



# yarra institute

for religion & social policy

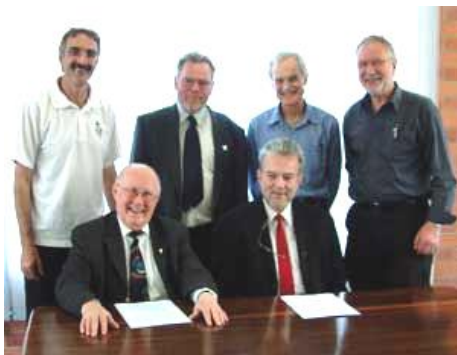
The Yarra Institute for Religion and Social Policy is an independent ecumenical organisation committed to promoting scholarship and research on the social traditions of the Christian churches, particularly as they bear on current social issues.



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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 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.



Signing the MoU with YTU. Left rear: 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 an MOU signed. The then YTU President, Dr Larry Nemer SVD, nominated Dr Bruce Duncan as initial Institute Director. YTU has generously provided office space, room for the Redemptorist social justice library, and facilities in the YTU Study Centre.



Photo mrink, flickr cc

## Website

The Yarra Institute website features information about the Institute and scholarly articles and publications. It promotes events and conferences, and publishes selected research findings.

## 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 lively 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, we would be pleased to talk with you.

## Publications and the Yarra Institute Press

With a grant from the Melbourne College of Divinity, the Yarra Institute in 2011 published online *The National Directory: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Services of the Australian Churches*.

Our Yarra Institute Press has published *Sufficient for the day: towards a sustainable culture*, a study of climate change by Dr Geoff Lacey.

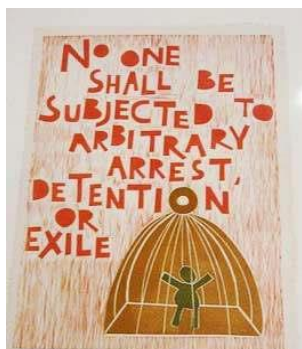
The Institute in 2013 also prepared an issue of the ATF journal, *Interface* on globalisation: *A World United or a World Exploited? Christian Perspectives on Globalisation*, available from our office.

*Social Justice and the Churches: Challenges and Responsibilities* will be launched in early November 2014. It gathers the papers from a conference the Yarra Institute organised in late 2013, with speakers from seven of the Christian traditions within the University of Divinity.

## Yarra Institute research projects

Dr Joan Daw's project on *Young People, Faith, and Social Justice* was launched in May 2013. It was funded with a grant from MCD University of Divinity.

Dr Cal Ledsham's investigation on **the morality of torture** is in the latter stages of writing.



'ianmackenz', flickr CC

## Transforming policies for asylum seekers

Funded by the Good Shepherd Foundation, in 2011 the Yarra Institute published *Long-term health costs of extended mandatory detention of asylum seekers* by Dr Tony Ward, and will shortly publish a detailed study by Dr Ward and Caz Coleman on why community detention is better for refugees.

## The Church's role in East Timor

Drs Jim and Therese D'Orsa are working with Bishop Hilton Deakin on his recollections of East Timor's struggles for independence.

The Yarra Institute relies on donations from religious and community groups to undertake its work and welcomes your support.

### How to donate

Donations to the Yarra Institute can be made to

*The Director,  
Yarra Institute for Religion and Social Policy,  
PO Box 505, Box Hill, VIC 3128.*

*Email: [admin@yarrainstitute.org.au](mailto:admin@yarrainstitute.org.au)*

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*Ph: (03) 9899 4777      Mobile: 040 897 971  
ABN: 41 920 916 986      CRICOS: 01037A*

The Yarra Institute is applying for DGR tax deductible status and is awaiting a response from tax authorities.

## Members of the Yarra Institute Board

**Rev Dr Stephen Ames** (President of the Board) is an Anglican priest and Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral. He is an honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne, where he lectures in the History and Philosophy of Science. He specialises 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, which integrates faith with arts to address issues of justice at work in a social and environmental context.

**Dr Anne Elvey's** research focuses on ecological hermeneutics and biblical studies. Anne is editor of *Colloquium: The Australian and New Zealand Theological Review*. She holds adjunct and honorary appointments at Monash University, Trinity College Theological School and University of Divinity, Melbourne. Her publications are listed at [anneelvey.wordpress.com/research/](http://anneelvey.wordpress.com/research/)

**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 issues around 'Catholic identity' in schools.

**Professor Therese D'Orsa** is head of the Missiology Department at the Broken Bay Institute Sydney. She 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.

**Major Brad Halse** has served as an officer within The Salvation Army for more than 30 years. He has worked in areas of aged care, homeless youth, and journalism work and church leadership. He is the Australia Southern Territory's Director of Government Relations and a representative on Commonwealth and State government advisory bodies and taskforces. He has been involved in reform proposals around responsible gambling and in advocacy for asylum seekers and refugees.

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

**Dr John D'Arcy May** returned to Australia after being Associate Professor of Interfaith Dialogue at the Irish School of Ecumenics. He specialises in inter-religious dialogue, including between Christians and Buddhists; Asian and tribal religions; and modernity. He is Associate Director of the Yarra Institute.

**Dr Paul Rule** taught Religious Studies and History at La Trobe University, and is now researching 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 YU since 1986. He writes on economics, religion and politics, war and peace.