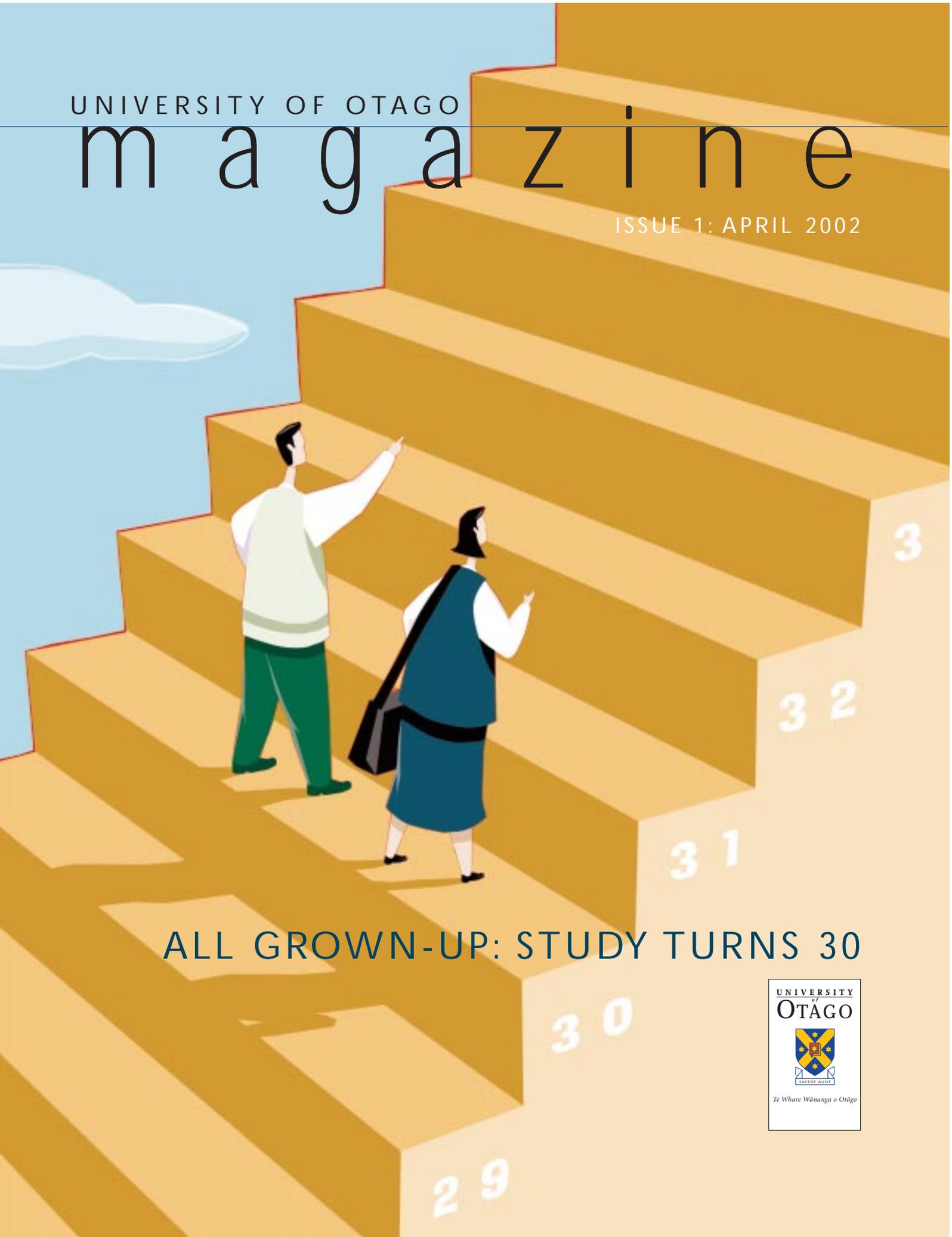


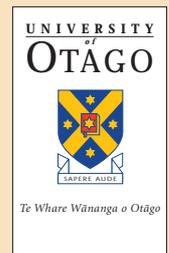
UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

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ISSUE 1: APRIL 2002



ALL GROWN-UP: STUDY TURNS 30



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University of Otago Magazine
Issue 1
April 2002
ISSN - 1175-8147

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Submissions
Contributed articles and letters should be addressed to:
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Communications Division of the University.
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VC's COMMENT

It gives me great pleasure to launch the University of Otago Magazine for alumni and friends of the University. The new magazine replaces the former Otago Graduate, which was produced annually and distributed to graduates. Because of our desire to have more frequent contact with alumni and friends of the University, the magazine will be sent three times a year.

The wider distribution of the new magazine is in direct response to the University's recognition of the many important relationships the University has, not only with its graduates and staff, but with all alumni and friends of Otago both in New Zealand and throughout the world. Traditionally, the University of Otago has drawn students from every part of New Zealand, and that tradition continues today with 70 per cent of all undergraduate students coming from outside the Otago region and 1200 from outside New Zealand.

For thousands of undergraduates, Otago becomes a home away from home. With its unique student lifestyle it's not surprising that so many alumni refer to their time at Otago as some of the best years of their lives. When I attend alumni functions both in New Zealand and other parts of the world, I am always impressed with the extreme fondness with which alumni of all ages and nationalities remember the University and the pride they take in Otago's academic and research achievements.

Historically, it has taken a global network to keep in touch with Otago alumni as they have always been characterised by their mobility: at last count 68,000 graduates were spread throughout 110 countries. Otago's escalating commitment to internationalisation, witnessed by exchange agreements with 90 overseas institutions in 30 different countries, has contributed to the need to broaden "alumni" to include not only graduates but also Study Abroad and Exchange students, whose taste of the "Otago Experience" has left them with a strong sense of belonging to the Otago fraternity.

The University of Otago Magazine will acknowledge its wide readership by catering for a broad cross section of interests by including a mix of research, opinion, profiles and features. I look forward to contributing to each issue and warmly invite you to communicate your thoughts and suggestions to the magazine's editor (mag.ed@otago.ac.nz) to help shape the development of what is, in essence, your magazine.



Dr Graeme Fogelberg
Vice-Chancellor
University of Otago

RESEARCHSNIPPETS

HEAVY CANNABIS USE LINKED TO MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS



Cannabis use at a young age increases risk of mental health problems later in life.

The long-running Christchurch Health and Development Study (CHDS) has found links between heavy use of cannabis and the development of mental health problems in young people.

The longitudinal study of 1265 children born in 1977 has produced a range of findings during the past 21 years – the latest being a study into how cannabis use affects mental health in young people.

The study by Professor David Fergusson from Otago University's Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences focuses on cannabis use after the age of 14. It investigates links to depression, psychotic symptoms, suicidal behaviours, crime and use of other drugs.

Fergusson says his analysis of CHDS participants shows that heavy and regular use of cannabis (at least once a week) increases the risk of negative mental health outcomes.

"Young people who are heavy cannabis users manifest increased rates of property and violent crime, suicide attempts and thoughts, depression and use of other illicit drugs."

In addition, those who developed cannabis dependence had increased risks of psychotic symptoms. These associations persisted even after statistical control for family and other factors. Interestingly, negative mental health outcomes are even greater among heavy users under the age of 16.

However, Fergusson says his research indicates that occasional recreational users of cannabis do not have the same problems as heavy users, which raises complex issues regarding the legal status of the drug.

The CHDS research has already shown more than two thirds of young people have used marijuana at least once by the age of 21, while 10% can be defined as heavy users.

Fergusson says these findings were recently corroborated in a study conducted by the Centre for Adolescence at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

He expects to publish his full results in the British journal *Addiction* later in the year.

LIGHT-EMITTING DEVICES COULD PROVIDE ENERGY SAVINGS



Dr Keith Gordon believes today's computer screens will be obsolete within 10 years if his team's research is successfully adopted commercially.

Research into light-emitting devices (LEDs) by Otago's Department of Chemistry could revolutionise the computer industry and drastically reduce future power consumption.

Senior lecturer Dr Keith Gordon is head of the team developing the innovative LEDs. He says the devices could be used to replace existing computer and television screens within the next decade – meaning huge changes for both industries.

Produced from innovative metal complex polymers, the devices require only a few volts of power to emit as brightly as a conventional computer screen. They give off little or no heat and can be made so thin that Gordon predicts computer screens as we know them could be obsolete in 10 years.

"In fact, people may be able to use a whole wall, or screen, in their work cubicle as their computer screen instead of a box in front of them. Currently, computer screens take up room and use a lot of power. These devices could drastically reduce the size and amount of energy used by computers."

Corporations like Sanyo and Kodak are researching LEDs similar to those under development at Otago, but Gordon says his team is concentrating on producing clear materials that emit primary colours – something that has so far proved elusive.

Christchurch-based company Screensign Arts is assisting the university with advice on the potential commercial application, cost effectiveness and marketability of the devices. As an exporter of high quality electroluminescent products, it is also working with the Department of Chemistry to solve one of its commercial dilemmas – the fading of coloured signs in sunlight.

A solution for Screensign is expected within the next year. The work is funded by a New Economic Research Fund grant.

MYSTERY AROUND ANCIENT FOOD SOURCE DISPELLED



Anthropology researcher Professor Helen Leach has long been intrigued by bracken fern root and its role in pre-European New Zealand.

Bracken fern root is regarded as an agricultural pest, responsible for rapid tooth decay and potentially toxic. So why it was consumed in large quantities as a food source by Māori in pre-European New Zealand has remained a compelling mystery to anthropologists for years.

It is a subject which has fascinated Otago Anthropology researcher Professor Helen Leach since she was a masters student almost 30 years ago.

In 2000, Leach and co-investigator and palynologist Matt McGlone set up a three-year Marsden grant to study the use of fern root in early New Zealand and potentially dispel some of the myths surrounding this ancient practice.

"The European perception of fern root, that it was something you only ate when there was nothing better, was probably wrong."

Leach says more in depth research suggests that, due to its high starch content, the plant was actually a vital seasonal stop-gap crop for Māori, as well as the traveller's food of choice.

"Imagine you have to walk from Kaikoura to Banks Peninsula and there is no wheat in the country. You have a choice between carrying kumara or fern root. Kumara were too heavy for long distance travel, and the fern root could be preserved for months, if not years."

While contributing to a broader understanding of early Māori society, the project also incorporates Leach's life-long interest in plants. She is well-known for writing *Cultivating Myths* and a number of best-selling books on cooking and gardening, such as *The Cook's Garden* with her sisters.

So will fern root be making an appearance in any future cookbooks?

Probably not. Having tried the plant only once, she describes it as very bland.

"Whether the fern root was actually enjoyed is something we can't put our finger on today. But there's evidence that it was."

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS UNDER SPOTLIGHT



Researcher Jo Kirkwood digs deep for the answers to why women pursue an entrepreneurial pathway.

Curiosity about what makes women in New Zealand go it alone in business has led Otago School of Business researcher Jo Kirkwood to Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin in search of the female entrepreneur.

Although there are fewer women founding and running their own business, compared to men, numbers are on the rise. The researcher hopes to complete her thesis in two years.

Graduating from Otago University in 1997 with a BCom (honours) and a Masters degree, Kirkwood worked as a policy advisor with the Ministry of Commerce. While there, she established a strong interest in women in business.

"There seemed to be very little research on the motivations of women entrepreneurs in New Zealand."

So when she returned to Otago University as a lecturer in operations management at the School of Business while working part-time on a PhD, it was the perfect opportunity to research a subject that fascinated her.

Kirkwood conducted a mail survey, receiving responses from more than 300 entrepreneurs.

Results show women tend to be in the service industry, and have smaller businesses in terms of sales. They employ fewer full-time employees than men, and hold lower educational qualifications.

Contrary to the image of entrepreneurs as wealthy, 42% of those in jobs prior to starting their business were now earning less as entrepreneurs.

So why do women become entrepreneurs if they can often earn more as paid employees?

After interviews with 20 men and 20 women, Kirkwood believes we may need to reconsider our beliefs that people become entrepreneurs because of the "dream" or the life-style factor. Reasons like redundancy and dissatisfaction with their employment or employer loomed larger in their decision-making process. And they liked the flexibility it offered of being able to better juggle home and child-care commitments.

Kirkwood hopes the results can help identify what assistance is required to boost entrepreneurial success.

GARLIC MAY WARD OFF MORE THAN SUPERSTITIONS



Dr Michael Williams says the antioxidant properties of garlic may reduce your chances of developing coronary heart disease.

Eating garlic may improve the health of your arteries and lower your risk of coronary heart disease.

This theory is being tested by researchers Dr Michael Williams and Dr Wayne Sutherland from Otago's Dunedin School of Medicine. The idea of using garlic as a possible therapeutic agent arose following a series of experiments looking at the potential protective properties of various dietary components (such as Vitamin C and red and white wine) on the function of cells lining the arteries – the endothelial cells.

Measuring endothelial function can be done by a simple, non-invasive method. It involves comparing the blood vessels' ability to dilate in response to increased blood flow and is used as a surrogate measure of cardiovascular health.

"Often the earliest sign of coronary artery disease in a person, even before any pain is experienced, is endothelial dysfunction," says Williams.

"Young people with high cholesterol, smokers, and people at risk of cardiac events all show impaired endothelial function."

Healthy endothelial cells protect against arterial disease in several ways. They produce nitric oxide, considered a 'good' radical, causing blood vessels to dilate and maintaining normal flow. Nitric oxide also prevents many of the steps leading to the formation of arteriosclerotic plaques or blockages in the arteries.

"When endothelial cells are damaged nitric oxide production is impaired or its effects are inactivated."

Dysfunctional endothelial cells can also have a lowered ability to prevent adhesion of blood platelets and white cells on the surface of the vessel - another risk factor in plaque formation.

Where does garlic fit into the equation? The anti-oxidant properties of garlic may protect the endothelial cells from this damage and decrease the oxidation of low-density lipoprotein, which is another risk factor in plaque formation.

A small-scale, double-blind trial with Dunedin coronary patients is underway, using a tasteless, odourless extract of garlic and a placebo.

INFLUENCE OF PARENTS AND MEDIA REINFORCED



Otago researchers (from left) Dr Karen Nairn, Dr Ruth Panelli and Nicola Atwool reinforce the importance of parental attitudes on teenagers.

How are young people perceived by the wider community?

This question was researched by Dr Ruth Panelli from the Department of Geography in collaboration with Dr Karen Nairn from the Children's Issues Centre and Nicola Atwool of Community and Family Studies. The team looked into parental views and media depiction of young people in rural and urban settings using a 2001 Division of Humanities grant.

It followed a previous study where young people described their own contrasting experiences between life in rural and urban settings.

"In doing that research, we realised that popular opinion and parents were influential dimensions of this experience and so decided to investigate local print media and parent opinions to deepen our understanding," Panelli says.

Parents associated with high schools in Dunedin and Alexandra were interviewed, while print media items addressing or including young people were analysed for a year.

The media study demonstrated that positive constructions of youth dominated Alexandra newspapers, in stark contrast to Dunedin's *Otago Daily Times*, where only 44% of articles were coded positive.

Panelli was impressed by the Alexandra study's outcome.

"It was a positive contrast to other academic research which has reported the 'pessimistic and biased' reportage that is often common in wider media."

Interviews with local parents also uncovered some surprising truths.

"It was ironic for both the researchers and the parents to discover that the parents reported having a freer and less restricted youth than they were shaping for their own children."

The key findings of the research included parental recognition and support of the diversity of young people and their experiences.

Community reports are circulating results and there has already been increased interest and awareness among local government, schools and the media in the experiences and opinions of young people.

RESEARCHSNIPPETS

GOOD-OLD SPIT COULD PROVIDE ANSWERS



Microbiologist Dr Geoffrey Tompkins (left) and student Mehdi Rahimi are doing what they can to link suspects to assault cases using an unlikely avenue - saliva.

When it comes to catching bad guys, skin is not a great surface from which to take dental impressions.

It's a problem being tackled by School of Dentistry scientists when trying to link suspects to bite-marks left on victims in assault cases – cases which often involve sexual abuse or rape.

Researcher Dr Geoffrey Tompkins and his award-winning undergraduate students Mehdi Rahimi and Luke Borgula are investigating a molecular means of circumventing this problem.

Conventionally, photos of the bite-mark are matched to a plaster impression of a suspect's teeth in a subjective and difficult process.

Another option is identifying a suspect's DNA in the bite, but this is difficult as saliva contains enzymes that degrade it very quickly. However, DNA within a bacterium is naturally protected. Thousands of oral bacteria, especially streptococci, are deposited on the skin with every bite mark.

"The common streptococci found in the mouth are genotypically incredibly diverse," says Tompkins.

Taxonomists routinely use a DNA amplification technique, called PCR (polymerase chain reaction), to identify different strains or genotypes of bacteria by identifying similar patterns of DNA on a gel.

This does not work for the oral streptococci because of the diversity. "Look at 70 different oral streptococcus isolates and you will get 70 different patterns," says Tompkins.

This fact should make it easier to match an individual to the bacteria they leave behind when they bite someone.

The early work involved seeing how well the bacteria could be recovered from skin after time and under different conditions, such as sweating, wiping, showering, etc. It showed that good samples can be taken 24 hours after the event if undisturbed. They then proceeded to assemble a small database of isolates (160 from 10 people) before using blind trials to see if subjects could be identified from the sample using the database.

Rahimi was responsible for the work and found he could match the samples.

A PINCH AND A PUNCH IN THE OFFICE



Otago PhD student Bevan Catley is challenging the traditional definition of workplace violence.

Is workplace violence really the mass homicide or murderous assault we learn about through the media?

Considering this question has led Department of Management PhD student Bevan Catley to grapple with what some say is the issue that worries companies most.

Catley's research – an examination of what counts as violence in the workplace – identifies other ways of thinking about the issue that are more subtle than high-profile machine-gun massacres.

"While much has been written about it, there seems to be little serious consideration of what violence in the workplace actually is."

He believes many empirical studies to date have been based on a "common sense" understanding of violence that does not reflect how contested the concept really is.

His research offers four ways of representing violence: a physical act; a speech act, such as verbal abuse; it could be built in to society's structures physically, such as a police officer's legitimate use of the baton; or it could be structurally symbolic, such as favouring one class or culture's values over another.

"What my research attempts to do is steer a course between labelling violence as only one thing and viewing violence as everything," he says.

"Deciding on what violence is will have implications for considering the context in which violence is experienced, tolerated or rejected by members of society."

Catley's passion for the sociological and philosophical side of management was acquired after completing a Physical Education degree at Otago. He furthered his interest in the topic by joining the Department of Management.

"Otago has an excellent reputation for providing opportunities to think about cutting edge philosophies in management. It's all part of a burgeoning topic area called critical management studies," he says.

Catley hopes his research will better inform debate and help in the formulation of policies surrounding workplace violence.

WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN REALLY EATING?



Human nutrition expert Winsome Parnell is working with a team of researchers from Otago, Auckland and Massey to study what New Zealand's young people are eating.

New Zealand's first national children's nutrition survey, funded by the Ministry of Health, is underway with Otago chosen as one of three universities heading the research.

Life In New Zealand (LINZ®) Activity and Health Research Unit staff are collaborating with the University of Auckland and Massey University (Palmerston North) colleagues to find out what five to 14-year-olds are eating and how their diet relates to aspects of their health status. Survey results will be used to help plan future health and health education strategies for all New Zealanders.

Otago human nutrition researcher Winsome Parnell says the University's LINZ-designed Data Capture programme is a significant tool for researchers involved.

The programme uses a list of preset probes to obtain detailed information about children's food intake. During the study, children relate what they have eaten over a 24-hour period. If a child says he had milk on his cereal, this information is punched into the computer. It prompts the interviewer to ask a set of specific questions, for example: what type of milk was used and how much?

The programme eliminates the risk interviewers will forget to seek specific information, and ensures the same questions are asked across the country.

More than 3000 children from 160 randomly-selected primary, intermediate and secondary schools are providing information about their food intake, level of physical activity and dental care.

Food data are normally collected at home with input from children and parents while physiological information, including weight and height, is obtained at school. Urine and blood samples are also taken, providing essential data about our children's iodine, iron, zinc and cholesterol levels.

Study results are expected late next year.

NEW ZEALAND'S TOBACCO INDUSTRY TAKEN TO TASK



Otago researcher George Thomson says the wider public needs to be aware of the health risks of smoking and he hopes his monograph will contribute to that knowledge.

Thousands of tobacco industry documents made available during United States court hearings have been the focus of recent University of Otago research into New Zealand tobacco companies.

After searching some of the vast array of material being released on the internet, Dr Nick Wilson and George Thomson from the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences have concluded that the tobacco industry in New Zealand has consistently failed to warn people about the health risks from tobacco products.

The two researchers, who have been carrying out tobacco investigations since the mid 1990s, have summarised their findings in a monograph, *The Tobacco Industry in New Zealand: A Case Study of the Behaviour of Multinational Companies*.

The authors highlight a range of tobacco industry activities which they describe as irresponsible. The industry has continually reassured people that the risks from second-hand smoke are not real but internal documents show the international parent companies were well aware of the risks, they say.

The Tobacco Institute also made a submission to a parliamentary select committee in 1990 stating there was no scientific proof that any constituents in tobacco caused harm or disease to humans. However, the monograph points out an internal document dating back to 1989 that reveals advisors to the New Zealand industry described these claims as hollow.

It is the first time a substantial body of these documents relating to New Zealand has been published by researchers.

Thomson says these documents may appear to be of historical interest but in fact the new data are one of the most important information sources for public health to emerge in 50 years. The University of Otago is well placed to evaluate this new data and make it accessible to the wider community and Government, he says.

The researchers believe their report highlights the need for tighter government control of the tobacco industry and serious investment in tobacco control activities.

MĀORI MEN ENCOURAGED TO SEEK TREATMENT EARLIER



Researchers Paul Williams and Marion Gray spoke in depth to Māori men to investigate their understanding of prostate disease.

Embarrassment about discussing intimate body parts is preventing many Māori men from seeking treatment for prostate disease, say University of Otago researchers carrying out a major New Zealand prostate study.

The investigation by the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences and Otago's School of Māori Studies has also found men have a very limited understanding about prostate disease.

The study is part of a major four-year investigation into prostate disease and prostate cancer in New Zealand, with researchers trying to establish whether diet and lifestyle contribute to this country's high prostate cancer rate.

Research coordinator Marion Gray says the investigation will also try to refine the PSA (Serum Prostate Specific Antigen) blood test for diagnosing prostate cancer in New Zealand men. Overseas research has shown men from various ethnic groups have different PSA levels and the research team is looking at differences between Māori, Pacific Island and Pakeha men.

To carry out the study, Māori researcher Paul Williams interviewed in depth 15 Māori men selected from 1600 participants who took part in a larger study. Focus groups were also interviewed.

Williams says there is a special interest in Māori men because prostate cancer is one of the leading cancers afflicting them.

"The death rate for Māori men is about 30 percent higher than for non-Māori men and there is also data showing a significant number of Māori men are not being treated for enlarged prostate."

Interviews with men taking part in the study show many Māori men feel uncomfortable or shamed about discussing intimate personal problems with their doctors. However, the research team already has some ideas to try and overcome these problems.

Gray says many Māori men who identified as non-Māori speakers used Māori words to identify body parts and health issues, and it may be important for educational material to include Māori terms.

Men also had little understanding of prostate disease and thought symptoms, such as getting up repeatedly at night to urinate, were a natural part of ageing. Most men recruited for the study had symptoms but had not seen a doctor.

Gray says a positive spin-off was that more than 100 men in the larger study received treatment and can now lead more normal lives.

RESEARCHER REJECTS LONG-HELD VIEWS ON CHILDREN



Otago researcher Judith Sligo says children are "competent, thoughtful and mature research participants" contrary to what many others think.

The concept of success is something adults consider at certain times during their life, but what is "success" through the eyes of children?

University of Otago researcher Judith Sligo's prize-winning Masters project looked at children's own understandings about success. It also investigated the research methodology surrounding children's research and the potential for children to participate effectively in research. Historically, much research about children was, and is, done by asking their parents or teachers - children's views have not really been trusted.

"I suggested that parents' and teachers' realities/understandings sometimes don't coincide with those of the children which is why I worked directly with children to investigate their understandings."

Sligo's work earned her the Rae Munro award for excellence in an education-based Masters thesis, granted by the New Zealand Association for Research in Education.

Under the supervision of Professor Keith Ballard and Dr Karen Nairn, Sligo asked 22 Dunedin primary school children from a decile 10 school about success. The children were aged seven to nine and the research was participatory.

"The children made some choices about the ways in which they provided data. This meant there were multiple methods of data collection, including interviews, written work, drawing, painting, drama and puppet shows."

Sligo found the children were competent, thoughtful and mature research participants with complex understandings about their successes. Most of the children felt more successful in their out-of-school pursuits than they did at school.

There were gender differences in the areas where children felt successful.

"Boys generally felt successful with sporting achievements and girls often identified art and reading as their area of success. However, it varied with individuals."

The children had different ways of knowing they were successful, including internal feelings of pride and external feedback in the form of praise or rewards.

"They were also influenced by their peer groups. Children with close friendship groups often understood success in similar ways and felt successful in similar areas."

FEATURE



Dunedin Multidisciplinary Study director Richie Poulton with just some of the 800-plus publications arising from the 30-year-old study.



OTAGO STUDY STILL WORLD LEADER 30 YEARS ON

THIS YEAR, THE DUNEDIN MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDY CELEBRATES A MAJOR MILESTONE IN ITS ILLUSTRIOUS LIFE - ITS 30TH BIRTHDAY. THAT MEANS 1000 DUNEDIN-BORN MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN PART OF THE STUDY SINCE THEIR BIRTH AT QUEEN MARY MATERNITY HOSPITAL DURING 1972-73 HAVE ALSO MADE IT TO 30.

FOR THE PAST THREE DECADES, EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN TRACKED - THEIR PHYSICAL GROWTH, THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL GROWTH, how they negotiated the hurdles life throws up, why they sometimes failed to negotiate them, and what health problems they had. And those are just some of the measurements made.

Study Director Dr Richie Poulton says the wealth of information these people have gifted to the developed world cannot be overstated. Researchers working on the Health Research Council-funded study have now produced more than 800 papers impacting on the provision of education, health services and on the creation of social policy here and overseas.

Council Executive Director Dr Bruce Scoggins says the internationally-renowned Dunedin study might just be "the richest archive the world has on human development".

International recognition and respect for the Dunedin study is high and continues to grow. The researchers are regularly asked to consult with academics, institutions and governments in several overseas countries including Australia, Thailand, the Netherlands, France, Mauritius, United States, England, Scotland, Canada and Germany.

A new book, *Looking at Lives: American Longitudinal Studies of the 20th Century*, summarises important longitudinal studies and focuses on American studies only. However, the introduction notes a handful of other studies conducted throughout the world: the Dunedin study is the only one mentioned outside of Europe.

United States and United Kingdom funding bodies are now investing heavily in the Dunedin longitudinal research programme – a testament to the premium placed on the value of the research emanating from Otago.

Today, parents everywhere are raising their children with knowledge that originated from the Dunedin study: they know that the first three years of their lives is the most critical formative period in terms of brain development; and that love and affection are vitally important to brain growth.

Then there are the safety standards for children's night-wear, playgrounds, hot water temperatures and cycle helmets that the study seeded.

Undoubtedly, the Dunedin study has helped save precious young lives.

Most recently, research on criminal offending and anti-social behaviour has discovered two groups of offenders - those that will offend throughout their lives and those that will only do so during their teenage years. This has major implications for how offenders are dealt with and is already having an impact in countries like the United States and Britain (see story on this page).

Poulton believes the strength of the study's original design is what makes it unique. That is, the frequent follow-up assessments every few years, its multidisciplinary approach to looking at the physical, psychological and social aspects of the participants' lives, and the face-to-face assessments.

Although costly and time consuming, study members are flown in from wherever they live around the world.

"All of these factors combined leave us with a basis for a far more comprehensive and holistic view of human development than any other study can provide," he says.

Housed in a small building behind the University's School of Dentistry, the researchers have also maintained an extraordinarily high participation rate - making results all the more compelling.

In 1972, 1037 babies were enrolled in the study. After 26 years, 18 of these had died, with 1019 left available for testing. Of these, a staggering 96% (980) turned up for their most recent assessment in 1998-99.

Says Poulton: "When you're trying to find out causes of things, illnesses and social conditions you need to keep everyone you started with.

"The people that tend to drop out are the ones with more emotional difficulties or physical health problems or socio-economic problems. These are people we're very interested in seeing. So we need to work hard to keep everyone involved."

Poulton worked briefly as an investigator on the project during his Masters in clinical psychology at Otago University in 1986. He went overseas, completing his PhD in Australia, returning in 1995 to take up the deputy directorship of the study, under founding director Dr Phil Silva. Now as its director, he believes he has the best job in the world for someone with his qualifications and interests.

STUDY IDENTIFIES RISK FACTORS TO CRIME

Neuro-biological risk factors have been identified in young males engaged in crime, according to landmark findings in a recently-published book on the Dunedin multidisciplinary study.

These risk factors include difficult temperament before age three, poor early language skills, poor memory, attention deficit, hyperactivity, slow heart rate and impulsive self-control problems.

Later in life, as young men, they are likely to spend time in prison, unemployed and with drug and alcohol addictions.

Sex Differences in Antisocial Behaviour, by Terrie Moffitt, Avshalom Caspi, Michael Rutter and Phil Silva (published by Cambridge University Press) examines delinquency and violence in 1000 Dunedin longitudinal study members aged between three and 21 years.

The research builds on work carried out in the 1990s where the Dunedin study found proof that antisocial acts are committed by two very different groups of people: those that remain offenders all their lives and a larger group that only offend during their teenage years, mostly reforming when they become adults with jobs and friends.

Legal scholars in the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands used these findings to argue for reforming their juvenile justice systems, noting that "adolescence-limited" offenders should be diverted to avoid a damaging criminal record, whereas potentially life-long offenders should be treated with strong rehabilitative measures.

The new book goes further and pin-points what influences girls: that they could be just as delinquent as boys, but only in certain

circumstances - in early puberty at around 14 to 15 years of age, when they took drugs and alcohol, and when they were sexually active with male offenders.

In contrast to delinquent boys, delinquent girls experienced different outcomes later in life, such as serious clinical depression, poor health and relationship problems.

When involved intimately with an antisocial partner, the female delinquent engaged in serious woman-to-man domestic abuse that was not explained by self-defence. These were couples whose abuse of each other had led to intervention by police, courts, therapists, doctors and hospitals. Yet, naively, women interviewed still believed that if they hit their partner he would not hit back. They were unaware of how their own hitting might increase their risk of injury during a quarrel.

Implications for the next generation were also examined. Delinquent women were highly likely to pair off with an offending partner who had a criminal record, left school early, was a poor reader and who abused them.

These young people accounted for three times their share of babies born to the 1000 study members by the time they turned 21 in 1993. However, the couples tended not to stay together long, leaving many of the babies to be raised by solo mothers.

The researchers hope their work will be used by policy makers in the development of pre-school programmes and in the formation of health, education and justice policies here and overseas.

No-one is more aware of the study's ageing process than Poulton. At 39, he was only nine years old when the study participants were born. It is his task to steer the team of some 40 permanent investigators (many Otago graduates) and a further 20 PhD and Masters students towards new phases of research as the study members get older.

"It is just as important to continue the study as it ever was. The issues and problems these people face in their more mature years are no less important as those they faced when they were babies, children, teenagers and young adults."

Over the next year alone, there will be research into the relationship between genetic and environmental factors, and how they interact to predispose people to conditions like hyperactivity, violence and alcoholism. The collection of DNA when the study members were 26 makes this possible.

A parenting study is also under-way looking at how the study members themselves nurture their own children.

"We want to work out what makes for better parenting and what makes for less-than-desirable parenting practices."

Poulton says longevity of the study will be determined by the ongoing usefulness of the results, and by how long study members continue and want to be part of it. Again, the importance of maintaining a high participation rate cannot be overstated.

This is why there is a tough policy towards sanctioning the media tracking down individual members. Essentially, he does not condone any attempts to find individuals involved.

"Why would you tell anyone about the most private aspects of your life unless you trusted them to keep your anonymity? What we studied are very sensitive issues, and unless our study members know we're going to follow through with the contract we have with them absolutely, then we jeopardise the future of our work."

The most recent mass assessment took place at age 26, incidentally shedding some light on the brain-drain debate. By then, 59% were living with a partner, 22% were parents and 21% owned homes. Between the ages of 18 and 26, 252 study members (26%) went to live overseas, with 55% of these men.

Of the 252 who went overseas, 63% had already returned to New Zealand to live or intended to return in the next five years, 18% weren't intending to return within the next five years and 18% were uncertain about their plans.

The most common reasons given for leaving New Zealand were to gain new experiences, to enjoy a better lifestyle and for better work opportunities and pay.

It is hoped that in another two years, at 32, they will once again make the trek from all over the world for their next eight-hour assessment. They will be asked about all aspects of their lives from what they eat, whether they suffer from health problems, to sex and even any criminal behaviour they may have been involved in.

As if that is not enough, they will have their blood pressure measured, fitness and lungs tested, teeth examined and blood taken.

So, the study lives on, with its highly important people protected and cherished for the knowledge they have given the world.

Study director Richie Poulton.



NATURE OR NURTURE – NO QUICK ANSWER

Recent research on Dunedin multidisciplinary study members' DNA is likely to raise eyebrows in the scientific world.

Study director Dr Richie Poulton and his team have studied genetic and environmental factors and their influence on behavioural or physical outcomes.

"There's a lot of talk about a gene for this and a gene for that. But human behaviour is much more complex and cannot be explained by one gene for each human trait," Poulton says.

Using DNA collected from multidisciplinary study members when they were 26, the research throws a different light, even debunks, some previously-held views on genotypes. One on periodontal (gum) disease shows that a particular genotype scientists thought was related to gum disease is not connected.

The researchers have tested another gene, thought to relate to hyperactivity in young people. The results, still to be published, will challenge established views on the subject.

The gene thought to predispose a person to violence is also under scrutiny. Poulton believes this study in particular will produce some fascinating findings later this year when published.

"The general outcome of these studies shows that you may have a genetic disposition towards something, but it won't happen unless certain environmental influences are also present," he says. Ask him whether it is nature or nurture that has helped create a certain behavioural trait and you will get a shake of the head.

"That idea of nature versus nurture is now redundant. From what we've seen so far from our research on genetics, it's not a case of nature or nurture - one or the other - it's a bit of both. It's a case of how much of nature, how much of nurture, and exactly when.

"If you don't have the environmental events but you do have a genetic predisposition, the condition or effect may still never occur. You might have a genetic predisposition towards cardio-vascular disease, for example, but if you don't have an unhealthy lifestyle, it may never manifest.

"Or, there may be a genetic predisposition towards violence, but you need certain environmental upbringing experiences at certain ages, in particular, for it to ever play out."

The strength of the multidisciplinary study's design makes it perfect for studying the human genotype.

The study yields strong phenotypes, again because of its high numbers, community representative sample and the fact that it is longitudinal and consistent measurements have been made at regular intervals throughout the lives of the study members.

FEATURE



*Rhodes Scholar and Otago graduate Susan Lamb
– international lawyer at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.*

GRADUATE FINDS WAY TO INTERNATIONAL COURTROOM

COMING FACE TO FACE WITH WAR CRIMINALS IS SOMETHING MOST NEW ZEALANDERS WILL HAVE THE GOOD FORTUNE NEVER TO EXPERIENCE. Yet for Susan Lamb, it's all part of the job.

The former Rhodes Scholar works as an international lawyer for the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at The Hague. A day at the office can involve anything from helping to draft the Prosecution pre-trial brief in the case against Slobodan Milosevic, to advising Serbian prosecutors on the peculiarities of prosecuting international criminals.

Thirty-three-year-old Lamb has worked at the ICTY in The Hague for the past four years. The Tribunal was established in 1993, by the United Nations Security Council as a response to the serious violations of international humanitarian law that occurred during the armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. She first worked at the Tribunal in 1997, for six months and, under UN rules of employment, Lamb was required to take a six-month break before accepting a permanent post.

It was during that break she began to see some of the horrors of war first-hand.

"In between times, I returned to my former post in Italy, where I took part in the 1998 Rome Conference, which led to the adoption of the treaty establishing a permanent International Criminal Court. I also worked with an ICTY investigative team of forensic pathologists and archaeologists in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was exhuming several of the mass graves in and around the eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica."

The mass graves that Lamb witnessed were the result of the mass-murder of 7500 men within four days of the capture of Srebrenica by Bosnian Serb (VRS) forces in July 1995. It constituted the largest single war crime in Europe since World War Two. Later prosecutions eventually saw the Corps Commander of the VRS forces responsible sentenced to 46 years imprisonment.

Lamb is strictly professional when it comes to dealing with such situations.

"The UN doesn't really have any mechanisms for handling psychological stress. The only pep talk I got before being deployed into the field was that 'if you're going to crack up, please try to last at least 12 hours...'. Apparently, my predecessor had taken one look inside the makeshift mortuary and ran out at the first sight and smell of the

decaying corpses, creating a personnel headache back in The Hague. The person sending me didn't want a repeat of this.

"My personal reaction? A mix of personal disgust and professional interest. How did I handle it? Exhumations and the autopsies which follow are conducted in an extremely structured and controlled manner. This makes it easy to focus just on the job at hand and get on with it. Any overly-emotional reaction in such a context would have been both conspicuous and, even if understandable on a human level, would have assisted neither the victims nor those trying to get a job done."

With new field experience and knowledge, Lamb returned to The Hague to take on the role of a legal advisor in international law with the Legal Advisory Section of the Office of the Prosecutor. Her job is an unusual hybrid of international law and criminal prosecution.

"We have jurisdiction over grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, violations of the laws and customs of war, genocide and crimes against humanity. However, our mandate is limited to individuals most responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law."

Lamb says this means the Office of the Prosecutor concentrates on prosecuting senior people involved, rather than, for example, political parties, illegal organisations or States.

"No individual has immunity from our jurisdiction by virtue of their official position, ensuring that a former Head of State, Slobodan Milosevic, and other senior political and military figures have all been the subject of our indictments for crimes committed while they were in office."

Lamb says the Milosevic trial has been different to others for many reasons.

"It has more media attention; it is bigger - involving crimes spanning eight years and three different sovereign states; and is the only case where the accused has chosen to represent himself, this being part and parcel of his purported refusal to recognise the legitimacy of the Tribunal. But otherwise, we strive to treat Milosevic as simply another defendant."

Lamb is heavily involved in prosecutorial strategy and the formulation of legal doctrine. Such a role means long days - up to 12 hours (and sometimes more) - of intensive and often frustrating work.

"The job requires a mixture of personal resilience and professional detachment," says Lamb.

"I stay sane fairly much like anyone else does - by switching off, reading a good book, going to the cinema, relaxing with friends, taking a vacation, etc. Some of the victim statements are disturbing but there is a world of difference between merely being the one to read this and process it within a legal setting as opposed to living through these events personally."

Although there is a relief in winning prosecutions against war criminals, Lamb says the result doesn't always satisfy everyone.

"There are usually quite emotional scenes from the accused's friends and family in the public gallery when a large sentence is handed down. That's never pleasant. There's also often a sense that you can't win. For instance, we were able to secure a conviction of 28 years for Kunarac, the most senior military officer charged in the Foca rape camp indictment, which was regarded in-house as a phenomenal result. However, many victim groups denounced the sentence as grossly inadequate to convey the true magnitude of the suffering. And in a sense they are right."

It's fair to say that Lamb has grown into the position. It was not one she envisaged as a youngster growing up on her parents' orchard in Roxburgh, dreaming of being an Olympic equestrian. In those days, law didn't enter the equation, even when she lost the desire to win gold. Instead, she decided she'd like to be a journalist, which then became a veterinarian, and then a diplomat.

Lamb didn't think terribly hard about attending the University of Otago - it just seemed to be the thing to do.

But, once there, she knew she couldn't have made a better choice. "Studying at Otago set me in good stead," she says. "It fostered intellectual curiosity, self-motivation, and a high tolerance toward cold climates!"

Despite her childhood aspirations, Lamb soon decided law was the direction she wanted to go in. And she was prepared to work hard to get there.

"I was conscientious and hard-working but, having grown up in rural New Zealand, I'd learned how to quite effectively disguise this. I think most of my contemporaries would recall me as being reasonably unassuming and gregarious, even if rather studious."

The hard work paid off. As well as honours degrees in history/politics and law, Lamb was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. Going to Oxford University was a big step for the country girl, but it was one she took in her stride.

"Oxford was exciting because of the sheer diversity of the people you met, richness of the experience, and the phenomenal resources suddenly at your disposal," recalls Lamb. "Some of the dons were curmudgeonly and remote, and thus scary and absurd in equal measure, but I was fortunate that my college (Balliol) was quite laid-back and fun."

However, she soon found out that under the surface of those laid-back students lurked "fiendishly high" intellectual aspirations.

"This all-pervasive nonchalance, in a peculiar way, produced its own stresses, as the academic expectations were fierce but it was never quite the done thing to admit to it. I think Balliol's had this reputation for

some time, as a 19th-century master dubbed Balliol's hallmark to be 'effortless superiority'. Unfortunately, in my experience, 'superiority' (in the sense of excellence) has never been effortless."

Lamb studied towards a Doctorate of Philosophy in public international law, focusing upon challenges to the legality of United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Why this speciality? "Because it is at the cutting edge of contemporary concerns as to the extent to which the powers of the UN Security Council, which are extensive (for example, the Security Council can under certain conditions authorise the military invasion of a State), can be subjected to any legal controls," says Lamb.

"It was also directly relevant to the ICTY's work. The ICTY was established by a Security Council resolution and its critics disputed

whether or not the Security Council had the power to establish a Tribunal of this sort in the first place. The issue also continues to come up from time to time in our ongoing practice. For instance, when the Prosecution managed to get UN forces stationed in Bosnia to agree to arrest war crimes suspects on our behalf, was this compatible with the powers initially granted to the ICTY by the Security Council? Or with the peacekeepers' own mandate? These areas have become something of an in-house speciality for me here."

After leaving Oxford in 1996, Lamb worked briefly as a human rights researcher at the UK House of Lords and then spent about six months in Siena, Italy, on an academic fellowship.

Career-wise Lamb doesn't plan too far ahead. And to date that has worked perfectly for her.

"I'm really the consummate drifter, and I've never really had a master plan. I've been fortunate to have had some wonderful opportunities thrown my way and to have been able to capitalise upon them.

"I've been at the ICTY for around four years and I expect to stay for several more."

However, it is still quite difficult to plan rationally for a career in international war crimes prosecution. The ICTY is part and parcel of the UN system, but is a non-permanent institution set up specifically to deal with the conflict in the territories of the former Yugoslavia (and Rwanda, with respect to its sister Tribunal, the ICTR). So at some point, and almost certainly within the next decade, the Tribunal's work will cease.

And when does the drifter from Central Otago intend to head back home to New Zealand?

"When I left New Zealand back in 1992, I fully intended to return. Gradually, though, I became established here and I now find that virtually all of my professional life has been spent abroad," she says. "I'm now highly specialised in a quite narrow area of international law which, thankfully, New Zealand has little need for. I've reached the point where, in the short term at least, it's hard to envisage changing track. But I rule nothing out."



OPINION

JEAN ON GENE TECHNOLOGIES

One modified Jean Fleming.

It is rare for one topic to generate as much passion in New Zealand society as the genetic modification (GM) debate has created during recent times. Regardless of background, age, occupation, cultural beliefs or stance on GM, almost every New Zealander has something to say on the subject. The Royal Commission on Genetic Modification was set up two years ago to establish some facts on an emotive issue. Late last year, they concluded with a recommendation essentially advising New Zealand to “proceed with caution”. Both sides were quick to criticise the Commission’s outcome. The facts uncovered by the Commission did not appear to change many opinions. University of Otago Magazine asked Commissioner and University researcher Dr Jean Fleming for an inside perspective.

I’VE NEVER WORKED HARDER, THOUGHT MORE DEEPLY, FACED MORE PERSONAL DEMONS AND WONDERED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET MORE THAN IN 2001. As I look back over the year of the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification (RCGM), I can truly say that this is one Jean that has been modified by the RCGM. People continue to ask me if I enjoyed the experience. There is really no answer to this. We laughed, we cried, we discussed and we argued, but most of all we listened and listened. We listened to pure, cold, impersonal science and to impassioned pleas not to change the world. We listened to researchers confused to be in the wrong spotlight and researchers confused about what constituted rigorous science. We heard aspirations, inspirations and exhalations, fears, philosophies and ethical dilemmas. It was an experience of enormous privilege, to travel the length of the country twice, to visit so many marae and to meet so many of the scientists, politicians and community leaders that constitute the fabric of New Zealand. A favourite memory: sharing fish and chips and remembering Waikaremoana with Tama Iti on the marae at Bastion Point.

The outcome of the Commission is now history. Personally, I have been pleased by the Government’s response to our report. However, the same old anti-GM stories continue to come up in the media and in

discussions, making me realise how few people have really come to grips with gene technology, let alone read the report. My own conclusion is that information and education will do little to change attitudes to GM. This is a technology that affects people at a very fundamental, often spiritual level.

For genetic modification to become widely acceptable, public attitudes have to change. To change attitudes, the technology has to be shown to be safe and useful. Currently the public has little understanding of the science and doesn’t trust the companies who sell the stuff or the scientists who do the research. One way to encourage people to accept genetically-modified crops and products is for the biotechnology companies to be more open about their research - to regularly disseminate the results of research on horizontal gene transfer, cross pollination and environmental effects with the public, and to involve the community more in decision making. As an academic teacher of future scientists, I believe strongly that we must emphasise acquisition of communication skills and ethical decision making in our biological science courses.

Instead of insisting that the scientific community take on the mantle of a business culture, the business community must begin to understand, accept and support the culture of science. A strong research base, including both commercial and independent public good research, will best serve the interests of the companies and the community. This is a technology with huge potential, but so far the focus has been to use genetic modification for the easier production of cheaper food. The next five years will see a plethora of new ideas and new products emerging in the marketplace. Genetic modification will not go away. It will just change itself to suit the market.

Would I do it again? Of course! Although I found the experience immensely stressful at a personal level, I also discovered parts of myself I never knew I had. I know I have the ability to do this work now. I am a better listener and a better writer. Hopefully I am also more tolerant and able to see both sides of an argument.



FEATURE

Sharon Bennett

Burns Fellow for 2002 Alison Wong is more accustomed to writing poetry but is using her year at the University of Otago to progress work on her first novel.

ERA OF DISCRIMINATION FORMS BACKGROUND TO NOVEL

"POETRY IS EASIER TO WRITE; I DON'T HAVE TO BUILD UP A WHOLE WORLD," says poet and novelist Alison Wong, University of Otago Burns Fellow for 2002.

But the Wellingtonian is not taking the easy option this year. She will spend 2002 in a major construction zone as she recreates, in her first novel (yet to be named), the period 1890 to World War One when, alone among immigrants to New Zealand, Chinese paid a prohibitive poll tax and had to pass an English test.

Little did Wong realise, when she undertook the novel, how topical the issue would become only six years later. Earlier this year, the New Zealand Government apologised to New Zealand Chinese about the £100 discriminatory tax.

"Although my great-grandparents and grandparents had to pay the poll tax, I didn't hear about it until the mid-1990s. My parents didn't talk much of the past - like many Chinese, they were too busy working. They only started to talk to me about the past when it became clear that I was a writer. Then when I started work on this novel, I did a lot of research and found out more."

Wong's research begins at a basic level: What did people wear? How did they prepare their food? Did they flick on a light switch or light a gas lamp? The writing will flow for a while, then she runs into something that needs more investigation.

She says the tax and other discriminatory legislation, like finger printing, the English reading test, and only allowing one Chinese on a ship per 100 tons of cargo, made life difficult and lonely for her great grandparents, grandparents and other Chinese of the time.

"It meant families were separated, with mostly men in New Zealand and their wives and children left behind in China. Usually, they could not afford to bring out anyone who could not earn a decent living and often they could not afford to go back. When you write a novel, you have to create characters and get inside their thoughts and feelings. You feel their joys and triumphs but also their anger, hurt, humiliation, loneliness and sadness."

Wong was surprised by the Government's apology but pleased New Zealanders are now aware of the history. She says the Chinese community's reaction is varied.

"Some are suspicious of the Government's announcement in election year. Some do not want to be singled out as Chinese - they don't want to be taken at 'face value'. There will be other reactions which I am not aware of, but for many, the apology is cause for jubilation, the beginning of a healing process."

Wong had never considered compensation before it arose during the publicity surrounding the apology. She believes it would be appropriate to consult the descendants of those who suffered under the poll-tax and related legislation but, again, there would be no easy answer.

The 41-year-old BSc graduate, technical writer and business analyst completed the Victoria and Whitireia creative writing courses in 1995. The following year she received a Readers' Digest New Zealand Society of Authors' Stout Research Centre Fellowship to begin her novel.

Her novel was inspired by family history, and the lives of other Chinese and Europeans of the time, but the characters and story are fictional.

Four of Wong's great-grandparents came out to New Zealand from China, and the whole of her grandparents' generation settled here. "Although it's not their lives I'm writing, the research gives me the chance to learn things about my family.

"To be convincingly Chinese, my characters must be influenced by the social norms of that community, but I'm seeking to make them individuals who don't necessarily conform."

Wong spent three years in China. She has also talked to researchers and older Chinese and Europeans, read heaps, and pored through photos and film archives.

Several publishers have shown interest in the manuscript, excerpts of which have appeared in *Landfall* and *Sport*, but Steele Roberts will publish it along with the volume of poetry Wong will work on this year.

"It can take a long time to get a poem just right, but it fits into your life better. If you write a bad poem, it's easy to throw it away and write another. I often write of things integral to my own life, that have emotional impact."

It's been said that Alison also treats each sentence of her novel like a poem.

"Yes, I like the words to sound good, feel good. The language is really important."

UNIVERSITY SUPPORTIVE OF REFORMS BUT WARY OF CONTINUING FUNDING CRISIS

The University of Otago supports the Government's objectives of furthering social and economic development through reshaping the tertiary sector. However, the University cautions that the legislation before Parliament will increase bureaucracy and may hamper basic research, while failing to address the chronic underfunding crisis faced by New Zealand universities.

Under the reforms, the Government will set up a Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) in July, which will allocate funding according to the ability of institutions to demonstrate the alignment of their activities and education provision with new government guidelines, including the Tertiary Education Strategy.

A University of Otago working party has studied the Government's Draft Tertiary Education Strategy that will be used to determine funding priorities and reporting requirements. It has found the document fails to build on the previous TEAC reports in providing a more coherent, forward looking and clear-cut framework for universities.

The working party's response to the Ministry of Education warns the overall approach to managing the tertiary sector is highly centralised and fails to fully acknowledge differences between various types of tertiary institutions.

The new reporting requirements would also create heavy compliance costs and burdens for institutions such as Otago that already have rigorous quality assurance measures in place. It cautions that with the establishment of TEC, New Zealand will be going further down the road of centralisation of higher education management than any other OECD country.

The working party noted that the Draft Strategy was silent on the question of how high-performing New Zealand universities would maintain and enhance their international standing when they were being starved of funding, while equivalent overseas institutions receive significant funding boosts.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Graeme Fogelberg supports the findings and says it is vital that the new system recognises that basic research is the bedrock of future innovation.



SUMMER SCHOOL SHINING SUCCESS

The University's Summer School programme is proving to be a resounding success and is to become a permanent fixture in the University year.

The programme started in January 2001 and enrolments have well exceeded expectations in both years, with a jump of more than 20% this year resulting in nearly 1000 students attending.

Summer School Director Associate Professor Merv Smith says the option to spend the first two months of the year undertaking intensive study has proved popular with students keen to speed up their degrees.

"As well as the benefits students gain, it is a useful way of trialing new papers and offering courses such as Effective Writing, which has turned out to be a very popular professional development option."

A non-credit paper, Bridging Chemistry, designed to bring students who did not fare well in Bursary up to speed, has also filled an important gap, Smith says.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY AGREE TO MERGE

The University and the Dunedin College of Education last month announced their move towards greater cooperation in teacher education.

An agreement in principle to merge the University's School of Education and the College was reached after the University and College councils approved the proposal. If the move is ratified later this year, a new Division of Education in the University will be created and this will be based at the current College of Education campus.

The agreement is based upon the recommendations of a joint working party formed after a Memorandum of Agreement to explore strategic partnership options was signed in October of last year.

University Chancellor Eion Edgar says the working party, composed of senior staff from both institutions, considered several possible arrangements and settled on the merger option after much consultation, information-sharing and analysis.

Edgar and College Council Chair Stan Duncan say a merger appeared to be in the best interests of teacher education, students and staff.

College of Education Principal Dr Roger Green says College and University students are expected to benefit through greater study options, and College staff would get more research opportunities.

In the time since the announcement, consultations, due diligence, detailed negotiations and planning to determine the merger's feasibility have proceeded. This process is expected to be complete within the next few months.

If the proposal gains final approval from both councils later in the year and if approval is gained from the Minister of Education, it may be fully ratified by October.

"It would be a really exciting development for the College, the University, the Otago/Southland region and for teacher education," Green says.

Under the agreement, the College will retain its name, and there are provisions to safeguard the interests of students and staff. The merger should be complete by 2004.



UNIVERSITY OVAL AGREEMENT TO

BRING BENEFITS TO UNIVERSITY AND CITY

Plans to significantly upgrade facilities at the University Oval are one step closer to reality after the University and the City signed an agreement in February that sees the University acquiring the former Art Gallery in return for transferring Oval leases and ownership of the grandstand.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Graeme Fogelberg says the University plans to redevelop the former Art Gallery into a Student Sports Centre that is “second to none in the country”.

“It’s envisaged that the new facility will house the University Rugby Club, provide a large social facility available for major events and that it will be the new effective base for the Highlanders Rugby Team and the continuing home of the Academy of Sport.”

It is planned that a fundraising drive and rental income from the tenants will cover the cost of \$2 million redevelopment.

OTAGO STRENGTHENS INTERNATIONAL LINKS

The University of Otago continued its efforts to reach out to the world by signing several agreements with leading Latin American Universities in December.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Graeme Fogelberg signed the agreements on academic and student exchanges during a two-week visit to South America and Mexico he and a contingent of business and education leaders made with the Prime Minister.

As part of the first visit by a New Zealand leader to South America, the Prime Minister opened a new Embassy in Brasilia headed by Otago Graduate Ms Denise Almao. The delegation’s visit also took in Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina.

“Reaching out internationally is key to our future growth not only in terms of research ties we forge, but also because of the large number of Mexican and South American students we can attract from these populous regions,” says the Vice-Chancellor.

The agreements signed with the Universities cemented relationships developed earlier, he says.

INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY SPONSORS INNOVATION CONFERENCE

The University was proud to be the principal sponsor of the Innovate Event where the nation’s business leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs gathered to showcase and celebrate success stories of some of the country’s greatest innovators.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Graeme Fogelberg says last month’s Christchurch conference was an “outright success”.

“It was a great opportunity for the University to share its experiences in successfully turning brilliant science into sound business, and to learn more from the stories of others,” he says.

Speakers from Otago included international competitiveness expert Professor Colin Campbell-Hunt and the scientific brain behind BLIS technologies, Professor John Tagg. Tagg’s BLIS K12 Throat Guard Lozenges will soon be commercially available.

Fogelberg told the conference that the forging of links between academia and business is not only mutually beneficial, but also essential to the economic future of the nation.

UNICLIPPINGS

APPOINTMENTS

Professor Keith Davids as Dean of the School of Physical Education in the Sciences Division. Professor Davids moves here from Manchester Metropolitan University.

Professor Ian Town as Dean of Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Professor Town was formerly the School's Associate Dean (Research) and Head of Department of Medicine.

Former MP **Dr Clive Matthewson** has been appointed to the newly-created position of Director: Development at the University.

Professor Vivienne Shaw, as the first female professor appointed within the School of Business.

Darryn Russell as University of Otago Māori Advisor. Mr Russell is also secretary/treasurer and director of Te Runanga o Otakou Inc., and a director of Ngai Tahu Fisheries.

Professor Martin Richardson of Economics as a lay member of the High Court to assist in cases involving appeals on Commerce Commission decisions and other Commerce Act matters.

Dr Abigail Smith, senior lecturer in Marine Science, to a government committee on oceans policy.

Professor Donald Evans, Dr Andrew Moore, Professor Michael Ardagh, Professor Charlotte Paul and Dr Anne Bray to the government advisory committee on ethics for the health and disability sector.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Graeme Fogelberg has taken up his position as President of the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

Professor William Dominiks as the new Head of Classics, replacing retiring Professor John Barsby. Professor Dominiks hails from the University of Natal, South Africa, where he headed the Classics Department.

Jan Flood as Secretary to Council and Registrar, replacing Tim Gray who has retired after 40 years of service to the University. Ms Flood was previously executive assistant to the Vice-Chancellor.

A'e'au Semi Epati, OU Law graduate, was appointed to the Manukau District Court as New Zealand's first Pacific Island judge.

Michael Crosbie, OU Law graduate, was appointed a District Court Judge.

Annis Sommerville, OU Law graduate, was appointed a Family Court Judge.

Hon Bill English MP, OU Arts and Commerce graduate, was elected Leader of the New Zealand National Party in October 2001.

Professor Malcolm Grant, OU Law graduate, was appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University.

Ian Fraser, OU Arts graduate, as Chief Executive of Television New Zealand.

Martin Snedden, OU Law graduate, Chief Executive of New Zealand Cricket since May 2001.

OBITUARIES

Dr Colin Mark Wells (40), OU senior lecturer in Physics in Energy Management and Director of the Energy Management Programme (1998-2001). Dr Wells was regarded as an innovator and leader in his field.

Dr Peter Rennie (67), former Master of University College (1985-1993) and former member of the Anatomy Department.

Dr Christopher Ehrhardt (63), retired OU Classics Scholar (1971-1997). Dr Ehrhardt is remembered as the Department's most learned member.

Elizabeth Robinson (82), OU deputy librarian (1952-1976). Mrs Robinson provided 30 years of devoted service to the University and Library.

Dr Fred Ansbacher (81), OU Physics lecturer (1963-85).

Professor Hector Monro (89), Philosophy lecturer (1946-1953).

John Bovett (86), first University of Otago Proctor, (late 1960s to 1979). Dr Bovett won a high reputation on campus through a firm but fair and friendly approach to student discipline.

Professor Alex Szakats (86), refugee from communist oppression and second professor of Law at OU (1974-1980).

Associate Professor John Douglas Campbell (74), lecturer in the Geology Department (1959-1990). Professor Campbell was one of New Zealand's most respected and highly regarded geologists.

Emeritus Professor William Trotter (79), Head of Anatomy (1969-83). In his retirement Professor Trotter contributed to the establishment and development of Otago Museum's Discovery World science centre.

Professor Erkin Bairam (43), OU Economics lecturer (1987-2001). Professor Bairam was one of New Zealand's foremost academic economists. At 33, he gained a personal chair in the University's Economics Department in recognition of his contributions to the field of econometrics.

Sir William Manchester (88), OU medical graduate (MBChB 1938), trained in plastic surgery under leading New Zealand surgeons Sir Harold Gillies and Sir Archibald McIndoe before returning to New Zealand to become the Auckland Hospital Board's first plastic surgeon in 1950. He set up New Zealand's first plastic unit at Middlemore Hospital, where he worked until his retirement in 1979.

Dr George Emerson (67), OU Biochemistry senior lecturer. Dr Emerson was with the department of Biochemistry for 40 years. He was also well known for his Emersons Beer label.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Professor George Benwell, Head of Information Science, was awarded the GJ Thornton-Smith Memorial Medal as a distinguished graduate of Melbourne University's School of Engineering Department of Geomatics.

Professor Erik Olssen of the OU History Department was awarded the Royal Society's Te Rangi Hiroa medal for contributions to the understanding of "current issues in cultural diversity and cohesion".

Associate Professor Terry Crooks of the OU School of Education has won the McKenzie Award for Educational Research.

Emeritus Professor Jim Flynn of the Political Studies Department and **Professor Charles Higham** of the Anthropology Department received the University's inaugural distinguished research awards in recognition of their status as world-renowned researchers.

Dr Robin Knight, OU Health Sciences graduate, won the United States Council of Graduate Schools award for the best PhD in life sciences in the United States, for his thesis on the origin and evolution of the genetic code.

Five present and former University of Otago academics were honoured in the 2002 New Years Honours List:

Emeritus Professor Douglas Coombs, professor of Geology at OU from 1956 to 1989, who has an international reputation in the fields of mineralogy, petrology and geo-chemistry, was named a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit.

Dr Susan Bagshaw, a senior lecturer at OU Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences, was also named as a Companion for services to youth health.

Professor Andrew Hornblow, recently retired dean of the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences, was named a Companion for services to medicine and health services.

Dr William Glass, retired Preventive and Social Medicine lecturer, was named as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for services to occupational health and safety.

Emeritus Professor Colin Gibson, retired English lecturer, was named as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to church music and education.

FELLOWSHIPS/SCHOLARSHIPS

Two of the three Rhodes Scholarships awarded in NZ last year went to OU students. **Christopher Curran** and **Rachel Carrel**, two Humanities graduates, are taking up their posts at Oxford University this year.

University of Otago doctoral students won 13 of the Top Achiever Scholarships awarded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. Three OU students also received Enterprise Scholarships and three lecturers received Bright Futures Enterprise Scholarships.

Justin Hodgkiss received a 2001 Fulbright Scholarship to pursue a doctorate in Chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr Jennifer Smith received a 2002 UNESCO Fellowship for Young Women in Life Sciences for her Botany Department work on enzymes that break down native New Zealand seaweed.

James Cook Research Fellowships went to **Professor Robert Poulin** of Zoology and **Professor Erik Olssen** of History. The prestigious fulltime two-year fellowships are awarded to scholars who will make a significant contribution to New Zealand's knowledge base.

Professor Poulin, **Professor Nik Kasabov** of Information Science and **Professor Mark Richards** of the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences were made Fellows of the Royal Society last year.

The University's Robert Burns, Frances Hodgkins, and Mozart fellowships went to Wellington author and poet, **Alison Wong**, Auckland sculptor **Scott Eady** and Dunedin composer **Michael Norris**.

A rare Fellowship of the New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Scientists and Molecular Medicine was awarded to **Ann Thornton** of the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences for a thesis judged as "best ever seen" by the examiners.

Claudia Geiringer, History Graduate and Crown counsel in the Crown Law Office, has received a 2001 Fulbright-Buddle Findlay award to study towards a Masters degree in constitutional law at Columbia University.

Fiona Tregonning, Law graduate, received a 2001 Fulbright Scholarship to study at Harvard Law School.

EMERITUS PROFESSORS

The distinguished service of five leading Otago academics was recognised recently with their appointments as Emeritus Professors.

They are: **John Barsby**, **Andrew Hornblow**, **Tony MacKnight**, **Malcolm McMillan** and **David Russell**.

HONORARY DOCTORATES

Honorary Doctorates were conferred in 2001 on **Shona Dunlop MacTavish** (HonDLitt) and **Tan Sri Dato' Dr Hj Ahmad Azizuddin bin Hj Zainal Abidin** (HonLLD). Ms MacTavish was honoured for a life of outstanding contribution to dance, while Tan Sri Ahmad, an Otago graduate who has remained a good friend of this University, has had a distinguished political and business career in Malaysia.

RARE DOCTORATES

Associate Professor John Hale of the English Department has received a rare LittD on the basis of his published work on John Milton.

AgResearch scientist **George Henry Davis** has received a DSc for his discovery of three prolificacy genes in sheep.

GRANTS

Last year, the University received \$47.5 million in external research funding, and an additional \$42.3 million in funds from commercial research and consulting activities. Together these sums are the largest received by any New Zealand University.

Otago received \$4.8 million from the Marsden Fund in 2001 for basic curiosity-driven research, representing 17.8 per cent of the total pool.

Professor Cliff Abraham of Psychology has received \$1.2 million from the Health Research Council for the final two years of a 10 year multi-disciplinary investigation into the memory mechanisms of the brain. The project has produced promising lines of research and new insights into disorders such as Alzheimers and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

A total of \$167,500 has been awarded for 2002 for innovation in teaching initiatives, internationalisation of the curriculum, and research into university teaching. The grants approved by the University's Committee for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CALT), are awarded on a competitive basis annually.

BOOKS

BOOKS ARE NOT DEAD

The University of Otago Press spent 2001 productively disproving the rumoured death of the printed word. The University's publishing house continues to gain prestige, both locally and internationally, with a varied range of titles and authors. More than 20 per cent of book sales are exported.

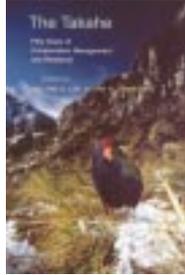
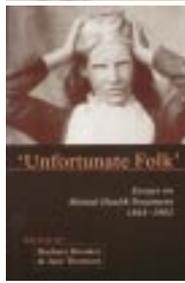
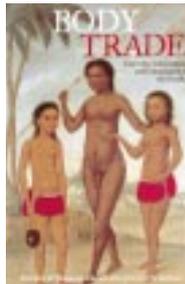
Recent Otago graduate David Geraghty published his book, *A Snake in the Shrine*, with the Press last year. It is an entertaining and perceptive account of three years spent teaching English in Japan. It is a book that can be enjoyed on many levels and is particularly relevant at the moment, when so many of our students are making the experience of teaching English in Asia part of their broader curriculum vitae.

Fellow graduate Anna Petersen, curator of photography at the Hocken Library, chose to stay closer to base with her handsome book, *New Zealanders at Home: A Cultural History of Domestic Interiors 1814–1914*. Petersen has put together a fascinating collection of photographs, drawings and paintings, showing how New Zealanders lived in a variety of settings, and her lucid commentary provides valuable insights into the ways in which people influence surroundings, and vice versa.

A volume of essays researched and written by post-graduate students of the University's Department of History was edited by Barbara Brookes and Jane Thomson. *Unfortunate Folk: Essays on Mental Health Treatment 1863–1992* uses what has happened in Otago as the focus, before moving on to a general discussion of changes in attitude and developments in the treatment of mental illness.

The Press is an important publishing outlet for Otago academic staff from a variety of disciplines. William Lee and Ian Jamieson edited *The Takahe – Fifty Years of Conservation Management and Research*, with contributions from people involved with the preservation of the takahe since its rediscovery in Fiordland in 1948. The book is an interesting and highly informative examination of the intensive long-term strategies to preserve the takahe, which have inspired species recovery programmes worldwide.

From the School of Education, *E-learning: Teaching and Professional Development with the Internet*, edited by Kwok-Wing Lai, provides an excellent resource for teachers at all levels, exploring the practical and theoretical aspects of using the Internet effectively in the classroom.



Books from other universities also featured in the 2001 list. Alison Jones, of the Auckland School of Education, edited *Touchy Subject: Teachers Touching Children*, a highly topical look at the cultural shift at work in the relationships of young children and their teachers.

Shifen Gong, currently teaching in America, writes about Katherine Mansfield, an author surprisingly widely read in China. In *A Fine Pen: The Chinese View of Katherine Mansfield*, she translates and introduces Chinese criticism of Mansfield and traces the fluctuations in her reputation in relation to social and political history.

In *British Capital, Antipodean Labour: Working the New Zealand Waterfront, 1915–1951*, Anna Green of Waikato University published her research into the relationship between shipping companies and waterside workers to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the 1951 dispute in a stimulating challenge to widely held views.

Our closely held images of history, literature and film are also challenged in *Body Trade: Captivity, Cannibalism and Colonialism in the Pacific*, edited by Barbara Creed and Jeanette Hoorn of the University of Melbourne.

Among the selection of more general books published by the Press is *Shifting Nature*, a collection of brilliant photographs by Wayne Barrar, with an introduction by ecology historian Geoff Park, which presents ideas about culture and nature, and the effects of human intervention in the environment. This was a Wellington collaboration, as Wayne is lecturer in photography at Massey University and Geoff is Concept Leader – Papatuanuku at Te Papa Tongarewa, the Museum of New Zealand.

Neville Peat and Brian Patrick's *Wild Rivers – Discovering the Natural History of the Central South Island*, is the latest in this duo's magnificent series on southern natural history.

Axis is a selection from Cilla McQueen's five previous volumes of poetry. The book allows readers the chance to rediscover some favourite poems and to trace the development of one of New Zealand's foremost poets. McQueen was educated at Otago, is a former Burns Fellow, and has lived here or in Southland for most of her life.

Otago books are available from bookshops nationwide and are distributed internationally. For more information, contact University of Otago Press, PO Box 56, Dunedin, Tel +64 3 479 8807, Fax +64 3 479 8385, email university.press@otago.ac.nz.

ALUMNI

ALUMNI HOUSE: AN INVITATION

When you're visiting the Dunedin campus, please call at Alumni House, at 103 St David St, the villa closest to the St David Street footbridge on the Clocktower side of the Water of Leith.

At the Alumni Office, our aim is to help former students continue to have an active relationship with the University. Our work includes supporting alumni networks, co-ordinating information for and about alumni and the University community, and organising functions.

Some very impressive recent building projects at Otago's Dunedin campus make it likely that even if you left Dunedin only a year or two ago, there will have been changes. If you left 20 years ago or more and visit now, you'll probably find yourself colliding with buildings that weren't there before and searching in vain for others which are not where they should be.

This will not be a problem if you start your exploration of campus at Alumni House. We will be happy to supply you with the landmark-based Campus Guide to help you navigate the new and improved University of Otago.

We look forward to seeing you on campus.



Gill Parata - Head, Alumni & Development Office

ALUMNI KEEN TO KEEP IN TOUCH

Thank you to the 4100 alumni who returned the Alumni Questionnaire which went out last year.

Improved contact details and more accurate information about alumni numbers in specific areas will help us to plan future alumni activities.

What's come in has been interesting as well as useful. About 4000 students finish degrees each year, and most of them leave Otago. If you've ever wondered where all those people get to after leaving Dunedin, the answer is "everywhere". Many are in New Zealand's main centres, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Another strong alumni population base is South East Asia, where so many of our international students have come from. But who would have predicted Malawi, Albania, the United Arab Emirates, to name but a few? Look out for notes from some of our more exotic alumni destinations in future issues of the *University of Otago Magazine*.

Perhaps the most pleasing conclusion to be drawn from the survey was the warm and enthusiastic attachment alumni expressed for the University.

So again, thank you very much. It's been our privilege and delight to get to know more about the alumni community directly from the people who constitute it. Please continue to keep in touch, using the website to update your information when you move or if you have suggestions for us. We are always pleased to hear from you.

Alumni House at 103 St David St



RECENT ALUMNI EVENTS

Southland, 12 March 2002

The first alumni function for the year drew about 130 alumni and partners to Invercargill's Ascot Park Hotel at a gathering following a special out-of-town University Council meeting.

New Plymouth, 12 December 2001

Chancellor Eion Edgar represented the University at a gathering in New Plymouth attended by about one-fifth of Otago's Taranaki-based alumni and their partners. Among the 120 guests were 12 students and future students - recipients of the first Priscilla Wunsch scholarships. The gathering celebrated the Taranaki alumna's generous bequest, which covers fees, travel and accommodation for two years of study at Otago for the selected Taranaki students.

Malaysia, 22 September 2001

The University's Malaysian alumni held their Annual General Meeting dinner on 22 September in Kuala Lumpur. The business part of the evening included the unanimous vote that Tan Sri Dato' Dr Ahmad Azizuddin bin Hj Zainal Abidin should become the Association's third patron. He joins founding patrons Tan Sri Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman bin Hj Daud and YB Datuk Amar Dr Leo Moggie.

September 2001

The Advanced Business Programme at the School of Business marked the 25th anniversary of the University of Otago MBA with functions in Dunedin and Auckland for alumni, students, and past and present staff. Auckland's celebrations included addresses by prominent MBA graduates Greg Muir (CEO, The Warehouse) and Paul Harper (CEO, Lodestar).

Sydney, 31 August 2001

Once again, the return Bledisloe Cup rugby match between Australia and New Zealand saw about 120 New South Wales alumni of all ages congregating at the University and Schools Club. Trans-Tasman visitors, including Chancellor Eion Edgar, mixed with locals at a Cup Eve reception which has now become a tradition.

ALUMNI

CHALLENGE GOES ON

The Chan Challenge began when the four Chan sisters from Malaysia alerted the University to the impressive 15 University of Otago degrees on their family tree.

Retired Timaru doctor Melville Brookfield replied with an even more impressive 31 degrees over five generations.

But it's going to be hard to top the 59 degrees of Dunedin's Farry family. There are another three in progress, and that number doesn't include spouses.

The Farry claim begins with the 1899 marriage in Dunedin of Gabriel and Amelia Farry. They lived for a time in Lebanon, but after Gabriel's early death, Amelia and their four children returned to Dunedin.

Although Amelia's children didn't attend university, their children did. Since Dunedin lawyer John Farry became the family's first graduate in the early 1960s, 45 of Gabriel and Amelia's grandchildren and great-grandchildren have studied at Otago.

GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION

The University of Otago Graduates' Association continues to support the University, as it has done since it began in 1938.

OUGA Vice-Presidents in main centres throughout the country help the University with alumni functions.

The Dunedin based committee liaises with the University on a range of issues, including lobbying Government on behalf of the University and graduates. This year, a sub-committee prepared a submission on the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC).

The Association is also concerned with supporting its future members and providing student awards.

Recent OUGA news includes the election of a new President, Dunedin lawyer Rachel Cardoza, who has been a member of the Committee for a number of years. Rachel succeeds Dr Peter Norris, whose address as guest speaker at the August graduation was warmly received.

ALUMNI IN TOUCH

We are developing web pages for alumni and friends which will provide a range of information about the University community. These pages will help keep you up to date with alumni activities and benefits, including what's on and how to contact people.

The web page will include links to other pages on the University website of interest to former students. One of these is the Science Careers Database – a resource for alumni, students, and prospective students. Many former students from the Divisions of Sciences and Health Sciences have contributed profiles which illustrate career possibilities – you're most welcome to add your own profile to the database at osms.otago.ac.nz/grads/gradsearch.htm

Updating your contact details is easy at www.otago.ac.nz/alumni/keepintouch/index.html – send the link to your friends. The University will host functions around New Zealand, Australia, and North America this year, so if you would like to catch up with former students in your area, please update your address.



ALUMNI RESOURCES

ALUMNI FUNCTIONS 2002

18 April 2002
Melbourne
30 May 2002
Kuala Lumpur
31 May 2002
Singapore
3 July 2002
New York
4 July 2002
Toronto
10 July 2002
Vancouver
11 July 2002
Los Angeles
2 August 2002
Pre-Bledisloe Cup Cocktail Reception, Sydney
29 and 30 August 2002
Auckland
5 and 6 September 2002
Wellington
18 September 2002
Christchurch

Further details on each function will be posted on the alumni web pages.

ALUMNI BENEFITS

Former students may continue to use **University of Otago Library** resources after leaving the University, subject to some conditions. www.otago.ac.nz/alumni.

Visitors to the University are welcome to stay at the **Executive Residence**, which offers quality accommodation at competitive rates. Contact: Tel 64 3 479 9151 Fax 64 3 479 9180 www.commerce.otago.ac.nz/execres/

Visitors to Dunedin are welcome at many University **recreational facilities**. The **Unipol** gymnasium accommodates casual users and **Recreation Services** runs a programme of leisure activities and hires out camping and sporting equipment. www.otago.ac.nz/recreation
www.unipol.co.nz

Alumni are welcome to visit the **University of Otago's Auckland and Wellington Centres**. Facilities include extensive conference and multi-media facilities for hire, and a Human Performance Centre in Wellington.

Auckland:
University of Otago House
Level 3 & 4
385 Queen Street
Tel 64 9 373 9700
www.otago.ac.nz

Wellington:
Stadium Centre
WestpacTrust Stadium
Waterloo Quay
Tel 64 4 460 9800
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