

**Occasional Address at the Conferring of Degree Ceremony held
on Thursday, December 17, 2009 at 2.30pm, University of Melbourne**

By Michele Levine, Chief Executive, Roy Morgan Research
401 Collins St, Melbourne www.roymorgan.com



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



Postera Crescam Laude

'I shall grow in the esteem of future generations' - Horace

CONFERRING OF DEGREES



ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Conferring of Degrees to be held in the WILSON HALL

THURSDAY DECEMBER 17 2009 AFTERNOON CEREMONY

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

THE PROCESSION will enter the Hall at 2.30pm in the following order:

Chief Marshal
Marshals
Doctoral graduands
Academic staff
Members of Convocation
Heads of Colleges
Members of Council
Deans of Faculties
Vice President of the Academic Board, Professor R.F. Slocombe
Guest Speaker, Ms M. Levine
Provost, Professor J. Dewar
Esquire Bedell, Ms S. Dixon
The Deputy Chancellor, The Honourable Justice S. Crennan, AC

WELCOME BY THE DEPUTY CHANCELLOR

The Honourable Justice Susan Crennan, AC, BA, PGDipArts(Melb), LLB(Syd)

THE OCCASIONAL ADDRESS to be given by Ms Michele Levine, BSc(Hons), MEnvStud(Melb), Chief Executive Officer, Roy Morgan Research.

CONFERRING OF DEGREES with the Deputy Chancellor presiding.

THE VALEDICTORY SPEECH to be given by Ms Amy Kha Huynh, BCom, BIS(Melb).

THE PROCESSION will leave the Hall in reverse order to that of entry, followed by the new graduates. Guests are requested to remain standing while the procession is leaving Wilson Hall.

ORGANIST Mr Hugh Fullarton, BMus, DipEd(Melb), ARCO, ARCM, LMusA

CHOIR: Choristry, conducted by Mr Trevor Jones, BMusEd(Hons)(UWA).

PRE-CEREMONY MUSIC: Silvan Quartet

Guests are reminded to switch off all mobile telephones during the ceremony.

All information in this program was correct at the time of printing, one week prior to this ceremony.



Welcome by the Deputy Chancellor
The Honourable Justice Susan Crennan, AC BA, PGDipArts(Melb), LLB(Syd).



The Occasional Address by Ms Michele Levine, BSc(Hons), MEnvStud(Melb),
Chief Executive Officer, Roy Morgan Research Pty Ltd.

From: Robert Saint
To: Michele Levine
Sent: Tue Dec 22 17:30:24 2009
Subject: Graduation occasional address

Dear Michele,

Thank you very much for joining us for the graduation ceremony and presenting such an engaging occasional address. Graduations are grand and important events in the lives of students and hearing from outstanding and successful graduates such as yourself inspires and motivates them as they move to the next phase of their lives.

I also wanted to thank you for staying for the discussion afterwards. It was one of the most interesting, stimulating and enjoyable discussions I've had for a long time. I hope we have the chance to continue it some time in the future. I will forward your suggestion that the University could engage more closely with and benefit from a closer association with Roy Morgan Research to members of our Faculty who may be interested in pursuing this (e.g. our Dept. of Maths & Stats and Dept. of Information Systems).

Best regards,
Rob.

Professor Robert Saint
Dean, Faculty of Science
The University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010
AUSTRALIA

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Graduands, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today marks a wonderful achievement for everyone here, and I'm delighted to be here to share it with you.

Roy Morgan Research has a long history of involvement with Melbourne University –

- In the 1970's Australia's continuous Consumer Confidence Index was created as a collaboration between Melbourne University (Duncan Ironmonger) and Roy Morgan Research
- We worked with the Medical Faculty and Howard Florey and funded a Chair to study Children of High Intellectual Potential
- We are currently collaborating with Melbourne Institute to conduct Australia's largest longitudinal survey HILDA – Household Income Labour Dynamics Australia – pioneering new technology Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) to capture information at the doorstep
- In our mining interests we have collaborated with Prof Peter Scales, Head of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, in developing intellectual property associated with extracting gold from Pilbara ores.

In 1951 when Australians were asked whether “women should be able to wear shorts in the street when not at holiday resorts” 49% of Australians approved, 47% were opposed. The question tells as much as the answer about society in 1951.

In September 1956 Australia's favourite Saturday evening leisure pursuits were: radio (26%), movies (19%), reading (17%), visiting (14%), cards (8%) and dancing (5%).

Looking around I doubt that it's quite so representative of today's graduates!

The issues were about appropriate apparel, appropriate behaviour, radio listening and movies, and early women's issues.

Today some issues are the same - like equal pay for men and women - but the burning questions these days are about global issues:

- Terrorism and Global Security
- Global Economic / Financial Issues
- Climate change and the Environment

When Roy Morgan Research surveyed Australians in 2005 the biggest issue facing the world and Australians was Terrorism and Border Security.

When we surveyed Australians in 2008, the Environment had taken over in Australians hearts and minds as the biggest Global and Australian issue.

Today the Economy and Financial Concerns have overtaken the Environment and Global Discord.

There is no question Australians face an increasingly complex social environment.

Over the last decade we have seen dramatic changes in our society. The most significant changes include:

- The changing role of women in society - with implications everywhere, women in the workforce, the changing role of marriage and redefinition of the family
- Technology, Global communication and Internationalisation and the associated demand for better and quicker information - more global, more integrated, more relevant, more reliable and more timely sources of comprehensible data.
- Privatisation: The blurring between Public and Private accountability and Privatisation/Corporatisation is having ethical and equity considerations.

Australians today truly face an increasingly complex environment. Coinciding with this we have seen dramatic increases in education levels. Ten years ago 15% of Australians had a tertiary qualification now it's 25%.

Some years ago (more than quarter of a century) I was sitting here like you, wondering what the future held for me. Having studied Science – really mostly Psychology, Maths/Stats, and Environmental Studies – I had no idea.

Now running Australia's largest market research company, Roy Morgan Research, that employs over 1,000 people and operates in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, UK and Indonesia – I have had to learn about commerce and business – and of course I have to continually learn and understand about everyone else's business.

As a Director of a gold mining company, Haoma Mining NL, I have had to learn patience and persistence (waiting for the gold to 'come out') – corporate governance, law and how deals are *really* done.

And now as a Director of the Malthouse Theatre, I am learning about avant garde theatre, and the parallel world of 'Not for Profit' organisations.

I am constantly frustrated that there is so much I don't yet understand.

When I finished my Environmental Studies Degree I wondered whether I had learned anything of value or relevance. We studied Sociology, Economics, Politics, Environment (ecology) and Technology. I felt I knew very little about any of those.

I now realise that what I had learned was how to frame *any* problem – think about *any* issue from different angles – I'd learned the enormous power of information (and I also developed a healthy cynicism about information).

Today I believe that three things are crucial for any successful creative process or problem resolution:

- Information – the real facts!
- The ability to make sense of those facts (analysis, synthesis and interpretation) and
- New ways of thinking

As an aside the Global Financial Crisis had lots of new ways of thinking – but the real facts and solid analysis were lacking.

It is interesting that information or research is often used to stop things – just ask any 'creative' person in an advertising agency – but it should be used to free up and support the innovation process.

For instance, critical to Professor Alan Trounson's leading edge Stem Cell Research, was a legislative environment which allowed the research to continue.

On August 15, 2001, The Herald Sun reported a 'Phone-in poll' on the question "*Should scientists be able to use spare embryos for medical research?*" showing 70.2% "No", and 29.8% "Yes". A real showstopper!

Fortunately for Australia, the real facts were at hand. In fact most people in Australia approve of the controversial use of stem cells from human embryos in medical treatments, according to a special four country study by Roy Morgan International.

The study revealed most people in Australia (72%), New Zealand (66%), the US (63%), and UK (62%), approved of scientists using stem cells extracted from embryos to treat diseases such as alzheimer's, cancer and spinal injuries.

This was in line with findings from Roy Morgan Research tracking Australians' views on IVF and related issues since the early 1980s.

No amount of analysis, interpretation, and new ways of thinking would help Australia, if as a result of 'phoney' information the Government legislated against innovation.

As another example, in 2001 when Microsoft looked as if it might be broken up because it was seen as a monopoly, Bill Gates would have been more confident had he known how Americans really felt about Microsoft.

A Roy Morgan International study on the Microsoft break-up found 45% of Americans surveyed said the software company should **not** be broken up, 33% said it should and 22% were undecided.

When asked whether they believed consumers had been disadvantaged by Microsoft's monopoly of the operating systems market, 50% said "no", 33% said "yes" and 17% couldn't say.

History tells us The US Court of Appeals overturned the decision to split the company in two.

The people involved in the USA were surprised when we told them this about their own country. (We didn't leave Australia to find the facts! We telephoned into the USA from Melbourne.)

In business, and life, you are provided with information and data all the time – often it is misinformation and flawed data – you need to be able to tell the difference.

Many of you are about to begin your professional lives and it probably feels like you are stepping into a very uncertain world.

Maybe you are lamenting that you landed in the tough years – if only you'd been born a few years earlier you would have caught at least the tail end of the boom instead of a global financial crisis.

Let me just say 'Welcome' - now is truly as good a time as any.

Australia and the world need you.

Get started as soon as you can, anywhere doing anything, do it well, apply yourself honestly and enthusiastically and you will quickly rise to the point where you can *make a difference*.

How do I know? In our organisation there is always room for clever, honest, enthusiastic people.

More generally, you are clever, this is Australia, the time is one of globalisation, information, and it is 2009.

Of particular relevance here is the insight of Andrew Grove, President and CEO of Intel, in his book "Only the Paranoid Survive". He says

"There are moments in any business when massive change occurs, when all the rules of business shift fast, furiously and forever."

He calls such moments "*strategic inflection points*."

Such a strategic inflection point he warned could be set off by almost anything:

- mega competition

- a change in regulations
- even a seemingly modest change in technology.

In 1996 when Grove wrote of these things it was clear that we in Australia had all those and more. Since then, in the space of 13 years we have experienced even more changes than ever before.

The world, or at least the developed world, has entered a new era.

This new era is one which is defined by globalisation, technology and communication, elimination of traditional boundaries, and a strategic focus on the global market place. Only recently we have seen across the world the collapse of some of our largest institutions – indeed, our entire financial system.

It is in times like these, when a phenomenon like Microsoft or Google can emerge in a few short years and take us all by surprise and when a financial or banking crisis can effect the world, that a small country like Australia can grow, develop, take a leadership position, and that young bright people like you can make all the difference.

Grove pointed out that managed ‘wrongly’ a strategic inflection point can mean the end of the game. Managed ‘right,’ it can turn into a powerful force.

It is a fabulous time for you to be starting out.

The issues today are big, global.

No-one knows the answers.

The majority of people around the world believe ‘*globalisation brings more problems than it solves.*’ It is easy to feel overwhelmed...easy to feel small in the scheme of things...like you can’t make a difference.

I recall one of my very first projects at Roy Morgan Research – an employee survey for Western Mining – I arrived at a Western Mining mine site in WA and was overwhelmed by the scale and the sheer size of the equipment. I can still remember the big wheels – I simply couldn’t imagine how people could make a difference. A few moments into the first interview, I knew it was all about the people.

Who would have thought the MD of that huge company, Hugh Morgan would be an advisor to our gold mining company, but he is.

People make all the difference.

- The global financial crisis and series of major corporation failures – like the big equipment at the mine – was about *people*.
- The environmental problems are about people.
- Terrorism, border security and international unrest are about people.

As Charles Handy says in his book, *The New Alchemists*, about how visionary people make something out of nothing.

“The world needs new ideas, new products, new kinds of associations and institutions, new initiatives, new art and new designs. But these things seldom come from established organisation. They come from individuals – the new alchemists.”

The challenge for each of us who seek to lead is to find the facts and look for the alchemy, think like an alchemist.

And remember it doesn't matter where you start, it's what you *learn* and *do* from now – and the sooner you start the better.

Reference:

1. Roy Morgan survey “Women should be able to wear shorts in the street when not at holiday resorts”, 1951
http://www.roymorgan.com/roymorgan//library/w66835_3.JPG
[Opinions on Women in shorts](#)
2. Australia’s favourite Saturday evening leisure pursuits, September 1956
http://www.roymorgan.com/roymorgan//library/d53598_3.JPG
[Radio is top entertainment](#)
3. The biggest issue facing the world and Australians was Terrorism and Border Security, 2005
<http://www.roymorgan.com/news/polls/2005/3923/>
[Australians And Opinion Leaders Divided: Opinion Leaders Say The Economy, Australians Say Terrorism, War And Security Most Important.](#)
4. The Environment had taken over in Australians’ hearts and minds at the biggest global and Australian issue” 2008
<http://www.roymorgan.com/news/papers/2008/20080506/>
[Environment Most Important Issue For Australians - Presentation, By Michele Levine, CEO Roy Morgan Research, Future Summit 2008, May 12-13, Sydney](#)
5. History, Roy Morgan Research
http://www.roymorgan.com/news/history-of-roy-morgan-research/history-of-roy-morgan-research_home.cfm
6. Haoma Mining
<http://www.haoma.com.au/>
7. Malthouse Theatre
<http://www.malthousetheatre.com.au/>
8. Four country study by Roy Morgan International
<http://www.roymorgan.com/news/press-releases/2001/17/>
[Four-nation study finds support for controversial treatment: Most Approve use of Human Stem Cells](#)
9. Australians’ views on IVF and related issues since the early 1980s
<http://www.roymorgan.com/resources/pdf/papers/19861102.pdf>
[Australians' Attitudes Towards IVF: A comparison of the values of supporters and opponents](#)
10. Roy Morgan International study on the Microsoft break-up
<http://www.roymorgan.com/news/press-releases/2001/13/>
[Americans Say No to Microsoft Split](#)