

New alliance to tackle rivers, wetland decline

Our rivers and wetlands are not in good shape. More than 100 years of misuse and mismanagement has seriously degraded Australia's rivers and wetlands.

Managers and users of our natural water resources now are faced with increased flooding, erosion and sedimentation.

Some river systems have experienced a decline in ecological diversity, a loss of freshwater habitats and a great increase in water salinity.

The solution lies in a better understanding of the complex ecosystems of rivers and wetlands. However, research into the myriad problems so far has been fragmented.

Providing guidelines for the restoration and preservation of our degraded systems requires a co-ordinated approach involving many disciplines. This is the aim of an agreement between Monash University and the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre, in Albury, NSW.

For the first time, research in varied disciplines will be co-ordinated, to tackle the problems within an environmentally sustainable framework.

At Monash, the co-operative agreement will involve the Departments of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and Geography and Environmental Science, as well as the Centre for Stream Ecology. It will provide increased resources and promote closer links between the disciplines of ecology, hydrology, aquatic chemistry, geomorphology and palaeoecology, instrumentation and image processing.

Monash staff including reader in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Dr Sam Lake, director of the Centre for Stream Ecology, Professor Barry Hart, and director of the Graduate School of Environmental Science, Professor Martin Williams, will take part in joint programs.

The university and the Albury-based research centre also have applied for a Federal grant to set up a research centre in river and wetland ecology.

Professor Williams said Australia's river systems and wetlands could not be restored to pristine condition.

"The challenge is to work out how we can continue to use our river systems and maintain their ecological health," he said.

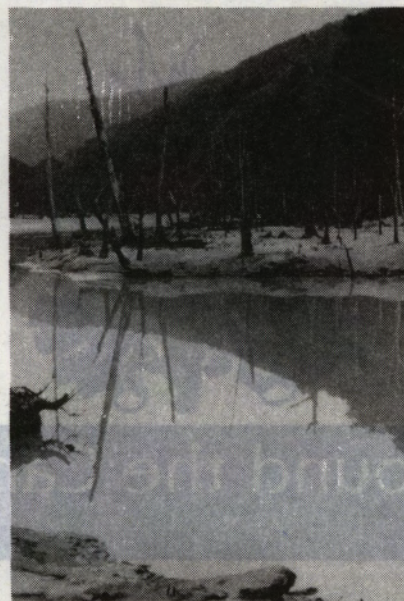
Throughout European settlement in Australia there had been "a single-minded interest in the delivery and use of water, and an almost complete disregard for the ecological health of these aquatic systems."

The problems of rivers and wetlands needed to be approached on two fronts, he said.

The first was to meet the demands of irrigation, power generation and flood control, while accommodating environmental needs and allowing for ecological restoration.

"In many cases, structures built to regulate water flow have exacerbated problems further downstream, causing changes in the incidence of flooding, erosion and sedimentation," Professor Williams said.

"Major rivers such as the Murray and the Goulburn are now used as conduits for the delivery of irrigation water. This has dramatically changed their natural seasonal regime."



Australia's wetlands in decline.

The removal of snags and the channel straightening had resulted in poor habitat conditions for flora and fauna, and the flow regimes were not sensitive to their needs.

Secondly, the ecological and water quality aspects had to be studied.

"The factors that control the ecology of Australian streams and wetlands are poorly understood.

"As a result, it is difficult to predict how a particular aquatic system will respond to a disturbance. This hampers the effective management of our rivers and wetlands.

"Such data are vital if we are to attempt to restore degraded ecosystems," Professor Williams said.



Good fun in anybody's language

Here's a language anyone can understand – food! Bilingual youngsters tuck into fairy bread, chocolate crackles and chips at the conclusion of *Konzert 1990*.

The concert was presented by a group of children from the Monash German Program for primary age children. The German Department has been running the Children's Program for 14 years. It was founded by Professor Michael Clyne and is now organised by Dr Silke Hesse.

WHO study links Monash, Jakarta

The side effects of a long-acting contraceptive widely used in developing countries will be investigated in a joint Australian-Indonesian research project.

The \$350,000 World Health Organisation project has been granted to Monash University's Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and the Study Group On Human Reproduction at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta.

The WHO awarded the three-year contract as part of its strategy to link developing and developed countries through research.

The collaborative WHO project will investigate abnormal menstrual bleeding in patients taking the long-acting contraceptive, Norplant, which is not yet available in Australia.

Work will be undertaken in both countries and Indonesian university staff will come to the Monash to learn new techniques. Two researchers – a clinician and a scientist – will be working at Monash at any one time during the project.

[Monash recently signed a formal co-operation agreement with the University of Indonesia covering joint research projects and exchanges of staff and students.]

Principal investigator, Dr Peter Rogers, of Monash Medical Centre, said as well as strengthening the

Indonesian group's research capabilities, the project hoped to provide vital information about women's health.

"The work also has wider implications because many women suffer from abnormal uterine bleeding at some time in their reproductive lives," he said.

"Norplant has been approved by the WHO and is available in many developed and developing countries.

"However, some patients have experienced problems with irregular bleeding, which can be a side-effect of all contraceptives which use oestrogen, progestogen or a combination of both."

"Norplant is implanted under the skin and is effective for up to five years. It can be inserted by a nurse and can be removed at any time," he said.

"It's one of the best contraceptive options for developing countries because its use is not affected by literacy or access to health care centres."

Tissue samples will be taken from women who have used the contraceptive and those who have not, and the functioning of cells which line the small blood vessels in the lining of the uterus will be compared.

Researchers hope to find out what triggers the bleeding and why it doesn't stop normally. Previous research has failed to find a link between abnormal bleeding and steroid levels in the blood.

N.B.

Somewhere close to the university's Clayton campus (and rapidly heading seawards) lies the centre of Melbourne.

There's no sign or plaque. In fact, according to a recent study by Coopers and Lybrand, the city's demographic heart is on the move – towards Bass Strait at the rate of some 500 metres a year.

Think of it. That's more than a metre a day. Buses to the city centre could become a thing of the past for residents in these parts. They would simply stand at their gates and wait until the metropolis drew up alongside. (Mind you, it might be a long wait. But think of the savings.)

♦ ♦ ♦

This one came out of left field and had us stumped. Either our jargon deflectors were set at full strength, or it was our innate even-handedness.

Whatever. The minutes from Meeting 1/90 of the Transitional Equal Opportunity Committee included an item on sinistral disadvantage.

In what ways, we wondered, did Monash disadvantage sinistri? Furthermore, how long had they been working on campus? And what were their duties?

Reading on, the fog began to lift. Sinistral disadvantage, it turns out, is the measure of inconvenience experienced by mollydookers. In other words, many university work stations and desks simply do not cater for left-handed people.

This type of jargon could lead to all sorts of scenarios: "Sorry, I'm late. But my sinistral needed fine-tuning." Or, "I banged my sinistral against the car door this morning and put it out of whack."

So sinistri unite! (Before your work stations become increasingly dexterous.)

A newspaper is born...

In answer to all your phone calls – YES, Monash will have a regular newspaper and this is it.

Montage will be published fortnightly and will contain news from the campuses, updates on the latest research developments and interviews with a wide range of people. You will also find diary notes and employment advertisements on page 7 and classified ads on page 6.

The editorial team – Susanne Hatherley, John Clark and Greg Williams – hopes you will find Montage as interesting and informative as the publications it replaces – Monash Reporter and SOUND.

We're keen to chase up any hot leads, so give us a call on 565 3087 or come up and see us sometime. We're on the first floor of the Gallery building at Clayton.

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Caulfield

● The standard of business education offered by the Syme Faculty School of Banking and Finance (Caulfield Campus) has attracted international recognition.

The Euromoney Institute of Finance, a prestigious institution and publisher in the area of banking and financing, has selected the school to develop training programs and teaching resources in Australia and Indonesia next year. The school will present courses on treasury management, portfolio management and project finance to business people here and in Indonesia.

● A corporate boardroom boasting panoramic views of the city and bay, and full facilities is Monash's latest venue for conferences, meetings and seminars.

The room, on the ninth floor of the Chisholm Tower Building, on Railway Avenue, at Caulfield campus, is part of office space leased by the National Australia Bank and now is available as a venue through the Commercial Property Office.

The Chisholm Tower is a commercial office project built by the campus to provide self-funding student amenities facilities. The Caulfield campus occupies three levels of the building and the rest is leased to private business.

One of three meeting places in the tower, the boardroom has video facilities and can host gatherings of 18-24 people. A second-floor room can cater for groups of up to 36 and a smaller venue on the fourth floor can hold from 12-18 people.

Commercial property manager, Mr Peter Cunliffe, said quality catering could be provided at competitive rates, and secure car parking was available adjacent to the building. Rates were considerably cheaper than comparable city locations.

For bookings and further information contact Ms Neisha Roberts on ext. 573 2487 or Mrs Liza Doll on ext. 573 2003.

● A RAAF Wing Commander has won the Simson, Bowles and Associates prize for top student in information modelling at Monash University.

Wing Commander Richard Sargeant was presented with the 1990 SYS514 Information Modelling prize for his work on semantic data modelling techniques.

The Information Systems Department at Monash has a collaborative arrangement with Simson, Bowles and Associates, a Melbourne-based data modelling consultancy, involving research projects, participation in teaching and the annual prize.



● Professor Owen Potter, described by his colleagues as 'the best academic chemical engineer in the country', retires this year after more than 30 active years of education and research. He has finished the year on a high note receiving the prestigious Chemeca Medal for achievement and distinction in chemical engineering in Australia.

Over the past 36 years Professor Potter has published over 100 research papers, supervised 35 research students who have completed higher degrees and been granted 14 patents for inventions in drying, power generation and alumina production. More than half of his academic life has been spent at Monash.

Professor Potter will continue his research projects at Monash.

He and his wife, Julie, were special guests at the first Chemical Engineering Alumni Dinner.



Around the Campi

Hot news from the campuses

Clayton

● Monash University's first medical officer in the Health Service, Dr Ian Macdonald, died on Thursday 25 October.

Dr 'Mac' began at the university as a part-time medical counsellor in 1962, and worked full-time from 1963 until his retirement in 1976.

Dr Macdonald was a very widely read scholarly man who had an amazing knack when it came to helping people with their problems.

For the many who knew him, it is his warmth and humanity they will remember.

● Professor Bernard Barry has been appointed director of the Graduate School of Management, replacing Professor Allan Fels, who will remain as a professor in the school. Professor Barry joined Monash's Economics Commerce & Management faculty 18 months ago.

● The dedication and work of one of Monash's professorial fellows has attracted a rare acknowledgement.

Professor W. G. Walker, AM, has been awarded the Gold Medal of the Australian Council for Educational Administration. This medal is only presented when the council wishes to honour a leader in the field.

The council describes Professor Walker as "one of the giants on the international stage in education administration".

● Who says all your hard work goes unrecognised?

The Monash Faculty of Medicine has introduced a Silver Jubilee Teaching Prize to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the faculty.

The prize is intended to recognise a significant contribution by a member of the faculty to curriculum innovation or teaching excellence.

You might have developed and implemented a new course, published a text book, produced an audio visual teaching unit or developed computer assisted learning programs. It may be a single project or a number of initiatives.

For details, contact the Office of the Assistant Registrar, Medicine on 565 4301.

● Fitness fanatics are reminded that they now need to be current members of the Fitness Gymnasium if they wish to make use of the Pool Fitness Room. For further information, or to organise membership of the Fitness Gym and a fitness assessment, call Leigh Branagan on 565 4111.

Frankston

● Long-time Frankston resident, Deputy Commissioner Brendan Crimmins became the most senior police officer to take out a degree when he received his Bachelor of Arts (Police Studies) at a graduation ceremony at Monash University recently.

Mr Crimmins is chairman of the Course Advisory Committee for the department of Police Studies at Monash.

Gippsland

● Creating local craft industries based on Gippsland's timber supplies is the long-term aim of co-operation between Monash University College Gippsland and Bairnsdale TAFE. From next year the college will accept TAFE graduates in wood design into its Visual Arts degree course.

Head of the School of Visual Arts, Mr Norman Creighton, said that encouraging graduates to settle in the region would create new products and new employment possibilities, as well as add value to a natural resource.

It made sense for sculptors, and wood and furniture designers to work close to their supply of raw materials.



● The Graduate School of Management's Centre for International Business, which runs export courses for companies, has been recognised for international business achievement in 1990. The centre received the Australian Export Award in the category Austrade Support for International Business. The award is sponsored by Austrade, CAI and others.

Technology could cut paper waste

Effluent from pulp and paper mills could be eliminated as a result of emerging technology, according to Professor Harry Cullinan, director of the Australian Pulp and Paper Institute (APPI).

The Monash professor of pulp and paper technology said that throughout the world, research was under way into the technology that would make closed-system mills possible.

He said that this type of mill, where all waste was retained and treated within the plant, was "on the verge of technological feasibility".

"The technology which already exists means we can reduce discharges to a level below what is considered safe," Professor Cullinan said.

However, the only way to counter concerns about pulp mill wastes ultimately was to close the outfall pipes.

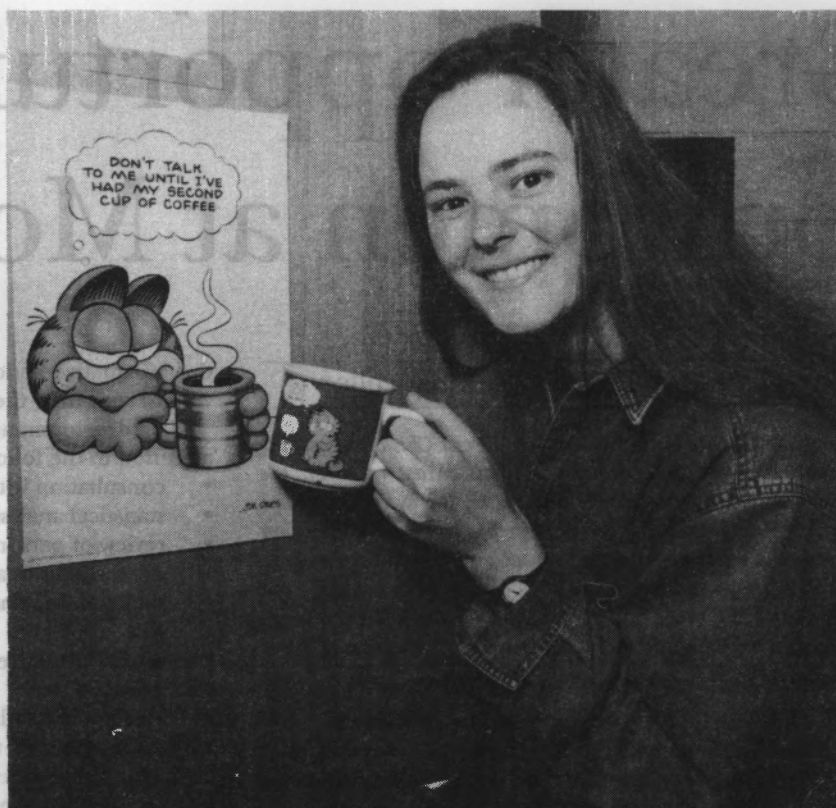
"Obviously the layman's question is going to be, 'why don't you just close the pipes right now?' Well, you can't block the discharge of a bleached kraft pulp mill because you would build up the trace amounts of chemicals into potentially dangerous concentrations," he said.

Existing pulp mill technology could not be adapted so pulp and paper mills of the future would need to be built from scratch.

The APPI was set up in the Monash department of Chemical Engineering last year with \$500,000 a year support from the Pulp and Paper Manufacturers' Federation of Australia, an umbrella group of the country's most important paper manufacturers.

The aim is to establish a world-class centre of pulp and paper technology, bringing together the research capacities of a university and the strengths of the manufacturing sector.

Construction of the institute's new \$1.5 million headquarters housing lecture rooms, offices conference rooms and laboratories began in August and should be completed early next year.



Caffeine starts with a bang, but ends a bit dimmer

A shot of caffeine is one way to clear the early-morning brain fog, but in larger doses it can also cloud the mind, a Monash study has found.

The study on a group of habitual users by PhD student in psychology, Ms Paula Mitchell, found that people with high intakes of caffeine consistently performed worse on complex tasks than people with more moderate habits.

The research confirmed that caffeine does improve mental speed performance, especially after the early-morning hit at 7 am.

However, subjects with an intake of more than 300 milligrams of caffeine (equivalent to five cups of instant coffee a day) were less adept at more difficult tasks.

Ms Mitchell, an enthusiastic coffee addict herself, studied the effects of caffeine on low, moderate and high caffeine users at different times of the day for her honors thesis last year. She is now following up the results with a larger study group and hopes to clarify whether anxious people have higher intake levels of caffeine because of their personality type, or if they become more anxious as a result of the caffeine.

"There also was a correlation between their performance and personality type. High caffeine use seems to be related to high anxiety levels," Ms Mitchell said.

"I looked into caffeine use because so many students seem to consume more coffee when they are studying or when it's exam time.

"Students actually consume less caffeine than the general population. If the high users perform consistently worse, then what about the really high users?"

"Also, caffeine is one of the most widely-used drugs in the world but no-one considers it to be a drug."

The study took into account all sources of caffeine, which include instant and brewed coffee, tea, cola drinks, hot chocolate, chocolate milk and chocolate bars.

Some subjects who did not drink coffee still fell into the moderate use category, consuming from 120 to 300 milligrams of caffeine a day (two to five cups) from other sources.

Ms Mitchell's continuing research will examine the relationship between caffeine and Circadian rhythms - the body's natural 24-hour cycle.

Don't shoot the messenger

Following a major review of Monash University's communications, a large number of systems and structures have been overhauled to help Monash better compete in the 90s; a decade that's already being called 'The Age of Communications'.

The new Communications Department now boasts a wide cross section of skills such as media, advertising, fund raising, marketing and publications.

But, despite technological advances in communications, it's still a people-oriented business and new, highly qualified people have been recruited to inject extra dynamism and expertise into Monash's many messages.

The former Information Office has been renamed the Public Affairs Office to reflect more accurately its broader role in providing the university with services such as media, marketing, public relations and promotion.

Another unit, Publication Services, has been renamed Publishing and Advertising and, like the Public Affairs Office, it too has become part of the Communications Department.

Director of Communications, Gary Neat, says that public affairs is a bewildering field for many. Few are aware of the extent of the discipline and how best it can serve individuals and faculties.

"Nowadays, the fields of advertising, marketing, public relations, promotions and fund raising overlap. Monash now aims to integrate a mix of these skills to consistently deliver a message."

However, Mr Neat warned that the bottom line was whether the story was worthy of promotion.

"Remember, the best campaign in the world still can't turn a sow's ear into a silk purse," he said.

To further help Monash staff come to grips with the new services, a Communications Handbook will shortly be published to make it easy to know the "who, what and where" of the new system. Early next year, a series of media training courses will be held for Monash staff who wish to learn the nuances of dealing with the media.

ARC grants "pleasing" - Professor

Monash should be particularly pleased with the results of the 1991 Australian Research Council (ARC) grants program, says the Deputy Vice-chancellor (Research), Professor Ian Polmear.

Professor Polmear said that Monash had improved about 50 per cent over its 1990 total for large grants (\$4.68 million compared with \$3.11 million).

A total of 107 large grant applications were successful, compared with 85 (Monash/Chisholm) last year. Monash will receive \$1.23 million in small grants.

Australia's top researchers have been given \$68.1 million for large grants in discipline and priority areas (\$52 million was awarded for 1990) and \$15 million for small grants.

Professor Polmear also noted that:

- The Monash success rate for initial applications for large grants was 37 per cent, compared with the national average of 31 per cent.

- Monash staff will receive about 25 per cent of all the awards made nationally in priority areas. Among them are grants worth \$95,000 in the new field of Australia's Asian Context. (Other priority areas in which Monash staff were successful are materials science, marine science, molecular science and scientific instruments.)

- Staff of the former Chisholm Institute of Technology have increased their grants from \$79,900 (three large grants) in 1990 to \$234,000 (six large grants).

Although complete figures are not yet available, it appears that Monash will receive 7.1 per cent of ARC funds awarded in 1991, compared with 6.6 per cent in 1990 and 5.9 per cent in 1989. (These last two figures were for pre-merger Monash and the Chisholm Institute of Technology.)

Professor Polmear praised the efforts of the Office for Research and members of the research committee who had worked with candidates to improve the quality of applications.

Arts starts at Frankston

The Monash Faculty of Arts has announced the commencement of its Bachelor of Arts degree course on the Frankston campus.

"In just six months, we are well on the way to realising one of the major goals of our recent merger: improved regional access to university standard education," dean of the faculty, Professor Robert Pargetter, said.

"Starting next year, BA students living on the Mornington Peninsula can look forward to a smorgasbord of subjects," he explained.

"The Frankston campus now will be able to offer studies in language, literature and linguistics, philosophy, mathematics, critical theory and cultural studies, the social disciplines of anthropology, sociology, psychology, politics and economics and those disciplines directed towards the performing arts such as drama, music, cinema studies and visual arts."

All these subjects will be offered in 1991, and additional disciplines will be added over the next five years. The new course has been welcomed by local government representatives.

In light of the recent announcement of the revised Affirmative Action Program for Monash, we have devoted the centre pages to women and their work at Monash. We talk about how women are becoming more powerful in business, and introduce Pearl and the power of persistence.

Greater opportunities for women at Monash

Professor M. I. Logan, Vice-Chancellor

The merger of Monash University and the former Chisholm Institute has involved amalgamating many ideas. Most recently, the Transitional Equal Opportunity Committee, led by Professor Ian Polmear, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), has been working on integrating the equal opportunity policies and programs from both campuses. The new 'greater' Equal Opportunity Policy has now been approved, and the Vice-Chancellor has made the following statement, re-affirming the university's commitment to improving equal opportunity through its Affirmative Action Program.

Monash University is committed to the continued development and implementation of an affirmative action program for women as required by the Commonwealth Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986.

Affirmative action as defined in the Act is compatible with the principle of appointment and promotion on the basis of merit. It aims to ensure equitable treatment of all applicants and employees. It will assist the university to make optimal use of the skills and talents available both inside and outside the institution. The program will contribute to the provision of an educational environment which is free from prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of sex.

The chief object of the program, recently approved by the Council, is a balanced representation of women and men on equitable terms in all course, both undergraduate and postgraduate; in all occupational groupings and classifications; and in all decision-making bodies.

Considerable progress has already been made in all of the institutions which now comprise Monash University and the recent amalgamation offers the opportunity to integrate

the affirmative action programs of each institution with a view to returning the best features of each program.

The development of the program will include continued attention to the following:

- consultation with staff and unions on the program
- statistical analysis of the University's workforce
- review of personnel policies and practices in areas such as recruitment and selection, promotion and transfer, staff training and development and conditions of service
- setting objectives and forward estimates for the Program
- monitoring and evaluating the Program.

The convenor of the Equal Opportunity Committee, Professor Ian Polmear, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), has overall responsibility for the co-ordination of the Affirmative Action Program on the Caulfield, Clayton and Frankston campus.

The affirmative action co-ordinator for the program at the Monash University College, Gippsland, is Mr George Joyce, director - administration. The equal opportunity offices are responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of the program.

I commend the program to you and urge all staff members to contribute to the development and implementation of the program.

For further information on the Monash Equal Opportunity Program contact:

Dr Margaret James, Co-ordinator, Clayton campus,
Ph: (03) 565 4090

Ms Annie Rennie, Officer, Caulfield & Frankston campuses,
Ph: (03) 573 2088

Mrs Christine Body, Officer, University College, Gippsland,
Ph: (051) 220 200

Boy George in the Boardroom?

Remember when British pop star, Boy George, made it hip to be androgynous?

Ms Wright told the recent Women in Management Careers Conference that more and more management opportunities should become available to women in the 1990s due to 'economic realities and skills shortages in the workforce.'

"Today's organisations need independent managers who are able to release the creativity and energy of workers," she explains. "I believe this demand will increase opportunities for women as more organisations become more interested in people and tapping their individual potential."

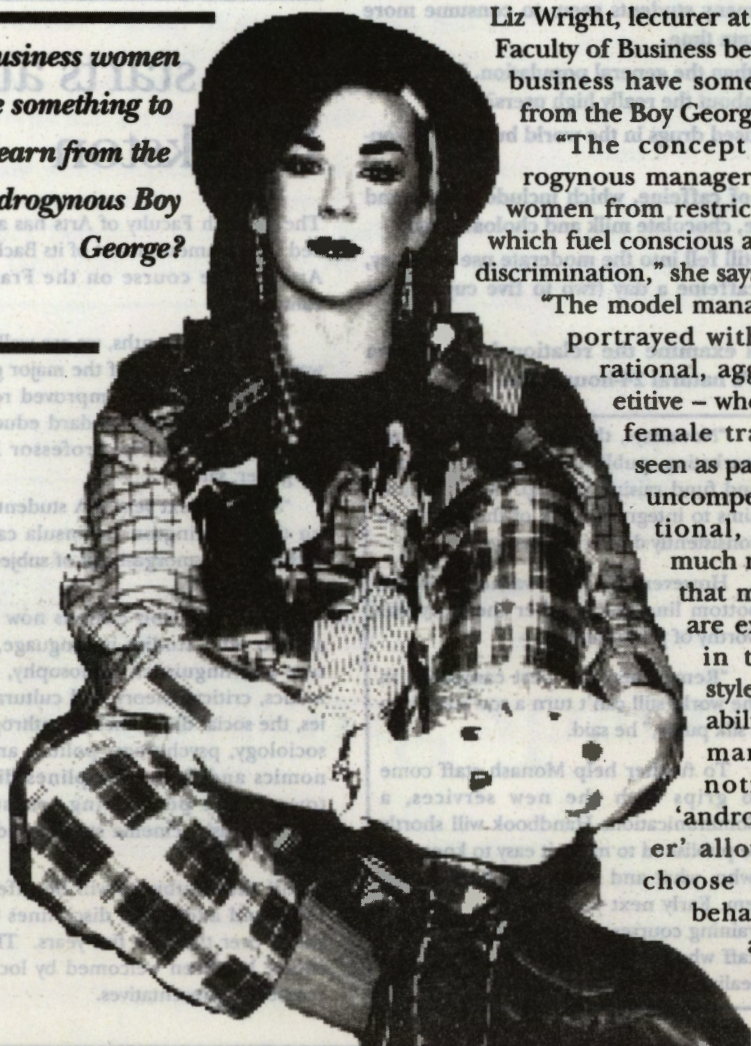
Ms Wright also believes companies will pay greater attention to staff development and the promotion of women because it just doesn't make business sense to keep half of the workforce underachieving because of outdated stereotypes.

Her advice to women with their eye on the top job is to have a clear and realistic career plan with an understanding of the impact a management position will have on lifestyle, and the sacrifices involved.

"Seek the support of senior colleagues," she advises. "Mentors are crucial in grooming people for future success. Study power politics within the organisation so you know how decisions are made and finally, network. Tune into the informal communication systems within the organisation and establish links with people in other organisations."

Photo courtesy Juke Magazine

Do business women have something to learn from the androgynous Boy George?



Liz Wright, lecturer at the David Syme Faculty of Business believes women in business have something to learn from the Boy George example.

"The concept of the 'androgynous manager' can help free women from restrictive stereotypes which fuel conscious and unconscious discrimination," she says.

"The model manager tends to be portrayed with male traits - rational, aggressive, competitive - whereas traditional female traits have been seen as passive, nurturing, uncompetitive and emotional, but there is much research to show that men and women are extremely similar in the leadership style, behaviour and abilities they use as managers. The notion of the 'androgynous manager' allows freedom to choose the type of behaviour appropriate to the situation."



Pearl Levin, one of Australia's foremost women in the computing professions, has been studying and lecturing at the Caulfield campus since 1965

Breaking down barriers for women in computing

When Pearl Levin took her first step towards a career in computers, married women were not allowed to hold permanent teaching positions in colleges and universities.

Twenty-six years later, this grandmother of three heads one of Victoria's largest computer training organisations, the Pearcey Centre for Computing, part of the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology.

She has been studying and teaching at the Caulfield campus since 1965, overcoming many of the barriers against women in computing careers along the way.

"When I was studying there were some women, but not many. Now probably about 50 per cent of our students are women and we take it for granted," Mrs Levin said.

"In the early days there were companies who wouldn't employ women programmers for reasons such as there were no female toilets or that women could not be left in the building at night.

"I don't think there are any barriers for women in computing now if they want to succeed, and they have the necessary skills and qualifications, but it hasn't always been that way."

Married women could not be permanent members of staff until 1970 (Mrs Levin was the first female permanent part-time staff member in the Victorian Institute of Colleges) and there was no superannuation or maternity leave.

"I think people forget that it wasn't very long ago that women had few rights in the work force. I was lucky that I got into it when I was fairly young," she continued.

"I won't say it's still not difficult to combine the pressures of a career with raising a family. I waited until my children were older and only after that I was free to start fighting battles."

"And I did have to fight for everything - I got very tough."

She is disappointed that despite the fact that younger women now play an important role in the computer industry there still are few women in senior academic positions in computing.

Mrs Levin is the only woman in Victoria who is a principal lecturer in computing and is one of only two women in the state who are Fellows of the Australian Computer Society.

After beginning her studies part-time, Mrs Levin graduated in 1976 with a Certificate in Computer Operating

and Coding and completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Computing in 1980.

She joined the Pearcey Centre at its inception as a consultant and part-time lecturer and succeeded the executive director, Mr Doug Burns, earlier this year.

The Pearcey Centre for Computing is a self-funding organisation which devises and promotes computer courses for industry and commerce. The centre, established 15 years ago, is named after Professor Trevor Pearcey, the designer of Australia's first computer.

It runs about 40 courses at any one time, ranging from word processing to complex UNIX operating systems and C program language. The centre also conducts in-house computer training for companies such as the National Australia Bank, Coles-Myer, Shell and the Department of Defence.

"We began to offer short courses - non-academic courses - at a time when nobody else was running them. We have been here a lot longer than a lot of our competitors and being attached to Caulfield all these years has been a big plus," Mrs Levin said.

"We are highly regarded by industry because of our ability to provide an enormous range of courses, backed up by all the skills within the biggest computing school in Victoria.

"A majority of our students are sent to us by their companies but there are a lot who do it for their own interest. The thing with computing is that it's ever-changing. We are shooting at moving targets all the time.

"You can graduate from a computer course and yet still require retraining in five years because you need to update skills and keep up with the latest developments.

"Recently, because of the economic climate, we have responded to a demand from many industries for courses in tighter project management."

Mrs Levin said that a whole generation of senior management in computing were graduates of Caulfield, further strengthening ties with industry. She said one of the challenges of the merger between Monash and Chisholm was to combine the applied approach to computing with the truly academic and theoretical areas.

"In the new faculty we have to come up with changes and compromises that are going to link both areas and maintain our reputation with the business community. We have to convince industry that the merger is not going to change our service, but that it will improve," she said.

"I don't think there are any barriers for women in computing now if they want to succeed, and they have the necessary skills and qualifications, but it hasn't always been that way."



Painter, photographer and musician Robert Rooney has been described as one of Australia's most sophisticated artists, and is one of the few to work consistently in the Pop Art style. Keenly interested in contemporary culture and everyday images like cereal packets and comics, Rooney once remarked: "I am not a cuisine painter. I'm not interested in painting as an equivalent of fine food and drink...". *Juke Box Jungle 1985* (above) can be seen in *From the Homefront: Robert Rooney works 1953 - 1988*, on at the Monash University Gallery until 30 November. (The exhibition has been assisted by the Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council.)

POET'S PLACE

In this issue of *Montage*, we feature the winning poem from the 1990 Monash University Prize for Poetry by third year Faculty of Arts student, Mrs Isobel Robin.

The judges from the Department of English also considered Mrs Robin's other entry, 'Cinders', an outstanding piece. We will publish 'Cinders' in the next issue.

'Bailero for Dead Lovers'

On those summer evenings how we talked
from light till dark and on, inside your room -
always room around a table with a crumpled
cloth
and books and cheese and dark bread-crumbs.
We would flush with claret, argument
and laughter,
then we talked the world around
from life to death and back again
while children came and went on child-business
and babies got into things
and we were nourished by your private love.
I am blind tonight. I steer a steamed car
against assaults of wind and hail as hard
as unshed tears. Red-light - green-light -
wrench gears - gently on the brake -
switch on the radio; the music's out of rhythm
with the relentless swish and swash of the
windscreen wipers.
I sail on a dazzling black road-river
that could sweep me, terrified, to the time's
dark place.
But then - 'The Songs of the Auvergne'
Te Kanawa -
Bailero lero lo.
Kiri singing pours me, tears and all,
out of the rim of winter in a warm night
of other, dearer voices.
Outside my car the world howls
but here I have the best of company.
You have come in from the storm to shelter
from death
safe inside my head.
We wait, all three held still inside the song
until it fades. You are no longer here
but there is no spell broken.
I am alone again, content, your friend.

Keeping up with Aussie books

On average, over 100 books are published every week in Australia. Now librarians and book sellers can keep up with the new titles quickly and easily, thanks to a joint project between Monash's National Centre for Australian Studies and publisher, D. W. Thorpe.

They have just released an authoritative *Guide to New Australian Books*, a bi-monthly listing and descriptions of all newly published Australian books.

The inaugural issue of GNAB runs to 40 pages and includes any books, published in Australia or

overseas since August 1 1990, which have Australian content or are written by an Australian.

John Arnold, Bill Anderson, Patricia Holt, Victoria Peel and Peter Robinson prepared the annotations, a job to delight any keen reader.

According to Professor Peter Spearritt, director of the national centre, GNAB is just the beginning.

"As well as regularly updating GNAB, we also hope to produce spin-off publications in specific categories. The guide currently covers more than 100 subjects."

So if you're interested in the latest Australian literature, GNAB a copy from Monash's National Centre for Australian Studies (Clayton campus).

Learn a foreign language this summer

The Monash Faculty of Arts Languages Summer School is once again offering a wide range of European and Asian language courses for university credit and for the general public.

Four-week beginners' courses - equal to one semester of study - in German, Indonesian, Korean, Mandarin and Japanese (as well as third-year Japanese) will start on 26 November. Each

course has a second four-week part, beginning 7 January. Both sections equal one year of university study.

Four week courses are also available in introductory French, the history of Japanese science and technology, and the music of China and Japan. These courses begin on 7 January.

The cost of a not-for-credit four-week course is \$550; two four-week courses cost \$950. (A discount is available for Monash staff and students.)

A brochure containing an enrolment form is available from the Summer School co-ordinator, Language Centre, Clayton campus, on 565 4236.

MONASH MARKETING PLACE

Free classified advertising space

In any publication, it seems everyone turns to the classified ads. Our fortnightly newspaper, *Montage* will be no different. As a free service to readers we are setting aside this space for your advertisements. Just let us know what you want to buy or sell. Copy deadline for the next issue is Monday 19 November.

For Sale

Two Leitz compound microscopes
\$300 each

one National colour television \$200

one Onga water pump, model 166,
as new, \$500

For further information contact Mr
Earle Headland, Equipment Officer
on 565 5610.

Accommodation

The Monash English Language
Teaching Centre, Normanby House,
needs full board for Japanese stu-
dents enrolled in an eight-week

English language course from 7
January to 1 March 1991. As well as
a roof over their heads, the students
need to practise their English.

Contact Mrs Erica Henderson on
565 5264 Monday or Tuesday after-
noons, or Wednesday mornings.

The department of Mathematics
needs suitable accommodation for
an academic, his wife and five chil-
dren from the University of Salzburg
who will be visiting Monash between
March and May 1991. Contact Dr
Hans Lausch on 565 4477 (bh) or
543 1949 (ah)

Scholarships Bulletin

Below is a listing of higher degrees and scholarships currently available. For further information contact the Higher Degrees and Scholarships Section on 565 3009.

Oxford Nuffield Medical Fellowship Appointment 1991

Applicants are invited for appointment to a clinical assistantship in a wide range of departments including Anaesthetics, Clinical Biochemistry, Psychiatry, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Clinical Neurology. Closing date 30 November 1990.

The Australian Federation of University Women - South Australia Bursaries

Open to women to assist with study or research for a higher degree or postgraduate diploma at a recognised high-

er education institution. Closing date 28 February 1991.

Zonta International Amelia Earhart Fellowship Awards for Women

For graduate study in aerospace-related science or engineering. Closing date 21 December 1990.

Shell Australia Postgraduate Scholarship

For a full time Masters of PhD in the fields of science, engineering, economics/commerce, computer science or other closely related discipline. Closing date 22 November 1990.

Postgraduate Scholarships for Study at the Scuola Normale Superiore

Available to under 30 year old non-Italians for study in areas such as classi-

cal philology, linguistics and history, philosophy, mathematics, chemistry and neurobiology.

For further information contact the Italian Institute of Culture on (03) 866 5931.

Mexican Government Scholarships

Further information from the Embassy of Mexico, fax number (06) 273 3488.

Netherlands Government Scholarships

Further information from Ms Margot Agnew, Netherlands Government Scholarships on fax (06) 257 5597. Closing date 14 December 1990.

Research Grants

Australian Wool Corporation, 16 November.

Research into Drug Abuse Program (RIDAC), 16 November.

ATERB Research Grants, 16 November.

Scientific Exchanges with China, 16 November.

Further details, application forms and guidelines may be obtained from the Office for Research, Clayton campus, ext. 75 3012 or 75 3085. Applications must be lodged with the office by the date specified.

Commuters! You'll need to organise alternative transport to the Clayton campus after 29 November 1990. This is when the University Security Bus Services cease operating for the year.

Alumni and Friends Events

Sunday 18 November

Friends of Monash University Inc. family barbecue at Monash Sports & Recreation Centre 12 noon to 3 p.m. \$5 BYO drinks

Saturday 24 November

Japanese Music Archive Concert Religious Centre, 8.15 p.m. Bookings: 565 3992

Monday 26 November

Monash Graduates' Association Annual Dinner, Union Banquet Room \$25

Friday 30 November

Monash Alumni ACT Annual Dinner High Court of Australia \$40. Bookings 565 4032

For further information call Jennifer Beck on 565 5007.

Coming events

16 November

Linguistics Seminar - "Cognitive and social correlates and consequences of additive bilingualism", by Professor Richard Tucker, director, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington DC. Room S426, Menzies Building. 11 am.

19 November

General and Comparative Literature Lecture - "Postmodernism and comedy", by Professor Philip Thomson. Monash City Centre. 6 pm.

21 November

Southeast Asian Studies Seminar - "Overpopulate and perish? Population and the environment in China", by Dr Bruce Jacobs, La Trobe University. Co-sponsored by Radio Australia and the Development Studies Centre. Radio Australia Centre, 699 Highbury Road, Glen Waverley. 12.30 pm.

22 November

Southeast Asian Studies Seminar - "The role of Filipino community organisations in Melbourne", by Ms Radha Rasmussen.

Room 515, Menzies Building. 11.15 am.

Classical Studies Lecture - "The birthday of Jesus Christ", by Dr Peter Bicknell. Monash City Centre. 5.45 pm.

24 November

Evening Concert - Contemporary music for koto, presented by Joji Yuasa, Yuji Takahashi & Tadao Sawai. Religious Centre. 8.15 pm.

26 November

General and Comparative Literature Lecture - "Postmodernism and fiction", by Dr Chris Worth. Monash City Centre. 6 pm.

29 November

Southeast Asian Studies Seminar - "Questioning the concept of Abangan in rural Java", by Mr Bambang Pranowo. Room 515, Menzies Building. 11.15 am.

Classical Studies Lecture - "Digging at Torone in Northern Greece", by Professor Alan Henry. Monash City Centre. 5.45 pm.

Tutors wanted

Mannix College needs part-time residential and non-residential tutors for 1991. Interested graduates of the faculties of Arts, Economics, Commerce and Management, Engineering, Law, Medicine and Science are invited to apply. Tutors are paid for tutorials and consultations for up to three hours a week, and also become members of the senior common room. You will be expected to take an active interest in college life, and follow closely the progress of a small group of first year students.

Applications forms from the Dean, Mannix College, 544 8895.

Care for kids

Childcare will be available every day from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. at the SWiCh Flat during the November examinations. Reimbursement for childcare costs is available through Student Welfare for low income students requiring extra study time.

Contact Student Welfare, 1st floor, Union, Clayton campus or call 565 3186.

A savant is a thinker. In the first of a series of contemplations by different members of university staff, Professor Peter Spearritt looks at the ailing Australian transport industry. Professor Spearritt is director of the National Centre for Research and Development in Australian Studies, based on the Clayton campus.

If you've tried to book a discount airfare lately you'll know that there's not much to celebrate about "the celebration of deregulation", Ansett's current slogan.

Discount tickets are hard to come by and some of the conditions that apply are even more draconian than in the bad old days of the two airline agreement. When Australian Airlines advertises Night Flights, that's just what they mean. How many people want to go flying, especially if they are accompanied by young children, at 10.30 pm or 5 am?

So it's still going to cost \$1350 for a family of two adults and two children to fly to Sydney for the weekend. No wonder most people choose to drive.

The Australian transport system continues to lurch from one crisis to another. Our over reliance on the private car – especially for urban transport – is again brought into stark relief by spiralling oil prices.

The last round of price increases gave us the four cylinder car. Petrol prices around Australia have increased by one fifth in the space of a few weeks. Will this round finally lead to better and more realistically priced urban public transport? Or will governing parties lose their nerve and cut their immediate outgoings by cutting back on maintenance and rolling stock?

The unions have often played into the hands of governments wanting to cut back ser-



by Peter Spearritt

vices. They spend a lot of time protecting outdated work practices and very little time urging the case for expansion or improved ticketing.

Sydney's rail and bus system presently carries about twice as many passengers as Melbourne's, and its subsidy per passenger kilometre is almost half that of the Victorian capital. The over reliance on the car in Melbourne has virtually crippled the public transport system depriving it of passengers and much needed fare income.

Although it is not fashionable to say so, Melbourne's system is still very reasonably priced, despite the recent fare increases. Just compare Melbourne's fares with London, Paris, San Francisco or even Sydney.

The lack of informed public debate about the future of our transport system is shown in

the stereotyped views taken over the Very Fast Train (VFT). Many rail buffs oppose it, longing to retain the charm of the 13-hour journey between Sydney and Melbourne. It's ridiculous that the only reasonably priced mode of public transport between these two huge cities – unless you're prepared to risk the bus – takes 13 hours.

And now, not least because of fuel price increases, the long promised cheaper air fares seem as far away as ever. Suddenly the VFT looks more viable. And the welcome decision to follow the Hume Freeway route, rather than the environmentally sensitive Gippsland option, will take much political heat out of the debate.

There is still the question of who should provide the capital and who should own the VFT. But the current unwillingness of the federal government to invest in major infrastructure projects means that some private ownership is almost inevitable. What the public should be demanding is a service priced so that most people can afford it, not aimed just at the business and holiday market, the constant preoccupation of airline marketing managers.

The federal government has just made one positive initiative, the announcement of a national rail freight system. It's unclear how it will be funded, and it's even less clear whether they'll be able to get the truck lobby – with its high proportion of owner operators – to pay the full costs of damage to the roads.

The extra tax would certainly make rail more economically attractive for long haul routes. But our cities, because rail routes no longer serve cross-suburban freight needs, are liable to be stuck with noisy and polluting trucks for a long time to come.

DIOGENES



Diogenes was a 4th century BC Greek philosopher who, according to popular myth, lived in a bath. Which may explain why he went on to found the Cynic sect, an organisation based on the rejection of comfort, wealth and convention. His sayings are legendary: to someone who asked what was the proper time for lunch, he replied, "If a rich man, when you will; if a poor man, when you can". And, "Lovers derive their pleasures from their misfortunes". He is said to have committed suicide by holding his breath.

On an old corrugated iron fence in a lane off Brunswick Street lies graphic evidence that the excuse has been raised to an art form.

Shining beneath the streetlights in letters three feet high is the message: 'I just wanted to see if the spray can worked'.

This visual justification, which covers almost two addresses, is probably too big for anyone to grasp. And maybe we've become immune to the phantom artists' message anyway.

But there might be an idea here, the germ of an honest approach that could improve our lives: what if we were to go similarly public with our excuses?

Sprayed in a politician's trembling hand upon the walls of Parliament House in Canberra there might appear one day: 'I just wanted to see the nation's capital'.

Closer to home and the heart, somebody might counterpoint the sound of a slamming door, a suitcase being hurled in a car's back seat, and the squeal of tyres with: 'I just wanted to test my feelings for you by staying the night with (insert appropriate personal pronoun)'.

Why stop there? Perhaps some retrospectivity could be introduced. For example, Captain James Cook: 'I just wanted a glimpse of Eden before the developers moved in'.

And Robert Oppenheimer, co-inventor of the atomic bomb: 'I just

wanted to witness the light of a thousand suns'.

Or even the Department of Employment, Education and Training on the release of the 1988 white paper: 'We just wanted to propagate a little mediocrity'.

"Familiarity breeds, if not contempt, then a kind of abject indifference."

I'm not sure who wrote that, I'd like to think it was me. Trouble is, in these days of miracle and wonder (that was Paul Simon) it's difficult to come up with an original line.

Pick a conversation, any conversation. There's every likelihood someone, somewhere has pursued a similar one, perhaps even come to the same conclusion.

So how original are we? How mechanical is our dialogue? For instance, how many times do we throw a greeting and then walk on before we catch its reply?

What would happen if one day someone were to utter 'saltchucker' in response to a salutation? As in:

"G'day. How y'goin'?"

"Saltchucker, thanks."

Would we question its meaning? Unlikely. Chances are we'd hear 'Fine'. Only a west coast Canadian saltwater angler would stop in their tracks and recognise one of their own.

Canadians are like that. Like Australians, they have an uncanny knack of sensing a fellow national,

even in something as chaotic and as nebulous as a football crowd.

Perhaps it's the dress, or maybe the accent. Either way, take a Canadian to Victoria Park and they'll heat seek five people from their home town and two from neighboring provinces before quarter time.

In similar fashion, an Australian visiting Edinburgh Castle on any given afternoon will stumble across someone who knows someone who's met somebody who tends the greens at their local bowling club. It's an established fact. University tests back it up.

But then, when was the last time you read about tests like that in the paper?

Indeed, whatever happened to those carefree pre-pragmatism days, when the results of a detailed Cambridge study into the reasons behind Mona Lisa's beatific but elusive smile would be worth five column inches on page eight in *The Age*, and 10 column inches and a pocket cartoon on page three in *The Sun*?

These days research seems to be more practical, less whimsical. For that very reason, it seems a study into why spilt beer only flows in a north-south direction is long overdue.

At times it seems the thrill is gone (I think someone might have beaten me to that).