

MONASH News

Research, news and opinion from Monash University

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FACULTY FOCUS: Each edition in 2004 highlights the work of one of the 10 faculties



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Population forecasting underestimates elderly

Demography

Australia's aged population is increasing faster than the government realises, population forecasting by Monash University researchers has shown.

Forecasting expert Professor Rob Hyndman, from the Department of Econometrics and Business Statistics, said the number of elderly people was increasing faster than official estimates and warned that the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) was underestimating the future number of people aged over 85.

"The ABS forecast of that sector of the population for 2031 is 660,000, while ours is 845,000 – a difference of 180,000, or 28 per cent," he said.

"That discrepancy could mean that we will be supporting more older citizens in 20 to 40 years than the government has provided for with health and community services.

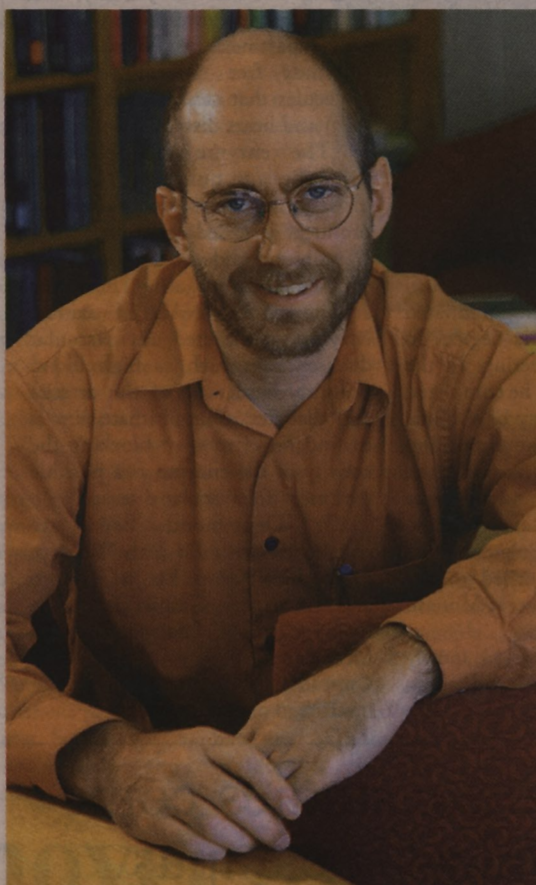
"The projected growth in the proportion of elderly Australians means some hard decisions need to be made about the provision and funding of services for the aged over the next 20 years."

Professor Hyndman, director of the university's Business and Economic Forecasting Unit, said that while Monash and the ABS both used mortality and fertility rates to make their predictions, the university's predictions were more accurate because they allowed for complex dynamic changes in those elements.

"Mortality and fertility rates don't fall or rise smoothly. For instance, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the mortality rate for people aged between 18 and 25 actually increased due to AIDS, suicides and road deaths. It has since started dropping again," he said.

The ABS was also inherently conservative in its predictions, Professor Hyndman explained, and worked on the assumption that the overall mortality rate would not continue to decline at the same rate that it had for the past 100 years.

"However, we take that trend over the



Forecasting expert: Professor Rob Hyndman.

Photo: Greg Ford

past 100 years and extrapolate it into the future," he said.

"Our approach is unique because, for the first time, we can put probability limits around the population for different ages, and we can also attach a probability rating to the forecast itself – about how certain we are that it will be correct.

"So instead of just predicting that in 50 years time there will be about one million people aged between 50 and 60, we can predict with 95 per cent probability that there will be, say, between 800,000 and 1.2 million in that age group.

"The Monash methodology could also supply vital information to determine the future cost to the govern-

ment of age pensions, he said. "Currently, Australia doesn't produce probabilistic forecasts for population, and to my knowledge neither does any other country."

The ABS and the Federal Treasury have agreed to run the new Monash methodology in tandem with their existing methodology in order to compare them over the next couple of years.

Professor Hyndman said he expected the government would see the benefits of the Monash forecasting. "It's our goal to get them to switch to our methodology alone," he said.

The unit's forecasting has been used successfully to predict budgetary requirements for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme after it ran over budget two years in a row.

Monash has also developed commercial software for automatic forecasting that is sold in Australia and overseas including in the US.

"We are constantly refining our methodology – we aim to be the best in the world in all areas of forecasting," said Professor Hyndman, who has just been appointed a director of the International Institute of Forecasters and editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Forecasting*.

Professor Hyndman will also co-chair the International Symposium on Forecasting, co-sponsored by Monash University, to be held in Sydney in July – the first time the symposium has been held in Australia.

– Robyn Anns

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Maternity leave researcher: Dr Susan Mayson.
Photo: Greg Ford

Paid maternity leave – only for the high-flyers

Management

Access to paid maternity leave in Australia is unequal within organisations and across industry sectors, Monash University research has found.

Dr Susan Mayson, of the Department of Management in the Faculty of Business and Economics, said that of the approximately 30 per cent of Australian women who had access to paid maternity leave, most were well paid and highly valued workers.

"They are also usually employed in the public sector, where paid maternity leave is accepted as a legitimate and important entitlement," said Dr Mayson, who is also a researcher with Monash's new multidisciplinary Australian Centre for Employment and Work.

Dr Mayson's comments are supported by the results of a qualitative study by Monash honours graduate Ms Effie Polites, who interviewed a sample group of managers and other employees, including women who had taken or planned to take paid maternity leave and who were employed by the banking sector and a university in Australia last year.

"Ms Polites' work provided useful evidence about attitudes and behaviours regarding paid maternity leave among Australian workers," Dr Mayson said.

"One of her key findings was that access to paid maternity leave in the banking sector tended to be dependent on the attitudes of individual managers, and this corresponds with attitudes to paid maternity leave in the private sector.

"While paid maternity leave was available as an entitlement to all eligible staff in a particular bank, managerial discretion was a key factor in determining access. This potentially disadvantaged women because managers can

view paid maternity leave as an inconvenience and therefore be uncooperative.

"In the same bank, with the same employment policies, a woman executive might receive paid maternity leave, while a woman working in the bank's call centre may find it more difficult to negotiate time off or, if they were a casual worker, might not be granted access to the leave at all."

However, paid maternity leave was more readily available at the university examined in the study because it was regarded as a legitimate entitlement in the public sector, although managerial discretion also emerged as an issue for some women.

"If paid maternity leave is to become more widespread or universal, it will have to involve small businesses whose priorities, concerns and financial resources will, in many cases, be different from those of big corporations," Dr Mayson said.

From this month, Dr Mayson's research will take on a new direction, looking into access and attitudes to paid maternity leave in small and large firms in the finance sector. Joining her in the research will be Monash colleagues Dr Paul DeLange, a senior lecturer in the Department of Accounting and Finance, Associate Professor Rowena Barrett, director of the Family and Small Business Research Unit, and Ms Wendy Webber, a lecturer in the Department of Management.

"We chose the finance sector because it has a large proportion of female employees at all levels, with many different kinds of employment ranging from full-time to casual, and it is part of a global industry," Dr Mayson said.

– Robyn Anns

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Amazing faces on display at Monash

Preliminary sketches of legendary Australian singer Nick Cave by the artist Howard Arkley are among more than 100 curious and quirky portraits from the Monash University Library Rare Books Collection currently on display at the Clayton campus. Other highlights include a 17th century engraving of King Charles I, Michael Jackson's now-infamous mug shot and Ronald Reagan in an advertisement for Chesterfield cigarettes. For further details, see page 6.



A working study for Howard Arkley's 'Nick Cave' (original held in Canberra, National Portrait Gallery, 1999), on loan from the Arkley Estate, courtesy of Alison Burton and John Gregory.

From the vice-chancellor's desk

A monthly column by the vice-chancellor of Monash University, **Professor Richard Larkins**

Monash University is entering an exciting new era. It has already achieved an enormous

amount, but has a great deal of unrealised potential. The recent planning conference, which was attended by 150 staff and students, addressed the strategic framework for Monash over the next five years.

By 2008 I expect Monash will have consolidated its position as a university known and respected around the world for its excellence in education and research, and its international focus and influence.

Monash will continue to develop its campuses in Australia and overseas. These campuses will be linked by common governance and shared resources, and each will be strongly integrated with the local region or country, helping to build local links and driving education, research and the economy in each region.

I believe one of the key foundations of Monash's future strength and prominence will be its strategic alliances and partnerships with other leading universities and research institutes, including the CSIRO.

Commercialisation and collaboration with industry, while not taking away from the significance of fundamental research, has added a new dimension to the roles of universities and will play an important part in Monash's future. The Australian Synchrotron and the Monash Science Technology Research and Innovation Precinct at the Clayton campus will provide opportunities for links between science and industry and help to drive the state and federal economies.

Scholarship and creativity for their own sake are still driving forces at the best universities, and Monash is no exception.



The university subscribes to 10 core values:

- excellence in education;
- excellence in research and scholarship;
- excellence in management;
- innovation and creativity;
- diversity;
- international focus;
- fairness;
- engagement;
- integrity; and
- self-reliance.

Continuing to live up to these values comes at a price. Monash needs world-class staff, better information technology resources and better facilities in general. These will only be possible with greater financial resources.

Eighty per cent of the income gained from the recent controversial increases to the student contribution amount (HECS) will be used to improve student to staff ratios, and provide more computers, more electronic teaching, improved lecture theatres and tutorial rooms, longer library opening hours, more language and learning support and more student counselling services.

The remaining 20 per cent will fund equity and access measures including an extension of current access scholarships, considerable expansion of the Indigenous education program, development of a new access and support program targeting disadvantaged schools and increased financial aid for students.

The benefits will be felt immediately and over time – advantaging not only current and future students of the university, but the community as a whole.

– Richard Larkins

First fellows focus on alloys, enzymes

Five outstanding research fellows will join Monash University this year as the inaugural recipients of the Monash Research Fellowships.

The fellowships were established to attract internationally competitive researchers to Monash to undertake research of national and international significance and provide them with the best possible environment in which to establish a productive laboratory or research team.

The 2004 fellows have come from tertiary institutions in Queensland and Melbourne and in the US, Canada and France.

They are Dr Laszlo Bajzar, who will join Monash's Department of Medicine at Box Hill Hospital, Dr Grant Drummond (Department of Pharmacology), Dr Christopher Hutchinson (School of Physics and Materials Engineering), Dr Tseen-Ling Khoo (School of Political and Social Inquiry) and Dr Adam Mechler (School of Chemistry).

Dr Drummond and Dr Hutchinson have already taken up their five-year positions, and the remaining three fellows will take up their appointments later this year.

Dr Hutchinson said he had come full circle with his return to Monash, where he graduated in 1997 with bachelors degrees in commerce and engineering. In the years since graduating, he completed a PhD at the University of Virginia and took up a postdoctoral position in Grenoble, France, at the Laboratoire de Thermodynamique et Physico-Chimie Metallurgiques, Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble. He returned to the engineering alloys group at Monash in January.

"At the moment, I work mostly in the field of metals and alloys and, as there is currently a large

drive for the development of magnesium-based alloys for use in the automotive industry, I am focusing on this class of materials," Dr Hutchinson said.

"Much of my work involves the development of computer models to attempt to describe, in a quantitative manner, how time, temperature and other processing variables affect the rearrangement of atoms within magnesium-based alloys and how quickly these rearrangements occur. This could help identify ways of improving the properties of existing magnesium alloys or identify potential new alloys for experimental investigation."

Dr Drummond, who was at the Howard Florey Institute for four-and-a-half years before joining Monash in January, has established his own laboratory in the Department of Pharmacology to study free radicals (unstable molecules that can damage human cells) and heart disease.

"The enzyme that produces free radicals in humans is NADPH oxidase, and the free radical it produces is called superoxide," Dr Drummond said.

"We're investigating how the activity of the NADPH oxidase enzyme is altered in vascular disease states such as high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries and diabetes. Our ultimate aim is to find novel ways of blocking the activity of the enzyme as a possible treatment for vascular disease."

Dr Drummond hopes to collaborate with Dr Rob Widdop, Dr Barbara Kemp, Dr Jo Favoloro and Dr Tracey Gaspari from the Department of Pharmacology in his research.

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Postgraduate studies come to the Malaysia campus

Monash University Malaysia is now offering postgraduate studies, with three programs to be offered from second semester 2004.

The new programs, which have been approved by Malaysia's National Accreditation Board, include a Master of Information Technology (by minor thesis), a Master of Science (by research) and a Master of Engineering Science (by research). They will initially be offered to full-time students only.

Pro vice-chancellor Professor Marilyn Liddell said the new courses were central to the university's expansion plans and helped raise the profile of Monash as a leading provider of quality tertiary education in the region.

"I hope the postgraduate programs will attract more research students and contribute towards greater collaboration between the university, business community and other academic institutions," Professor Liddell said.

"The university already has good links with the business community and other academic institutions, and we hope to further strengthen this relationship through academic and research activities."

She said the university's future growth in the region would depend



Monash Malaysia: New postgraduate programs.

on the strength and reputation of its postgraduate programs.

Monash University Malaysia has experienced rapid growth and strong demand for its courses since its establishment in 1998. There are now 2000 students at the campus, 16 per cent of whom are international students.

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Briefly

Bioterrorism expert speaks at Monash

World-renowned Australian virologist Professor Frank Fenner presented the inaugural Rod Andrew Oration at Monash University's Clayton campus in late April on the topic of 'Big lessons from smallpox: bioterrorism and emerging infections'.

Professor Fenner chaired the World Health Organisation's Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication. In December 1979, he declared the world free of smallpox and has since been outspoken on issues surrounding the management of the remaining stores of the virus and bioterrorism risks.

His oration covered new and emerging viruses and the lessons that can be learned from the handling of smallpox eradication.

The Rod Andrew Oration is a new tradition instigated by Professor Ed Byrne, dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, and the medical school alumni to honour Professor Rod Andrew, the faculty's founding dean from 1960 until 1976.

Professor Fenner's lecture kicked off an annual program of prestigious lectures aimed at inspiring alumni, staff, students and the public on important health-related issues.

Crash, bang, wallop

Monash University researchers are investigating the dangers of football by looking into the circumstances surrounding serious injuries to Australian Rules players this season.

The study, funded by the Victorian Department of Sport and Recreation and VicHealth, is investigating serious injury cases among adult non-elite players throughout Victoria.

Each year in Victoria, more than 3000 footballers present to hospital emergency departments and, of these, more than 1950 are admitted for observation or treatment.

The project's chief investigator, Ms Erin Cassell from the Monash University Accident Research Centre, said the risk of serious injury from sport and physical activity could interfere with the enjoyment of participation and reduce the long-term health benefits.

The study results would be used in future injury prevention strategies and programs, she said.

Academy awards Monash researchers

The research achievements of Monash University professors David Smyth and Marelyn Wintour-Coghlan have been acknowledged with their recent election to the Australian Academy of Science.

Professor Smyth, from the School of Biological Sciences, was honoured for his research into how genes control the development of flowers, and Professor Wintour-Coghlan, a NHMRC senior principal research fellow in the Department of Physiology, was acknowledged for her research into the development of the human fetus, particularly the kidneys.

They were among 20 fellows admitted to the Australian Academy of Science this year.

Professor Wintour-Coghlan, whose research career spans 44 years, joined Monash in 2003 after 13 years at the Howard Florey Institute.

Professor Smyth has worked at Monash for the past 30 years, interrupting his tenure with sabbaticals at CSIRO Plant Industry and the California Institute of Technology. He has served on the Australian Research Council and is a former president of the Genetics Society of Australia.

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Testing times for cognition

Psychology

A computer-based test that detects impaired cognition has been developed by researchers from Monash University's Psychology department and could be used to identify people who are affected by drugs, chronic fatigue or even hangovers.

The test, which measures cognition – the ability of brain cells to talk and connect to each other effectively and quickly – is also being trialled on heart surgery patients at Monash Medical Centre to determine how their cognitive abilities are affected by surgery.

Associate Professor Stephen Robinson from Monash's Department of Psychology said it could also be used to screen elderly drivers, evaluate head injuries in sportspeople or detect impairment in high-functioning groups such as pilots, where a decrease in cognition could have disastrous effects.

With colleague Dr Greg Yelland, Dr Robinson is also evaluating whether the test could be used to detect people at high risk of developing Alzheimer's, raising the possibility of early treatment for the disease.

The test was developed because existing tests lacked sensitivity and

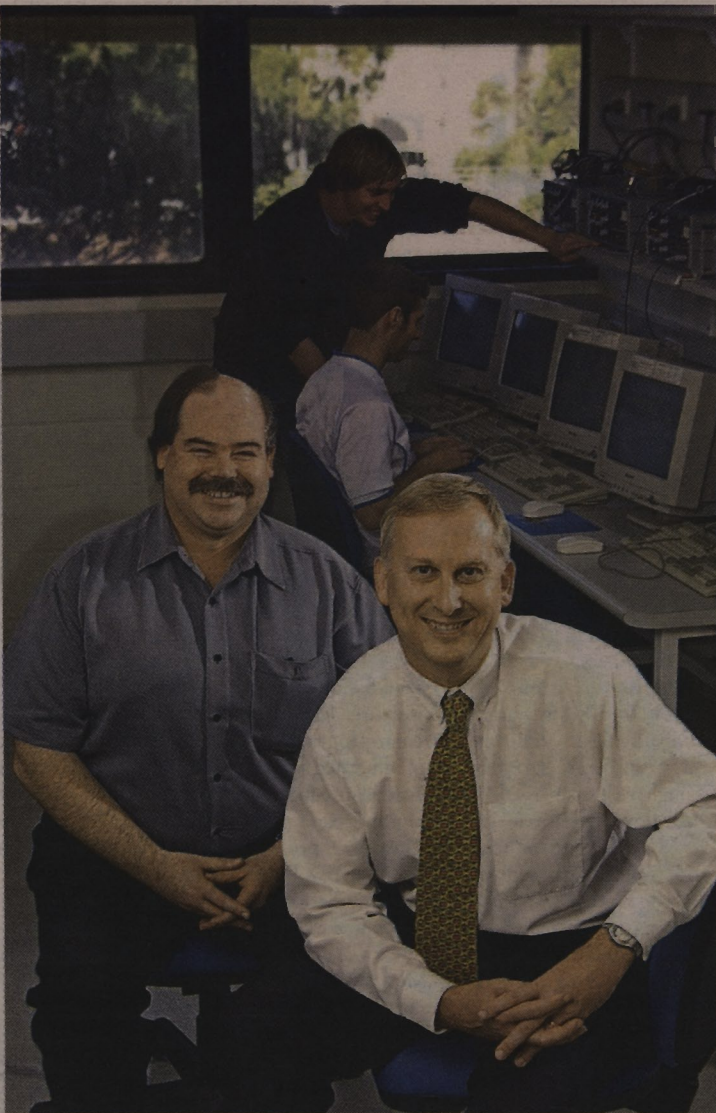
some could not be re-used for up to six months because test subjects could 'learn' the appropriate response to give, Dr Robinson said. He developed the test with Dr Yelland and doctoral researchers Mr Chris Hutchison and Mr Tim Friedman.

The test, which takes about five minutes, is awaiting patenting. Monash Commercial, the university's commercialisation arm, is seeking commercial partners who could help bring the test to the marketplace.

"It is a visual discrimination test that requires the test subject to make a decision based on what they see on the screen," Dr Robinson said. "The information is presented to them so fast that they are not even aware they have seen it, so they are responding to things that are only available to the subconscious."

"Where I see the real strengths of our test is in people who are undergoing some sort of clinical treatment either with drugs or after surgery. The study at Monash Medical Centre with Professor Julian Smith is looking at the effects of various cardiac surgeries on cognition."

"People who have any sort of impairment perform a lot worse on this test. For example, we have used the test to look at the cognition of



Testing the brain: Dr Greg Yelland (left) and Associate Professor Stephen Robinson.

Photo: Greg Ford

people with HIV and have tested it alongside the gold standard psychological tests for cognitive impairment in that group. Our test was as good as any others on the market at predicting the cognitive impairment of HIV patients."

The test has also been trialled on 90 people aged between 60 and 85. "Within that group we have detected a subgroup who, by most tests, show a mild decline in cognition, whereas our test has revealed a significant impairment,"

Dr Robinson said. "Subsequent testing has revealed that some of the people in this subgroup have progressed to Alzheimer's disease."

However, Dr Robinson said it would be some time before the test could be used to assess whether a test subject might be in the early stages of Alzheimer's.

– Penny Fannin

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Funding shortfall for police corruption investigator

Criminology

Despite a \$1 million funding increase announced last month, inadequate resources are available to the Victorian Ombudsman's office to investigate allegations of police corruption, misconduct and abuse of power, says a Monash University criminology expert.

Associate Professor Colleen Lewis, head of criminal justice and criminology in the School of Political and Social Inquiry, says the state government has reacted to police corruption allegations by increasing the powers and resources of the Ombudsman's office.

But she says the additional \$1 million the office will receive immediately to assist in its police oversight role is grossly inadequate and way below funding allocations for similar purposes in other states.

"The government's move follows recent criticisms of investigations into Melbourne's underworld killings,

allegations of serious corruption in the Victoria Police Drug Squad, claims that confidential police files were accessed for political purposes and claims that police probes into child sex abuse cases were not conducted appropriately," Dr Lewis says. "The premier's response to allegations of police corruption, malfeasance and abuse of power has been to reject the royal commission option. His government has opted instead to increase the powers and resources of the Ombudsman's office."

Dr Lewis says in terms of powers, the office will shortly have the ability to initiate its own investigations into police without first having to receive a complaint, a power all other police oversight bodies in Australia apart from the Northern Territory have had for years.

Other legislative changes will allow the Ombudsman to demand that police, former police and other people answer any question, even if their answer is self-incriminatory and – subject to a warrant from the courts – to search and to seize, she says.

"The funding boost to the Ombudsman's office represents a 30 per cent increase and will take its annual budget to \$4.5 million a year. "However, when this figure is compared to what the Queensland and New South governments spend on police and other public sector accountability institutions, it appears grossly inadequate."

"It is \$25 million below what Queensland spends in monitoring, reviewing and investigating complaints against its public servants, including police, and a staggering \$49.5 million below that of New South Wales."

Dr Lewis says the role of the Ombudsman is vital to achieving good public administration and open and accountable government, but if it is to be effective it needs to be properly resourced.

– Michele Martin

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Finding novel ways with water

Water institute

Car parks that could serve as reservoirs for stormwater and unmanned aircraft that could play a part in flood warnings are just two of the projects being investigated by the newly formed Institute for Sustainable Water Resources at Monash University.

The institute is based in the Faculty of Engineering and involves staff from all the university's engineering departments. It was set up by Dr Tim Fletcher, Dr Ana Deletic and Dr Tony Ladson from civil engineering, with funding support from the Monash Research Fund (new research areas) as well as the Department of Civil Engineering and the Faculty of Engineering.

The institute is also working closely with the Water Studies Centre in the School of Chemistry and the Monash Environment Institute and aims to pursue innovative research and teaching in water sustainability.

Dr Fletcher, who is acting director of the institute, said the drought currently being experienced across Australia had highlighted water resource issues and the need to come up with novel ways of using water more efficiently.

"We could be harvesting stormwater, for example, so we're not starving our rivers as much," he said. "To this end, we're investigating water recycling within businesses, homes, factories and shopping centres, including their car parks."

"Technology allows us to build porous pavements without sacrificing the structural integrity of the pavement, so we're looking into having tanks below roads, malls or shopping



Water-wise: From left, Dr Tony Ladson, Dr Ana Deletic and Dr Tim Fletcher.

Photo: Greg Ford

Other projects being investigated by the institute include the following:

- Using unmanned aircraft to monitor floods in real-time. This would provide data for the development of mathematical models to predict how much damage the floods will do so that timely warnings can be sent out.

- Examining the amount of water rivers need to remain healthy. The institute has developed a model of the Snowy River to test the effect of different flows on the habitat available for fish.

- Testing the effectiveness of wetlands at removing pollutants. A laboratory wetland has been built at Monash that can be dosed with different levels of pollutants to see how effective the wetland is at removing them.

- Looking at interactions between surface water and ground water and how these interactions might affect ecosystems that depend on ground water such as wetlands. Institute researchers are also looking to improve the use of water recycling by using groundwater aquifers as a means of storing treated stormwater.

- Using risk analysis to look at the most cost-effective way of managing rare events such as floods or droughts.

– Penny Fannin

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centre car parks that collect storm water, which can then be used for non-drinking purposes such as watering gardens or flushing toilets."

The aim of the project is to establish pilot-scale stormwater recycling in areas such as car parks in Melbourne and Brisbane. Institute members are working with the Brisbane City Council, Melbourne Water and the environment protection agencies in Victoria and New South Wales to achieve this goal.

However, for stormwater harvesting to occur more information is needed on the quality of stormwater that might be collected from buildings, roads or car parks. Dr Fletcher said two systems had been set up at Monash – one from a building roof and the other from a car park – to monitor the quality of stormwater. "This allows us to determine pollution levels and design treatment devices that will provide a suitable quality of water for its intended use," he said.

Professional development for Japanese teachers

Teacher training

Monash University's Faculty of Education at Clayton campus has recently conducted an intensive two-week teacher training program for a group of 15 primary and secondary teachers from Japan.

The program was designed to enhance the teachers' capacity to teach integrated studies – the integration of various disciplines and subjects to make learning more holistic and meaningful – and improve their understanding of Australian culture. It was initiated by the Australia-Japan Foundation and endorsed by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Technology (MEXT).

Areas covered included curriculum development, student evaluation skills, methods to encourage inquiry learning and problem-solving skills among students. Participants also spent two days visiting local primary and secondary schools to observe the teaching of integrated studies.

The Education faculty and the Australia Asia Centre for Education Exchange (AACE), a development office within Monash International, successfully tendered to run the program, which was fully funded by the Australian Government.

AACE has been associated with Monash for more than 10 years and has developed, marketed and coordinated numerous educational exchange programs for the university.

Mr Kotaro Ito and Ms Mayumi Sakuragi from AACE, and Education faculty lecturer Ms Libby Tudball coordinated this particular program.

Ms Tudball said the teaching of integrated studies, though well established in the Australian education system, was a relatively new concept in Japan.

"Since its introduction to Japanese primary and junior high schools in 2002, MEXT has placed high emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and the importance of cross-curricular content," she said.

"The training provided by Monash's Education faculty is designed to assist the teachers in further

developing their own integrated studies teaching and learning activities once back in Japan."

Mr Ito said the innovative program had attracted considerable interest from Japanese educators and media. "Australia is regarded as one of the leaders in integrated education, so the program was a terrific opportunity to showcase the Australian education system."

A further 25 Japanese teachers are expected at Clayton campus in August to take part in the program.

– Karen Stichtenoth

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Intensive training: Back row, from left, AACE project coordinator Ms Mayumi Sakuragi, Osaka Kyoiku University Associate Professor Mr Hiroyuki Tanaka, Kita-joyo Junior High School teacher Mr Tetsuji Hirose, AACE project coordinator Mr Kotaro Ito and Australia-Japan Foundation project manager Ms Junko Sato. Front row, from left, Education faculty lecturer Ms Anita Forsyth, Education faculty academic coordinator Ms Libby Tudball, and Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Technology (MEXT) school inspector Mr Masanori Ogushi.

Photo: Melissa Di Ciero

Fine-tuning the music teacher's craft

Music education

The use of DVD animations in teaching music theory, the rewards and challenges of adult music education and motivation issues among Year 7 music students are some of the issues being investigated by students in Monash's Master of Education (Music Education) course.

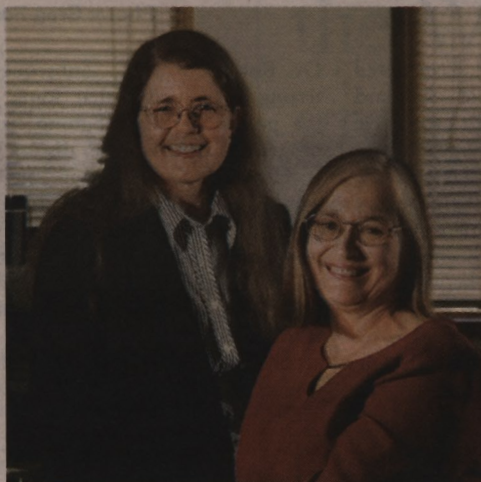
Senior lecturer and former course coordinator Dr Ros Smith said most of the masters research topics had arisen from particular workplace problems or concerns.

"For instance, one of our students, who has taught music in both boys and girls schools, is doing her research thesis on why boys in her prep class are less interested in singing than girls at the same level," Dr Smith said.

"She is looking at the reasons for this and at ways of dealing with it, ways of trying to make the boys more positive about singing."

Students in the course also investigate and discuss the work of other researchers in the music education field. One of the most debated issues in the music education field, according to Dr Smith, involves the 'Mozart effect', a term based on US research in the early 1990s suggesting that listening to Mozart could improve learning abilities.

US researchers found college students who listened to about 10 minutes of a certain Mozart piano sonata experienced short-term improvement



Exposing music teachers to a range of issues and research: Dr Jane Southcott (left) and Dr Ros Smith.

Photo: Melissa Di Ciero

in spatial-temporal reasoning – the ability to make a mental image and think ahead in space and time.

"One of the problems is that music teachers around the world sometimes use this sort of research to make exaggerated claims about the value of music lessons," Dr Smith said.

"Our students are encouraged to look more deeply into research like this to determine what it really does or doesn't mean."

The course has a largely online and off-campus study mode to meet the teachers' unique needs.

"Music teachers usually have a lot of extra-curricular commitments, with practice and concerts and performances after school making it difficult for them to attend classes after work, which is why the off-campus mode was developed," Dr Smith said.

"There's a mix of online and more traditional forms of contact between students and lecturers, and people can choose the balance that suits them."

Earlier this year, a group of eight students participated in a three-week visit to Europe, where they attended classes and seminars at leading music education institutes in Geneva and Hungary.

Dr Smith, who is also associate dean (staff) in the Education faculty, recently passed on the role of course coordinator to Dr Jane Southcott, who said the future of the course was extremely promising.

"Many students have moved on to the final research phase of the degree and the range and quality of their research is exciting," Dr Southcott said.

– Michele Martin

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Schools

At Monash seminar series

The At Monash seminar series provides students with a comprehensive overview of course and career options within discipline areas. Seminar speakers include an academic, a current student and a graduate guest from each faculty.

Bookings can be made online at www.monash.edu.au/psd or by contacting the Prospective Students Office on +61 3 9905 4164.

Arts and Science (including Psychology)
Tuesday 4 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, Robert Blackwood Hall, Clayton campus.

Engineering and Information Technology

Monday 10 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, Robert Blackwood Hall, Clayton campus.

Education and Nursing
Thursday 13 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, George Jenkins Theatre, Peninsula campus.

Business and Law

Wednesday 19 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, Robert Blackwood Hall, Clayton campus.

Pharmacy and Related Sciences
Tuesday 25 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, Cossar Hall, Parkville campus.

Art and Design

Wednesday 26 May, 7.30 pm to 9 pm, Art and Design lecture theatre, level 1, Caulfield campus (this event is for Year 12 students only, due to limited space in the venue).

Law faculty turns 40

Monash Law Debate

To celebrate the Law faculty's 40th anniversary, a special Monash Law Debate will be held in the Legislative Council Chambers at Parliament House on Wednesday 19 May. Registrations open at 5.30 pm, and the debate commences at 6 pm.

The two debating teams, composed of Monash law students and alumni, will each include three people under the age of 40 and three over 40. The teams will debate the topic 'Designer babies should be legalised'. Secondary school students are welcome to attend, and entry is free.

Law Week 2004

Monash Law will run a series of activities from their city-based Law Chambers during Law Week, from 17 to 22 May. Law Week is an annual event hosted by the Victoria Law Foundation. For more information about Monash's Law Week activities, visit www.law.monash.edu.au/.

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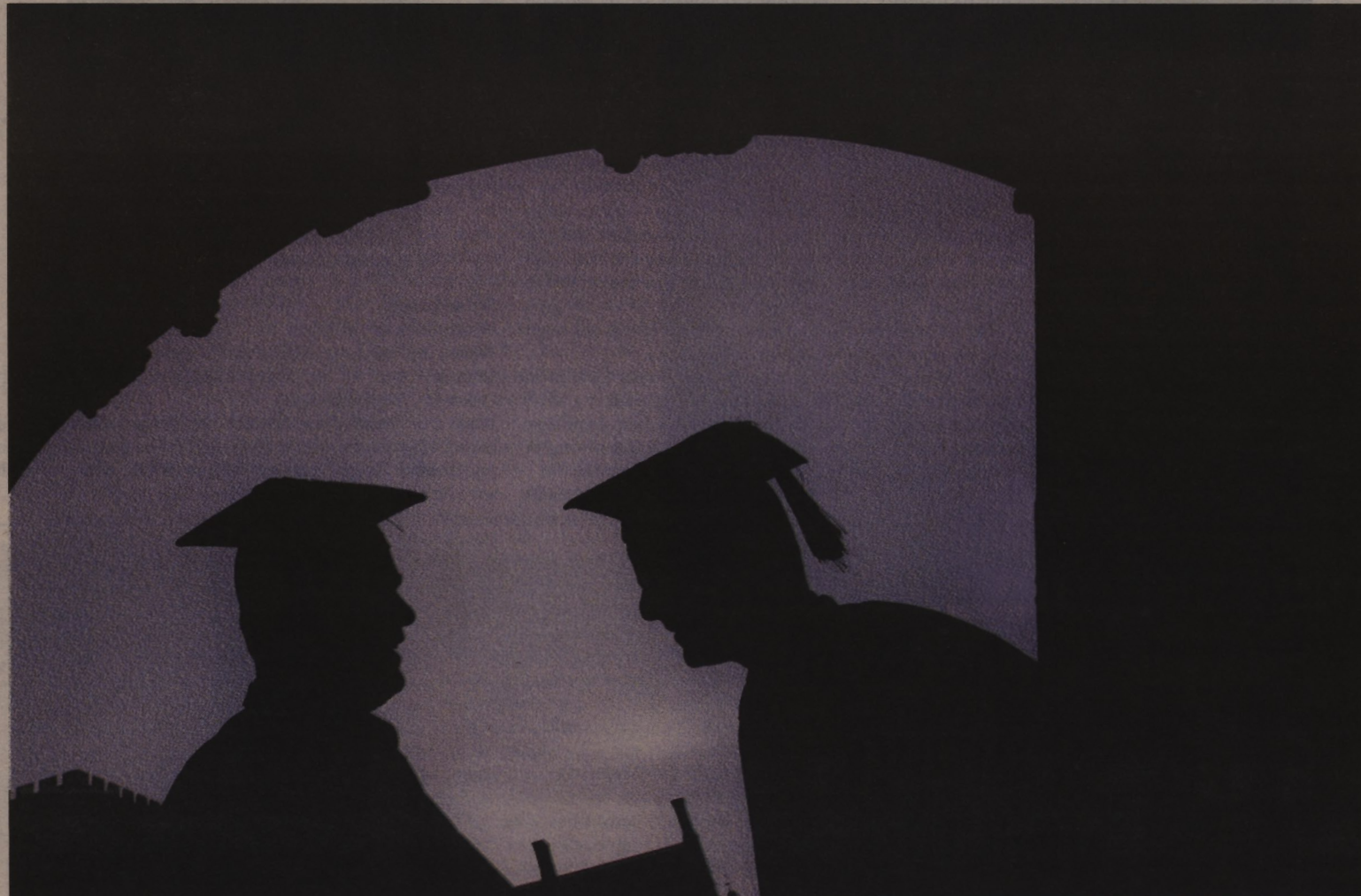
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Time for changes in graduate business education



Monash University has provided coursework masters degrees in business since 1968, initially with the MAdmin, later renamed the MBA. Overall graduate program enrolments have more than doubled in the past five years and currently total more than 4200 students.

Among the popular programs in 2003 were the MBA, Master of Practising Accounting, Master of Marketing, Master of International Business and Master of Management. Other degrees include the Master of Human Resource Management, Master of Public Policy and Management, Master of Applied Finance and Master of Business Law. There is also a range of executive certificates, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas.

International enrolments in graduate programs have more than quadrupled over the past four years.

In 2004, Monash is setting up a Graduate School of Business to coordinate all graduate and postgraduate programs. Professor Owen Hughes, former head of the Department of Management, has been appointed its first director.

Photo: AFR

Graduate business education has been a success story for Australian universities but several things need to change in order to ensure continued growth, write Monash's dean of Business and Economics, **Professor Gill Palmer**, and director of Postgraduate Business, **Professor Owen Hughes**.

The growth of graduate business education has been one of the success stories of the past 20 years, especially with master of business administration (MBA) programs. Today, however, the demand for the traditional MBA is static or declining. At the same time, the demand for other specialist business degrees – masters programs in accounting, marketing, international business or human resource management – has been growing rapidly. Undoubtedly, there has been a real shift in the focus of graduate business education around the world.

Universities once believed that the best way they could deliver graduate business education was to hive off their graduate business courses – typically MBAs – into separate business schools. The separated business school model had the advantages of freedom from university restrictions on staff salaries and expectations of research grants and research outcomes and the ability to draw on practitioners as an adjunct faculty.

However, the advantages of the separated business school have evaporated as universities themselves have changed. The flexibility once found only in separated business schools can now be found within the cores of universities, particularly as they become progressively less dependent on government funding.

Separated school structures also have disadvantages that are now becoming more apparent. There are limits to the resources that one major degree can provide in terms of research and student choice. There are serious conflicts of interest if the business school attempts to expand into specialist areas provided by the parent university. In some instances, separated business schools have paid insufficient attention to controlling costs and are now in financial difficulty. Having staff remote from the much larger commerce faculties has made it difficult to maintain intellectual cohesion, and the business schools' research records have not been as good as those of the parent universities. There is also the problem of competition within the same university for both staff and students. Some business schools have started to diversify into specialist masters programs, but have had little success so far, due partly to competition with the parent university.

Another problem has been caused by the massive growth in undergraduate business education that has occurred alongside the growth in graduate



Professor Gill Palmer, left, and Professor Owen Hughes.

numbers. In the US, business education, like law or medicine, is usually taken as a graduate program, often following a generalist undergraduate degree. In Australia, business education starts at first-year undergraduate level. By the time a student has completed a first degree in business, he or she has already studied much of the content of an MBA program and possibly to a higher standard. For example, a core MBA unit in accounting would be lower in standard than a third-year or even second-year undergraduate accounting specialisation. This means that universities need to offer specialist masters degrees to build on specialist undergraduate degrees. MBA degrees also need to be adapted to appeal to those with undergraduate business degrees.

Several things need to change in order for graduate business education to thrive.

Business education needs to be seen more broadly. Diversification to such areas as international business, marketing, accounting, finance, human resource management and public sector management indicates that graduate students and their employers value a wider range of offerings than might have once been thought necessary. Being successful in business is increasingly seen as requiring knowledge of disparate disciplines such as governance, ethics, leadership, social responsibility and emotional intelligence, as well as the traditional technical areas.

If the need for a separate business school is no longer present, the appropriate organisational form should be a graduate school within a commerce faculty, rather than requiring a separate employer of academic expertise in a stand-alone school. The university must be able to demonstrate, however,

that it can be flexible in practice as well as in theory.

International graduate students need to be perceived in a different way. For too long they have been regarded as an easy way for a university to make more money from fees. International demand has been growing faster at the graduate level than at the undergraduate level, but more needs to be done to improve the quality of the overall experience. This requires more investment in language programs, in cross-cultural awareness programs and in training staff.

International students need to be seen as a long-term asset. They provide insight and expertise for the university and, if their experience is positive, they provide a source for future business. Australian business schools are well placed in their knowledge of the American and European traditions in business education, their teaching in English and their interest and proximity to Asia.

There needs to be greater engagement with past graduates. Australian universities can learn a lot from US universities in the way they look after their alumni. Graduate alumni are especially valuable and possibly easier to engage than undergraduates.

Graduate business courses need to face up to the issue of accreditation. There are two major, internationally recognised accreditation systems for business education: the AACSB from the US, and EQUIS from Europe. A number of Australian business schools are now making a considerable investment in time and resources to gain accreditation.

Seen at its broadest, graduate business education has been a success story for Australian universities. However, it cannot be assumed that growth rates will continue. Success in future is likely to be in those universities that work hardest in providing a graduate experience with good courses, staff and facilities and where research and teaching are inter-linked. Graduate business courses exist in an informed market; the universities that survive and thrive will be those that deliver real quality.

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INPRINT

Future Girl

Young Women in the Twenty-First Century

By Anita Harris
Published by Routledge
RRP: \$39.95



Future Girl is an analysis of the changed landscape of growing up female in the Western world. While educated, young professional career women with glamorous consumer lifestyles appear to be everywhere, the book argues that there is another story behind this representation of young women as winners in rapidly changing societies.

The author suggests that young women are living more complex lives than suggested by the dominant images of girls' freedom, power and success and that class and race inequalities continue to shape opportunities and outcomes.

Dr Harris explores how and why young women have emerged as the central subjects of discourses about how to prevail in the modern world and seeks to shake the notion that 'girlpower' and new socioeconomic opportunities have simply created brilliant prospects for all young women.

Dr Anita Harris is a lecturer of sociology in Monash University's School of Political and Social Inquiry. Her research interests are young people and globalisation.

A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics

Compiled by Joan Swann, Ana Deumert, Theresa Lillis and Rajend Mesthrie
Published by Edinburgh University Press
RRP: \$55

This is the first comprehensive dictionary of the field of sociolinguistics and covers topics relevant to a range of disciplines including anthropology, psychology, sociology, education and linguistics. It is intended as a useful

resource for students, teachers and researchers in sociolinguistics, or any area of language study that takes a socially oriented approach.

Sociolinguistics is characterised by increasing diversity, giving rise to a proliferation of theories, concepts and terminology. This is sometimes a minefield, with similar terms used rather differently within different academic traditions.

Organised alphabetically with terms explained in a non-technical way, the dictionary maps out the traditions and approaches that comprise sociolinguistics in a way that is designed to help readers find their way through this complex subject.

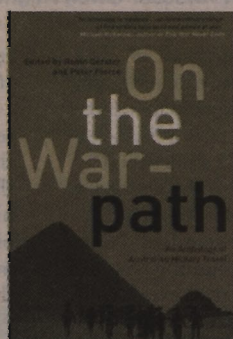
The authors have taught and researched widely across different areas of sociolinguistics and in different geographic areas, including the US, the UK, Europe, Australia, southern Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

Dr Ana Deumert is a lecturer in the School of Languages, Cultures, and Linguistics within the Faculty of Arts at Monash University.

On the War-Path

An Anthology of Australian Military Travel

Edited by Robin Gerster and Peter Pierce
Published by Melbourne University Press
RRP: \$39.95



Through more than 50 stories from Australian military travellers, journalists, writers, civilian tourists and combatants, this anthology reveals the many ways in which going to war has formed a cultural bridge between Australia and the world.

From the Sudan in 1885 to Afghanistan in 2001, the connection of war to travel is illustrated in the observations of servicemen and women, and writers as varied as 'Banjo' Paterson, George Johnston, Nancy Wake, John Pilger, Lily Brett and Peter Weir.

This lively collection crosses the boundaries between literature, literary criticism, travel writing, war writing and cultural commentary. The stories also reveal how the experience of war has both broadened and refined (and sometimes distorted) Australian views of the world.

Robin Gerster, who has published widely in the areas of war and travel literatures, is an associate professor in the School of Literary, Visual and Performance Studies at Monash University.

If you are a member of the Monash community and have a forthcoming book, contact media@adm.monash.edu.au.

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

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Amazing faces

More than 100 curious and quirky portraits from the Monash University Library Rare Books Collection are currently on show in a special exhibition at the Sir Louis Matheson Library on the university's Clayton campus.

Highlights include a 17th-century engraving of King Charles I, singer Michael Jackson's now-infamous mug shot, former US president Ronald Reagan in an advertisement for Chesterfield cigarettes, a hologram of Jesus superimposed on the Shroud of Turin and, on loan for the exhibition, some preliminary sketches of singer Nick Cave by Howard Arkley.

Monash University Rare Books librarian and exhibition curator Mr Richard Overell said the exhibition had been chosen to highlight specific areas of the Monash Collection.

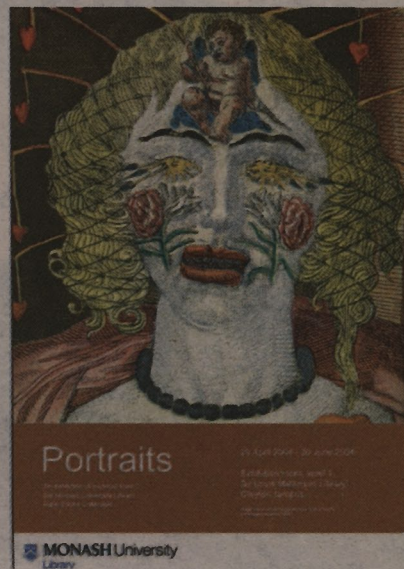
"The exhibition is an idiosyncratic selection of material published from the 17th century to the present," Mr Overell said.

"Human beings are fascinated by faces – it's inherent in our nature. We can learn a lot about ourselves and our society, both past and present, by examining the faces that have come to represent much more than just the person in the picture."

The portraits on display are mainly from books, although some are separate engravings or photographs.

The Monash University Library Rare Books Collection consists of some 100,000 items. The earliest work is a 1476 commentary on the Bible. The collection has significant holdings from the period 1660 to 1800. It is also strong in Australiana, art, and 19th and 20th-century literature.

– Karen Stichtenoth



Show notes:

What: Portraits exhibition

When: Until 30 June 2004, during library opening hours

Where: Level 1, Sir Louis Matheson Library, Monash University, Clayton campus

Who: For information, contact Mr Richard Overell, Rare Books Librarian on +61 3 9905 2689. For general inquiries on viewing hours, contact +61 3 9905 5054 or visit www.lib.monash.edu.au/hours.

Legs on the Wall group stirs sporting frenzy

An explosive and daring display of physical strength and grace, set in the fiercely competitive world of Australian sport, is the latest show to feature in the 2004 Monash University Performing Arts Season.

The Alexander Theatre will host the only Victorian season of *Runners Up*, beginning 13 May, with two evening performances and one matinee scheduled.

Director Debra Iris Batton created *Runners Up* during Australia's biggest sporting event, the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

The performers interpret classic sporting moves such as the AFL mark, rugby line-out and netball dodge through awesome acrobatics, tumbling and flying in harnesses.

Monash's director of Performing and Visual Arts, Ms Jan Clancy, said the high-energy performers from the Legs on the Wall group – renowned for their startling, sensuous and emotion-charged theatrics – pushed the boundaries of physical theatre.

"The beauty of the human body in flight is contrasted with the aggressive force of a football match and finding winners and losers in the colourful, highly emotional world of competitive sport," she said. "The show reflects our aspirations, obsessions and the much-loved sporting chance."

Runners Up performers include Kirk Page, who has performed with Bangarra Dance Theatre, Rowan Marchingo, Claudia Alessi, Kerry Casey, Telford

Scully, Ingrid Kleinig and Jodie Farrugia.

Since its establishment in 1984, Legs on the Wall has created strong contemporary Australian theatre by incorporating acrobatics, dance, and aerial and circus skills into new frameworks and theatrical adventures. Previous productions include *Flying Blind*, *All of Me*, *4 on the Floor* and the long-running *Homeland*.

– Karen Stichtenoth



Daring: Performers from the high-energy show, *Runners Up*.

Show notes:

What: *Runners Up*

When: 13 May, 8 pm; 14 May, 1.30 pm and 8 pm

Where: Alexander Theatre, Monash University, Clayton campus

Who: For bookings, contact the Monash Box Office on +61 3 9905 1111, for information, visit www.monash.edu.au/monart/events/.



"The Chinese population is steeped in the belief that you save then spend and that you must always try to first borrow from a family member. It is considered shameful, and a last resort, to borrow from a bank."

Photo: AP

When China was admitted to membership of the World Trade Organisation in 2001, it marked a milestone on the communist nation's path to free trade.

As a condition of the prized WTO membership, China will officially lift restrictions on foreign banks entering its financial markets, starting in 2007. The following year the country will host the Olympic Games.

These two events are linked, and the thread that joins them is plastic – credit cards in particular.

The Beijing Games, of which Visa is a major sponsor, will attract thousands of foreign tourists, who will mostly want to pay for travel, accommodation, meals and souvenirs using Visa and MasterCard.

The only problem is that China does not yet accept foreign credit cards; nor does it have a consistent, national infrastructure to process them.

So before the Olympic flame reaches Beijing, China must install a national data processing system. At the same time, it must mount a massive public education campaign to persuade its debt-averse population that credit is good.

Monash academic Professor Steve Worthington, of the Faculty of Business and Economics, is a credit card expert who has been researching the history of bankcards in China and how credit cards will be introduced to its population of more than 1.3 billion.

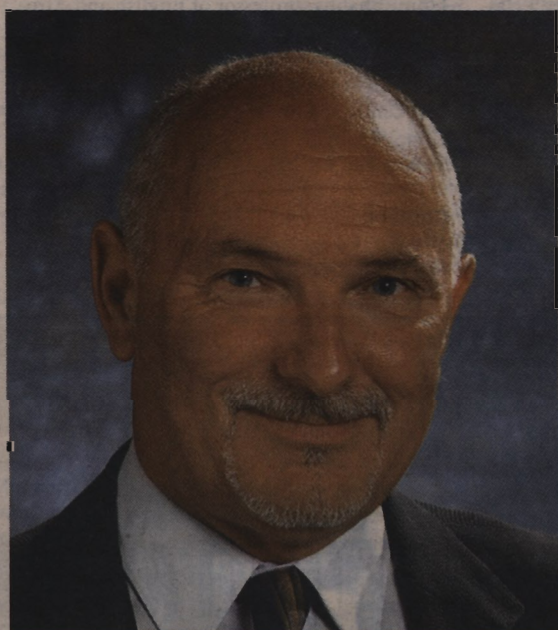
He notes that one of China's most important first steps has just been taken.

"In January this year, the world's two largest banking groups, Citigroup and the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank of China (HSBC), were given permission to launch co-branded credit cards with local Chinese banking partners," Professor Worthington says. "This makes them the first foreign organisations to launch cards in China."

The People's Bank of China and the China Banking Regulatory Commission have allowed Citigroup to launch a co-branded dual currency card with the Shanghai Pudong Development Bank, and HSBC has received permission to launch a similar card with its partner, the Bank of Shanghai.

"Australia's ANZ bank also has a strategic alliance with the Shanghai Rural Credit

China's first steps on the plastic path



"The card system absolutely has to work. It is a huge loss of face in China if your card is rejected or does not process."

– Professor Steve Worthington

further develop the bankcard industry in China," Professor Worthington says.

Cooperatives Union, which has more than one million customers," Professor Worthington says. "The intention is to launch credit card products using ANZ's expertise in risk management and marketing."

The organisation charged with the overall job of turning China on to credit and making the system work nationwide is the China UnionPay Corporation (CUP), a shareholding financial institution established by 84 domestic financial institutions.

"The corporation's major tasks are to establish and operate a nationwide bankcard information switch and interchange network, to enable interoperability of bankcards nationwide and to

China has had bankcards since 1986, but almost all of the 560 million cards currently in circulation are actually debit cards. Of the 25 million true credit cards, with revolving balances, most are unable to be used abroad and many are restricted to a specific region or city.

"At the moment, CUP cards are the only type of bankcards that can be used nationally including in Hong Kong. Other types of bankcards are available, but only locally and they don't work for inter-bank or inter-region usage," Professor Worthington says.

"CUP must improve inter-operability of the system in which dozens of regions and hundreds of cities use different forms of

processing that don't match. It's like a national railway system whose gauge sizes alter from region to region."

Even after the China UnionPay Corporation oversees the installation of technology to process cards, will the Chinese people have faith in that system and use credit cards?

"The card system absolutely has to work. It is a huge loss of face in China if your card is rejected or does not process," Professor Worthington says.

"People may be cautious about the safety of their money when using the new credit cards, especially as there has been anecdotal evidence that card-holders have experienced technical problems in using their cards and that it took them months to get back money that was wrongly deducted.

"Also, the Chinese population is steeped in the belief that you save then spend and that you must always try to first borrow from a family member. It is considered shameful, and a last resort, to borrow from a bank. That philosophy has led to a situation where personal credit ratings are almost unheard of. The question then becomes: how do you issue credit cards, and credit card limits, to millions of people who do not have credit ratings?

"In China today, there is pent-up demand for almost everything. When China does install an end-to-end data processing system and the people begin to use credit cards in earnest, it will represent a huge seismic shift in the country's economy and its philosophy."

– Robyn Anns

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Pharmacists' vigilance can save lives

Pharmacy

Fifteen Australian lives were saved in one month as a result of pharmacists intervening in medicine management, a study involving Monash University researchers into clinical pharmacy services in eight of the nation's teaching hospitals has found.

The study, published in the *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, also revealed that 88 pharmacist interventions reduced the length of patient stays in hospital and 156 interventions reduced the potential for the patient to be readmitted to hospital.

Mr Michael Dooley, a senior lecturer in Monash's Department of Pharmacy Practice and director of pharmacy at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, led the study that was supported by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia. It focused on one clinical pharmacy activity: when a pharmacist proposed to a doctor a change to a patient's medicine management.

Mr Dooley said the changes were recommended by pharmacists in order to increase the effectiveness of medicines and to reduce potential adverse events. Some of the interventions involved a pharmacist identifying that although a doctor had prescribed the right



drug, the dose was incorrect. Other common errors were doctors neglecting to prescribe drugs that the patient needed or prescribing drugs the patient didn't need.

With colleague Ms Kirsten Galbraith, also a senior lecturer in the Department of Pharmacy Practice, Mr Dooley and the study team tracked pharmacist interventions in relation to almost 25,000 patients over one month. In that time, pharmacist interventions prevented 11 admissions due to poisoning or toxic drug effects and nine admissions due to heart attack.

Mr Dooley said the study emphasised the importance of pharmacists in patient care. Preventing the deaths of 15 patients in one month at only eight hospitals equalled hundreds of patients a year in all of the nation's hospitals, he said.

"In financial terms, the study showed that for every dollar spent on a pharmacist for an intervention in medication management, the hospital saves \$23," he said. "Over the four weeks of the study, the calculated savings were \$263,221 for the eight hospitals. This included \$150,307 for length-of-stay reduction and \$111,848 for readmission reduction."

When extrapolated over a year, the interventions worked out at a saving to the eight hospitals of more than \$4.4 million.

"The issue of medication treatment in hospitals is very complicated," Mr Dooley said. "It's very difficult for everyone involved in the prescribing, dispensing or administration of medication to get it right. That's where pharmacists play a role – they can save lives, improve patient care and reduce the length of stay in hospital for many people."

– Penny Fannin

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kirstie.galbraith@vcp.monash.edu.au

Language barrier an issue in South Africa

Linguistics

People migrating to cities from rural areas of South Africa are facing difficulties with employment and social service access due to language barriers, a Monash researcher has found.

Dr Ana Deumert, research director of Monash University's Language and Society Centre, spent two months last year surveying internal migration to Cape Town from other parts of South Africa.

The survey formed part of a larger research project, 'Global Markets, Human Mobility and Social Protection', led by Professor Chris Nyland from the Faculty of Business and Economics and funded by the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements.

Dr Deumert said that in post-apartheid South Africa, English had become the main language of upward mobility, political access and economic power but that Afrikaans still played an important role as many employers in the Western Cape were Afrikaans-speaking.

However, she said many of those interviewed were unable to communicate even basic information in English and their knowledge of Afrikaans was also low.

"Those who participated in the survey repeatedly commented that their inability to express themselves in English and Afrikaans prevented them not only from finding permanent or casual employment, but also from access to social services and government institutions," she said.

"Doctors in clinics and hospitals usually have little knowledge of Xhosa, the main language spoken by most of the internal migrants, and rely on the patients' knowledge of English and sometimes Afrikaans. As one respondent put it when asked about his experience in hospitals: 'Me understand doctors, doctors not understand me'."

Dr Deumert said many rural migrants only had minimal contact with English and typically settled in areas where other migrants from nearby villages had established themselves and where Xhosa remained the dominant language of everyday life.

"In many parts of South African society, English is a second language, but in many of the townships in Cape Town, English is very much a foreign language."

Dr Deumert said further quantitative and qualitative information on language distribution was urgently needed in South Africa, which is constitutionally committed to a multilingual language policy. There are nine official languages in South Africa.

– Diane Squires

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Celebrated author V. S. Naipaul opens Monash forum



Forum organisers: From left, Professor Clive Probyn, Dr Chandani Lokuge and Dr Meg Probyn (absent, Associate Professor Jenny Strauss). **Photo:** Greg Ford

Postcolonial writing centre

Nobel and Booker Prize-winning author V. S. Naipaul, knighted for his services to literature in 1990, will open an upcoming literary forum organised by Monash's Centre for Postcolonial Writing in collaboration with the State Library of Victoria.

Centre director Dr Chandani Lokuge said securing V. S. Naipaul was an exciting coup for the Globalisation and Identities Forum, being held from 8 to 11 May at the Melbourne City Conference Centre and the State Library.

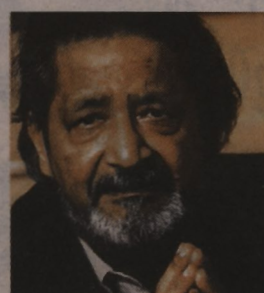
In his only appearance in Melbourne, V. S. Naipaul will deliver the opening address at 6.45 pm on Saturday 8 May at the conference centre.

He will also read from and discuss his works, which encompass more than 14 novels including *The Mystic Masseur*, *A House for Mr Biswas* and *A Bend in the River*, as well as many non-fiction books including the acclaimed trilogy *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilisation*.

The evening with V. S. Naipaul includes a welcome address from Monash vice-chancellor Professor Richard Larkins, and features a classical Indian dance performance.

Dr Lokuge said the forum was a milestone for the Centre for Postcolonial Writing.

"We aim to provide a stimulating platform for the exchange of creative and intellectual inquiry on postcolonial studies," she said. "And the forum's theme – globalisation and identities – is currently one of the most popular areas of postcolonial creative writing and scholarship."



Keynote speaker:

V. S. Naipaul.

'Postcolonial' is defined as the period from European colonisation to the present day, and postcolonial writing engages with the discourse of empire and the special positioning of colonising cultures in the colonised environment, Dr Lokuge said.

Also featuring at the forum are renowned Australian authors Janette Turner Hospital, Robert Drewe and Kim Scott, who will explore the issue of Australia's current cultural identity at 6.45 pm on 10 May at the State Library.

And at 6.45 pm on 11 May, also at the State Library, there will be an address by one of the world's foremost cultural theorists, Homi Bhabha, professor of English and Afro-American studies at Harvard University.

The Globalisation and Identities Forum has been organised by Dr Lokuge, along with her centre committee colleagues Professor Clive Probyn, Associate Professor Jenny Strauss and Dr Meg Probyn.

– Michele Martin

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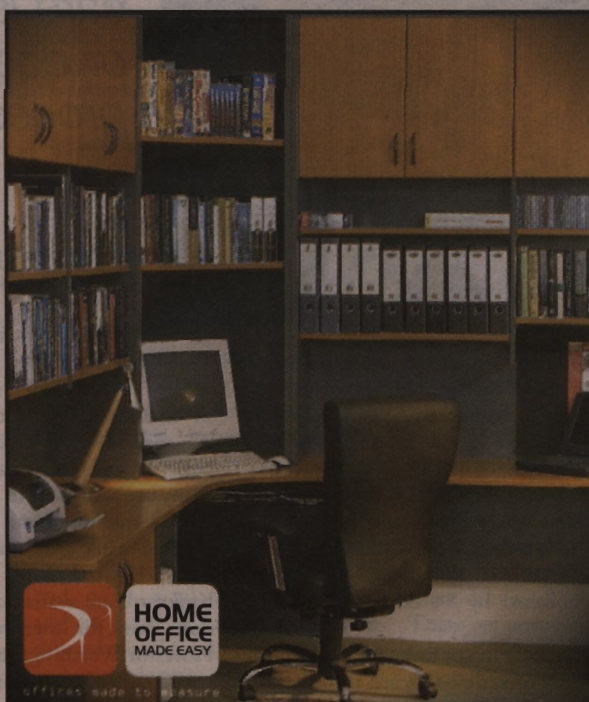
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