Psychology study suggests:

**Metcon should be extended**

To increase road safety the Metcon traffic control system should be extended to every intersection in the operating area, a report by a team of Monash researchers suggests.

The team, the Monash University Human Factors Group, has found that Metcon is working effectively as a safety measure in reducing driver uncertainty about what other drivers will do at an intersection.

The trouble is, the report claims, drivers are applying Metcon rules to inappropriate situations such as uncontrolled intersections and those still governed by "give way to the right" signs.

The report calls for consistency and urges that Metcon should be extended to all intersections in the operating area "as fast as resources permit".

The Metcon system has been operating for two years now. It meant the phasing out of the "give way to the right" rule and its replacement by a system of priority roads. Side roads are now controlled by "give way" or "stop" signs and road markings.

The Monash University Human Factors Group, a unit of the psychology department, conducted its study of driver behaviour both before and after the implementation of Metcon. The study was supported by the Federal Department of Transport.

It was conducted in two parts. First, discreetly placed TV cameras allowed direct observation of driver behaviour along selected segments of an inner suburban radial road carrying traffic in and out of the city and a cross-town road carrying traffic from one radial to another.

Secondly, 1000 Melbourne-area drivers participated in a questionnaire both before the program was fully established and after one year of operation.

The questionnaire called for decisions to be made in mock traffic situations and also included questions designed to determine the level of driver confidence in the system.

In its conclusions the report states: "With respect to driver orientation and performance the general impact of the Metcon intersection control program has been positive."

"In both perception of the task and performance in the driving environment there was evidence of a significant increase in the ability to anticipate the behaviour of other drivers and in restraint in the performance of high risk manoeuvres, possibly attributable in part to some improvement in continuity of traffic flow.

"This was indicated both in systematic allocation of priority to the main road driver at controlled intersections and in a general decrease or lack of significant change in overtaking behaviour."

"On the other hand, there was a significant increase in multiple vehicle overtaking at several sites under conditions of high stress (peak hour traffic load hour); this is a tendency to watch others with some concern."

The principal investigator in the Monash University Human Factors Group is Dr T. J. Triggs, senior lecturer in psychology. Associated with him is Professor R. W. Cumming. Also on the team are Dr R. McKelvey, senior research fellow, and Mr W. K. Mare, senior technical officer; and Miss P. H. Wisdom, research assistant.

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**WINTER 1977: a time for warm woollies, Aussie Rules football, the Williams Committee... and a new round of that other time-honored Australian pastime: un-bashing.**

The Williams Committee will soon be settling down in earnest to plot the future course of post-secondary education in Australia.

Concurrently, the Universities Commission will be preparing its recommendations to the government on how the educational cake should be cut up in the forthcoming triennium.

Already one thing is certain: neither the Williams Committee nor the government will want for advice from all manner of experts - inside and (particularly) outside the ivy-clad walls of academia.

Almost daily now, as the anti-education bandwagon gets rolling, we're treated to new revelations about the scandalous misuse of public money that is represented by the universities and the CAEs. There are allegations of empire-building, self-seeking, nest-feathering, unhealthy preoccupations with 'trivia,' an almost criminal pursuit of knowledge for its own sake - and, for extra measure, some good old-fashioned bludging.

Many, if not most, of the accusations are demonstrably superficial, inadequate, ill-researched, intertempore and, often, just plain silly.

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**Oh! to be at Uni. when winter comes!**

But it's probably pointless to try to respond - publicly, at least. The almost certain consequence would be a further charge - the ultimate, unanswerable, indictment: academic paranoia.

Still, it does sometimes seem that our critics are convinced that the world would be a better place if the universities and their partners in crime, the CAEs - were just cut back to size. Any size, perhaps, so long as they know they're being punished for their sins.

Inflation would go down, unemployment would go up, and most of our social, economic and industrial problems would evaporate along with the deficit...

If only somebody would empty out all the 'cod-dled eggheads' and 'pampered students' who infest our seats of higher learning...

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**Law and computers**

The explosive development of computer technology has challenged many accepted legal principles and practices.

At the same time, the computing profession itself faces a whole new spectrum of legal problems, for many of which there are no adequate precedents.

Both these sets of issues will be explored in a major national conference at Monash University on May 24-25. The conference has been sponsored by the Australian Computer Society, the Law Reform Commission, Mr Justice M. D. Kirby, who will speak on 'data bases and privacy.'

Other major topics listed for discussion include:

- Impacts of computers on democratic forms of government: Professor C. G. Weeramantry (Monash Law Faculty).
- Evidentiary uses of computer-based information: Mr John Traill QC (Law Council of Australia).
- Protection of intellectual property: Mr J. C. Lahore (Monash Law Faculty).
- Computers and law enforcement: Dr C. J. Bellamy (Director, Monash Computer Centre).
- Impact of technology on the legal profession: Professor D. Whalan (Faculty of Law, Australian National University).
- Auditing and computer systems: Mr M. Israel (Price, Waterhouse and Co.) and Mr Ron Stride (Fell and Starkey).

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**A MAGAZINE FOR THE UNIVERSITY**

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MAY 6, 1977
Professor hits the "cruel use" of animals in experiments

A professor of philosophy at Monash University has spoken out against a lack of consideration for the welfare of animals used in scientific experiments.

He has criticised the sometimes unconscious awareness that the infliction of pain and death on a non-human animal raises any ethical question.

He is Professor Peter Singer, author of the book *Animal Liberation*. Professor Singer delivered a Science Faculty lecture recently on the topic, Ethics and Science.

There was a pressing need for all involved in the scientific use of animals — both students and staff — to consider the ethics of what they were doing, he told his audience.

Millions of animals were dying in laboratories often in the course of trivial experiments or pointless teaching demonstrations. Quite often they were made to go through discomfort and sometimes even acute pain before they died.

He said: "The fact that a being is not a member of our species is no reason to give less consideration to its welfare — such as it is — than we give to members of our own species."

Professor Singer was talking in course of a discussion on whether science could go without ethics.

He asked the question: "If science cannot take over ethics, can it do without them?"

"My answer to this is a firm: no."

He continued: "Scientists make decisions and their decisions have ethical significance. Even the scientist who is most dedicated to pursuing 'pure' research has, by that decision, expressed his ethical values; and when he asks the taxpayer to support him in his pursuit he asks the government to endorse those values.

"We must not forget that when the government provides money for pure research it is providing money that might have gone towards hospitals, schools and social services.

"When research is applied rather than pure, ethical considerations come into the end for which the research is intended."

Once again, the scientist cannot evade responsibility by claiming that he merely provides the means and it is up to the politician to decide whether or not what the scientist has provided.

"This is a very dubious kind of ethical position unpleasantly reminiscent of Eichman's defence of himself as a mere efficient bureaucrat carrying out orders."

Nur is it just in the purpose of his or her work that the scientist must be alive to ethical issues. There are also, often, ethical questions about the way in which the research is conducted.

If you're in the habit of counting copies with a moistened finger — take care with photocopied sheets.

The solvents used in copying and printing machines can cause harm if transferred to the mouth.

They can be harmful also if you have a cut on your hand, and continuous application of a solvent to the skin removes the natural oils, causing the skin to crack and encouraging dermatitis.

But, the University safety officer Mr Will Barker says, photocopying is harmless if done with reasonable care.

Mr Barker's tips include not touching photocopied material for harmless solvent. Benzine, petrol, carbon tetrachloride and the like were some of the early solvents, all dangerous either from a toxic or flammable aspect or both.

These two hazards may still be experienced to some degree with the more modern solvents.

"These are usually labelled as hazardous if used in confined spaces and are more so if the solvent is handled or decanted in an unprofessional manner such as allowing the solvent to be handled in open containers where there is a large surface area of solvent or spillage.

"The concern is usually expressed in terms of damage to the liver or kidneys by inhalation of halogenated hydrocarbons."

Three safety hints

Mr Barker gives three hints for the safe handling of solvents.

• If the solvent is purchased in, say, 20 litre drums, decant into a smaller vessel by means of a pump.

• The smaller vessel should be of a squeeze bottle type with small bore pouring neck, ensuring minimum amounts and closed containers.

• All spillages should be wiped up immediately and all soaked rags and the like disposed of, to prevent spontaneous combustion.

New magazine for earth scientists

The earth sciences department at Monash has launched a new magazine to link people with an interest in the field, between campuses.

The magazine, E. S. Staff, aims to communicate at all levels — undergraduate, postgraduate, academic and support staff.

One of the more unusual objectives it has is to print undergraduate papers. Often these contain much worthwhile material which goes unnoticed.

The magazine also seeks to establish contact between people studying in similar areas or on the same topics.

The earth sciences department at Monash has set up an editorial committee to help publish "E. S. Staff" and is hoping that similar committees will be established on other campuses.
Astronomers will meet at Monash

About 90 astronomers, radio-astronomers and astrophysicists from throughout Australia and New Zealand will gather at Monash University this month.

They will be attending the 11th annual general meeting of the Astronomical Society of Australia, the nation's main professional astronomical body.

The meeting will be held from Monday, May 30 to Wednesday, June 1.

The delegates will listen to five invited papers as well as 50 other contributions detailing the results of current research being conducted in Australia.

Noted speakers will include the Director of the Mount Stromlo and Siding Spring Observatories in the ACT, Professor Olin Eggen, the Director of the new Anglo-Australian telescope at Coonabarabran, NSW, Dr D. C. Morton, and professor in the mathematics department at Monash, Professor R. van der Borght.

Professor of astronomy at Monash, Professor K. C. Westfold, will chair the meeting. Professor Westfold is also the current President of the Astronomical Society of Australia.

Monash organisers of the meeting are Dr D. W. Coates (physics), Dr P. D. Godfrey (chemistry), Dr J. O. Murphy and Dr A. J. Prentice (mathematics).

For further information contact the conference secretary, Dr Prentice, on ext. 2599.

HEARU studies a delicate teaching area...

Where (wrong) looks can kill

The delicate matter of teaching anaesthetics in the operating theatre, where the welfare of the patient is of primary concern, has been the subject of a recent Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit project.

The work has been carried out by Neil Paget of HEARU and Thomas Lambert of the Paediatrics Department at Queen Victoria Hospital, with Elena Eaton helping with research.

The team has published two papers, "Teaching and Learning in the Operating Theatre" which appeared in a recent issue of the journal, Anesthesia and Intensive Care.

The work has been funded, in part, by a grant from the Felton Bequest.

It aims to help tutors in what is seen, as a unique educational setting, in which the chief concern is the welfare of the patient, and teaching and learning can only be a minor activity.

Those familiar with more traditional teaching situations might appreciate the drawbacks associated with the other constraints too: the need for quietness, the wearing of face masks and the physical restrictions imposed by equipment and sterile areas.

In such a situation special communication skills are required, the researchers say. Such aspects as the positioning of tutor and student, the use of eyes, the pitch and volume of voice take on greater significance.

The researchers identify two phases of an anaesthetic.

In the second phase there is the opportunity for a different type of learning. But there are still limitations imposed by the anaesthetist's necessary vigilance.

A broad debate on a complicated subject can be conducted most fruitfully outside the operating theatre, the researchers conclude.

"However if the tutor does wish to do the discussion in theatre, perhaps because it is particularly relevant at that time, then he must take over the monitoring function of the anaesthetist while the student works out the answer," they say.

NEW LOOK AT VICTORIA'S COASTLINE

A giant's jigsaw puzzle discarded in frustration some time in the past?

The Victorian coastline certainly has such an appearance as this aerial photograph by Herve Alleaume shows. It features the London Bridge landmark in Portland.

The photo was taken during a survey flight over part of the coastline recently by a team from the geography department at Monash.

Aboard the Cessna 182 were senior lecturer in geography, Dr Stuart Duncan, tutor, Mr David Dunkerley, and Herve. It was piloted by the manager of ADP, Mr Maurie Butler.

One of the aims of the flight was to examine the validity of suggested corrections to the publication, The Coast of Victoria: A Physiographic Atlas, for when it is reprinted. Herve's photos might also be used to enliven the reprint.

The atlas was published jointly last year by the geography department at Monash and the Victorian Ministry for Conservation. It has already sold enough copies to defray original costs.

The survey team reports that while the bird's eye views might have been stunning, even more so was the cold in the open door aircraft.
Melbourne's main roll-on roll-off container terminal.

northern end

Researchers

baseline against which any future building an extra berth at Webb Dock.

possible effects of construction and to provide data which will serve as a side effects on the environment of Hobsons Bay.

University's Centre the shipping using the dock, but before

An investigation has thus been ordered by the Melbourne Harbor Trust Commissioners to predict the possible effects of construction and to provide data which will serve as a baseline against which any future changes may be measured.

It is being carried out by Melbourne University's Centre for Environmental Studies under the direction of Dr Jon Hinwood, senior lecturer in mechanical engineering at Monash and a senior research associate of the Centre.

Other key researchers include Mrs Jeanette Watson of marine science and ecology at Melbourne and Dr Geneva Dandy of the Centre for Environmental Studies. Specialist consultants from Melbourne and Monash will assist also.

Aspects to be examined in the 18 month study include:

- meteorological variables such as wind speed and direction, air temperature and air pressure
- hydrodynamic variables such as water movement, tides, wave heights, drift of floats and other tracers
- silt and sand properties and movement in the bay and on the beaches.
- properties of the water, including temperature, chemical composition and bacterial content.
- the composition of the different biological communities and their distributions within the bay.

Historically Hobsons Bay has been at an environmental disadvantage. It is at the mouth of the Yarra River which, for more than a century, carried properties of the water, including temperature, chemical composition and bacterial content.

The seminar will be held on May 14 at 9.30 a.m.

Speakers and their topics are: the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Dr J.N. Turner, will conduct the first session on the rights of the unmarried consumer law, and the law affecting migrants. They would earn no income from it other than that which is paid in honoraria.

John Dickie, said that the students had decided to organise the course to share the results of their study with a wider audience, and to gain experience in public presentation.

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Some of the topics they will be dealing with include concepts of ecology, population, organic farming, the concept of wilderness, energy in the home, nuclear power and resolving conflict in forest resource use.

A spokesman for the group, John Dickie, said that the students had decided to organise the course to share the results of their study with a wider audience, and to gain experience in public presentation.

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To lawyers and scientists alike, the message at recent graduation ceremonies was the same: 'COMMUNICATE ... and cut the jargon!'
The Long Term: Beware the waste of a CAE overlap into uni. role

While the critics of universities indulge in flights of fancy, this is how Monash sees the realistic future for itself and other tertiary bodies.

Two areas of particular concern to Monash — Education and Engineering.

Whereas Monash's Education Faculty was the largest single source of newly trained secondary teachers in Victoria in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the flourishing of Dip. Ed. courses in State College of Victoria-affiliated colleges and declining teacher employment opportunities have meant a shift in direction of the Faculty's role.

Its increasing emphasis will be in provision of continuing professional postgraduate training of teachers through a large program of course-work degrees and by providing opportunities for undertaking higher degrees by research. In terms of numbers this has already become very substantially the major activity of the Faculty.

"It is a matter of some concern that other faculties have begun to enter or are intending to enter the same fields, though it is not clear that order to staff and services would enable them to offer courses of the same standard. The questions here are the end of 1976 to conduct a major in·

Masters degrees

In Engineering, Monash University has planned and is operating a substantial program of masters degrees by coursework, intended for members of the profession with the same years of experience and for study part-time.

The submission continues: "Monash believes that such courses are a proper university responsibility and that their duplication elsewhere in the post-secondary system would be wasteful and indeed that in most areas the colleges would not be able to mount courses of comparable standard. It would appear that already there has been a situation in Victoria in which there are too many engineering schools teaching four-year programs to degree level, it is most important that the proliferation of engineering courses at the under-graduate level be not permitted to occur at the graduate level."

The Monash submission proposes that there is no need for any considerable expansion in university numbers at least for the next decade or so.

Certainly there would appear to be no grounds for establishing new universities, though some of the more recently founded universities will need to expand their numbers in order to become viable institutions, it says.

The growth should therefore be in the other areas of post-secondary education. However, the submission makes two points:

- It should be made easier for stu-
dents to transfer from one sector to another, in both directions. In Vic-
toria, it says, the State College might serve as community colleges from which postgraduate students might transfer to the universities with appropriate credits.
- A higher proportion of university time (and funding) should be ex-

onded on graduate work (both research and coursework) rather than on recurrent or continuing education, par-

icularly in updating professional skills and knowledge.

The University says it does not wish at present to comment in detail on the relationship between the educational system and the labor market.

"However," it continues, "something should be said about vocationaI training and manpower planning in view of the number of statements in recent months about the overproduction of graduates in Arts and Science, for example, who have not received specific vocational training.

"The assumption seems to be that large numbers can be trained (apart from those who take a teacher training course and end up in the teaching profession) who are unemployable and that the universities are therefore failing to respond to the needs of the community and indeed waste community resources."

Two areas of particular concern to Monash — Education and Engineering.

While the critics of universities indulge in flights of fancy, this is how Monash sees the realistic future for itself and other tertiary bodies.
THE SHORT TERM:

Coming triennium should see boost in growth rate

Monash University has strongly supported the Universities Commission's recommendation of a higher growth rate for universities in the 1978-80 triennium.

In its submission to the Commission for the triennium, Monash supports the recommendation that recurrent funding should provide for a minimum annual growth of 3½ per cent in real terms for 1978 and the years following. (The growth rate was fixed at 2 per cent for 1977.)

The University states that its support for the Commission's views stems not only from the "present, effective standstill." More importantly it is based on the belief that, with the development of other post-secondary educational institutions, the role of matured universities will be directed more towards postgraduate training, scholarship and research.

These are the most expensive of university activities.

The submission says: "Even if total enrolments fall, needs for funds would increase. Changes in the pattern of enrolments are already observable at Monash especially in education and engineering."

Monash asks for a general development grant at the earliest possible opportunity, stating that, "for the University the financial situation is exacerbated by the onset of financial stringency coinciding with the time for approving our planned maximum size and hence having little or no capacity to effect changes we would need to take to the development of our research, teaching and community activity."

General development grants were introduced in 1973 for the oldest large universities in appreciation of such a situation. Since then the Universities Commission has suggested the possibility of extending their provision.

The University seeks funds in the next triennium for several new initiatives as well as the strengthening and extension of existing programs. It makes a strong application for Category B research grants to assist in the development of existing postgraduate research centres and to enable it to set up new ones.

One of the most successful establishments of the Centre for South-East Asian Studies and existing Commission support for the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Family Planning, the University submits proposals for three more such centres: a Centre for Materials Research, a Centre for Astronomical Studies and a Centre for Neuroscience.

Monash is seen as being an ideal base for a Centre for Materials Research. A unique situation exists at the University in which two departments (physics and materials engineering) cover a very broad spectrum of interest in the materials area. Other institutions tend to be involved in specialized aspects of materials research.

The proposed Centre would aim to:
• provide a focal point for materials research activities, both within and outside the University;
• encourage a broader collaboration and stimulate new and further research, partly by the infusion of new ideas and personnel from the Australian materials scene;
• encourage further links within the University and with outside organisations at the level of joint research, consultancy and general advice;
• encourage and improve graduate training in the materials area;
• attract research grants;
• give short, specialised post-graduate courses;
• organise regular seminars.

A Centre for Astronomical Sciences within the Science Faculty at Monash would bring together those members of successful University who are working in, or could contribute to, the development of various fields of astronomical research. A high number of staff and students in the departments of chemistry, mathematics and physics are engaged in such research.

The submission says: "The purpose of the Centre for Astronomical Sciences is to bring about an operation between the participants, to consult together as a body in order to plan and advise upon the development of the University in which two departments of astronomy, mathematics and physics are involved. Indeed, it is highly likely that the Centre for Astronomical Sciences will promote these developments.

Areas in which Monash seeks funding for further development include continuing education, extension and postgraduate courses and migrant studies.

On continuing education, the submission states: "The purpose of the Centre for Continuing Education at Monash is to bring about an operation between the participants, to consult together as a body in order to plan and advise upon the development of the University in which two departments of education and science are involved. Indeed, it is highly likely that the Centre for Continuing Education will promote these developments.

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"We are simultaneously introducing of new courses to bring about an operation between the participants, to consult together as a body in order to plan and advise upon the development of the University in which two departments of education and science are involved. Indeed, it is highly likely that the Centre for Continuing Education will promote these developments."

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Investigations

"Our faculties of Arts and Education have conducted conferences and seminars about the role of universities in teaching and research. We have been doing this in the field since 1963 and for which a graduate Diploma in Migrant Studies is now offered.

"We believe we have significant standing in this field, but while some limited financial support might be available from one or two other groups, additional funds would be needed if we are to diversify our language teaching and other educational activities with adequate lecturing, tutorial and library resources."

Monash particularly asks that it be allocated a substantially larger sum for equipment in the next triennium, which would allow it to develop its central computing facility.

The submission states that Monash's B6700 computer, installed in January 1973, is unable to cope satisfactorily with demand from terminals.

It continues: "We support the Commission in its view that the universities should be encouraged to develop computing services on a large scale, and that Monash should be able to develop its central computing facility in the next triennium, which would allow it to develop its central computing facility."

Continued next page
Mr Mann poses the question: Is university education as it is now presented, and in the context of the numbers of young people taking it, directed so that students can achieve the worthwhile benefit of a "more satisfying life?"

He answers: "My general feeling is that it is not. The forms of higher education that were arrived at over a long period, but during all of that time the students taking it constituted an elite. The expectations were quite realistically fixed on a prospect of advantage, privilege and leadership. In a sense, we have all this happening, the development of intellectual and critical skills will mean for him a more satisfying life than he would otherwise have achieved.

Earlier, Mr Mann says: "If university study is seen, as unfortunately too often, as a way of satisfying examiners with the minimum of effort and thought, so as to achieve the 'piece of paper' that is for them the sole object in coming to university, then the time spent at it may largely have been wasted."

Mr Mann observes that the "university experience is merely an extension of schooling by which the young person moves into established society without having seriously re-examined that society and his possible role in it, then undoubtedly, his time could better have been spent in getting on with that under-demanding transition."

"If throughout his period at university he has had in mind merely job and career, the community's money has probably been wasted in granting him access to this privilege. Neither he nor the community will have gained any significant benefit, and he should probably have considered deferred his coming until he was ready to profit from the experience."
In the general Australian context, Monash operates on an assumption of representative decision-making for professional staff. In the Council, the body of final authority in University decision-making, there are ten representatives, seven of whom are elected, and the representatives of those elected is open to criticism. This lack of representativeness in its constitution is repeated, with consequent excessive representation in decision-making for professional staff. This system is open to criticism not only on the grounds of its non-representativeness, but also of its wastefulness of the resources available to the University in the whole body of academic staff. Professors appointed for their excellence in teaching and research are often so heavily burdened with administrative responsibilities that the University reaps less benefit than it should from their intellectual accomplishments.

At the same time excellence in administration is not necessarily a necessary condition for excellence in the service of professed specialities. If the University is in its early period of rapid growth; what now calls for consideration is the continuing suitability of such structures of government in an established university.

The question of the ends to which universities are to be governed has been under debate within universities for some time. In the immediate future it appears likely to be a matter of more widespread public attention. We can resent this as unwanted or we can plan-taking it to be so important as to make it the subject of our major concern.

SAMA does not have a coherent theory or policy about the University's place in the wider community, and its programme does have some questions which it feels that academics ought to be thinking about: Universities, because of their very size, their financial dependency, the degree of occupation of their members, and their pretensions to, and practice of, dignity, are alarmingly vulnerable to the kind of loosely integrated attacks so epitomised by a recent article in The Bulletin.

Who speaks?

Are we to lie politically low and say nothing, are we to rely on the quality of our work to justify us, or must we enter the arena of public relations? Does it not seem to SAMA that we should speak for Universities — their vice-chancellors, distinguished academics, education faculties, staff associations, professional PR men?

Much of the present criticism of universities seems designed to enforce the proposition that their non-growth is not merely something forced by economic recession, but positively to be desired. Are we happy to accept that there are now enough universities in Australia when university education is still a privilege of the minority?

Education lock

Is it this or the sparseness of education generally, that explains why epidemics of university-bashing occur so often in Australia, and why the lowest common denominator, reached so unerringly by some politicians, is so depressing low?

Finally, it may be that not it is a necessary function of universities to be popular, are we contributing to an unquestioning distrust of any institution by our relative isolation, by over-ready assumptions that we know best? Above all, do we fail to make meaningful contact with many of the students we should be influencing to non-universities by conceding the primacy of research over teaching, and, by implication, the primacy of theory over practice?

W. A. Howard, J. Strauss on behalf of the SAMA executive.

A bullocky on the Grand Canal

Venice, you'll have noticed, has boated the news again. (You re-read The National Times, of course?). In March a symposium was held there on Australian writing in the 1950s.

It was sponsored by the University of Venice and the Australian Government and among the contributors taking part were Rosemary Dobson, Then Asley, Vincent Buckley and Chris Wallace-Crabbe.

Australian literature in Venice? Yes. Why not?

Last year I was there myself, as visiting professor for April and early May. About 30 students enrolling in the subject, under the enthusiastic guidance of the Queensland-born Professor Bernard Hickey, were discussing Judith Wright's "Bullocky" in a piazza overlooking the Grand Canal.

Ian Turner of our History Department lectured there a few months later. And there are at least two other Monash-Venice connections. One, Venice graduate, Ariella Crema, teaches English at Monash, and another, Rodolfo Delmonte, is here for his Ph.D. on Australian politics.

In Venice I held regular classes and interviews, supervised the final draft of their thesis and helped Bernard Hickey to put the finishing touches to his anthology of recent Australian poetry, which was launched at this year's symposium.

In addition I gave two poetry-readings, one in Venice and the other in nearby Treviso.

Earlier in the year I had spent two weeks in Sweden, as guest of the Swedish Institute, to meet writers, editors and publishers, and to make Australian writing better known. So far, no Swedish university teaches the subject, and not surprisingly Patrick White (winner of the 1973 Nobel Prize for Literature) is the Australian author best known in Sweden.

England, in the past, has tended to ignore Australian writers. But when I got to London I found signs of greater interest. Notably at the BBC, which has broadcast Jack Hibberd's "Strategic Imagination" readings from Judith Wright's "A. D. Hope. More Australian poetry will follow, including my sequence on the theme of "The House of the Huns."

On my way back to Australia I dropped in at the University of Aarhus, in Denmark. There, Commonwealth literature, including Australian, has been taught for many years, first by Dr Greta Horta (formerly Principal of University Women's College, Melbourne) and since her death by the Australian-born Anna Rutherford.

Her students take this subject in four years of their course and so are exposed to at least some Australian literature for a longer period than any Australian student.

One thing which impressed me during eight months in Europe was the 'Aust. Lit.' network there. In Venice, for example, a previous visitor had been the critic Brian Kieran of Sydney University. While I was there he returned from Aarhus, on his way to a conference at Toulouse, where again Australian literature is taught. At the same moment Peter Quarmby arrived from the University of Easter where he's in charge of Australian studies. Lige is yet another university which offers some teaching in the subject. Leiden is another.

So Australian literature is alive and living in Europe. Some Australians hear this with enthusiasm raised. I don't think why: still the old "cultural cringe".

I only wish that Australian books weren't so hard to come by over there. Even with all the Foreign Affairs and the Literature Board, Bernard Hickey's students haven't enough copies of essential texts to go around.

Books, God knows, are getting scarce here too. But if students and others who want to study our writers, surely we should do all we can to help them?
FLU VACCINE

Influenza vaccine is now available
for students at the campus Phar­
macy. This year's CSL vaccine offers
immunity against the Type A flu
strain as well as the A/Victoria strain
which was responsible for last
winter's epidemic.

As in previous years, the University
Health Service is prepared to ad-
minate vaccinations.

Praise from U.S. students

Associate Professor Frank Lawson, of
the Monash Department of chemi-
cal engineering, has proved popular
with staff and students of the Colorado
School of Mines.

As Kroll Visiting Associate Professor
of Extractive Metallurgy in the School's
department of metallurgical engineering,
he has completed a year's study leave
engaged in both research and teaching.

The Dean of Engineering at Monash,
Professor Lance Endersbe, recently
received the following letter from the
School's Vice-President for Academic Af-
cairs, James H. Gary:

"Dear Dean Endersbee:
It is always a pleasure for us to have
Professor Lawson of your faculty as a
visiting professor on our campus. Both he
and his wife contribute a great deal to our
faculty as well as to our educational
program.

The Colorado School of Mines has an
annual outstanding faculty award which is
granted upon the recommendation of stu-
dents by a faculty review committee.
This award is restricted to our regular full-
time faculty, and consequently visiting faculty
members are not eligible to be given the
award. However, this year Professor Lawson
was nominated for this award by students
in his classes, and it is with regret that we
were unable to consider him.

I did want you to know, however, that the
quality of his lectures was such that he was
to be highly thought of by the students.

We hope that Professor Lawson will con-
sider us in the future when he wishes to take
his sabbatical leave."

MUNASH REPORTER
Richard Pannell reviews "Romeo" and says ... 

OILSTRUCK LOVERS DESERVED BETTER

The Victorian Shakespeare Company's production of "Romeo and Juliet" at the Alexander Theatre deserved greater success than the petting ceremony and consequently dwindling audiences allowed. If it is true that most discussions and productions are better in theory than in practice, the production was a successful one. For one thing it succeeded in seeing it as a "paean of romantic love" then this production did us a service in revealing the work's comic life.

Humour, obscenity, warmth and venality were all there on their own vivid and challenging terms, not muted to heighten the effect of tragic pathos. The production's most self-consciously "provocative" and "modern" touches, always rather inconsiderable, seem to have missed the point not to count for much. There were, perhaps, moments of over-insistence on a distinctively Australian coarseness of gesture and attitude in Bill Zappa's Mercutio. But it was a performance of brilliant energy, at once disturbing and come in its obscurity and gaiety, and sustained by a completely convincing language of the body as well as of speech.

Judith McGrath's Nurse was just as appealing, as the venality of her humanity emerged, point after point of human recognition. To the point. In this Production Mercutio, and Romeo, despite some effective use of the voice.

As Juliet, Judith Crooks did achieve a moving characterisation. If the illusion of youthful naivete, tenderness, and impetuosity (as of a 14-year-old) was not quite complete, it was a pleasure to see them so moment of the evening came with Mercutio's taunt at Romeo's "dishonourable, vile submission" to Tybalt, and the bitter joking of his death.

But this is, inescapably, a play of young love. Its poignancy, which can be almost unbearable, seems - in a modern production at least - to depend on the absolutely convincing youthfulness of its Romeo and Juliet.

Here the new thrust stage, which so effectively shut off the company and the audience of the Alex stage and brought the play out to the audience, didn't help. Depth and distance might have sustained illusion; the intimacy of this stage did not. So Chris Crooks, looking a likely Benedick, did not seem to be accepted as Romeo, despite some effective use of the voice.

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SON OF TINTOCKIE FOR THE ALEXANDER

A puppet show which has enchanted children, adults and, unanimously, the critics interstate since its world première at the Sydney Opera House in January, comes to Melbourne — and the Alexander Theatre — this month. It is the Marionette Theatre of Australia's double-bill production, Hands and Roses which will play at the Alexander from May 9 to 21.

There will be two performances daily at 10.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. with a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. Although the show is billed as a holiday attraction for school children its appeal is obviously wider than this, as newspaper reviews from Sydney, Adelaide and Perth indicate.

Said The National Times: "It would be silly not to enjoy it, even if you don't have a youngster to justify your presence. It is, to say very little, the funniest and cleverest show in town.

The national theatre magazine, Theatre Australia, goes as far as to say that the Marionette Theatre of Australia is one of the world's two or three best puppet theatres.

"Their theatre is, perhaps, the most sophisticated and professional, a quite impressive dramatic institution we have in this country," the magazine concludes. One of the men behind the production is Richard Bradshaw, who was appointed director of the puppet company by the late Dr. George W. Alexander.

Bradshaw took a bold step in devising the program to be presented at the Alexander by changing completely the company's presentation techniques. He replaced the complicated string-operated puppets with rod puppets operated in full view of the audience.

It was a gamble which has paid off handsomely in terms of critical acclaim.

Says head puppeteer Graeme Mathieson: "The new puppets enable better movement and stronger, swifter actions.

"They are more comfortable to operate than the string type and more flexible, although it required learning a whole new technique."

"Hands" opens with four spotlit pairs of clasped hands which become the audience for a contemporary parable about a pop singer. Finger, glove, rod and string puppets are used.

"Roses" has been described as more traditional Tintookie-type fare.

It deals with the protection of the environment and native animals by tracing the story of the Parma wallaby, a rare Australian mammal thought to have become extinct in 1935.

In fact small numbers of the wallaby were found in the 1960s and with the introduction of breeding stocks from descendants of Parma wallabies taken to New Zealand many years ago animal is no longer on the endangered species list.

Seats may be booked by contacting the Alexander Theatre on 543 2858. Tickets are $3.50 adults, $1.75 children.

NO "HARE" UNDER HAT THIS ONE

"Hare": A rework of that notorious '60s musical? A magic bunny showing off the skinny old in a hat? Perhaps even an on-stage persona of a new religious sect?

The answer is none of these. Rather, "Hare" is the title of the 1977 com-