BEHIND THE WALLS
Preserving the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct

BREAKING THROUGH THE MARZIPAN LAYER
How gender equity in the classroom could impact the boardroom

WANT CLEAN ELECTRICITY?
The case for ecolabelling and mandatory disclosure
What are the top three things you want to achieve this year?
It’s hard to pick just three things! Research within the higher education sector is going through interesting times; there is a drive for research quality, but at the moment an increasingly competitive and shrinking government funding pool. At UTS we have worked hard to achieve recent success with our Research Strategy and further our strong links with industry and the community to ensure our research has real impact. We have, as a university, a clear vision and the plans in place to work towards becoming a world-leading university of technology. So, my main goal is to continue implementing the UTS Research Strategy 2010-2015, with a focus this year on further increasing and diversifying funding sources for our research and researchers, extending industry and university partnerships nationally and globally; focusing on researcher development programs; and, finally, supporting the faculties and all the staff in their efforts to continue to make UTS a vibrant, exciting place to work and research.

But, there’s one more …
If I can have another, it’s to support UTS academics to write for and contribute to The Conversation – an independent source of analysis, commentary and news written by recognised experts in academia and research. UTS is a founding partner and have many, really talented contributors. I want to see more of our researchers and research students work with The Conversation’s experienced journalists to get their research outcomes direct to the public.

What country would you most like to travel to?
I have to travel a reasonable amount with work, and this year will be no different with trips to South America, China and the USA already scheduled. Some are part of our Key Technology Partners program, others are to establish joint international research centers or develop the two-way flow of PhD students. So, when on holiday, I prefer to stay in Australia. There is no place on earth like the south coast of NSW – deserted white, sandy beaches, sparkling effervescent seas – it’s perfect for relaxing or exploring with my family.

What are you working on right now?
Writing a series of answers to questions that I hope will not bore the readers too much.

What was your first paid job?
In the middle of high school I proudly became a change room attendant (and thrillingly, a year later; ‘Head’ change room attendant) at Gowings – a now-defunct clothing store. This job taught me, very early, the importance of diplomacy and gave me insight into the variety of influencing skills required in life – how to suggest, positively, that someone would look better wearing something else, or the same item but three sizes larger! Towards the end of high school I also started as a piano teacher for kids in the area. I learned a lot from this experience – how to enthuse the unenthusiable, bring interest to those who couldn’t care and gently encourage virtuosity from those who insisted on hiding their talents deep down inside themselves. These are lessons I have tried to re-learn and apply in all my subsequent jobs.

25 years ago I was …
An aspiring scientist. I certainly never imagined, 25 years ago, that I would now be developing and supporting the research contribution that UTS is making, nationally and internationally. It gives me a real sense of pride to be doing so.
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The concept of robots updating each other through social media may sound far-fetched, but if research student, and newly-awarded IBM PhD Fellow, Wei Wang has her way it will soon become reality.

Based in the Centre for Quantum Computation and Intelligent Systems’ (QCIS) Magic Lab, Wang is conducting research that enables robots to interact with each other through technology similar to Twitter and Facebook.

Inspired by the way humans connect through such sites, Wang is developing a mechanism to allow robots to share their skills and experiences in a similar way. Her research aims to help robots learn from each other, adapt to new and unseen tasks, and to sustainably develop themselves.

“Humans use social media to communicate with friends and other people they’re interested in. We swap news, life events, give and receive advice, and learn from each other.

“So I thought, if people can benefit from social networks in this way, then why not robots? They could have a social media-style profile which identifies their capabilities, shows what they’re working on and what new skills they’ve learned,” says Wang.

Such forward-thinking research has won Wang a prestigious IBM PhD Fellowship – an intensely competitive worldwide program that seeks to nurture the best in the field of IT and to identify people and projects that are game-changers in terms of their potential to impact the wider world. Wang’s successful application is one of only two fellowships offered in Australia this year.

Her success represents another homerun for the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, which has now won five fellowships in the last four years.

It’s also part of an impressive track record for QCIS. The research centre is described by Director of IBM Research, Australia Glenn Wightwick as “a great source of fellowship students”.

Wang explains the first step in enabling robots to share their skills and learn from each other is to break down the skills so other robots can emulate them.

“Robots perform actions in one skill that can be reused in others. For example, the action ‘raise arms’ can be used by robots to lift heavy boxes in a warehouse or lift drinks trays to serve hospital patients. Once these reusable actions have been determined, they can be shared so other robots can use them when they find themselves in similar situations.”

Ultimately, the third-year doctoral student says her research aims to use robots to improve our lives, and not just in dangerous environments like space or places with high radiation.

She foresees a world in which robots not only communicate and learn from each other, but are also socially connected with humans and smart objects found in the ‘internet of things’.

“For example, you could be sitting on your sofa drinking orange juice. When you finish your drink, your glass tells your robot it’s empty. Then your robot asks if you’d like a refill. If you say ‘Yes’, the robot talks to your refrigerator to see if there’s any juice left. If your fridge says ‘No’, your robot could get in your car and drive to the supermarket to get you some more!’”

Tristan Craig
Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology
Photographer: Joanne Saad
“Women and men who are juggling family and work commitments still face real barriers in building and sustaining a research career. They need support and flexibility to reach their research goals. It is, after all, in the university’s interest for this to happen,” says Equity and Diversity Project Officer Sybille Frank.

This month sees the launch of the new UTS Research Equity Initiative. Championed by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Attila Brungs and launched by Chief of the CSIRO Materials Science and Engineering division Cathy Foley on 10 April, the initiative will help UTS attract, retain and develop the best students and academic researchers.

“It recognises the reality that managing both your research and your family and carer responsibilities can be very challenging, and aims to help academics who want to develop or maintain their successful research career alongside family commitments,” explains Frank.

The initiative grew out of the findings of the UTS Women in Research Report 2012, which pulled together key data on women’s and men’s participation and performance in research over a five-year period. The report showed areas of significant achievement for UTS women against key research performance indicators, but also identified some concerning gender gaps in research engagement and productivity.

“Women are as motivated and capable as men of producing great research, but the impact of babies, family commitments and carer responsibilities at key career points can make it harder for women to produce as much research as early in their careers,” says Frank.

“It’s also more difficult for them to develop the same types of national and international research networks, or to move cities or countries to take up opportunities in the ways required to develop highly competitive research profiles.”

The initiative builds on existing UTS services and support programs for staff with carer responsibilities, while also delivering a range of new programs to target particular hurdles facing women.

New programs include the Childcare and Carer Fund (Conference Travel) which provides funding of up to $2000 to assist staff with primary carer responsibilities to attend important conferences and workshops; the Funding for Research During Parental Leave guidelines, which provide financial support and resources for postdoctoral students and staff who need to keep research projects going while on parental leave; a Research Re-establishment Scholarship of up to $15 000 to enable staff returning from parental leave to spend concentrated time on their research; a research fellowship for mid-career staff whose research career has been affected by sustained carer responsibilities; and mentoring/networking programs as well as faculty-based actions.

Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Ann Reich is an early career academic in the Learning Cultures and Practices Group. She’s also mother to eight-year-old twins and one of the first recipients of the Childcare and Carer Fund (Conference Travel).

The fund money has enabled her to accept an invitation to be a keynote speaker at a prestigious international conference overseas and look at possible joint research projects.

“It’s vital newer researchers are provided with opportunities to attend international conferences to develop international research profiles and maintain established international links,” says Reich.

“It can be very difficult due to the cost of taking children and a carer with us, or the difficulty of organising for their care at home. These initiatives are important in overcoming some of these difficulties to ensure equity of opportunity for all staff.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad

Comment on this article at
UTS NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2013/04/supporting-equity-in-research
The ‘marzipan layer’ is a clever and visual analogy for the layer of management, below the white icing on the top of the cake, that many professional women are unable to move beyond.

“Ambitious women come to do, let’s say, a postgraduate business degree to get the hard skills to help them progress within an organisation,” says Lecturer in the Institute for Interactive Media and Learning Katrina Waite. “They don’t believe there’s any discrimination happening within the university.

“But when I started asking, ‘How do you work in groups?’ it emerged the men do the maths and quantitative stuff while these women created the PowerPoints and undertook the more discursive kind of work because they knew they were better at it. They hadn’t realised they were doing it group project after group project.”

It’s findings such as these that have contributed towards the project ‘Breaking Through The “Marzipan Layer”: Developing gender mindedness and equity pedagogy in the design of groupwork activities and assessments’.

The project has raised many questions around common teaching and learning practices including the gendered nature of some curriculums. Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences’ Creative Practices Group Theresa Anderson says women often reach a layer of positions within an organisation but find they can’t progress beyond it. Recent studies suggest the strengths which women are perceived to contribute to organisations are not valued in the same way as the strengths of men.

“Different kinds of skills are valued when you get to management, and they’re often what we would consider to be male skills or attributes – the quantitative skills like finance acumen, putting yourself forward, being confident. It’s alarming to think that, in a way, because you’re very good at being how you are, you’re not encouraged or nurtured to actually develop a fuller set of knowledge and expertise. And it’s unintentional.”

Waite and Anderson, along with Research Officer in the School of Design Mukti Bawa, worked with UTS academics to observe the interactions between students working in their class environments. One of the subjects included in the study was the UTS Business School’s Alternative Perspectives in Contemporary Economics led by Roderick O’Donnell. While there was a balance of both sexes in the class, the gender imbalance quickly became apparent in a simulation game.

“It was so much about power,” says Waite. “All the men rose to the top in terms of positions of power and a lot of the women ended up in relatively powerless positions. We presented the findings to students afterwards and they were shocked once we told them how it played out.”

“We’re interested in creating a more mindful approach,” adds Bawa. “That extends past
gender to students who may not have the best English language skills and therefore don’t verbally present well. They’ve done the research, they understand the content, but it’s the presentations that leave them behind.

“It’s about being mindful of the whole process rather than just the final outcome, and it applies to both academics and students. It’s putting subtle markers along the way to assess how the student is graded, rather than how you deliver in a 10-minute presentation at the end.”

As a result of the discussions after the simulation game observation, O’Donnell has developed more inclusive group work tasks. He’s even incorporated a student-to-student mentoring component to allow students to develop skills during the group work process.

“The response from the students has been really positive because they feel like they’re getting something out of the group and learning from one another. It also fits with the UTS aspiration of student-generated learning,” says Anderson.

In addition to studying in-class behavior, the team also undertook observations on mixed gender groups in public learning spaces. More often than not, they found women working on the computer while a man was giving instructions, “leaning back with his arms behind his head and feet up on the desk,” says Waite. “It’s the subtlety of these occurrences that we’re looking at.”

They further consulted with students, in a “fabulation” process, about how an ideal group based assignment would play out. They say students aren’t as concerned about the ‘outcome’, rather the process of learning along the way.

“I call it ‘time to link, think and tinker,’” says Anderson. “As educators, we’re not mindful of what the power of that deadline does. It closes off the opportunity for people to say, ‘I’m not very good at statistics, but I wouldn’t mind the opportunity to try and learn,’ rather than, ‘Hey, you have really strong statistics skills so you should look after this because it will help the group get a good grade.’”

As a result of their research, Anderson, Waite and Bawa have developed tactical workshops for lecturers. Their aim is to disrupt the tendency of dominant personalities who take over in the classroom and empower less confident students to participate. “If you can do that, you’re helping your students graduate with some training that has wonderfully positive outcomes in organisations where group work is common, especially with people who aren’t your friends,” says Bawa.

The workshops are part of a long-term strategy, one that could also interest socially responsible Sydney corporations.

And, while the project has used gender as the starting point, the team knew it was never going to be the end point. “When you get down to it, it’s not just about gender,” says Waite. “It’s about inclusion, developing one’s confidence, facility of language and practise at getting your ideas forward.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad

Comment on this article at
UTS NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2013/04/breaking-through-the-marzipan-layer
For most Australian households, electricity makes up a large part of their carbon emissions. But, with electricity companies failing to disclose where their energy comes from, the opportunities to make choices to lower our carbon footprint are few. Sustainability researcher Fiona Berry explains how a new study is paving the way for consumers to make the switch to more sustainable power sources.

With the deregulation of electricity markets in Australia, a large number of electricity retailers have emerged, and with them a plethora of electricity products offered to consumers.

Since 1998 electricity retailers in California (and many other states in the USA) have been providing customers with a Power Content Label, similar to the nutritional labelling you find on packaged food. Likewise, since 2005 UK and European electricity retailers have been disclosing on bills to customers, or via their websites, the overall fuel mix of electricity sold. Both clearly show consumers the contribution of each energy source – either renewable energy (zero or low carbon emissions) or fossil fuels (high carbon emissions).

In Australia, electricity retailers do not disclose such information. Many are quick to advertise how ‘green’ their electricity is, but is it really? The answer is, simply, we don’t know.

I, together with colleagues Jenni Downes and Jay Rutovitz, was recently part of a team at the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) who were commissioned by the Total Environment Centre to test the status of fuel mix disclosure by electricity retailers in Australia. Given the importance of climate change and rapidly rising electricity prices to the Australian public, we have a right to access easy-to-understand information about where our electricity comes from.

Our study, The Electricity Retailer Disclosure Study, looked at the 36 licensed retailers in the National Electricity Market (NEM) and reveals that it is not possible to find the source of electricity sold by any of them.

What’s more, these 36 licensed retailers are under no obligation to share this information with their customers. The result is widespread inconsistency in the information provided to Australian consumers.

Though the Federal Government has introduced a carbon price and a renewable energy target which shifts the Australian energy market to focus on environmental impacts not just economic performance, the reality is these requirements don’t extend to the retail electricity market. Even if a new government is ushered into power in September this year, it’s unlikely this will change any time soon.

Due to the lack of available data on the retail market, The Electricity Retailer Disclosure Study analysed data on the wholesale market; that is data on energy generation by those retailers who own or operated electricity generation assets. Only 38 per cent of the retailers who own generation assets comprised of 100 per cent renewable energy and they accounted for seven per cent of the total electricity generated.

There is also no way to link the type of electricity this 38 per cent generate to the type of electricity they sell. This is because there are several ways retailers can buy electricity from the wholesale market, such as retailer and generator arrangements, power purchase agreements, the spot market and the futures market.

But before you dig further into the numbers on generation, it is possible some retailers have acquired different generation assets since our study took place. This provides a stronger case for disclosure of the source of electricity purchased directly by retailers to customers, such as on quarterly bills, rather than through organisations such as ours conducting research into various data sources.

You may be asking, why, if there is transparency in generation in the wholesale market, can’t the retail market provide the same transparency to consumers? After all, such disclosure is now common in Europe. In fact, last month the first, and only, pan-European ecolabel for electricity was launched.

Until disclosure is required of retailers, the only way we can be sure that our electricity is from renewable sources is to take the initiative – generate our own or choose GreenPower (an Australian Government program that provides certified renewable energy).

Our study identified only 47 per cent of retailers offer GreenPower to their customers. Total sales were found for only four of these retailers, and the highest
percentage of GreenPower sold was 3.2 per cent. So it remains unknown exactly where the remaining electricity they sell is sourced from.

For customers who do generate their own renewable energy, like solar power, you may be surprised to learn that two-thirds of retailers in the study pay only at or below the state governments’ mandated solar feed-in tariff. In fact, 58 per cent of the retailers did not provide consumers with information on feed-in tariffs at all (although presumably they will offer the mandated feed-in tariff if approached).

Despite whether or not consumers are interested in this information, the trend seems to be toward a strong focus on price competitiveness in our electricity industry which conveniently shifts the consumer focus away from disclosure of environmental performance. Should the Liberal Party be successful in this year’s federal election, it would likely continue to ignore this issue too.

The market, however, appears open to disclosure. The Energy Transparency Project was launched last year by Bloomberg New Energy Finance. It collects and ranks information on the amount and type of renewable energy used by 300 of the world’s largest organisations for their own use via their Corporate Renewable Energy Index. The not-for-profit, The Carbon Disclosure Project requests data on the carbon emissions performance of the 200 largest listed corporations on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX200). Last year, 85 per cent of the ASX200 volunteered information on their emissions performance.

Similarly, the Federal Government’s Green Vehicle Guide rates new cars based on their greenhouse gas emissions and the Carbon Offset Guide helps consumers find and select formally accredited offsets. Certainly the same thinking could be applied to electricity sales?

Mandatory disclosure, or at least an ecolabel like the one offered in Europe, would help to clear up the confusion. Until then, Australian consumers may be limited in their ability to make fully informed decisions about the environmental impact of power they purchase.

To download a copy of the study, visit tec.org.au/recent-tec-reports.

Fiona Berry
Senior Research Consultant
Institute for Sustainable Futures

Photographer (power point): Joanne Saad
Photographer (F Berry): Hoc Ngo

U: SAID IT QUESTION
How would an ecolabel or mandatory disclosure about where your electricity comes from affect your energy usage?
Abuse, imprisonment, secret women’s business; Australia’s Parramatta Female Factory Precinct (PFFP) has a long, and often ugly, history.

Once traditional land for Burramattagal women, since 1821 the area has been a place of female incarceration and confinement. Today, UTS:Shopfront is working with Parragirls to preserve the precinct’s history and turn it into an internationally recognised Site of Conscience.

Convicts, criminals, orphans, ‘welfare’ children and the mentally ill; over almost 200 years, more than 40 000 women and children have been confined to the institutions on the 48-odd acres of land wedged between Fleet Street and the Parramatta River.


Djuric’s memories of the time are shadowed by anger and humiliation: “It was always driven home to us that our ‘female-ness’ was the source of our rottenness.

“There were no doors on toilets and showers, so there was no privacy. If you were in a dormitory you didn’t have a cabinet next to your bed for your things; you had no personal things at all. You weren’t allowed to speak freely. You had no choice; everything was directed by those in charge. Anything about being an individual was completely obliterated in the institution.”

Djuric, unlike many ‘Parragirls’ who continue to struggle with “limited literacy and a lot of emotional and psychological problems”, graduated from the Australian Catholic University a few years after starting a family. She went on to study at the National Art School, itself a former prison. The experience awoke her nightmarish memories of Parramatta.

Then, in 2000 following her sister’s death, Djuric became foster mother to her sister’s three children. “I began to wonder: ‘Why is
our family, once again, having to turn to
the welfare authorities for help?"

As she delved into her own past, Djuric
began to discover the layered history of
the PFFP. Her first “astounding” discovery
was that “the institution I was in
had earlier been Australia’s first
Catholic orphanage.

“The orphanage was established to
accommodate children forcibly removed
from their convict mothers in the adjacent
Female Factory. I realised then that the
state intervention which directly affected
my life, and which also profoundly
affected Aboriginal people, began in
Parramatta. This site is the cradle of our
welfare system.”

In 2003, Djuric founded Parragirls – a
support group and contact register for
former inmates – and began placing
the information she had found online. “But
having a website means you go public.

“I started getting emails from former
inmates, descendants of convict women
and descendants of kids who had been in
the orphanage. So there was a whole new
arm of inquiry, investigation and interest
in the site.”

In 2007, Djuric contacted Shopfront
to ask for help in compiling a history
of the precinct. Within months, UTS
communication/law student Clare Butler
began researching the Female Factory and
addressing the criteria Djuric would need
to submit the site for national heritage
listing in 2010.

Fast forward to 2013 and Shopfront
and Parragirls have begun work on
their fourth project – the ‘PFFP Memory
Project: Trace, place, identity’.

As part of this, public historian and
Shopfront Academic Director Paul Ashton
is working with Djuric and others on
a program that will raise the profile of
the site among other historians and
politicians. Their first task is to organise
a September symposium on stolen and lost
generations of women and children.

“From that,” says Ashton, “we’re going
to produce a special issue of Public
History Review, which is published by
UTSePress and the Australian Centre for
Public History, and we’re also hoping to
edit a book based on the proceedings of
the conference.”

The purpose, says Ashton, is to “build up
a body of work that supports the heritage
values and significance of the site.

“For most large government agencies, they
have hundreds of incredibly important
heritage buildings that are very expensive
to maintain, or to even work out what their
significance is.”

Many, adds Ashton, “become demolished
by neglect”. He, Djuric and Parragirls’
community of activists are working hard
to ensure that doesn’t happen.

“In government, decision making is
informed by the recommendations of
experts,” explains Djuric. “And who are those
experts? They’re the sorts of people who
will be writing papers, participating in or
attending public history conferences. So if
we can get to them and inform them and
engage them, then when it comes time for
the government to ask their opinion, we’ve
got them batting for us.”

Ashton adds, “There are some people in
bureaucracy or in cultural institutions who
say we shouldn’t shock the public, that
people want nice stories. But they also want
the truth.”

Djuric agrees. “Today we’re much more
aware that things that went on behind
closed doors, is as the case with the current
inquiry into sexual abuse in institutions.

“It’s being dominated by allegations against
religious groups, mainly the Catholic
Church, but it’s not just the Catholic Church,
it happened everywhere.” Allegations
have also been levelled at state controlled
institutions like Parramatta Girls Home.

“One way or another” Djuric hopes to
know the outcome of her national heritage
application by August this year. “Indications
are it will be included, but that’s just the
first step.

“Next is having it included on UNESCO’s
World Heritage List and that could take
up to 10 years. An important part of the
process is demonstrating how the site is
being utilised today and that’s another
reason why we launched the Memory
Project,” adds Djuric.

The initiative, which could offer UTS
students another opportunity to work with
Parragirls later this year, encourages the
public to engage with the site and artists,
historians and former inmates to share their
interpretations of it.

It’s all part of Djuric’s plan to one day see
the precinct recognised as an international
Site of Conscience. “The model is you take
historic sites, sites where trauma and
human suffering have occurred, and use
these past struggles to address pressing
human rights issues today.”

In addition to wanting the site used as a
place of learning and a community cultural
hub, Djuric says, “we’re also thinking about
the land.”

“It would be really great if the whole site
was used as a children’s garden, where
you could hear children laughing instead
of crying.”

Though the State Government is currently
consulting to develop a master plan
for many of Parramatta’s historic sites,
including the PFFP, Djuric is sceptical. “Each
of these sites has had master plans before,
but nothing has happened.”

Quite simply, she says, “The government are
not listening to anyone”.

But, “We’re acting on it, we’re doing it, we’re
not going to sit passively by and wait. It’s
not just history, it’s people’s lives. After all,
we are the last generation of Australians
who experienced institutional ‘care’. Our
stories, our experiences, matter.”

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (B Djuric): Catherine McElhone
PFFP map image supplied by: Parragirls
Photographer (P Ashton): Joanne Saad

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2013/04/behind-the-walls
She’s the smiling face behind the foyer concierge desk. Fresh faced and Canadian keen, UTS Lift Concierge Britta Smith says she’s got plenty to smile about.

“There’s such a diverse range of people that come through UTS. Hearing the good and bad parts of their day and what’s going on in their lives is something I enjoy.

“I’m a real people person and I feel like I’m everyone’s co-worker in the Tower building. It feels like a family – which I didn’t expect at all – and that makes me happy.”

It was a chance meeting with “a beautiful Australian gentleman” in a Toronto cafe in 2011 that has kept Smith in Sydney for longer than her intended three-month stay. It’s a move she says hasn’t been too difficult, despite missing friends and family back home.

“There’s about five feet of snow in Toronto at the moment. I don’t miss spending five minutes putting on my winter gear before going outside and, literally, digging my way out of my house.

“One particular thing I miss is going up to our log cabin in Northern Saskatchewan with my mum, dad and brother. That sounds so Canadian, doesn’t it? We have our own small island, miles from civilization, with no running water or electricity. We actually acquire our drinking water from the lake; it’s like going back in time. The simplicity of it is so beautiful.”

With much of Australia still to explore, Smith says travel has been her most valuable education. “My partner and I are planning our next big trip to India to volunteer at an orphanage. With every trip, the list of places to travel keeps getting larger, not smaller.”

Smith’s background is both colourful and varied. She studied fine arts for a year, leaving her inspired to go on her own art tour of Europe for nearly four months in 2008. “It ultimately changed my life. Besides giving me a real sense of accomplishment and empowerment afterwards, that trip taught me to live in the moment and to be present.”

She then trained as a vet’s assistant for an animal hospital, allowing her to indulge her love for animals as well as start a side pet portraiture business. “I’m currently working on some commissions to send back to Canada, along with my own work of more abstract expressionism.”

Having spent most of her childhood and teenage years competing in dressage throughout Canada and the United States with her two Arabian horses, Smith says she feels a profound connection to the mighty animals.

“Told it sounds silly, but horses are like my spiritual animal. I used to kid-proof horses for a schooling barn to help me afford the cost of having my own. It was my job to make sure they were safe for the children to ride. I hope to one day have a large farm for rescue animals where I can teach and rehabilitate them.”

For now, Smith gets her animal fill from her local dog park in Newtown. She finds it amusing when UTS staffers pass her on the street and almost don’t recognise her. “Nobody pictures this sweet little concierge girl actually being quite tattooed up underneath the blazer. A lot of it is my own art. I love the whole culture and artistic side of it. My mum said she’d pay me $1000 if I didn’t get any more tattoos. I said, ‘Yeah, I can’t promise you that’.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
For many, graduating university is a time of excitement, uncertainty and furious job hunting. Devoid of all things familiar, that first year can bring with it some unexpected and often memorable challenges. Such was the case for law graduate Naomi Dekhtyar.

Not only did she secure a position as a Tipstaff and Associate in the Supreme Court of NSW to a number of notable Supreme Court Judges, including the Honorable Justices David Kirby and Monika Schmidt, Dekhtyar was involved in a litigation team at Herbert Smith Freehills who mounted and won a High Court challenge.

"A massive amount of work went into that," says Dekhtyar. "Not many people get the chance in their first year of working as a graduate to be a part of a High Court challenge. It was fantastic!"

Having graduated from UTS in 2009 with First Class Honors and a Bachelor of Laws, Dekhtyar says her success was a combination of hard work, perseverance and being involved in the extracurricular mock courtroom activity of mooting.

"I did a lot of mooting and that gave me a lot of experience in speaking, which is really helpful when you're being interviewed by a panel of partners."

Dekhtyar says studying at UTS gave her the necessary skills to propel herself forward into what has been a very dynamic career in law. It was the early guidance received from her tutors, the opportunity to assist one of her lecturers, Sophie Riley, with legal research for submission to an international legal journal and being able to participate in legal research courses, that really gave her an edge.

During those first few years Dekhtyar experienced the complexities each facet of law had to offer. After completing a research thesis on international criminal law in her final year, she also assisted the Honorable James Wood AO QC with criminal law research on complicity as well as working on civil and commercial cases with Justices Kirby and Schmidt respectively.

"You have to learn very quickly, about the different areas of the law," says Dekhtyar who recognised her first year out of university as her greatest hurdle to date.

"Looking at the precedents that we use and being able to undertake work quickly and efficiently is probably the biggest challenge."

When an opportunity arose at British law firm Linklaters to undertake an internship in Hong Kong and Shanghai, Dekhtyar jumped at the opportunity. She was already accustomed to the travelling life having been homeschooled in Australia and living overseas, however, Dekhtyar says the internship with Linklaters was a definite highlight.

Upon returning to Australia in May 2011, she began working at commercial law firm, Herbert Smith Freehills. "I am currently working in banking but will be settling later this month in energy and resources," says Dekhtyar.

For the young lawyer, who went on to complete a Masters of Law at Sydney University primarily focusing on international oil and gas, and energy and resources law, commercial law has always held the most enjoyment.

"The business aspect of law is dynamic and fast-paced and if you enjoy working within a team then you should definitely consider working in commercial law."

Alison Brown
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Ben and Ada Wilson first met in 2003 – Ada was a crew member at Fairfield McDonald’s and Ben was a regular customer. Ten years on and both work at UTS. Last October, Ada gave birth to their first child – Autumn. The new parents reveal how Autumn has changed their life and how they’ve been able to share UTS’s paid parental leave.

ADA WILSON

We didn’t really plan to have a child, it was sort of a surprise. We’d never really paid attention to the parental leave benefits, but of course when we found out we were expecting we looked into what we were entitled to receive as UTS staff. There are certain conditions that determine whether or not you can get parental leave. I’m on a fixed-term contract, I’m a Junior Business Analyst in the Financial Services Unit (FSU), and I started working at UTS in 2011. I was fortunate that I’d worked here for 40 weeks before my due date, so I was able to apply for paid parental leave.

I had planned to work until I was due, but it just so happened that I was due to finish work on 11 October but Autumn was born on 3 October. I decided to take three months off straight away, because I wanted to come back, after that, for my job. Ben was able to share the other two months of my parental leave although this reduced our leave from five months to almost four – when Autumn was born, Ben took 20 days off which was his paid partner’s leave.

That’s the downside of sharing; if I was to take the full five months, he would still be entitled to 20 days partner’s leave anyway.

Having Ben at home has, absolutely, made it easier. It’s good for Autumn and, at the same time, it’s good for Ben to bond with her too. I can come home or go to work with peace of mind; without having to worry because he’s really good with Autumn. He’s energetic and always plays with her; she’s like his little princess. A lot of my time with Autumn is spent feeding her, and we get to bond that way too.

Being a mum is fabulous; you’re watching something you’ve brought to life. The first few weeks were tough! Mainly because of the sleepless nights, and because I had stitches so I couldn’t really do much, except try to recover. You just have to take it one day at a time. But Ben was really good – he’d change her and comfort her. Autumn’s a good baby – easy going, very laidback, very chilled.

I love working at UTS, it’s a really friendly environment and everyone’s very supportive. HR and FSU have been really flexible and helpful as well. I started my phased return to work on 11 March – at UTS you’re entitled to 30 days where you’re paid even though you don’t work. You have to use it within seven months of your return to work, but because Ben’s been at home looking after Autumn, I didn’t have to take it straight away. Even though I sometimes see Ben at work, we really don’t talk much on the job – we say ‘Hi’ but really he just does his thing and I do mine. So I’m starting my phased return before Ben comes back to work so I can spend some time with him as well.
All in the family

BEN WILSON
Initially I was a bit apprehensive, I was thinking should I take that much time off from work? But I’m glad I did it. The first few days were very tough because Autumn was so close to Ada. I actually had to call Ada back from work one day because I was so scared Autumn wouldn’t take the bottle. The next week, she was perfect.

I had no idea how tough Ada was, I have absolute respect for her. When she was in the delivery room, and she was giving birth to Autumn, my god! She’s never complained at all about anything during the pregnancy or after the pregnancy. I think Autumn has taken on Ada’s personality in a way – she’s very mindful of her surroundings. In the morning I take her with me to the coffee shop and she’ll wait til I finish my coffee; she doesn’t make a sound, she looks around and is very patient.

While Ada was pregnant, that was a bit scary because we weren’t really sure about her contract and so on. But we spoke to HR and they were very, very helpful. They told us what our options were – we were entitled to paid parental and paid partner’s leave, which was 20 days for me and five months for her. I think the best thing that was offered, since we work at the same place and Ada decided to come back to work early, was that I could take her parental leave. It’s worked out really well for Autumn.

Ada used to work for the Commonwealth Bank and had a full-time job there, but this position for a four-month contract at FSU came up, and it was related to her degree, so Ada took that chance. We planned for having a kid in two years’ time, after our wedding, but then the baby came first. I’ve been at UTS for a while – I started here in March 2005 – so we knew I’d be able to get some leave, but we didn’t know how much Ada could access. My job title is Senior Customer Support Officer but I am actually managing about seven staff. FSU is one of the areas we support.

I am looking forward to coming back to work, but I don’t miss it. I thought I would but I’ve just completely switched off; baby time. I come back to work on 4 April – I added on my annual leave as well which is why I’ve said UTS has been so flexible – they let me take nearly two months off, and during the busy time of the year as well. The biggest dilemma we have now is once I come back to work we’ll have to put Autumn into day care, and maybe a couple of days with my mum. I think she’ll be ok, it’s better than putting her in at three months.

I don’t think Autumn will remember the time with me, down the track, but I will. And I think that’s nice. If a guy asked me, ‘Should I take time off?’ I’d say, ‘Yeah, definitely!’ Being a parent is great.

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Samantha Goyen has always felt the pull of the deep, blue sea. The marine science and international studies student says her wonder for the ocean grew from a fervent childhood love for the most friendly of ocean mammals – sea turtles.

“Many summers, during high school, I would go up to Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef to do turtle tagging with the Queensland Sea Turtle Conservation Society,” says Goyen.

It all started when “mum took me up to the island when I was about 13. She knew I loved the reef and the water, the swimming and the turtles. I saw this group of people on the beach and I asked if I could join them and tag along.”

While Goyen admits many would view the experience as a childhood phase, she says, “I just never really got over this one. Although, as I grew up and hit uni, I realised how extensive and diverse marine biology is. There’s oceanography, specific species focus, deep sea research, fisheries – it’s just endless.”

Today, Goyen, who is set to graduate this year, is already coasting on a wave of success. As a result of an undergraduate internship, she is currently working as a Technical Officer in the Australian Museum’s Ichthyology Department (ichthyology is the study of fish).

She credits her success to the School of the Environment’s thorough preparation for understanding the complexity of marine science – “It’s not all lazing about on the beach and snorkelling rendezvous”.

During her time at UTS, Goyen and her classmates have undertaken a number of subject-based field trips to coral reefs. “These research trips were work-intensive and absolutely, jaw-droppingly amazing,” says Goyen.

They included a trip to Queensland’s One Tree Island. The highly protected remote reef island – zoned for scientific research only – is famed for its marine science research. It is accessible only by boat from Heron Island.

“One Tree Island is pretty much the most spectacular place I’ve ever seen,” says Goyen. “The sunsets, the reef, the remoteness; it’s one of the most remote Barrier reef islands and is just tiny. The coral colonies there have been untouched for millions of years.”

Goyen admits she’s still amazed to think “that 20-something students were allowed to go there and stay for a week.

“The idea was that we were in the water everyday, setting up and doing experiments. I consider myself extremely lucky for ever getting the chance to go there.”

It’s no surprise then that the marine enthusiast’s career aspirations lend themselves to the big picture.

“The oceans are so important and vital for survival on land. Climate change has huge consequences for our oceans, and we’re already starting to see its effects. We’re noticing strange weather and a rise in sea levels, and a decrease in species diversity.

“I feel that understanding the complexity of this planet and our place in it can be achieved through marine science. We need to understand the oceans to solve the current global crisis, and if I can be a little part of that, where I’m doing something to contribute to the overall picture of what marine science can achieve and make a difference, then I’ll be happy.”

Frances Mao
Bachelor of Arts in Communication | Journalism/
Bachelor of Laws
Photographer: Anna Zhu

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2013/04/water-world-at-her-feet
In Civilization, Niall Ferguson identifies six ‘killer apps’ that made the West the dominant culture globally for five centuries: competition, science, property, medicine, consumerism and the Western work ethic. Great Western Highway by Anthony Macris explores these same forces in a highly contemporary love story that resonates with the vitality of Sydney’s Inner West. Nick loves Penny – he thinks – but still loves Christina, who dropped him after a decade-long relationship. However, Penny, whose own stocks aren’t particularly high, has decided to no longer invest her future in Nick. Her only prospective romance is her ex, Murray, and Penny’s bosses, Lawrence (the weasel) and Joy (who’s anything but) do nothing to make her future anything other than uncertain. The story develops through some great dialogue, although most revealingly, through the protagonists’ inner monologues. Against the backdrop of this consumerist epoch of economic rationalism and televised wars on terror, Macris suggests societal forces that operate at a global scale also manifest at a deeply personal level. As rich in metaphors as it is, Great Western Highway rings most truly through its evocation of the most basic and real of human themes – love, and how to live a good life. This reader, at least, was left expecting more from both Nick and Penny.

Anthony Macris is an Associate Professor of Creative Writing at UTS. Following the critical success of his first novel Capital, volume one, he received three Australia Council grants to write Great Western Highway. Parts of the novel and an additional theory component were completed at the University of Western Sydney as part of his PhD.

Behavior Computing: Modeling, Analysis, Mining and Decision
Edited by: LongBing Cao, Philip S. Yu
Publisher: Springer

Behavior computing is his third book. Human behaviour is made up of complex interdependencies, not least of all because individuals convey actions using the multiple modes of voice, facial and eye movements, hand gesturing and body to interact on a social basis. The modelling and analysis of human behaviour is giving rise to the new discipline of behaviour computing integrating techniques from both computer science and social sciences. In this new field of behaviour computing, a major distinction over previous behavioural research is a focus on online social networks and the internet impacting behaviour rather than the traditional experimental analysis of the behaviour of animals and organisms. The field of behaviour computing opens up the opportunity for breakthrough advances, discoveries and advanced knowledge to come from outside of social sciences. Behavior Computing effectively contextualises statistical and machine learning tools in a series of 23 very interesting chapters embracing models, scenarios and case studies thematically connected with behaviour computing. The end result is a highly presentable book for a wide-ranging audience inclusive of final-year undergraduates or postgraduate students. However, the book requires familiarity with machine learning algorithms and analysis of large datasets and may just prove to be a catalyst for social scientists to leave behind existing pastures and embrace the field of behaviour computing.

Suresh Sood
Advanced Analytics Institute
Longbing Cao is the Director of UTS’s Advanced Analytics Institute and a Professor of Information Technology. Behaviour Computing is his third book.

This is a brilliant book. Reading Language and Mobility sensitises one not only to the relative unimportance of some of the traditional sociolinguistic taxonomies but also to the obstacles they can place in the way of understanding how people use the linguistic repertoire they have at their disposal in the spaces where they happen to be. The book also explores these ideas within the context of ‘cultures of mobility’ through examples such as the unexpected presence of the Cornish language in places as diverse as Patagonia and South Australia. Alastair skilfully interweaves evocative parables drawn from his family’s colonial past and his own history as a language learner with a meticulously developed theoretical framework. His thought-provoking book will prove to be a rich intellectual resource for anyone seeking to better understand the complex linguascales of globalised cities such as Sydney and for those who wish to go beyond standard categories in order to explain the unexpected (and too often ignored) literacies that children bring with them when they commence schooling. This is directly due to the critical stance Language and Mobility adopts towards concepts like bilingualism, mobility and the force of institutional expectations about language use in rich, diverse and interactive cultures like Australia.

Alastair Pennycook is Professor of Language Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. His recent book Language as a Local Practice was shortlisted for the BAAL book award, an award he’s won twice before.

Brian Bailey
Information Technology Division

Language and Mobility: Unexpected Places
By: Alastair Pennycook
Publisher: Multilingual Matters

During April, the Co-op Bookshop on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on all three books reviewed in this issue. For more details, email uts@coop-bookshop.com.au
"A slightly mad, slightly inefficient and slightly playful curiosity”. That’s how Design, Architecture and Building (DAB) academic Adam Jasper describes the idea behind UTS Gallery’s upcoming exhibition: Living in the Ruins of the Twentieth Century.

Co-curated by Jasper and the UTS Gallery’s Holly Williams, the exhibition, on display in the gallery from 16 April to 17 May, is a mash-up of material objects, narratives and contemporary artworks.

Described by the duo as a ‘wunderkammer’, or cabinet of curiosities, the inspiration for the exhibition came from the New York-based art and culture magazine Cabinet.

Jasper, who is a contributing editor to Cabinet, says, “the way the magazine understands the world is through the everyday objects that surround us. So they look for things that aren’t necessarily exceptional, but that might be able to tell exceptional stories.”

For example, “Rather than telling tales of the lives of famous men, they look in incredible detail at the history of DayGlo paint, or a device for drilling holes in human skulls to cure migraines, or microwave ovens. They’re interested in the backstories; the true history of the microwave oven.”

The other part of Cabinet’s agenda, says Jasper, is curiosity. “Curiosity has a bad reputation; it suggests idleness, the merely interesting. But it’s important. The best reason for believing the world might turn out differently in the future is evidence that it might have turned out differently in the past. Curiosity provides that evidence.”

And that, say the curators, is what Living in the Ruins of the Twentieth Century is all about. “Using the magazine as a kind of research archive, we’ve laid out three general areas,” says Jasper. These are: Islands and Interiors (individuals and egos), Giant Spheres (conspiracies and totalities), and Explosions (events and accidents).

The explosions, adds Jasper, “stand in for all the unexpected events, all the accidents of history; the sudden, jarring turning points of history that have morphed one flow or one direction into another.”

The exhibition, supported by UTS’s Centre for Contemporary Design Practices and the UTS Library, includes existing and commissioned contemporary artworks as well as loaned objects from the Museum of Old and New Art, the Powerhouse Museum, the University of Sydney’s Macleay Museum and Physiology Department, the Westpac Archives and some from the pages of Cabinet.

Among the most curious are a 160 kilogram coral coffee table that pays homage to the failing fortunes of Nauru and a horse foetus that was found in a plastic jar under a house and donated to a museum because nobody knew what to do with it.

“So we’ve got all of these objects from these really diverse collections. Some of them are really quite important and substantial and meaningful, while others are almost, sort of, simple and mundane,” says Williams.

Jasper adds, “It’s an archaeological excavation of the everyday, where we investigate the prehistory of contemporary technology in search of the roots of our condition.”

Doing so, “allows you a different relationship to mundane objects, because all of a sudden, every one of them becomes a kind of mystery.”

To help viewers unravel the mysteries and create their own alternative visions of history, DAB Lecturer Zoe Sadokierski will be designing the accompanying publications and Senior Lecturer Lizzie Muller will be leading a colloquium to explore the new trend highlighted by this exhibition – ‘post-disciplinary curation’.

“It’s a respect for the weirdness of history,” says Jasper.

“And it’s not like we’re going in with a really fixed agenda in terms of what we think you’ll go away with,” adds Williams. “It’s really just a huge experiment.”

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Anne’s Taj Mahal by Buckminster Fuller on fire, Montreal, 20 May 1976: From Cabinet Issue 32, Fire. Courtesy Cabinet.

Comment on this article at UTS:NEWSROOM newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2013/04/20th-century-re-imagined
WHAT'S ON

APRIL

EASTER MONDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY

LOOK THIS WAY
Seven mid-career and emerging artists consider the pervasive impact of signage in museums and galleries
12 noon to 6pm Monday to Friday / UTS Gallery, building 6, level 4
Until 5 April
art.uts.edu.au

1:09
An exhibition by Leisa Tough that re-fits the gallery space as a new manifestation of the interior; subverting the existing through scale, materiality and slight shifts in form
DAB Lab, building 6, level 4
Until 26 April
dab.uts.edu.au/dabella

THE COMEDY LOFT
Stand-up comedy's finest will be performing at The Loft on the second Tuesday of every month
7pm to 11pm / The Loft, Broadway
utscomedyloft.eventbrite.com.au

POSTGRADUATE INFORMATION SESSIONS
Considering postgraduate study? Find out what’s on offer in your area of interest, get more information about a specific course, have your questions answered or apply
Until 22 May
postgraduate.uts.edu.au

LIVING IN THE RUINS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
An idiosyncratic retrospective of Cabinet magazine and 20th century artefacts offering alternate histories
12 noon to 6pm Monday to Friday / UTS Gallery, building 6, level 4
Until 17 May
art.uts.edu.au

MEDICAL AND MOLECULAR BIOSCIENCES CAREERS FORUM
UTS Science students can network and gather information about the different careers that exist for students and graduates
2pm to 6pm / Building 2, level 4, room 29
lisa.aloisio@uts.edu.au

UTS BOOK CLUB
Literary lovers are invited to join the conversation on the third Monday of every month
5.30pm to 7.30pm / The Loft, Broadway
facebook.com/groups/utsbookclub or laura.earl@uts.edu.au

VICE-CHANCELLOR’S WEEK (AUTUMN SEMESTER)

AUSTRALIA QUARTET 2013 CONCERT 1
The first of four concerts featuring four of Australia’s best-regarded young chamber musicians who come together to form the Australia Quartet, UTS Piano Quartet in Residence
6.30pm / Bon Marche Studio, building 3, level 1, room 5
fass.uts.edu.au/australia-quartet

Art & U profiles a piece of work from the UTS Art Collection every issue.

Michael Johnson, Untitled 1969, acrylic on canvas

One of the recurring themes in the development of the Art Collection at UTS (and earlier, the NSW Institute of Technology, or NSWIT) has been to address the vast expanse of concrete in the foyer and other public spaces inside the Tower building. Various solutions have been attempted since the Tower’s first occupation in the 1970s, including giant pop art billiard balls, suspended hang-gliders, Polish textiles and mural-sized paintings.

One artwork that has stood the test of time is an untitled painting, from 1969, by local artist Michael Johnson. Originally lent to NSWIT by gallerist and collector Ann Lewis while she was serving on the institute’s Fine Arts Committee, this modular canvas added some much-needed colour into what was seen as a drab and cavernous space.

In this painting, vibrant blocks of colour are thinly applied with no sign of brushwork – a feature of the minimal style of ‘colour-field’ painting of the time. It provides a wonderful contrast to the quarry-like surfaces of textured concrete in the Tower.

Although far distant from the heavily layered surfaces of his more recent paintings, similar canvases by Johnson earned him a place in The Field – a highly influential exhibition of Australian art held in the newly re-opened National Gallery of Victoria in 1968.

Johnson’s painting became a part of the permanent UTS Art Collection in the 1990s, joining several other important paintings from the same period. It can be viewed in the mezzanine area above level 3, near the Alumni Green entrance.

For more news and stories about the UTS Art Collection, visit our blog: utsartcollection.wordpress.com

Janet Ollevou
UTS Art Collection

Email your events for May 2013 to u@uts.edu.au by April 8.
LIFE THROUGH THE LENS

These photos, snapped across South America by Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication/Bachelor of Arts in International Studies student Annabel Campbell, show how in-country study can lead to learning about more than just language and culture.

Photographer: Annabel Campbell