

CHASS Newsletter

Issue 84 February 2015

From the Executive Director's Desk



In a well-known [paper](#), Dr Iain Chalmers, former director of the UK-based Cochrane Centre, tackles the question of how to do more good than harm when providing professional advice and developing public policies.

There is no denying that public policies and practice sometimes produce harm. Chalmers cites several examples. The whole language approach to reading instruction, eschewing phonics, led to poor learning outcomes in many children. Programs designed to reform juvenile delinquents (“scared straight”) actually had the opposite effect; they led to increased offending. Advising new parents to put their babies to sleep on their stomachs led to thousands of sudden infant deaths. These are salutary reminders that professional opinions and policies are not always backed up by carefully collected evidence.

Evidence-based policy is certainly not the norm in Australia. Do “anti-bikie” laws reduce organised crime? Does banning “alcopops” reduce alcohol-related injuries? Does publishing the price of petrol reduce fuel costs? All three policies were implemented with little evidence to demonstrate that they do more good than harm.

What can be done to change this, to make policy and practice evidence-based? Some have argued that what Australia needs is a Chief Social Scientist to provide the government with unbiased advice. The occupant of such a position could inform the policy-making process and also serve as a bridge between the social science academic community and government.

The question “Does Australia Need a Chief Social Scientist?” will be debated at the forthcoming CHASS Forum, which will be held in Melbourne on 15 and 16 October. Come along and join the discussion. If you cannot be there, drop us a line and let us know what you think.

Emeritus Professor Steven Schwartz AM

Nominations open - 2015 CHASS Australia Prizes

We are pleased to announce that nominations for the 2015 Australia Prizes are now open.

The CHASS Australia Prizes are designed to honour distinguished achievements by Australians working, studying or training in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) areas, including academics, practitioners, philanthropists, policy makers and students. This year, four prizes will be given out. Two cash prizes of **\$3,500** each are sponsored by Routledge: one for a **Book** and the second for **Distinctive Work**. A cash prize of **\$2,000** sponsored by Future Leaders is for a **Future Leader**. The Co-Op has sponsored the fourth prize valued at **\$500** for a **Student**.

- No application or submission fees for any category
- Self-nominations are welcome
- Simply fill an online form to apply/nominate

New CHASS website is here

[Our website](#) has a fresh look! We encourage you to visit and explore it, and we hope you will enjoy it.

And while you are there, please let us know [what you think](#). We are proud of it; however, there's still work to do. In the coming months, we will continue to improve the site so that it best serves how we communicate with you.

Get Social!

For regular updates about us and the HASS sector, please follow/like us:



Feel free to take part in the discussion and share the updates with your social media networks. Have something interesting about HASS to share? Let us know and we can help spread the word around.

HASS Your Say: A City Alive

Adelaide in February and March is a city alive; an exhilarating place to be!

It's arts festival time and the city is physically and psychically altered, albeit temporarily. She's a grand ol' dame and one gets the sense that she enjoys the dressing and undressing necessary for transformation into a cultural playground.

The streets, laneways, buildings and parks - and every kind of space in between - explode with creativity, ideas and passion as the Adelaide Festival, Adelaide Fringe, WOMADelaide, Adelaide Writer's Week and Soundwave bring artists, thinkers and audiences from around the nation and the world into South Australia for a month-long cultural celebration.

At no other time is Adelaide so actively engaged in the social and cultural experiences that elevate us all beyond the daily routine of life. Everywhere you look people are encountering new ideas and perspectives in a kind of bionetwork of performances, exhibitions, concerts, readings and conversations washed down with the best food and wine Australia has to offer; all the hallmarks of a vibrant, innovative and thriving city.

This is the boon of clustering the arts in such a highly visible context and proves that Adelaide wants arts and culture embedded in its daily life. However, at present festival organisers, arts companies and freelance artists must ferret out unused and abandoned spaces to create hubs of vitality and culture. It's a great temporary activation for the city but an enormous amount of planning, time, energy, resource and money is expended both on building short-term infrastructure and then striving to draw audiences into more out-of-the-way locations.

How can we make our arts more accessible and visible throughout the year? As we look to the future we should ponder the lessons of clustering activity and visibility and invest in making these arts precincts permanent. In doing this we can achieve a truly sustainable cultural presence that will maximise arts investment, contribute to the local economies and enrich the cultural vibrancy of the city and state. Great cultural cities embed their artists permanently in the midst of the metropolis, as well the outer fringes, creating high profile arts precincts that attract tourists and locals all year round.

CHASS Board member Christie Anthoney is the Executive Director of Festivals Adelaide [the alliance of 10 of the world's best festivals]. A City Alive was written by Chris Drummond.

Member and Sector Updates

[#AEFchat, 26 February, 7-8pm AEST](#)

Join Asia Education Foundation for their next Twitter chat 'Intercultural understanding'. Questions to guide discussion include: What is intercultural understanding (ICU)?; What is the role and place of ICU in education?; What does ICU look like in classrooms and the broader school community?; What do you find challenging about ICU in schools?; Where to next for ICU in Australian schools?

[Book launch – Poiesis: Manufacturing in Classical Athens, Humanities 21, 10 March, Melbourne](#)

Founder and President of Humanities 21, Peter Acton's new book *Poiesis: Manufacturing in Classical Athens* will be launched by The Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria. This accessible and critically acclaimed book applies modern business analysis to classical Athens, shedding new light on ancient society. Free event, bookings are essential.

[Public Lecture: Doctor Dolittle's Delusion - Animal Communication and Human Language, The University of Queensland, 10 March](#)

How do animals communicate? Can they be taught a human language? The answers to these questions, plus more will be explored by Yale University's Professor Stephen R. Anderson at the School of Languages and Cultures first Public Lecture for 2015. The lecture will be followed by a reception, with light refreshments. Places are limited, registrations required.

[Free public lecture: The Age of Experience: cultural heritage in museums of the future, The University of Western Australia, 11 March, Perth](#)

A public lecture by Sarah Kenderdine, Deputy Director of The National Institute for Experimental Arts (NIEA) and Director, iGLAM Lab (Laboratory for Innovation in Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums). Registrations are essential.

[Deakin University's International Women's Day Short Film Screening, 12 March, Melbourne](#)

Deakin University and Women in Film and Television (WIFT Vic) will host the annual WIFT Vic International Women's Day Short Film Screening at Deakin Edge, Federation Square. Join us for an evening of exclusive graduate screenings and a panel discussion, followed by networking drinks to celebrate the successes of female filmmakers from Deakin University.

[Centre for Social Impact Swinburne 2015 Commencement Lecture, 12 March, Melbourne](#)

The Centre for Social Impact Swinburne and Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Investment and Philanthropy invite you to this year's Commencement Lecture *A Century of Community Foundations: The Evolution and International Adaptation of a Philanthropic Innovation*, delivered by Professor Mark Sidel. Anyone interested in new ideas and practices in philanthropy and the community sector will find this lecture compelling.

[Call for entries closing 16 March: 2015 Anne Dunn Scholar Award](#)

To commemorate the life and work of a much valued and sorely missed colleague Professor Anne Dunn, the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia (JERAA), the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA), and members of Anne Dunn's family decided to offer an annual award worth \$3,000 for an Anne Dunn scholar of the year. This award recognises excellence in research about the fields of communications or journalism, including but not limited to broadcast media for the public benefit.

[Free concert: WAAPA in the Park, Edith Cowan University, 21 March, Perth](#)

Bring your family and friends, a picnic rug and hamper and enjoy this highlight of the WAAPA calendar as the 18-piece WAAPA Big Band and the latest crop of contemporary musicians bop, rock and swing their way through a program packed with hits under the stars in Ron Stone Park.

[InConversation with Professors John Urry and Deborah Lupton 'Catastrophic futures? 2050 and beyond', Hawke Research Institute, 25 March, Adelaide](#)

This panel discussion led by the Hawke Research Institute's Director Anthony Elliott, and comprising experts on the social, cultural, political and ecological consequences of possible social futures, will consider dilemmas facing the 21st century. The discussion will focus on various scenarios of future societies that might feasibly exist by 2050, and the very complex choices which these scenarios will entail.

F5: Footscray in Transition exhibition, till 29 March, Victoria University, Melbourne

F5: Footscray in Transition is a five-year photographic project commissioned by Maribyrnong City Council, which examines the dramatic period of change in Footscray. Now in its fourth year, the project will feature artist James Voller at VU at MetroWest.

Early bird closing 31 March: AFMLTA 20th National Languages Conference, 9 - 12 July, Melbourne

In 2015, the AFMLTA celebrates its 20th conference as Australia's largest gathering of languages teaching and learning professionals. Our anniversary theme *Pedagogies for a plurilingual Australia* is both a statement about Australia's multilingual reality today and an aspiration for our future.

2015 AAP Conference, 5-9 July, Sydney

The 2015 Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) Conference will be hosted by Macquarie University. Paul Redding (Sydney) will give the Presidential Address. Keynote speakers: Cheshire Calhoun (Arizona State), Cordelia Fine (Melbourne), Frederick Neuhouser (Columbia), and Dan Zahavi (Copenhagen).

Note: While we take due care to bring you correct information, dates and timings of events listed here are subject to change and we advise that you check details using the links provided before making bookings.

Council for the Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences

PO Box 12226, Franklin Street Post Shop, A'Beckett Street, MEL VIC 8006

T: [+61 3 9925 3935](tel:+61399253935) membership@chass.org.au www.chass.org.au



You are receiving this email because your organisation is a CHASS member or you have had a reason to provide us with your details in the past. If you wish to unsubscribe from future mailings, please click the unsubscribe link below