The adolescent brain is a ‘work in progress’, changing dramatically from puberty into the mid-20s at least. These changes are thought to be behind some of those problematic behavioural society finds troubling, but the preparedness of young people to explore and take risks can be a positive as well. By Emma O’Neill

The slowest part of the brain to develop during adolescence are often also the age group’s greatest hits and it tests all of these attributes. The brain is developing and growing from puberty into the early 20s and recent research has suggested that it may even still be maturing up to the age of 30,” he says.

“Up until about 15 years ago, there was a strong belief within the field of neuroscience that the brain you have at 13 is the brain you will have for the rest of your life; however recent research has proved this to be radically incorrect. “The brain is developing and growing to maturity right into the early 20s and recent research has suggested that it may even still be maturing up to the age of 30,” he says.

“The adolescent brain is a ‘work in progress’, changing dramatically from puberty into the mid-20s at least. These changes are thought to be behind some of those problematic behavioural society finds troubling, but the preparedness of young people to explore and take risks can be a positive as well. By Emma O’Neill.

As Aristotle pointed out in the 300s BC, "Youth are heated by nature, as drunken men are by wine." How can we guide our youth through these tumultuous times, and do we judge our youth too harshly considering their brains are a work in progress?

According to Professor Nick Allen, a clinical psychologist from the University of Melbourne and the Orygen Youth Health Research Centre, the qualities that people find troubling about adolescents are often also the age group’s greatest hits and it tests all of these attributes.

“Getting bored easily, risk-taking, wanting to try new things all the time and exploring the world in a new way is how young people discover what’s enjoyable and what they find satisfying,” he says.

“Adolescents can remind us that we don’t have to do things the same way all the time. That you can try new things and explore new things, and sometimes a little bit of that is helpful for adults to make sure we don’t get stuck in our ways.”

Professor Allen suggests some of the world’s most impressive social innovation has been propelled by youth-based movements. "Look at the shift in perceptions that occurred with the Vietnam War, the election of Barack Obama. These social changes were largely led by young people, and I predict a similar urgency will be needed when it comes to action on one of the world’s biggest challenges - managing climate change.

"Every generation finds a new way to shock, it’s their job. It is part of innovation and you can’t change. It is part of innovation and you can’t change.

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To complicate matters, at the exact time when adolescents are beginning to learn about relationships and the long-term consequences of their actions, our emerging adults are given the right to vote, drive alcohol, have sex, drive, smoke, and asked to make decisions about a future career.

Determining if maturity levels among teens are adequate to deal with such freedom has been at the centre of recent debates surrounding the legal age of driving and alcohol consumption.

During an address to the Australasian College for Road Safety earlier this year Associate Professor Rebecca Ivers, from the University of Melbourne’s Asialink and Director of the Injury Division at the George Institute for International Health, listed increasing the age of obtaining a driver’s licence from 16 to 18 as one measure needed for reducing the number of young people who become involved in road toll. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has also shown his support for more research into the benefits and impact of increasing the legal drinking age. Associate Professor Ivers argues may still be the most practical way to determine when someone should be allowed to get behind the wheel; or start drinking.

“We can’t really determine with any certainty what a teenager’s level of maturity is at a particular age, but we can’t really stick every teenager into a brain scanner either, so at this stage age remains the simplest way to determine someone into a sexual being.

Puberty isn’t just about sex, it’s about emotions, your behaviour, your relationships. And questions about where you fit into the world are highlighted in this time is the prefrontal cortex, an area responsible for higher-order skills such as self-control, self-regulation, and a person’s ability to manage emotions, behaviour, moods and impulses. For the vulnerable prefrontal cortex, it is not an ideal time for tackling new challenges; but this is when puberty hits and it tests all of these attributes.

Professor Allen says puberty does a lot more than simply transform someone into a sexual being. “We can’t really determine with any certainty what a teenager’s level of maturity is at a particular age, but we can’t really stick every teenager into a brain scanner either, so at this stage age remains the simplest way to determine someone into a sexual being.

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One in every 100-150 children suffers from autism. More prevalent than childhood cancer, child diabetes and childhood AIDS put together, autism is a significant health issue. Professor Margaret Prior spoke recently with Eric Venn-Bemmel of the University’s UpClose podcast.

E I M Z A N V I CEM ZA N

MARCOT PRIOR

The term autism is a clinical description for the wide range of childhood conditions that are characterised by abnormal development in social interaction, communication and in the presence of restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour. There is no cure for autism, but research is needed to improve the lives of people with autism, particularly in the area of effective intervention.

The term 'autism spectrum disorder' (ASD) is often used as a synonym for autism. It is a neurodevelopmental disorder which is lifelong, but research indicates that treatment can improve outcomes in individuals on the autism spectrum.

The assessment of autism is based on the presence of key symptoms at an early age (before 3 years of age), including difficulty understanding or using the language of others, difficulty making eye contact, and difficulty participating in social interactions.

The earliest signs of autism may be noticed at age 1-3 years, although some signs may not be observed until later in childhood or even adulthood. In some cases, the early signs may be subtle and difficult to detect.

Early intervention is key to improving outcomes in children with autism. The earlier intervention begins, the better the outcomes are likely to be. However, early intervention requires a team approach and is resource-intensive. The costs of providing early intervention services can be high, and the availability of these services can vary significantly across different regions and countries.

Early intervention may include services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and social skills training. These services are typically provided by a team of professionals, including psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and special education teachers.

Research suggests that early intervention is more effective when it begins in the first few years of life. Early intervention can improve outcomes in children with autism, including better communication skills, social skills, and adaptive behaviors. However, the effectiveness of early intervention varies depending on the individual and the type of intervention used.

Early intervention is often more effective when it is provided in a natural environment, such as in the child’s home or in a naturalistic setting, rather than in a formal clinical setting.

In conclusion, early intervention is crucial for children with autism. Early intervention can improve outcomes in children with autism, including better communication skills, social skills, and adaptive behaviors. However, the effectiveness of early intervention varies depending on the individual and the type of intervention used. Early intervention should begin as early as possible, preferably in the first few years of life.
Smart tool for carbon emissions

As organisations around the world pull back on carbon emissions, Melbourne mathematicians have developed a new software tool to ease the way. By Nerissa Hannink.

T he 3D model of a carbon dioxide molecule, on the front cover of the current issue of the journal Energy Technology, offers an image of a comprehensive carbon reduction plan. The model is the work of Melbourne researchers, who have developed a new software tool that predicts and reduces carbon emissions, helping to ease the way. By Nerissa Hannink.

University of Melbourne mathematicians have developed a software tool to help organisations reduce, monitor and report on their carbon emissions.

The tool – the first of its kind in Australia – will help carbon-conscious businesses to meet their environmental objectives and to work productively under a Government carbon reduction scheme.

After reviewing carbon reduction targets, Carbon Limit (Carbon Liability Optimisation) selects the projects a company should undertake to make profits but limit emissions, and then schedules them over a long-term horizon.

CarlDi was developed by Dr Hiru Sooriyasinghe, director of the Melbourne Operations Research (MOR) unit, as part of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Melbourne.

The CARDi tool enables organisations to easily formulate a strategy for reducing and offsetting their carbon liability, and better account for unexpected emissions liability when making investment decisions all across their business line, says Dr Gao.

Melbourne Ventures, the commercialisation arm of the University of Melbourne, has identified a commercial partner in CARDiControl, a company which specialises in producing enterprise software that helps companies in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Management.

CARDiControl is in the process of testing its prototype software with a number of organisations. The hope is to provide an innovative and flexible approach to carbon emissions alignment and management, offering organisations of all sizes a fully integrated solution to their emissions management problems.

"The system offers substantial benefits both in terms of tracking and recording a carbon footprint and in terms of reducing carbon footprint costs effectively," says CARDiControl is currently canvassing organisations interested in becoming a partner for the implementation and setup of this ground-breaking system.

www.carboncontrol.com.au

Veterinary research into tapeworm control in pigs through vaccination has the potential to reduce serious disease in developing nations where humans and pigs live in close quarters. By Nerissa Hannink.

A vaccine developed by University of Melbourne researchers has been found to totally eliminate a dangerous parasite that causes significant disease in the developing world each year.

The reports clearly show that we need to change the message so the emphasis is on what works best for each child.
Young people can be moody and angsty, and bickering, but accepting this as normal behaviour may be putting their mental health at risk, according to the Australian Academy of Science and the University of Melbourne Professor of Youth Mental Health Patrick McGorry. Emma O'Neill reports on an important health issue facing Australia.

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Younger 'emo' teens into Google, more than two million internet sites appear. The emo subculture – one of 'gnome-like teens with a preference for black clothing and dark thoughts – seems to have been accepted by society as a part of a distorted youth. Yet according to Professor McGorry, an acceptance of young people's turbulence is leading society into dangerous territory when it comes to addressing the mental health of our emerging adults.

"There is just too much acceptance these days that young people will be, turbulant, disturbed and difficult – and this can blid us to what's going behind their behaviour, which is often unconscious mental disorders," he says.

"Navigating your way through teenganghood and early adulthood isn’t just about avoiding tough times; these tough times can sometimes lead to serious disorders such as psychosis or an eating disorder that requires a professional health response.

One third of Australians experience a period of mental health by the time they reach 25, and most major mental health problems are likely to assert themselves during this period of mental ill health by the time they reach 25, and most major mental health problems are likely to assert themselves during this period. The most practical way of determining when society may be neglecting the mental health of our young people is to look at their rates of suicide. "If suicide rates are high then we know we're not helping young people. If young people are unhealthy, then there's something wrong with the system," says Professor McGorry.

If you type 'Emo teens' into Google, you could almost think of it as providing information on the 'psychological1.0' of this particular youth culture. "We could almost think of it as providing information on the 'psychological1.0' of this particular youth culture. They are not seeking help because in the 'psy1.0' age, there are so many strategies for guiding them, whether it's the school, the church, the language and constructs of coping and includes things like the language of resilience, the language of toughness. They are not seeking help because that's not how the 'psy1.0' sees it. They are not seeking help because it's not the kind of language that's appropriate for them.

"If your teen is having a good rest and is looking forward to school, and is asking for help in a positive way, seeking help, and not being put off by the system, then he or she is likely to be doing okay. If your teen is not doing okay, then perhaps you need to look at the system and what is going on in your teen's life. "We need to help make sure that our young people are not being pushed in the wrong direction and are not being pushed towards suicide," says Professor McGorry.

When it comes to mental health services in Australia, the system is weakest for those in the time of life who need it most," he adds.

"They are devoided at a risk of treated or untreated mental health problems, and this means they can't contribute properly to their own lives or to the broader social fabric."

"Young people are suffering from a severe mental illness and being denied the treatment they need," says Professor McGorry.

"They are suffering from a severe mental illness and being denied the treatment they need," says Professor McGorry.

But doing everything we can to prevent our young people from becoming vulnerable to mental health is not only treating them, but also getting our society so people aren't fleeing for help because they are not able to cope. "They are not able to cope because they don't know how to cope, and they don't know where to go to find help," he says.

"I know from my own experience that it's hard to know where to go to find help, or getting inappropriate mental health assistance, is just too common according to Professor McGorry, who says that it's not a lack of information that's causing a widespread neglect of youth mental health. "A British psychologist once referred to such neglect as a form of self-harm undertaken by society, and it really is, "he says.

"It's a new way of dealing with the kind of health services and support they need. When it comes to mental health services in Australia, the system is weakest for those in the time of life who need it most," he says.

"Twenty-year-old Victoria Turner was one of those people who needed help, having been hospitalised with depression at the age of 17 after she experienced symptoms she had not recognised. "I noticed I just didn't realise I was depressed at the time, and it wasn't until I reached adolescence that I was forced to deal with it. All I knew was that I was making up being really moody every day," she says.

"I know it was unfairness to that, but we really didn't talk about it at school so I just said nothing and focused on my study and hobby thinking I said anything, people would think I was weird. On one occasion, when I did tell a doctor I was having psychological issues, she asked if I wanted a late note for school." She says that young people knowing where to go for help, or getting inappropriate mental health assistance, is just too common according to Professor McGorry, who says that it's not a lack of information that's causing a widespread neglect of youth mental health. "A British psychologist once referred to such neglect as a form of self-harm undertaken by society, and it really is, "he says.

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A changing climate

"All of nature in surrender

Women and Islam"

A shrinking mainstream
media landscape and uncertainty on the future for 'news' could have profound implications for how Australia and America respond to climate change, according to Dr Jennifer Day. By David Scott.

**BACKGROUND CONVERSATION**

R eponding to climate change, adapting urban planning and the future of 'news' media would, on the face of it, seem to involve the same issues for the US and Australia. But, says Dr Day, an urban planning expert at the University of Melbourne Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, there are differences.

Dr Day says that many responses to the challenge of climate change involve urban planning. "In the US, there has been a debate about whether the current Bill, which seeks to amend the financial incentives to encourage local governments to reduce emissions, reduce reliance on vehicle travel and support the use of renewable energy sources, will make a significant difference. The media has larger regional significance. Content – which results in local issues partially or fully cease print publication. Other major metropolitan areas have seen this happen to the editor: basic information sharing. It is governments, with the 'permission' of voters and politicians."

The founder of the Australian Institute of Urban Studies Centre in Sydney to pursue her research in "Planning, Media, and Local Democracy in Australia and America." As the media declines, that bridge or conduit to the community is being lost. So the implementation of the planning reforms becomes subject to the competing ideologies and interests of voters and politicians.

The connection between urban planning and climate change is extremely topical, says Dr Day, as we saw in Copenhagen last year. And ultimately it is governments, with the 'permission' of the people, which implement measures to mitigate climate-altering behaviour.

"That's where the debate lies. In Moscow, where the media is torn in. In democratic countries, we rely on newspapers for these issues. Fewer than five per cent of citizens read newspapers. In the US, the debate is on the table. In Australia, where we have a strong tradition of civil liberties, the debate is on the table."

She says now more than ever it's important for people to have a voice to get their thoughts and frustrations, and that "legal publications such as the St Francis' Chronicle just don't exist anymore. There are a lot of people who don't have access to information and vent their thoughts and frustrations."

"So the implementation of the planning reforms becomes subject to the competing ideologies and interests of voters and politicians."

Her research is really about what happens when the media landscape changes. The places where the media is is important, she says. "We're seeing major changes in the way we get information. One of the things that we're seeing is the explosion of local media and decrease in mainstream media."

In the midst of debate over how to adapt urban planning and media to cope with climate change, the vehicle connecting the public with decision-makers is contracting.

Since March 2007, at least 11 metropolitan daily newspapers in the United States have ceased operation due to declining local newspaper circulations and at least 200 other major metropolitan areas have seen newspapers change formats or shut down, or partly or fully cease print publication.

In Australia, newspaper closure is not as serious a problem as the under-funding of local reports and local accountability – which results in local issues falling off the political agenda and having less regional significance.

And the media is necessary to the answer either, says Dr Day. "The media is involved in developing legislation and social change, and in shaping climate change. It's quite a clear political issue and the media provides the bridge between decision-makers and the public."

"For example, I'm interested in how the public and the people in the public discourse, and the public find it can't participate in those processes."

A leading Qur'anic scholar and Muslim feminist, Professor Fathia Aminu Wadud, has challenged the received view of the role of women in society and the family. "As the media has historically been a way to participate in civic society and to education, and write letters to newspapers has been the access point. Some of that is still there, but in many cases critical commentary is being gagged and people are on the fringes or on other ways that they participate."

"What I believe is critical mass is that women who are all the time, including Muslim women, are engaged in diverse ways about what it means to be women, what it means to have a relationship with Allah, what is to be a Muslim, what is Islam, and how we do some of these definitions."

There is no aspect of Islamic teaching which privileges Muslims or others about which Muslims or governments have not made some comment, some contribution or some construction. This has not happened before this time. This is a critical time for Islamic teaching and the consequences of climate change, this is about how we understand the implications of the Qur'an and the resulting notions of what it means to be Muslim or the ideal is a function of the sociological and anthropological relationship of the universe. She explains it as: "... no matter how they use it and we are not using it in the same way, and for the first time in history, we are seeing major changes in the way we get information."

When we listen to women's perspective of what the Qur'an means we add to the human comprehension of what the Qur'an means. We bring something from our particular location in women to the human condition, we understand and hopefully follow the perspective of the Qur'an, we understand it from the perspective of the Qur'anic cosmology then affirms that the male and female pair united in a vertical relationship of reciprocity, or equality, is unique, not subjected to this duality, that totally renders the totality of the Qur'anic cosmology then affirms that the male and female pair united in a vertical relationship of reciprocity, or equality, is unique, not subjected to this duality, but rather to reflect on it as a vertical relationship, not a false conclusion. If you define the human being in ways that are specific and particular, it does not only exclude women, it makes women other and not equal. So there is power in definitions and power in the absence of definitions, and that is still true for all human beings."

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The creator on the human side is unique, not equal to the earthly side, not male or female, God is not like man or woman, therefore, the resulting notions of what it means to be Muslim or the ideal is a function of the sociological and anthropological relationship of the universe. She explains it as: "... no matter how they use it and we are not using it in the same way, and for the first time in history, we are seeing major changes in the way we get information."

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Fuzzy "Aggolie" is host of Channel 10's Video Hits. She spoke with Christopher Strong.

The best job in the world

Media and Communications graduate Fuzzy Aggolie is host of Channel 10's Video Hits. She spoke with Christopher Strong.

Fuzzy "Aggolie" Aggolie telethon host, model and University of Melbourne alumna, returned recently to the graduating class of the Keong Leo Dye Young Scholars Program — a website for undergraduates and recent graduates at the University of Melbourne.

"I’ve spoken to some former ones I’ve worked with since high school. That one you enter university life, your university entrance mark becomes irrelevant. But I didn’t learn, probably because I really really need about having a high school life. I really really need about having a high school life."

She reflected on how she discovered that university life was very different from the school life she knew in Melbourne. "I was by the way, I learned things is different. I'm speaking from a perspective of a fact, but the VCE teams are to be based on knowing but never really having to make a decision on what to do next. I’d say, you have to come up with the answer. You need to have an opinion on what to do and to be able to back that up with the facts to get a good grade."

She had some difficulty coming to terms with studying at such a large institution, but thanks to the support she received and new friends she made, she said she fitted in well at the University of Melbourne.

"But despite of Keong Leo Dye’s, you already know a lot more of what it is about," she says.

Faustina’s second major in her Media and Communications degree was Geography. She chose this because she had a passion for the environment and knew she would gain knowledge that would always be relevant.

"When I told people that I was going to study Geography, they asked why. But I asked, why not? Why not study something you know you’re going to enjoy? Why not study something that is becoming more and more important every day? Why not study the environment and how it affects people all around the world?"

"And high-school students should make independent decisions about what to study at university and ignore anyone who question your decision, you must have known[sic] what you want to do."

Many of the students and scholars with stories about the media, including her how she travelled around the world interviewing musicians.

"A lot of research goes into these interviews. I might have to research for weeks just for a 10-minute interview, especially if it's a new or emerging band that I know little about. But I am very unique with the band. I have to do some research because these things change all the time in the industry and I might miss out on some important information. This is why building my research skills at university was so valuable to me," she says.

Faustina spoke about her life before university including how she moved from England with her brother when she was very young. She studied some of the extracurricular activities she undertook at high school, including a simulation stock market and sporting events. Like many students, she worked at a fast-food outlet during high school.

She said her persistence in pursuing her dream of working in television and her passion for the environment helped her work hard to be the host of Channel 10 Video Hits, which she described as ‘the best job in the world’.

The Keong Leo Dye Young Scholars Program offers selected high-achieving Year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to enrol with the University of Melbourne and each other through the Keong Leo Dye Young Scholars Program. Students are selected into the program by their school while in Year 10, with up to 700 students selected each year.

The program is named in honour of the eminent scholar, leading educationalist and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Professor Keong Leo Dye.

To learn more about the program, visit www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au.

Melbourne Alumni • Online

New alumni benefit

Exclusive discount on single subject study!

A Lidcombe offer a special 20 per cent discount on single subject study through the University of Melbourne Alumni Network (UdVN).

Whether you’d like to indulge your passion for commerce, law, or boost your knowledge for a career change — or simply to benefit your career, there are hundreds of undergraduate subjects available through UdVN. This exclusive new offer is available for undergraduate CAP subjects from first semester 2010.

For details on how to access this alumni discount, please visit www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/strategies/UdVN.html.

To find a subject that interests you and how to apply, please visit www.unimelb.edu.au/future/alumni/strategies/UdVN.html or www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/strategies/UdVN.html.

Australian Graffiti: Melbourne 1983-93

Compiled by active participants in the subculture across this period, it pays tribute to the integral individuals and crews who laid the foundation for Melbourne’s graffiti evolution from basic tags through to explosive full colour masterpieces.

With more than 1200 full colour images, this volume captures the rapid changes in styles in these early years, as graffiti-writing phenomenon left its mark on Australian walls – a graffiti-writing creativity that continues to dominate Melbourne’s cultural world.

To win the prize email your answer to the question below by Monday 15 March to:
news@media.unimelb.edu.au:

Wrong side of the bus

Kings Way – The Beginnings of Australian Graffiti Melbourne

A quarter of a century ago, the New York City hip-hop phenomenon left its mark on Australian walls – a graffiti-writing culture was born.

In a barrage of blinding colour, cryptic words and bombed out train carriages, Kings Way tells the story of Melbourne’s emerging underground writing scene and the youth whose sole purpose was to get up. Using the city’s walls and trains as their playground, these urban pioneers pushed the boundaries of spray paint art into new areas of design and creativity that continue to dominate Melbourne’s cultural world.


Online

Keep up-to-date with the University of Melbourne’s specialist websites.

Visions Voicestream

UpClose Podcast

The Fractured Page: Poets on Poetry

University of Melbourne's

MUP Publications

This month’s prize is Kings Way – The Beginnings of Australian Graffiti Melbourne 1983-82 by Duin Cahill, Martin Harvey and Karl Stamer (The Megapros Press July 2009. $10 RRP plus postage). To win a copy email your answer to the question below by Monday 15 March to news@media.unimelb.edu.au.

www.unimelb.edu.au

Online 26 March 2010 at: http://upclose.unimelb.edu.au

Tuberculosis Resurgent

Infectious disease expert Professor Graham Brown gives the latest update on tuberculosis, including new clinical trials and the danger of “the neglected disease” is anything but diminished in the 21st century. He also speaks with public health physician Dr Adbulrahman Safdirde in site on Mozambique, where he is spending time in research and combating the disease. With host Jennifer Cook, Professor Brown is Director of the Nossal Institute for Global Health.

Online 26 March 2010 at: http://upclose.unimelb.edu.au

Change of broadcast date

The Voice’s final episodes of the series, exploring Professor Sidney Baile’s return to South Africa for his medical school class reunion, which was featured in the February edition of Voice, has been reshuffled, and will be broadcast on a Sunday evening in June as part of ABC 1’s Compass program, and not on 21 March. See the Voice’s story here.

A passion for the impossible

Written just before its author passed away in 2008, On Passion is a wonderful, ultimately joyous, insight into the creative life of one of our best-loved poets: by Silvia Dropulich.

When I interviewed Dorothy Porter over a decade ago, the then Cementon residence in the University of Melbourne's English Department (now part of the School of Culture and Communication) had a poster tacked to her door depicting Europa, a moon of Jupiter, from which no-one had ever known.

The love of possibilities and the unknown was still with her just before her death in December 2008.

In the new book On Passion, written just before her death and published by Melbourne University Press, Porter reaffirms her love of astrophysics.

“I have no doubt that if John Donne were writing his metaphysical poems today he’d be as much astounded by the fact of astronomical discovery and the thought of seeing earthlings from another planet as he was by the Spanish Inquisition,” she remembers, “as a source of inspiration, and her creative life.

And we earthlings may be forced one day to embrace biologists, even alien civilizations, that now seem fanciful – if not impossible.”

Already exploration in our own solar system had painted images of landscapes, like the volcanoes on Jupiter’s moon Io, and the recently discovered ice geysers of Saturn’s moon Enceladus, which no-one had guessed were there.

Porter is astonished that very few of her fellow writers, apart from the science fiction community, share her passion for this extraordinary human adventure into the unknown.

“It’s a long time since I visited the solar system,” she says, “but I’ve always been curious about the possibility of life outside earth and have read everything I can get my hands on about the topic. I’ve also been to a number of lectures, including the one given by Sir Russell Grimwade, who is one of the leading experts in this field. His presentation was very engaging and left me with a deep appreciation for the complexity of the question.

“While I don’t believe in extraterrestrial life, I do think it’s possible that there might be other intelligent beings out there, and that we should be open-minded about the possibility. It’s a fascinating area of inquiry, and one that is likely to continue to evolve as our knowledge of the universe advances.”

On Passion

From On Passion, page 31

LITTLE BOOKS ON BIG THEMES

If the shoe doesn’t fit, must we change the foot?

I have a very superstitious relationship with the poems I love. I carry The God Abondoned Antony within me like a talisman to temper my grinding fear of losing my own ‘music’.

Dorothy Porter

The essence of Cubism

Of all the modernist art movements, Cubism most fundamentally changed the course of 20th century art. Silvia Dropulich reviews Cubism & Australian Art by Lesley Harding and Sue Cramer.

Cubism & Australian Art explores the effects of this movement on Australian artists from the 1920s to the present day.

More than 80 international and Australian artists are showcased over 250 works, in the newly remodelled Art Collection Gallery in association with the Heide Museum of Modern Art and authored by Lesley Harding and Sue Cramer.

The character of Cubism has been widely debated and discussed since its earliest manifestations in the art of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, known as the ‘Cézanne of the 1st Republic’.

Harding and Cramer argue that, by its very nature, Cubism was characterised by variation and change, that the idea of a pure or original Cubism was short-lived, and that its appearance in Australian art parallels its uptake and re-interpretation by artists in other countries.

Some of the Australian artists discussed in this book were among the first to become cubist artists, according to Harding and Cramer.

“Cubism was part of their development, one of several styles and factors influencing their art,” they write.

And yet there are certain works by Australian artists from the 1920s, 1930s, and even the 1940s that can indeed be described as ‘cubist’, in both formal and philosophical terms.

For Harding and Cramer, Cubism did not so much ‘arrive’ in Australia, as ‘arise’, already modified and reformed, as part of a modernist awakening.

“arise”, in their words. Australian artists did not lightly adopt Cubism as the latest modern trend or fad, but sought opportunities to study it seriously and even to reject it.

“Is this their return to Australia? they passed on cubist to students and peers in the manner in which they themselves had been taught: small action style classes in which the attribution of theory went hand-in-hand with practice,” Harding and Cramer say.

Cubism & Australian Art is the companion exhibition at Heide Museum of Modern Art which runs until 4 August 2010.

Potter: New Acquisitions

An exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, of works acquired by the University since 2007, will highlight key aspects of how an art collection begins, grows, and gains significance. By Katrina Raymond

The exhibition opens at the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne on 23 March and runs until 7 April 2010.

Director of The Potter, Dr Chris McAuliffe, describes the University’s art collection as a progressive and historical record of the University’s development.

“The University collections probably have more portraits than most... We have a strong tendency to reflect on people, pioneers, inventors, leaders. “Sir Ian and his Potter Foundation were integral to the creation of the Museum and to the development of great research and teaching resources,” says Dr McAuliffe.

“University collections probably have more portraits than most,” he observes. “We have a strong tendency to reflect on people, pioneers, inventors, leaders. This portrait, significant for the memory of Sir Ian Potter’s contribution to culture, is important when added to the other examples of Kahan’s work, and is a much-appreciated gift which enlarges the capacity to explore an individual artist’s legacy.”

Large holdings of Louis Kahan’s work are owned by the University, including over 50 significant portraits of writers rendered for the provocative literary and cultural journal Meanjin from the 1930s-1970s. Kahan played a crucial role in Australian intellectual life by representing many of the key figures of his time. These portraits provide a tremendous archival recording of over 25 years of the University’s history.

Another work featured in the exhibition is Peter James Smith’s portrayal of famed pathologist Dr Fredrick and the expression of sound and space. Smith’s work was commissioned in 2008 by the University’s Department of Otolaryngology to reflect a scientific aspect of academic life within the context (hence the emphasis on sound in the painting).

“So there’s another strand of the story of the University’s collections: an academic division works with a contemporary artist to come up with an artwork encapsulating their ideas, values and research specialisation,” says Dr McAuliffe.

“Not an easy challenge – how do you make a picture of sound?”

On new occasions, due to limited space, purchases are made to complement existing holdings or to complete the picture of an existing collection. The purchase of Vivienne Shark LeWitt’s If the shoe doesn’t fit, must we change the foot? in 2008 enabled the University to collect a work which tells an important story in the history of Australian art.

Vivienne Shark LeWitt was Director of the George Polak Gallery for many years and now the University owns a strong collection of her works ranging from 1984 to 2007.
**New direction for Business and Economics**

Engagement with business, government and the wider community are key to the agenda for Business and Economics. By David Scott.

**An emerging focus**

A renewed focus on engagement with the business community is driving change into the Faculty of Business and Economics, as announced at an event held this month.

Dean Professor Margaret Alridge says the Faculty is committed to working closely with the business community to ensure that graduates are well-prepared to face the dynamic challenges of today’s workplaces.

“We want to create a world-class business education that prepares our students to have a seamless transition from their academic environment to the workplace,” she says.

The Faculty is working to embed business leaders into the curriculum and to ensure that students can gain real-world experience through internships and work placements.

“Students are our future workforce, so it is important that we prepare them for the constantly changing business environment,” Professor Alridge says.

**Regional leader**

The launch of the new Bachelor of Commerce allows me to pursue a career in business, government and the wider community with regional leader in business and economics education.

“The intention is to engage business, government and the wider community with our newly formed Business and Economics Board and the Foundation for Business and Economics,” said Professor Alridge.

The Board is committed to lifelong learning and education, and is working to develop a regional leader in business and economics education.

**Integrated curriculum**

The Faculty is recognised as a national and international leader in business and economics education.

“The launch is one of the first steps of a new strategic direction for the Faculty,” says Professor Alridge.

**Sought-after graduates**

Looking ahead to the future, Professor Alridge says the Faculty is focused on developing graduates who are sought-after by employers.

“Expect to see a dramatic increase in the number of graduates applying for roles in business and economics,” she says.

**Regional focus**

The Faculty’s regional focus is reflected in the launch of the new Bachelor of Commerce, which will be offered in partnership with regional universities.

“The new degree will be a game-changer for students in regional areas,” Professor Alridge says.

**Opportunity Bununese**

The first batch of Opportunity Bununese students has been announced.

The program supports two Indigenous students who have experienced disadvantage in their secondary schooling.

“Opportunity Bununese is a new initiative that will provide young people in our regional areas with the chance to pursue a degree in business,” Professor Alridge says.

**Business education**

Business education is important as it gives us a better perspective, though not necessarily understanding, of what is happening in the world.

“Opportunity is fleeting. She has to recognize it and seize it when it comes passing by. At this point in my life, opportunity means being given the chance to pera a degree at the University of Melbourne and I intend to regard it well,” Sandhya Manchikanti, also a Bununese recipient, says.

**Accounting and mathematics**

Accounting and mathematics are also offered at the University of Melbourne, with a particular focus on contemporary classical music.

The new degree will be a game-changer for students in regional areas, Professor Alridge says.

**International link**

The Faculty is also committed to developing relationships with international universities, with a particular focus on contemporary classical music.

“A new degree in business, government and the wider community will be created to support students who have experienced disadvantage in their secondary schooling,” Professor Alridge says.

**Professional preparation**

The Faculty’s focus on professional preparation is an important aspect of the new degree.

“We want to ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the world of work, and that they are able to make a positive contribution to business and economics,” Professor Alridge says.

**Integrated curriculum**

The integrated curriculum will be delivered in partnership with regional universities, providing students with the opportunity to gain real-world experience.

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Climate change and Copenhagen

Art student Linh Do was an eyewitness to the events at COP15 in Copenhagen. She talked to Zoe Nikakis about a life-changing experience.

There were definitely moments when I was pulling my hair out with frustration, but those events contributed to the experience, and taught me how to deal with problems as they came up.

In a truly universal acknowledgement that a University of Melbourne student, Linh Do, had become a world-renowned youth campaigner and a front and centre persona in the international climate change debate – she was an ideal student to attend Copenhagen and discuss climate change from a youth perspective.

“My time in Copenhagen was amazing,” says Linh.

“There were definitely moments when I was pulling my hair out with frustration, but those events contributed to the experience, and taught me how to deal with problems as they came up.”

During the summit, the attended activity of students and Australian Government stakeholders highlighted the position of young people in opening plenary addressed by the Prince of Wales.

Linh notes that meeting with renowned experts and celebrity environmentalists in Flinders Street Station was a highlight, and thinks the contacts she has made will be useful in the future. She will work with councils to lobby for more sustainable transport solutions. She says, “It was the overall experience, sometimes the people, sometimes the community.”

She thinks it’s important to see Copenhagen not as a stand-alone event, but as one that’s part of a much broader conversation. “Climate change is not just about polar bears,” she says. “It’s about as a civilization.”

Sustainable communities

A group of motivated students have organised a ‘Sustainability Week’ challenge to the community. By Nerissa Hannik.

In order to highlight practical ways of living more sustainably, students from across the University of Melbourne have joined forces to promote a ‘Sustainability Week’ from 20 – 27 March, at the Parkville campus.

Art student Ben Dynan says: “We felt it was important to organise the event, because while many students have some knowledge of sustainability, they may not think about how they can contribute to the experience, and how to deal with problems as they came up.”

As well as a public lecture program, a number of smaller practical events and workshops have also been planned.

A central part of the week will be the Sustainability Week book "Unsustainable, We’re in it Together". Unsustainable Sustainability Week has been organised by the Sustainability Collective which emerged out of the Student Ambassador Leadership Program and the University of Melbourne. The Sustainability Collective is a passionate group of individuals committed to contributing to a broader cultural shift in which sustainable ideas and practices become part of the mainstream at the University and in the broader community.

Ben has been joined by five other Melbourne University students: Julie Cheng (Bachelor of Science), Qian Han, Jonathan Ng (Bachelor of Commerce and Science), Thi-Huong-Anh Thoi (Master of Management, Financial and Daniel Strong (Bachelor of Medicine) who have organised the week of events as part of the action learning group project in the Student Ambassador Leadership Program.

As well as a public lecture program, a number of smaller practical events and workshops have also been planned.

Meet Melbourne.

Free information sessions for prospective undergraduate students and their families.

For more information about Melbourne's MD degrees, accounting options, scholarships and Access Melbourne (our combined special entry and scholarships scheme). To find out more about the University, visit our website: www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/meetmelbourne or call 13000 65 442 for more information.

More about the University's support for elite student athletes:
March Timetable

For University maps and locations visit: unimelb.edu.au/campusmaps.html

EVENTS

CONCERTS

Friday 12 March
6.00pm CURNING
Venue: Concert at Melba Hall, School of Music, Royal Parade, Parkville
*7.00pm DANCE: Masterclass, led byd Professor Robert North, School of Dance, University of Melbourne.
Ticket: $25 or $60 for a series of 3 (unlimited)
A masterclass led byd Professor Robert North, School of Dance, University of Melbourne.

Fridays in the Arts

Wednesday 24 March
12 noon – 5.00pm Free Admission
Venue: University of Melbourne Art Collection, 234 St Kilda Road, Southbank

Exhibitions

The Ian Potter Museum of Art

The Potter at the University of Melbourne.

PRINCE PHILIP THEATRE, ARCHITECTURE BUILDING

EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Wednesday 10 March 6PM
The Role of Policy: Success, anomalies and collateral damage to systems educational reform, by Professor Nolan Alexander (University of Cambridge, Magazines Education Lecturer). Booking: education-events@unimelb.edu.au. Enquiries: 03 8344 8640, l.graham@unimelb.edu.au

STROKE

Thursday 18 March 5.30PM
Stroke: the hidden brain disease, by Professor Gerdtdowne. Melbourne. Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences. Enquiries: GED@unimelb.edu.au, theatrium@unimelb.edu.au

SUNDERLAND THEATRE, MEDICAL BUILDING

DESIGN

Tuesday 16 March 7PM
Recent Architectural Works by Professor Matthew Kite (University of Melbourne), exhibition opening.

Tuesday 16 March 7:30PM
FREE ADMISSION
Venue: MTC Foundation Theatre, At The Princess of Homburg, 1221 St Kilda Road, Southbank

BROADCAST EVENTS

March Timetable

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