

news

June 2015

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COMMUNITY

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INSIDE UNISA

Putting research in the frame

[more](#)



BUSINESS AND LAW

Legal advice clinic reaches million dollar milestone

[more](#)



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

New degree opens doors to 'Australia's Most Attractive' ICT employer

[more](#)



INSIDE UNISA

From the Chancellery

[more](#)



INSIDE UNISA

The latest achievements and announcements

[more](#)



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

The moral and emotional landscape of jury duty

[more](#)



INSIDE UNISA

Art of deception needed to prove dry needling works
[more](#)



COMMUNITY

Fairytale production for UniSA and Tutti [more](#)



COMMUNITY

Graduate creates social movement to spread smiles
[more](#)



HUMANITIES

Using respect to tackle cyberbullying [more](#)



NEW BOOKS

The latest books from UniSA researchers [more](#)



THE CONVERSATION

Supermarket price deals: the good, the bad and the ugly
[more](#)



IN PICTURES

On campus this month [more](#)

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[top^](#)

Putting research in the frame

[Back to story index](#)

by Rosanna Galvin



COMMUNITY

As the old adage goes, a picture is worth a thousand words.

But can an image help tell the story of tens of thousands of words, plus months, if not years of work in laboratories, workshops and libraries?

That's the challenge UniSA researchers have been set in the inaugural Images of Research Photography Competition. UniSA staff and students have been invited to submit arresting photographs that tell a story about the research taking place at UniSA and the people who are making it happen.

UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Innovation, Professor Tanya Monro says the competition will help demystify research, which can be technical in nature, by engaging us instead in a captivating visual journey.

"This is an opportunity for staff and students to showcase compelling images created during their research," she says.

"We are hoping to discover images that cause people to stop, pause and asks questions. The image doesn't need to explain the research being conducted but instead it should grab people's attention and raise awareness and intrigue.

"Through photography we can open up the world of research to the wider community. At the same time, the competition has given our researchers a chance to look at their work in a completely different way.

"Researchers have written tens of thousands of words for theses, journal articles and grant applications but now we have challenged them to look at their research in a new light and think about how it can be communicated in a visual way."

The Images of Research Photography Competition closed on June 16. The images will be judged by a panel including both UniSA staff and external representatives and the winning image will be announced at the Images

of Research Awards Ceremony on June 29.

The photographer behind the winning image will receive \$5,000 towards professional development and there are two additional \$2,000 prizes for runner-up and People's Choice respectively.

The People's Choice winner will be determined at this year's UniSA Open Day, where the entries will form a striking photography exhibition.

Staff, students and visitors will be able to cast their vote to help decide who takes home the People's Choice crown.

For more information, go to unisa.edu.au/research/photocomp/.

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INSIDE UNISA

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[more](#)



INSIDE UNISA

From the Chancellery [more](#)

[top](#)^



Legal advice clinic reaches million dollar milestone

[Back to story index](#)

by Rosanna Galvin



BUSINESS AND LAW

(L-R) Prof Wendy Lacey, UniSA's Dean and Head of School: Law; Matthew Atkinson, Managing Solicitor, UniSA Legal Advice Clinic; Susan Lilley, Northern Community Legal Service Inc; Rachel Spencer, Director: Professional Programs, UniSA School of Law; Heidi Roche, Supervising Registrar at Elizabeth Magistrates Court; Magistrate David McLeod, Elizabeth Magistrates Court; Rocky Perrotta, President, The Law Society of South Australia and Betty Kontoleon, solicitor, UniSA Legal Advice Clinic.

The South Australian community has benefited from more than one million dollars' worth of pro bono legal work undertaken by the UniSA Legal Advice Clinic, which is run by UniSA students and supported by University staff.

The significant milestone coincides with the opening of the Legal Advice Clinic's new outreach service at the Elizabeth Magistrates Court, which started operating at the end of last year and was officially launched this month.

Rachel Spencer, Director of Professional Programs in the School of Law, says it has been an exciting few months for the Legal Advice Clinic, which first opened its doors in 2011 at City West campus.

"The clinic is a valuable service because there is a huge unmet need for legal services in our community. The average person cannot afford a lawyer and very few people are eligible for legal aid, which is only available in very limited circumstances," Spencer says.

"To know the Legal Advice Clinic has delivered more than one million dollars of legal work to the community – and often to the most vulnerable members of society – is extremely satisfying and it's a credit to the dozens of law students who have undertaken volunteer work during their degrees.

"Access to justice means more than access to lawyers and the legal system. It also means access to information, including information about how to resolve disputes or legal problems – and this is where the UniSA clinic plays a really important role."

Interdisciplinary in nature, the new Elizabeth outreach service gives clients access to both legal advice from the

Legal Advice Clinic, and financial advice provided by the Northern Community Legal Service.

Spencer says the Elizabeth Magistrates Court sees an exceptionally high number of consumer debt-related cases and providing the right mechanisms to support people in debt has a positive impact on the wider community.

“Debt-related issues affect entire families – often people who have serious debts may get ‘lost’ in the legal system and borrow more money to resolve debt issues, which further exacerbates their problems,” she says.

“The clinic links those who have financial difficulties with a financial counsellor so they can find a way out of the debt spiral – a better result for individuals, families and the community. It can have a really positive effect on families who might otherwise suffer from extreme financial hardships.”

UniSA student Suzana Jovanovic, who is studying a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce double degree, has been instrumental in setting up the Elizabeth Magistrates Court outreach service. Growing up in the northern suburbs, the final year student says she has always been aware of the challenges families in low socioeconomic status (SES) areas face.

“Growing up in an area with low SES, I have developed a strong desire to help those who are in need. Volunteering at the Elizabeth outreach service has provided me with an opportunity to give back to a community that has made me who I am today,” Suzana says.

“It is no secret that the northern suburbs of Adelaide are associated with having a low SES. In fact there is a disproportionately higher unemployment rate in comparison to many other suburbs in South Australia.

“This makes it all the more important to provide the local community with a facility like the outreach service. It’s particularly crucial in circumstances where legal aid is unavailable; in which case our services can provide members of the public with free legal advice, free financial advice and most importantly, access to justice.”

Suzana says the opportunity to work in a real life environment at the Legal Advice Clinic has been one of the highlights of her degree.

“The clinic is not only a valuable community service but it’s also one that provides invaluable experience to law students,” she says.

“Students develop practical legal skills by interviewing clients, writing up various legal documents and working collaboratively, not only with the supervising solicitors, but with other students as well.

“Through the process, I have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of the legal ethics which I am bound by, and among other things, I get to see firsthand how the law affects the lives of real people.”

For more information on the UniSA Legal Advice Clinic, go to the clinic’s [website](#).

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RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

The moral and emotional landscape of jury duty [more](#)



INSIDE UNISA

The latest achievements and announcements [more](#)

[top](#)

New degree opens doors to 'Australia's Most Attractive' ICT employer

[Back to story index](#)

by Aleisha Johnston



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

UniSA students will have the chance to work for one of Australia's most attractive employers thanks to a new degree in Information Technology (IT) which kicked off at UniSA this year.

The Bachelor of Information Technology (Honours) (Enterprise Business Solutions) program gives all students enrolled the opportunity to undertake a 12 month paid internship with HP, one of the world's largest providers of IT infrastructure, software, services, and solutions.

The company was recently named [Randstad's](#) 'Most Attractive Employer' in the Australian Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Category.

The new degree is the result of a partnership between HP, UniSA and the South Australian Government announced last year.

UniSA's Program Director of IT, Dr Grant Wigley says the new program aims to deliver graduates who are ready for a diverse job market.

"Adelaide is at a stage where our traditional industries like manufacturing are changing so it's important that our graduates are ready for jobs of the future," Dr Wigley says.

"Whether it's working for a global organisation like HP or even in a start-up business, graduates need transferrable skills to succeed in such a changing business landscape."

Nick Wilson, Managing Director of Hewlett-Packard South Pacific says the degree will equip students with the skills, knowledge and experience to forge successful careers in ICT, Australia's fastest growing sector.

"Students today need to learn the technical skills and concepts that reflect the changing needs of the industry. In

collaboration with HP, UniSA has structured a degree that provides not only the technical skills, but the opportunity to develop professional skills and experience through twelve month paid internships," Wilson says.

Student Damien Raines (pictured above), one of the first to study the new degree, says he has already had the opportunity to network with HP as part of the program.

"I met with some of the HP managers as part of my degree and they seemed genuinely excited by the partnership. They really want us to succeed with this program," he says.

"The internship with HP will be an invaluable learning experience and an excellent opportunity to gain real world experience working in the ICT industry. The ICT industry itself is rising in popularity, ranking in the top 10 most attractive industries at the recent 2015 Randstad Awards.

"HP is one of the largest international ICT companies, and to have a globally recognised company on my CV before graduating is a huge confidence booster."

Following his degree, Damien wants to pursue a career in network security, where he will work to protect businesses from threats.

"At the moment my interest lies in computer networking, particularly network security, as this is an area of growing importance for businesses to ensure that their data is secure and protected from threats," he says.

"It has also been identified as an area of potential skill shortage for network security experts, particularly in Australia."

The students will also have the opportunity to take advantage of the UniSA HP Innovation & Collaboration Centre, which is due to open later in the year. The Centre is another initiative stemming from the partnership between UniSA, HP and the South Australian Government, with the goal of driving innovation and ICT business growth in South Australia.

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Putting research in the frame
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From the Chancellery [more](#)

[top^](#)

news

June 2015

> from the University of South Australia

From the Chancellery

[Back to story index](#)


The eve of your next birthday is a great time. It's both a time to reflect on where you've been, but mostly, it is exciting to think about where you're headed.

UniSA is right at that point. Next year will be our 25th anniversary and we're already planning our celebrations. You'll soon notice a new website set up to help celebrate the event. When it's launched at the end of July, it will feature updates on all the 25th anniversary events planned for our campuses next year. It will also feature a timeline of the University's history and the stories that make us what we are today.

Your stories.

You see we have decided that perhaps the most important thing we need to celebrate next year is our people. The website and the 25th anniversary logo will be filled with photographs of all of you.

You will have noticed the photo booths recently on campuses and we are hoping all of you took the opportunity to "get in the picture" for our anniversary. And we want your stories too. We want you to load that website with anecdotes, memories, observations and your thoughts about the University and its past and present success.

Celebrating milestones should always be about acknowledging commitment, dedication and the people who have made the journey to where we are so vibrant and successful.

At UniSA that is our brilliant researchers, compelling teachers, eager students and super professionals, all of whom have made UniSA more than just their workplace.

There is always the sense in this University, of a deep personal commitment to the vital role of education in society.

Today UniSA is considered one of the world's best universities under the age of 50 by the world's two top rankings agencies; we're number one in South Australia for the employment rate of our graduates and almost half of South Australia's annual cohort of school leavers choose us to help start them on their chosen career

paths.

Being young and successful allows us to focus on the future where innovation and creativity, combined with knowledge, will deliver economic growth. And while we're focused on continuing our success, we won't ever walk away from our commitment to equity in education.

We can all be proud of our achievements. But rather than just celebrating an anniversary by taking in the past, what I hope the 25th anniversary will be for staff, students and our friends is an inspiration for future growth and success.

Professor David Lloyd
Vice Chancellor and President

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[more](#)

[top^](#)



news

June 2015

> from the University of South Australia

Achievements and Announcements

[Back to story index](#)
[Vice Chancellor's term of appointment extended until 2022](#)
[New CRC node extends South Australia's expertise in low carbon living](#)
[Narrowing in on nanosafety](#)
[Student innovators secure \\$50,000 in funding](#)
[A win for water security](#)
[An insight on Intercultural Adelaide](#)

Vice Chancellor's term of appointment extended until 2022

UniSA Chancellor Dr Ian Gould confirmed last month that the University has extended the contract of UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd (pictured right) until 2022.

Making the announcement, Dr Gould said that Prof Lloyd had initiated an exciting period of fundamental transformation and renewal at UniSA that had reinvigorated the campus experience for students and significantly expanded international research and industry partnerships.

"During a period of significant external higher education policy uncertainty, David has brought a bold new vision and vigour to the University and we are delighted that he has agreed to make a long-term commitment to the change process outlined in our strategic action plan, Crossing the Horizon," Dr Gould said.

Dr Gould said Prof Lloyd's determination to challenge the status quo and forge new relationships and endeavours since his appointment in 2013, was a leadership quality much respected in the institution and the wider community in South Australia and beyond.

Prof Lloyd said that when he brought his young family to live in Adelaide he immediately knew this would be his home for some time and that leading the evolution of UniSA was a uniquely fortunate opportunity.

"UniSA is an exciting example of how a modern and enterprising university should be – how it should be forever young in spirit – and I'm looking forward to the coming years in this role where I have the great fortune to steer its course for the future," Prof Lloyd said.

For more information, go to the related statement at UniSA's [media centre](#).

New CRC node extends South Australia's expertise in low carbon living

Empowering industry, government, academia and the wider community to work together to reduce carbon emissions is the focus of a new research node of the Cooperative Research Centre for Low Carbon Living (CRCLCL), which was launched in Adelaide last month.

With more than a \$1.1million joint investment from UniSA and the CRCLCL, the Node of Excellence will be the State's premier research hub for multidisciplinary research and innovation into the technologies, urban design, construction and building renovation, consumer choice and energy systems integration that underpin a reduction in carbon emissions.

The investment will also fund up to five higher degree research positions.

Launching the node, UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Innovation, Professor Tanya Monro (pictured below right) said the node would provide fantastic



UniSA Vice Chancellor
Professor David Lloyd.



opportunities to expand postgraduate research into what will become industries of the future. Low carbon living at Lochiel Park.

“To limit the impact of climate change, it is not enough to develop new technologies in isolation,” Prof Monro said.

“We also need to empower communities to adopt low-carbon housing solutions via advances in energy and planning policy. By bringing together emerging technologies with policy frameworks that reduce barriers to renewable energy, this CRC promises to make a deep impact and bring the concept of sustainability to low-cost housing.”

Director of UniSA’s Barbara Hardy Research Institute, Professor Wasim Saman said the node in South Australia was especially significant because it capitalised on the great amount of work being done locally to address the challenges of human’s contribution to climate change.

“Locally the issue of climate change mitigation is very much on the agenda with the State Government outlining a clear direction for change and innovation,” Prof Saman said.

“The research we do in here, focusing UniSA’s expertise on real-world technical and planning challenges, will have wide scale application for the nation, particularly in support of sustainable new urban developments and regeneration projects.”

CRCLCL Chief Executive Officer, Professor Deo Prasad said the Node of Excellence would draw on and expand the research program of the Adelaide Living Laboratory (ALL). Already supported by the CRCLCL, the ALL developments at Lochiel Park, Tonsley and Bowden are modelling the transition to low carbon impact urban environments.

For more information, see the related [media release](#).

Narrowing in on nanosafety

Existing between one and 100 nanometers in size, nanoparticles, also known as nanotechnology, have the potential to revolutionise many products, from consumer goods to medical treatments, but little is known about their safety.

To address the lack of knowledge, UniSA recently hosted a nanosafety workshop which was designed to bring a diverse range of researchers together to examine the safety, impact and ethical implications of nanotechnology in humans, animals and the environment.

UniSA’s Professor Nico Voelcker said nanoparticles had been getting a lot of attention recently but it was also important to consider the wider implications of the emerging technology.

“There is currently a lot of hype around nanoparticles and their use. But the safety around using this new technology is something that is yet to be fully uncovered which is causing concern among some interest groups,” Prof Voelcker said.

“We want to reduce the polar opinions on nanoparticles, and avoid what has happened with genetically modified foods for example, where the public had concerns about whether they were safe for consumption.

“For nanotechnology to truly advance in society, it is important that we continue to evaluate the safety implications of this emerging technology in the public view.”

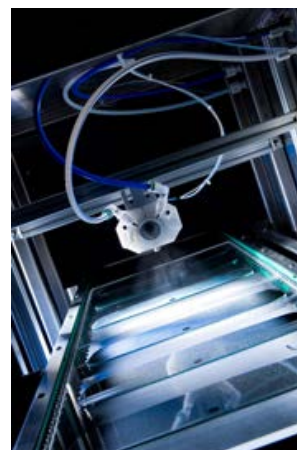
UniSA Research Professor Enzo Lombi said the workshop brought together key stakeholders to discuss what kind of considerations need to be made when working with nanoparticles.

“No one has brought this group of stakeholders together like this before. Through the workshop we were able to bring together a mixture of senior researchers, industry, regulators and students to look at the issues from a non-biased perspective,” Prof Lombi said.

With support from a State Government Premier’s Research and Industry Fund grant, the workshop was the first of its kind to discuss nanosafety,



Professor Tanya Monro launching the new research node of the CRC for Low Carbon Living at Lochiel Park.



with more than 20 speakers, including delegates from Germany, Italy and the United States.

UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation Professor Tanya Monro, and South Australia's Chief Scientist Professor Leanna Read opened the workshop and guests heard from a number of key speakers including Professor Kirk Scheckel from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Student innovators secure \$50,000 in funding

Two UniSA students have secured funding from the State Government and UniSA to further develop their cutting-edge innovations – a new container closure technology and a 3D holographic display that can be used in both the video gaming industry or manufacturing and hardware marketing and sales.

Will Tamblyn, developer of Voxiebox, and Simon Schmidt, UniSA Master of Business Administration student and managing director of the beverage innovation company, Vinnovate, will each be awarded \$50,000 as part of the latest grants in the Venture Catalyst program.



The teams from Vinnovate and Voxiebox.

Now in its second year, the Venture Catalyst program is a UniSA and State Government initiative to support students to start up new businesses and develop new products.

Congratulating UniSA's student winners Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd said their drive to research and develop products that are solutions-focused was a great example of how education would fuel future prosperity and innovation.

"These students have looked at what is needed and applied their learning, knowledge and creativity to finding solutions and developing the next advances in technology," Prof Lloyd said.

"Schemes like this important partnership with the SA Government to support that enterprise and creativity are invaluable in supporting our brightest and best to deliver those innovations in this State."

Science and Information Economy Minister Gail Gago said the program was invaluable in supporting creative people to achieve great things.

"This program encourages would-be entrepreneurs to start businesses, develop products and reach world-wide markets," Gago said.

"We want to demonstrate how becoming an entrepreneur can be a rewarding experience – one that can open new doors, new partnerships and access new markets both locally and abroad."

For more information, go to the related [media release](#).

A win for water security

A South Australia-based, demand-driven research organisation, which taps into the expertise of water researchers across the State, has taken out a national award for its work to protect one of the nation's most valuable resources.

The Goyder Institute for Water Research, a partnership between the South Australian Government, UniSA, CSIRO, Flinders University and the University of Adelaide, was awarded the National Research Innovation Award at the Australian Water Association Awards last month.



Professor Simon Beecham, UniSA Pro Vice Chancellor of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment, said the award acknowledged the innovative work the Institute undertakes to address one of the most critical issues of our time.

"The future of our state, and our nation, depends on developing sustainable water solutions and this is where the Goyder Institute's strengths lie," he said.

"Truly collaborative in nature, the Goyder Institute takes a problem and brings together a team of experts to provide a solution and we are proud to have been a part of that partnership since the Institute's inception.

"Our researchers at UniSA have contributed enormously to the research conducted at the Institute in a wide range of areas, from developing innovative Water Sensitive Urban Designs that can be incorporated in our city

planning and building, right through to the role water markets play in climate change adaptation.

“This award is a credit to all the researchers involved in the Institute.”

UniSA researchers have contributed to a number of key projects at the Goyder Institute, including the recently completed Climate Ready SA project, which UniSA led. The seven million dollar project has produced the most comprehensive set of downscaled climate projections data ever available in South Australia.

Climate Ready SA recently took out the Minister’s Award for Excellence in Water Sustainability in the South Australian Water Industry Alliance Smart Water Awards and data from the project has already been used for a number of applications, including modelling reservoir inflows and assessing the impacts of changing groundwater levels of wetland systems.

Since its establishment in 2010, The Goyder Institute for Water Research has delivered economic benefits for South Australians into the hundreds of millions of dollars based on an investment of just \$25 million from the South Australian Government.

An insight on Intercultural Adelaide

What makes a society operate in peace, harmony and prosperity – luck, goodwill, strategy and legislation, or a combination of factors?

It’s a question that will be high on the agenda as UniSA’s International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding, joins with the Government of South Australia and the University of Adelaide to consider the significance of diversity in our community at the InterculturAdelaide summit in July.

The summit will also consider how we engage with high levels of diversity among our Asian neighbours, including in India, China and Southeast Asia.

The summit is embedded in the Ninth International Convention of Asia Scholars (July 5-9) at the Adelaide Convention Centre, the largest Asia-oriented event ever held in Australia and set to bring up to 1000 participants to Adelaide from more than 50 countries.

Summit convenor UniSA’s Dr Amrita Malhi says it offers an important local focus within the wider conference program.

“InterculturAdelaide will look at a range of topics from how migration has built both cultural and economic capital, to how Australians can embed adaptability and openness into their social and cultural landscape,” Dr Malhi says.

The summit will feature panel discussions and a series of open ideas laboratories on key policy areas including education and research, sports and tourism, food and wine, health and other services and the cluster of strategies around inclusion, cohesion, resilience and countering radicalisation.

Keynote speakers include Professor Prasenjit Duara from the National University of Singapore, Hon. Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad from the Selangor State Executive Council and State Assembly in Malaysia, and Professor Gary Bouma from Monash University, who will examine the relevance of religious and secular diversity and interculturality in our region.

For more information on the summit, go the [flyer](#) (PDF).



The InterculturAdelaide summit.

[top^](#)

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The moral and emotional landscape of jury duty

[Back to story index](#)

by Associate Professor Julia Davis



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Associate Professor Julia Davis, based in UniSA's School of Law, is working with a group of researchers on the Australia Research Council-funded National Jury Sentencing Study, which is investigating public attitudes to sentences imposed by courts. In this month's Research Spotlight column, she shares some of the findings from two recent studies, which involved surveying and interviewing 100 jurors in Tasmania and Victoria.

The prevailing idea, driven by the media and politics, that the public has a punitive attitude when it comes to criminal justice could very well be a myth. That's one of the most surprising results from our research into the jury experience.

Ninety per cent of the juror respondents we surveyed said the judge's sentence in their case was either 'fairly appropriate' or 'very appropriate' – a response that contrasts markedly with the results of more general public opinion surveys, which show that when people are asked to assess sentencing levels, between 70 and 80 per cent reply that criminal sentencing is too lenient.

And while you might expect jurors to commonly feel anger during their jury service experience, particularly in relation to the offender, the reality is also very different. There was very little anger among the 100 jurors we interviewed – most expressed no anger at all and their attitudes to the offenders in their cases were often dominated by sorrow, sympathy and compassion.

In fact, anger was often replaced by sentiments of hope – hope for the future of the offender, hope that the system would rescue them rather than punish them, and hope that the system would help to rehabilitate them and encourage them to re-join the community and not to reoffend.

Our research allowed us to go beyond the myths about the criminal justice system, and the preconceived ideas about what jury service is like, and reveal instead how everyday people react to their jury experience and feel

about sentencing once they have seen the system first hand.

Many people dread the call for jury service because of the disruptions it can cause in both private and professional life. Others look forward to the experience because criminal law is one of the most publicly visible and interesting aspects of the legal system.

Regardless of how prospective jurors anticipate their jury service, in the end most people find their experience to be worthwhile and absorbing. Even in cases where the evidence is disturbing and the trial is time consuming and difficult, jurors tell us they appreciate the opportunity to see the criminal justice system in action.

Jury service is a solemn undertaking because it requires jurors to judge and potentially condemn another human being. Jurors are well aware that their decision could change the course of another person's life and this power over another can become a burden during the course of the trial, especially when the time for their deliberations draws nearer and they realise that their decision could put the accused person behind bars.

It is a heavy burden that in most cases people would rather not undertake, and it is a task that they are not trained for.

Across the process of a trial, we found that jurors experience a range of positive and negative emotions. The emotions change as they go through the process of reporting for jury duty, being selected and sworn in, listening to the lawyers and witnesses, taking in the judge's directions, deliberating on the verdict and then delivering the verdict.

Jurors are often surprised when they realise that a real trial is nothing like the version that is presented on television.

They get frustrated because they want to be certain of their verdict, but the trial (and sometimes the lawyers and witnesses) may seem to be hiding the truth from them. Some jurors can also become distressed because the evidence might be gruesome or highly disturbing – and some of the people we interviewed described being traumatised by the experience and confused by their conflicting emotions of empathy for victims and sympathy for the offenders.

The trial and the looming decision can take its toll on jurors, preoccupying them during the day and disturbing their sleep at night, and the fact that jurors are not allowed to talk about the case with their friends and partners can also make them feel cut off from their usual support mechanisms.

Jurors are not experts in the law but they are being asked to make a very important decision governed by intricate rules. The legal terminology and formalities of the trial can be confusing and between moments of tension and concentration, jurors can also become bored and frustrated. Some say the process is often time wasting and tedious, while others appreciate that while it is slow and laborious, it is also fair, rigorous and balanced.

Once jurors are in the jury room there are no accepted processes to guide their decision making, and many find the lack of structure for their deliberations maddening, especially when jurors with different decision-making styles and viewpoints clash.

Jurors are often frustrated because they are asked to make a black and white decision, but all they can see are shades of grey. Some jurors find it almost impossible to bring themselves to convict because of the serious consequences of a verdict of guilty, especially when they feel sympathy for the accused – or see their partners, children or parents supporting them in the courtroom.

They are confronted by their feelings of sympathy for the accused who may not look the way they expected a 'real criminal' to look. It makes the decision more difficult when the jurors recognise that the accused is a real human being who has done the wrong thing, and is not the evil criminal of their imagination.

The moment of the verdict is an intensely emotional time for many jurors, who report that they were shaking, their heartbeat increased, and they felt tearful – even though they may have been wholly convinced of the guilt of the accused. Others report a sense of unease, even guilt, or a feeling that they have somehow been tainted by being deeply involved at the heart of the criminal justice process that deals with such unpleasant matters and condemns other members of the community to punishment.

The good news is that while jury service can sometimes feel like an ordeal, it can also be a process that people find interesting and inspiring.

Despite the fact jury service is an emotional experience, jurors are well aware that they should dispassionately weigh the evidence logically and with an open mind, and not according to their passions or feelings. This

realisation, and the support of other jurors, helps jurors overcome their initial reluctance to decide on another person's fate.

They take pride in doing their job well and find it useful to remind themselves of the bigger picture and the obligation that they have to do justice according to law.

The jurors we spoke to – even those who hated some aspects of their jury service – used a number of positive words to describe their experience, including fascinating, enjoyable, rewarding, heartening, amazing, and even marvellous.

Many report coming away impressed with the whole system and looking forward to serving on a jury again. There is a sense from jurors that they are there to make the community safer and uphold community standards.

Prospective jurors are in for a very interesting and sometimes very challenging experience. The juror's task is a serious one – it is one of the rare times in a person's life when they must make a solemn oath and promise to carry out their duty faithfully.

They should take pride in their role of serving as representatives of the community who bring their common sense experience of life into the courtroom. After all, regardless of all the rules and regulations it contains, the law is also a very human instrument and a juror's part is to give the law that human face.

Supporting jurors on jury duty

Taking part in jury service can be an overwhelming experience and jurors, sworn to secrecy, are unable to rely on their normal support networks such as family and friends. According to Associate Professor Julia Davis, jurors, for the most part, support each other throughout the trial, however her research has revealed that many jurors would like access to extra support from a counsellor in the weeks after the trial and verdict.

While most jurisdictions in Australia provide counselling services to jurors on request, not all jurisdictions publicise this fact widely. Most Australian jurisdictions also provide orientation material to jurors in video-form on their first day of service and supplement it with written material, such as a booklet or handbook.

Based on the results of her research, Assoc Prof Davis says there are several ways for courts, lawyers and judges to assist jurors in their task, including:

- Treat jurors with respect and consideration
- Provide explanations about what is taking place during the trial and clarify the concepts and matters that are likely to lead to misunderstandings and misperceptions
- Provide better information in varying formats to jurors about jury selection, criminal trials and the deliberation process
- Assist the deliberation process with aids such as issues tables and question trails
- Protect jurors from concerns about privacy and intimidation
- Encourage juries to take their time in their deliberations and treat each other with respect, bearing in mind that different people have different decision-making styles.

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**University of
South Australia**

The wake-up call that is European Climate Diplomacy Day

[Back to story index](#)

by Will Venn



COMMUNITY

When it comes to climate change it's almost last chance saloon for the international community to act together and stop the slide into potential irreversible global warming.

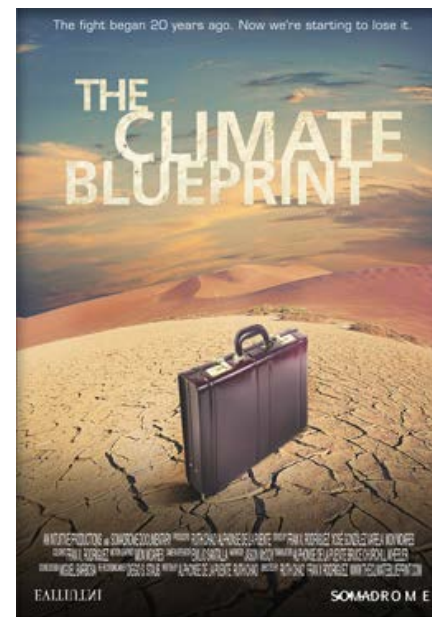
This is one of the messages that Dr Constance Lever-Tracy, climate change specialist, and Adjunct Research Fellow at the Hawke Research Institute, makes clear on the eve of European Climate Diplomacy Day.

On June 17 simultaneous climate awareness events will take place across the world, encouraged by the European Union (EU), as it seeks to raise awareness of climate change issues and to stimulate informed debate ahead of the United Nations (UN) Conference on Climate Change taking place in Paris in December.

Contributing to the initiative, UniSA's Hawke EU Centre for Mobilities, Migrations and Cultural Transformations, in partnership with the EU Centre for Global Affairs at the University of Adelaide, will host its own European Climate Diplomacy Day event which will see speakers including Dr Lever-Tracy explore the impacts of climate change.

It's a subject which chimes with the aims of the Centre as it seeks to develop dialogue and cooperation between the European community and Australia – particularly related to the migration and displacement of vulnerable people – an obvious side effect of extreme climate change and its capacity to invoke natural disasters.

The event will include expert panel discussion, involving representatives from the business and scientific community, Australian political leaders, as well as a European representative. There will also be a screening of the documentary *The Climate Blueprint* which depicts the multiple rounds of international negotiations on climate change that have taken place over the last 20 years.



For Dr Lever-Tracy, the documentary is akin to being on a white knuckle ride.

“Watching it felt like a dangerous roller coaster, in which again and again failure was averted at the last minute, and the hard decisions were not abandoned but constantly postponed,” Dr Lever-Tracy says.

“After each round the scientific evidence continued to accumulate of increasing anthropogenic global warming, caused mainly by the burning of fossil fuels, and of its contribution to dangerous climate change and catastrophic climate disasters, not only in the distant future but already manifest.”

When it comes to outlining what the dangers are associated with climate change, Dr Lever-Tracy dispenses without any vague generalities.

“There is global scientific agreement that to avoid the worst, including possible tipping points and irreversible runaway warming, global temperature rise must be limited to at most two degrees above pre-industrial times – the product of a maximum 450 parts per million of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere,” she says.

“To stay within the two degree limit, the world must cap its total accumulated emissions to 565 gigatons of CO₂.

“Currently available fossil fuel holdings are enough to produce 2795 gigatons, five times the scientific limit. Meanwhile global subsidies for fossil fuel companies are estimated at \$5.3 trillion – \$10 million every minute – 6.5 percent of global gross domestic product, according to the International Monetary Fund.

“The same sums, if redirected, could establish an alternative, renewable global energy system.

“The main obstacles to a solution are not technological but political and economic, above all the narrow parameters of market mechanisms and the political power exerted by big corporations in support of their short term interests.”

But it's not all bad news. Dr Lever-Tracy says that divestment movements, led by college students, faith-based and philanthropic organisations, have taken off rapidly, especially in the wake of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in 2009.

“By the end of 2013 there were divestment commitments from more than 70 campuses, churches, cities, hospitals, pension funds, charitable foundations and environmental groups around the world,” Dr Lever-Tracy says.

“By September 2014 commitments had more than doubled again, coming from those controlling over \$50 billion in assets. These include the Rockefeller family, the World Council of Churches, and many universities.”

Public commitment and involvement is also emphasised by Professor Anthony Elliott, Executive Director of the Hawke EU Centre.

“In the aftermath of the failures of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, the global realities of changing climates and their associated catastrophes demands public attention – and as never before,” Prof Elliott says.

“Dialogue between Australia and the EU in this context is crucial, and should encompass the full range of options – most fundamentally, economic and energy security interests, technology, state intervention as well as robust discussion of the limitations of the formal international climate negotiations.

“The Hawke EU Centre at UniSA is examining the climate problem from a variety of standpoints; historical, sociological, financial and geo-political.

“We are seeking to promote active public political debate in this area between Australia and the wider region and Europe.”

The EU Centres at the University of South Australia and the University of Adelaide are supported by the

European Commission.

For more information on the European Climate Diplomacy Day event go to the [website](#).

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Art of deception needed to prove dry needling works

[Back to story index](#)

by Peter Krieg



INSIDE UNISA

One of UniSA’s brightest new PhD students will look to the skills of magicians to help design better research into dry needling – a western form of acupuncture.

While dry needling is increasingly popular in the physiotherapy and allied health fields, the technique lacks solid proof of effectiveness and part of the problem is that it’s hard to test because of the difficulty in creating a convincing placebo.

So how can researchers fool study participants into thinking they are having needles stuck into their skin? It’s this question that Vice Chancellor and President’s Scholarship recipient Felicity Braithwaite (pictured right) is tackling in her PhD, and finding an answer will require tapping into the art of deception.



“Dry needling involves needling and palpating tight, sore spots called myofascial trigger points to bring pain relief and promote healing,” Felicity says.

“It’s not the same as acupuncture – it uses the same needles but a different philosophy, with an emphasis on responding to clinical findings.

“At the moment, dry needling hasn’t been conclusively proven beyond placebo, which is a big problem because there are lots of people using it, including many South Australian physiotherapy clinics, and there are potential ethical concerns if the technique is not proven.

“To run strong studies we need to develop a fake dry needling technique, which we call a ‘sham’, to convince study participants that they are receiving the real thing. At the moment there is no standard sham.

“It’s a bit like a placebo in a drug trial – we need the sham to be able to conduct proper blinded studies around

dry needling.

“The goal of my research is to develop sham guidelines, achieve a consensus among experts on the best sham, and then test it out.”

This is where Felicity hopes famous magicians will come into the picture to contribute valuable expertise on how to fool people.

“We’re looking to approach well-known magicians who we hope can give us a unique perspective on ways to deceive people,” Felicity says.

“It might be small visual cues, like maybe leaving a toothpick in sight on a table to fool people into thinking they’re getting the sham. It might be ways to set up the room, things to say to people, their positioning, and how to perform the fake technique.

“I actually don’t know what the magicians will offer up.

“In previous shams, researchers have focused on sensation. We think the whole simulation experience is important, from when participants enter the room to when they leave.”

Adding further challenge to Felicity’s project is a need to mimic the actual sensations of dry needling.

“The needles penetrate the skin and go deep into muscle tissue. Some people don’t feel anything, whereas others feel some sensation,” she says.

“We need to mimic these sensations, ideally without producing any physiological reaction. However, sham needling involves mimicking real needle sensations like pricking and pain which could, for example, cause opioids to be released into the blood. How can we effectively fake these sensations without getting a bodily response?

“It’s very complex, which perhaps explains why previous research approaches have been inconsistent.”

Felicity completed a Bachelor of Physiotherapy with Honours last year, during which she conducted a small dry needling study. This, she says, inspired her to continue research in the area.

She is one of this year’s Vice Chancellor and President’s Scholarship recipients, an award that recognises the top seven new domestic PhD students and contributes \$10,000 towards their research.

“Almost everything I hear anecdotally about dry needling is positive, but research doesn’t reflect this yet – and this could be a consequence of inconsistent sham methods out there,” she says.

“If I can develop a consensus on the best sham technique, it can be a basis for more consistent dry needling research in the future.

“I’m still planning how to use my scholarship, but it might go towards a trip to Las Vegas to meet with magicians, a trip to China for an acupuncture philosophy perspective, conferences, or perhaps an advanced dry needling course.

“I hope this will help me gain the diversity in perspectives that will assist me to become a leader in the field.

“Any magicians out there who might be interested, please feel free to contact me.”

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**University of
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Fairytale production for UniSA and Tutti

[Back to story index](#)

by Will Venn



COMMUNITY

It was a fairytale setting that saw UniSA drama students and members of the Adelaide-based Tutti Choir team up to deliver a unique stage production of a Brothers Grimm story, *Six Swans*, at The Hartley Playhouse this month.

With 24 third year Performing and Media Arts students collaborating with 40 members of the Tutti Choir, as well as four Tutti soloists, the production provided students with the chance to harness their musical talents while gaining valuable industry experience associated with staging a joint production.

The performance related themes of redemption and forgiveness through the enchanting tale of what happens when a father turns his six sons into swans, after a jug is broken, and how their sister has to work hard to break the curse.

Play director and UniSA performing arts lecturer, Dr Russell Fewster, explained that the production arose following a suggestion by play composer, musician, and UniSA lecturer, Dr Richard Chew.

"Richard has worked on operas and chorus and music for theatre and film, and received a BBC Best Composer nomination for *Six Swans* following a production in the United Kingdom last year," Dr Fewster says.

"His suggestion led to the collaboration with Tutti and it's been really exciting to work with an external, well-regarded industry group that is so socially aware."

Now recognised as one of Australia's leading disability arts organizations, Tutti began in 1997 as a choir and has since grown into a specialised multi art-form centre for artists with a learning disability.

Tutti founder and Artistic Director Pat Rix says Tutti's work is underpinned by a deep community arts practice which seeks to address the social and professional isolation of disabled artists. She adds that collaborative productions like *Six Swans* are an important part of reaching out to the wider world.

"We love art and we hate disadvantage," Rix says.

"The world is not a level playing field and our job is to remove the barriers that prevent people from developing their talent and presenting their work.

"Working with UniSA is a natural collaboration because Tutti's way of working combines applied learning with professional production. *Six Swans* offers a great opportunity to work with two visionary educators, Richard and Russell, who have extensive production experience and a group of passionate students.

"There needs to be more of this because collaborations are vital in terms of supporting new and emerging artists to build and broaden their professional practice.

"Survival in the arts is very much about developing strong creative relationships and growing the networks to both make new work and take existing work further.

"I'd like to think that the bonds created through *Six Swans* will have outcomes for all of the emerging artists involved that go way beyond this performance."

Dr Fewster says the course is structured to replicate working in an industry work space. Students gained valuable experiencing working alongside Tutti's professional production management and costume designers.

"Such industry alignment corresponds with the launch of UniSA's new performing arts major this year which seeks to train the next generation of performance makers and educators," says Dr Fewster.

"For the students it's been a journey. When we first mentioned the idea of opera they said 'we're performers not singers' but it has reached a point now where they are all singing fantastically. It's been a big leap making them aware of what's possible.

"The performance also goes beyond the stereotype of what opera is and that it is more musical theatre; everyone has a voice."

UniSA student Hannah Nicholson, who played the role of the princess, appreciated the opportunity to work as part of an ensemble cast with Tutti.

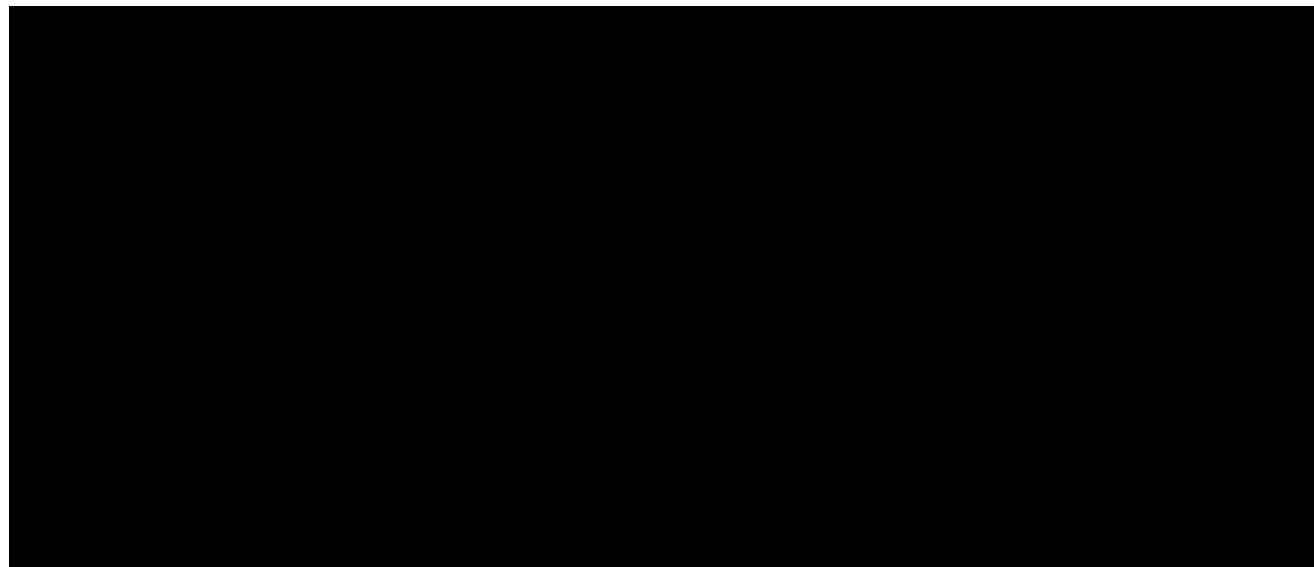
"Acting is something I want to continue with and this has been a different experience, a good experience. I'm a singer but this is definitely something I haven't done before," Hannah says.

'It's a different approach to performing as the singing element makes it more than just delivering dialogue. There is also a big focus on the technical side with Richard playing the score live, accompanied by the chorus, and a strong sense of physical settings.

"It's a whimsical event and it's different from what I believe UniSA usually produces."

The production took place earlier this month at the Hartley Playhouse, Magill campus, with 600 people in attendance. Responses to the performance were positive and empathic, with universal praise for the collaboration between UniSA and Tutti Arts.

Russel Fewster talks about staging the production in the video below.





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Graduate creates social movement to spread smiles

[Back to story index](#)

by Rosanna Galvin



COMMUNITY

Mike Worsman speaking to monk at Schwedagon Pagoda in Myanmar as part of A Million Smiles.

In an age when the news is dominated by terror, war and disasters, one UniSA journalism graduate is going against the tide to pursue one seemingly simple mission: to make people smile.

Motivated by the fact that most adults smile less than 20 times a day while children manage 400, Mike Worsman launched a new social initiative: A Million Smiles, in 2013.

Harnessing the power of social media, A Million Smiles shares heart-warming photos, videos and stories to give people around the world a reason to smile.

Worsman, who was recently named Channel Nine's Young Achiever of the Year in South Australia, says he hopes the project will bring about a social shift, helping people see the value in pursuing happiness, rather than wealth and status.

"Despite being wealthier and more 'connected' than ever, more of us are depressed and lonely," Worsman says.

"The shocking reality is we live in a world which currently sees one person committing suicide every 40 seconds worldwide.

"Through A Million Smiles, we hope people learn to prioritise and value happiness, rather than chase the often-distorted idea of 'success' we're sold, in which status and material wealth are our life's goals.

"A Million Smiles shares stories about people, places and ideas that can inspire humanity to find and practice what makes them smile.

"At its core, A Million Smiles is about getting adults to smile like they used to when they were children."

The social movement is gaining momentum – there are more than 60k fans following the A Million Smiles

Facebook page and the photos and videos produced have already been viewed by more than eight million people from every country on Earth.

A Million Smiles will culminate in a feature film and book, which will take viewers on a journey around the world to find out the secrets to smiling more often.

Worsman says A Million Smiles has a big target to reach – building an audience of 10 million by 2018 – but they are well on the way to hitting it.

“To ensure A Million Smiles achieves its vision, we gave ourselves five years to build an audience of 10 million,” he says.

“This will allow us to approach the biggest film distributors and book publishers with the confidence that they will want to work with us to achieve our goals of a film and a book in the next few years.

“While the last two years have largely been about getting the foundations right, the next two years are about going 'bang'. In order to do this, we’re going to be pushing the envelope.

“We’ve got plans to live stream from Times Square and the Eiffel Tower, and we’re going to head off the beaten track in Africa, India, Afghanistan and more, in the hope of capturing amazing stories and getting ourselves on the biggest talk shows and media platforms we can.”

Since graduating from UniSA in 2007, Worsman says there have been many highlights, from filming a four-year-old boy see his mother’s face for the first time, to dining with the Prime Minister of the smallest country on Earth – Tuvalu.

He credits his studies at the University for equipping him with many of the skills he uses in the project.

“Many of the philosophies and skills I learnt during my time at UniSA have played a part in shaping where I am today,” Worsman says.

“If I look at my life, the things I’ve seen and the stories I’ve been lucky enough to share, it’s hard not to be grateful for every person and institution that has guided me.”

And for university students who are still struggling to find their place in the world, and work out what drives them, Worsman offers this advice:

“All too often I see people, particularly university students, trying to live a life others want for them – whether it’s their parents’ dreams, sacrificing their passion to please others, or simply forgetting why they are here.

“Through A Million Smiles, I’ve seen firsthand that a happy life cannot be bought, or sold; it can only be experienced by individuals daring enough to pursue their inner voice.”

Anyone can contribute photos, videos and stories to the A Million Smiles project.

For more information go to www.amillionsmilesmovie.com.

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Using respect to tackle cyberbullying

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by Will Venn



HUMANITIES

How can social marketing campaigns be used to tackle cyber bullying, change attitudes and promote positive online behaviour among young people?

This is the question that lead researcher on the Safe and Well Online project, Dr Barbara Spears (pictured far right), is seeking to answer, through the innovative use of social media to encourage young people to engage in respectful behaviour online.

The project is part of the national Australian Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre's (CRC) wider aim to promote young people's safety and wellbeing online. UniSA has played a leading partnership role with the CRC in researching this issue over the past three years.

The recent release of Young and Well CRC's Campaign Pilot report, titled *Keep It Tame*, indicates that respect is a key factor in triggering safety and behaviour change in young people, and should be adopted as an underlying principle for future campaigns.

The *Keep it Tame* campaign, which is estimated to have reached 80 per cent of young people aged 12-18 in Australia, was developed to determine how effective social marketing campaigns are in creating attitudinal and behavioural change for those within that age bracket.

UniSA Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr Carmel Taddeo (pictured above Left) says *Keep it Tame* involved a banner ad campaign across a range of popular youth focused websites, from news.com.au to cinemablend.

"The call to action, to *Keep It Tame*, was communicated via a pop-up of an animated mobile phone. Young people then interacted with a video message about respectful behaviour online on a mock social networking site and were provided with proactive strategies," Dr Taddeo says.



Researchers Dr Carmel Taddeo and Dr Barbara Spears.

“These posts enabled viewers to see what happens when social media online exchanges are used negatively. It’s a bit like a choose-your-own adventure and is a subtle nudge for people to engage with the campaign and to make good choices online.

“A real positive was that the campaign resonated well with young people, and this was highlighted in comments such as ‘I did like the campaign because I felt I could relate to it. The people in the video felt how I felt ... and it was all very realistic’.”

The campaign trialled the application of an innovative digital tracking methodology which – in conjunction with a cohort study and market research that surveyed and interviewed young people over a specific period of time – has led to researchers developing a way to measure impact on behaviour change.

Young people were asked about their experiences and views on a range of topics such as wellbeing, internet use and cyberbullying.

Dr Spears says that around 20 per cent of young Australians aged eight to 17 are estimated to be victims of cyberbullying over a 12 month period.

“There is a significant emerging mental health issue with young people in this country. This project uses technology to support young people’s mental health and wellbeing,” Dr Spears says.

“One way of intervening with young people who are using new technology is to use that technology ourselves and to work closely with young people throughout all stages of the research.

“Through the *Keep It Tame* campaign we are targeting social marketing and this marketing is for social good, not for the purpose of trying to sell a product but to sell a message.

“That message is about empowering young people to use technology for positive relationships, wellbeing and health.”

The *Keep it Tame* campaign identified a number of key research outcomes:

- While existing research measures can be used online, they must be streamlined and more engaging to effectively and efficiently facilitate the collection of data for online studies
- Participatory design with young people is essential for creating successful campaigns that aim to connect with this target group
- Young people’s own perceptions of problems and desired change must be considered together with the theory
- Respect was found to be a key factor in triggering safety and wellbeing behaviour change in young people, and should be adopted as an underlying principle for future campaigns.
- “Governments are spending more on targeted social marketing campaigns for social good than ever before,” Dr Spears says.
- “This report provides early evidence of the factors which might contribute to successful social marketing approaches targeted towards young people’s attitudes and behaviours in relation to online safety and wellbeing.
- “This report is also a call to parents to continue to participate in ongoing research: for without their active involvement, and that of their children, there can be no evidence base to support new initiatives, or the evaluation of those initiatives.”

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New Books

[Back to story index](#)

Long live Psychoanalytic Theory

It is not every academic publication that makes it to its third edition, celebrates 20 years in print and is translated into many other languages (in this instance Italian, Korean, and Spanish), but *Psychoanalytic Theory: an Introduction* by UniSA's Professor Anthony Elliott has achieved just that.

The quality of the book and Prof Elliott's insightful presentation and analysis has ensured its continued popularity as a core text for students of the humanities and social sciences.

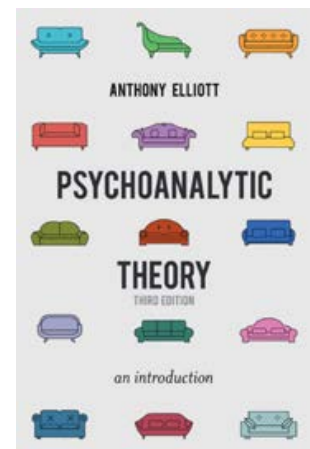
As one of the world's leading social theorists, Prof Elliott not only unpacks the work of leading psychoanalytic theorists from Freud to Laplanche, but also looks at the impact of their ideas and research on politics, culture and society.

The book examines the political and cultural dimensions of psychoanalytic studies from feminism to postmodernism and in this edition includes new material on Lacanian and post Lacanian theory, the post Kleinian psychoanalyst, Wilfred Bion, and deconstructive psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic feminism.

Already receiving exceptional reviews, Regents Professor in the Department of English at the University of Minnesota, Madelon Sprengnether says the book is exceptionally lucid and learned.

"In this comprehensive examination of the richly diverse field of psychoanalysis in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Elliott makes the case for the continuing relevance of psychoanalysis to the humanities and social sciences," Prof Sprengnether says.

Published by Palgrave Macmillan this influential and illuminating book is available in paperback from the [Book Depository](#).



Public policy and sport – is it all fair play?

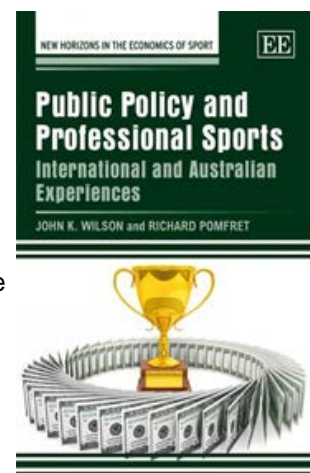
In Australia public spending on sport has risen from under eight million dollars in the 1970s to a huge \$307 million in 2013. There has also been a rise in public interest in professional team sports both in terms of participation and viewing.

The sports sector also attracts a large amount of public attention, from the funding of stadium construction to bidding and staging of mega-events. Yet the manner in which professional sport operates differs from all other industries.

In the sports sector, labour markets are tightly regulated with restrictions over player wages and movement that would not be tolerated in other sectors of the economy. The sector is also increasingly affected by corruption and doping scandals such as the latest scandal involving the arrest of seven Fédération Internationale de Football (FIFA) officials.

It is these unique public policy issues surrounding sport that are the focus of *Public Policy and Professional Sports: International and Australian Experiences* co-authored by UniSA senior lecturer and economist, Dr John Wilson and Professor Richard Pomfret from the University of Adelaide.

The book addresses a range of issues, from rationale for public funding and regulatory exemptions, right through to antitrust and labour market laws, and unethical behaviour and governance.



Dr Wilson says governments at all levels direct funding towards elite sports.

“Governments around the world bid for mega-events, such as the FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games,” he says.

“When successful they pay large sums to build infrastructure in order to host these events, but international governing bodies of sports capture almost all of the direct gains. Estimates suggest FIFA netted profits of \$US5 billion from the Brazil World Cup alone.

“Governments also heavily fund stadium development, which is the major input to most professional team sports.”

According to Dr Wilson, the rationale for all the public spending, as per any form of government spending, is that private markets will under-supply these goods. He says benefits such as participation in sport and the economic activity generated, such as tourism, external to these transactions also give a potential rationale for government subsidies.

“There are a number of perceived public benefits that justify the public spending on sport, particularly around health. Watching sport is thought to spark interest and participation in sport which leads to a number of health and productivity benefits in the community,” Dr Wilson says.

“There is also what we might call ‘warm glow’ effects that may arise from success of a team, or from hosting mega events such as the Olympic Games.

“Spending on these mega events is also seen to have economic benefits from both the construction process itself, and the hosting of the event which tends to boost other sectors like tourism and hospitality.

“However in our book, we highlight that almost without exception ex-post modelling suggests that significant public spending on sport does not actually have positive net effects for the economy overall – nor are the health benefits of this type of spending likely to exceed direct investment in grassroots sport.

“While there is little doubt that certain groups benefit from the construction of stadiums or the hosting of mega-events, the economic analysis suggests that the case for the majority of this to be funded at tax-payer expense is extremely weak.”

In recent years, Australia spent \$43 million in an unsuccessful bid for FIFA World Cup – a bid that prompted the Greens party to demand an (unsuccessful) senate enquiry. Dr Wilson says there is a strong interplay between domestic special interest politics, governments and world governing bodies of sport which lead to exuberant bidding by potential hosts.

“As a general rule, mega events like the FIFA World Cup tend to be funded by taxpayers of the host nation while most of the direct gains accrue to the governing bodies of the sport,” he says.

“The bidding processes are non-transparent and under a cloud of speculation over corrupt practices.”

Published by Edward Elgar, *Public Policy and Professional Sports: International and Australian Experiences* is available for purchase on the publisher’s [website](#).

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Supermarket price deals: the good, the bad and the ugly

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by Svetlana Bogomolova, Pei Jie Tan and Steven Dunn



THE CONVERSATION

On first glance, it seems that supermarkets are offering consumers great deals these days.

Many do save us money and majority of consumers manage the task of judging the value of a deal.

However, our new [research](#) shows confusion among some consumers about how much they're saving through price promotions. One in four consumers misjudge the value of the deals offered and the most vulnerable shoppers are most likely to be left out of pocket.

Our analysis across 23 product categories in five retail chains of the UK and the US shows that between [30 - 50%](#) of supermarket sales in developed countries are bought on some form of deal. With such high prevalence, it is important we all develop the numeracy skills needed to tell a good deal from a bad one.

A deal is not always a saving

There are deal types ranging from "20% off" to "buy one get one free" and even "lowest prices guaranteed". However, consumer advocates say supermarket price promotions can mislead consumers.

UK consumer advocacy group [Which?](#) has just launched an unprecedented "[super-complaint](#)" to the UK [Competition and Markets Authority](#) against supermarkets' misleading price promotions.

We wanted to understand just how confusing some of these practices are to consumers. We conducted a [study](#) using two representative samples from the US (1016 consumers) and Australia (607 consumers).

It showed that while the majority judged the promotions correctly, a quarter of customers miscalculated the value of the deals on offer.

"Buy one, get the second of equal or lower value half price" caused the most difficulty for consumers. Almost half

of the US and a quarter of Australian consumers surveyed wrongly estimated the maximum they could save on the total purchase. (The answer is up to 25% off.)

Younger and lower income consumers tend to have the most difficulties in understanding the offer. Yet they are the consumers who would benefit the most from making sound purchase decisions.

And it's easy to understand why anyone could have trouble doing the maths required to understand the price promotion in front of them, especially with all the time pressure, visual clutter and multi-tasking involved in doing a weekly shop.

Our study participants analysed prices under the best possible conditions – with no time pressure, and no interruptions – and we still found that common deals confused some shoppers.

For example, 36% of the US and 24% of the Australian consumers could not calculate which offer would be cheaper for a \$4 loaf of bread – “45 cents off” or “15% off”. (Answer: the latter.)

New tactics

Tough competition amongst manufacturers and retailers means more promotions for consumers and more opportunities to save. Yet, a downside of this competition is that it also pushes the industry to constantly invent new types of promotions and novel ways of communication to cut through the competitive clutter.

The most [prevalent](#) types of deal are “Price Off” (eg “30% off” or “\$1 off” normal price), which accounts for around 25% of all offers. This is closely followed by “multi buy” or “X for \$Y” deals, representing around 19% of all offers.

The complexity of the information on the point-of-purchase signage is also increasing.

Our [audit](#) of price promotion signage across 10 product categories revealed up to six numerical pieces of information located on just one sign. This may include retail price for loyalty members and non-members, unit price for members and non-members, savings for members, past reference price (before the discount) and deal expiry date.

All the above suggests consumers are faced with a varied and large amount of price promotion information in supermarkets.

Tips for the critical shopper

Price promotion signs give consumers the license not to pay close attention to the actual information on the sign and to what degree it represents a real saving.

Here are some ways consumers can critically assess deals on offer:

- Remember that discounts vary widely, so some “deals” may actually only save a few cents.
- Consider the prices of alternatives (sometimes the promo price is still dearer than the price offered by acceptable competitors or the same brand in a different pack size);
- Remember that buying the “every day low price” or “locked down low price” deal results in no real savings on the day.
- Don't forget that different colour-coded product tags attract attention but may not offer actual savings (for example, the promo sign may say “new” but offer no discount)
- Multi-buy offers may result in people buying more than they need and increases the potential for over-consumption and/or wastage;
- Some inventive promotions confuse the consumer with the use of verbal cues such as “special” and “sale” – make sure you check whether or not such items truly are being discounted
- Price discounts can be for loyalty card members only, meaning the non-members and those who forgot to use the card will have to pay the full price.

Australian consumer advocates, CHOICE, and their UK counterpart, Which?, have also been reporting [examples](#) of clearly misleading promotions.

Where to from here?

There are three areas where action is needed.

First, best practice guidelines for the retail industry need to be developed on how to clearly communicate price

promotion information. In the United States, the National Institute of Standards and Technology recently developed [A Best Practice Approach to Unit Pricing](#). This is a document and extensive network of seminars and podcasts rolled out across all the US states on how to present the unit price information on point-of-sale signs.

Second, regulators should consult widely with researchers, retailers and consumer advocate groups to identify those price promotion practices that need tighter rules to avoid misleading consumers.

Third, education programs aimed at improving consumer literacy, particularly amongst young and low income groups, could be incorporated into the existing national curriculum on financial literacy.

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[top](#)



In Pictures

[Back to story index](#)



From bush food tastings to the inaugural UniSA Reconciliation Lecture, UniSA celebrated this year's National Reconciliation Week with a range of events across all campuses. Photo credit: The Border Watch. .



Associate Professor in Engineering Innovation David Cropley featured in the new series of Redesign My Brain on ABC1 last month. David, pictured (right) with show host Todd Sampson, is featured in this first episode looking at aspects of mental flexibility, adaptive reasoning, fluid intelligence and problem solving.



First year Nutrition and Food Science students undertook a lentil cook off last month in the lead up to the United Nations International Year of the Pulse next year. Lecturer Dr Evangeline Mantzioris says lentils are low fat, high fibre, and rich in protein and phytonutrients.

[top^](#)

