Recession not main cause of job loss in top companies

Study says older workers are ‘bearing the brunt’

Early findings of a survey of some of Australia’s largest companies pinpoint reasons other than the recession for labour-shedding programs.

Among the other more significant causes are company restructuring through mergers, improved management methods and the like, and the introduction of new technology.

The survey, which is planned to embrace 60 of the nation’s top companies by market capitalisation, identifies voluntary early retirement as the preferred tool in implementing manpower policies.

But a question has been raised as to whether the new, higher rate of superannuation lump sum taxation will put the skids under early retirement schemes.

While much attention is focused on the problems of youth in relation to jobs, it is in fact older workers — whose expectation is that they will be in a job until age 65 — who are “bearing the brunt” of the labour market revolution, says Mrs Val Maxwell, tutor in Administrative Studies at Monash.

Mrs Maxwell is conducting the survey and compiling company case studies from the results as part of a two-year Ph.D. study for Melbourne University’s Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research.

The research builds on work she has done on issues surrounding early retirement in Australia.

She points out that her finding on the relative impact of the recession on job shedding is based on companies at the “rock solid” end of the scale — companies which may have individual divisions with fluctuating fortunes but which are generally soundly-based. Her study, too, is yet to extend to the automobile and textile industries. It does include several large public employers.

Mrs Maxwell says that voluntary early retirement — wrapped up in an attractive “package deal” — is the preferred means of labour shedding because it is the least visible.

The “harder options” are involuntary retirement and retrenchment of younger workers — moves which can stir up a hornet’s nest in industrial relations and tarnish a company’s public image.

Super payouts: a vital stress factor for our police?

Rail strike called off

Workers shocked by the sudden sackings

This engineer saw steam triumph over sail — now computers tell his story

Master of all he surveys — chief engineer on a 19th century steamship. One suspects that such a man, riding on the wave of new technology in his own generation, would wholly approve of a new Monash Education project which uses the computer in the classroom to illustrate the impact of the transition from sail to steam. The story, centre pages.

Also inside:

‘The Dreamers’ Eve Fess reviews the new Aboriginal play at the Alex, p.12

• What happens when a research library fills up? p.3
• Policy Studies man buys into shop hours debate p.4
• True confessions — at too high a price p.5
• Tax — it’s time to open the Pandora’s Box p.6
New maintenance approach aims at cutting costs

Research by a Monash Mechanical Engineering team on monitoring the condition of industrial machines is aimed at reducing the cost of their maintenance and improving productivity through less "downtime" — the time equipment is out of action during repair.

The team has produced an inventory of techniques which can be used to identify a maintenance need. From the unit of detection, the researchers have moved on to improved methods of problem diagnosis and prognosis. Application of these new techniques to date has been on equipment used in mineral processing — giant conveyors, crushers, winders and mobile equipment. Equipment maintenance as a percentage of operating costs has risen sharply in the mining industry in recent years, and methods of reducing the maintenance bill are eagerly sought.

The team now numbers seven. It includes senior lecturers, Dr Ralph Alfredson, Jack Steckl and Bruce Kuhnell; research consultants, Dr Joseph Mathew and Marion Walker; and Peter Dawson, seconded from industry.

Dr Alfredson says that there are two basic approaches that have been taken to equipment maintenance. Both have their drawbacks.

One approach has been to maintain machines on a regular basis. The problem with this is determining an appropriate interval between checks so that equipment is not either over- or under-serviced. There is the associated problem that in any given maintenance programme, costs can be introduced as well as eliminated. The more a machine is maintained, the greater the chance this will happen.

The second approach is to allow equipment to run until it breaks down and then effect repairs. A machine breaking down unexpectedly, however, can cause great loss in production.

The new approach, advocated by the Monash team, is to maintain equipment when its condition indicates that maintenance is required.

The team has worked on three tests for determining this:

- Examining wear debris in lubricating oils to see if a machine can cause great loss in production.
- Monitoring changes in the machine's vibration levels.
- Measuring the temperature of bearings.

"Most of the equipment is 'old' technology — it's about 25 years old — and whose sites the team has visited so far, we are able to engage in 'targeted separation' — making them available to staff members whose performance is considered not up to scratch. The 'voluntary' aspect tends to get a little blurred in this method, Mrs Maxwell says.

One of the chief prompts to early retirement is the stress older workers experience with change — whether it is in new office or industrial procedures or working with new technology.

Mrs Maxwell approaches personnel managers of companies with a set questionnaire and also seeks about a one-hour interview — "although if they want to talk longer I'm prepared to listen", she says. Information given is treated confidentially on an individual basis. She is aiming to complete a case study a week.

Her interest in conducting the research was stimulated by participation on a State Government working party on disadvantaged workers.

A crossed line yields cross words

The Monash phone system is capable of the odd crossed line as most users would be well aware.

The chance connections that result can have their lighter side, as a secretary in Education, Bev Pocknee, relates.

This is Bev's story:

"The other day I was endeavouring to make an outside call and kept getting a crossed line. After many unsuccessful attempts I realised that the other party was dialling out and I attempted to get their attention by saying "Hello", "Hello" between the clicks. Eventually the dialed finishing and my "Hello" was greeted by another "Hello".

"Who are you?" asked (thinking that I might be able to get the technicians to check the two extensions for faults)

"Never mind who I am", came the reply, "I've just dialled my husband — who are YOU?"

Any other anecdotes? Reporter would like to hear.

MONASH REPORTER
What happens when a university library “fills up”? No one would seriously suggest that it stop acquiring new material. In Australia, the expectation grew among librarians from the late 1950s for a period of nearly 20 years that once a new building was full a new one would be built.

Externally-imposed funding constraints dashed that expectation—leaving some giant headaches on storage. A new study from Monash’s Graduate School of Librarianship looks at four strategies for dealing with storage problems and gives librarians permission to reject cherished beliefs about library buildings. Mr Stayner says that the issues raised by the study would have to be faced by libraries sooner or later even without arbitrarily-imposed constraints such as funding. “It has to be recognised that there is a finite upper limit to the growth of conventional library buildings.”

What the study provides is a format for cost-effectiveness analysis—a checklist of costs, some suggestions for estimating costs and combining them, and how account can be taken of effect over time.

### Attitudes hurdle

Mr Stayner says that the “biggest hurdle in implementing any of the options other than the first is the attitudes of librarians and library users. Notions such as closure and weeding a collection strike at the heart of firmly-held beliefs about a research library’s role.”

He says: “‘The creation of knowledge’, ‘the store-house of civilisation’ and so on.

“It is true that these may reflect the stated objectives of its parent institution (the university), and that libraries have important symbolic values. But it can also be argued that the library was created to serve a well-defined clientele with specific needs.

“For the purposes for which it is established, it can be argued that the university library is simply a device for making the search for materials more efficient. It exists so that the user’s need to materials for existence and location can be served. It is as inefficient to some extent storage as “legitimate, routine and respectable” aspects of collection management worthy of careful professional attention and the development of professional skills.

### Some options when the library signs read ‘full’

- **The new building option.** This is an obvious solution, but it requires a site, often in a single institution, housing materials at a higher density than in the primary collection, with closed access, few reader seating, and a standard of environmental control for library materials as good as in the primary collection.

- **The second store option**—a secondary storage facility, owned and operated by a single institution, housing materials at a density higher than in the primary collection, with closed access, few ‘creature comforts’, but at a standard of environmental control for library materials as good as in the primary collection.

- **The co-operative storage option**—a shared secondary storage facility with similar physical attributes to option two, for the use of several institutions.

- **No new building of any sort.** New material would be accommodated by a combination of: substitution of microform and other condensed forms for paper; reductions in reader or staff space; discard of materials; increases in shelving density; and more reliance on the holdings of other libraries through the inter-library loan system, telefacsimile and the like.

### Historical experience

Historical experience is that space problems recur but that a scarcity of capital resources for new buildings is only temporary. That is, the upper limit for library space has not yet been experienced.

Few librarians have had to accept that the final limit has been placed on the size of their library building, he says.

Substandard

“This leads to what seems to be the most important attitude of all: that housing library materials in secondary storage (remote from users) is seen as unusual, the exception rather than the rule, and caused by extraordinary circumstances which will prove to be merely transient,” he says.

“This seems to have resulted in conditions of housing and procedures for the control of and access to materials in existing remote facilities being sub-standard. Secondary storage collections have not really been taken seriously because their management is not considered to be part of the natural function of librarianship.”

Mr Stayner says that librarians must start viewing weeding and remote storage as “legitimate, routine and respectable aspects” of collection management worthy of careful professional attention and the development of professional skills.

### Continued Page 9

**MONASH REPORTER**

SEPTEMBER, 1983

* Photo: Rick Crompton

* Richard Stayner ... 'limit to the growth of library buildings'
‘Deregulate trading hours!’ — economist

Total deregulation of retail trading hours — that is the policy advocated by the Assistant Director of Monash’s Centre of Policy Studies, Mr Geoff Hogbin.

Mr Hogbin doubts that totally free shopping hours will be realised but says this would be preferable to a partial change, say Saturday afternoon trading. “Any time in the future the same set of problems will recur as pressures mount for further deregulation and the community will face the same sorts of disruptions.”

Mr Hogbin, following evidence he gave to the 1982 Committee of Inquiry into trading hours, has prepared a major report which will be published later in the year by the Centre for Independent Studies, a privately-funded social science research and information organisation.

He says his main aim is to make people think about why there are restrictions on trading hours.

“I want to try to get people to think about what governments do — do they regard the trading hours in the public interest or to further the interests of particular groups for political reasons?”

Mr Hogbin says there is no doubt that some people and employers would be hurt by extended trading hours. This is regrettable, he says, but similar to that caused by the introduction of the motor car.

“When motor transport was introduced, many blacksmiths and coach-builders had to move to other occupations, but the community benefited immensely.”

Mr Hogbin says the argument that family life and leisure time would be severely disrupted for retail industry employees is often used against the proposal.

“But roughly one million people — one-sixth of the workforce — work at the weekend now.”

Mr Hogbin says people provide what have come to be regarded as the weekend ‘essentials’ — meat pies at the footy, restaurant meals, service at hotels and discotheques, pornography, movies, petrol, fast foods, airline travel and many other services.”

This showed that the community did not regard working and trading at the weekend as unethical.

“This suggests that those who oppose the introduction of weekend trading on these grounds are being unduly selective about the objects of their concern.”

Mr Hogbin says the demand for extra shopping time can only grow with the increased participation of women in the workforce and increased spending power in the community.

He believes the advantages to consumers, the vast majority of the population, heavily outweigh the disadvantages to a minority who would be harmed.

“Either consumers must continue to bear the costs which restrictions on shopping hours impose on them or some retailers must suffer losses following the introduction of weekend trading.”

Mr Hogbin points out that shopping is time-intensive. At present consumers must either choose to shop hastily, to pay higher prices or to buy fewer items or to shop normally and lose out on leisure time.

“Opponents of weekend trading frequently argue that with careful organisation of time anyone can arrange to do their shopping within the times available under the existing laws.

“However this almost entirely misses the key point about the effects of restrictions on consumers. If they wish, most people could manage to dispose of an entire week’s income on a Saturday morning. The reason why many people prefer to spend more than the absolute minimum amount of time to dispose of their income, is to attempt to get maximum satisfaction from their outlays.

“Restrictions on weekend trading simply reduce the satisfaction that consumers derive from spending their incomes.”

Mr Hogbin says removing the restrictions would benefit those who worked normal hours — including retail employees — particularly single parents, wives in two-income households and unmarried people living independently of their parents.

“For example, we do not know how many housewives choose not to work, or choose to work shorter hours, because of anticipated difficulties in scheduling their time within the current constraints on shopping time.”

Mr Hogbin says that if prices rose as a result of extended hours it would only be by a very small percentage.

Extended hours would end the Saturday morning peak and would mean capital savings for retailers which would offset the cost of higher wages, he believes.

For example, supermarket car parks could be smaller and extra cash registers, used only at the peak period, would not be needed.

“We regularly pay more for higher quality service. If it were true that prices rose this would be indicative that people were prepared to pay for the weekend service.”

Both shoppers and retailers would gain from the end of the Saturday morning congestion, he says. People are likely to shop less hastedly and gain more satisfaction from their purchases and, from the retailers’ viewpoint, they are likely to buy more.

African aid threatened?

The African Studies Association has expressed concern that Australian aid to Africa might be reduced if the emphasis in our aid programs is shifted towards “regional concerns”.

The Association, which held its sixth annual conference at Monash last month, has made a submission to the Committee to Review the Australian Overseas Aid Program set up by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

It says there are disturbing implications for Australia’s aid program to Africa in the Committee’s terms of reference and especially the instruction to “consider the geographic distribution of Australian aid programs, and in particular whether more emphasis should be given to the Pacific and Southeast Asian regions”.

The submission says that if Australia is committed to tackling the problem of global poverty then it should, in fact, provide greater assistance to Africa, which contains two-thirds of the world’s poorest nations.

“If Australia were now to reduce its aid to Africa at a time when Africa is experiencing its worst famine in a decade, it would be turning its back on a potential human tragedy of immeasurable proportions.”

The submission continues.

“In doing so, Australia would also be dissociating itself from the clear and growing international consensus that the human needs of Africa must now be seen as a paramount concern of the international aid effort.”

The submission says that humanitarian considerations should be primary in determining our aid approach to Africa — but Australia’s own interests should not be ignored.

First, Australia would be bound to enjoy more Third World support if it were to maintain a strong commitment to policies directed to assisting those most in need.

Second, the goodwill of the numerous African members of the Commonwealth, the UN and other international forums, will be a more effective actor in these bodies.

Third, within the context of Indian Ocean strategy, Australia stands to gain from the greater political stability in Africa which economic improvement would bring.

Fourth, an African which has earned a practice in forest management in which “fuel”, such as dead wood on the forest floor, is reduced in a controlled burning program. This, it is argued, limits the impact of wildfire.

The keynote address will be given by Dr Ed Komek, of the Tall Timbers Research Station, Tallahassee. Other speakers will be from universities, State government departments and conservation bodies. They will look at the relationship between fuel and fire, the causes and extent of bushfires, the effects of fuel reduction burning on wildlife behaviour, and the effects of fire on soil, water, flora and fauna.

Results of an opinion survey on fuel reduction burning conducted by a Monash Environmental Science research team will also be presented. Early this year the Graduate School of Environmental Science secured a $24,000 contract with the Forests Commission to conduct an evaluation of fuel reduction burning. The report on this study should be completed by March 1984.

For further information about the symposium contact Dr Tim Ealey on ext. 3840.
Chinese volleyball team plays at Monash

The Chinese university's volleyball team, on its first tour of Australia, will meet a combined Victorian universities team in a public match to be held at Monash tomorrow night (Thursday, September 8).

It will start in the Recreation Hall, part of the Sports and Recreation Complex, at 7.30 p.m.

The Chinese party consists of 12 players — some of the best in the nation — and four officials. The team recently competed successfully at the University — university games — in Edmonton, Canada.

Tickets for the match are on sale from the control desk, Sports and Recreation Centre, and cost $3 and $2 (concessions).

PARADISE LOST?

Bob Milton was entranced by Irian Jay and his disciples, who have been extensively in the '70s he could see it was a society under threat. The story, Flights.

Do trial judges have a role in “checking” police behaviour . . . . . By, say, rejecting in some circumstances the confession which is legally admissible but obtained by improper or illegal methods?

The Australian system, like Scotland's and Ireland's, gives Judges the nod to exercise such a discretion. The English system has been reluctant to do the same.

The Australian approach is more satisfactory, says Mr Bob Williams, Reader in Law. The paper in which Mr Williams argues his case has just been published — in England — in the Oxford Journal of Legal Studies.

Much has been written on the legal requirements for admissibility of a confession but Mr Williams' research breaks relatively new ground on a trial judge's power to reject a legally admissible confession.

The requirement for admissibility is that the confession be voluntary in the sense that it is not contaminated as the result of oppression or of a threat or promise exercised or held out by a person in authority.

The governing principle behind such requirements is that a breach of them could be a con"fession" unreliable.

But a few rungs down the ladder from "oppression, threats and promises" are procedures which may well yield a reliable confession but may be considered improper or even illegal.

For the most part it would be police behaviour in breach of the so-called Judges' Rules the term used to describe the rules laid down to govern police in their interrogation of suspects.

In Victoria the "rules" are adopted in the Standing Orders of the Police Commissioner. They are, in fact, no more than instructions to police and guides as to what courts will regard as fair treatment of suspects by the police.

They cover such aspects as cautioning a suspect; questioning a suspect after he has been cautioned or charged; access to a solicitor, relative or friend; use of information received and statements by a person in custody without being charged; and unlawful detention and the use of holding charges.

In the Australian system, it is not simply a case of a judge rejecting a confession because one or two of these "rules" have not been complied with.

MONASH REPORTER

High Commissioner visits

Members of the Monash Indian Community got together last month for the first visit to the University of the new Indian High Commissioner, His Excellency Dileep S. Kamtekar. Pictured in the Vice-Chancellor's office are some of the group, from left: Dr Feusto Gomes (Library), Dr Naunihal Singh (Mathematics), Mr Kamtekar, Mrs Gloria Moore (Anthropology & Sociology), Dr Kishor Dabke (Electrical Engineering) and Dr R. H. Desai (Anthropology & Sociology).

True confessions but at what price?

"At a certain point the evil of acquitting a guilty accused becomes less than the evil of tolerating lawlessness on the part of the authorities."

But where impropriety reaches a sufficiently grave level, says Mr Williams, then a consideration of competing requirements of public policy may properly result in rejection of a confession.

The two elements of public policy here are bringing the guilty to justice and protecting citizens from unauthorized and improper treatment by police.

"What is involved is an attempt to balance the desirability of placing cogent evidence tending to show guilt before the court on the one hand, and the undesirability of judicial approval or encouragement being given to unlawful conduct on the part of the police, on the other," he says.

"At a certain point the evil of acquiting a guilty accused becomes less than the evil of tolerating lawlessness on the part of the authorities." Mr Williams has been examining a large number of cases to see in what circumstances a judge is likely to reject a confession because he considers the police "disciplinary principle outweighs the evidence "reliability" principle."

"For example, despite the significance of the caution in advising a suspect of his legal right to remain silent, the courts seem not to reject confessions merely because a caution was not given. However, the lack of a caution combined with other improprieties, such as denying access to a solicitor or keeping a person in custody without being charged, could lead to rejection.

Similarly, if police mislead a suspect by advising him that they have information which they in fact do not have, then, if such deception were perpetrated knowingly, any admission is likely to be rejected.

The courts also show a greater willingness to exercise their discretion where proper procedures have not been carefully observed in investigations of Aborigines, non-English speakers, children and intellectually handicapped people.

English courts adopt a much narrower view of the scope to be accorded to the discretion to exclude.

"At a certain point the evil of acquitting a guilty accused becomes less than the evil of tolerating lawlessness on the part of the authorities." Mr Williams urges that courts develop and refine principles and guidelines to be used by trial judges in the exercise of discretion. It is an area of law which will grow by gradual evolution, case by case, and not one ripe for codification.

He says the High Court in Bunnings v. Cross spelt out some of the principles to be taken into account by trial judges.

In its decision, the Court suggested that:

1. Account should be taken of whether the police deliberately disregarded the law. If the illegality occurs because of a mistake, that is a factor pointing in favor of admissibility.
2. Consideration may be given to whether the illegality affects the cogency of the evidence.
3. Another consideration is the ease with which the law might have been complied with in procuring the evidence in question. While a deliberate "cutting of corners" ought not to be tolerated, the fact that the evidence could have been obtained easily under correct procedures may point towards admissibility.
4. Regard should be paid to the nature of the offence charged. The more serious the offence, the stronger the arguments in favor of admissibility.
5. Regard should be had to the scheme of any legislation the police fail to comply with. If the legislation shows a deliberate attempt to restrict narrowly the police in their power to obtain certain evidence, that consideration will point towards rejection of evidence obtained in breach.

SEPTEMBER, 1983
New light on Vietnamese settlement in Melbourne

The need for ready available information about housing and jobs was an important, but neglected, reason for migrants concentrating in certain areas. This is one of the findings of a report by three candidates for Master of Environmental Science degrees. The students investigated Vietnamese settlement in Springvale.

With the help of interpreters they interviewed 52 people in Springvale, Richmond and Fitzroy. Vietnamese migrants in Springvale gave family and friends as one of the most important sources of information about housing and jobs, the report says. Vietnamese and other Indo-Chinese were more “visible” in the Australian community and their residential concentration therefore more noticeable.

This concentration was potentially divisive particularly if local employment and housing shortages became severe, so it was important to understand the causes of it, the report says.

The majority of Indo-Chinese in the Springvale area live close to Springvale Central and Westall.

“General public opinion attributes this concentration to the fact that the Indo-Chinese ‘stick with their own’, and is vaguely suspicious of it,” the report says.

But lack of information was an important constraint on non-English speaking migrants.

“The main channel of information is relatives and friends within the ethnic community. They are likely to hear of jobs and accommodation in areas close to the people they know.”

Of those surveyed, 41 per cent had found their first accommodation in Springvale through Vietnamese friends and relatives. Real estate agents — at 29 per cent — were the second major source.

Only six per cent found their accommodation through the housing officer employed at the Enterprise Migrant Centre in Springvale. The report says this could be because the officer has less access to information about likely vacancies than residents in the community.

Thirty-six per cent of those in the survey said Vietnamese friends and relatives had told them about their current jobs. This was the second major source of job information.

Forty per cent had obtained their jobs through a personal approach to the employer, 18 per cent through the Commonwealth Employment Service and four per cent through Australian friends.

Information network

The report says that in a tight housing market, friends and relatives were often the best sources of information.

“...In this case, those who use a network of friends with an ear to the ground to get information on future vacancies, have an advantage.”

“Use of the ethnic community networks as the main channel of information housing is likely to result in concentrated settlement.”

“The handing on of leases from one household to another means that the pattern can become fairly permanent, as happens with student housing,” the report says.

But only eight per cent gave “close to other Vietnamese” as the reason for choosing their current accommodation. The major reasons given were closeness to work, public transport and schools.

The Springvale residents were more likely to have a job when they left the migrant centre whereas Richmond-Fitzroy residents moved out of the centre because they had been offered jobs.

The report recommends that the maximum stay at a migrant centre be increased. This would allow them more time to find alternative accommodation.

Other recommendations include increased information for migrants at migrant centres from 300 hours to 900-1500 hours; making English classes, particularly for professionals, more accessible; increased provision of public housing in the Springvale area; information on tenancy rights in all languages and more education of Vietnamese on nutritional and dental aspects of a western diet.

The report says more work should be done on the effects of a westernised high-fat, high-sugar diet on Vietnamese health.

Schoolchildren and young adults were adopting the Australian diet most readily.

The report was edited by Mr Frank Fisher of the Monash Graduate School of Environmental Science from theses by Rob Gardner, Helen Neville and John Smith.

Computers are set to make a widespread impact on the humanities, with computers having a legitimate place in the humanities classroom as the case in question.

And they believe that that’s a “practical possibility” — as a tool in learning — as well as a subject of study (as in an examination of the Computer Revolution, which through its volume or rarity, say, could be less remote than the age of the paperless office), says Dr Shorten.

“Yet historians fail to realise the potential of the new technology when they then will confirm the view that theirs is a discipline of the ‘mouldy old cupboard’.”

The three units look at aspects of social and economic change — how the shift from the steam engine to the modern basis of the maritime industry and indeed the lives of ordinary Australians in the second half of last century; how settlement and agriculture was shaped by the introduction of irrigation; how women began participating in the workforce and other spheres during the two world wars.

In talking about their projects, the educationists come back to a requirement of the ‘mouldy old cupboard’ or “valid” use of the computer.

How has this been achieved?

The report says that the computer is the same in all three projects — the storage, retrieval and analysis of historical data which would not normally be available in a school. Such data can be used to allow
the student to see a graphic extrapolation of a trend over time, for example, or to test the validity of a tentative hypothesis against further evidence.

This is not the only way in which computer use has been proposed for the history classroom — simulations have also been pioneered.

The historical raw material stored on floppy diskette for use in the first unit, "Beyond the Breakers", came from the Mercantile Navy List of Australia and New Zealand and the Register of Australian and NZ Shipping. (The land unit, incidentally, is titled "Beyond the Limits", the women in the war unit, "Beyond Hope".)

Dr Shorten says that the team faced a horns dilemma in the selection and preparation of database material.

"If the database was neither sufficient in quantity nor adequate in its complexity to justify the use of computer storage, retrieval and analysis, then the proponents of undigested use of computer technology in a trivial and unworthy fashion and of lesser majesty in the suspension of the printed word by mere technological gimmickry would be raised against us.

"On the other hand, if the material was too voluminous and the analytical concepts too complex, the material would be inappropriate for middle secondary use. Furthermore, the microcomputer might well be too slow in its operations on the database for effective classroom use by individual pupils.

"Heeding the traditional requirement of stringent selection of history curriculum materials adapted to the cognitive abilities of the adolescent pupil, the team decided that integrated printed and computerised resource materials provided a solution."

Design of the units had to pay heed, too, to the probable availability of only one microcomputer in the class of 30. Computer work, then, had to be only one avenue of investigation.

Another aspect the team was mindful of in selecting data was that it must be encoded without distortion of the evidence.

One of the objects of the units was to set students on a course of genuine historical inquiry — with all its frustrations and dead-ends in incomplete data, as well as its successes.

"It is not a case, then, of distorting data going in to make it fit coming out — so that there are nice, tidy answers to all the questions posed," says Dr Shorten.

"An inconclusive exercise illustrates the nature of historical inquiry — and it also highlights awareness that a computer will do only what it is programmed to do and what the data in it permits it to do."

How have the students themselves reacted to computers in the history classroom?

Part of "Beyond the Breakers" has had a trial run and been judged a success by students and teachers. The one criticism students made was that in the unit's pilot form there was not enough computer work — a criticism which is being met in its redesign.

\[\text{An early steamship — The Shamrock — which arrived in the colony for the Melbourne-Sydney run in 1841.}
\text{Photo: National Library of Australia.}\]

\[\text{Deciding the future ourselves}\]

What will Australia be like in 2020?

Today's schoolchildren are being given a glimpse of a number of possibilities — and some ideas on how they can opt for ones more environmentally desirable — in a new handbook and associated classroom kit published last month by the Graduate School of Environmental Science and the Gould League of Victoria.

In the classroom, Australia 2020 invites students to identify key aspects of the lifestyle they would like to have as adults. They do this by selecting from a range of coded lifestyle indicators.

The codes lead students to a model (13 are possible) which describes what their society would be like if their first choice lifestyle were to predominate.

They are then invited to identify the good and bad features of that society compared with salient features of the other 12 possibilities and then substitute good for bad, arriving at a more desirable model.

The student handbook sells for $1 a copy, the classroom kit for $5. They can be ordered from the Gould League of Victoria, PO Box 446, Prahran 3181.
Professor Head says that the present tax system ignores accepted principles of equity and efficiency.

“Our tax system bristles with outrageous design deficiencies and, as a result, serious and responsible discussion and public understanding of the real issues in taxation policy”.

Professor Head makes his remarks in a book, Taxation Issues of the 1980s, published last month by the Australian Tax Research Foundation. The book is a collection of papers presented by leading Australians and overseas tax scholars at a conference organised by Monash’s Centre of Policy Studies.

Professor Head says that there are good reasons why a country’s tax system should be rarely altered.

“The prevailing tax structure established by this country and in practice, the way in which the burden of resource transfer is to be shared among different individuals and groups in the community, and in combination with the transfer system it has a crucial impact on the sharing of the income and wealth distribution,” he says.

“Extremely controversial and potentially divisive issues of equity are thus intrinsically central concern in tax policy making.”

“To embark on a fundamental review of the taxation system is therefore to open up a veritable Pandora’s Box of controversy in the sense that it puts the existing tax structure and the entrenched tax compromise on cost-sharing and the income distribution up for grabs.

“Public discussion of far-reaching changes in the tax system is a source of uncertainty and the implementation of major reforms can be costly and extremely protracted.”

Despite such risks, suggests Professor Head, reform of Australia’s tax system is now a matter of extreme economic and social importance.

Design deficiencies that could be lived with under stable growth and a small public sector — such as in 1950s and ‘60s — have contributed substantially to the progressive decline of taxpayer morale. The taxpayer revolt which occurred under the inflationary and stagflationary conditions of the 1970s.

“It is far from clear, however, that the appropriate directions for reform are those which have received most public attention in the past few years,” he says.

These are some of the criticisms and recommendations by Professor Head.

**Pandora’s Box**

John Head, tax economist, says Australia needs:

- Comprehensive taxation of income including capital gains, retirement money and ‘imputed rent’
- - A broad-based consumption tax
- An inheritance tax or modest wealth tax

In fact, Australia is a relatively low tax country. The weight of personal income tax is not significantly out of line with comparable countries — when, for example, employee contributions to the social security are included in North America and European countries.

Professor Head says that part of the reason for a sinking acceptance of income-type taxes in Australia is the absence of direct earmarking for specific purposes.

“The greater part of the answer, however, is to be found in primitive design deficiencies and loopholes in the structure of our personal income tax which have no real counterpart in the income tax systems of countries with which we normally like to compare ourselves.”

Professor Head says the traditional standard for personal income tax design is provided by the Schanz-Haig-Simons comprehensive income approach which suggests that all types of gain be taxed alike regardless of source, form or use.

Interest, dividends, capital gains, pension rights, imputed rent, buying and selling, gambling winnings, etc., would all be fully taxed on the same basis as wages and salaries.

This acceptable design standard is so seriously violated in Australia, he says.

The worst violation is a failure to tackle seriously the problem of taxing capital gains and losses.

“Apart from the contribution made by company income tax, our efforts in this area illustrate very nicely the utter futility of attempting to discriminate between so-called systematic gains (which are expected or intended) and so-called windfalls.”

“Section 26(a) and Section 26AAA are little better than a joke or a confidence trick as a result of which the vast bulk of capital gains escape personal tax completely.”

He recommends adoption of the Asprey Committee recommendations on capital gains taxation as a “useful improvement.”

Another area in which the personal tax system has been outstandingly deficient, says Professor Head, is the taxation of pension rights and retirement saving.

He calls the long-standing failure to adequately tax lump sums a “grotesque” tax, such as the Government’s “modest reforms” in this area, he adds: “I see no reason why we should not attempt to approximate equal treatment of different forms of consumption in order to reduce the gap between the benefits received on retirement.”

The third major gap in the personal tax base is in the area of owner-occupied housing.

“The comprehensive income approach would require that the imputed rental return on this form of investment should be taxed as far as possible on the same basis as other types of income from capital,” Professor Head says.

Concessions for owner-occupied housing have served to produce a seriously distorted and extremely conservative pattern of saving and investment “totally inconsistent with the requirements of a dynamic and growing economy.”

**Sales Taxation**

Professor Head urges sales tax reform as a matter of high priority although he says there has been much “nonsense and hypocrisy” in recent debates on changing the tax mix away from direct income taxes towards indirect consumption taxes.

He says that one advantage of changing the mix would be to allow cuts in income tax rates which could then be used as a “sweetener” for reform of the income tax base.

What is unusual in Australia, says Professor Head, is the relatively small share of broad-based consumption taxes, such as the sales tax, and the remarkably narrow base and highly discriminatory character of our consumption tax system. Some 80 per cent of total revenue from the taxation of goods and services comes from liquor, tobacco, petrol products and motor vehicles and parts.

He says that there has been a misguided attempt to “humanise” wholesale tax by drawing a distinction between so-called necessities and luxuries, dating from World War II.

**Wealth Taxation**

Professor Head says that Australia enjoys the “dubious distinction” of being virtually alone among developed industrialised countries in imposing no general tax on wealth or wealth transfers.

The Commonwealth decision to follow the States’ example in the field of estate and gift taxes by abolishing the federal estate tax was “totally incomprehensible, shortsighted and irresponsible”.

He says that, from the design point of view, wealth transfer taxes are among the simplest to administer and the least costly to collect, hence yielding substantial administrative and economic efficiency advantages over other forms of tax.

In a number of West European countries a modest annual wealth tax — at a rate of one or two per cent and with reasonably generous exemptions — is imposed invariably alongside traditional forms of inheritance tax.

Professor Head says that there is no precedent overseas for a substantial wealth tax such as has been canvassed in some quarters in Australia recently.

“A much better alternative would be the Commonwealth property tax bequests and gifts as ordinary income to the beneficiary, under an appropriately reformed income tax, with perhaps a linear rate schedule and certainty with comprehensive averaging provisions and generous annual and lifetime exemptions.”

“If taxation of bequests and gifts of small sums is no longer an option, and looking ahead to the problems of tax equity likely to be created by tax avoidance and evasion, the resources sector over the next decade, it seems to me that top priority should be given to capital gains taxation and/or a modest wealth tax supplement on the European model.”

**Taxation: it’s time to open the Pandora’s Box**

John Head, tax economist, says Australia needs:
When the Minister for Science and Technology, Barry Jones, launched "The Lost World of Irian Jaya" last month an important person was missing.

It was the book's author and photographer, Bob Mitton.

A Monash student in the late 1960s, Bob died from leukaemia in 1976, at age 30, when the book about the part of the world he considered "the nearest to paradise" was but an idea — to be put together from a large collection of notes, letters, diaries and photographs.

Bob left this material to Sue Galley whom he met at Monash. Sue, Jon Peterson, a senior lecturer in Geography, and Catriona Etherington (nee Shannon), another fellow student, have guided his ambition to reality.

Actual editing of the book was done by Dr Peterson, Dr Malcolm Walker, an anthropologist, and Collis Brooks, a geologist, for Oxford University Press.

Bob's interest in Irian Jaya grew from when he took off studies in 1969 to travel north to Papua New Guinea where he worked as a mining exploration field officer. Working close to the PNG-Irian Jaya border he was attracted by "the distant view of the ice-capped Mt Juliana."

By 1971 he was in Irian Jaya working for the Indonesian subsidiary of the American company Kennecott. He travelled extensively as part of his work — and travelled even further in his time off, preferring that to pining for Australia over a jug or two of beer.

He encountered groups of people along the Baliem River who had never seen Europeans or Indonesians, groups living a Stone Age style of existence, people who were headhunters and cannibals.

It was a part of the world that was becoming far less "remote" very quickly. Bob's aim was to record its original nature before it disappeared forever.

He has some harsh words on the "reckless and needless destruction" that has happened to the land and its people at the hands of its Indonesian masters and some missionaries.

Bob also collected artifacts on his travels. These have been donated to the Macleay Museum in the University of Sydney.

"The Lost World of Irian Jaya" sells for $30.


---

The ‘full’ library

**From Page 3**

Although the study does not come up with any best solution to space problems, Mr Stayner says that it would appear that significant cost savings could be made with the co-operative storage option.

"There are, however, difficulties with this option not revealed in an economic analysis," he says. "It could be that it is not so much co-operative storage as co-operation that is difficult to get right!"

He says that support for co-operation in librarianship has been a motherhood-type notion.

"These days, however, library co-operation must be based on much more than the traditional professional solidarity and pride in helping one's colleagues. Librarians are, quite legitimately, looking for evidence that participation in the co-operative enterprise will provide positive net benefits to their own institution and are tending to discount any altruism that their membership might display to other participants."

He urges that the Commonwealth should finance the capital and establishment costs of a shared facility directly, while the operating costs should be met by the participating libraries on the basis of their relative volumes of use.

Many researchers would feel uneasy about delegating material to remote co-operative storage but Mr Stayner urges them not to make a rushed judgment on this option on the basis of their experience, say, with inter-library loans.

"New and better methods of storage and document delivery have to be demonstrated," he says. "But there is no great mystery in how it can be done. With on-line public access catalogues, on-line loan requests from the library to the co-operative facility, and a courier service, I can't see why a 24 hour turn-around on the delivery of any material wouldn't be possible."

The Cost-Effectiveness of Alternative Library Storage Programs, by Richard Stayner and Valerie Richardson, is published by the Graduate School of Librarianship, Monash University.)
ECOPS' strength: legacy of a great scholar

THE DEBT of the faculty of Economics and Politics to its founder, Don Cochrane, is very great. His contribution to scholarship and the public interest has been acknowledged on many occasions, notably the conferment of the honorary Doctorate of Economics. What this faculty must acknowledge now is the scale of his achievement in establishing one of the significant faculties of Economics and Politics in Australia.

Don Cochrane was appointed Professor of Economics at Monash on March 1, 1961, and Foundation Dean of the faculty of Economics and Politics shortly after.

The air was charged with high promise and excitement. Don Cochrane made it plain from the outset that the pace of growth was to be fast, with little or no room for hesitation. Superbly self-confident, difficulties were swept aside with the greatest ease. The faculty was superbly excellent and the resources were plentiful. The energy that Don Cochrane released was immense. He was totally in control of the endeavour. He was economic of speech. He rarely raised his voice. His arguments were always coherent and convincing. He promoted his belief in the great possibility of the faculty, and his enthusiasm and drive were felt by all those who were gathered into the adventure of Monash.

Under his style of leadership, the faculty grew at a pace that no other faculty in Australia has ever known. It was incredible; and overseas visitors who came to Monash marvelled at the achievement.

The founding team that began the journey with Don Cochrane was four people — one professor and three lecturers. The curricula diet consisted of three subjects and the first intake was 54 students.

Within the space of the first 10 years the number of introductory courses had grown to 12, lecturers 121, the student number from 58 to 2000, and the number of courses was the new. Its target was established and the first MAs and PhDs had begun their way.

By 1981, the year in which Don Cochrane retired, 25 professors and 127 lecturers had been appointed, 4510 Bachelors of Economics, 474 degrees with Honours, 136 Masters of Economics, 322 Masters of Administration, and 22 PhDs had been conferred.

To say the very least, it was a notable achievement on the part of the whole faculty; chaired, watched over, counselled, managed, controlled and encouraged by Don Cochrane.

It was inevitable that a community of scholars that had grown with this speed would generate a vast range of feelings — of pleasure, of stress, of tension, of emotion, of hurt vanities, unrequited eyes, uncelebrated relationships, of conflict. This was a community of interesting humans, not only scholars and teachers.

Countless issues were debated about a vast number of things — the purpose of the degree, the proper weighting of different disciplines with the degree; how much of politics, how much of accountancy, how much of statistics, and in different parts of the curriculum.

Emotions often ran high. But through all these heady years of rapid growth when there was hardly time to look back to see what had been done, Donald Cochrane moved the faculty with a persuasive voice, calming the hostility of the disappointed, encouraging those who were frustrated by the heat of the development, reassuring those who entertained different visions of their disciplines that it was worthwhile. The faculty always felt secure in the strength of his hand, the integrity of his purpose, the clarity of his ideas, and the wisdom of his counsel.

No one had a deeper concern for the reputation of the faculty than he did. Whenever its reputation was attacked, he fought to defend it. Whatever his severest critics might have to say about his style of leadership, no one could conscientiously quarrel with his great sense of responsibility to the faculty and his concern for the welfare of its members.

No Dean was more convincing or insistent on the claims of the faculty to a fair share of the University resources. While other Deans might occasionally shout and storm at Board or Deans' meetings, Don Cochrane pursued the interests of the faculty with a quiet strength, composure, and single-mindedness. Indeed, many spoke openly of their envy that this faculty was so well represented by so skilled and so successful a Dean.

It may seem a paradox that a man of Don Cochrane's assertive and driving style would also have been responsible for developing a faculty of such liberality. Yet this is also Don Cochrane's achievement.

The Board of the faculty of Economics and Politics has always been a forum where those who wished to speak could do so to their heart's content. The sole inhibitions upon them were the opinions and attitudes of their fellow students. But barely Don Cochrane's chairmanship.

He presided at the meetings of the Board and its committees not as an autocrat but as a chairman. He set the breakfast table talking for the College and patient but confident primum who encouraged opinions from everyone. He never rushed to resolution, but neither did he refrain from entering the argument. He was a fair critic who entertained even the toughest of comments with a great deal of humor. The faculty has a tradition of intellectual openness and it owes much to the liberality of its first Dean.

As the great Robert Burton author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy" observed, all men are mixtures of many humours; no man is one thing. Don Cochrane was a scholar and a man of many parts. A few knew him well; some knew him moderately well, some hardly knew him at all, and no one knew all of him.

He was just Dean, a strong Dean, an ambitious Dean, a responsible Dean, and a humane Dean. Clifton Pugh's portrait of him captures him in a way that hardly any of his colleagues knew.

He did he refrain from entering the argument. He was a just Dean, a strong Dean, an ambitious Dean, a responsible Dean, and a humane Dean. Clifton Pugh's portrait of him captures him in a way that hardly any of his colleagues knew.

While but many things will stand as a testament for Don Cochrane — the man — the scale of his achievement in establishing a faculty of such envious reputation as it has in 20 years, is his greatest testament.

Applications close on September 30 for 1983 Calyx Woman Graduate Scholarships.

This year, in addition to six State scholarships, a national scholarship worth $40,000 over two years is being offered for the first time.

The scholarships are open for competition among women (who are Australian citizens or have resided here for seven years) who are completing a degree or postgraduate diploma in an Australian tertiary institution this year. A selection committee in each State will award a scholarship valued at $5000. The six winners will be candidates for the national scholarship for postgraduate study overseas. The national scholar will be expected to begin her studies not later than the northern hemisphere's 1985-86 academic year.

Selection of scholarship holders will be based on a combination of factors including: scholastic attainment, social awareness, achievements in other than the academic area — sport, community service, culture, or innovative enterprise, for example — sense of purpose, and potential for future influence on the Australian community.

Intending applicants should discuss their eligibility with the Academic Services Officer, Mrs Joan Dawson, ext. 3011, in the first instance.

Interested in incorporating Canadian studies into your teaching? The Canadian Government, together with the Australia-New Zealand Association for Canadian Studies, is offering aid in the form of an annual Canadian Studies Faculty Enrichment Awards program.

Awards are offered to members of academic staff (with a PhD) to undertake study and research relevant to Canada.

Applications for 1984 must be with the Canadian High Commission in Canberra by the end of September.

The Information Office is holding for perusal a leaflet outlining details of the awards.

SEPTEMBER, 1983
The Play (An excerpt from the program)

"Equus is based upon an incident told to Shaffer by a friend: the blinding of six horses by a seventeen year old boy. The boy's arrival in hospital provokes the old boy. The boy's arrival in hospital provokes his reaction, and the drama begins."

TO REFLECT upon a play in production, one recalls moments both good and bad; therefore we must look to the elements that constitute the whole, to see if, indeed, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We must look to the direction which, among other things, embraces set design and the measure of the work as executed by the cast and stage crew.

It is in the direction where the framework is determined, where conventions are tried, tested and then fixed if they prove appropriate to the need. The essential quality inherent in 'convention' is that once it is determined it must remain constant. Even if a director wishes to establish conventions within performance in order to break them down, this must seem to be a conscious decision and remain constant.

In this production nudity is used as a means of dramatically strengthening the final climax. However, the script calls for nudity at the climax of Act One: for some reason the actor mimed taking off his clothes. This lack of clarity in establishing the 'rules' which govern the performance persisted throughout. Actors mimed the use of props and then used real props. Such mimicry of a performance style. Stanislavsky argued that what is a performance style. Stanislavsky argued that what cannot be projected by the actors does not belong on stage.

The end of Act One had the actor playing Nugent (the physical embodiment of Equus) lean over "mid-illusion" and pluck from a cranny in the stage floor a hinged pole to lean on. This enabled him to support the actor raving and ranting on his back.

If an actor portrays a horse on stage, his immediate work is to weave a sustained illusion. When he leans out of the image, as a man, to make certain adjustments to his physical situation, he is asking the audience to suspend mid-moment their trust in what is happening on stage.

Another primary function of the director is to unite the set design functionally with the development of lines of action to delineate space. Add to this light and an impression of time passing is created.

In this production, the blending of 'present' action and action recalled was not clear as the use of light did not make the bridge in time apparent. This function of light was made more difficult by the design of the set. It was constructed out of raw pine giving it a clear line and lending an earthly warm tone to the space. The set's function only made full sense at the climax of the play when the horses surrounded it and we experienced 'stable'.

It had been a simple structure linking the floor to the ceiling that aesthetically "closed" the space but which functionally served only as hat racks for the skeletal horse-head masks. These structures lent nothing to the atmosphere created by the action, only imposing height which served to draw the eye over and beyond the action.

As a static design which did not alter its shape, the set worked against the script. When the plot moved from the Stable to the private world of Dr. Dysart, the audience was asked to make the leap without adequate assistance. In all fairness to the production this difficulty is perhaps inherent in Shaffer's script.

Although much of the play works on a naturalistic level, the script also requires the cast to use non-naturalistic modes of performance to express inner conflict and emotion. Rarely did the cast come to grips with the expression of emotion that could at the same time touch and unite an audience in a common experience.

Each member of the cast showed evidence of hard work, but the levels of performance were very uneven. It is not possible to do justice to each actor; rather each appeared to be working from very different premises. It was unclear who was on stage. Was it, as Plato argued, an actor imitating another being, or narrating another being's story? Or were actors playing out ideas of what makes up the character? Was the work based on the method of slipping on cunningly-contrived masks? In this production we seemed to be given not solutions to these questions but situations where actors were still grappling with it.

Unless a common understanding of text and process permeates the work it is very difficult to be true to the original theatre. If we as an audience cannot give of ourselves and trust what is happening on stage, we can often find ourselves being taken for a ride.

The Monash English Department in the Union Theatre. Director: Andrew Enstice.

In Review

Equus, by Peter Shaffer. Performed by Monash English Department in the Union Theatre. Director: Andrew Enstice.

The atmosphere created by the action, only imposing height which served to draw the eye over and beyond the action. As a static design which did not alter its shape, the set worked against the script. When the plot moved from the Stable to the private world of Dr. Dysart, the audience was asked to make the leap without adequate assistance. In all fairness to the production this difficulty is perhaps inherent in Shaffer's script. Although much of the play works on a naturalistic level, the script also requires the cast to use non-naturalistic modes of performance to express inner conflict and emotion. Rarely did the cast come to grips with the expression of emotion that could at the same time touch and unite an audience in a common experience.

Each member of the cast showed evidence of hard work, but the levels of performance were very uneven. It is not possible to do justice to each actor; rather each appeared to be working from very different premises. It was unclear who was on stage. Was it, as Plato argued, an actor imitating another being, or narrating another being's story? Or were actors playing out ideas of what makes up the character? Was the work based on the method of slipping on cunningly-contrived masks? In this production we seemed to be given not solutions to these questions but situations where actors were still grappling with it.

Unless a common understanding of text and process permeates the work it is very difficult to be true to the original theatre. If we as an audience cannot give of ourselves and trust what is happening on stage, we can often find ourselves being taken for a ride.
The ethos of Australia is the background to this play. All sensitive Australians longing for a national culture of their own will despair that the mystique, the beauty and reverence of the Aboriginal culture that "The Dreamers" brings to us, may soon fade entirely into the past and be lost to Australia, the world and Aboriginal Australians before they too have had a chance to share in its experience.

In dramatic visual and aural portrayal, the contrast of the world in which Aborigines find themselves today and that in which they played a complete and integral part presents the audience with a disturbing reality.

The strength of the play lies in the actors’ abilities to convey the humour, the tenderness and the calm acceptance of adversity in the Australian world.

Every Aboriginal in the audience last night recognised a part of him or herself in the play and, at the same time, felt both movement and despair.

Non-Aborigines to a realisation that although Aborigines lived in the European world, they were in fact people of two worlds — that assimilation had begun but had not been completed. "The Dreamers" is a play for all Australians — an education and an experience and a must for all those non-Aborigines who would seek to understand the indigenous people of this land.

Eve Foskett
Director
Aboriginal Research Centre