

Mixed reaction to Faculties review

By SEAN DALY

The ANU's review of all its Faculties, announced last week, has received a mixed reaction with Deans welcoming the plan, the Students' Association greeting it with caution and the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) denouncing the process.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Deane Terrell, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Richards, announced the plan to review the Faculties of Arts, Asian Studies, Engineering and Information Technology, Law and Science, last Monday after it had been approved by Council.

Citing the Faculties' deepening economic problems due to falling enrolments and reduced Government funding, Prof Terrell said the review would look at enrolment trends to predict future demand for courses and attempt to identify the best structures for the ANU to be able to meet those demands.

The review, to be headed by Prof Richards, is expected to be

completed by August. Prof Terrell said that the University Executive would move rapidly to implement its recommendations, however, he stressed that current students' courses would not be affected and it remained committed to providing high-quality programs in Arts, Asian Studies, Engineering and Information Technology, Law and Science.

Prof Richards said that the review had been welcomed by all the Faculty Deans and that the Faculty of Arts had also been reassured by the Council's commitment to liberal and general degree programs.

He said the four-month timeframe for the review was tight but it reflected the Council's view that it must be done quickly.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will be assisted by the president of the ANU Students' Association Helen Stitt, the president of the Post Graduate and Research Students Association Simon Niemeyer, the Chairman of the Board of the Faculties Professor Ric Pashley, and two

external members. Prof Richards said he expected to approach possible external advisers this week.

Ms Stitt said the Students' Association would not tolerate any further pressure on staff or students and was concerned to ensure that, if there were changes, worthwhile interim arrangements were put in place for students.

"I think an important thing that needs to be kept in mind throughout this whole review is not just the future but the impact it will have on staff and present students."

Ms Stitt said that, while she was pleased that students had been given an opportunity to participate in the review, she was concerned about the speed with which the process was to take place.

NTEU ANU branch president Doug Kelly said the union felt it should have been consulted prior to last Monday's announcement to all staff and that it was being cut out of any decision-making process.

"NTEU wants to settle with man-

agement this issue of consultation; we believe that the current enterprise agreement binds management to genuine consultation in advance of such decisions. We want that consultation to take place and we want to make representations over the terms of reference, the constitution of the committee and the way the review is going to happen."

Mr Kelly said there were vital interests of general and academic staff that were being ignored.

"We are offended that students have their rightful place on the steering committee while staff are left out in the cold."

Prof Richards said Council's announcement of the review made it clear that there would be wide consultation and the process would be conducted under change-management principles.

He said that press reports of the review announcement which focused on possible job losses were premature and alarmist.

"We simply don't know what the outcomes from the review will be. Therefore, it is too early to talk about job losses, or whether there will be no loss of jobs. What is clear is that we have to act now to ensure that our undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs maintain quality, breadth and relevance as we move into the next few years. The difficult funding situation, and the accrued deficits in some Faculties, must be seen in the light of that goal."

Prof Richards said he would provide all staff with as regular reports as he could.

"The process has to be open and consultative," he said.

Parliament denying basic right to protest

By TANIA CUTTING

The democratic rights of Australians to protest at Parliament House and be heard by their political representatives have become second fiddle to administrative convenience, according to ANU social scientist Kurt Iveson.

Mr Iveson, who is undertaking a PhD study on public space in Australia at the Urban Research Program in the Research School of Social Sciences, believes the regulations governing protests at Parliament House have become so prescriptive for the sake of efficient management that protesting has become more of a media exercise than one of democracy.

"I think there has been a very calculated attempt by the Presiding Officers and the National Capital Authority to limit long-term protests which seek to target the public directly, and to stop attempts to engage politicians directly through protest at Parliament House," Mr Iveson said.

"They have assumed that protest is only media driven, and so while they will tolerate protest, the time and space for protest is limited."

Protesters wanting to make a point directly to politicians have had to resort to a range of unsanctioned or imaginative tactics to get not only a 10-second quote on television but to directly engage with their political representatives, Mr Iveson said.

Knee-jerk reactions to past protests such as the week-long loggers blockade in 1995, during which logging trucks encircled Parliament House, have also made other sorts of protests such as last year's peaceful chain-of-hands protest almost impossible.

"There was a bit of a panic after the loggers' protest and a realisation that the Parliament is very vulnerable to

that sort of protest activity. New regulations were introduced to stop protesters encircling Parliament House," Mr Iveson said.

"But the regulation introduced by the Presiding Officers was not necessary. It was not a lack of regulations that prevented security forces from taking action. Traffic laws and public order laws could have been enforced, but were not, in order to prevent a confrontation."

Apart from the guidelines, which are not actually laws but are legally enforceable, Mr Iveson believes the design and construction of Parliament House has also conspired to redefine democratic protest.

"There was a very conscious effort in the design to articulate a space for the public that would be manageable and separate from the space for politicians. That notion has flowed through into how the place is managed, so that now we have a specified area (200 metres in front of the main public entrance) where protest can happen that is distant from the politicians and the public," Mr Iveson said.

He said that the managers of Parliament House feel they have met their obligations to facilitate protest by providing this designated space, but this restriction frustrates people who feel that in order to get a point across they need to protest in other areas around Parliament. Regardless of how peaceful or orderly such protests are, they still contravene the guidelines.

"If a protester walks over the top of Parliament House with a flag or stands outside the ministerial entrance with a banner, they are not disturbing the peace or breaking any other existing criminal laws. I can't see why those kinds of protests should be proscribed."

Return to southern latitudes

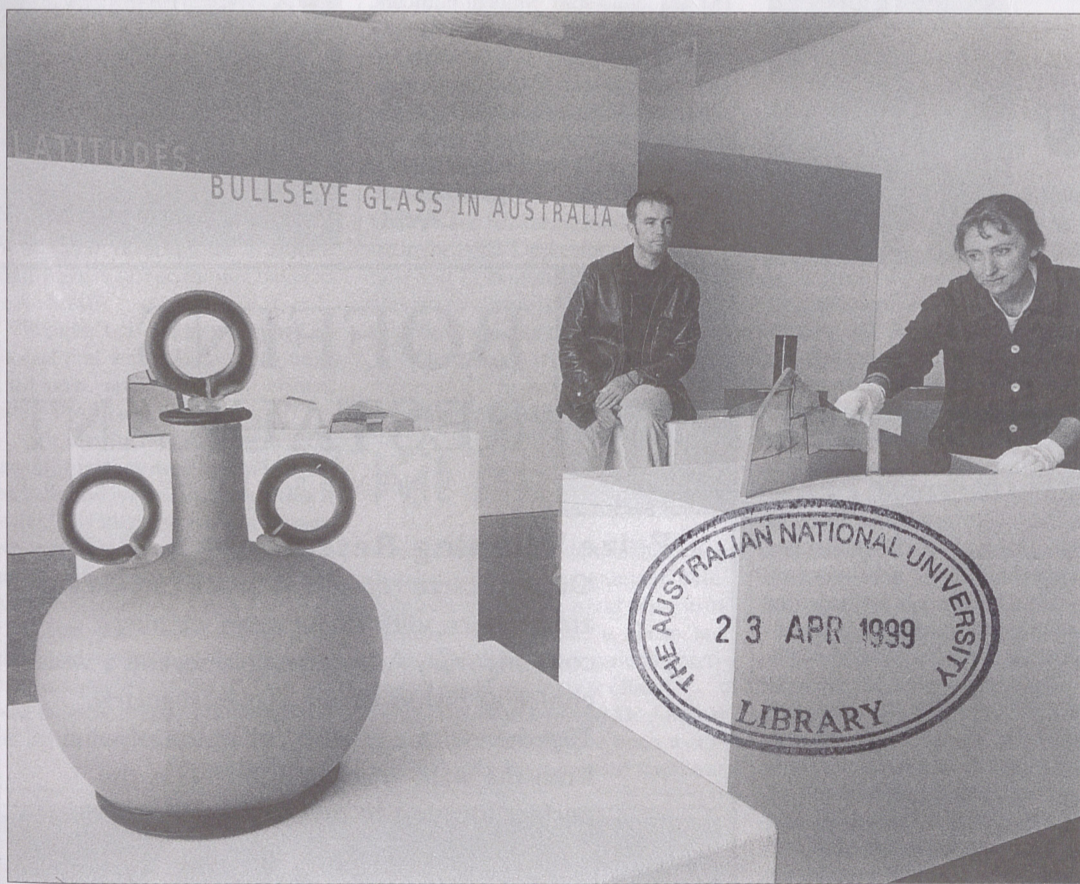


Photo: John Tucker

CSA Glass Workshop lecturer, Kirstie Rea, sets up one of her pieces for the recent Latitudes: Bullseye Glass in Australia exhibition, watched by graduate Scott Chasling whose work is in the foreground.

In 1995 and 1997 the Canberra School of Art's Glass Workshop hosted workshops to allow artists to experiment with a new type of glass, developed by the Bullseye Glass Company in Portland, Oregon.

The Bullseye glass can be used in both blown and kiln-formed techniques allowing

unusual and colourful works. Artworks from the workshops formed the exhibition *Latitudes II* which last year was shown to great acclaim at a Glass Artists Society conference in Japan and a special Bullseye Glass exhibition in the United States.

The exhibition has now returned to Australia under the name *LATI-*

TUDES: Bullseye Glass in Australia and the CSA Gallery is the first venue to host the work.

The tour also includes workshops by artists to demonstrate new techniques.

The exhibition will continue until Friday 23 April before it moves on to Queensland in June and South Australia in October.

Decision over Library funding will add to decline

The ANU Library is perhaps the most important research resource in the whole university. And yet, at a time when other parts of the university receive increased funding, the 1999–2001 budget, recently presented in the *ANU Reporter* (10 March), shows that funding for the Library will only be maintained “in dollar terms”.

There is some hedging for currency fluctuations, but only for 2001. But there is no funding to offset inflation (yes, it still exists), there is no funding to offset the above-inflation rise in the prices of books and serials, and there is no funding to offset rises in salaries. So, when those cost increases eventuate, the long decline of the library will continue and worsen — the decline, that is, in acquisitions of books and serials. Many serials have been cancelled in recent years, and even more will disappear.

Also, there is the risk of a further decline in staff numbers, in a library that already seems to be understaffed. This means that in real terms the funding will not be maintained, and it would

have been more honest to say so.

In the Chifley Library, the 40 shelves reserved for the books most recently acquired used to be full. Of late they are not. At last count, about three out of 40 had any books on them. The rest were empty.

This is not how a university library should be run. This is not the way to protect, even less to enhance, the reputation of the ANU as a place conducive to research.

A previous *Reporter* has much about the Humanities Research Centre and the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, but how can they thrive without the maintenance of adequate research resources?

Thomas Mautner

Department of Philosophy

P.S. I have heard a rumour that the real decision-makers at the top of the ANU administration are genuinely puzzled about the book-reading inclinations of some academic staff and students, and regard it as a rather quaint kind of activity. If that is the case, it may help explain what is now happening.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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- Include date and page number of references to the *ANU Reporter*.
- Sign it and give phone number and full address details.

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VC's VIEW

Fostering innovative teaching

This month I welcomed the Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development (CUTSD) to the University for a meeting that was part of the Committee's program of developing its links with universities. I was especially pleased to welcome my colleague the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Professor John Hay, here in his new role as Chair of CUTSD.

The Committee is charged with identifying and promoting good teaching, learning and assessment practices in universities, fostering innovation in higher education teaching and providing staff development opportunities for academic and administrative staff. It reports to the minister through the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

Those issues should be central issues to any university committed to teaching and a part of its strategic focus. Innovation must be not only the responsibility of individuals but also of organisational units within universities.

The interconnection of teaching practices with the overall experience of the student is a key contributor to the standing of the institution and hence to its long-term well-being. Student expectations have evolved with changes in their social and technological environments and the skills they bring to their university education are markedly different from the skills most of their teachers brought to their own university educations. Updating our own skills is an increasingly routine expectation in terms of our professional activities as a result.

Information technology has changed rapidly. We are right in the middle of one of the great revolutions in that area. The possibilities it brings for improved and innovative teaching methods and delivery are exciting and demanding.

Our tertiary pedagogues must be in tune with developments in one of the fastest-moving areas of modern life. Universities must respond innovatively.

Collaboration is an essential ingredient. In collaborative exchanges, the energies are released that give us new strategic focus. We must assess and respond to the developmental needs of our teaching staff. Each institution will respond according to its own situation and the responses may well be every bit as diverse as are the institutions themselves.

The Centre for Educational Development and Academic Methods (CEDAM) at the ANU has been developing some important new responses to the need for new directions.

The Learning Studio is now a reality. It has been a collaborative exercise within the University, with input from The Faculties Resource Group, Facilities and Services and Information Technology Services. Further details about how academics are exploring the opportunities of this facility can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Participants in CEDAM's professional education programs come from across the University and across all levels of appointment. Many projects are carried out in collaboration with Departments, Centres and Schools, on issues they have generated. This

Review disappointment

James Jupp's review (*ANU Reporter*, 24 March) would perhaps have been more credible had he not created the impression that the Howard Government has reduced immigration.

Anyone with an on-line computer can access the Australian Bureau of Statistics Web site that shows net immigration has climbed steadily from 30,000 in 1993 to 106,000 last year.

Although the Government's formal immigration program has reduced slightly, the actual number of immigrants has continued to grow. As an ANU graduate I am dismayed that Dr Jupp appears to have used weasel words to disguise a reality of which, as an expert on immigration, he must surely be aware.

I am also disappointed that he seeks to discredit a group like Australians for an Ecologically Sustainable Population (AESP) by using words like “extreme” and “unduly excited”. I would hardly expect Bob Carr, now re-elected with a large majority as Premier of NSW, to be described as extreme, yet this is what he said to the National Conference of AESP in 1997: “We've got to dispose once and for all of the notion that Australia is an underpopulated continent, an empty continent waiting to be filled up. We're not in that position. In Australia the pressure of population is having a very marked effect on our capacity to provide a secure environment capable of sustaining the incomes of our people in the years ahead.”

Instead of acknowledging that

AESP represents a mainstream and respectable body of opinion, Dr Jupp uses more weasel words to insinuate that AESP is somehow associated with One Nation and Pauline Hanson's infamous “swamped by Asians” diatribe.

Had he bothered to check, he would find that AESP rejects any selection of immigrants based on race as part of the aims and objectives spelled out in its Constitution — and that its immigration policy was identical with that of the Australian Democrats at the last election. Further, Dr Jupp says Australia's population will rise by at least 4 million in the next 20 years, “whatever happens”. The Australian Bureau of Statistics does indeed forecast a rise from the present population of nearly 19 million to 23 million by 2010 — but that projection assumes a net migration gain of 100,000 per annum over that period.

If net migration is lower, at just below 50,000 as the Australian Academy of Science advocated in 1994, the population will only reach 23 million in the year 2040, and will then become stable. What the Academy regards as reasonable, however, is clearly not what Dr Jupp regards as reasonable.

Tom Gosling
(BA, ANU, 1968)

Matter of fact

In the “Fact File” for the Faculty of Arts feature in the 17 February edition, one reads: “According to the 1996 Annual Report, the Faculty has about 151 academic staff. Student numbers were around 2100”. Past tense for students, present for staff. Even for survivors from the 151 it is saddening to be reminded of this figure; for readers outside the Faculty it could be misleading at the beginning of 1999.

Roger Hillman
CAMEL

Correction

In a photograph on page six of the 7 April edition of the *ANU Reporter*, Dr Hong Zhu was incorrectly identified as Dr Shao-Wu Zhang. *ANU Reporter* staff apologise for the mistake.

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Deane Terrell
CEDAM focus, Pages 6 & 7

VC calls for \$350m research fund boost

Australia needs to get serious and increase basic funding for research by \$350 million, if it is to keep up with other countries according to a research paper released by Vice-Chancellor Professor Deane Terrell.

The paper, prepared at the ANU and supported by the Business Higher Education Round Table (BHERT), argues that national priorities for research based on Australia's strengths should be developed, and that research training at the highest level should be fostered.

Prof Terrell said he was concerned that Australia was not keeping up with other leading OECD and Asian countries.

"When you look at countries that we naturally think of as our competitors and collaborators in basic research, they have, over recent times, clearly invested strongly in basic research. Whether it is the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Japan, Taiwan or Singapore — they're all making very major steps to get their basic investment up. We seem to be moving in the opposite direction."

"In basic research, you not only compete, you often collaborate. And if you fail to keep up in your investment in basic research, you're not regarded as a suitable collaborator."

Prof Terrell said that keeping up our strength in basic research would lead to innovation and consequently many employment opportunities in the 21st century.

Major opportunities created by new technologies, especially in bio-science and information sciences, would have major economic benefits for Australia.

"We can't afford to wait until it's obvious that we've failed. We have to act now, and that is the critical thing," Prof Terrell said.

"We see the other countries recognising that they must invest in basic research, and we're concerned that if we don't do likewise we won't compete and more than that, in some cases where we have to, we won't be able to collaborate."

"If you don't have outstanding people and proper facilities the other countries quickly realise that you are not a suitable venue for collaboration, let alone competition."

TERESA BELCHER

ANU school science program wins award

By TERESA BELCHER

Examining lizards, isolating DNA and growing plants are just some of the activities in store for primary school students taking part in an ACT initiative by the ANU's Division of Botany and Zoology in the Faculty of Science.

The program, BISACT (Biological Sciences in the ACT) is an outreach program that aims to foster positive role models in science and show that science can be fun and interesting through biology, the study of living things.

"We hope to promote the 'biological awareness' of school students," Dr Murali Nayudu, the program coordinator said. "It's basically taking biology on the road."

BISACT began over 10 years ago when Dr Nayudu and Senior Technical Officer Mr Terry Murphy from the Division of Botany and Zoology, received enthusiastic support from the Head of Division and staff and students to run the outreach program.

The program offers support to the existing school science curriculum by providing students with "hands-on biology" activities, experiments, short talks, nature walks, discussion and debate.

"During the debate they have some really fantastic topics like 'Should there be animals in circuses?', 'Should we allow animal testing?', and 'Should long line fishing be allowed?'," Dr Nayudu said.

"The focus is to make it interesting through hands-on experiences, keeping the science content but making it at a level the students can understand."

The group recently won an annual award for services to education from the ACT Department of Education and Community Services. This was the first time it had been awarded to people outside the Department.

"The reason why I think it is so successful is because we conduct the program to a fairly high level of

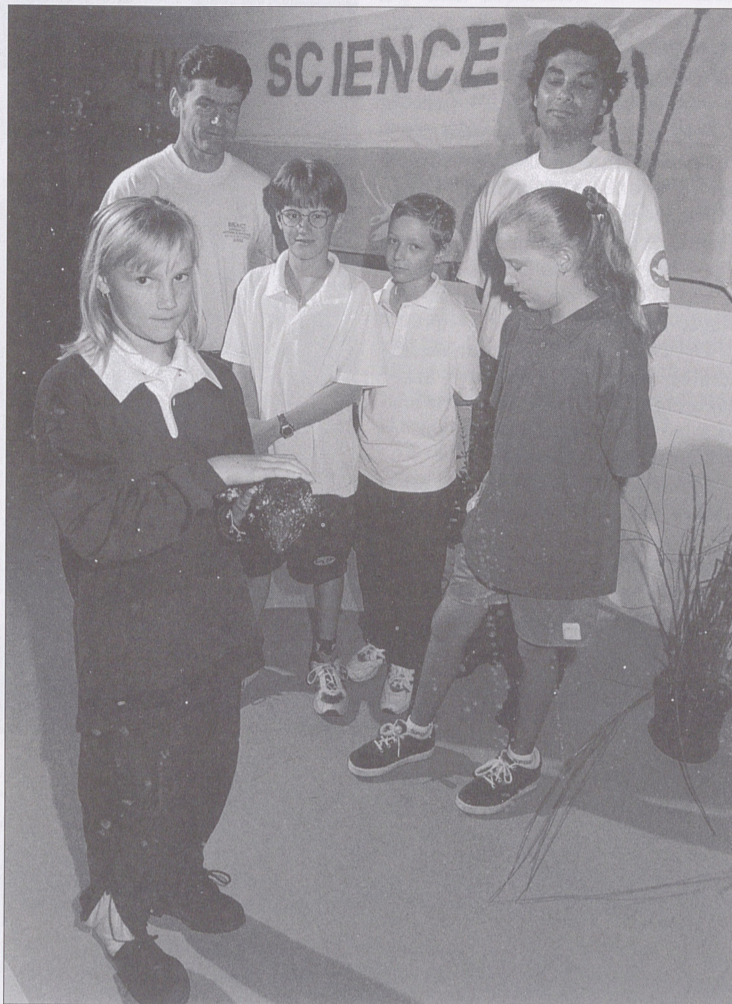


Photo: John Tucker

Living science: Students from Gold Creek School, Gungahlin, get a feel for science from BISACT's Terry Murphy (left) and Murali Nayudu.

intensity and we offer a good stimulating variety of activities for the kids," Mr Murphy said.

"A lot of teachers haven't done science recently in their educational background, so what we are able to do is bring in a whole lot of current resources and take them out to the classroom," Dr Nayudu said. "The kids learn a lot and at the end of it, the teachers learn a lot too."

The group is applying for funding

from the ACT Department of Education and Community Services to extend the program with a web-based service.

The ultimate aim of BISACT is to help students to better consider biological issues in the future, break down the apparent "ivory-tower image" of scientists and promote a better understanding of biology as an interesting area of future study and employment.

Kit may help treat Multiple Sclerosis

A new diagnostic method for detecting damage to the nervous system by Multiple Sclerosis (MS), could assist in its treatment and provide a cheap and accessible method that general practitioners could use in their clinics.

Dr Ted Maddess and Dr Andrew James from RSBS have been working on improving a method known as

a Visual Evoked Potential to rapidly and accurately identify MS-induced lesions to nerves.

MS is caused by inflammation of different parts of nerves in the body. After the inflammation occurs, tiny plaques are formed in the nerve, destroying the insulative material around the nerve fibres. These plaques cause a slowing of the conduction of nerve information along the nerve that leads to loss of motor skills and ultimately the inability to regulate things like breathing and other life support.

"What we are proposing is a new kind of Visual Evoked Potential," Dr Maddess said. "A stimulus is presented to the eye and the time it takes for the visual information to get from the eye to the visual part of the brain is measured. We can obtain measurements of the decline of nerve conduction in different parts of the optic nerve and different parts of the visual brain and we can do that simultaneously."

"At the moment the best diagnostic test for MS is to use Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the brain.

This images the plaques along the nerve. Unfortunately it doesn't image small plaques well. So even though it is a good technique, it still misses about 10 per cent, in other words it has about 90 per cent diagnostic accuracy."

The MRI instrument is expensive and patients usually need to visit a specialist to be tested. "One of the problems now is that people don't go back for follow-up MRIs to see if their treatment is effective or not effective, because of the expense," Dr Maddess said.

"With the Visual Evoked Potential, the measurement error is improved because all the measurements are taken at the same time and you may be able to spot lesions to one part of say one optic nerve when another part is not affected," Dr Maddess said. "It is also much cheaper than MRI."

"It would be very useful for a front-line physician to be able to have an instrument which is almost as good or better than a more expensive instrument that they could use in their office."

TERESA BELCHER

IN BRIEF

ANU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Deane Terrell, has written to all Federal parliamentarians setting out how the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment Bill 1999* will adversely affect the way in which ANU delivers student services. The Bill, currently before Parliament, is aimed at ending the way in which general student fees are currently collected by Australian universities. Last week the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee said it had obtained legal advice that suggested parts of the Bill were unconstitutional.

A new extension to the L.F. Crisp Building was last Friday named the P. A. P. Moran Building after the late Emeritus Professor Pat Moran who was a distinguished statistician and an ANU staff member for many years. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Deane Terrell, officially named the building and unveiled the plaque.

Making science "sexy" is one of the aims of the Australian Science Festival which begins in Canberra on 3 May. The Director of the ANU-based National Centre for Public Awareness of Science, Dr Sue Stocklmayer, said the festival was the only event in Australia that appealed to a diverse audience of adults and children. Dr Stocklmayer, Mike Gore from Questacon and John Woodland from CSIRO Double Helix, assisted in the Indian-themed launch of the 1999 festival poster and program on 13 April, during which ACT Chief Minister Kate Carnell draped a python around her neck and sat on a bed of nails.

Deputy Prime Minister and Trade Minister, Mr Tim Fischer spoke at a dinner at the ANU's University House on Tuesday 13 April to celebrate the establishment and acknowledge the sponsors of the Rajiv Gandhi Chair of South Asian Economics. The Rajiv Gandhi Research Chair has been sponsored in perpetuity to consolidate the long-term future of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies and the Asia Pacific School of Economics and Management's research work on the economic development of this region. The appointed professor will help to deepen and strengthen the relationship between Australia and the dynamic countries of South Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives and Bhutan.

PARSA meeting

A special General Meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Students' Association Inc will be held on Tuesday 4 May in the Common Room of University House, at 5.30pm.

The purpose of the meeting is to decide upon the continued affiliation of PARSA with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations.

More information is available by calling (02) 6249 4187 or from <http://www.anu.edu.au/parsa/disaffiliation>

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Bat protestors cause headache for ANU expert

By TERESA BELCHER

Bat rehabilitators have been hindering wildlife management work in the northern NSW town of Maclean according to an ANU bat expert contracted to move a colony out of a once-thriving patch of remnant rainforest.

A flying fox colony numbering more than 50,000 has been using the 1.1-hectare patch adjacent to the Maclean High School and TAFE as its camp.

The NSW Department of Education and Training has asked Dr Chris Tidemann, from the School of Resource Management and Environmental Science, to help frighten the bats to another campsite.

The Department said the bats have destroyed the rainforest and extreme amounts of bat droppings present a potential disease risk to the children at the school.

"The problem is a very simple one really," Dr Tidemann said. "The patch is far too small for the bats and the patch to coexist, and the fact that it's up against the school creates yet other problems."

In the past, the locals were actively scaring bats from the area to preserve the last few remnants of the rainforest.

However, 10 years ago, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service introduced a policy that long-standing flying fox camps must not be moved. Since then the number of bats has drastically increased in the camp.

Dr Tidemann believes the sheer weight of the bats (each bat weighs 500-600 grams) is destroying the forest.

"In a very short time, the bats are going to have to go anyway because the trees will have fallen down. The trees are either dead or dying — they are just clinging to life. There's no canopy, so it is no longer a rainforest technically, because you need a continuous canopy to be a rainforest."

PhD's cancer research wins award

By TERESA BELCHER

An ANU PhD student's research efforts into hereditary colon cancer were recognised with an award at an international conference held in Australia last month.

Ms Robyn Otway, a final-year PhD student, working with Dr Maija Kohonen-Corish at the Cancer Genetics Laboratory of the John Curtin School of Medical Research, was the inaugural recipient of the Young Investigator Award — presented by the International Collaborative Group on Hereditary Nonpolyposis Colorectal Cancer.

Cancer is caused by gene alterations called mutations in specific genes. These mutations can occur sporadically and normally cells are able to repair them. Sometimes they are missed and cancers are formed, particularly later in life. Hereditary forms of cancer develop at a younger

"So my stance is its better to be pro-active and send them somewhere sooner rather than later, whilst there's still some shred of a chance of revegetating the rainforest — but you're talking about 150 or more years for something like that to regrow."

Dr Tidemann and local members of the community have been frightening bats with noise to encourage them to permanently move to another area.

No bats are harmed by this procedure, and mothers take their flightless young. Bat rehabilitators, however, were at the site protesting after unsuccessfully trying to stop the work through the courts.

"People who love bats to bits but don't understand anything at all about wildlife management — that's the problem," Dr Tidemann said.

"There's this mythology that has grown up among people who rear young flying foxes because flying fox Mums die for a variety of reasons," Dr Tidemann said.

"They are incredibly cuddly little animals — they're charismatic in the extreme, they have big eyes and little smiley faces — and they fall in love with them. They have whipped up this massive frenzy of outrage about this evil Tidemann going in there and moving these bats."

"I've spent a lot of time working with flying foxes and I do have pretty serious scientific credentials in particular in relation to the management of them and yet I've had these amateurs arguing with me," Dr Tidemann said.

He said that the issue had necessitated a big cost to the public purse over what was really a storm in a teacup.

"The problem is really very simple — the bats have to go somewhere else because they can't stay where they are. Quite apart from any of the school problems — they are killing the habitat."

age because one mutant copy of a gene is inherited.

Carriers of the mutated gene for Hereditary Nonpolyposis Colorectal Cancer are at a high risk of developing cancer as early as their late teens.

"I am working on detecting mutations in Australian families in these genes, and we are collaborating with a group from Melbourne who offer pre-symptomatic testing for these families," Ms Otway said.

"We are also looking at improving the methods which we use to detect the mutations and then combining all the information to try and determine how these gene alterations lead to cancer."

At present, members of families at risk have a biannual colonoscopy to look for the cancer from the age of 25.

"If you haven't inherited the mutation in the gene, you don't need



Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

Students cycle around Australia for overseas aid

Two university students, one from the ANU, have embarked on a cycling journey around Australia in an attempt to raise money to alleviate the chronic food shortage in Indonesia.

Mia Hoogenboom (left), who has taken a year off her studies in the Faculty of Asian Studies, and Fiona Collins, a University of Sydney student, are hoping to raise more than \$500,000 on the nine-month cycle which will take them to every major centre in the country.

The pair set off from Sydney on 28 February and stopped briefly at the ANU last month for a fundraising lunch organised by Asian Studies' students.

The women were inspired to undertake the arduous cycle after spending a year in Indonesia as part of their studies.

With the help of non-government organisations in Indonesia, they have established a network of 11 centres to

distribute food bought from funds raised during the 16,000km cycle, which they expect to finish in November.

They are supported on the trip by a mobile education unit that has information about their effort and the food crisis in Indonesia.

Their progress can be monitored, and donations made, via their Web site at <http://www.indosat.net.id/ozindo-project/>

EVENTS

Prof Paul Bourke, Professor of History at RASSS, will give an address on *Some Thoughts on the Future of Universities in Australia* at University House on Wednesday 28 April at 6pm. The night is hosted by the University of Melbourne Alumni, ACTNetwork. Tickets are \$25 each, including dinner. For details contact Ross De Vere on 6258 2486.

Australian Science Festival, 30 April - 9 May:

- The Mount Stromlo Observatory will be holding an open day on Sunday 2 May from 10am to 4pm. All telescopes and workshops will be open for inspection, displays set up and astronomers on hand. Entry by gold coin donation.

- The ANU will once again have a display at ACTEW's Amazing World of Science at the National Convention Centre, Civic. Open 9am-4pm 5-7 May, 9am-5pm 8-9 May. Admission is free or a gold-coin donation on Sat/Sun for adults.

- Dr Sue Stockmayer from the ANU's National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science will present *May The Force Be With You*, a look at electricity at the Sutherland Theatre, National Convention Centre, on 5 and 7 May at 10am. Tickets are \$3 each, bookings on 6205 0588.

- A forum entitled *Can We Handle The 21st Century?* will be held at Llewellyn Hall, Canberra School of Music, on Friday 7 May at 7.30pm. ABC Radio National's Robyn Williams discusses the environment, the brain and our future with author Douglas Adams, musician and Australian Conservation Council President Peter Garrett, chemistry Professor Ben Sellinger and *New Scientist* editor Alun Anderson. Free entry, but bookings are essential. Call ANU Ticketing on 6249 5491.

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Academic's informative and moving life story

IN an academic pond as small as Australia, writing book reviews can be tricky because one is apt to know the author, perhaps quite well. Reviewing an autobiography compounds the difficulty because the subject matter is the author herself, not some academic project from which it might be possible to develop a little distance. In this case, I was marginally less apprehensive about the task because I had read drafts of some chapters several years ago, so I already knew that I liked the book. Besides, much of the narrative involves people and places I know, so it carries an inherent interest for me as a reader.

Autobiography is a distinctive genre requiring the right balance of flair and human interest. An eventful life story poorly told makes for a bad read; but if the account is too smooth, we may find it hard to identify with the story-teller. Thelma Hunter relates her life of courage, struggle and passion with authenticity and candour and occasional flashes of literary grace.

She has already positioned herself four times in the title and subtitle: a daughter, a child of Beauvoir, an émigrée and a scholar. These aspects of her self interweave throughout the book, amplified in adult life by the addition of other significant roles: wife and mother, and later widow. From adolescence on, Thelma is dogged by episodes (some quite prolonged) of severe, disabling depression which at times threaten to become another role.

This un-dutiful daughter escaped from a domineering, abusive father in her teens, and struggled for many of the subsequent decades with the effects of estrangement from her family and her ethnic and "Old World" heritage. The account of her guilt and grief following the death of her

NOT A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER: THE PERSONAL STORY OF A MIGRANT ACADEMIC



Thelma Hunter

Charnwood, ACT, Ginninderra Press, 1999. \$22

mother is particularly poignant, and she is unflinching in describing the toxic effects of having grown up with a passive, ailing mother and an abusive father. One of five children of Italian migrant parents, her earliest memories of life in tenement Glasgow are appropriately ambiguous: which violent incident happened to her, which to her older sister? In retrospect, she is uncertain, but the vividness of her recollection shows the enduring harms of childhood abuse, whether as witness or victim.

Strangely, apart from her father's brutality, young Thelma seems to be afraid of nothing. She is clearly an intelligent, rebellious child who grows into an adventurous, non-conforming woman. She takes lovers; goes AWOL from the Auxiliary Territorial Service and stows away on a ship to France; gets married while at university when few fellow students are doing so; works part time on her PhD before it was the fashion; and is determined to be both a professional and a wife/mother at a time when role models were few and far between.

ANU readers will particularly enjoy her keenly observed account of the University in the 1960s and '70s. Thelma tells an unsentimental story, but it is difficult not to feel a little nostalgic when she describes her first year of full-time teaching politics at ANU (in 1965) in these words: 'There are a few periods in life that are so precious that you want to bottle them up and uncork them from time to time to

recall the perfume of it all.'

A new member of faculty in 1999 would, I suspect, be unlikely to recall their initiation to contemporary university teaching in such terms.

Two conflicts run through the book: the confusion and pain caused by her chronic, relapsing depression; and the exhausting struggle to do right by both her academic ambitions and her beloved family. Stories like Thelma's do not resolve such conflicts, but the telling may relieve some of the alienation for those who continue to encounter these difficul-

ties. Combining paid work and family life is still arduous for all but the domestically irresponsible, and living with depression is still hard, pharmacotherapy notwithstanding. I was particularly struck by the fact that she was devastated but not depressed following her husband's death when she was not yet 40 and had growing children.

For me, this illustrates the significant difference between severe depression and an intelligible though excruciating grief, in her case made more painful by the inability of many around her to bear witness to her pain and loss. This social squeamishness also persists and compounds the suffering of the bereaved who are, ultimately, all of us.

Like most autobiographies, this one ends somewhat inconclusively. She does not update us on 'the latest'

in her personal life, apparently a choice to preserve her privacy which one can hardly begrudge. Nor does she recite the most recent triumphs and tribulations of the ANU. Either task would be fruitless anyway, since by the time the book comes out, whatever she said would be obsolete. Instead, she reflects on what she has covered and finishes — as honestly as she has begun — in the midst of an ongoing life.

The life story of this un-dutiful daughter of ANU has been a long time coming.

It will make informative and moving reading for ANU old-timers and newcomers alike, and for many women and men who have no connections with this University.

Dorothy Broom

National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health

Postal service revamped



Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

Post haste: TNT International Mail Australasia general manager Terry Paull (left), Mail Room manager Scott Patterson and ANU Purchasing manager Brian Burke with the new mail vans.

Noticed those bright new TNT vans around campus? They are the most obvious sign of a revamp of the University's mail service.

TNT was awarded the contract to handle the 30,000 pieces of mail the ANU sends and receives each week, taking over from Australia Post.

The change has meant the mail is no longer taken off campus, but processed and distributed from the mailroom on Garran Road.

It has also meant the welcome return to twice-daily pick-ups and deliveries throughout the University.

ANU Purchasing manager, Brian Burke, said the university was one of the ACT's biggest mail

destinations and the contract was worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Mr Burke said that, while electronic mail was increasingly being used throughout the campus, problems with software compatibility levels, causing difficulties in opening documents attached to email, meant there was still a place for the paper variety.

In consultation with the university, TNT has developed a world-class "Mail Management System" to handle the campus correspondence.

The program has been so successful that the company is now marketing the idea to other universities and potential overseas markets.

WHO WROTE IT?

He knew that something unexpected might happen, and he hardly dared to hope that they would pass without fearful adventure over those great tall mountains with lonely peaks and valleys where no king ruled. They did not. All was well until one day they met a thunderstorm — more than a thunderstorm, a thunder-battle. You know how terrific a really big thunderstorm can be down in the land and in a river-valley; especially at times when two great thunderstorms meet and clash. More terrible still are thunder and light-

ning in the mountains at night, when storms come up from the East and West and make war.

Michael Walker, from the Theoretical Physics Department, RSPHysSE, won last issue's Who Wrote It, identifying the excerpt from *The Shawshank Redemption* by Stephen King. The first entry identifying the above piece and its author, drawn after the close of entries on Tuesday, 27 May, will receive a \$30 voucher from University House.

Staff awards nominations

Nominations have opened for the 1999 Council Medals for General Staff Excellence, which are presented at Conferring of Degrees ceremonies.

The awards, which aim to recognise and encourage outstanding contributions from teams or individual members of the general staff of the university, were established following a recommendation of the 50th Anniversary working party. The inaugural awards were presented in 1997.

Nominations of teams or individual general staff members may be made by a supervisor, colleague, student, union or member of the wider community.

At its meeting this month the ANU Council endorsed some changes to the awards recommended by the selection committee for last year's awards.

The changes mean that full and part-time members of the general staff are eligible for nomination. In previous awards only people who had been employed at the ANU for at least five years were eligible.

Nominations will be assessed on one or more of the following criteria:

- consistent and outstanding performance at work in one or more areas of the University
- significant innovation in quality of service and/or demonstrated improvement in work practices arising out of the initiative of the staff member/team
- outstanding service or contribution, beyond expectation or requirement, to enhancing the University's work and/or study environment
- assistance in outreach to the community on behalf of the University, or as an individual or team, in a way which reflects favourably on the University

Up to five awards, of \$1,000 and a commemorative medal, will be made. If a team wins an award, each member will receive a medal and an equal share of the \$1,000.

Nominations close on Friday 4 June 1999. Forms and details about the Awards are available from Jill Brumpton on extension 2208 or email: Jill.Brumpton@anu.edu.au.

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Responding to emerging academic concerns

The Centre for Educational Development and Academic Methods (CEDAM) program is constantly being adapted so as to be responsive to emerging academic concerns and the University's strategic directions; however the integrating theme remains that of collaborative educational development.

Whether we in CEDAM engage with colleagues from the Faculties, Institute of the Arts or the Institute of Advanced Studies, in consultations, workshops or seminars, or in working on projects — we are

always exchanging ideas and developing strategies for enhancing academic practice and exploring new possibilities in what is an open-ended reflective conversation.

This conversation includes all members of the University community and particularly students. We value student input into our programs. Not only do we arrange gaining student feedback on teaching through ANUSET, students present in our seminars and advise on projects. Their voices are to be heard in a recent Centre publication, *A Collection of Student Stories about Learning*

in a *Technological Era*; and currently CEDAM is preparing a project to survey first-year students about their on-campus experience.

There are many other conversations: some with academics with leadership responsibilities who are looking to strengthen their skills for managing change; others with early career academics facing an uncertain future and seeking support for career development and with academic women seeking an opportunity to reflect on their special concerns.

Such conversations have led us to begin the modularisation of

our professional education program, providing more flexible pathways as well as opportunities for accreditation. For those seeking a professional qualification in university teaching, a seminar series and action research project articulates into the UNSW Graduate Program in Higher Education.

The challenge of doing things differently and using IT appropriately in an increasingly competitive, globalised educational environment demands that our conversations are critically reflective, open to ideas and experience from other contexts, and



informed by international developments in pedagogy and academic practice.

Margot Pearson
Director, CEDAM

Centre looks at evaluating the postgraduate experience

By TANIA CUTTING

For many professionals, reflecting on and evaluating performance is crucial to ensure that they are doing their jobs properly. In a university, reflective practice — and specifically evaluation — is used by teaching academics to establish how well they get their message across.

ANUSET, the ANU Standardised Evaluation of Teaching, is one instrument that academics use as a tool for evaluating their performance in

the classroom. The questionnaire asks students to summarise their learning experience, telling lecturers about the effectiveness and impact of their teaching.

ANUSET is a well-established, widely accepted — yet still evolving — tool used at the undergraduate level.

Now the Centre for Educational Development and Academic Methods (CEDAM) has begun to explore the postgraduate experience. Working with the Graduate School, CEDAM is try-

ing to determine how students and supervisors can get useful feedback on the postgraduate research experience. They are hoping to provide strategies that will give accurate and reliable information about the learning experience of ANU's research and coursework students.

"We are at the point now where we are developing strategies on the ground using the knowledge of the research that has been done so far and piloting strategies, one by one,

with the intention of developing the ability to generate a more standardised evaluative process for research supervision," CEDAM's Dr Malcolm Pettigrove, said.

"This will be for two things — the quality of the research supervision and the nature of the student's experience as a research student, which doesn't necessarily focus on the supervision, or the supervisor."

But, according to CEDAM Director Margot Pearson, formulating a postgraduate evaluation tool is a much more difficult proposition than developing the undergraduate equivalent because of the smaller research base available from which to draw data. Although much has been recently written at the postgraduate level on research supervision, Ms Pearson said it does not paint as clear a picture of the critical factors involved in teaching evaluation as the undergraduate research does.

"There are all sorts of problems with a population which is smaller and has a rather different engagement with the learning endeavour over a period of time," she said.

"If you see research training as learning something of a craft, as well as learning propositional knowledge, then there are all sorts of problems looking into that and it is much more complex than looking at the undergraduate experience."

Part of that complexity involves moving away from the focus on the principal supervisor, which is a very teacher-centred approach, Ms Pearson said. CEDAM's focus is on a much wider range of factors in a student's research experience.

"If you become more student-centred you start to take in a range of things one of which, and a very important one, is indeed the principal supervisor but there are a lot of other factors," Ms Pearson said.

Learning studio explores classroom alternatives

Tucked away in Linnaeus Cottage, behind the Hancock Building, is a revolutionary new classroom designed to open up the possibilities of teaching. The Learning Studio, which has been up and running since second semester last year, is the brainchild of CEDAM's Dr Chris Trevitt who originally set out to investigate more cost-effective and educationally preferable alternatives to traditional computer labs.

But the Studio has become more than an alternative to a room of computers. It is an institutional experiment in collaborative group learning and classroom architecture.

The Studio, unlike traditional classrooms, has moveable furniture including 30 chairs, five desks, five computer terminals, six portable whiteboards and projection capabilities. The rationale behind it is to shift the focus of the learning environment from the conventional teacher-oriented structure to an approach which gives students greater ownership of their learning. Whether that leads to better or more efficient learning has not yet been fully established but, as Dr Trevitt explained, already it seems to be yielding beneficial outcomes for the students and the University as a whole.

"What is clear is that our ability to connect and stay connected with the next generation of students seems to be enhanced if we take a more student-centred approach," Dr Trevitt said. "Their perceptions of the relevance of the university experience seem to be more enhanced with very important consequences, such as increased retention rates."

The Learning Studio's primary function is to allow an assortment of teaching and learning activities that could not necessarily be undertaken in



Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

Class room: The Learning Studio explores different physical arrangements.

a standard classroom, to occur in one lesson. Teachers can mix and match a range of activities including lecturing, presentations, computer-based and group learning. But Dr Trevitt was quick to point out that the Studio is not designed to replace classrooms.

"I wouldn't like to see every classroom on campus being built like that at all. I would like to see us maintain a healthy diversity of classroom options," he said. "What we are saying is that we are not doing away with lectures, what we're doing is broadening the range of opportunities to engage in group work in a diversity of activities apart from just lectures and tutorials."

One lecturer who has taken full advantage of the Studio is Dr Carolyn Behm from the Division of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in the Faculty of Science. Stimulated by the opportunity to design a new course unit this semester, Dr Behm decided to use the Learning Studio to conduct weekly workshops. In the process, Dr

Behm and her students in the Ecology of Health and Disease Unit have willingly become a test case to allow CEDAM to evaluate the new classroom architecture. The reaction from them has been positive.

"The freedom of activity and the flexibility is marvellous and I can certainly sense an enthusiasm from the students who seem to really enjoy the interaction," Dr Behm said.

Dr Trevitt said it should not be long before many more ANU students and lecturers can take advantage of the kind of flexible learning opportunities the Learning Studio provides.

"I wouldn't have thought it is too far fetched to think in terms of significant portions of new buildings, which are being constructed in the next five years or so, being geared toward better meeting student learning needs and providing practical and cost-effective user-friendly learning environments," Dr Trevitt said.

TANIA CUTTING

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The Australian National University and ABC Radio 2CN invite you to meet

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Who will launch a cookbook, *'Banquet — Ten Courses to Harmony'* (Random House) on Monday, 3rd May at 6.30pm at the Tang Dynasty Restaurant, 27 Kennedy St Kingston.

H.E. Mr Zhou Wenzhong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China will be present at the event.

ALAN DUFF

Author of *'Once Were Warriors'*, will launch his new book, *'Both Sides of the Moon'*, at a special event at the New Zealand High Commission on Monday, 17 May at 6.30pm. Tickets \$20 from ANU Ticketing, telephone 6249 5491. Supported by the Co-op Bookshop.

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

Friday, 7 May at 7.30pm. Llewellyn Hall, Canberra School of Music

Science Forum: Can We Handle the 21st Century?

Creator of *'The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy'*, Douglas Adams, will join forces with musician, activist and President of the Australian Conservation Foundation Peter Garrett, British editor of New Scientist Alun Anderson and chemistry guru Ben Selinger to discuss the environment, the brain and our future with ABC Radio National's Robyn Williams.

This lecture is free and interested members of the public are invited to attend, however, bookings are essential.

Bookings from ANU Ticketing, telephone 6249 5491.

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Recognising the need for international learning

By TANIA CUTTING

In the global economy, internationalisation (actively participating in overseas student and academic exchanges and being sensitive to cultural diversity on campus), is looming as a top priority for a number of Australian universities. The ANU, with over 1,000 international students representing nearly 80 countries, is one university actively responding to the challenge of keeping pace with the need to internationalise learning.

One way the ANU is attempting to meet that challenge is through the Centre for Educational Development and Academic Methods (CEDAM) which is developing three initiatives to help ANU academic staff respond to the surging international demand

for excellent learning and skills.

According to CEDAM's Dr Larbi Sadiki, educators need to know how to respond in the best possible fashion both inside and outside the classroom because, along with students, academics are the suitcases in which knowledge travels.

"Internationalising university and learning has to be seen in the context of an increasingly borderless world and a globally multicultural society in which both knowledge and education seekers travel," Dr Sadiki said.

"This makes learning not only a universal product, but also, and more importantly, a form of communication, cooperation, interdependence, global networking, collaboration and cross-cultural fertilisation between

international student senders and recipients, and between the experiences and talents of education providers and the needs of education recipients."

The three CEDAM activities being developed include helping to establish a working party on internationalising curriculum, running workshops for academic staff to consider the implications of internationalisation for their disciplines, and establishing an email discussion list across the university to share ideas on curricula responses to internationalisation.

But Dr Sadiki said it was important to understand that the internationalisation of university and learning was not simply a matter of

securing a larger slice of the growing market of fee-paying students. He described it as an ongoing process of developing internationally sensitive curricula, regardless of discipline, to make learning relevant to multicultural Australia and its overseas students, and extending personal and professional development to help sensitise educators to issues of cultural diversity.

"Such a process means that reigning assumptions about cultural literacy should be enriched by tapping into the store of cultural resources international students bring into Australian universities. Hence the flow of 'expertise' and 'knowledge' is not allowed to be unidirectional," Dr Sadiki said.

Visitor looks at computer-supported learning

By DAVID BROMAGE

Use of the Internet as a teaching tool will become more common in the future and an important use of the technology in computer-supported collaborative learning. This area is a research interest of Penny Collings, a Visiting Fellow at CEDAM.

Ms Collings is on leave from the University of Canberra, and came to CEDAM because it has expertise in at least two areas of importance for her work — flexible learning and the changing work practices of academics. Both of these, she says, arise from the educational application of computer-supported cooperative work.

"We are able to share and develop ideas and undertake some joint discussions, for example with the Medieval History people involved in a current Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development grant," Ms Collings said.

In a pilot project, about 200 Uni-

versity of Canberra and University of Melbourne students evaluated Web sites designed by each other.

The students allocated their own groups, organised the time line for the project, developed their own Web site specifications and selected the evaluation criteria.

Students assumed the role of potential users when evaluating other Web sites. "It was called 'useability testing', but it was a peer review," Ms Collings said.

"Pedagogically it's very interesting because if you design a Web site you should have it independently reviewed to see if anyone can use it."

Knowing that students from another university would be evaluating their Web sites prompted them to put more effort into design. "They found that learning to work this way was valuable, and they really appreciated getting the feedback," Ms Collings said. "They said they created much better Web sites."

"People need to know how to integrate [information technology] into the work process," Ms Collings said.

Future work will investigate other forms of collaborative learning, and may involve overseas collaboration.

She will be giving a seminar on her work in CEDAM later this year and a paper on the project is being developed, as is a resource booklet about computer-supported teaching and learning.

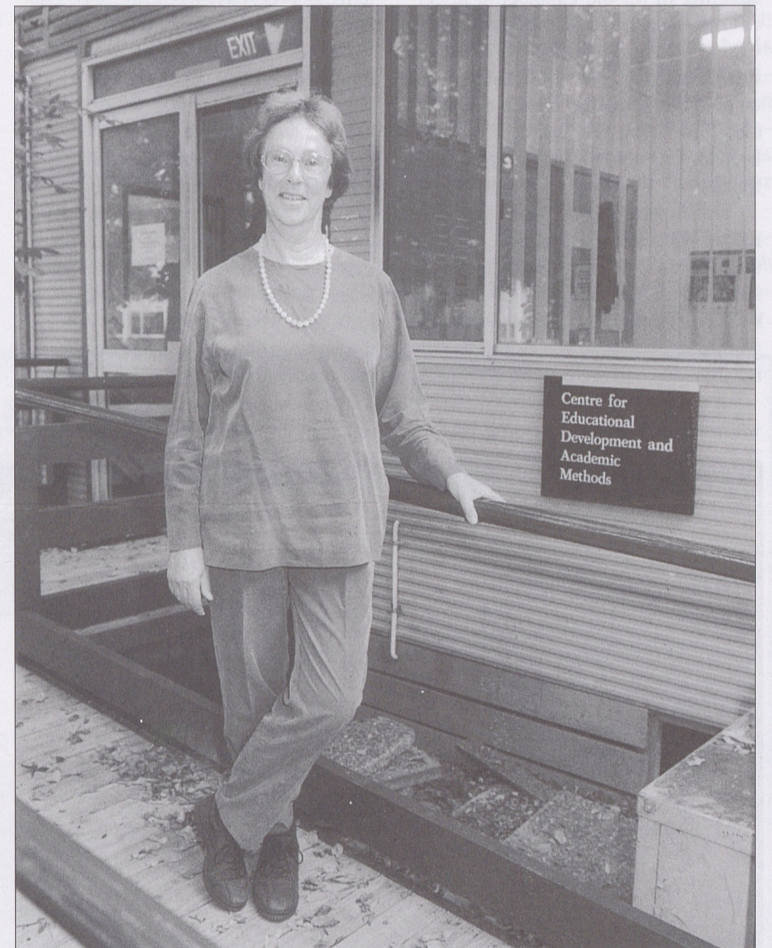


Photo: Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

Fruitful visit: Penny Collings is a Visiting Fellow at CEDAM while on leave from the University of Canberra.

J.G. Crawford Award

(* Updated advertisement: please note revised condition)

The J.G. Crawford Award will be presented in 1999 to the author of a research paper seen by the Selection Panel as making a substantial and original contribution to scholarship on Japan or on Australia-Japan relations. To be eligible for consideration the paper should address some aspect of the operation of the Japanese economy or economic policy, or Japan's international relations or relations with Australia, or the political environment affecting these affairs.

The value of the Award is determined each year by a judging panel and in recent years has been A\$2000.

Papers published, written for publication, or unpublished, but written in the year of the Award are eligible for nomination. Other conditions are:

- Papers must be in English and either typed or printed.
- Applicants must be Australian or Japanese citizens, permanent residents or scholars working in Australia.
- * **Persons who have had a PhD or graduate qualifications in the relevant area for more than seven years will not normally be eligible for the award.**
- The paper should be 'journal length', that is 4,000-10,000 words.
- A 100-word synopsis of the paper must also be submitted.
- Candidates must submit three copies of both the paper and the synopsis.

The deadline for applications for the Award is **31 July 1999**.

Applications should be forward to:
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Academics' ideas on growth studied

By TANIA CUTTING

Unique research at CEDAM has discovered that within the academic community, professional growth and development is perceived more broadly than simply career promotion.

PhD student Gerlese Åkerlind has identified a range of areas academics associate with their development. These have important implications for the way academics view their roles in Australian universities.

"Normally when people talk about career development they mean how to get promoted as fast as possible", Ms Åkerlind said.

"Now this kind of research legitimates a focus away from becoming a professor, with career development including making your job more satisfying, and that's important."

The PhD study, which Ms Åkerlind expects to complete in 2001, is unique because unlike other studies it addresses the nature of academic

work from the perspective of the academics themselves.

"The way the academic group is often looked at is in terms of what activities people engage in, what proportion of time they spend on each activity and so on — looking at them from the outside," Ms Åkerlind said. "What I am doing is trying to establish how academics experience their work and what it means to them, so it is that experiential perspective that makes it unusual."

Ms Åkerlind interviewed 28 ANU lecturers from a variety of disciplines, cultural backgrounds and levels of experience and asked them how they felt about their own growth and development with respect to research and teaching and the relationship between the two. She also questioned them on what they were trying to achieve as academics and how.

For both teaching and research Ms Åkerlind found the group had a range

of views on academic development and approached both in one of three ways. The academics had a focus on performance, expansion or advancement and within each of those they also perceived professional development differently.

For example those with a performance focus thought of growth and development either quantitatively, in terms of achieving more with the same effort or qualitatively, by ensuring they were doing a good job. The feelings associated with each also differed. The academics striving for efficiency felt a reduction in stress whereas those who were trying to be more effective felt a great sense of job satisfaction.

Ms Åkerlind said having this kind of information not only assisted CEDAM to better target its programs, it would also be invaluable for academics in expanding awareness of the range of approaches to career development.

