

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

# Bulletin

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004

## ECOTOURISM HELPS

sustainable  
development

## WHO YOU ARE IS WHERE YOU GO

Personality determines  
holiday choice



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What constitutes an enjoyable holiday? A specialist in consumer behaviour says four main personality types determine holiday choice, see story page 10.

Photos: Mary Malloy and La Trobe University PDI.  
Digital image: Greg Nelson

The La Trobe Bulletin is published ten times a year by the Public Affairs Office, La Trobe University.

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Articles: Noel Carrick, Ernest Raetz  
Photos: La Trobe University DPI,  
Design: Campus Graphics, 61059  
La Trobe University.

Printed by Work & Turner.

Website: www.latrobe.edu.au/bulletin

# EQUALITY IN THE US

## Don't confuse the rhetoric with reality

**D**on't confuse anecdotes about 'black achievers' in the United States with the continuing reality of racial disadvantage. While there has been growth in the black and Hispanic middle classes, their level of poverty has not changed since the 1960s, especially childhood poverty.

That was the central message of this year's La Trobe University Bernard Bailyn Lecture. It was delivered by eminent American historian and television documentary maker, Dan Carter, who was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University.

Professor Carter says that with five per cent of the world's population, the US has 25 per cent of the world's prison population. Black men in college are outnumbered by black men behind bars. And there are calls for still tougher and longer sentences. AIDS has become a black disease, nine times as prevalent among blacks as whites.

The title of Professor Carter's topic was *Seizing the Rhetorical High Ground: American Conservatives and the Politics of Race in the 1990s*.

He says in the US, the issue of race has retreated from the public agenda. It is now regarded as less important than gay marriage, health care and debt. While discussion about race has faded, recent census data reveals a poverty level among black people four times worse than for other people.

He says the way Americans view issues of race has changed dramatically since the days of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, when conservatives began refocusing the context of discussion about race and poverty.

The mid 1960s were the high-water point of liberal consensus in American society, but already then the conservative movement was on the march, with its arguments about welfare and work ethics.

Professor Carter stresses that the US is not an 'all conservative society'. More books are still written by liberals, but there has been a strong shift.



American conservatives and the politics of race: Professor Carter delivers his lecture.

The Bailyn lecture is the annual highlight of North American Studies at La Trobe. It is followed by a seminar where, this year, Professor Carter spoke about American presidential autobiographies from Theodore Roosevelt to Bill Clinton.

A visitor from the University of South Carolina, Professor Carter, has written many prize-winning books including *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South*, which won six literary prizes.

He won a television 'Emmy' for his research for the 1999 documentary *George Wallace: Settin' the Woods on Fire*. Other television programs in which he has been involved are *The American Civil War* (1985), *Stories of Scottsboro* (2001), *Ulysses Grant* (2002), *Jimmy Carter* (2002) and *A History of America* (2002).

He also writes feature articles for major newspapers, including *The New York Times* and *The Atlanta Constitution*. ■

# TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION IN EAST TIMOR

Dr Spencer Zifcak, Associate Professor in La Trobe University's School of Law, has officially evaluated the work of East Timor's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The assignment followed Dr Zifcak's earlier work helping to draft the new nation's constitution.

Undertaken for the Commission, his evaluation focused on the extensive process of community reconciliation to resolve disputes and differences between militia members and their victims before, and immediately after, the referendum on independence in 1999.

The Commission's final report to the President of East Timor, Xanana Gusmao, was delivered in November.

'On balance the community reconciliation process must be considered a very significant success,' said Dr Zifcak, who specialises in both human rights law and public international law.

'In almost all of about 200 hearings held over 18 months, perpetrators and their victims agreed to reconcile. Just as importantly, more than 30,000 people attended the hearings – approximately five per cent of the country's population – so the process served an enormously important educational purpose as well,' he said.

'Through the many hearings, adults and children across the country were able to unearth the truth about what had occurred in their local communities. Knowledge of this history may make a very significant contribution to ensuring that the extensive political criminality which occurred in 1999 will not recur.'

Nevertheless, Dr Zifcak said that the Commission's work was hampered substantially, principally because almost all the most serious perpetrators of politically criminal activity had fled across the border to West Timor, or to the Indonesian mainland. There they walked freely and with impunity under the protection of Indonesian authorities.

'For the future, perhaps the most important



Professor Zifcak, left, with his translator and villagers who participated in the truth and reconciliation process.

aspect of this evaluation will be its implications for the development of East Timor's nascent legal system. At present, East Timor's legal system is highly under-developed. It cannot cope with the demands placed upon it, so it needs to be complemented by a viable system of local

district and village justice.

'My report has sought to make recommendations to the Commission about how its own success in the conduct of local community mediation proceedings may be translated into making the country's local justice systems fairer and more effective.' ■

## Work: making it family-friendly

A La Trobe University specialist in international labour law has played a role in the campaign by trade unions to make Australian workplaces more family friendly.

The ACTU commissioned Dr Jillian Murray, a lecturer in the School of Law and Legal Studies, to write a report on international developments in maternity leave, parental leave and part time work.

Her report, *International Legal Trends in the Reconciliation of Work and Family Life*, was presented to a hearing before the Full Bench of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission during the Work and Family Test Case. She also spent several hours being cross-examined on the report as an 'expert'

witness. Dr Murray's doctoral thesis at Oxford University examined the roles of the International Labour Organisation and the European Union in securing workers' rights, and she has undertaken consultancies for both the ILO and EU. At La Trobe, she is continuing to develop her research in the role of law in helping people reconcile their work and family life.

The ACTU is claiming three major adjustments: an increase in parental leave from one to two years, the right to part time work, and increased emergency leave for family reasons.

*Continued page 4*

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Dr Murray said conflicting demands of work and family make life difficult for many people and governments were introducing laws and processes which allowed people to reconcile work and family.

Her report described a significant trend towards legal intervention in the labour market to achieve more effective resolution of work and family life. Change has been promoted by national governments, and international institutions including the International Labour Organisation and those of the European Union.

New employment rights have been created, but they vary from country to country. In some cases, there are now very significant leave entitlements.

Examples include up to 52 weeks paid maternity leave in the UK; up to three years parental leave prior to a child's eighth birthday in Germany; 60 days paid emergency leave per worker per year to care for a child under twelve in Sweden; access to part-time work with a right to change hours, subject only to serious business objections in the Netherlands and Germany; and certain rights to part-time work in all EU countries.

Dr Murray's report said definitions of 'work and family' were becoming more flexible. For example, UK law permits workers 'reasonable time off' to care for non-family members, where the worker is the only person available to undertake this task in an emergency.

She said much of this recent regulation was designed to establish a legal framework within which implementation can occur at the workplace, through individual or collective bargaining.

Early evidence from the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands suggested that the new rules have increased workers' use of flexible work, and have not led to a sharp increase in contested matters before industrial tribunals and the courts.

'There is some evidence that employer groups – many of whom opposed the introduction of the new laws – have worked well with the new systems. The predicated catastrophic consequences have either not occurred, or have not yet been reported in the research available. An exception appears to be the USA, where the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 is claimed by some employers as a major fetter on their ability to compete.' ■

# NEW PROFESSOR of Chinese Law and Legal Globalisation

**D**r Jianfu Chen – a legal specialist with interests ranging from human rights to international business law – has been appointed Professor of Chinese Law and Legal Globalisation in La Trobe University's School of Law.

Professor Chen collaborates widely with Chinese and European institutions and has held visiting professorial and other appointments in China, Europe, Hong Kong and Australia.

An authority on Chinese law, he has led international research projects funded by European governmental and other organisations, and provided legal and academic opinions on many issues.

His research interests include human rights, globalisation and global justice; central-local relations in China; China's World Trade Organisation membership and legal implications; and Chinese law and its implementation.

Professor Chen has written two books, and co-authored five others, on Chinese law, Australian law, globalisation and

global trade. He is co-editor of three other books. His work, in English, Chinese, and French translation, appears in academic and professional forums nationally and internationally.

Recent academic publications include *Chinese Law: Towards an Understanding of Chinese Law, Its Nature and Development* (Kluwer Law International, 1999), *Law-Making in the People's Republic of China* (co-editor, with Otto, Polak & Li) (Kluwer Law International, 2000), *Implementation of Law in the People's Republic of China* (co-editor, with Otto & Li) (Kluwer Law International, 2002), and *Balancing Act: Law, Policy and Politics in Globalisation and Global Trade* (co-editor, with G Walker) (Federation Press, 2004).

Since 1999, Professor Chen has been Chief Editor of the *China Business Law Guide*, updated quarterly. Professor Chen has a BSc degree from China, and a LL.M (Honours I) and PhD (Law) from the University of Sydney. He joined La Trobe University in 1993. ■

Professor Chen at La Trobe University's Law School.





Photo: John Casamento.

## Quest to eliminate arsenic from drinking water

# SIMPLE TEST MAY HELP MILLIONS

A La Trobe University microbiologist is a member of a six-member international research team that has advanced the prospect of resolving one of South Asia's major health problems.

That problem is a form of cancer people develop when they drink arsenic-contaminated bore water. Tens of millions of people in 61 of the 64 districts of Bangladesh rely for water on bores drilled up to 100 metres deep through rock that contains arsenic.

Surface water, while in ample supply, often contains dangerous pathogens and cannot be drunk. The problem also exists in the Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

The team in which La Trobe University-ARC Australian Post Doctoral Fellow, Dr Joanne Santini, is a major player, has developed an efficient method – a simple molecular assay – to detect a bacterial gene called *arrA* that can cause a dangerous form of arsenic called arsenite to contaminate water.

A type of *arrA*, found in an organism called *Chrysiogenes arsenatis* from the tailings of a gold mine near Ballarat,

similar bacteria from Haiwee Reservoir which supplies drinking water to Los Angeles, and bacteria from 11 other sites, were used in the research.

A paper describing their discovery, entitled *arrA is a Reliable Marker for As(V)-Respiration in the Environment*, was published in the October edition of *Science*, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The five other members of the team – Dr Dianne Newman, Mr Davin Malasarn, Dr Chad Saltikov, Ms Kate Campbell and Professor Janet Hering – are from the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena.

Dr Santini explained that in Bangladesh and other areas, when water flows underground over rocks containing arsenic, it reacts with oxygen when it rises up a bore to the surface, to produce two soluble toxic forms of arsenic – arsenite and arsenate. Arsenite is 100 times more toxic than arsenate.

The problem is that bacteria can use arsenate instead of oxygen for respiration and covert it to arsenite. The *arrA* gene is one of the genes required for converting arsenate to arsenite.

Dr Santini said *arrA* enables arsenate-metabolising bacteria to become energised and once energised, it causes rocks to release their natural arsenic content into water. The arsenic in the form of arsenate is relatively harmless when dormant in rocks and soil but when it reacts, it becomes highly toxic arsenite.

The team advanced the prospect of alleviating the problem by developing a test to detect the presence of *arrA* in samples of water from aquifers.

It developed a 'primer', a chemical which binds to the *arrA* gene. Using a technique called polymerase chain reaction, the team tested the 13 species of bacteria and found that 12 of them had the *arrA* gene.

Team members have not yet tested whether the same bacteria exist in Bangladesh – but all the indications are that they are there.

The next step is to use the team's molecular assay to identify areas where arsenic-releasing bacteria are at work, enabling scientists to determine the reasons why the gene is active. This will enable them to predict when *arrA* will convert arsenate into arsenite. ■

## New Mildura courses tackle regional workforce shortage

The Mildura campus is expanding its range of courses to cater for increased regional demand for higher education.

New offerings for next year include degree courses in Nursing and Social Work and a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education.

The three-year Bachelor of Nursing caters for year 12 school leavers, as well as mature age entry students and Division 2 nurses who wish to upgrade their qualifications.

The Bachelor of Social Work is a four-year course, while the Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education is one-year full-time.

Mildura Campus Director, Mr Ron Broadhead, says the courses address a regional shortage of qualified professionals. Local people, once qualified, are more likely to remain in the regional workforce than those who train in cities. ■

*Details: Tel: (03) 5051 4000.*



## A LIGHTER WRIST WATCH

### BUT HOW MUCH EXTRA WILL YOU PAY?

Aluminium is expensive to use in the manufacture of small components of complex shape because of certain technical difficulties and the cost of moulding or pressing it.

This has limited its use in a potentially huge range of applications such as watch cases and components for engines, portable generators, hand-held electronic devices and hand tools.

Two La Trobe University economists are now playing a major role in a multidiscipline research project to develop technology to overcome aluminium's technical 'barrier' and to ascertain whether such a product would be economically viable.

Dr David Prentice and Dr Xiangkang Yin, both senior lecturers in La Trobe's Department of Economics and Finance, will supervise the component of the project to determine the profitability and economic applications of a technology called Metal Injection Moulding of Aluminium (Al MIM) which is being developed by the School of Engineering at the University of Queensland.

Drs Prentice and Yin – with Professor Graham Schaffer and Dr Tim Sercombe from the University of Queensland, and industry partners Cooltemp Pty Ltd of Queensland and the Aluminium Power Company Ltd of the UK – have been awarded a \$228,000 ARC Linkage Grant over three years for the research.

They say La Trobe's side of the research is to estimate the cost efficiency of replacing aluminium components manufactured by conventional methods such as casting, machining and forging with injection moulded components or other injected-moulded materials like PVC.

'We will do this by adopting the technical cost modelling methodology to estimate the costs of Al MIM and the manufacturing methods it will replace. More importantly, this component of the project will also draw on techniques used in applied microeconomics to estimate the production functions or cost functions to investigate the economies of scale and estimate the efficient scales of production of Al MIM.'

This approach – which will look at both cost and demand – will yield advice on how to choose the best plant and company size. It will also help measure the private and social benefits of process innovations like Al MIM.

For example, they will attempt to establish how the market values the attributes of such a new product: if it is used to make watch cases much lighter, what kind of premium do people pay for lightweight watches? They will also collect data on the prices and characteristics of existing products which the new material will replace. ■

## Family Law Reform

### PUTTING CHILDREN'S NEEDS FIRST

A multi-disciplinary team from La Trobe University recently completed a project to ensure that children's needs top the agenda in all discussions on Family Law disputes.

Commissioned and funded by the Federal Attorney General's Department, Professor Tania Sourdin, Associate Professor Lawrie Moloney, and senior lecturer, Dr Tom Fisher, have prepared standards for Family Law dispute resolution practitioners.

The La Trobe team – which has extensive experience in family law and dispute resolution – prepared draft 'approval' standards and 'practice' standards. Safeguarding children's interests is one of a number of areas covered in the standards.

Project Leader, Professor Sourdin, is an experienced mediator, conciliator, adjudicator, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) trainer and lawyer with a PhD in commercial dispute resolution. Her book *Alternative Dispute Resolution* was published in 2002. She is also a key author of the Australian Standard on Dispute Resolution and of other recent Australian Law Reform Commission work on ADR.

Dr Fisher is co-ordinator of graduate programs for law and social science students in Conflict Resolution and Family Law Mediation. A mediator under the Family Law Act, he also mediates in community, workplace and planning disputes. He has co-authored major studies and training programs in family law mediation for the Federal Attorney-General's Department.

Head of the Department of Counselling and Psychological Health, Dr Moloney is a family therapist and teaches 'Mediating Family Conflict' in the Graduate Diploma in



Professor Sourdin, centre, with Dr Moloney, left, and Dr Fisher.

Family Law. He has supervised family mediators for ten years, and is a researcher and evaluator as well as a clinician. As a former Director of the Family Court Counselling Service in Melbourne, he has a long-standing interest in ADR.

Professor Sourdin said high standards for dispute resolution were of growing importance as a result of a recent rule change by the Family Law Court. This required most disputants to use dispute resolution processes such as mediation before court proceedings can be filed.

She said that the draft 'approval' standards specify that from 2008, practitioners who work in the counselling, facilitative and dispute advisory areas must meet minimum qualification, supervision and competency requirements.

In addition, practitioners have extensive obligations to meet 'practice' standards. At present those obligations have been

developed for 'facilitative practitioners' only.

'Practitioners who work in a facilitative role do not advise upon, evaluate, or determine disputes. They assist in managing the process of dispute and conflict resolution whereby the participants determine the outcomes,' Professor Sourdin said.

'Facilitative processes include mediation, conciliation, conferencing and facilitation – where the practitioner does not provide advice or proffer a view as to outcomes – and counselling where the process is directed at dispute resolution and involves two or more participants. The principle of self determination requires that these processes be non-directive.'

In relation to children, practitioners have to help adults to keep the interests, needs and emotional attachments of any child affected by a family dispute at the centre of discussions about future parenting and care arrangements, she added. ■

# WHAT LIVES ON NED'S CORNER?

## Baseline biology in Kidman Country

**W**hat flora and fauna live on Ned's Corner – 30,000 hectares of historic flat saltbush plain with a 27 km Murray River frontage 100 km west of Mildura, once Victoria's largest freehold grazing property?

We now have a good indication, thanks to a highly unusual La Trobe University expedition in which 25 students and staff recently spent seven days assessing the plant and animal inhabitants of the former property of Kidman the Cattle King.

Organised by zoologists Professor Tim New and Associate Professor Michael Clarke, the expedition returned with detailed information about insects, birds, reptiles,

mammals, invertebrates and plants that will take months to analyse.

In 2002 the Trust for Nature (TFN) purchased the former grazing property, on which up to 15,000 sheep had grazed at any one time, and the sheep were removed. The property is part of the proposed Barkindji Biosphere Reserve, the establishment of which has strong La Trobe University support.

'Because this survey took place so soon after the sheep were removed, it was a unique opportunity to begin a study of long-term changes in a saltbush environment,' says Dr Clarke.

Other La Trobe University academic staff who participated, and their specialities, were:

Dr Brian Malone (reptiles), Associate Professor Pat Woolley (mammals), Dr Dennis Black (reptiles, bats, invertebrates) and Associate Professor Richard Zann (birds). Three TFN plant specialists, Dr Chris Williams, Ms Natalie Holland and Mr Greg Ogle also participated.

The 16 third year students,

all volunteers who contributed specific skills to the expedition, comprised 11 Bachelor of Conservation Biology and Ecology, Animal Science or Biological Science students from the main Melbourne campus at Bundoora and five Bachelor of Environmental Management and Ecology students from the Albury-Wodonga campus.

Expedition members split into five groups seeking information on plants, invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians, birds and mammals and used a number of different methods that involved sightings, direct search, scat analysis and many kinds of traps and nets.

The most unexpected result was finding a rare small marsupial called *Planigale gilesi* which had not been seen in the area for at least two decades. A dead animal of the same species was also found. The tiny nocturnal creature lives in cracking clays but emerges into bushes when infrequent rains fall.

Many reptiles were found, including seven species of geckoes, four of snakes, four of skinks and several species of frogs. Among the 86 species of birds sighted was the unusual Inland Dotterel which was found breeding on the property.

Professor New led the team seeking





invertebrates and concentrated on ants. His team collected several thousand individuals.

'I think we collected about 40 to 70 species but we won't know for sure until I have had an opportunity to examine them all in detail in the laboratory,' Professor New said.

Dr Black also performed 'litter extractions' in which many minute organisms including mites and insect larvae were located. These are regarded as important indicators of the health of the soil.

The TFN botanists had conducted preliminary surveys of the flora, and the recent expedition confirmed the rich botanical diversity of the area, despite its small and erratic rainfall.

All data collected will be made available to the TFN land managers and significant findings will be lodged with the *Atlas of Victorian Wildlife*. A summary containing information needed to guide land management and habitat restoration will be given both to the TFN and the Mallee Catchment Management Authority.

All who took part in the expedition are keen to return and pursue the many research opportunities through future expeditions and postgraduate studies. ■

Professor New, far left, and two finds, an adult Mallee Blackhead snake, top, and Fat-Tailed Dunnart, left.

Photos: Anna Clarke

# Good ecotourism

## HELPS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**G**ood ecotourism can be a great boost for environmental learning. And the more we learn about the environment, the better the chance for sustainable development.

But the term 'ecotourism' must mean what it says. Tourism operators should not use it as a marketing tool for nature travel that doesn't enhance appreciation of the environment.

A lecturer in La Trobe University's School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, Dr Garry Price, makes these points in his PhD thesis entitled: *Ecotourism Experiences and Environmental Learning: A Critical Examination of their Nexus in Selected Australian Ecotourism Operations*.

Dr Price says that some operators, although not necessarily the ones selected for his study, use the prefix 'eco' in the title of their tours, but do not deliver the goods. Although nature-based tourism is the fastest growing segment of the industry world-wide, not all nature-based tourism is ecotourism.

Authentic ecotours, he says, must comply with four principles: they must be nature based; they must contribute to the quest for economic, ecological and social sustainability; they must have an environmental education component; and they must benefit the local community.

'The distinguishing feature of an ecotour is its environmental education component. Such a tour must not just

permit participants to look at nature, but must convey to them an environmental message.

'The focus of my investigation of the nine companies whose tours I joined – in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria – was whether they were delivering good quality environmental education.

'I found that while many of them are very good, some could improve the quality of their environmental education. In true ecotourism, operators must not just point out and name trees or birds or other fauna, but must convey an environmental message.'

To help ecotourism operators deliver good quality environment education, Dr Price has developed a model of ideal interpretative practice from which they can extract sections for use in their own operations.

Dr Price's interest in both the theory and practice of ecotourism reflects his background as a VCE secondary school teacher in Environmental Studies and owner-operator of an ecotourism business in Victoria's central Gippsland.

As part of his research, the nine 'ecotours' he joined included a river cruise at Noosa, a rainforest tour inland from the Sunshine Coast, a four-wheel drive tour on Fraser Island, a cruise on wetlands near Maroochydore, and visits to both French and Phillip islands in Westernport Bay. ■



# Personality determines holiday choice

## WHO YOU ARE IS WHERE YOU GO

**F**our main personality types – thinking, physical, feeling, and imaginative – have different ideas as to what constitutes an enjoyable holiday, according to La Trobe University specialist in Consumer Behaviour, Dr John Gountas.

Although there are many shared preferences, he has pinpointed where the different personalities prefer to have their holidays.

‘Thinking’ personality types prefer independent holidays often to cultural trendy famous places while ‘physical’ types mainly choose package holidays in the sun where they can relax in comfort.

‘Feeling’ types like smaller quiet resorts with organised activities and sports while ‘imaginative’ types also like independent holidays but in small quiet resorts – where they can venture out and mix with local people.

Working with a British leisure airline, First Choice, Dr Gountas, a senior lecturer in marketing in La Trobe’s School of Business, investigated the holiday choices based on the characteristics of the holiday makers’ personality types.

The study was carried out as part of his PhD thesis, entitled *Personality Types and Tourism Holiday Preferences*. Dr Gountas carried out three empirical surveys between 1999 and 2000 with a total sample of 2669

holidaymakers. The holidaymakers travelled from British regional airports and Ireland to Mediterranean, Caribbean, North African, and Asian resorts. The three surveys tried to capture all holiday types included in the winter, shoulder and summer seasons.

To define ‘personality’ types, Dr Gountas researched personality type theories starting with Plato’s theory of temperaments, Jung’s 1921 theory of the eight personality types, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and other post-Jungian theories up to the present day including some neuropsychological and brain theories.

After formulating the four personality types, Dr Gountas devised a 50-item questionnaire filled out by the holiday makers *en route* to their destinations.

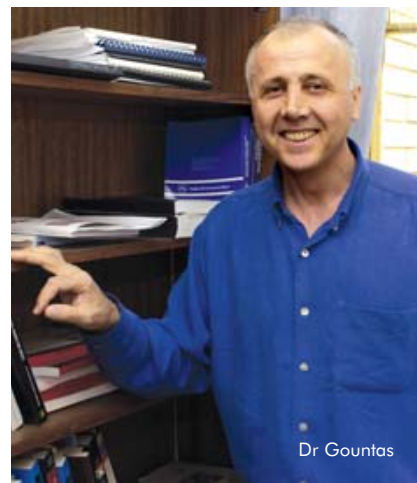
The survey results tested the relationships between the holiday makers’ personality types, preferences for holiday resorts, sources of information and the core values or main source of ‘satisfaction’.

Dr Gountas summarised the general holiday resort preferences of the four main types as follows:

**Thinking types (21.7% of the population):** Prefer independent holidays, variety of resorts, outdoor, mountains and scenic tours, historical and cultural, trendy places. They gained their holiday satisfaction from learning and thinking and relied on TV, radio and the mass printed media for their information.

**Physical Types (20.8 %):** Mostly prefer package holidays in the sun by the sea where they relax in comfort and are close to nature and physical pleasures. Satisfaction comes from physical pleasures and comforts after learning about their favourite destinations from mass printed media and word of mouth.

**Feeling types (29 %):** Prefer to go to smaller, quiet resorts with activities and sports and different experiences from



Dr Gountas

normal or routine lifestyle. Satisfaction stems from feelings and emotional experiences and their information comes from mass printed media and friends and relatives.

**Imaginative types (28.3%):** Tend to be interested in flexible and independent holidays in small, quiet resorts where they can see historical, cultural and natural wonders and also mix with locals. They enjoy holidays that appeal to their perceptions or fantasy needs, and tend to go to travel agents and tour operators for their information as well as TV and radio and word of mouth.

Dr Gountas says his research has many implications for tourism marketers.

Products can be differentiated more accurately to target the psychographic and demographic characteristics of different holiday makers, thereby identifying more segments in the tourism population and creating holidays for their needs.

Communications strategies can be directed more accurately towards the right market segments according to their personality type, using appropriate language and media taking into account the different social groups, education levels and age.

Irrespective of personality type, Dr Gountas says the main motive for going on holidays for the British public was to get away from the usual routine, the rainy and cold weather and find a sunny and warm climate – preferably at locations as familiar as British seaside resorts. ■



# Out on a limb

La Trobe consolidates its global leadership in prosthetics and orthotics



The University has taken a further step to consolidate its leading position as a world provider of tertiary education and research in prosthetics and orthotics.

In its latest expansion, it will provide its highly regarded Prosthetics and Orthotics degree courses on-line for students from Cambodia, and several African and Middle Eastern countries.

Prosthetics and orthotics is the design and fitting of artificial limbs and other supportive devices.

La Trobe PhD candidate and sessional lecturer in the National Centre for Prosthetics and Orthotics, Mr Wesley Pryor, helped initiate the latest arrangement – with the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics in Phnom Penh – to upgrade the Cambodian diplomas of some of its students to La Trobe bachelor degree status.

The Vice-Chancellor's fund has provided \$75,000 to help develop the course which will enrol its first 15 students in January 2006.

'The Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics approached La Trobe for assistance because we are recognised for our clinical skills and the reputation of our graduates as good communicators. Institutions all over the world realise that what we are doing in distance learning is world's best practice,' Mr Pryor says.

La Trobe has excellent infrastructure for on-line learning of this kind, and its Centre for Online and Multimedia Educational Technologies has helped overcome many technical barriers.

'Cambodia wants its students not only to have the necessary technical skills, but also the training that prepares them for leadership roles. We have demonstrated flexibility in our teaching approach, including an initiative to teach Japanese students.'

After graduating with their Cambodian diplomas, students from Cambodia and other countries will upgrade their qualifications using distance web-based courses, as well as three-months of intensive technical and clinical work at La Trobe's main Melbourne campus at Bundoora.

'The need for prosthetics and orthotics services in Cambodia, the Middle East and Africa is extremely high,' says Mr Pryor. 'Victims of war, disease and natural disasters have greatly increased the need for prostheses and orthoses.'

Last year he conducted training sessions in Delhi, India, for Handicap International to research the efficiency of prostheses fitted to victims of the 2001 earthquake in the State of Gujarat. ■

## New 'tool' makes hospital discharge less risky

La Trobe University is helping improve risk and decision-making principles in the health sector.

Professor of Public Health, Shane Thomas, has developed the Thomas Post Acute (PAC) Risk Screen Tool now used widely in Australian health services to assist discharge planning for hospital patients.

The tool, he says, screens patients for whether they may need additional services at home so that they can be fully assessed and the services arranged.

The Victorian Effective Discharge Strategy, introduced in 2001, made it mandatory for hospitals to report the outcomes of the Risk Screen.

Recently the State Government re-committed its health services to use Risk Screen to improve care for older people. Other Australian health services have also adopted it. It is used in Queensland and some services in NSW have recommended it.

Professor Thomas says having effective screening tools, such as the PAC Tool, ensures that the needs of people are systematically taken into account when they are discharged from hospital.

'If people are discharged without the necessary supports, their recovery and health may be compromised. The use of screening tools helps minimise this risk.'

Professor Thomas is also working with a team of researchers from the University of Melbourne to develop a Prisoner Risk Screen Tool to identify prisoners who may benefit from prison services that could help reduce their risk of re-offending. ■

Professor Thomas





## Clinical physio placements NOW IN STOCKHOLM

The first group of La Trobe University physiotherapy students recently undertook their clinical placements at one of Sweden's leading medical institutes – the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

The three third year students were Ms Laura Keely, Ms Danielle Ryan and Mr James Bainbridge. They spent their nine-

week neurological physiotherapy clinical placement at the Institute.

While in Sweden, they were visited by La Trobe lecturer in neurological physiotherapy, Sonia Denisenko, who won this year's Faculty of Health Sciences Dean's Teaching Excellence Award.

Chair of the Australian Physiotherapy Association National Neurology Group,

Ms Denisenko used her \$5000 prize money to attend the European Society for Movement Analysis for Adults and Children Gait course in Warsaw, Poland, and visit the students in Stockholm.

She won the award for up-dating courses dealing with the management of conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, head injury and brain tumours.

Physiotherapy practice in Australia – including that currently presented in La Trobe Physiotherapy courses – was extremely well regarded internationally, Ms Denisenko said.

'At least half a dozen presenters at the Warsaw course referred to work at Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital (RCH). It is considered a centre of world excellence in the management of children with cerebral palsy,' she added.

Several of the presenters referred to the work of another La Trobe University PhD graduate, Dr Roslyn Boyd, who recently won a Premier's Commendation for Medical Research and now works at the RCH. ■

From left, Ms Denisenko, Ms Ryan, Karolinska Institute lecturer, Ms Anne Kusoffsky, Mr Bainbridge and Ms Keely, after presenting a colleague's paper in Stockholm.

## International links forge new cerebral palsy research

Research links to help children with cerebral palsy have been established between La Trobe University, the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, and the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

About 135 children are born in Victoria every year with cerebral palsy. A major part of this applied neuroscience research concerns understanding the hand function of children with cerebral palsy to help improve clinical practice.

Collaborative research includes validating in Australia an assessment developed by Swedish neuroscientist and clinical researcher, Dr Ann-Christin Eliasson, an Associate Professor at the Karolinska Institute.

Collaboration between Dr Eliasson and

La Trobe lecturer in Occupational Therapy, Ms Christine Imms and Dr Roslyn Boyd from the School of Physiotherapy, led to a recent visit by Dr Eliasson as a La Trobe Distinguished Fellow.

Ms Imms said that Dr Eliasson, using her skills as a neuroscientist and clinical researcher, has provided many opportunities for academic staff, paediatric therapy researchers, post-graduate students and clinicians to collaborate and to gain from her experience and knowledge.

Before coming to Australia, Dr Eliasson and her Swedish colleagues had developed the Manual Ability Classification System (MACS). This enables clinicians to gauge the relative abilities of children by using five levels related to their capacity to function in daily life.

In a joint project between La Trobe and the Royal Children's Hospital with Ms Imms and Dr Boyd, therapists and children were recruited for an Australian validation study of the MACS.

A new collaborative research project – to investigate the use of Constraint Induced Movement Therapy (CIMT) and Botulinum toxin A to improve upper limb function in young children with cerebral palsy aged five to 15 years – was also developed.

During her stay at La Trobe, Dr Eliasson presented a paper to the Australasian Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, gave a workshop for more than 100 people, and provided a paediatric training course to La Trobe post-graduate students and clinicians. ■

# Surprise findings from MS FITNESS RESEARCH

**L**a Trobe University physiotherapy researchers believe a controversial research project they recently completed has overturned previously held beliefs about increasing the well-being of people with multiple sclerosis.

They say results of the pilot project, carried out in collaboration with the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Victoria using nine participants with MS in Melbourne, turn around views most clinicians hold about the use of strenuous exercise such as weight training.

'Previously most clinicians were reluctant to prescribe weight training and many believed that it had potentially harmful effects,' said La Trobe team member, Dr Karen Dodd.

'We were surprised that our results were so good and so uniform, flying in the face of all previously held ideas. We showed that leg muscle strength improved by 33 per cent and arm strength by 14 per cent and there were a number of other benefits both physical and psychological,' Dr Dodd said.

In addition there was the advantage that the program was carried out in a conventional gymnasium in the community.

Caused by a breakdown of the central nervous system, MS affects control of muscles, sensation, vision and other body functions. A common symptom of the disease, which affects about 15,000 Australians, is fatigue.

Dr Dodd explained that weight training for people with MS raises complex problems. If they don't exercise, they become progressively physically weaker – but if they do exercise using a medium like weight training, many clinicians believe they become fatigued with subsequent possible complications.

Because of this dilemma, clinicians have been most reluctant to prescribe strength training as most believed that it could be detrimental.

Encouraged by indications from overseas



Dr Dodd: leg muscle strength improved by 33 per cent, arm strength by 14 per cent – and there were other physical and psychological benefits.



that this belief was not necessarily correct, the physiotherapy team at the MS Society of Victoria asked La Trobe's Musculoskeletal Research Centre to investigate.

In collaboration with Ms Dawn Prasad from the MS Society and physiotherapist colleagues from the Centre, Dr Nicholas Taylor and Ms Sonia Denisenko, the program was carried out over a 14 weeks, starting at Easter in the gymnasium at Telstra Dome.

Before the volunteers, two men and seven women aged between 27 and 61, began the carefully planned weight training program, they underwent four weeks of baseline testing including measurements of the strength in various parts of their body. These measurements were compared with those taken after attending the gym twice a week for 10 weeks.

Ms Prasad and two qualified fitness instructors monitored the participants in exercises designed to strengthen arms, legs and trunk. As well as the improved strength in arms and legs, the researchers found that at the end of the 10 week period, the volunteers walked faster and increased their distance walked over a given time.

While there was some expected muscle soreness – which even fully fit people starting weight training experience – there were no adverse neurological changes and most importantly, no increased fatigue. When interviewed at the end of the program, participants reported they were less clumsy, found it easier to walk up and down stairs, and had more energy.

Team members said weight training may now be seen as a possible fitness option for people with MS with a mild to moderate disability. They now hope to verify their results with a randomised control trial of at least 30 people with MS.

The results of the pilot project were presented to the MS Australia Scientific Meeting: *Progress in Multiple Sclerosis Research* in Melbourne in November at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute. ■



The Rev. Costello, left, and Mr Hulls.

## Meeting the challenge of world poverty

The Reverend **Tim Costello** – one of Australia's leading campaigners on social justice issues and 'Victorian of the Year 2004' – delivered two public lectures at the University recently.

Chief Executive of World Vision Australia, he spoke in support of an Anti-Poverty Week event in October. Hosted by the School of Social Work and Social Policy in association with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the title of his lecture was: *Meeting the challenge of world poverty*.

Earlier, he was the keynote speaker at public seminar, *Sudan: the Human Crisis*, convened by the La Trobe Politics Society.

The seminar provided back-ground to the crisis. Other speakers were La Trobe Head of African Studies, Dr **David Dorward**, a frequent visitor to Africa, and Professor **Anthony Low**, former Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University and Smuts Professor of Commonwealth History at Cambridge University.

Having brought Labor leader, **Mark Latham** to the University earlier in the year, the Politics Society also ran a special election seminar featuring former Senator and Labor Minister, **John Button**, Associate Editor of *The Age*, **Shaun Carney**, and La Trobe Professor of Politics, **Judith Brett**.

State Attorney-General **Rob Hulls** spoke to about 80 final year La Trobe Law students in October, challenging them to use the law as an instrument of change to benefit the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community. In an address to the Legal Practice and Conduct class, Mr Hulls said lawyers had a professional responsibility to do *pro bono* legal work to ensure access to justice is not limited to those who can afford it.

Head of La Trobe Law Clinical Legal Education, Ms Mary Anne Noone, said the University played its part by providing legal services where senior students, under supervision, helped the local community. ■

## ADJUNCT PROFESSORS APPOINTED AT MILDURA

Two well-know members of the Mildura community, **John Irwin** and **Rob Walker**, have been appointed Adjunct Professors. Their appointments acknowledge their contributions to the University, principally to the Faculty of Science Technology and Engineering.

**Professor Irwin** is a key figure in the 80,000 hectare Barkindji Biosphere Project near Mildura. Biospheres, created under terms set out by UNESCO, are 'ecosystems promoting solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use.'

The Barkindji Biosphere has received strong backing from the University. La Trobe scientists are already undertaking research on the site, and several groups of students have

been taught using resources from the Biosphere. These initiatives are expected to increase significantly in the years ahead.

Professor Irwin also helped forge links between La Trobe and the Yunnan Agricultural University in the People's Republic of China. The first graduates from Yunnan are expected to arrive next year as visiting scholars, under a project designed to ultimately help agribusiness and trade between Sunraysia and China.

**Professor Walker**, Chief Research Scientist at the CSIRO Plant Industries Laboratories at Merbein, has made major contributions to teaching and research at the University. A founding member of the Riverlink Network of Horticultural Research and Development Agencies in Sunraysia and



Adjunct Professors Irwin, left, and Walker, right, with Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Graham McDowell.

Riverland, he was also a key figure in creating the Riverlink Postgraduate Research Network.

The network helps La Trobe scholars to carry out research in local Riverlink laboratories, and the first of these scholars recently completed her doctoral studies. ■

# Top essay performance by Kate Chanock

'Australian identity is vulnerable, not because it fails to resist the seductions of other, flashier cultural products, but because, like other nations, we invest our cultural confidence in national performances.'

So writes La Trobe's Dr Kate Chanock, in an essay titled *Identity Anxiety*, which won the \$10,000 first prize in this year's Dialogica awards.

'By investing so much in Olympic success ... Australia invites harm to the most cherished component of its own imagined identity, the value of mateship.'

'Whether games or battles, these are always going to be about ranking, splitting and winning. If this undermines the things we most like about ourselves, we would do better to climb over the edge of our box and look at what makes us the same as everybody else, in every other time and place.'

Dr Chanock heads the Language and Academic Skills Unit in the Faculty of

Humanities and Social Sciences. She says 'refracted through the prism of postmodernism', identity studies have become the 'New Black' in universities, with students spending a lot of time looking at how identity is defined, and shaped.

While she normally helps students with essays of this sort, her own contribution, in under 2,000 words, covers a lot of ground - from the Anzac spirit, egalitarianism and mateship to 'Big Brother' and the recent Olympic Games.

The Campus Review/Co-op Bookshop Dialogica Awards promote clear and coherent writing about contemporary issues. Dr Chanock received her award at the Academy of the Humanities Symposium annual dinner in Hobart in November. ■

For the full text of the essay, see <http://www.camrev.com.au>

## Selwyn medal for Chris Gray

Dr Chris Gray, senior lecturer and Head of Earth Sciences, has been awarded this year's Selwyn Medal by the Geological Society of Australia (Victoria Division) for his contribution over more than 25 years to the study and understanding of geology.

The award citation says Victorian geology has benefited greatly from Dr Gray's application of geochemistry and isotope geochemistry to field problems. Internationally, his work has implications for broader processes such as magmatism and planetology.

The Selwyn Medal is named after Sir Alfred Selwyn, founder of the Geological Survey of Victoria. ■

## Koorie training award

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The awards were presented at a three-day conference on the *Wurreker Strategy - Pathways and Partnerships to the Future* for Koorie communities, employers, employment agencies, TAFE and other training organisations.

The conference was attended by La Trobe Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Access), Dr Kerry Ferguson and Indigenous Development Officer, Ms Julie Andrews.

Ms Andrews, who co-ordinated the development of the La Trobe Indigenous Employment Strategy, said the first step will be the appointment of an Indigenous Employment Co-ordinator. ■



Dialogica Award winner, Dr Chanock.

## National award for Robert Manne

La Trobe University Professor of Politics, writer and political commentator, Robert Manne, has won a place among 'Australia's top 10' creative and innovative people.

He has topped the 'Society' category of the 'Smart 100' competition conducted by the national magazine, *The Bulletin*.

Professor Manne was chosen from finalists including philanthropist, Heloise Waislitz from the Pratt Foundation; Educational consultant, writer and feminist, Dale Spender; and human rights advocate, High Court judge, Mr Justice Michael Kirby.

Editor of *Quadrant* magazine for most of the 1990s, Professor Manne is a commentator on public affairs for the ABC, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*. At La Trobe, he teaches Australian politics and 20th Century political history.

*The Bulletin's* 'Smart 100' list celebrates the efforts of scientists and researchers in fields ranging from business and communications, health and medicine to arts and entertainment.

The selection panel said Professor Manne's 'writings and advocacy have shown us all that ideas and words can be as powerful a force in our community as deeds.' ■





# THEFT HAS ITS REWARDS

For Bendigo photographic artist Donna Bailey the antics of her daughter's pet parrot, Charlie, stealing a biscuit has secured her a place among six finalists exhibiting in the prestigious national Energex Arbour Contemporary Art Prize.

Ms Bailey is a PhD candidate in Visual Arts (Photography) at La Trobe University, Bendigo. And she was the only Victorian finalist in this year's competition which called for works with the theme 'Australians at Play'.

As part of the award, her image entitled, *Charlie and the Pink Biscuit* has been enlarged to 3 metres by 2.4 metres and mounted in a public art exhibition at Brisbane's South Bank Energex Arbour during December.

Ms Bailey said the picture was captured spontaneously at a popular picnic spot near Bendigo last summer.

'I was laughing, too, as I pressed the shutter on the camera capturing Zoe and her friend Raquel's looks of delight and surprise.'

Ms Bailey is a finalist in the Centre for Contemporary Photography Leica, Documentary Award, currently touring Australia. She was invited to exhibit in the Australian Centre for Photography exhibition, *Changeling: Childhood and the Uncanny* in Sydney in November. Her work was also featured in a group exhibition, *The Line Between Us: The Maternal Relation in Contemporary Photography* at the Monash University Museum of Art. ■

## La Trobe University wins Koorie training award

La Trobe took out the 'University – Pathways' prize in the inaugural Wurreker Awards for achievements in training for Koorie students. The awards are a joint initiative of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated and the State Office of Training and Tertiary Education.

The award category 'University Pathways' is for the development and/or delivery of innovative tertiary education programs and services promoting increased pathways for Koorie academic achievement. La Trobe has developed and implemented its Indigenous Employment Strategy in partnership with the Koorie community, to address the low levels of Indigenous employment in the higher education sector.

Education and Training Minister, Lynne Kosky, who assisted in presenting the awards, said the 'Wurreker Strategy' helped provide training pathways leading to better employment opportunities for Indigenous people.

She said the strategy was 'based on a mutual respect for Koorie culture and heritage and for the aspirations of the Koorie community to achieve self-determination.'

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La Trobe's Dr Ferguson, behind the award, and Ms Andrews flanked by Joel Wright, National Indigenous Officer for NTEU, left, and Wayne Clarke, Wurreker Broker, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated.