

Cultures of Peace - Perth 2000

The Australian Academy of Humanities 2000 Symposium and AGM will take place in Perth from 2 - 4 November 2000. The theme of AAH's 2000 Symposium is Cultures of Peace, based on UNESCO's International Year For A Culture Of Peace (IYCP). The preamble to the objectives for IYCP states:

"The Culture of Peace is all the values, attitudes and forms of behaviour that reflect respect for life, for human beings and their dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding among peoples and between groups and individuals."

Speakers from across Australia and

regional countries will explore these ideas within the context of Humanities in Australian and Asian societies as well as the implications of globalisation. The five major components of 'cultures of peace' that this informative, critical and provocative program will address are reconciliation, tolerance, respect, cooperation, and sharing. Speakers include David Christian, Macquarie University, who will give the Annual Lecture; Bruce Davis, Director-General of AusAID, who will give the Keynote Lecture; Evelyn Scott, Chairperson of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation; Will Christensen, Curtin University; Shabnam Ramaswami, who conducts schools for child labourers in Delhi; Abdullah Saeed, University of Melbourne; Patrick Jory, UWA; Ken McPherson, Curtin University; Bill Cope, RMIT; and Deryck Schreuder, Vice-Chancellor of UWA and past-President of the Academy.

All sessions of the Symposium are open to the public. Public registration for the full Symposium is \$100, or \$30 for any individual session.

Frank Broeze of the University of Western Australia and Ken McPherson (formerly of Curtin) are the convenors. Both the University of Western Australia and Curtin University of Technology have provided valuable logistical and financial support for this Symposium as well as the venues. This is the first time that the Academy has met in Perth.

More information about the Symposium, including the program, is available at the Academy's website, <www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/aah/>. The program can also be found on page 4.



'Broad base remains vital'

On 19 July 2000, the Centre for Independent Studies, Sydney, published 'Degrees of Difficulty' (Issue Analysis paper No. 12) which claimed that the 'labour market performance of Arts graduates was unimpressive' and that Universities should provide students with more employable skills. The paper's author, CIS research fellow Andrew Norton, a former higher education advisor to Dr David Kemp, stated there is a "need to reduce the number of people who are graduating in just Arts, with no other qualification". His letter to the *Australian* 'Curtailed the Glut of Arts Graduates (19.7.2000), catalysed a national media debate. Norton defended his issues paper saying that the points he was making "were about choice, performance and outcomes" [of Arts degree vocations].

Prof. Deryck Schreuder FAHA, Vice-President of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC), and Vice-Chancellor of the University of

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Every Eight Seconds: Aids revisited

On Wednesday, 29 November and Thursday, 30 November 2000, the National Academies Forum (NAF) in conjunction with the National Library of Australia (NLA) and the AIDS Action Council of the ACT will hold a conference on HIV/AIDS, *Every Eight Seconds: AIDS Revisited* at the NLA. The Australian Academy of Humanities and Australian Academy of Science (AAS) are organizing this conference for the National Academies Forum.

In 1991 the AAS held a symposium on HIV Infection and AIDS, examining the status and future prospects for prevention, treatment and cure. In

1995 the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) held a workshop called 'No Place for Borders', which covered the HIV/AIDS epidemic and development in Asia and the Pacific. In the year 2000 it is appropriate for Australia's four learned academies to revisit a disease that is now infecting new victims at the rate of more than one every eight seconds. Although Australia has been successful in limiting the disease relative to some other countries, the concern is that this has bred complacency.

Set within an historical and global context - particularly Africa, Asia and

the Pacific - this symposium will examine current developments and future directions in dealing with HIV/AIDS. The aims of the symposium are:

- to identify common issues across the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and technological sciences relating to HIV infection and AIDS;
- to outline and discuss current strategies for prevention, treatment, and cure; and,
- to help overcome the Australian complacency about HIV infection and AIDS by promoting greater public awareness of the issues related to it.

More information on the conference and a registration form are at <www.naf.org.au> or ph. (02) 6247 5777 (registration fee \$165 plus GST).

Forum on research in the creative arts

The Australian Research Council (ARC) and the Australia Council for the Arts (AC), with assistance from the Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH), sponsored a Forum on Research in the Creative Arts on Tuesday, 26 September at the new ARC Headquarters at the AGSO building, Symonston, Canberra.

Participation in the Forum was by invitation only, so that a small and select group of researchers and practitioners, including Vicki Sara, Chair of the ARC; Margaret Seares, Chair of the AC; and Malcolm Gillies, President of the AAH, could develop two major outcomes:

- a basis on which to build enhanced coordination of national support for research and professional practice in the creative arts; and

- guidance on the development of a national strategy to support the long-term growth of research in the creative arts.

Recommendation 21 of *Knowing Ourselves and Others: The Humanities in Australia into the 21st Century* states:

- That creative work in The Arts be recognised by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Australian Research Council and within individual Universities either as research or the equivalent of research, and be funded within research funding

mechanisms on an equal footing with other disciplines.

- That Australia Council grants, State Government and other Arts grants awarded on the basis of national competition be included in the list of approved 'competitive national grants'.

One purpose of this Forum was to explore ways in which support can be made more seamless and responsive to the needs of researchers and practitioners, through enhanced coordination. The Forum laid groundwork for formulating key issues, such as:

- the development of an appropriate balance of support for practice and theory based research;

- the identification of research methodologies appropriate to the various fields within the discipline;

- an analysis of emerging, innovative research in creative arts practice and theory, and,

- generally, the steps that are necessary to ensure the growth of a lively research culture within the various fields that constitute the creative arts.

Academy President Malcolm Gillies commented that throughout the 1990s the arts had been caught between mismatched models of research and professional practice. "Now we have a more solid basis for moving forward," he said.

Spirit of Sculthorpe



Renowned composer Peter Sculthorpe (FAHA) has been honoured by Tasmanian artist Cheyne Purdue in a magnificent oil portrait. Cheyne said she was inspired by Peter's 70th birthday concert in Launceston last year by "the bright lights and vivid colours, the music, and most of all, by the warmth and charisma of the man himself. I was reminded of my deep love of music and also of my past, as I spent much of my childhood in Launceston," Cheyne said. 'Spirit of Sculthorpe' is now part of a permanent display in Sheffield, Tasmania. The painting can also be seen on website <http://www.datawise.com.au/chantilly>

Poetry and Peace

Professor Robert White

*Department of English
University of Western Australia*

The following is part of a series of short 'think pieces' which link research fields of Fellows with 'hot' topics in the wider public domain. If Fellows have ideas for further commentaries of this kind, please contact Bruce Bennett, Editor, or Paul Hendy, Publications Officer. The views expressed in this 'think piece' are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the Academy.

It would be gratifying if, in the year 2099, our descendants could look back and use the phrase 'the century of peace'.

Since it has been estimated that at the end of the twentieth century there are at any one time 100 wars and civil wars being waged, the scope of such a hope is clearly very ambitious, if not forlorn. In the seismic movement of mind which is necessary, poets, and creative artists in general, can be powerful catalysts for change.

The fundamental connection between rationalism, the place of human beings in nature, and pacifism, is eloquently expressed in 'Ralph Partridge's Statement to the Appeal Tribunal for Conscientious Objectors in 1943' as transcribed in Frances Partridge's *A Pacifist's War* (London, 1978). The statement marginalises and ridicules war and violence as solutions to problems, in a way that makes pacifism the norm of human dealings:

"...I resigned my commission in the Army as soon as the war ended and became a pacifist, not out of a revulsion from fighting but from a conviction that wars never lead to peace but only to the next war..."

"The ethical basis for my profound conviction that war is wrong in itself and all its consequences, is that I believe human behaviour should be governed by reason which is all that distinguishes us from brutes, that men can be reconciled and united by reason; that in disputes between human beings a resort to violence, being irrational, is recognised as wrong by the laws and



courtesy of Ibnuo Wahyudi, *Peace and Development*

conscience of mankind; and that the organised violence of war is infinitely worse than individual acts of violence because for political reasons it is exonerated by the State and even glorified. It is the doctrine by which the Inquisition was justified. The outcome of a war can never prove that one side is right and the other wrong; it only proves which side has superior force. The only lesson nations learn from war is the need for superior force to obtain victory...

"I have the firmest belief in the sanctity of human life and the brotherhood of man, and I am convinced that no civilised life can endure in this world until these universal conceptions override national jealousies and mistrust, and are accepted by the governments of states as well as private individuals."

The Quakers, acting directly from 'the light within', have been living by such a creed since the mid-seventeenth century.

The power of literature is to open readers to new and unfamiliar subject-positions using a combination of affective appeal to the imagination through sympathy and empathy, and rational thought: poetry literally opens up the mind (or in some cases, shuts it down!). Our culture overwhelmingly endorses the propaganda that patriotic

war is noble and admirable, allowing individuals to demonstrate unparalleled feats of heroism and courage. Popular literature and films which propagate this world-view based on the normativeness of conflict, apparently infinite in their volume, attest to the power of reading as a way of changing and reinforcing consciousness to accept war as glorious. Thackeray puts the position satirically in one of his ballads published in *Punch*, 'The Chronicle of the Drum':

And ever since historian writ,
And ever since a bard could sing,
Doth each exalt with all his wit
The noble art of murdering.

Literature and drama (like any art forms, particularly those encouraging collective responses) are dangerous mediums and if readers simply wallow emotionally in them they can find themselves tacitly endorsing attitudes which are quite irrational, unjust, and cruel. Fortunately, there is a substantial body of pacifist literature, written not just as a response to war but as a general perspective on human relationships. Peace may not be as glamorous or as socially endorsed as violence and disagreement, but it has a basis in rationality which the latter lack, and some literature powerfully conveys the emotionally cleansing and healing qualities of such thought.

We can find poems, novels, and essays written from a pacifist perspective, from Buddha, Lao Tzu, to the biblical Isaiah:

"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"; and Jesus Christ in the Gospel of St Matthew:

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God"; up through Tolstoy and literature of the twentieth century World Wars and the Vietnam conflict, to the present day. Shakespeare includes the pacifist voice amongst many others throughout his plays, virtually whenever the subject of war is raised directly or indirectly. Armed

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'Cultures of Peace'

Program

2 November (University of Western Aust.)

10.45am Registration/ Morning Tea

11.10am Welcomes/Presidential statement/Admission of New Fellows

12.00pm The Annual Lecture: A/ Prof. David Christian

1.00pm Lunch

2.30pm Cultures of Peace in Asian Societies: Indonesia, India and Thailand

4.30-5.00 Break

5.00-6.00pm Keynote Address: Bruce Davis (AusAID)

3 November (Curtin Univ. of Technology)

9.00am Welcomes

9.15am Cultures of Peace in Asian Societies (cont.)

10.15am Morning tea

10.45-12.15pm Cultures of Peace in Australia

Buses to University of Western Australia

1.00-2.15pm Lunch

2.15-3.15pm Globalisation and Tolerance

3.15-3.30pm Break

3.30pm-5.00pm Fellows-only Discussion

7pm Dinner: Royal Perth Yacht Club

4 November (University of Western Aust.)

9.00am Electoral Section Meetings

12.30pm Lunch

1.30-5.00pm Annual General Meeting

Rhys Jones at RoySoc

Professor Rhys Jones FAHA, of the Australian National University, was invited to give a lecture in September at the Royal Society, London, on the topic 'The Measurement of Time'. His lecture explored the C.P Snow-like issue of bridging the gap between the sciences and the humanities. He is also taking the opportunity to research the papers and correspondence of Robert Boyle in the Royal Society library.

Poetry and Peace

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conflict is rarely, if ever, allowed to stand unchallenged as the norm of human behaviour, even when the context is a 'just war'. His unique brand of radical ambiguity seems to be a function of the dramatic medium itself, at least in his practice: it is enough to portray convincing dramatic presences giving vehement expression to a range of apparently strong and conflicting convictions. As one steeped in the rhetorical tradition of Cicero, Shakespeare would have been trained like a good lawyer to defend almost any position with power and plausibility, and he always has characters who can speak with as much belief of peaceful values as warlike ones.

In some ways Hamlet emerges as one of the most conscientious pacifists in Shakespeare, until he is forced against his philosophical inclination to 'take arms against a sea of troubles' late in the play. Shakespeare's characteristic strategy is to use a dual technique of either 'alienating' war (putting it in a perspective that exposes it as absurd, irrational, or even comic - as in *Troilus and Cressida*), or alternatively placing peace in an attractive and normative light. One example among many comes in *Coriolanus*, a play which has often been misread as pro-war. Speaking of the military 'hero', Coriolanus, who has turned his back on Rome, a Tribune says,

"SICINIUS

We hear not of him, neither need we fear him.

His remedies are tame - the present peace

And quietness of the people, which before

Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends

Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,

Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold

Dissentious numbers pest'ring streets than see

Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going

About their functions friendly."

(4.6.1-9)

It has been argued plausibly that Gandhi had read and assimilated Shelley's nonviolent philosophy in the *Masque of Anarchy*, and it is no accident that the 'poetry of pity' we remember most from the first World War comes from combatants like Owen, Sassoon and Rosenberg, who learned and taught that war causes a horrifying breach to the heartwarming decencies of ordinary life.

Women have carried the message most eloquently, and they can claim Edith Sitwell's 'Still falls the rain', written in London in the blitz, as one of the greatest anti-war poems. The Celts had it right in exempting bards from military service, and Dylan Thomas responded with one of his steadiest and most moving poems, 'Refusal to Mourn', focusing on the death of a child bombed near the Thames, 'the cinders of the little skull' to generate feelings of abhorrence for the atrocity of war.

It is incalculable how influential poetry was in galvanising opposition to the Vietnam war. Ginsberg and Adrien Mitchell, and poets such as Yevtushenko, Anna Akhmatova and Judith Wright commenting more generally from other cultures, along with anthologies like *Doves for Peace*, found enthusiastic readers and listeners prepared to turn their emotional responses into political activism.

Poetry and fiction can bring home lessons 'on the pulses' to general readers across disciplines and outside universities, far more effectively than political philosophies or particular religions. The unique amalgam of conceptual rationality, lateral imagination and direct emotional appeal of literature, makes it compelling. If we are to have a peaceful century, it will be in some measure due to the heartfelt cries of poets.

Robert White

Swedish exchange

Mr Francis Regan, Flinders University, has been awarded the Visiting Fellowship for Sweden to explore the impact of the changeover from Sweden's legal aid system to private insurance.

Scholarly communication and creative arts research

The Academy's dedication to issues of scholarly communication has been illustrated at recent meetings of the National Scholarly Communications Forum (26-27 July, Sydney, chaired by Angus Martin) and of the Coalition for Innovation in Scholarly Communication (16 August, Canberra, chaired by Malcolm Gillies).

Both gatherings were large (around one hundred participants), reflecting current concerns at Australia's dwindling percentage access to the world's scholarly information and uncertainty about the rate of adoption of new electronic formats for knowledge.

At both meetings, ways were proposed in which the nation might recapture a worthy level of access through such schemes as broader access to the growing number of electronic datasets and the establishment of preprint and postprint electronic repositories of our own institutional research publications.

The national press and a variety of local presses have taken up the issues, largely because they mirror concerns raised by the Innovation Summit and

the Science Capability Review, now being finalised by the Chief Scientist.

How can we have an innovative and world-beating research community if we do not have access to the broader extent of the world's research literature?

The Canberra meeting, cohosted by the Australian Research Council and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, considered in detail a proposal to develop a 'national research information infrastructure' designed to:

- provide equitable access to current high-value materials for all researchers in our universities and national research institutes
- facilitate multi-disciplinary approaches to research
- improve accessibility to research materials not just in the library, but in the office, laboratory or home
- maximise our financial potential through large-scale consortial dealing with publishers.

The central aspect of the proposal is a three-year project, a so-called 'national site licence', whereby some of the world's largest datasets can be accessed by the nation's scholars.

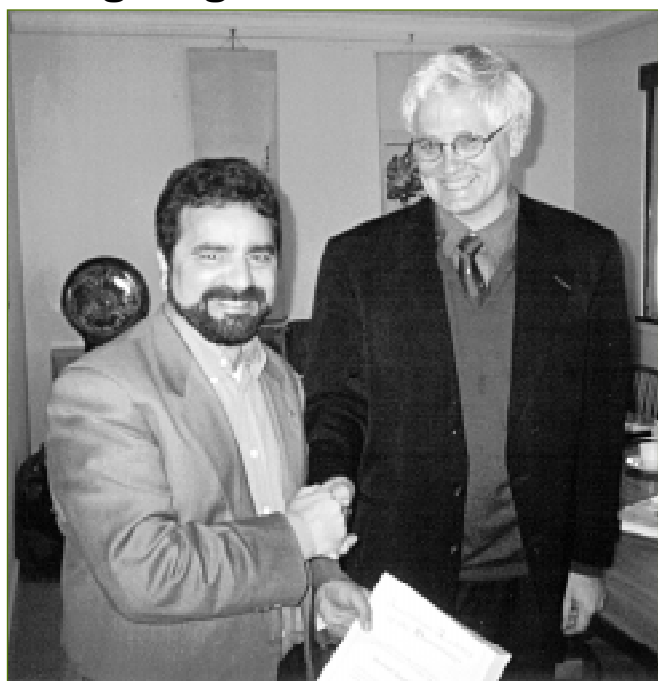
We hope that next year's federal

budget might be supportive of this endeavour, as part of a package of measures to boost Australia's research capacity. The Academy is also most supportive of recent propositions to double the dedicated funding to the Australian Research Council over the next five years. This increased funding, hopefully for both linkage and discovery aspects of the revised Council's activities, would be a tremendous boost to all fields of research.

The new six-committee structure of the Council introduces a separate committee for the Humanities and Creative Arts. This arrangement is similar to that now found in Britain, and distinguishes our concerns more starkly from those of the Social Sciences. As part of the planning for that new Humanities and Creative Arts committee, the Academy assisted the ARC and the Australia Council at a 'Research in the Creative Arts' day on 26 September in Canberra. This meeting explored the types of creative arts research activities which the ARC's new committee might seek to develop. A Program Manager for the committee will shortly be appointed.

Malcolm Gillies

Signing of Charter Book



New Fellow Professor Joseph Lo Bianco recently signed the Charter book with congratulations from departing Council member, Professor Colin Nettelbeck.

Publication subsidies

During the Year, Council considered a total of 24 applications for publication subsidies and Eight subsidies were awarded amounting to \$13,000.

The awardees were as follows:

Campbell, J., *The Invisible Invaders*

Hainge, G., *Capitalism and Schizophrenia in the Later Novels of Louis-Ferdinand Celine*

Lindsay, M., *Covenanted Solidarity*

McLaren, R., *Re-Thinking the Body*

McMullin, R., *Pompey Elliot*

Nicoll, F., *From Diggers to Drag Queens*

Pescod, K., *The Government Counted Their Socks*

Stewart, K., *Investigations in Australian Literature*

Travelling fellowships

Six travelling fellowships worth a total of \$12,500 were awarded to six scholars for short-term research abroad. These were: Dr Malcolm Choat, Macquarie University; Dr Erik Eklund, University of Newcastle; Dr Trevor Evans, Macquarie University; Dr Simone Gigliotti, University of Melbourne; Dr Donald Pulford, La Trobe University; and, Dr Martin Thomas, Sydney.

Broad base remains vital

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Western Australia, responded to the Norton report in the following way:

The report ignores the reality that study of arts and the humanities provides possibly the best foundation for developing a broad range of critical transferable skills so vital in our globalised era.

It also fails to acknowledge the role of arts and the humanities in contributing significantly to that complex partnership of politics, economics and technology that is at the heart of our liberal, free-enterprise society.

In fact the arts and humanities actually underpin the improvement of economic performance - through the realisation of human potential, helping to maintain social cohesion, enhancing effective management, strengthening national and global security, and

improving the processes of government.

They also represent empowering influences in shaping the way we see our society - helping define who we are collectively, how other nations perceive us, and developing frames of understanding about the human potential of science and technology, and the impact of social change in everyday lives.

Despite all this, study and research in the arts and the humanities still suffers from the outdated perception that it is marginal to economic and social life.

The *Enterprising Nation* report, from the Industry Taskforce on Leadership and Management Skills in 1995, clearly stated that Australian managers were deficient in such essential leadership qualities as vision, decisiveness, teamwork and self-confidence.

The study of arts and the humanities provides the basis for developing these broader critical and generic skills. And there is substantial evidence that prospective employers are beginning to look more and more for graduates with

just such a broad background.

This has provided the impetus for the growing number of double degrees at our universities, in which students use aspects of the Bachelor of Arts degree to give breadth to the study of more specific professional disciplines.

I would also mention that at the University of Western Australia surveys of graduate destinations indicate that arts graduates are successful in gaining full-time employment, with the variety of jobs and employment sectors reflecting the broad range of skills involved. Further, mean starting salary levels for arts graduates (in 1999) were higher than the mean starting salaries for law, economics/commerce, and architecture and fine arts graduates.

Any university operating at international standards of excellence will always have strong and vibrant commitment to the arts and the humanities.

The Knowledge Nation needs just such knowledge.

Prof. Deryck Schreuder

New Administration Officer

Tania Walker, our new Administrative Officer, has pursued parallel interests in fine arts and administration since 1991. She completed a Diploma of Fine Art at Warrnambool - in the days before degrees had even been thought of for study of practical art - and went on to receive a B.A. Hons in Art History at



Tania Walker

La Trobe University. Her passion for art history was "kindled by the art historian at Warrnambool" and her enthusiasm for her subject, particularly Byzantine

art. At La Trobe University, Tania came under the spell of another art historian and the Italian Renaissance and Bronzino. But then she made a huge and sudden leap into contemporary Soviet art. Unable to find anyone to supervise her thesis in that area she chose instead to focus on the Russian avant-garde, especially Malevich, which in turn led to an interest in the relationship between art and social/cultural politics, and an M.A. from the University of Melbourne.

Tania's administrative background is equally diverse. She has worked with the Museums Association of Australia and the Council of Australian Museums Association as well as in contemporary visual art galleries, both commercial and public. She has taught 'abstraction' in Visual Arts Studies at Swinburne Institute of Technology, has been a legal secretary, and worked on a contract basis designing promotional displays and installations for the manufacturing industry, where her background in sculpture came in useful. Tania has also worked in non-government school

administration; and recently dipped a toe in the tepid waters of the Public Service. Following a brief period spent in Brisbane, Tania has braved the cold and come to settle in Canberra, taking up her position at the Academy with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. And she still, when time and funds permit, takes up her brushes and paints.

Fellows' biographies on Website

The Academy's Website <http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/aah/> now has a full List of Fellows' 'biographical' entries with address, academic and electoral section information. Could you please check your entry which can be found on the home page under 'List of Fellows'-(New).

Please take the opportunity to embellish your entry with further biographical information, or inform the Academy of any changes, by emailing Paul Hendy on aah@anu.edu.au, by fax 02 6248 6287, or by post.