

EMERITUS

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Back numbers of *Emeritus* can be found here <http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/news.html>

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Emeritus Faculty wins award

The ANU Emeritus Faculty has won the Association for Tertiary Education Management/*Campus Review* Innovation Award for being the best example of innovation in Australia and New Zealand this year.

ANUEF founding Secretary Giles Pickford and Founding Treasurer Peter Scardoni were at the 2012 Tertiary Education Management Conference in Adelaide to receive the award on behalf of the Faculty. During the conference Giles Pickford presented a paper by Emeritus Professor Don Anderson and himself on the creation of the ANUEF and its achievements to date.

The members of the first Committee of the ANUEF are listed here:
Heinz Arndt, Allan Barton, Rafe de Crespigny, Bob Gollan, Anthony Low, Isabel McBryde, John Molony, Giles Pickford, Beryl Rawson, Peter Stewart, Gerard Ward, Maev O'Collins.

These are the “mothers and fathers” of the Faculty: and the 200 members of the Faculty are the mothers and fathers of the ANU.

The Award will be delivered to the Molony Room at the next meeting of the Committee on 3 October.

Universities warn against ‘grants’ freeze

Vice Chancellor Professor Ian Young, in a note to colleagues, writes, “In recent days, you may have seen media reports that the Government was considering freezing up to \$2 billion in ‘grants’ for 2013. There has been concern that this may impact on ARC, NHMRC and OLT grants for 2013. Minister Chris Evans has advised:

- Given challenging financial circumstances, ministers have been asked to examine all grant schemes, as the report suggests.
- However, no decision has been made to freeze payments. The Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet will look at all grant schemes in coming weeks to test opportunities for savings, as it does each budget cycle.
- No decisions have been taken within DIISRTE to put existing schemes on hold, though DIISRTE portfolio programs will be evaluated in the same way as all other agencies.

Continued Next Page

Professor Young went on, “I stress that no decision has been made to freeze research grants. Nevertheless, the Group of Eight Vice-Chancellors have met and decided to take a proactive stance and released the media statement below. This statement is intended to make it clear that to cut research funding at this time would have a very negative effect on the community.

Research cuts: save now - pay later

The future of Australian research and innovation is reportedly under threat following the Government’s freeze on grants. *The Australian* reported recently that the Government plans to put on hold grants worth \$2 billion in total in an effort to save a marginal Budget surplus.

Such a funding freeze would stop the research funding councils and other bodies from funding any new projects in 2013. This would slash around \$320 million from universities and research institutes. If the government cancels rather than just postpones new funding commitment, the cut would be more than \$1.3 billion dollars. Either way, the effect on Australian research would be dire.

Such funding cuts would see at least 1,700 highly-trained and creative people from the higher education sector lose their jobs. This is more than the recent job losses at Toyota, Ford and BlueScope Steel combined. Our best emerging and established researchers would see their opportunities in Australia disappear and would move overseas. The skills they bring to their workplace, developed through years of training, would not be easy to replace.

“Such cuts, if made, would be unprecedented and arbitrary, and would completely undermine the Government’s rhetoric on innovation as the key to Australia’s future” said Professor Fred Hilmer, Chair of the Group of Eight. “The Government should not allow short-term financial objectives to trump long-term efforts to build a more resilient and productive nation.”

Countries such as the USA and UK that were hit much harder by the GFC have deliberately protected research funding – even while making drastic Budget cuts elsewhere – precisely because research is vital to their economic recovery.

At the height of the Global Financial Crisis, President Obama told his fellow Americans, “science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it has ever been.” In his 2012 State of the Union address he said America needed “a level of research and development we haven’t seen since the height of the space race... I will be sending a budget to Congress that helps us meet that goal.”

Around our region, other countries are not only maintaining but lifting their investment in research. This year, the Chinese government increased spending on science and technology by 12.4% to 229 billion renminbi (US \$36.2 billion).

Professor Hilmer went on, “Stop-go funding makes it difficult to collaborate with countries having this scale of investment, let alone compete in the world rankings. Australia’s international student market would suffer as Australia loses its reputation as a country which has a world-class university system.”

The cuts would also discourage foreign investment and lead companies to transfer their innovation activities elsewhere. This would damage Australia’s standing in the world research community and risk our international partnerships in astronomy, human genomics, and cancer consortia.

“Australia’s future, Australia’s reputation, and the wellbeing of the national innovation system and our young and developing researchers, would all be harmed if the government adopts this approach” said Professor Hilmer.

ACT Labor promises funds

In a recent message to ANU colleagues, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Young, commented on two ACT Election announcements that have been made “that are particularly important for ANU and education and training in the ACT more broadly”.

He said, “First, Chris Parish and his team have gained support from ACT Labor for a high profile chair in cancer research, based at The John Curtin School of Medical Research. A sum of \$1.5million has been committed for a Centenary Chair in Cancer Research, building on a proud history of cancer research at the John Curtin School. The new Canberra Region Cancer Centre at the Canberra Hospital will greatly improve the quality of treatment for cancer patients in the Canberra region, but new therapies are desperately needed, and JCSMR researchers will be working on such therapies.

“The Chair in Cancer Research is one of the high-profile, strategic research appointments being made by the University and this additional support will enhance the research impact of the position. This is good news for ANU and John Curtin, but also for every family touched by the nation’s biggest killer. ANU aims to conduct an extensive national and international search to ensure that a researcher of the highest quality is recruited to the position”.

He went on, “Secondly ACT Labor also announced a *StudyCanberra* policy, with the aim to turn the ACT into an education hub. The \$2 million plan would capitalise on the wealth of education and training providers and options already in place in the ACT. The proposal will bring a range of economic, social and education benefits to the Territory, and has grown from proposals developed by the ACT Learning Capital council, which I chair. Benefits will include more students, from Australia and overseas, taking courses, enhanced research capacity and greater economic flow on the ACT and surrounding economy”.

He concluded by saying that the ANU welcomed investment in research and education in the ACT.

Inquiry into higher education support proposal

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment has been referred for inquiry, the Higher Education Support Amendment (Maximum Payment Amounts and Other Measures) Bill 2012.

The bill proposes amendments to update the maximum payment amounts for Other Grants and Commonwealth scholarships and to authorise wider use and disclosure of personal information collected for the purposes of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

The committee has called for submissions to the inquiry. Although it set a deadline of 19 September, committees tend to be flexible with late submissions.

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4573 email ee.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee>

Politics & Society

The Attack on knowledge

Academic freedom is in danger

Thomas Docherty, professor of English and of Comparative Literature in the University of Warwick and the author of many books, explains how cuts are damaging universities across the UK

One morning in June 1946, Hannah Arendt received a package at her home in New York. As a Jew, Arendt had not been permitted to teach in German universities; and, like many German-Jewish intellectuals, she found refuge in America. The package she received that morning contained a book, *The Idea of the University*, written by her former academic supervisor, Karl Jaspers. It was a new edition of a book Jaspers had initially published in 1923; in its 1946 revision, it became a contribution to the de-Nazification of the German university system and German society.

Arendt read it avidly, immediately exploring the possibility of having it translated for a wide audience. The book was amongst the first to formulate a post-war credo of academic freedom. Jaspers saw its importance for the renewed health of a university system and of a society that had been corrupted by authoritarian restrictions on freedom of thought, speech and action under Nazism. Academic freedom permits the scholar to follow fearlessly whatever lines of inquiry are demanded by the disinterested pursuit of truth and knowledge in any field; and the actual and material realisation of this freedom lies in the dissemination of such knowledge through teaching. To teach is to enact those very freedoms of thought that academic research strives to imagine.

Substantial funding cuts in the UK are severely undermining Jasper's tenets. Since Lord Browne's higher education review two years ago recommended slashing the university teaching budget by 80 per cent, the pace has accelerated. In a climate of public sector austerity there now even appears to be a logic to the cuts, but the impact on academic freedom is profound. Why does it matter? The licence to engage with ideas that are critical of social norms and existing values depends on that freedom. Its curtailment encourages the establishment of orthodoxy and promotes authoritarian forms of governance that stifle freely spoken critique.

Academic freedom — crucial to a thriving democracy

The 1946 context makes clear what is at stake: the university, built on academic freedom, is an institution that seeks to realise the freedoms that will give an emergent democratic society its various identities, arguments and openness to future possibilities. Such openness of spirit had been precluded while the university sector was the instrument of an ideologically determined political program. Nazism permitted only those academic activities that were consistent with its aims. All else was illegitimate. For Jaspers, as for Arendt, academic freedom is more than merely academic.

In the UK, we have two constitutional post-war definitions of academic freedom. For the 1963 Robbins report, it is the freedom to publish, to teach according to a teacher's own concept of fact and truth, and "to pursue what personal studies and researches are congenial". For Robbins, academic tenure guarantees such freedoms. When the 1988 Education Reform Act abolished tenure, it redefined academic freedom. Section 202 of the Act gave academics "freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges that they may have at their institutions".

No one seriously is suggesting the abandonment of such principles. However, thanks to the economic logic of cuts to public expenditure, we have drifted insidiously and gradually towards that dangerous state of affairs where the spectres of "official knowledge" and "official teaching" are increasingly visible and material. If Jaspers and Arendt are right, then our predicament may be all the worse for the fact that we fail to see our democratic liberty being threatened by a quiet ruination and decay of academic freedom. Arendt, writing back to Jaspers after reading his book, considered what should be the proper relation between state and university: "Because somebody has to pay for the whole show, the state clearly remains the best donor of money." She continued: "It would be good ... if the professors would not, despite this, see themselves as civil servants." Some arrangement was needed — and eventually found in the German constitution — to protect academic freedom; but, in the UK in recent times, the arrangements are different.

Education and “value for money”

The first major cuts to UK university funding took place in the 1980s, as part of a project of privatisation that diminished the state’s commitments to the public sphere. The demand for accountability in the public sector, for “value for money”, was crucial to the ideological acceptance of this process. Universities adopted a business-like efficiency, encapsulated in the mantra of “doing more with less”. Success in making economies then provided the rationale for further cuts, for we were now “doing more” than was previously thought necessary, and so could accommodate additional cutting of resources; and if we failed, we deserved to be cut entirely, for we had failed in doing what was necessary. This argument led to a rationale for what happened finally in 2010, when the UK government formally withdrew all funding for the teaching of arts, humanities and social sciences, and cut the general budget by 80 per cent following the Browne Review.

The effects of the cuts have been gradual and insidious, but substantive: we now no longer research as we wish, teach as we wish, or pursue those congenial studies that Robbins wanted to protect. Arendt’s fear — that academics would become servants of their governments — was well founded.

In 1992, the UK University Grants Committee (UGC) was replaced by the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCE) and the change of title brought into law a change of practice. Where the UGC had acted as a buffer between academy and government, to stop us becoming civil servants, HEFCE’s management statement virtually required that we make our academic freedoms subservient to the state. Paragraph 3.4.2 of that statement requires that:

“The Chairman [of HEFCE] is responsible to the Secretary of State. The Chairman shall aim to ensure that the HEFCE’s policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of the Secretary of State.”

HEFCE became an arm of government; and, without debate, the dominos fell. Vice-chancellors became agents of HEFCE, and academics — no longer “authorities” — became human resources in the advancement of government strategy. The university — without legislation — was now tacitly politicised, and our research and teaching legally constrained and restricted.

It is important to state that things are not always as crude as this on the ground. Academics continue to maintain their integrity and independence in their research and teaching, but this is despite the prevailing norms, and their chances of official recognition are therefore much diminished. Yet the perception of academics as accountable to the requirements of the government of the day, rather than the demands of intellectual inquiry, has become entrenched: our main priority is to serve business and to do whatever government decides is necessary for the economy. Charles Clarke, as Secretary of State for Education, argued in 2003 that “We have to make better progress in harnessing knowledge to wealth creation.” Consequently, the 2003 Lambert Review identified “a need for the government to support university departments which are doing work that industry values”; and it went on to claim that “Public funding for basic research ... is intended to benefit the economy.” Later, the 2011 Wilson Review stated that “Universities form the supply chain for business.” These views are now so commonplace that they provoke no debate.

Malleable public opinion — a threat to free expression

This is now the quasi-official view of the university, research and teaching that do not serve business or wealth creation are seen as luxuries; and it is equally assumed that luxuries should not be funded from the public purse. The academic who works in medieval theology or French experimental fiction is in an invidious position: the classroom work must highlight not academic issues but rather skills that are transferable to business or wealth creation. The “luxury” of serious critical thinking on matters of theological politics or of relations between art and society (a luxury that might provoke new thought and new freedoms beyond the academy) is now less legitimate. Academic and other freedoms are being

diminished, and education itself drastically impoverished. As a result, dissident thought is sacrificed to a tacit demand for conformity. We are expected essentially to validate whatever it is that public opinion decides is the genuine or proper existing states of affairs, and thus to confirm our cultural identity. Yet as Christopher Hitchens once put it, the greatest threat to freedom of expression today is not government but a malleable public opinion. If the public is genuinely to extend our freedoms and possibilities, then such opinion needs to be subjected to critique — sometimes by the exercise of academic freedom. The loss of our freedom to critique such constructions means that our identities — and thus our possibilities in life — are essentially in the hands of others. The point of research is not to rehearse what we know, but to explore and extend the boundaries of our ignorance and, by thus disturbing our idea of ourselves, to prise open those human possibilities that were previously undreamt of. Such ideals sit uneasily alongside the now normative corporatist ideas of accountable efficiency.

A matter of conformity

Virtually all research funding in the UK is now competitive: we bid to research councils for it, or we win it through competing in the Research Excellence Framework (REF, formerly Research Assessment Exercise). This exercise aims to concentrate research in ever decreasing numbers of institutions (thus rationalising cuts everywhere else). A good REF performance “earns” us our future research funds; and, cast in positive terms like this, the process obscures the fact that competition is reducing the state’s commitment to the total research capacity of the nation and its academies. Governments will not inflict the cuts; instead, peer review ensures that we do the government’s work and cut ourselves in a form of self-harm. We are like Kafka’s Joseph K, watching his executioners with their knife and realising that he is expected to wrench it from them and “plunge it into his own breast”.

Much research is published in scholarly journals. These now also have rankings, with some having higher “impact factors” than others. Academics are effectively required to seek publication in those highly ranked places, as the journals themselves become proxies for measuring the value of research. A piece in *Physics Letters* is ranked excellent by the REF, axiomatically; recognition of excellence is harder to secure in the new upstart journals. However, all journals have their own scholarly priorities and preferences, sometimes even ideological preferences in the humanities and social sciences. To be regarded as excellent, my research must be recognised by my peers; but, if good research is by definition marked by dissidence, then such evaluations can pose awkward difficulties. The likelihood will be for research to be considered excellent precisely to the extent that it confirms the basic principles of my peers and conforms to their priorities. So, farewell freedom, as I skew my work to get it into *Physics Letters*; and thus the REF restricts the thinking behind our increasingly sclerotic research base. Crucially, universities increasingly require that academics make sure that their research conforms to that narrowed base, in order to secure more funding — more funding that will, in turn, eviscerate the now anorexic research base further, and decrease the freedom to research as we would wish. If you want the funding that comes with prestige, make sure your work fits in. Academic freedom becomes subservient to academic orthodoxy.

“The Big Society” and “Connected Communities”

The process can be politicised too, as we saw in June 2010, when the coalition government’s Big Society agenda became explicitly a funding priority for the research councils. At the centre of this was a political hijacking of an interdisciplinary project called “*Connected Communities*”, led by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). When the AHRC held its first summit on the programme, Shearer West, the AHRC’s director of research, gave a presentation which set the scene for the research programme and its funding explicitly in terms of the Big Society framework. The only other presentation archived on the AHRC website from that summit was given by Bert Provan of the Department of Communities and Local Government. His title: “*Connected Communities; or, ‘Building the Big Society’*”. If you want funding to carry out research, make sure you centre it on serving the political agenda.

Similar strictures afflict teaching. We no longer teach as we wish, but according to the logic of cuts and its attendant economics. Teaching, like research, is inherently unpredictable; but such unpredictability cannot be permitted in a system grounded in efficient accountability. In teaching, especially with very high tuition fees, quality must be assured by our Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Now that all degrees are modular, thought is compartmentalised; knowledge becomes reduced to information; and learning becomes simply the managing or manipulation of that information. The economics here understands knowledge as a commodity, and not a dynamic process that might involve the changing of minds and thus also of identities. Commodities are never critical of anything, but simply available for purchase; and that purchase is intended simply to assure the consumer of his identity, to “enrich” an already existing and settled identity. It’s just that the freedom of that identity is now reduced and narrowed to matters of consumer choice between modules. This is all the more pressing when the UK deals with the 80 to 100 per cent cut in state funding of teaching by effecting a massive tuition-fee hike whose effect is to monetise teaching and learning. Teachers are required by QAA to predict outcomes of their teaching, so that the student knows what it is that she is “buying”. Now, all students need to be the same as well; their futures safely predicted, managed, controlled. There is no academic freedom left in teaching — unless we ignore these strictures and carry out our work essentially in clandestine and unofficial fashion.

Accountability, though seen most vividly as part of the logic of cuts, can have further unexpected repercussions. When a former University College London (UCL) student, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, was found to be involved in a plot to blow up a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit, Universities UK (UUK, the vice-chancellors’ association) drew up a report on freedom of speech on campus. It was interesting that they felt implicated simply because Abdulmutallab had attended UCL. No doubt, he also frequented coffee shops, but there was no similarly anxious report from Starbucks. UCL, however, chose to identify freedom of speech in academia as a subject for policing, as if the university were a site of terror by association, and therefore responsible for terrorist acts. In the UUK report, the 1988 Reform Act statement is rehearsed: academic freedom is sacrosanct “within the law”. It is in that phrase, “within the law” that the report finds the absolute limit of academic freedom. On one hand, this sounds eminently reasonable: the university should not encourage criminality. However, in principle, it changes the accountability of the academic again. Where Jaspers thought that the academic’s accountability was to the intellectual process itself, and where REF and QAA see accountability as being political and consumerist, UUK’s report makes the academic into an official, policing “the law of the land”. But which land? In an age of globalisation especially, intellectual work knows no such borders. Further, what if the law itself is a bad law or a law that lacks legitimacy? Is it not actually incumbent on the academic to point this out and speak out about it? UUK appears to take the view that the results of our research and teaching must be in conformity with the law of the land; but the text of the 1988 Act might properly be read as saying that our academic freedoms are themselves protected within or by the law. That is to say: the law protects us, even if what we discover calls the law into question.

In what has by now become a classic procedure, UUK has imported the logic of accountability into academia. The result is the Quisling attitude of our vice-chancellors. On one hand, some fear speaking out lest it endangers either their own self-advancement or the competitive advancement of their institution; and on the other, there are some who do not even see the dangers inherent in their quiescent compliance. Both have fully internalised the economic logic that endangers our freedoms.

Academic freedom is at the core of the democratic intellect and a free culture. It must be fought for.

2 September, 2012

Continued Next Page

More ranking success for ANU

Professor Margaret Harding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), commented on the QS World University rankings published recently. She said, “ANU has topped the nation, improving our position by two places, putting us at 24 in the world. This is a very pleasing result, and a testament to the high-quality research and teaching that defines our great institution.

“The results are a cause for pride across the whole University community, and a direct endorsement of the work and commitment of all ANU staff.

“The QS ranking by ‘faculty area’ placed ANU 13 in the world for Arts and Humanities, 16 for Social Sciences and Management, 20 in Natural Sciences, 44 in Life Sciences and Medicine and 50 for Engineering and Technology. Taking academic reputation alone into account, QS ranks ANU 21 in the world.

“The QS ranking is the second in as many months to chart the rise of ANU through international ranks. Last month ANU rose six places in the Academic Ranking of World Universities. One of QS’s strengths is that it measures quality across a wide range of disciplines, including Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

“It is also great to see seven other Australian universities in the top 100. Thank you to everyone for your continued commitment to ANU”.

‘Mature’ first-time authors wanted

As reported in the last edition of *Emeritus*, Random House Australia is sponsoring the National Seniors Literary Prize for 2012. The prize is awarded to a writer over 50 who has not been previously published. In sponsoring the prize, Random House is hoping to discover a new bestselling author as many famous writers began their careers later in life.

The theme for this year’s prize is “change” and only fiction books will be eligible – last year only non-fiction manuscript were accepted. The theme of change was chosen as it was deemed that older Australians had seen much change in their lifetime and were well placed to write about it.

The winner will have their book published digitally after being professionally edited by a Random House editor and the cover will be designed in-house. The prize winner will also get \$2000. The competition closes on November 30 and the winner will be announced in February 2013.

For more information on the prize, please go to www.nationalseniors.com.au/literaryprize.

Current Affairs

Literacy and numeracy partnership

A public hearing of federal parliament’s Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit has focussed on the “mixed” administration of the National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy (LNNP). The \$540 million LNNP — a funding agreement between the Commonwealth and state governments — commenced in 2009 and was one of the first national partnerships to include reward funding for states and territories which met or exceeded performance targets.

A recent Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) report (No.41) found that the administration of the partnership by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations had been “mixed”; resulting in wide variability between states in program coverage and performance targets. The report also highlighted difficulties in measuring the agreement’s impact within the short timeframes required for reward payments. The ANAO made two recommendations and identified some broader lessons for future partnerships.

The committee’s scrutiny of this audit follows its previous inquiry into national funding agreements, tabled in November 2011 with 15 recommendations. It emphasised the need for reward payments to states to be based on genuine reward for effort. Representatives from the ANAO and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations appeared before the committee in Canberra on 12 September

More information is on the Committee’s website at: www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa under ‘current inquiries - review of audit reports.’

The one that got away?

The debate over the super-trawler, Margaris, has coincided with a parliamentary inquiry into the “Role of Science for Fisheries and Aquaculture”.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry held its last public hearing on 12 September at which it heard evidence jointly from representatives of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The committee heard evidence from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.

Objections to the super-trawler’s operations have included possible environmental damage to protected fish stocks. The inquiry’s terms of reference include:

- the relationship between scientific knowledge of fish species, ecosystems, biodiversity and fish stock sustainability;
- fishery management and biosecurity
- research, development and applied science of aquaculture
- governance arrangements relating to fisheries and aquaculture

For more information

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4500, email arff.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee’s webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/arff>

Fishers, scientists and a changing marine environment

Competition records collected by fishing clubs over the past 50 years will be used by CSIRO scientists in a new project which aims to detect changes to fish distributions along the south-east Australian coast in response to warming coastal waters.

CSIRO Ichthyologist Daniel Gledhill said they hope to understand how these changes will impact on the experience of recreational fishers and to better develop adaptation strategies for coastal communities.

“As marine species and fishing communities adapt to climate change, fishers are facing increased challenges. Ensuring sustainable use and management of coastal waters is becoming increasingly complex,” Mr Gledhill said.

Scientists will review historic records from New South Wales, Victorian and Tasmanian fishing clubs from as early as the 1960s.

“Long-term, statistically robust datasets of marine species are rarely available, so scientists are turning to novel, high-quality datasets such as those from spear-fishing clubs to fill this knowledge gap. Spear-fishing competition data sheets are a historical “biodiversity inventory” for recreational fish species,’ Mr Gledhill said.

“Recreational users of coastal waters are often in the best position to see changes occurring locally. These records will provide us with a precious insight into how fish populations have moved as the East Australian Current (EAC) pushes southwards. Geographic extensions of species ranges are already being recorded for recreationally targeted species in Australian waters,’ Mr Gledhill said.

Coastal waters off the east coast of Tasmania are warming at 3–4 times the global average, largely resulting from the intensification of the EAC. These changes are bringing sub-tropical species to the state that have not been seen previously and are having detrimental impacts, for example, on endangered giant kelp forests and associated species”.

‘Previous studies suggest the 1980s was a tipping point for change among marine species on the east coast of Australia. Early records from the 60s and 70s will provide a baseline against which we can measure change and compare distributions against what is being recorded now,’ Mr Gledhill said.

The collaborative project between CSIRO’s Climate Adaptation National Research Flagship, James Cook University and the Australian Underwater Federation, is working directly with spear-fishing representative bodies, Southern Freedivers from Victoria, and the Underwater Skindivers & Fishermen’s Association from New South Wales.

The project, ‘Identification of climate-driven species shifts and adaptation options for recreational fishers: learning general lessons from a data rich case’, is supported by funding from Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, and the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency on behalf of the Australian Government. Results of the project are expected to be available in May 2013.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies gives evidence

The House Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and the Arts held a public hearing in Canberra on September 20, as part of its inquiry into Australia’s biodiversity in a changing climate. The Director of Research for Indigenous Country and Governance of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Dr Lisa Strelein, addressed the Committee.

The Committee discussed the current research projects being undertaken by the Institute, as they relate to the effects of biodiversity loss on Indigenous communities. The Committee heard also about the funding and research priorities of the Institute, and about the implications of biodiversity loss for the maintenance and transmission of Indigenous laws and knowledge.

Committee Chair, Tony Zappia, said that ‘the Committee is in the final stages of collecting evidence for the biodiversity inquiry, having completed its interstate hearing and site inspection program.

For more information, including the terms of reference, access the Committee’s website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/ccbio>

Renewable energy inquiry heats up

The government's \$435 million renewable energy grants program came under scrutiny at a public hearing of parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit in Canberra on 19 September.

The Renewable Energy Demonstration Program was launched in 2009 and awarded grants to partially fund the development of six projects for renewable energy technologies such as solar, geothermal and ocean energy. The program was designed to accelerate the commercialisation and deployment of new renewable energy technologies by assisting their demonstration on a commercial scale.

In a recent report, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) said the department responsible for administering the program, the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, "did not manage key aspects of the program's implementation well". It was the department's first major program, with an accelerated timeframe as part of the government's economic stimulus activities. The audit revealed particular weaknesses in program planning, probity arrangements and the assessment of applications. It recommended the department strengthen its processes for future grants programs.

Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, said the administration of grants programs was of continuing interest to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit. "Every year billions of dollars of public money is spent on grants programs," said Mr Oakeshott. "The committee is concerned with making sure this money is spent in a way that ensures the best value for money is achieved. Yet again, we are seeing a grants program that has been implemented without an adequate level of planning and without measures to ensure transparency and accountability."

Representatives from the ANAO and the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism appeared before the committee on 19 September 2012 in Parliament House, Canberra.

More information about the hearing can be found at the committee's website www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa under 'Current Inquiries – Review of Auditor-General's Reports'. **For information about the hearing:** please contact the committee secretariat by telephone (02) 6277 4615, e-mail jcpaa@aph.gov.au, or visit the committee website.

Future leaders of developing countries

Some of the brightest and most talented scholars from 46 countries in the Asia Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean have been developing their leadership skills in Canberra recently. More than 170 current and emerging leaders of developing countries took part in the Leadership for Development Conference hosted by AusAID as part of its Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) program.

Welcoming participants Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, Richard Marles MP, said on September 18, "The Leadership for Development Conference is a three-day event that helps ALA recipients deepen their understanding of international development challenges, strengthen partnerships with their colleagues and with Australia, and put their leadership skills into practice. Leaders make a positive contribution on return to their home countries".

Mr Marles presented The Allison Sudradjat Award to six outstanding ALA scholars from Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Allison Sudradjat was a senior AusAID officer in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea who died tragically on 7 March 2007 as a result of a plane crash in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

More information on Australia Awards is at www.australiaawards.gov.au

Coal seam gas denial

CSIRO has rejected the claim made in a television commercial aired on 2 September that 'CSIRO [and government studies] have shown that groundwater is safe with coal seam gas'. At no time has CSIRO made such a statement, it says, and nor do the results of CSIRO research support such a statement.

CSIRO has stated on the public record that coal seam gas extraction is likely to pose a 'low risk' to groundwater quality through contamination. CSIRO has also indicated that groundwater levels will fall as a consequence of coal seam gas extraction. In some places this could see aquifer levels subside by tens of metres for tens of years; in others it is likely to reduce aquifer levels by several metres for several hundred years.

CSIRO says it continues to undertake research to better understand the impacts of coal seam gas extraction on groundwater quality and quantity.

The advertisement was produced by Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) and CSIRO requested for the commercial to not be aired.

Nauru designated for regional processing

Constitutional lawyers and students of international law may be interested in the legislative instrument signed by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen, designating the Republic of Nauru as a regional processing country under the Migration Act. Among its clauses, it states:

36. However, even if the designation of Nauru to be a regional processing country is inconsistent with Australia's international obligations, I nevertheless think that it is in the national interest to designate Nauru to be a regional processing country."

The Minister tabled the designation documents in Parliament on September 10 which, subject to both houses passing a resolution approving the designation, allows for the transfer of "irregular maritime arrivals who arrived after 13 August to Nauru," Mr Bowen said.

The Minister has determined that it is in the national interest to begin transferring people to Nauru as set out in the Statement of Reasons, including:

- Nauru has given Australia the assurances around the principle of non-refoulement and the assessment of asylum claims in line with the Refugee Convention
- Designating Nauru as a regional processing country will discourage irregular and dangerous maritime voyages and thereby reduce the risk of the loss of life at sea
- The designation promotes the maintenance of a fair and orderly Refugee and Humanitarian Program that retains the confidence of the Australian people
- Designating Nauru as a regional processing country promotes regional cooperation on irregular migration and people smuggling and its undesirable consequences; and
- Arrangements already in place in Nauru and those that are proposed to be put in place in Nauru are satisfactory.

To see the terms of the agreement and reasons, access

http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/_pdf/designation-statement-reasons.pdf

Pak family v Commonwealth of Australia: The former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, Catherine Branson QC, found that the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship did not consider the best interests of an Australian child as a primary consideration when

seeking to remove the child's parents from Australia. She also found that the removal of the child's parents from Australia would amount to an arbitrary or unlawful interference with the family.

She found also that the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship breached the human rights of a young girl, Miss Judy Tuifangaloka; and that the Commonwealth breached the rights of an individual not to be subject to arbitrary detention pursuant to article 9(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Full details of her findings are at:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2012/74_12.html

Mature age workforce participation

A report released by the Australian Human Rights Commission at its *Older Workers and business growth strategy forum* in Sydney recently predicted a boost of billions of dollars to the national economy arising from increases in workforce participation by older workers.

According to the *Grey army advances* report, prepared by Deloitte Access Economics, current growth in mature age workforce participation is already expected to see a \$55 billion increase in national income by 2024-25.

A three per cent additional increase in mature age workforce participation would mean the national economy would be a further \$33 billion larger; and if a lift of 5 percent, would add \$47.9 billion per annum.

Age Discrimination Commissioner, Susan Ryan, said, "People are living longer, want or need to work longer, and older workers are needed in the workforce if the Australian economy is to grow. Older workers are the obvious and available major solution to skills shortages currently holding back economic growth."

At the conclusion of the forum, the participants developed a communiqué setting out practical steps that would achieve these results. The Forum's Communiqué is available

at: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2012/71_12.html

The *Grey army advances* report is available

at: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/age/publications/mature_age/

Keeping seniors' online health records safe

The security of personal online health records were examined at a public hearing of parliament's Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety inquiry into cyber-safety for seniors on September 19 when the Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) expressed its concerns about Personally Controlled Electronic Health Records (PCEHR)..

Since July 2012, the online record system has allowed registered users to provide access to their medical records to others for secondary purposes. In a submission to the inquiry, the national peak body for healthcare consumers said it had concerns about the adequacy of safeguards to prevent the misuse of PCEHR information by third parties, such as employers or insurers.

"Users could be coerced into permitting access to their record when this will not be in their best interests," the CHF said in its submission. "Older Australians, particularly those who lack computer and online health literacy skills, may be particularly vulnerable."

The CHF has made several recommendations to the committee, including the need to examine the system's complaints mechanisms and review Medicare Australia's role as the complaints body.

At an earlier hearing on September 12, the Committee discussed why vulnerability to cyber-risks may have less to do with age and more to do with experience.

The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy told the committee that the susceptibility of an individual to a specific online risk is related less to the individual's age than to their behaviour when confronted with the risk. Research indicates that seniors who are regular users of the internet are as confident in their abilities to protect themselves online as users in other age groups.

However statistics show seniors are over-represented in the percentage of Australians who are either light or non-users of the internet, meaning seniors as a group may be less likely to have the knowledge and confidence to deal with those risks.

Committee Chair Senator Catryna Bilyk noted that a public survey on seniors' internet use, initiated by the committee, had attracted significant interest and is still open. "I encourage senior Australians to complete the survey, either online or in hardcopy which can be posted or faxed to the committee. The survey takes about ten minutes and is anonymous," she said. The survey can be accessed at:

<https://www.surveymk.com/s/cybersafety-seniors>

For further information on the inquiry, go to the committee's web site at <http://www.aph.gov.au/jsc> or contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4202.

Identity theft a real concern: A-G

Almost 90 per cent of Australians surveyed are concerned about identity theft and 61 per cent think identity theft will increase over the next 12 months according to new research released on September 4. Attorney-General Nicola Roxon said that while Australians are concerned about identity theft, there is a lot that individuals can do to protect their own identity.

Ms Roxon urged people to make sure "you don't respond to suspicious e-mail or store personal details on your mobile phone" which are two easy steps to prevent identity theft. Ms Roxon also spoke about what governments and business can do to combat identity theft, including the use of the Document Verification Service that is run by the Attorney-General's Department.

"The Document Verification Service is being used by government agencies to confirm details on key identity documents such as passports, driver licenses and birth certificates. The DVS helps to put out of business those who try and peddle fake identify documents. From next year, the financial and telecommunications sectors will be able to access the DVS to check Commonwealth identity documents, such as passports and visas – further helping the private sector to protect their customers' identity."

Identity crime is one of the top three enablers of serious and organised crime in Australia, and can have serious financial implications for business, governments and individuals.

The research was commissioned by the Attorney-General's Department and repeats a similar survey conducted in July 2011. Key findings for this year's survey include:

- 89 per cent of respondents are concerned about identity theft and 61 per cent think identity theft will increase in the next year
- 24 per cent of respondents had been, or knew someone who had been, a victim of identity crime in the last six months - an increase of seven per cent since 2011

- When identify crime occurred, 58 per cent involved the internet, through either a virus or an online scam, 35 per cent involved the loss of a credit or debit card, 18 per cent involved mail theft and 9 per cent involved the theft or loss of physical identity documents such as a passport and drivers licence.

The results of this research will inform the review of the National Identity Security Strategy currently being undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the States and Territories.

For more information on the survey or protecting your identity visit www.ag.gov.au/Identitysecurity

IT pricing, consumers and copyright

Do Australians pay more for IT software and hardware than consumers in overseas markets? If so, why? These key questions are being asked in an investigation into IT pricing in Australia, now being conducted by the House Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications.

The Committee heard from ACCAN, the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 September 2012 that ACCAN has concerns about the effects of international price discrimination on all consumers, including small business, and people with disability. ACCAN is calling for the Committee to explore ways for consumers to access a choice of products, which will encourage genuine competition and place downward pressure on prices.

ACCAN also wants to see the development of warranties that apply beyond national borders, and action taken to assist vulnerable consumers who are most impacted by these high prices. ACCAN claims that equipment for people with a disability can be significantly more expensive in Australia than in overseas markets. ACCAN's views can be seen in its submission to the inquiry (no. 74, available from the Committee's website below)

The Committee was scheduled to speak to an expert in copyright law and information technology, about aspects of copyright issues raised by many participants in the current inquiry. "The inquiry into IT price discrimination has generated a great deal of interest, judging by submissions and also by community responses on social media like Twitter," said Committee Chair, Mr Nick Champion MP.

For inquiry information: including the terms of reference and submissions, go to: www.aph.gov.au/itpricing, or contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 2352.

CSIRO discusses Australian dementia research

Scientific studies aimed at finding ways to diagnose dementia in its earliest stages was the focus of a public hearing into parliament's inquiry into dementia diagnosis and intervention on September 18 when the CSIRO presented its latest research findings to the House of Representatives Committee on Health and Ageing.

In its current study, the CSIRO is working with other research bodies and universities to improve understanding of the causes and diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, which affects more than 250,000 Australians. The study involves 1000 volunteers and combines expertise in neuro-imaging, biomarkers, psychometrics and lifestyle factors.

"The historical success of reducing the impact of chronic disorders on individuals and society rests on two fundamental pillars - early diagnosis and intervention," the CSIRO said in its submission to the inquiry.

“It is clear that intervention is more biologically effective and more cost effective to society and government when it is applied at the earlier stages of the disease.”

The Committee met with Alzheimer’s Australia, the peak body providing support and advocacy for the 250,000 Australians living with dementia at a hearing on 11 September to discuss strategies to improve diagnosis and management of dementia.

In its submission, Alzheimer’s Australia told the committee that as a consequence of non- and late-diagnosis, the majority of people with dementia in Australia slip through the gaps and miss out on crucial opportunities for early intervention and care.

Alzheimer’s Australia is concerned that many health professionals, including GPs, have difficulty differentiating normal ageing from early stages of dementia. They told the committee these professionals lack specific knowledge about dementia assessment, management or appropriate referral pathways.

In addition Alzheimer’s Australia have said that Australia’s primary health care system lacks the necessary processes to reach a diagnosis of dementia earlier on. They suggest issues including the lack of dementia-specific training; utilisation of skilled practice nurses; and established referral pathways to specialists who can make or confirm a diagnosis are all barriers to care.

Committee chair, Steve Georganas said that a number of deficiencies raised by Alzheimer’s Australia were of significant concern. “Dementia was recently named as Australia’s ninth National Health Priority alongside diabetes, cancer and mental health. This is a clear signal that there will now be more focus on early diagnosis and intervention for people with dementia and the committee is hoping to find ways to improve access to care,” he said.

For all inquiries contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4145 or visit the committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/haa.

Report tabled on Indigenous language learning

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs tabled its report ***Our Land Our Languages: Language Learning in Indigenous Communities*** on September 17.

The committee’s 12-month inquiry received a total of 154 submissions. In travelling to a variety of locations, the committee heard Indigenous languages in daily use and learned that language is inseparable from culture, kinship, land and family and is the foundation upon which the capacity to learn, interact and to shape identity is built.

The committee’s report makes a total of 30 recommendations. Some of the key recommendations include:

- incorporating an acknowledgement of Indigenous languages in the Closing the Gap framework;
- expanding the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program;
- establishing a national Indigenous interpreting service and putting in place immediate measures to ensure competent interpreting services in the health and justice sectors;
- supporting Constitutional changes to include the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages;
- resourcing bilingual school education programs for Indigenous communities where the child’s first language is an Indigenous language (traditional or contact);
- first language assessments of Indigenous children entering early childhood education, and alternative NAPLAN methods and reporting for students whose first language is not English;
- developing strategies for training Indigenous language teachers to ensure greater access to career and accreditation pathways, and
- compulsory English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) training for teachers.

Information about the inquiry and the report can be found is on the inquiry's website: www.aph.gov.au/languages
For further information, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au

2012 ANUEF activities

Farewell to Mandy at Collegiality Lunch

John Molony gave the farewell address to Pro Vice Chancellor Mandy Thomas who is leaving ANU to go to her new position in Brisbane. He thanked her for her support and encouragement during the last few years, including the move to the new premises. He then presented her with a Penfold's Grange 2004 from the Secretary's cellar.

Helping School of Music Students

A fund raiser for the Friends of the School of Music to enable them to continue supporting students over the remainder of 2012 will be held on Tuesday, 25th September at 7pm in the Larry Sitsky Recital Room. This event will see the second of two concerts with a wide range of performers, the program featuring flutes, clarinet, strings, piano, guitar quartet, jazz, percussion and voice.

This is a second chance to hear a range of highly renowned staff and students performing together. Performers are expected to include Virginia Taylor and students, Gary France (percussion), Tom Azoury (clarinet) with chamber group, guitar quartets drawn from Andrey Lebedev, Callum Henshaw, Campbell Diamond, Andrew Blanch, Ariel Nourhadi; Miles O'Connell (jazz saxophone) and his group, soprano Louise Page and more.

There will be bar service before the concert and during interval.

The first of these concerts in late August was a sell out with standing room only, and this is also likely to sell out, so it is **essential to reserve your place in advance by email to** fogo@bigpond.net.au <<mailto:fogo@bigpond.net.au>> or phone to 6230 1993.

There will be sufficient rows set aside for all those who have reserved, but you select your seats within those rows: the earlier you arrive, the greater your choice of seats.

Payments at door - \$20 members of Friends; \$25 adults; \$10 students - **but don't forget to reserve a place.**

Robert Attenborough <Robert.Attenborough@anu.edu.au>

Emeritus Faculty Vacation-Student Oral History Project

A new project for ANUEF involves a group of overseas students, who wish to interview members of the ANU Emeritus Faculty for writing an Oral History. They are seeking help with making contact with 10 – 12 suitable members. If you are interested contact the ANUEF Secretary giles.pickford@bigpond.com.

Ideas for the future

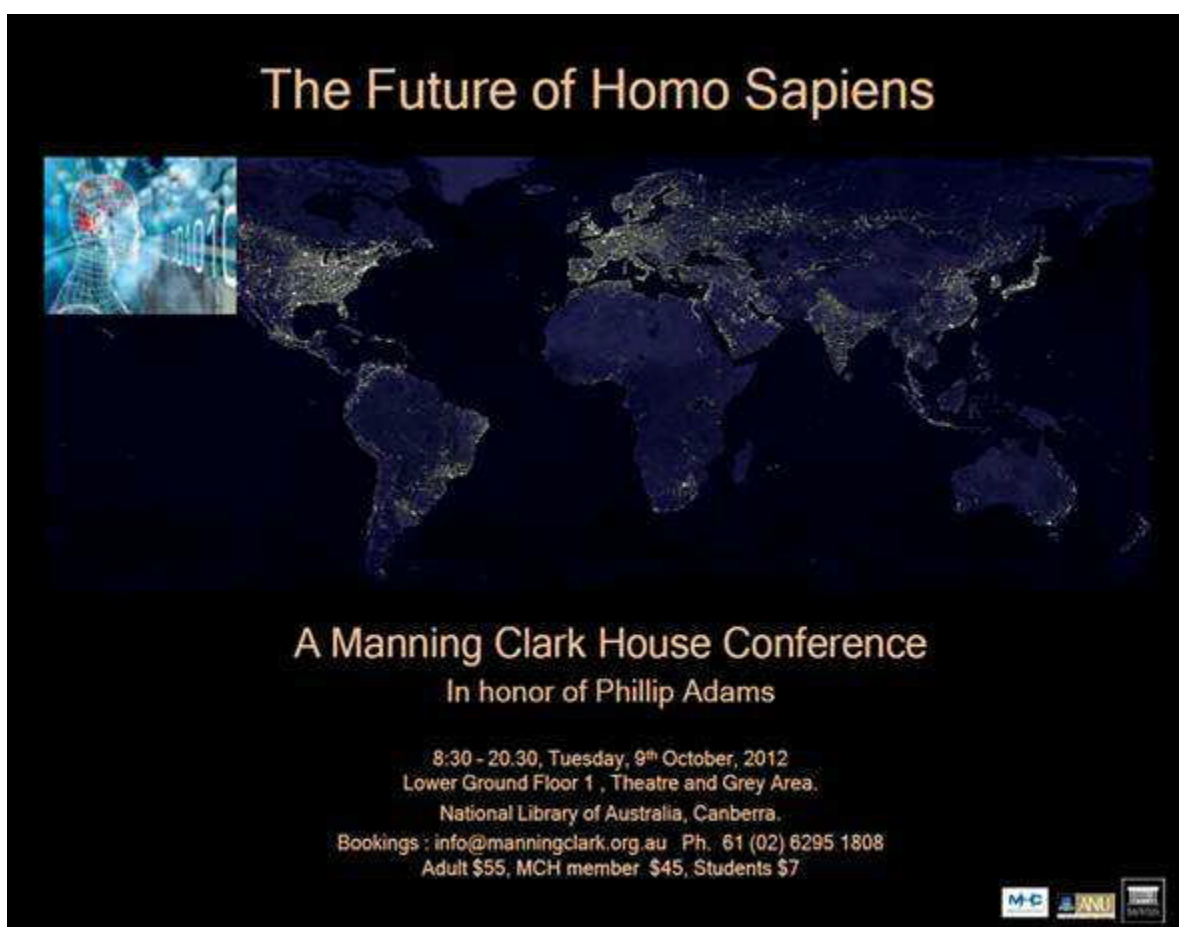
ANUEF Secretary Giles Pickford writes, "I am talking to *The Conversation* about ideas for their future. You may already be familiar with [The Conversation](http://TheConversation.net.au). It is an independent channel of evidence-based news and analysis – written by researchers and academics and delivered free to the public. It is owned by our Universities.

“Today, people are drowning in tweets, blogs and press releases, but parched for insights. With business models under threat, many media organisations are in a state of crisis that is compromising the quality and integrity of content vital for an informed society. *The Conversation* inspires informed debate, sharing research outcomes, and promoting the value of higher education and research to the wider public.

“*The Conversation* commissions articles from experts and deals with current news topics. They also publish research findings. The [charter](#) is to unlock deep expertise and give academics a greater voice in shaping public policy.

“You may like to sign up to the free daily newsletter and register to write if you have not already done so.”

The Future of Homo sapiens



A Manning Clark House conference in honour of Phillip Adams will be held at the National Library of Australia on October 9.

Phillip Adams will give the keynote address, *Homo sapiens: where-to now?* Talks will be given by leading anthropologists, climate scientists, philosophers, theologians, economists, politicians and lawyers, including C. Groves, A. McMichael, M. Raupach, J. Schellnhuber (by Skype), C. Hamilton, R. Manne, J. Hewson, G. Browning, R. Campbell, B. Douglas, J. Crispin, K. Harrison, K. Crispin, on the themes:

- The biological origins and evolution of the Genus Homo.
- Microbes and Humans: a Darwinian struggle.
- Fire and human evolution: Homo sapiens' entropy blueprint

- Global warming and future climate change projections.
- Global change and the future of Homo sapiens.
- What kind of humans in the Anthropocene?
- The sociology and politics of climate change.
- The spiritual dimension of global change.
- The rise and fall of civilizations and their music.
- The metaphysics of human survival.
- Implications of global climate change for Australia.
- *Climate change economics in Australia.*
- *Crimes against the Earth.*
- *A message of Hope.*

The conference begins at 8:30 and ends at 20.30 on Tuesday, 9th October, 2012; Lower Ground Floor National Library of Australia, Canberra, A.C.T.

Bookings : info@manningclark.org.au Ph. 61 (02) 6295 1808

<http://manningclark.org.au/event/future-homo-sapiens-conference-keynote-speaker-phillip-adams>

Adult \$55, MCH member \$45, Students \$7

US Conference

The North Carolina Coalition of Retirement Organisations at the Triangle UNC Universities Is hosting the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education for the AROHE 10th Anniversary Conference October 21-24, 2012. The conference will be held at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For more information, access:

https://arohe.org/conferences/conference_2012

'False feminist death syndrome'

ANU Archives supporters attended the 11th annual lecture by Professor Marian Sawer, Adjunct Professor in the School of Political Science and International Relations in the ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences on the topic 'Feminism for the 21st century'.

She says, "Feminism has suffered from 'false feminist death syndrome' for almost as long as it has existed. Some believe that now with a woman Prime Minister equality has been 'done' in Australia and the time for feminism is over". She examined some of the media representations of feminism over the past century and the rather different story that can be found in the archives. This is a story of feminist persistence in pursuit of goals still far from achieved.

Emeritus Professor Marian Sawer (AO, FASSA) is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Political Science and International Relations in the College of Arts and Social Sciences and the former head of the Political Science Program in the Research School of Social Sciences. She has researched and published widely in the fields of democratic theory and practice, electoral administration, and gender politics, and has just stepped down as Vice-President of the International Political Science Association.

The lecture was jointly presented by the ANU Archives and the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre. For more information access: butlin.archives@anu.edu.au or 6125 2219 or Maggie Shapley, University Archivist, ANU Archives Program (*Noel Butlin Archives Centre, University Archives and Pacific Research Archives*) on 6125 9602

maggie.shapley@anu.edu.au

www.archives.anu.edu.au

Lectures and diary dates

17 October, 4pm. – 5pm Lecture by Julian Cribb, Science Journalist on “Why *Homo Sapiens* needs to be Reclassified”

9-12 November The ANUEF annual excursion to Kioloa.

12 December ANUEF Christmas Party on at 5 pm.

More diary date details can be found here: <http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/events.html>

ANUEF room bookings

The procedure has changed. Judith Caton will coordinate the process. In future requests for booking the room will go to Judith via email, and these will be forwarded to the committee for approval, and then entered into the diary. A return email will be sent to the organisation confirming the booking. The diary will be held in the office rather than being left on the table in the meeting room. Conditions for the use of the premises will be emailed to users and a copy will also be placed on the ANUEF website.

Contact Judith Caton on judith.caton@anu.edu.au

What's on at the ANU?

What's On at ANU is a fortnightly email for staff and students that aims to highlight many of the interesting, enlightening and engaging public lectures, seminars and events happening around the university. All of these events are open to the public. Please check if reservations are needed.

For more information on any of the events listed, or to see a calendar of upcoming events, go to <http://billboard.anu.edu.au/events.asp>

Next edition of *Emeritus*, the ANUEF Newsletter, will be published in October