LET ME TELL YOU A STORY
The symbolism and psychology of fairytales

RETHINKING DISABILITY
Challenging stereotypes and revealing diversity

WAVES OF SUCCESS
Solving real-life problems with mathematics
The topics of research and research performance have been dominating the higher education sector and I have no doubt this will continue to be the case throughout 2011.

As the Vice-Chancellor has recently pointed out, we can be proud of our recent Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) results. To have approximately 80 per cent of our research benchmarked as world class or above by the Federal Government is a fantastic achievement, especially for a university that is not yet 25 years old.

It is also important to remember these statistics are now three to six years old; ERA 2012 will give us an updated picture of our research performance. The next round of data collection assesses research outputs from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2010. The census date for this information was 31 March 2011, so effectively those results are already set.

The full impact of ERA results has yet to be seen. However, the Federal Government has made it very clear these results, and those that follow, will play an important role in shaping not only government funding for research – which in turn will impact UTS funding – but will also increasingly impact the teaching activities of the university.

Fortunately, UTS – supported by the UTS Strategic Plan 2009-2018 – has a strong and increasingly integrated teaching and research relationship.

These current results (from ERA 2010) will directly influence Sustainable Research Excellence funding from 2012 and also inform the funding of future research training places. We have earned our leading reputation for excellence in teaching and learning and we want to ensure research continues to complement that.

I am confident the impact of our $40 million investment in research, which began to be felt in 2009, will further support our 2012 ERA performance.

Throughout this year, the focus for research here will be to continue to implement the UTS Research Strategy 2010-2015. Central to this is continuing to build research partnerships with industry and the community to further boost our research capacity and our ability to tackle current national and international challenges.

Of course, we cannot produce quality, relevant research without attracting retaining and developing research talent. Researcher education and researcher development will continue to be a key area. The implementation of the UTS Framework for Doctoral Education and the continued expansion of the Researcher Capability Development Initiative will have significant benefits for research students and staff.

These initiatives will be underpinned by sustained process improvement projects. Simple, streamlined processes can aid continued improvement in our research performance.

Implementing the research strategy will be challenging, we have set ourselves ambitious targets. We have the people, infrastructure and plans in place to continue punching above our weight as we work towards our vision of becoming a world-leading university of technology.

It is the energetic, innovative and collaborative nature of UTS that will really get our research strategy across the line. Over the last year, I have worked closely with academics from every faculty and staff from all of our support units. This is the real strength of UTS, and I look forward to continuing to work with you throughout 2011.

Attila Brungs
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Photographer: Joanne Saad
The University of Technology, Sydney’s vision is to be a world-leading university of technology. Our purpose as a university is to advance knowledge and learning to progress the professions, industry and communities of the world. Our values – to discover, engage, empower, deliver and sustain – guide our performance and our interactions with each other, with students, our partners and the wider community.

The next issue will be distributed on 2 May 2011.
Send your story ideas, opinions and events to: u@uts.edu.au
Deadline for submissions is 8 April 2011.
What do asylum seekers, offensive language, healthcare and climate change have in common? They’re four of the areas under examination by the first-ever Quentin Bryce Law Doctoral scholars.

Named after Australia’s first female Governor-General, the new scheme will see five PhD scholarships offered every year until 2013. Each scholarship includes a three-year $25 000 annual stipend, $1500 of research support, paid holiday, sick, maternity and parental leave as well as the opportunity to undertake a doctoral teaching fellow worth $25 000 a year.

The Faculty of Law’s Associate Dean (Research) Lesley Hitchens says, “We wanted the scholarships to be distinctive; to have someone associated with them that we felt really represented what’s important for us as law scholars.

“Quentin Bryce, as a woman, has obviously been a pioneer, but she’s also had a very active career – as a lawyer and academic, in public office, in community engagement, and she’s also had a strong role as a human rights advocate as well. So it seemed like such an interesting mix that said something about what we’re trying to do as researchers and as a faculty.”

It’s a sentiment shared by the first recipients – David Carter, Elyse Methven, Anthea Vogl and Rachel Young (applications for the fifth scholarship, offered from Spring semester, close next month).

“To be one of the first Quentin Bryce scholars is an honour and a responsibility,” says Young. “It’s hugely inspiring, and a little daunting, to be doing this under the auspices of the Quentin Bryce Scholarship.”

Hitchens believes the young scholars are up to the task. “When you look at the research topics of these students in some ways they can seem quite esoteric, but they’re actually dealing with significant real-world problems. Their research has the potential to have an impact on how we deal with those problems in the community.

“For example, Rachel’s trying to look at the role of property law in building a sustainable response to climate change. David and Elyse are addressing quite different problems in criminal law, but problems which can affect or create marginalised communities. While Anthea is researching asylum seekers.”

Vogl, who plans “to investigate how stock stories about undocumented persons influence the regulation of onshore asylum seekers and determinations of refugee status in both Australia and Canada,” was particularly drawn to the doctoral teaching fellow on offer.

“As a postgraduate student, being able to be involved in the faculty whilst researching is a very attractive prospect.”

So attractive that she turned down a number of other offers that would have seen her stay in Canada, where for the last two years she has been completing a Master of Law (Research).

Hitchens says, “What’s interesting about Anthea is that we’re going to build a cotutelle link, so she will actually have a joint PhD from the University of British Columbia and UTS.”

With collaboration inside and outside of UTS key, the scholarships are set to fit well within the new UTS Framework for Doctoral Education which is being rolled out across the university this year.

“It’s exciting to be joining the faculty at a time when it’s developing and expanding its postgraduate research program and to be one of a new community of doctoral students,” says Vogl.

Hitchens agrees: “It’s about building the future of the nation by investing in research and young researchers, and if they pursue an academic career we are helping to build the future academic community as well.”

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/generation-next
“Students said that the number one thing they want is power,” says Manager of the Haymarket Public Spaces Project Bryce Hutchinson. And power they shall have.

Opened last month, the upgrades to the student areas in blocks A and B of the Haymarket campus have provided a more fluid and flexible social environment with informal learning spaces ideal for group collaboration.

“Part of the masterplan is that the uni wants to bring in a sticky campus mentality,” Hutchinson says. “We’ve got to come up with ways of encouraging students to stay here. Now with the new student accommodation project occurring there are going to be a lot more students around. We’ve got to be providing spaces for them to socialise, relax and study.

“Thanks to collaborative team work between facilities and the Teaching and Learning Committee, I believe we are achieving this outcome.”

Quality learning has driven the design of spaces in all new UTS buildings. Hutchinson says, “Shirley Alexander, our main stakeholder, wanted something to address the shift in learning; something new and flexible.”

Architects Woods Bagot were asked to incorporate the entry to block A into the Ultimo Pedestrian Network. The result is the Shed – an outdoor space fitted with robust wooden tables and new heating on the walls for the winter months. “While at the moment the whole area is earmarked for students only, it’s hoped that a unique lecturer may see this as a new area they could perhaps use for teaching.”

From May, block A will become the new 24/7 area for those students who need to work late and use the general computers, or those after a few winks of sleep. “However the architects and I envisage the space, its use will ultimately be determined by the students,” says Hutchinson.

In the area dubbed the Sandpit – complete with cloud and sky ceiling motif – niche areas have been cut out of the walls to allow students to see into spaces and encourage collaboration. For those groups seeking some privacy, curtain rails have been installed to subdivide the area into sections.

The corner of blocks A and B houses the new Union shop, while further along the Sunroom offers wooden laptop benches, power plug-in points, computers and a kitchen. Hutchinson points out that wherever there is furniture, there is a power supply nearby.

“Everything is rich in technology: Large screens on walls, smart whiteboards, blu-ray, DVD, internet bays, computers, colour-coded area-booking system, headphone stations, a large meeting room equipped with a life-size conferencing unit – it’s all here.”

The Courtyard has also received a refurbishment with new decking, funky green rocking chairs, upgraded lighting and multiple power boards for students to plug into. New kitchens, showers, toilets, a parents’ room, vending machines, an ATM, lockers and lounges complete the upgrade.

Hutchinson says the project has been a learning curve for all, however, “We’ve had such dedicated and quality people around us. Stakeholders, our head consultants Woods Bagot, our main building contractors ISIS – everyone has been so fantastic.

“Now it’s up to the students. They really have to take possession of the space here. If they own it, they’ll look after it.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/plugged-in
Four million people – nearly 20 per cent of all Australians – identify as living with disability. PhD student and co-creator of the UTS:AccessAbility website Biz Hayman explains how the little-discussed cultural side of disability can be used to challenge limited thinking and conventional stereotyping, and allow a richer and more diverse cultural experience for us all.

Most people living with disability are familiar with having their human value overtly and covertly destabilised: we know what it’s like to be made abject or pitiable, culturally invisible or tokenistically overly present.

All too often our dignity is exploited and our cultural representation damaged in the name of charity fundraising. Likewise, our exclusion is created and implemented within the very design of our public systems, our institutions and our material world.

From ill-fitting clothing to inaccessible transport and a lack of choice in living arrangements – those of us living with disability are often confronted with additional complications arising from misguided cultural assumptions about us.

Putting forward more realistic, complex and nuanced ways of thinking about disability is slow cultural-change work. Yet it is vital.

There are disabled cultural practitioners out there, like Mat Fraser, Liz Carr, Kath Duncan and Philip Patston, who present a definite and confident cultural presence, the like of which – I know from my own uni experience – find little nurture within education systems. Rather than miss out, it’s down to those of us who know it from the inside to tell it like it is and see what can come from this.

Knowing that change must start somewhere, I started working in 2009 with two other members of UTS’s Disability Action Group of Students (DAGS), Nicola Corcoran and Colleen Woods. With support from the Equity and Diversity Unit we have developed the UTS:AccessAbility website (www.accessability.uts.edu.au).

A university website conceived, written and managed by students with disabilities for students with disabilities looks different to anything else out there because it is different. AccessAbility’s online space is grounded in the experiences of its student co-creators. Subtly, we talk about the sophisticated ways in which many of us have come to handle the sorts of intrusions into our dignity that often come in the wake of disclosing aspects of our ability status.

More overtly, we’ve had a lot of fun adding obvious disability-infused elements like film, fashion, music and humour. Our inclusion of ‘crip humour’, though new to many, is a really potent way of putting other possibilities out there for people to think about.

We’ve also been very careful to link to other web spaces that ‘get’ this too. We push for real, workable information and purposely use everyday language to cut to the chase.

Finding camaraderie and a certain sense of kinship is incredibly important for all uni students. However, it’s exhausting trying to achieve parity with your peers when you’re not only dealing with disability issues but also hampered by being in physical, social and online environments that have not been designed with the underlying presumption that you might be part of them.

Those managing disability in addition to their studies need to be able to relate to those of us already performing this juggling act. They need to witness that we’re still here pursuing what we set out to do, to swap tips on how to navigate education systems and environments which have been largely conceived without us in mind, and to find safe spaces to share experiences of the alienating effect of dealing with separate remedial provisioning.

In doing this we’re not only relating to other students living with disability, but giving everyone the chance to witness what potential lies in the wake of reframing ideas beyond more traditional notions.

Once we step back from the idea that disability is inherently wrong, we can start to learn the rich wisdoms that come with living differently.

Though the wider cultural benefits of doing this will inevitably take time to establish, we can already see how an open discussion of this usually sidelined aspect of life is creating possibility.

In addition to the support we’ve received from the university, AccessAbility is creating interest and positive feedback beyond the Broadway campus. We’ve been overwhelmed by the support from the local and international disability studies and arts fields and have begun talking with students in other universities about how to do this type of work, in ways that suit them best.

A wider promotion of this type of lively, conversational exchange of information is needed before the full potential of user participation is taken seriously. How else do we bring pride to the way in which we handle living differently and determine genuinely optimum, creative ways to deliver services so every one of us can access them with straightforward parity?

Biz Hayman
Co-founder of the Disability Action Group of Students and PhD student
Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building
Photographer (B Hayman): Katia Sanfilippo
Illustration: Zoë Sadokierski
Comment on this article at
speed’ I think I always thinking. My sport with verbal conversation. I think I always thinking. What if I understand...?...yeah, Karen, my mom... annoying, isn’t it?...famous for cloud formations. No, I mean, that. hairdos, jumping cloud formations. Half-formed sentence memory and settled. There’s all those tiny one-word expressions like ‘on-screen continuity inconsistencies’...
As the Japanese crisis has shown, the wanton destruction caused by a tsunami often represents nature at its most unpredictable. According to Layna Groen, who has spent five years researching tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean and Caribbean Sea, it’s an under-researched area.

In 2009, the mathematician began exposing her third-year students to her research and research methodology.

“I began thinking, ‘I can do more, I can broaden their experience’. So I decided to give them a real research project that would result in a published paper.”

In the subject Quantitative Management Practice, she asked students to use mathematics to analyse the performance of the tsunami warning system in the Mediterranean. The aim was to help improve the odds of survival for the population of coastal communities by enabling people to receive more timely warnings from their local tsunami warning centres.

So successful was the project, that in 2010, the students’ research was published in the international journal Science of Tsunami Hazards.

In recognition of her work, Groen was selected as the first recipient of the Strengthening the UTS Model of Learning Award at the 2010 UTS Learning and Teaching Awards. It recognises an outstanding contribution to teaching and learning or curriculum design that exemplifies the UTS Model of Learning.
Director Mary Coupland believes the centre’s service is as much about empowering students as it is about helping to solve tricky questions.

“Students that are maths-anxious – maybe they’ve put off dealing with maths in the past but find they can’t do that for a particular subject – will find a friendly face who won’t judge them, but will patiently help them. That’s very reassuring.

“Once you’ve passed the basics, maths can be tough work – but it’s rewarding and important work. Students need to be given support so they can build their own confidence and persistence.”

Marianne Menictas is one student unafraid of tackling challenges. Menictas was one of the six students in the tsunami warning system research group and has returned to UTS to pursue her honours.

“Layna’s teaching style is very interactive so I never felt static; I always felt that I was applying myself.

“Publishing in an international journal was demanding but such an exciting experience. As a student it took mathematics out of the classroom and into a realistic context. That really opened my eyes and has helped in how I’m approaching my thesis.”

Groen says, “It’s this kind of understanding that offers me the greatest reward.”

For those students who do need support with technical content and ‘hard skills’, the Mathematics Study Centre provides workshops and one-on-one tutorials. Run out of the School of Mathematical Sciences, the centre was also awarded a citation in the 2010 UTS Learning and Teaching Awards.

Groen hopes this type of teaching and learning will have a positive impact on students.

She recalls her own experience as a university mathematics student: “I was told I wouldn’t be anything other than a maths teacher or an academic.”

It wasn’t until after Groen became a teacher that she realised her thinking may have been limited. It’s a realisation she wants her students to arrive at much earlier.

“I had one student in this subject who couldn’t believe they weren’t going to learn any new mathematical techniques that semester. I said, ‘That’s right, I’m going to show you how to apply what you’ve been learning’. It took him six weeks to come around to that being a good idea.

“Quite often in technical disciplines, such as mathematics, we can be so focused on the content that we fill up a whole degree with theorems and techniques and don’t allow students to develop in other crucial ways. Professionals need soft skills like critical thinking and good communication in order to make effective use of their hard skills. I teach the way I do because the students need it.”

For those students who do need support with technical content and ‘hard skills’, the Mathematics Study Centre provides workshops and one-on-one tutorials. Run out of the School of Mathematical Sciences, the centre was also awarded a citation in the 2010 UTS Learning and Teaching Awards.

“WE CAN BE SO FOCUSED ON THE CONTENT THAT WE FILL UP A WHOLE DEGREE WITH THEOREMS AND TECHNIQUES AND DON’T ALLOW STUDENTS TO DEVELOP IN OTHER CRUCIAL WAYS.”
Let me tell you a story

What is it about fairytales that continue to fascinate and inspire artists, writers and filmmakers? A new documentary project, initiated within UTS, is revealing the adult meanings, symbolism and psychology behind the Disney cotton-candy versions and proving fairytales aren’t just for children.

In the world of Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, we’re all familiar with the ‘big bad wolf’. But could he also reveal something more, such as our pleasure for devouring or our fascination with food?

It’s a question that Senior Lecturer Sarah Gibson wants us to consider with Re-enchantment – a multi-platform documentary project produced as part of UTS’s Centre for Media Arts Innovation.

“You think you’ve got a handle on what fairytales are about, then you look at them from a slightly different angle and get a completely new take on them.”

Three years in the making and launched last month, the interactive website and accompanying documentaries thread together various interpretations and versions of fairytales from the perspectives of psychology, social history and popular culture.

As Re-enchantment’s Writer and Director, Gibson says part of a fairytale’s power is in its capacity to maintain some mystery and fascination.

“You can’t say this equals that with a fairytale. You have to enter into the story and then get a sense as to how this might relate to you as an individual.

“Fairytales are like cultural snapshots – they can tell us about the culture at the time of the story being told, or they can reflect back on our own individual anxieties, fears and concerns.”

Spurred by a documentary series she made, Myths of Childhood, Gibson began questioning whether fairytales can tell us more about the real complexity of childhood as well as the experience of being an adult. Her friend, and Producer of Re-enchantment, Sue Maslin suggested it would make a great interactive documentary, and this enabled Gibson to draw her ideas together in a new and accessible way.

With seed money from UTS, Gibson, assisted by fellow UTS Senior Lecturer Megan Heyward, began exploring the familiar stories of Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, Red Riding Hood, Bluebeard, Rapunzel and Snow White. Gibson’s experience as a therapist (a part-time Jungian analyst role she has undertaken for the last 15 years) fuelled her thinking that a fairytale’s darker themes echo our own experiences.

“In the therapy rooms I see the value of people connecting their own experience to stories, in the same way I saw filmmakers increasing the depth of their own filmmaking practice by connecting to a more poetic, resonant story – an old story being retold.

“Fairytales have different resonance when we’re five, 15, 25, or 55. There’s no doubt they express children’s anxieties and fears and help them deal with conflicting emotions.

“But as adults we can ask if Cinderella is just a rags to riches story? Or does it tell us what it’s like to lose your mother? What it’s like to be the object of envy by other women? Does it tell us about our internal stepmother who we’re obeying rather than our own desires? I think you can start to look at fairytales as being sort of parts of us.”
Re-enchantment’s interactive website takes a multilayered approach. Animation, design and soundscapes take the user on an immersive and engaging journey through themes that are at the heart of understanding traditional fairytales. These include Ever After, If The Shoe Fits, Wicked Stepmother, Into The Woods and Beastly Husbands.

The themes were carefully chosen based on Gibson’s belief that fairytales are woven into our cultural fabric. Wider questions that emerge ask why is cosmetic surgery of the foot on the rise? Why are older women demonised? And why are so many women caught up in the princess fantasy (which is timely in the lead-up to the fairytale wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton this month)?

“Under Red Riding Hood, you can find some ideas about sexuality. The wolf can be seen as a seducer of young women or as a paedophile stalking and preying on young girls. The story can also be seen not just about sex, but as an invitation to psychological change – perhaps it is time for the well-behaved girl to move away from mother and take her own path of personal development. Is the wolf dressed in granny’s clothes both a mother-father figure and perhaps in some ways erotic?

“What I’m trying to do is pull together a lot of different interpretations. Being able to weave ideas from social history, cultural studies and psychology is really interesting to me. You can also find resources to undertake more research. But most importantly, users can add their own ideas via an interactive gallery where they can upload their own images, videos and artwork.”

Gibson and Maslin also produced 10 three-minute animated documentaries for ABC Television. Shot and edited by Lecturer Greg Ferris and narrated by former communication student Gretel Killeen, each documentary poses a question such as ‘Why are fairytales set in forests?’ Gibson hopes these will encourage viewers to visit the site and learn more about how traditional fairytales have a powerful hold on our cultural imagination.

“Fairytales can help us make sense of inner and outer life experiences. We can imagine ourselves as the fairytale’s figures and gain new psychological insights into sibling rivalry, overwhelming envy, poisonous love and devouring love and murderous hatred. We are introduced to the ways in which difficult life experiences can be endured and even overcome.

“For me, this project is a whole new way of working creatively, but it’s also opening up this sort of issue of the interpretations of fairytales in a multilayer, interdisciplinary way. I think that’s the strength coming out of the university, that it can foster the research side of a project like this.”

Find out more about Re-enchantment at www.abc.net.au/tv/re-enchantment

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (S Gibson): Digby Duncan
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/let-me-tell-you-a-story

“Fairytales are like cultural snapshots – they can tell us about the culture at the time of the story being told, or they can reflect back on our own individual anxieties, fears and concerns.”
More than 250 million people are affected by malaria each year, and in Africa a child dies from the disease every 45 seconds.

Facts like these are what drive urban entomologist Bryce Peters in his work to control insects.

Even after 30 years in the industry, his fascination with insects doesn’t show any sign of dwindling. According to Peters, “we don’t seem to be getting on top of them”.

“Most of the insect-borne problems, like malaria, are increasing. The insects are continually adapting to what we throw at them, even though we are developing newer and safer insecticides and new delivery methods and formulations. It’s always changing; so it’s exciting.”

Peters says, "Urban entomologists are interested in insects which affect people in and around their homes. My interest is in controlling insects or repelling them and keeping them away.”

Together with Visiting Fellow, Peter Miller, Peters leads a small team in the Faculty of Science’s insect research laboratory. The unit has been conducting insecticide research and development for local and overseas companies for over 20 years.

“We work a lot through accessUTS, which is the university’s consulting arm. We also receive grants from industry for contract research and contract testing," Industry partners have included Novartis Animal Health, SC Johnson and Son, and, the makers of Mortein, Reckitt Benckiser.

While much research and testing is done at the faculty’s facilities, it’s not all lab work for Peters and his team. “We go to various places to do studies. We tend to work in the tropics, in Cairns and Darwin, to study mosquitoes and sandflies.

“We really enjoy getting out in the field and looking at the way products are used rather than just staying in the laboratory. It’s great to see how a lot of the products are used in the conditions they’re designed to work under – that’s what I find the most satisfying.”

Peters’ career in entomology started when he studied the subject as part of his undergraduate degree in ecology at the university – then known as the NSW Institute of Technology (NSWIT) – between 1978 and 1980. Following his graduation, he worked in the NSW Department of Agriculture’s Biological and Chemical Research Institute.

“I started working at NSWIT in late February 1981 as a technical officer in applied biology at the Gore Hill campus. I moved to the City campus in 1986 to manage the biology labs after the nursing faculty moved to UTS.

“In my role as Acting General Manager of Science’s Technical Services I look after approximately 50 staff. They’re the technicians and professional officers that support all the teaching and research in science.”

The media also regularly consults Peters for his comments and advice about pest control. Earlier this year, he spoke to Brisbane radio station 4BC about the possible outbreak of pests in Queensland after the floods. Peters has also recently been interviewed by ABC radio’s James Valentine and Mornings with Kerri-Anne about cockroaches and new insecticides.

“We now have very safe and environmentally acceptable cockroach gels, which give excellent control of cockroaches in domestic and commercial situations,” says Peters. “They’re applied by placing a small, pea-size amount in cupboards and other areas cockroaches frequent.”

With regard to how he wants pest control to be improved, Peters says, “I’d like to see new insecticides that will be safer to humans and the environment and be more species-specific; that is, only control the insects we are targeting and not take out other species, which may be beneficial.”

Brendan Wong
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/International Studies
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/beyond-the-bugs
Nasima Rahmani is a fighter. A law graduate and Afghani human rights defender, she has survived displacement from her birth province by Soviet Union troops, five years of oppressive Taliban rule and, most recently, the US-led war in her home country.

However, her spirit is still strong; and now she’s fighting for equality and justice for women across Afghanistan. “I believe that education has the power to change society.” Rahmani knows this from experience. She holds a law and political science degree from Kabul University and a Master of Laws from UTS. “It’s given me chances not available to many women in Afghanistan.

“We have three specific programs for women’s rights: education, economic independence and domestic violence. We work with women in the provincial communities to empower them, raise awareness.

“Our economic program focuses on income generation and provides women with facilities and information about independence. We also have a paralegal program where women can seek advice and consultation. The paralegals have a good knowledge of gender and equality issues, and they are taught about the issues of women’s rights, functions of the legal system, psychosocial support, mediation.

“For me, the main reason for women’s vulnerability is the fact they are not educated – they cannot work, they don’t have income – and this means they are vulnerable to abuse, to violence against women. It’s a cycle. If they’re educated and they have confidence and an income, they’re able to stand against the abuse of their rights.”

The United Nations reports over 87 per cent of all Afghani women have suffered some form of domestic abuse. And according to Afghanistan’s Central Statistics Organization and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the estimated national adult literacy rate is approximately 26 per cent – and women make up only 12 per cent of that figure.

In rural provinces the situation is more acute, with an estimated 93 per cent of adults (mostly women) lacking basic reading and writing skills.

Rahmani says in rural areas women have less access to education facilities. “When we fled our village and migrated to Kabul, the only school in the village was burned. Even now, years later, there is no school in that village.”

Working as Manager of the women’s rights program for ActionAid – a not-for-profit organisation aiming to eradicate poverty and injustice through rights-based activities – Rahmani is empowering the marginalised people of Afghanistan.

“This means they can then advise women on how to seek justice – what are the steps and where to go when they face legal problems.

“I’ve seen some women in really difficult situations, facing a lot of violation and abuse; I felt like I couldn’t overlook these women.”

And though Rahmani has travelled the world, she hasn’t forgotten her roots. “I came to Sydney when UTS gave me the Peace Scholarship [open to Afghani students to study at undergraduate or postgraduate level in Australia].

“I had never experienced travel beyond even the next province!

“Studying at UTS was the most beautiful thing that happened to me. The people around me – teachers, lecturers and the admin staff – they were so supportive and loving.

“You can’t compare Sydney to a backward, war-torn country like Afghanistan. Of course it’s not easy to come back to a place like this after the time I spent living in Australia. In the beginning it was very disappointing for me, but one thing is clear: I have a very deep connection with the people of Afghanistan, with the children begging on the streets, with the poor people. I find it impossible to be away from these people for a long time. I can’t live anywhere else.”

Izanda Ford
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/seeking-justice
Project Officer Karen Eva and Director of UTS’s Centre for Midwifery, Child and Family Health Caroline Homer have worked together for seven years. When Karen found out she was pregnant with her third child Amy last year, she turned to Caroline for support and ultimately her midwifery and maternity care.

THE TIES THAT BIND

Karen has worked at UTS since before her second baby was born. I didn’t know her very well then, my office was in the terraces and she worked mostly at Kuring-gai. I didn’t really get to know her until she had her second baby.

He has a chromosomal abnormality; he’s in a wheelchair and goes to school, but he doesn’t walk and doesn’t talk. He’s alert and lovely and a gorgeous little boy, but it’s hard work and I was often amazed at how Karen did it all.

I didn’t realise Karen wanted more children, then one day, in February last year, she came into my office – by this time we’d moved into building 10 and had become good colleagues. She said she was pregnant.

Karen hadn’t had any of the tests at that point, it was very early on, and she was anxious. You can imagine if you’ve had a disabled child before it’s nerve-wracking, thinking about what’s going to happen.

At the time Karen was going to see midwives in a group I’d set up years ago called STOMP – the St George Outreach Maternity Program. It’s a great program – six midwives and a doctor and you see those people through your pregnancy, labour and birth and after the baby is born.

I was speaking with another colleague of ours, Rachel Smith, and thought we could offer a more personal service. Rachel’s a Lecturer in Midwifery and we work together looking after women who have what we call high needs – lots of young women, women who’ve had mental health problems, bad experiences last time or who’ve got complicated lives.

Because Rachel and I are also employed by St George Hospital we get covered by insurance. So we suggested to Karen that we could look after her. A few days later she agreed.

We did almost all her pregnancy care here, on the floor or on the sofa in our level 7 offices. Most pregnancy care is talking, particularly for someone like Karen. You know, you’ll take someone’s blood pressure, listen to the baby’s heart rate, check the baby’s growing; you don’t need much technology to do that.

Karen was great and it was wonderful to be so involved with her pregnancy care. We took some lovely photos of her which we’ve used on the cover of a midwifery newsletter, Midwifery Matters, and we taped a couple of the antenatal visits and podcasted them for students – we’re trying to teach students how to do good antenatal visits. I’ve always wanted a good video of a baby check to use in teaching, so we also videoed a check-up of Amy.

Karen even shared her story for a UTS-run project funded by the Australian Centre for Child Protection – Sowing the Seeds of Innovation for Nurturing and Protecting Children: A learning resource for midwives and nurses.

She was also the key liaison person. As Project Officer, Karen helps with the development of tenders, expressions of interest and budgets. She also looks after a lot of our consultancy projects as the liaison between us and accessUTS or the Research and Innovation Office.

The story of Karen’s labour is quite funny. She came into work after her waters broke and sat on three or four towels finishing up work because she knew once she left she wouldn’t be coming back for months. All the staff was telling her, ‘Go home’, and she was saying, ‘No, no I’ve still got these things to do’. People always think when your waters break you’re about to have a baby, which isn’t true at all. Karen took 48 hours to go into labour.

As a midwife, being able to walk alongside women and be their safety net is a really big privilege. I have incredible respect for Karen and her parenting; how she looks after her three children and her way of being with a disabled child is quite inspiring. She talks about relinquishing fear and anxiety and just living for the moment, and you know that’s pretty impressive to watch.
KAREN EVA

When I found out I was pregnant I knew I wanted to have my baby at St George, at the public hospital.

I went to my first appointment at STOMP, but it felt strange because I work for the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health and I have colleagues who are experienced midwives. So I decided to speak to Caroline.

Initially, when she suggested she and Rachel could look after me, I thought, ‘Oh gosh, my colleagues are going to see me naked’. But then I told myself, ‘Karen stop being silly, this is childbirth’. So I went back to Caroline and said, ‘Yes, I want both of you to do it. I’m happy’.

They know my background, they know I’ve got an older son – he’s eight – and that my second son – he’s five – has special needs. So I didn’t have to go through the experience of meeting a new midwife and explaining everything. Plus they’re experts in their field. I feel very comfortable with them and that’s what I wanted with my pregnancy.

After having my second child I decided I wanted to do the CVS (chorionic villus sampling) to test for any chromosomal abnormalities. You’ve got to wait two or three weeks for the results to come back. Caroline kept telling me, ‘Everything is going to be fine, don’t worry. What happened with the previous birth was just a one-off’. But it was still the most nerve-wracking time.

The day I got the call to say everything’s fine I went straight to Caroline and hugged her. She was so happy for me. But I was still worried; you just don’t know what can happen.

The syndrome that affects my special needs child is called Cri Du Chat – it’s French and means ‘the cry of the cat’. For most babies with the syndrome, their cries sound like a cat’s whimper. He didn’t cry at all. So the minute Amy came out and cried like a normal newborn, both my husband and I started crying because we knew she had been born healthy.

Amy was born in the early hours of 3 September last year, but my waters broke at about three o’clock on the morning of 1 September. I wasn’t feeling any contractions or pain so I decided to go into work.

The next day I stayed home and worked until about two or three in the afternoon and went to the hospital for a check-up at 5pm. I’d had curries cooking on the stove, so I thought I’d take Caroline and Rachel some food to eat.

When we got there they told me I’d tested positive for Streptococcus B and I was going to be induced. I said, ‘Well at least you have dinner’. According to Caroline, I fed all the doctors and midwives on the ward that night!

The whole experience was just amazing. We’d dropped our second son off at care the day my waters broke and brought our first child with us to the hospital. He fell asleep because it was getting so late and then just at the point when I was ready to deliver he woke up. He sat there with Caroline and assisted in my delivery. He and his dad cut the cord and after that Caroline took the time to show him the placenta and explain why it was important for the baby and her growth. Normally, that just wouldn’t happen.

The relationship you develop with a midwife makes your whole pregnancy very personal, very intimate, very special. I wanted future midwives at UTS to know that they can make a difference; they can make a mother feel comfortable and safe and provide the right advice, the right environment. That’s why I was happy to have some of our sessions recorded.

I’m enjoying every minute of my time with Amy but I think I’ll be ready to come back in May. I love what I do at UTS, and it’s nice to know I’m surrounded by people like Caroline and Rachel!

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit

Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/the-ties-that-bind
“It felt like a dagger to the heart.”
Tom McGregor isn’t one to mince words. The 21-year-old amateur AFL player is still reeling following his team’s 17-point loss last September.

“The first year I played with the UTS Bats, we shouldn’t have won and we didn’t. But last year, we should have won and we lost.”

Unashamedly competitive, McGregor’s using the pain of his division-two loss as motivation to succeed. For the young half-back, who grew up playing rugby union and basketball on Sydney’s North Shore, 2011 marks his third year playing AFL.

He made the switch after high school, opting to join UTS because the university offered a combined business and engineering degree and his mum knew the wife of then-coach Lachlan Buszard.

McGregor says, “AFL’s like no other game I’ve played. It doesn’t matter what build you are, you can play a type of game that will suit you.”

This year, the UTS Bats’ first and reserve grade teams – who for two years achieved near-perfect win rates in the division one and two competitions – have been elevated to Sydney AFL’s premier division.

The season (which kicked off on Saturday 2 April) will see the newcomers pitted against the city’s finest, including Sydney University and UNSW-Eastern Suburbs.

Though McGregor admits, “My kicking’s not that great and there are still a few rules I don’t know,” he believes his “hustle and bustle” style is well suited to the tougher competition.

“There are a couple of things I do better than players who have grown up on AFL; the biggest one would be tackling. They definitely hit hard with their shoulders in AFL, but in terms of tackling, there’s not that force you get in union.”

The number 84 hopes his team’s move will give him the opportunity to play positions in the centre, learn more about the game and eventually take on a leadership role in the club.

At the helm is head coach Michael Hosking. Prior to his post at the Bats, “Hosko” led fellow premier division club the North Shore Bombers to two grand final wins in ’05 and ’07.

“He knows what’s required;” says McGregor. “There’s such a big difference between the reserve and premier leagues, having someone who’s been there before gives you that little bit extra confidence.

“Realistically, no one’s expecting us to win a game. We should beat the lower teams, but no one’s expecting us to beat the higher teams, like Sydney Uni and the East Coast Eagles.”

Though McGregor is quietly confident, there is one challenge he’s keen to overcome. “Our average age is about 25.

“A lot of premier teams have under-18 teams; we don’t. They have a natural ability to bring up kids and train them and give them experience, so we need to somehow counteract that.

“It would be nice to see more staff and students get involved; to get to know more people at uni and have that bond you can’t get anywhere else except being in a sporting team together.

“I think that’s one of the reasons we’ve done so well – it doesn’t matter if you’re the worst or best player in Sydney, you’re still welcome at the Bats.”

Though McGregor’s ultimate dream is to work in construction management, with three years of study and a year or two of travelling still to come, he says, “that’s a long way off.”

Right now, his sights are firmly set on September.

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/rivalry-and-redemption
The Myth of the Ethical Consumer is a fascinating and thought-provoking book which critically reviews the notion of consumer social responsibility. In particular, it analyses the stark difference between the huge number of polls and surveys showing that consumers are giving increasing attention to the ethical components of products and processes, and consumers’ actual expressed activity which exhibits very low levels of purchases of ‘ethical goods’. Providing evidence from several empirical studies, the authors contend the reason for this difference is the fact that values and beliefs are but two of many factors contributing to the individual’s consumption decision and that they trade ethical issues off against other basic issues, for example lower prices are traded against environmentally ethical product features. The book proves our convenient assumptions and simplistic notions about who consumes ethically to be unfounded and shows individuals don’t behave with general ethical intent, rather with very specific choices related to the products at hand. In short, The Myth of the Ethical Consumer is really worth reading. It pulls together conceptual and empirical discussions to generate normative conclusions about what we can do to enhance social consumption in a meaningful and socially legitimate manner.

Christine Eckert
UTS: Business School

Timothy Devinney is a Professor of Strategy in the UTS: Business School and a core member of the Centre for Management and Organisation Studies. He is one of Australia’s leading business scholars and the speaker at the next UTSpoke: Ethical vanities on Wednesday 27 April, 2011.

Despite growing up in Melbourne, I’ve been a loyal follower of Australian Rules football. It on the other hand has followed me all my life. Like a slightly annoying family friend, I’ve grown fond of AFL. So it’s with more than one eye that I come to Best on Ground – an entertaining, endearing and broadly appealing collection of stories on our national game. Editors Peter Corris and John Dale have pulled together a band of well-known Aussie writers including, among others, David Williamson, Malcolm Knox and Jean Bedford, getting each to write a love story on their AFL team. As with the clubs in the code itself, the stories you’ll barrack for most in this book will depend on your prejudices as much as your preferred colours, age, gender and birthplace. Damian Barrett’s ‘Long Bombs to Snake’, about his beloved “uncool and perennially broke” North Melbourne, was among my favourites; as was Sophie Cunningham’s ‘Loving the Cats’ in which her copious tears at Geelong’s 2009 grand final victory provoked irritated profanity from an angry St Kilda fan. In Kate Eltham’s ‘Nothing Like a Convert’, a six-year-old girl’s near-end-of-game shout of: “Come on Brisbane, you can still win this!”, is an absolute cracker of a line for reasons I’ll not divulge. To quote my kid nephew: “It made my eyes cry”. Amid the tears, there are plenty of good laughs in here too.

Sonya Voumard
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Best on Ground is the third anthology edited by John Dale. He is a Professor of Writing and Director of the Centre for New Writing at UTS and the author of six books including the best-selling Huckstepp.

Where to start? What to research? How to research? These are the questions facing any student embarking on a journey into academic research, whether it be an honours, masters or PhD. Polonsky and Waller’s book Designing and Managing a Research Project is fast becoming a regularly prescribed manual for supervisors and research unit instructors looking to embed research skills in their students. The text is a fantastic practical guide to the process of research with clear stages applicable to any research student as they progress from choosing their topic to managing supervisor relationships. It’s an excellent introduction to the process of ethics considerations and clearance, which complements students actually completing a National Ethics Application Form, and the step-by-step discussion about how to undertake research is clear and easy to understand and follow. One of the biggest struggles for any researcher is knowing how to complete and present their results and findings. This text proves to be a great resource, covering all the critical success factors – from the written thesis to the oral presentation. Designing and Managing a Research Project is an excellent complement to research method studies in both qualitative and quantitative studies.

Kerrie Bridson
School of Management and Marketing, Deakin University

David S. Waller is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing. His research interests include marketing communications, advertising agencies, agency-client relationships, controversial advertising, international advertising, marketing ethics and marketing education.

U:BOOKWORMS

During April, the Co-op Bookshop on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on the books reviewed in U: Read It. For more details, email uts@coop-bookshop.com.au
Being seen and being heard; it’s a theme that resonates among the ambitious digital and electronic arts project, Change has come.

Curator Nicole Foreshew explains: "I guess I called it Change has come because I felt that while the works may not directly talk about or reference change, the common theme I could relate to was this possibility of seeing and hearing differently and how this can change over time."

The exhibition will be on show from 28 April until 3 June in the Tower foyer. It incorporates the work of 11 artists who conceptually use popular mediums like video projections, film footage, photographs, light boxes and soundscapes in their work.

“I was on holiday in Queensland and Joshua Yasserie, an artist in the show, was showing me mobile phone recordings of himself and his friends performing poetry beats within the backdrop of cane fields in Mackay. I thought it would be a great opportunity to invite Joshua to exhibit his experience with media and art in everyday life.”

The artists vary vastly in age, underscoring – from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective – the changes in dialogue that can happen between generations. “The way we see and hear things now is different from the way we see and hear things from different generations.”

Similarly, the artists vary in experience. In addition to well-known identities, like contemporary artist Christian Thompson, emerging artists, including Emma Loban, will also have their work on display.

Loban’s work looks at climate change through her island way of life in Waiben (Thursday Island) where she lives and works.

“It’s looking at the kinds of change we may not have access to through mainstream media, but have access to through the eyes of an artist living and experiencing change in their personal life or places where they live,” says Foreshew.

"Emma’s work really asks the long and ongoing questions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had being on the frontier of the impact of climate change for a very long time."

Well-known Sydney-based artist Jonathon Jones will also be creating a new installation for the exhibition. “It’s been a privilege to work with such an amazing artist who uses everyday materials such as household light bulbs and tarpaulin to make huge lightscapes that map shadow and light in ways that are both unexplained and intended,” says Foreshew.

Notions of identity are questioned by many of the artists. Vanessa Summerfield inserts images of herself and her family into internet images to comment on the concepts of identity and mass media.

“Vanessa’s questioning how she might consider herself and her family in that context. These are quite powerful and complex works. Having said that, there’s a lot of humour in the images as well.”

Foreshew believes the timely exhibition reflects the emergence of a new contemporary art movement as a mediator of change and possibility.

“They’re very elevated questions these artists are having about how we build our ideas about reality. The works in Change has come really highlight the influence and saturation of digital and electronic media within everyday life. The artists also question the process of manufacturing vision and sound by creating identity, locality and collective experiences.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit


Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/questioning-change-creating-possibility
## WHAT'S ON

### APRIL

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<td>1</td>
<td><strong>ANTARCTICA: A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION BY JASON EDWARDS AND ANNA ZHU</strong></td>
<td>Until 15 April / Tower, level 4 foyer</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><strong>DESIGN NEEDS LESS MERCENARIES AND MORE GUERRILLAS</strong></td>
<td>Until 10 April / Fraser Studios, 10-14 Kensington Street, Chippendale e: <a href="mailto:kate.sweetapple@uts.edu.au">kate.sweetapple@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><strong>SYDNEY AFL: UTS BATS V BALMAIN</strong></td>
<td>7pm / Henson Park, Sydenham Road, Marrickville <a href="http://www.utsafc.com">www.utsafc.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>CAREERS FAIR</strong></td>
<td>12 noon to 4pm / Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour e: <a href="mailto:careers@uts.edu.au">careers@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td><strong>MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTS HALL OPENING</strong></td>
<td>10am / Multi-Purpose Sports Hall, building 4, level 1 e: <a href="mailto:james.stuart@uts.edu.au">james.stuart@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td><strong>AWFULLY WONDERFUL (CURATED BY UTS SENIOR LECTURER LIZZIE MULLER AND BEC DEAN)</strong></td>
<td>Until 14 May / Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm / Performance Space at Carriageworks, 245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh <a href="http://www.performancespace.com.au">www.performancespace.com.au</a></td>
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<td>17</td>
<td><strong>SYDNEY AFL: UTS BATS V ILLAWARRA</strong></td>
<td>2.10pm / Henson Park, Sydenham Road, Marrickville <a href="http://www.utsafc.com">www.utsafc.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>POSTGRADUATE INFORMATION EVENINGS</strong></td>
<td>Until 28 April <a href="http://www.postgraduate.uts.edu.au">www.postgraduate.uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td>20</td>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION STYLES WORKSHOP</strong></td>
<td>9am to 4pm / Building 10 e: <a href="mailto:jann.joy@uts.edu.au">jann.joy@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td>21</td>
<td><strong>EHS ESSENTIALS WORKSHOP</strong></td>
<td>10am to 11am / HR training room 2, building 10, level 6, room 430 e: <a href="mailto:jann.joy@uts.edu.au">jann.joy@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<td><strong>GRADUATION CEREMONIES (KURING-GAI)</strong></td>
<td>Until 30 April / Kuring-gai campus</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>UTSPEAKS: ETHICAL VANITIES</strong></td>
<td>6pm for a 6.30pm start / University Hall, building 4, level 2 e: <a href="mailto:robert.button@uts.edu.au">robert.button@uts.edu.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td><strong>CHANGE HAS COME</strong></td>
<td>Until 3 June / Tower, level 4 foyer newsroom.uts.edu.au/events</td>
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Email your events for May to u@uts.edu.au by Friday 8 April 2011.

## SAID IT

**BENEFITS OF HINDSIGHT**

What is the most important lesson the Queensland floods can teach Australians? Here’s what some of our online and print edition readers had to say.

“We are still very much at the mercy of the planet. Unfortunately, this stuff is going to keep on happening – we have overpopulated the planet, shown very minimal respect to the other species we live with and altered the climate. We are now facing the consequences of our actions.”

Laurence Wainwright

“The floods highlight the ‘Australian spirit’ – there was an enormous amount of money, clothes and supplies donated to affected areas. It’s clear that in the face of a major natural disaster the Australian Government and the Australian public are here to help.”

Alexandra Berriman

“Great topic. Maybe the politicians should enroll in your class and start re-learning how things should be done on subjects they have not properly researched.”

Wafa Lahoud

“Building in ‘greenfields/floodplains is not a good pattern – especially when the density of Australia’s existing cities and suburbs could be substantially [and humanely] increased. [The Queensland floods also show] Australians do shine in the face of adversity. Despite the best efforts of the media to sensationalise the destruction and subsequent storms, the world is amazed by how Aussies have pulled together, very quietly and effectively, to help each other out. Nice one!”

Anonymous

Share your thoughts about any article featured in U at newsroom.uts.edu.au

**NEXT MONTH’S QUESTION**

How do you believe more realistic, complex and nuanced ways of thinking about disability can change our cultural and everyday life experiences?

Email your answer and name to u@uts.edu.au or comment online at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/04/ rethinking-disability
“10A is the most gentle and gorgeous sidekick I’ve ever met, whilst Campbell is an articulate cynic with razor-sharp wit just trying to survive the ups and downs of life.”

This photograph was taken last year by visual communication student Teresa Tan. In a confronting yet honest account of life on the streets, they form part of a documentary project she created about “streeties” and *Big Issue* vendors.

Photographer: Teresa Tan