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ANU Reporter



First, to learn the nature of things

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Government urged to provide divorce help

Damage to children can be limited: report

By Shelly Simonds
Divorce is a very distressing event for children, but it does not have to result in long-term developmental damage, a study by an ANU researcher shows.
Following a survey of Australian research into divorce in 1996, Dr Bryan Rodgers of the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health has completed a comprehensive review of over 200 British reports into the impact of divorce on children.
The study was conducted with Dr Jan Pryor of the University of Auckland with support from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
It found that one of the best things parents could do to help chil-

dren overcome the trauma of divorce was not involve children in conflict between the divorcing couple.
Support for parents so they cope well with their own distress was also of great benefit to children.
Clear explanations about what was happening, and why, were also beneficial, as were reassurances that children were not being abandoned by the non-resident parent. Quality contact with the non-resident parent could improve outcomes for children, the study also showed.
In England and Wales close to

14 per thousand marriages ended in divorce in 1994, compared with 12 per thousand in Australia. Dr Rodgers said divorce rates in the two countries were very similar in the past few years and that about one in four children in both countries would experience the divorce of their parents by age 16.
Children of divorced parents were almost twice as likely to have behavioural problems, perform less well in school, use drugs and suffer from depression and lower incomes in adulthood, the study showed.
Despite the increased risk, Dr Rodgers stressed that these negative

outcomes occurred only in a minority of cases. Most children were not adversely affected by divorce.
He said children would also be helped by better government policies to support parents going through separation.
"The government needs to recognise where problems for children arise and which professionals deal with those problems. Few people receive psychiatric or other specialist help. Most often they have contact with teachers, GPs and lawyers — professionals who aren't necessarily trained to deal with the social aspects of divorce," Dr Rodgers said.

Policy makers also needed to view divorce as a process beginning before the divorce itself and continuing long after. Parents and children may need support during a number of stages in this process.
The study showed that children typically want to stay in contact with both parents after divorce and that it was important for the courts to respect their wishes, except in situations of abuse or violence.
The study dispelled some myths about divorce — boys were not more adversely affected by separation than girls and the age at which children experience their parents' separation did not appear an important factor in how children were affected.

Ski field grooming damages ecosystem

By Julian Lee
Grooming of Australia's ski fields may be causing irreparable damage to one of the country's most fragile ecosystems, preliminary findings by one ANU scientist suggest.
In a study of Perisher Valley in New South Wales, Honours' student Katrina Cousins of the Department of Forestry in cooperation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, has found that organic soils are significantly degraded under "super-groomed" trails.
To create these levelled runs used by skiers, the top layer of soil is scraped every year before the first snowfalls. In the process, the organic layer is removed.
"If the resort developers don't maintain this top organic layer and the soil structure is destroyed as a result, it will be very difficult to rehabilitate in the long-term," Ms Cousins said.
In a study of sub-alpine soils, Ms Cousins looked at changes in organic soil structure since European settlement. By comparing soils in resort developments with soils in areas that have been left untouched or grazed, Ms Cousins hopes to be able to determine the relative damage and difficulty to rehabilitate each area.
"Resort development has involved the disturbance of soils in a number of ways, including road construction, building development and slope grooming," Ms Cousins said. "It is slope grooming that is most detrimental to the sub-alpine soil structure."

In sub-alpine regions where soil formation is very slow and nutrients are scarce, it is important that organic matter be allowed to accumulate, she said.
Accumulation of organic matter plays a significant role in maintaining soil structure.
"In such a fragile environment 100 per cent plant cover is needed to prevent erosion," Ms Cousins said.
While she is not suggesting that skiing and other recreational activities be stopped, Ms Cousins believes that management methods could be improved to minimise negative effects on the environment.
For example, Ms Cousins said instead of planting oats, which only provide around 70 per cent ground cover in summer, a fast growing native which provided more complete ground cover could be used.
The study, which will eventually include 160 sites in the Perisher Valley, will be the basis of a computer database for the National Parks and Wildlife Service which leases the fields to the resorts and manages the surrounding lands.
Ms Cousins hopes the database will assist in developing management practices more appropriate to the delicate sub-alpine conditions and identification of areas that need rehabilitating.
"The database will be continually updateable and so it could be used to visualise the affect of management decisions over time," Ms Cousins said.

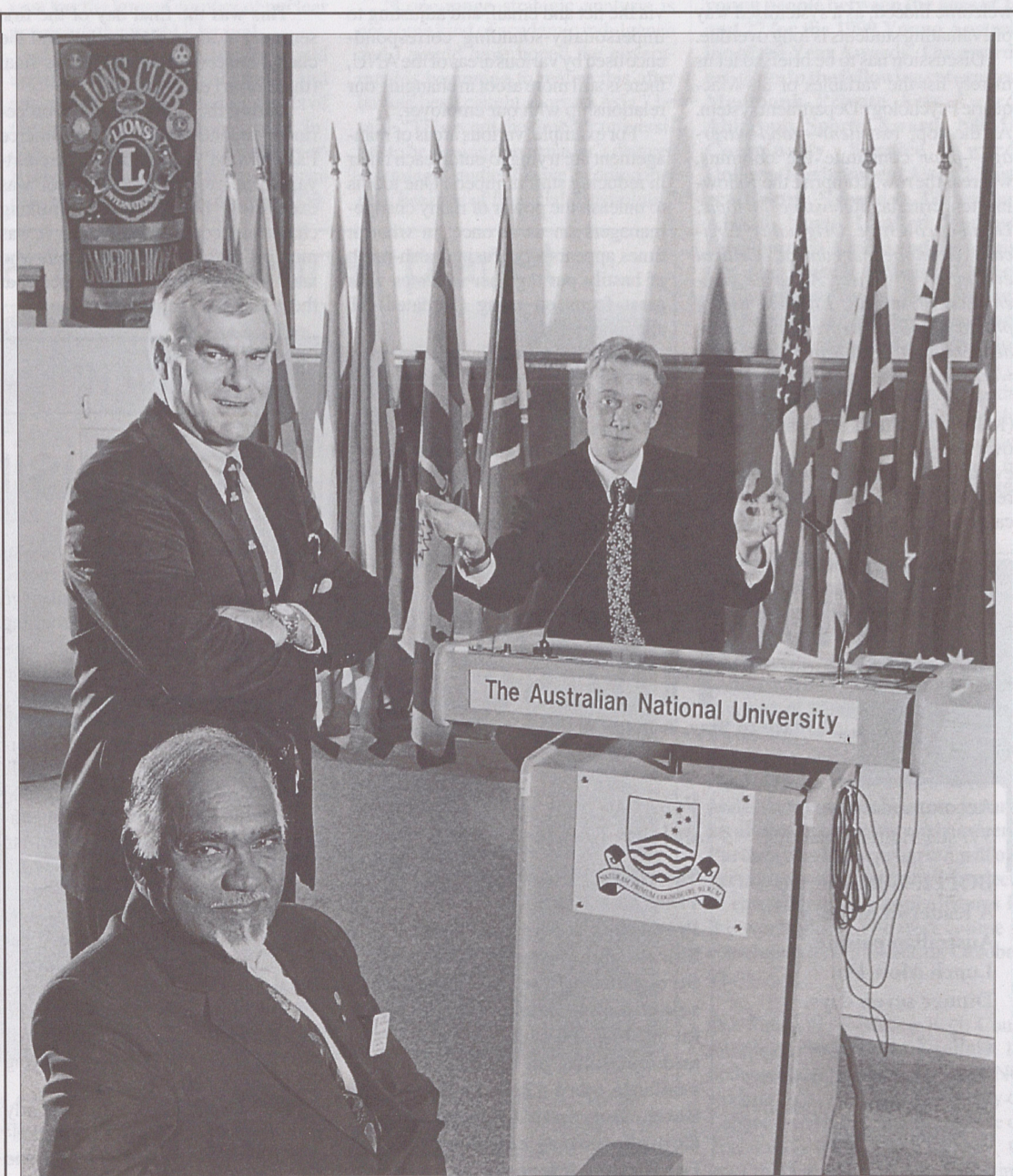


Photo: John Tucker

Strictly speaking: Lions Oratory Contest winner, Mark Thompson, with contest master of ceremonies and Head of the ANU's Public Affairs Division, Jim Mahoney (centre), and Mannik Reddy of the Lions Club Canberra Woden

Arts/Law student Mark Thompson last week became the first male to win the Lions Oratory Contest, with a 10-minute delivery on executed Nigerian activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.
The annual competition, in its fourth year, is open to all undergraduate students at the ANU and

carries a \$1,000 first prize. The competition is sponsored by the Lions Club of Canberra Woden and this year included a People's Choice award of \$500 — donated by ANU Vice-Chancellor Deane Terrell — which was won by Olivia Widjaya for her piece on Leo Tolstoy.

The eight finalists for the competition, held in the Manning Clark Theatre, were asked to give a 10-minute speech focusing on the life of a historical figure who personifies the Lions' values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence.

System for evaluating students, well overdue

In an *ANU Reporter* article "Essay assessment earns top marks" (June 3, 1998), Julian Lee described a new "...marking method ... using the criterion-based system The staff consistently address areas such as language, referencing, argumentation, knowledge of topic and analytical ability...", based partly on H.M.Boot, 1997, in *Australian Economic History Review*, v.37, No.3, 282-297.

As a university science teacher/researcher for several decades, one of us (KHW) has used in Canada and USA similar guiding criteria — even in editing manuscripts for several international refereed journals and over 20 reference books; and the other undersigned writer (JDC) is at present associated with one of the schools at Macquarie University using a marking approach that ought to be of more widespread interest.

We agree with the reporter that the marking criteria can be used as a template for other disciplines — indeed for any discipline, with minor modifications to adopt it to specific needs. Boots and associates' attempts are very welcome indeed, as a systemised way of evaluating students is long overdue.

Discussion has to be brief, so let us merely list the variables of the Macquarie Psychology Department system. At the top, *excellent—good—average—poor* constitute the columns, whereas the rows comprise the following ten criteria: *Relevance to topic, Depth of coverage, Originality, Logically developed argument, Critical evaluation of subject, Accurate presentation of subject, Effective use of primary source, Representative evidence chosen, Legible and well set out work, and Style and spelling.*

The system developed by one of us (KHW), more informally as a "loner" over many years to find consistency in evaluations, comprised two parts: one related to judging the scientific/technical aspects, the other the writing style,

grammar, spelling, and related matters.

Both types of criteria were listed in two separate tables or forms for the use in marking essays, laboratory assignments, and examinations. The criteria varied slightly from lower-

Losing sense of value as human beings

Since 1981 I have proudly belonged to the ANU, firstly as a latecomer to academic study, and since 1993 as a member of support staff.

Our University is about people — the theorists and practitioners, be they academic, administrative or technical. Together we have sustained the motto "First, to learn the nature of things" and to support all the great academic achievements that have come out of the ANU since its inception.

Sadly though, more and more academic and general staff with whom I have regular contact feel that they are not being valued as human beings any more. Despite our familiarisation with all the new jargon and info-overload via the net and email, and adjusting to impersonally-sounding correspondence used by various areas of the ANU, there is still more afoot in changing our relationship with our employer.

For example, various areas of management are trying to outdo each other in reducing staff numbers. One tool is to unleash the power of many change-managers on us at once, in what at times appears a confusing mish-mash of hastily put together schemes with great focus on using (outdated) IT admin systems.

In this changing climate it becomes harder to present the ANU to the rest of the world in the most glowing terms. Yet the oft-forgotten administrators in departments and centres that deal with students and the rest of the world, now have to increasingly use keyboards/VDU's and accept responsibility for

level courses to postgraduate levels.

Of course, the criteria to evaluate manuscripts submitted by researchers to publishers of refereed international journals and handbooks duplicated some of the criteria for students, but had other criteria/guide-

inputs and reports previously carried out by faculties business officers and staff employed in other centralised university areas.

As yet, changes in industrial policies that support and safeguard us all in increasingly changing work practices have not permeated to these levels of staff. If the ANU asks us to reinvent ourselves in order to match its new

No support in testing time

I draw attention to an unnecessary incident that occurred on the afternoon of July 2 in the courtyard outside the Copland Building.

This was the final day of the first semester examination period and the class I supervise was taking its final (three-hour) examination.

During the entire examination period, students from the Commerce Faculty were "celebrating" in the courtyard. The resulting noise level was excessively high involving drinking chants and continual shouting. It was most off-putting to all 60 students who later wrote of their great concern at their inability to concentrate.

lines as well.

More information is available on request.

Dr. K.H.Wolf
Eastwood, NSW
Dr. J.D. Cunningham
Macquarie University

electronic and institutionalised corporate face, then please could we see some more effort for real support and broad-based consultation to make it possible for us to comply with new expectations? Hopefully, when management carries out its proposed benchmarking exercises then the ANU's human infrastructure is not just an adjunct to its technology.

Name withheld by request

I informed the Examination Section of the problem at the commencement of the examination but they appeared to be relatively powerless to do anything.

I mention the above incident as I cannot understand why such a disruptive event should have been allowed to take place at this time especially outside a room where examinations were being held. I trust the relevant university authorities have sufficient concern for students as to not permit this to eventuate in the future.

Professor Fyfe Bygrave
Division of Biochemistry and
Molecular Biology

Praise for translators

I was interested to read Dr Gordon Briscoe's review of *Road to Australia* (*ANU Reporter*, June 17) which is in fact the English translation of Vladimir Kabo's book *Doroga v Avstraliu*, originally published in Russian in New York in 1995.

The reviewer writes that the book "is easy to read and always exciting". The story of Kabo's life is certainly exciting — the reader can hardly fail to be moved by the hardships he endured, nor by the passionate pursuit of his interest in the Australian Aborigines. But I feel that anybody reading this review will be left with the impression that it is a negative and depressing account of his life and that of the educated classes in Soviet Russia, when in fact there is much that is positive, indeed a source of inspiration.

The fact that the book is easy to read in the English version is due to the excellent translation produced by Kevin Windle and Rosh Ireland of the ANU's Russian Program, whose work is regrettably not acknowledged in the review.

A work can be enhanced or marred by a good or a bad translation: the ideal is a "transparent" translation which does not force itself on the notice of the reader, and the fact that the reviewer evidently did not notice that he was reading a translation is a tribute to the standard of Windle and Ireland's work.

Margaret Travers
Modern European Languages

VC's VIEW

Recognising excellence

The Times (London) Higher Education Supplement on March 13 noted the absence of Oxford and Cambridge from the Universitas 21 (a grouping of institutions initiated by the University of Melbourne). It said that Oxford and Cambridge "could, however, galvanise their own international peer group for this purpose involving say, Harvard, MIT, Stanford, the Australian National University, the Sorbonne and others". That is placing The Australian National University at the peak and it deserves its place.

The quality of a university is found not only in glittering prizes and congratulatory reports in newspapers, but also in the full collegial achievement. There are many among us who are getting quietly on with the serious business of excellence, bringing great credit to the institution.

Professor Bob Dixon has recently been elected a Corresponding Fellow of The British Academy. He and his colleague, Professor Alexandra Aikhenvald, at the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology in the Faculty of Arts have taken linguistic typology at the ANU right to the international cutting edge.

Bob's book *The Rise and Fall of Languages*, in setting out a punctuated equilibrium model, has brought forward a new approach to the analysis of language change. (It is being translated into Japanese with a 30,000 first run.)

Oxford University Press has just selected Professor Aikhenvald's

monograph *Classifiers: A Typology of Noun Categorisation Devices* for publication in 1999.

From August 17–22, the Centre is hosting an international workshop on "The connection between areal diffusion and the genetic model of language relationship". The workshop will bring linguistic scholars from some of the world's most prestigious centres of linguistic learning to the ANU campus. What they will find is a centre that has used the unique asset of a complex matrix of indigenous languages to develop new approaches to typology through accessing and applying theories from other disciplines, such as biology. The workshop will contribute to the University's standing and the Centre deserves collegial support and recognition.

In another part of the Arts Faculty, a multi-faceted research project application is under way.

The Department of Archaeology and Anthropology is consolidating individual activities. It will focus this consolidation on resource development (including but not limited to mining) and the relation of indigenous people to development projects.

The Department will also consolidate research on the interaction of national entities such as Australia with the international economy and with international organisations regarding issues of resource development.

There has been a lot of very sub-

stantial work already

done in the Department on the use and impact of mining royalties and on native title. This consolidation enables the Department to build on an already impressive track record in partnership with colleagues through cross-links.

The Department is seeking international and national funding for this project, which aims to draw in academics from outside the Department. It is a collaboration that is intended to bring benefits to the Faculty, but also to the University at large in expanding its postgraduate research training.

Professor Francesca Merlan's team has already gone a long way within their Department in consolidating activities to take research to the highest international levels.

They are drawing together the three streams in their Department — Social Anthropology, Biological Anthropology and Archaeology — and will be reaching beyond to other areas of the University as they take their project forward.

What is happening in each case is that research is adding greatly to the Faculty and to the University.

It is of course part of the collegial responsibility to ensure that it does so. In return, the Faculty and the University — all of us — need to acknowledge the value of such contributions and to sustain them.

Deane Terrell



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Wednesday House Dinner

Wednesday 12 August

Barry Oakley: Friends of the
Library — Books in my Life

Wednesday 19 August
Judith Hurst — Violinist

Physicists squeeze more out of light

By JULIAN LEE

A team of ANU physicists is leading the world in what could be the next major breakthrough in optical communications — “squeezed light”.

All methods of transmitting information are limited by noise or static that deteriorates transmission quality. Squeezed light, however, has significantly less noise than lasers currently used in optical fibre communications.

By adding squeezed light to laser light, scientists in the Department of Physics believe they will be able to vastly improve the amount of information that can be stored and transmitted.

“We’ve done something quite extraordinary that a few years ago wasn’t thought possible. We have reduced ‘quantum’ noise in laser light by a factor of five and are leading the world in this technology,” Professor Hans Bachor, head of the Department of Physics, said.

When Heisenberg first described “quantum mechanics” — a branch of modern physics — he predicted that even pure light contained fluctuations and background “noise”.

Until recently it was believed that this noise would be a fundamental limit on the amount of information that could be transmitted.

Using a specially treated crystal, however, Ping Koy Lam, a PhD student, and Prof Jiangui Gao, a visiting fellow from Shanxi University in China, convert laser light to this “squeezed” state which is quieter than the fundamental limit.

There are even suggestions that squeezed light may make a form of teleportation possible — but don’t expect Scotty to be beaming you up soon.

“It is only theoretical at this stage and even if possible, it would only teleport information carried by light, not people.

“There is no magic and the laws of physics are not being violated. We have made use of Heisenberg’s principle which states that as you improve one property of light, another property must deteriorate,” Dr Tim Ralph, theoretician on the team, said.

There are two properties of light which can be modified — intensity and phase. Since only intensity fluctuations are relevant in applications such as telecommunications, optical data storage and chemical analyses, the ANU team has taken advantage of Heisenberg’s principle to increase the accuracy of measurements beyond anything previously possible.

Not only are the ANU results better than those of other laboratories in the world, but they are cheaper and more reliably reproduced.

“Initially it might double the price of the laser — which currently fills a laboratory bench top — but squeezed light will be necessary in some applications such as ultra-sensitive chemical analysis,” Prof Bachor said.

He believes that with their successes, technical and not physical considerations are once again the limiting factor in improving this technique. “Squeezed lasers will one day be miniaturised and mass-produced just as laser pointers are today,” Prof Bachor said.

Crisis has altered Asian balance of power: Dibb

By SHELLY SIMONDS

The economic crisis has changed the geopolitical balance in Asia, enhancing China’s influence in the region and reducing Japan’s, an ANU defence expert claims.

In a recent lecture, Professor Paul Dibb, Head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS), said China had strengthened its position as a regional leader by prudent handling of its currency during the crisis. However, Japan’s weakened economy and leadership turmoil had caused its influence to wane.

“Japan looks like a weak, distracted power in the biggest crisis we have seen since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975,” Prof Dibb said.

In the worst-case scenario, a deepening economic crisis in Asia could lead to increased tensions between China and Japan over competing territorial claims in the East China Sea, he said.

The seminar was the first in a regular series: “The Millennium Seminars on Asia-Pacific Security” featuring experts from SDSC, RSPAS and other areas of the ANU. The seminars, focusing on policy implications for

Australia, are aimed at scholars, journalists and government officials.

During the seminar Prof Dibb emphasised the need to reassess the geopolitical landscape of the Asia-Pacific region, saying much of what we thought we understood about the region has changed.

“In the last 12 months we’ve lost the economic security which has underpinned Australia’s basic security judgements,” he said.

For instance, he said, much of Australia’s strategic concepts were based on the political stability of 200 million people to our north in Indonesia.

Further more, the recent nuclear tests conducted by India has changed the strategic landscape by forcing Pakistan and China to re-evaluate their nuclear capabilities.

“India’s test has increased the risk that the world’s first ever nuclear exchange will occur in South Asia. Asia now has the largest number of nuclear powers in the world,” he said.

Prof Dibb said the region would undergo a combination of arming and not arming, correlated to the impact of the crisis on individual countries. Indonesia for example, was unlikely to be able to afford upgrading its defence capabilities. Whereas Singapore, Tai-

wan and China, less affected by the crisis, would probably use the opportunity to boost capabilities.

For Australia, the Asian crisis has emphasised the need for better analysis and expertise on the region, Prof Dibb said.

The government had been caught short on a number of occasions in the last 12 months in failing to predict the economic crisis and the end of the Soeharto regime in Indonesia.

“We’ve just undergone the biggest failure of assessment since the fall of the Soviet Union,” Prof Dibb said.

He blamed a lack of transparency and reliable financial information from Asia and also the compartmentalisation of Asian expertise in Australia. Experts in government and academia needed to work more closely to share research and insight.

He also stressed the importance of long-range strategic analysis.

“Long-range strategic analysis is not some kind of academic indulgence and I would have hoped the government is beginning to realise this after having been caught short on Asia,” he said. “This is not the time for universities to be closing down master’s degrees in strategic studies but we’re doing that now because of financial constraints.”

Charting a plan for a cleaner planet



Photo: Julian Lee, ANU Reporter

All a flutter: Year six students from Arawang Primary School presented Professor Frank Jackson, Director and Chairman of the Board of the Institute of Advanced Studies, with a banner illustrating their thoughts on the environment.

The banner will be the first cultural item to be displayed at the Art School as part of the Earth Charter Schools Project which be officially launched later this year.

The project, which was facilitated by the BISACT outreach program run by the Division of Botany and Zoology, aims to encourage school groups and individuals to have a say in environmental issues.

WHO WROTE IT?

“Boy, when you’re dead they really fix you up.

“I hope to hell when I do die somebody has sense enough to just dump me in the river or something. Anything except sticking me in a goddamn cemetery.

“People coming and putting a bunch of flowers on your stomach on Sunday, and all that crap.

“Who want flowers when you’re dead? Nobody.”

Shawanah Tasneem won last issue’s *Who Wrote It*, identifying the excerpt from *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. The first entry identifying the above piece and its author, drawn after the close of entries on Monday, August 17, will receive a \$30 voucher from University House.

IN BRIEF

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) signed a further agreement this week to provide funding for the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) until 2004. A separate agreement with the Department of Social Security (DSS) was signed last month. ANU will provide total funding of over \$400,000 per annum, while ATSIC will contribute \$630,000 and DSS \$150,000. As of January 1 1999, CAEPR will become an ANU Centre with a university-wide role in policy-oriented research on indigenous public policy issues. In the current economic and political environment the rigorous, independent, policy-oriented and very practical research being undertaken by CAEPR at the ANU is needed more than ever before, CAEPR’s director Professor Jon Altman said. The research partnership with ATSIC and DSS is obviously proving extremely effective and beneficial for all parties, he added.

Nominations are being sought for young people between the ages of 14 and 27 for the 1999 Young Australian of the Year Awards. The awards are given in the following categories: Medibank Private Arts Award, Abigroup Sports Award, NRMA Community Service Award, Unilever Environment Award, Eastern Energy Science & Technology Award, North Limited Regional Development Award and the Minister for Youth Affairs Career Achievement Award. Four finalists will be chosen across the seven award categories, with one of the four being chosen as the ACT Young Achiever of the Year. All nominees from the ACT will also be eligible for the NSW program. Nominations close September 4 and inquiries can be made to Shauna Wood on (02) 9899 7099.

Up to 24 leaders of research and technical teams will this year be subsidised in an innovative management training program. In a trial-run, the “Achievement through teams: leadership in R&D” program will be run at a cost of \$5000 — a 50% subsidy — for university participants. The program’s aims are to develop practical leadership skills and an understanding of the human dynamics at play in the work environment. Participants in the program will undertake “action learning” projects to consolidate and apply lessons in the work place. The next course is scheduled to commence on October 11.

The Papua New Guinea High Commissioner, Mr Renagi Lohia, met 15 undergraduate and postgraduate PNG students from ANU, the University of Canberra and the Canberra Institute of Technology at the ANU recently to brief them on the situation following the tsunami disaster. PNG students at the ANU have been offered a range of support services, including counselling, telephone cards and special consideration for the impact which the disaster will have on their study programs. Mr Lohia thanked the Australian people and Government for the assistance they were providing to PNG. The ANU’s Vice-Chancellor, Professor Deane Terrell, expressed the University’s sympathy to PNG and offered whatever assistance the University could provide.

AgrEvo pact to boost grain studies

By JULIAN LEE

Australia will play an important role in the development of new crop varieties needed to feed and clothe a world population expected to grow to 10 billion in the 21st century.

Under a recently announced five-year alliance with AgrEvo, one of the world's leading crop production companies, the ANU's Research School of Biological Sciences (RSBS), will work on specific areas of agricultural biotechnology research.

The new partnership involves RSBS, CSIRO, Hoechst Schering AgrEvo (Germany) and its Australian subsidiary, AgrEvo, and ensures access to state-of-the-art technology for Australian farmers and agribusiness industry.

Dr Geoff Wasteneys of the Plant Cell Biology Group in RSBS, is one of the scientists chosen to be on the project for his advanced work on plant development.

Dr Wasteneys has identified a single gene — MOR1 — central to many stages of plant growth. MOR1 appears to specifically regulate the cell framework or 'cytoskeleton', which directs the way cellulose is deposited in cells, he said.

"As a major component of plant cell walls, cellulose deposition underlies how a plant will grow and function. Therefore identifying a gene like MOR1 is of major significance to most aspects of plant development — from germination and growth through to reproduction," Dr Wasteneys said.

Many molecular biologists deliberately "knock out" a gene to identify its function. This method is unreliable with genes such as MOR1 because disabling them completely results in a dead plant. "A dead plant just says that the gene is vital to the plant, but does not tell you very much else," Dr Wasteneys said.

Instead, Dr Wasteneys looked for

mutant plants that grew under normal conditions, but lost function when grown in higher temperatures. Coming from a background in cell biology, he designed an unorthodox screening strategy which involved rigorous testing of some tens of thousands of plants to identify the mutants.

While isolating these mutants has been a "hard slog", Dr Wasteneys believes that the MOR1 gene would not have been uncovered otherwise.

"By understanding how MOR1 and associated genes function, we will be able to breed plants that are better able to cope with stress conditions such as frost, heat, salinity, drought and soil compaction — the major issues affecting productivity today," Dr Wasteneys said. "As we all wear cotton and use paper, this could have a huge impact on the fibre industry."

The alliance has come at an ideal time with funding for the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Plant Sci-

ence — established under a seven-year government program — coming to an end, Dr Wasteneys said. He believes he would not have been able to continue this research at the ANU without AgrEvo's support.

The agreement retains Australian ownership of intellectual property associated with the research projects, while AgrEvo will obtain licences for a range of crops including cereals, vegetables, oilseeds and cotton.

As part of the agreement, AgrEvo will make its crop improvement technologies available to Australian researchers which will enhance national crop breeding efforts and benefit Australian farmers.

"Combining efforts and technologies will not only allow all partners to do more for less, but will without doubt spur the creativity and innovation that comes from this kind of high-level international collaborations," Dr Jan Leemans, AgrEvo board member, said.

PEOPLE

Professor Brij Lal of the Division of Pacific and Asian History in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, was appointed an Officer of the Order of Fiji by Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. Prof Lal is honoured for his valuable service as a member of the Fiji Constitution Review Commission and for his literary contribution to Fiji and the Pacific. The award was announced on July 27 to coincide with the promulgation of Fiji's new constitution which is based substantially on the report written by the Commission.

Prof Nicholas Thomas, director of the Centre for Cross-cultural Research, has been awarded the Rivers Memorial Medal for 1998 by the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. The medal is bestowed for work which makes a significant contribution to social, physical or cultural anthropology or archaeology. This award brings particular distinction to Prof Thomas as it is normally only awarded to persons with some British connections and has only twice before been awarded to an Australian.

Dr Terry O'Neill of the Department of Statistics and Econometrics and Reader in Statistics has this week been named a fellow of the American Statistical Association at a presentation ceremony in Texas. Dr O'Neill is being recognised for his outstanding professional contribution and leadership in the field of statistical science.

EVENTS

The next speaker in the Books in My Life series will be Dr Brian Kennedy, director of the National Gallery of Australia. He will be talking about the influence of books in his life on August 12 at University House at 7.45pm. House dinner, \$20, begins at 6pm. Inquiries to Robert Barnes on 6249 2909.

A performance of the Filipino epic poem, "Cantata of the warrior woman Daragang Magon" will be given by Merlinda Bobis. The performance will be given in the Drama Lab at the ANU Arts Centre on August 17 at 5pm. Inquiries to Dr Jacqueline Lo on 6249 3469.

The 22nd Annual "Japanese Evening" will be held on August 21-22 at the ANU Arts Centre. The program includes a martial arts demonstration, a skit by Lake Tuggeranong High School and a Kabuki play performed by ANU Japan Centre Students. Doors open at 7pm and admission is free, however donations will be gratefully accepted.

The Urban Research Program will hold two seminars: Judy Stubbs will talk on "It depends where you stand: counting the costs of urban renewal", on August 17, and Nicholas Brown will discuss "Citizens at the coast", on August 24. Both will be given in Seminar Room D in the Coombs Building at 11am. Inquiries to Kurt Iveson on 6249 2214.

The ANU Red Cross is holding a Blood Drive from August 19-21. Inquires to Belinda Barnard on 6247 0870.

Political parties move closer on economics

The major political parties are moving closer together in their approaches to the economy, an ANU study has shown.

A research project by Peter Taft for a Master's Degree in the Public Policy Program, revealed that the views of Coalition and Labor candidates on free-market solutions to economic problems had grown closer in the past 10 years.

The data for the research was collected by the Social Science Data Archives (SSDA) at the ANU. Mr Taft found that, as a group, ALP candidates have become more inclined to support free-market policy prescriptions to economic issues over the past decade, while Coalition candidates were less inclined to do so.

However, he found that Coalition candidates are still substantially more

likely to support free-market prescriptions than ALP candidates.

Mr Taft also found that personal characteristics of candidates had little correlation with the holding of free-market views. This disputes suggestions made elsewhere that some individual characteristics are significant determinants of views on economic issues.

"Whilst there was some evidence that characteristics such as age or the extent of religious observance may be associated with certain views on economic policy, the association was not necessarily the same in both parties. Sweeping generalisations linking such characteristics with particular views should be viewed with great scepticism," he wrote.

However, Mr Taft found there is a

slight tendency for tertiary education, especially in the ALP, to be associated with less support for free-market views. Younger Coalition candidates are marginally more likely to favour free-market ideas than their older colleagues, while the younger ALP candidates are less free-market oriented than their seniors.

Mr Taft notes that during the past 30 years, there has been a noted shift in the emphasis that policy makers have given to free-market solutions to actual and perceived economic problems. In general, there has been a greater scepticism of the benefits of redistributing wealth via both macroeconomic means (fiscal policy) and microeconomic means (for example, labour market regulation). With Australia becoming increasingly absorbed into the global economy, there has been a growing intensity in the debate over the desirability of free-market policies — and the effectiveness of alternative policies.

"Both parties appear to be moving

to a position of favouring the targeting of expenditure towards the poor as distinct from 'ordinary working people', who are viewed as the beneficiaries of 'middle-class welfare'," Mr Taft wrote. "It would appear that those with less free-market views are winning the 'macro' debate in favour of a role for the state in supporting redistribution (thus influencing the Coalition). On the other hand, those with more free-market views are winning the 'micro' debate about the form that role should take in implementing that policy (thus influencing the ALP)."

He said the seemingly increased prevalence of free-market views evidenced in the ALP and more broadly in the media and bureaucracy may have masked a growing acceptance of the goals of wealth redistribution and the provision of services within the Coalition since the late 1980s. The narrowing difference between the major parties means that it matters less which party formed a government in terms of the goal of distributing wealth.

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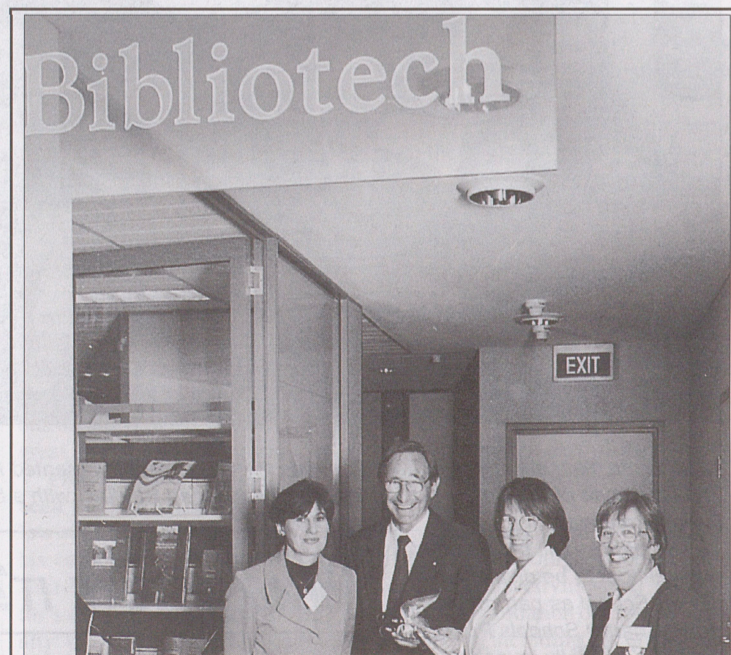


Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

ANU Chancellor Professor Peter Baume and the staff of Bibliotech celebrate the opening last month of a new specialist bookshop at Anutech Court. Bibliotech, a division of the University's commercial arm ANUTECH, was established to distribute specialist books and international publications for the ANU and other clients. The new bookshop has more than 2,400 publications available and most are on display in the centre. Bibliotech manager, Helen Brennan, said the books handled by the shop reflected the research strengths of the ANU.

Systematic indictment of a 'brutal' regime

For all our strength in Asian Studies, the ANU rarely produces a book on Burma (Myanmar). One of the implicit themes of Ball's important book is that Australians have been unwise to neglect the study of developments in this increasingly significant South-east Asian country.

Burma's Military Secrets is at one level a study of signals intelligence — the "production of intelligence by intercepting and processing of signals by radio or other electromagnetic means" — but the discussion moves relentlessly from technical issues to a systematic indictment of the entire regime.

The story of signals intelligence itself is fascinating, and begins with Japanese and Allied activities during the Second World War. Here and in his account of later periods, Ball takes pains to demonstrate just how superior signals intelligence can give one side or another — and increasingly it is the Burmese government that triumphs over dissident groups — a critical military advantage.

In the first decades of national independence, the dissident groups had been remarkably successful, the Communist Party and the Karen and Kachin armies probably having more sophisticated signals intelligence than the government. Ball gives details of their equipment and techniques.

The Karens, for instance, were in 1949 reported to possess a readily encryptable Karen-language Morse code, and the Communist Party of the 1970s and 1980s adopted the policy of using the Indonesian language for voice communications. The

BURMA'S MILITARY SECRETS: SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE (SIGINT) FROM 1941 TO CYBER WARFARE



Desmond Ball

Bangkok, White Lotus Press

Karen National Liberation Army purchased modern radio systems in Thailand, and the Communist Party obtained signals equipment from China.

Chinese assistance was centrally important in supporting the national regime in the 1980s and 1990s as it proceeded to establish a crushing superiority in signals intelligence.

Ball documents the new equipment — the ground stations, mobile facilities, capabilities for monitoring microwave telecommunications and jamming devices. Step by step he shows the build-up of surveillance material, explaining how the government has developed the capacity to monitor telephones, fax, email and other transmissions. He notes the mobile facilities that are able to be employed in remote regions and records the gradual achievement of sophistication in encryption techniques, signals interception and direction-finding equipment.

We see this technology in action, most effectively in the government capture in 1995 of Manerplaw, the command centre for almost the entire non-Communist ethnic insurgency movement.

In this operation, which was of large scale, involving at least 10,000 government troops, the government

was able to intercept radio communication between the commanders of the insurgent forces. Casualty details, arms and ammunition usage, tactical information and even signals intelligence capacity were all revealed, and Ball's account brings home just how important this advantage was in the government's victory.

The significance for the civilian population of such comprehensive superiority in signals intelligence is obvious. When a government that is determined to punish every act of treason possesses the ability to control or intercept all manner of electronic communication, there are few limitations on the potential for tyranny.

The moral position adopted by Ball is unmistakable. The "brutality of the regime", he insists, "is simply overwhelming".

Beyond the account of intelligence technology, therefore, Ball delivers strong messages about Burma. Few will question the suggestion that, with the second largest military force in Southeast Asia, and the third most sophisticated signals intelligence, Burma deserves greater scholarly as well as diplomatic and security attention. Not everyone will go all the way with his judgement of the regime.

In a recent article in the ASEAN FOCUS/ANU ASIA monthly web analysis of the countries of ASEAN, Rey Iletto has suggested certain reasons for optimism regarding the Burmese regime. He also notes the presence within Burmese society of a degree of genuine suspicion toward Aung San Suu Kyi and warns against the danger of trying to assess the Burmese situation in terms of "dictatorship versus democracy, evil SPDC versus good NLD" (National League for Democracy, the party of Aung San Suu Kyi).

Ball is clearly impatient with such lines of speculation and his evidence is persuasive. His own account of the

Burmese regime's signals intelligence, military capacity and political will, however, does suggest that the emergence of an effective resistance movement is unlikely in the foreseeable future.

In this situation, Australia will have no alternative but to continue to explore possible strategies for coping with the government of this emerging Southeast Asian Power that is now a member of ASEAN.

The Australian task will not be made easier by the absence of any serious academic program for the study of Burma/Myanmar in our universities.

A C Milner
Dean, Faculty of Asian Studies

Law students mark landmark case

On May 26 the Faculty of Law and the Law Students Society organised a commemoration of one of the most famous cases in the common law's history — *Donoghue v Stevenson*, also known as the "Snail in the ginger beer bottle" case.

The case concerned a woman who alleged that she saw the decomposed remains of a snail fall out of a bottle of ginger beer, the contents of which she had consumed. She sued the manufacturer and the case was appealed to the House of Lords where the House decided the question of law in her favour.

That case is now regarded as laying the foundations for the law of negligence, although this may be an exaggerated claim.

Nonetheless, the law, the facts and the characters involved in that case had so captured the imagination of generations of lawyers that a world conference was organised in 1992, a

monograph produced and then a video made of the case and its impact on ordinary people and the law.

This video was screened on the anniversary of the decision and the function was attended by approximately 90 students and staff, who by all accounts, enjoyed the video and then stayed for a pleasant social gathering.

This commemoration will now become an annual one, with future events including special lectures or debates on issues of torts by distinguished people in the field.

Apart from the intellectual stimulation and the personal interest in law that this may inspire in academics and students, the event was also special in that it heralded the beginning of a true community of academics and students, jointly involved in the study of law.

Kumar Amirthalingam
Law School

Scholarship honours Rodgers

An astronomy scholarship honouring Professor Alex Rodgers, who died last October, is to be established at the ANU, following the donation of \$60,000 by Prof Rodgers' widow, Mrs Ruth Rodgers.

Prof Rodgers was devoted to the study of astronomy and the promotion of the Observatory at Mount Stromlo. He is famous for his related studies of the motions of globular clusters and of a particular kind of hot star (the Rodgers metal-rich A stars).

Mrs Rodgers' donation is to be matched by the Vice-Chancellor's Endowment for Excellence scheme to create the Alex Rodgers Travelling Scholarship, intended to support PhD astronomy students travelling overseas.

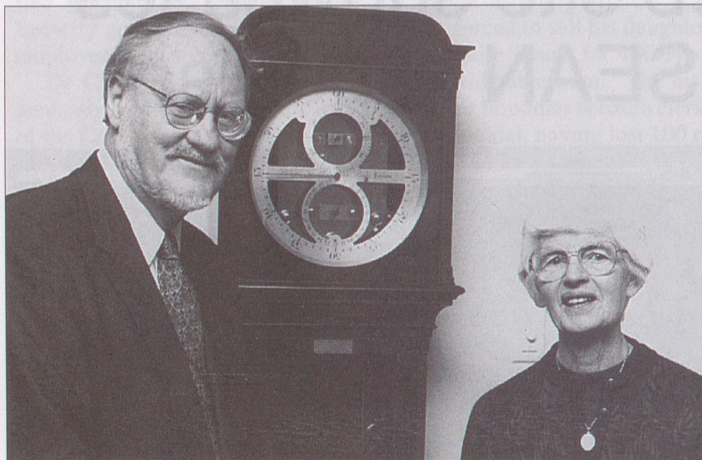


Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Deane Terrell presented Mrs Ruth Rodgers with a silver salver and named her a Distinguished Member of The ANU Endowment for Excellence.

Ansett boosts Oxford exchange

Ansett Australia has announced a major contribution to the ANU to support the university's unique staff and student exchange agreement with Oxford University.

For the next three years Ansett will support the travel to Britain of ANU students on an exchange to Oxford.

Ansett will provide return economy air fares for five ANU students to travel between Australia and Hong Kong, matched from the ANU's Endowment for Excellence by the funding of return fares for the Hong Kong-London leg.

British Airways and Oxford University have a similar agreement for Oxford students coming to ANU as part of the exchange program.

ANU is the only Australian university — and one of the few in the world — to have an exchange agreement with Oxford University. The agreement, signed in ANU's 50th Anniversary year, 1996, provides a framework in which the two leading universities are building specific collaborative programs.

Medieval history and literature, the biological and natural sciences,

Asian Studies, astronomy, anthropology, environmental and international law and Australian studies are particular fields covered by the exchange.

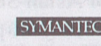
ANU has two students at Oxford at present and four — two undergraduate and two postgraduate — will go there for the coming northern academic year.

ANU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Deane Terrell, said Ansett's involvement was a major boost to the program of academic cooperation between the two world-leading Universities.



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Playing a national role in the study of Asia

The Faculty of Asian Studies, the only faculty of its type in Australia, is a central institution in the extraordinary concentration of Asia expertise at the ANU.

In its undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, staff research and outreach, the Faculty joins the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies and other elements in the university in the task of ensuring that the ANU continues to be the pre-eminent Australian centre for the study of Asia.

The Faculty plays a national role in teaching a vast range of Asian languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean,

Vietnamese, Thai, Lao, Indonesian, Malay, Javanese, Arabic, Hindi and Urdu.

We are also exceptional in teaching the classical languages of the region: Sanskrit, Arabic, Classical Chinese, Classical Japanese and Classical Malay.

Non-language teaching includes majors and programs in the history, politics, linguistics, literatures, religions and contemporary societies of the region.

Courses range from North Korea: History and Politics, to Classical India and Southeast Asia, and, running in this current semester, a timely unit entitled "Asia in Crisis".

With respect to research, recent Faculty initiatives (all

Australia Research Council funded) include projects on Religious Law in Indonesia and Malaysia, Business Ethics in Vietnam (with the St James Ethics Centre) and the scholarly translation of the 11th-century *Tale of Genji*, the greatest masterpiece of Japanese literature.

A continuing challenge for the ANU is to demonstrate that the entire range of our Asia expertise contributes to the Australian national objective of a comprehensive, sophisticated engagement with Asia.

With the assistance of the university's Asia Liaison Officer, the Faculty has been involved in developing a series of Business Briefings, a well-publicised ANU

ASIA Lecture program, dialogue meetings with The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, collaborative workshops with curriculum leaders in the secondary school system, and a monthly web-site commentary on ASEAN countries for the business group, ASEAN FOCUS.

The Faculty, of course, maintains its international research connections. Over the last few months, for instance, important co-operative work has been undertaken with scholars and institutions in Vietnam, China, the Netherlands, Japan and Israel.

As Australians worry about the significance and implications of the so-called Asia crisis, however, the ANU is more conscious



than ever of its national responsibility to provide an informed, language-based analysis of the political and cultural processes that will determine the future prospects of the region.

Professor A C (Tony) Milner
Dean, Faculty of Asian Studies

Indonesian call to back democracy movement



By Shelly Simonds

A prominent Indonesian dissident, Professor Sri-Bintang Pamungkas (above) last week urged Australia to support the democracy movement in Indonesia.

"It is important that Australia continue to monitor what happens in Indonesia to help meet the demands of democracy. A new political culture will benefit Australia," he said during a visit to the Faculty of Asian Studies.

Prof Pamungkas was charged with subversion by the Soeharto government and had been sentenced to execution by the supreme court. He spent nearly 15 months in jail before being freed by the new Indonesian president Jusuf Habibie.

Prof Pamungkas was a professor in industrial economics and management at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta for 25 years before being arrested.

He said seeing the country follow the wrong path toward development was one factor which led him to speak out against the Soeharto government.

"As an economist, I knew that the development program run by the Soeharto dictatorship was wrong. Now, with the economic crisis, we know this was true. The whole world knows this was true," he said.

The continuing devaluation of the rupiah was evidence that international markets lack confidence in the new government to bring reform, he said.

His visit to the ANU included a number of seminars with faculty and students. He was sponsored by lecturer Amrih Widodo, of the Southeast Asia Centre.

Misconceptions cloud view of Asia

By Julian Lee

After a cursory examination of today's technological development in China, the birthplace of the printing press and gunpowder, you might be excused for thinking it has had its day in the sun.

However, one ANU Asia historian believes this is because Westerners often consider stereotyped Asian cultural values, such as "Confucianism", to be hindrances in their move towards modernity.

"There is a real danger in the perception that there is only one way to modernisation — the Western way," Dr Aat Vervoorn of the Asian History Centre in the Faculty of Asian Studies, said.

"The thing to realise is that Asia has never been sitting around wait-

ing for help from the West," Dr Vervoorn said. "There has always been lots of exchange in both directions."

He believes that the main issues facing China, and in fact all societies across Asia, are much the same as those confronted by Australia. Issues such as technological change, economic development, population growth, the environment, communications and human rights have become global concerns, he said.

"Trying to restrict interaction with the outside world to insulate society from these issues has been one response to globalisation," Dr Vervoorn said. "Generally however, Asian countries are taking new ideas and adapting them to

their own tradition and circumstance."

Dr Vervoorn has written a text book, *Re Orient*, which deals with these issues across the Asia region and fills a gap in materials currently available. In contrast to the usual country-by-country style of text books, *Re Orient* is issues based, which Dr Vervoorn believes is more useful to students.

In the book he provides an overview of contemporary Asian countries, which he uses as a basis for understanding how societies operate in general.

"When you look at what appear to be peculiarities in one country, you see that they in fact crop-up in many others," Dr Vervoorn said.

"General issues however, are

shaped by local circumstance."

The Internet is a good example of this. Dr Vervoorn points out that, while China has been criticised for trying to maintain tight control over the Internet for political purposes, it has legitimate concerns over the otherwise unrestricted inflow of pornography and gambling via the Internet. "In Australia we too have our media controls," he said.

"Most would agree that there need to be restrictions. The question each society needs to ask is where to draw the line," Dr Vervoorn said.

"Even when we agree on the need to protect basic rights and freedoms, it is possible for reasonable and socially responsible people to come to quite different conclusions on such issues."

Analysis Web site showcases the ANU's ASEAN expertise

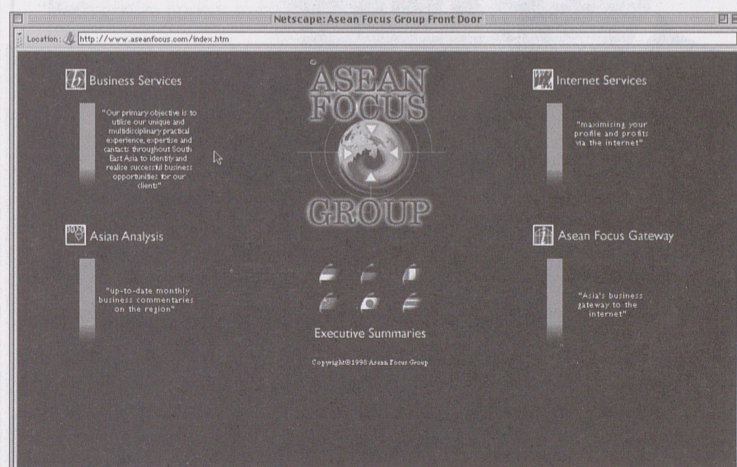
The ANU's expertise on Asian issues is now available on the Web, following an approach to the Faculty of Asian Studies (FAS) from a Sydney group seeking to provide information on the region to prospective business investors.

The ASEAN Focus Group has asked the Faculty to provide monthly reports on individual countries as part of the group's service, which also includes business advice and contact information in the ASEAN countries.

The Asian Analysis section of the Web site is co-edited by Professor Anthony Milner and Alison Broinowski of the Asian History Centre in FAS and includes pieces by other experts from the Faculty, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies and other universities.

Ms Broinowski said the Faculty was approached to provide monthly pieces on all the ASEAN countries: Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam and also pieces on Cambodia.

Recent contributions from ANU experts include pieces on Cambodia by Milton Osborne and Tony Kevin, visiting fellows in FAS; articles examining Indonesia's political upheavals by Emeritus Professor Jamie Mackie, Prof James Fox, Dr Harold Crouch and



Web wisdom: The ASEAN Focus Group's Web site features country-by-country analysis by ANU experts for potential investors.

Dr Ross McLeod all from RSPAS; Dr Virginia Hooker of the Southeast Asia Centre in FAS has written on leadership and moral codes in Malaysia; Dr Rey Iletto has written on Burma (Myanmar) and on the significance of 1998 in the Philippines; and Dr Craig Reynolds of the Faculty's Asian History Centre has looked at business in Thailand's provinces.

Ms Broinowski said feedback from the site had been very positive and she hoped it would expand its coverage.

"It's a nice little innovation that we are quite proud of. I myself would

like eventually to see it cover the north Asian countries as well."

She said the project, which began in February, was originally scheduled for a one-year trial.

"In February next year we will sit down and think about where it is going, but I don't think it will be dropped, I think it is more likely to expand."

The group's Web site — www.aseanfocus.com — is currently free, but Ms Broinowski said there were plans to restrict its access to subscribers only, once it was well established.

FACT FILE

FACULTY OF ASIAN STUDIES

The Faculty began in 1952 as a School of Oriental Languages headed by the Swedish scholar Professor Hans Bielenstein. The School was constituted as a separate Faculty in 1962.

Centres:

- China and Korea Centre
- Japan Centre
- South and West Asia Centre
- Southeast Asia Centre
- Asian History Centre
- National Thai Studies Centre

Languages and literature are taught in the first four centres; the Asian History Centre is responsible for courses on the religion, philosophy, politics and other contemporary aspects of Asian societies.

Staff:

There are about 52 Faculty staff

Students:

In 1996 there were 2406 undergraduate students and 97 postgraduate students in the Faculty.

Study finds bonded labour rife in China

By Shelly Simonds

Freeing up the labour market has been a major reform in China in recent decades. But many workers employed by foreign-run factories in the footwear industry are anything but free, an ANU researcher claims.

Dr Anita Chan, of the China and Korea Centre in the Faculty of Asian Studies, recently completed a study of 54 footwear factories in China and found that many of the rural migrant workers in the factories had to pay employers between two weeks' and a month's wage as a "deposit".

This created a new type of bonded workforce in China, said Dr Chan, an Australian Research Council Senior Research Fellow, who recently presented the results of her study at a lecture sponsored by the ANU branch of the NTEU.

Other abuses revealed by the study included employers randomly taking money out of employee paychecks, using corporal punishment in factories, and illegally confiscating worker ID cards, without which migrant workers face police violence and deportation, she said.

More than 80 million migrants seeking jobs in China made up the world's largest and most flexible workforce, said Dr Chan. This massive workforce has created a buyers' market for employers.

But as competition forced factories to seek greater and greater efficiency, employers have tried to keep marginal costs of employee turnover down by requiring bonds from migrant workers.

"I think the reason for the bond is that when the employer pays them such a low wage, of course they want to leave all the time. They are always looking for a factory with a little bit better pay or better benefits. I'm sure if you pay them well, they would stay," Dr Chan said.

The worst offenders were foreign-owned or joint-venture factories run by Asians. Of these the most common offenders were overseas Chinese

from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea.

The study was conducted in footwear factories in Tianjin, Shanghai, Putian, Dongguan City, and Chongqing. Some factories were state or collectively owned, others were private and some were owned in foreign joint ventures. In each factory the research team surveyed a factory manager, a trade union chairperson and the factory workers, who filled out separate questionnaires and handed them to the surveyors before leaving a closed room.

Dr Chan said popular wisdom held that the best paid workers in China were employed by foreign-owned factories, but her study found little evidence to support this. The best pay was from state-owned and collectively-owned enterprises when work hours and benefits were taken into account.

She found that workers in factories run by foreigners worked an average of 11 hours a day, which was beyond the legal limit, whereas workers in the state-owned sector worked eight hours.

Also associated with the Contemporary China Centre in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Dr Chan said corporal punishment was reported in 27 per cent of the workers in the foreign owned-ventures surveyed.

The study also found a militarised atmosphere in these factories. Private security guards were commonplace, and often they carried weapons like electric batons. Security guards even monitored the employee's dormitories.

Dr Chan said militarism is not generally considered a traditional part of the Confucian work ethic — it is simply a show of authoritarianism by factory managers.

Many commentators have argued that foreign ownership of Chinese factories may bring democratisation to China, but Dr Chan said her research suggests otherwise.



Photo: Japan Centre

Man maids: Students of the Japan Centre in the Faculty of Asian Studies hold a traditional Kabuki night each year. This year will mark the 22nd performance.

Students keep theatre tradition alive

By Julian Lee

Maintaining interest in an esoteric Japanese art form is not easy in its home country — let alone Australia — but every year students of the Japan Centre put on a performance that attracts a full house.

Kabuki — traditional theatre that features an archaic form of Japanese — abounds in lavish costumes, make-up, and backdrops. And this year's 22nd Kabuki performance titled "Bunshichi motoyui: A story of human relations", is no exception.

The play revolves around the plight of a poor plasterer — Chobei — forced to sell his daughter to a pleasure house for 100 ryo — a considerable sum. On his way home he comes across a clerk who is suicidal, having lost 100 ryo of his master's money.

The kind-hearted Chobei gives the clerk his money, which later lands him in hot water with his wife. Luckily however, the clerk and his lord come to Chobei and

explain that the money was never actually lost. Recognising the generous act, the lord offers to pay Chobei's daughter's ransom for freedom and marry her to the clerk who is far above her station in life.

"The play is a social comedy, reflecting the values and lives of traditional Japan. However, kabuki is a bit like going to Shakespeare — long and involved — but with the added difficulty of being in another language," producer of this year's show and second-year Japanese student, Suzy Styles, said.

To counter this stuffy image, the students have adjusted the play to suit a modern Australian audience. "We have spiced it up by performing some parts in English and by adding a bit of humour," she said.

In keeping with traditional kabuki, female roles are played by males, however in these plays the male roles are played by women, which Ms Styles said is only fair and often provides moments of comedy.

While there is a lot of fun, the

plays are professionally run and lavishly produced. Ms Styles said they place a lot of emphasis on choosing authentic sounding actors. To ensure this the actors are coached by Japanese speakers.

Production could have been made easier by including Japanese native speakers, however a self-made rule "prohibits" them from taking speaking parts. Even so, there was much hilarity when two exchange students from Japan played a horse last year, Ms Styles said.

The plays feature richly embroidered authentic kimonos provided by the Japanese Embassy which, together with the Japan Foundation, supports the play each year.

"The shows have come a long way since the early days when they were held outside on Union Bridge with a sheet as a backdrop," Ms Styles said.

This year the play will be held on the evenings of August 20-22 at the Arts Centre and are free.

Upheaval ends Indonesian exchanges

Shelly Simonds

The Faculty of Asian Studies' Year in Asia program is an exciting opportunity for students to live in and learn about the country they are studying. This year however, students who went to Indonesia got more excitement than they bargained for.

On May 19 students in Yogyakarta had the worst night of their stay. Demonstrations were growing daily, the military presence in the city was increasing, and people were saying the situation would soon explode. The time had come for students from Australia to decide to stay or go.

"We made the decision to leave Yogyakarta really suddenly, in a panic, and I think we didn't make the decision properly," said one ANU student, Damien Locke.

"The hardest part was leaving," said another student, Damian

White. "When I left, the situation was uncertain and I couldn't be sure about the future of my friends or their safety."

Mr White regrets cutting short his stay in Indonesia and said he feels guilty about the way he was able to return to Australia so quickly, while his Indonesian friends didn't have a choice.

"Being in Indonesia made me realise how privileged we are in Australia. It made me think the things we worry about were rather petty, wondering if we could afford a third TV," he said.

Eight ANU students were on the Year in Indonesia program during the recent political turmoil. Half returned to Australia while others went to calmer areas like Bali and Ambon.

Program coordinator, Dr George Quinn, said at no time did he feel students were in danger but

admits it was the most difficult period he's been through with the program.

"At the height of the crisis I was on the phone with our coordinator there every day," said Dr Quinn, Senior Lecturer in the Southeast Asia Centre.

"One day on the phone I could hear gun-fire in the background. Then a group of people burst into his home and he said he needed to get off the phone. It turned out some students had sought shelter in his house."

The Year in Indonesia program is just one of a number of study abroad programs run through the Faculty of Asian Studies, including programs to Vietnam, Thailand, Korea, India and the most popular destinations, Japan and China.

Students usually attend the program during their third year of

study and — depending on their language level — either study regular subjects with their host university or do intensive language training.

For ANU students, being in Indonesia during the end of the Soeharto era was an incredible learning experience.

"Something like this can only happen once in a lifetime," said Jennifer Howitt, another student on the program.

"You read about this kind of thing in newspapers, but when you see it, it has a profound impact."

Both Damien Locke and Jennifer Howitt are committed to returning to Indonesia to work, perhaps with non-government organisations.

"I'm just working out how to get back as soon as possible, to be a part of picking up the pieces," said Locke.

Riots spark crisis group

A group of concerned Australians, including several ANU academics, is calling on the Australian government to offer refugee status to many women of Chinese descent who were raped during the recent rioting in Indonesia.

The group has formed "Crisis Relief for Indonesian Woman" (CRI-Women) and is seeking donations and volunteers to help victims with medical and social rehabilitation.

Currently more than 400 cases of rape have been recorded around Indonesia, and more than twenty of these victims were killed, according to CRI.

The group is planning a protest in Garema Place on Monday, when they will deliver a petition for an end to violence against ethnic Chinese, Achinese, East Timorese and other minorities.

Can the UN enforce International Law?

Richard Butler AO, Executive Chairman of the United Nations Special Commission and a graduate of the ANU, recently addressed a conference organised by ANU's Centre for International Public Law. In this extract from his speech, he details the difficulty in enforcing UN Security Council resolutions on Iraq and the ramifications for international law.

Obviously, I will be talking a bit about Iraq, but my subject is one that is not only crucial to the issue of Iraq but is of far deeper and wider importance — the role, ability or willingness which I sum up in the question: can the Security Council enforce international law?

I don't think it is an exaggeration to call the time in which we live the era of the Charter of the United Nations because that utterly gifted document, a document may I say as an aside, we would find very hard to get agreement on today, but that utterly gifted document has in its concepts that lawyers had striven for centuries to codify. It was made possible, unfortunately, because of a terrible war, but it succeeded in codifying rules on how states and peoples should conduct their international relations.

Crucial amongst those rules, are things like this: the peaceful settlement of disputes. I like that one because it actually is very wise. It is wise on two counts: that is, it implicitly assumes that disputes will occur in human life. Of course that is true. But it urgently insists that the best solution to them will always be the peaceful one.

It talks about the fundamental requirement to maintain international peace and security and in this context, gives the body that we're going to be discussing in a few moments — the Security Council — the basic role.

The role of the Council is defined in the charter as "the maintenance of international peace and security". In this context the Charter asserts it is very

important that all states exercise respect for treaties and the obligations that flow from them. It also sets forth, in other places, some very fundamental rules of conduct in international relations, such as that invasions of states, as Iraq did to Kuwait in 1990, should not occur.

Central to the vision of the charter was "the maintenance of international peace and security". It gave primary responsibility for this to the Security Council. This threw up, straight away, the question of how would the Council, a small but representative or quasi-representative body of 15 states — five permanently appointed — maintain its relationship to the totality of the membership of the General Assembly.

There were obviously questions to be resolved about the relationship between the two: Article 12 says, that the General Assembly may not deal with a matter of peace and security while the Security Council is seized with it.

Going beyond this, the Charter gave the Council primary responsibility for peace and security and another unique power — it is the only body whose decisions are mandatory, who have the force of international law.

Now, for the enforcement or to ensure that the decisions that it takes are acted upon, the Security Council was given two paths of action. One under chapter VI which is entitled "Peaceful Settlement of Disputes" and the other under chapter VII of the charter which deals with enforcement.

All of the resolutions of the Security Council — with respect to Iraq's

action when it put itself into the UN's record books as being the only member state of the UN ever to invade and seek to absorb a fellow member state — all of the resolutions of the Security Council with respect to that action, the expulsion of Iraq from Kuwait and everything that flowed from it, were done under chapter VII. So they all carry with them, at least implicitly, the possibility that they may be enforced by force, sanctioned by the Council.

When the Council, in 1990 and 1991, considered the special case of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, it put together, it legislated, a series of obligations which are nothing, if not heavy. I am not saying they are not right or that they are unjust. But I am saying they are heavy. In this sense, the speciality of what Iraq did, the uniqueness of what Iraq did in invading Kuwait, was recognised, as was the revelation, when action was taken to expel it, of the very considerable quantity and quality of weapons of mass destruction that Iraq had put together.

I asked my legal adviser in New York about six months ago, in preparation for some talks in Baghdad, to do me a quick note on all of the obligations Iraq faced. He researched all the resolutions, all the legislation, put together this paper for me and, in normal sized paper, one and a half spaced, that document was 28 pages long.

The point I am making is that the law was exercised with great weight and in great detail. To back it up, of course, sanctions were imposed upon Iraq. All under chapter VII, always



Photo: CIPL

UNSCOM chairman Richard Butler with Centre for International and Public Law director Hilary Charlesworth

with the possibility that if this law wasn't adhered to, it would be enforced by military means.

But short of that, sanctions were imposed upon Iraq in terms of trade, economic and financial relations and, in particular with respect to the export of oil — all as the means of encouraging Iraq to fulfil its obligations.

What has occurred in these past eight years?

In one respect I can stand here proudly in the name of Rolf Ekeus, my predecessor and the women and men who work for UNSCOM today and say, it's been a brilliant track record. We started off facing a very substantial array, quantity and quality of weapons of mass destruction and we have located, found and destroyed the lion's share of them. It's been a very significant achievement.

As you know, within this time frame, there has also been the phenomenon of recurrent crises of which the largest one occurred in the period from November last until February 23 this year, when a mighty armed force was assembled in the Gulf ready to be used to bring Iraq back inside the law.

The Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, went to Baghdad and signed an agreement with Iraq which gave us access to places we need to be able to visit in Iraq but, above all, in my view, gave us once again, but this time at a very significant level, the promise by Iraq of full cooperation with UNSCOM.

That achievement was a stunning piece of diplomacy by Kofi Annan. The Secretary-General's achievement made possible the agreement of an accelerated program of work to deal with the remaining issues in the missile chemical and biological field.

The specified actions Iraq must take are to dismantle all ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres and all their related major parts facilities and production, and all chemical and biological weapons and facilities.

During the seven years in which we have been attempting to implement this law, the Security Council has, in fact, been confronted by plain unwillingness of this state to obey its law. This is why I pose the question: Can the Security Council enforce its law or enforce treaties?

It is why the Iraq case is of such importance, as well as for the reason of the wider battle that we are supposed to be waging (somewhat shaken by India and Pakistan) to create a tapestry of treaties under which weapons of mass destruction will be regulated: the nu-

clear non-proliferation treaty, the chemical weapons convention, the biological weapons convention.

What we've seen in the case of Iraq is something that, I suspect, provides the answer to my own question. That is, the need for the Council to act with unity. It seems that whenever the Council, especially its permanent members, are divided on an issue the first victim of such division is actually its own ability to enforce its own law.

The era of the Charter is one in which rules of law will make international relations work better and more peacefully. In my opinion, that is a deep interest, an interest which surely should be recognised, above all, by those who have great power.

There's a final reason why this question is an important one, going beyond Iraq and going beyond other contemporary issues. It is that we have developed a world, which has within it a tapestry of treaties designed to give a negative answer to the question, "Must we live in the twenty-first century awash with weapons of mass destruction?" The answer that all the world wants is, "No, we must not, we should not have to accept this".

One of the ways of ensuring that that is not the case, is through the treaty framework that has been built. That framework rests on a moral consensus that weapons of mass destruction are wrong; has political backing by governments to develop the law which then becomes the superstructure of that moral commitment and establishes an inspectorate, a verifying agency to ensure everyone is keeping the law.

One of the common characteristics of those treaties is their answer to the question, "What do you do if someone cheats and breaks the law?" The answer in all cases is: "We take it to the Security Council". This is why the question of Iraq, is not only intrinsically a major challenge to that tapestry of treaties, to the moral commitment against weapons of mass destruction but it is also important, from the point of view of the question, "Is a Security Council willing or able to enforce its own law?"

It is very important that the answer to this question be given in the affirmative. I can only say to my friends in the Council in New York that there is, and can be, no substitute for unity in the Council and for keeping alive the original idea that the great powers will share a common custodianship for the maintenance of peace and security, and for respect for the obligations of international law.

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