

Gap has huge cost

LAURIE NOWELL

AUSTRALIA'S volatile housing market is widening the nation's rich-poor gap and fuelling rising levels of mental illness, obesity and crime, according to a housing and urban research expert.

Dr Ian Winter, executive director of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, says the way housing is traded in Australia exacerbates income and wealth inequalities and causes social problems that affect everyone.

He says new research shows the cascading effects of inequality of wealth and housing can include rising mental health problems, higher mortality rates, more obesity, rising homicide rates, reduced levels of trust, shorter life expectancy, a lack of innovation and lower education standards.

He has revealed the research in speech at a Committee for Economic Development of Australia function last month.

"These things impact on all of us—even the rich—and we all bear the cost of a society that has a subset of people who are greatly disadvantaged," Dr Winter says.

"The evidence is compelling that where you have greater equality in wealth and housing, you have a much better range of outcomes."

But Dr Winter says this has not always been so. During the three decades following World War II, families on lower incomes could own homes and were not disadvantaged.

He says the issues of housing economics are too difficult for politicians to address properly, especially in an election year. A community debate is needed to find a more balanced approach to the housing market, he says.

Roof over our heads, Page 86

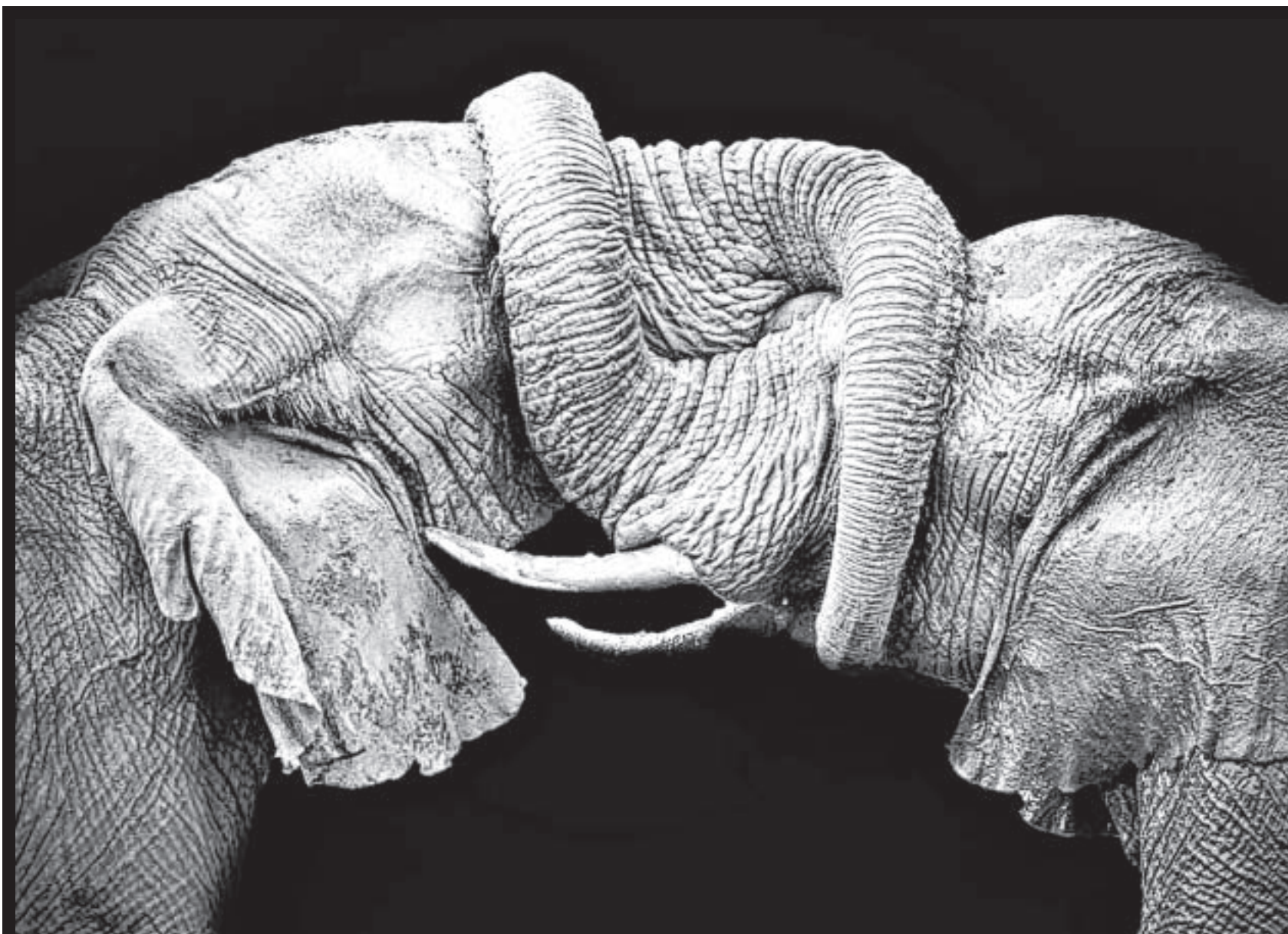
US cops our cars

HOLDEN will begin production of its purpose-built cop car for US police before the end of the year.

Holden's parent company GM announced late last month it will be taking orders for the Caprice sedan from October.

It is understood the Californian Police Force is impressed with the large V8-powered sedan and may order up to 10,000.

The sales start date was hailed by Holden as a major breakthrough in the resurrection of its US export program.



Africa by night

OUT of the darkness of the African night, a pair of elephants in the Kalahari Desert, Africa, nuzzle one another.

This tender moment was captured as part of a collection of striking photographs called *Black and White Africa*.

South African photographer Hannes Lochner spent two years taking the black-and-white shots of the teeming wildlife.

Pictures: BARCROFT PACIFIC



F B 1 2 3 | C M Y K | SHS 8-AUG-2010 PAGE 23 FIRST

NEXT WEEK IN YOUR Herald Sun

TOMORROW

YOUR MONEY

Go green to save cash



Chrissie Swan on the run

Feelinggreat

TUESDAY

taste.com.au

Jane Kennedy's top kitchen tips



Do you have a TAC claim?

You may be entitled to lump sum compensation even if the accident was your fault.

Call one of our expert personal injury lawyers now.

ARNOLD THOMAS & BECKER LAWYERS

FREECALL 1800 737 788 NO WIN, NO FEES (Cond. Apply) Established in 1968

100606 37012