MARCH 2014

Page 6 – Monkey business: What can primates teach us?

Monday Monthly

University of Cape Town • iYunivesithi yaseKapa • Universiteit van Kaapstad

Newspaper of the University of Cape Town

To read our daily news coverage or see digital versions of these stories, please visit www.uct.ac.za

Page 3 Mitigation is affordable: Sir Eric Ash on the costs of climate change

Page 5 Trauma interrupted: the legacy of intergenerational trauma

Page 9 VCs debate the role of universities in post-apartheid South Africa

Taking UCT research into the world

ABIGAIL CALATA

By engaging with communities outside of UCT, the university is fulfilling its most important transformative role.

Addressing participants at the Social Responsiveness Symposium on 24 February 2014, Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price said if any testimony were needed to the commitment to transformation across the university, it could be found in the sphere of social responsiveness and engaged scholarship.

"We often risk thinking of transformation and our transformation agenda as being primarily about the demography of the student and staff bodies. In doing so we often forget that our most important transformative role is in engagement with the communities outside the university, and how we change those communities."

The symposium culminated in the launch of the 2013 Social Responsiveness Report, which had teaching and forms of engaged scholarship as its focus, compared to the research focus of previous years. Other highlights included a talk on the role of public intellectuals, and examples of how individuals and departments are making their work more publicly accessible; as well as examples of capacity building with communities and government officials.

Going public

Professor Pierre de Vos – Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance in the Department of Public Law, and recipient of the 2013 Vice-Chancellor's Social Responsiveness Award – spoke about how his engagement as a public intellectual has enriched his teaching.

"When teaching on the right of access to health care or the right to equality, I will engage with a specific Constitutional Court case; and in between, tell stories about what happened in a particular situation.

"I do this to make it real for the students, so that they understand that the Constitution and the law are not abstract. They affect real people every single day," De Vos said.

In addition to regularly being asked for comment on constitutional issues, De Vos writes a widely read and influential blog, 'Constitutionally Speaking', which is republished by the *Daily Maverick*. He is also involved with non-profit organisations like the AIDS Legal Network, where he serves as board chairman and contributes to their quarterly publication.

One of De Vos's greatest challenges, given this broad level of involvement over and above his responsibilities as a researcher and teacher, is time management. Engaging with the public on social media is particularly demanding: De Vos manages this pressure by allocating specific times in the day in which to engage.

Keeping pace: Top metro officials had their eyes opened when participating in an *Amazing Race*-like event in which they needed to perform tasks using only public transport to get around. This was part of a high-level short course developed by UCT's Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice, in partnership with the National Treasury.

Another symposium speaker, Dr Rob Little from the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, picked up on the role of social media and online platforms in communicating the work his department does to a wider public. The institute is housed within the Department of Biological Sciences, and is one of UCT's two DST-NRF (Department of Science and Technology, together with the National Research Foundation) Centres of Excellence.

"Over the last eight years we have produced over 600 scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals. From 2005 we have produced nearly as many semi-popular articles. Along with that, we have produced almost three books a year; which is quite phenomenal, since there are only five academic staff and 50 students at the institute," said Little.

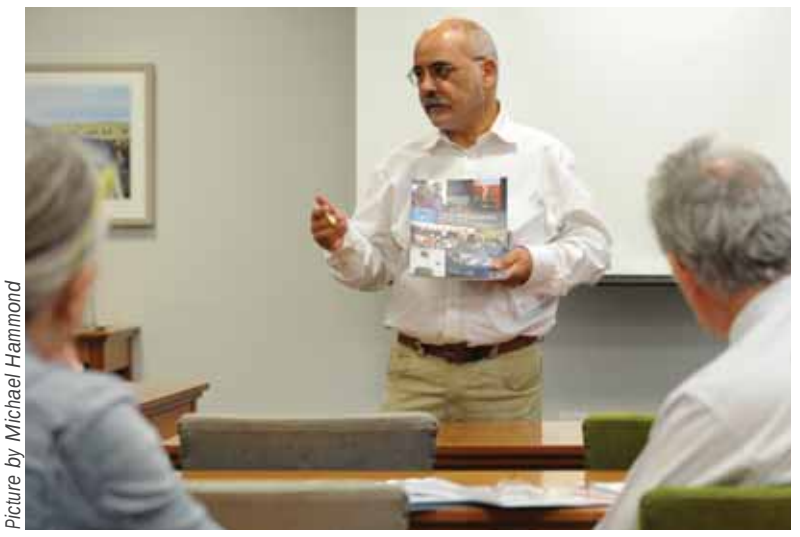
"Our mission is to use birds to conserve biodiversity – to make this a better place to live in," he explained.

How is the institute turning this kind of research and writing into something more palatable for the public? By using both Facebook and film. In 2012, the institute's Cape Parrot Project produced a television show, Endangered, which was screened in the US on the Public Broadcast Service (PBS) and other networks; while the project's Facebook page has become the largest parrot conservation group worldwide, with over 5 000 subscribers.

Equal partnerships

Associate Professor Sophie Oldfield from the Department of Environmental & Geographical Science shared her experience of long-term partnerships with civic organisations in Cape Town's townships. Her involvement in areas like Nyanga, New Crossroads and Valhalla Park stretches back to 2000. As part of her students' practical course component, they spend time every week speaking with local community groups and individuals about a range of issues, such as the living conditions of so-called backyard dwellers and the nature and logistics of informal home-based businesses.

Oldfield aims to construct "teaching projects around a research agenda that fits with the NGO and its partners, and teaching fieldwork skills of observation, interviewing and writing; but ultimately, producing some product that could be useful for the partner". One such product is a neighbourhood *Yellow Pages* that Oldfield's students developed for Valhalla Park, listing the home-based businesses in the area.



Picture by Michael Hammond

Equal partners: Launching the 2013 Social Responsiveness Report, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Crain Soudien said the report illustrated the extent to which teaching at UCT is informed by engaged scholarship.

As part of their coursework, students are asked to reflect on their experiences in the communities by journaling. Some of the excerpts she shared showed how students were changed through their interaction with community members.

"My first impression of New Crossroads was a strange mixture of interest … and absolute alienation … I was part of the same city organism as they were, but felt as different from them as if I were a visitor from the moon," wrote one student.

Another student related the following anecdote: "Today I spoke to one of the cleaners in the microbiology building at UCT. I simply asked why she was not home for the holiday and she ended up telling me her life story. I feel that sitting and talking to the residents of Valhalla Park has changed me a little bit. I feel I've learnt to listen attentively, and I have also seen the very basic need of people to feel that they are being listened to. I do not know if I would have spoken to the kind lady today if I had not done this research in Valhalla Park."

Building government capacity

While Oldfield and her students engaged with grassroots organisations, the team from the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice (GSDPP) engaged with senior public officials, who were participating in high-level short courses.

The GSDPP was established in response to the Vice-Chancellor's call for a "Kennedy School of Government for Africa". Its core mission is to train senior officials in government and government agencies in South Africa and other African countries.

At the symposium, Dr Judith Cornell from GSDPP related her experience of engaging with six of South Africa's eight executive mayors and their technical teams on a course aimed to "align their political mandate with reform goals; strengthen their capacity to achieve ambitious, yet realistic goals; and build effective coalitions". The course was initiated and funded by the National Treasury and developed in collaboration with the World Bank Institute.

This course was so successful that late last year the school hosted another one in partnership with the National Treasury, titled 'Leadership in Public Transport for Spatial Transformation', and including the leadership of all eight metros. One of the highlights of the course was an *Amazing Race*-style event. Teams had to perform specific tasks using only public transport to get around. According to Cornell this exercise was "great for team-building", and brought transport officials and councillors – some of whom hadn't used public transport in years – face-to-face with the realities of commuting. ■

NEWS IN PICTURES

1 Lyrical adieu:
A valedictory poetry reading by Professor Ingrid Fiske, also known as the poet Ingrid de Kok, was hosted by the Institute for Humanities in Africa to mark her early retirement this month. Fiske read from 26 of her works (one for each of her years at UCT), written between 1989 and 2014; poems about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, love, family, and her new research on foundlings. Her career included 24 years at the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies – initially in the Humanities Faculty and later in the Centre for Higher Education Development – and two as a lecturer in the English department. Attendees included colleagues, former colleagues, family, and friends.

Picture by Raymond Botha

2 Life cycle:
Students and staff were greeted by a flock of flying bicycles on Jammie Plaza recently. This year's traditional Thursday Meridian events flipped off in spectacular style on 20 February as the Students' Representative Council and beverage company Mountain Dew teamed up to entertain masses of students with a feast of extreme sports. Daring skateboarders and stunt riders wowed a packed crowd with all manner of thrills (and fortunately, no spills). It was all for a good cause, of course: the proceeds of the sponsored event went to the SRC bailout fund for students struggling to settle their tuition fees.

Picture by Raymond Botha

3 Change agents:
Second-year physiotherapy students took a professional oath last month before starting clinical practice. They committed to upholding the strictest standards in the services they offer, and were reminded to respect their clients in all circumstances and adhere to a professional code of conduct at all times. Before receiving their name badges, these students were encouraged to see themselves as agents of change, responsible for promoting health literacy and providing accessible health care to the wider population.

Picture by Michael Hammond

4 Spray it on:
Lerato Majara had her hair sprayed in the Barnard Fuller courtyard earlier this month, as part of the UCT Shavathon in support of the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA).

Majara and about 170 other UCT staff and students participated in this event, the fourth of its kind hosted on the medical campus.

The Shavathon, which is jointly organised by the UCT branch of the South African Medical Students Association and the Prince Lab – a CANSA-funded research facility – raised almost R5 000 this year, which will go towards cancer research and awareness campaigns.

Picture by Raymond Botha

5 Theatrical feast:
Two dynamic productions will take to the stage at the Little Theatre Complex at the beginning of April.

Mephisto, directed by Christopher Weare, is set in Nazi Germany and tells the story of a group of actors' reaction to Hitler's rise to power.

Titus Andronicus, described as Shakespeare's bloodiest and most violent work, sees Geoffrey Hyland and Jeffrey Sichel sharing directorial duties. Kiroshan Naidoo (pictured) plays the role of Lavinia, Titus's daughter, who is raped and mutilated by men seeking revenge upon her father. Sichel is a visiting Mellon Scholar, who describes his South African students as "remarkably open and mature, allowing for deep levels of engagement".

Picture supplied

Good news on climate change: Mitigation is affordable

HELEN SWINGLER

The inventiveness and will of the world's leaders and thinkers will be tested as never before as carbon emissions threaten to destroy the planet's delicate, life-sustaining weather systems. But, says Sir Eric Ash, there's hope – and an affordable solution.

One way out of the dilemma, precipitated mainly by burning fossil fuels like coal for energy, is to capture the CO_2 before it gets into the atmosphere – and then bury it, said Ash in his Wolfson Memorial Lecture, titled *The Climate Change Threat: Any room for optimism? A challenge to science and for diplomacy*, which formed part of this year's Vice-Chancellor's Open Lecture Series. Ash is a trustee of the Wolfson Foundation, which has supported many strategic projects at UCT and around the world.

"Carbon capture and storage is a technology that's had a long gestation, and is now gaining momentum in several parts of the world."

That's good news, Ash argued. With an important proviso: that the world pulls together under a banner larger than individual nations' needs, and that the youth roll up their sleeves to unpick the damage wrought by previous generations.

Moving beyond controversy

Why is climate change still so controversial, despite the evidence of shrinking Arctic ice, rising sea levels, and unprecedented weather-induced disasters?

It's still a distant threat, explained Ash; and "democracy is ill-matched to dealing with problems that lie in the future". And there are many sceptics with influence, "but little science". The media has also had great difficulty unpacking the complexities of climate change to the lay public.

"It's reminiscent of the times when the impact of smoking on health was debatable – and was debated – long after the sad truth had been clearly established."

Climate change is also exceptionally complicated, exceeding our experiential parameters.

Getting to grips with complexity

"What's lacking is an understanding of the mega-complexity of climate change science, which puts it in a class utterly remote from those we normally encounter… it's not an area in which common sense and much life experience is any guide as to how it works."

Ash has some direct experience of this complexity in the economic arena, having initiated a series of reports on energy policy, notably the use of economic instruments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, during his tenure as treasurer and vice-president of the Royal Society in the UK.

Citing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's *5th Assessment Report*, Ash pointed to unequivocal findings: the growing concentration of CO_2 due to the combustion of fossil fuels; observed global warming in accord with analyses of past and current weather events; and the increase in floods in wet regions, more drought in dry ones, more exceptional heat waves, and increasingly destructive typhoons as temperatures rise.

"A rise of just 0.9°C, which is what the globe is experiencing, is disrupting life as we know it," he said.

But mitigation is affordable – if the world's nations can accept that climate change is the single most important challenge to the planet's sustainability. Restricting emissions is our only hope.

What will it cost?

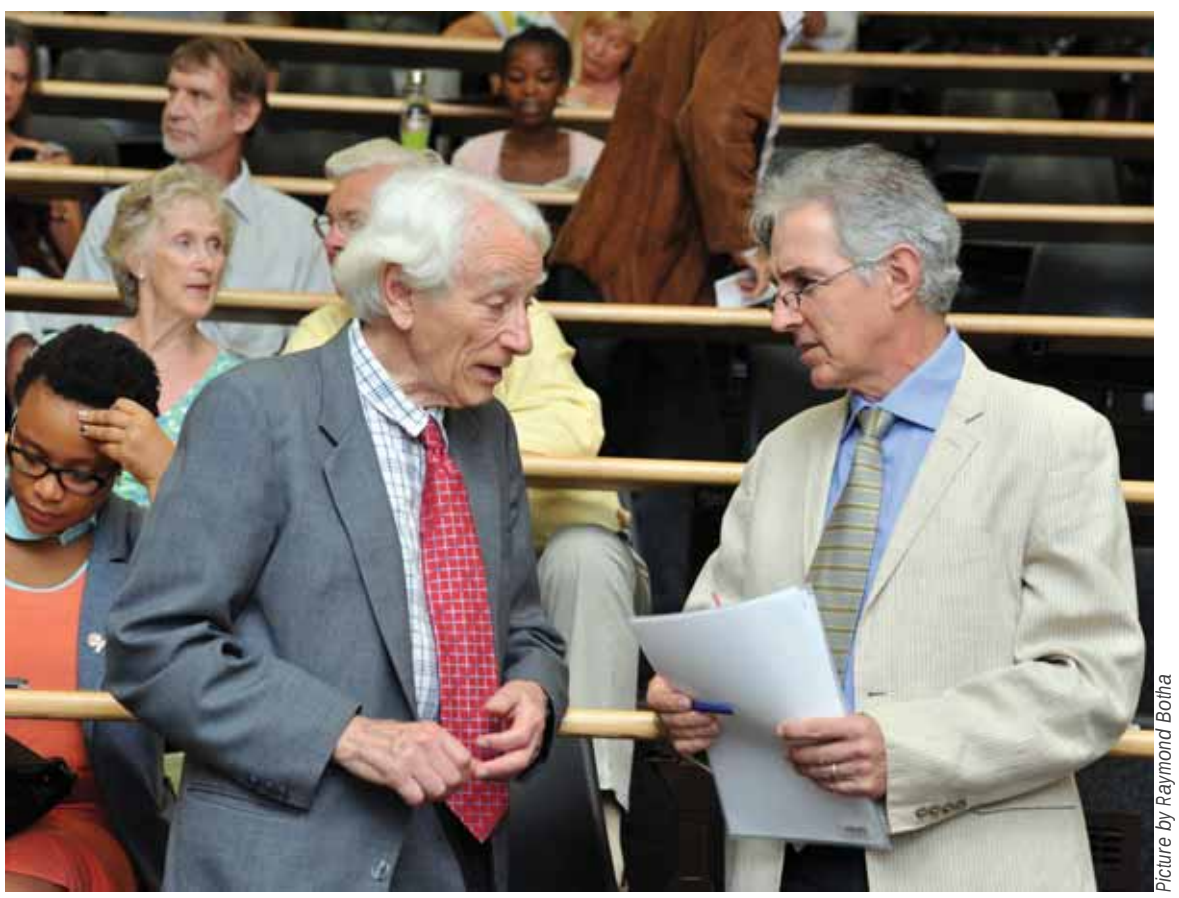
Economists like Nicolas Stern have already started tackling this "horrifically difficult question", estimating that mitigation will cost between one and two percent of the world GDP per annum.

"Of course, the arithmetic is the easy part. How to distribute the load between and within countries – that's the hard part! Progress so far has been unimpressive," Ash added.

"When it comes to paying the bills, to making appropriate sacrifices, how do you compare the claims of developing countries, who have put out far less CO_2, against those of developed countries such as Europe and North America – and then factor in countries like China, who are currently generating more greenhouse gases than any other nation?"

If all else fails, there is one drastic measure that could stabilise greenhouse gas effects: geoengineering. In this scenario, aerosol clouds would be injected into the atmosphere to mimic the cooling effects of volcanic eruptions.

"I hope we don't have to go that way," Ash added. ■



Picture by Raymond Botha

Room for optimism: Sir Eric Ash (left) delivered the Wolfson Memorial Lecture, and spoke about the global challenge of climate change. Here he is seen with Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price.

BRIEFS

UCT surgeon receives excellence award for open content

Dr Juan Klopper, a senior lecturer in surgery at UCT, won the 2014 Award for OpenCourseWare Excellence in the educator category for his innovative work in sharing teaching materials. With this award, the OpenCourseWare Consortium (OWC) recognises "an educator who actively develops and/or uses open educational resources in creative and significant ways over a sustained period of time".

Klopper describes his online lectures as a "labour of love", which slots in with his mantra "never stop learning and never stop teaching". His YouTube channel view count is nearing 200 000 and he has almost 1 000 videos online.

The OpenCourseWare Consortium is a community of more than 300 universities and associated organisations from around the world, committed to advancing open education.

Claude Leon Foundation honours young scholars

Three exceptional researchers – Drs John Ataguba, Andrew Hamilton and Deena Pillay – received Claude Leon Foundation Merit Awards for Young Scholars at a lunchtime event held in the Research Office recently.

Health economist Ataguba, P-rated physicist Hamilton and marine ecologist Pillay were recognised for meritorious scholarly work by young academics (under 41 years) in natural and medical sciences, and engineering. Each receives funding of up to R50 000, which must be spent within 12 months of receiving the award.

Five 2014 Rhodes Scholars from UCT

Five exceptional UCT graduates are among 11 South African recipients of Rhodes Scholarships to conduct postgraduate study at the University of Oxford.

They are Paul Amayo (Bachelor of Science and Engineering in Mechatronics, 2013); Matthew Davey (Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, 2012); Nicholas Dowdall (Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology, Economics and Spanish, 2013); Simon Mendelsohn (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, 2011); and Vuyane Mhlomi (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, 2011). They are part of a broader annual class of 83 scholars for 2014, selected from institutions around the globe.

Established in 1903 under the will of Cecil Rhodes, the scholarship is the oldest – and one of the most prestigious – international graduate scholarship programmes in the world.

MyCiTi-Jammie integration helps UCT commuters

A new Jammie Shuttle stop near Gardens Centre will help UCT students and staff to connect more easily with buses on MyCiTi routes. The Jammie Shuttle previously had only one MyCiTi transfer point at UCT's Hiddingh campus, but will now connect with MyCiTi on its way to and from Hiddingh.

This new development will reduce passengers' travel time and enable shuttle passengers to access MyCiTi routes 101 and 103, with the return journey also being possible.

Higher education not grappling with endemic trauma – Crain Soudien

HELEN SWINGLER

South African higher education institutions are not acknowledging or dealing with the multiple levels of intergenerational trauma affecting students' experience, said deputy vice-chancellor Professor Crain Soudien.

Soudien was delivering the opening address at the two-day interdisciplinary colloquium 'Reconciliation, Intergenerational Trauma and Higher Education' in February, hosted by the university's HIV/AIDS Inclusivity and Change Unit (HAICU) and the Transformation Services Office (TSO).

Universities should create spaces for the acknowledgement and discussion of trauma, such as the intersection of post-apartheid intergenerational trauma and HIV stigma, and develop support services to equip graduates to address these issues and others like them, he added.

The colloquium tackled the theme from a number of angles, including history, law, politics, safety and violence, and saw several local and international speakers address participants. Discussants included Guy Lamb of UCT's Safety and Violence Initiative, TSO Director Glenda Wildschut, Tali Nates of the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, and Professor of Political Science and the Samuel R 'Bud' Shorstein Professor of American Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Florida, Ken Wald.

Soudien has written extensively on education and transformation. Pertinent to this colloquium was his government-commissioned *Soudien Report*, which revealed that discrimination (especially racism and sexism) is still endemic in South African universities.

"But the conversation is very important now because it's a global issue, not just an issue for South Africans to resolve. In the English-speaking world, I can't think of one country that's free of intergenerational trauma."

The issues are intense, he said, but "evaded". Major trauma existed, unspoken at collective and individual levels, among black and white communities, old and young.

"My generation has failed to engage young people with the full complexity of what we're bequeathing them. Our old survival tricks don't work. Our fiction understands that; JM Coetzee's *Disgrace* understands that, Mark Behr's *The Smell of Apples* understands that.

"There's a particular responsibility among schools and universities to be talking into this complexity and we're not doing it. We inhabit old nostalgias, which are irrelevant.

"All our wonderful [university] courses are not dealing with this. Our society is not doing it; our psychologists are not doing it; our work on crime and poverty is not doing it.

"We need evidence-based analysis. The imagination of writers is far more engaged than our sociology.

"Consider the Reitz Four and the Waterkloof Four. Fingers are pointed at their parents. But it's not just their parents, it's all of us, and all of us have to take responsibility for those people." ■

Trauma interrupted: The role of acknowledging blame and responsibility

HELEN SWINGLER

During World War II, bystanders in the community of Grossröhrsdorf, a small East German village near Dresden, witnessed a Jewish family being taken away by the Nazis.

The parents, Curt and Regina Schönwald, became victims of the gas chambers that killed millions of Jews.

But before being sent to Buchenwald, Curt, a decorated World War I soldier, was released to sell his business, a textile shop the family had owned since 1928. During that brief reprieve, the couple managed to send their children, Heinz and Suze, to safety in America and what was then Rhodesia.

But the community of Grossröhrsdorf never forgot the family, and for decades lived with the shame of not acting as their friends and neighbours were taken away to certain death.

Captured by the story, German theologian Pastor Norbert Littig spent 25 years researching what happened to the family – a complicated endeavour, given that the German Democratic Republic (GDR) did not allow this type of research – and began a reconciliatory process, piecing together memories from the bystanders.

This work inspired a book, and the community later issued a formal apology, the Grossröhrsdorf Apology, acknowledging their failure to protect the Schönwalds.

In November 2008 a memorial to Curt and Regina Schönwald was erected in the town during a week of "dignified remembrance". It reflected similar post-WWII reparation efforts, particularly by German Christians who'd also "stood by and watched", as a confession of their guilt. Organisations were formed to care for Jewish cemeteries and the aged, many of whom had survived the Holocaust.

Littig is now active in school exchanges that promote peace between Germany, Israel and Palestine. During his recent visit to South Africa in February, he addressed participants at UCT's 'Reconciliation, Intergenerational Trauma and Higher Education' colloquium.

The Grossröhrsdorf Apology is in some ways reminiscent of South Africa's own path to truth and reconciliation. South Africans also experience multiple levels of trauma as a result of the country's fraught past, compounded by current stigma and shame around HIV, race, class and sexual orientation, said HAICU director and colloquium architect Dr Cal Volks.

Should South African 'bystanders' be doing more to acknowledge what did or didn't take place in South Africa, asked Volks? "Do we need more fora and facilities for discussion, healing, and reconciliation in appropriate settings, including institutions like UCT?"

Littig's presentation, delivered with the help of translator Dr Tania Katzschner, was especially close to home for Volks – who is one of Suze Schönwald's granddaughters.

Volks only heard more detail of what happened to her family from Pastor Littig later on in life.

For her, the burden of acknowledgment is felt at two levels: as a descendant of German Jews, and as a white South African. This experience has only deepened her exploration of the many narratives around the possible impact of intergenerational trauma and the need to address it at Higher Education Institutions.

The full weight of trauma, whether at the hands of Nazis or perpetrators of apartheid atrocities, is often experienced by the second and third generations, said Ken Wald, professor of American Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Florida, in a Skype interview. Wald, too, is a survivor of intergenerational trauma, and a descendant of Heinz Schönwald.

For both Volks and Wald, learning the story of Curt and Regina Schönwald returned a lost piece of history, and gave them the chance to make a level of peace with the past – interrupting the transmission of trauma from one generation to the next.

Volks has since visited the memorial to Curt and Regina and is acutely aware of the importance of acknowledgement and responsibility.

"Acknowledgements of the failure to interrupt violence are important. They have the potential to facilitate 'empathic repair' by allowing the victims and perpetrators to engage with each other." ■

Always remembered: The cracked glass of this memorial to Curt and Regina Schönwald, erected in 2008, symbolises Kristallnacht when Nazi party members smashed the windows of Jewish-owned businesses in Germany including the Schönwald's textile shops in Grossröhrsdorf. In the inscription the citizens of Grossröhrsdorf expressed their regret at not acting to save the Schönwalds, but added that they owe it to themselves, their children and the Schönwald family to preserve the memory of their life and suffering.

Picture by Raymond Botha

Acknowledging blame: German theologian Pastor Norbert Littig, with a translator Dr Tania Katzschner, recounting his research on a World War II Jewish family taken by the Nazis as their fellow villagers looked on. The theme of his talk was apology, reparation, and forgiveness, delivered at the 'Reconciliation, Intergenerational Trauma and Higher Education' colloquium in February.

Understanding the effects of intergenerational trauma at university

YUSUF OMAR

As part of the "Reconciliation, Intergenerational Trauma and Higher Education" colloquium in February, Allengary Naicker and Carmelita Lee-Shong of the university's Student Wellness Service, both explored how the burden on so-called "born frees" is affecting their ability to succeed in a university environment.

Naicker tentatively explored the drop-out rate and failure of a small sample of university students: "Up to 30% of students drop out of university, with a majority that will not enrol for tertiary studies again," Naicker said. "Many of the students are now in debt and will have to enter the job market as creditors. What goes wrong when bright and eager students, who are imbued with so much optimism and potential, do not succeed?"

Tentative diagnosis

This is Naicker's tentative diagnosis: "Youth are the carriers of intergenerational trauma, borne by their parents, who endured apartheid and poverty first-hand. During the height of the resistance struggle in the '70s and '80s, children became the vanguard of the struggle. Many were imprisoned and tortured to death, others released after a few months. One study in 1986 revealed that 2 000 black children younger than the age of 16 were in prison for about four months.

"Children obviously suffered unbearable, unmentionable abuse and torture. Many of them were to become parents of children born in the new dispensation, some of them at universities today. Yet they themselves were not able to complete schooling.

"Youth from townships and rural areas especially still experience the impact of poverty and trauma on the psyche, and it is vital to make sense of the consequences for survival and learning."

The impact of this history was demonstrated by a startling statistic: 80% of South Africa's 7 000 high schools, which are neither formerly whites-only public schools nor schools in rural areas, produce only 20% of the country's matric exemptions.

While educational institutions have made great strides when it comes to transformation, with measures like bursaries for deserving students and financial aid, it seems more can be done.

A case study close to home

Lee-Shong, a social worker at UCT's Student Wellness Service, shared her experiences of the challenges that students face, in a video screened by the office of the Vice-Chancellor's Transformation Commitee.

What it showed was how close to home homelessness and hunger can be, drawing on the experience of some of the students who make use of the university's wellness service:

"Many of these students come from disadvantaged backgrounds, impoverished backgrounds, and can come to UCT with very limited resources," explained Lee-Shong. "I think the main challenge is finding accommodation in and around UCT. It's pretty expensive, so some students end up squatting, either sleeping on the streets or in the [24-hour] Com Labs – wherever they can find a space.

"The other thing is finances. If you don't get financial aid, things are tough, and for those that are on financial aid, it doesn't necessarily cover everything."

What can be done?

How can places of learning walk this difficult road with students?

Lee-Shong recommends making emergency accommodation available through the Student Wellness Service. "Often, [students] arrive with literally a bag with the few things that they do have and nothing else. Some haven't eaten for days on end. To tell a student to come back in a few hours after you've secured funding is heartbreaking."

Naicker recommends that more educational psychologists are trained and assigned to schools for an obligatory year of community service, and that counselling psychologists should be required to perform community service. Furthermore: "Autonomous learning should be encouraged in the senior phase of high school, because there's so much pressure to produce good enough results that this is an area that is neglected.

"At university, the fantastic mentoring programmes should be intensified and students should be supported throughout the course of study, not just their first year. Sometimes it becomes necessary for the university to walk alongside a student. It should become the responsibility of the university to make such a service available when a student requires long-term therapy."

Group therapy is also a viable option on educational and community settings, suggested Naicker: "Group therapy as a modality is a viable option financially and in community settings in a country where access to therapy is expensive and the culture of individual therapy is not yet established for most people."

Way forward

According to HAICU Director Cal Volks, the colloquium, while unpacking some difficult issues, has paved the way for some important changes within the university: "It was gratifying to have key representatives from Transformation Services Office, the Department of Student Affairs, the Student Wellness Service, the Centre for Higher Education Development and academic departments at the colloquium, discussing the integration of some concrete recommendations into existing student services and, where relevant, curricula. Speakers must follow this up." ■

Picture by Michael Hammond

Born free? The burden of apartheid down the generations

ABIGAIL CALATA

The burden of apartheid-era trauma is carried down the generations, and can still affect university-level students today, explained HIV/AIDS, Inclusivity and Change Unit (HAICU) director Cal Volks (pictured above) at the recent UCT colloquium on intergenerational trauma in post-conflict societies, and the role of higher education institutions in addressing it.

Following on the launch of her book, *Are They Really 'Born Free'?* Volks discussed her research with UCT students living with HIV, in/*terviewed in 2006 and early 2012, exploring the multi-layered burden of experiencing HIV stigma coupled in some with intergenerational trauma and some experiences of discrimination around race, class, gender, language and sexual orientation.

According to Volks, students interviewed in 2012 exhibit some of the traits Polish-American writer and academic Eva Hoffman speaks of in second and third post-Holocaust generations for example, the need to achieve and overachieve against all odds to make up for losses their parents experienced, as well as rampant perfectionism combined with intense guilt.

One of the students interviewed spoke of his parents' expectations and his struggle to integrate being HIV+ with his sense of self: "I do feel guilty sometimes … because of what was expected ... I'm not sure they understand it's not easy to deliver [on] some of their expectations … I can't tell my mom [about the HIV] … They expected only good things."

This palpable pressure, ongoing HIV stigma and the legacy of apartheid-era trauma may even affect something like antiretroviral (ARV) uptake – which is why, according to Volks, ARV roll-out should include more social support.

Volks urged higher education institutes to "strive to understand the multiple levels of trauma that some of their students face, and to create spaces to deal with the intersectionality, both in support services and discipline-relevant classroom discussions, in preparing graduates to enter the world with an understanding of how to address these issues". ■

What primates

We can learn a lot from studying primates; both about them, and about what makes us human (and primate). Primatologist Dr Jane Goodall's recent visit to UCT threw a spotlight on primate research in disciplines as diverse as anthropology, evolutionary biology, ecology, medicine, and psychology. A number of UCT researchers study primates, their research programmes ranging from the applied (eg conservation) to the theoretical (eg evolution). **Helen Swingler** asked six academics, some of whom collaborate on projects, to describe their studies.

Tracking hybridisation in the fossil record

Assoc Prof Becky Ackermann (Department of Archaeology)

I am interested in understanding why primates (including humans) look the way they do; or more specifically, what underlying evolutionary processes are responsible for shaping primate diversity. I study both living and ancient skeletons to understand this relationship between evolutionary process and morphological variation.

Some of the questions that interest me include: Do patterns of morphological variation among living primates differ? Are these differences more likely to be the result of random evolutionary divergence (eg genetic drift) or adaptation (natural selection)? Can we differentiate between these processes when looking at fossil diversity? When during development does morphological divergence in variation patterning occur, and how can we use this to understand the developmental evolutionary divergence of primates? How does gene flow (hybridisation) between populations affect patterns of morphological diversity? Can we use our understanding of patterns of variation in living hybrids to detect hybridisation in the fossil record?

These are big questions that cross taxonomic boundaries, and my work has focused on myriad groups, including apes (chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos), monkeys (baboons, tamarins, marmosets), humans and other mammals (wildebeest, mice), as well as Plio-Pleistocene (some five million years ago) members of our lineage, including australopiths, early members of the genus Homo, and most recently Neanderthals.

Although I have engaged in both palaeoanthropological and primatological fieldwork, the bulk of my research focuses on collections housed in museums and institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and North America. I am also using laboratory-bred mice as a model for understanding the effects of hybridisation on the skeleton, and am actively collaborating to explore the correlates between morphological and genomic divergence. ■

Forces that shape baboon populations

Dr Riashna Sithaldeen (Department of Archaeology)

That the distribution and genetic structure of many species globally has been shaped by climatic fluctuations is well established. My research focuses on the role of these and other processes in shaping diversity within Southern African chacma baboon populations.

Baboons evolved over the course of the Plio-Pleistocene, some five million years ago, and remain widely distributed throughout Africa. These animals have been on the subcontinent for at least two million years and provide us with an opportunity to study how climate and landscape change may have impacted on the evolutionary history of a terrestrial, sub-Saharan primate.

What has becoming increasingly evident is that even on a local scale, baboons are not homogenous but fascinatingly diverse: genetically, morphologically, ecologically and even behaviourally. My research is aimed at understanding the external forces that drive this diversity.

While my PhD research looked at large-scale genetic structure in chacma baboons, sampling from across Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique, my current research targets specific South African populations to gain a more highly resolved picture of the population dynamics and processes shaping diversity within this species. ■

Communities: UCT primate researchers (from left) Dr Riashna Sithaldeen (archaeology), Dr Jacqueline Bishop (biological sciences), Assoc Prof Becky Ackermann (archaeology), and Prof Larissa Swedell (archaeology). Image supplied.

Social structure, behaviour a Ethiopia and South Af

Prof Larissa Swedell (Department of

I am an honorary research associate at UCT, as my home base is the City University of New York (CUNY). My primary research interests involve the interacting biological and behavioural strategies of males and females in animal social systems, and the costs, benefits, and evolution of sociality.

My research focuses on baboons, and I'm currently running two field projects. The first is the Filoha Hamadryas Project, focusing on hamadryas baboons at the Filoha field site in Ethiopia. Hamadryas baboons are arguably the most male-dominated primate species, one in which males coerce females into harems. Such a social system lies at the far extreme of known variation in sex roles among primates, and I am trying to understand the evolutionary underpinnings of this unique system, especially the understudied role of female behaviour.

To complement this work and for comparative purposes, for several years I have been studying the behavioural ecology of the chacma baboons of the Cape Peninsula. Since 2006, I've been collaborating with South African and American colleagues and students as part of UCT's Baboon Research Unit to investigate the impact of social behaviour and local anthropogenic forces on stress, social behaviour, and reproduction of these baboons. Most of my work has focused on the baboons of the Tokai Forest, part of the Table Mountain National Park, where the baboons go about their daily lives amid the removal of the pine plantations and fluctuating baboon management practices.

My research team includes Shahrina Chowdhury, a CUNY PhD student who recently finished her behavioural fieldwork and endocrinology lab work focusing on stress and sociality in female baboons; Caley Johnson, a CUNY PhD student working on baboon nutritional ecology; and postdoctoral research fellow Steffen Foerster, who is currently following up on Chowdhury's research. Our current project, which involves collaborations with the University of KwaZulu-

teach us

Picture by Jaco Marais/Foto24

nd stress in frica

Archaeology)

Natal and the Smithsonian Institution, aims to elucidate the proximate mechanisms underlying the previously demonstrated link between sociality and health in baboons.

Results from our research so far have shown that baboons are remarkably flexible in their behaviour. Not only do female baboons shift their patterns of social bonding in response to management-driven changes in troop composition (eg the euthanasia of raiding males), but they also adjust their diet on a daily basis to maintain a constant ratio of protein to carbohydrates amid fluctuating environmental conditions. Such flexibility in behaviour and ecology is reminiscent of ourselves and makes the baboon an exceptionally useful model for studying human behavioural evolution. This is true on a theoretical level but also on a personal one, as it is difficult to observe baboons for any length of time without remarking on their similarities to ourselves, and interpreting their behaviour as we would our own. ■

Genetic connections across the Western Cape

Dr Jacqueline Bishop (Department of Biological Sciences)

My research interests focus on how we can use our knowledge of genetic variation for the conservation and management of Southern Africa's wildlife.

One of the groups I study is baboons; large, smart primates who are found in all but the driest environments of Africa.

Using data from the mitochondrial genome, we've been studying the evolutionary history of chacma baboons across Southern Africa for a number of years.

More recently we've focused our attention on the baboons of the Cape Peninsula, where we're interested in understanding historic patterns of dispersal and health in what today is effectively an island population.

Until relatively recently, the baboon troops of Cape Town were genetically connected via the dispersal of young males between troops, both within and outside the Peninsula. In the face of extensive urban development of the greater Cape Town metropole over the last 50 years, it's now impossible for a young dispersing male baboon to successfully traverse the landscape that once linked troops in the Overberg, the Boland, the Swartland, and the West Coast to those on the Cape Peninsula.

To inform the long-term management of an ecologically and evolutionarily healthy population, we've been using DNA-based methods to explore the historic connection routes of Cape Town's troops to those outside of the Peninsula, and determine the levels of adaptive immune genetic variation in troops on the Peninsula.

Our data reveals that troops in the Overberg and Boland regions are evolutionarily the most closely related to Cape Town's baboons, and that while the Peninsula supports very few maternal genetic lineages, this may be the result of limited historical dispersal into the area.

Despite this, troops on the Peninsula do support equivocal levels of immune genetic variation to troops in the Overberg, reflecting the shared pathogen history of these once-connected populations.

This is good news for an isolated population living in such close proximity to humans, where ongoing contact and competition for habitat is likely to increase in coming years.

Data of this type can be used to directly inform interventional management options like translocation and supplementation; these are important options to ensure the persistence of a healthy population within the confines of the Cape Peninsula. ■

What has your research taught you about yourself and what it is to be human?

Assoc Prof Becky Ackermann:
"Studying primates gives us insight into what it means to be human, largely because it tells us how much of what we consider special in ourselves (things like intelligence, toolmaking, self-awareness) is actually shared with our primate relatives. This gives us a baseline for understanding those few things that really do make humans unique."

Dr Jacqueline Bishop:
"When observing primates I am always reminded of how important individual personalities are in both the success and the breakdown of social groups. We can recognise the despot, the Romeo, the sulky adolescent; and research supports that these similarities between humans and primates are not anthropomorphic extensions; rather, they are best explained by our shared ancestry."

Dr Riashna Sithaldeen:
"Many students learn about the concepts of evolution in the classroom and accept a primate ancestry for humans from an intellectual perspective, because the facts add up. This is how it was for me. When I started working with baboons as a graduate student, that was when I really saw that the connection was undeniable."

Prof Larissa Swedell:
"Baboons enjoy being groomed, and baboons that spend more time grooming actually end up living longer and producing more surviving offspring. One of the things I as a researcher enjoy most about baboons is watching them groom one another. Not only does grooming reduce the baboons' heart rates and stress levels, but it actually reduces mine as well. This comes in handy given the high stress of academia!"

Picture by Jaco Marais/Foto24

Game fences to protect human and animal rights

HELEN SWINGLER

Electric game fences have been proposed as a solution to the conflict between humans and wild animals such as chacma baboons on the Cape Peninsula.

The proposal is for R20-million worth of game fencing to be erected around discrete urban areas (such as Scarborough and Misty Cliffs) where baboons currently range and raid.

The idea stems from Dr Bentley Kaplan's recently completed PhD thesis in which he tested a variety of cost-effective management options to reduce conflict.

The fence is noiseless (it doesn't hum or tick like some electric fences), and wild animals can approach the urban edges without being harassed by domestic dogs or people.

Professor Justin O'Riain of the Department of Biological Sciences' Baboon Research Unit argues that the once-off cost of the fencing should be weighed against the year-on-year cost of R10-million for field rangers with paintball markers who prevent baboon encroachment in residential areas.

The fences will also allow baboons to roam freely within Table Mountain National Park without the constant presence of and herding by field rangers, and may even allow for the reintroduction of other wildlife.

Living in a national park

"Living on the Cape Peninsula, we have to accept that this is a national park within a city and thus the edges are already very hard," notes O'Riain. "In other national parks, game fences reduce overlap between humans and their wild neighbours, and so help keep the peace."

The Zwaanswyk-Tokai neighbourhood has been affected by baboon raiding for over a decade, leading to a drop in property prices and difficulties in selling prime properties.

However, since the installation of a baboon-proof game fence between the residential area and the reserve, the quality of life for both residents and baboons has improved, and they are now good neighbours, says O'Riain.

Kaplan's data show a 100% success rate since the Zwaanswyk fence was first erected in 2012, 18 months ago.

Previous PhDs in the research unit indicate that the primary driver of conflict between humans and baboons on the Peninsula was the systematic displacement of baboons to higher, more marginal land on Table Mountain National Park.

"We then proceeded to attract them with all manner of foreign bounty, including waste bins, grapes and exotic-fruiting gardens within the urban edge – and in so doing, set the stage for chronic conflict," adds O'Riain.

"We accept that humans and baboons do not make good co-habitors, and so need to be kept apart. This has shaped our thinking about the importance of densification on the Peninsula, to slow the sprawl that has choked off dispersal corridors and reduced baboon access to suitable low-lying foraging areas."

Human diseases in baboons

A consequence of high levels of overlap between humans and baboons has been the sharing not only of food, but of pathogens too. Baboons have tested positive for three human viruses (hepatitis A, Epstein-Barr and cytomegalovirus), and we share the same whipworm in our guts, says O'Riain.

The risk of contagion limits options for moving baboons off the Peninsula, and also serves as a red light to stop further co-habiting, as there are clear risks to both baboons and humans.

Long-term research by UCT graduate Esme Beamish, who did her MSc on the population dynamics of the Peninsula baboons, reveals that despite the challenges they face, this population is increasing and now numbers over 500 (up from 379 in 2006).

Even more gratifying is that the sex ratio has normalised: two to three females for every male.

"Not so long ago there were eight females to every male, because the males were raiding inhabited areas and being killed by irate residents," notes O'Riain.

Myth busters

A behavioural ecologist who applies his skills to conservation challenges, O'Riain says he has fought some frustrating battles with animal rights activists, who don't want to accept the findings of his group, or evidence that the conservation status of the Peninsula baboons has improved dramatically over the past decade.

"It is essential for researchers to communicate their findings to the public in a digestible format, and this has largely taken the form of public meetings after hours. It's here that my postgrads have been brilliant, systematically busting popular urban legends about baboons and the many falsehoods that are actively peddled.

"We can't educate the public enough about the reality of the Peninsula baboons' status. There are many false stories out there."

An essential part of the research unit's work is also to forge links with local, provincial and government bodies and to assist with the shaping of management plans, protocols and policy.

"Social responsiveness is an important component of academic life and an essential part of making science 'relevant' in a developing country with established social challenges.

"The data will show the way forward."

Spreading expertise

But the Peninsula is not the only area with a baboon problem.

O'Riain's unit – supported by one postdoctoral, one doctoral, and two master's students – has been approached by Forestry South Africa to conduct a study that will help authorities understand how and why baboons damage trees in Mpumalanga's commercial plantations.

"It aims to first understand the behavioural and spatial ecology of baboons in a human-altered agricultural habitat, and then to use these data to devise sustainable solutions for this important agricultural sector," says O'Riain. ■

Picture by Michael Hammond

Good neighbours: Prof Justin O'Riain at a game fence erected around Zwaanswyk, on the border of the Tokai Forest, to prevent conflict between humans and their neighbours – wild animals such as the chacma baboon.

Seafood on the side

The Cape Peninsula's baboons are consummate foragers, and one group in particular is partial to a little seafood, writes doctoral student Matthew Lewis of the Baboon Research Unit in the Department of Biological Sciences.

(Sea)food for thought: Matthew Lewis observes baboons of the Kanonkop troop, who feed on marine invertebrates like mussels and limpets. He found that despite its abundance in the primate's home range, marine food make up a surprising low percentage (up to 10%) of these baboons' diet.

Contrary to popular belief, there are still baboons on the Cape Peninsula that do not raid people's homes, or even harass them at local picnic sites.

These baboons belong to the Kanonkop troop, which inhabits a 45km^2 home range in the northern part of the Cape of Good Hope section of Table Mountain National Park. They feed only on natural foods, including various plants, as well as marine invertebrates such as mussels and limpets.

According to studies performed elsewhere, primates prefer foods that are rich in proteins. The Kanonkop baboons might therefore be expected to make extensive use of marine food resources.

During the course of my PhD I've studied the ecology of this troop in an attempt to determine how much marine food they eat, and how this affects other aspects of their behaviour.

I collected data through behavioural observation and stable isotope analysis (a chemical analysis of food samples, baboon hair and faecal samples) to determine the ratios of stable carbon and nitrogen isotopes in these materials. These ratios are then used as input for mathematical models that provide estimates of the proportional contributions of different foods to the baboons' diet.

Behavioural observations indicate that the Kanonkop baboons marine-forage frequently (every two to three days depending on the season), but do not spend a great deal of time feeding in the marine intertidal zone.

As a percentage of feeding time available to baboons, time spent marine-foraging does not exceed 7% in any season. The seasonal observation-based estimates of marine foraging are supported by the results of the isotope-based models, which suggest that the marine foods contribute 0-10% in different seasons.

These values are surprisingly low, and suggest that some environmental factors may be limiting the exploitation of marine foods by baboons. I therefore used statistical analyses to determine whether environmental factors affect marine foraging.

The results of the analyses suggest that bout duration, and the numbers of animals marine-foraging during bouts, both decrease with increasing tide height, wave height and wind speed.

I am in the process of modelling baboons' behaviour to better understand what might be driving or limiting marine foraging in these baboons. ■

What is the role of universities in social transformation?

YUSUF OMAR

Universities don't just lead public debate around moral behaviour and conflict resolution through rational debate. They are also a unique space where students are exposed to 'the other' – and come to grips with their misconceptions around this otherness.

This was a key message from Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price, in conversation with his counterparts from local institutions on 4 March. The vice-chancellors – and in some cases their representatives – were debating universities' roles in modern society: whether they are uniquely positioned to lead the transformation of South African society after apartheid.

Price said universities were spaces where students met and interacted with people from various backgrounds, which was a change from the often sheltered norms some students grew up in.

"Some universities … are places where students meet 'the other' for the first time," said Price.

"They come to a university campus which is very diverse, and they are confronted with this diversity, with people from different backgrounds, different social classes, different languages, different religions.

"I think one of the most powerful things you do at university is to educate people about 'the other', about tolerance, about reconciliation, and to reduce the fear of the unknown. In the post-apartheid society, what can be more important than that?"

Picture by Je'nine May

Looking to the future: UCT Vice-Chancellor Max Price (far left) joined his counterparts at St George's Cathedral recently to discuss the role of the university in developing a post-apartheid South Africa. From left: Professor Prins Nevhutalu (CPUT), Professor Irene Moutlana (Vaal University of Technology), Professor Norman Duncan (rep for VC of University of Pretoria), Archbishop Thabo Makgoba who chaired the session and Dr Mvuho Tom (Fort Hare).

Sharing the panel with Price were a host of other vice-chancellors: Professor Prins Nevhutalu of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology; Dr Mvuho Tom of the University Fort Hare; Philippa Tumubweinee, representing the VC of the University of the Free State; Professor Norman Duncan, representing the VC of the University of Pretoria; Professor Irene Moutlana, VC of the Vaal University of Technology; Professor Brian O'Connell, VC of the University of the Western Cape; and Professor Adam Habib, VC of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Nevhutalu argued that universities should guard against merely producing students that exacerbated present social inequalities.

"South Africa has one of the world's largest Gini coefficients," said Nevhutalu. "Do universities produce students who are going to exacerbate these divisions between the very rich and the very poor? For example, if our students become MDs of companies, how do they treat their workers? What kind of graduates do we produce so that we can … be part of a changed society?"

Habib agreed that universities needed to equip graduates with more than just enough skill to fit seamlessly into a pre-defined working world. "What people want is for graduates to perform tomorrow [after graduating] in the working world at 120%," said Habib. "It doesn't happen anywhere in the world. Skills transfer has two elements. One is training, which the university plays a fundamental role in. But the second is mentorship."

Mentorship was where industry needed to take the lead, said Habib.

Moutlana said that universities should be fundamentally concerned with social upliftment:

"[We should be concerned with] the upliftment of the human species and of society as a whole for the common good." However, this quest for the common good had been undermined by a lust for profit, Moutlana maintained.

Responding to perceptions that universities conducted esoteric research, Price added that one would be hard-pressed to find research at local institutions that didn't add value to society, either immediately or as a foundation for future endeavours.

"If we want to simply be the adopters of knowledge produced elsewhere in the world, then we can say we should do no discovery," said Price. "But I don't think we want to do that as a country. We don't want to simply be the consumers of other people's research."

The conversation, held publicly and chaired by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, was hosted by the St George's Cathedral in Cape Town in conjunction with the District Six Museum and the Michaelis School of Fine Art. ■

Elections veteran back for 20th anniversary of freedom

HELEN SWINGLER

Cape Town at the height of summer; a country celebrating the 20th anniversary of its democracy; and an historic general election in May. Jørgen Elklit couldn't have timed it better.

The professor of political science at the University of Aarhus is back in the country, and newly appointed to the Van Zyl Slabbert Visiting Chair in Politics and Sociology at UCT.

The chair is underpinned by a five-year grant from the Open Society Foundation for South Africa. It honours former opposition leader and Institute for Democracy in Africa founder Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert's commitment to an open and democratic society.

A specialist in electoral systems and voting behaviour, Elklit has advised and consulted in more than 20 countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, China (village elections), Lesotho, Kenya (as secretary to the Independent Review Commission in 2008), and Zimbabwe.

Africa offers the scholar a wealth of case studies.

Elklit's first link to South Africa dates to his appointment to a panel under the Goldstone Commission, which looked into how one could best prepare for the 1994 general election.

And as one of the international members of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in 1994, he found himself in the middle of the country's political rebirth.

"It was one of the best elections," he reminisces.

Elklit and Van Zyl Slabbert met on a number of occasions and served together on the board of the Electoral Institute for Southern Africa in the mid-1990s. He remembers Van Zyl Slabbert as a knowledgeable and dedicated champion of democracy.

They also worked together on the Electoral Task Team, headed by Van Zyl Slabbert, which advised Cabinet on electoral system options for the 2004 and subsequent elections, and where Elklit was the only non-South African in the team.

Now settled in the Department of Political Studies, his academic base for the first half of 2014, Elklit is delighted to be back in South Africa. Among other things, he'll contribute to the department's research and staff and student seminars until the end of his assigned term.

This month he jets off to Washington to receive the International Foundation for Electoral Systems' Joe C Baxter Award for his contribution over the years to the development of democracy and election integrity.

Although he has followed the country's progress since that watershed 1994 election, Elklit is still keen to understand the political zeitgeist.

On his desk is Max du Preez's *A Rumour of Spring*, which examines the country's progress post-1994, and Roger Southall* and John Daniel's *Zunami!*, which dissects the 2009 general elections and Jacob Zuma's rise to power.

"It's a fantastic opportunity to see how things have developed in the electoral field."

He has no doubt that the run-up to the milestone May election will be smooth.

"Running an election should be boring and uneventful: voters are registered; ballots are cast; votes counted; seats allocated ... There shouldn't be anything too complex about it. Politics should be discussed somewhere else and not focus on electoral administrative issues."

1994 was a case in point. Once the legwork had been done, things proceeded to plan, bar the telephonic complaints streaming into the IEC operational centre in Johannesburg that ballot papers and marking ink had run out at some rural polling stations – or had not been delivered.

"We thought it was a disaster," Elklit says. But when they saw the TV news at the close of day, they were thrilled to see joyful voters, many in those isolated communities, who like millions of others, had cast their ballots for the first time.

"Then it all changed; we knew we had achieved something special."

It was short-lived. Not long after, they were alerted that a hacker had accessed the main computer and changed some of the parties' results – this as the country celebrated the dizzying success and prepared to install Nelson Mandela.

Keeping the news under wraps, the team recounted the data to ensure the results were clean, delays that prompted public ridicule – and a Zapiro cartoon disparaging the IEC's counting abilities.

Picture by Michael Hammond

Electoral specialist: Jørgen Elklit, professor of political science at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, is back in South Africa, having been appointed to the Van Zyl Slabbert Visiting Chair in Politics and Sociology.

"We didn't want to talk about it until we were sure it wouldn't have political consequences," recalls Elklit.

He'll be watching the May elections carefully; research for a paper he plans to submit for a conference in Montreal in July.

And while 1994 was the Rainbow Nation's miracle election, not everything has panned out in the way he thought.

"There have been some surprises and disappointments," says Elklit.

"In May 1994 many observers thought Parliament, elected as representative of the people, would have a stronger voice in terms of what happens in the country. But this hasn't been the case."

He also believes party funding needs scrutiny, to safeguard fairness between the political behemoths and the shrimps.

"There should be a formula to ensure balance."

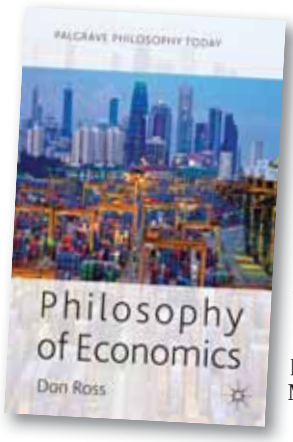
He's also dismayed by what looks like political intolerance and lack of respect for a basic human right – freedom of choice – among South Africa's electorate.

Twenty more years may be needed for real democracy to root, he adds.

"I hope I live long enough to see it."

**Professor Roger Southall was the first Van Zyl Slabbert Chair.* ■

Economics and sociology slowly converging?



Some say money; but that only applies – at a stretch – to macroeconomics, writes Dean of Commerce Professor Don Ross in his new book, *Philosophy of Economics*, published by Macmillan.

The A-rated researcher writes in the introduction (to what is his twelfth published book) that while some maintain economics is about money, others say it is about "incentivised choices".

"Through a review of the history and methodology of economics, with special focus on the past 60 years, the book shows why the second answer is more accurate," writes Ross. "But this leads straight into another problem: psychologists study choices too. So how is economics different from psychology?"

By showing how economics is really about groups or populations of people, not just individuals, Ross distinguishes economics from psychology. He criticises the current popular wave of behavioural economics, showing how many studies under that label confuse economics with psychology.

But if economics is about structures of group response, then how is it different from sociology?

"The book shows how and why economics and sociology are currently converging, perhaps ultimately to form a single unified discipline fed by two distinct historical tributaries."

Ross, who is also programme director for methodology in the Centre for Economic Analysis of Risk at Georgia State University, deals with a number of currently debated topics. These include the question of whether economists should be blamed for failing to have anticipated the onset of the Great Recession in 2008.

– *Helen Swingler*

Building a teaching and support community

South Africa is one of the world's most unequal societies, and universities like UCT grapple with equity and diversity – particularly in the classroom, where a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching has failed.

Surfacing Possibilities: What it means to work with first-generation higher education students focuses on the challenges faced by first-generation undergraduates who come from a diversity of linguistic, social, and cultural backgrounds and have often experienced disadvantage.

Under the editorship of Associate Professors June Pym and Moragh Paxton, a number of UCT staff members (three of whom are former Distinguished Teacher Awardees) provide a practical look at how they grapple with these challenges, whether through curriculum change for development and equity, or innovations in courses like statistics, economics and financial accounting.

The case studies are prefaced by an introduction to the Education Development Unit's Academic Development Programme (ADP) within the Faculty of Commerce. The ADP has been built on extensive research and scholarship, as well as ongoing success, reflected in growing graduation rates.

Pym believes the book holds many lessons for developing and developed countries: "This new generation of students calls for different directions in teaching, learning, and support; and we have focused on harnessing student agency, rather than working with a deficit model."

By this Pym means that the book emphasises students' holistic development, in which everything is addressed – from a student's psychosocial background to his or her graduate attributes.

– *Helen Swingler*

Yearning for unimportance

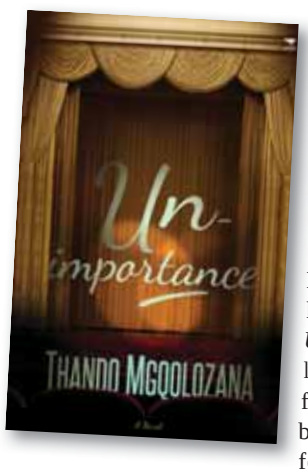


Image is just about everything for a politician's career; and the protagonist of UCT researcher Thando Mgqolozana's latest book, *Unimportance*, is learning that a façade can only be propped up for so long.

Zizi, an aspiring student politician, is a bundle of nerves the evening before he is due to deliver his election manifesto. He assaults his cheating girlfriend; and when she flees, Zizi panics, dreading that the truth about his character and deeds will stain his poster-boy reputation.

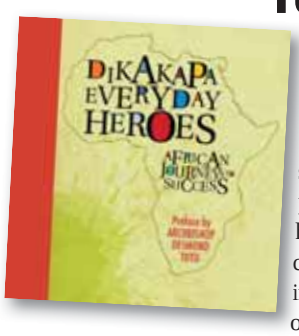
Unimportance, due to be published in April by Jacana Media, follows *A Man Who is Not a Man* (2009) and *Hear Me Alone* (2011). The title is derived from Zizi's manifesto speech-cum-confession session, in which he revokes his candidacy for the Student Representative Council and announces that he is going home instead.

Zizi's sole wish at this point is to be "free and unimportant".

Mgqolozana, a research development officer at UCT, previously worked for the Human Sciences Research Council. A Mandela Rhodes Scholar in 2006, he was listed among the Mail & Guardian's top 200 young South Africans in 2010.

– *Yusuf Omar*

Everyday heroes inspire further education



A social intervention project by UCT postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows has birthed a book containing the inspirational stories of 25 Africans, who hope that by telling their stories they will be able to motivate young people from impoverished areas to educate themselves.

Dikakapa Everyday Heroes: African journeys to success was published by the six founders of Dikakapa-Everyday Heroes (dikakapa is the Sotho word for champions) at the end of last year, in partnership with Juta & Co, the David and Elaine Potter Foundation, UCT OpenContent and Inqaba Biotech.

"We visit high schools where we interact, motivate and encourage learners to use education as a tool to achieve success in their lives," says Dr Andile Nofemela, co-founder and a former postdoctoral fellow at the Division of Medical Virology at UCT's Institute of Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine.

Nofemela's co-founders, also health science postgrads, are Dr Aron Abera, Dr Hlumani Ndlovu, Agano Kiravu, Retsilisitsoe Moholisa and Khethelo Xulu.

Initially the book will be distributed free of charge at two local schools, Fezeka High in Gugulethu and Thandokhulu High in Mowbray. In order to reach more learners they are partnering with initiatives like 100-UP, a UCT Schools Improvement Initiative programme aimed at preparing academically gifted learners from Khayelitsha to compete for places at UCT.

"Through partnerships with NPOs like Magaeng Developers for Science and Engineering, also founded by UCT graduates, we will reach learners in the villages of Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal," adds Xulu, co-founder and a master's graduate from the Division of Haematology.

The book is also available online at the UCT OpenContent website.

– *Abigail Calata*

Fresh perspectives for students of Constitution

Constitutional law students at UCT have a new core reference, one that has been lauded by top law faculties around South Africa.

South African Constitutional Law in Context seeks to balance accurate descriptions of the most authoritative interpretation of the Constitution with a critical and enquiring approach, say publishers Oxford University Press. This is to help readers grapple with key concepts while being presented with material that provides depth and diversity of perspective.

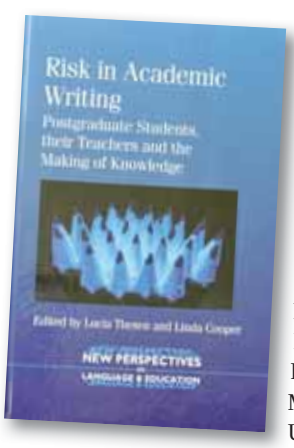
Co-edited by UCT's Prof Pierre de Vos, the Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance, and Prof Warren Freedman of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the book is aimed at those studying Constitutional law as part of their LLB degree, as well as postgraduate students and legal practitioners wishing to deepen their understanding.

"This is a timely addition to the growing literature on South Africa's Constitutional law," says Prof Danwood Chirwa, head of UCT's Department of Public Law. "It provides a contextualised, comprehensive account of the fast-growing field of South African Constitutional law in an accessible, interactive and thought-provoking style, without misrepresenting the complexity and fluidity of the subject. Its advantages over competing works in the area lie in its conciseness and contextualisation, and in its invitation to the reader to interact with and reflect upon the text."

Prof Jonathan Klaaren, lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand's School of Law, describes the book as a "sorely needed comprehensive overview of, and introduction to, Constitutional law in South Africa. There is a diversity of views within the field of South African Constitutional law, and this text points to many of them – and not just the dominant ones; a feature long missing in Constitutional law books."

– *Yusuf Omar*

Taking risks in academic writing



"If I were to read only one book on academic writing this year, this would have to be it."

So says Emeritus Professor of Higher Education Research at Leeds Metropolitan University Sue Clegg, referring to a recently published book edited by two UCT academics, *Risk in Academic Writing: Postgraduate students, their teachers and the making of knowledge*.

Dr Lucia Thesen and Associate Professor Linda Cooper edited the volume of essays about how likely students were to take the risk of trying out new forms in their writings.

"In the contemporary higher education landscape, which is characterised by an unprecedented movement of people, texts and capital, this problem of erasures and silences is a deeply political issue," writes Thesen. "What forms and knowledges are being erased? Why? Who benefits, and who remains silent?

"The contributors approach these issues by means of a new reading of the idea of risk, one that emphasises risk-taking as productive; and by exploring what this means for the process and product of research writing."

Thesen is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED). Her research focuses on ways of teaching writing to postgraduate students, and alternative forms and functions of academic writing. Cooper, also of CHED, focuses on worker education, the recognition of prior learning, and theorising different forms of knowledge.

– *Yusuf Omar*

VACANT POSTS

EXECUTIVE AND ACADEMIC POSTS:

Head of Reproductive Health and Feritility, Regulation: Reproductive Medicine Unit – Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Health Sciences, Closing date 24 March 2014

Lecturer or Senior Lecturer: Statistical Sciences, Faculty of Science, Closing date: 24 March 2014

Senior Lecturer/Lecturer: Chinese, School of Languages & Literatures, Faculty of Humanities Closing date: 31 March 2014

To view the full advertisements and application requirements for each post, please visit www.uct.ac.za and click on "Vacancies"

PROPERTY / ACCOMMODATION

ZEEKOEVLEI waterfront houseshare with one other. Suit mature or post-grad student R3500 monthly plus deposit. References essential, available immediately. Phone Martin 0790897164

Rondebosch: Ivydene Guest House offers short and medium term stays in charming old Cape farmhouse on Jamie shuttle route, close to shops and restaurants and Main road. Visit www.ivydeneguesthouse.com Email ivydene@mweb.co.za (+27216851747)

Little Mowbray: Garden flat, fully furnished one bedroom, Victorian Fireplace, Wi Fi internet connection, TV, secure undercover parking, use of garden. Electricity included. Non-smokers. R4700 per month. Tel 0216864067

Newlands house to rent From May, June, July. Would suit visiting professor. 2 rooms, 2 bathrooms. Good heating system. Rental: R10 000 per month

FOR SALE

"Hyundai Elantra 1.6 GLS - 2005 - 103000kms - Manual - FSH Full House - Immaculate condition. LOW LOW MILEAGE 103000 KMs Remote Central Locking / Leather seats – clean, rear like new / Air Bags / Air Conditioner / Power Steering / Electric Windows / Electric Mirrors / Radio / CD / Mag Wheels / New tyres. Full service completed at Hyundai dealer in Jan 2014 Call: 082 3700 800"

2003 Honda Civic 5-dr, Automatic, FSH, owner emigrating in April, low km, good condition, R60k, email tal.schreier@uct.ac.za

VW polo sedan 2012, 45 000 kms, R25 000 Bruce 083 719 3600

GENERAL

Academic Editing and Proofreading: I have experience in editing PhD and Masters dissertations (APA 6th ed), and Research articles (Journal specific formatting). Contact jacquelinegamble@telkomsa.net

PROOFREADING AND EDITING: Your thesis, publication or dissertation edited professionally by Full Member of Professional Editors Group. Contact Philip, University Education Services at 0723406238 or pmurton@mweb.co.za

On Time Transcribers: We do your transcription - on time - every time! Student rates. Give us a call for a free quote 0766064266 or email us on info@ontimetranscribers.co.za

PROOFREADING AND EDITING: Your thesis, publication or dissertation edited professionally by Full Member of Professional Editors Group. Contact Philip, University Education Services at 0723406238 or pmurton@mweb.co.za

Professional Editing & Proofreading. Improving language, expression, style, formatting. Postgraduate dissertations, theses, articles, etc. Very experienced and reliable. Good rates. Tel: Regine at (021) 531 3330. Email: regine.lord@gmail.com

Found: A Namibian Drivers License found on campus please go the UCT lost and found office if you think it is yours.

Housekeeper: my char has worked for me since the early 1990s and is reliable, honest and efficient. I employ her two days a week and she is looking for a weekly Friday position. I can provide template contract and payslip advice. Please contact me for a reference 0825885593, jennifer.whittal@uct.ac.za, or Nomvuyo herself on 078 306 3038

ALL YOUR EDITING/ PROOFREADING NEEDS: Highly experienced editor will take care of all your editing/proofreading needs. Dissertations, theses, journal articles, etc. Excellent rates and quick turnaround time. Contact David: davidgcapel@gmail.com or tel: 0726606211

For your typing needs - email me on erikam@webmail.co.za for anything you need to be typed, from a thesis to a project, anything you might need assistance with. I am situated at the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT.

Financial Advisor: I Work with you to understand and define your financial needs and goals, Recommend Investment strategies to help you achieve your goals, assist you to plan your Investments and Retirement tax efficiently, provide professional financial planning advice, we offer death cover to HIV positive people and much more contact me, Shehaam Jacobs on 0216732102/ sjacobs1@oldmutualpfa.com /0820527835

TRANSCRIBING: Skilful and efficient transcribing tailored to your needs. Qualitative research, focus groups, conference proceedings. Over 18 years experience: work not outsourced, confidentiality assured. carintranscribing@webafrica.org.za 0214659904 / 0836822245

Bright Lights!!! Faded and Clouded Plastic Headlights? Inadequate and unsafe road lighting at night? Is your car losing value because of it's appearance? Let me remove the damaged outer layer and re-apply the Protective UV-resistant Coating to restore your headlights. All work Guaranteed for 12 Months Call DIANA on 0735572236

Clairvoyant, Stage Hypnotist to hire and promote. Licensed Hypnotherapist. Ready for U.C.T. + U.W.C. + C.P.U.T. Parties, Youth Groups, Sport Groups, Corporate Events. Can include clairvoyance. ect.

Graphic design student capable of capturing precious moments and corporate events brilliantly without the heavy price tag. Contact me via email at inclyne@gmail.com or empty.d.signs@gmail.com for further details

Proof Reading and Editing: 25 years' experience in lecturing, supervising dissertations and examining in the creative and performing arts. Extensive experience in article writing and editing as well as book editing. Available for all editing and proofreading. Needs: theses, dissertations, articles not only in those specific areas reasonable rates and quick turnaround times. Contact sharon.capetown@gmail.com // 0833086989

TYPING & VA SERVICE: Contact: Jaci - secretarialservice287@gmail.com or visit Paycoprint, Shop 6, OBZ Square, 129 Main Rd Observatory. T's&C's apply.

Become an Online English teacher: We host conversational classes and can assist you in gaining your TEFL. Applicants must have completed a 3 degree / diploma (or be in the process of completion) , neutral accent , a strong command of the english language , computer literacy skills, interested? Contact us at CTPANGEA@GMAIL.COM

Quartet to make Commonwealth splash

YUSUF OMAR

They're no strangers to the international stage, but for four UCT water polo players, getting called up to the South African squad for this year's Commonwealth Games is the zenith of their young careers.

Chris Baker, Jonathan Hock, Nicholas Hock (men's) and Tarryn Schooling (women's) will take to the pool for the senior national team at the 20th Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, in July and August.

The quartet have been stalwarts of UCT's trophy-laden water polo teams of recent years, and are raring to make a splash at the Games.

The men's first team have won the prestigious USSA Water Polo tournament for four years running, while Ikey players are also regularly selected for national teams.

Baker vividly recalls the pride he felt when *that* email from SwimSA popped into his inbox.

"We had just finished a Western Province training session on a Friday afternoon and I was one of the last to leave the pool area. I read the email and I kept on reading the team list over and over again. I eventually ended up just staring at my name on the team list.

"I had this overwhelming sense of pride and relief building up inside me. I immediately phoned my parents to share the news."

While Baker has represented South Africa as a junior in the FINA World Championships in Greece (2011) and Hungary (2013), he refers to them a curtain-raisers compared to the Commonwealth Games.

Schooling represented South Africa at the World Championships in Barcelona last year, and recalls her first-game jitters against New Zealand.

"It was our first game of the tournament and I don't think I've ever been so nervous in my life. We played a really good game and lost narrowly. I look forward to meeting them again in a big tournament!" she says.

Schooling can't wait to dive into the Commonwealth pools.

"Commonwealth Games promises to be an entirely new experience, as each tournament is different. So while I have represented my country before in an international tournament, I consider this selection a huge achievement; and yes, it is a big tournament to be called up for, and I can't wait to get there," she adds.

As water polo is an amateur sport in South Africa, players routinely foot the bill for tours and training camps, whether local or international.

"This can end up being very expensive, and is the reason that a lot of very good players give up playing competitive water polo," says Baker. "Having said that, the water polo community gets very involved in fundraising for national tours, as is happening for this Commonwealth tour, and companies like Old Mutual Wealth are very generous in their support of the game."

When UCT played Stellenbosch in the final of the USSA tournament in 2012, Baker was not in the greatest form. By his own admission, he'd had an "average tournament" up to then, and was low on confidence.

"During the final, that completely changed! I just couldn't seem to do anything wrong in that match. My defence was impenetrable, and when I shot I couldn't miss: I ended up scoring three goals in our 7-3 victory over Stellenbosch."

He and his team-mates will hope for more of the same in Glasgow. ■

Water world: Chris Baker, pictured here about to make a pass, will be one of four UCT water polo players carrying their country's ambitions on their shoulders at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow later this year.

Life-saving information at the touch of a button, thanks to alumnus

HELEN SWINGLER

The call to Dr Kate Balme on the Poison Information Centre's (PIC) national line is urgent. Three days into treatment for accidental ingestion of high levels of paracetamol, a young patient's liver has developed toxic damage.

Based at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, Balme has been advising the patient's medical team, based at a hospital in Port Elizabeth, by tapping into AfriTox, a vast database of over 40 000 records on toxins collected and researched at the PIC over 30 years, and now the country's most comprehensive poison databank.

The call is one of 13 to 15 queries the poison team fields daily (after-hours calls are taken by the emergency paediatrics staff at the hospital).

In the past, this patient information would have been captured using a pencil, notebook and calculator, and then loaded onto the system. But this has changed, thanks to retired medical alumnus Dr Selig Leyser, who – during a brief holiday to South Africa from the US – designed a new program to record telephonic information and generate reports in real time, providing immediate statistics.

The collaboration resulted from an "extraordinary bit of luck" after a chance meeting at a UCT reunion at the end of November 2013, says PIC director Dr Clare Roberts.

Leyser was in Cape Town for the 40th reunion of his MBChB class. He'd trained in pathology in the US, and later developed an interest in systematic reporting of pathology specimens. He went on to design programs for the real-time recording of information that parents of patients gave to paediatric nurses by telephone.

At the reunion Leyser met Dr Mike Madden, Roberts' husband, who realised a similar program could be useful to the PIC.

Leyser was keen to use his expertise to benefit people in the country in which he'd received his medical training. After visiting the PIC, he designed and perfected a program to record information from callers to the PIC, real-time, on a laptop. This analyses the data and instantly stores it on the dataset.

"In Africa, only we and the team at Tygerberg record this type of information systematically," says Roberts. "Now we will have our data from Red Cross at our fingertips, instantly, at all times, and can use it for a variety of publications and preventative purposes."

Leyser, who left South Africa in 1976, expressed a sentiment common among UCT alumni working and living abroad: "People connected to Africa want to contribute. There are many more medical alumni in the US who would like to contribute skills and knowledge, but current legislation prevents them from doing so."

Leyser paid for a part of the program that needed a commercial licence, and covered the costs of converting it from the Apple operating system to Windows.

"It's a Rolls Royce program," says Roberts proudly.

It's a far cry from the old card-index-and-textbooks system that medical personnel used to answer calls when the service first began in 1971. In 1981, work began on the national poisons information system, now AfriTox, to make all the information necessary for treating a poisoning case accessible on a computer.

The service is essential. For example, in the Western Cape, paraffin remains the biggest problem, particularly in Khayelitsha where it is often used for lighting and cooking; dealers buy it in bulk and decant it into plastic cooldrink bottles, which children mistake for soft drinks. In areas like Mitchells Plain, medicines top the list of substances accidentally ingested. Pesticide poisoning is also on the increase, Roberts notes.

"Dangerous substances meant for agricultural use only are being sold illegally on the streets for use as rat poison in the home. This puts adventurous toddlers at serious risk of poisoning." ■

Giving back: Drs Selig Leyser and Clare Roberts examine old files at the Poisons Information Centre, Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital. A medical alumnus, Leyser has designed a new program for the centre, which generates real-time data for the team, easing their load and increasing efficiency.

Acting editor: Chris Mitchell, **Acting production editor:** Judith Browne, **Designer:** Zwelibanzi Damba, **Freelance proofreader:** Dave Buchanan,
News leads: newsdesk@uct.ac.za, **Subscriptions, advertising, deliveries:** Ads-MondayPaper@uct.ac.za, **General info:** 021 650 5816