

THE YARRA INSTITUTE FOR RELIGION & SOCIAL POLICY

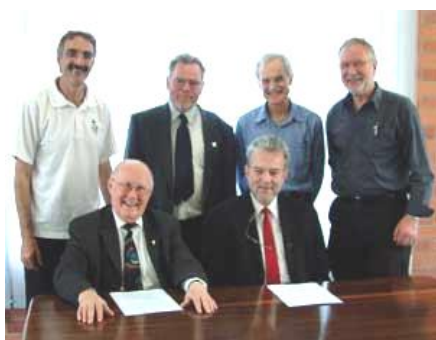
The Yarra Institute for Religion and Social Policy is an independent ecumenical organisation committed to promoting scholarship and research in the social traditions of the Christian churches, particularly as they bear on current social issues.



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As the name indicates, the Yarra Institute focuses on the interaction between religious belief and areas of social policy in Australia. It also explores how religious belief and moral values bear on specific issues, including economics and globalisation, hunger and poverty, international aid and development, indigenous affairs, issues of war and peace, conflict resolution, social justice, the environment and climate change.

While it springs from Christian social traditions, the Yarra Institute recognises Australia's secular, pluralistic and multicultural society, and commits to engaging with the broader culture in a collaborative effort to promote the common good. The Yarra Institute is the result of initiatives from the ecumenical advocacy organisation, Social Policy Connections.



The signing of the MoU. Left to right, at rear: the incoming YTU President, Fr Chris Monaghan CP, Dr Bruce Duncan, Dr Rowan Ireland, Dr Wes Campbell; in front, Dr Larry Nemer and Dr Stephen Ames.

The Yarra Institute was formally acknowledged by the Council of Yarra Theological Union in late 2008, and a Memorandum of Understanding signed. The then President of YTU, Dr Larry Nemer SVD, nominated Dr Bruce Duncan as initial Director of the Institute.



Photo courtesy mrfink at flickr.

YTU has generously provided office space, a room for the Redemptorist social justice library, and access to the facilities in the new Study Centre.

Website

The Yarra Institute website can be found at www.yarrainstitute.org.au, with articles, reports and publications, and provides a forum for scholarly exchange. It also promotes events and conferences, tracks research, publishes its own research findings, and monitors public policy in areas of special interest.

WHAT YARRA INSTITUTE OFFERS

- **SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH CAPABILITY** to focus our intellectual resources more purposefully on current pressing social issues.
- **A FORUM** in which to explore how Christian social values and traditions could improve human wellbeing today.
- **RESOURCES** to deepen knowledge of Christian and other traditions of social concern, and to foster more productive interaction among them.
- **A PLATFORM** from which to engage in the public conversation, drawing from the deep ecumenical resources in Melbourne.
- **WIDER NETWORKS** of people concerned to contribute to the formation of public policy.

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

The Yarra Institute has an experienced Board of Directors with excellent resources to supervise research projects and higher degree students. The Yarra Institute would be pleased to discuss possible research projects or partnerships with agencies and organisations.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Volunteers

The Yarra Institute benefits greatly from the pro bono contributions of its supporters and volunteers. If you have skills you would like to contribute in this way, we would be pleased to talk with you. As our research activities expand, so do our needs in administration, marketing, funding, editing and computer entry.

Financial support

Launched by the Hon Brian Howe AM in 2009, the Yarra Institute has developed with much good will and the involvement of key groups on an honorary basis. Our financial support has come mainly from a number of lay people and several Catholic religious orders. We would especially like to acknowledge the support of the Redemptorist Congregation, the Brigidine Sisters, and MacKillop Family Services. In addition, we wish to thank Bernadette Reeders, Drs Jim and Therese D'Orsa, and John and Paula McLeod for their timely contributions to this project.



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As a research body within the Melbourne College of Divinity, the Yarra Institute is part of the national university system, and benefits from DGR tax deductibility in advancing the research aims within the MCD. The Yarra Institute is eligible to apply for research grants from government and private sources, and to enter industry partnerships with church or other organisations for research.

Yet how well the Yarra Institute achieves its potential will depend in large part on further financial support. Your donations can help us make a significant difference.

How to donate

Tax-deductible donations to the Yarra Institute should be made out to: *The Finance Manager, The Melbourne College of Divinity, 21 Highbury Rd, Kew VIC 3101*, with the request that the donation be forwarded to the Yarra Institute for Religion and Social Policy. The MCD will send a receipt to you.

Or write to us directly at the Yarra Institute and we will forward any tax deductible donations through the Melbourne College of Divinity.

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Members of the Yarra Institute Board

Rev Dr Stephen Ames (President) is an Anglican priest and Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral. He is an honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne, and lectures in History and Philosophy of Science. He has special expertise in the relationship between science and religion.

Revd Dr John Bottomley is a minister of the Uniting Church in Australia. He has had parish ministries in Knox and East St. Kilda, and is a founding member and Director of the Creative Ministries Network. The Network integrates faith with the arts to address issues of justice at work in a social, political and environmental context.

Dr Jim D'Orsa is involved in pastoral planning in the Diocese of Sale and chairs its Diocesan Strategy Team. He is also involved with Broken Bay Institute in the areas of leadership and missiology. His current research concentrates on the Theology of Mission as it applies to education; secularisation/secularity and their implications; and issues around 'Catholic identity' in schools.

Dr Therese D'Orsa is head of the Missiology Department at the Broken Bay Institute Sydney. She recently completed eleven years as Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale and also her term as Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. She gives a special focus to justice education and mission. She is also a professorial fellow of ACU National.

Dr Rowan Ireland is an Honorary Associate in the School of Sociology at La Trobe University in Melbourne. He has had extensive field work in Latin America, and is investigating urban social movements in three Brazilian cities. He is also studying the processes of secularisation and new forms of religious life and civil society in Australia.

Dr Peter Price is a former Director of Mission for the InterChurch Trade & Industry Mission (ITIM Australia). In 2004 he retired as Director of Human Resources for Publicis International and now lectures at YTU in the Theology and Practice of Pastoral Planning. He provides Pastoral Planning and Lay Leadership Development Programmes, and is on a National Working Group sponsored by the Catholic Bishops for the Development of Parish Pastoral Councils. His PhD at Monash University is on late 19th century English Catholicism.

Dr Robyn Reynolds olsh has had many years living and working with indigenous Australians. She lectures at YTU in Missiology and in Pastoral Theology and Ministry Studies.

Dr Paul Rule taught Religious Studies and History at La Trobe University where he remains an associate, and is now engaged in major research projects on Christianity in China for the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco and Macao Ricci Institute. He is a former member of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council and the Melbourne Justice and Peace Commission.

Director: Dr Bruce Duncan CSsR has lectured in history and social ethics at YTU since 1986.