A pair of hands, likely belonging to an older person, are shown holding a dark, textured bowl. The hands are positioned on either side of the bowl, with fingers wrapped around it. The bowl has a rough, almost metallic or stone-like appearance with some lighter spots. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Red

ISSUE 04 OCTOBER 2009

Are **Sanctions** the solution?

Mary Robinson on business and human rights
Older workers and the keeping of wisdom
Letter from **Shanghai**

VC

Griffith University
Vice Chancellor and President

PROFESSOR IAN O'CONNOR



Sustainability is one of the world's hottest topics—pardon the pun—and clearly universities play a leadership role in the field. It is much more than the province of environmental science,

embracing business, law, health, town-planning, sociology, architecture—in fact disciplines too numerous to list here.

Griffith University's core value statement enshrines our commitment and contribution to a robust, equitable and environmentally sustainable society. Our multidisciplinary work in the sustainability arena frequently finds its way onto the pages of *Red*.

This edition explores sustainability from a couple of different angles. We take a close look at the impact of the global financial crisis, and how business schools have a responsibility to prepare graduates who are equipped to build sustainable enterprises.

We take another perspective in a conversation with Mary Robinson, one of the world's greatest champions of human rights. The former President of Ireland and United Nations ambassador delivered the Griffith Lecture in September, and shared insights into her latest endeavours which have focussed on ethical globalisation and realising human rights.

Our lead feature considers the many consequences that economic, political or security sanctions bring to nations and their people.

And we shine a spotlight on the much maligned generation Y, and later look at the changing landscape of work, life and retirement plans for members of generation X and baby boomers.

I hope you enjoy reading about our teaching, research and community outreach.



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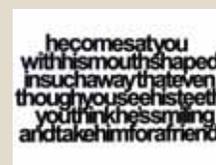
Snapshots	1
Sanctions	4
Getting to the heart of good health	10
Gen why?	14
Are business degrees still about money?	16
The keeping of wisdom	20
Viewfinder: SICHUAN HOT!	22
Alcohol: an environmental health issue?	26
Middle earth	30
Social business—Mary Robinson	32
Letter from Shanghai	36
The buck stops here	39
My view	40

The Griffith University Art Collection

Griffith Artworks provides cultural asset management, curatorial and research publication services at Queensland College of Art Gallery and across the five campuses of Griffith University. It is the management authority for more than 4000 objects in the Griffith University Art Collection and administers the On-Campus Exhibition Program that displays the collection in thematic and curated groups on over 120 approved sites between the Gold Coast and South Bank, Brisbane. Almost 20 per cent of the collection is on display at any given time, one of the highest rates of exposure for any public collection of art in Australia.

Griffith recently acquired this major work by Vernon Ah Kee. His work deploys text, drawing and video mediums to engage specifically with issues facing Indigenous cultures in the context of contemporary Australian society. In this work Vernon has 'sampled' text attributed to Malcolm X, the African-American Muslim minister, public speaker and human rights activist who was assassinated whilst giving an address in 1965.

Vernon Ah Kee was awarded a Doctorate of Visual Arts from Queensland College of Art in 2007, and is currently exhibiting in 'Once Removed' a major part of Australia's official representation at the 53rd Venice Biennale of International Art. Griffith University is a Supporting Partner for Australia at The 53rd Venice Biennale.



BACK COVER

Vernon Ah Kee
the fox 2009
acrylic on canvas 180 x 240 cm

Griffith University Art Collection.
Copyright courtesy the artist
and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.



Red is printed on paper made from elemental chlorine-free pulp derived from well-managed forests. It is manufactured by an ISO 14001 certified mill and has been produced using waterless printing. This environmentally friendly process saves water and reduces toxins released into the air and entering our waterways.

Snapshots



Artists and athletes learn together

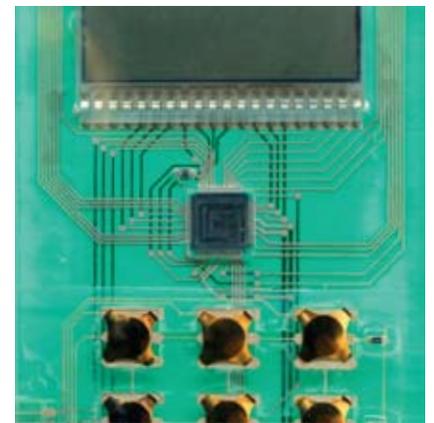
What do elite artists and athletes have in common? Both need special preparation to face the intense world of public attention and meet their obligations as role models. Griffith's Michael Jeh, life skills coach to stars of Australia's elite sports world, is taking on musical protégés in collaboration with the Queensland Conservatorium. Launched in 2008, the Skool Project brings together talented athletes and performing artists from high schools across Brisbane and gives them leadership and life skills training. Participants are taught about managing their public and private life, money, media, interpersonal and networking skills, and drugs and alcohol. In 2009, the project was implemented in Gold Coast high schools.

The future of robotics

They're already here—driving cars, vacuuming carpets, feeding hospital patients—and autonomous robots will be in our offices and homes within the next decade. In order to behave as expected by others, they will require “common sense”, helped by the findings of the Robotic Dominoes project. Professor Vladimir Estivill-Castro at Griffith University's Mi-PAL lab has created domino playing robots to research and investigate the artificial intelligence required to handle competitive situations. His research explores robot-human interaction, where more multi-modal cues are needed.

Plastic circuits for greener electronics

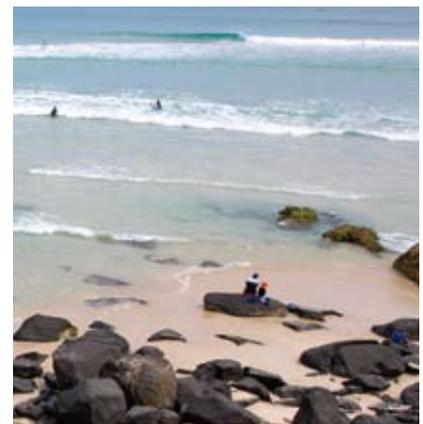
Griffith University engineers are making circuits out of plastic. Professor David Thiel and Madhudas Rao Neel from the Centre of Wireless Monitoring and Applications say plastic circuits are more environmentally friendly than traditional circuits as they can be made from recycled plastic, don't contain any hazardous substances, and as packaging is part of the base circuit board, there is no need for additional packaging material. At the end of the circuit's life the components are mechanically disassembled and recycled leaving a lower carbon footprint compared with that left by shredding and incinerating traditional circuits.





Narrow beaches at risk

Early this year stormy seas devoured large slices of Australia's favourite beaches along the south-east Queensland coast and researchers warn there is more damage to come. Scientists at Griffith's Coastal Management Centre predict an increase in storm activities resulting from global climate change and studies reveal the average beach width may be too narrow to withstand storm events. The Centre is working with local council on long-term strategies to widen and protect beaches for future generations to enjoy.



Bull sharks on the move

Since 2006 Griffith University PhD candidate and shark researcher Jonathan Werry has been using acoustic technology when tagging bull sharks in south-east Queensland to understand their habitat use and movements throughout their life cycle. Werry has attached acoustic tags to about 40 neonate, juvenile, sub-adult and adult bull sharks. The tags, which emit a unique "pulse" detected by receivers deployed in river, estuarine and near-shore habitats, revealed that bull sharks know exactly where they are going in the canals, with juveniles moving from one end to the other over two-week cycles and preferring the main river to the canals.



Frogs in crisis

Amphibian extinction is one of the most serious environmental issues of the 21st century. One-third of the world's 6418 amphibian species are currently threatened due to factors such as climate change, herbicides and pesticides, environmental stress, chemical contamination and habitat destruction. Griffith University biologist Associate Professor Jean-Marc Hero has been conducting research into amphibian recovery and disease and recently formed a global research team to examine the amphibian response to climate change.

A garden of sounds

Sonic Babylon is a global art project planting interactive gardens of sound which grow within a community, bringing music, sounds, and stories from the past and present into the future. The gardens hang invisibly in the air and can be heard and shaped by visitors on Wi-Fi-enabled mobile devices. Each garden is unique and grows over time, nurtured by public interaction. Creators Nora Farrell and William Duckworth from New York, in association with the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, are establishing permanent gardens in Noosa and South Bank.

www.sonicbabylon.com

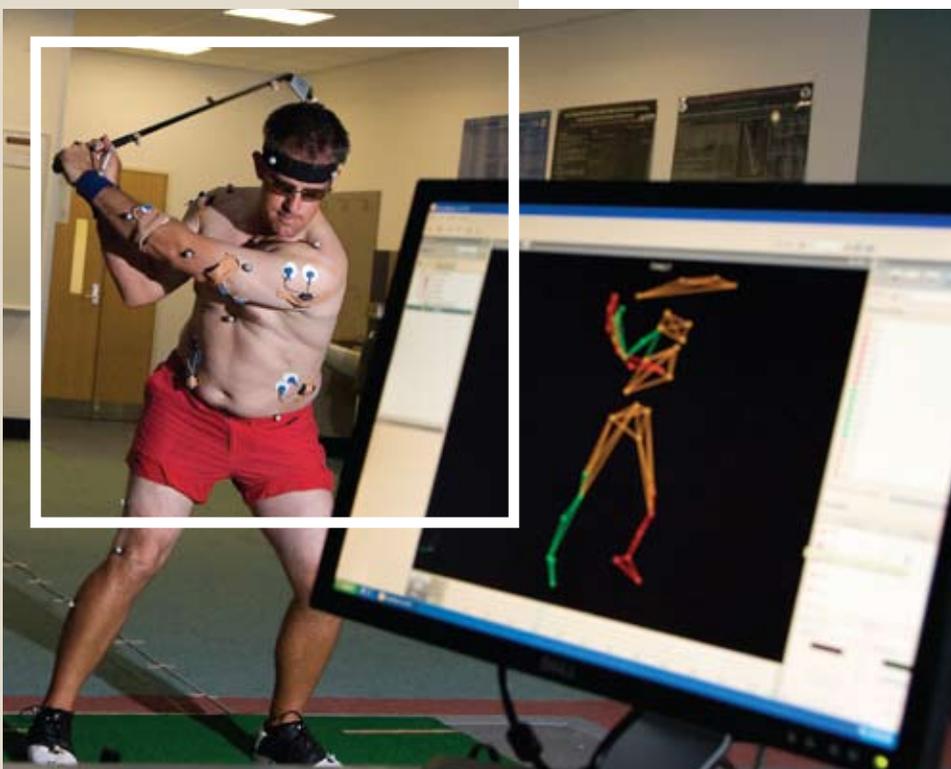


Knowledge gaps fuel alcohol trouble

Researchers believe the number of people with behavioural problems resulting from drinking alcohol is higher than estimated and that alcohol-knowledge gaps need urgent attention. Griffith Business School's Associate Professor Sharyn Rundle-Thiele said observing people's drinking behaviour at pubs and bars had shown people drink more than they report in surveys. Her Canberra-based NRMA-funded study has revealed that people are not sure about the number of standard drinks contained in beverages yet if better informed, they are likely to act more responsibly. Rundle-Thiele said with alcohol-fuelled violence and teenage binge drinking worsening, there is an urgent need to increase people's knowledge of the effects of alcohol.

Science analyses a classic golf swing

Griffith University researchers are using the latest technology to replicate the unique action of golf legend Ben Hogan. Head of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science Professor Peter Milburn said the project would document the sequence and timing of muscle movement which helped Hogan to win 64 PGA tournaments. "Hogan was the world's best, however the biomechanics behind his swing has remained an enigma. We believe we can replicate his action on the computer and analyse aspects such as the hip movement, the weight shift and the down swing that made his style unique."



Facing up to lie detection

Research in the area of memory and brain activity is opening up the possibility of future alternatives to the traditional polygraph or "lie detector" test. Griffith University psychologist Dr Tim Cutmore said when the brain recognises an object or face it has encountered through previous personal experience, it produces a distinctive response measurable by electroencephalogram (EEG). This response can be distinguished from other brain activity associated with viewing unfamiliar or irrelevant images. By testing a suspect's responses to the faces of crime victims or key aspects of a crime scene, it may be possible in the future to help distinguish the guilty from the innocent.

Animal protection

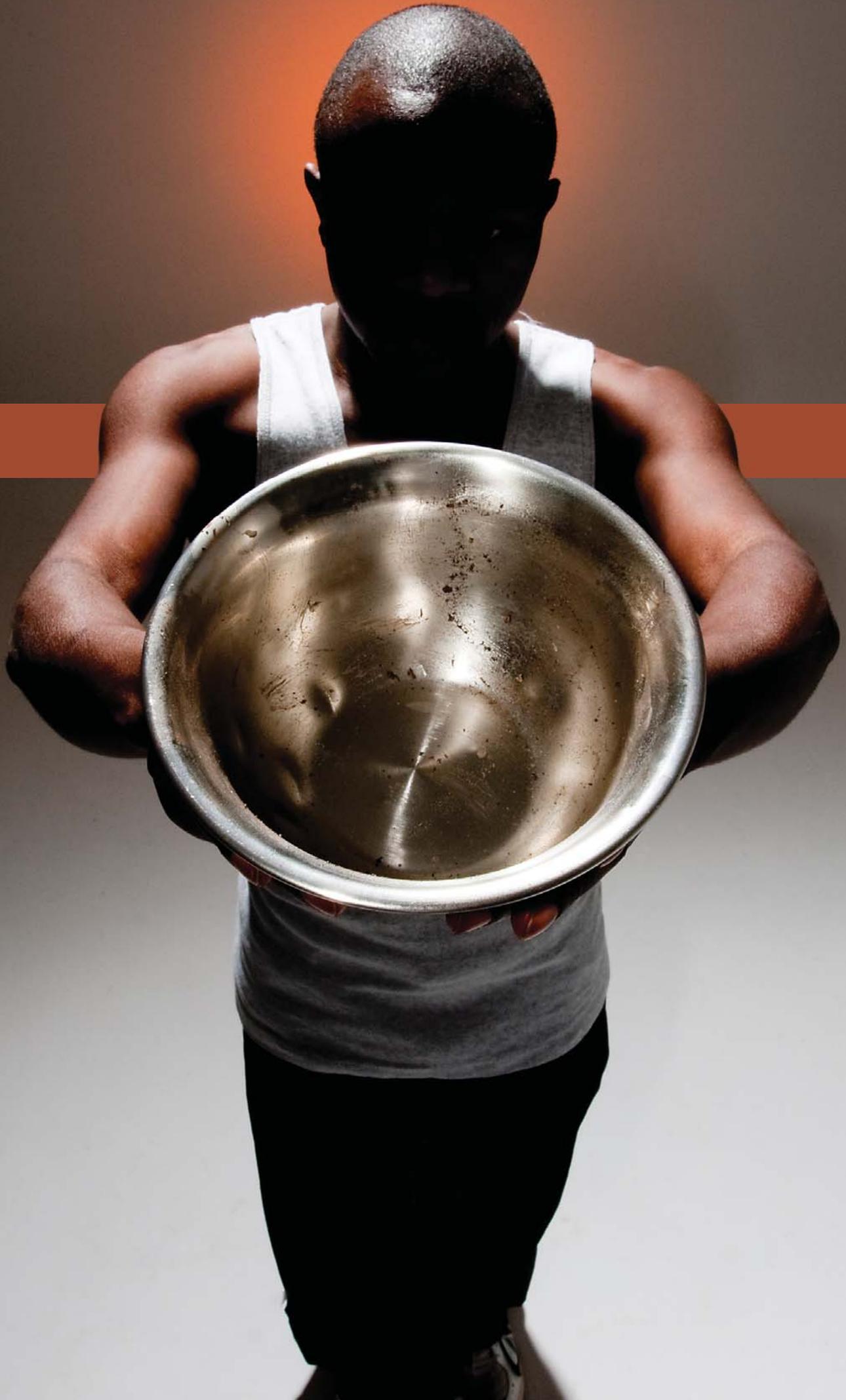
In our last issue of *Red* we wrote about animal rights (*AnimalLore*, *Red* Issue 03, May 2009) and the work of animal protection organisation Voiceless in lobbying governments to address institutionalised suffering of animals bred for food. Australia's most recent review of layer hen housing has increased minimum floor space from 450 square centimetres to 550 square centimetres per bird, which Voiceless argues is still inadequate.

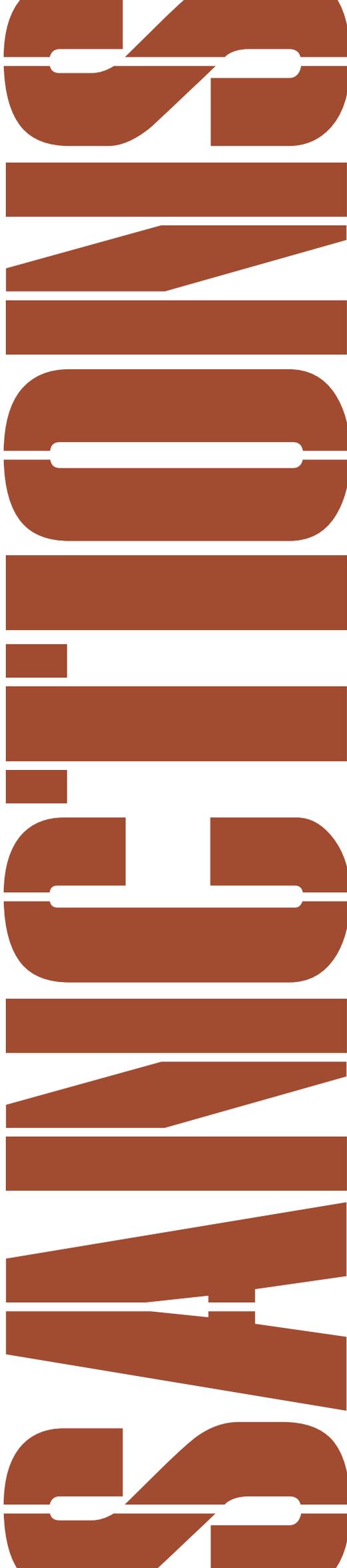
For further information:

http://www.voiceless.org.au/The_Issues/Fact_Sheets/Battery_hens_.html



AnimalLore, Red Issue 03, May 2009.





DO ECONOMIC SANCTIONS HELP OR HURT THOSE THEY TARGET?

JOHN BARRON REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

Sarraj drives the night shift in a taxi in Sydney, ferrying people to city pubs and restaurants and weary shoppers home with bags bulging from department store sales. Fifteen years ago he was driving a cab in his birthplace, the city of Kirkuk in northern Iraq. "It was a bad time," the Kurd in his mid-forties recalls with a slight shake of his head.

On August 2, 1990, 100,000 Iraqi troops backed up by 700 tanks invaded neighbouring Kuwait. Four days later the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 661 which decrees: "All states shall prevent the import into their territories of all commodities or productions originating in Iraq ... [and] the sale or supply of any commodities or products [to Iraq]..." in effect banning all international trade with Iraq.

"At the time, the feeling wasn't that the sanctions would cause too much pain and be too severe, if anything the worry was the other way—that the sanctions would be mild and easily evaded, not do much damage," says Professor Jason Sharman from Griffith University's Centre for Governance and Public Policy.

The UN sanctions froze Iraqi financial assets and cut off the export lifeblood of the Iraqi economy—oil—which according to UNICEF figures accounted for 61 per cent of gross national product. Iraq had abundant supplies of oil, and was reliant on oil revenue to survive as they were not self-sufficient in food. Saddam's government immediately introduced food rationing set at just 1000 calories per person per day, which accounted for only 40 per cent of daily requirements.

"There was a debate about whether the sanctions would be enough to force Iraq out of Kuwait or whether military action would be required," Sharman says. "Many people argued that sanctions would have worked, if only they had been given more time."

Senior US State Department official and later ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton doubts sanctions alone would have worked. "It became clear very soon that Saddam couldn't care

“... in effect the sanctions might have ended up hurting Kuwait more than Iraq.”

UN AMBASSADOR JOHN BOLTON

less about the political signal and that if we waited for the sanctions to perhaps have effect that he would have looted Kuwait in the meantime. He would have pumped a lot of its oil and taken the revenues for himself and stripped assets—so in effect the sanctions might have ended up hurting Kuwait more than Iraq.” In late 1990 Bolton became a driving force for the UN resolution to authorise the use of force against Saddam.

Thirteen days after taking the oath of office following the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt in April 1945, the new President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, travelled to San Francisco to address delegates to the UN Conference on International Organisation, where the objectives and instruments of the UN were being hammered out in the dying days of *World War II*. The bespectacled former haberdasher from Independence, Missouri, told the assembled dignitaries: “By your labours at this conference we shall know if suffering humanity is to achieve a just and lasting peace ... We can no longer permit any nation, or group of nations, to attempt to settle their arguments with bombs and bayonets.”

Six months later, the Charter of the United Nations, drafted in San Francisco, came into effect, providing the framework for international relations in the postwar era. The UN’s key mechanism for maintaining world order short of the use of military force was set out in Chapter VII, Article 41:

“The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations”—in other words, United Nations sanctions. But while sanctions were designed as an alternative to war, sometimes they have become a precursor to war, or even a form of warfare in itself.

After five months of UN sanctions, intense diplomatic manoeuvring and military preparations, *Operation Desert Storm* unleashed the full fury of the US-led multi-national force on the

Iraqi army in Kuwait in January 1991. Saddam had warned of the “mother of all battles” but the reality was closer to “the mother of all routs” as the Iraqi invaders were driven from Kuwait in disarray while dozens of Saddam’s SCUD missiles were lobbed blindly into Israel.

The Gulf War was soon won, but the UN embargo remained in place and the suffering of Iraqi civilians had just begun. The Kurds in the north of Iraq and Shias in the south heeded calls from US President George H.W. Bush to rebel, but with no outside military help their uprising was brutally repressed by Saddam. Tens of thousands of people were killed.

Professor Charles Sampford is the director of the Institute for Ethics, Government and the Law, a joint initiative of Griffith University, the United Nations University, QUT and the ANU. He says the international community must accept some responsibility for the humanitarian disaster that unfolded in Iraq during the early 1990s. “They did one very stupid thing, which was to incite the uprising without being prepared to support the rebels, which was beyond the mandate of the UN, and then they decided to continue the sanctions which were only intended as a relatively short-term thing. They managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of a brilliant victory and the sanctions regime was the greatest problem of all.”

“I remember the children dying,” Sarraj recalls. “They would get sick [and] go to the doctors, but the doctors had no medicine, so the children just died.” He says the sanctions also made it hard to get spare parts for his taxi and he had no work and no money. Kirkuk was the hub of the Iraqi oil industry and so was especially hard-hit by the embargo, and the Sunni dictator was only too happy to punish the Kurds and Shiites by further limiting supplies of food and medicine to those regions.

By the UN’s own estimates, up to 5000 Iraqi children were dying each month as a result of the sanctions, with a total conservatively put at 150,000. The Iraqi Health Ministry claimed the figure was three times that but was accused of inflating the toll for propaganda purposes. Ambassador John Bolton lays the blame squarely at the feet



of Saddam Hussein. “He used the revenues he was getting to buttress his own military position to support his lifestyle and those of his political allies. The idea that it was the sanctions that caused suffering among aspects of the Iraqi population ignores the role of the Ba’ath Party dictatorship. There wasn’t any suffering in the Sunni areas; it was in the Shia areas. If you ask the people in Iraq today who they blame for their troubles, I think a very small percentage would blame the United States or the international community, and the overwhelming majority would correctly blame Saddam Hussein.”

I ask taxi driver Sarraj who he holds responsible, the sanctions or Saddam? “Both,” Sarraj says.

In 1997 UN Resolution 986 enabled further humanitarian relief to arrive in Iraq in the form of the Oil-for-Food program and infant mortality rates stabilised. In September 1998 the UN co-ordinator of the program, Denis Halliday, resigned after 18 months in the job declaring sanctions “a totally bankrupt concept”. Halliday also warned the privations caused by the UN sanctions had eroded Iraq’s secularism, driving younger Iraqis towards a Taliban-like radical Islam. “It is not well understood as a possible spin-off of the sanctions regime [that] we are pushing people to take extreme positions.” The prescience of his comments would only become apparent in the sectarian and insurgent bloodbath that followed the eventual ousting of Saddam in the US-led invasion of 2003.

The Oil-for-Food program itself was corrupted by kickbacks to Saddam’s regime and a rampant black market, with the Australian Wheat Board among the worst offenders. “It embroiled the United Nations and constituent governments including Australia in a lot of corrupt activity, most of which the UN-member governments—including Australia—have been very happy to sweep under the rug,” observes Professor Jason Sharman, from Griffith University. But he says the human toll and subsequent rorting of the 1990s UN sanctions regime against Iraq also led to a reappraisal of the way sanctions are formulated.

The result, Sharman says, was so-called “smart sanctions”—United Nation Security Council bilateral or unilateral sanctions that target the particular individuals responsible; the high government officials rather than the economy and the civilian population. But while freezing the assets of the leadership in countries like Zimbabwe, Burma and Fiji and restricting their ability to travel rather than impose broadly-based sanctions may have had an impact, they haven’t brought about regime change. And these more targeted sanctions can still be problematic, if they prove to be too effective, Sharman says, such as when the United States barred Iran and North Korea from US-dollar denominated financial markets. “North Korea responded by walking out of six-nation talks on their nuclear program so the United States basically backed down and handed back the money.”

“ They managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of a brilliant victory and the sanctions regime was the greatest problem of all.”

PROFESSOR CHARLES SAMPFORD

As US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton headed the Bush administration's effort to limit North Korea and Iran's ability to import fissile material and equipment which could advance their nuclear programs. "The fact is the sanctions that have been imposed by the Security Council on North Korea since the first nuclear test in 2006 were simply not enforced very well and in part that's due to the Bush administration's decision not to press the sanctions in the hopes of a negotiated solution. And in the case of Iran, the sanctions passed by the Security Council have been completely ineffective. They have been so watered down that they have had almost no effect. But that's not a test of the efficacy of the sanctions but a test of the efficacy of the Security Council, and it's the Security Council that has failed there, not the idea of sanctions."

Professor Sampford warns that in many cases sanctions are ultimately counter-productive. "The imposition of sanctions actually strengthens the domestic power of the regime which is being targeted, it increases the black market and allows the government to blame the foreigners for everything that goes wrong whether it's the fault of the sanctions or not—they will hand the scarce supplies out to their supporters and the soldiers who will be defending them. That's why sanctions often don't work—generally don't work—why they frequently strengthen the hand of the domestic regime and why they lead to increased suffering of the civilians one is hoping to help."

The question of sanctions emerged again in mid-2009 when the repressive and reclusive military junta in Burma put the winner of the 1990 election, Aung San Suu Kyi, on trial for breaching the conditions of an order which had seen her spend almost 16 years under house arrest. In August there were reports Burma had teamed with North Korea to build a secret military nuclear reactor and develop its own atomic bomb within five years. Would sanctions have any effect or simply have a negative impact on the Burmese people? Australia is among a handful of countries to have imposed limited bilateral sanctions against the Burmese regime, but some argued the lack of UN sanctions had already resulted in greater civilian suffering.

"If sanctions can help in even a small way to ultimately bring down the evil regime then the people will willingly suffer and rejoice in their suffering," says Patrick Cho, a Brisbane-based Burma activist.

But Tim Costello, the CEO of aid group World Vision, says the sanctions-related civilian deaths in Iraq in the 1990s should stand as a warning for the future. "It was an over-reach, and cost far too many lives. I am one who just believes that war has outlived its usefulness and therefore all measures short of war including well-targeted sanctions are worth trying ... but when they actually have the same impact as war—150,000 killed in Iraq—then you have to put them in the category of war and say no, this isn't justified."

Back in Sarraj's taxi in inner Sydney the radio is tuned to the latest news from Washington. Iraqi President Nuri al-Maliki has appeared alongside President Barack Obama in the Rose Garden of the White House, six years after the ousting of Saddam and almost 19 years after the invasion of Kuwait. Obama has joined Nuri al-Maliki in calling on the United Nations to lift the remaining Chapter VII sanctions against Iraq, which still include monthly reparation payments of \$100 million to Kuwait.

Meanwhile, a series of bombings north of Baghdad have left more than 50 people dead. ■

John Barron presents the national Drivetime Show on ABC NewsRadio and is author of the book Vote for Me! about the 2008 US Presidential election.



WHEN SOFT SANCTIONS HIT HARD

The campaign against the white-dominated apartheid system of government in South Africa had been gaining momentum in countries like Australia during the late 1960s, taking its inspiration from the US civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements.

By the winter of 1971, the Australian Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) and the Campaign Against Racism in Sport (CARIS) had attracted public and media attention by protesting against South African surf lifesavers marching on Sydney's Coogee beach and throwing dye into the pool where an Australian swimming team was being selected to tour South Africa.

The 23-year-old co-founder of the AAM, Meredith Burgmann, was by now well known to NSW Police, so she disguised herself in a red wig as she headed into the Sydney Cricket Ground in early July for the tour match between the South African Rugby Union team, the Springboks, and a NSW state side.

"We made the decision that we would target South African sporting teams because sport was so incredibly important to the South Africans, rugby and cricket in particular," Dr Burgmann explains. "And sporting teams were very easy to demonstrate against as opposed to big business where there was not often a confrontation point."

During the match, Meredith Burgmann and three others ran onto the field, halting the game before being apprehended and hauled off to jail. More than 100 other protesters were arrested in the stands. In the weeks that followed, protester numbers at the test matches swelled to 20,000, leading Queensland Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen to declare a state of

emergency. Seven Australian players refused to take to the field for the Wallabies against the South Africans.

"The [South African] teams were outrages in themselves," Burgmann says, "in that black and coloured and Indian and Asian players were not able to be available for selection in those teams, so it just made it starker and easier to explain in Australia."

The aim was not only to interrupt the Springboks tour, but to prevent the similarly racially-selected South African cricket team from touring Australia the following summer. When it became clear to the Australian Cricket Board the mass anti-apartheid demonstrations would continue, the cricket tour was called off.

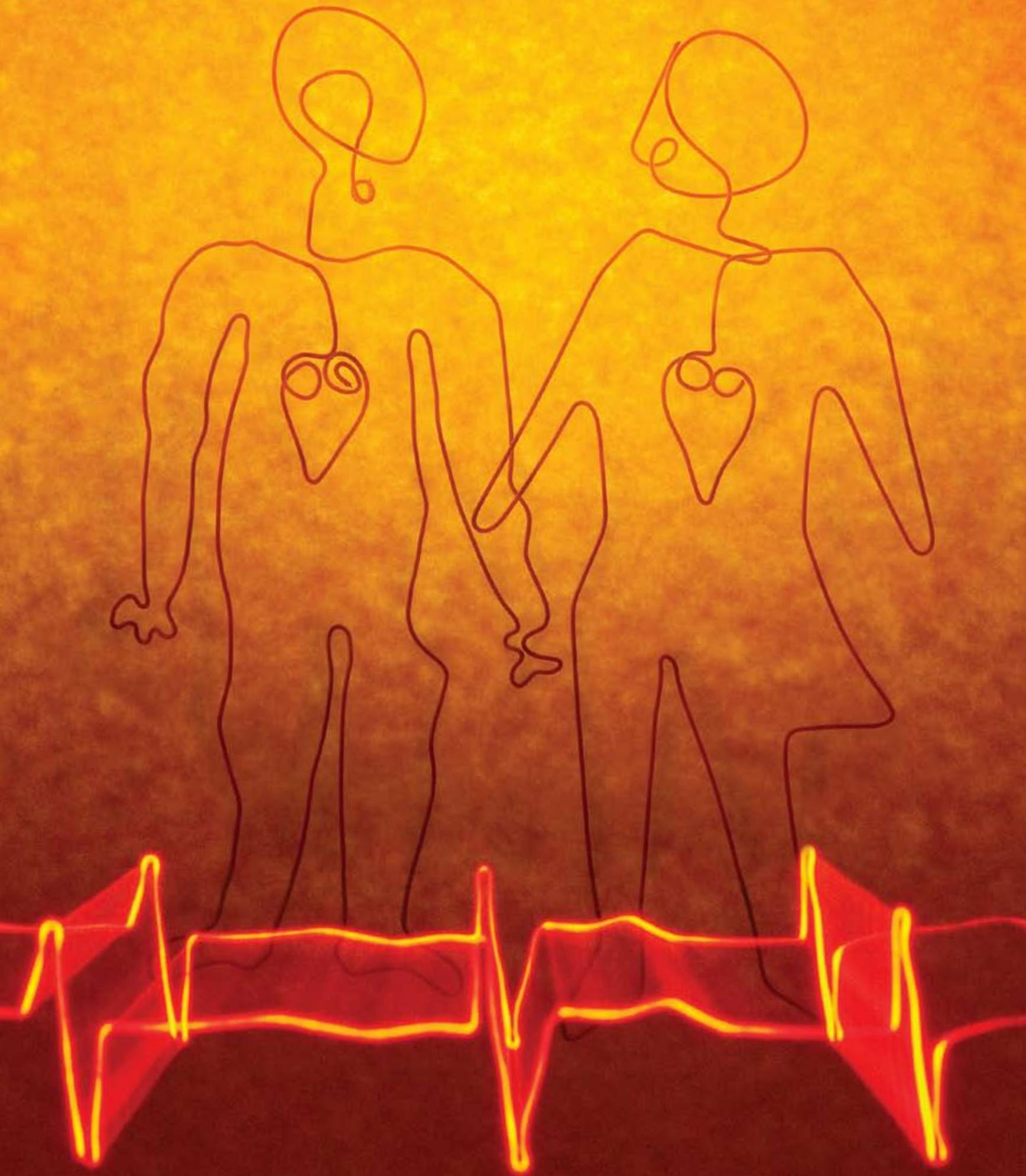
In 1977 a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, resolved to "discourage contact or competition

with sporting organisations, teams, or sportsmen from South Africa" until apartheid was ended. It would be almost two decades before a South African side would run back onto an Australian sporting field.

Some, including Griffith's Professor Charles Sampford, contend that the "soft sanctions" were ineffective, given how long it took to end apartheid, yet Meredith Burgmann argues that being internationally ostracised and prevented from playing their beloved sports had a profound effect on whites in South Africa. "People in South Africa still tell me they were listening to their transistor radio in the middle of the night when I ran onto the SCG, it was actually incredibly effective—we were handed on a platter the most effective way of destroying the morale of the white South Africans."



MEREDITH BURGANN BEING DRAGGED FROM THE SCG AS SHE PROTESTED DURING SPRINGBOKS V SYDNEY MATCH, JULY 1971.



GETTING TO THE HEART OF GOOD HEALTH

HEART DISEASE IS OUR BIGGEST KILLER, ACCOUNTING FOR AROUND 34 PER CENT OF ALL DEATHS IN AUSTRALIA, WHICH MEANS SOMEONE DIES NEARLY EVERY 10 MINUTES. AND IT IS NOT JUST OLDER AUSTRALIANS WHO ARE AFFECTED—IT IS ALSO THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN, ACCOUNTING FOR 30 PER CENT OF ALL CHILDHOOD DEATHS.

LYNNE BLUNDELL REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, nearly twice as many children die each year from congenital heart disease compared with deaths from all childhood cancers. The social cost is enormous, as is the economic burden.

A study released by the Heart Foundation in 2007, *The Burden of Cardiovascular Disease in Australia for the Year 2003*, highlighted the immense burden of cardiovascular disease on the Australian population. A key measure used in the report was disability-adjusted life years or DALYs, which takes into account the years of life lost to cardiovascular disease due to premature death and disability.

The report found that in 2003 cardiovascular disease caused 473,794 DALYs—252,405 for males and 221,389 for females. Of these, 78 per cent represented years of life lost due to premature death and 22 per cent due to disability.

Disturbingly, despite the widespread awareness and education campaigns by organisations such as the Heart Foundation, there is considerable ignorance regarding heart disease in the general population.

NORFOLK ISLAND STUDY

TARGETS GENETIC FACTORS

The role of genes in cardiovascular disease is the focus of a Griffith University research project studying the genetically and geographically isolated population of Norfolk Island.

Lyn Griffiths, Director of the Griffith Institute for Health and Medical Research, says the population of Norfolk Island was ideal for the research.

“Eighty per cent of the population can trace their heritage back to the founders which goes back 12 generations. And the genetic mix is unique. The island was given to the descendants of the original Bounty mutineers and their Polynesian wives in the late 18th century,” Griffiths says.

The Griffith University team has done a number of studies on the island focusing on the influence of genetic factors in cardiovascular disease. When the research began nobody on the island was being routinely tested for cholesterol or blood pressure. As part of the project full medical checks were done on participants—over two-thirds of the population—as well as genetic research.

The results have shown a large proportion of the population is at high risk of cardiovascular disease, with high cholesterol levels, high body mass index (BMI) as an indicator of obesity, and high triglyceride levels. The results were not a surprise as diabetes is rampant in Polynesian populations, Griffiths says.

“As most people are aware, diabetes is increasing. Some of this is due to diet but it is also caused by genetic factors. We are focusing on the latter by aiming to determine whether it is the Polynesian or Caucasian gene that is having the most effect.

“We haven’t yet identified the gene but when we do it will help in prevention and early diagnosis. There is then the potential to develop better treatments either through drugs or diet. At the moment treatment is random; if you have high blood pressure or cholesterol you’re given medication. But if we can identify the genes we can develop targeted and personalised treatment and start early.”

In 2008 a Heart Foundation Newspoll survey found that 70 per cent of women did not know that coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death of Australian women. Most believed it was breast cancer even though heart disease is responsible for more than four times the number of deaths (approximately 11,000 compared to 2000). The same Newspoll survey found that while women recognised that smoking and obesity are key risk factors, few women recognised that high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes were leading risk factors for heart disease.

Even more alarming were the findings of a study by researchers at the Telethon Institute for Childhood Health Research, that almost 30 per cent of 14-year-old Australian children are at increased risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes or stroke. The study, which was reported in *MJA* (*Medical Journal of Australia*) in July 2009, found that 29 per cent of children aged 7 to 15 years had metabolic syndrome, a collection of disorders that increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

Also reported in *MJA* in July 2009 were the three most recent national surveys of weight and height of Australian children. The data showed that the proportion of boys

aged 7 to 15 years who were overweight or obese more than doubled from 11 per cent in 1985 to 23.7 per cent in 2007. For girls the figure also more than doubled, from 12.2 per cent in 1985 to 25.8 per cent in 2007.

Dr James Tatoulis, chief medical advisor for the Heart Foundation, says the latest research shows that more than 60 per cent of Australians are overweight or obese and the numbers are increasing by around 1 per cent a year. And with diabetes on the rise, 30 per cent of those people with heart disease also have diabetes.

Despite all the negatives in the statistics, Dr Tatoulis says there are also many positives.

“The number of people dying from heart attack has reduced significantly. We are much better at managing heart attacks now—in the 1970s we gave people morphine after a heart attack, in the 1980s they were brought in and monitored and then treated accordingly. The modern method is to take people straight to the Cardiology Department and get a visualisation of what is going on and then dissolve the clot or open the artery and put in a stent. This has halved the chance of dying of a heart attack,” Dr Tatoulis says.

Getting the message through at a young age is vital, particularly given the statistics regarding young people and heart disease.

“My personal view is that if we want to reduce the social and economic cost of heart disease the first step is a lot of education about lifestyle and diet, then introducing stronger guidelines for junk food advertising and production, and then if that doesn’t work introducing legislation.”

Dr Tatoulis points to some areas of the United States and Scandinavia where the use of trans fats is banned.

On the research front much is being achieved in the area of heart disease and the role of prevention. Professor Ian Hamilton-Craig, Professor of Internal Medicine at Griffith University, has for many years been conducting research in the area of familial hypercholesterolaemia, a condition that affects one in 500 Australians, yet is under-diagnosed and often under-treated. He has written widely on the subject, including the best selling book *Unclog Your Arteries*.

He believes the only way to make an impact on the incidence of heart disease is to be proactive—introducing lifestyle education into the school curriculum in a formal way and putting more emphasis on preventative measures rather than secondary treatment.

“There is ample evidence from the US and elsewhere that if we start when people are young and intervene early we can make



an enormous impact on the incidence of heart disease,” Professor Hamilton-Craig says.

At Griffith University he is currently overseeing seven separate research projects into preventative and diagnostic treatments. One of these involves a genetic study of 7000 patients of the Hinterland Medical Centre in co-operation with general practitioner Dr David Richards. The study is looking at thickened carotid artery walls as a predictor of cardiovascular disease risk. Those patients in the top 50 per cent in terms of thickening of the artery are being treated and tested over a two-year period to determine the effectiveness of early intervention. Some will be treated with statins—a class of drugs that lower cholesterol levels—and some will not.

Another project is looking at the importance of documenting high cholesterol levels in patients, something that is not currently done effectively, Hamilton-Craig says.

Other projects include one investigating the use of retinal photography as an indicator of cardiovascular disease risk, and another which looks at the link between depression and heart disease.

“The theory is that people who are depressed have changes in their heart rate. It has been thought that depression is a major cause factor in cardiovascular disease but it

could be a case of putting the chicken before the egg. We need to know more.”

One Griffith research team is studying the genetic makeup of people who have adverse reactions to statins. The aim is to intervene early so that these side effects do not occur. All of the projects aim for a preventative approach.

“There is too much emphasis on secondary treatment and a shift away from primary prevention, particularly with older people. It is essential that we focus on early intervention with children, teens and young adults both through identifying those at higher risk because of their genetic makeup and through formal education about lifestyle and diet,” Hamilton-Craig says. ▣

Lynne Blundell is a freelance writer and journalist who writes about finance, health and current affairs. She is the editor of The Fifth Estate.





Gen *Why?*

If you have members of generation Y in your household, be kind
says *Phil Brown.*



PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

It is widely believed that gen Ys are not coping with the GFC (Global Financial Crisis) and the bad press is mounting. An article in Brisbane's daily newspaper, *The Courier-Mail*, in July credited members of this highly scrutinised generation with costing the Queensland Government \$16 million in fare evasions on its Queensland Rail network over the past year.

State Transport Minister Rachel Nolan told the newspaper gen Y commuters accounted for more than 80 per cent of the state's 20,557 fare evasion fines in that period. What's the explanation: that gen Ys expect a free ride on trains, as well as through life in general?

Social commentator Bernard Salt thinks so. Salt, a well-known author and KPMG partner, has written widely about generational trends and says gen Ys (between 18 and 30) have been gliding along, until now. "They have been raised in an age of prosperity and think the world is a rich, happy and prosperous place," Salt says. "They have had total confidence in the future and have lived for the present. This is why you could argue that the present financial crisis is a wake-up call. For the first time in their lives something has looked them in the eye and said no. They didn't understand that people get fired, that businesses go under, that good times sometimes come to an end. They will learn from this but it will be painful."

Before you start feeling sorry for them consider the fact that some are even blaming them for the GFC.

High risk-taking gen Y financiers have hastened the downturn according to Erik Jensen, writing in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in April. They have wreaked havoc and are now grimly reaping their karmic rewards.

"For a generation who grew up with money and for whom money had a great deal to do with worth, a recession might be the first step towards re-evaluating life," Jensen wrote. "For a group of people typified by arrogance, who flitted between jobs and took out mortgages they could never repay, unemployment might be a welcome kick in the teeth."

Hold on, that's a bit rough, says Professor Andy Bennett, director, Centre for Public Culture and Ideas, Griffith University. "There have always been these moral panics about youth, about what a threat young people are to society and social order and generation Y is getting picked on because young people

have always been picked on," Professor Bennett points out. "There are continual categorisations and sweeping generalisations about this highly diverse group of people."

In his book *Hooligans: The History of Respectable Fears*, the British criminologist and historian Geoffrey Pearson shows clearly that all these fears about young people have been around for centuries.

"The criticism of generation Y is a sort of generational myopia which I have referred to as the Golden Age Effect. People look back and say it was far better when they were young and each new generation will one day say the same thing."

How does the gen Y generation perceive itself? After all, no generation has been so aware of their own uniqueness.

Sydney artist Emily Fitzgerald, 27, says she is happy to be categorised as a gen Y gal and fits the profile perfectly: she is well educated, well travelled, handy with technology.



"There have always been these moral panics about youth..."

Professor Andy Bennett

Josh Thomas talking 'bout gen Y

Brisbane stand-up comedian Josh Thomas, 22, became the face of gen Y this year on the Ten network's game show *Talkin' 'bout your Generation*. Mind you he doesn't like being stereotyped. "But I guess I tick enough of the gen Y boxes or I wouldn't have got the job," Josh says. "One of the things I noticed being on the show is that my generation doesn't know anything. I've also noticed that baby boomers like double-entendres and that gen Xers are very competitive."

The program, a huge hit which is expected to run to a second series, pits the three generations against each other and has given Josh new status as gen Ys pin-up boy.

He had already established himself as a rising star on the comedy circuit after emerging with the gong for Best Newcomer at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival in 2007. Since then he has been building his profile and has been a guest on other television shows, including *Good News Week*, also on Ten. Now that he's represented everyone between 18 and 30 on national television he's keen to defend fellow gen Ys.

As for claims that they've had it too good and are partly responsible for the GFC, well, naturally enough he disagrees.

"I'm pretty sure we didn't make all the bad banking policies and I'm pretty sure we weren't

the ones giving bad credit," Josh says. "And as for the idea that we've lived in such good times, all I can say is we've had our own issues."

"We have war and terrorism and now I have to take my shoes off at the airport. And we aren't the ones who destroyed the environment, although now we have to fix it. As for other criticism, well, I think it's just that old people don't like young people and blame us for everything. I can't even take a bath now without feeling guilty."



"I'm pretty sure we didn't make all the bad banking policies and I'm pretty sure we weren't the ones giving bad credit."

Josh Thomas

"I Twitter for breakfast," Emily says. She attended the exclusive Brisbane Girls Grammar School and, aged 18, was a fashion model working overseas. She is now on her second career, with a growing profile even though she is still studying at the National Art School in Sydney.

"I'm like other gen Ys, constantly tuned into my iPod," Emily says. "Also, I'm pretty optimistic like my peers and I'm always in a rush. I guess I'm just in a hurry to get where I'm going."

Gen Ys apparently want the world, and want it now. They expect lofty positions straight out of university and often get them.

Ben Naparstek, the 23-year-old Melburnian who was made editor of *The Monthly* magazine in April this year, reputedly applied for the job when he was 18 but was told he had to wait.

Much was made of his relative youth when appointed, fresh from completing a

PhD at John Hopkins University, Baltimore, in the US.

He is "really impressive, really brilliant" according to the magazine's publisher, Morry Schwartz, who says he deserved the job despite the fact many had him tagged as a gen Y wannabe.

"Honestly I don't see what all the fuss is about," Naparstek says. "Editing's a young man's game. Oscar Humphries, who edits the Australian version of *The Spectator*, is also in his 20s. Tina Brown became editor of *Tatler* at 25. There has been a lot of media discussion about me as a 'wunderkind' or literary 'Doogie Howser' and so on. As I told *The Australian*, I'm comparatively young but I'm old enough to be long used to people telling me I'm young."

Bernard Salt agrees that Ben Naparstek's generation is "a very switched on group", one that is perhaps less respectful than its elders think it should be. But isn't it the job of young people to displease the older generation?

Besides, there is an upside. Even a baby boomer like Salt agrees that gen Ys are "articulate, have double degrees, have travelled the world, are confident, fearless lateral thinkers" and have a lot to offer, or will do after they get over the shock of leaner times. Then the critics can turn their attention to the next outrage, those born between 1995 and 2009—gen Z. They comprise about 18 per cent of the population and will soon be old enough to give offence.

Good on them. ■

Phil Brown is a Brisbane journalist and author.

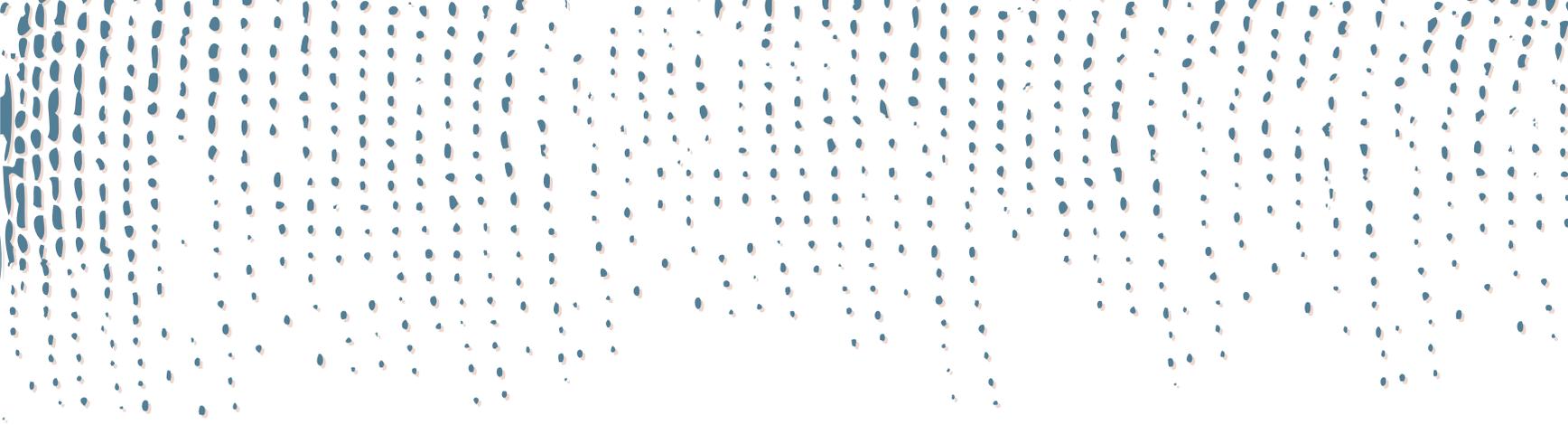


John Evans
SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

John Faulkner
GOVERNOR
RESERVE BANK
OF AUSTRALIA

THIS AUSTRALIAN
NOTE IS LEGAL
TENDER
THROUGHOUT
AUSTRALIA
AND ITS
TERRITORIES

David M...



ARE BUSINESS DEGREES STILL ABOUT MONEY?

Geoff Maslen investigates how the global financial crisis has impacted the attractiveness of business degrees.

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

Before the economic tsunami swept across the world's financial markets leaving a trail of devastation and surging unemployment in its wake, university students undertaking business courses could look forward to an optimistic future.

Whereas newly-graduated scientists might earn \$40,000 in their first year, a graduate economist could be enjoying a salary of \$60,000–\$70,000. Those aiming at even higher-paying jobs had their sights set on the burgeoning field of merchant banking where multimillionaires plied their arcane trade in financial derivatives and high-risk loans.

Then came the crash and with it entire banking sectors in many Western countries looked set to collapse. Down Under, on the periphery of the vast flood sweeping away whole industries and the jobs of millions elsewhere in the world, Australia seemed protected by its resources boom and robust economy.

By late 2008, however, it was clear few nations could escape the havoc and Australia

was not going to be one of them. In January this year, the Olivier Job Index revealed that advertisements for university graduates in the banking and financial services sector had plummeted a startling 73 per cent. For those with newly-minted accounting degrees, the job pool had shrunk by 64 per cent.

The response by Queensland students was as sudden as it was surprising: the number applying for undergraduate business courses for 2009 as their first preference through Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) dropped by up to 8 per cent compared with the previous year.

Curiously, though, the switch in applications had begun even before those first newspaper reports declared that graduates with degrees in finance, law or accountancy faced fierce competition securing a job as redundancies began to rise and employment opportunities were drying up.

It was as if students and their families had been scanning the business pages looking at events in New York and London, and

across the European capitals, and had drawn remarkably prescient conclusions about the impact on Australian business.

“There was some evidence that students planning to go on to university had seen the collapse of the financial markets and decided that business education was not for them,” says Professor Michael Powell, Pro Vice Chancellor and head of business at Griffith University. “But whether that signals the beginning of a trend or was just a one-off is too early to tell.”

Some 30 per cent of all students enrolled at Griffith are undertaking degrees in business or economics while a quarter of postgraduates are also studying business. Yet the movement among postgraduates has been in the opposite direction to that of the first-year undergraduates: more enrolled in business courses this year for their second or third degree.

“Although the situation varies across universities, postgraduate courses seem to have experienced an increased demand,” Powell says.

“Most business schools have reported increased enrolments in MBAs, for example, and this could be that people working in business are worried about their careers and are seeking additional qualifications to give them a competitive advantage in the market, or they are looking to reinvent their careers if they’ve been retrenched.”

He says enrolments in the MBA and specialised masters courses have remained quite strong. So have areas such as finance and financial planning where an enrolment downturn might have been expected, given they have been hardest hit in terms of employment opportunities.

“But more and more postgraduate students have to pay the fees themselves because companies have cut their training budgets quite savagely. That has led to some withdrawals, especially in the more expensive schools. More moderately priced programs such as the ones at Griffith represent much less of a hurdle.”

While an MBA at Griffith University costs \$30,000 over 18 months to two years, the cost can be double that at the most expensive business schools. For an individual to find \$70,000 to pay for a full-time course at such schools, when employers had previously picked up the tag, would be a big ask and could account for the withdrawals.

But what has been the effect of the financial collapse on business schools in terms of what they are teaching: do they accept any responsibility for training the very people who created the mayhem on Wall Street and other financial centres around the globe?

Phillip Delves Broughton, a graduate of the famed Harvard Business School in the US, says a procession of Harvard-trained MBAs played starring roles in America’s economic collapse: “George W. Bush was a Harvard MBA. Hank Paulson was a Harvard MBA, as were the CEOs of General Electric, Procter & Gamble, the heads of hedge funds and the private equity funds,” Broughton says.

In an article published in *The Times* of London, Broughton described this group of business leaders as Harvard’s “masters of the apocalypse—people who had the same education, who knew each other, who created an economic system that has created an enormous amount of hardship”.

Earlier this year, Powell attended an international meeting of business school deans in the US where the issue of ethics was “one of the hot topics debated”. He says business schools have to accept some responsibility for the performance of the financial sector and its impact on the global economy, although some of the deans rejected that notion.

“I’m of the view the schools have to recognise their teaching has certainly not led to improvements in business behaviour so that these sorts of crises are avoided,” Powell says. “There’s something of a two-edged sword here because on the one hand you want your graduates to be innovative and aggressive in the marketplace but sometimes those innovations can lead in unforeseen directions and that is certainly what happened.”

He says the Griffith Business School was the first in Australia to sign the UN Principles of Responsible Management Education as an indication of its commitment to educating “responsible business leaders”.

“That is, business leaders who understand that successful and sustainable business is not just about the bottom line or ‘profit’, although that is obviously critical, but also about contributing to sustainable communities and environments.

“The Principles of Responsible Management Education encourage business schools to focus the attention of their students on operating with integrity, ethics, and an understanding of the broader impact of business decisions. The Griffith Business School is committed to responsible leadership and sustainable business practices and seeks to integrate these values in its curriculum.”

Referring to the launch in May of Griffith University’s new Asia-Pacific Centre for Sustainable Enterprise, Powell says sustainability is becoming a mainstream and central issue to business.

“The global financial crisis has created a shift in concern. It is vital that tomorrow’s leaders are equipped to develop sustainable business initiatives, which is why we have sustainability and corporate social responsibility throughout our programs.” □

Geoff Maslen is editor of University World News, the world’s first online higher education newspaper. He is a regular commentator on education for newspapers and magazines in Australia and overseas.

“

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”

PROFESSOR MICHAEL POWELL

the keeping of WISDOM

The idea of retirement is changing and becoming an outdated notion for many.

KRIS OLSSON REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

The notion of retirement has always been foreign to me. I'm a writer, and the word *retirement* just doesn't fit into my vocabulary. I suppose I'm in the lucky category of people whose jobs are truly their lives, or more accurately, truly who they are. For me, there is no separation. I don't ever entirely clock off.

But I've been on the pay-roll often enough to know that for most, work and home—or work and *outside*—are very different places, and they are different people, bodily and emotionally, in each. And that the concept of retirement often varies according to how differently you view those two versions of yourself.

Over the past 10 years, those versions have gone into battle in many heads, as baby boomers reach their 60s with healthier, sturdier bodies, a wardrobe of personal interests but frequently not quite enough superannuation to keep them in their preferred style. Elsewhere, the realisation dawned that our population was ageing. And, just as workers and governments started to do their sums, along came the global financial crisis.

How does the world of work figure in the lives of those now in their late 40s and 50s, and what attitudes and opportunities can they expect as they face their 60s?

For Janine Walker, the situation is plain: we need older workers. "We have a couple of options," she says. "The current workforce stays at work longer, or we face big shortages."

As Director of the Office of Human Resource Management at Griffith University, and Adjunct Professor in the Griffith Business School, Ms Walker has a bird's eye

“
The whole notion
of **retirement**
won't be in
the dictionary
in 20 years' time.
”

PROFESSOR ROSS GUEST

view of how the next 20 years look in the workplace. If they have a colour, she says, it would be grey.

"Smart employers are responding to this creatively," she says. "They're starting to ask questions like these: how can we keep people in the workplace longer? Why do people want to stop work? And how do we manage the situation for people who are tired of working, are staggering to the line, but because of finances have to confront the prospect of working longer?"

Some of the answers are already coming through: "People stop work because they want to do more of what they enjoy, they want to spend more time with their families, and now that they're through the most expensive period of life, bearing and raising children, they want to enjoy themselves," Walker says.

"But many also love the work they do, so for them it's about finding a way to do both. Creative employers are saying—we need you to stay longer, to pass on your skills. But you can work part-time, work flexibly, so you can do more of what you want to do."

On the other hand, workers who have "retired on the job", who are very unhappy at work or disappointed with their progression, need to be managed too.

"There is a really significant issue here about mid and late career management. We have to recognise a genuine and important career stage emerging, and give it more attention," she says.

That's just what Dr Kate Shacklock, from Griffith's School of Management on the Gold Coast, is doing. Her research into older workers has revealed widely different motivations for remaining at or leaving work, and that male and female workers have different drivers influencing the decision.

"For women, the personal and interpersonal relationships at work are very important," she says. "They are more interested in staying at work than men are. One unmarried woman I spoke to told me that work was indeed her family. She socialised with them, went to their children's weddings. It was her life. For her to stop work was almost unthinkable.

"For men, it's the role work plays in their life that is important. For both men and women, the decision is often about where work rates in comparison to the other things in their lives.

"Some will have strong outside interests, but will stay at work to finance those interests. Others didn't have that, but said they were fearful of retiring because there wouldn't be structure in their days. They could play golf or volunteer—but not seven days a week."

But others are counting down the days, and no effort by employers can persuade them to stay.

According to Dr Shacklock, the "whole idea of retirement has changed". Organisations are planning for their workers' retirement years ahead, and implementing transitional programs, through incremental changes leading towards retirement, as well as making work an attractive option.

Janine Walker sees this too, but believes we need to be smarter in our approach. "We need to be much more positive," she says. "Why not offer more training to a



53-year-old? Or new technology skills to the 60-year-old? We shouldn't make assumptions about what people can do or want to do. If an older worker wants to keep investing in work, we need to keep investing in her. It's a whole culture shift."

But a report commissioned by National Seniors Australia points the finger at age discrimination as a factor in keeping older workers employed or not, and reveals nearly two million older Australians are "willing to work, could be encouraged to work or are unemployed and looking for work" at a cost to the economy of nearly \$11 billion a year.

National Seniors chief executive Michael O'Neill says three factors are vital in addressing this: the elimination of age discrimination in the workplace, the recognition of older workers' skills, wisdom and experience, and a "seismic shift" in our view of retirement and ageing policy.

"This approach must integrate government supports such as health, transport and social security and also allow for new flexible models of work. The Government's plans to increase the pension age to 67 should train a new spotlight on older workers' economic and social contribution and the effects of ageism," he says.

According to Ross Guest, Professor of Economics at Griffith's Business School, the shift identified by National Seniors is already happening: "Social norms are changing, older workers are a lot more visible now, and most don't need encouragement to stay at work. They want to stay longer. They're healthier and more able to work, and the nature of work is changing too, it's less physically demanding,

and technology is allowing people to work from home, and to work more flexible hours."

And importantly, he says, there is more recognition now that older and younger workers are complementary in the workplace. "Young people have skills and attributes older ones don't, and vice versa. For instance, older workers are seen to have better judgement, better people skills, are reliable and more emotionally balanced. Younger workers are physically stronger, have more dynamism, and are more adaptable to new technologies. It's good for firms to have that balance in the workforce."

It makes economic sense, too. Professor Guest's research shows that, if the retirement age is increased slowly by five years, pension costs would be slashed dramatically, by as much as 50 per cent.

He believes "the whole notion of retirement won't be in the dictionary in 20 years' time". That people will change their work patterns and begin to move through a transition stage that lasts over many years. "Their hours of work, where and how they do their work will change," he says.

"Except in some very physical or manual jobs, we won't be downing tools one Friday and going from 40 hours a week to zero." □

Kris Olsson is a writer and a journalist. Her second novel, The China Garden, was published in 2009.

No retirement yet

At 66, Jenny Wyeth is still enjoying her job at Micah Projects, a community organisation in South Brisbane, and sees herself still enjoying it at 70.

"I'm fit and I really enjoy it, and feel I've got a lot to offer the job as well," she says. "The job keeps me interested, young and active, and I enjoy the company at work too. I think I'd be bored just pottering at home."

A late starter in the workforce after taking time out to raise children, Jenny also returned to study to complete an arts degree before joining the community sector. She worked in several jobs before joining Micah, where she is now assistant team leader of the resident support program, supporting people in hostels and boarding houses with personal care and community linking. She is deeply committed to Micah's mission of social inclusion, and to its aims of addressing disadvantage and marginalisation.

Workmates also figure in her social life, but she doesn't regard her workmates as family. She has a strong group of friends outside the organisation: "And that's good, because I think that otherwise, Micah could take over my life!"

Jenny says that, as a single woman, she feels the financial pressure to stay at work, but that is balanced by her own desire to stay in the job. "Sometimes I'd rather be doing yoga or art or going around the galleries," she says. "But not enough to stop. When the time is right I'll begin the transition to retirement, and go part-time. Not for a while, though."

SICHUAN HOT! is Australia's first public gallery exhibition of artists who exemplify contemporary painting from Chongqing, a city in the massive Sichuan corridor of central China.

Described as one of the 50 places that define modern China, Chongqing is best known for its spicy chilli and street-side hot-pot restaurants.

As perplexing and sophisticated as the city itself, work by this group of artists reveals a hotbed of talent at the forefront of developments in China's evolving contemporary art movement.

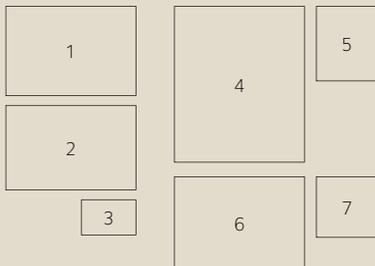
They present a fresh collection of ideas, interests and influences, with styles and approaches that combine emerging talents, experienced artists and masters of contemporary painting, integral to the birth of the Chinese avant-garde in the 1980s.

Across the representative sample of artists in **SICHUAN HOT!** it is possible to see how contemporary art's primary concerns in China are now firmly rooted in post-Mao sensibilities. Instead of each artist drawing on a narrowly defined pool of references or events, as if to reinforce their cynicism with signifiers of agitprop and state instrumentalities, each is now vested with a far wider range of interests: in the specificities of consumerism, daily life, and every facet of the sprawling urban metropolis. The personal aspirations of a newly trained and skilled group of practitioners have opened up contemporary art to portray a sense of cautious optimism and confidence.

The exhibition was held from 17 July to 23 August at the QCA Gallery, South Bank.

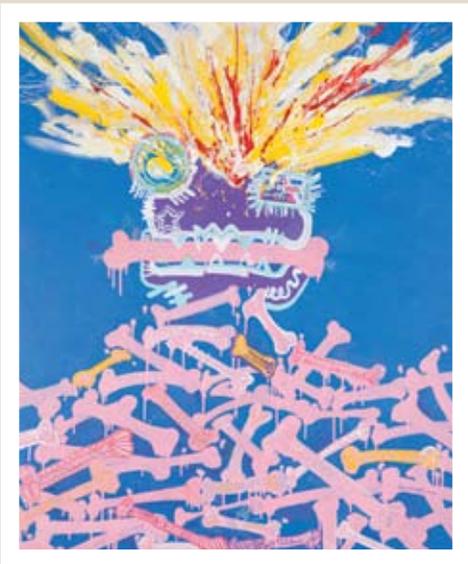
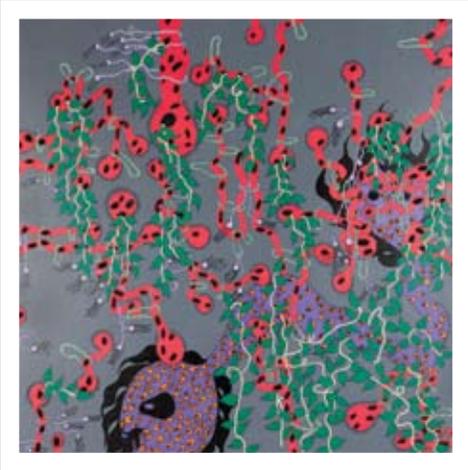
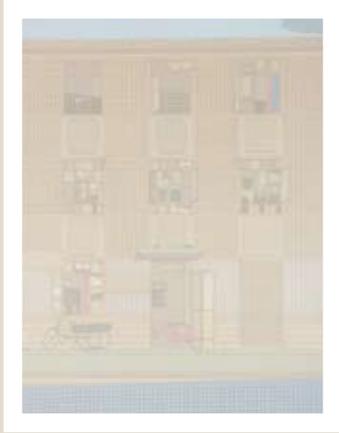
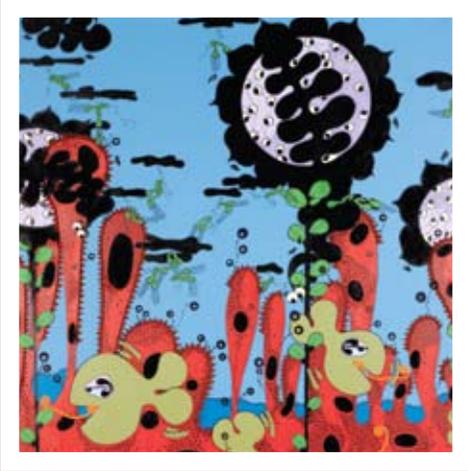
SICHUAN HOT! is an industry partnership between Griffith Artworks and Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney, with support from Organhaus Arts Space (Chongqing).

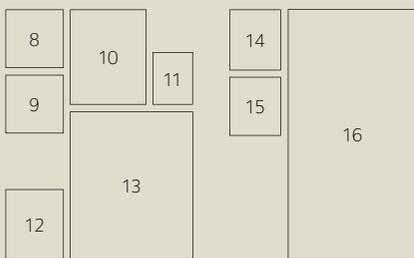
*All images copyright of the artist.
Courtesy Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney.*



- 1 **YANG SHU** 'Untitled (Red)' 2008 oil on canvas 180 x 260cm.
- 2 **WAN YANG** 'Game #2 - Fortuitous Encounters in the Forest' 2006 acrylic on canvas 100 x 150cm.
- 3 **WAN YANG** 'Game #3 - Adventures into the Stratospheric Laboratory' 2006 acrylic on canvas 100 x 150cm.
- 4 **CHEN WEIMIN** 'Untitled (Disco Lights)' 2008 oil on canvas 180 x 150cm.
- 5 **CHEN WEIMIN** 'Untitled (Blue Flowers)' 2008 oil on canvas 180 x 150cm.
- 6 **LI LI** 'The Destruction of 100 000 Tonnes #1' 2005 acrylic on canvas 130 x 180cm.
- 7 **LI LI** 'The Destruction of 100 000 Tonnes #2' 2005 acrylic on canvas 150 x 150cm.







- 8 LI BIN BIN 'The Black Flower #1' 2009
acrylic on canvas 160 x 160cm.
- 9 LI BIN BIN 'Lost' 2008
acrylic on canvas 160 x 160cm.
- 10 ZENG HONG 'Untitled (Facade)' 2008
acrylic on canvas 180 x 140cm.
- 11 ZENG HONG 'Memories of the shop' 2007
acrylic on canvas 180 x 140cm.
- 12 LIU WEI WEI 'Hero' 2008
acrylic on canvas 180 x 150cm.
- 13 LIU WEI WEI 'Monster' 2008
acrylic on canvas 180 x 150cm.
- 14 ZHOU SIWEI 'Infectious: Bambi No.1' 2009
oil on canvas 110x130cm.
- 15 ZHOU SIWEI 'Infectious: Snow White No.1' 2009
oil on canvas 150x130cm.
- 16 LI HUA 'Untitled #1' 2008
synthetic polymer paint and mixed media 233 x 130cm.



ALCOHOL

An environmental health issue?



There is growing concern about the role of alcohol in our culture.

MELISSA SWEET REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

When Carolyn Quirk first began drinking, as a 16-year-old high school student in the central Queensland city of Rockhampton, it was hardly even a conscious decision. It was just something that everyone did.

For the next few years, alcohol was an important part of her social life, especially at parties. She preferred pre-mixed spirits, mainly “because they didn’t taste like alcohol, they tasted nice”.

She drank “to a stage where I was having a good time. That’s what everyone did; it was very accepted,” she says.

Although she once witnessed a horrific beating, and was traumatised by having to give evidence in a subsequent court case, she wasn’t until then particularly conscious of drinking as a health or safety issue.

“I don’t think most young people see drinking as a health issue or are conscious of counting their drinks, unless they have to drive,” she says.

Now 22 and in the fourth year of pharmacy studies at Griffith University, Carolyn is no longer so interested in partying hard. “But I can still see people my age now doing the same as what I was doing when I was 16 to 18,” she says.

Research backs up her observation. While much public concern has focused on teenage drinking, research cited by the National Preventative Health Taskforce shows that young adults in their 20s are most likely to drink at levels likely to cause long-term harm.

A Taskforce report released earlier this year, *Preventing Alcohol-related Harm in Australia: a window of opportunity*, says one-quarter of this age group binge drink at least once a month.

On top of all the well known hazards, like increased risk of accidents and injuries, heavy drinking before brain development is complete at

around 25 years of age may have long-lasting effects on brain function, the report notes.

Professor Ross Homel, the Foundation Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Griffith University who has been developing interventions to reduce alcohol-related violence for the past 20 years, says the changing social and economic environment has contributed to problematic drinking among young adults.

“All the hysteria at the moment tends to focus on teenagers but the really heavy drinking is done when people have more money in their 20s, the age now known as emerging adulthood,” he says.

“It’s a period when people don’t have the adult responsibilities and are prevented from taking them on because of the nature of the fragmented labour market and the extended education that’s required.”

Some commentators argue that binge drinking should simply be seen as a rite of passage associated with the risk-taking of youth but this view overlooks how much the drinking environment has changed in recent decades, with alcohol more widely available and sophisticated marketing, aided by new technologies, that often targets youth.

“We’ve created this problem, we have a society soaked in alcohol which regards alcohol as the lubricant of social interaction,” says Homel.

Mr Geoff Munro, who is director of the advocacy group Community Alcohol Action Network and has worked in the alcohol and drug field for more than 20 years, has been struck by how some aspects of the drinking environment have changed dramatically in recent years.

He says free market policies that give priority to promoting competition have made it easier than ever for people to drink to excess by easing restrictions on liquor licensing and contributing to a proliferation of alcohol outlets, helping to keep prices relatively low.

The National Alcohol Strategy notes, for example, that the price of wine dropped in real terms between 1998-99 and 2003-04, while spirits



“ We’ve created this problem, we have a society soaked in alcohol which regards alcohol as the lubricant of social interaction. ”

PROFESSOR ROSS HOMEL



have stayed at almost the same price in real terms for the past decade. It also notes that the number of liquor licences in Victoria almost tripled from around 4000 in 1986 to more than 12,000 in 2004.

At the same time, many new products, such as sweet and ready-mixed drinks, appeal to young palates. “The industry has been able to market products that almost seem designed for young people. It’s easier to drink now than at any time in the past,” Munro says.

And while Munro has also watched Australians become more health conscious in recent decades, this has not generally translated into healthier drinking habits.

Indeed, the National Alcohol Strategy refers to Australians propensity for “getting pissed” and notes that “many of the dangers of alcohol for those who drink, and those around them, are misunderstood, tolerated or ignored”.

Change is in the wind, however, propelled by widespread public, professional and political concern, as well as by evidence of the enormous health, social and economic toll of alcohol. Victorian Premier John Brumby has described alcohol as “the biggest social issue” facing his state, and the Prime Minister last year announced a new national strategy to address “the binge drinking epidemic among young Australians”.

Together with obesity and tobacco, alcohol is one of the three priority areas being addressed by the Rudd Government’s National Preventative Health Taskforce, which cites research showing that in the decade from 1992, more than 31,000 Australians died from alcohol-attributable injury and disease.

The taskforce says over half a million hospital admissions were caused by risky drinking in the eight years between 1993-94 and 2000-01, and that the total social cost of

harmful consumption is estimated to be more than \$15 billion each year.

“Changing the physical and economic availability of alcohol is probably the most effective and reliable way of reducing the harmful consumption of alcohol,” the Taskforce says. It says research backs measures such as increased alcohol taxes, partial or complete bans on advertising and promotion, and more intensive enforcement of measures to reduce drink driving.

Professor Paul Mazerolle, Director of the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University, would like to see further research into the impact of banning alcohol advertising, as well as into the impact of raising the minimum drinking age, probably to 19.

Additionally, further emphasis on modifying the environment and practices of bars, clubs and other venues to promote safer drinking would be worthwhile, he says.

“Demand reduction is another part of the equation,” he adds. “We have to have a debate in our society about the role of alcohol in our culture.”

But Australia is not alone in grappling with the grog toll. A recent series of articles in *The Lancet* highlighted the global public health toll of alcohol, and also documented the alcohol industry’s success in countering effective policies.

Geoff Munro believes the industry’s economic and political might helps explain why Australian governments have not done more: “We now see governments starting to respond but it has been relatively slow and it’s still not rigorous.” □

Melissa Sweet is a freelance health journalist and the author of several health books.

“ *It’s easier to drink now than at any time in the past.* ”

GEOFF MUNRO



AVOIDING THE BINGE

When the National Health and Medical Research Council recently released new drinking guidelines, these did not try to define the term “binge drinking”.

“It is actually not a very useful term,” says Professor Jon Currie, a Melbourne physician who chaired the committee that produced *Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking*.

“It is hard to define meaningfully or scientifically, it has very different meanings for different people.”

Instead the guidelines dealt with the issue by stating: for healthy men and women, drinking no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion reduces the risk of alcohol-related injury arising from that occasion.

Professor Currie says that just focusing on what people define as binge drinking can reinforce a mistaken perception that only a small proportion of the population are at risk, or that the guidelines aren’t relevant to everyone. He says the guidelines aim to give enough information for people to make their own informed decisions, based on an understanding that the associated risks increase as consumption increases.

The guidelines also say:

- * men and women who regularly have more than two standard drinks per day are increasing their lifetime risk of health problems, accidents and injuries. The more they drink, the greater the risk, especially for women
- * not drinking is the safest option for children and adolescents under 18
- * not drinking is the safest option for women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or who are breast-feeding.

“No one is trying to kill off socialising,” says Currie, “but there’s a valid argument that many people need to rethink how many drinks they’re having and just monitor more carefully what they’re doing—for not only their own health, but also that of their families and communities.”



Middle Earth

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

OF THE RURAL DREAM

ANDREW CORNELL REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

Television news footage of million-dollar Byron Bay beach properties being eaten away by the sea or, even more catastrophically, whole communities razed by bushfire, are terrible reminders the attraction of the wilderness to Australians is one laced with threat.

The beach house, the bush block, the country weekender, sea change, tree change—their enduring allure is they are not the city and, even more fundamentally, they tap into a mythology of the Australian country.

As the Australian populace inexorably concentrates in major urban centres, that “non-city” becomes more and more attractive, drawing not just the well-off to second homes but, less romantically, the less well-off for whom the city is not affordable.

Yet, according to Professor Brendan Gleeson from Griffith University’s urban research program, this is a mythology the Australian community can’t afford.

“We will have to accept, unfortunately, that this vision is not affordable, that we can’t each have our own piece of the country,” he says. “Just as every Parisian does not have a weekend escape just away from the city, we will have to accept the country experience must be rationed, as it actually is in Europe.”

The rude awakening from the dream of a rural Australian idyll is the reality that the community can’t afford its cost, according to Gleeson.

“Ultimately, the community pays the cost of this rural dream, whether it is with the bushfires, the eroding coastline ... the cost of fighting fires, of rebuilding infrastructure, of saving lives, is borne by the community,” he says.

“In Byron Bay [where the council will not support coastal protection] the community has said we are not prepared to pay, those houses [on the coastline] should not have been there in the first place. We will have to accept many other country places just shouldn’t be there.”

But what Gleeson is adamant and passionate about is that it should not be the market that does the rationing of Australia’s rural riches. It should not be a question of the rich being able to afford this amenity and the non-rich keep out.

“The starting point is more liveable cities, more sustainable cities. Cities people don’t want to escape from. We need to manage our metropolitan areas so there is not that same push factor.”

Equally he stresses the rural lifestyle, particularly the so-called “peri-urban” areas on city fringes, are not just the preserve of the well-off multiple home owners but also the only residence of the less well-off who are there because it is all they can afford.

Moreover, according to Associate Professor Darryl Low Choy of the Centre for Urban Land Research, the shifting land use of the last few decades in Australia has created a whole new transitional zone around cities which must be managed on its own terms. Low Choy, who has extensively researched the peri-urban space, says the phenomenon refers to the fragmentation and conversion of rural land to more urban uses, which may include semi-farming activities such as agistment of horses owned by city dwellers.

His work with colleagues at Griffith University has identified four key groups in peri-urban areas. *The Seekers*: including “tree/sea change” life stylers, “blockies/homesteaders”, religious communities and alternative life stylers. *The Survivors*: including DIY homebuilders, the horse community, “truckies” and “adaptive” farmers. *The Speculators*: including farm stays and retreats, the pet industry, boutique farmers, recreational providers, landscape suppliers,

The end of the backyard

Australians are living differently. Not just in the migration from suburban to urban and peri-urban zones but even in that traditional space, the quarter acre. If one Australian dream, of the rural idyll, drives tree change and sea change, another, the home-as-castle, fells the natural world.

One of the most widely discussed academic presentations of the year has been Griffith University urban researcher Tony Hall's *Where Have All the Gardens Gone? An Investigation into the Disappearance of Backyards in the Newer Australian Suburb*. Picked up widely in the media, Professor Hall's thesis is that the last decade has seen growing houses and shrinking backyards as properties are built for investment returns rather than living.

"In the early 1990s a dramatic change in Australian suburban form began," Hall wrote. "Houses with large backyards ceased to be built.

Dwellings built since then now extend to within a few metres of the side and near boundaries of the lot."

Hall says: "We're still maintaining the story of the laid-back, outdoor, casual lifestyle when, in fact, the reality is moving rapidly in the opposite direction. There's a huge ecological function of the planted areas around the house."

Yet, as with management of peri-urban spaces, while some hard decisions must be made, proper planning can provide much compromise. In Britain, for example, higher density houses still have more garden simply because the house is built with little, decorative, front garden but more useable open space in the back.

"If indeed we are dealing with a new form of settlement ... then the appropriateness and adequacy of our traditional urban and rural planning process, tools and instruments must be questioned."

PROFESSOR LOW CHOY

the equine industry and developers and real estate agents. *The Strugglers*: characterised by the "holding-on" farmers.

A Griffith urban research fact sheet says: "The resulting peri-urban landscape will comprise a range of land use activities that exhibit a high degree of heterogeneity, continual change and conflicting values. It is a distinct settlement pattern, an identifiable 'middle landscape' between the boundary of an urban area and rural pursuits.

"Peri-urban areas are 'not quite urban but not quite rural' in contrast to truly rural areas which are situated well beyond reasonable commuting range of urban areas and isolated from urban markets."

The challenge though with such a middle landscape is the adequate provision of services, including community protection, and appropriate planning.

Victoria's horrific bushfire season has prompted a Royal Commission which fundamentally will consider the reality of the rural dream. A study released late last year found the population in the tree change, or peri-urban, areas around Melbourne grew at twice the rate of the wider state in the five years to 2006.

In the wake of the fires, one resident captured the essence of the dilemma when he said: "I think it was the realisation about how vulnerable we felt on those couple of days. I think there are a lot of people out there reconsidering what they are doing. A lot of my wife's friends, from people who have been there for a long time to weekenders who plan to retire up there, a lot of them are reconsidering whether they want to do that."

It's fair to say that reconsidering is also going on in government, regulatory and academic realms. As the resident said, they wanted a place where the "city can't catch you" but it also proved a place where the city couldn't help either.

Central to the Griffith research is the idea that a whole new community form, rather than just a "fringe", is at the heart of the peri-urban.

"If indeed we are dealing with a new form of settlement, one that is neither urban nor rural in the traditional sense, then the appropriateness and adequacy of our traditional urban and rural planning process, tools and instruments must be questioned," Low Choy says.

"These are challenges that urgently need addressing in the wake of the peri-urban tidal wave that has already engulfed the fringes of our urban areas," Low Choy adds.

Just as Professor Gleeson believes a realistic assessment of the rural dream will show some tensions are unresolvable, he also sees opportunity in the proper management and planning of evolving areas.

"When you look at the Australian Conservation Foundation's research, it is the inner-city areas which consume more per capita than suburban areas," he says. "Sea and tree change," Gleeson argues, "is as much a change of thinking as a relocation, a shift to more sustainable living being one factor. And that is a positive force." ■

Andrew Cornell is a leading business journalist and writer of books on business and Japan. He is a senior writer and columnist for The Australian Financial Review and its magazines.



PHOTOGRAPHY DEJONGESTUDIO.COM



PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

Social Business

Human rights advocate and 2009 Griffith Lecturer Mary Robinson speaks to Griffith University Vice Chancellor Ian O'Connor.

Mary Robinson was the first female President of Ireland (1990-97) before becoming the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1997-2002). She has been awarded Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience Award and has been Honorary President of Oxfam International since 2002.

Mary Robinson delivered the Griffith Lecture as part of the 2009 Brisbane Festival.

Ian O'Connor

The title of your speech *Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism* appears to be inspired by the work of Dr Mohammed Yunus, who has advocated a social business model where entrepreneurs are motivated by social passion rather than profit making.

What role do you believe businesses, as opposed to governments, should perform in the human rights arena?

Mary Robinson

I do support the work of Mohammed Yunus. In fact we are Elders together, brought together by Nelson Mandela, and I've long been an admirer of his work. We shared a CARE Humanitarian Prize together in the early 90s which was the first time I met him.

But I would like to go beyond what he is talking about to also reflect on the work of Professor John Ruggie, the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Business and Human Rights and the framework that he has now outlined which the Human Rights Council accepted. That framework states that all governments should protect people from violations of their human rights by third parties, and in this instance they mean business. Secondly, that all corporations should respect all human rights and thirdly, that we need better means of redress and remedies generally for violations that governments should have taken care of.

That concept of respect for human rights goes beyond just doing no harm to a kind of due diligence which stems from an awareness of the power that corporations have. There is also a corporate social responsibility to help further the Millennium Development Goals.

Ian O'Connor

What about universal human rights and other good governance values contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? They appear to be derived mainly from Western political philosophy. To be truly universal shouldn't they be a source of continuing dialogue between Western and other cultures to harness the best of all cultures? In other words, they are not static.

Mary Robinson

I believe that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a living instrument in the way that you've indicated, but I think we should pay tribute to the visionaries over 60 years ago led by Eleanor Roosevelt, but also including scholars from China, from Lebanon, from Chile, from Canada and from France. They did do their best in the world at

that time. They looked at what the great religions of the world said and they drew on them and on the humanist tradition and they were very keen to promote the Universal Declaration as universal.

What happened subsequently was not their fault. What happened was that the Cold War widened the divide. There ought to have been one human rights covenant based on the Universal Declaration, but in fact we got two covenants: the international covenant on civil and political rights which Western countries placed great emphasis on and the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights—rights to food and safe water and health and education, shelter and the like.

The former Soviet Union had a wonderful constitution guaranteeing all those rights, and other countries followed suit, but didn't want the political freedoms as well. The world really divided on that.

I had hoped that after the fall of the Berlin Wall we would come back together more, but as you say, we really have to work on that. I do believe that the true intent of the Universal Declaration is that it is a genuinely universal document and we have to make it relevant to our world of the 21st century.

Ian O'Connor

The International Labour Organization has recently released figures indicating that in the worst case global unemployment could rise by over 50 million people in 2009 compared to 2007 which is pushing up to 200 million workers into severe poverty.

So how do social economic rights relate to civil and political rights and are there any different ways of enforcing them?

Mary Robinson

That's an area that we've really been both working in and I have to confess struggling with. I'm very impressed by the fact that in Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights you have a very clear statement of work as a human right—the right to work, the right to form trade unions, equality in work etcetera—something that was clear in 1948 after two world wars and the Holocaust and facing a very uncertain future. Why is it in the 21st century that we don't recognise that work is actually so fundamental to human dignity, to a sense of identity, to a sense of self—that we need to order our policies and our taxation codes and our trade policies globally in a way that supports as many people as possible being in productive, creative, innovative work? Then we will have more peace.

My colleagues and I have been very much engaged in developing a decent work agenda which is linked with the International Labour Organization. They're a big organisation that becomes a little bit bureaucratic sometimes between trade unions, employers and governments. We can be more flexible and challenge and say: "Come on!"

We also have to recognise what's happening in the informal sector, particularly with women in the sector, they are highly productive. Very poor women often carry out several jobs to support their family and they are using the internet to link in their hundreds of thousands. The best known example of course is SEWA, the Self-Employed Women's Association in India founded by another Elder, my good friend, Ela Bhatt. There are also waste pickers who are linking worldwide and the waste pickers in Colombia won a recent court case that individual poor waste pickers couldn't have their livelihoods deprived by a corporation that tried to move in on waste from a corporate perspective.

I saw email traffic floating from South Africa to India to Pakistan and back to Columbia: "How did you win this court case? Tell us because we want to also use courts if necessary."

There's a very good alignment also of Slum Dwellers International of very poor people—very often women. All of these come together in an organisation called WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment Globalising and Organising). It's a very exciting part of the energising of very poor people claiming their rights. I served on the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor which recommended supporting the rights of poor people. This is now recognised by Amnesty International. Amnesty has a strong brand based on civil and political rights: on political prisoners, no torture, the Guantanamo Bay issues. But they've just launched a campaign which I'm very supportive of called Demand Dignity which is about rights of the poor.

Ian O'Connor

What are the duties of business managers to ensure civil and political rights and social, economic and cultural rights?

Mary Robinson

I think that's a very good question because they do feel a responsibility and there hasn't recently been much guidance.

Now I'm happy to say more and more tools, guidance and general helpful aids are available. The United Nations Global Compact has been doing work in this area in conjunction with my former office, the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights. The website of the Global Compact (www.unglobalcompact.org) is a good reference point.

The business-led initiative that I chaired for six years is called The

Business Leaders' Initiative on Human Rights. There are wonderful tools on its website (www.blibr.org) that are business-led and nothing to do with the UN at all.

There is a very good website, www.business-humanrights.org, which takes stock in a very fair-minded way of the good and the bad done by business. So where there are complaints of violations by corporations made to this website the approach will be very fair to the company—giving the company time to give its viewpoint and then publish both the complaint and what the company said about it, or if they think the complaint is frivolous, not publish it. But they try to be genuinely very fair and they also have a lot of material on John Ruggie's mandate and other areas.

Ian O'Connor

Do you think universities across the world have a unique role to play in human rights as well?

Mary Robinson

I do and particularly business schools. Up to now there hasn't been as much interest as there should be. There are some business schools that are beginning to realise that this is an enormously important area for young graduates and also management schools and parts of universities that are dealing with issues that will affect corporate behaviour or corporate ethics in the future.

Ian O'Connor

What do you believe the response of the developed countries should be to corrupt officials, dictators and tax avoiders and the like who seek to deposit their money in Western banks?

Mary Robinson

I'm very glad that the World Bank itself has tackled this issue. It is now tackling it even as far as heads of state are concerned, and where they may try to hide ill-gotten money in foreign banks.

Corruption is a terrible undermining of human rights and I link very strongly corruption and human rights. I'm glad that the 10th principle of the Global Compact is to tackle corruption. There are voluntary initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and there are also the OECD guidelines and now the Convention on Corruption.

I believe that developed countries should tighten up their legislation and make it clear that bribery is not acceptable. That's becoming more the norm but it's still true that people turn a blind eye.

We need effective ways to trace the money and if there are huge bank accounts of those who've held political roles because they have entered into corrupt arrangements with the extractive industries, now we need to find the money and make sure the banks cannot somehow block that by so-called banking practices. That's not acceptable anymore.

Ian O'Connor

Finally, where a country incurs debt through illegal wars or illegitimate or dictatorial government activities, this can be considered "odious debt". How would you define "odious debt", and what is your attitude towards it and what should we, as a society, do about it?

Mary Robinson

I'm very close to Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and she has inherited what I will now call "odious debt" from what Charles Taylor and others were doing. Her method really is: "Please I am trying as President of the country to do my best. I need to move forward. I cannot be completely crippled by this debt."

I do believe that in the interests of furthering development of countries and the people of those countries when there is a leadership that's committed to that, there should be every effort to lessen the debt.

Now I know that there has been quite a lot of debt relief and debt forgiveness in relation to Liberia—it is a good example. I've been in Liberia several times, my colleagues have been more often in the last couple of years, and there should be a more forward-looking focus on financing for development, where the money stays in Liberia and doesn't go out to countries that then recycle it back in a form of development—that is never effective because we know the development aid doesn't always reach countries. So to have debt forgiveness in those circumstances is essential. ■

“ Why is it, in the 21st century, that we don't recognise that work is actually so fundamental to human dignity, to a sense of identity, to a sense of self ... ”

Mary Robinson

LETTER FROM **SHANGHAI**

Griffith Alumnus Clinton Dines reflects on his 30 years living and working in China.

PHOTOGRAPHY KYLIE SMITH



“This truly ain’t the China I arrived in all those years ago.”

CLINTON DINES

Sitting in the back of one of the ubiquitous but grubby and seatbelt-less Volkswagen Santana Taxis in Shanghai (*we do have a car but my wife has commandeered it to a higher purpose than merely getting me downtown to work*), roasting in the early morning summer sun angling through the window (*no aircon in this taxi*), with some occasional shade courtesy of one of the city’s hundreds of skyscrapers and observing every car around me and the detail of the road surface (*because we are barely crawling along a three-lane freeway in Shanghai’s notorious and ever-thickening traffic*), it occurs to me that life here is indisputably a little different than it was even a few years ago.

With 30 years in China behind me, I have the undoubted privilege of reflecting back on more than just a few years of China’s extraordinary modern era of change, but even so, I have found the acceleration of visible change in the past decade startling. This notwithstanding, China is still mostly a developing country in the midst of a massive multi-decade transition, with a few patches of “nearly-developed” urban areas like Shanghai and a burgeoning momentum of urban development becoming very apparent in a multitude of other would-be metropolii across a continent-sized hinterland.

Although most foreign visitors notice and comment upon the striking apparent infrastructural modernity of Shanghai and Beijing, it is the change at the daily life level for ordinary Chinese people which I find to be more significant, in both a material and a socio-political sense. When I arrived in China in the late 1970s, the economy was dormant, life was overseen by the authorities in a manner that can only be described as Orwellian, the country was a dark, dismal and somewhat fearful place to live and most people were hungry. The common greeting was not “hello” but “have you eaten?” For a young Australian, arriving fresh from our free and cheerful, fat and happy sports-obsessed developed world society (*we may complain about things in Australia but we*

do pretty well compared to most of the rest of the planet) it was something of a shock to discover how harsh life could really be under another system in another culture in a heavily populated developing nation-state groping its way towards a new model for making life better for its people.

Apart from the scarcity of food, even in large cities like Shanghai and Beijing there was virtually no recreation of any description, apart perhaps from going for a walk in the park. Television was limited to a couple of hours of carefully-managed propaganda each day and there were hardly any print media publications. The very few restaurants that did exist opened at 5.30pm for dinner and took last orders at 7pm and the menus were very limited. Communications were primitive to say the least. The phone system was antiquated and all calls had to be routed through telephone operators, long-distance and international calls had to be booked (*and paid for!*) ahead of time, and one then sat and waited for the call to be connected. My own longest wait was about 26 hours but I heard of people who waited three days!

Virtually every purchase in those days had to be made using “piao” or ration coupons, just like we had in the Western world during the privations of the Second World War. Prices for all products and commodities were fixed by the government, no bargaining allowed, unlike today when we haggle for everything. It is interesting to note, and a mark of how far China has progressed in the reform era, that the price of almost everything in China today is set by the market. Only the major energy commodities—oil, gasoline, diesel, electricity, coal, gas—and the major strategic food grains—wheat, rice, soybeans and the like—are under direct government control, for the obvious reason that excess volatility in the prices of these items could well trigger serious social unrest in a large populous country like China. Chinese governments have always been very leery of inflation, especially in food.

But back in the day, even resident foreigners were issued with ration coupons. We had these piao for various forms of foodstuffs such as flour, meat, and cooking oil; piao for cloth and clothing; piao for soap and cigarettes, even piao for bicycles! China’s economic and material norm 30 years ago, even 20 years ago, was scarcity. These days, although a large majority of the population are still doing it tough (*some very tough*), there is a striking variety and abundance of very reasonably priced and accessible goods in a bewildering plethora of open markets, street stalls, shops, supermarkets, convenience stores and big department stores such as Carrefour and Wal-Mart. Chinese urban nouveau-affluent shop to furnish and renovate their houses at IKEA and B&Q (*a UK version of Bunnings*), they take their families out to dinner at KFC, Pizza Hut, MacDonald’s and a growing range of Chinese-Asian food chains. Starbucks stores are ubiquitous in the major cities. Amusement parks and cinemas abound (*both Disney and Universal Studios are building theme parks in China, and one can choose among about 100 golf courses in the vicinity of metropolitan Shanghai alone and there is an indoor snow skiing complex a few kilometres from where I live!*).

There are large multi-storied malls in almost every urban district and the major shopping avenues and high-end commercial developments are populated with brand-name luxury stores. A friend of mine imports wine and is now the world’s largest volume buyer of several of the major Bordeaux Chateaux. Hummer, Bentley, Rolls-Royce, Ferrari and the like all do brisk business in China, not to mention the swarms of Benz and BMWs that fill the roads and car parks of newly built apartment complexes. China’s new car sales of some 10–11 million units will this year surpass the United States for the first time. China’s outbound tourism to the world has expanded dramatically.



For many foreign residents and the increasing number of Chinese who can afford it, there are very comfortable apartment developments and detached houses in gated communities with all mod cons, gyms and pools, an incredible array of services (*we have six different pizza delivery options where we live and visiting masseurs and mani-pedicurists, to name two*), a wonderful variety of good-quality, good-value restaurants nearby, more satellite TV channels than you could ever need, good broadband, lots of low-cost brand name apparel, golfing equipment and the latest DVDs (*all pirated of course!*) and good-quality high-frequency airline services direct to almost everywhere.

All this supply of products and services is seeking to meet demand from China's newly affluent urbanites, a generally well-educated group who have prospered under China's market-oriented reforms, whose basic needs for food, housing, and the like have long been satisfied and who are curious about products and experiences their parents never had.

There is some debate about how many Chinese now fit into the category of "middle class" or comparatively affluent, but most observers would agree that there are probably 50–70 million households, or more than 150 million people. That's the equivalent of a couple of Germanys joining global consumption inside of the last decade.

This truly ain't the China I arrived in all those years ago.

On top of having just held a pretty impressive Olympics in Beijing last year (*with years of construction, dislocation, traffic and general popular angst about making it a success*), we here in Shanghai are in the not-quite-so-frenetic-but-sometimes-just-as-disruptive throes of preparing for the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. Some 5.5 square kilometres along two sides of the Huangpu River in the middle of the city some nasty old docklands and industrial badlands—not unlike South Brisbane before the 1988 Expo sweetened it up—are being completely reconstructed. And, as with Beijing, the city authorities are taking full advantage of preparing for the Expo to accelerate a lot of urban development and renewal that was planned to happen anyway but at a slower pace. Five new subway lines, a new terminal at the domestic airport, a huge new logistics centre, a new high-speed rail link to Beijing, lots of new arterial roads, bridges and tunnels, plenty of urban renewal in the form of parks and satellite towns, all happening rapidly and, for the most part, fairly efficiently, as the Chinese continue to do what they have become quite good at doing in the last 15 years, that is, building the physical underpinnings of a modern nation.

And remember that Guangzhou is also now building for the 2010 Asian Games at the same time and there is now a helluva lot of other stuff going on all over the country which has been brought forward by virtue of last November's stimulus package as a guard against the economy slowing too far from the effects of the global financial and economic/trade crisis.

Of course, in their enthusiasm to get on with the job, the Chinese do have a slight tendency to roll right on over anyone who tries to slow the process down. Land resumption and relocation processes are fairly abrupt and arbitrary by Western world standards. From a Chinese perspective however, although there are perhaps those 150 million or so urban souls who have, as a result of China's era of reform and opening, become comfortably off (*no mean achievement in itself*), there are only another 1.1 billion people patiently waiting their turn to join the club (*no mean challenge yet to be dealt with*) and there is a legitimate concern that they won't be patient forever, so there is some urgency to build and maintain economic growth and strong employment, and a preference for getting on with the job that is understandable.

There is also no lack of awareness among the policy-makers that a nation needs to be about more than just roads and bridges, and along the way the emphasis on the physical nation building will of necessity gradually be more balanced by the non-physical softer social justice considerations—there is quite some evidence of this process already under way in the shifting of policy priorities in recent years—but the priority, and the imperative, for the moment is clearly to build cities and build the nation's infrastructure so that the economic wherewithal for a more benevolent future is in place.

Having thought about all this quite a bit from my little perch here in the middle of it, this seems to me to be, on balance, no bad thing, from both the Chinese and the Australian points of view. But China's global significance is now such that we all have an interest in monitoring developments closely and in finding ways to interact with China which recognise both the achievements and the challenges.

And those of us living in Shanghai will just have to grin and bear the air quality and the constipated traffic flows a little longer while we look forward to next year's Expo. ■

The Buck Stops Here

The origin of philanthropy is a love for mankind and where better to show this, than in education.

PHIL BROWN REPORTS, PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

International fundraising expert Laura Fredricks has some good advice for universities seeking to increase philanthropic contributions: ask and you shall receive.

As Vice President for Philanthropy at New York's Pace University, Fredricks raised US\$92 million between 2002 and 2008. She says Australian universities can be equally successful and shouldn't be coy about asking for money.

"The number one reason why people do not give is they have not been asked," Ms Fredricks explains.

Learning to be up front about fund-raising is an integral part of creating a culture of philanthropy towards universities according to Griffith University Vice Chancellor and President, Professor Ian O'Connor. Professor O'Connor acknowledges that the generosity of Australians hasn't extended to the higher education sector in the past and says changing that will mean changing some common misconceptions.

"Many people still think most of our income comes from government but the proportion of government guaranteed funds has dropped dramatically," Professor O'Connor says.

"Government funding is now running at about 30 per cent. Clearly universities make a major contribution to the community and we must look within the university, as well as outside, for the money to continue that good work."

The 2005 report *Giving Australia*, commissioned by the Federal Government, indicated individuals and businesses were more likely to give to community service or welfare, health, arts, culture, sports and recreation before education. This contrasts with US data indicating education is the second largest cause for individual giving (after religion) in that country.

Not much had changed by 2008 according to the Philanthropy in Australia's Higher Education System report.

"Australia does not have a well-developed culture of philanthropy in the higher education sector," the report concluded. "The reticence of Australians to make donations to higher education institutions is at least partially linked to a strong tradition of government funding universities."

With that in mind philanthropy was high on the agenda at the Universities Marketing, Communications & Development Conference in Brisbane in April. This was reflected in the choice of Laura Fredricks as keynote speaker. Ms Fredricks, author of the best-sellers *Developing Major Gifts: Turning Small Donors into Big Contributors* and *The Ask: How to Ask Anyone for Any Amount for Any Purpose*, stresses that developing a culture of philanthropy means Australian universities must first develop a culture of asking for funds.

"The idea that people will give when they want to so it is better not to ask is a complete myth," Ms Fredricks says. "If you truly love what you do, believe in the transformational power of education and what it can do for generations to come, then asking for money on behalf of your university should come naturally."

"All philanthropic organisations, particularly universities, need to have a commitment, focus and priority from everyone in the institution that philanthropy is something that is earned, it does not happen on its own. The institution needs to have a solid strategic fundraising plan on how it is going to cultivate, ask and steward many gifts from all its constituencies."

This year's Griffith University Annual Appeal is "our first effort to build a culture of philanthropy in a systematic way" according to Professor Ian O'Connor. Before looking outside the university Professor O'Connor points out that the first step involves encouraging staff and alumni to give.

"People want to support important research that would make a difference to the lives of others," Professor O'Connor says.

"Funds are needed to provide an enriched experience for students and to support research in vital areas like climate change adaptation or drug discovery."

"If you're asking other people to give you should give yourself."

Megan Cullinan, development and alumni co-coordinator, Griffith Law School, agrees and was one of the first to do just that. Ms Cullinan, also a Griffith University alumnus, believes individual giving is important for the next generation.

"I truly believe in the product of Griffith University and its vision," she says. "When talking to others about pledging it's important to lead by example. For me personally it's about staying with Griffith for a lifetime through giving."

Director Development and Alumni, Patricia McGarr, says the Griffith University Annual Appeal will foster an "environment of philanthropy within the university community."

"We've just launched a workplace giving program and staff can make a donation out of their salary on a fortnightly basis," Ms McGarr says. "Our philosophy is: we're proud to be a part of Griffith and we want to give back." ■

If you would like to make a donation to Griffith University, please contact Patricia McGarr on +61 7 5552 7218.



My View

ELIZABETH KENDALL
on responding to
disability and disease

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STACEY

Each year, many Australians face the prospect of living with the permanent effects of injury or chronic disease. For most of us, the idea of living with a disability is completely foreign—we take our health for granted and, if unwell, we expect to receive the best, quickest and most effective treatment.

Sadly, our health systems are strained and unable to keep pace with the demand for services. Pressure to find economies in health care has resulted in a centrally-engineered shift of responsibility to citizens and the places within which they live and work. The search for cost shifting and containment has identified the individual and the community as new sites for healthcare and has resulted in the emergence of ubiquitous terms, such as self-management, lifestyle modification, prevention and risk-factor minimisation.

There is no doubt that some disease and disability can be prevented. Disability is too often the hidden aftermath of interpersonal violence, war, unnecessary disease epidemics, accidents caused by unregulated worksites or unsafe driving conditions, deliberate self-harm, cultural or religious persecution and adverse medical events. With regulation, timely interventions or sufficient protection of innocent citizens, the loss could be contained.

The focus on prevention has given new life to historical movements such as self-determination, public participation, community development, capacity building and social inclusion. These movements can generate important outcomes—social connectedness, family stability, job security, and neighbourhood safety—and can create health rather than simply preventing disease. Paradoxically, these movements are no longer inherently sustainable

and are not achieved through precarious, short-term funding or rhetoric. They are not the low-cost or speedy solutions being sought as they require sustained and adequate investment.

Another paradox is that the shift towards individual responsibility creates fertile ground for a new logic about the cause of disability—one based on judgements about the capacity to avoid disability. This logic infers that if informed about risks, people will choose healthy options but if they choose otherwise, they will experience “deserved” consequences or be undeserving of treatment. This logic ignores the uncontrollable causes of disability—genetics, political, social and environmental conditions or accidents. It also ignores the unequal distribution of social and environmental resources that facilitate “responsible” action.

Finally, in espousing prevention, we must tread a fine line between respecting individuals with disability and promoting cure or amelioration. The latter infers a discourse that the disabled state is “harmful” and should be removed. However, the best prevention efforts will not eliminate the state of disability. In most societies, inequality will remain an inherent scar on the landscape, meaning that impairment will continue to translate into disability.

Disability is an entire experience that cannot be divided into components to suit our service frameworks. As a result, most people experience our service system as frustrating and even damaging. Continually confronting this unhelpful system is an exhausting reality that can lead to an internalised sense of inadequacy, bitterness and isolation. Thus, the “solution” may become part of the problem.

In developing service systems, we tend to see the world through our own cultural lens, limiting our capability to meet the diverse needs within society. Dominant Western models of thought may serve us well within acute medical contexts, but fail

to address the long-term consequences of living with disability. Acquired brain injury is a good example. This is a hidden disability, often resulting from accidental causes, but with poorly understood social consequences that often emerge well beyond physical recovery and treatment. Despite efficient emergency procedures and well-equipped medical facilities, these social implications usually remain unaddressed, denying thousands of people the quality of life we all expect. Inadequate attention is given to the structures and supports that would enable people living with this disability to experience success in the community. Once negative behavioural patterns are established, people become more marginalised, often intersecting with justice systems that serve to reinforce their status as “undesirable”. Thus, long-term cost of lost potential and damaged lives overshadows the high cost of medical management.

Undoubtedly, appropriate and timely interventions could improve these lives, but can our current health workforce respond? The community setting, with its complex and murky boundaries, raises significant ethical, personal and moral challenges. Complicated social issues require philosophically challenging models of service delivery which our health professionals find difficult to translate into practice. Most importantly, it seems that our system is unable to appreciate difference as a fundamental starting point in life—something to be expected, celebrated and accommodated? These are the challenges that occupy the minds of our researchers. ■

Professor Elizabeth Kendall leads an interdisciplinary research unit focused on innovative responses to disability within the Research Centre for Clinical and Community Practice Innovation. The unit, consisting of more than 15 researchers, is funded by the Australian Research Council, Motor Accident Insurance Commission, CONROD, Queensland Health, General Practice Queensland and the Wesley Mission.

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