



## Letter to the editors

The editors through their new series of articles are highlighting some of the issues that Mathematics is facing in Australia. Yet I cannot help but feel that the issues that are being raised are to some extent ancient history. We have moved on from those dark days and in fact Mathematics has done quite well recently, as has been documented in the excellent article by Tony Dooley. Why not have more emphasis on the positive and on our collective achievements. Doom and gloom is all well and good but it can be self fulfilling and can give quite the wrong impression, especially with the recent Federal Fundings in Mathematics.

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Finally, I suppose it is up to the Editors and to the readers of the *Gazette* to form their own views as to the appropriateness of the article by Philip Broadbridge and the comments on page 91 about colleagues knifing people in the back. The ARC does its best in difficult circumstances and I cannot understand why the *Gazette* would allow such comments. Informed opinion is fine but not vitriol.

I urge the *Gazette* to think about what they are trying to achieve with such articles.

*Our aim with the series of articles on the brain drain has been to complement the wealth of statistical data on this important issue with personal stories of drainees. As editors we have chosen to give free reign to our contributors and to not shy away from the sometimes confronting comments being made. Indeed, although the Gazette should not (just) become a forum for disgruntled mathematicians, the Australian mathematical community should hopefully be strong and mature enough to allow for a free and open debate. We would rather have the Gazette be sometimes controversial than be uninteresting and irrelevant.*

*As to whether the brain drain is something of the past, only time will tell. It will be clear from Kevin Burrage's letter, the President's column and Richard Brent's 'brain gain' contribution that views on this issue are not at all clear cut.*

*The editors*