RESEARCH

Watching the world's population explode



Moving to fight against Parkinson's disease



Unravelling possum puzzles

Many thousands of years ago in Australia there lived a killer possum called *Thylacoleo*. This marsupial 'lion' – a rather grandiose title for an animal that was little larger than a lynx – had the most extraordinary teeth of any carnivore in the world.

Thylacoleo has sometimes been described as a sabre-toothed possum, but its huge incisors projected almost horizontally rather than vertically from its jaws, especially those of the upper jaw. Their function remains unclear.

Behind them, the animal's dentition is dominated by a huge set of razor-sharp blades called carnassials that were clearly adapted for slicing easily through muscle, sinew and tendon – but not, it seems, bone.

An honours student in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Mr Kris Juzva, has made a simple but surprising discovery about the carnassials. Mr Juzva (pictured, holding a *Thylacoleo* tooth) has been supervised by Dr Gordon Sanson (pictured far right), whose work focuses on the relationship between an animal's teeth and its ecology.

Dr Sanson points out that the cutting edge of the carnassials in *Thylacoleo* is so finely honed that the focused pressure generated by biting into bone would have almost certainly caused it to chip.

Invariably, the carnassials in fossilised *Thylacoleo* skulls found at sites around Australia are intact and unchipped. But they do have pronounced scratches – the widest scratches seen on the teeth of any animal, five times wider than those seen on the teeth of any other carnivore.

Previously, these had been explained as score marks left by the crushed bones of its victims – although an explanation was lacking for how *Thylacoleo* managed to crush bones with teeth that seem supremely ill-equipped for the purpose. Dr Sanson asked Mr Juzva to investigate.

"Gordon's choice of animals was interesting," says the honours student. "He suggested I compare the cat, dog,



Tooth enamel is one of the hardest substances in nature after diamond. So how does one explain large scratches on an extinct killer possum's teeth? A Monash honours student has yielded a simple discovery that requires paleontologists to take a fresh look at the ecology of other extinct carnivores around the world.

Tasmanian devil and thylacine so as to compare carnivory with scavenging.

"The dog and Tasmanian devil are predominantly scavengers. There's an argument that scavengers eat more bone than pure carnivores, so their dentition, including the carnassials, are optimised for crushing rather than cutting. Cats, which do not crush bones, have sharp carnassials, but they are much smaller than the massive blades seen in *Thylacoleo*."

Dr Sanson says other studies have shown that herbivores, which do not eat bone, develop very fine scratches on their teeth, caused by particles of silica contained in plant cells. But the differences in the width of scratches found on the teeth of herbivores and carnivores is less than that between carnivores and *Thylacoleo* by a large margin.

In an important study conducted at Flinders University in the 1980s, facsimile *Thylacoleo* steel teeth were 'fed'

with materials corresponding to the diets of herbivores and carnivores.

They produced similar scratch widths to those seen on the teeth of living herbivores and carnivores. Gum leaves, including the tough petioles or leaf stems, produced fine scratching, not the huge scratches seen in genuine *Thylacoleo* teeth. This confirmed that the killer possum was indeed a flesh-eater, and not an innocent herbivore convicted on circumstantial evidence.

Even when the *Thylacoleo* facsimile steel teeth were fed with hide and bone, the scratch widths were only in the normal range seen in other carnivores – and nowhere near the width seen in the fossil teeth.

The Flinders University study concluded that *Thylacoleo* did not eat bone. It assumed that *Thylacoleo* was a meat-eater, despite the inconclusiveness of the wear scratch tests.

Mr Juzva made a set of teeth out of mild steel, which is actually about 20 per cent softer than tooth enamel, the hardest substance in the body (the Tasmanian devil *Sarcophilus* has been known to chew through chicken wire).

Mr Juzva fed the steel teeth different components of a carnivore's diet – fresh meat, viscera and the cleaned hide of a cat (he actually shampooed the pelt of a cat killed by a car). Later, he dragged the hide through the garden to contaminate the fur with particles of soil and sand, and he also tried small particles of crushed bone.

Of all these variations, only one 'diet' always produced scratches on the teeth – the dirt-contaminated cat pelt. This was particularly interesting bearing in mind that the steel was 20 per cent softer than real teeth.

It was then that he realised the bone particles had essentially failed to scratch the mild steel. A substantial scientific literature on the ecology of living and extinct carnivores is based on the assumption that the scratches on carnivore teeth are made by bone.

He then tried using bone to scratch dog tooth enamel, which is specifically adapted for crushing bone, and no scratches attributable to the bone resulted. The only conclusion possible is that the scratches seen on animal teeth are caused by inadvertent ingestion of silica particles, dirt contaminating the meat, or in the case of herbivores, phytoliths in plant leaves.

"My finding suggests that work on carnivore microwear needs to be reassessed. Flesh and bone can't scratch teeth – but silica can," Mr Juzva says.

Rather than reflecting the amount of bone in the diet of a scavenger or a carnivore, the degree of scratching may instead measure the amount of dirt or sand inadvertently picked up during eating. "Carnivory is a mucky, dirty business," says Dr Sanson.

So *Thylacoleo* was almost certainly a flesh-eater, which encountered a lot of dirt in its diet. Because the upper and lower carnassials slide past each other instead of coming into direct opposition, they rarely crunch silica, and the damage is restricted to the lateral surfaces.

There is still no explanation for the exaggerated width of the scratches on *Thylacoleo* teeth – although if the silica explanation holds, it rules out the possibility that it exclusively caught and ate its prey above ground.

"The implication is that *Thylacoleo* may have lived in a dusty environment, perhaps pouncing on its prey from overhead and rolling it on the ground," says Dr Sanson.



An artist's impression of *Thylacoleo*.

Defusing the population bomb

In this year's federal election campaign, the Prime Minister, Mr Paul Keating, said Australians should be excited because South-East Asia is experiencing the world's most rapid economic growth. But he neglected to say that the region is also experiencing the world's fastest population growth, which could have dangerous economic and political ramifications in the next century.

Uncontrolled world population growth is a problem that politicians in developed nations don't want to think about.

However, Professor Roger Short of the Department of Physiology says the consequences of this growth will plague affluent nations next century. The trend, he says, could lead to dangerous economic and political instability.

Professor Short, who is also a director of Family Health International, a non-profit family planning organisation based in North Carolina, says: "You only need to look at the United Nations Population Fund projections for Indonesia. In 1988 Indonesia had nearly 175 million people; by the turn of this century the figure will be 208 million, and by 2025 Indonesia's population will be around 263 million.

"I fear that Australia could be finished as a nation if we don't help our South-East Asian neighbours control their population growth rates, because in 100 years time there will be enormous problems with food supply, human health and refugees."

Explosive population growth in South-East Asia is part of the global problem of uncontrolled human fertility, with its associated consequences, he says.

A recent United Nations report has projected that there would be between 10 billion and 12.5 billion humans on the planet by the middle of next century (see table).

The 'medium-low' scenario is unduly optimistic, Professor Short says. It would depend on effective birth control programs being in place throughout the world by next century. More than likely, actual growth will fall somewhere within

the range defined by the 'medium' and 'medium-high' projections.

This means that by the end of next century, the world's population could be between 11.2 and 17.6 billion – the latter figure, reflecting the 'medium-high' growth scenario, would represent almost a tripling of today's global population.

"If we go up to 17 billion ... what a mess it would be," Professor Short said.

He believes that western governments have a duty to make modern contraceptive methods available to developing nations. Unfortunately, research into better methods of contraception and foreign aid programs focusing on population control are being hindered in the West by a small but vocal minority that asserts, on religious grounds, that contraception is immoral.

There is no doubt that the world's population is increasing at a totally unacceptable rate, and destroying the environment we live in.

Professor Short says some of these lobby groups mischievously misrepresent the nature of population control programs. Recently, the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) made a grant to the World Health Organisation's Human Reproduction Program. Well-known antiabortion and anticontraception campaigner Senator Brian Harradine claimed that the

money would be spent on procuring abortions in developing nations.

"Every time Australia does something good in the way of putting more money into family planning in developing countries, Senator Harradine and his supporters jump up and down and try to get it blocked," Professor Short said.

Despite the influence of such groups, Professor Short discounts the public perception that religious sanctions against contraception and abortion are primarily responsible for uncontrolled population growth in third world nations, especially in South America.

"I don't think religious beliefs are a major factor in uncontrolled population growth. The problem arises when people with a misguided religious sense attempt to translate their beliefs into the political arena," he said.

"They try to deny other people access to modern forms of contraception and pregnancy termination in the mistaken belief that they are on a messianic crusade.

"People are entitled to their own religious beliefs, and they may believe that abortion and contraception are terrible. But they are not entitled to impose those beliefs on others living in less favourable circumstances in developing nations."

Like many other population experts, Professor Short believes that the rising economic and educational status of women in developing nations will do more to constrain population growth than contraception, sterilisation or abortion.

"Education is the best of all contraceptives, because it is an expensive item to provide to children. Once you can convert children into an economic drain on the family, where hitherto they have been an economic asset, people are strongly motivated to limit the size of their families," he said.

"In addition, educating women means that they become informed about the options for restricting their own fertility.

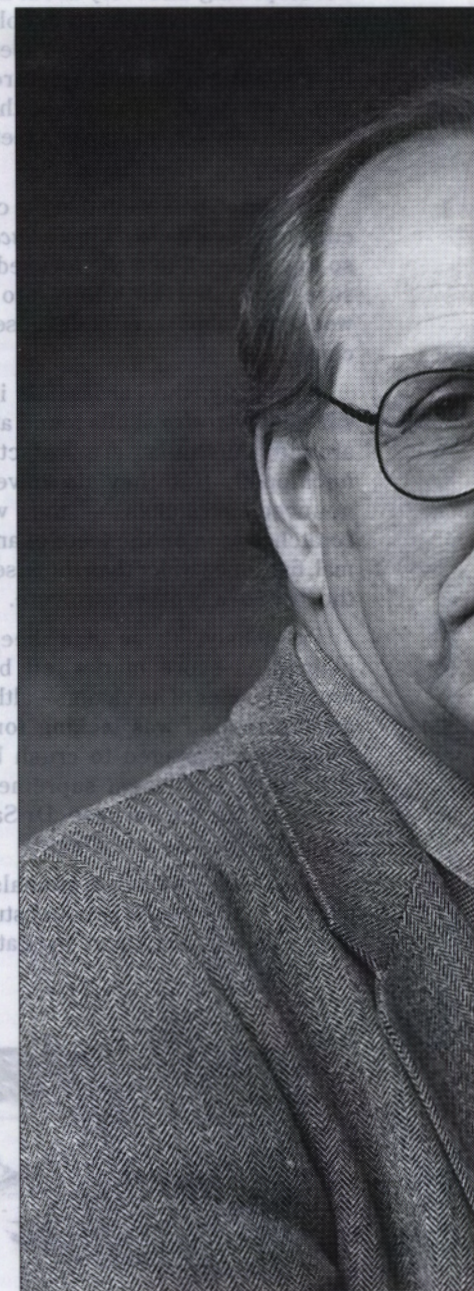
"We know that already in many developing countries the vast majority of women want no more than three children. The tragedy is that no contraception is available to prevent them from having more.

"So the problem is back squarely on our plate. The developed nations are the ones most responsible for polluting and plundering the world's resources, so we

are the ones who should pay if we want to maintain our affluence.

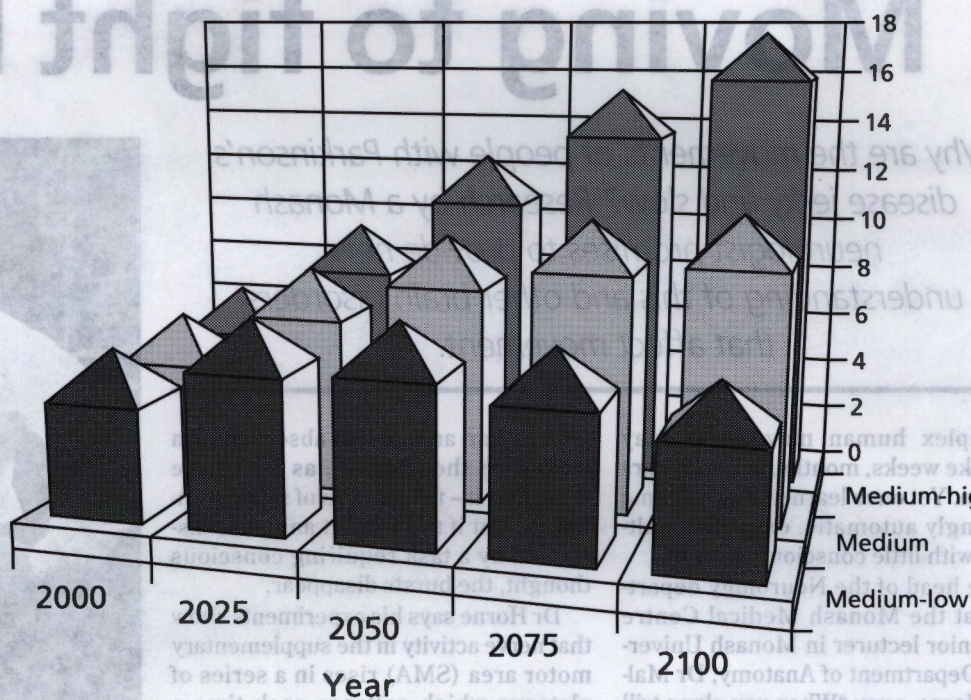
"The price demanded of us is to provide adequate contraception to people in developing countries who want to have smaller families. A recent survey in Indonesia found that 75 per cent of Indonesian women want to have no more than three children, but they cannot always obtain the necessary contraception.

"Australia, as an affluent neighbour, should be helping Indonesia with family planning programs, and making modern contraception available at a reasonable



Professor Roger Short: "I fear that Australia and our South-East Asian neighbours could be finished as a nation if we don't help them control their population growth rates."

e time



cost. The alternative is for us to spend billions of dollars on defence next century.”

Professor Short has been on the board of Family Health International for 10 years, but has been interested in population issues for much longer. He says he was influenced enormously by the controversial Club of Rome report ‘The Limits to Growth’, published in 1973.

The report pointed to the dire consequences of uncontrolled human population growth, but has subsequently been criticised for being unduly alarmist and pessimistic.

“People said you couldn’t treat the world as one system, but in dismissing ‘The Limits to Growth’ as simplistic, they threw the baby out with the bath water,” Professor Short said.

“There is no doubt that the world’s population is increasing at a totally unacceptable rate, and destroying the environment we live in.”

Professor Short said he had recently read *The diversity of life* by international authority on biodiversity and Pulitzer Prize winner Professor E. O. Wilson of Harvard University.

“Wilson says the current loss of species from the world as a result of habitat destruction ranks as one of the greatest natural extinction episodes that has occurred since life appeared on Earth,” Professor Short said.

“Many of these species whose extinction we are bringing closer are insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles and plants – organisms that most people aren’t aware of. But that doesn’t mean they are not vital players in ecosystems. Even bacteria are essential for our survival, so we can’t afford to wipe them out with impunity.”

The Club of Rome warned about the impact of human population pressure on the global environment 20 years ago.

Professor Short says that despite the scepticism, many of the report’s projections have come true. He says few people, politicians included, comprehend the nature of exponential growth – the rate at which the world’s population is increasing each year is so large as to be almost meaningless to the average person.

“I tell my students to take the last two figures of the current year as a rough guide,” he said. “So in 1992, about 92 million people were added to the world population. This year it will be roughly 93 million – 5.5 times Australia’s total population.”

Indonesia’s population growth pales by comparison with that of India. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has projected that India will rival China as the world’s most populous nation soon after the turn of the century. In 1988 there were nearly 819 million people in India. By the year 2000 there will be more than 1 billion, rising to nearly 1.5 billion by 2025.

But these projections do not take into account the potential impact of AIDS in developing nations, says Professor Short.

Although India has relatively few cases of AIDS, the long latency period between infection and the development of full-blown AIDS obscures an exponential rate of infection.

“It will take quite a time for AIDS to actually start killing as many people as are being added to the world,” Professor Short said. “It won’t start happening until well into the next century.”

“But if AIDS really does bring the world’s population into check, it would be a horrendous scenario. With more than 100 million people dying each year, over and above the death rate from all other causes, the world would stink of putrefying flesh.”

“It could happen – AIDS may be our Malthusian plague. We cannot be com-

placent because we are only in the very early stages of the global AIDS epidemic.

“Dr Jonathan Mann, the former head of the WHO Global Program on AIDS, was recently in Melbourne as part of a lecture tour. He asked people in his audiences who believe we have AIDS under control to raise their hands.

“Nobody raised their hand, and Dr Mann says they are right. The fact is that AIDS is still completely out of control, and that its spread has not been successfully contained anywhere, although some developed nations have managed to dampen it.

“Australia is probably a good example. We have been reasonably successful in slowing the rate of spread, but we cannot claim to have AIDS under control.”

Reproductive health in the world

“More than 100 million acts of sexual intercourse take place every day, resulting in 910,000 conceptions, of which 50 per cent are unplanned and 25 per cent definitely unwanted. This sexual activity also results in 356,000 sexually transmitted bacterial and viral infections.

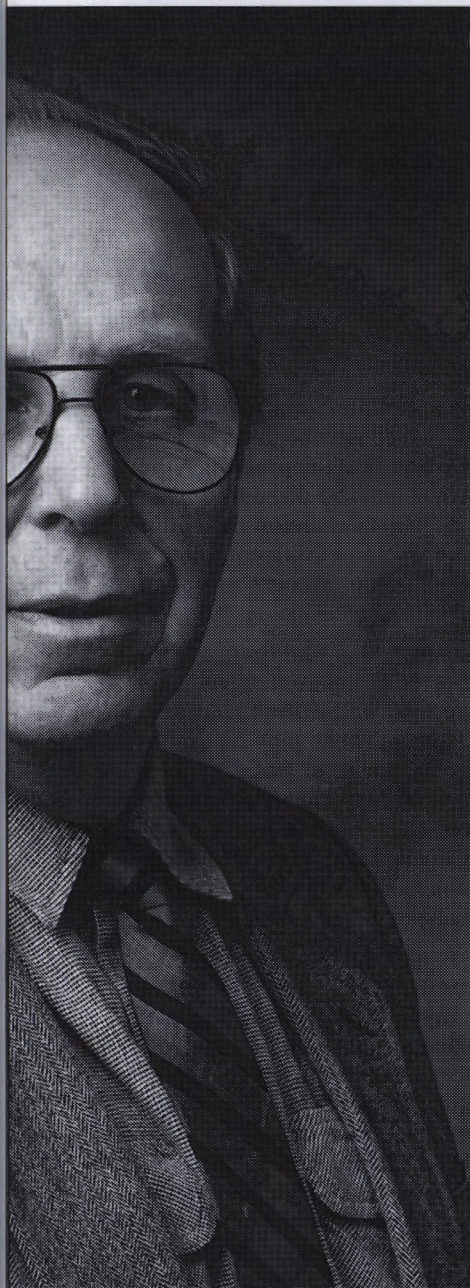
“About 150,000 unwanted pregnancies are terminated each day by induced abortion. One third are performed under unsafe conditions and in an adverse social and legal climate, resulting in some 500 women dying every day.

“Every day about 1370 women die in the course of their physiological and social duty of pregnancy and childbirth; many more times this number have escaped death narrowly, but suffer significant physical and psychological injuries.

“Some 25,000 infants and another 1400 children aged between 1 and 4 die each day. One in 12 infants born this year will die within the first year, and one in eight will die before their fifth birthday.

“Family planning not only prevents births, it also saves the lives of women and children. Some 300 million couples do not have access to family planning services.”

Source: World Health Organisation Report 1992



could be finished as a nation if we don't help
ntrol their population growth rates.”

Moving to fight Parkinson's

Why are the movements of people with Parkinson's disease jerky and slow? Research by a Monash neurologist promises to provide new understanding of this and other brain disorders that affect movement.

Complex human movements may take weeks, months, or even years to learn. Yet once learned they become seemingly automatic, executed faultlessly with little conscious thought.

The head of the Neurology department at the Monash Medical Centre and senior lecturer in Monash University's Department of Anatomy, Dr Malcolm Horne, says: "When you play a trill on a clarinet it's a simple two-finger movement.

"But when you move to a more complex sequence, the order of the notes gives contextual meaning. If you have to rely on auditory feedback to move between notes, your brain could never process the information fast enough for you to play rapidly.

"And if you make a mistake, your hands will continue for some time afterwards. It's as if some program is being executed automatically before you consciously realise the error," he says.

According to Dr Horne, the way the brain coordinates complex sequences of movement, without its owner being conscious of the fine detail of those movements, is poorly understood.

His own research, with colleague Dr Bob Iansek, promises to illuminate the neural mechanisms involved, and may help victims of brain disorders that affect movement, such as Parkinson's disease.

Monitoring nerve activity

Dr Horne and Dr Iansek have been monitoring an intriguing pattern of nerve activity in a region of the brain called the basal ganglia.

In the past decade, neurologists noted that neurons begin firing in a region of the brain called the supplementary motor area some time before the movement actually begins – it seems to be associated with the intention to move.

Dr Horne says the neurons of the basal ganglia fire in a series of 'spikes' that are also associated with physical movement. But here, instead of preceding the movement, they fire after the movement has been initiated.

In 1982 Dr David Marsden, of the Queen Square Hospital for Nervous Diseases in London, theorised that this nerve activity in the basal ganglia might be serving as a signal for the brain to move from one segment of a complex movement 'program' to the next.

In experiments with laboratory animals, Dr Horne and Dr Iansek have obtained evidence that supports Dr Marsden's theory.

"Marsden suggested that the basal ganglia might be providing internal cues to coordinate movements, instead of the brain relying on external cues, such as auditory cues in the case of the clarinet player," Dr Horne says.

"We refined this idea by suggesting that the neuronal discharge – the bursts of activity in the basal ganglia – were indeed internally generated cues marking the points at which the brain's 'program' moved between sequences."

While an animal was absorbed by a task – "in the groove", as Dr Horne describes it – this pattern of spikes continues. But if the subject animal is distracted by a task requiring conscious thought, the bursts disappear.

Dr Horne says his experiments show that nerve activity in the supplementary motor area (SMA) rises in a series of plateaus which collapse each time a new movement is executed.

In a clever experiment, he and Dr Iansek showed that if the animal was trained to carry out a particular activity for a fixed time, activity in the SMA would collapse when the sequence was completed – as if there was no further expectation of movement. But if the animal was unexpectedly required to prolong the movement, the activity would collapse, and then build up again as the movement resumed.

Similarly, if an animal's activity was entrained to the beat of a metronome, and then the beat was altered unexpectedly, the animal would maintain the original rhythm for some time before making the adjustment. Dr Horne interprets this as evidence that the animal's movement becomes entrained to an internally generated rhythm, not the audible, real-world cues of the metronome's sound.

Dr Horne and Dr Iansek are attempting to show that laboratory animals suffering from an induced form of Parkinson's disease somehow lose or fail to produce these internally generated cues. They come to rely on external cues and are required to consciously process information from them, which may explain why their movements slow down and become jerky – a condition known as bradykinesia.

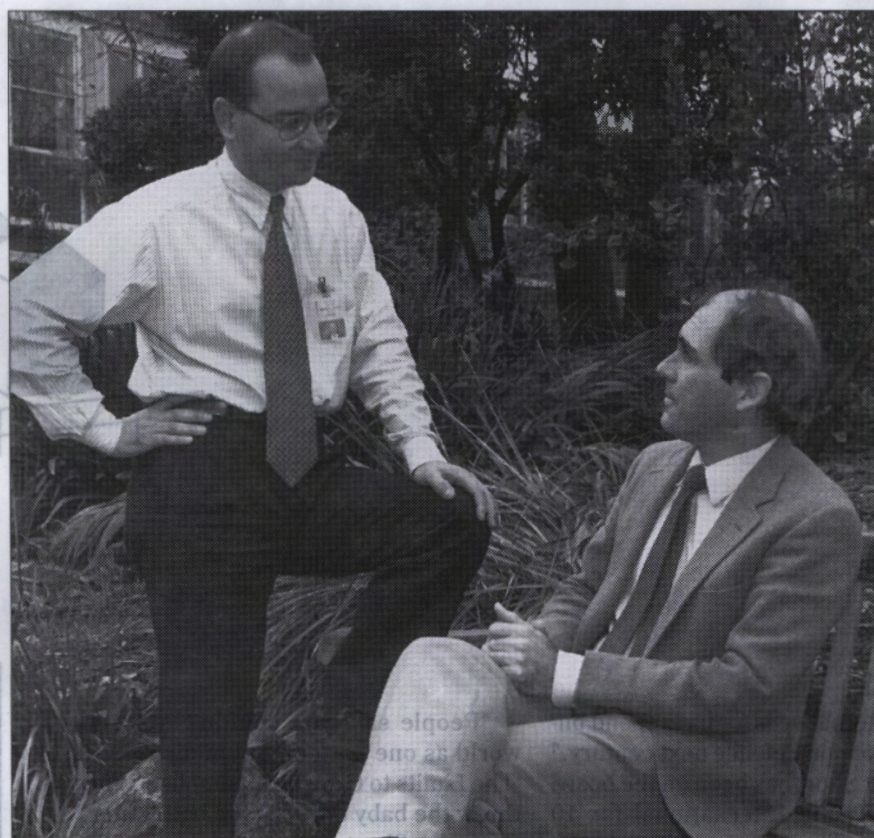
Human Parkinson's patients also manifest bradykinesia. Without external cues to guide movement, a Parkinson's patient's movement becomes hesitant. With external cues, such as an instructor saying "left, right, left, right", a patient's movement is noticeably more coordinated.

Dr Iansek has been recording the internal "readiness potential" via electrodes attached to the scalp of healthy human volunteers. "We asked people to tap a sequence on a board. In these subjects the spikes build up and then collapse. Interestingly, if we ask the subject merely to think about tapping out the sequence, but not to execute it, the spikes build up in the same way.

"The same thing happens when we ask healthy volunteers to draw a pattern following the path of a moving light. Their brains exhibit the same series of spikes if they are asked to draw the same pattern without observing the light.

"Patients with Parkinson's can also draw a pattern following a moving light. When they do it without the light as a visual cue however, they perform poorly, and there is no build-up of activity in the brain.

Dr Horne says a complex series of steps links the generation of an internal



Research by Dr Bob Iansek (left) and Dr Malcolm Horne has shed new light in the fight against Parkinson's and other diseases that affect movement.

cue and the execution of movement. When the basal ganglia are firing, the impulses inhibit activity in the thalamus. So when the basal ganglia are silent, the thalamus activates and sends impulses to the supplementary motor cortex, which preprocesses nerve signals going out to the muscles.

But there is a question mark over this picture. In Parkinson's patients, the absence of basal ganglia activity should give the thalamus free rein to excite the supplementary motor cortex. It doesn't. "This does not make sense," Dr Horne says. "We don't know how the brain turns off excitation of the supplementary motor cortex."

Despite this uncertainty, the arrangement of the circuitry offers a way to reduce one of the most unpleasant symptoms of Parkinson's – dystonia, or uncontrolled muscle tremors.

Dr Horne says that some years ago doctors came across an interesting case in which a person with Parkinson's had suffered a stroke. The stroke had destroyed a structure called the globus pallidus interna (GPI) through which the spiking signals from the basal ganglia travel en route to the thalamus.

After the stroke, the patient's Parkinsonian tremors subsided markedly. Surgery to ablate the GPI may be useful in treating bradykinesia in patients with Parkinson's disease.

Surgery an option

Dr Horne and Dr Iansek have sought a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to test this surgical procedure in animals with induced Parkinson's. In fact, Dr Horne says, this surgery has already been performed experimentally on several human volunteers in the US – and seems to work.

Understanding how the circuitry coordinates smooth, fine motor movement in healthy people could also have practical applications, said Dr Horne.

Twice in his career, the German golf champion Bernard Langer has suffered a severe case of what golfers call 'the yips' – he was unable to make the

smooth, coordinated movement required to putt. In very tense matches, the Czechoslovakian tennis player Miloslav Mecir was sometimes forced to serve underhand because he lost the coordination needed to serve overarm.

Dr Horne theorises that some elite athletes, under acute pressure, may suffer a temporary 'derailing' of the internal programs developed through practice. Many golfers, tennis players and other elite sports people have unusual rituals that they go through each time before they execute an otherwise smooth action. If the ritual is interrupted, they feel uncoordinated – "Michael Lynagh (Australian Rugby Union champion) goes through this amazing ritual before he kicks for goal," Dr Horne says.

"When something goes wrong with the ritual – which may be programmed into the early part of the program – the entire action may be disrupted. One solution may be to abandon the entire motion and try something completely new – for example, Mecir's use of an underarm serve."

Pianists may also find their performance affected by random movements that creep into well-drilled routines, says Dr Horne. These may be due to spontaneous bursts of basal ganglia activity, which may give false cues to the muscles. The best known medical condition involving false movements is Huntington's chorea, which originates in the basal ganglia.

At least part of the problem may stem from cues being sent to the wrong place. Dr Horne notes that a child learning the piano may initially make superfluous movements, which with appropriate tuition can be progressively eliminated as the child acquires skill. He speculates that if these are not eliminated, they may result in further errors creeping in that impair overall efficiency. This underscores the importance of teaching the correct techniques during training – whether to a young musician or a child starting out in a new sport.

Big toys out of the Playbox

Sitting in the downstairs cafe of the Malthouse Theatre, surrounded by producers negotiating and actors rehearsing, what better way to spend an hour than to interview Playbox's artistic director and lead in their latest production *Big Toys*.

As I speak to Carrillo Gantner, I am awed by his energy, despite a show the night before, an eight-show-per-week run, and every other waking hour spent at the Malthouse organising forthcoming plays, a future trip to Japan, and a *Big Toys* Victorian tour.

Stirring his cappuccino, he says: "What keeps me going is that my pleasures, passions and work are the same. Good coffee also helps."

Mr Gantner was founder of the Playbox Theatre Company in 1976. In its first season, the company performed works by Australian women playwrights. Since then it has produced 150 full productions of Australian works, as well as countless workshops and readings of other new plays.

When Playbox's theatre at 55 Exhibition Street was burnt out in 1984, Carlton United Breweries Ltd gave the company the 1892 Malthouse building, which, after four years of renovation, has become an important part of Melbourne's cultural world.

In addition to being Playbox's home, this centre for contemporary art aims to be the cultural voice of Australia through its two theatres, art exhibitions, acting classes, workshops, music, contemporary opera and dance.

With the support of the vice-chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, Playbox affiliated with Monash in 1990. The association grew from the efforts of Mr Gantner and the manager of the Alexander Theatre, Mr Phil A'Vard.

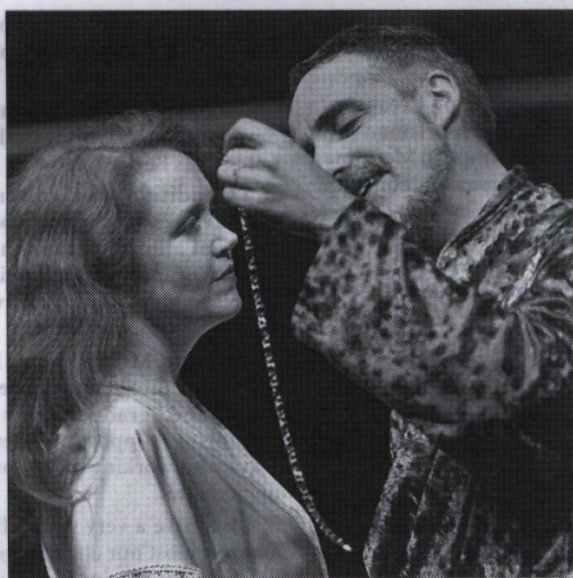
Mr Gantner says the idea to take theatre to the people in outer-metropolitan areas was inspired by his three years as cultural counsellor at the Australian embassy in Beijing.

"Companies did not have their own theatres but took a show around the city to several venues. When I came back to Melbourne, I thought this might work in Australia and initiated tours to the Alexander Theatre," he says.

"I was surprised at the wonderful reaction that we received in the first year. I thought it would take a few years to build up the following that exists there now."

But the Playbox-Monash connection has been beneficial for both sides, says Mr Gantner: "For Playbox, we have built up our audience base, received administrative benefits, and the university funds an education officer to work with secondary and tertiary institutions.

"Playbox has helped Monash serve not only staff and students but also the local community in the demographic



Carrillo Gantner with Julie Nihill in *Big Toys*.

heart of Melbourne. We have enhanced the university's cultural image, and helped to build local business and sponsorship support."

Mr Gantner will retire as artistic director of Playbox at the end of 1993. He says that after 15 years it is time to go: "Change is important in a theatre company. When it starts wearing the director's signature and personal taste, it is time for another set of tastes to get a run."

Mr Aubrey Mellor, former director of the Royal Queensland Theatre Company and director of the forthcoming MTC production at Monash, *Brilliant Lies*, has been appointed to the position.

Mr Gantner will remain on the board of Playbox and invest more time in his own creative work - acting, directing, and promoting artistic links with Asia.

But he will not go out without a bang. His last performance for 1993 will be the lead role in Playbox's *King Lear*. It will be played for Melbourne audiences and then in China, Japan and Korea.

"I have a feeling that people might think that *Lear* represents the last act of hubris by Carrillo Gantner. If this is the case ... so be it," he says.

"I might be 49 today, but I will never be ready for golf. There are too many other things that I haven't explored."

— Suzie Bourne

The Arts Gallery

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

Bernard Sachs's *Elements* exhibition opened on 1 July at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

The Australian-born artist's work reflects psychological states expressed metaphorically through the evocation of three cities: Melbourne, Jerusalem, and Vienna.

Sachs's imaging of place and persona assume a monumental mesmerising presence. The huge black charcoal drawings of tattooed figures articulate notions of origin and migration.

Elements will be exhibited until 1 August at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Dallas Brooks Drive, South Yarra. For further details, contact 654 6422.

Monash University Gallery

The Bomb in Australian Art will be on show at the Monash Gallery in July and August.

The exhibition, curated by Rod James, examines the extent and diversity of the response by Australian artists to the nuclear issue. Works explore the issues arising from the threat of nuclear annihilation from the outset of the atomic age to the present.

The exhibition surveys how the impact of the Cold War, national nuclear policy, militarism and developments in nuclear technology have been communicated through art, popular imagery and video.

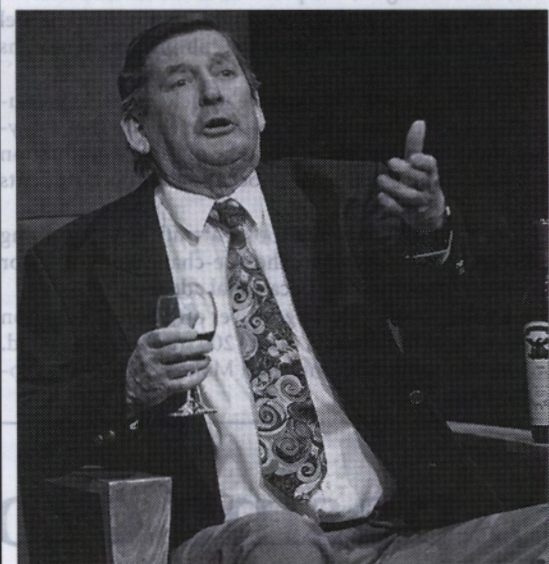
The Bomb in Australian Art will be held from 14 July to 28 August. For further details, contact extn 75 4217.

The Alexander Theatre

Brilliant Lies

David Williamson's controversial play *Brilliant Lies* was performed at the Alexander Theatre in mid-July.

The well-received play combined comedy with thought-provoking social issues and featured a cast of Australia's finest actors: Peter Adams, Christine Amor, Genevieve Lemon, Miranda Otto, and Ray Barrett (below).



Great Expectations

Visiting Dickens exponent Mr George Curry will present readings of *Great expectations* at the Alexander Theatre in August.

Director of the theatre, Mr Phil A'Vard says that the readings will be Mr Curry's only appearance in Melbourne.

Mr Curry will present a brief reading on Friday 6 August at lunchtime and a full reading on Sunday 8 August in the afternoon.

For more information on the readings, contact the Box Office, extn 75 3992.

Bran Nue Dae

The first Aboriginal musical, *Bran Nue Dae*, will come to the Alexander Theatre in the first week of August.

Bran Nue Dae has been heralded as a landmark musical for every Australian. It is a simple, warm-hearted tale about a young Aboriginal boy searching for identity and love.

The play is set in the Western Australian city of Broome, where a young boy escapes from a Christian mission. On his journey, he meets a collection of the most bawdy and loveable characters ever to be seen on stage.

The eclectic music includes calypso, early black American, Celtic, some Harry Belafonte, and even a bit of Gilbert and Sullivan.

Bran Nue Dae will run from 4 to 7 August. For information and bookings, contact the Box Office, extn 75 3992.

Recalling a golden age

The difference between work and pleasure is forever blurred for Monash University academic, Dr Brian McFarlane.

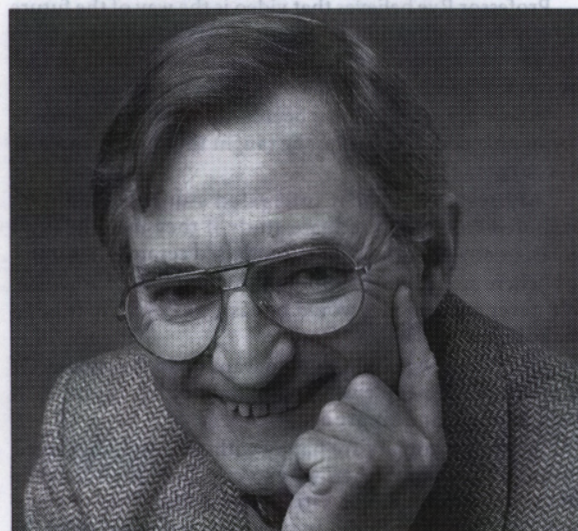
The associate professor of English loves film and literature and has forged a successful career around his life-long interests.

Teaching cinema studies and literature on Caulfield campus keeps his film appetite whetted during working hours. Writing books about British film and its famous actors from the 1940s and 1950s has filled his private time.

Dr McFarlane's recently released book, *Sixty voices: Celebrities recall the golden age of British cinema*, was the "most attractive, pleasurable research anyone could do".

He recounted dozens of interviews with British film stars, producers and directors, describing them as "enormously entertaining".

"I've always been interested in British cinema and this has given me a wonderful change from the critical studies I've done before," he said.



Dr Brian McFarlane.

But Dr McFarlane is quick to play down his fascination with British film. "I'm not obsessed with film," he laughed. "That's too strong a word. I'd say that I've always been devoted to literature and film."

"I'm not what people call a movie buff. That term conjures up images of someone who's good at Trivial Pursuit."

Dr McFarlane admits, however, to being lured towards cinema since his childhood in the Wimmera. The twice-weekly screenings at the local cinema created a "lasting impression", with a particular fondness for British films.

"At the age of 10, I was already interested in films," he said. "I had many battles with my father because he didn't think children should be going regularly to the movies."

Dr McFarlane was able to fully discover cinema after moving to Melbourne in the 1950s - a time when three cinemas showed British films exclusively.

He started his academic career at the State College of Victoria at Frankston in 1976, which became the Frankston campus of Monash in 1990.

Writing several books about Australian and British film provided the impetus for *Sixty voices*, and in particular for a book Dr McFarlane co-wrote with Dr Geoff Mayer called *New Australian cinema: Sources and parallels in American and British film*.

The book compared Hollywood movie styles with British and new Australian film. Their research provided more than enough information on the subject.

Dr McFarlane's latest work steers away from academic critique, focusing more on the personalities behind British cinema in its heyday.

The book took three years to complete, with hours of watching films, researching and tracking down celebrities.

Memoirs recorded in the book include such famous names as John Mills, Valerie Hobson, Ann Todd, Peter Ustinov, Stewart Granger, Wendy Hiller, Dirk Bogarde and Alec Guinness.

Sixty voices was released in England last year and launched in Australia in April. Published by the British Film Institute, London, with the assistance of Monash University, the book is distributed in Australia by Heinemann.

In search of inspiring heroes

Monash University has launched an annual international search for two heroes in the tradition of its namesake, Sir John Monash.

The director of Alumni and Fundraising, Ms Jennifer Beck, is coordinating the Monash Distinguished Alumni Awards, which will be promoted to Monash graduates around the world. The awards, sponsored by the SEC, will honour high-profile Monash alumni.

A selection committee chaired by the chancellor, Mr Bill Rogers, will consider all nominations, which may be made by individuals, groups, corporate or public sector organisations.

"We are looking for people who, like Sir John Monash, are able to combine outstanding professional achievement with inspirational leadership and exceptional personal qualities," Ms Beck explained.

"We feel that this country – and possibly the world – lacks leaders, people who can set an example to future generations and inspire us all."

With more than 50,000 alumni around the world, Ms Beck is confident that suitable contenders for this prestigious award will be found. In the six years she has worked at the university, she has built up an extensive

database that has enabled Monash to maintain contact with many of its graduates.

Some of the more well known among them include politician Simon Crean, state coroner Hal Hallenstein, sportsman John Bertrand, entertainer Campbell McComas, playwright David Williamson, consumer advocate Helen Wellings, leading business women Rhonda Galbally and BHP public affairs manager Carol Austin.

"One of the most pleasant aspects of this job is that I am constantly coming into contact with people who have an enthusiasm for Monash and genuinely wish to stay in touch with the university," Ms Beck said.

"When I joined the university at the end of 1987, we did not have an alumni membership, although individual faculties had established special interest groups, such as the Monash University Law Association and the Association of Monash Medical Graduates.

"We have now established mechanisms for encouraging graduates to stay in touch wherever they live, whatever their disciplinary background."

These mechanisms include a regular newsletter, reunions, membership privileges and opportunities to network with other graduates. Every student receives a

letter of congratulations from the university and an invitation to join the alumni when they graduate.

"We also help faculties and departments develop relationships with their own graduates," Ms Beck explained.

In addition, the university now has alumni links around the world – there are regional alumni groups in Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, and Monash 'correspondents' in 40 cities worldwide and across Australia.

In future, Ms Beck would like to encourage greater interaction between undergraduates and graduates by establishing mentoring, support and network groups. She is also working on a Monash directory of graduates.

"We have a very strong belief that first and foremost our alumni are people, not a database. By offering them our support and interest, we hope to encourage theirs," she said.

Ms Beck previously worked for the International Development Organisation in Canberra, which was responsible for developing links between Australian higher education institutions and countries in South-East Asia and the Pacific rim.



The director of Alumni and Fundraising, Ms Jennifer Beck.

"I have always had a strong interest in international relations," Ms Beck, who is proficient in French, German, Italian and Swedish, explained. She is an executive member of the Australian Asian Association, and a member of Australian Business in Europe and the Australian Institute of International Affairs.

Before settling in Australia she lived in France, Sweden, Belgium and Italy, and still harbours an ambition to spend time in Seoul and Beijing.

Overseas graduations take centre stage

More than 410 international students from three countries graduated this month in Monash University's largest off-shore graduation ceremonies.

Students from all faculties graduated in ceremonies held in Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. The chancellor, Mr Bill Rogers, presided at the ceremonies.

The university's acting academic registrar, Mr Michael Watson, said the ceremonies are the culmination of months of preparation.

"This year is the third time we've held overseas graduations and a lot of work is necessary to ensure that everything goes smoothly," he said. "The off-shore graduation ceremonies hold a real sense of occasion for both students and their families."

More than 120 students took part in the Hong Kong graduation ceremony, where the vice-chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, presented the occasional address.

In Kuala Lumpur, the largest ever off-shore graduation ceremony held by Monash, nearly 200 students graduated. The vice-chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Pro-

fessor Dato' Zawawi Ismail, delivered the occasional address.

Monash graduate and founder of the multimillion dollar international watch company, The Hour Glass, Ms Jannie Tay delivered the occasional address in Singapore to more than 90 graduates.

Planning for overseas graduations is a long and detailed affair. Qualified students first have to notify student administration of their wish to graduate in their home country.

"As with all graduations, occasional speakers are identified, programs and testamurs printed, academic dress and procession details finalised and music selected," said Mr Watson.

"Off-shore graduations differ only in the sense that most of the planning done at Monash is then removed and put into place in another country," he said.

Each graduation ceremony was followed by an informal function where graduates and their families mingled with the official Monash party and had photographs taken.

Ceramic works captured on video

The home video has taken on a new role for postgraduate students in the ceramics distance education course offered by Monash University's Gippsland School of Art.

Instead of recording family events or holidays, video recorders are now capturing the development of ceramic artworks produced by the students.

A long-time devotee of celluloid, ceramics lecturer Professor Owen Rye recognised the possibilities of using videos for teaching and assessment.

Research into the use of video as an educational tool has been government funded. Professor Rye says that using the videos has been a success for both the students and staff.

"As a teacher, I need to see the progressive development of the students' work. I can then offer them effective advice on ideas, methods of production and technique," he says.

"Constructive criticism involves looking at the shape, material and how students go about their work. I could not offer this kind of advice with our initial slide-assessment procedure.

"The students are also confident now in using cameras and the effects they can get from them. The filmed material acts as a sketchbook and provides back-up information for their work, such as footage of the immediate surroundings and environment. The colours, shapes and objects give a useful insight into major influences on a student's work and personal identity."

"I am able to gauge a student's personality from his or her explanations and conversations on video and by the surrounding environment. Art is created by a person. To understand a person's work, I need to know them as well."

Getting to know the students is more formalised through the school's compulsory, three-week winter workshop during which participants come together to work on, discuss and assess their artworks.

Professor Rye believes that video is the way of the future for distance education in ceramics. He looks forward to the day when videoconferencing will be affordable so that he can talk to students while they explain their works.

"Some art schools have been critical of our methods, saying that ceramics cannot be taught this way," Professor Rye says.

"My response is that interested students would be excluded from postgraduate study if they lived in rural areas, or anywhere lacking a recognised ceramics course."

"There are always difficulties in managing such a course. We never pretended it would be easy, but we have tried to make it appropriate and feasible."

And plenty of people seem to want to do the course. Of more than 100 people who inquire about the course each year, 30 apply and six are accepted.

"As our customers are happy with the results achieved through the course, then we can conclude that distance education is providing a satisfactory education for many dedicated artistic people. In ceramics, using video facilitates the process."

Exposing ozone depletion

A Monash meteorologist has been testing a computer model that can accurately predict changes in the size of the hole in the ozone layer.

The model, developed by the Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre, provides advanced warning of the extent of ozone depletion in the southern hemisphere.

The director of the Centre for Dynamical Meteorology at Monash, Dr David Karoly, says the model provides a 'pseudo-ozone forecast'.

"Given that there is a region of depleted ozone, we are trying to use the model to predict further changes," Dr Karoly said.

"We have found the computer model has significant skill at forecasting the changes in the stratospheric winds and temperatures up to 10 days ahead, which allows us to predict a quantity that is not ozone but a tracer, a pseudo-ozone."

Ozone, the natural gas that occurs in the stratosphere, lies 10 to 30 kilometres above the Earth, and shields the planet from harmful ultraviolet rays.

Dr Karoly said the stratospheric winds affected the size and shape of the ozone hole. Using supercomputers at the Bureau of Meteorology, meteorologists are able to input data on wind speeds and temperatures from six levels of the stratosphere, as well as in the lower atmosphere (troposphere).

"The model is important because it allows us to study the processes that lead to changes in the ozone hole, and to look over a period time at what leads to its formation," he said.

Dr Karoly said the first phase of the research was to understand the stratospheric circulation in which ozone holes and wind changes occur from winter to summer.

The research, the first of its kind in Australia, involves collaboration between the Monash Centre for Dynamical Meteorology and the Bureau of Meteorology.

The project team released their report to the International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography in Tasmania recently.



Dr David Karoly with the computer model that forecasts changes in the ozone layer.

Après Monash: Where do graduates go?

As the saying goes: every cloud has a silver lining. A recent survey of almost 5000 Monash graduates suggests the recession may ultimately lead to a better educated workforce.

Monash graduates are enrolling in higher degrees in greater numbers than ever.

In 1992, 42.5 per cent of Monash graduates went on to further study, 17.5 per cent were seeking full-time work, and 32 per cent found full-time employment.

The university's coordinator of graduate employment, Ms Rosemary Gall, says these figures, compiled by the Course and Careers Centre, show that Monash graduates are faring better than the average job-seeker. In 1992, 22 per cent of Victorians and almost 19 per cent of Australians were looking for work.

However, the figures for job-seekers would have been higher if not for the increasing numbers returning to university for postgraduate qualifications.

"Postgraduate study is partly a survival strategy, a way of coping in a difficult labour market," Ms Gall said. "While a large proportion of new graduates has always chosen to strengthen their qualifications through further study, it may be that many of these graduates decided to continue their job searches while also enrolling in further study to keep their options open for as long as possible."

Particular disciplines seem to be more relevant for further study. For example, more than 60 per cent of Monash graduates majoring in courses such as humanities, languages, social sciences, mathematics, chemistry, physics, geology, life and physical science are choosing to continue their studies.

Further study is a less popular option for graduates majoring in medicine, nursing, law, education, social work, business studies, accounting and engineering.

The disciplines that enjoyed the best employment rates in 1992 included medicine, with 86.7 per cent of 1992 Monash graduates finding full-time employment, law (74.8 per cent), and social work (58.6 per cent).

According to the Graduate Careers Council of Australia, medicine is also one of the top disciplines when it comes to starting salaries. Medicine graduates earn about \$36,000 a year. However, anyone planning a career in medicine should bear in mind that graduates work an average 50 hours a week, which reduces the hourly rate of pay to just \$13.80.

Social work provided the 10th-highest graduate salary at \$26,000 and remained the highest ranked among the non-science disciplines.

According to Ms Gall, the good news for Monash graduates is that their average starting salary of just over \$26,200 is above the national average of \$25,700. But there are still disparities between salaries for males and females. Ms Gall says these gender differences relate to unequal employment opportunities, not wages within a particular profession.

"More women are still to be found in the lower paid professions, dominated by disciplines such as humanities, psychology, and social work," she explained.

The result is that the average male Monash graduate will start his career on a salary of \$28,300, while female graduates start at around \$25,000.

Ms Gall points out that there are significant opportunities to be found in the service industries, many of which have been traditionally dominated by women.

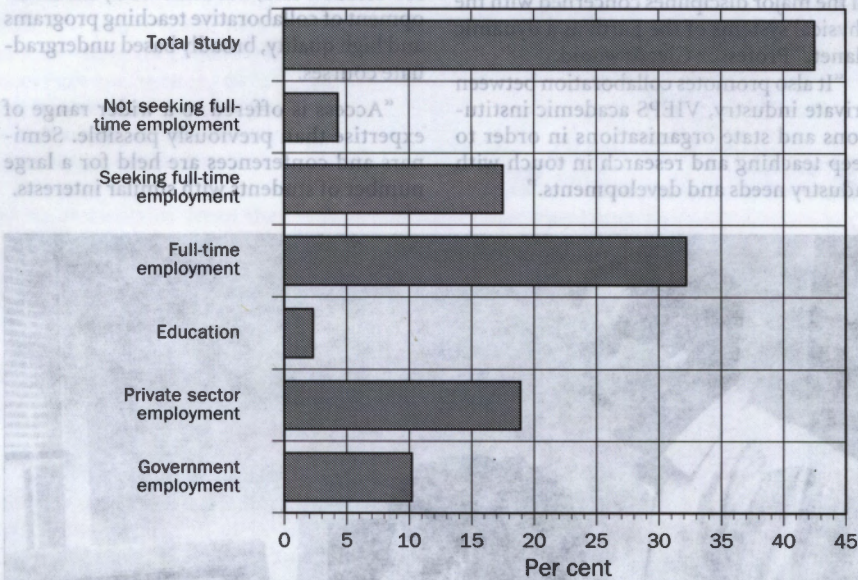
According to the IBIS Business Information report, *Reflections on work, employment and unemployment*, a major growth area will be the conversion of domestic work into industries such as carpet cleaning, nannying and tutoring.

The development in the job market is being affected by other trends such as job sharing, immigration, fuller and faster deregulation of labour markets, curbs on unemployment benefits, and the removal

of subsidies to sheltered industries and their application to sunrise industries.

According to the IBIS report, there is a raft of industries that will provide future export opportunities, including intellectual property, education, financial services, tourism, health, communications, niche manufacturing, and tropical fruits and vegetables.

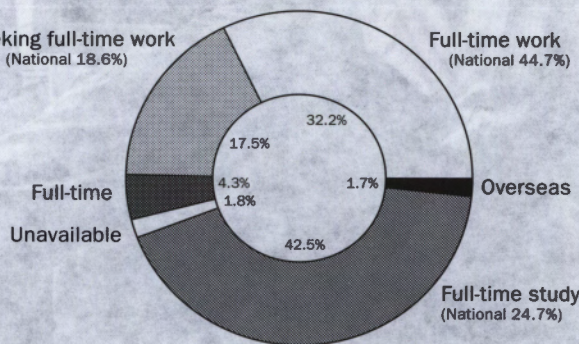
The report also points out that while some of these occupations may presently appear menial, society can – and does – change its views. The elite industries of the 1970s and 1980s, such as chartered accounting, acting, sport and entertainment, were all first described as "not proper jobs": lowly paid, demeaning, degrading and without a future.



Discipline	Starting salary (\$)	Weekly hours	Growth since 1977 (%)
Dentistry	40,000	40	261.4
Medicine	36,000	50	270.7
Optometry	32,000	40	NA
Engineering	29,400	40	291.1
Computer science	28,000	40	274.5
Earth sciences	27,200	40	280.4
Mathematics	27,100	39.5	285.3
Veterinary science	27,000	50	281.3
Physical science	26,800	40	285.1
Social work	26,800	38	254.9

Upper right: Destinations of all Monash first-degree graduates, 1992.

Lower right: Activities of Monash first-degree graduates with national average comparisons.



GRADUATE PROFILES

● Susanne Henriksen, 24

Monash Bachelor of Science with honours in chemistry, graduated 1991

Monash science graduate, Ms Susanne Henriksen, recommends registering with employment agencies to "get a foot in the door".

She secured her full-time position as research and development technical officer with ICI-Dulux after accepting a one-month contract job through an employment agency specialising in technical positions.

Once she was working with the company, she kept an eye open for internal job opportunities and made contact with the personnel manager.

"Many people don't consider using employment agencies, but I found the agencies were able to widen my job opportunities," she said.

Ms Henriksen also warns graduates against setting limits before they enter the job market.

"I hadn't considered the career paths available at a company like Dulux," she said. "Now I have an inside view of the company I have discovered various opportunities for career development. Graduates should seek work in many diverse areas."

● Robyn Dittich, 23

Monash Bachelor of Engineering with honours, specialising in chemical engineering, graduated 1991

Engineering graduate Ms Robyn Dittich also believes it is important to approach the job market with an open mind.

Ms Dittich secured her position as mill chemical engineer with Visypaper, part of the Pratt Group, through

on-campus interviews prior to graduation. But she admits that she had not considered the paper industry when evaluating her job prospects.

"I was looking at the petrochemical industry, and hadn't really thought about the paper industry. However, after a tour of the plant, I became very interested in the process," she said.

"I have since discovered that many of my fellow students have found work in sales with engineering equipment companies. The important thing is to be flexible in your approach to career opportunities."

● Lisa Hood, 22

Monash Bachelor of Economics, graduated 1992

"Keep on pushing. They [employers] can only say 'no'," advises Monash economics graduate, Ms Lisa Hood.

Ms Hood can confirm from experience that it is difficult – but not impossible – to find work in your chosen profession.

She applied for countless positions, made it to four interviews and finally managed to secure a position with the St Kilda Road accounting firm, Duesbury's, after making personal contact with the human resources manager at the company.

"Personal contact can make all the difference," she said. "Duesbury's had actually turned down my application when I met the human resources manager. That meeting led to an interview and ultimately a job. It is certainly a good idea to follow up any applications or interviews with a telephone call."

Ms Hood, who now works in Business Advisory Services, added that she found her Monash degree was well recognised and highly regarded.

"The most useful subject I studied was advanced accounting, which has given me a real advantage in the job," she said.

"Of course, once you start a job, the learning begins all over again. A degree is a beginning, not an end."

● Mark Devine, 21

Monash Bachelor of Arts (with honours), graduated 1992

Work experience during university studies was the job-hunting key for Monash graduate, Mr Mark Devine.

Securing work as a reporter in a suburban newspaper depended on "setting myself apart from the rest", he said. "There are so many graduates on the market, so students should get as much experience as they can, even if it's unpaid."

"This stands you in good stead because you've got the combination of a degree and experience."

During degree studies, Mr Devine worked part-time at the Australia Post State Media and Communications office.

He applied for several positions, including a newspaper journalist job at the *Community News* in Moonee Ponds, before finishing his degree late last year.

Although Mr Devine's bid was initially filed by *Community News* management, he was given another chance after graduation and started work in the newsroom in January.

Mr Devine said his Monash degree provided a broad base for his career. He said the degree also provided essential analytical skills, enabling him to look deeper into issues.

As a last word of advice he said: "You should make sure that you map out your course with subjects relevant to the career you want."

CENTRE OF ATTENTION

For an institute whose name conjures up images of topographical and galactic exploration, the Victorian Institute of Earth and Planetary Sciences (VIEPS) has its academic feet planted firmly on Melbourne soil.

A collection of eight departments and centres at three local universities, VIEPS was set up to coordinate research and teaching in geological, geophysical and atmospheric sciences.

The institute's work encompasses meteorology, physical geography and environmental science, upper atmospheric physics, and applied mathematics and astrophysics.

The newly appointed director, Professor Andrew Gleadow, says the establishment of the institute in 1989 marked a significant development in earth and atmospheric science education in Australia.

"The group is aimed at bringing together all the major disciplines concerned with the physical systems of the Earth as a dynamic planet," Professor Gleadow said.

"It also promotes collaboration between private industry, VIEPS academic institutions and state organisations in order to keep teaching and research in touch with industry needs and developments."

The Victorian Institute of Earth and Planetary Sciences

By enrolling in undergraduate programs in a member university, students are able to use any part of the VIEPS network for advanced undergraduate education.

An active campaign is run each year to inform students, both here and overseas, of the diverse range of research and education programs offered at the institute.

Coordination of staff resources, Professor Gleadow said, was achieved by the development of collaborative teaching programs and high quality, broadly based undergraduate courses.

"Access is offered to a wider range of expertise than previously possible. Seminars and conferences are held for a large number of students with similar interests.

"An informal approach to both symposia and conferences organised by VIEPS provides students with valuable interaction with industry members needed to understand the requirements of possible future employers and provides those same employers with a first-hand look at possible new recruits.

VIEPS, in collaboration with its industry partners, recognises that graduates today need more than just a grounding in the core earth science curriculum.

"Effective communication, both written and verbal, will be of increasing significance for earth science graduates in their later professional lives, and is obviously important to employers," Professor Gleadow said.

VIEPS has introduced a thesis writing course, a presentations skills course and a number of other courses which concentrate on improving computer literacy.

Each year VIEPS runs a series of specialist short courses in advanced topics suitable for industry, technical and professional staff. The laboratory facilities within the VIEPS network are also available for access by external industry groups.

Coordination of equipment resources across VIEPS is achieved by sharing the cost of major new developments and optimising the use of existing facilities.

VIEPS also assists in coordination of access to such research institutions as CSIRO, Geological Survey of Victoria,

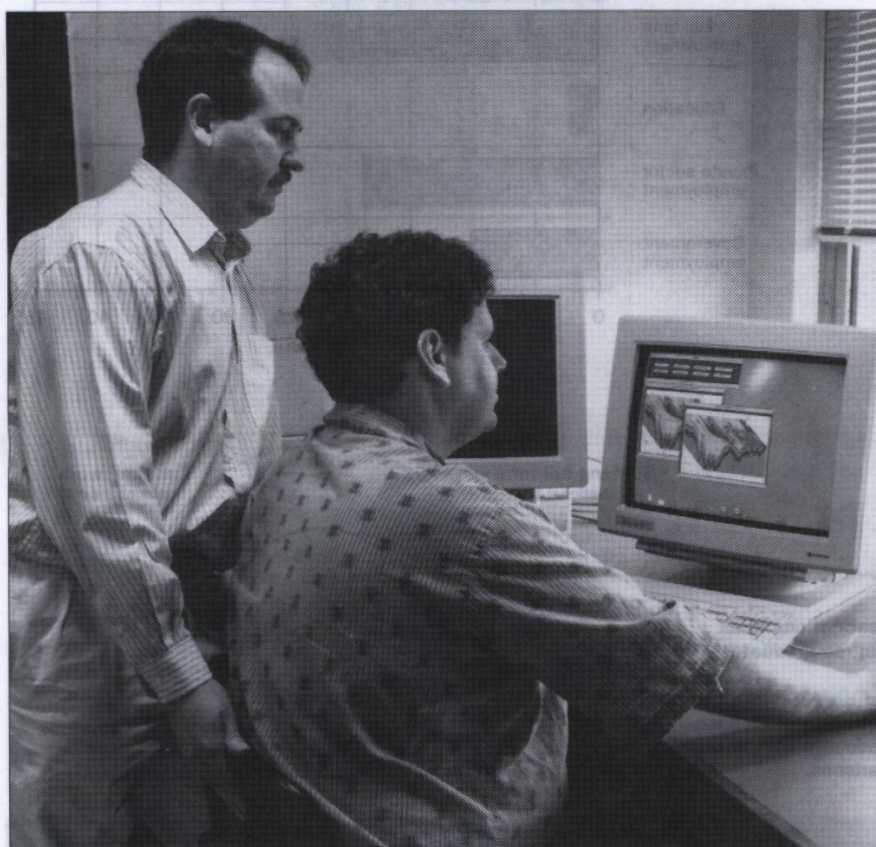
Australian Geological Survey Organisation and Bureau of Meteorology. These programs benefit industry scientists and VIEPS researchers, and expose students to a blend of curriculum items important to both academics and industry.

VIEPS consists of the Department of Geology and the Theoretical Space Physics Group at La Trobe University, the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne, and the departments of Geography and Environmental Science and Earth Sciences and the centres for Computational Mathematics and Dynamical Meteorology at Monash.

Support and financial backing was given by Victorian Education Foundation and the hydrocarbon and mineral industries.

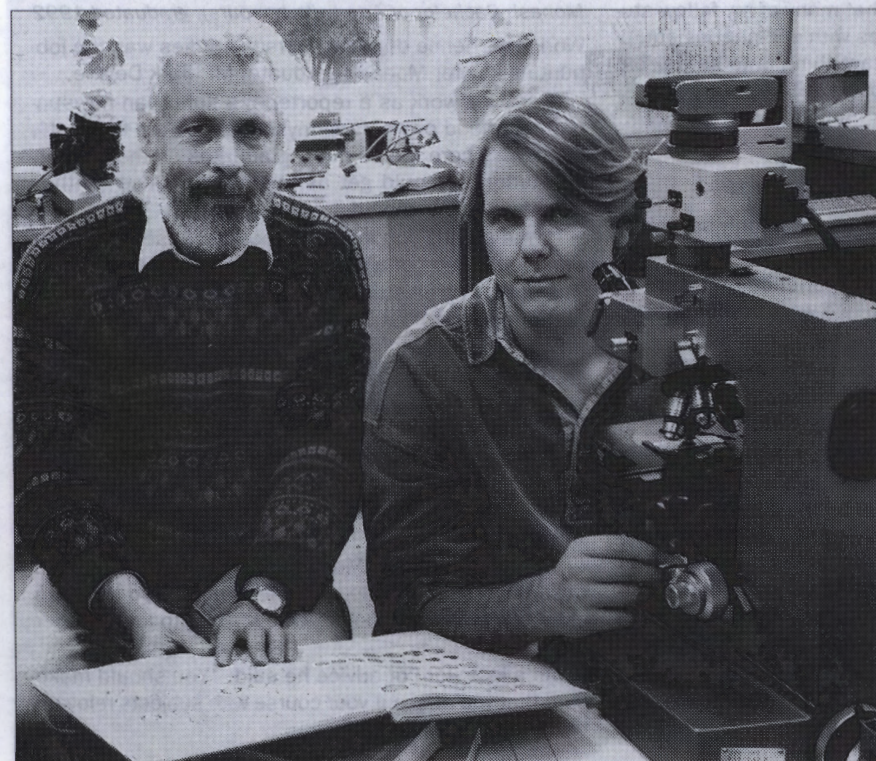


Former honours student Ms Anja Pahl inspects an olivine bomb (a mass of ejected lava) from the Western District in Victoria.

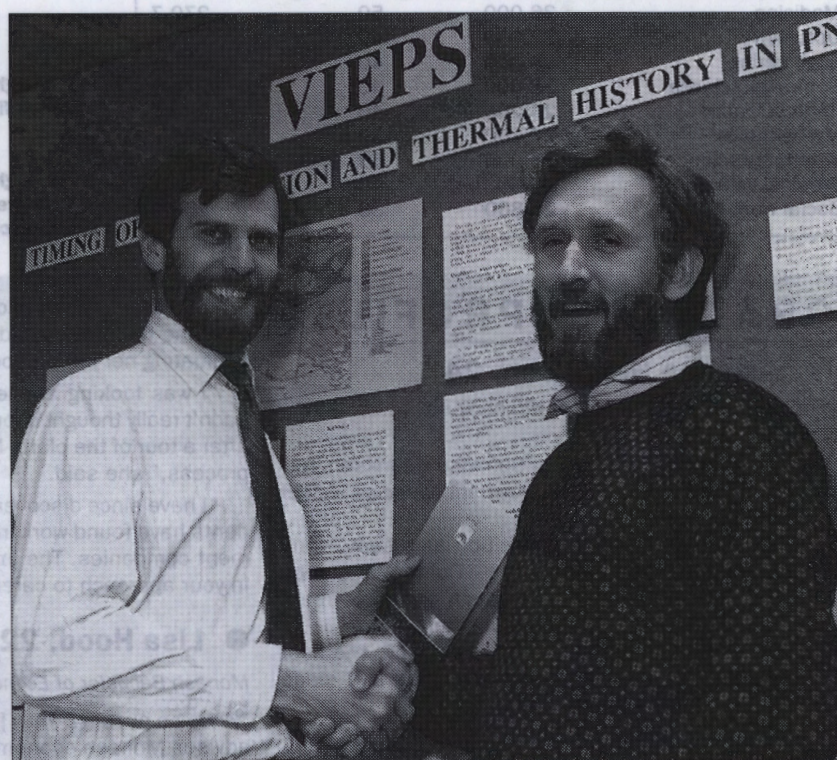


Above: VIEPS program coordinator Dr Bob Baird (left) and geology lecturer Dr Rick Valenta toy with Noddy, a modelling program that can make the Earth move in the digitised landscape of a computer.

Below: VIEPS member Dr Peter Kershaw helps research student John Tibby identify fossil pollen.



Changing direction



The VIEPS foundation director, Professor Gordon Lister (pictured, right) of the Department of Earth Sciences at Monash, is about to take up a key role in the new Australian Geodynamics Cooperative Research Centre.

The institute's new director is Professor Andrew Gleadow (left), professor of geology and dean of physical sciences at La Trobe University.

Professor Gleadow graduated PhD in 1974 from the University of Melbourne and completed postdoctoral research at the University of London before returning in 1975 to the University of Melbourne as a Queen Elizabeth II fellow, research

fellow in Antarctic geology and senior research fellow.

In 1988 he took up the Chair of Geology at La Trobe. He has published extensively on all aspects of the development and application of fission track dating to geology, especially related to tectonics, sedimentary basin analysis and hydrocarbon exploration.

His current research interests include fission track analysis and thermochronology of extensional tectonic environments in the south-western United States, East Africa and south-eastern Australia; and the establishment of new facilities for $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ and Thermoluminescence dating.

Top marks to MUFY

International students who completed a one-year bridging course before enrolling at Monash are among the top performing students in their undergraduate course.

The Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY), a joint venture between Monash and Taylor's Institute of Advanced Studies (TIAS), is designed for international students and prepares them for university study in Australia.

The managing director of MUFY Limited, Mr Peter Cunliffe, says that qualified entrants are accepted as provisional students of Monash and undertake the one-year program to prepare them for their chosen degree course.

Mr Cunliffe said the results of MUFY students who took undergraduate studies at Monash last year indicated a high correlation between their foundation and undergraduate results.

"More than 70 per cent of students enrolled in the foundation year achieved a credit grade or higher, and just over 50 per cent of those same students in their first year at Monash achieved credit or above results," he said.

"The students were well prepared for university studies and adapted to the local environment and culture. MUFY students have proven to be among the top performing students in their course."

The program began in 1990 with a pilot group of 33 students. From that initial intake, 29 students enrolled in undergraduate courses at Monash.

In 1991, 106 students attended the program, with 75 being offered places at Monash. Last year, 205 students participated in the program, with 143 students placed at Monash. This year, 244 students are enrolled in the program.

"Students not offered places at Monash may be offered a place at another tertiary institution," Mr Cunliffe said. "There has been a rapid expansion in the program this year."

"Great potential exists to develop the MUFY program further. The company will generate more than \$2 million this year, and with about 200 students expected to enrol in Monash's undergraduate courses next year, a further \$2 million in annual fees will be generated over the next three years."

Growth will come from developing new markets and diversifying off-shore.

"MUFY has actively marketed and recruited students from Asia, particularly Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and



Graduates of the 1992 MUFY program have good reason to smile – they are among the top performers in their undergraduate courses.

Indonesia," Mr Cunliffe said. "We are now looking at new markets and expanding the program to Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka and the Pacific basin."

MUFY Limited, the company established to operate and administer the foundation program, comprises board members from both Monash and TIAS.

Changes provide a fresh look

New focus for Caulfield

An ambitious landscaping project will give Caulfield campus not only a new look but also a central meeting place.

The landscaping, designed by Chris Dance Land Design in conjunction with Monash, will feature extensive tree planting and a lawn area, which will become a campus focus.

Work has already begun on replacing existing small areas of lawn with garden beds and softening hard building surfaces with plants.

Caulfield Campus manager Mr Brian O'Mara says the landscaping will be carried out in stages.

"The first stage of building a courtyard north of building A is complete, with the second stage involving tree planting around the campus about to begin," he said.

"The next stage includes the creation of a common, which we hope will begin in 1994."

Clayton graduate centre

Work has begun on a specialised graduate student centre on Clayton campus.

The new centre will house the graduate student and research services offices and give postgraduate students a purpose-built study complex.

The three-level centre will be one of two new buildings to be built in the area between Annexe 2 of the Administration Building and the University Club. Work will be completed early next year. The second building will provide more space for administration.

The vice-chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, says the new centre reflects the increasing importance that Monash is placing on its graduate students and research.

New student admin area

A new student administration office in Annexe 2 on Clayton campus means better service for students.

"The counter has only been operating for a few weeks, but the change is noticeable already," Ms Kath Barnett said.

"There is more room for students and a longer counter so that staff can provide a faster, more efficient service."

The staff handle a variety of inquiries including travel concessions, lost identification cards and address changes.

Monash slips into sub-district cricket

Monash University's cricketers were bowled over recently with news that they have been accepted into a higher grade of amateur competition.

After more than 25 years of battling for recognition, senior university teams have won the right to progress from the local league to sub-district level from this summer season.

Club spokesman Mr Trevor Findlayson hopes the upgrading will attract more staff and student cricketers to the university's teams.

Mr Findlayson believes there are a number of cricketers studying or working at the university who are playing with other clubs.

A wicket-keeper and opening batsman with the club thirds, Mr Findlayson was

delighted by the club's rise in the ranks as he had seen several failed bids to join the sub-district league.

Lack of support for junior cricket and inadequate facilities were among the reasons for knock-backs, he said.

"But the sub-district association has welcomed us with open arms this time, probably because we now have such great facilities," Mr Findlayson said.

"It'll be a much better standard, so we're hoping to attract some more players to the club."

"Now there's an opportunity for Monash students and staff capable of sub-district cricket to have a go for their university's club. I think it's a great opportunity."

Monash University Men's Cricket Club was established about 30 years ago and operates under the auspice of the Sports and Recreation Association.

With about 100 members, the club fielded six teams in the eastern suburbs competition last season. The top two teams will join the sub-district league this year, and the remaining teams will continue in the local competition.

Teams also participate in turf competitions, interspersed matches and several social fixtures. Club members have access to three turf pitches, plus ample indoor and outdoor practice facilities.

For more information, contact the Sports and Recreation Centre on extn 75 4102.

"STEP INTO MY OFFICE ..."

John Harris

We all know what it is like to manage our own budgets. Managing the university's, we imagine, would create quite a headache.

But the manager of the Budget and Statistical Services Branch, Mr John Harris, does not seem perturbed by the task.

Responsible for the preparation of the budget for consideration by the university's Central Budgets Committee, Mr Harris regularly prepares recommendations involving millions of dollars.

Instead of being daunted, he is challenged by his work and looks forward to new developments ahead.

Beginning next year, Mr Harris and his team will prepare budgets that fully integrate all campuses.

"Now that the consistent framework for Caulfield, Clayton and Frankston has been established, we are planning to extend this approach to the Pharmacy College and Gippsland," Mr Harris said.

Determining the budget for a university is not an easy task. For 1993, the Commonwealth Government allocated Monash \$231 million for operating expenses. This represents more than \$10,000 per student.

Additional funds come from the State Government, international student fees,

grants and other income sources, which together with funding for non-operating costs such as the construction of buildings adds about \$80 million to the university's resources.

With this total budget in mind, the Budget Branch then determines where the money will be allocated within the university.

In terms of teaching, the unique Monash budgeting system funds each student on a marginal cost basis. The relative funding formula, introduced in 1992, combines funding for faculty teaching load across a mix of subjects, with funding based on research performance.

Mr Harris says that a particular challenge in future budget planning is to estimate the full costs of research activities.

"You need to allow for materials and time spent by technical staff, the use of buildings, libraries and other support staff," he said.

"With the ever-increasing pressure to become more efficient, faculties and departments are tending to cost out activities more carefully than in the past, which means greater analysis of financial needs."

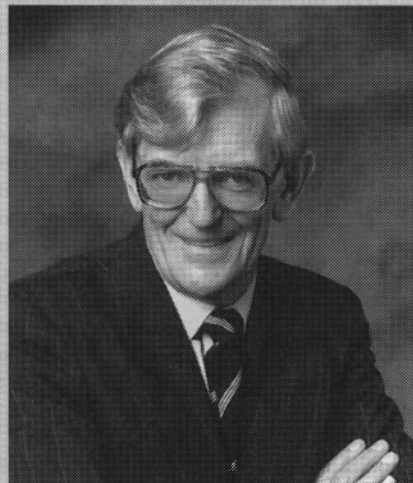
Mr Harris has one of those familiar faces – mainly because he has spent most of his life here.

Following an economics degree at Clayton in the 1960s and early 1970s, Mr Harris moved to Caulfield as a lecturer and masters student.

During his 20 years at Caulfield, he became head of the Department of Banking and Finance. He was later seconded to administration as head of the Resources Branch.

With the amalgamation, Mr Harris joined Clayton administration and now heads the Budgets and Statistical Services Branch.

Outside work, Mr Harris is a keen sports fan who enjoys gardening and bushwalking. He runs a Christian education program for young people and is involved regularly in a can recycling program.



Manager of the Budget and Statistical Services Branch, Mr John Harris.

Harnessing the power of the press

IT IS 8 O'CLOCK ON A WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Television, radio and newspaper crews crawl over the Clayton campus of Monash University. Later, every television and radio station will carry the story of 'a student severely injured in an accident at Monash'. Sketchy stories are being hurriedly composed so as to feature on hourly broadcasts. Everyone strives to be the first on the scene. Cameras struggle to gain access to the site of the accident and to have an interview with the 'victim'.

It's an all too familiar story – the media focusing on a 'sensitive human interest story' and squeezing it as far as possible, to the exclusion of the broader issues it may raise. Too often, this type of approach has adversely affected members of the community.

The media is a powerful tool, which empowers as well as educates. Through responsible reporting, images and stories should be portrayed from an unbiased and realistic perspective, allowing the public to draw their own conclusions.

From a student perspective, the media is vital to portraying an alternative viewpoint to the rhetoric of the politicians and bureaucrats. No one likes bad publicity, particularly in politics. By using the media effectively, this intense dislike by politicians can be exploited to the public's benefit. The public can find out the 'real story' behind government cover-ups and place pressure on the relevant decision-makers to create change.

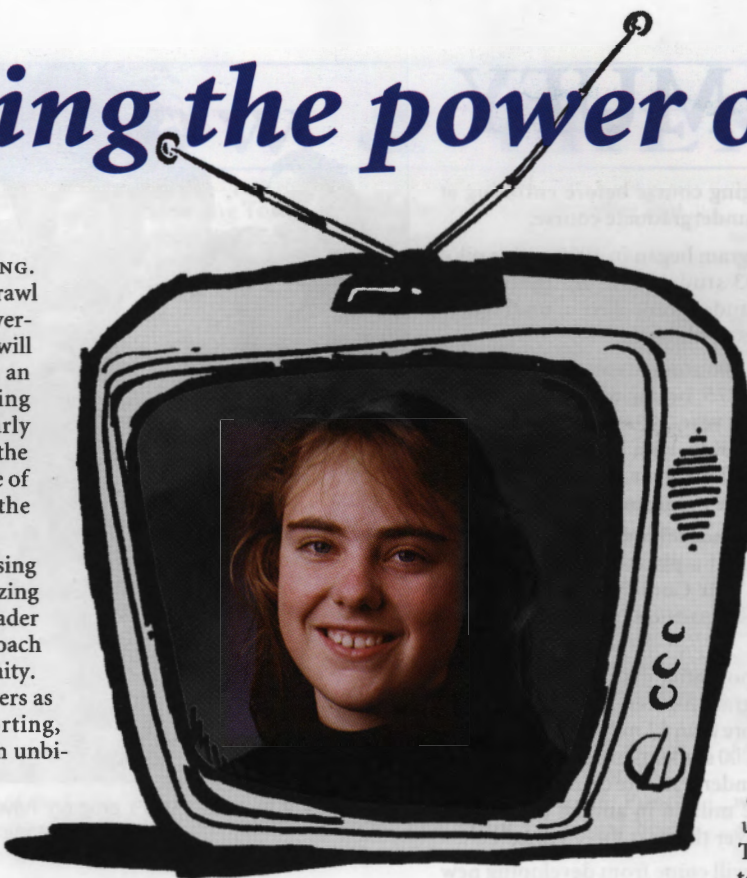
If press coverage is so important to the success of campaigns and to the resolution of contentious issues, what do we have to do to get media coverage?

Working with the media can be an incredibly frustrating experience. The primary concern of most editors and reporters is to satisfy the client – the general public. Consequently, stories are 'run' on the basis of what the media determines will have the greatest public appeal. A quick scan of any daily newspaper, television and radio news, reveals that this primarily means human interest stories, and issues with a strong visual aspect or some type of violence.

The media is vital to portraying an alternative viewpoint to the rhetoric of the politicians and bureaucrats.

Any attempt to gain media coverage must therefore recognise that these principles exist and cater to them. From a student perspective, the repercussions of this on plans to lobby public, government or university bodies are quite severe. In many respects, issues are modified for the benefit of the media or certain aspects are exaggerated to portray those dimensions the media likes to focus on.

This trade-off, between the 'real life' situation as seen by those involved and the often hyped-up, sensationalised picture shown in the media, is a carefully calculated balance designed to get media coverage, while still allowing some



by Mina Guli

discussion of the issues involved. The 'outraged' students, responding to the 'threat' by university bureaucrats to 'slash' library funding, is a sensationalised version of a story. But with a visual set of actions, this may attract media attention, attack the public image of the university, and successfully lobby the government.

Such a strategy was recognised by South Australian university student organisations who successfully responded to moves to cut library funding by organising public rallies, distributing 'gimmicky' fliers and sending out numerous press releases. This resulted in extensive coverage by the media and a successful resolution of their problem.

Other methods of attracting the media may not be so successful. The vast increase in the numbers of mass public demonstrations means that without enormous crowds swarming in the streets, the press is unlikely to be interested. Certain techniques, however, can increase the possibility of some media interest.

A quick flick through the history of the press coverage of actions and campaigns shows that, generally, rallies associated with visual gags, arrests or violent scuffles achieve the most media coverage.

In some instances, this media penchant for arrests is exploited. Arrests are preplanned and steps are taken to ensure the media is constantly updated. Protesters are portrayed as 'victims', raising moral objections to the importation of rainforest timber, or to logging in the Erinunderra State Forest. Their actions, for the most part, are only a mild infringement of the law, and usually also involve some visual element or risk to life (for example, burying protesters neck-deep across the path of bulldozers) to sensationalise the story. This usually succeeds – the media covers the case and gives public exposure to an otherwise hidden issue.

Visual aspects of campaigning do not only take the form of risk to health or safety. 'Gags' or gimmicks are often used successfully to attract the media. A showing of bare flesh with letters strategically placed on bodies to spell a significant word or phrase is sure to keep the press happy. Alternatively there is street theatre, involving people dressed in costume with well-scripted lines, funeral processions with participants dressed in black to mourn the passing of a government bill or the introduction of a new fee, blue stockings placed on statues around a city to commemorate blue stocking week, sardines sent to politicians to symbolise university overcrowding, or stickers and paint placed on billboards across discriminatory advertising. All are usually interesting, gimmicky, attract attention and, when accompanied by appropriate press releases and telephone calls, achieve press coverage.

Actions and campaigns must be well thought out and involve a planned structure carefully built around media coverage. Demonstrations and press releases are scheduled for low news days, and sent out hours before deadline. Telephone calls and faxes are used to follow up contacts and to persuade unwilling journalists that a story is worth reporting. Everything must be planned and catered for.

Without a public campaign, media coverage of the student viewpoint on particular issues can be difficult to obtain. Issues such as open learning, where students around the nation fight for participant representation, lack the visual element necessary to attract the television and print media. Attempts to sensationalise the issues are futile and it remains out of the public spotlight. The politics of opposing the large and powerful force of a university are too great, the public value of the story is too little, and it remains unreported.

Without enormous crowds swarming in the streets, the press is unlikely to be interested.

It is a poor indictment of society that there is so much emphasis on the entertainment value of a news story and of the human interest factors it involves. Huge issues may arise on campus, but it is only when a student is injured, or manages to do something unusually sensational, that the press attend in droves.

As students who recognise the value of media coverage as a tool to convey images that can influence decision-makers, we must identify the elements of a story that the media appreciate, and cater to them. Most student activists recognise that a portrayal of the general principles involved is the most vital aspect of any campaign, even if it involves getting arrested or staging a protest. Having the message heard and seen is the most crucial element of a campaign, and to expose it through the media is essential for success.

Mina Guli is chairperson of the Monash Association of Students.

DIOGENES



Australia's newest public holiday was not so much launched last week as set adrift.

Indeed, if it hadn't been for a last-minute hitch, Stating the Obvious Day would have bobbed by entirely unnoticed.

Up until the very last moment, the organising committee was still undecided where best to introduce 24 hours that venerated nothing more than sheer tedium. A late submission from the Victorian Government swayed them.

Not unexpectedly, the day began slowly. An opposition politician announced on morning television that the Federal Government was in a parlous state.

Eighteen viewers, figuring that little made sense any more, crossed out Canberra on their mental road maps and pencilled in 'Impala Estate'.

Just another leap of faith, they said to no one in particular.

By lunchtime a menagerie of animals had left home. Most returned before late afternoon, dog-tired of a life on the lam. Several, however, came back to find their little houses already recycled into firewood, or, worse, occupied by a more attractive breed.

One parent in 71 forgot they had taken their child shopping that morning. They were only reminded on the way home when they began remonstrating with the groceries, which had been carefully strapped into the car seat.

A family in the next street was robbed. Someone in the next suburb ran into a lamp post. Someone in the next town ran their car into a lamp post.

Thirty-three marriages broke up, 64 relationships broke down, 23 businesses went broke.

An inestimable number of people fell silently in love with someone whose reflection they had glimpsed in a window. All went home to their partners feeling less comfortable with their own relationships. By the time dinner and small talk had come around, most had forgotten their unease.

Two footballers up on striking charges at AFL House claimed that the umpire had simply caught them in the act of grooming

their opponents. "Rather like primates," said one offender, who in a certain light did appear simian.

Someone's neighbour won Tattsлото, three would-be winners forgot to put their entries in, four winners put their entries in and forgot to check the results.

The evening news reported that the city had experienced five seasons in 24 hours. Three newscasters lost their place on the autocue, two found it, and the third gave up and crossed to the weatherman, who was caught counting the seasons on his fingers.

At day's end, about 40 per cent of couples went to bed intending to make love. A third carried out their nocturnal mission, another third forgot and fell asleep, and the rest lay awake wondering why they had gone to bed so early.

Most finally worked it out. Like the day itself – a celebration of the self-explanatory – it was obvious.