

Your voice

An extraordinary event...

I wish to report an extraordinary event: I almost had time to read the editorial in last month's issue by Alan Bundy...

Then am I one of those time-stretched academics? Nudge, nudge, wink, wink — teaching has finished for the semester, eh? Nod, nod. What a life of leisure is led in those mystical ivory towers between bouts of pedagogy!

It seems that I fall into Alan's shrinking category of 'library educator', that I am close to terminal decay. I'll be even more scarce if the federal government continues to shrink post-secondary funding.

Despite my neglect of them, amazingly many of my students work very successfully in libraries when they graduate. As to how that could possibly be, I can only speculate very absent-mindedly. Give me some post-modern space; I'm an academic, you know.

Anyway, as I say in haste, I almost had time to read that editorial...

...My passing glimpse of the presidential diktat was achieved this week in parallel with marking sixty-four student assignments, interviewing twenty-three students who needed advice on weak assessment, attending planning meetings every day, writing an application for a grant, trying to finish a final draft of a conference paper due last month, co-ordinating postgraduate research of thirty-six students (ten of them directly related to librarianship), marking a thesis on the impact of CCT on public libraries in Victoria, and preparing subject content about professional and ethical issues for another one-hundred-and-thirty-six students who surge in on a new wave of enthusiasm from overseas mostly, all freshly eager in one month's time.

Surprise to say, my only other peripheral glance was in the

direction of the federal government's May budget and changed tertiary policies...

It decreased its university funding in real terms, and liberalised the rules of entry for full-fee paying students. The entry standards for study and the requirements for work visas in Australia are eased.

While English is a second language, obviously money also talks. Occasionally English-speaking academic staff have been known to lapse into a very low level of gutter lingo when castigated about the quality of their graduate outputs by omniscient commentators.

...By comparison, tossing off an editorial or two in English for Australian professional readers would be a delightful doddle.

I think a desperate student just peeped darkly through my office window. I did but see her passing by...

Dr Graeme Johanson

The story of the star...

I too have often been asked what the 'star' means and thanks Ivan for the response. It is interesting to note that Ivan comments 'the star has remained as a crucial and enduring symbol...' If this is the case, why does it not appear anywhere in *inCite* except for the reproduction of the web page?

Di Booker, Adelaide, SA

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Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: *Your voice*, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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