

EDITORIAL

It's good to have recognition of the international standing of the Faculty of Arts. In the issue of 27 October, 2006 this year the London *Times Higher Education Supplement* published its world-wide university rankings for five broad disciplines, including Arts and Humanities. Sydney was ranked fifth out of the top 100 universities, behind only Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard and Berkeley. Other Australian universities ranked too: the Australian National University and Melbourne came in sixth and seventh, ahead of Yale and Princeton; and New South Wales, Monash, Queensland, Macquarie, La Trobe, RMIT, Tasmania, West Australia, Adelaide, Newcastle, and the judgment, and signals sustained improvement (last year, Sydney came 36th) in the face of all the now familiar constraints. As the Dean commented, 'we may not be appreciated close to home but in the outside world our stocks are high'. The Vice-Chancellor felt the same way: in the *University of Sydney News* of 10 November, he wrote 'I am especially gratified that this rewards our commitment to pure scholarship. Ancient Greek theatre, Buddhist manuscript fragments from Afghanistan and West Indian immigrants and the numbers game in New York are all examples of the diverse richness of our studies'.

Another recognition of the humanities came from elsewhere on the campus. Geoff Gallop, the former premier of West Australia and newly appointed director of the graduate school of government, wrote in the *Higher Education* pages of the *Australian* of 29 November that 'Overall it appears as if the humanities found it harder going in the new era of managerialism. That said, they still hold their heads high, ask the searching questions, seek understanding from history and prick the conscience of those of us who have or seek power in an imperfect world'.

And on top of all that, we won the two-horse race with Melbourne for the prestigious federally funded United States Studies Centre.

Such plaudits must be kept in perspective, of course. In the same *Higher Education* of 29 November, the Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research ranked Melbourne and the ANU ahead of Sydney in the humanities. But then, the Institute is part of Melbourne University.

During the year, the Vice-Chancellor decided to abolish the College system. One result has been that Arts now has an administrative alliance with Social Work, Education and the College of the Arts, with the Dean as Executive Dean.

The Arts Association has had a most successful year, as the contents of this journal will suggest, and it has slightly increased its membership.

Congratulations all round.

G.L.L.