

# HOME TRUTHS

---

**Australian Historical Association  
2024 Annual Conference**

**Flinders University  
1 – 4 July 2024**

**ABSTRACTS**

The abstracts, short biographies, and other details listed in this book were provided by the speakers. Please direct any queries to [aha2024@flinders.edu.au](mailto:aha2024@flinders.edu.au).

**Caroline Adams**

*University of South Australia*

## **History and Wellbeing – or how public history can potentially make you happier and healthier and save the government money!**

This paper will consider the link between public history and wellbeing. It will begin by looking at the social prescription model as practiced in Britain, exploring how involvement in community history and heritage projects can facilitate healing and promote wellbeing, particularly amongst the lonely and socially isolated. Using the 'Six routes into wellbeing through heritage' framework developed by Historic England, this paper it will highlight how participation and volunteering are vital components to wellbeing. It will also show how there is a positive social return on investment. Volunteering in the heritage/public history/health nexus will also be considered, including the economic value of volunteers and how volunteering improves social connectedness and sense of belonging and identity. Examples will be given of how those who have been directed to history/heritage groups via social prescription have continued as volunteers, again potentially building the capacity of these community organizations. This paper will give several examples of this from the UK, including Operational Nightingale (military) and Heritage Action Zones (including intergenerational groups). The author sees a particular space for Indigenous people to be more involved in shaping how local history and heritage is presented in Australia. The paper will conclude looking at the Sporting Memories program in Adelaide as an example of how sporting history and heritage sites can be used as tools in assisting in social engagement particularly in older men.

I am currently a lecturer in Public Health at the University of South Australia. I have a background in nursing, aged care and medical history. My PhD was in nursing in the Boer War. I also have a research interest in social proscription, church history and ageing and spirituality. I am an accredited Professional Historian and a trained Sporting Memories facilitator.

Caroline.Adams@unisa.edu.au

**Cate Cleo Alexander**  
*University of Toronto*

## **Content, Context, and Conspiracies: (Mis)representations of Public History on YouTube**

Historical conspiracies and misinformation thrive online — but what happens when the measures created to address them only amplify the problem? YouTube's context panels were introduced in 2018 as short blurbs extracted from 'reputable' third party sources (usually Wikipedia) that appear at the top of some searches and directly beneath certain videos. This presentation examines how these context panels for historical topics compound several problems: the biases of which topics are selected; the biases of the YouTube algorithm; and the biases of Wikipedia. When the context panels were introduced, journalists criticized them for pushing responsibility onto individual consumers and failing to address the root cause of algorithmic bias that help to propagate conspiracy videos. EU Disinfo Lab has also identified the strong American bias in the context panels that prioritize American concerns while allowing misinformation in other regions to thrive. Five years after the introduction of these context panels, I investigate them through the lens of public history, situating their impact on formations of cultural memory. My arguments are based on my digital ethnographic observations of the flaws in the automated system. The context panels are triggered algorithmically, using a strange and biased list of topics. For example, it flags Princess Diana but not the Holodomor. The Holocaust is flagged, but not Hitler, Nazis, or Neo-Nazis. Leveraging insights from platform studies and media theory, I examine the inconsistencies and flaws of this automated system and discuss its potential impacts on how audiences learn the 'truth' about specific historical events.

Cate Cleo Alexander (she/her) is a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto. Prior to U of T, Cate obtained a BA Combined Honours in History and Classics and a MA in Digital Humanities at the University of Alberta. Cate's doctoral research examines digital public history through feminist new-materialist and political economic theory in order to establish a better understanding of how platforms influence the production, distribution, and consumption of public history. When she is not studying cultural heritage, digital humanities, or media theory, Cate can be found reading trashy murder mysteries, watching long video essays on YouTube, or dancing (Lindy Hop, blues, fusion, balfolk, contra, west coast, etc.). Cate's research is generously funded by a SSHRC Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship — Doctoral (CGS-D) Award.

cate.alexander@mail.utoronto.ca

**Matthew Allen**

*University of New England*

### **Restrained Comportment: Public Drinking, Public Drunkenness and the Democratic Imaginary in Colonial New South Wales**

As New South Wales democratised, the public consumption of alcohol, and public behaviour under its' influence were each significant performances of democratic citizenship. Long before the colonists had the vote they asserted a fraternity of free British gentlemen through the ritual of toasting at so-called public dinners: elaborate, celebratory and drunken banquets, reported in the press. As they imagined themselves as a public, the capacity to drink like a gentlemen – in manly quantities but with proper restraint and self-control – symbolised agency, while participating in loyal toasts legitimated their campaign for British political rights. Meanwhile arrest for public drunkenness became the leading means of policing public order, and arrested drunkards were publicly shamed by listing their names in the press. Female drinking in public became increasingly scandalous and supplying alcohol to Aboriginal people was prohibited. Only white men were responsible enough to drink in public, and their drinking was strictly policed, marking the boundaries of respectable conduct. In this paper, I argue that alcohol had an important symbolic role in the democratising colony as a test of responsible citizenship. I use the concept of restrained comportment – by which I mean the successful performance of proper behaviour regardless of intoxication – to help explain how the colonial public imagined its' democracy. I argue that performing restraint, both through respectable drinking, and performative temperance, was a crucial assertion of the capacity for self-government; while simultaneously drunkenness symbolised the limits of citizenship.

Dr Matthew Allen is a Senior Lecturer in Historical Criminology at the University of New England. His research is concentrated on early New South Wales and its unique transition from a penal colony to a settler colonial democracy. Much of his work has focussed on the history of alcohol and using both drinking rituals and the social control of drinking as a means to understand the political imaginary that underlay this transformation. He has just completed his first monograph, entitled *Drink and Democracy: Alcohol and the Political Imaginary in Colonial New South Wales, 1788–1856*, currently under review with McGill-Queens University Press.

matthew.allen@une.edu.au

**Bridget Andresen**

*University of Queensland*

### **Rape trials in Post-war Queensland**

The issue of sexual violence has arguably never been more visible in global society than it is today. Historical investigations into this topic are part of a fast-growing field dedicated to revealing long-standing issues in the structures of policing and the criminal justice system, as well as the impact of reductive and stereotyped ideas about sexual violence on cases, victims, and defendants. This paper presents key findings from an investigation into adult rape trials in post-war Queensland, 1945–1955. Though Queensland's legislation and justice system did not widely differ from other Australian jurisdictions, a close reading of court material has highlighted the unique Queensland experience of the policing and prosecution process. Stereotypes about sexual violence rendered many victims silent in the criminal justice system, with cases in this sample only reflective of a particular 'type' of rape. The vast geography of the state had a direct impact on investigations in a number of ways, including delaying trials which were scheduled to take place outside of a metropolitan centre, and there were accessibility issues regarding skilled police and medical professionals. Police conducted only very brief investigations into complaints before placing charges, and cases were finalised in a fraction of the time they are today.

Bridget is a PhD Candidate in the final year of her candidature at the University of Queensland. She is currently undertaking placement at the not-for-profit feminist organisation, Share the Dignity, and has previously worked as part of the editorial collective for Lilith Journal. Her research is on historical rape trials in Queensland, and she is particularly interested in uncovering the impact of gendered and racialised stereotypes on policing and prosecution processes.

b.andresen@uqconnect.edu.au

**Kate Ariotti**

*University of Queensland*

## **The Treatment of Australia's Vietnam War Dead: Towards a History of the Australian War Corpse**

Sixty thousand Australian military personnel served in Vietnam from the middle of 1962 until the end of the Australian commitment in January 1973. Some 500, mainly from the Army, died. While the impetus to commemorate the dead is strong, particularly in more recent times, there has been far less attention paid to the tangible outcome of these deaths – the corpse – and to what happened to the bodies of those who died. This paper draws on government papers, military records, and personal testimony to canvass the treatment of Australia's Vietnam War dead. It explains how the drastic shifts in Australian repatriation policy during the 1960s and the adoption of (and integration within) American military mortuary processes facilitated a new way of handling Australian remains that transformed Australian wartime mourning practices. Examining the complex political, logistical, scientific and emotional work that shaped the treatment of the dead in Vietnam reveals much about changing Australian attitudes to war in this era, and furthers our understanding of this significant but often obscured aspect (or 'home truth') of the reality of war more broadly.

Dr Kate Ariotti is an ARC DECRA Senior Research Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry at the University of Queensland. Kate is a specialist in Australian war history: she is working on a history of the Australian war corpse and has published on the treatment of Australian war dead, the experiences of Australian POWs, and the ways in which Australians have remembered and commemorated wars. Her first book, 'Captive Anzacs: Australian POWs of the Ottomans during the First World War', was shortlisted for the Australian War Memorial's inaugural Les Carlyon Literary Prize. Before commencing her position at the University of Queensland in 2022, Kate worked in the Military History Section of the Australian War Memorial and most recently as Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Newcastle.

k.ariotti@uq.edu.au

**Michelle Arrow**

*Macquarie University*

**'I will fight the monster with a mother's fury': Understanding schizophrenia in letters to Anne Deveson, 1987–95**

Released in 1991, Anne Deveson's powerful memoir *Tell Me I'm Here* remains a landmark examination of the experience of mental illness in Australia. Deveson offered a candid account of her eldest son Jonathon's experience with schizophrenia, her family's attempts to weather the storms of his illness, and her research into the condition. The book was influential in reshaping community understandings of schizophrenia in Australia in the 1990s. Deveson's public narrative about her son's illness provoked many people to write to her with their own stories of mental illness. These stories revealed people's experiences of giving care outside formal medical settings, particularly within the family, and the difficulties accessing support for mentally ill people, especially in the context of the deinstitutionalisation of mental health care in the last quarter of the twentieth century. They also offered insights into contemporary attitudes towards schizophrenia, and reflections on motherhood in an era of rapid transformation of Australian families. This paper will examine this correspondence in the context of Deveson's published work, to speculate on how a critical analysis of this material can help us understand the history of mental illness in the very recent past.

Michelle Arrow is professor in Modern History at Macquarie University. She is the author of three books, including *Friday on Our Minds: Popular Culture in Australia Since 1945* (2009) and *The Seventies: The Personal, the Political and the Making of Modern Australia* (2019), which was awarded the 2020 Ernest Scott Prize for history.

Michelle.Arrow@mq.edu.au

**Matthew Bailey**

*Macquarie University*

**'The vast economy of time': Australian department stores, mass production and environmental history**

In November 1922, Farmers' department store in Sydney held an exhibition entitled 'Australian Timbers' in its city exhibition hall. An accompanying pamphlet called for a greater understanding of Australia's "forest wealth". Lamenting the decline of available lumber, its authors declared money "powerless to buy a fully grown tree" because it could not compress the century or more required to grow it. Their recognition of the latent value contained in this natural asset prefigured one of William Cronon's arguments in *Nature's Metropolis*: the value created by "autonomous ecological processes" was a critical input into capital accumulation for those harvesting "first nature". Department stores were products of industrialisation and urbanisation. However, there have been limited connections made between their operations and the natural environment from which all their products ultimately derived. The industrial revolution enabled "stored sunshine", to draw on Cronon's phrase, to be converted on mass-scale into ready-to-wear garments and off-the-shelf products. Steam power facilitated the transport of primary resources and finished products across oceans and countryside. From the late nineteenth-century, Australia's largest urban department stores vertically integrated. Their huge manufacturing enterprises transformed domestic primary resources into finished goods, including timber furniture. Marketers for Anthony Hordern's described this mechanised production as a "vast economy of time", but the phrase could equally be applied to the value accumulated in "first nature". This paper outlines the connective relationship between Australian department stores and the environment, and considers some possibilities raised by situating retail history within the broader context of environmental history.

Matthew Bailey is one of Australia's leading retail historians. His book, *Managing the Marketplace: Reinventing Shopping Centres in Post-War Australia* (Routledge, 2020) is the first book on the subject, and one of the few to comprehensively examine Australian retail history. Dr Bailey has published widely on retail and retail property history, including in leading international and Australian journals such as *Urban History*, *Enterprise & Society*, *Australian Economic History Review*, *Journal of Australian Studies*, *History Australia*, and the *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*.

matthew.bailey@mq.edu.au



**Barbara Baird**

*Flinders University*

### **Contested marriage memories: The effects of political organisation and strategy in the mainstream campaign for marriage equality in Australia**

As soon as the parliament voted in December 2017 to establish marriage equality in Australia a range of competing claims to the truth of the marriage campaign and its 'success' started to emerge. The campaign had begun in 2004 when LGBTIQ+ activists responded to the Howard government's amendment to The Marriage Act 1961. It came to a climax when a national ballot on marriage reform was conducted in the lead up to the vote. Tasmanian gay activist Rodney Croome published the first of series of articles critical of the campaign in early 2018. Two of the leaders of Australian Marriage Equality (AME), which lead the campaign, Shirleene Robinson and Alex Greenwich, published a more or less official version later that year and a collection of about fifty short pieces, many critical of the campaign and indeed the desire for marriage, co-edited by trans and non-binary scholars Quinn Eades and Son Vivienne, appeared shortly afterward. In 2019 GetUp's Sally Rugg, who had been at the centre of the campaign, published a frank insider's view. This paper canvasses the range of accounts of the marriage campaign and the 'home truths' told by First Nations and other people of colour, trans, gender non-conforming and disabled folk, those un-enamoured by marriage, and others simply critical of AME's strategies. It includes focus on the style and methods of organisation employed by AME, common across many contemporary social movements, to facilitate questions about the effects of centralised, digital and often feel-good campaigning.

Barbara Baird is an Associate Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at Flinders University, an institution built on the unceded land of Kurna people. Her research concerns C20th and C21st Australian histories of sexuality and gender with particular focus on abortion and LGBTIQ+ issues, and their shaping by the politics of race and nation. She is author of *Abortion Care is Health Care* (MUP 2023) and co-author, with Leigh Boucher, Michelle Arrow and Robert Reynolds, of the forthcoming *Personal Politics : Sexuality and the Remaking of Citizenship in Australia* (Monash Uni Press, 2024). She is the co-convenor of the SA Abortion Action Coalition (saaac).

barbara.baird@flinders.edu.au

Jacquelyn Baker  
*Deakin University*

**'WE ARE NICE, WE ARE FUN, WE ARE RUN on a collective basis': Grassroots Women's Sport and the Feminist Cultural Renaissance, 1980s**

In 2004, Susan Magarey drew our attention to the way that cultural disruption and cultural transformation were key aspects of women's liberation activism. Coined the 'feminist cultural renaissance', Magarey contended that women's liberationists achieved their goals through cultural practices, such as writing and publishing; plays and theatre; and music and radio programs. This was a pivotal moment in women's liberation historiography and historians of second-wave feminism in Australia have since delved deeper into the cultural pursuits of feminists. However, there is one area of feminist cultural disruption and transformation that has remained largely overlooked—that is, women's sport. This paper focuses on grassroots women's sport in Melbourne in the 1980s. Drawing on feminist newsletters, I examine accounts written by lesbian feminists to consider how grassroots women's sport was an important part of the feminist cultural renaissance—particularly in the way that they attempted to disrupt the 'typical Aussie-het' masculine sporting culture. In addition, I argue that it was crucial in the turn toward cultural feminism as women's sport, particularly for lesbian feminists, was seen as a practice that helped to strengthen a sense of community and promote self-assurance as well as a way to 'show pride to a heterosexual society'. Ultimately, by examining this overlooked aspect of women's liberation and lesbian feminist grassroots activism, we can better understand the positive impact of women and gender diverse athletes today.

Dr Jacquelyn Baker has a PhD that traces women's liberation in Melbourne over time and space. More broadly, her research interests include: feminism, gender, sexuality, place and space, cultural and social groups and 20th century Australian history. She is the general editor of *Australian Policy and History* and the Regional Victorian Representative for the Australian Women's History Network. Outside of academia, Jacquelyn works as a Heritage Services Officer at Kim barne thaliyu / Geelong Heritage Centre where she assists visitors with family, property and local history research.

[jacquelyn.baker@deakin.edu.au](mailto:jacquelyn.baker@deakin.edu.au)

**Corinne Ball**

*History Trust of South Australia*

### **'For God's sake don't send me back there!' The experiences of a female Convicted Inebriate, 1913–23**

In late nineteenth-century Britain and her colonies, medical science began to conceptualise problem drinking as a disease, rather than as a sin or moral failing. At the same time, developments in criminology enabled the categorisation of 'habitual' offenders, who merited extreme supervision, or even total exclusion from society. In South Australia, as elsewhere, these theories converged in the establishment of state-sponsored Inebriate Institutions, often figured as 'Homes' or 'Retreats'. From 1913 Adelaide and Gladstone gaols were gazetted as Institutions, and lengthy sentences imposed upon a new type of inmate: the Convicted Inebriate. Female alcoholics, doubly deviant for their offences both legal and moral, were particularly reviled: Mabel Worley was one of these unfortunates. As Gladstone Institution's female inmate #2 Mabel was a guinea pig under the new regime, enduring nearly a decade as a Convicted Inebriate. She repeatedly pleaded in court not to be returned to the Inebriate Home, where despite lofty ideals of reform and treatment, inmates suffered under the usual penal system and worse. This paper explores how the changing discourse around alcoholism affected Mabel, and how the designation of Convicted Inebriate shaped her experiences. It examines how Inebriates were managed and monitored by South Australia's police, courts, charities, and medical professionals (inside and outside the Home), and uncovers the resistance and evasion strategies Mabel employed. Finally, it highlights the woman behind the designation, rereading official records to find evidence of Mabel's emotional and social life during her time as an Inebriate and beyond, when home, family, and hope seemed unobtainable.

Corinne is passionate about South Australian women's history, and keenly interested in uncovering and sharing previously hidden, marginalised, or untold lives and stories. Her Honours thesis (Deakin University) was on the impact of the Nursing Mother's Association in South Australia in the 1970s, and she also holds a MA in Museum Studies and Cultural Heritage. Since 2013 Corinne has been a curator at the History Trust of South Australia, where she has worked solo and with many co-creators to deliver exhibitions, tours, talks, and digital content. Corinne's research interests include South Australian history, disability, migration, and Adelaide's former workhouse, the Destitute Asylum. She is the author of the award-winning biography, 'Three-ring circus', which reveals the tragic, mysterious, and dramatic life of South Australian woman, Mabel Worley.

[cball@history.sa.gov.au](mailto:cball@history.sa.gov.au)

**Andrea Ballesteros Danel**

*Independent Scholar*

### **Joaquín Martínez de Zúñiga's nineteenth-century ideas about trans-Pacific contact**

Joaquín Martínez de Zúñiga (1760–1818) was one of the earliest scholars to propose a trans-Pacific contact theory in his *Historia de las Islas Philipinas* (1803). Although earlier writers pondered on similar ideas, his 1803 publication contains the earliest-known theory establishing linguistic comparisons between the Mapuche language of Chile and Tagalog (the Philippines), his ideas and evidence have not been fully explored. The current paper argues that while Martínez de Zúñiga's ideas were novel and set some scientific grounds for one of the most resilient debates in the history of archaeology, his evidence was scarce. Furthermore, his attribution as one of the earliest individuals to propose a trans-Pacific contact theory is arguably inaccurate, as similar ideas were pondered as early as the sixteenth century. This paper also investigates supporting and opposing ideas proposed by Martínez de Zúñiga and his contemporaries, which were shaped by a colonial background and a demonological discourse. These scholars' hypotheses were predominantly based on linguistic and anthropological grounds, on the direction of sea currents and winds, and on the numerous islands across the Pacific that could facilitate long-distance voyages. Similar ideas continue to feed into the pre-Columbian trans-Pacific contact debate today.

Dr. Andrea Ballesteros Danel completed her PhD at The Australian National University in 2020. Her thesis focused on the history of ideas about pre-Columbian trans-Pacific contact between the Americas and Oceania. Her research was part of the 'Collective Biography of Archaeology in the Pacific' (CBAP) project, a five-year project funded by the Australian Research Council through its Laureate Fellowship grant scheme and by the Australian National University. She recently concluded her 2-year term as Resident Adjunct at the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University.

andreaballes@yahoo.com

**Lorina Barker**

*University of New England*

With Taragara Researchers, Eliza Kent, Michael Brogan, Cultural Knowledge Holders and Elders from the Corner Country

This hybrid presentation will be co-presented with Taragara Researchers, Dr Eliza Kent, Mr Michael Brogan and Cultural Knowledge Holders/Elders using cultural methodologies co-designed with Cultural Knowledge Holders/Elders as part of the ARC funded research project, Songlines of Country, and the creative research and exhibition project, Looking Through Windows. We will briefly explain each project, and our experiences in transforming research methodologies into cultural methodologies, what we refer to as 'light-bulb moments', and the process of working from an Aboriginal centred worldview. Using our cultural methodology, Online and OnCountry we invite you to sit at our virtual campfire (through Zoom), to listen to the deep knowledge, history and culture of the Mura (Songlines), and how it is culturally translated and transferred through cultural expressions of oration, song, dance and art and included in creative projects like Looking Through Windows. Through the Mura you will come to learn the true nature of the deep history of this continent – it is Everything, Everywhere and time is now and all at once, and to know and experience it is to awaken from the colonised slumber, to see the Aboriginal world that surrounds you.

Dr Lorina L. Barker is a Wangkumara/Muruwari oral historian and artist. She is a descendant of the Adnyamathanha (Flinders Rangers SA), Kooma and Kunja (southwest QLD), Barkindji (northwest NSW) and the Wiradjuri (Bogan River central west NSW). Dr Eliza Kent is a researcher working with Taragara Aboriginal Corporation as part of Taragara Research at the University of New England. She has a PhD in History from the University of Melbourne and has published widely on early modern European history. Michael Brogan is a Badtjala scholar, educator and creative arts practitioner working inside and outside the classroom through digital interfaces and multimedia platforms to deliver community-centred projects to access digital resources and cultural material housed within collecting institutions. Together they, with Cultural Knowledge Holders and Elders from the Corner Country – the Adnyamathanha (Flinders Ranges SA), Wangkumara (Far western NSW), Barkindji, Ngemba, Muruwari (northwest NSW and southwest QLD) – work online and InCountry on Aboriginal-led, designed, managed and delivered research and creative projects and define best practice for working with Aboriginal communities. Taragara Researchers use multimedia as part of their research and creative projects to transfer knowledge, history and culture onto the next generation in mediums that they use and are familiar with such as film, short stories, spoken word, theatre and exhibitions.

lbarker3@une.edu.au

**Samuel Bashfield**

*University of Melbourne*

## **Seabed Critical Infrastructure and Seabed Warfare since the mid-1800s**

Since telegraph cables began to be laid on the seabed in the mid-1800s, these critical infrastructures have played a crucial role in geopolitics and conflict. The ability to communicate in real time across seascapes transformed society, and a state's ability to exercise power. Seabed connections (not only data but also electricity and gas) are still important critical infrastructures, and are prime targets in times of geopolitical tension and conflict. For example, at the outset of the First World War, Britain swiftly severed German telegraph cables, and Germany's ill-fated attempt at destroying the telegraph cable landing station on Cocos (Keeling) Island resulted in the Royal Australian Navy's first engagement. This paper illuminates how Australia, Britain and the United States conceived of 'sovereign' seabed infrastructure (including in international waters), as well as how these infrastructures were controlled, and by whom, plus how these infrastructures enabled power accumulation. The paper also details how these governments planned to disrupt enemy seabed critical infrastructure in wartime or times of heightened geopolitical tension, as well as how seabed critical infrastructure was protected. This paper, which the author plans to develop into a solo-authored monograph, presents early findings for peer feedback, to refine the monograph concept.

Samuel Bashfield is defence researcher on the Australia India Institute's Defence Program at the University of Melbourne. Sam's research interests include (modern and Cold War-era) Indo-Pacific security, defence and foreign policy, Indo-Pacific security architecture, maritime security, nuclear issues and technology governance. He is also PhD candidate at the Australian National University's National Security College. His thesis examines the British Indian Ocean Territory's Cold War history, focussing on Britain's withdrawal 'East of Suez' and the Anglo-US special relationship. He has words in range of academic and non-academic outlets, including the International History Review, Journal of the Indian Ocean Region, the German Law Journal, Al Jazeera Opinion, The Australian and The Interpreter. Sam has worked previously at the University of Sydney, the Australian National University, Australia's Attorney General's Department, and has interned at the Jakarta Globe newspaper in Indonesia.

sam.bashfield@unimelb.edu.au

**Nancy Bassett**

*Monash University*

## **Legitimisation of Indigenous oral history and the advantages and challenges of Artificial Intelligence**

The legitimisation of indigenous oral history, in particular, discussing the colonised perspectives of documented indigenous history in the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand. Highlighting the challenges and tensions in legitimising oral history as a valuable historical resource. Exploring the importance and value of indigenous knowledge keepers their role in providing historical evidence in land claims and land development. Further discussing the positives and negative impact/s of Artificial Intelligence in documenting indigenous oral history.

Ethnographer, Mining Consultant, mother of 8 children and a PhD Research Candidate. Previously I have provided pro bono support to Safe Steps, Australian Red Cross and currently the Co-Founder and Chairperson of the Australian Charity, the To Be Loved Network [www.tobeloved.org.au](http://www.tobeloved.org.au). I was awarded a Bachelor of Education at Flinders University in 1992. I am undertaking a Research PhD at Monash University and currently I am in the process of preparing for my PhD mid-candidature presentation later this year. My thesis topic:

'Ngaruahine Maori elders as catalysts for cultural revitalisation of tikanga, ancestral knowledge, oral stories and the importance of mana, hierarchy and symbolism of women to develop revitalised tikanga based preventative whanau violence programs'. My research involves interviewing the senior Elders of my tribe listening, recording and documenting their oral stories and history to revitalise lost culture.

nancy.bassett@monash.edu

**Jill Beard**

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

**At home in the Commonwealth? Indian independence and Australian insecurity in their bilateral relationship 1947–57**

The success of independence movements, and rapid decolonisation in the wake of World War II disrupted the idea of the British Commonwealth as 'home' for emerging nations such as India. At the same time, Australia also had cause to reconsider how effectively that notion served its interests – especially in terms of regional security. These reconsiderations of the idea of 'home' informed the ways in which Australia developed fresh relationships with its newly independent, regional neighbours. This paper explores the rationale for Australia's efforts to have India remain in the British Commonwealth, the effects those efforts had on emerging bilateral relations, and the implications for Australia's efforts to develop regional security relationships far from 'home'.

Jill Beard is a historian at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, working on the Documents in Australian Foreign Policy series. She is currently working on a documentary history of Australia's relations with India and Pakistan from 1947–1972.

Jillian.Beard@dfat.gov.au



**Melissa Bellanta**

*Australian Catholic University*

### **Con-Men and Consumption in Interwar Australia: The Case of Louis Stirling**

The con-man and thief Louis Stirling avoided being pinned down to anything resembling a home truth in interwar Australia. Jailed for armed robbery in Sydney in 1924, he had previously been a “shoddy dropper” in Melbourne – an itinerant seller of men’s suitings, often acting on false pretences – although the organised criminal Squizzy Taylor once claimed that Stirling was one of his main adversaries. In the 1930s, Stirling turned up in Brisbane, where he was tried after selling shares in an apocryphal petroleum-tech company. Though few concrete facts are known about Stirling, the deceptions surrounding this allegedly London-born Jewish migrant reveal certain “truths” about interwar-era Australian society. One revelation relates to the degree to which social concerns about trickery proliferated after the First World War – due, among other things, to increasingly aggressive methods of salespersonship and marketing adopted in the commercial sphere. Further insights include the allure of fashionable consumption for men as well as women, the struggle to participate in this consumption by members of the working- and lower-middle classes, and the subterfuge of white heteromasculine journalists trying to conceal their complex attractions to glamorously-clad non-Anglo men.

Melissa Bellanta is an Associate Professor of Modern History at the Australian Catholic University. As a social and cultural historian, her work explores masculinities, fashion, street culture and popular entertainments in Australia and the Anglophone world. She recently completed a research fellowship exploring queer dress in late twentieth-century Australia at the Powerhouse Museum and is chief investigator of the ARC Discovery Project ‘Men’s Dress in Twentieth-Century Australia: Masculinity, Fashion, Social Change’.

melissa.bellanta@acu.edu.au

**Oleg Beyda**

*University of Melbourne*

### **From Siege to Australia: The Baskakov–Bogachev Family Migration Route**

This paper will shed the light on the family history of the Baskakov–Bogachevs, clear-cut representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia who survived the Stalinist terror, the German occupation of World War Two, and managed not to perish in exile. Relying on their professional acumen and not engaging in politically active collaboration, for two years they were trapped in Pushkin, right near the Leningrad blockade. After months of daily hardships, deadly hunger, the German terror, and the Soviet bombardments, the family followed a path of semi-forced displacement to Germany, where it was time to wear another mask, this time of a Displaced Person. Finally, the family found salvation in Australia. Answering a call from an émigré newspaper to preserve the vanishing memory of Russia in exile, the mother Evdokiia took to penning the crucial events of their lives mangled by the global humanitarian catastrophes of the last century. The given paper will ponder over the questions of how typical this family experience was, and whether it can be extrapolated as an example of silent survival before and after the migration.

Dr Oleg Beyda is the Hansen Lecturer in Russian History at the University of Melbourne. He is a multi-lingual historian focusing on diaspora studies (the first and second waves of migration from Russia after 1917) and the Second World War in Eastern Europe. He has authored multiple publications on military and civil collaboration in Europe during the Second World War, Russian emigration, and the German–Soviet War, including those for Cambridge University Press (2017), European University of Saint Petersburg (2018), Palgrave Macmillan (2020), George Washington University (2021), and Central European University Press (2024). Dr Beyda has extensive teaching experience in Soviet history, the historiography of Stalinism, the history of the world since 1750, and the global history of World War Two

[oleg.beyda@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:oleg.beyda@unimelb.edu.au)

**Katherine Biber**

*University of Technology Sydney*

### **Redeeming Jimmy Governor: the missionary and the outlaw**

On the eve of Australia's Federation celebrations in January 1901, the outlaw Jimmy Governor spent six weeks in the condemned cell in Sydney's Darlinghurst Gaol. A Wiradjuri and Wonnarua man responsible for the axe-murders of nine white settlers, mostly women and children, Governor had been convicted of murder and was waiting for the hangman. In that time, he received 23 visits from Retta Dixon, a 22-year-old white faith missionary who lived in the mission house in La Prouse. Determined to convert and redeem Jimmy Governor, Retta Dixon was determined to bring Christ into the lives of all Aboriginal people. She left unpublished records of their fellowship together, and later delivered public lectures titled 'Jimmy Governor as the Chief of Sinners'. Later, through her organisation, the Aborigines Inland Mission (AIM), Retta Dixon would become the most important and influential Christian missionary in Australia in the first half of the 20th century. Retta Dixon House, in Darwin, operated by AIM, would be implicated in neglect, harm and violation in the testimony of survivors of the Stolen Generations and also at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The removal of Aboriginal children from their families, and their assimilation into the labour force, was a key policy in Australian nation-making. Retta Dixon's own entanglement in this policy is now a matter of record. This paper shows that her earliest ministrations, in Jimmy Governor's condemned cell, are not irrelevant nor unconnected. It reveals the entanglement of law, incarceration and religion in Australian nation-making through the crimes and punishment of Jimmy Governor.

NOTE: I would be happy to be included in either the First Nations History or the ANZLHS stream.

Katherine Biber is a legal scholar, criminologist and historian and Professor of Law at the University of Technology Sydney. She is the author of *In Crime's Archive: The cultural afterlife of evidence* (2018) and *Captive Images: Race, Crime, Photography* (2007). She is currently writing a book about Australia's last proclaimed outlaws, Jimmy and Joe Governor. Her podcast trilogy, *The Last Outlaws* <https://thelastoutlaws.com.au/> won Australian Podcast of the Year, Best History Podcast (AusPod awards), the NSW Premier's History Award (Digital History), and the Australian Legal Research Award. She is Co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Crime Media Culture*. Her next project, a collaboration, will be on the journeys and legacies of European Émigré Lawyers in Australia.

Katherine.Biber@uts.edu.au

**Max Billington**

*Deakin University*

### **Manufacturing History: British nuclear weapons testing and the 'inconvenient' nuclear veteran**

Between 1952 and 1957, Australia played host to five major tests of nuclear weapons designed, built and owned by the British government. Their detonation at the Monte Bello Islands north of Western Australia and at Emu Field and Maralinga in South Australia brought nuclear weapons to the doorstep of a population who had previously only encountered them through media coverage of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Histories of the British testing have repeatedly emphasised the Australian government's desire to acquire a sovereign nuclear arsenal, as well as the commitment of Australia and Britain to innovate themselves into a place of safety in the Cold War world. This paper questions the high-political, absolutist nature of this narrative, which ignores the claims of human injury and environmental degradation raised by Australian servicemen who participated in the tests. The paper instead suggests that the history of British nuclear weapons testing in Australia is, in reality, one of multiple and conflicting 'truths' about the meaning and nature of radical weapons experiments. Through an examination of the 'nuclear discourses' organised within the Australian public sphere at the time of British testing, the paper demonstrates how the painful memories associated with the testing have been suppressed within official histories for the purpose of legitimising the tests' occurrence and limiting public doubt in their safety. The paper concludes by asking how histories such as that of nuclear testing can be told in the light of the multiple 'truths' that exist within a public sphere.

Max Billington is a PhD Candidate (History) at Deakin University and a History Honours (First-Class) graduate from the University of Melbourne. Their research interests include Second World War and Cold War Australian military strategy and foreign policy. Their thesis concerns the history of British nuclear testing in Australia, focusing on Australian veterans' struggle for legal recognition of injuries sustained during deployment at nuclear testing ranges. They have previously had work published by the Australian War Memorial and are the 2023 recipient of the Royal Air Force Museum's Undergraduate Prize.

hbillington09@gmail.com

**Karen Bird**

*Flinders University*

With Meggie Hutchison, *UNSW Canberra*

**The Historical Contingency of Veteran Suicide: WWI veterans and their post-war experiences in Australia, 1919–45**

Investigating the long history of veteran suicide is critical in identifying the construction of the problem and how it has been approached and understood in the past. Focusing on select case studies from the Queensland archives, this paper analyses the post-war experiences of veterans as they navigated civilian life after returning from war. It explores how veterans' pre-war circumstances, wartime service, transition from the military, access to support after separation and social networks, fundamentally shaped their post-war experiences. In doing so, the paper highlights that veteran suicide has been a persistent and significant problem in Australia for over a century and argues that an understanding of its historical dimensions is crucial if we are to address and prevent this problem into the future.

Karen is an Intellectual Historian and Post Doctoral Fellow at Flinders University and UNSW currently contributing to an ARC project which is investigating "Veteran Suicide from 1914 until the present". Karen is a Pro-Bono Advocate for Australian Defence Force Members, Veterans, and their Families, a contributor to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, Board Member/Deputy Chair of the National Advisory Committee, DVA/Open Arms, and a Committee Member at the AWM for the "Sufferings of War & Service Memorial".

karen.bird@flinders.edu.au

**George Bishi**

*University of the Free State*

**'The white hordes from the west': Australian media representations of white Rhodesian immigrants during Zimbabwe's decolonisation, 1960s to late 1970s**

This study examines how the media framed, reported, and depicted white migration from Rhodesia. Between the 1960s and 1970s, many white settlers departed Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) due to political and economic uncertainty, as well as the liberation struggle of the 1970s. This explores the different perspectives that Australian newspapers brought towards the immigration of white Rhodesia settlers to Australia. It contends that Australia's ambiguous and contradictory policy towards Rhodesia's decolonization was mirrored in the manner in which Australian newspapers portrayed news of white Rhodesian immigrants in Australia. In particular, this research explores the status of Rhodesian immigrants as 'white refugees' in both media and policymaking discourse in the era of the decolonisation in Africa.

George Bishi a postdoctoral fellow in the ISG, where he earned his PhD in 2019. His research interests on Rhodesia, settler colonialism, white and British identities, decolonisation, chieftainships, archives, and communities on the margins of the state. Some of his publications cover issues such as immigration in Southern Rhodesia, whiteness and naming politics, anti-fascism in Southern Rhodesia, archives and chieftainships, archivists, and researchers.

georgebishie@gmail.com

**Catherine Bishop**  
*Macquarie University*

### **A Woman's Place is in the Home ... True?**

Domesticity and dependence have long been tropes associated with women in Australia's history. The rhetoric around a 'woman's place' being in the domestic sphere has always carried more weight than the reality, cropping up regularly in both casual and academic discourse. But scratch the surface of the historical record and you can find women breaking out of kitchen and financial dependence and into the bold brave world of money-making. This paper introduces some preliminary findings of my current research project, *Gendered Enterprise: Australian Businesswomen Since 1880*, using a variety of sources from census statistics and business directories to *Australian Women's Weekly* features and oral history interviews.

Dr Catherine Bishop holds a DECRA postdoctoral fellowship at Macquarie University, researching a history of Australian businesswomen since 1880. She is also a CI on the ARC Discovery project 'Shop Talk'. Her first book, *Minding Her Own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney* (NewSouth, 2015), won the 2016 Ashurst Business Literature Prize. She is also the author of *Women Mean Business: Colonial Businesswomen in New Zealand* (Otago University Press, 2019) and *Too Much Cabbage and Jesus Christ: Australia's 'Mission Girl' Annie Lock* (Wakefield, 2021). With Jennifer Aston, she co-edited *Female Entrepreneurs in the Long Nineteenth Century: A Global Perspective* (Palgrave, 2020). Australian Scholarly Publishing will publish *The World We Want: The New York Herald Tribune World Youth Forum and the Cold War Teenager* in late 2024.

catherine.bishop@mq.edu.au

**Joshua Black**

*Australian National University, Whitlam Institute at WSU, and Australian Historical Association*

### **Archives of Secrecy and Surveillance: Sir John Kerr, Gough Whitlam and Memoirs of the Dismissal**

When the Governor-General Sir John Kerr dismissed the Whitlam Government in November 1975, he replaced a political and constitutional crisis with an autobiographical and epistemological one. In the years after the crisis, Kerr and Whitlam harvested records and generated evidence with which to furnish their retrospective accounts about the momentous events. Kerr's autobiography *Matters for Judgment* was published in 1978, and Whitlam's riposte, *The Truth of the Matter* followed two months later. Both were substantial undertakings, and both had an eye to posterity as well as to the business of contemporary persuasion. In this paper, I discuss the weaponisation of archives and archival knowledge in that personalised, but nationally significant, history-making contest. *Matters for Judgment* depended on an archive (which included the Palace Letters) defined by its secrecy and privilege. *The Truth of the Matter* depended on records that amounted to a surveillance of Kerr, but which were fundamentally democratic in nature. Both understood their archive as a source of powerful home truths on which to draw, especially at one another's expense. The nature of these archives and the terms of their existence at the time is important, because as Kirsty Reid and Fiona Paisley have argued, '[w]ho holds the keys to the archive continues to have personal as well as social, cultural and political significance'. In this paper, I argue that the archives on which Kerr and Whitlam depended had a significant influence on the cultural and political functions and possibilities of their political memoirs.

Dr Joshua Black is a historian of Australian political culture based at the Australian National University. Josh has published his research in a variety of scholarly journals, and in 2021 he co-edited a special issue of the *Australian Journal of Biography and History* with Dr Stephen Wilks. He has served as treasurer of the Canberra branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, and as the Postgraduate Representative for the Australian Historical Association (AHA). Since 2023 he has worked as the AHA's Administrative Officer. He is also a member of the Editorial Board of *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vice-President of the Friends of Noel Butlin Archives Centre, and a Palace Letters Fellow with the Whitlam Institute at WSU.

Joshua.Black@anu.edu.au



**Rachel Bleeze**

*University of Adelaide*

Fostering historical consciousness and empathy in lower secondary students: A comparative study of history curricula in Australia and Singapore

History curriculum, in the twenty-first century, needs to develop more relevant, student-centred learning based on critical thinking and intercultural understanding. Such learning processes underpin the skills of historical inquiry and historical literacy, which enable students to become active learners of history. The concept of historical literacy can be seen as the personal individual student complement to historical inquiry as a teaching approach and can foster students' personal attitudes toward history. This can subsequently promote the likes of empathy in the form of a deeper understanding of other individuals and groups in society, which many view as a twenty-first century skill. This paper sets out to compare, to what extent and how, history curricula developed in Australia and Singapore have helped to encourage empathy in lower secondary school students and strengthen students' sense of relationality with those individuals and groups in society who are different from themselves. The comparative education approach adopted describes the social, political, and cultural context of each country before presenting an analysis of the relevant curriculum documents. This will be presented alongside written comments from teacher participants. The findings demonstrated how a country's conceptualisation of history education plays a role in the inclusion of empathy and relationality within the different sources of data.

Dr Rachel Bleeze is a Lecturer at The University of Adelaide in the School of Education. Rachel is also a qualified teacher and has held teaching positions at The University of New England, as well as Tabor College of Higher Education (South Australia). Rachel recently received funding to study the implementation of version 9 of the Australian Curriculum: History and whether empathy can be measured through VR technology.

rachel.bleeze@adelaide.edu.au

**Mary Blight**  
*Curtin University*

### **The Wonnerup Massacre of 1841: Wardandi memory and settler forgetting**

In 1841, British settlers massacred Wardandi Noongar people at Geographe Bay in the Vasse district of the south-west of Western Australia (WA) after Wardandi Elder Gaywal speared and killed settler George Layman at Wonnerup. Historians Warren Bert Kimberly and James Sykes Battye in the late 19th century and early 20th century gave graphic accounts of the massacre, including Wardandi oral history. Sustained settler challenges to this history led to forgetting of the massacre, with settler society instead glorifying colonisation of the Vasse district, downplaying and justifying ongoing violence there. Public records and history writing in WA reveal a timeline of how settler society gradually forgot this massacre. From 1929, several popular books lauded the achievements of the early settlers at the Vasse, adding to the obfuscation of this massacre. In examining the erasure of such a significant event in Western Australian history, I explore why settler society has forgotten this violence, and how this loss of memory affects Australian society today. The Battye and State Library archives hold Colonial Office records and some Wardandi oral histories. Wardandi people still have a strong oral history today of the Wonnerup massacre of 1841 and I am recording them as part of this research. Australian society desires Reconciliation, yet this cannot occur if settler society continues to ignore the violent history of colonisation. An examination of how and why settler society erases memory of colonial violence will help with future truth-telling and hopefully, a better understanding between Australian settler society and Indigenous peoples.

Mary Blight completed a Bachelor's degree in Indigenous Knowledge, History and Heritage with a double major in French at the University of Western Australia in 2020. She did an Honours degree in French at the University of Western Australia in 2021 and is currently enrolled in a Masters by Research at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University. The topic of her MPhil is Examining the 1841 Wonnerup/Minninup Massacre through Western Australian colonial records and Wardandi oral histories. Her research interests are: the Baudin expedition during its time at Geographe Bay in 1801 and 1803, the Wonnerup massacre in 1841, Indigenous oral history of colonial violence, colonial massacres in the south-west of Western Australia, and the role and activities of Governors, Protectors of Aborigines, Resident Magistrates and other administrators in colonial violence from 1829 to late 1890s.

[mary.blight@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:mary.blight@postgrad.curtin.edu.au)

**Shauna Bostock**

*Australian National University*

**The weeping wounds of Aboriginal history: How my access to Aborigines Protection Board archives healed my family's suffering—and why state governments' restrictions on historians' access to Protection Board archives perpetuates the festering of old Aboriginal wounds**

Throughout time, thinkers have used the metaphor as a powerful literary device that provides imagery in the reader's mind. The notion of a wound needing to be cleaned before it can truly heal often shows up in literature, poetry, music and writing. Professor Kofi Anyidoho, a celebrated academic and poet from Ghana, described slavery as 'the living wound under a patchwork of scars. The only hope of healing is to be willing to break through the scars to finally clean the wound properly and begin the healing'. French novelist, literary critic and essayist, Marcel Proust wrote, 'We are healed from suffering only by experiencing it to the full'. He believed that just as a wound must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before it can heal, our emotional wounds require a similar approach. Avoiding pain prolongs our suffering. In this paper Shauna shares the lived experience of her ancestors from colonisation to the present. She then explains how access to family archives, while ripping open the 'old wound', created the opportunity to see that, rather than being 'power-less' victims of history—her ancestors' were resilient and 'power-full' survivors of history. Knowledge has the potential to dispel descendants' grief for their ancestors' suffering. The bureaucratic layering of band-aids and bandages to hide the wound does not stop family pain and weeping. It is only by pulling all of our ancestors' files out of the archives that we, as a nation, can rupture the festering wound and purge the pain of history.

Dr Shauna Bostock is a Bundjalung woman whose research focuses on the multi-generational history of her Aboriginal ancestors. Shauna has traced her four Aboriginal grandparents' family lines back to the settlement of Northern New South Wales. Placed within the context of Aboriginal and Australian history, her family history research is a chronological narrative of five generations of Aboriginal experience. Shauna's doctoral thesis was titled, *From Colonisation to My Generation: An Aboriginal Historian's Family History Research Past to Present*, and she graduated from Australian National University (ANU) in 2021. She is the author of a book called *Reaching Through Time: Finding My Family's Stories* (Allen & Unwin, 2023) which was published last year on the 4th of July. In September 2023, Shauna was invited to be the Stannage Fellow at the University of Western Australia (UWA) where she presented The Tom Stannage Memorial Lecture and Masterclass.

shaunabostock@abfamhistory.com

**Leigh Boucher**  
*Macquarie University*

### **The Lusher Debate: A feminist success story?**

In 1979, Stephen Lusher, a National Party MP put forward a motion to address what he described as the 'national tragedy' of 'abortion on demand.' Lusher proposed the withdrawal of Medibank rebates for abortion, except in very limited circumstances, a manoeuvre that Right to Life groups had been seeking for the past few years after a concerted campaign to 'break the business model' of abortion provision. Because Lusher was a Federal parliamentarian, his motion produced what scholars have described as a confused and muddled national debate about abortion, because the legal status and provision of abortion was (mostly) determined by state legislation and common-law. For a few months in late 1979, public life in Australia was gripped by a debate about abortion, and parliamentarians complained about their offices grinding to a halt under the weight of letters and phone calls from constituents. While many scholars have noted the 'Lusher Debate' in passing, few have examined its emergence and conclusion closely, and those that have usually position it as an example of the rising influence of anti-abortion activism; feminist activists later suggested they had been caught on the back foot by an effective anti-abortion campaign. This paper will examine this debate and suggest that, rather than representing a disturbing example of the power and success of anti-abortion activism, it instead tells us much about the degree to which feminist arguments has shifted the terrain of public debate about abortion over the previous decade. Using Clare Parker's work on parliamentary debate in South Australia a decade earlier as a counterpoint, this paper will argue that the defeat of Lusher's motion reveals the centrality and potency of feminist arguments in Federal Parliament in 1979. While the ideas and practices of RTL might have underpinned Lusher's move, it was feminist ideas that defeated it.

Leigh Boucher is an Associate Prof., Modern History at Macquarie University. Previous work has examined the relationship between liberalism and settler colonialism in Victoria, and, representations of gender and sexuality in contemporary popular culture. He has recently completed a history of the early years of HIV/AIDs in Darlinghurst, to be released in podcast with History Lab in the middle of this year. His book *Personal Politics: Gender, Sexuality and the Remaking of Australian Citizenship* (with Michelle Arrow, Barbara Baird and Robert Reynolds) will be launched at this conference.

leigh.boucher@mq.edu.au

**Lucy Bracey**

*Professional Historians Australia*

**The Future of Professional Historians**

*Contribution to the Plenary Panel of the Public History Stream, sponsored by the History Trust of South Australia*

lbracey@waybackwhen.com.au

**Elizabeth Branagh**  
*Macquarie University*

### **Gay telephone counselling and the radical politics of friendship in 1970s Australia**

In 1973, a group of gay activists from CAMP (Campaign Against Moral Persecution) founded Australia's first gay counselling service, Phone-A-Friend. The service promised that counsellors would be 'friends' to the callers. But before long, the service acquired an unsavoury nickname: 'Phone-A-Fuck'. The service was also criticised by CAMP executives for 'counselling people to accept what shit was handed out to them' rather than pursuing 'the political direction'. Historians of gay activism persistently re-inscribe these historical ways of thinking about the service, foreclosing our understanding of Phone-A-Friend as woefully 'welfarist' and 'reformist' in contrast to its 'political' and 'radical' parent organisation. This paper disrupts these binaries of welfare-politics and reformist-radical. It engages closely with the indeterminant, possibly 'radical' paradigms that underpinned how Phone-A-Friend counsellors engaged with callers. Namely, counsellors engaged the ideal of 'friendship' as an ambiguous, relatively unregulated placeholder for the variety of possible encounters between counsellors and callers. This open-ended approach to calls was reminiscent of Gay Liberation – that 'navel-gazing' group of utopic 'radicals' who splintered off from CAMP to liberate their psyches and then greater society. By demonstrating the synergies between 'reformist' Phone-A-Friend and 'radical' Gay Liberation, I trouble our discipline's re-inscription of these categories of activism.

Liz Branagh (she/they) is a research candidate at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. She is interested in historicising our orientations towards archival material and writing new histories of gender and sexuality in 1970s Australia. Since 2022, she has been a Pinnacle Scholar and a sought-after speaker for LGBT+ fundraising events. When she isn't queering Australian history, she is reading at home with her mischief of pet rats.

[elizabeth.branagh@hdr.mq.edu.au](mailto:elizabeth.branagh@hdr.mq.edu.au)

**Melanie Brand**

*Macquarie University*

### **'A Spy Thriller Outdoes Fiction': Popular Culture and the 1954 Petrov Affair**

Scholars are increasingly aware of the ways in which popular culture, particularly spy fiction and film, mediates public understanding of the clandestine world of espionage and intelligence. This paper will use the 1954 Petrov Affair as a case study to argue that spy fiction and representations of espionage performed a mediating and framing process for the Australian public during the early Cold War. The events surrounding the defection of Soviet Embassy Third Secretary Vladimir Petrov and his wife Evdokia to Australia in April 1954 were shocking and unprecedented; with little experience of the extraordinary events beyond the thrilling espionage narratives of popular culture, the Australian media began to frame the event using the familiar formula of spy fiction. By making the "story" of the Petrov Affair a recognisable narrative, the events were rendered understandable, the mysteries decipherable, and Australia's unsettling involvement in the world of international espionage transformed into entertainment.

Dr. Melanie Brand is a Lecturer in Intelligence Studies at Macquarie University. Her research interests include Cold War intelligence, intelligence analysis and warning, oversight and accountability, secrecy, and cultural perspectives on intelligence, espionage and spying. Her research has been published in *Intelligence and National Security*, *Cold War History* and *the Conversation*. She completed her PhD in history at the University of Melbourne and is a founding board member of the Women in Intelligence Network.

melanie.brand@mq.edu.au

**Claire Brennan**

*James Cook University*

### **Hunters, Man-eaters, and Handbags: Constructing gender around crocodiles in northern Australia**

Australian historians have recently begun to examine the ways in which engagements with twentieth century commercial and recreational hunting reflect gender. In northern Australia in the decades after World War II, crocodile hunting became popular as a way to experience adventurous travel that was funded in part by the sale of skins. A range of hunters recorded their experiences, emphasizing the dangers of their occupation and speculating about the fashion industry that underwrote their activities. This paper explores the topic of gender during Australia's crocodile hunting bubble, and in the discourse around crocodile ranching, farming, and tourism. The motif of dangerous man-eating beasts transformed into ladies' handbags recurs in the twenty-first century within crocodile tourist experiences. This paper argues that such representations are culturally satisfying and intersect with a broader fascination with animals that prey on humans. Talk of handbags has long formed part of the mystique that surrounds crocodiles in tropical Australia, and it serves to obscure the participation of women hunters while constructing a vision of northern Australia as a masculine space.

Dr Claire Brennan is a senior lecturer in history at James Cook University, Australia. Her PhD thesis at the University of Melbourne looked at the history of hunting in New Zealand and Australia, and placed it in its global context. More recently she has examined aspects of the history of northern Australia, including crocodile hunting, disasters, and the region's military connections. She is currently working on the Coral Discovery project digitally mapping all European scientific voyages that entered the Pacific between 1768 and 1834 and providing connections to the journals kept by captains and scientific workers.

claire.brennan@jcu.edu.au



**André Brett**  
*Curtin University*

### **The Premier League: Stability of heads of government in Australasia, 1855–2023**

Research on political leaders in Australia and New Zealand is typically limited to biographical and/or nation-level analysis. This paper presents data that is truly Australasian in scope. It draws on a dataset of the heads of government of all thirteen past and present self-governing polities within the Commonwealth of Australia and the Realm of New Zealand, encompassing the period from the swearing-in of the first responsible ministry in each polity through to 31 December 2023. My purpose is to set out how long heads of government ordinarily spend in the role: can the average leader anticipate much time in power and how frequently do electors and parties refresh leadership? This goes beyond a focus on individual polities or on notably long serving or reforming leaders to flesh out historical patterns and the overall trajectory of the highest political offices in Australasia. I test conventional wisdom that political leadership in the colonial era was notably unstable, identify distinctive trends and patterns between eras and polities, and ask whether the recent shift from 3-year to 4-year parliamentary terms has had significant effects on the duration of premierships. I conclude that Australasian political leadership is stable and rarely stagnant, providing quantitative endorsement that the rise of parties has facilitated greater leadership stability.

Dr André Brett is Lecturer of History at Curtin University. He is a historian of Australia and New Zealand, with an emphasis on political, economic, environmental, and transport themes. He is the author of four books and the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2021 Max Crawford Medal from the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Dr Brett is currently researching two main projects: an enviro-economic history of railways in Australasia pre-WWI, and a history of territorial separation movements in colonial Australasia. He is also preparing for publication journal articles based on statistical data associated with the heads of government throughout the Commonwealth of Australia and the Realm of New Zealand.

andre.brett@curtin.edu.au

**Rachel Bright**  
*Keele University*

### **The Home Truths of Migration Archives: An exploration of women and families within early twentieth century Australian naturalisation files**

The historic lives of female migrants are notoriously poorly documented, subsumed within their roles as mothers, wives, or daughters. This paper, using the National Archives of Australia (NAA) naturalisation files, will explore both the highly gendered ways in which information about women and their families was recorded by the government, and how women themselves presented their family histories. The NAA's current guidebook describes these files as 'primarily of interest to family historians', a description that marginalising them from broader academic histories of migration and citizenship, while also meaning that anyone without children is implicitly delegated unimportant. This is a chance to reflect on the ways narratives around female migrants have been documented and shaped, originally when governments decided what information to record about women during naturalisation applications, and later by archivists deciding what History is important and for whom. And yet, buried within these files are compelling 'home truths' in women's own words about their lives. Admissions of secret bigamous marriages or desertions, sad notes about dead children, the desire to buy a family home: the subject of 'family' dominates many of the conversations within these files, often in ways which challenge our expectations about contemporary respectability. The files offer real insights into women's 'home' lives and occasional hidden 'truths'. This is particularly important in helping scholars understand gendered aspects of migration and migration records, but also it reflects on the centrality of the family unit within governments' conceptualisation and policing of migrants.

Dr. Bright is Senior Lecturer in Imperial and Global History at Keele University. After completing a PhD from King's College, London, she secured a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of East Anglia, and lectured at the London School of Economics and Goldsmith's College, London. She is currently PI of an ISRF Fellowship exploring the links between eugenics and migration control within Britain's empire, and writing her second book, *Becoming British: women's migration, naturalisation, and the politics of identity in early twentieth century Australia* (MUP: 2025), based partly on research undertaken as an ANU Visiting Research Fellow in 2019.

r.k.bright@keele.ac.uk

**Stephanie Brookes**

*Monash University*

### **'The little man' and the politician: Representations of gender in Walkley Award-winning editorial cartoons, 1958–2023**

Editorial cartoons operate as daily media objects and as works of visual satire; they are powerful distillations of the ways in which stories of identity have been told in the pages of Australian newspapers, and the ways in which the 'characters' of these stories change and evolve over time. A key aspect of the identity stories told by Australian editorial cartoons lies in their depictions of gender. In Australia, a small but vibrant strand of scholarly attention has considered representations of gender in controversial cartoons – those that spark debate and critique on a local, national or more recently, global stage. Often, these 'cartoon scandals' feature discussion about the representation of intersecting planes of identity including race, gender and sexual identity, class, national and religious identity. This paper argues that to effectively grapple with the history of gender representation in Australian editorial cartoons, it is vital to consider not only the cartoons that provoke outrage, but also those celebrated as 'excellent'. It therefore proposes an alternative approach which pays attention to gender in the editorial cartoons that have been celebrated in Australia's annual national-level awards for excellence in journalism, the Walkley Awards. The paper considers depictions of gender within Walkley Award-winning cartoons from 1958 until 2023, identifying the dominance of white, male political or 'authority' figures throughout these cartoons. It also maps the gender balance of award-winning cartoonists across that time. The paper then undertakes a more focused analysis of gender representation in Walkley-winning cartoons through case studies of two of the most-awarded cartoonists in the history of the awards: Ron Tandberg and Mark Knight. Tandberg's Walkley success as cartoonist for Melbourne-based daily broadsheet 'The Age' includes 11 awards across four decades (1976–2014, including two Gold Walkley Awards). His work is celebrated for its minimalist but effective skewering of the leading politicians of the day; and for its championing of the voice of the ordinary Australian (or 'little man') who was so frequently featured in his cartoons. Knight has won five Walkleys as cartoonist for Melbourne-based tabloid the 'Herald Sun' (2003–2022), and while his depictions of women in politics (from Joan Kirner to Jacinta Allan) have been the focus of controversy, they have also led to industry accolades and celebration.

Dr Stephanie Brookes is senior lecturer in journalism in the School of Media, Film and Journalism at Monash University. She researches media, journalism and politics, focusing on election campaigns, political journalism and journalistic identity, fact-checking and editorial cartoons. She has a particular interest in questions of identity and belonging in news media and political discourse. Dr Brookes is currently a chief investigator on the Australian Research Council Discovery Project *Cartoon Nation: Australian Editorial Cartooning – Past, Present and Future*, with colleagues Associate Professor Richard Scully (UNE), Professor Robert Phiddian (Flinders) and Lindsay Foyle (Australian Cartoonists' Association) [DP230101348]. She has published widely in journal articles and book chapters, including co-editing the May 2018 special edition of *Media International Australia* on press gallery and political journalism in Australia, and is the author of *Politics, Media and Campaign Language: Australia's Identity Anxiety* (Anthem Press, 2017).

Stephanie.Brookes@monash.edu

**Linda Bryder**

*University of Auckland*

### **Vaccination, midwives and 'home truths'**

During the recent Covid pandemic the New Zealand government instituted a vaccine mandate requiring all frontline health workers to be vaccinated against the disease in order to keep their jobs. A minority of midwives resented this as an intrusion on 'bodily autonomy' or the right to choose. Others saw refusal to be vaccinated as a dereliction of their duty to maintain public health. This paper shows there was nothing new in the attitudes espoused by those midwives who chose not to be vaccinated; since the 1990s a faction within the New Zealand midwives have opposed directives relating to immunization, claiming that they stood for freedom of choice or informed consent. However, the 'home truth' to be explored here is that underpinning this adherence to 'bodily autonomy' was a deep suspicion of vaccination itself as an intervention that was unnecessary or even dangerous. In short, they were anti-vaccination. This paper traces these attitudes as part of a broader resistance to scientific medicine and technology in favour of natural remedies and a holistic approach to health. I show how this emerged from the 1980s homebirth movement, which exercised undue influence on New Zealand's maternity services in the following decades. While most modern midwives support immunization, a significant minority still believe that immunization causes more harm than good, contrary to modern scientific evidence. As trusted caregivers for most New Zealand women, before and after childbirth, midwives' attitudes matter.

Linda Bryder is professor of history at the University of Auckland Waipapa Taumata Rau, with expertise in the social history of health and medicine. She completed her DPhil at the University of Oxford in 1985 on the social history of tuberculosis in twentieth-century Britain, and has since then published widely in modern history of health and medicine (including five sole-authored monographs), with a focus on Britain and New Zealand. Her research interests include the history of public health, healthcare politics, and the history of infant and reproductive health. She currently co-edits the *New Zealand Journal of History*. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi, and currently president of the Australian and New Zealand Society of the History of Medicine.

[l.bryder@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:l.bryder@auckland.ac.nz)

**Neville Buch**

*Professional Historians Australia (Queensland)*

### **Rethinking School: Historical Forgetfulness and Educationalist Theory 1971–89**

The paper is home truth for Queensland schools. Academic leadership in education had, not only forgot the theories of schooling in era of critical theory (e.g. Habermas, Giroux, etc.), from frameworks of Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire, too many academic leaders do not know how they have got to the States of Affair in the present time. The explanation for the spiraling and networking presentism comes in models of Randall Collins, who stated clearly in his *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* (1998): "The channel that carries the energies of intellectual creativity is more than ideas floating in an atmosphere of influence, even if we can pin down such influence to the presence of a certain text in the personal library of a certain thinker; the central channel is the personal contact of face-to-face encounters. I will demonstrate the paramount importance of two further kinds of 'schools' or 'circles.'" One of these involves chains of personal relationships, of which the most important are relationships between teachers and their pupils; besides these vertical ties are horizontal links of personal contacts among contemporaries. Finally, a "school" can be literally an organization: a place where teaching takes place and authority and property are passed down through an explicit succession...(1998: 88) The paper's educationalist historians spell out the relationship between the criticism of schooling from Illich and Freire in the Collin's intellectual history analysis and within the framework of critical theory.

Dr Neville Buch is an expert on histories and historiography of big belief and doubt, researching on Evangelicalism, Freethought, Rationalism, Humanism, Unitarian–Universalism, and Progressivism, during the 20th century. He has been a scholar in studies in religion and Australian–American intellectual history for 41 years, as well as a community participatory teacher for The Philosophy Café Brisbane Meet Up, and the Brisbane Meetup Intellectual Network. He has been a Q ANZAC Fellow at the State Library of Queensland (2015–2016), and a speechwriter and higher education researcher, working with four Vice-Chancellors. He is well-published and recognised for his contribution in the histories of Catholic secondary and state primary education, and other Protestant and Catholic organisations, in Queensland. Dr Buch is affiliated with the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, University of Queensland as a former post-doctorate fellow. He is a Convenor, Sociology of Education Thematic Group, The Australian Sociological Association (TASA).

nbuch61@gmail.com

**Juliana Byers**

*Victoria University*

## **The Dark Legacy of ANZAC Day**

Few dates are more sacred in post-colonial Australian culture than the 25th of April: ANZAC Day. Traditionally, it is a day to remember those Australians who gave their lives in service of this country: at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them. But Australian remembrance culture, with its focus on ANZAC Day, has a much darker legacy. It is as if Australian military engagements started and ended on one day in April more than a hundred years ago. How did a single day of a ten-month campaign in a four-year-war gain such prominence in our national culture that it eclipsed every military action that came before and after it? And what are the consequences of such narrowly focused remembrance? Australian military history is long: from the Frontier Wars to Afghanistan, Australian soldiers, sailors and aviators have fought and participated in dozens of wars, skirmishes and peace-keeping missions all around the globe, only for their actions and efforts to be overshadowed by remembrance of a conflict of which we no longer have any living memory. If we wish to continue to honour our fallen and respect those who have returned from conflict, we must reconsider ANZAC Day and critically reflect on its legacy. Importantly, we must ask whether it is truly a day of remembrance, or a day of forgetting the terrible price that is paid every time we go to war.

Juliana Byers is a military historian with an interest in Australian pre- and post-colonial history, especially how we remember past conflicts and how we define an 'Australian' combatant. She is currently pursuing a Master of Research at Victoria University, examining masculinity and militarism on the Victoria goldfields, and is the host and founder of 'The Skeptical Historian' podcast. She is a member of Golden Key International Honor Society and holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Creative Writing, also from Victoria University. When not studying she can be found watching dinosaur documentaries and playing with her two guinea pigs, Billi and Zetta.

julianabyers93@gmail.com

**Paula Jane Byrne**

*State Library of New South Wales*

**Legality at Balranald, the most distant part of the colony of New South Wales, 1850–60**

In 1859 a list of Aboriginal names was given to the clerk of the bench at Balranald – the most distant part of the colony of New South Wales. These names were to be placed on the electoral roll. The clerk sought advice 'it was a matter of legality.' This paper examines some of the slippery legalities of the Bench at Balranald, where jurisdiction extended from the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee to Hindley St Adelaide. It questions some of the contemporary narratives of the 'interior' of the colony, influential as they have been. Aboriginal voters as a group were countenanced at Balranald while the metropolis indulged in the bloody language of the frontier.

Author of *Criminal Law and Colonial Subject* and *Judge Advocate Ellis Bent, Letters and Diaries*. I have lectured at several Australian universities and held research positions at others. At present Visiting Scholar at the State Library of New South Wales.

paulajanebyrne22@outlook.com

**Ella Byrne**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Geoffrey Blainey, National Action and the 'Asianisation' of Australia**

Australians on the whole tend towards the comfortable view that our society is resistant to radical politics, with many people unaware of the extreme right movements in our past. Admittedly, Australia's extreme right has traditionally had less visible success than the extreme right in other countries. However, extreme right groups have always existed in Australia and have often sought to exploit significant events and mainstream discussions to gain political ground. This case study explores one such example: historian Geoffrey Blainey's comments on the 'Asianisation' of Australia in 1984, and the nationwide discussion that followed. The extreme right group National Action attempted to capitalise on the discussion for its own benefit, but how successful was this? What responses did National Action receive from the community, government and security services, and how did these responses help or hinder the group? In examining these questions, I seek to unsettle the narrative that the extreme right has been peripheral to Australian politics.

Ella is a PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide. Her thesis examines a range of factors which have influenced the success of Australia's extreme right over the past forty years. Her research interests include violent extremism, anti-fascism and democracy.

ella.byrne@adelaide.edu.au



**Cassandra Byrnes**

*University of Queensland*

### **Reproductive Coercion and Abuse: Intimate Partners and Familial Perpetrators**

This paper maps a recent history of reproductive coercion and abuse in Australia centred on intimate partner relationships and familial relationships in the mid-to-late-twentieth century. Reproductive coercion and abuse are currently understood as the interference in another person's reproductive choices—forced termination of pregnancy, forced continuation of pregnancy, prohibiting contraceptive use, or imposing contraceptive use. This particular violation of consent in intimate partner and familial relationships has been documented as an extension of sexual violence under certain circumstances. Thus far, few scholarly works have focused on understanding the pervasiveness of this phenomenon in decades past. In heterosexual intimate partner relationships, manipulation, promises of marriage and love, and physical and sexual violence were used to enact reproductive coercion and abuse in quite explicit ways. When considering parents' role in making reproductive choices for their children, financial incentives, homelessness, and emotional manipulation were most frequently used. In the same ways that experiences of rape and sexual abuse hinge on notions of consent and bodily autonomy, reproductive coercion is a form of sexual and medical violence that violates an individual's right to make informed choices. Examining its history allows us to see how reproductive coercion and abuse are often coupled with other instances of sexual violence, and it facilitates a broader understanding of the ways in which autonomy and coercion operate in relationships.

Dr Cassandra Byrnes (she/her) is a History Lecturer at the University of Queensland, Australia, and researches histories of gender and sexuality focusing on reproductive rights and control. She is currently interested in histories of reproductive coercion in Australia's recent past, and how that directly influences our current understandings of laws and social practices. She recently completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship on the interdisciplinary project *The Limits of Consent*.

c.byrnes@uq.edu.au

**Rachel Caines**

*Australian National University and Australian War Memorial*

### **Searching for Indigenous Australians in the Soldiers Settlements Schemes**

Australia's soldier settlement schemes were a central part of efforts to support the influx of repatriated First World War servicemen. For decades, it was assumed that Indigenous Australian veterans were systematically denied access to these schemes due to their race, an injustice exacerbated by the seizure of Indigenous Country and the closure of reserves and missions to secure over 18 million acres of Crown land for the schemes. A number of Indigenous veterans, however, did benefit from the schemes, while others were granted land or housing through returned servicemen programs. Indigenous Australians' engagement with soldier settlement schemes reflects diverse experiences of the war and its aftermath, rather than a single homogenous experience. This paper presents two family histories of service and post-war experiences: that of a Gunditjmarra/Boandik family from western Victoria, and a Noongar family from south-western Western Australia. These histories are used to explore the complicated narratives of Indigenous Australian engagement with soldier settlement schemes. The experiences of these families both challenge and affirm the prevailing narratives surrounding Indigenous engagement with the schemes, as well as raising additional questions and contradictions. By centring the lived experiences of two families from opposite sides of the country, this paper offers some initial insights about Indigenous engagement with Australian soldier settlement schemes.

Rachel Caines is a doctoral candidate at the Australian National University and a historian in the Military History Section of the Australian War Memorial. Her research focuses on Indigenous Australian wartime and post-war experiences, with a particular interest in the First World War and the Frontier Wars. Her thesis explores Indigenous engagement with Australia's soldier settlement schemes during the interwar period. She has presented her research at national and international conferences, and is the author of academic and popular works on Indigenous Australian war service and commemoration. Prior to joining the Australian War Memorial in December 2022, Rachel previously worked as a researcher, tutor, and administrator in the university sector and as a historical consultant for television production companies.

rachel.caines@anu.edu.au

**Malcolm Campbell**

*University of Auckland*

**'The enemy within our gates': bigotry in Australia, 1912–25**

On Easter Sunday, 31 March 1918, the Reverend T. E. Ruth delivered an address in Melbourne warning of the enemies confronting war-time Australia, including Archbishop Daniel Mannix, the Roman Catholic Church, and Irish nationalism. Australia's Protestants, Ruth maintained, were subject to an unprecedented test to defend their true religion and the Commonwealth against these opponents. However, Ruth's railing against Mannix, the Catholic Church and Ireland were not new. Throughout the First World War, he was a prolific author of attacks on each of these subjects, along with socialism and the IWW. Ruth's high-profile interventions have figured prominently in historians' analyses of the period 1912–1925, one that is widely acknowledged as a high point in Australian sectarianism. However, to date this period has mainly been treated as self-contained, framed by the political developments in war-time Australia and the long-distant impact of the Irish Revolution, rather than as part of the longer-term experience of bigotry in this land. This paper, part of a wider history of bigotry in Australia, argues the Home Truth that bigotry has been a deep and enduring scar on Australian life since the arrival of Europeans, and that the tumult of the period 1912–1925 should be seen not as exceptional but aligned with the long-term experience of intolerance and prejudice in Australia.

Malcolm Campbell is Professor of History at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, where he teaches Australian and Irish history. A graduate of the University of New South Wales, he has held visiting posts at universities in Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. His most recent book is *Ireland's Farthest Shores: Mobility, Migration and Settlement in the Pacific World*, published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 2022. He is currently writing a history of bigotry in Australia.

mc.campbell@auckland.ac.nz

**Rosa Campbell**

*University of Edinburgh*

### **Oral history, racism and the Australian women's liberation movement**

My doctoral dissertation and forthcoming book project considers the global history of Australian women's liberation. I used a mixed methodology of oral history and archival research and interviewed twenty-two feminists, over half of whom were women of colour or First Nations women. In this methodological paper, I begin with Penny Summerfield's concept of 'discomposure,' moments in the interview when interviewees struggle to construct a life that is coherent and composed, and which Summerfield suggests that we oral historians might usefully make meaning from. As I began interviews, I wondered about how Summerfield's concept applied to the interviewer. As we must maintain composure, hold space, listen with depth, and ask follow up questions. Given that women's liberation has been characterised by its deep fissures, particularly along the lines of race, I wondered whether interviewees would feel that aspects of my identity – particularly that I was white – would preclude my ability to build reciprocity in the interview and as a result, I would lose composure. To ensure my composure, I turned to recent feminist theory which discusses white women's defensive responses at moments where they are confronted by their own racism and what we might do differently (for example, Ruby Hamad's 'White Tears, Brown Scars,' Terese Jonsson 'Innocent Subjects,' Layla Saad 'Me and White Supremacy'). But, I wondered if the reading I had done, while useful, was also creating limiting expectations that racism in the women's movement would be the subject of central discussion. While this did often feature, all those I interviewed offered histories far more expansive than this. Particularly women of colour and First Nations women were keen to discuss activism which stretched far beyond a critique of race in the women's liberation movement, highlighting the way that oral history can offer us new histories of feminism.

Rosa Campbell is a global historian of feminism, and the inaugural GENDER.ED Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Edinburgh. Between 2018–2023 she was a Smuts Scholar at the University of Cambridge where she completed her doctoral dissertation on the global history of the Australian women's liberation movement (1968–1990). Her new project considers the global history of the four United Nations Conferences on the Status of Women (1975–1995) and sees these as key to Global South feminism in the late twentieth century. She is passionate about extending ideas beyond the academy and her work has recently appeared in *The White Review*, *The Independent*, *Literary Hub* and *Public Books*.

[campbell.rosa@gmail.com](mailto:campbell.rosa@gmail.com)

**Andrew Cardow**  
*Massey University*

## **From Landscape to Adventure. New Zealand Government Tourist Publicity**

The early days of New Zealand tourism publicity was essentially that of travel writing. This form of publicity about New Zealand existed since the beginning of the 19th century. However, it was not until the late 1800s that writing about New Zealand became more 'tourist' orientated. During the late 1880s tourism in New Zealand became organised and attracted the attention of the colonial government. By the 1880s There were travel brochures, tourist guides and during 1880 Thomas Cook began operations, initially through an agency in New Zealand. By 1888 The company had established their own office in Auckland. There is also evidence that by this time cruise tourism was well established, notably by the Union Shipping Company of New Zealand. The union company operated successful cruises from Australia, Wellington, and Auckland to the Fiordland area of New Zealand. Predicated upon a growth in tourist activity the colonial government established national parks, the first being Tongariro in 1887 and started purchasing hotels. Subsequently they joined the private sector in publicising the country. Government publicity centred around the natural 'wonders' to be seen. This emphasis on the wonders was to endure into the 21st century. With campaigns to see your own county, the 100% pure campaign and finally a shift to promoting New Zealand as an adventure playground. I argue that the New Zealand government has never lost emphasis on landscape, placing it at the core of advertising campaigns and despite the modern campaigns continues to publicise the natural wonders.

I have an interest in tourism, pop culture and politics. All through the lens of history.

[a.cardow@massey.ac.nz](mailto:a.cardow@massey.ac.nz)

**Jane Carey**

*University of Wollongong*

### **Legacies of Race in Feminist Histories: The Case of Eugenics and Birth Control**

This paper reflects on some of the historical links between eugenics and birth control and the contemporary legacies of these histories. Internationally, many prominent birth control organisations have recently moved to disavow their connections with eugenics – including the renaming of Marie Stopes International and the Margaret Sanger Birth Control Clinic in New York. These moves have been explicitly presented as a response to Black Lives Matter and other movements around the ongoing legacies of slavery, race and colonialism. However, Australian organisations have been slower to follow this lead. I want to do two things here. One is to look at how these organisations themselves have, or have not, acknowledged their historical connections to eugenics. The other is to assess how these histories have, or have not, been addressed by scholars of women's and feminist history. Too often these entanglements continue to be misunderstood, avoided or even denied. Despite the supposed embrace of intersectionality by recent feminist scholars and activists, it seems that feminist history still has considerable difficulties dealing with its own racial past.

Jane Carey is an Associate Professor in History at the University of Wollongong where she was a founding co-director of the Centre for Colonial and Settler Studies. Her work spans across settler colonial, women's and Indigenous histories, with a focus on issues of race, science and reproduction. She is the editor of several collections including *Creating White Australia* (2009), *Indigenous Networks* (2014) and *Colonial Formations* (2021). Her most recent book is *Taking to the Field: A History of Australian Women in Science* (2023).

[jcarey@uow.edu.au](mailto:jcarey@uow.edu.au)

**Margaret Carmody**

*Australian Catholic University*

### **St Gregory's Hall Queanbeyan NSW: 'The most palatially equipped [hall] in the State outside the city of Sydney'**

The first St Gregory's Hall was built in 1925. Located in the central business district, it was part of the optimistic vision of the Parish Priest, Fr Haydon for the future of Queanbeyan, to have a large hall that could be used for community purposes. Designed by Roarty, it was described as 'the most palatially equipped [hall] in the State outside the city of Sydney'. Winifred Maher, of builders Maher and Mann took a particular interest in the construction. She was the first woman in NSW to hold such a position. It consisted of a ballroom with capacity for over 1,000 people, a supper room, billiards saloon, a library and reading room, shops and offices. An important aspect of the social significance of the complex was that it was leased as the Star Picture Theatre. Canberra residents made the trek by horse, bus or on foot to Queanbeyan to see the latest films from America and Great Britain. It met the need for more shops in Queanbeyan, provided spaces for meetings and community activities and a large venue for social events and movies. During the severe flood in 1925, the hall was the evacuation centre for families who had lost their homes. After the Hall was sold in 1940, it continued to be used for parish events such as the Annual Catholic Ball - a Vice-Regal event in 1950. The building eventually became part of Riverside Plaza. St Gregory's Hall is an example of the church's involvement in the community.

Margaret has an interest in oral history and the window this provides on the lives of the people which the historical narrative has so often overlooked. The story of St Gregory's Hall and the Catholic Community of Queanbeyan is close to Margaret's heart because she lives in Queanbeyan and has edited *Under the Pines: A history of St Gregory's Catholic Parish Queanbeyan NSW* (2023). Margaret works as a lecturer at Australian Catholic University. She has a PhD in history. Margaret has experience researching community organisations and Catholic Church history. She is a member of the Irish Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand, the NSW Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia, the Australian History Association and The Children's Book Council of Australia. Margaret believes that history should tell people's stories: it is these rich and varied stories that give us a detailed and engaging picture of the past.

margaret\_carmody@live.com.au

**Emma Carson**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Romance on a Razor's Edge: Censorship in the Letters of Australian Servicemen and their Partners during World War II**

For couples separated by military service during World War II, letters were a vital means of communication that ensured the longevity of their relationships. Exchanging correspondence helped servicemen and their partners deal with practical issues and, more pertinently, construct intimacy. Nonetheless, Australian military officials enforced strict regulations to prevent the spread of sensitive information, whether it was 'truths' about the nature combat and the war that were not appropriate for home, or unpleasant 'home truths' about difficult conditions and anxiety felt by civilians in Australia. It was, therefore, rare for personal conversations in letters to be shared exclusively between writers. The aim of this talk is to explore how field censorship influenced the ways that correspondents conveyed intimate thoughts and maintained their relationships. The inability of servicemen to describe distressing experiences prevented them from seeking adequate emotional support from their partners. Furthermore, the knowledge that someone else was reading their letters was often enough to make correspondents on both sides employ self-censorship and repress their emotions. For officers and chaplains who surveyed letters from their battalion and read touching declarations of affection that exceeded their own abilities, censorship could lead to a sense among the censors that their writing was not sincere enough. Yet censors could also use this as an opportunity to gain insight of the personal issues men faced in their battalion. I argue that censorship was not an exclusively negative experience for both the censor and censored, especially when interlocutors found creative ways to avoid it.

Emma Carson is a social and military historian based at the University of Adelaide, whose PhD research used letters to analyse the emotional impact of separation and military service on married couples during World War II. She was the 2020 recipient of the Hugh Martin Weir Prize and her paper at the AHA in 2022 was a runner-up for the Ken Inglis Prize.

emma.carson@adelaide.edu.au



**Yianni Cartledge**

*Flinders University*

Andrekos Varnava, *Flinders University*

### **Promoting Smoking and Fighting Cancer in Australian Migrant Newspapers, 1930s–50s**

This paper explores and compares smoking advertisements and anti-smoking and anti-cancer messages in migrant and minority press in Australia, particularly migrant community newspapers, between the 1930s–50s, with a focus from 1945–1955. It investigates the ways in which smoking was advertised and promoted to migrant communities through their newspapers, contrasts this with the increasing prevalence of anti-smoking and broader anti-cancer messages, and explores the shift in advertising and messages following the growing research linking smoking and cancer (particularly lung cancer) from 1950. These messages were ultimately tied to this growing research, as well as the various Australian state and national anti-cancer campaign committees who emphasised early diagnosis and swift treatment as the best method to combat a range of cancers. These discussions also reflected the momentum around the eventual national approach to cancer control, which stemmed from research and anti-cancer campaigns. Greek language newspapers (notably *To Ethnico Vema*) form an important case study, however, other foreign-language and migrant community papers are also consulted, including Italian, Jewish, and French.

Yianni Cartledge has recently submitted his PhD at Flinders University, under the supervision of Prof. Andrekos Varnava. His PhD thesis, titled 'Aegean Islander Migration to the UK and Australia, 1815–1945: Emigration, Settlement, Community Building, and Integration', explores the migration of Aegean islanders to the UK and Australia during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Yianni's research interests include migration and the migrant experience, diaspora studies, Mediterranean histories (particularly the British and Ottoman Empires), and the history of modern Greece. An article from his Honours thesis was published in *Historical Research* in 2020. His first edited collection is *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). He has also published in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (2021), in an edited collection by the PHA SA (2022), in *Cerae* (2022), and in *Australian Historical Studies* (2024). He has a forthcoming volume with Brill (2024) on *Forced Migration to Britain and the British Empire* (with Varnava & Evan Smith).

yianni.cartledge@flinders.edu.au

**James Cassidy**

*University of Western Australia*

### **The Many and the Few: The Distribution of Capital in the Swan River Colony**

Within months of its foundation in 1829, the economic situation at the Swan River Colony was in shambles. Designed with the interests of wealthy settlers in mind, a key fault in the plan led many early investor-settlers to financial ruin. This turn of events fuelled the success of those settlers fortunate enough to have access to cash or the ability to import high-demand goods. Subsequent changes in land regulations issued by the Colonial Office and the colony's own administration, intended to remedy problems of land distribution, only benefited the wealthiest settlers further. Historians typically examine these settlers in relation to the agricultural and economic development of the early colony. It is much less common to see their abundant capital discussed as a factor of settler-colonialism in Western Australia. This paper shall focus on certain key Swan River settlers (including George Fletcher Moore, William Tanner and William Brockman) and how they accumulated capital in the early colony. But beyond their success, the paper will also consider the role played by contracts, pastoralism and landlordism in the realm of settler violence and the broader settler-colonial project.

James is completing a PhD part-time with the University of Western Australia, while working as a casual relief teacher with the School of Isolated and Distance Education. His research, broadly speaking, concerns the earliest years of the Swan River Colony. More specifically, he focuses on the role of certain key settlers, their engagement with 1830s print culture, as well as colonial violence and negotiation.

[james.cassidy@research.uwa.edu.au](mailto:james.cassidy@research.uwa.edu.au)

**Burcu Cevik-Compiegne**  
*Australian National University*

### **Fiction as migrant life-writing**

Fictional short story is among the genres of writing that have the weakest authority as sources of truth. Yet, if we accept this statement as a fact, we would be dismissing some of the richest sources that were produced by migrants about their lived experiences. In the early 1970s, within a few years after their arrival in Australia under the Labour Migration Scheme (1967), Turkish migrants started publishing their short stories in Turkish newspapers. Not many of these writers aspired to become published authors, but their urge to write and share was strong. What role did writing play in their lives and why did they choose short stories to convey their emotions and experiences? My research understands these texts as a form of transnational life writing as they give us key insights into migrant experiences at the time. This paper will focus on the methodological aspects of using fiction as a source in history. The complex relationship between history and fiction is often discussed in respect to the historiographical value of historical fiction or the cross over between these two different modes of storytelling. This paper will instead interrogate the use of fiction writing as a meaning-making process by migrants and tease out what we can learn from these texts as historians of migration.

Burcu Cevik-Compiegne is a lecturer in Turkish Studies at the Australian National University, Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies. She obtained her BA and MA degrees at Aix-Marseille University and PhD at University of Technology Sydney. Burcu has strong interest in diasporic memory, social and cultural history and cross-cultural studies.

Burcu.Cevik-Compiegne@anu.edu.au

**Sujata Chakravarti**

*University of Technology Sydney*

### **Macquarie and George: Will the subaltern speak up please?**

From 1809 to 1822, Lachlan Macquarie was governor of New South Wales. Popularly known as the Father of the Nation, certain Australian characteristics such as the idea of the fair go have been attributed to the road map his administration provided. A lesser known but undeniable home truth about the Macquarie years is the presence of former slave George Jarvis. Bought as a child in 1795 by Macquarie in Cochin, India, Jarvis was named after an Antigua slave owning family. Despite being widely travelled for an Indian of the time, he never returned to India after 1809. Varying descriptions of Jarvis as a 'black Hindu slave', a 'Maorian body servant' and a 'smart Portuguese boy' indicate how completely his identity was erased. Although valet to a prolific diary writer like Macquarie, not a word in Jarvis' voice exists in any language attributed to him. Jarvis was only thirty-five when he passed away. A deeper understanding of the past will come through revealing home truths and stolen voices such as that of Jarvis. The topic of this paper addresses an understudied and essential part of Macquarie's life, his career in India from 1788 to 1809. The time he spent in those proving grounds may hold clues to the policies he formulated that marginalised indigenous culture and culminated in the Stolen Generations. This is part of my larger thesis project (in progress): The East India Company career of Lachlan Macquarie and its influence on his Governorship of NSW.

Ruma Chakravarti is a blogger and writer with a deep interest in East India Company history. While her background is in mathematics education, her extracurricular interest in public history led her to explore links between Australia and India that go beyond curries, cricket and camels, depending on whether you are a foodie, a cricket fan or simply interested in Camelidae. Currently an HDR student with UTS, New South Wales, Ruma is working on Lachlan Macquarie's links with the world's first multinational company. She hopes her research will unfold as a doctoral dissertation and a creative non-fiction piece on George Jarvis, an Indian valet in Governor Macquarie's household. She has embarked on both areas of research in tandem as the dissertation will be contextualised by the creative work. When she is not reading history or writing about it, she lives and gardens on Kurna country in Southern Adelaide.

rumachak10@gmail.com

**Michael Clarke**  
*Deakin University*

### **Australian Strategic Narratives on China, 1949–2007: From Repelling 'Red Imperialism' to Domesticating the Dragon**

The past several years has seen the development of a febrile public debate in which political leaders, prominent journalists and academic commentators have pushed a narrative that it has only been in very recent times that policy-makers have awoken to the potential security challenges posed by a rising, authoritarian China. This however ignores the historical evolution of successive Australian governments' approaches to China that have sought to balance both the geopolitical risks and economic benefits of such an outcome for Australia's national security. The paper utilises the literature on 'strategic narratives' in security studies to track the ways in which Australian governments over the 1949 to 2007 period sought to frame and communicate the opportunities and risks of China's rise. In general, the literature on 'strategic narratives' suggests that three types of narrative are predominant: 'system narratives' about the nature or future of the international system; 'identity narratives' about the protection or extension of an actor's identity; and 'issue narratives' about topical, contextual problems in a given policy area. Based on an analysis of primary source documentation including Australian parliamentary debates, official government statements (e.g. Defence White Papers), public statements by political leaders, government ministers and relevant public servants related to China or Sino-Australian relations this paper finds that the predominant type of strategic narrative over the 1949–2007 period has combined 'system' and 'identity' narratives that link the protection of Australia's identity as a liberal democracy to the maintenance of American predominance, and if not primacy, in the international system.

Dr Michael Clarke is Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Future Defence and National Security (CFDNS), Canberra, and Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney.

michael.clarke@deakin.edu.au

**Sharyn Clarke**

*Flinders University*

### **What Lies Beneath the River Torrens/Karrawirraparri?**

This paper considers some of the many truths that lie beyond the surface of Adelaide's rather placid and small lake. This is an overview of the history of the Torrens/Karrawirraparri in the early years of settlement focusing on the theme of water. It begins with some of the initial lies propagated by the Colonisation Commissioners about a much grander, noble river. Having been sold a deception, colonists then grappled with the reality of their river in summer which became a series of waterholes. The river effectively became the site of settlement and it was here that the Kurna and other Indigenous groups also resided in the early years. Settlers turned to the Kurna for advice about the river but after an initial period of some conciliation there was a turn against Indigenous use of the water. A campaign was initiated in the press against the Indigenous presence along the river area, leading to their attempted eviction from Adelaide.

Sharyn Clarke is a Ph D Candidate at Flinders University. Her doctorate is on the development of a conservation consciousness in colonial South Australia and it has a focus on Romanticism and natural history in developing people's connections with nature. She is a teacher with the Education Department of South Australia and has a Masters Degree on the history of the River Torrens/Karrawirraparri. This paper is drawn from her book *The River Torrens/Karrawirraparri* to be published by Wakefield Press in 2024.

clar0117@flinders.edu.au

**Annaliese Claydon**

*University of Tasmania*

### **Blank Spaces: Sea Ice, Indigenous Authority, and the Tasmanian Search for Sir John Franklin, 1851–53**

In 1852, Tasmanian colonists raised over £1000 to finance an Arctic expedition organized by women (Lady Jane Franklin and Sophia Cracroft) and led by an Indigenous man (Captain William Kennedy, Metis). The *Isobel* was intended to sail to Bering Strait to look for Sir John Franklin's missing expedition, which some believed was trapped in an open polar sea. Tasmanian support for the expedition was all the more extraordinary because so many Tasmanians had recently voyaged to the Arctic themselves – half of the whaling fleet had been in the ice-choked Bering Strait in 1851. This paper examines how the unpredictable Arctic sea ice in 1851 exposed contests over truth and authority in Britain and Australia. Fundamentally, while ice constrained the movements of foreign mariners, it facilitated Indigenous travel and exchange. Indigenous intelligence was interpreted by whalers, traders, naval officers and families, all of whom laid claim to the authority to special knowledge of the 'blank spaces' on the map. After their own whaling fleet limped back from Bering Strait, Tasmanian settlers adopted Jane Franklin's quest for the open polar sea as their own, and hitched the idea of Arctic exploration to the campaign to end transportation. This case study can, I suggest, not only shed light on how practices of exploration highlighted contests over 'truth' in the mid-nineteenth century, but also illuminates the broad geographies of Tasmanian settler ambition.

Annaliese Claydon is an Alaskan-born, Tasmanian-based historian. She earned her PhD in British and Imperial History from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2015. She has worked as a public historian with Indigenous-managed national historic areas in Alaska and as an archivist with Libraries Tasmania. She is now an Adjunct Researcher in the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania. Her first book, "Arctic Circles and Imperial Knowledge: The Franklin Family, Indigenous Intermediaries, and the Politics of Truth" has just been published by Bloomsbury Academic.

claydona@utas.edu.au

**Catharine Coleborne**  
*University of Newcastle*

**Mapping nineteenth-century vagrancy: clusters of arrests in New South Wales, 1862–80**

Using a dataset of vagrancy prosecutions listed in New South Wales Police Gazettes (NSWPG) for two decades, a new map of vagrancy arrests offers a visual representation of where people interacted with police, courts, and laws in colonial NSW. This map derives from a larger project which examines the mobility of people prosecuted as vagrants in colonial New Australia (NSW, Victoria, and Tasmania) between c. 1860 and 1910. Police Gazettes were published in each colony from c. 1860. Using the 'multilayer' tool and Colonial Census data, we can also map the arrests for vagrancy in NSW by place of birth in the British Isles. These different-sized clusters and layers of the map support my research findings as a historian using large datasets about the motility of colonial peoples and their vulnerability to regulation under vagrancy legislation from the 1840s. Where this data intersects with other indicators – such as birthplaces – it tells us more about vagrants who were highly mobile people of empire in this period. Although the TLCMap links back to TROVE sources of information about individuals, locating individuals in terms of their 'moments' of arrest as pinpoints on the map could mean that we neglect the complexities of their movements across places and between sites. This paper describes the work to map this history so far and offers ideas about forms of 'cultural mapping' through mobility studies, such as 'movement as elusiveness' (Rossetto 2021) that might enhance the map layers currently available.

Professor Catharine Coleborne is a historian at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. Relevant to her paper at this conference, her most recent book (out in May 2024) examines the histories of colonial vagrancy: *Vagrant Lives in Colonial Australasia: Regulating Mobility, 1840 – 1910* (Bloomsbury). Her scholarly work has ranged across histories of mental illness and institutions, colonial families and health, and museums, collections and exhibitions of psychiatric histories and objects. She is a member of the ARC's LIEF-funded TLCMap team (in 2023–2024).

cathycoleborne@gmail.com



**Julie Collins**

*University of South Australia*

**'Architecture is public health': examining the medicine–architecture nexus in South Australia in the first half of the twentieth century**

What I maintain is, that architecture is public health in its broadest and possibly its best sense'. With these words, British architect Banister F. Fletcher imagined himself into the future, 'looking fifty years hence', in an address to the Royal Institute of Public Health in 1900. He spoke on the extermination of slums and the importance of sunshine and ventilation, foreseeing a time when garden cities and houses with flat roofs would become common. Fletcher was not alone in his thinking. The spread of such ideas globally will be examined in this paper which will explore some of the ideas presented in Fletcher's address before examining some South Australian examples of the building types mentioned by him. They will be drawn from the mid twentieth century, and will be buildings designed in the new hygienic 'modern' style. The cases are a hospital ward – at the Repatriation General Hospital, Daw Park, 1941, by architects Stephenson & Turner and Woods, Bagot, Laybourne Smith and Irwin, an apartment building complex, Retten Flats, Glenelg, 1939, by Harold T. Griggs, and the Frayne Residence and Surgery, 1945, by Jack McConnell. Drawing on primary archival material, this paper will use the historical interpretive method to examine the case studies within the framework of Fletcher's ideas.

Dr Julie Collins is Curator and Research Fellow at the University of South Australia's Architecture Museum. With a background in architecture and a focus on architectural history, she is the author of *The Architecture and Landscape of Health: A Historical Perspective on Therapeutic Places 1790–1940* (Routledge 2020), and with Christine Garnaut, *'Not for Ourselves Alone': the South Australian Home Builders Club 1945–65* (Crossing Press 2013). Other projects have focussed on the history of South Australian department stores, designed environments for children, architect designed modern houses in South Australia, prefabricated housing in the postwar period, and South Australia's female architects.

[julie.collins@unisa.edu.au](mailto:julie.collins@unisa.edu.au)

**Carolyn Collins**

*University of Adelaide*

**Building Bombs, Guns and a 'Legion of Cobberhood': Mobilising and Motivating General Motors–Holden's Wartime Workforce**

The mobilisation of private industry during World War 2 was crucial to the success of Australia's war effort. After all, troops cannot be moved, and lines cannot advance without munitions, armed vehicles, aircraft components, tents and stretchers, etc. But to meet these orders, companies like General Motors–Holden (which turned all its Australian factories over for war production) needed to maintain a skilled, loyal and motivated workforce. Ensuring workers felt that they were playing a vital role in the war effort was a major part of managing and maintaining war-time workforces -- and avoiding potential industrial unrest. This paper focusses on GMH's Cobbers' Club, set up to support workers in the Services, and how it was used as a propaganda tool to boost morale in the company's factories.

Dr Carolyn Collins is a researcher in the Department of History at the University of Adelaide with interests in Australian history, labour history, gender and oral history. She is the author of *Save Our Sons: Women, Dissent and Conscripted During the Vietnam War* (Monash University Press, 2021), co-author of *Trailblazers: 100 Inspiring South Australian Women* (Wakefield Press, 2019) and joint editor of the journal *Studies in Oral History*. She is currently working on an ARC Linkage Project, *Assembling for War: GMH and Mobilisation of Private Industry in World War 2*.

carolyn.collins@adelaide.edu.au

**Margaret Cook**

*La Trobe University*

**Conserving or creating new environments in the Murray Darling Basin: does it matter?**

Throughout the Murray Darling Basin people are conducting environmental projects. Passionate about their riverine locale, individuals are building animal habitats, planting vegetation, or preserving land as conservation areas. Drawing on philosophies of heritage building conservation and science and technology studies (STS), I ask are these efforts conservation and restoration or are they further human and technological interventions on nature? And if their efforts impose a new imagined space on the environment but helps regenerate the more-than-human world, do the principles of conservation matter?

Margaret Cook is a freelance historian, heritage consultant and academic. In her consultancy practice she specialises in cultural heritage and social history. Her academic research focuses on environmental history with particular interest in natural disasters, climate and agricultural settlement. She is currently working as researcher/oral historian on the Murray Darling Basin Community Oral History Project.

Margaret.Cook@latrobe.edu.au

**Jayson Cooper**

*University of Melbourne*

## **Dispossessing the Possessed: Resisting Settler Colonial Narratives Through Sonic Ecologies**

This paper examines the entangled histories of colonial landscapes and Indigenous narratives in Australia. It employs arts-based and multimodal research methods to reimagine colonial and consumerist ideologies of ownership and belonging. These ideologies are etched into Indigenous territories through singular historical narratives. Creatively exploring the historical layers of places reveals the complex interplay between colonial structures and stories that propagate pedagogies of erasure within public spaces. Artistic counter-cartographies and storytelling practices articulated in this paper challenge settler notions of occupation to decolonize Australian historiographic pedagogies. The Mparntwe Education Declaration highlights the significance of history for reconciliation, foregrounding shared understandings of 'pastpresent' to stimulate critical provocations when addressing contemporary issues haunted by past injustices. A commitment to truth-telling lives in present-day participatory mappings with locally generated community knowledge as a resistance to the possessed stories of occupation in Australia. In early childhood studies and sites of education, this challenges singular textbook articulations of Indigenous perspectives. Informed by King's (2004) articulations of historiography and pastpresent, I articulate the pedagogical entanglements of sonic ecologies that disrupt dominant historical discourses about colonisation through a series of practice-based vignettes. Critical sound studies offer an interdisciplinary lens to engage with history in slow, polyphonic, and sustained ways, inviting lively and embodied mappings of the echoes and reverberations that dwell within local places, seeking alternative narratives, voices, and experiences of how and where we belong.

Jayson Cooper is an interdisciplinary artist, teacher, and researcher, currently Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at The University of Melbourne. With a rich interdisciplinary background across education, music, and fine arts, Jayson brings a unique perspective to his work, with deep understandings of place-based knowledges 'always already' situated in historical contexts. His scholarship explores public pedagogies, First Nations-Settler relations, and sustainability practices, contextualised within historical frameworks. Accounting educational practices through critical, prismatic ecologies of knowing in the interest of decolonial understandings of Australian history resists singular narratives of conquest. Promoting inclusivity, social justice, and environmental stewardship within education, Jayson's research advocates slow and deep pedagogies of listening that are done with Place in creative ways. This is intensified through his teaching, research, and community engagement which interrogates the historical narratives that shape contemporary contexts, living and learning on stolen land.

[jayson.cooper@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jayson.cooper@unimelb.edu.au)

**Lisa Cooper**

*Independent Scholar*

### **Forced Labour: Papua New Guineans and Australia's war graves effort during the Pacific War**

Our knowledge and understanding of the role of Papua New Guineans during the Pacific War is limited, extending largely to the carrying of supplies and of course the care and transport of Australia's sick and wounded soldiers. It is this work that earned them high praise and the respect of Australians for their strength and compassion, a respect that continues today. However the truth about the role of Papua New Guineans during the Pacific War remains largely untold. This paper will examine the role of Papua New Guineans in the Australian Army's effort to deal with the dead of this war in New Guinea. With Australia's war graves units limited in strength, local villagers became a useful commodity, relied upon to provide labour not only to assist in searching for the dead and creating and maintaining war cemeteries, but to carry out the distasteful work of handling and transporting remains, sometimes over large distances. Though both the labour and local knowledge provided by Papua New Guineans was critical to the war graves effort, the conditions of this work were insensitive at best and exploitative at worst. Only by examining the work carried out by Papua New Guineans in Australia's war graves effort can we better understand the impact this work had on the men themselves as well as their relatives and descendants.

Dr Lisa Cooper is a historian and writer specialising in Australia's experience of the Second World War. Lisa was awarded First Class Honours in History at Deakin University in 2017 with her thesis titled 'Remembering Lark Force: Grief, loss, and multi-generational commemoration' before graduating with a PhD in 2023, also at Deakin University, with her thesis titled 'A "most heartbreaking job": caring for the dead of Australia's war against Japan'.

[lisacooper.historian@gmail.com](mailto:lisacooper.historian@gmail.com)

**Rachael Cottle**

*La Trobe University*

**'A Page for Womenfolk': the representation of women in The Victorian Railways Magazine**

This paper draws on evidence found in the Victorian Railways employee journals to explore how the representation of women reflects the employment of women in the Victorian Railways. Women were employed in the Department of Victorian Railways in over 30 roles, including Gatekeeper, Station mistress, Waiting-room-attendants, Clerks, Porters and in workshops. Despite the diversity of positions, women of the VR were typically represented publicly in administrative jobs and domestic roles as staff of the Refreshment Services Branch. An analysis of The Victorian Railways Magazine and The Victorian Railways Newsletter provides an insight into how women employed by the railways were viewed and treated by the Department

Rachael Cottle is a PhD candidate at La Trobe University. Her research aims to trace the history of women in the Victorian Railways and position this study within women's labour history in Australia. She holds a Master of Cultural Heritage from Deakin University.

R.Cottle@latrobe.edu.au

**Lorinda Cramer**  
*Deakin University*

**Contribution to panel "The Future of Academic History in Australia"**

lorinda.cramer@deakin.edu.au

**Robert Crawford**

*RMIT University*

**'Not what they used to be...': Department stores and the challenges of the past**

Over the last two decades, Australia's major department stores have been struggling. The once dominant retailers have become a shadow of their former selves, having progressively decreased the number of outlets, the size of these stores, and the range within them. While these actions have been pragmatic responses to the harsh realities of changing retail patterns and trends, they have not necessarily been embraced by shoppers or, indeed, staff. A common refrain is that department stores aren't what they used to be. Such claims invite historical consideration. Drawing on oral history interviews conducted with past and current department store shoppers and staff, this paper examines the historical basis of such refrains. In exploring the disconnect between the past and present experiences, this paper also reflects on the role that historians can play in revealing deeper 'home truths' to industries that prioritise current and future trends and developments.

Robert Crawford is Professor of Advertising in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University. His research focuses on the growth and historical development of the advertising, marketing, and public relations industries nationally and internationally. His most recent book is 'Oral History and Business: Disruption and Continuity' (Routledge, 2023 – co-authored with Matthew Bailey).

Robert.Crawford@rmit.edu.au



**Harrison Croft**

*Monash University*

### **Unloading the Sheep at Birrarung/Yarra River: Multispecies Entanglements and Invasion**

Cows and sheep introduced to southeast Australia by settler-colonists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were social and ecological agents. They trampled and denuded Country and prevented murnong/yam daisy from being cultivated in the light soils. At the same time, they presented a new food source to the Kulin whose traditional hunting grounds were at that time being fenced and overrun by pastoralists arriving from Van Diemen's Land. The existing literature has not always unraveled the distinct complicities of the quadrupeds and the Vandemonians who brought them. In this paper I argue that although the deleterious effects of sheep on Country were many, ultimately it was the humans—not the nonhumans—who should shoulder the blame in the historiography. I also point to moments of sheep and cow objection that may be interpreted as resistance to the newcomers' acts towards them and towards Country. In this paper I make clearer the agencies of human and nonhuman historical actors. This paper explores the arrivals of sheep to the banks of Birrarung/Yarra River since 1835. I use, among others, Francis Bride's Letters from Victorian Pioneers to track the arrivals and the rapid establishing of pastoral runs throughout southeast Australia and argue that while the sheep here were caught up in Invasion, they were not at the vanguard by choice.

Harrison Croft is a PhD candidate at the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre, Monash University, on unceded Boon Wurrung Country. His research interests are in environmental, climate, and more-than-human histories, and his PhD thesis is investigating changing human, animal, and plant relationships with Birrarung/Yarra River. Harrison is Monash's HDR co-representative and co-editor in chief of Eras.

Harrison.Croft@monash.edu

**Martin Crotty**

*University of Queensland*

Contribution to panel "The Future of Academic History in Australia"

m.crotty@uq.edu.au

**Nancy Cushing**

*University of Newcastle*

### **Possums, Opossums and Making Oneself at Home**

Antipodean possums and American opossums are distantly related marsupial cousins who were reunited in 1770 by Joseph Banks' naming practices. Perceiving a commonality between an animal he killed in far north Queensland and those others had encountered in eastern North America, Banks applied a name to the gulaan of the Guugu Yimidhirr people that had originated a hemisphere away with the speakers of Algonquian languages. In doing so, he created a connection that might not otherwise have been made. But perhaps there was some logic to this. In the centuries since Banks' intervention, some species of both the possum (order Diprotodontia) and the opossum (order Didelphimorphia) have proven themselves to be readily adaptable to colonised environments. Many of them have thrived even to the extent of having the title of pest conferred upon them, a shorthand for flourishing in ways not endorsed by dominant human groups. These o/possums have a true talent for making themselves at home in new contexts, whether by adapting to changes in their original environments or by habituating themselves to new places. This paper will explore the degree to which this homemaking success has been met with hospitality from the humans who also make claims to these spaces, and how and why this has varied in four national settings: Australia, Brazil, New Zealand and the United States.

Nancy Cushing is Associate Professor of History at the University of Newcastle, Australia on Awabakal and Worimi country. An environmental historian whose interests range from coal mining to human-other animal relations, she was co-editor of *Animals Count: How Population Size Matters in Animal-Human Relations* (Routledge 2018). Her current project is *A New History of Australia in 15 Animals* (Bloomsbury). In 2024 and 2025, she is the Coral Thomas Fellow at the State Library of NSW, researching the non-human animals of Sydney. Nancy is on the executives of the AANZEHN and the AHA. She can be found on X as @ncushing12 and Facebook as @History at Newcastle.

nancy.cushing@newcastle.edu.au

**Sam Dalgarno**  
*UNSW Sydney*

### **'The right to decide their own future': the Keane Report and the early years of Aboriginal self-determination in New South Wales**

When in October 2023 the Australian people voted down the proposal for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, the referendum result arguably pointed to a home truth—that this was consistent with Australia's history of rejecting Indigenous demands for self-determination. Indeed, while self-determination has been the policy of Australian governments for much of the last 50 years, its perceived failure led some, like the prominent Referendum Council member Megan Davis to state in 2016, seven years prior to the referendum, that 'Australia has rejected self-determination – freedom, agency, choice, autonomy, dignity – as being fundamental to Indigenous humanness and development'. This paper will consider whether the perception of self-determination's 'failure' is reflected in the implementation, in the early 1980s, of New South Wales's attempt at such a policy. The policy shift, born out of a pair of parliamentary reports authored by Maurice Keane, recommended a move away from the concept of 'assimilation' to the principle that Aboriginal people should 'decide their own future on the basis of 'self-determination''. The paper will therefore explore how the second Keane report in particular conceptualised self-determination with reference to the types of measures he and his committee recommended, and how the NSW government and bureaucracy responded. In the policy's infancy, what did the NSW government do under the label of Aboriginal self-determination? And, to what extent did these actions enable sharing of state power, or decision-making authority, with Aboriginal people?

Sam Dalgarno is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of New South Wales. He is working on a history of the governance of Aboriginal self-determination in New South Wales from 1980.

samuel.dalgarno@gmail.com

**Jonathon Dallimore**

*History Teachers' Association of NSW*

### **Straws in the Water: Revisiting the Barcan-Macintyre Debate about Secondary School History**

In 1997, the historians Alan Barcan and Stuart Macintyre conducted a brief debate about secondary school History in the Australian Journal of Education. Their key aim was to explore the problem of declining enrolments in senior History courses across Australia. Writing from different political and professional backgrounds, the two men presented their unique diagnoses and offered some possible solutions to combat what both considered to be an alarming situation. This session uses the Barcan-Macintyre exchange to raise questions about the past 50 years of secondary History education in Australia using New South Wales as the main case study. It begins by placing the Barcan-Macintyre debate in its historical context by exploring some of the major developments in school History from the 1970s. It then attempts to summarise the key ideas put forward by Barcan and Macintyre and asks whether much (if anything) has changed in the 25 years since their debate in 1997. The session finishes by attempting to capture some of the current challenges in secondary school History education with an aim to make a small contribution to the important and continuing discussion around the question: what is to be done?

Jonathon Dallimore is a secondary History teacher who currently works as the Executive Officer (Professional Services) for the History Teachers' Association of NSW. He teaches History methods courses for pre-service History teachers at the University of NSW and the University of Wollongong and has a keen interest in the history of secondary school History in NSW and Australia. He completed a Masters thesis (History) through UNSW (ADFA) and regularly contributes to school textbooks in NSW.

jonathon.dallimore1@gmail.com

**Cody Davis**

*University of New England*

**'I'm Beginning to Fear Australia has been Torpedoed': Prolonged Epistolary Silences and the Australian Husband at War**

Writing from the Western Front in September 1917, the Australian Lieutenant James Clement Burgess expressed a sense of disappointment to his wife after having received no letters from her for ten weeks, humorously stating that 'I'm beginning to fear Australia has been torpedoed'. Burgess' expression was unique in the satirical language he employed but expressed a common anxiety many men had throughout their military service: the fear of being forgotten. Their only tangible link with home, the coveted letter, was the imperfect vehicle by which soldiers could sustain their relationships with their families while also staying informed of happenings back home. For married men, their departure from Australia was the cause of considerable feelings of uncertainty and anxiety with the welfare of their families being left to the care of relatives, state apparatuses, public charity, and the dedication of their wives themselves. The prolonged delay between sending a letter and receiving a response complicated the ability of these men to sustain their presence in their households with the same immediacy afforded to Britons and, to a lesser extent, Canadians. It has been discussed in recent historiography, the effects of distance upon the correspondence of soldiers were known and widely felt by both those at the front and those at home. What this paper seeks to do is to examine the effects Australia's distance from the battlefields of Europe and Asia on the epistolary habits of married Australian soldiers when compared with their British and Canadian counterparts.

Cody Davis is a PhD Candidate at the University of New England and his research focus is on marital identities of married soldiers from the British World serving during the First World War. He is due to complete his PhD studies in May 2024.

cdavis31@myune.edu.au

**Kate Davison**

*University of Edinburgh*

## **Truth and Reconciliation: A Useful Framework for Historic LGBTQ+ Aversion Therapy Practices?**

Spurred by public campaigns for bans on so-called 'conversion therapy' in various countries, survivors of historic practices, including aversion therapy, at public hospitals and universities in the 1960s and 1970s have begun to come forward with stories of past harms and lingering effects. This is raising ethical questions for how institutions dedicated to care and education, should account for their historic complicity in the pathologisation of queer sexuality and trans identity. What responsibilities do such institutions have, and to whom? How and when should historic practices be investigated and framed? Is a 'truth and reconciliation' model inspired by post-Apartheid South Africa an appropriate tool? Are apologies desirable, and what purpose do they serve? In this paper, I investigate these questions in light of recent action taken by two universities in the UK. In 2021-2022, following a media interview with a man who claimed to have been subjected to aversion therapy there in the 1960s, Birmingham University (UK) commissioned a research report and ultimately issued a public apology for past harms. Although the report found only minimal evidence of the practice occurring there, the university had hired two of the world's most prolific aversion therapists who had shifted focus from clinical to academic research, and supported them as they processed and published results of aversion therapy experiments carried out at a Manchester University-affiliated hospital prior to their appointment. Now Manchester University has commissioned its own report. Should other universities, such as the University of New South Wales, follow suit?

Dr Kate Davison is Lecturer in the History of Sexuality at the University of Edinburgh. She was previously Lecturer in Queer History at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her first book, *Aversion Therapy: Sex, Psychiatry and the Cold War*, will be published by Cambridge University Press.

kate.davison@ed.ac.uk

**Laura Dawes**

*Australian National University*

### **The Brych Affair: Promotion and control of cancer quack Milan Brych**

In 1978, self-proclaimed cancer 'doctor' Milan Brych set up a clinic in the Cook Islands offering a treatment that Brych claimed could cure 80% of terminal patients. Patients from Australia and New Zealand flew to Rarotonga to have the \$12,000 treatment – at least one sold her house to pay for it. It was, however, one of Australia's most prominent cases of quackery. Most of Brych's patients died within months and were buried in the Rarotonga cemetery, which became known locally as the 'Brych Yard'. Given the contemporary interest in medical misinformation and the key role of historians in bringing enriched understandings of the past to assist in confronting contemporary challenges, it is timely to consider the Brych Affair. This paper looks at this notable case of cancer quackery, what Brych claimed his treatment was, his communication strategies and the role of the media, and what motivated his patients to seek his treatment and advocate for him. Further, the Brych Affair raised significant legal and public interest challenges, answered by the Commonwealth Government with bold – but constitutionally questionable – legislation. Drawing on historical scholarship on quackery, regulation of the medical profession, and contemporary studies on misinformation, this paper considers issues of media ethics and regulation, terminal patients' rights, and legal responses.

Dr Laura Dawes is a Research Fellow at the Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science at ANU. She specialises in the history of modern medicine and the law, and is particularly interested in cancer in Australia, including cancer quackery. Laura is the author of 'Childhood Obesity in America: Biography of an Epidemic', 'Fighting Fit: The Wartime Battle for Britain's Health', as well as writing for magazines, radio, journals and TV documentaries.

Laura.Dawes@anu.edu.au



**Jackson Dehring**  
*Monash University*

## **The Latins d’Afrique: The legacy of Napoléon III’s latinité and settler-colonialism in French Algeria**

Australia’s origins as a settler-colonial nation still exists as a ‘home truth’, one that contests other notions of multiculturalism or Australia being a ‘post-racial’ nation. But Australia is one of many settler-colonies developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – French Algeria remains a striking example, with a multitude of ‘home truths’ discussed in France today. The French law of 23 February 2005, for example, requested that school programs ‘recognise especially the positive role of the French overseas presence, especially in North Africa’. While many debates regarding the nature and brutality of the French rule in Algeria rage on today, another question must be considered. How French were the settlers in French Algeria? Recent scholarship suggests the settler population in the area was not nearly monolithic as previously considered, instead being a complex amalgamation of various Latin national and linguistic identities – French, Spanish, Italian and even Maltese – forming a transnational ‘neo-Latin’ or ‘Algérien’ community. I argue that this shared Latin identity, or ‘latinité’, finds its roots in the political endeavours of Napoleon III, who imagined a confederation of Latin nations under the French Second Empire. Furthermore, I posit that Napoleon III’s imperial justification of latinité was later co-opted by the colons in Algeria to indigenise themselves and to legitimate European control over Algeria. This project focuses on the experiences of European settlers in French Algeria from the sénatus-consulte of 1863 to 1914.

Jackson Dehring is a first-year history student studying his PhD at Monash university. He received both his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Research degrees from Macquarie University, where he wrote a diplomatic history of Napoleon III and the Luxembourg Crisis for his MRes thesis, describing Luxembourg as a contested Franco-German borderland. His current field of research concerns Napoleon III and the Second French Empire, the diversity of settler populations in French Algeria, and the concept of ‘latinité’, or pan-Latinism.

[jackson.dehring@mq.edu.au](mailto:jackson.dehring@mq.edu.au)

**Ashley Dennis-Henderson**

*University of Adelaide*

## **Using Digital Techniques to Provide Collective Insights into the Experiences of Australian World War I Soldiers**

Various mathematical and computational techniques have been developed over the years to assist with the automatic analysis of textual documents. Whilst these techniques are often used on modern data sets such as movie reviews, they can also provide useful insights when applied to historic documents. Applying these techniques allows us to analyse large amounts of historic text in a shorter time frame than what can be achieved through traditional close reading. This work will focus on a set of Australian World War I diaries and letters held by the State Library of New South Wales. These documents have been digitised and transcribed, and can now be analysed using digital methods. Three methods will be focused on in this paper: topic modelling, sentiment analysis, and network analysis. Topic modelling will be used to automatically identify topics within the text, and the words that are associated with these topics. Sentiment analysis will be used to automatically detect emotion words within the text and give a score identifying if the document has an overall positive, neutral, or negative sentiment. Finally, network analysis allows us to see the connections between nodes of interest, in this case singular documents or diary entries. These techniques are used to search for patterns of interest within the text, which are then explored further through close reading.

Ashley is currently in the final year of her Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Adelaide. Her project focuses on how mathematical and computational analysis techniques can be applied to historic documents, in particular Australian World War I diaries and letters. Ashley's research interests include natural language processing, network analysis, optimisation, and the history of World War I. She has also completed a Diploma in Arts majoring in History.

ashley.dennis-henderson@adelaide.edu.au

**Alexandra Dixon**  
*Griffith University*

**Contribution to panel “Intercultural histories and decolonising methods in an era of Truth-Telling”**

Alex Dixon is a settler-colonial Australian with Greek-Anglo heritage living in Meanjin on Jagera and Turrbal Country. For the past decade, she has worked with First Nations communities across Australia in history writing; water management and policy; community development; education and design. Much of this experience has been in Brewarrina on Ngemba Country and nearby Weilmoringle (Murrwarri Country) and continues to volunteer and work for these communities. She has worked in partnership with other First Nations communities on various projects, including consultation for New South Wales water policy. She completed her Masters in Aboriginal History at Monash University (2014) and is currently a PhD Candidate in the Australian Rivers Institute, Griffith University.

[alexandra.dixon4@griffithuni.edu.au](mailto:alexandra.dixon4@griffithuni.edu.au)

**Endre Domaniczky**

*Ferenc Madl Institute of Comparative Law, Hungary*

**'They are the rightful owners of the land' How the Australian indigenous people were seen in the early-20th-century Hungary**

Hungary is a small, landlocked country in the heart of Central Europe. In the second half of the 19th century, the country underwent a period of great development, and from the end of the 19th century more and more Hungarian travellers reached the more distant parts of the world. Little direct experience of Australia had previously been available, mainly thanks to the accounts of the ex-soldiers of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, who visited the continent in the wake of the Victorian gold rush. However, in the 25 years between 1890 and 1914, four Hungarian travellers had the opportunity to visit Australia and gain a more in-depth knowledge of the country. Two of the four, Charles Gubanyi (1867-1935) and Count Peter Vay (1863-1948), also focus on the Australian indigenous people, in many cases with photographs showing their lives, their way of life and the situation they found themselves in after the Europeans settled and established the state. In my presentation, I would like to share the – surprisingly complex – reflections of these two Hungarian travellers on the indigenous people.

Endre Domaniczky (1979) graduated in law and history from the University of Pécs, Hungary (2004), and wrote his doctoral thesis on legal history (2009) He made his habilitation at international law (2023). Between 2011 and 2019 he served three terms as a consul in Australia, about which he has published four books in Hungarian and English. Currently working at the Ministry of Justice in Hungary as a senior researcher. His last book (came out in 2023) is a biography of a Hungarian president, Ferenc Mádl who was originally a professor of law.

edomaniczky@gmail.com

**Paige Donaghy**

*University of Melbourne*

### **'When her ship was laden with wares, then she could take in passengers': Pregnant Women's Sexuality in Early Modern England**

In Lisa Jardine's groundbreaking study of women in early English drama, *Still Harping on Daughters* (1983), she remarked that 'the pregnant woman is the Renaissance image of female sexuality'. Despite Jardine's keen observation, there has been little research into ideas about early modern pregnant women's sexual desires, or how pregnant women were perceived as erotic or desirable. This is striking considering the visibility of pregnant women in this period, and the frequency of debates about whether married couples should have intercourse during pregnancy. While some early moderns believed that a woman's pregnancy meant she could more readily and happily 'take in passengers', others denounced sexual relations between married couples during pregnancy, calling it 'marital whoredom'. In this paper, I revisit Jardine's observation about pregnant women's sexuality, to canvass ideas about pregnant sexuality in early modern England, across domains such as medicine, popular culture, life writing and religious thought. I suggest that close analysis of pregnancy sex reveals fresh insights into perceptions of the maternal body and sexuality, and the boundaries of 'natural' and 'unnatural' sexuality, particularly for heterosexuality and masturbation in this period. More broadly, this paper also aims to provoke further reflection on the history of pregnant sexualities in general, as pregnant people are arguably underexplored figures in the history of sexuality.

Dr Paige Donaghy is an award-winning early career researcher who studies the history of reproduction, medicine and culture in Europe ca. 1500 to 1800. She completed her PhD at the University of Queensland in 2022, and her thesis presents the first history of false generation (such as false conception and pregnancy) in early modern Europe. Donaghy has published on sexuality, gender and medicine in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, *Social History of Medicine*, and *Isis*. In mid-2024 Donaghy will take up a McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellowship at The University of Melbourne, to start a project investigating connections between about obstetric violence, gender and emotions in early modern Europe.

paige.donaghy@outlook.com

**Peter Donovan**

### **The history of a history business**

Peter Donovan reflects on the 40-year history of his history consulting business, highlighting opportunities taken, others missed, along with successful initiatives and others not so successful. The paper highlights the diversity of consulting opportunities available for historians outside the academy and outlines strategies for maximising these.

Peter Donovan, BA (Hons), MA, HonD.Lit, studied history at the University of New England, and Flinders University of South Australia, and taught history at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and at Flinders University. He later studied at the International Architectural Conservation, Rome. Peter was a founding member and inaugural president of the Professional Historians Association (SA) in 1980. Peter established his history consultancy in 1980, with core businesses being commissioned histories, oral history and heritage assessment. Projects have been undertaken in all states and territories for clients that have come from all levels of government, and small and large organisations including major national companies throughout Australia: Peter has written more than 60 books and numerous project reports. The University of New England awarded Peter an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters in 2014 for his pioneering work in professional history.

[donovanassociates@bigpond.com](mailto:donovanassociates@bigpond.com)

**James Dunk**

*University of Sydney*

### **Psychology and Planetary Crisis, 1945–65**

In the middle years of the twentieth century, alarmed warnings of resource depletion, runaway industrial pollution, and nuclear annihilation, as well as moral and spiritual collapse, came from various quarters. Ecologists, internationalist bureaucrats, philosophers and futurists developed a new, troubled planetary consciousness – a world newly joined and now newly threatened by the rapid spread of industrial capitalism and new technology, steeply growing population and consumption rates, and related increases in environmental ruin and social unrest. The same years saw the emergence of a gamut of new psychologies and therapeutic frameworks: humanistic and existential psychology and Gestalt therapy, which in different ways sought to clarify the situation of the individual psyche in the sweep of world history. The same years also saw a psychological retreat from the world: radical behaviorism and the ascendancy of cognitive psychology. This paper interprets these developments in psychology in light of the emerging crisis consciousness, elicited by new knowledge of the deteriorating planetary environment. In addition, it maps those areas adjacent to formal psychology and psychotherapy where human health, wellbeing, and self-making were seen to be shifting in the shadow of the newly looming planet.

Dr James Dunk is a research fellow in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Sydney. His research, teaching and writing explore how health and wellbeing are being transformed during the ecological crisis. He is planetary mental health lead on the ARC project Planetary Health Humanities: Developing Concepts, convenes a community of practice exploring dialogical and arts-based solutions for climate distress, and is co-director of the Ecological Emotions Research Lab. His articles appear in various history, psychological and medical journals as well as literary magazines, and *Bedlam at Botany Bay* (NewSouth 2019), a study of madness and mental illness in early colonial Australia, won the NSW Premier's History Prize and was shortlisted for the Ernest Scott Prize and the University of Queensland Non-Fiction Book Award at the Queensland Literary Awards.

james.dunk@sydney.edu.au

**Richard Dunley**  
*UNSW Canberra*

### **Let's Not Be Suckers Again: Legacies of First World War Propaganda in the United States, 1919–41**

'The question is whether we have learned enough to withstand the barrage of propaganda to which we have been subjected ever since this war began'. For Charles Lindbergh, speaking before an American First gathering in Minneapolis in 1941, this was the crucial question facing the United States. By this point the majority of Americans believed that foreign propaganda was the primary reason why the United States had entered the First World War in 1917, a decision many saw as a dreadful mistake. Twenty years later Europe was ablaze again, and the position of the United States was hotly contested. This paper will briefly explore some of the legacies of British propaganda conducted in the United States in the First World War. It will look at the shifting public awareness and perception of that campaign, and how this intersected with the growth of revisionist attitudes towards the war. It will then go on to briefly consider how this legacy became a crucial element in the discussions in the later 1930s and early 1940s around American neutrality, and possible involvement in the next European conflagration.

Richard Dunley is a Senior Lecturer in History at UNSW Canberra where his research focuses on British military and diplomatic history in the first half of the twentieth century. He is currently completing a monograph on British propaganda and the Anglo-American relationship in during the First World War, and is sounding out his next project looking at legacies of propaganda.

r.dunley@unsw.edu.au



**Penny Edmonds**

*Flinders University*

Heidi Ing, *Flinders University*

### **Networks and Mobilities: Humanitarian Tour to the Antipodes**

Using a rich dataset drawn from published reports, archival journals, and maps, this project visualises the journeys of humanitarians James Backhouse and George Washington Walker on their tour to investigative empire in the Antipodean colonies in the 1830s, at a key moment in imperial reform. This project derives from a Future Fellowship project titled 'Reform in the Antipodes'. The nine-year humanitarian investigative tour of Backhouse and Walker lends itself well to visual representation. Via their geographic mobility, Backhouse and Walker utilised and created networks across empire, connecting colonial officials, governors, reformers, dissenters, mariners, convicts, and First Nations people. This project draws out a diverse imperial and antipodal network of actors and contextualises them in time and space. Our goal is to make visible the dense multidirectional networks generated by this tour, revealing the movement and meeting of people and information. Through a series of case studies, we show how the travellers visited hotspots of empire during and after frontier violence, sites which are generative of much contemporaneous text and information, and we explore how these can be overlaid with other mapping within the TLCMap project, such as the University of Newcastle's Australian massacre map. Using multilayers, we are able to show, for example, each time they were in contact with convicts, or the locations of those who received copies of the 1837 House of Commons Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements), hot off the press, sent by Backhouse back to the colonies, revealing the curious afterlife of this key report.

Penny Edmonds is Matthew Flinders Professor of History at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia. Her research is in the areas of Australian colonial history, British imperial history, Indigenous and settler colonial histories, humanitarianism, reconciliation and heritage. She also has a professional background in museums. Her book *Settler Colonialism and Reconciliation: Frontier Violence, Affective Performances, and Imaginative Refoundings* (Palgrave 2016) was shortlisted for the AHA/University of Melbourne's Ernest Scott Prize for best book in Australian and NZ colonial history.

penny.edmonds@flinders.edu.au

Ray Edmondson

## A 'crime against society': the contested birth of the National Film and Sound Archive

That operation had all the characteristics of rape: the cynicism, the utter lack of scruple and the plain treachery that accompanied that particular crime against society. We were certainly outgunned and outmanoeuvred. We were indeed rolled by experts.' So wrote Harrison Bryan four years after the National Library lost its film and sound archive functions in 1984, while he was Director General. The assertion that underhanded 'sectional interests' were behind the creation of the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) for their own benefit was by then set in corporate mythology. Was Bryan right? During a campaign that reached fever pitch in Parliament and the media in late 1983, the Library vigorously opposed the Hawke Government's sympathy for a new kind of institution to manage the nation's audiovisual heritage. Bryan later claimed that after nearly fifty years of pioneering achievement, the Library had been targeted by a high pressure lobby coveting control of its film archive – and that his Council's own advisory committee, aided and abetted by 'quisling' staff, was at the centre of the plot. This paper reviews what happened during that campaign, the climax of a decades-long saga during which the film, television and sound recording communities expressed ever-mounting concern about the National Library's perceived inadequacies. In the NFSA's 40th anniversary year, it is timely to revisit an institutional and political drama of advocacy, ethics and loyalty. How does a memory institution engage in truth telling?

Ray Edmondson OAM PhD is an international authority on audiovisual archiving and documentary heritage, and occasional consultant to UNESCO. From 1968 to 1984 he led the embryonic National Film Archive within the National Library, and was Deputy Director of its successor, the National Film and Sound Archive until 2001, when he retired and was made the Archive's first Curator Emeritus. In 1996 he became the founding president of the South East Asia Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA). He has occupied diverse roles within UNESCO's Memory of the World program and has received lifetime achievement awards from academic and professional bodies in Australia, South East Asia, India, Brazil, USA and Mexico. His books include *Australia's Lost Films* (co-author, 1982) and the widely translated *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles* (UNESCO, third edition 2016). His doctoral thesis *National Film and Sound Archive: the Quest for Identity* was completed in 2011.

ray@archival.au

**Ruby Ekkel**

*Australian National University*

**To protect and preserve: native species conservation and women's work for animal welfare, 1877–1921**

Scholars including Harriet Ritvo and Diana Donald have established the significance of women in the emergence of the international animal protectionist movement in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Australia, another form of animal advocacy was taking shape, as scepticism about 'topsy-turvy' marsupials gave way to nationalistic affection and concern: native species conservation. Little attention has so far been granted to the intersections of these causes. This paper will draw out the entanglements of native species conservationism with women's animal protectionism, examining in particular the case of a Tasmanian zookeeper whose transnational career spanned these domains in paradoxical ways. Despite commissioning the violent removal of animals from their natural habitats, and shipping live thylacines and other endangered native animals to distant zoos, Mary Grant Roberts was lauded by the RSPCA. She was held up as an exemplar of a maternal and philanthropic woman who had succeeded in keeping thylacines and Tasmanian devils where many men had failed before her, and who encouraged kindness to animals in children. Roberts highlights the ways in which conservationism could clash and coalesce with women's animal welfare work. Her encounters with animals invite questions about animal care and cruelty in settler colonial contexts, where distinctions between 'native' and 'invasive' were highly fraught.

Ruby Ekkel is a PhD candidate at Australian National University. Her research focuses on changing attitudes towards and interactions with native animals, especially as mediated by women. She has published and presented on topics spanning animal history, environmental history, and women's history in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Ruby is an HDR Representative for the Australian Historical Association Executive.

[ruby.ekkel@anu.edu.au](mailto:ruby.ekkel@anu.edu.au)

**Janine Evans**

*James Cook University*

### **Returning to Waalumbaal Birri (Endeavour River): the site of Cook's Endeavour repair and place of European botanising**

Lieutenant James Cook's Endeavour expedition visited the east coast of the Australian continent in 1770 and spent most of its time at Waalumbaal Birri, or what is now known as the Endeavour River Valley. That extended stay in the tropical far north of the Australian east coast enabled the scientific complement on the voyage to collect, observe, describe, and record plant genera and species for science. Their botanising marked a pivotal moment in the history of Australian botany that provided valuable insights into the rich biodiversity of the flora of the far north-eastern extremity of the continent. That diversity of plants the naturalists found offered up a wealth of collections, drawings, and records that helped shape our understanding of the complexity of ecological systems. Yet, despite the importance of the scientific nature of the expedition, and Cook earlier naming Botanist's Bay near present-day Sydney, European interest in the far north was not sustained in the wake of the Endeavour voyage. This paper explores, and seeks to explain, European contact (or rather, lack of contact) with the Endeavour River region in the period after the enthusiastic visit by the Endeavour's botanists, and their exploration of the botanical riches of Waalumbaal Birri. It draws on written records of botanising in northern Australia from expedition journals and on physical records held in herbaria.

Janine is a PhD candidate at JCU, Cairns. Her research interest is in the history of botanical illustration at the Endeavour River Valley, in northern Queensland, 1770–1999. Her thesis considers plant portraits as methods of knowing nature, as well as their cultural associations. Her study combines the visual culture of plants and history of science using botanical records.

janine.evans1@my.jcu.edu.au

**Jordan Evans**

*Flinders University*

### **'Give Blood. Save Life': The League of Red Cross Societies and the 1974 World Red Cross Day**

The League of Red Cross Societies was one of the pre-eminent global authorities on blood transfusion in the decades after the Second World War. The League's blood transfusion programme was a hub of research, expertise and assistance and its core aims concerned developing and supporting self-sufficient blood services for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This paper examines the 1974 World Red Cross Day which focused on blood transfusion and the role of the donor. This World Red Cross Day was part of a broader global strategy to develop and support National Societies blood transfusions service, seeing the League work in close partnership and employ its network of relationships with National Societies to collaborate on shared projects. The League provided a host of materials to National Societies to with aim of helping National Societies expand their blood transfusion services and spread the voluntary donation message of the Red Cross movement to local communities and populations. The 1974 World Red Cross Day coincided alongside a global campaign to limit the reach and excess of commercial blood operations, which saw the League marshal a coalition of international partners to ensure that voluntary donation became the norm for most blood transfusion services. Through a variety of media strategies, the League sought to utilise the 1974 World Red Cross Day to influence the public about the benefits of voluntary blood donations, a gift based on altruism and charity, core values and principles of the Red Cross Movement.

Jordan Evans is a PhD student at Flinders University in the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. His PhD titled 'New Blood: The role of the League of Red Cross Societies in the development of blood transfusion services in Asian and African post-colonial states from 1946 – 1979' examines the intersection between humanitarianism, technology, and blood during the era of decolonisation.

[jordan.evans@flinders.edu.au](mailto:jordan.evans@flinders.edu.au)

**Taylah Evans**

*Macquarie University*

**'Convicting agents instead of reformers': the campaign and appointment of women police officers in NSW**

The appointment of women police officers in NSW, with the aim to ensure the greater protection of women and children, was a long-held ambition of several women's organisations at the beginning of the twentieth century. Feminist campaigners imagined the role to be welfare-oriented, different to the work carried out by male police. In July 1915, after strenuous campaigning, Australia's first two women police were appointed to the NSW police force. Tasked with specific duties relating to the welfare of women and children, scholars have suggested women police acted as 'maternal guardians' rather than law enforcement. However, an examination of the work of early women police officers challenges this historiographical assumption, revealing their role in the policing of fortune telling, abortion, and drug trafficking in the interwar period. Women police officers' use of more punitive measures accounts for the dissatisfaction expressed by the women's organisations who had campaigned for the position. In exploring the tensions between the feminist aims that shaped women's entry into policing and how women police officers' services were actually used, this paper seeks to reveal the contradictory and highly gendered expectations placed on women in policing in the first half of the twentieth century.

Taylah Evans (she/they) is a recent Master of Research graduate and sessional teaching academic in the Department of History and Archaeology at Macquarie University. Taylah's thesis focused on the appointment of Australia's first women police, however, more broadly, Taylah is interested in the relationship between gender, policing and welfare throughout the twentieth century. Taylah is currently working on preparing to commence a PhD in 2024.

taylah.evans@mq.edu.au

**Ann-Marie Ezzy**

*University of Tasmania*

**'Know ye that We of our special grace and favour have thought to give and grant...':  
Land Grants and the Making of Home in Van Diemen's Land**

In a time of deep and uncomfortable questioning of our past, it was important for me to find my own place in family and location by examining my family at a time of cultural collision during the settlement of Van Diemen's Land/Tasmania. Those who go looking into family history sometimes find a land grant record, a "fact" added to others to build a picture of an ancestor's life. A researcher might even take the time to read through the archaic language, on an often foxed and faded piece of paper. Yet, such a document, like the one given to my own ancestor, is not unproblematic; rather, it is a palimpsest. My paper explores those stories which were overwritten, to acknowledge contexts and other interpretations of official record. By approaching such stories through a focus on the homemaking practices of a convict's family, we can explore how racial, gendered, and classed understandings shaped the way dislocated migrants made homes.

Ann-Marie Ezzy is a PhD candidate at the University of Tasmania. Her research explores the lived spaces of colonial Tasmanian women and children.

AS.Ezzy@utas.edu.au

**Simon Farley**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Deer in Australia: a cultural history**

Populations of wild deer in Australia have exploded in the twenty-first century. In the 2020s, deer are taking up an increasing amount of space in Australians' everyday lives; once elusive, they are now seen on farms, in backyards and, occasionally, even wandering down inner-city streets. As we learn to share our worlds with these creatures, their presence in this continent is in urgent need of historicisation. This paper will synthesise a wide range of sources to provide an overview of the 220-year history of deer in Australia. Deer have borne various meanings for Australians: they have been seen as markers of civilisation, as lucrative commodities, as agricultural and environmental pests, and, most enduringly, as prey. Accordingly, Australians have also meant different things to deer. Adopting an 'ecocentric' perspective and taking cues from more-than-human histories, this paper will both contextualise and complicate recent debates over these species.

Simon Farley is on the verge of completing a PhD in history at the University of Melbourne. His thesis is a cultural history of non-native wildlife in Australia – particularly birds – from the 1820s to the present. His research has been published in the *Journal of Australian Studies* and will appear in the forthcoming *Dhoombak Goobgoowana* (Melbourne University Publishing, 2024).

[sfarley@student.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:sfarley@student.unimelb.edu.au)



**Nicholas Ferns**

*Monash University*

## **The World Bank and Australian Economic Development in the 1950s**

Beginning in 1950, Australia was the recipient of a series of World Bank loans that were aimed at facilitating Australia's ambitious post-war economic development program. Over the course of the next decade, Australia received almost half a billion dollars, which was spent on projects ranging from agricultural improvement, jet airplanes for Qantas, and the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme. Despite playing an influential role in driving Australian development in the 1950s, the role of the World Bank has gone largely ignored by historians. This paper will examine the interactions between Australia and the World Bank in the 1950s, demonstrating that the relationship was of mutual benefit to both Australia and the Bank. Australia was able to obtain crucial US dollars that funded vital development projects, while the World Bank was able to make use of the Australian loans to demonstrate the effectiveness of its lending program. Tracing the changing nature of Australia's relationship with the World Bank over time provides a new way to assess Australia's position in global economic and political processes. Highlighting the role of middle powers like Australia will also correct the misconception that the World Bank was exclusively a tool of American global hegemony. This has the potential to transform existing understanding of the World Bank's origins and internal workings as well as scholarly knowledge of the financial relationships underpinning Australian regional power.

Nicholas Ferns is an ARC DECRA Research Fellow in History and Monash Sustainable Development Institute Affiliate at Monash University. He is a historian of development, empire, and decolonisation with a particular focus on Australia's role in the Asia-Pacific region. His first book examined Australia's colonial rule in Papua New Guinea and foreign aid policy in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. He is now working on his second monograph, which examines Australia's relationship with the World Bank and its impact on development and decolonisation in Australia and Papua New Guinea.

nicholas.ferns@monash.edu

**Karen Filewood**

*Independent Scholar*

### **'Worthy' Women: Power, paternalism and process of the National Shipwreck Relief Society of NSW**

Ideals of paternalism, morality, social status, gender and the deserving poor are well known in the Victorian era. Less familiar is a recognition of their manifestation and their practical implications for women and their families, in an all-male maritime-based benevolent society, after crises takes their breadwinner. To apprehend fully the consequences, we must understand these ideals, the everyday functioning of a society and its members and the lived experience of the women seeking relief. To achieve this understanding, the National Shipwreck Relief Society of NSW has been used as a case study, focussing on their 1877-1883 minute book. This source provides core information to enable biographical research establishing the life experience of everyone involved and giving insight into the charity's management. Investigations revealed the committee to contain the classic middle-class male demographic characteristic of Victorian times, while the women came from a variety of social classes and backgrounds. It also disclosed how contemporary ideals, gender and occupational biases, as well as the publicity and circumstances of crisis, affected benevolent activities, with no regard of women's workload or existing support. Overall, this study offers a new depth of insight into how contemporary ideology, emotional practice and women's benevolence created 'arbitrary altruism'.

I began history research and genealogy in the late 1980s and have been involved in volunteer work for around three decades in the local museum and Coffs Harbour Council's Heritage Executive Committee. Currently I host history and cemetery walks, present my research to various local groups as well as academic conferences and am a Wreck spotter for NSW Office of Environment. After gaining an Advanced Diploma of Local, Family and Applied History, I completed the Bachelor of Historical Inquiry and Practice receiving a New England Award and an Undergraduate Research Summer School scholarship. In 2018 I completed the Bachelor of Arts with Honours at UNE, supervised by Dr Matt Allen and Dr Martin Gibbs and am preparing to do my PhD. I write a fortnightly history column for my local newspaper and occasionally I am employed as a research assistant or undertake independent history research and digital image restoration.

thefilewoods@outlook.com

**Matthew Firth**

*Flinders University*

### **Qualitative Analytics and Historical Research: A Case Study from the Middle Ages**

Qualitative analytics methodologies and software used in the social sciences for interview analyses have potential applications for the examination of historical corpora. Using a hierarchical catalogue system, individual texts are coded to themes, which allows for the production of reports and concept maps that highlight thematic relationships in the data. In this way, it is possible to identify links between texts that might otherwise be obscured, and so hypothesise both the transmission of historical narratives and the points at which historiographical traditions make contact. This method of research allows for the full complexity of history writing networks to be realised and insight into how cultural memory is shaped by its narrators and methods of narration. Importantly, it also offers an innovative methodology for the analysis of non-traditional forms of history writing, promoting a more inclusive approach to historiography. This draws on network theory by emphasising the connections between texts and ascribing equal value to those traditionally considered peripheral. Using accounts of the Danish conquest of England as its case study, this paper will demonstrate how this methodological approach can be mapped onto other historical corpora and histories of conquest.

Matthew is an Associate Lecturer in medieval literature and history at Flinders University. His research focuses on historiography, cultural memory, and the transmission of historical narrative across time and place. With research specialities in the history of early medieval England and in Scandinavian saga literature, he has published numerous articles on various aspects of society and culture in England and Scandinavia in the Middle Ages, and their intersections. His first monograph, a biographical study of English queens in the years 850–1000, was published in the Routledge Lives of Royal Women series in 2024.

matthew.firth@flinders.edu.au

**Emily Fitzgerald**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Lies Your Map Can Tell: Navigating the Story When Creating Historical Maps**

When we create a map, we are telling a story. And, as with other forms of historical narrative, the choices we make when constructing it can change the story we are telling (both intentionally and unintentionally). We are now working in a time where the software to make maps is easily available. These maps can then be powerful tools for historians when working through the information we are pulling together, supporting our analysis, and illustrating our narrative and argument when sharing with others. Place is such an important facet of our histories, and we should be taking advantage of these tools to explore it. At the same time, this paper will demonstrate the need to critically examine the maps we are making, as we make them. The choices that we make when creating a map (or, indeed, any sort of data visualisation) can highlight or de-emphasise a point; can clarify or obfuscate another. This is particularly true with digital maps, which can imply incredible precision when working with incredibly imprecise data. Such choices fundamentally shape the story that is being told by the map, and by the historian who created it. As such, we need to consider and engage with them in the same way we would a map we are using as a historical source.

Emily Fitzgerald is a historian and Research Data Specialist in the Melbourne Data Analytics Platform (MDAP) at the University of Melbourne. Her PhD research on the transnational connection between Australia and the United States during the development of Australian Federation fostered her interest in the digital humanities, where she has a particular affection for creating maps and data cleaning. She is keenly interested in what technological tools and skills can bring to humanities research and what humanities scholars can bring to technological development.

fiej@unimelb.edu.au

**Matthew Fitzpatrick**

*Flinders University*

### **'The End of Paradise': Nazi Views on Australia's Racial Policies**

With a particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on the books and letters of Rudolf Asmis, Germany's Consul General to Australia from 1932 to 1939, this paper assesses the ways in which prominent Germans with a direct line of communication to Berlin discussed racial matters in Australia during the Nazi period. The paper spans their discussion of colonial violence against Indigenous Australians, their understanding of the white Australia policy and Australia's claims to subimperial domination of the Pacific region. It argues that Australia was seen as both an exemplar and an example to be avoided by Nazi officials interested in the questions of race and imperial expansion. It also shows that Australian officials were keen to foster closer ties with Nazi Germany as late as June 1939.

Matthew Fitzpatrick is an ARC Future Fellow and Professor of International History at Flinders University. He is the President of the History Council of South Australia and author of three books covering different aspects of German history. He has twice been a Humboldt Fellow at the Westphalian Wilhelms-University in Münster and is a past recipient of the Chester Penn Higby Prize.

[matthew.fitzpatrick@flinders.edu.au](mailto:matthew.fitzpatrick@flinders.edu.au)

**Simon Fleming**

*Western Sydney University*

**Collaboration or resistance? Transimperial debates about the home and women between Britain and India**

British and Indian political writers in the nineteenth century largely agreed on the relationship between women and the home. 'The home' was a space for spiritual and cultural development, where one could take off their mask and be themselves in contrast to 'the world', a utilitarian place of business, economics, and politics. The categorisation of society in these terms was fundamentally gendered, with men and women assigned their duties in these species. This paper assesses how these ideas traveled back and forth between Britain and colonial India in the nineteenth century. I intend to highlight how the strange similarity of gendered ideas in Britain and India, but I also wish to point out how Indian thinkers resisted particular aspects of British thinking, adapting ideas of the colonisers with their own.

Currently a tutor at Western Sydney University and Charles Sturt University, spending most of my time writing while commuting – or sleeping. Working on finding a publisher for my first book, 'Between John Bulls Legs', and researching the transimperial nature of nineteenth century British politics and the empire.

s.fleming@westernsydney.edu.au

**Prudence Flowers**

*Flinders University*

### **'If the USA can do it, with God's help, so can we': Opposition to Abortion in Twenty-First Century Australia**

The anti-abortion movement has consistently been a tiny element of Australian society which occupies an outsized place in discussions of reproductive health care. While its connection with organised religion has been a primary source of this influence, so too is its relationship with the much larger and more powerful US right-to-life movement, which functions as both a source of inspiration and direct assistance. This paper situates the Australian anti-abortion movement in a transnational context, exploring the historical circulation of people, ideas, and strategies across borders. Over the decades, Australian right-to-lifers have hosted some of the most extreme voices within the US movement, and there has been a consistent tendency to seek out Americans who endorse clinic blockades, civil disobedience, and violence against abortion care providers. But although these controversial speakers excite true believers, they have had a muted impact on the activism of the Australian movement, which is constrained by its national context. The majority of the Australian population is strongly pro-choice and society is more secular and less politically polarised than in the US. Far more influential has been the adoption and amplification of US anti-abortion tropes, particularly the pro-woman frame, along with the tactical emphasis on 'late-term abortions,' 'fetal pain,' and aborted infants 'born alive.' Exploring state and commonwealth debates since 2016, along with US and Australian anti-abortion publications, this paper charts the mainstreaming of US anti-abortion rhetoric by activists and its amplification by conservative politicians and media.

Dr Prudence Flowers (she/her) is a Senior Lecturer in US History at Flinders University. She is a historian of gender, politics, and the body, and has published extensively on the politics and activism of the US anti-abortion movement. Prudence is in the midst of finishing a book on Ronald Reagan, 1980s politics, and modern conservatism, and advancing work on an internationally comparative project on late termination of pregnancy provision in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia. Prudence is the current president of the Australian and New Zealand American Studies Association.

[prudence.flowers@flinders.edu.au](mailto:prudence.flowers@flinders.edu.au)

**Ed Selkirk Ford**

*University of Exeter*

## **Nations Above Parties: The Australian Federation Referendums in an Imperial Context**

In the late 1890s, the Australian colonies undertook a series of radical experiments in direct democracy. These referendums have a well-earned place in this historiography of Australian nationhood and democracy, but their innovation as referendums in a context where ultimate power was assumed to be vested in parliament has not previously been explored in great depth. The significance of these referendums, therefore, goes beyond Australia and they represent the practical result of the transnational intellectual development of ideas of 'democracy' in the late 19th century. Focussing on debates about referendums in Britain and British settler colonies, this paper will examine the ways elements of direct democracy became partially and insecurely enmeshed in theorising about 'the British constitution' as well as about white supremacism, colonial nationalism, and party systems. It was a debate in which philosophers, constitutional theorists, and politicians engaged, and which despite its transnational character, made itself 'at home' in a wide range of different political and social contexts. By paying attention to both the transmission of rhetoric and principle, as well as the deeply contextual and contingent local politics, this paper aims to reinterpret the wider debates about referendums beyond their traditional, purely national framing. In the aftermath of recent referendums in Britain and Australia that have gone against government preferences, this historical context is more relevant than ever.

Ed Selkirk Ford is a PhD candidate and Postgraduate Teaching Associate at the University of Exeter, UK. He works on debates about parliament and representation in the British Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and his dissertation is provisionally entitled 'Parliamentarism and the Construction of the Settler Colonial Nation: The Politics of Representation in Australia and South Africa, 1890-1910'. More broadly, he is interested in the way in which individuals and groups have understood their relationship to political decision-making. Ed also maintains an interest in contemporary constitutional affairs, and is contributing writer for the London-based policy and educational foundation the Constitution Society.

e.s.ford@exeter.ac.uk



**Hannah Forsyth**

*Australian Catholic University*

### **A Woman's Point of View. Banking in the 1970s**

In the 1970s global finance underwent massive upheavals caused by the end of Bretton Woods, the 'legitimation crisis' of stagflation, the growth of money markets and the arrival of derivatives and other new instruments. By the 1980s economist Susan Strange referred to the system as Casino Capitalism – such a contrast to the staid old gentlemanly profession of the previous few decades. At the same time, everyday banking in Australia was changing very rapidly. Computers were replacing ledgers, Australia's first credit card, Bankcard, was introduced, cheques were starting to look like they might disappear and the front line bank worker – tellers, especially, but also many others – was almost certainly a woman. To help bankers navigate the shifting gender norms of the era, between 1977 and 1980 the Australian Banker Magazine included a Woman's Point of View, a column by branch manager Marilyn Longmuir, which sought to normalise the presence of women in banks, at all levels. It was no gender revolution, however. The same issues of the magazine continued to publish cartoons where the key theme was women's financial illiteracy. This paper considers the developing place for women bankers amidst the moral and economic shifts underway in Australia in the 1970s. It argues that contradictory forces grew in the moral-economic system of the 1970s to make a place for women bankers, while also beginning to gender many of the new, complex aspects of finance as masculine 'cowboy' work that actively discarded banking's now-feminised sense of financial probity.

Hannah Forsyth is a historian of work, education and capitalism. She is author of *Virtue Capitalists* (2023) and *A History of the Modern Australian University* (2014). Previously Associate Professor of History at the Australian Catholic University, Hannah now works part-time as Assistant Director in research capacity for Jobs and Skills Australia and writes independently. You can follow her writing at [hannahforsyth.substack.com](http://hannahforsyth.substack.com)

[hannahelise.forsyth@gmail.com](mailto:hannahelise.forsyth@gmail.com)

**Robert Foster**

*University of Adelaide*

**Contribution to panel "The South Australian Frontier and its Legacies"**

Robert Foster is formerly an Associate Prof., now Adjunct Research Fellow in History at the University of Adelaide.

robert.foster@adelaide.edu.au

**Meg Foster**

*University of Technology Sydney*

### **Public History, Current Injustice? Crime, policing and settler colonial Australia**

How does the nineteenth century, Australian colonial past impact Australia's current attitudes to crime and policing? Contemporary crime and policing are affected by a paradox—they suffer from too much and too little history. They have too much history in the sense that current criminological trends—such as racial profiling and disproportionately high numbers of people of colour in prisons, or the high incidence of domestic violence towards women by their male partners—are not new, but parts of longer, colonial histories of race and gender. Contemporary crime and policing have too little history in the sense that these connections between history and current trends are grossly under researched in criminology, and are often rendered invisible in this discipline's overwhelming emphasis on the present over the past. This paper will explore the possibilities offered by integrating public history, social memory and criminology to address this imbalance. Rendering colonial legacies of crime and policing visible, and understanding their ongoing impact, is important. It allows us to actively combat our colonial inheritance, rather than being beholden to it.

Dr Meg Foster is an award-winning historian of banditry, settler colonial and public history. She is currently a Chancellor's Research Fellow at the University of Technology, Sydney, and prior to this, she was a Junior Research Fellow at the University of Cambridge, UK. Foster is an intersectional historian who has experience working across crime, race, and gender histories as well as across colonial, ethnographic, and public histories, and is the author of *Boundary Crossers: The Hidden History of Australia's Other Bushrangers* (Sydney: NewSouth, 2022).

Meg.Foster@uts.edu.au

**Karen Fox**

*Australian National University*

### **A Tale of Two Reputations**

Adam Lindsay Gordon died before his fortieth birthday, but by that time he had already achieved widespread renown. Acclaimed as Australia's 'National Poet' during the 1930s, with a bust on display in Westminster Abbey, by the twenty-first century he had slipped into relative obscurity, and few besides specialists are likely to know his poetry today. Mary Gilmore lived to the age of 97, receiving a damehood in 1937 and a state funeral when she died in 1962. During her later years she was a literary icon, her birthdays publicly celebrated. Nevertheless, although her image still appears on the \$10 note and an award is given annually in her name, her fame too has inevitably faded. Gordon's and Gilmore's lives and afterlives demonstrate that, no matter how malleable truth may seem in matters of fame and celebrity, no person can control their own reputation after death, and an individual's reputation may change in unforeseen ways as the decades pass. In a present era frequently seen as obsessed by celebrity and the desire for fame, and in which the reputations of once-celebrated individuals have been revealed as unstable and shifting, this paper will consider how fame fades. Part of a larger project on the nature of historical reputations in Australia, it asks how famous individuals come to be forgotten and what it takes to be remembered, through a focus on the contrasting figures of Gilmore and Gordon.

Dr Karen Fox is a senior academic research editor for the Australian Dictionary of Biography at the National Centre of Biography in the School of History at The Australian National University. Her most recent book is *Honouring a Nation: A History of Australia's Honours System* (2022), and she is currently researching the making, unmaking, and recasting of historical reputations in Australia.

karen.fox@anu.edu.au

**Ash Francisco**

*Dilin Duwa Centre for Indigenous Business Leadership*

### **The fallacy of the Closing the Gap Agenda – Historical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic participation and government orchestrated disadvantage**

Current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander political affairs are governed by the Closing the Gap agenda, in which every state and the federal government are signatories. How did this come to be so, and whose agenda is it really? What home truths from the past affect the realities of our present? By demonstrating how historically the New South Wales (NSW) state government orchestrated the socio-economic 'gap,' of which the Closing the Gap agenda focuses on, this paper explores the impact of NSW Aboriginal legislation. Through analysing archival records, government reports and literature, it will discuss Aboriginal economic participation in New South Wales (NSW) in the 1940s and the impact of historical legislation on contemporary economic realities. Utilising three key events in NSW that demonstrate the economic orchestration at the time, this paper details NSW legislation which dictated the process and avenues of participation, limiting the scope of opportunity for Aboriginal people throughout the state. It argues that historical legislation designed to limit economic agency and corralling Aboriginal people to the economic margins has led to the 'gap' of which successive governments are both a creator and minder. By demonstrating the groundwork generated by successive NSW state governments to facilitate disadvantage on one hand and drive the Closing the Gap agenda on the other, this paper argues that government-controlled economic agency in a historical context has directly resulted in the lagging economic 'gap' facing Aboriginal people today.

Ash is a proud Wiradjuri woman, published researcher, lecturer and the engagement lead at the Dilin Duwa Centre for Indigenous Business Leadership at the University of Melbourne and Melbourne Business School. She has a PhD in NSW Aboriginal History from the Wollotuka Institute at the University of Newcastle and is an inaugural member of the Yuma Yirramboi Victorian Aboriginal Economic and Employment Council, a board member for Ganbina, and an advisor of Richmond Football Club's reconciliation advisory group and MCA's Bangawarra Art Yarns Reference Group. She lives and works on Taungurung Country in regional Victoria and is committed to advancing regional business connections and opportunities.

[afrancisco@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:afrancisco@unimelb.edu.au)

**Kate Fullagar**

*Australian Catholic University*

**Contribution to panel "The Future of Academic History in Australia"**

Kate Fullagar is Prof. of History at the Australian Catholic University and Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. She is the author of *The Savage Visit: New World People and Popular Imperial Culture in Britain, 1710-1795* (Berkeley, 2012), *The Warrior, the Voyager, and the Artist: Three Lives in an Age of Empire* (Yale, 2020), and most recently *Bennelong & Phillip: A History Unravelling* (Simon & Schuster, 2023).

[kate.fullagar@acu.edu.au](mailto:kate.fullagar@acu.edu.au)

**Kate Fullagar**

*Australian Catholic University*

**Contribution to panel "New Cross-Cultural Histories of Early New South Wales"**

Kate Fullagar is Prof. of History at the Australian Catholic University and Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. She is the author of *The Savage Visit: New World People and Popular Imperial Culture in Britain, 1710-1795* (Berkeley, 2012), *The Warrior, the Voyager, and the Artist: Three Lives in an Age of Empire* (Yale, 2020), and most recently *Bennelong & Phillip: A History Unravelling* (Simon & Schuster, 2023).

[kate.fullagar@acu.edu.au](mailto:kate.fullagar@acu.edu.au)

**Samuel Furphy**

*Australian National University*

### **Matthew Moorhouse and Aboriginal protection policy in South Australia**

Matthew Moorhouse was the first permanent Protector of Aborigines appointed in the Colony of South Australia. He was one of many men appointed to similar roles across Australasia in the years following the British Parliament's Select Committee on Aborigines (1835–6). Based in Adelaide, he served in the role from 1839 until 1856 when his position was abolished. It was a period of flux in colonial Aboriginal policy that was shaped by both metropolitan and local settler politics. This paper will explore Moorhouse's career and asks what it might tell us about the trajectory of Aboriginal policy in South Australia. Taking both a biographical and a comparative colonial approach, it will consider the extent to which Moorhouse was typical or distinctive when compared to other protectors in South Australia and elsewhere. Themes of the paper will include his attitude towards settler–Aboriginal violence; his role as a legal advocate for Aboriginal people; his experiences of educational programs for Aboriginal children; and his scientific interests in Aboriginal people.

Dr Samuel Furphy is a historian based at the Australian National University, where he is a senior academic research editor in the National Centre of Biography and a senior lecturer in the School of History. His research is broadly in the fields of Australian colonial history, Aboriginal history, and biography. Recent publications have focussed on Aboriginal protection in the 19th century and Aboriginal war service in 20th century.

samuel.furphy@anu.edu.au



**Ruth Gamble**

*La Trobe University*

### **A Flood with Many Sources: the Deep-Time, Generational, Colonial and Developmental Histories of Sikkim's 2023 glacial lake outburst flood**

On the fourth of October, 2023, the South Lhonak Glacial Lake burst through the moraine holding it, and its waters cascaded down through the Teesta River Valley. Within hours, they had destroyed the Teesta III Dam and fifteen bridges in Sikkim and West Bengal. By morning, they had deposited unexploded ammunition from a flooded high-altitude army base in a West Bengal village hundreds of kilometres away. At least a hundred people died, and many more are still missing. Most commentators on the flood focused on the disaster's immediate causes: excessive rain, the unmonitored glacial lake, and the lack of communication along the flood's route. This article looks beyond the immediate to examine the historical causes of the flood within multiple temporal scales, including those of deep time, generational indigenous lifeways, and colonial and developmental time frames. It explains how the region's deep-time geological and hydrological cycles created one of Earth's greatest stores of Gravitational Potential Energy, supercharging any flood's power. It then traces the valley's multiple human histories and shows how various groups responded differently to this energy. The valley's Indigenous inhabitants acknowledged the mountain and waters' combined power, but Sikkim's inclusion within the British imperial sphere led to a new way of seeing the Teesta catchment. The British Empire approached Sikkim as both a corridor between Tibet and the Indian Planes and a site of extraction. They used river sand and forest wood to build roads and towns, which enabled the invasion of Tibet to the north and the extraction of Sikkim's resources to the south. The post-colonial independent government (1947–1975) and the post-merger Indian state extended these roads and extractive industries as they sought to secure Sikkim's borders. In the past twenty years, despite intense protests from Indigenous groups who saw them as a threat to their lifeways, dam building has intensified the state's corridor-extraction approach to Sikkim. As the article argues, all these histories created the circumstances for the 2023 GLOF, and approaching such disasters through the lens of multiple temporal frames may provide insights into how future GLOFs can be avoided.

Ruth Gamble is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Archaeology and History at La Trobe University. She is the author of two books on Tibetan history and Rivers of the Asian Highlands: from Deep-Time to the Climate Crisis (Routledge, 2024), which she co-wrote with earth scientists and other humanities scholars. Before coming to La Trobe, she was a post-doctoral fellow at Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich and a fellow at Yale University's School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. She currently holds an Australian Research Council DECRA Fellowship.

R.Gamble@latrobe.edu.au

**Denise Ganly**

*University of New England*

### **The Role of Gentlemen's Clubs in 19th Century Australia: Creating 'Home' Away from Home**

This presentation considers how men used gentlemen's clubs to recreate 'home' in Australia during the 19th century. For British gentlemen, clubs were an essential part of their lives. In founding clubs in the Australian colonies, gentlemen were, in the abstract sense, re-creating a critical part of the 'home' they left behind. In a very literal sense, they were also creating places where they could eat, drink, bathe, socialise, and sleep; Australian clubs were home in almost every sense of the word. Although based on the clubs found in London's clubland, Australian clubs were not carbon copies of British ones and the differences influenced the development of Australian masculinities and clubs and changed the usage of the British clubs.

Ms Ganly is a PhD candidate at the University of New England. Her PhD thesis examines gender, class, and masculinities in the United Kingdom and Australia during the long nineteenth century. It considers the influence of gentlemen's clubs in the creation, maintenance, and subversion of hegemonic masculinities during the period.

dganly@myune.edu.au

**Nathan Gardner**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Settlement as the work of all Australians: The Good Neighbour Councils' role in building grassroots support for immigration and refugee resettlement**

Current research into Australia's community sponsorship schemes for refugee resettlement has highlighted that engaging the good will and resources of the community improves both resettlement outcomes and improved understanding of the settlement needs of refugees. In search of historical examples of this kind of public engagement and good will, this paper examines Australia's network of Good Neighbour Councils (GNCs). In much of the literature about GNCs, historians have focused on GNC-led settlement initiatives and the mixed results they produced while the GNCs' other primary function – promoting positive attitudes towards migration (including refugees) in post-WWII Australia through active community participation – has been left relatively unexplored. Although the recommendation of the 1978 'Galbally Report' to wind up the GNCs appears to provide a degree of validation for the negative views of the GNCs, my aim in this paper is to demonstrate that the report also recognised the value of community engagement in the settlement process; including the GNCs' vast grassroots network of volunteers and the role the GNCs played in positively shifting the attitudes of Australians to migration (non-British included) and refugee resettlement. By drawing on these Galbally materials and historical materials produced by different GNCs, this paper evaluates the extent to which the GNC's objective to build community support was met.

Dr Nathan Gardner is a post-doctoral researcher at the Melbourne Law School (University of Melbourne) and a historian of Australian immigration and multiculturalism. He often relies on non-English language materials to study Australia's diverse ethnic communities. His forthcoming monograph will be published by Sydney University Press and is the first historical study of Chinese Australian communities since the end of the 'White Australia Policy', with a particular focus on the political actions of community organisations and their expressions of 'community unity'. Nathan is currently working as part of an Australian Research Council Discovery Project (with Professor Susan Kneebone, Dr Kate Ogg and Dr Anthea Vogl) to produce a comprehensive examination of the history of community sponsorship and community settlement initiatives for refugee resettlement in Australia.

nathan.gardner@unimelb.edu.au

**Erin Gates**

*Australian National University*

### **Sexism in academia: Dr Marie Reay at the ANU**

Over her career spanning more than five decades, Marie Reay came to be regarded as a well-respected figure in her field of Melanesian anthropology. However, Reay's experiences with authority figures in academia are emblematic of a period during which, by simply existing within the department as a woman, her career in anthropology was radical, and during her lifetime her work was subsequently undervalued and undermined by many of her male colleagues. When Reay's career began, while a female anthropologist was legitimized by male patronage, she was also, to varying degrees, both benefiting from and constrained by male protection. Reay certainly would have felt the pressure to conform to current norms within the discipline, or risk repercussions from her supervisors. This paper will investigate some alternative routes her work may have taken, document some instances of abusive treatment from her superiors and the long-term traumatic impacts of this poor conduct on her mental health, and, finally, articulate the complicated positionality of what it was to be a female anthropologist at the ANU during Reay's career.

Erin came to study history circuitously, with a background in cultural anthropology and museum collections. Through these interests, Erin has recently completed a primarily archival-based PhD focusing on the history of Australian anthropology, Pacific studies, and gender relations in academia. This has resulted in a biography of Australian anthropologist Marie Reay, whose work was undervalued due to both her gender and queerness.

erin@coasthistory.com.au

**Catherine Gay**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Education and exercise books: Girls' schooling in nineteenth-century Victoria**

In 1872, the Victorian government declared that under their new Education Act, all children would receive free, compulsory primary education in state-run schools. Despite numerous barriers posed by ethnicity, class, indigeneity and geography, more Victorian girls than ever before had access to formal education. The likelihood of boys attending school changed little after the Act's implementation, but girls' attendance increased markedly. Girls' private secondary education also expanded, though it was only available to a small number of middle-class and elite girls. How did girls experience school? This paper employs girls' school exercise books to glimpse into the state and privately-run classroom. Exercise books were envisioned as a learning tool, a way for pupils to record and remember a curriculum that aimed to produce useful, neat and dutiful future citizens. Yet, read alongside diaries, letters, memoirs and education archives, surviving exercise books demonstrate that female students used the new opportunities provided by schooling in ways that often contradicted or went beyond adult intentions. Although educators and parents still anticipated marriage and motherhood as the eventual outcome for their female pupils and daughters, exercise books reveal that schoolgirls could pursue academic excellence, imagine future careers and cultivate friendships. Schoolgirls could style themselves as scholars, as future professionals and as friends, developing a sense of self that in some ways contradicted the aims of the education system.

Catherine Gay is a Hansen Trust PhD Scholar in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her doctoral research examines the lives of Aboriginal and settler girls in nineteenth-century Victoria using girl-produced material culture. She has published independent and co-authored articles in Australian and international journals, including *History Australia*, *Postcolonial Studies*, and *The History of the Family*. In 2022 she received the Australian Historical Association's Jill Roe Prize and in 2023 was awarded an inaugural Hansen Little Public Humanities Grant from the University of Melbourne. She has worked as a sessional tutor at the University of Melbourne and Deakin University, as well as a Research Assistant on several projects. Catherine is a Research Associate at Museums Victoria, where she has undertaken several curatorial projects related to her doctoral research.

gayc@student.unimelb.edu.au

**Andrea Gaynor**

*University of Western Australia*

### **A more-than-human history of street trees**

As the effects of climate breakdown are increasingly felt in Australian cities, governments are turning to urban greening to mitigate intensifying urban heat island effects and provide other benefits. These strategies seek to expand and transform the urban tree stock, now described as 'urban forest', that has grown over decades. This paper reports on research that can inform current urban greening by providing a more-than-human history of street trees in Perth and Melbourne from the 1920s to the 1980s. It shows how initial enthusiasm for tree planting was over time tempered by the material reality of living among sometimes unruly trees in a maturing urban forest. While the term 'urban forest' has gained traction in recent years, metropolitan Australians have generally seen themselves as residents of cities or suburbs, not forests, and many have neither understood nor committed to the relationships that forest life entails. In the mid-late twentieth century the experience of living in a maturing urban forest was embodied politically at the local level in conservative decision-making, that valued small and 'well-behaved' trees over other possibilities. A more-than-human history of urban trees illuminates the way in which urban vegetation is co-constituted through local government policy, human residents' attitudes and emotions, broader cultural and technological factors, and the life cycle and particular features of the plants themselves. It also points to the potential for metropolitan Australians to understand themselves as residents of urban savannahs, woodlands and forests, and the benefits and responsibilities this entails.

Andrea Gaynor is a Professor of History and Australian Research Council Future Fellow at The University of Western Australia. An environmental historian, her research seeks to use the contextualising and narrative power of history to assist transitions to more just and sustainable societies. Her current research encompasses histories of nature in Australian urban modernity, water in Australian urbanisation and community-led land management in Australia. Her most recent book, co-authored with six colleagues, is *Cities in a Sunburnt Country: Water and the Making of Urban Australia* (Cambridge University Press 2022).

[andrea.gaynor@uwa.edu.au](mailto:andrea.gaynor@uwa.edu.au)

**Loredana Giarrusso**

*La Trobe University*

### **Robert Hawke, Indigenous Affairs Policy and Contemporary Colonialism 1983–91**

On 5th March 1983 Robert Hawke became Australia's 33rd Prime Minister with the promise of 'Bringing Australia together', emphasising common goals and achievements for the nation. Labor's commitments prior to the 1983 election connected this theme of 'Bringing Australia Together' to the plight of Indigenous Australians, highlighting the significant disadvantages faced by Australia's First Peoples. This gave a real sense that government would confront Australia's colonial history beyond political rhetoric and implement policies that would speak to Indigenous peoples' loss of their lands and sovereignty. This paper examines Hawke's tendency to create a perception of genuine change or progress in Indigenous affairs, without acknowledging the underlying influence of the government's past colonial relationships with Indigenous peoples. Archival records help us to understand how Hawke's commitments and tactical retreats from his government's stated commitments were reflective of embedded contemporary colonialism that it failed to address. It will evaluate the complexity of embedded colonial structures that continue to operate into the present day as evidenced by more recent historical moments as the voice referendum. I argue that governments of any persuasion continue to engage in a process of colonisation in the way in which governmentality itself continues to reinforce embedded colonial structures.

Loredana Giarrusso is a PhD Candidate at Latrobe University, Bundoora in the School of Archaeology and History. She been a lawyer for over 10 years and worked in family law. Lori's research interests include Australian Indigenous policy history, and politics.

lorri22au@yahoo.com.au

**David Goodman**

*University of Melbourne*

**Contribution to panel "Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne"**

David Goodman is Prof. in History in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. He has a BA (Hons), MA and Dip. Ed. from the University of Melbourne and a PhD in History from the University of Chicago. He has taught at the University of Melbourne since 1990, in areas including US history, Australian studies and the history of history/historiography.

d.goodman@unimelb.edu.au



**David Goodman**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Land monopoly and land lottery in comparative perspective**

Australia and the USA both had traditions of anti-monopoly thought and political action, with however significant differences in context and content. Gretchen Ritter argues for a long-standing US 'concern with corruption and economic monopolies, the desire to preserve an independent and virtuous citizenry, and resistance to the extension of special privileges by the state'. This specific critique about political corruption and economic monopoly – the fear that economic monopolies derived from/were sustained by political favor – long dominated the political discussion of monopoly in the US but was arguably less influential in Australia. This paper offers a preliminary look at concerns about 'land monopoly' in the US and Australia. In both societies, there was strong desire that the recently-invaded Indigenous land be rapidly redistributed to settler-colonists in ways that did not reproduce Old World landed aristocratic domination of land ownership. In the state of Georgia, the 1795 Yazoo land scandal (in which legislators accepted bribes from land companies before selling them 35 million acres of land) provoked a strong political response. Georgia held seven land lotteries between 1805 and 1832, on the basis that random distribution to white citizens was the best way to achieve the rapid transfer desired without political corruption or favouritism. There were not government land lotteries in 19th-century Australia, although much newspaper commentary suggested particular land policies amounted to a lottery for land-seekers; private companies did hold land lotteries. Wakefield's influence in Australia meant there was more debate about price than about the desirability of randomising distribution amongst the settler population. The different but related political traditions thus generated quite different responses to the perceived threat of land monopoly.

David Goodman teaches history at the University of Melbourne. His recent publications have been on the history of broadcasting in the United States; he is now completing a study of the local debate about American entry into World War 2. This AHA paper relates to a possible new comparative study of anti-monopoly traditions in the US and Australia.

d.goodman@unimelb.edu.au

**Megan Graham**

*University of Leeds*

### **'It's the politics of the streets': Black Theatre and Cultural Protest in 1970s Redfern**

This paper examines the intersections of race, politics, and performance in late twentieth century Australia by tracing the history of Black Theatre in Redfern through the theoretical arcs of space, agency, and community. Functioning as an alternative cultural institution and grassroots engine for social transformation, Black Theatre ruptured normative social, racial and heterosexist hierarchies to radically nourish and empower black communities. A product of the radical transnationalism and rising intransigent clamour for Aboriginal autonomy at the turn of the 1970s, Black Theatre operated casually from 1969 and formally from 1972 until 1977. This work explores how the stage, which had symbolically served to uphold the violent hegemony of cultural imperialism, was repurposed by activists to be a space where silenced truths were told, pasts were reclaimed, and recuperative possibilities were creatively imagined. Written, oral and performance records highlight that Black Theatre embraced and embodied self-determination through its performances, pedagogical programs and international outlook, whilst simultaneously nurturing cohesion by sustaining other local and national liberatory initiatives in the 1970s. This work seeks to redress wide-scale cultural amnesia that silences radical black creative histories in a global paradigm. Offering a counter-discursive cultural history of theatre and performance in Australia, this localised study serves to refigure the traditional archive by using soundscapes to imagine emotionality and elevate subjugated voices while also illustrating the potency of theatre as a weapon in the struggle for racial empowerment in Sydney.

Megan Graham is a second-year PhD researcher and Postgraduate Teaching Associate at the University of Leeds, generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Meg graduated with First Class Honours in BA History in 2020 and gained a distinction in her MA in Race and Resistance in 2021. Meg's doctoral project explores Aboriginal health activism and its relation to transnational discourses of racial empowerment in late twentieth century Australia. Meg is also the postgraduate lead for the Health Histories Research Cluster at the University of Leeds, a White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities (WRoCAH) Equality Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador and the lead organiser of the AHRC funded Oral History Collective.

hy17meg@leeds.ac.uk

**Liz Grandmaison**

*Flinders University*

**'I can't believe what you say because I see what you do': Museums' equity rhetoric versus the experience of First Nations museum workers**

A few minutes of unguarded conversation with a museum worker of colour will often reveal their institution's equity programs as 'illusions of inclusion' (Ballo et al., 2021, p. 34), elaborate mechanisms that protect institutional whiteness by using workers of colour as diversity symbols. This paper examines the material harms that result from the vast difference between how Australian museums portray their diversity, equity and inclusion commitments and the lived experiences of First Nations workers within these institutions. This fissure between rhetoric and action follows the pathway of other perceptual gaps between levels of museum hierarchy in Australia and abroad. One example comes from the recent Museums Moving Forward Workplace Equity and Organizational Culture in US Art Museums report (Benoit-Bryan et al., 2023), which reveals two troubling perceptual gaps. The data indicate that white museum workers have a far more positive view of diversity progress than do museum workers of colour. At the same time, museum leadership teams believe staff input influences decisions far more than staff feel they are listened to (Benoit-Bryan et al., 2023, pp. 18–19, 27). Together, these findings cast doubt on the prospects for museums' transformation. My research reveals experiential differences similar to those identified above. Interviews with First Nations workers in Australian museums expose an alarming disjuncture between institutions' positive equity rhetoric and workers' negative experiences. If this disjuncture is not addressed, Indigenous workers will continue to be burnt-out by the sector, leaving in doubt the possibility of true progress and equity in museums.

Liz Grandmaison is a PhD candidate at Flinders University in South Australia. Her research centres on the theoretical and practical interventions necessary for memory institutions to become liberatory spaces for their publics and workers. She is a member of the South Australian Branch Committee of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA). Before embarking on her research, Liz held positions at the History Trust of South Australia and Flinders University Museum of Art.

[liz.grandmaison@flinders.edu.au](mailto:liz.grandmaison@flinders.edu.au)

**Nadia Gregory**

*University of Wollongong*

**A hard truth: forgotten legacies and memory, in the figure of Cissie Gool**

This paper will outline the life and legacy of Cissie Gool, a South African leader against apartheid who from the 1930s into the 1960s campaigned against the increasingly intense segregation laws in the Cape. Cissie Gool was a Coloured councilwoman, Coloured being those who essentially identified as mixed race in South Africa, who campaigned for the people of District Six – an area where many Coloured peoples were forced to relocate from, due to the apartheid system. The legacy of her struggle has been one allocated to the outskirts of the history books, internationally but also surprisingly within South African history. This paper will discuss the hard truths of why it is that a prominent figure of the time has now been neglected in terms of her legacy, and within this example will seek to answer why it is that women as leaders of protest movements are relegated to the sidelines in historical memory.

Nadia Gregory is a History PhD student at the University of Wollongong, Australia, and specialises in 20th century South African history. Her previous research was a comparative history of black leaders in South Africa and the United States during the mid-20th century. Nadia ultimately developed an interest in exploring how underrepresented groups and individuals constituted broader movements against racist social and political arrangements. She is currently carrying out research for her PhD on the roles and lives of Coloured women in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

neg748@uowmail.edu.au

**Brenton Griffin**

*Flinders University*

**'An Invasion of Australia by Brigham Young': Mormonism, Colonial Anxieties, and Press Media, 1870s–1930s**

In 1871, colonial newspapers throughout Australia announced and largely decried the apparent 'invasion' of the continent by Mormon leader Brigham Young and his followers. This was mostly unfounded, as there is no evidence to suggest that the fledgling theocracy, based in the United States, desired to build colonies on the Australian continent. However, whilst some sections of the press were avidly hostile to the idea, others were more humorous in their responses, claiming the harsh Australian environment would quickly eradicate the religious community. International press suggested that it would be better to have the Mormons, who themselves had famously made a thriving community in the Utah desert, inhabit the centre of Australia, rather than other colonial rivals. Though there has been no admittance by the Church of plans for this 'invasion' (or even if the religion's hierarchy were aware of this media furor), the tale lived on for decades afterwards. As late as the 1930s, the story of a 'Mormon invasion' continued to be part of the local histories of the Gippsland area in Victoria. Here, the supposed introduction of a letter from Brigham Young to a Warragul farmer, not featured in the original 1870s news reports articles, becomes central. Running through this paper, the theme of how unproven narratives become engrained into broader, accepted histories will be examined.

I am a PhD candidate at Flinders University who recently submitted my dissertation on the reception and representation of Mormonism in Australia and New Zealand. As an insider–outsider scholar, I have particular interest in Mormonism, as well as broader histories surrounding religion, identity, and politics.

brenton.griffin@flinders.edu.au

**Srishti Guha**

*University of Newcastle*

**Contribution to panel "A Sense of the Past: Historical Practice Beyond the Page"**

Srishti Guha is in the last few months of finishing up her thesis in History at the University of Newcastle. Her work examines the colonial gaze through a transnational study of visual culture and iconography in India and Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By deconstructing various digitised visual material, Srishti considers the relationship between creator, subject, and viewer, and explores themes of race, gender and national identities. Affiliated with the Purai Global Indigenous History Centre, she is also a Vice-Chancellor's HDR Training Scholar.

Srishti.Guha@newcastle.edu.au

Teagan Haby

### The many identities of Sally

A small and seemingly insignificant memorial stone at American River on my home of Kangaroo Island, South Australia inspired me to begin writing a book on the Aboriginal women who unwittingly got caught up in the sealing and whaling trade of Southern Australia in the 19th century. It would be a stretch to say that any of them were associated with the industries by choice for most of them had been kidnapped or traded like chattels. Their stories are barely mentioned in the records of the time. Of the however many aboriginal women that were mentioned, even less of them were credited with having names and therefore identities. I set out to discover their stories, the lives they lived and their input into a blood-thirsty industry. A name that stood out time and time again was Sally. There were many identities of Sally including Make-ker-lede-de, Princess Sally, Princess Con, Bumblefoot Sal or Encounter Bay Sally. In some texts throughout history, a Sally story featured often. Though there were times that some of those stories had different versions. Regardless, each Sally lived an adventurous life and often left the people who met a Sally awestruck. The awe could be that she was an Aboriginal who spoke English well, that she was extremely skilled in many facets of living in an isolated place or that she was potentially a member of a murder plot. Nevertheless, it's the Sally's tale I'd like to tell. Documented by white men over time and delivered before an audience by a white woman.

I grew up on Kangaroo Island surrounded by its environment and history and the people who were passionate about either. Despite not having lived there for 25 years, the place has left an indelible mark. I return home sporadically to see family and rekindle old memories. On and off since 2003, I've lived in the Big Rivers region in the Top End of the Northern Territory working in agriculture and horticulture and I've done a short stint in South Australia working for PIRSA as a Bee Biosecurity Officer. I enjoy reading, studying and spending time with my dog, horses, cattle, donkey and bees.

teagana66@gmail.com

**Dianne Hall**

*Victoria University*

### **Irish mothering in colonial Australia**

One of the most well-known poems of early twentieth century Australia was 'The Little Irish Mother' by John O'Brien (1922). This sentimental poem praised the aged Irish woman of the title in her old age as a silent figure who was the backbone of the new nation. This paper looks at these stereotypes in the light of histories of Irish women's experiences of motherhood, including those of the young women known as the 'Famine Orphans' and more well known women such as Ellen Kelly. Data from inquests, newspapers and police records shows both the stresses of mothering in extreme conditions as well as the efforts by Irish women to comfort and help their fellow migrants.

Prof. Hall researches Irish and Irish-Australian histories of gender, migration, religion and violence. She is the co-author of *A New History of the Irish in Australia* (2018) with Elizabeth Malcolm. She also published widely on Irish migration and settlement, particularly in Australia.

dianne.hall@vu.edu.au



**Lorna Hallahan**

*Flinders University*

### **Something different, somewhere else: social entrepreneurs changing disability**

Freeing those who named themselves the captives of care – sequestered in the enduring asylums and ‘nursing home’ disability services of the mid-20th century – had families striving to find the sweet spot between neglect and abandonment and over-protection. This case study of one family’s efforts to build better responses to two generations of women with cerebral palsy and to alter life opportunities for other disabled people provides a portrait of the ongoing struggle for dignified care and rights. Jeremy Ward in *The Shouted Goodbye* (2015) tells us that when his spouse, Margaret, joined the board of the Queensland Spastic Welfare League she argued for the closure of the League’s nursing home. He explains that: ‘My own parents had been involved in the nursing home’s establishment in the 1960s. My sister would later talk of escaping from the League nursing home when, after living there for seventeen years, she was given the opportunity to be part of a new project supporting four people with physical disabilities to share a house ... our father supported the move.’ Drawing on the writings of Ward and his father Bryan, this case study charts the shifting strategies of family engagement after WW2. Praskier and Colman’s 2010 model of social entrepreneurship provides a framework to show that telling painful home truths about disability clienthood by focussing on the history of the contribution of families reveals their vital influence in the emerging disability rights movement.

Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan is Social Work Professional Accreditation Lead at Flinders University. She has been a significant and long term contributor to the development and analysis of disability policy including the development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the Evaluation of its trial from 2013–2016. From July 2019 until February 2021 Lorna was seconded as Senior Research Advisor to the Royal Commission on Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. While at the DRC she produced a major report – *Disability in Australia: Shadows, struggles and successes: A usable socio-cultural history of disability in Australia* (2021). She is currently a Director, The Achieve Foundation, a national organisation focussed on catalytic innovation in the disability sector.

[lorna.hallahan@flinders.edu.au](mailto:lorna.hallahan@flinders.edu.au)

**Ben Hammond**

*Flinders University*

## **Hearts and Minds: How cultural consumption affected the early years of US-funded Cold War radio broadcasting**

One of the most significant sources of popular culture in the Cold War era Eastern Bloc was provided by music programming on US funded radio broadcasts. Radio organisations such as Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty and the Voice of America were championed by the US government as effective methods of circumventing Soviet censors and disseminating pro-Western propaganda throughout the Eastern Bloc. These radio station's role as beacons of hope providing uncensored information to the populace of the Eastern Bloc has been widely acknowledged, however their status as US backed purveyors of popular culture has not been sufficiently addressed. The music programming of these radio stations relied on genres, such as jazz, that had become synonymous with the West, despite the various racial prejudices and conservative critiques that had become associated with their domestic consumption. Despite these concerns, these radio stations were able to threaten Soviet cultural hegemony and increase their listenership by capitalising on jazz and other music genres that had developed in the US. This paper will draw upon materials from US archives to illustrate how principles of popular cultural consumption were instrumental in establishing US Cold War radio broadcasting following the end of World War II and the rise of Cold War tensions between the US and the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. Furthermore, this paper will analyse the dichotomy between US domestic perceptions regarding popular cultural consumption with that of the need to utilise soft power and achieve foreign policy goals.

Ben Hammond is a PhD candidate at Flinders University. His thesis examines the influence of popular music broadcast on US-funded radio stations during the Cold War.

hamm0144@flinders.edu.au

**Guy Hansen**

*National Library of Australia*

### **Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories**

In 2024 the National Library of Australia (NLA) will be presenting an exhibition about some of the highlights of the NLA's migration history collections. The exhibition includes photographs, posters, ephemera, costume, manuscripts, oral history and publications, all speaking to the topic of the history of migration in Australia. In completing the survey of the NLA's collections it became clear that much of the migration material held by the NLA reflects the way migration history is often understood in terms of the emotions of hope and fear. Hope is manifest in visions of the quest for a better life for migrants and their families. It is expressed at the national level by a belief in a successful, powerful and prosperous Australia. It is captured in slogans like 'Australia unlimited' or 'Big Australia'. Similarly, descriptions of Australia as a successful multicultural society provide a hopeful and optimistic vision of migration. Fear, in contrast, is manifest in the political debates about who should be allowed into Australia. This is reflected in the history of the White Australia Policy, the history of citizenship, and debates about boarder control. Slogans such as 'Populate or Perish' reflect a fear of invasion. In this paper I will explore the emotions of hope and fear in relation to Australia's migration history drawing on examples from the collections of the NLA.

Dr Hansen is Director of Exhibitions at the National Library of Australia (NLA). He has curated a wide range of exhibitions on Australian History including *League of Legends: 100 years of Rugby League* (2008), *Keepsakes: Australians and the Great War* (2014), *1968: Changing Times* (2018), *Inked: Australian Cartoons* (2018) and *Grit and Gold: Tales from a Sporting Nation* (2023). He has a PhD in Museum studies and history (UTS) and has completed the Gordon Darling Museum Leadership Program. Guy has published reflective articles on museum practice as well as numerous articles on Australian visual arts, popular culture and history. In 2019 he authored *Inked: Australian Cartoons*, (NLA Publishing), a history of cartooning in Australia.

ghansen@nla.gov.au

**Elizabeth Harford**

## **The origin of Casualty Departments in Australia**

What is the origin of Emergency Departments (ED) in Australia? How did they start and what were the needs that they were responding to? This paper seeks to answer these and other questions in relation to the Casualty Departments which were the forerunners of today's ED. Hitherto, little has been written about the Australian hospitals of the nineteenth century and their strategies to offer urgent episodic care to the sick and injured. The need for the poor of Melbourne and Sydney in the mid nineteenth century to access medical care, not only following accidents but also when sick, is discussed including brief reference to the United Kingdom experiences. Many of the triggers for the development and expansion of Casualty will be explored including influences such as the introduction of an ambulance service and trained nurses as well as the growth and expansion of metropolitan industry, infrastructure, and recreation. Selected cases sourced from local newspapers, hospital records and Government inquiries are used to illustrate the patient Casualty experiences from the 1850s to the 1950s. This paper will also briefly trace the rise of outpatient specialist clinics and contrast their services with Casualty.

Qualifications: R.N.; B.Sc.(UNE); M.Clin.Nurs.(USyd); Grad Cert. H. Sci.(Management)(USyd); Ph.D.(USyd); Cert. A&E(NSWCofN); Cert. Trauma (Westmead Hospital). Research Focus: Over thirty years' experience in researching the development of Casualty Departments in Sydney from 1860s to present with a focus on descriptions of clinical treatment. Currently engaged in private research into Casualty and Emergency nursing and medical clinical treatment from 1940 to 1970; the rise of medical and nursing specialties in Australia. PhD Thesis Title: Blood Antiseptic and Stale Beer: History of Casualty Department & Casualty Nursing in Sydney 1870 -1939. Awarded 2002 University of Sydney. Forty two years' experience in nursing and over twenty five years in hospital management in public sector healthcare, majority of which has been with NSW Health.

lizharford@gmail.com

**Kristyn Harman**

*University of Tasmania*

Victoria M. Nagy, *University of Tasmania*

### **A Good Riddance: Convicts Criminally Deported from South Australia to Van Diemen's Land**

In June 1851 in a short news article titled 'A Good Riddance', the Adelaide Observer informed its readers how 'in addition to her more valuable cargo' the ship Union had recently 'conveyed away ... convicts sentenced to transportation at the recent Session of the Supreme Court'. All the offenders were male, with sentences ranging from seven years to transportation for life. This paper utilises historical and criminological approaches to explore this shipment of human cargo from Adelaide to the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land, situating the event within the wider phenomenon of the practice of criminal deportation within the Australian colonies. We argue that the deportation of those who originally arrived free (or who were born free) within the Australian colonies but who later offended and were sentenced locally to transportation heralded the inception of criminal deportation in Australia. We acknowledged that this research is funded by the Australian Research Council (DP230100267 The Inception of Criminal Deportation in Colonial Australia).

Dr Kristyn Harman is the Associate Head of School Research and an Associate Professor in History within the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania, and the Deputy Chair of Academic Senate. In her capacity as a social historian, Kristyn is an award-winning expert on cross-cultural encounters across Britain's nineteenth-century colonies with a particular focus on law, punishment, and incarceration. She supervises doctoral and masters candidates as well as honours students across her areas of research expertise. Kristyn engages extensively in taking history from Tasmania to the world. She is a member of the Australian Historical Association's executive committee, the Australian Dictionary of Biography's Editorial Board, and Chairs the ADB Tasmanian working party.

Kristyn.Harman@utas.edu.au

**Abbie Hartman**

*Macquarie University*

### **'The high-stakes world of sheep-herding': playing Australian history**

As one of the most popular and profitable forms of media, video games have a significant cultural reach, with approximately 3.09 billion players worldwide. However, it is rare to have a game interact with Australian history or even Australian culture and society, whether developed by Australian or non-Australian developers. This most likely stems from two intersecting issues: first, the changes to the Australian game development industry after the 2008 global financial crisis, and second, the difficulty in negotiating the complex landscape of Australian history and mediating this through the medium of video games.

This paper examines two examples of Australia-themed historical video games: Tobop Production's 2022 game *Ned Kelly: Armored Outlaw* and Electronic Art's 2017 *Battlefield I* expansion *Turning the Tides*. Although these video games represent different aspects of Australian history (the Kelly Gang's last stand and the Gallipoli campaign, respectively), they are both influenced by the popular ideas of history surrounding these events. In examining these games, I suggest that the context in which they were developed influenced the history of Australia they presented. This affects the players' understanding of the historical event and therefore their understanding of the past. While this influence may seem minor, historical video games are, and will continue to be, a significant way that the public access history.

Abbie Hartman is a public and cultural historian, working in the fields of Modern History and Media Studies. Her research interrogates the knowledge created when the public interacts with history through popular culture, with a particular emphasis on historical video games and their ability to function as public history. Additionally, Abbie has extensive experience working in the GLAM and education sectors and is driven by the philosophy that history should be available and consumable for everyone.

abbie.hartman@mq.edu.au

**Victoria Haskins**

*University of Newcastle*

### **Amina and the Ayahs' Home: Women negotiating empire in London, 1867–1902**

In 2022 the installation of a Blue Heritage Plaque on a Hackney building in London marked a long-overdue recognition of the presence of South Asian women in the imperial metropole. The plaque commemorates the existence of an institution known as 'the Ayahs' Home' and the intrepid women who passed through its doors between 1900 and 1921, as they accompanied British families travelling around the circuits of empire, as nannies and nursemaids. Yet there is an even more hidden history lying behind this institution: of an Aldgate lodging-house that catered to the travelling ayahs throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. In this paper, I focus on the intriguing woman that ran the nineteenth-century enterprise, one Amina Hanson, and the stories of some of the women who resided in her establishment, to consider the complexity of women's interracial encounters and agency at the metropolitan heart of empire.

Victoria Haskins is a historian of gender and colonization at the University of Newcastle, and founding former director of the Purai Global Indigenous History Centre. Her work on domesticity, mobility and race in global histories of colonization traces the entangled histories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities in Australia, North America, and South Asia. Her books include *One Bright Spot* (Palgrave, 2005); *Colonialism and Male Domestic Service across the Asia Pacific* (Bloomsbury, 2018), with Julia Martinez, Claire Lowrie and Frances Steel; *Living with the Locals* (NLA 2017), with John Maynard; and the edited collection *Colonization and Domestic Service* (Routledge 2014) with Claire Lowrie. Victoria is lead series editor for the Bloomsbury Academic Series, *Empire's Other Histories*.

Victoria.Haskins@newcastle.edu.au

**Pauline Hastings**

*Monash University*

### **Making the Real Seem Unreal: Artifice and the rise of fashion photography in Australian advertising from the 1950s**

In postwar Australia, photographic images of goods had become a familiar marketing tool but photography for fashion advertising lagged behind. Garment manufacturers had traditionally avoided the photo, considering stylised sketches of fashion garments to be superior for creating illusion and consumer desire. As such, the perceived authenticity of the photographic image was mostly reserved for garments that benefitted from detailed, realistic representations such as hats and shoes. Influenced by the concept of 'new materialism,' which reintroduces an economic focus into cultural histories and drawing on a range of popular and business sources, this paper examines how entrepreneurial photographers changed garment trade perceptions of their ability to create artifice. It explores how European-trained postwar refugees such as Helmut Newton and Henry Talbot carved out niches for their photographic art in fashion marketing that, in turn, fostered the burgeoning profession of photographic modelling. By documenting the uptake of photography and the reciprocal decline of sketched illustrations in fashion advertising throughout the 1950s, the paper explores the transnational transfer of technology, ideas and style in postwar Australia. It positions photography's rendering of artifice in fashion marketing and its subsequent representations of women as instrumental in propelling 1960s youth culture in Australia.

Pauline Hastings is a PhD candidate in contemporary history at Monash University. Her research into the clothing manufacturing industry in Australia from 1945–1990 sits at the intersection of cultural and economic history. In 2023, her essay 'Fibres on the Field: Jean Shrimpton, Christine Borge and the Promotion of Orlon and Wool at the 1965 Melbourne Cup' derived from her AHA Conference paper was runner-up in the Australian Historical Studies Journal Ken Inglis Postgraduate Prize.

pauline.hastings@monash.edu



**Matilda Hatcher**

*Australian National University*

**'No reprieve and no relief': Historicising Trauma in the British Royal Navy, 1793–1815**

The British Royal Navy during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars was the site of significant, frequent, and varied traumas. The nature of combat in the 'fighting age of sail' meant that men were threatened with constant danger and distress: including interpersonal violence, the technologies of war, long absences from home, and the loss of comrades. The mental and physical tolls of this lifestyle were considerable. There is an abundance of primary material relating to the sailor experience in this period. In these works seamen's mental (ill) health was discussed, both formally by medical professionals like shipboard surgeons and the Sick and Hurt Board, and as informal observations made by other seamen and civilians. However, in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries the study of psychotraumatology had not yet emerged. Psychological trauma was only defined in the late-nineteenth century and legitimised in the twentieth century following the devastating effects of two world wars. As such, research examining historical instances of what could be termed trauma before this period are lacking. By applying the framework of trauma to the experiences of sailors in the French Wars, this paper contributes to the chronological depth of the history of war trauma. It asks: what are the benefits and limits of applying potentially anachronistic concepts of trauma to the historical past? In doing so, it addresses the theory and methodologies of histories of violence, and attempts to speak to truths of historical experience whilst locating a broader history of combat trauma in the past.

Matilda Hatcher is a PhD candidate at the ANU School of History. Her research focuses on men and masculinity in the British Royal Navy during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. She is currently writing a thesis on the history of emotion, unpacking the interactions between masculine ideals and sailors' lived experiences of combat through the lens of emotion. Through this project she seeks to illuminate the displays of men's wartime emotions in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Her Honours thesis discussed war-related disability, examining British naval manliness and impaired bodies in visual culture during the French Wars. Matilda is an editor of the ANU Historical Journal II.

matilda.hatcher@anu.edu.au

**Martine Hawkes**

*University of South Australia*

### **Mapping the records of Woomera Immigration Reception and Processing Centre**

Two decades since Woomera's immigration detention facility closed, a re-evaluation of its history and archival record is due. Located in the Far North of South Australia, Woomera Immigration Reception and Processing Centre (IRPC) was used to detain and process asylum seekers between 1999 and 2003. Once a flashpoint for the intense and polarising refugee debate, some twenty years on, and with records dispersed across national, state, institutional, and community holdings, an urgent opportunity exists to clarify Woomera IRPC's archival record. This project seeks to identify and map the historical records of Woomera IRPC. Through the records continuum model, this research project explores the complex interrelations between records creation, management, preservation, and use. In so doing, I hope to open and continue conversations among historians, archivists and recordkeeping scholars on how the creation, utilisation, activation and, indeed, absence or inaccessibility of records influence contemporary policy and historical narratives and impact the recognition and denial of the rights of refugees.

Dr Martine Hawkes is a recordkeeping researcher and Adjunct Research Fellow at the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia. She has examined the role of archives and records of trauma in shaping institutional response and public memory in the fields of child abuse and neglect, refugee protection, and post-genocide response.

[martine.hawkes@unisa.edu.au](mailto:martine.hawkes@unisa.edu.au)

**Eric (Rick) Hayward**

*University of Western Australia*

**Where are the official reports into “...one of the most bloodthirsty deeds ever committed by Englishmen...” at Minninup Western Australia, in February 1841 and what does this mean for Truth Telling about British colonialism in Australia and worldwide?**

This paper investigates the limitations of official reports into unauthorised massacres of Noongar people and has implications for Truth Telling about British colonial massacres worldwide. The historical dispute in Western Australia emanates from the twentieth century public debate between two versions of our history written by W.B. ‘Bert’ Kimberley “History of Western Australia. A Narrative of her Past. Together with biographies of her Leading Men”, 1897 and John Battye’s “The Cyclopedia of Western Australia in Two Volumes.” 1912. The historians are distinguishable by Kimberley’s use of E.H Carr’s ‘perspectivist’ approach versus Battye’s use of Geoffrey Elton’s ‘objectivist’ approach and Battye’s denial of whether the Minninup massacre took place. Battye’s denial is not dissimilar to the approach of Windschuttle, who twenty years ago ignited the Australian history wars with his stringent denial of Aboriginal massacres in Tasmania and the mainland. The existence of official records is crucial because Australian history is noted for great silences in colonial violence towards its Indigenous people and one of the reasons for this is due to a paucity of official reports. What happened in Western Australia is important worldwide because British colonial records of violence towards Indigenous people matter to Truth Telling, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, institutionalised racism, and ongoing colonialism. This investigation will analyse written reports, settlers’ letters, newspaper accounts, Indigenous oral histories, and document missing official reports. The paper finds that not only did the massacre occur at Minninup on 25th February 1841, but that local settlers and public officials John Bussell JP and Resident Magistrate John Molloy, were active participants. The paper concludes that settlers, 21st Regiment soldiers, and Public Officials executed innocent Noongar men, women and children and their culpability has been denied by settler descendants, downplayed by historians, and excused in Western Australia for nearly 200 years.

I am a First Nations Solicitor from the South West of Western Australia and my topic covers Swan River colonial Laws and settler History from the nineteenth century. I was the first Noongar lawyer to graduate from UWA in 1991 and in 1992 was admitted to practice as a solicitor in the Supreme Court of Western Australia. After completing my Graduate Diploma of Education in 2002, I worked as a public school teacher for 17 years throughout Regional WA. I am currently employed as a Solicitor by Legal Aid WA and I practice civil law, specialising in Human Rights. In 2017, I was recognised as an Elder by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. My grandmothers country is Kaneang of the great Southern Forest and I am a member of the Karri Karrak Corporation Aboriginal Cultural Committee. Grandfathers Wudjari coastal country extends East to Esperance. I am a father of 6 children, grandfather of three and a passionate Fremantle Dockers AFL supporter.

eric.hayward@research.uwa.edu.au

**Jacqueline Healy**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Shaping a profession: Fifty years of dental therapists**

This traces the development and production of the exhibition and publication *Shaping a profession: 50 years of Dental Therapists* that commemorated over 50 years since the establishment of the first training for dental therapists in Victoria 1972. It traces this journey through the lived experience of the dental therapists and academics associated with their education and training. Importantly it highlights the crucial role of advocacy in securing the professional frameworks and tertiary education for dental therapists and oral health therapists. Crucial were the role of the industry associations, Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapists Association (ADOHTA) and Victorian Dental Therapist Association Inc (VDOHTA) that advocated for change in Victoria. The project team of Professor Julie Satur and Professor Mike Morgan, Honorary Curator with Dr Jacqueline Healy, Director, Faculty Museums and Tess Scott, Registrar, consulted with ADOHTA, practitioners, researchers and academic staff. Key to the process was directly contacting the extended network of practitioners and seeking their stories and memorabilia documenting those pivotal changes over 50 years. Important outcomes were loans and gifts of material such as certificates, class photographs, wax teeth, uniforms, course results and class notes. Significantly, the archive material from the now defunct Victorian Dental Therapist Association Inc (VDOHTA) that documents the major legislative and policy changes in Victoria that enabled the practice of dental therapists has as part of this project become a substantial addition to the Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum collection. This project demonstrates the active role of museums in the history of health sciences.

Dr Jacqueline Healy BA(Hons), MBA, PhD is Director, Museums, Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences at the University of Melbourne including the Medical History Museum, Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum and Harry Brookes Allen Anatomy and Pathology Museum. In 2018, awarded a University of Melbourne Excellence Award for the transformation of the museums in the Faculty of MDHS. Previously, Director, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre; Director, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory and Director, Public Programs, National Gallery of Victoria.

[jacqueline.healy@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jacqueline.healy@unimelb.edu.au)

**Eureka Henrich**

*UNSW Sydney*

### **Exploring AI in undergraduate History teaching**

An uncomfortable home truth many of us are currently facing is that our students are already using AI. Unlike Languages or even Philosophy, where the automatic generation of dialogues lends itself well to some activities and assessment, the skills we hope to impart in History seem in many ways antithetical to programmed amalgams. This is a conundrum that we cannot afford to ignore. Two guiding principles outlined in the November 2023 TEQSA assessment reform paper suggest a way forward: our 'assessment and learning experiences' should 'equip students to participate ethically and actively in a society where AI is ubiquitous', and 'forming trustworthy judgements about student learning in a time of AI requires multiple, inclusive and contextualised approaches to assessment'. What could this look like for History? This paper will detail my experiments with seminar activities and assessment design incorporating human–AI collaboration for a cohort of 3rd year History students. By reflecting on what worked, what didn't, and why, I aim to offer some concrete and road-tested examples that can support student learning and harness AI for our discipline.

Eureka is a historian of migration, health, heritage and memory and the co-author of the 50th anniversary history of the Australian Historical Association. She lectures in historiography and Australian history at UNSW Sydney, and has experience with course and program design in the Australia and the UK.

[e.henrich@unsw.edu.au](mailto:e.henrich@unsw.edu.au)

**Peter Hobbins**

*Australian National Maritime Museum*

### **When we sank Australia: AUKUS, autarky and maritime strategy in 1924 and 2024**

On 20 February 2024, the Minister for Defence stated that 'Australia's modern society and economy rely on access to the high seas: trade routes for our imports and exports, and the submarine cables for the data which enables our connection to the international economy'. This assertion followed a comprehensive fleet review of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), prompted by the 2023 Defence Strategic Review and the trilateral commitment by Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS) to jointly build and operate nuclear-powered submarines. Australia's profound reliance on maritime commerce was furthermore driven home by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions of 2020–22. Yet the Minister's words would have been equally valid in 1924, trailing the triple impacts of the Great War, the 'Spanish' influenza pandemic and the 1922 Conference on the Limitation of Armament – the 'Washington Treaty'. In that moment, geostrategic posturing played out in Sydney Harbour four times, via respective fleet visits by the Imperial Japanese Navy, Britain's Royal Navy and the US Navy, plus the deliberate scuttling of the RAN's flagship, HMAS Australia, under the terms of the Washington Treaty. It also influenced construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Australia's showpiece of imperial loyalty and industrial autarky. But another major infrastructure program also lay behind Australia's decision to sink its most capable warship, namely Britain's commitment to build a major fleet base in Singapore. This presentation examines the predicates, participants and consequences of 1924, asking what home truths it offers for maritime doctrine and strategy today.

Dr Peter Hobbins leads the exhibitions, curatorial, library and publications teams at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney. As a historian of science, technology and medicine, his academic and public history contributions have ranged across snakebite, pandemics, medical research, defence science, military medicine, coastal fortifications, aviation accidents and shipwrecks. Peter is a former DECRA Fellow and current Honorary Affiliate in History at the University of Sydney, and Editor of *The Great Circle*, journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History.

peter.hobbins@sea.museum

**Nicole Hodgson**

*University of Western Australia*

**Writing the eco-biography of Sarah Brooks: Western Australian settler-coloniser and botanical collector**

Sarah Brooks (1850–1928) was a prolific botanical collector from the remote south-east of Western Australia for Baron von Mueller of the Royal Botanic Garden Victoria. Located for the final 54 years of her life at the eastern edge of the global biodiversity hotspot of the South West Australian Floristic Region (SWAFR), Sarah's collecting identified plants new to Western science, and helped to establish the biogeographical boundary of the SWAFR. The writing of Sarah's life combines ecobiography, environmental history and auto-ethnography, through more-than-human approaches, with each discipline posing some methodological challenges. This paper will explore the different threads of this research and some of the challenges encountered, such as how to utilise the botanical specimens collected by Sarah as an innovative primary archive, along with more conventional sources. There is another challenge in writing the ecobiography of a settler-coloniser in a sensitive and ethical way. This research explores the dissonance between Sarah's dawning understanding of the cultural and ecological values of the place she helped colonise, and her complicity in the colonisation process and pastoral industry that would ultimately diminish the values she was discovering and documenting. This research project has been grappling with whether it is possible to write a decolonised history of a settler-coloniser while being inextricably part of the settler-colonialist culture that has wrought such a profound impact on this place and its traditional owners.

Nicole Hodgson is a PhD candidate in Environmental Humanities at University of Western Australia, with a particular focus on ecobiography and more-than-human-history. Nicole has worked in environmental and sustainability policy for over 25 years, and is currently also a part-time lecturer in sustainability at Murdoch University, Western Australia.

[nicole.hodgson@research.uwa.edu.au](mailto:nicole.hodgson@research.uwa.edu.au)

**Carolyn Holbrook**  
*Deakin University*

### **The Establishment of the Peter McCallum Cancer Centre: A Case Study in Cancer Control Advocacy**

This paper places the history of cancer treatment and control in Australia within the broader frames of imperial history and political and policy history. It examines the circumstances preceding the establishment of Victoria's Cancer Institute in 1949, looking in particular at how Dr Peter McCallum and his colleagues at Cancer Council Victoria used the visit of renowned British radiology experts Ralston and Edith Paterson to Australia in 1943 to convince Premier Albert Dunstan to provide state government funding for a centralised cancer centre. Although the opening of the cancer institute was delayed by several years, the paper argues that the success of the Cancer Council Victoria in marshalling international experts, cultivating networks of influence and persuading government to take a more interventionist role in cancer control emboldened it for the confrontation with Big Tobacco, beginning in the late 1950s. It argues further that greater understanding of the operation of international networks of intellectual exchange and the ways that policy change was achieved is useful in tackling contemporary harms to public health.

Dr Carolyn Holbrook is a Senior Lecturer in the Contemporary Histories Research Group at Deakin University, and the Director of Australian Policy and History. Her latest book, *Lessons from History: Leading Historians Tackle Australia's Greatest Challenges* (NewSouth), edited with Lyndon Megarrity and David Lowe, was published in July 2022. Previously, she has written about how we remember the First World War in *Anzac: The Unauthorised Biography* (New South, 2014) and *The Great War: Aftermath and Commemoration* (UNSW Press, 2019), the latter edited with Keir Reeves.

[carolyn.holbrook@deakin.edu.au](mailto:carolyn.holbrook@deakin.edu.au)



**Alison Holland**

*Macquarie University*

### **Part of the Solution? Exploring Women's Role in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission**

In a report commissioned by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission's Office of Evaluation and Audit in 1995 it was found that ATSIC did not adequately represent the interests of Indigenous women. In part they were rendered invisible within the notion of the family or their specific rights were subsumed by a discursive rights agenda that tended to promote an homogenous Indigenous voice. Leading Indigenous scholar, Megan Davis, suggested that the problem of gender inequity within the organisation had contributed to its decline. Yet, anecdotal evidence suggests that, at least in its earlier years, ATSIC was a 'safe place' for Indigenous women who were inspired by its female leadership and the opportunity it afforded for capacity building. Indeed, many Indigenous female leaders today were schooled in ATSIC. ATSIC had an Office of Indigenous Women and it supported delegations of women's attendance at leading international women's conferences. This paper considers the question of women in ATSIC with a view to providing an explanatory frame for the question of Indigenous women's historical experience of it. Recovering the contours of this history, it considers the possibility of two distinct phases in the body's history, a feminised phase, 1990-1996, and then a masculine phase, 1996-2004. It situates the latter in the context of the political contest over ATSIC at the time to locate ATSIC's later failure of women not just in the overly patriarchal nature of its leadership but to what amounted to a competitive masculine political tussle over the organisation's very existence.

Alison Holland is an Associate Professor in the Department of History and Archaeology at Macquarie University where she teaches in human rights history. Her research fields cover twentieth century Indigenous political history, human rights, settler colonialism and race and antiracism. With Indigenous scholars from Jumbunna at UTS she is a CI on an ARC DP titled Policy for Self-Determination: the Case Study of ATSIC. She is also lead editor of a Routledge Handbook on Antiracism in Historical Perspective due for publication in 2025.

alison.holland@mq.edu.au

**Rebecca Houlihan**  
*Monash University*

### **Doomsday 2000: The Millennium Bug in Australia**

The year 2000 was highly anticipated, offering a chance for people across the world to reflect on the past 1000 years and look ahead to the future. However, it was also awaited with some trepidation due to predictions that, on 1 January 2000, many computers, electronics, and programs might fail. This was the Millennium Bug (Y2K), the result of the common practice to drop the first two digits of a year when programming – meaning that a computer might read 00 as 1900. There was a massive effort by the Australian government and businesses to prevent errors from occurring – with an estimated \$12 billion spent on remediation efforts. Despite this, not everyone believed the doomsday predictions, and many Australians poked fun at those who did. In the aftermath, when little of consequence occurred, some Australians began to believe that Y2K had been a cash grab by IT professionals and that the amount of time and money spent was wasted. This paper revisits Y2K in Australia, questioning contemporary remembrance that frames it as a moment of mass hysteria. It looks at the representations of Y2K across different forms of media and within popular culture. I argue that Y2K allows us insight into Australian society at this time, which was increasingly reliant on computers and technology, and increasingly privatised. Y2K forced Australians to confront and reflect on these changes, and the discussions surrounding Y2K were also debates about the place that technology should have in Australian life.

Rebecca Houlihan is a current PhD candidate at Monash University. Her PhD looks at the social and cultural history of the internet in Australia from 1989–2010 and is funded by a Research Training Program Stipend and Monash Graduate Excellence Scholarship. She was the 2021 recipient of the Margaret Kiddle Prize (Melbourne University) for her Honours thesis on the interconnections between gender, the internet, and the Emo youth subculture in the 2000s.

houlihanrebi@gmail.com

**Rohan Howitt**

*Monash University*

## **Undiscovering Emerald Island: Writing an Environmental History of a Non-Existent Place**

In January 1839, the four ships of the globetrotting United States Exploring Expedition became separated during storms and fog soon after leaving Sydney. In line with the instructions given to them by the fleet's commander before their departure, each ship set a course for Emerald Island, planning to regroup there before continuing south towards Antarctica. But when they reached the location marked on their charts – 57°15' S., 162° 12' E. – the U.S. ships sailed over open ocean; Emerald Island was nowhere to be found. Exactly a century later, the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia published a run of its own branded map of the British Empire. Wedged into the bottom corner of this map is Emerald Island, shown in precisely the same location – 1,800 kilometres south-east of Tasmania – it had occupied on hundreds of maps since its purported 'discovery' in 1821. This paper reflects on my ongoing research into the phantom islands of the Southern Ocean. It considers what the process of 'undiscovering' an island like Emerald – that is, accumulating sufficiently firm evidence of its non-existence to remove it from the map – can reveal about the production and transformation of environmental knowledge of the Southern Ocean. I argue that an environmental history of non-existent islands can provide fresh insights into how oceanic spaces have been imagined and experienced.

I am a lecturer in environmental history at Monash University. My research examines the interconnected histories of Australia, Antarctic, New Zealand, the subantarctic islands, and the Southern Ocean itself.

rohan.howitt@monash.edu

**Bolin Hu**

*Huaqiao University, China*

### **Fractured Patriotism: General Tsai Ting-kai and the Divided Allegiances of Chinese Australians in the Early 1930s**

The prevailing exploration of patriotism among Chinese Australians in the 1930s primarily adheres to a China-centred framework. However, scholarly scrutiny lacks insight into the transnational dimension of Chinese patriotism in the early 1930s and nuanced diasporic Chinese subjectivity and agency. General Tsai Ting-kai, celebrated for resisting Japan's 1932 attack on Shanghai, was produced as a symbol of transnational Chinese patriotism in Chinese Australian newspapers. This narrative backfired when Tsai participated in a mutiny against the Kuomintang regime, causing a schism among Chinese Australians. Contestation over Tsai's admission to Australia and divergent interpretations of his roles reveal how political agendas shaped patriotic narratives and the intricacies in the China-diasporic Chinese-White Australia relationship. This article explores these political narratives around Tsai Ting-kai, shedding light on the interplay shaping local Chinese homeland-oriented patriotism to understand better the political life and multifaceted relationship with China of Chinese Australians.

Bolin Hu is a lecturer at Huaqiao University, China. His research interests include the history of the Chinese diaspora in Australasia and the relationship between China, Australia, and New Zealand.

bhu977@aucklanduni.ac.nz

**Marnie Hughes-Warrington**  
*University of South Australia*

**AI and Education**

*Contribution to Plenary Panel of the Public History Stream, sponsored by the  
History Trust of South Australia*

Marnie.Hughes-Warrington@unisa.edu.au

**Kathryn Irving**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Home truths: Parents as allies of institutionalised disabled children in the 19th century United States**

Disability history is activist history: inspired by the slogan of the Disability Rights Movement, 'nothing about us, without us', disability historians privilege the voices of disabled people as acts of restitution. Yet historical archives are neither neutral nor fully inclusive: the voices of disabled children—especially those with profound communication disabilities—are particularly difficult to locate. Historians should consider who is less able to speak for themselves, whose archive may be mediated through the voices of sometimes-allies such as parents, professionals, and reformers. In this paper, I aim to uncover the perspectives of children admitted to so-called 'schools for idiotic children' in the nineteenth century United States. Over the course of the century, these residential schools increasingly offered long-term custodial care, and were ultimately transformed into eugenic asylums. Yet in their early iteration, they were notably more flexible, pragmatic, and responsive to the priorities of children who were perceived as disabled. This history suggests that modern objections to segregated education and institutional care are shaped by the painful legacies of total institutions in the twentieth century. In the decades before eugenics, parents viewed specialised institutions as useful resources to support their disabled children. As historians have demonstrated for the twentieth century, nineteenth century parent advocates did not always align with their children's perspectives; however they were important proxies who influenced disability policy, and left valuable traces in our imperfect archives.

Kathryn Irving is a medical historian and paediatric neurologist with a particular interest in childhood disability. Her work explores the origins of institutional care for disabled children in the nineteenth-century US, highlighting the diversity of children's experiences as well as the enduring legacies of institutionalisation. She is working on a book manuscript currently titled *Disability Before Eugenics*.

kathryn.irving@gmail.com

**Stephanie James**

*Flinders University*

### **Strange Bedfellows? Excavating preliminary 'home truths' involving some prominent Adelaide Irish figures 1895–1918**

Irish Catholic colonists faced ongoing prejudice in early South Australia. But by the turn of the century such attitudes had apparently dissipated. Unexpected rapport between two Kilkenny-born Irishmen – Protestant CE Owen Smyth, a leading public servant, Freemason and imperialist, and John O'Reily, Adelaide's Catholic Archbishop – suggested greater Catholic inclusion. JV O'Loghlin, born to Irish parents, strongly supported Irish Home Rule. Founding editor of Adelaide's Ireland-focused Catholic paper in 1889, MP from 1888, chief secretary and minister for defense 1896–9, O'Loghlin faced challenging interactions with O'Reily. Irish background was the common denominator for these men, although their perspectives differed. All shared imperial military interests Both O'Reily and O'Loghlin promoted the Irish Corps commanded by O'Loghlin 1901–10; Smyth's son was a member. Smyth was an enthusiastic member of the patriotic Royal Society of St George and from 1906 a council member. O'Loghlin's life reveals some contestation between his commitment to Empire and Ireland. To both Smyth and O'Reily were attributed some autocratic tendencies in their public interactions. World War One proved a redefining moment for Smyth and O'Loghlin; O'Reily had predicted Germany's imminent defeat before his mid-1915 death. League of Empire President from 1916 and involved in the Navy League, Smyth was intent on publicly denouncing traitors. Official surveillance targeted Irish, including O'Loghlin. The war fractured earlier perceptions of the successful integration of Irish South Australians. Home truths from this era suggest the capacity of privilege to control acceptance of minorities, and the importance of challenging such discriminatory actions.

Stephanie's involvement in history is life-long, but Irish–Australian perspectives have dominated the last two decades. While her wider, earlier publications focused mainly on issues relating to Irish Australians facing issues in imperial conflicts, her more recent emphasis has been on uncovering aspects of Irish South Australian history. Stephanie contributed the entry on 'The Irish' in the forthcoming second edition of the Wakefield Companion to South Australian History. Shared editorship of both *Irish South Australia: New Histories and Insights* in 2019, and the April 2023 launched *Irish Women in the Antipodes: Foregrounded* with eight local chapters, also reflects this research direction. Currently she is involved in finalizing publication of a joint project with Rory Hope involving the life of his Irish forbear in the Clare Valley.

stephanie.james@flinders.edu.au

**Yuan Jing**

*University of Queensland*

### **China's 1950s Land Reform versus Daughters, Daughters-in-law, and Mothers-in-law**

Though the 1950s Land Reform is widely regarded as the implementation of the principle of equal property rights for men and women under the legalization of the China Land Reform Law and Marriage Law, this paper contends that the 1950s Land Reform inherited the logic of the traditional Patriarchal Paternalistic Family Property ownership system established based on Chinese centuries-old clan system, both in policy formulation and grassroots implementation. The paper further argues that the inheritance of this logic led to the failure of custom-made measures taken during the 1950s Land Reform in Hui'an to address the local "evil" "Extended Natal Stay" marriage custom, and thus the persistence of "feudal and backward" marriages and sexuality in the area until the late 1990s. This argumentation begins with an overview of the evolution of China's property ownership system before 1949, with a closer eye on women's property and inheritance rights, pointing out that the traditional Chinese property ownership system is the Patriarchal Paternalistic Family Property ownership system. Then, drawing on three propaganda posters from the 1950s Land Reform and seventeen Land Deeds issued after the Land Reform as evidence, the paper focuses on how the 1950s Land Reform perpetuated the logic of the traditional ownership system in policy formulation and grassroots implementation. This is followed by demonstrating of why this logic was more conceptually accepted and effectively adopted in Hui'an than elsewhere, using the Hui'an local government archives from the 1950s. The paper concludes by examining two cases of female-related land property in Hui'an in the 1950s to illustrate women's property ownership status as daughters, daughters-in-law, and mothers-in-law after the Land Reform, and to validate further that the preservation of the logic abstracted from the Patriarchal Paternalistic Family Property ownership system in Hui'an, was accounted for the failure of the locally tailored Land Reform policies attempting to change the local marriage and sexuality.

Yuan Jing is currently a PhD student and academic tutor in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry at the University of Queensland. She holds a master's degree in Chinese history and has been researching extensively in the field. Her current research looks at the history of marginalised female groups in China, focusing on a particular group called "Hui'an women". She is interested in the relationship between clothing and politics/economic/social changes, interactions between different ethnic groups and gender roles.

y.jing@uq.edu.au



**Timothy Jones**

*La Trobe University*

**'Child Care, not Child Abuse': Abortion and the New Christian Right in 1970s Australia**

Anti-abortion activism was a core issue that engaged the nascent New Christian Right (NCR) in Australia. Pregnancy termination began to be legalised in Australia in 1969 with the passage of legislation in South Australia and the Menhenitt ruling in the Victorian Supreme Court, which found that pregnancy termination was lawful to preserve the physical or mental health of the woman. This paper explores the subsequent emergence of an Australian right to life movement. Anti-abortion politics was a mainstay of the Festival of Light and subsequent NCR groups, but a distinct anti-abortion movement also emerged that attracted a wider support base than the NCR's demographic, particularly amongst Catholics. The paper charts the early history of the Australian pro-life movement, its relationship with the NCR in Australia and internationally, and the ways its articulation of the values of motherhood and the child evolved. It shows the ways in which the personal became political for conservative women actors in this era, and considers their contributions to debates about children's and women's rights.

Timothy Willem Jones (he/they) is Associate Prof. of History at La Trobe University. An historian of religion, gender and sexuality, he is currently writing a book on the rise of the New Christian Right in Australian politics and leading a national study investigating LGBTQA+ conversion practices. Tim also serves as president of the Australian Queer Archives.

t.jones@latrobe.edu.au

**Ross Jones**

*University of Melbourne*

**Contribution to panel "Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne"**

Ross L Jones is Senior Research Fellow in the Indigenous History of the University of Melbourne Project in the Centre for the Study of Higher Education. After teaching for some years, he completed a Master of Educational Studies and a PhD at Monash University on the eugenic movement in Victoria. He then taught in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Melbourne, after which he took up an Australian Research Council postdoctoral position at the University of Sydney. In 2016–17 he was awarded the Redmond Barry Fellowship at the State Library Victoria.

jonesrl@unimelb.edu.au

**Benjamin Jones**

*Central Queensland University*

### **'Make the exclusion as perfect as possible': How the Immigration Restriction Act Legitimised Federation**

The Immigration Restriction Act was the most consequential pieces of legislation passed by the first Australian parliament in 1901. Together with the Pacific Islander Labourers Act and the Post and Telegraph Act, it formed the legislative trident of the White Australia Policy. Scholars have noted that the Immigration Restriction Act was debated with concern for both Australian and international opinions, especially those from Britain. An under-researched dimension of the Act, however, is the way it was used to legitimise the Federation project. Restricting immigration from non-European countries was a major concern in every colony and creating an effective national mechanism became a litmus test to justify the creation of the Commonwealth. While there was virtually no debate over the ethics of racial exclusion, the first federal government was eager to justify its existence by delivering a more comprehensive policy than would be possible as separate colonies. In the words of the first prime minister, 'it is the intention of the Government to make the exclusion as perfect as possible'. The Immigration Restriction Act was the 17th statute passed in the first session of the first parliament. It was debated alongside bills relating to Commonwealth revenue (No.1), recognising state laws (No.5), and the excise on beer (No.7). Despite the historic infamy of the Act and the enduring legacy of the broader White Australia Policy, the parliamentary debates reveal an Arendtian banality. Along with other Acts passed in the first year of the new parliament, the Immigration Restriction Act served to legitimise the creation of the Commonwealth and assure the six states that Federation had been a worthy project.

Dr Benjamin T. Jones is a senior lecturer in History at Central Queensland University with expertise Australian political history, especially republicanism and national identity. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, a Foundation Fellow of the Australian Studies Institute, and has served as Secretary of the Australian Historical Association. His most recent books are *Australia on the World Stage* (Routledge, 2022), *History in a Post-Truth World*, (Routledge, 2020) and *This Time: Australia's Republican Past and Future* (Rebback, 2018).

b.t.jones@cqu.edu.au

**Mike Jones**

*University of Tasmania*

## **History, truth-telling, and the contemporary museum**

Truth-telling is a central component of First Nations reconciliation movements in settler nations. For Australia, the failed Voice Referendum 2023—characterised by a 'disturbing resurgence of denialism' regarding First Nations history and culture (Bongiorno 2023)—means that this work has never been more urgent. Gamilaraay and Yawalaraay journalist Lorena Allam argues that truth-telling 'will be the key to leading us to healing and understanding' (Allam 2023). Large public museums have an increasingly vital role to play. A single prominent First Nations exhibition may be seen by hundreds of thousands of people, using objects, stories, history and culture to educate, entertain, challenge, and persuade. Metropolitan museums continue to see rising visitor numbers and studies in recent years have shown they are more trusted than universities, courts, media or government. Realising the potential of public museums as sites for historical and contemporary truth-telling requires continual critical evaluation of practice. In this paper, Dr Mike Jones will explore changing practice in museums, looking at the ways in which community relationships and new models of curatorship and ethics have started to challenge existing practical and theoretical approaches to First Nations collections and exhibitions. Drawing on a selection of case studies from Australian and international institutions, he will argue that though more effective forms of truth-telling have started to take shape in some large museums, such work is often precarious, marginalised, and unevenly distributed.

Dr Mike Jones is an archivist, historian, and collections consultant with more than 15 years of experience working with the GLAM sector (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums) on digital, archival, and public history projects. Mike's interdisciplinary research explores the history of archives and museums, and the ways in which collections-based knowledge is documented, managed, exhibited, and preserved, with a particular interest in the potential of contemporary technologies to support this work. He is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow—Indigenous and Colonial Histories at the University of Tasmania and is involved in several collaborative projects with First Nations communities, museum professionals, archivists, and academics. Mike is also the inaugural convenor of the Australian Society of Archivists' Research and Education Special Interest Group (REDSIG), an active member of the GLAM and digital humanities communities, and the author of *Artefacts, Archives, and Documentation in the Relational Museum* (Routledge 2021).

MA.Jones@utas.edu.au

**Deborah Jordan**

*Monash University and Griffith University*

### **Settler Colonisation and the Queensland Women's Vote**

Myth-making about how white women in Australia won the vote has been enduring. This paper addresses key historical questions about the campaigns for women's rights that have been eclipsed. When we listen to the voices of the earlier suffragists, especially in Queensland with its delayed introduction of manhood suffrage and a property vote where a wealthy man could hold up to 72 votes, very different accounts emerge. Unlike most western countries, Australian women were not granted the vote because of their support of patriotic militarism and World War 1, indeed leading suffragists opposed the war and led the national campaigns against conscription. In their combined call for both the women's and the democratic vote, for justice as well as equality, Australian suffragists' achievements on the world stage are largely overlooked. The question why they failed to enter parliament until decades later, slow in contrast to their early uptake of the vote, can start to be addressed. With the violence unleashed by the war and the associated shifts in gendered relationships, suffragists stepped back from leading positions and disappeared from the public gaze.

Dr Deborah Jordan, History Research Associate, Monash and Griffith University; Petherick Reader, National Library of Australia; and professional historian; specialises in research on women at the intersection of history, literature, and environment, addressing issues of gender, race and class. Published widely in cultural and women's history, her sixth book *Australian Women's Justice, Settler Colonisation and the Queensland Vote* with Routledge came out earlier this year. She taught History, and War and Peace studies at Flinders University in the 1980s before taking up appointments in the English Department at the University of Queensland where she was lead researcher on climate change narratives for AUSTLIT.

deborah.jordan@monash.edu

**Grace Karskens**

*UNSW Sydney*

**Contribution to panel "New Cross-Cultural Histories of Early New South Wales"**

Grace Karskens is Emeritus Professor of History in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. Her research areas include Australian colonial and cross-cultural history, Aboriginal history and environmental history.

[g.karskens@unsw.edu.au](mailto:g.karskens@unsw.edu.au)

**David Kaufman**

*Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists*

### **European and Aboriginal eye disease pre and post colonisation**

European eye disease in 18th century before European colonisation of Australia and the effects of introduced disease on a disease naive Aboriginal population with parallels to North American First Nations. Eye infection principally bacterial and sexually transmitted disease was common as was trachoma both in European and native populations in Australia at the time of 18th century colonisation. Smallpox, measles, trachoma and tuberculosis ran rampant through the native population. Change in native demographics with clustering after the new diseases were introduced amplified the effects causing profound morbidity and mortality. Eye trauma pre and post colonisation remains a significant problem.

Ophthalmologist with a long commitment to education and work in developing countries Post graduate work as Lecturer at Oxford University was followed by College commitments as examiner and Censor in Chief of Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists. Senior ophthalmologist and head of unit Royal Melbourne Hospital. Since 2011 Curator of the RANZCO online museum with multiple past and current exhibitions. Work as a team leader of the ASPECT foundation work in multiple Pacific countries in the 80s and 90s involving surgery and teaching with Melanesian and Polynesians affected by eye disease spurred interest in conditions affecting Australian Aborigines.

dvkaufman91@gmail.com

**Geoff Keating**

*University of Southern Queensland*

### **An Axe to Grind: Colonist Opposition in Australian Papua**

Australian colonial rule in Papua extended from initial efforts at Queensland imperialism in the late 19th century. The establishment of Australian control of Papua in 1905 led to the governorship of Hubert Murray; significant due to its longevity (1905–1940), its exploratory nature as well as its unflinching commitment to a turn-of-the-century variation of equality. Papua's small Australian expatriate community exercised commercial and social control of the territory and inhabitants yet never had the opportunity to exercise total political control due to the conditions established under the Papua Act 1905. Many of Murray's decisions and opinions were unpopular among the white colonialist population of the territory. This opposition was formally voiced by the *Papuan Times*, who led campaigns against every facet of Australian rule in the territory. By examining the writings of the *Times*, we are provided a snapshot of white colonial society in the period leading up to 1917. This paper aims to examine the main points of contention between Murray and the *Times* readership as it pertains to the enfranchisement of colonists and early colonial administration. While colonial opposition is often studied as the relationship between coloniser and Indigenous peoples, in this instance, opposition to Australian colonial rule stemmed from the colonists themselves, an area which has received minimal scholarly attention.

Geoff is an early career historian and educator whose research examines Colonial and Imperial history and impacts, particularly in the Pacific region. He also researches and publishes around the development of human rights, with a particular emphasis on the Holocaust and Holocaust education. His PhD project centres around the role of outsiders in establishing Australian rule in Papua and New Guinea between 1906 and 1930.. Geoff is a proud Kunja man, whose family comes from the land around Cunnamulla, Western Queensland. He was a Yad Vashem scholar in 2017, and developed an educational package comparing and contrasting the experiences of the Holocaust with those experienced by Indigenous peoples in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century. He has also presented at numerous history teaching conferences, including the Australian History Teachers conference.

[geoff.keating@unisq.edu.au](mailto:geoff.keating@unisq.edu.au)



**Thomas Kehoe**

*Cancer Council Victoria*

### **'You've got to face the facts': Early detection as prevention in early Australian cancer control**

Australian cancer control is now 100 years old, having begun after World War I. Over that time, it has changed profoundly, from a focus on early intervention to improve treatment outcomes, to the multi-faceted present-day response, which is based on three clearly defined and complementary pillars: primary prevention through health promotion and vaccination; screening for pre- and asymptomatic disease; and treatment, including palliative care. These divisions help define areas of focus for policy programs, health organisations, and practitioners. But the current divisions reflect a century of competition between different views of the aims and practices for cancer control, which has created modern divisions that are arbitrary and overlapping. This paper examines these competing ideas; how they shaped the early effort; and their consequences for those in the field and in the public. To do so, it examines the shifting meanings around "prevention" and "screening", which are now separate pillars but were in the interwar years combined when there were no techniques for asymptomatic testing or primary prevention strategies. Instead, governments and anti-cancer organisations promoted a fear- and shame-based self-checking message designed to shorten the time between symptom onset and medical attention on the belief it would improve treatment and survival. This earliest form of treatment-focused cancer prevention by self-screening was pursued for four decades, yet it failed, instead causing widespread "cancerphobia" and public inaction. But this early program did solidify support for addressing cancer as a public health priority and laid foundations for modern primary prevention and screening.

Thomas Kehoe, PhD, MPH, is the historian and head of heritage at Australia's peak cancer charity, Cancer Council Victoria, and is Research Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. He is lead industry-based investigator on the Australian Research Council Linkage grant 'Cancer Culture' (2022–2025) led by Prof. Andrew May, which explores the history of public health campaigns to control tobacco and skin cancer in Australia. Tom has far-reaching research interests in governance and institutions, and has published two monographs, *The Art of Occupation* (Ohio University Press, 2019) and *Cancer Data for Good* (Palgrave, 2022), and two edited collections with Bloomsbury (2020) and Emerald (2021). He has also published in a range of high-ranking journals, including the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (2016), *Business History* (2019), *Social Science History* (2020), the *European Journal of Criminology* (2022), and most recently *Health Promotion International* (2023).

thomas.kehoe@cancervic.org.au

**Catherine Kevin**  
*Flinders University*

### **Discovering reproductive coercion in an age of normative heterosexual intimacy**

As the South Australian government reckons with home truths about family and domestic violence in this state, the language of its inquiries speaks to a recent national and international history of naming and detailing different forms of abuse. For example, the term reproductive coercion was coined in the 2010s and refers to the obstruction of a person's reproductive autonomy by interfering in decision-making relating to contraception or termination of pregnancy. In seeking to write a history of domestic violence in Australia in the period 1914 - 1970 that is alert to the specific meanings of different forms of violence in their contexts, I have explored the utility of the term reproductive coercion. This paper contends that by focusing on understandings of and conditions for reproductive autonomy, reproductive coercion provides a constructive line of inquiry into a history of domestic violence. Working with this term demands a reconsideration of what reproductive autonomy could mean in the period under examination and the ways in which it might be undermined in the context of domestic abuse. It leads to a careful consideration of the intersections of histories of the availability, affordability and legality of contraceptive and abortion technologies, and changing understandings of and conditions for heterosexual intimacy and agency.

Catherine Kevin is a is an Associate Professor at Flinders University who teaches and researches in the fields of Australian history and feminist history, particularly Indigenous-settler relations, the politics and experience of the reproductive body and gendered violence. Her book, *Dispossession and the Making of Jedda: Hollywood in Ngunnawal Country* was published in 2020 and she is currently writing a book about the history of domestic violence in Australia since 1850 with Ann Curthoys and Zora Simic

catherine.kevin@flinders.edu.au

**Tianna Killoran**

*James Cook University*

## **Denial and Dispossession of Japanese Australians during WWII**

The internment and subsequent dispossession of Nikkei communities in Allied nations during World War II has garnered increasing international scholarly attention in recent years, with a notable dearth of focused research in Australia. Indeed, this research paper contributes to a growing international discourse surrounding wartime internment and seeks to uncover and understand the 'home truths' surrounding the dispossession of Japanese Australians. With more than 97% of Japanese Australians arrested and interned for the entirety of the Pacific War, this paper examines the process by which the dispossession of this community was able to occur. This paper draws on recent scholarship on Japanese Canadian internment and analyses Australian internment records to explore how authorities administered the dispossession of Nikkei property, including their homes, businesses, and personal possessions. This paper highlights how the Australian security service, army, and state police denied and deferred their responsibility for Japanese civilian internees and possessions from 1941. These government decisions resulted in the alienation of Japanese Australian families from their communities and facilitated dispossession that transcends material losses. By contributing to the growing field of international scholarship and examining these racialised property practices in the context of Nikkei internment, this research sheds light on a much longer history of white settler possession in Australian history.

Dr Tianna Killoran is an Associate Lecturer in Humanities and Social Sciences at James Cook University in Townsville, Australia. She received her PhD in History in 2023, with her thesis investigating the history of Japanese migrants in north Queensland between 1885 and 1946, including their families, communities, and roles and relationships as part of the region's development. She has published her research in the journals *History Australia* and *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal*, and was also a 2023 Scholar in Residence as part of the Past Wrongs, Future Choices research project in Victoria, Canada.

tianna.killoran@jcu.edu.au

**Tets Kimura**

*Flinders University*

Peter Prince, *University of Sydney*

### **They were 'belongers': the unlawful internment and expulsion of Japanese Australians in WWII**

Shigeru Yamaguchi was born in 1906 in Western Australia. James and Leonard Yagura were born in Queensland in 1915 and 1918 respectively. Shigeru was a farmer growing vegetables in Geraldton while James and Leonard worked as carpenters on Thursday Island. In the landmark High Court case *Love & Thoms* in 2020, Justice Edelman coined the term 'belongers' for members of the nation who could not be 'aliens' to Australia in a legal or constitutional sense. Under the English common law principle of birthright nationality dating from 1608, confirmed by Australia's Nationality Act 1920, Shigeru, James and Leonard had full legal membership status as 'British subjects'. After Pearl Harbour, however, all three were 'captured' as Japanese 'enemy aliens' and sent to wartime internment camps. Shigeru and James were 'repatriated' to Japan after the war. Only Leonard managed to return to his home, on Thursday Island. Our paper argues that internment and expulsion of Japanese Australian 'aliens' was not just unethical but also unlawful. The federal Constitution did not allow such treatment. Neither the lawmaking power over 'aliens' nor that over 'immigrants' could validly apply. The other possibility was the lawmaking power regarding defence. But these were peaceful, productive members of the community who posed no threat. Could the defence power be used to intern and then force them into exile merely because of their ethnic background? As in the United States and Canada, we say their descendants are owed an apology and compensation from the federal government for their inhumane and unlawful treatment.

Dr Tets Kimura is an academic status holder at the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Flinders University, researching fashion studies, art/cultural history, and Australia's Japanese history. He is a fellow at the National Library of Australia (2023–24) and Taiwan's National Chengchi University (2024). His latest publications include 'Repatriated from Home as Enemy Aliens' (*Journal of Australian Studies*, 2023). Together with A/Prof Richard Bullen (University of Canterbury, New Zealand), he is working on an edited volume on Japanese war from Australasian internment camps during the Second World War. Dr Peter Prince is co-editor of *Subjects and Aliens: Histories of Nationality, Law and Belonging in Australia and New Zealand* (ANU Press 2023) <http://doi.org/10.22459/SA.2023>. His work has been cited by the High Court of Australia in critical 'aliens' cases including *Singh* (2004), *Love & Thoms* (2020) and *Chetcuti* (2021). He is an affiliate of the University of Sydney Law School.

tets.kimura@flinders.edu.au

**Skye Krichauff**

*University of Adelaide*

**Contribution to panel "The South Australian Frontier and its Legacies"**

Skye Krichauff is a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Adelaide.

[skye.krichauff@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:skye.krichauff@adelaide.edu.au)

**Zoe Laidlaw**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Capital, Agents and Absentees: Legacies of British Slavery in Victoria**

The founding capital of two of Victoria's largest and most successful early pastoral ventures, the Clyde Company and Niel Black and Co, was generated in the Atlantic slave economy. This paper explores where and how the predominantly Scottish investors in these partnerships made their wealth; how they invested it in the early Port Phillip District; and how they sought to secure their Australian investments from the 1830s to the 1860s. Using a combination of company and family papers, genealogical information, and the Legacies of British Slave-ownership database, the paper considers the influence on the Port Phillip District's invasion of capital generated from Atlantic trade and, particularly, liquidity created by the compensation paid to slave-owners under the 1833 Abolition of Slavery Act. It demonstrates how entwined mercantile, financial and family networks allowed capital to be raised and deployed profitably at a distance, supported by new mercantile houses in Melbourne. British, and particularly Scottish, investors, including the Dennistouns, Woods, Gladstones and Finlays, reaped huge returns from their Victorian ventures. In the colony, the prominence of key figures connected with these endeavours, including Niel Black, George Russell, William Montgomery Bell and James McCulloch, extended from pastoralism to commerce and politics. While connections between early Victoria and Scotland have long been recognised, this paper argues that the connection to the Atlantic slave economy prompts reconsideration of long-held assumptions about the histories of settler colonialism.

Zoë Laidlaw is Prof. of History at the University of Melbourne. Her research focuses on nineteenth-century imperialism and colonialism, and she has published widely on British imperial networks and governance, settler colonialism, Indigenous dispossession, humanitarian activism and the Australian legacies of British slavery. A Chief Investigator on the ARC Discovery Project, 'Western Australian Legacies of British Slavery' (2020–24), she is now commencing work on its successor, 'Australian Legacies of British Slavery: Capital, Land and Labour' (2024–27). Her most recent book is *Protecting the Empire's Humanity: Thomas Hodgkin and British Colonial Activism 1830–1870* (2021).

[zoe.laidlaw@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:zoe.laidlaw@unimelb.edu.au)

**Zoë Laidlaw**

*University of Melbourne*

**Contribution to panel "Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne"**

Zoë Laidlaw is Prof. of History at the University of Melbourne. She grew up in western Victoria and completed honours degrees in Arts and Science at the University of Melbourne, and a doctorate at the University of Oxford. Having worked at the University of Sheffield, and Royal Holloway, University of London, Zoë returned to Melbourne in 2018. A historian of nineteenth-century imperialism and colonialism, she has published widely on British imperial networks and governance, settler colonialism, Indigenous dispossession and humanitarian activism. Her current research focuses on imperial inquiries and the legacies of British slavery in Australia.

[zoe.laidlaw@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:zoe.laidlaw@unimelb.edu.au)

**Jessica Lake**

*University of Melbourne*

### **'Unsullied purity': Sexual slander at the margins of race and class in antebellum North Carolina**

On 10 December 1808, William W Jones – plantation owner, enslaver, father of daughters, member of the state legislature – introduced to the North Carolina House of Commons the first 'Slander of Women Act' in the common law world (the British/former British Empire). By making it easier for women to sue for sexual slander (such as being called a 'whore') it sought to defend the reputations of 'innocent and unprotected women', whose very existence in society depended upon the 'unsullied purity of their character'. The Slander of Women Act underlined the perceived seriousness of sexual slander against elite white women and reflected a collective legislative commitment to demarcating and defending their reputations for racial and moral supremacy. But the Act did not play out this way. Most cases relying upon the 1808 Act heard by the North Carolina Supreme Court during the antebellum period were brought by those on the margins of society: poor, aging, spinsters, 'lunatics', Native American and African American women. Often their cases were unsuccessful, but the Slander of Women Act enabled sexually exploitative and denigrating words spoken about these women by propertied men to be refuted and their protests to be placed on the public record. This paper focuses particularly on a series of slander cases brought by Cherokee women against a powerful local plantation owner in 1820s North Carolina.

Jessica Lake is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Melbourne Law School. She is a legal historian and researches the regulation of expression, speech, and creativity (privacy, defamation, and copyright) in the common law world during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a particular focus on gender. Her first book on the history of women and privacy law, *The Face that Launched a Thousand Lawsuits: the American Women Who Forged a Right to Privacy*, was published with Yale University Press in 2016 and her next book, on the gendered history of defamation law, *Special Damage: Slandered Women and Stained Whiteness*, is forthcoming with Stanford. In 2022, Jessica was awarded an ARC DECRA for her project on 'The Colour of Sexual Slander'.

calvertlake@gmail.com



**Des Lambley**

*University of New England*

### **Military untruths by omission**

Throughout the First World War, about 460,000 Australians volunteered to join the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). About 331,000 men and women left Australia for distant theatres, and 11,460 males were commissioned as officers. Of these, 414 were placed before a court-martial for breaking the rules. So many people believe only the best about the Anzac men and women. Such is the legend. The historical genre for the First World War has tended to obscure these stories, which warps our history. C.E.W. Bean, the official Australian war historian, was the creator and protector of the Anzac legend. He told an extensive, detailed story of gallantry in defeat and success, and regarded the typical digger as strong, healthy, resilient to hardship, good-humoured, independent, fair and inventive. Bean built these traits into his preferred positive of the Australian soldier and took a pragmatic, global view of the Australian involvement in the war. He made no mention of the court-martialled officers. Higher degree research took Bean's omission as the divergent starting point to expose a truth. The military court-martial archive is rich in evidence about the application of military justice and the context surrounding cause and effect. A constructionist approach is used to tease out their identity, what their offences were and what might have prompted their indiscipline. Official, archived documents were sourced with relevant data extracted upon which analyses are derived. Why did these officers offend? Did their courage fail? Were they overworked? Was there a link between battle stress, indiscipline and illness?

Des Lambley, BA(Hons.) ME, Grad. Dip. LFAH is reading for his PhD at the University of New England, Armidale. Topic: 'An Analysis of Military Criminality by Australian Officers in the First World War'. Although having military service during the Vietnam War years, most of his working life was in the Policy and Research Management areas of the NSW Public Service. He has published works in several disciplines and is retired.

deslambley@gmail.com

**Marcia Langton**

*University of Melbourne*

**Contribution to panel "Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne"**

Marcia Langton, AO, is a granddaughter of Yiman and Bidjara people in Queensland, where she was born and raised. She is qualified as an anthropologist and geographer. Since 2000 she has held the Foundation Chair of Australian Indigenous Studies at the University of Melbourne, and since 2017 she has held the role of Associate Provost. She is Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee at the University of Melbourne and advises on collections of art and cultural heritage. Her current research concerns alcohol management and domestic and family violence in Aboriginal settings, and Indigenous data governance and community data projects. She has published in the areas of political and legal anthropology, Aboriginal arts and cultural heritage, Indigenous agreements and engagement with the minerals industry, Aboriginal land tenure, native title, and Indigenous resource management.

m.langton@unimelb.edu.au

**Declan Lawless**

*University of Adelaide*

**'You'd have the men arguing the toss': Citizenship and current affairs education in the British Army during the Second World War**

Between May 1939 and June 1941, the British Army was transformed from a small professional force into a mass conscript army. Many young men of this intake, being better educated, more unionised, and less deferential than their fathers had been in 1914, responded to the tedium and petty injustices of Army life by becoming cynical or apathetic about the war. In the summer of 1941, the Army sought to address this crisis of morale with a new program of education in citizenship and current affairs – teaching soldiers about British democracy and freedoms would alert them to the righteousness of their cause. After the shock election loss experienced by Winston Churchill's Conservative Party in July 1945, many prominent Conservatives complained that army education had turned soldiers to the Left. The Army Bureau of Current Affairs had overstepped its remit and sold servicemen a vision of post-war reconstruction along socialist lines. Historians have predominantly characterised army education as politically uncontroversial and its Tory critics as jumping at shadows. Much of this previous work has neglected to pay sufficient attention to a key resource: the material circulated to Army units as the basis for educational sessions on (for example) 'Women After the War' and 'The Nation's Health'. Drawing on the pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire and closely examining the material produced by the Army to guide its discussion of citizenship and current affairs, this paper will argue that army education often encouraged soldiers to think about – and come to expect – radical social change.

Dr Declan Lawless (he/him) is interested in both political history and contemporary political discourse. His PhD thesis, completed at the University of Adelaide, analysed hostile constructions of social movement activism in reactionary online media. His current work is an extension of his earlier Honours thesis which examined the political culture of the British Army during the Second World War.

declanjlawless@gmail.com

**Sharon Lawn**

*Flinders University*

### **History as a crucial part of understanding trauma**

This talk will bring together my reflections on the importance of applying an historical lived and living experience lens to the investigation of suicide and Australia's military veterans. By reflecting on a long career that began with history teaching, then mental health practice, mental health research, and national mental health lived experience advocacy, I will examine why history isn't ever confined to the past; how it has intergenerational impacts that are relevant to current and future communities and the mental health challenges they face. I will use our ARC-funded research on the historical dimensions of veteran suicide to exemplify how this approach can inform our current understanding of trauma. I will discuss the challenges and opportunities for influencing mental health policy reform when bureaucracies and their governments only see what is in front of them and the next election cycle; when they fail to see, understand and acknowledge the longitudinal role of trauma and its intergenerational impacts and influences. I will argue that history is not just what occurred in the past. It is 'living' and is played out across time through narratives of trauma, embedded and carried by individuals, families and communities.

Sharon is a Prof. in the College of Medicine and Public Health and Flinders University and Co-Director of Open Door, focused on veteran research from a social health perspective. Sharon is also Executive Director of Lived Experience Australia, a nationally awarded mental health consumer and family/carer advocacy organisation. Sharon brings her personal lived experience and 20+ years as a family carer to several national representative roles including the Board of Mental Health Australia. Sharon was previously Director of the Department of Psychiatry research unit, and lead SA Mental Health Commissioner in 2020-21. Prior to these roles, Sharon worked in mental health, aged care and disability services in SA for 23 years in clinical and support delivery roles. Sharon continues to undertake a broad range of mental health systems research from a lived experience perspective.

sharon.lawn@flinders.edu.au

**Roland Leikauf**

*Australian National Maritime Museum*

### **Good health, gold bars and ample food: 'truths' about boat arrivals in Australia**

In episode 4 of the TV series *Patrol Boat* (1979–1983), *Ambush* rescues a small Vietnamese fishing vessel with refugees. The actors play out all the stereotypes that were projected on to these migrants: that they are well-fed, carrying 'more tucker on board than we did' and in the possession of 'gold bars' and other valuables. The episode is, fittingly, titled 'Another Bunch of Reffos'. The series aired from 1979, only three years after the arrival of the VN KG 4435, which is generally seen as the first 'boat people' arrival. When the crisis was still ongoing, it seems, key tropes, stereotypes and negative truths had already solidified. Truths are tools of categorization that allow us to separate the world into easily processable packages: refugees are good or bad, genuine or fake, dangerous or harmless. It is not surprising that such categorisations developed for the 'boat people' crisis. They provide us with, as William McNeill puts it, 'social cement'. It is the speed of development and clarity of message of this form of 'identity-based opposition' that is surprising. When Wayne Gibbons, the Minister for Immigration's private secretary, talks to the refugees from KG 4435, he foresees the possible impact on public opinion, fearing 'the mood of the public will become paranoid'. But what is the turning point, when general prejudice gets distilled into these specific forms? When does public opinion take such a sharp turn? Or did these arrivals from above the seas rather reawaken and reconfigure much older tropes?

Dr Roland Leikauf is the Curator for Post-war Immigration at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney, Australia. Before migrating to Australia in 2021, he worked for museums in Germany as a curator and historian. At the Hadamar Memorial Museum, he researched and prepared a new permanent exhibition about the murders of Nazi 'Euthanasia'. At the House of History, the largest state-funded museum in Germany, he worked on several exhibitions and developed a collection policy aimed at refugees and migrants, especially from war-torn Syria. Before finishing his PhD in Siegen, Germany, he worked as a freelance public historian. His PhD 'Welcome to my Bunker', which was published by transcript publishing in Germany, analysed the different strategies of memory construction on the websites of veterans of the Second War in Indochina. At the University of Hamburg, he studied history, European ethnology and media studies.

roland.leikauf@sea.museum

**Jessie Lewcock**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Navigating the difficult truths of First World War veteran suicides**

The topic of suicide has historically been shrouded in stigma, secrecy, and shame – three bitter enemies of truth, and towering obstacles for those who engage with primary resources linked to these deaths. When suicide and military service collide these shrouds only become darker and murkier. This paper will discuss the difficulties encountered while engaging with primary sources and record repositories during the creation of a database of First World War veterans who died by suicide in South Australia. It will also stress the importance of the balance that must be struck between honouring their service during war and telling the complex and at times inglorious truths of their post-war lives and deaths.

Jessie Lewcock is a social and military historian and current doctoral candidate at the University of Adelaide. Her PhD research has resulted in the creation of a database of First World War veterans who died by suicide in South Australia between 1915 and 1965. She was the 2019 recipient of the Hugh Martin Weir Prize and has been on the judging panel of the Premier's Anzac Spirit School Prize since 2020.

[jessie.lewcock@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:jessie.lewcock@adelaide.edu.au)

**Rowan Light**

*University of Auckland and Auckland War Memorial Museum*

**Auckland's War: Material exchanges and Regimental networks in colonial Auckland, 1846–58**

Globally, museum collections are recognised as sites of contested colonial history-making. Public debates about Aotearoa New Zealand's contested past, however, omit the role of 'material culture' in the experience of colonial conflict. Since 2021, collections-based research at the Auckland War Memorial Museum (which holds the country's largest body of materials relating to colonial conflict) aims at restoring the military context of imperial collecting in nineteenth-century Aotearoa otherwise omitted from popular and scholarly narratives. By focusing on a case study of 1850s Auckland as a 'wounded city' (using Karen Till's term), this paper explores the role of materials in the legitimising of British military occupation in nineteenth-century imperial projects – with profound implications to the presentation and holding of objects and taonga (ancestral treasures) at the Auckland Museum.

Rowan Light is a historian at the University of Auckland and project curator (NZ Wars) at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. His research focuses on the cultural memories of the New Zealand Wars, particularly the material legacy of colonial conflict.

rowan.light@auckland.ac.nz

**Kiera Lindsey**

*History Trust of South Australia*

**Calling all Storytellers: South Australian Stories Survey Initiative (SASSi)**

*Contribution to Plenary Panel of the Public History Stream, sponsored by the  
History Trust of South Australia*

[KLindsey@History.sa.gov.au](mailto:KLindsey@History.sa.gov.au)



**Alex Little**

*Australian Catholic University*

### **'Are We Worth Attacking?': Peter Scratchley, William Jervois, and Australian Defensive Planning of the 1870s**

By 1870, the final British garrisons had departed Australian shores, leaving the colonies entirely responsible for their own local defences. With little agreement and standardisation between them, colonial defences were often poorly planned and inconsistent while lacking the necessary co-operation required. Two key figures assessing these colonies and their defences were Royal Engineers, Lieutenant General Sir William Jervois, and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Scratchley. Both men visited the colonies several times during the 1870s, conducting key surveys of the Australian defensive forces as the colonies embarked upon a new era where they would bear full responsibility for local defence. This paper investigates Scratchley and Jervois' evaluation of Australia's defensive forces in 1870, and their influence upon Australian defensive planning across the following decade. Drawing upon a series of lectures given by Peter Scratchley in 1870, it assesses the key takeaways from the Royal Engineers' impressions of the state of Australia's defensive forces, and how they fit into the broader network of British imperial defence. Their influence was significant enough that the two were specifically requested to conduct the first systematic survey of the colonies' defences in 1877 conducted by the one, independent team. Scratchley and Jervois' survey delivered some home truths to the Australian colonial governments, that they were not as adequately prepared for the changing imperial landscape as they had hoped.

Alex is an Early Career Researcher, having recently completed his PhD at Australian Catholic University. His thesis examined the Australian contribution to British imperial wars of the late-Victorian, early-Edwardian era. He specialises in transnational histories of the British Empire, and Australian military history.

alexslittle93@gmail.com

**Claire Lowrie**

*University of Wollongong*

### **Recovery Work: Hidden Histories of Chinese amahs in Britain and Australia, 1920s–40s**

The past five years has witnessed a flourishing of research on the experiences of South Asian ayahs that travelled to Britain as carers to colonizer children. Many of these women ended up in the Ayahs Home in Hackney, London, awaiting return voyages home. In 2022 a Blue Heritage Plaque was erected on the Hackney site in recognition of ayahs' presence in Britain and the role they played in the colonial project. The home was also a place of refuge for Chinese amahs that came to Britain in the company of British families. Chinese amahs were engaged to care for children on the long voyage from Malaya, Hong Kong and treaty port China to London. Very little is known about the lives of the travelling amahs and their stories have not been acknowledged in histories of Chinese labour migration nor in the histories of the Ayahs Home. This paper seeks to understand why it is that these women have been forgotten not only in Britain but also in Australia to where they travelled in significant numbers from the 1920s. By bringing together fragments from shipping records, immigration documents, press accounts and oral histories, the paper aims to recover hidden histories of the travelling Chinese amahs.

Claire Lowrie is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Wollongong. Her research focuses on the history colonialism, labour and migration in tropical northern Australia and Southeast Asia. She is a Chief Investigator on two current Australian Research Council Discovery Projects. The first is on the abolition of Chinese indentured labour across the Asia-Pacific (led by Julia T. Martínez and with Gregor Benton). The second is a history of the travelling Indian ayahs and Chinese amahs of the British Empire (led by Victoria K. Haskins and with Swapna Banerjee). Claire is the author of *Masters and Servants* (Manchester University Press, 2016) and *Colonialism and Male Domestic Service across the Asia Pacific* (Bloomsbury, 2019), co-authored with Martínez, Frances Steel and Haskins. Her edited books include *Chinese Colonial Entanglements* (Hawaii University Press, 2024), co-edited with Martínez and Benton, and *Colonization and Domestic Service* (Routledge, 2015), co-edited with Haskins.

clowrie@uow.edu.au

**Jane Lydon**

Xavier Reader

*University of Western Australia*

### **Measuring Noah's Ark: Western Australian Legacies of British Slavery**

The physician Dr. William Milligan gave an early account of the new Swan River settlement, established in 1829 as Australia's first free colony founded by private investment on the traditional Country of the Whadjuk Noongar people. Milligan noted 'some gentlemen from the East and West Indies' among the colonists – that is, men made wealthy by their investment in Britain's Asian territories of India and the Indian Ocean region, overseen by the East India Company, or in its Caribbean colonies. Britain's abolition of slavery in 1833 has long been understood in the context of the larger re-orientation of the British Empire from mercantilism to the adoption of free trade, and the gradual emergence of global capitalism. Swan River colony was established at a time when many anticipated the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean and were turning toward the new settler colonies for investment and profit. Debates about labour and land commodification determined the form of 'the mighty experiment' of emancipation as much as they shaped settler colonisation. Here we explore links between Britain's slavery system and Western Australia, through the movement of capital, people, and culture from one imperial system to the other in the period immediately prior to the abolition of slavery. Through analysis of the colony's foundation through capital investment, we seek to identify the investment and life stories of those moving from Britain's slavery business to Western Australia.

Jane Lydon is the Wesfarmers Chair of Australian History at the University of Western Australia. Her research centres upon Australia's colonial past and its legacies in the present. In particular, she is concerned with the history of Australia's engagement with anti-slavery, humanitarianism, and ultimately human rights. Her work has contributed to decolonizing heritage and academic practice, with a strong impact on debates regarding colonialism and Australian legacies of imperialism and slavery. Her most recent books include *Imperial Emotions: The Politics of Empathy across the British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) which examines the role of the compassionate emotions in creating relationships spanning the globe, and *Anti-slavery and Australia: No Slavery in a Free Land?* (Routledge, 2021), which explores the anti-slavery movement in imperial scope, arguing that colonization in Australasia facilitated emancipation in the Caribbean, even as abolition powerfully shaped the Settler Revolution.

jane.lydon@uwa.edu.au

**Heather Lyle**

*University of Newcastle*

**At Home with Malaria: Perceptions of malarial disease in domestic settings on Australia's tropical frontier 1850–1910**

My research into the history of malaria in Australia during the nineteenth and early twentieth century shows that everyday private interactions with the disease gives insights into how information provided to the public is integrated into individual experiences of malarial disease. People took that information into their homes, families and communities, incorporating it into their view of the world. Rachel Henning for example referred to her family's approach to the malarial disease that was common at their home in north Queensland at certain times of the year as experimental. Each of the members of her household had their own favoured remedy for malarial disease. This variety of opinions within a single household indicates a familiarity with malarial disease, but also a confidence in their own ideas that treated the information available to them through the press and medical texts as a starting point rather than as the final word. In the modern context, entirely new diseases are relatively rare, and when the COVID-19 virus emerged the public were flooded with information. This information interacted with and disrupted existing ideas about health and disease leading to a vast range of beliefs about the virus that in turn influenced people's responses to it. In this paper, I draw on examples from my own research into Malaria to demonstrate the importance of the domestic and personal context in the delivery of health information, and possible insights that may be drawn on to guide the delivery of that information in the future.

Heather is a PhD candidate at the University of Newcastle and was the inaugural recipient of the Janet Copley HDR Scholarship. Heather's research explores the history of malarial disease in Australia during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. A key focus of Heather's research is on the way that scientific discoveries during this time about malaria interacted with prevailing ideas about malarial disease in the community. Heather came to history after a fifteen year career as a Registered Nurse. This combined with her upbringing in Far North Queensland has driven her interest in the social history of medicine, especially perceptions of health and disease in the past, and histories of the Tropical north of Australia.

Heather.Lyle@uon.edu.au

**Paige Mahoney**  
*Deakin University*

### **'Morbidity curiosity': Murder and crime voyeurism in colonial Victoria**

In December 1864, a young woman named Margaret Graham was murdered in the central Victorian goldmining town of Daylesford. The brutality of the crime horrified the colony, but it also caused a sensation that thrilled and fascinated the public. Alongside extensive newspaper coverage of the case, there were numerous opportunities for the public to directly access the murder and its aftermath: sightseers invaded the crime scene to view blood-soaked sheets; large crowds jostled for seats at courtroom hearings; and families gaped at waxwork effigies of the convicted killer. Such voyeuristic activities offered spectators an immediacy that newsprint could not replicate and followed longstanding British traditions that conflated serious crime with entertainment. At the time of Margaret's murder, the 'morbidity curiosity' that was thought to engender such unseemly fascination with crime was a source of concern to colonial newspapers. However, criticisms of voyeuristic practices such as sightseeing were often classed and gendered rather than inherently opposed to the notion of crime as entertainment; the boundaries of what activities were considered acceptable, and for whom, were malleable. This presentation will consider three modes of crime voyeurism which occurred following Margaret's murder—sightseeing, courtroom and execution attendance, and waxworks—to consider how the colonial Victorian public experienced Margaret's murder in terms not only of horror, but enjoyment; and how certain activities were constructed by the press as socially (un)acceptable.

Paige Mahoney is a PhD candidate in History at Deakin University's School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Her thesis centres on an 1864 murder in the central Victorian goldfields town of Daylesford and considers the interplays between crime, representation, gender, and gold in colonial Victoria. Paige's previous research has explored the complex intersections between history and fiction, gender and memory, and regional and national identities. She has also worked on a range of projects in higher education research, examining topics such as assessment feedback, feedback literacy, and inclusive assessment.

p.mahoney@deakin.edu.au

**Aaron Marston-Pattison**  
*Australian National University*

### **Britain's Business? Britishness and the Meanings of the Second World War on the Australian Homefront**

Just over an hour after Great Britain went to war on 3 September 1939, Australia followed. Initial responses to this development from the Australian people were mixed. Though few were pleased to hear the news, many accepted the arrival of war as a sad inevitability. Scores of Australians did not question that their country would automatically follow Britain into a world war. After all, surely Australia was itself a British country? Australian national identity has long been a contentious topic of debate among historians of the twentieth century. Particularly when it comes to the time of the Second World War and the immediate post-war era, scholars have fiercely debated whether the country began to discard Britishness as the dominant cultural glue in favour of a distinctly Australian identity. Usually, such considerations centre around the views and efforts of politicians and other cultural elites. Often neglected in these discussions, therefore, are the wartime discussions, musings, and private opinions of ordinary Australians. By contemplating the place of Britishness in popular understandings of the Second World War, I aim to reinvigorate this debate. In doing so, I demonstrate that Britishness remained a dominant national identity throughout the Second World War, that allowed many ordinary Australians to shape their understanding of the conflict in a British mould. Simultaneously, however, the war exposed an explicitly Australian national identity which necessitated that the war be cast as something other than imperial folly.

Aaron Marston-Pattison is a second year PhD candidate at the Australian National University. His research focuses on the Australian homefront of the Second World War and how contemporary Australians understood that conflict. He has previously written on how racism and anti-racism were expressed in understandings and depictions of the Pacific War. His PhD thesis focuses on how 'ordinary' homefront Australians found meaning in the Second World War. Aaron has previously spent time working for the Research Centre at the Australian War Memorial. Aaron is a co-editor of the ANU Historical Journal II.

aaron.pattison@anu.edu.au

**Jeremy Martens**

*University of Western Australia*

### **Intergenerational wealth, family connections and the creation of a 'pastoral interest' in colonial Western Australia 1830–50**

This paper examines the processes by which wealthy pastoralists created a politically powerful 'pastoral interest' in nineteenth century Western Australia. Some of the colonists who established the wool industry in the Avon valley in the 1830s and 1840s had direct connections to Caribbean slavery, while others were members of wealthy British landed families who drew from 'old money' accumulated from vast landholdings in Britain and Ireland over many generations. I argue that elite colonists conscientiously replicated long-standing British aristocratic practices in order to cultivate political and economic connections in colonial Western Australia. In particular, by brokering dynastic marriages and accumulating large large grants, which were often leased out to other settlers, families such as the Barrett-Lennards, Drake-Brockmans and Hamersleys established a 'pastoral interest' with outsized political and economic power by the 1850s.

Jeremy Martens teaches global history at the University of Western Australia; South African, African and British imperial history; and the history of race and racism. His research interests include the evolution of immigration restriction legislation in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as race, gender and the law in nineteenth- and twentieth-century South Africa. In addition to publishing widely on South African, Australian and British imperial history in scholarly journals, he is the author of *Empire and Asian Migration: Sovereignty, Immigration Restriction and Protest in the British Settler Colonies, 1888–1907* (UWAP, 2018) and *Government House and Western Australian Society, 1829–2009* (UWAP, 2011). The latter book was shortlisted for the 2011 WA Premier's Book Awards (WA History) and received a Special Commendation, 2012 Margaret Medcalf Award. In 2020 he was awarded the annual Marian Quartly Prize for 'The Mrs Freer case revisited: marriage, morality and the state in interwar Australia,' *History Australia* 16.3 (2019).

jeremy.martens@uwa.edu.au

**Marvin Martin**

*Monash University*

### **'I had to do it to restore law and order': corporal punishment at the central Australian Hermannsburg mission**

Since the "Bringing Them Home" report published in 1997, missions in Australia have become infamous for the practice of forcefully removing Aboriginal children from their parents. The violent mission practice of corporal punishment has received comparatively little scholarly attention. This paper addresses the neglected image of the 'beating missionary', by examining the forgotten 1936 Local Adelaide Court Case. This case dealt with two corporal punishment incidents at the Hermannsburg mission in central Australia. The court case functions as a case study to better understand the broader role of corporal punishment practices in the everyday encounters between the German Lutheran missionaries of Hermannsburg and Western Aranda people and other central Australian Aboriginal peoples. Based on court case records, newspaper articles, and missionary reports, I analyse the German Lutheran missionaries' conceptualisation of corporal punishment and Aranda people's responses to this violence. I argue that the German Lutheran missionaries used the practice of corporal punishment to try to control Aranda people's behaviours and foster a Christian order on the mission that reflected the missionaries' ideas of morality. Aranda people were however not merely passive recipients of corporal punishment. They had their own understanding of corporal punishment, and both openly and secretly protested the missionaries' use of violence. This mitigated the effects of the corporal punishment system. The corporal punishment system did therefore not simply impose German Lutheran values on Aranda people, but Aranda people and the German Lutheran missionaries rather constantly renegotiated the boundaries of acceptable violence.

Marvin Martin is a PhD candidate at Monash University. Originally from Berlin, Germany, Marvin completed the master's programme Global History at the Freie Universität Berlin and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Before studying Global History, he received a bachelor's degree in History and Political Science from the Freie Universität Berlin and completed an exchange year at the University of Kent in 2014-2015. An additional exchange year at the University of Melbourne in 2017-2018 sparked his research interest in Australian colonial and Indigenous history. In his PhD thesis, he combines his German background with colonial history and examines the cross-cultural encounters between the German Lutheran missionaries and Aboriginal peoples at the central Australian Hermannsburg/Ntaria mission from 1926 to 1952.

marvin.martin@monash.edu



**Mia Martin Hobbs**

*Deakin University*

## **Hidden Truths: Anti-war veteran activism in Australia from Vietnam to the War on Terror**

This paper explores the stories of Australian veterans who attempted to protest war and the ways in which they have been undermined, from Vietnam to the War on Terror. While there is a well-documented history of Australian veterans campaigning for recognition, compensation, and attention to individual war legacies, Australia has not seen a robust organisation of anti-war veterans opposing war itself. This absence is particularly striking when compared to the long histories of anti-war veteran activism in the US and UK, the countries with which Australia has generally gone to war. Drawing on oral histories with Australian Vietnam veterans, public letters and articles from veterans, as well as online forums, blogs, and social media pages from more recent wars, this paper will examine how veterans have expressed critical views of war and militarism, along with reactions from mainstream veterans' organisations, the Australian government, media, and general public that implicitly or overtly work to diminish them. This paper argues that growing militarism in Australian society since the Vietnam War has intimidated and isolated veterans who might otherwise have spoken out about the ways in which warfighting changed their political views. It suggests that anti-war Australian veterans tend to drop their veteran identity and blend into broader pacifist or left-wing organisations, rather than drawing on their veteran experience, or 'truth', to protest war.

Dr Mia Martin Hobbs is an oral historian of war and conflict. She completed her PhD in History at the University of Melbourne in 2018, and her book, *Return to Vietnam: An Oral History of American and Australian Veterans' Journeys*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2021. She has published on veteran memories and war narratives in *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *Oral History Review*, and *Journal of American History*, and written on contemporary veterans' issues for *Australian Policy History* and *The Conversation*. Mia is presently an Alfred Deakin Postdoctoral Research Fellow, where she is undertaking an oral history project with women and minority veterans who fought in the US, UK, and Australian militaries since 9/11, and is also investigating the experiences of anti-war Australian veterans from Vietnam to the War on Terror.

[mia.martinhobbs@deakin.edu.au](mailto:mia.martinhobbs@deakin.edu.au)

**Katharine Massam**  
*University of Divinity*

### **"Imagine something else": women, faith and social change in twentieth-century Catholicism**

Founded between 1912 and 1925 in Belgium, the Young Christian Worker movement spread quickly through Catholic networks around the globe: by 1966 it included 4 million young people in 100 countries with a dozen allied movements, both adult and youth. Each formed leaders committed to a 'lay apostolage' that would transform the context of daily life through shared theological reflection. Their method, articulated by the founder Fr Joseph Cardijn as 'see-judge-act', impacted 10 of the 12 major documents of the Second Vatican Council and resourced liberation theologies globally. Women held key leadership role as the movement developed and spread. Through the twentieth century, the 'see-judge-act' method prompted countless women to social and political activism beyond the stereotypes endorsed by their church and wider society. The historiography of the 'lay apostolate' in Australia has been dominated by the political effort of Industrial Groups set up by B.A. Santamaria from the mid-1940s to combat Communism. This paper offers a more complicated and transnational history of the lay apostolate in Australia with a focus on the home truths generated by the approach of 'see-judge-act'. It considers the strong endorsement by young Australian women on a 'lay apostolate' committed to the world as a context for discipleship, and in particular explores the activism and commitment of cohorts of teaching sisters ('nuns') who joined religious congregations with experience of Cardijn's method.

Katharine Massam is a historian of religion with particular interests in cultural and theological understandings of prayer and work, and the connections between them. Her publications include *\*A Bridge Between: Spanish Benedictine Missionary Women in Australia\** (ANU Press), shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Award in Australian History in 2021 and *\*The Promise and the Blessing: Presentation Sisters in Victoria 1958 - 2023\** (John Garrett, 2024). She holds a collaborative grant with an international team from the American Academy of Religion on the theological method of reflection on experience promoted by Joseph Cardijn (1882 - 1966) and its transformative potential for women. Her AHA paper draws on that work. She is professor of History and chair of the Academic Board at the University of Divinity, Melbourne.

kmassam@divinity.edu.au

**Hamish Maxwell-Stewart**  
*University of New England*

### **Unfree Labour in the City**

Historically, large numbers of slaves in the US and convicts in Australia were deployed in urban settings. Charleston, New Orleans, Sydney, Hobart and Launceston all evolved as carceral port cities. This presents something of a conundrum. Historically, urban areas have been associated with greater levels of freedom than plantations and rural estates, yet preliminary work reveals that male and female convicts located in towns in Australia were at significantly greater risk of prosecution than their rural counterparts. This paper will explore ways in which the deployment of unfree labour impacted upon urban planning, as well as the lives of free and unfree residents of port cities. It will do this by surveying the relationship between architecture, evolving urban landscapes, and labour management practices across a range of locations focusing on Hobart. Using innovative digital mapping techniques to reconstruct evolving urban landscapes, it will model changes in labour management over time and by sector of employment, sex, and civil status. Recent research in urban slavery in the US and elsewhere in the Americas will be used to place the results of this work within comparative context.

Hamish Maxwell-Stewart is a professor of heritage and digital humanities at the University of New England. He specialises in using large datasets to shed light on complex historical problems. His recent work includes a reassessment of convict resistance rates as well as new estimates for Tasmania's pre-contact population. His latest book co-written with Michael Quinlan, *Unfree Workers: Insubordination and Resistance in Convict Australia*, was published by Palgrave Studies in Economic History in 2022.

[hmaxwell@une.edu.au](mailto:hmaxwell@une.edu.au)

**Andrew May**

*University of Melbourne*

### **This sunburnt country: an Australian healthscape history**

Determining the historical evolution of societal views and cultural norms around sunlight and sun protection is important in analysing the interplay between normative behaviour and social change. From the symbolism of the rising sun badge of the Australian Commonwealth military forces or tensions implicit in Dorothea Mackellar's 'I love a sunburnt country', to historical debates around daylight saving, attitudes to the sun have never been static. Favourable views of suntanning that have coalesced around the image of the healthy 'suntanned Aussie' have also been an impediment to skin cancer prevention. The famous 1980s 'Slip Slop Slap' campaign focused on Australia's love of the outdoors and the sun and augmenting it with education about skin cancer protection. Precursor campaigns ran from the 1960s, requiring Australians to recognise an inherent danger in the many outdoor activities they held dear. This paper draws examples from a book-length project on cancer culture and Australians' relationship to the sun in work and leisure from the early twentieth century, including burgeoning medical understandings of the link between UV exposure and skin cancer.

Andrew J. May FASSA FRAS is a social historian and Prof. of Australian History in the School of Historical & Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne where he has been a Faculty member since 2000. He has published widely on the social experience of the Australian city, including *Melbourne Street Life* (1998), *Espresso! Melbourne Coffee Stories* (2001), *Federation Square* (2003, with Norman Day), and as principal editor of *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne* (2005). As facilitator of the Melbourne History Workshop, he oversees a studio-based research collaboratory in the History Program which taps the pooled expertise of staff, research higher degree students and affiliates in order to provide innovative and rigorously-applied historical research, postgraduate training, industry collaboration and community-facing projects. He has further interest in aspects of colonialism in India, his key contribution to the scholarship being *Welsh Missionaries and British Imperialism: The Empire of Clouds in North-East India* (2012).

a.may@unimelb.edu.au

**John Maynard**

*University of Newcastle*

### **Fight for Liberty and Freedom – 100 Years of the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association 1924–2024**

This paper will recognise that this year marks 100 years since the formation of the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association (AAPA). The AAPA are today recognised as the first united all Aboriginal political organisation to form in the country. It is important to recognise that the political platform of the AAPA including a national land rights agenda, genuine self-determination, protecting a distinct Aboriginal cultural identity and Aboriginal children and that Aboriginal people should be placed in charge of Aboriginal affairs remains at the front of Aboriginal demands today. This paper will examine this important history.

John Maynard is a Worimi Aboriginal man from the Port Stephens region of New South Wales. He has held several major positions including, Deputy Chairperson of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Executive Committee of the Australian Historical Association. He was the recipient of the Aboriginal History (ANU) Stanner Fellowship 1996, the New South Wales Premiers Indigenous History Fellow 2003, Australian Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow 2004, University of Newcastle Researcher of the Year 2008 and 2012. In 2014 he was elected a member of the prestigious Australian Social Sciences Academy and in 2020 made a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Professor Maynard's publications have concentrated on the intersections of Aboriginal political and social history, and the history of Australian race relations. He is the author of several books, including *Aboriginal Stars of the Turf*, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom* and *The Aboriginal Soccer Tribe*.

john.maynard@newcastle.edu.au

**Chris McAuliffe**

*Australian National University*

### **Legends of the True Cross: The Dissonant Symbolism of the Southern Cross**

The Southern Cross is integral to the designs of the Australian national flag and Eureka flag. But it has not established a definitive truth within these symbolic or mythological platforms. The inconvenient truth about flags is that they are mutable, ill-defined emblems. Very little concrete information about the authorship, fabrication and symbolism of the Eureka flag is available. The authenticity of the remnant object itself was disputed until the mid-20th century. The Eureka flag has been aligned with diverse and contested causes—from anti-nuclear campaigns to militant trade unionism—and has recently been appropriated to the post-truth performances of anti-Vax protest. Until 1954, the design and use of the Australian national flag was a subject of sustained confusion. The form of the Southern Cross was central to debate on the flag's design, provoking a campaign, invoking astronomical truth, for the correction of the constellation and revision of the flag. But even scientific truth collapses in the face of the impossibility of a flag's mission; declaring the unity of a homogenous people, with a coherent identity, in a quasi-heraldic emblem. Addressing the inherent dissonance of the Southern Cross, exacerbated in an age of social fragmentation and contested meaning, the ARC project 'Dialogue with Difficult Objects' uses new community-based research—cultural mediation and deliberative democracy—to explore the ways that the people Ballarat develop local truths about the meanings of the Eureka flag and the boundaries of its use.

Dr Chris McAuliffe is an Emeritus Professor at the School of Art and Design (SOAD), the Australian National University. He was previously Sir William Dobell Professor and head of the Centre for Art History and Art Theory (2019–22). From 2000–2013 he was Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne. He taught art history at the University of Melbourne (1988–2000) and was Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser Visiting Professor of Australian Studies at Harvard University (2011–12). Dr McAuliffe is currently a Chief Investigator in an ARC Linkage Project, partnering ANU, Federation University, the Art Gallery of Ballarat and the Eureka Centre. 'Dialogue with Difficult Objects: Mediating Controversy in Museums' tests the application of culture mediation and deliberative democracy techniques in addressing objects of dissonant heritage, such as the Eureka Flag.

[christopher.mcauliffe@anu.edu.au](mailto:christopher.mcauliffe@anu.edu.au)

**Scott McCarthy**  
*Deakin University*

### **Middle-Class Catholic Identity and the Issue of Loyalty During the Great War in Australia**

The historiography of Catholics during the Great War in Australia has focussed upon the ostracization of the Catholic community, and certain of its clergy, from the normative discourse of wartime enthusiasm and imperial loyalty espoused by Australia's Protestant majority. But such historiographical emphases have neglected the Catholic middle class, whose support for the war and, later, conscription, was both aligned with, and in large part shaped by, the Protestant élite. It was from that élite that certain middle-class Catholics sought acceptance and, indeed, in whose ranks they sought inclusion. This tendency to adhere to Protestant forms and values functioned to alienate the Catholic élite from their working-class co-religionists, and certain of the clergy that led them, at the very juncture in which sectarian divisions threatened their positions within Australia's social and political power structures. The navigation of those tensions effectively bifurcated the Catholic community along class lines during the Great War in Australia. This article will examine middle-class Catholic attitudes to the war and to conscription, and will thus determine the extent to which those attitudes were shaped by the cultural hegemony of Protestant élites in wartime Australia. In so doing, this article will argue that middle-class Catholics adhered to Protestant norms of Britishness and imperial loyalty to combat the perceptions of Irish and Catholic disloyalty more generally, and to secure their positions within élite society more specifically.

Scott Denis McCarthy is a PhD candidate at Deakin University, Geelong. His thesis examines middle-class Catholic identity in Victoria and New South Wales at the turn of the twentieth century. Scott received an Australian War Memorial scholarship in 2022, and will be completing a National Library of Australia scholarship in 2024. His work has appeared in *Australian Historical Studies*, and in 2023 he was the recipient of the Australian Catholic Historical Society's James MacGinley Award.

smccarthy@deakin.edu.au

**Julie McIntyre**

*University of Newcastle*

### **Torrens title and Tanunda: Land as the 'matter of history'**

Torrens title is a modern system of small-scale freehold land ownership registration first formalised in the British imperial world in South Australia's Real Property Act of 1858. As legal scholar Brenna Bhandar asserts, the subsequent globalisation of fee simple land title widely fostered legal erasure of Indigenous land sovereignty. Whereas Bhandar focused on Torrens title as a diffused instrument of settler colonialism, I am interested in the contingency of the law's enactment from multiple perspectives. These perspectives include First Nations' histories, legal history, the emergence of smallhold settler capitalism in Australia, and – in this paper – reconnecting land abstracted as real property with its materialism. The intellectual landscape of historical methodologies is presently awash with diverse approaches to new materialism in response to the crises of environmental collapse, economic inequality and social injustice. For one, mining historian Timothy LeCain models a frame where 'matter' or other-than-human things can be understood to have made human history as much as humans have created things. By combining histories of science with cognate methods and reversing the usual interpretative direction of causalities to decentre humans and foreground things, LeCain believes we might identify clearer historical conclusions to explain the world today. My question therefore is: how did the land of South Australia make Torrens title and what does this have to do with settler capitalism? I will attempt an answer using a range of sources from scientific to quotidian and centred on the district of Tanunda in the years 1841 to 1862.

Julie McIntyre researches the relationship between commodity production, distribution and consumption centred on grape wine, people, plants and place. Research for her new book for Princeton University Press on Australia in global context has led to her interest in the origins of land title regulations as an instrument for enabling settler colonial agriculture while excluding Indigenous people from their ancestral lands.

julie.mcintyre@newcastle.edu.au



**Annemarie McLaren**

*University of Notre Dame*

**Contribution to panel "New Cross-Cultural Histories of Early New South Wales"**

Dr Annemarie McLaren is an historian of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century world and the British empire, with a particular interest in the Indigenous societies encountered and how intercultural exchange took place. In 2020, her doctoral thesis was awarded the biennial Serle award for best postgraduate thesis in Australian history by the Australian Historical Association.

annemarie.mclaren@nd.edu.au

**Lyndon Megarrity**

*James Cook University*

### **The Life and Times of Dr Rex Patterson: 'Home Truths' and the ALP 1965–75**

Dr Rex Patterson began his political career by telling home truths to the Liberal–Country Party Coalition Government, which he had served as a senior public servant before resigning to pursue a career as a Labor Federal MP. With the support of rising Labor star Gough Whitlam, Patterson won the Queensland seat of Dawson on a platform of northern development, accusing the Coalition of neglecting the northern half of Australia. While making a number of key contributions to Australian public life, including assisting with the recovery of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy, Patterson has now largely been forgotten by historians. This paper argues that Patterson's obscurity within Labor's historical narrative is partly due to the fact that he publicly expressed 'home truths' as he perceived them to both Whitlam and the Labor Party which they did not wish to acknowledge. Patterson was especially critical of Labor's rural policies and the party's increasing public relations problems in Queensland during Whitlam's Prime Ministership. His outspokenness and independence as a Labor Minister and MP mark him out as one of the most interesting politicians of his era.

Lyndon Megarrity is an historian based in Townsville. He has taught at James Cook University since 2014 with a focus on history and political science subjects. He is the author of several books, including *Northern Dreams: The Politics of Northern Development* (2018) and *Robert Philp and the Politics of Development* (2022). His most recent publication is the first biographical study of Dr Rex Patterson (2024).

drlyndon@bigpond.net.au

**Henry-James Meiring**  
*Griffith University*

### **Piratical Knowledge in the Age of Darwin**

This paper explores the category of piratical knowledge in nineteenth-century science by examining the role of the American print industry in the global circulation of Charles Darwin's evolutionary ideas. Focused on Darwin's seminal work, *Descent of Man* (1871), the study traces the book from its birth in John Murray's London publishing house to New York, and its subsequent mass reprinting at the hands of print pirates during America's Gilded Age. Between 1871 and 1900, more than a dozen American publishers engaged in the unauthorised reprinting of Darwin's book in various shapes and sizes. These inexpensive pirated copies reached new and diverse readerships across the country and in turn were—legally as well as illegally—exported all over the world. Moreover, *Descent of Man* became entangled in the Cheap Books Movement and legal disputes over international copyright laws between Britain and America. By viewing *Descent of Man*'s reception through its movement as both a material object and cross-cultural transaction, I show that piracy was not peripheral to the 'Darwinian Revolution' but rather a central force in the dissemination of Darwinism across the globe. The study of piratical knowledge, therefore, enlarges our picture of the development of science, by fundamentally altering our understanding of how scientific knowledge was produced and consumed on a global scale.

Dr Henry-James Meiring is a GU Postdoctoral Fellow in the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research Institute at the Griffith University, and the co-editor of volume 17 of the *John Tyndall Correspondence* (University of Pittsburgh Press). Having earned his doctorate from the University of Queensland, Henry previously held visiting fellowships at the University Oklahoma and Linda Hall Library. His interdisciplinary scholarship is situated at the vanguard of the material and global turn in historical studies, focusing on the intersection between science and print culture in the nineteenth century, exploring how reading practices and the materiality of texts themselves came to shape readers understanding of what it meant to be human.

[h.meiring@griffith.edu.au](mailto:h.meiring@griffith.edu.au)

**Caitlin Merlin**

*University of Adelaide*

### **'Inverted "V" without the bow': The Development and Division of the Red Ribbon as an HIV/AIDS Symbol**

The red ribbon as a symbol of HIV/AIDS awareness and support has been a point of division in cultural discussions since its inception as the Ribbon Project in 1991 by the Visual AIDS Artists' Caucus. During the project's rapid rise in prominence within the popular consciousness and subsequent fading, continual misunderstandings followed the red ribbon symbol. Broad interpretations, issues of artistic credit, and overall supporter fatigue all contributed to complex responses to the symbol. The development and public introduction of the project, utilising the skills of the Visual AIDS members alongside outreach through televised awards ceremonies. This allowed for a rapid increase in popular attention, while strengthening associations between the ribbon and artistic industries. These events also strengthened communication networks between Visual AIDS and organisations with similar backgrounds, such as Broadway Cares and Equity Fights AIDS. Legal implications of the decision to not copyright the symbol, though core to the symbol's ability to permeate the cultural zeitgeist, also allowed for opportunists such as Andy Butterfield to exploit the ribbon for personal gain. The ribbon's oversaturation in its first year of use incited considerable backlash toward the ribbon's continued use, due to increased use of the ribbon a fashion accessory or marketing technique within high-profile advocacy settings. The expansive reach of the red ribbon has nevertheless ensured that it is still a leading symbol for HIV/AIDS advocacy to this day. A controversial symbol, but one that continues to be utilised as a uniting force for global HIV/AIDS non-profit work.

Caitlin Merlin (she/they) is a history PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide, working at the intersection of many fields, including but not limited to cultural history, theatrical studies, and queer theory. Her current research investigates the responses of New York City artistic communities to the initial HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, through case studies of community developed non-profit organisations. This work extends from their 2020 First Class Honours thesis, *We Won't Die Secret Deaths Anymore: The New York City Theatrical Community's Response to the 1980s and 1990s HIV/AIDS Crisis*. Caitlin hopes to enrich understanding of inter-community interactions through self-developed support structures, as well as societal reflections of isolated communities at times of duress.

caitlin.merlin@adelaide.edu.au

**Bessie Mikelsons**

*Deakin University*

**'I cannot help worrying over you': Changes in epistolary responses to war and separation**

Letter writing was the mainstay of distanced relationships in both the First and Second World Wars, keeping correspondents updated on and engaged in one another's lives. Australians wrote of their daily activities, their hopes and fears, their mutual love and concern. While the themes of correspondence remained similar, however, the emotional experience of enduring the two wars appears to have manifested differently, at least within letters. This is not to say that the experience of the Second World War was any easier or the burden any lighter; living through war was a trying and emotionally charged experience for Australians in both conflicts, but subtle differences in the tone and texture of letters suggest a greater preoccupation with the potential for imminent loss in the First World War. Perhaps this was merely an epistolary reflection of changes in society more broadly and of the differing circumstances of each war. Or perhaps something deeper was occurring, a shift in the ways in which Australians related to each other and to the circumstances of war and separation. This paper will explore these possibilities, seeking to understand the change in texture between First and Second World War letters and to determine the causes of this change.

Bessie Mikelsons is a PhD candidate at Deakin University, Victoria. Her research examines the nature of Australian correspondence during the First and Second World Wars with a view to better understanding the role that letters played in navigating the emotional experience of the war and maintaining distanced relationships.

bkmikels@deakin.edu.au

**David Milazzo**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Naming the City: The Kurna Place Names Project and Decolonisation**

Historically, Indigenous toponyms were often co-opted by settlers for the purposes of naming and claiming the land. More recently, however, the restoration of Indigenous placenames and languages has had great potential to unsettle established colonial narratives. This may be especially disruptive in urban settler cities, which 'form a central component of the settler society, yet at the same time render Indigeneity profoundly out of place', as Libby Porter and Oren Yiftachel point out. This presentation explores a local example of this phenomenon—the Adelaide City Council's Kurna Place Names project, which introduced Kurna toponyms to acknowledge 'the prior occupation of this land by the Kurna people'. Between 1997 and 2012, Kurna names were established for all 29 parks of the Adelaide Park Lands and dual names were introduced for the six city squares and the River Torrens/Kirawirra Pari. The Kurna Place Names project revealed both the decolonising potential of processes designed to restore Indigenous place names, as well as their limitations. Nonetheless, in 2002, Kurna Elder Lewis Warrita O'Brien noted that the project demonstrated genuine recognition of Kurna culture and history within Adelaide, and represented a successful collaboration between the local government, university academics, and the Kurna community.

David Milazzo is a current History PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide. His research thesis explores the memorialisation of frontier violence in South Australia. His scholarly interests include memory politics, nationalism, settler-colonialism, and public memorialisation.

david.milazzo@adelaide.edu.au

**Thomas Mohr**

*University College Dublin*

## **Poles Apart? Australia and the Irish Free State at the Inter-War Imperial Conferences**

A political and constitutional link between Australia and the new Irish Free State was established by the provisions of the 1921 Anglo Irish Treaty. The Australian Constitution was also used in drafting the Irish Constitution of 1922. Australia was mentioned directly in its final provisions. Yet, the Irish Free State has been described as a 'restless Dominion'. This ensured that Irish representatives pushed hard for constitutional reform of Dominion status at the inter-war Imperial conferences. The 'home truth' raised by this paper is that the Irish Free State and Australia clashed bitterly at many of these conferences. The two Dominions clashed on issues of foreign and economic policy. They also pulled in opposite directions on many proposals for constitutional reform. Areas of contention included Imperial legislation, extra-territorial jurisdiction and the appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. This paper will not downplay or minimise this history of conflict. Yet, this 'home truth' does not represent the whole truth. Irish-Australian relations took a dramatic turn when James Scullin, an Australian prime minister of Irish descent, took office in 1929. Scullin would become the first overseas leader to visit the Irish Free State in 1930. He also provided vital assistance to the Irish Free State in matters of supreme constitutional importance at the Imperial Conference of 1930. The paper will conclude with an assessment of the extent to which Australia and the Irish Free State really were 'poles apart' in the political and constitutional affairs of the inter-war period.

Thomas Mohr is an associate professor at the School of Law, University College Dublin. He is vice president of the Irish Legal History Society and book review editor of the *Irish Jurist*, Ireland's oldest law journal. His publications on Irish legal history range from medieval Gaelic law to the law of the independent Irish state in the 20th century. His latest books are *Guardian of the Treaty – The Privy Council Appeal and Irish Sovereignty* (2016) and *Law and the Idea of Liberty in Ireland – From Magna Carta to the Present* (2023). The former concerns an important aspect of Ireland's relationship with the British Empire in the inter-war years while the latter is an edited work stretching from the medieval period to the present. He attended and presented papers at the ANZLHS conferences of 2010 and 2019.

thomas.mohr@ucd.ie

**Reece Moir**  
*La Trobe University*

**Contribution to panel "A Sense of the Past: Historical Practice Beyond the Page"**

remoir98@gmail.com



**Alexia Moncrieff**

*University of Leeds*

### **Australian First World War Hospitals and the Administration of Death**

The Australian Army Medical Corps (AAMC) undertook varied and complex work during the First World War. Past studies have focused on its life-saving work close to the battlefield, its rehabilitative work behind the lines, its treatment of psychological wounds and venereal diseases, as well as the lives of significant individuals. However, there has been no examination of how the AAMC managed the bodies of the very recently deceased. Given the number of deaths that occurred in these official medical spaces, this is a significant gap in historical understanding of the work of this essential military service. Rather than focusing on the work close to the battlefield, this paper examines Australian hospitals further removed from the front lines. In these spaces, where the exigencies of war were less pronounced, there was more time for policies and practices around the treatment of dead bodies to be developed and implemented. By examining sources such as hospital unit war diaries, infrastructure plans and campus maps, as well as death registers from Australian hospitals in France and England, this paper reveals how the AAMC treated dead bodies and how the related administrative processes developed over the war. Consequently, it provides insight into the priorities and practices of death in official medical spaces.

Alexia Moncrieff is Lecturer in Modern Global History at the University of Leeds where she teaches the social and cultural history of Australia, the global First World War, and the history of medicine, and convenes the MA in Social and Cultural History. Her first book, *Expertise, Authority and Control: The Australian Army Medical Corps in the First World War*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2020 and she is Book Reviews Editor for *Medical History*. Her current project, 'Epistolary Lives and the Making and Re-Making of First World War Archives', is a collaboration with Bart Ziino (Deakin). Funded by the British Academy, this project investigates the extensive wartime correspondence of Dr John Bean and his family, including his brother Charles, the official war correspondent.

[a.moncrieff@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.moncrieff@leeds.ac.uk)

**Alison Downham Moore**  
*Western Sydney University*

## **Medical Management of Diabetes Through Low-Carbohydrate Diets between 1860–1930**

Type 1 diabetes is a deadly disease without the use of exogenous insulin which only became available in medical treatments from the 1920s onwards. However, the historical narrative according to which no one in the nineteenth or early twentieth century was ever helped by the use of dietary interventions for diabetes warrants scepticism. While there are certainly accounts by doctors in the nineteenth century describing the hopelessness many clinicians faced in caring for diabetic children and youths (most likely type 1 diabetics), there is also another body of sources that tell a very different story, many insisting that they had found a 'cure' for the disease in adults (many likely type II diabetics) and that there were indeed sound hygienic principles through which it could be managed. The scientific discovery of carbohydrates and the distinction of their different types occurred in French and German biochemistry between 1790–1860. These discoveries directly informed the emergence of low-carbohydrate dietary protocols for the clinical management of adult diabetes, and a detailed, highly palatable, ultra-low-carbohydrate and high-fat dietary regime is described in a 1873 French brochure referring to the 'Vichy Dietary Regime for the Diabetic' produced by a Spa Hotel in the French town in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. It was employed by numerous doctors providing treatments for a chronic illnesses of ageing, and was based on the rationale of diabetes as a disease of carbohydrate intolerance as discussed in the medical scholarship in France, Germany and Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century.

I am Associate Dean of Research for Humanities & Communication Arts, and Associate Professor of History & Medical Humanities, serve on the Board of Trustees and am a member of the Professoriate Leadership Group at Western Sydney University. I have written 3 books, edited 4 journal special editions/collected volumes, and authored over 50 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, both alone and in interdisciplinary collaborations. My latest book is *The French Invention of Menopause and the Medicalisation of Women's Ageing: A History* (OUP 2022). I am a Quality Matters international peer-reviewer of online teaching design, a Senior Fellow of AdvanceHE, an elected Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (UK) and Managing Editor of *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal*. I am also a NSW RFS volunteer firefighter, a WIREs native animal rescuer and a Blue Mountains Bushcare volunteer.

[alison.moore@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:alison.moore@westernsydney.edu.au)

Holly Moorhead  
*Deakin University*

**'Feminine armour': The tactical performances of female agents in F Section of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), and the perceptions of gender in occupied France**

This paper examines the tactical performances of women in the Special Operations Executive (SOE) during WWII, and how female agents manipulated gender stereotypes to avoid detection or interrogation in the field. Thirty-nine women were deployed into occupied France between 1941-1944, operating in high-risk roles like couriers and wireless operators. Drawing from oral and written testimonies of former agents and F-Section leadership, this paper examines how such women utilised perceptions of femininity to avoid arrest and further conduct espionage in enemy-occupied France. An advantageous factor for women's recruitment was the ability to be seen in public under the guise of errands, social calls, and employment, without raising suspicion. Whilst conversely, the Service du Travail Obligatoire had forced the enlistment and deportation of young, able-bodied men in occupied France. The STO greatly hindered the ability for men of that demographic to be seen in public under the same guises as women, due to their mandated obligations of employment. Recruitment officer Selwyn Jepson's reasoning for his decision was driven by his favourable attitude towards the characteristic potential of female agents, arguing that women 'had a far greater capacity for cool and lonely courage than men'. This paper further argues that women were not selected as agents in spite of being female, but rather, because of it. There were equal expectations of standards in training to their male counterparts, and their success in the field proved women had the aptitude and ability to engage in previously male dominated roles.

Holly Moorhead is a PhD candidate in History at Deakin University's School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Her research investigates the impact and complexities of the Gaullist myth of resistance, and how the exclusionary nature of this resistance narrative impacted the recognition of female resisters operating in occupied France during World War II. Holly is particularly interested in how foreign involvement in the French resistance has been commemorated in the subsequent decades, with a specific focus on the thirty-nine female agents deployed by Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE).

hmoorhead@deakin.edu.au

**Claire Morey**

*Flinders University*

### **Applying contemporary understandings of financial abuse to our colonial past**

Financial abuse is a central component of domestic violence. Often difficult to disentangle from other forms of domestic violence, its complex and near invisible nature can allow it to go undetected by those experiencing it and by the legal system alike. It is only within this century that financial abuse has been considered a distinct category of domestic violence. Historicising financial abuse is a delicate and challenging task, but it is essential for a few reasons. First, although abuse in nineteenth-century South Australia was largely understood as physical, many colonial women's accounts closely mirror women's experiences of financial abuse today. Failing to historicise financial abuse hinders our ability to understand these origins and how it has reached its crisis point today. Furthermore, the doctrine of coverture entrenched women's dependence on their husbands, meaning that a husband was legally bound to provide for his wife and family. Some husbands transgressed this obligation in various ways, such as in periods of desertion, refusing to purchase food or necessary household items, or through more explicitly cruel acts like exploitation, extortion or sabotaging their wives' income or business. In examining these types of financial abuse across several case studies, this paper seeks to contribute to the nascent field of financial abuse in both Australia, as well as internationally. In so doing, I show how women's deep-rooted financial dependence on their husbands helps to bring to light the existence of this financial abuse, both to us now but also to the nineteenth-century petitioners.

Claire Morey completed her Master of Philosophy in History at the University of Adelaide in 2021. Her area of research is domestic violence in nineteenth-century South Australia, with a particular focus on economic abuse and divorce. Claire's thesis titled "'I will not maintain you': Understanding Economic Abuse in South Australia, 1859-1893' was awarded a Dean's Commendation for Research Thesis Excellence. Claire is currently working on two major projects, including the ARC project 'A History of Domestic Violence in Australia, 1850 to 2020' with Associate Professor Catherine Kevin, Dr Zora Simic, and Professor Ann Curthoys, in addition to the future of rental and housing conditions at the Australian Centre for Housing Research at the University of Adelaide. She has recent and forthcoming publications across both areas of study.

Claire.Morey@adelaide.edu.au

**Ruth Morgan**

*Australian National University*

### **Australia's desert world: Climate, decolonisation and the UNESCO Arid Zone Programme**

The origins, nature and activities of the UNESCO Arid Zone Programme (1951–1964) have come under renewed scrutiny over the past decade. Some historians have examined its role in perpetuating colonial narratives of desertification, while others have located in its work the post-war rise of 'the global environment' and the role of science in its governance as an interconnected system. Following Matthias Heymann's recovery of the Programme's scientific study of local climatic issues, this article focuses on the role of Australian researchers in advancing its agenda. Although Australia was not among the original seven nations engaged in the Programme, its representatives soon came to play key scientific and institutional roles in guiding and producing arid zone research that grappled with diverse scales and causes of climate change and variability. Centering the work of botanist B.T. Dickson (1886–1982) and geologist E.S. Hills (1906–1986), this article argues that the Arid Zone Programme afforded Australian scientists and scientific institutions entry to an emergent international order of scientific diplomacy, which aligned with the nation's post-war geopolitical interests in a decolonising world.

Ruth Morgan is the Director of the Centre for Environmental History at the Australian National University in Canberra. She has published extensively on the water and climate histories of Australia, the British Empire and the Indian Ocean world, including the co-authored book, *Cities in a Sunburnt Country: Water and the Making of Urban Australia*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2022. She was a Lead Author on the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and her latest book is *Climate Change and International History: Negotiating Science, Global Change and Environmental Justice* (Bloomsbury, 2024).

ruth.morgan@anu.edu.au

**Cameron Muir**

*University of Western Australia*

*Lilian Pearce, La Trobe University and Helen Bishop, Kungarakan Cultural and Education Association*

### **Environmental history and heritage at Unrungkoolpum: Stories from the Rum Jungle abandoned uranium mine**

After WWII, desperate to win the nuclear arms race, the United States and the United Kingdom scoured the planet to secure uranium. With the support of the Australian Government, they commissioned Rum Jungle, Australia's first large-scale uranium mine which operated from 1954 until its closure in 1971. Situated on the East Branch of the Finniss River in the Northern Territory, the area is home to the Kungarakan and Warai people, who are intimately connected with the river, which meanders westwards through a mosaic of paperbark forests and seasonal floodplains before reaching mangrove estuaries at the Timor Sea. At 'Unrungkoolpum', the Kungarakan name for this place, the mine destroyed sacred sites and continues to generate ongoing ecological devastation and cultural distress. It has prevented Traditional Owners from fulfilling responsibilities to Country, causing disharmony and sickness. Its toxic discharges kill river life downstream from its open pits and overburden heaps. After several failed remediation attempts, a \$400M remediation effort is underway to ensure a safe and stable environment, and to eventually return the land to Traditional Owners. This paper considers a significant geographical and temporal moment in extractive resource imaginaries, global politics, environmental management, and relationships with First Nations. Reading Rum Jungle through the lens of a 'shadow place', our project explores how communities work through legacies of violence and contamination and strive toward recognition and healing. It considers how the stories that we tell about the past shape possible futures. We present an example of how environmental history might better support the ambitions of Traditional Owners, amplifying First Nations' truths, and developing resources for community use.

Dr Cameron Muir is a Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia exploring shadow places in the Australian Anthropocene with Prof Andrea Gaynor. He also works at the National Museum of Australia on community art and ecology programs as part of the 'Living on the Edge' project led by Dr Kirsten Wehner and Prof Thom van Dooren. His writing appears in Griffith Review, Meanjin, Inside Story, Overland, The Guardian, Australian Book Review, Wild Magazine, and Best Australian Science Writing, among others. His work has been shortlisted for the NSW Premier's History Awards, the Eureka Prize for Science Journalism, and the Bragg Prize for Science Writing. He is co-editor with Kirsten Wehner and Jenny Newell of the anthology, *Living with the Anthropocene: Love loss and hope in the face of environmental crisis* (NewSouth 2020).

cameron.muir@uwa.edu.au

**Kate Murphy**

*Monash University*

### **'Like living in an Alice in Wonderland world': disability and Australian families in the 1970s**

In 1978, journalist Anne Deveson recalled of her time as a Commissioner for the Royal Commission on Human Relationships (1974–1977) that 'almost everywhere we went', parents of 'handicapped' children came forward to talk about their 'frustrations and lack of support'. Relatively little has been written about the history of disability in Australia, an absence that is particularly marked in the historiography of the Australian family. This paper centres the family as a key site for understanding the lived experience of disability in Australia in the last decades of the twentieth century, focusing on the 1970s, a decade of profound social change. Drawing on submissions to the Royal Commission on Human Relationships, the paper seeks to illustrate how paying attention to disability challenges scholarly and popular assumptions about the 'Australian experience' of childhood, parenting, motherhood, fatherhood, and marital and sibling relationships. In doing so, it responds to recent trends in disability history that complicate and critique the politically potent concept of 'independent living' and acknowledge and value interdependence in the lived experience of people with disability. It also considers how family care and advocacy sat alongside the growing disability rights movement, with its emphasis on self-determination for people with disability, and how the resulting tensions played out in Australian families.

Dr Kate Murphy is a Senior Lecturer in History at Monash University. She is currently researching fatherhood in Australian history as part of the ARC Discovery project *Fatherhood: an Australian History, 1919–2019*. She has published on rural history, postwar social movements, and gender and family history.

kate.murphy@monash.edu

**Hannah Murray**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Racial Transformation in Early Colonial Sydney**

This paper examines how race was imagined as changeable in early colonial Sydney. Starting with an 1809 poem in the 'Sydney Gazette' in which a white woman seemingly transforms into an African Black man, I use this text as an entry point to examine attitudes to Blackness and conceptions of race itself in the burgeoning town. First, I argue that the inclusion of an African man situates early colonial Sydney in a transnational world of Black migration, subjugation, and polyvalent artistic representation, and it registers a multifaceted understanding of Blackness in the early colony as simultaneously global and local, enslaved and free, and tragic and comic. Second, I argue that early Sydney newspapers, letters and travel writing regularly invoked the possibility of racial transformation, ranging from blackface performances to proto-evolutionary theories. White people could turn Black, and non-white people could become White. Viewing local First Nations peoples in transnational frameworks of both Blackness and Indigeneity, settler leaders envisioned 'whitening' young Eora men and women into industrious and pious settlers via Native Schools, while expecting those who resisted or failed to die out. With these interventions and global migration combined, Australia could be a multiracial space, including British- and foreign-born Black residents, but without an Indigenous Black population. Developing recent work of Justin Clemens and Tom Ford ('Barron Field' 2023) this paper demonstrates that early Sydney writing enriches our understanding of the globally-situated, multiracial town and encapsulates a racial politics in which race could change in service of settler-colonial aims.

Dr Hannah Murray researches and teaches American and Australian literature at the University of Melbourne. Her first book 'Liminal Whiteness in Early US Fiction' (Edinburgh UP, 2021) examined fluid and precarious whiteness in American fiction, 1798-1857. She is currently researching ideas of racial transformation in colonial Australian writing.

murray.h@unimelb.edu.au



**Nell Musgrove**

*Australian Catholic University*

## **Ignoring Criminogenic Child Welfare Systems as a Form of Historically Inflicted Violence**

Australian child welfare and criminal justice systems have been intimately connected since their foundations, and since at least the mid-19th-century commentators have publicly discussed the troubling trend of people made wards of the state as children being over-represented in prison populations. Why then, does every generation seem to need to discover this 'truth' for itself all over again? This paper argues that this forgetting is a form of historical violence which has been inflicted on people who grew up as wards of the state—society has found it easier to label them as the 'problem' than to confront the ways in which government systems have criminalised children who were, essentially, victims of poverty and misfortune. It presents quantitative data supported by qualitative analysis to show that the overrepresentation of state wards in Victoria's criminal justice system goes back to the foundation of the colony's child welfare system in 1864 and that there are identifiable causal links between people moving from one system to the other.

Nell Musgrove is an Associate Professor of history at ACU Melbourne. Her current research examines the connections between historical child welfare systems and criminal justice systems with a particular focus on how false stereotypes about Care-leavers might be challenged through historical research.

[nell.musgrove@acu.edu.au](mailto:nell.musgrove@acu.edu.au)

**Deborah Nance**

*Australian National University*

### **Making religion legalistic and the law religious: Australia's Marriage Act of 1961**

Australia's Marriage Act has had a role in the lives of many, if not most, Australians since its enactment in 1961. But how much is really known about its genesis? The passage of the Marriage Act marked the culmination of a slow and hesitant process by which Australia's national government assumed control over the regulation of entry into, as well as exit from, marriage. How did this happen? Why the early 1960s, rather than earlier? What was the nature of the regulation introduced by the Marriage Act? This paper will discuss some of my conclusions on these matters. In particular, it explores the central role given to Christian clergy in ensuring compliance with the legal requirements for getting married. This arrangement continued a long-term and subtle 'partnership' between religious bodies and the state that had regulated getting married in Australia since the colonial era.

Deborah Nance, a PhD student at the Australian National University, is examining the enactment and nature of Australia's Marriage Act of 1961. As a lawyer, Deborah worked in government as national Registrar of Marriage Celebrants and held administrative responsibility for national marriage law.

deborah.j.nance@gmail.com

**Amanda Nettelbeck**  
*University of Adelaide*

**Contribution to panel "The South Australian Frontier and its Legacies"**

Amanda Nettelbeck is a Prof. of History at the University of Adelaide

[amanda.nettelbeck@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:amanda.nettelbeck@adelaide.edu.au)

**Ben Nicholls**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Pianos: In Australian Homes and Australian History**

The French musician and composer Oscar Commettant estimated that there were 700,000 pianos in the Australian colonies during the 1880s. He also claimed that no matter where you went, 'whether in Adelaide, Sandhurst, Ballarat, or anywhere else—there are pianos everywhere.' Oftentimes he is quoted with little criticism, but occasionally there's a note of suspicion. In this paper, I look at where he has been referenced and test a few of his hyperbolic claims. Pianos were common but depending on the decade, the numbers and geographic spread vary markedly.

Ben is a third year PhD student in the Department of Historical and Classical Studies at the University of Adelaide. His research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship and focuses on the piano in the South Australian colonial mythscape and soundscape. He has given papers for the Society of Global Nineteenth-Century Studies symposia and the Society for the History of Emotions, as well as sold out lecture/performances for the South Australian History Festival and PianoLab.

[benjamin.nicholls@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.nicholls@adelaide.edu.au)

**Kerry Nixon**

*La Trobe University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, and the Whitlam Institute at WSU*

### **The Palace letters: Reading Beyond Content**

After many years of bitter legal argument, The National Archives of Australia made the so-called Palace Letters, from Lord Casey through to Sir William Deane available to all in a digital format. In doing so, we, the Australian public, can read for ourselves the correspondence between various Governors-General and The Queen. But the words alone are not the only conveyors of meaning in these letters. Too often, letters have been used by historians merely for the information contained in their text. However, the work of many scholars, both literary and historical, have demonstrated conclusively that there is far more to ascertain from the humble epistle. Ken Plummer determined that 'every letter speaks not just of the writer's world, but also of the writer's perceptions of the recipient'. Given the nature of the relationship between the Monarch and her Australian representative, Plummer's understandings require particular investigation if the letters are to reveal meaning beyond their words. I am using the theoretical understanding of epistolary as a cultural and social practice, to understand the Palace Letters, as part of a broader mission to determine the role of Governor-General as articulated in the correspondence to and from the Queen. This paper confines itself to exploring how the correspondence of Lord Casey, Sir Paul Hasluck and Sir John Kerr and the responses from The Queen's Private Secretaries can be better understood through attention to the unspoken aspects of their writing.

Dr Kerry Nixon returned to university as a mature-aged student, and discovered a love for history that propelled her into a PhD. Her thesis concentrated her ability to interrogate personal writings for meanings beyond the superficial content. Her interest in epistolary theory led to The Palace Letters via an eager student, and that in turn led her to The Whitlam Institute's project, funded by Jenny Hocking's generous bequest. She has vague hopes of reading all the letters one day.

K.Nixon@latrobe.edu.au

**Sybil Nolan**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Australian resistance to elite history**

This conference CFP, recognising 'the complicated politics of knowledge', challenges historians to expose the 'epistemological ground [required] for necessary conversations about the past and the present'. Answering that call, my paper analyses the complicated place of elite studies in Australian historiography and discusses ways to make this approach more authentically useful and insightful in understanding recent conditions in this country. I argue that Australian history generally situates elites in a dichotomy: 'insiders and outsiders', 'winners and losers', 'us against them'. Understandably indifferent to class-based elite studies of British history, it is also not completely comfortable with C. Wright Mills's classic construct of a 'power elite', which describes Mills's American context more accurately than it does most other nations. When Australian historians do discuss elites, they often do so through the frames of 'resistance' and history from below. The history of education, by definition an activity involving elite settings, is the only subfield where elite framing is more or less embraced by Australian historians. This general indifference to elite frameworks in Australian historiography means that we do not know enough about a key group in Australian society and its impact historically and in the present; or about the elite discourses that since 2000 have characterised popular commentary on social media and in news media. This paper discusses how we can complicate elite approaches in useful and compelling ways. It begins by asking how elite studies should deal with positionality.

Since completing her PhD on Robert Menzies' liberalism at University of Melbourne in 2011, Sybil Nolan has focused on researching Menzies through alternative frames to political history, including book history, masculinities and the history of emotion. She is currently working on a monograph on Menzies and his elite networks. This paper draws on research for a special issue on elites that she is co-editing with Professor Chris Wallace (UC).

sybil.nolan@unimelb.edu.au

**Andrew Novak**

*George Mason University*

### **The Queen's Prerogative of Mercy: Local and Global Contestations of the Death Penalty and Clemency in Post-UDI Rhodesia**

The proclamation that announced Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) from Great Britain on November 11, 1965, introduced a new independence constitution that removed Britain's ability to appoint officials but preserved the Queen as head of state. A series of death penalty cases in Rhodesian courts tested the Queen's power of mercy, which implicitly challenged the legality of Rhodesian independence. After the murder of a white farmer in 1964, two black guerillas received a mandatory death sentence under security legislation; a third black Rhodesian had later been convicted of murdering a chief. After the three defendants failed to obtain a stay of execution in Rhodesian courts, the Queen, on the advice of her Foreign Secretary, attempted to commute the death sentences. The UK Privy Council determined that the Queen's pardon was valid and Rhodesian UDI was unlawful, but Rhodesian courts found that Britain had effectively abandoned Rhodesia by imposing economic sanctions and no longer exercised de facto control. The three executions generated international outrage, including unanimous condemnation by the UN Security Council. However, the episode also motivated white Rhodesians toward declaring a Republic in 1970. The two conceptions of the Queen's prerogative of mercy by the Privy Council and by Rhodesian courts remain irreconcilable truths: did the Queen exercise the pardon power by grace of God or was she a stooge of Harold Wilson's anti-Rhodesian Labour government? This contradiction between the pardon as an unassailable sacrosanct privilege and as a corrupt, destabilizing act is central to the historiography of clemency.

Andrew Novak teaches in the Criminology, Law and Society program at George Mason University. He has published widely on the death penalty, clemency and human rights in Africa and in comparative perspective. He is the author of *The African Challenge to Global Death Penalty Abolition: International Human Rights Norms in Local Perspective* (Intersentia: 2016) and *Comparative Executive Clemency: The Constitutional Pardon Power and the Prerogative of Mercy in Global Perspective* (Routledge: 2015).

anovak2@gmu.edu

Alexander O'Kane  
*Flinders University*

**'As you know, there is nothing to gain': the British Foreign Office and popular opposition to Anglo-Japanese Treaty Revision, 1890–94**

In the early 1890s negotiations took place between the British and Japanese governments which eventuated in the revision of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. This was the first such "unequal treaty" with a great power to be revised in Japan's favour. These negotiations took place in the face of strong opposition from British residents in Japan. It was recognised both within and without the government that treaty revision presented many dangers and provided little benefit to British interests in East Asia. Nonetheless, the British Foreign Office remained receptive to Japanese entreaties for revision, successfully concluding a new treaty in 1894—a tumultuous year in Anglo-Japanese relations due to anti-foreign agitation in Japan and the outbreak of the First Sino-Japanese War. Using Foreign Office correspondence and memoranda, this paper investigates the reasoning behind the British decision to pursue treaty revision despite the numerous difficulties involved. This paper shows that within Whitehall and the British legation in Tokyo there was a perception that Japan was a 'civilised' country, and that it was no longer possible to maintain unequal relations with a country socially and legally so similar to those of West. While the opposition of the British residents of Kobe and Yokohama towards treaty revision was based on practical concerns and material interest, the Foreign Office's decision to pursue treaty revision was based on a sense of obligation towards a civilised and westernised Japan.

PhD candidate studying the diplomatic history of the United Kingdom in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, with a focus on Anglo-Japanese relations and the role of commercial and financial actors and interests in the making of foreign policy.

okan0016@flinders.edu.au



**Nikolas Orr**

*University of Newcastle*

### **'Our Home, Our Historic ... Ancestral Land': The Mexican–American Settler Struggle for Belonging in the Southwestern United States**

The Southwestern United States has a complex cultural landscape in which Hispanic minorities have sought to reclaim the pride (and land) they lost after the Anglo–American takeover of northern Mexico in 1848. The revalorisation of Mexican American heritage as an antidote to US colonisation occurred in the late twentieth century alongside the growing militancy of Pueblo Indians and other First Nations twice colonised, by both Spanish and US agents. How then, if at all, have Spanish–descended Mexican Americans negotiated the contradictions of their status as both colonised and coloniser? Can non-Indigenous Australians draw lessons from their example? Drawing on visual and textual productions from the 1960s to the present, this paper charts the attempts Mexican American activists, artists and writers have made towards reconciling their claim on the Southwest as home with its concomitant risk of Indigenous dispossession. The Chicano/a movement's grassroots expansion of colonial pride in the 1960s was tempered by a strong current of self-critique only to be steamrolled in the 1990s by elite interests and the memorial-building mania that saw Spanish conquistadors erected in Texas, New Mexico and California. Most recently, the Black Lives Matter movement has lent momentum to the recuperation of earlier critical approaches. Although intermittent and inconsistent, Chicano/a engagement with its hybrid contradictions has, to an extent, upset the settler logic which sought to undermine the exclusive rights of First Nations through ancestral claims to indigeneity via the Aztecs and colonial land grants. A similar reckoning with its own struggle for belonging awaits Australian settler society.

Nikolas Orr submitted his doctoral thesis on 'Contemporary Indigenous Iconoclasm in Global Perspective' in February under the auspices of the Centre Study of Violence at the University of Newcastle. Here he was ranked a finalist in the 2023 HDR Research Excellence Awards for his output and was a Gowrie Scholar (ANU) in both 2020 and 2021. His research features in the *English Historical Review* and *Patterns of Prejudice* and in the volumes *Visual Redress in Africa from Indigenous and New Materialist Perspectives* (Routledge, 2023), *The Palgrave Handbook of Rethinking Colonial Commemorations* (2023) and *The Visuality, Space and Affect of Monument Removal* (Brill, forthcoming). Nikolas has presented his research at seminars and conferences at the University of Cambridge, Australian National University and on local and national media. In addition to his doctoral experience, Nikolas holds first-class Honours in Fine Art (Sydney), and a Masters in Art History and Visual Culture (Madrid).

nikolas.orr@uon.edu.au

**Kira Page**

*University of Adelaide*

**Contribution to panel "The South Australian Frontier and its Legacies"**

Kira Page is a Research Consultant (GIS) at the University of Adelaide.

[kira.page@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:kira.page@adelaide.edu.au)

**Debra Parish**

*University of Queensland*

### **'Uncivil Tongues': Civility, Gender and Conflict in Seventeenth Century England – Continuance and Relevance**

In his conduct book for English 'gentlewomen' (1631), Richard Brathwaite extolled the virtues of 'civility' for the female sex. Civility was a popular topic of early seventeenth-century prescriptive texts for women and was associated with other feminine ideals such as 'silence', 'modesty' and 'submission' to male authority. My paper demonstrates that discourses of 'civility' and similar codes of feminine behaviour, were not restricted to conduct books but spilled into the key politico-religious debates of the English Civil War period. At this time of intensified religious separatism and conflict, critics appealed to models of civility and feminine conduct, accusing women who joined the religious sects or dared to preach in public, of transgressing their prescribed gendered roles. However, civility discourse, I argue, was not only aimed at restricting women's agency but also for the restoration of social and religious order more broadly. Why civility? These same calls for civility resonate in our current politically charged times as we witness the rise of extremism and misinformation, and the increase of toxic and misogynistic speech fueled by social media. There are claims of a 'civility crisis' and media headlines calling for a return to civility in our political and public discourse. My paper uncovers both the gender and political elements of 'civility' in the turbulent early modern period, as it highlights its continued relevance and implications for our own contemporary context.

Debra completed her PhD in History at the University of Queensland in the research area of women's prophecy and witchcraft in seventeenth-century England. Her interests are women's religious agency and its reception, especially during the turbulent English revolutionary period. She is now working on a book for Routledge which explores the relationship between the early modern female prophet and the witch. Debra is also currently researching early seventeenth-century English conduct books for women, and their feminine ideals of civility, silence and submission, exploring their connections with dominant politico-religious discourses and power conflict.

d.parish@uq.edu.au

**Daniel Pascoe**

*City University of Hong Kong*

### **Death Penalty Abolition and the Human Rights Fallacy**

The 21st century death penalty literature often characterises the global movement towards abolition as irreversible, and inspired by the legal institutionalisation of human rights at national and international levels. Proponents of this idea point to the fact that a majority of UN member states that have abolished capital punishment in law did so after 1948 (the year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and post 1976 (the year the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights came into force). Yet the historical reality has been different. This paper critiques human rights as the predominant frame through which death penalty abolition tends to be viewed in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The paper makes the case for a less linear and more pluralistic set of explanations for abolition. To do this, the paper points to a) 20th and 21st century state abolition prompted by non-human rights (or at most, human rights-adjacent) concerns, such as revolution, religion, humanism, 'civilisation', decolonisation or public finances; b) political entities which abolished capital punishment long before 'human rights' entered the international lexicon, such as in Imperial China and Japan, and several Latin American states; and c) states which have reinstated the death penalty in law from the mid-20th century onwards, despite growing international attention paid to human rights norms. For today's campaigners for abolition, the paper concludes by suggesting a set of approaches tailored to the precise historical circumstances of each retentionist state.

Daniel Pascoe teaches in the School of Law at City University of Hong Kong. He is the co-editor (with Andrew Novak) of *Executive Clemency: Comparative and Empirical Perspectives* (Routledge 2020) and the author of *Last Chance for Life: Clemency in Southeast Asian Death Penalty Cases* (Oxford University Press 2019).

dcpascoe@cityu.edu.hk

**Bill Pascoe**

*University of Melbourne*

## **Mapping Australian Frontier Conflict**

There is a call for more evidenced based, reasoned, honest and respectful recognition of the Australian Frontier Wars. The Colonial Frontier Massacre Map demonstrated the utility of digital humanities web maps for methodological rigour in conducting humanities research, as a research interface, and for public engagement. It shows the internet can be used not only for spreading misinformation but to reliably inform public debate – a crucial role for academia. Among other things this catalysed the development of humanities mapping infrastructure, such as Time Layered Cultural Map (TLCMap). TLCMap makes online mapping easier for humanities researchers. Combining the massacre data with new cluster analysis features of TLCMap we can identify distinct regions of intense mortal conflict from a continuum of frontier violence. While some Australian wars are relatively well known and named, others are less clear or less researched. Combining this quantitative evidence with critique of war in the Australian context and historical research we can better identify and acknowledge these Australian wars. Layers in TLCMap can also be combined to show different aspects and illustrate details. Combining with other layers can lead to unexpected findings or validation. The map is also a way to navigate to sources for each region and understand connections which is essential as the work could not happen without the the prior work of knowledge holders, historians and truth tellers and because this is only one step toward better understanding the history of where we live, and our place and future in it.

Dr Bill Pascoe is a Digital Humanities specialist currently with the Melbourne Institute researching historical frontier violence in Australia and is the System Architect for Time Layered Cultural Map, a national digital humanities mapping infrastructure project. He has worked with the Centre For 21st Century Humanities and the Centre for Literary and Linguistic Computing at the University of Newcastle and was the DH specialist on the award winning 'Colonial Frontier Massacres in Australia, 1788-1930' map, database and website. He has been a leader and contributor on other innovative DH and eResearch projects in a variety of disciplines, including the EMWRN archive, ELDTA endangered languages, IA stylometry software, Virtual Biobank 3D medical image processing and eWater.

bill.pascoe@unimelb.edu.au

**Micaela Pattison**

*Flinders University*

### **Modern Monster: Visualising the Eugenic Child**

Micaela Pattison is a Lecturer in Modern European History and Early Career Researcher (ECR) of contemporary Spanish history with a particular interest in gender, sexuality and social movements during the interwar. She has published in Spanish and English in edited collections and peer review journals including the *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* and the *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*. Her forthcoming first book (under contract with Tamesis, Boydell & Brewer) is titled *Science, Sexual Revolution and the Making of a Modern Woman in Interwar Spain* is a micro-history that uses the career of sex reformer Hildegart (1914–1933) to study gendered modernity, youth politics and sexual science in interwar Spain. She is national convenor of the Australian Women's History Network.

[micaela.pattison@flinders.edu.au](mailto:micaela.pattison@flinders.edu.au)

**Mandy Paul**

*History Trust of South Australia and University of Adelaide*

### **History and 'the fierce urgency of now': the 1939 heatwave in Tarntanya/Adelaide**

The heatwave began on New Year's day 1939, and on 12 January the temperature was recorded as 117.7° Fahrenheit in the shade. While recent data recalculations have revised that day's maximum to 46.1° Celsius (114.9° F), it remained the hottest day recorded in Tarntanya/Adelaide until 24 January 2019 (46.6° C). The 1939 heatwave continued for 14 days. By the second week there were a dozen people hospitalised with heat stroke, a special ward with extra air-conditioning established at the Children's Hospital, and advice on how to keep infants cool published in the newspapers. Ice was in such short supply that police were called in to control crowds at some depots. Major industries adopted reduced hours, and people across the suburbs took to sleeping on their verandahs and front lawns. From 10 January bushfires raged in the Adelaide Hills, reported in the press alongside the Black Friday fires in the eastern states. Recent climate adaptation research has established that extreme heat events cause more deaths than all other natural disasters combined. Tarntanya/Adelaide is the Australian capital city most vulnerable to extreme heat events, and projections show that in the future they will become longer, hotter, and more frequent. This paper will take an explicitly dialogic approach, exploring how contemporary understandings of the impacts of extreme heat events (particularly in the fields of public health and urban planning) might enrich historical analysis; and how community perceptions of, and adaptive practices during, past extreme heat events might inform the future.

Mandy Paul is a historian and museum professional living and working on Kurna land. She has worked for over three decades as a professional historian, specialising in native title, and in social history museums as a curator, director and collections manager. She holds postgraduate qualifications in history and museum studies and has published widely on Australian and South Australian social and cultural history, museology, and the historiography of native title. She is Head of Collections at the History Trust of South Australia and a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Adelaide. Her research interests include: First Nations and settler colonist relations in South Australia and the Northern Territory; material history and the power and relations of power latent in museum collections; and the history of extreme weather events in Tarntanya/Adelaide.

mandypaul@ozemail.com.au

**Mandy Paul**

*History Trust of South Australia*

**Contribution to panel "The South Australian Frontier and its Legacies"**

Mandy Paul is an historian and Head of Collections at The History Trust SA.

MPaul@History.sa.gov.au



**Pauline Payne**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Australian traditions: risk-taking and 'the practical approach'**

Two features of migrant life in Australia regularly occur in professional historians' historical research on settlers. One is risk-taking. Folk setting out from c19 Europe faced lengthy, challenging voyages. Some hoped the Australian climate would help health problems. Most didn't expect to see friends and family left behind, and had little idea about conditions to be faced, whether their work skills were appropriate and how they'd get suitable accommodation. Risk-taking and risk management continued as settlers and later ex-servicemen, undertook exploration, tried new crops, and new settlement areas and new methods of transport. Many of us are descended from people who were risk takers. A second feature, continuing into later decades, was the strong tradition of valuing and respecting practical skills. Especially in country and regional areas, these skills were considered more important by friends and neighbours than someone's social and economic background and the kind of school they attended. This paper provides case-studies of people who used their practical skills in their work, thereby helping other people to survive and prosper. Examples include the story of one who developed the Pedal Radio, enabling people in isolated areas to get medical help, make social and business contacts and access School of the Air. Another developed the Iron Lung, saving many lives during the 1930s–1950s polio epidemic. There's an account of a country town shop-keeper and another case-study describing a scientist's achievements including simple, effective treatment for Coast Disease in sheep and work in the Kimberley on health issues.

Pauline Payne is a graduate of Oxford University and did her PhD at the University of Adelaide where she is a Visiting Research Fellow. She is President of the Professional Historians Association (SA) and the History of Science, Ideas & Technology Group, and convenes SA's German Heritage Research Group. In addition to her more recent research in the area of history of science and technology, her rural background and her previous career in public and social administration gives her a special interest in settlement history and community support systems.

pauline.payne@adelaide.edu.au

**Anne Maree Payne**

*UNSW Sydney*

### **From the Heart: 'Home Truths' about Truth-Telling in Australia**

The Uluru Statement from the Heart outlined the strong demand for truth-telling emerging from First Nations delegates; a foundational principle arising from deliberations was that an option for constitutional reform should only proceed if it 'Tells the truth of history' (Referendum Council of Australia 2017, p. 22)). But what does the call for truth-telling by First Nations people encompass, and how does this differ from non-Indigenous Australians' understandings of truth-telling? How does truth-telling relate to historical understanding, and do First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians view the relationship between history and truth-telling differently? This paper will reflect on the findings of a research project undertaken by Anne Maree Payne and Heidi Norman in 2023 which explored attitudes towards, barriers to and enablers of engagement with First Nations histories and community-based truth-telling in Australia. We identified three interconnecting narratives about the role and purpose of truth-telling in settler-colonial contexts: to achieve justice for First Nations peoples; to promote healing and reconciliation; and to challenge and change historical understanding. While there was wide agreement among participants in our study that truth-telling is an essential step in redefining the relationship between First Nations peoples and the Australian nation, our research findings highlight that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people do not always have a shared understanding of what truth-telling involves, what it might achieve or how to go about it. The implications of our research for progressing truth-telling in Australia will be discussed.

Anne Maree is currently employed as a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Humanities & Languages, UNSW Sydney. As an historian with significant professional experience and expertise in the human rights field, Anne Maree's research has a strong focus on applied research with 'real-world' applications. An important aspect of her work over the past decade has been her contribution to a number of industry reports and publications on significant public policy issues, including exploring barriers to and enablers of community truth-telling in Australia; the need for a National Resting Place for the care of Indigenous Ancestral Remains; media studies focusing on both gender and the representation of Aboriginal political issues; and other gender and/or human rights-related research. Anne Maree's book *Stolen Motherhood: Aboriginal Mothers and Child Removal in the Stolen Generations Era*, was published in 2021.

anne\_maree.payne@unsw.edu.au

**Madeline Pentland**

*Australian National University*

### **The 'Ernie Awards': (de)fame, sarcasm and misogyny in NSW Parliament, 1993–2022**

The Ernie Awards (1993–2022), an annual charity dinner hosted by women of the Labor Left in NSW Parliament House, was a satirical presentation night for the year's most sexist remark by a public figure. The event had humble beginnings, with only 40 attendees and one award: The Golden Ernie, named after Australian Workers' Union secretary Ernie Ecob. The event soon grew to a crowd of 400 attendees annually, and the ever-growing number of worthy nominations led to an additional nine categories by 2003: four Silver Ernies, The Warney, The Fred, The Trump, The Good Ernie, and The Elaine. With the catchphrase 'keep them nervous', there was seemingly no misogynistic speech in Australia safe from the judgement of the Ernie Awards. Adorned with dress-up themes and accompanied by the resounding jeer of attendees voting in the Ernies' democratic 'Boo-Off' system, the Ernie Awards were a controversial political statement that garnered international publicity. Responses by winners (and losers) varied, with most publicly denouncing the event, and others correcting nominated quotes. By 1995 some contenders were known to deliberately publish misogynistic remarks in the lead up to the Ernies, compelling organizers to implement a strict rule that 'you cannot get an Ernie for trying'. This begs the question, what do the Ernie Awards signify about the 'truth' of misogynistic speech in a highly publicised domain? To consider this question, this paper analyses three key moments of the Ernie Awards history: the first (1993), international acclaim (1999–2002), and post-Julia Gillard's 'Misogyny Speech' (2013–14).

Madeline Pentland is a first year modern Political History PhD student at the Australian National University, researching feminist identity and collectivity of women in Australian parliaments during the 1990s and early 2010s. Madeline graduated from Australian Catholic University with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in 2023, receiving the University Honours Medal for her thesis titled 'Keeping the Histories Honest: Framing a Political Legacy of Natasha Stott Despoja'.

madeline.pentland@anu.edu.au

**Robert Phiddian**

*Flinders University*

### **Black and white art in White Australia: The complexities of interpreting racial images in 20th century cartoons**

Much like the society it provoked and entertained, the Australian cartooning tradition has been shaped by the White Australia policy on issues of race. For cartoonists, the risks of racism were (and continue to be) magnified by the fact that they trade in caricature and visual stereotype according to the terms of their art. For historians of cartooning this leads to a major methodological crux in assessing grades of racism in compact visual and verbal texts. Cartoons of the past can employ stereotypes we would now decry and yet vary in levels of racist intent from Phil May's powerful and revolting 'Mongolian Octopus' (1886) to Bruce Petty's potent pleas for sympathy with the Vietnamese victims of US and Australian aggression in the 1960s. The paper is cursed by a rich array of material and racisms to choose from and will focus on two of the more prominent fields, Asian and Aboriginal representations. Is there any point in trying to discriminate shades of sympathy or hostility? Or should the whole thing be written off from the perspective of the 2020s as irretrievably bad? The consequence of accepting the second position would be that no thorough history of Australian cartooning (such as the one we are contracted to complete) would be possible. If it had to leave out all images that might validly be construed as racist now, however, it would repeat the silencing of Indigenous and non-Anglo experiences that the White Australia policy sought to institute. That would be a grim irony indeed.

Robert Phiddian works on political satire, particularly Australian political cartoons, presently as a Chief Investigator of an ARC Discovery Grant, "Cartoon Nation: Australian Editorial Cartooning – Past, Present, and Future" (2023–6). He has been Research Centre Director, Associate Dean Research, and Deputy Dean in the School of Humanities at Flinders University. He works on aspects of Shakespeare, and eighteenth-century literature, as well as teaching courses in political satire, parody, and humour. He has been Chair of the Adelaide Festival of Ideas, and was Foundation Director of the Australasian Consortium of Humanities Research Centres (ACHRC). His most recent book is *Satire and the Public Emotions* (Cambridge UP, 2020).

phid0001@flinders.edu.au

**Tamson Pietsch**

*University of Technology Sydney*

**Contribution to panel "The Future of Academic History in Australia"**

Tamson.Pietsch@uts.edu.au

**Andonis Piperoglou**  
*University of Melbourne*

### **Envisioning Greeks Diasporas: from historical photos to contemporary murals**

This paper considers how a dispersed visual archive – like historical photographs and contemporary public art murals – have represented the Greek diaspora in Australia. Be it through images that disseminated from studios and family albums or ethnic community photographs and recent public mural projects, an identifiable and often interactive visual culture has played a pivotal role in characterizing Greek diasporic culture in Australia. By 1916, for example, photography for Greek settlers had become a source of fascination in their public spheres, as newspapers and immigration guides published pictures that represented new forms of Greek subjectivity. Photography attracted Greek migrant's imagination as it often combined a spectacular representation of public life, national sentiment and adaptation. Pictures, in other words, could convey a twofold message: first, Greek migrant's loyalty to Australia; second, the cultural capital that Greekness could embody in a host country. In recent years, public murals have played role in re- envisioning the Greek Australian diaspora and its contribution to Australian multiculturalism. These murals, which draw upon historical images and narratives, help make observable the motivation for and effects of mobile actors, ranging from hardship and suffering to opportunity and optimism. They also demonstrate how past dynamics of migrancy speaks to the politics of a diasporic present. By examining Greek Australian historical photos in tandem with contemporary art murals, I demonstrate that diasporic visual culture has played a crucial, albeit evolving, role in defining what it means to be a member of the Greek diaspora in Australia.

Dr Andonis Piperoglou is the inaugural Hellenic Senior Lecturer of Global Diasporas at the University of Melbourne. He a specialist in migration and ethnic history and has published extensively on the Greek diaspora in Australia. He works on historical connections between colonialism, racism, and migration, as well as historical connections between the Mediterranean and the Pacific. His chapter "Settler Migrations" was recently published in dual volume collection *The Cambridge History of Global Migrations*. Currently, Andonis is Vice President of the International Australian Studies Association, a Fellow of the Australian Centre, and serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*.

andonis.piperoglou@unimelb.edu.au

**Nicholas Pitt**  
*UNSW Sydney*

### **The Rev. David Mackenzie, Capital, and the enchantment of squatting in 1840s New South Wales**

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, settlers in New South Wales competed over their visions of the colony. While urban and agrarian futures each had their boosters, squatters represented an important stream within the political life of the colonisers, as they sought to legitimise the expansion of the colony and their personal enrichment. While histories of squatting represent an old and well-trodden path of Australian historiography, many home truths remain waiting to be told. Recent and on-going work includes stories of resistance, capitalists, gender, and more-than-human histories of pastoralism. This presentation builds and expands upon this recent work, especially work on the political and social identity of squatters. It considers the ways that ideas of political economy and biblical interpretation interacted through the work of the Presbyterian minister, author, and squatter, the Rev. David Mackenzie (1800–74). Mackenzie's *The Emigrant's Guide, or, ten years' practical experience in Australia* (1845) combined practical advice, economic thought, and extended engagement with his bible. Using the methods of digital history and distant reading, I begin to quantify the extent of Mackenzie's use of his bible and other key Presbyterian texts. His arguments were similar and yet also distinct from his fellow colonial Presbyterians such as John Dunmore Lang and Henry Carmichael. Mackenzie's work provides an insight into the ways that biblical texts could be used by squatters to justify their morality. Understanding these arguments from the 1840s can then help us to hear their later, persistent echoes.

n.pitt@student.unsw.edu.au

**David Plater**

Andrew Alexander

*University of Adelaide*

**'Virtually Outlaws in their Native Land which they have never Alienated or Forfeited':  
The 'Incompetence' of Aboriginal Witnesses in Colonial Australia**

This presentation highlights the role of legal history in considering issues of continuing resonance. It 'tells the truth' and considers the law of witness competence applying to Aboriginal witnesses in nineteenth-century Australia. After British colonisation, there was strong awareness of the rule of law and the ostensible need for equity and justice for all. Yet Aboriginal witnesses were deemed 'incompetent', unable to testify as they did not believe 'in a future state of reward and punishment' and were 'destitute of the knowledge of God'. The British law of witness competence sought to ensure that only 'reliable' (ideally Christian) testimony was presented. However, this law was arbitrarily applied in colonial Australia and ignored Aboriginal beliefs. This contrasts with acceptance of the testimony of other non-Christian witnesses. Belated reform efforts in the mid-nineteenth century allowed the 'unsworn' testimony of Aboriginal witnesses. Such provisions proved relatively swift and uncontentious in South Australia, but encountered hostility in New South Wales and did not pass there until 1876. However, the effects of such laws were limited and the testimony of Aboriginal witnesses was still regarded as inferior to 'sworn' evidence. This paper looks at notorious cases such as Chapman in 1834 and James Brown in South Australia in 1849. The vexed law of competence in applying to Aboriginal witnesses has continuing implications.

David Plater is Deputy Director of the independent South Australian Law Reform Institute (SALRI) based at the Adelaide Law School. He has extensive practical experience, including as a prosecutor in Kent and London and worked from 2008 to 2018 with the State DPP in South Australia and then the State Attorney-General's Department on various legislative projects. He has also lectured at the University of South Australia and the University of Tasmania as Adjunct Associate Professor. He has a keen interest in legal history and its modern application and Morris dancing and has published widely in various fields in both personal and SALRI capacities. Andrew Alexander is Noongar person from the south-west region of Western Australia, now working in government, and a law student at Flinders University

David.Plater@adelaide.edu.au



**Alexander Potočnik**

*Ad Pirum Institute*

### **Between Personal Truth and Nation Building Myth: Remembering Italy's participation in the First World War**

This paper examines the endeavour of the Italian Fascist regime to utilise the needs of individuals to mourn and remember loved ones lost in WW1. The regime reshaped memories of individual experiences of trench warfare into a single heroic nation-building myth, suppressing in the process individuals' truths, formed through the individuals' own experiences. In Italy, the initial enthusiasm for war was soon replaced by disillusionment. The harsh reality of trench warfare was made even worse by the incompetence of military commanders. Yet, during and after the war, the Italian government and media promoted the story of a heroic army and of enthusiastic soldiers, ready to bravely sacrifice themselves for a higher cause. The participants themselves remembered a different experience – one of unceremonious crouching in rat infested trenches and numerous senseless deaths. With the ascent of the Fascist regime in 1920, the state apparatus made sure that only one truth was to be conveyed. The regime overrode the stories of suffering and, by reutilising the notion of the last stage of the Risorgimento, it transformed the heroic version of WW1 experience into a nation-building myth aimed at encouraging new conquests. Thanks to scholarly work in the field of oral history, works of literature and films, the grim 'truth' is well established in collective memory and popular culture today. But monumental memorial architecture and state rituals that still use that architecture as their stage prolong the presence of the formerly prevailing and once the only officially allowed 'truth' about Italy's Great War.

Alexander J. Potočnik graduated as a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Ljubljana in 1984 and completed Graduate Diploma course in Animation and Interactive Multimedia at Swinburne University of Technology in 1993. Since 2006 he has worked as an associate partner of the Ad Pirum Institute in the field of architectural heritage. His speciality is fortification heritage. He completed his doctoral study in history at Monash University in Melbourne in 2023.

[ajp@amis.net](mailto:ajp@amis.net)

**Wilf Prest**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Legal Reformation in Eighteenth-Century England**

This paper surveys the historiography of law reform in early and later modern England, before providing a brief overview and assessment of attempts to improve the efficiency and equity of a most unsystematic legal system between the later seventeenth and the early nineteenth century.

Wilfrid Prest has published widely on topics of early modern English history, with special reference to lawyers and legal institutions; a second edition of his first monograph, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts, 1590–1640*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2023. He is among the co-authors of the forthcoming *Oxford History of the Laws of England*, vol. 9, 1689–1760.

wilfrid.prest@adelaide.edu.au

**Laura Rademaker**

*Australian National University*

### **Finding 'true religion'; how Aboriginal land rights became a religious contest**

In a May 1984 speech in Canberra, mining magnate Hugh Morgan made a theological claim. Appealing to the New Testament and Book of Common Prayer, 'for a Christian aborigine,' he declared, 'land rights ... is a symbolic step back into the world of paganism, superstition, fear and darkness.' His words were widely condemned, including by church leaders. First Nations Uniting Church minister Charles Harris retorted that Morgan was the real 'pagan' as Morgan had 'no knowledge of Aboriginal spirituality.' But why did Morgan think mining was a religious matter at all? My interest in this paper is how disputes over First Nations land rights and mining could be understood by the 1980s as a religious contest around the meaning of 'true religion'. Aboriginal spirituality has long been denigrated by settler Australia as 'pagan superstition' rather than 'religion'. In a surprising turn of events, First Nations people transformed Christian churches (which had, not long ago, supported and facilitated mining) into strategic allies that argued for land rights on the grounds of religion. With Greg Johnson and Susan Friend Harding, I consider settler recognition of First Nations' spirituality as grounds for sovereignty as a form of 'conversion'. This paper explores the ways First Nations people articulated their connection to Country in ways that made recognisable the religious nature of their claims, arguing that, by the 1980s, First Nations people not only converted Christian missions to their spiritualities but deployed them as missionary agents to the 'pagan' settler culture.

Laura Rademaker is an historian at the Australian National University. Her work focuses on histories of Indigenous self-determination movements and Christian missions, drawing on oral histories in partnership with communities. She is the author of *Found in Translation: Many Meanings on a North Australian Mission* (University of Hawaii, 2018) and, together with Traditional Owner Mavis Kerinaiaua, *Tiwi Story: Turning History Downside Up* (Newsouth, 2023).

[laura.rademaker@anu.edu.au](mailto:laura.rademaker@anu.edu.au)

**David Rafferty**

*University of Adelaide*

### **Roman politics without guardrails: democratic breakdown in the first century BCE**

The United States prides itself on being the oldest surviving republic in the world, but most agree that republic is in trouble. This paper argues that it, and we, can learn from an even longer-lasting democracy: the Roman Republic. It fell into civil war and autocracy in the mid first century BCE and never recovered. This paper draws on current scholarship in both ancient history and political science. Among Romanists, it is widely accepted that certain events in the 50s BCE (e.g. Caesar's consulship in 59; Pompeius and Crassus's consular campaign for 55) were destructive to the republican political system. However, it is not well understood HOW they were destructive. That is where the political scientists come in. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt's 2018 book 'How Democracies Die' explains the mechanisms by which habitual violation of political norms can lead to a political system's collapse. They look at four concepts—mutual toleration, institutional forbearance, constitutional hardball, and 'politics without guardrails'—which are all readily observable in Rome. This paper argues that if we study violated norms in Rome as a connected phenomenon we can better understand their causal force in the collapse of republican government. This both helps us understand Roman history better and provides an example of good comparative history and good interdisciplinary scholarship, of use both to historians and political scientists.

David Rafferty is ARC DECRA Fellow at the University of Adelaide. He is the author of "Provincial Allocations in Rome: 123–52 BCE" (Steiner 2019) and his DECRA project (2022–25) investigates political science approaches to explaining Rome's democratic breakdown in the first century BCE.

david.rafferty@adelaide.edu.au

**Henry Reese**

*University of Melbourne*

**Contribution to panel "A Sense of the Past: Historical Practice Beyond the Page"**

Henry Reese (he/him) is a historian, early career academic and musician based in Meanjin (Brisbane). Drawing on histories of sound and the senses, his PhD, completed at the University of Melbourne in 2019, is the first cultural history of early recorded sound in settler society in Australia. Over the past ten years, Henry has worked as a research assistant on numerous ARC-funded projects, as well as a sessional lecturer and tutor at the University of Melbourne and Australian Catholic University. Henry has held fellowships at the State Library of Queensland and the Harry Gentle Research Centre at Griffith University. He has won multiple awards for his research, including, most recently, the AHA Ken Inglis Prize (2019), the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand's Postgraduate Development Prize (2019) and the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History's Bob Gollan Prize (2023).

henry.reese@unimelb.edu.au

**Julie Rickwood**

*Australian National University*

### **'The Guardian Tree': The framing and shaping of a community labyrinth**

In November 2022, during a stormy night, a large limb and branches from the 'Guardian Tree', a Blakely's Red Gum, fell onto the community labyrinth in the Mt Ainslie Nature Reserve. The event heralded another chapter in the life of the labyrinth, one that, at first, seemed to declare its end. From the beginning, the Guardian Tree had composed the labyrinth. Standing at the back of a level clearing it was the more-than-human collaborator in the design of the labyrinth that would become known as Five Senses: The Mt Ainslie Community Labyrinth. This 'splendid gnarled' tree called to the artist during one of her meanderings in the reserve. She accepted the tree's invitation and began collecting its discarded branches into a pile. Over three days she laid them out in its light dappled shadow, tracing out the pattern of a classical labyrinth. 'The Guardian Tree' held the labyrinth in place, an anchoring pillar at the back of the unicursal pathway. This paper explores the guardian tree's ongoing framing and shaping of Five Senses; its role in the regenerative process of the labyrinth's longevity, as well as its dynamic relationship with the community of collaborators.

Julie Rickwood is a Visitor with the Centre for Environmental History at the Australian National University. She is working on an environmental and cultural history of Five Senses: The Mount Ainslie Community Labyrinth. Julie created the classical labyrinth as an ephemeral artwork from scattered eucalypt branches in June 2006. Surprisingly, over seventeen years later the labyrinth still exists, co-constituted over time by its human and more-than-human community. Previously, Julie's research interests focused on Australian popular and community music, exploring place, gender, heritage, cross-cultural exchange, and environmental activism. More recently she has been researching in the field of ecochoreography. Julie has published conference papers, journal articles and book chapters and is a co-editor of *Popular Music, Stars and Stardom* (2018, ANU Press). Julie is a tenor with the Pop-Up Choir and a dancer/choreographer with Somebody's Aunts Dance Ensemble.

julie.rickwood@anu.edu.au

**Lee Rippon**

*Flinders University*

### **Shackled Australian Prisoners of War: a weapon behind the wire**

Shackles were a weapon of choice for detaining powers to use against unarmed men in prisoner of war camps. Used to dehumanise and punish the prisoners, they were a tool of manipulation. They could also be used as an effective political weapon, particularly during the shackling crisis of 1942–1943. Australian prisoners of war suffered through this method of political reprisal, with the prisoners shackled together for hours a day and, in some cases, months at a time. This paper seeks to discuss how Australian prisoners of war became caught up in the shackling crisis, and how the detaining powers used shackles as a weapon in order to extract political advantage. The paper aims to explore the complex issue of the shackling of Australian prisoners of war in Europe – particularly Italy and the way in which the reciprocal use of shackles undermined the morale of prisoners and manipulated belligerent governments.

Lee Rippon graduated in 2023 from Flinders University with her doctoral thesis titled *Prisoner of War Diplomacy: Australian Prisoners of War in Italy and Australian Foreign Policy, 1939–1945*. Lee is the lead author of an article titled *Baseline bioavailable strontium and oxygen isotope mapping of the Adelaide Region, South Australia*, published in the *Journal of Archaeological Science Reports* 2020. In April 2023, Lee presented a paper at the *Britain and the World Conference* in Pittsburgh, USA. She is a member of the Australian Historical Association, Royal Historical Society, Society for the History of Warfare and Friends of the South Australia Archives.

lee.rippon@flinders.edu.au

**Zac Roberts**

*Macquarie University*

### **Searching for Utopia: Settler colonialism, Jewish territorialism, and the idea of a Jewish homeland in Australia**

In 1905, Anglo-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill alongside fifty others left the Zionist movement at the seventh Zionist Conference in Basel and formed the Jewish Territorialist Organisation (ITO). The aim of the ITO was to find a suitable location for a Jewish homeland outside of Palestine. Despite the ITO being disbanded in 1925, a second wave of Jewish Territorialism was established in 1935 through the Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonisation under exiled Soviet lawyer Isaac Steinberg. Alongside proposals for a Jewish homeland in Ecuador, the United States, and Suriname, there were at least three separate proposals for such a settlement in Australia: two in the Northern regions and one in Tasmania. This research is principally concerned with the relationship between settler colonialism, Jewish territorialism, and these proposals for a Jewish settlement in so-called Australia. I ask the question, 'to what extent can we categorise Jewish Territorialist movements as acts of settler colonialism?'. I explore Indigenous engagement – or lack thereof – with these proposals, how Jewish communities in Australia are positioned within settler colonial structures in the Australian context, and ultimately the failure of the proposals due to the White Australia Policy.

Zac Roberts is an Walbunja Yuin scholar from the South Coast of New South Wales. His research interests centre on Indigenous histories, with a particular interest in interrogating the unspoken space of Indigenous narratives within the broader national history of Australia. Zac is currently an Associate Lecturer and PhD candidate in the Department of Indigenous Studies at Macquarie University. In 2022 he was awarded the John Mulvaney Fellowship from the Australian Academy of the Humanities for his research regarding the relationship between Indigenous and Jewish communities in Australia since 1788.

zac.roberts@mq.edu.au



**Libby Robin**

*Australian National University*

### **The Landcare backstory that created Gondwanalink**

In the 21st century, conservation and farming increasingly work in partnerships rather than in opposition. Using less land for more diverse purposes maintains places where rural depopulation is a threat to community services. Creative innovation is the only economic 'growth' available in the Anthropocene, something that Judith Wright observed long before the label of the Anthropocene intertwined science, economics and care for country. Conservation that includes economic and cultural advantages is the cornerstone of the Gondwanalink initiative that has created an extraordinary ecological corridor connecting over 1,000 kilometres of lands in southern Western Australia. It joins up covenanted production lands, private conservation initiatives, traditional lands, road reserves, state parks and Biosphere reserves. Gondwana Link Ltd was established in 2009 to formalise the still-growing collaboration that had built up between groups, including large formal NGOs (The Nature Conservancy, Bush Heritage Australia and others), small local natural history groups like Friends of Porongorup, and important Indigenous-led initiatives like the Nowanup 'bush campus' of Curtin University. Its strength lies in the blending of abstract conservation initiatives and local people, Traditional Owners and western-style farmers, who love their local bush and celebrate the contribution of nature to culture and the economy. Gondwanalink's roots go back over 40 years to Landcare initiatives launched by present CEO, Keith Bradby and neighbours in response to a proposal by a WA Minister for Agriculture to clear 100,000 ha of bushland per annum. This paper will explore the Landcare backstory that led to the creation of Gondwanalink.

Libby Robin is an historian of science and environmental ideas. She is Emeritus Prof. at the Fenner School of Environment and Society at the Australian National University, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and now works as an independent writer and Curator-at-Large, focusing on museums and global change.

libbydeq@gmail.com

**Charmaine Robson**

*UNSW Sydney*

**Singing out! Locating Australian Mid-twentieth Century Female Protest in the public persona and performances of Glen Tomasetti**

Glen Tomasetti (1929 – 2003) was a Melbourne-based female activist who, from the mid-1960s, was a familiar figure in Australian second-wave feminism and the anti-Vietnam war movement. As a singer, guitarist, and composer, she successfully used musical performance as a vehicle for protest, raising awareness and mustering support for these causes. She also gave public talks and theatre performances, joined women's and peace groups, wrote newspaper columns, and engaged in direct acts of resistance. In tune with the voices and concerns of the corresponding movements in the United States and sharing platforms and modes of protest with other Australians, she was nevertheless distinctive in her approach. With the object of extending understandings of mid-twentieth century protest movements, this paper explores the elements that made Tomasetti's calls for change resonate with many Australians during the 1960s and 1970s. It will examine the development of her popular public persona which rendered the rebellious acceptable, and her invoking of an Australian identity in her songs of protest. The paper bases its findings on Tomasetti's papers, newspaper sources and the historiography of mid-twentieth century protest movements.

Charmaine Robson has a PhD in Australian history and has published extensively on the history of medical institutions, colonialism and women missionaries in Australia. In 2017 she was Religious History Fellow at the State Library of New South Wales. Her book, *Missionary Women, Leprosy and Indigenous Australians 1936-1986* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2022. She is an honorary lecturer at the University of New South Wales where she has taught history for many years. While continuing to write and research on Australian health history, she has diversified into feminist cultural history and is currently undertaking a biographical study of Melbourne writer, musician and activist, Glen Tomasetti.

charmaine@robson.tel

**Thomas Rogers**

*Sea Power Centre – Australia*

### **Royal Australian Navy cruisers in the Second World War**

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was a mixed force consisting of six cruisers and many smaller ships. A force of this size was unable to conduct independent operations against any serious threat, and for this reason the RAN was designed to operate seamlessly with the Royal Navy (RN) in times of war. The RAN's cruisers suffered heavy losses during the war: HMA Ships Sydney, Perth, and Canberra were all lost to enemy action. The loss of personnel from these three ships represented nearly two-thirds of all RAN personnel killed during the war. The cruisers were also at the centre of Australia's naval successes in the war, from the early years in the Mediterranean, to the RAN presence at the Battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944. The RAN operated with the RN as intended, but its personnel and ships also adapted rapidly to work with the US Navy in the Pacific. This paper offers a brief history of the RAN's Second World War cruisers, and explores the lessons learned from their experiences, with a particular focus on interoperability.

Dr Thomas J. Rogers is a historian at the Royal Australian Navy's Sea Power Centre in Canberra. He researches histories of conflict in Australia, and he has published and taught in the areas of colonial and British Empire history, frontier conflict, and military history. His book, *The Civilisation of Port Phillip: Settler Ideology, Violence, and Rhetorical Possession* (2018), considers the early years of British settlement in the state of Victoria and the relationships between settler rhetoric and frontier violence. Tom was previously a researcher in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, a historian at the Australian War Memorial, and a lecturer in history at the University of Melbourne.

tjrogers3010@gmail.com

**Oscar Roos**

*Deakin University*

### **The Unsuccessful Successful 1906 Referendum**

The recent failure of the Voice Referendum appears to have reconfirmed some 'home truths' about constitutional change in Australia: that any formal alteration of the Constitution is extremely difficult to achieve; that the Australian electors are apathetic and wary of change; and that proposals without bipartisan political support are doomed to fail. In the context of only eight successes in 45 referenda since Federation, every success is notable and worth of historical study. Australia's first referendum in 1906, which altered s 13 of the Constitution to change the commencement date of Senate terms from 1 January to 1 July and the permissible window for Senate elections, has been almost entirely ignored by history and summarily dismissed as a mere technical alteration to the Constitution. But, aside from the fêted 1967 'Aboriginal referendum', it was most successful in Australian history, achieving almost 83% national support, and carried by a huge margin in every State. How did that (in retrospect) remarkable result happen? And what can it enrich our understanding of the 'home truths' that will apparently determine the fate of any future referendum proposals?

Dr Oscar I Roos is a member of the Victorian Bar and a senior lecturer at Deakin University's School of Law, where he lectures on constitutional and administrative law. He has published 18 articles in refereed academic journals including in the *Sydney Law Review*, the *Melbourne University Law Review*, the *Public Law Review*, the *University of New South Wales Law Journal* and the *George Washington International Law Review* in the United States, and a book chapter in *Great Australian Dissents*, Cambridge University Press (UK). In 2021 he was awarded the Cheryl Saunders Prize for Excellence in Scholarship in Constitutional Law by the Australian Association of Constitutional Law for his article 'The Kirk Structural Constitutional Implication' which appeared in volume 44(1) of the *Melbourne University Law Review*.

oscar.roos@deakin.edu.au

**Shannon Ross**

*University of Queensland*

### **Those You Least Expect: Juveniles as Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse**

While adults historically dominate discussions around child sexual abuse, growing scholarship and public attention has seen an increase in recognition of juvenile involvement in these crimes. The phenomenon of juveniles as perpetrators of child sexual abuse is a complex and evolving topic, and youths engaging in abusive behaviour often exhibit a mix of environmental stressors and personal challenges, requiring a nuanced understanding of their circumstances. Whilst adults who perpetrate child sexual abuse may do so due to factors such as skewed power dynamics or unresolved personal issues, juveniles often grapple with unique developmental vulnerabilities in addition to these factors. The examination of youth perpetrators historically reveals a dynamic interplay of societal influences and shifts, evolutions in understandings of youth psychology and growing awareness of the crime of sexual abuse, particularly with relation to children. This paper aims to contribute a more comprehensive understanding of child abuse dynamics in a historical context, as well as analyse the distinctive challenges posed by offenders who fall into age brackets outside the 'norm'. It distinctly addressed the home truth that abhorrent crimes can be perpetrated by those we least expect.

Shannon Ross (she/her) is a second year PhD candidate in the field of history at the University of Queensland in Brisbane (Meanjin). She holds a first-class honours degree and was awarded the 2021 Margaret Julia Ross Prize in Australian History for her thesis. Her PhD research focusses on cases of abuse presented in the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and analyses how historical perceptions of children and childhood contributed to the development, occurrence and understandings of these instances of child sexual abuse. The purpose of this research is to contribute to public recognition of and responses to this crime and to highlight the experiences of the victims, as well as to give prominence to the disparity in the historical and contemporaneous experiences of Indigenous Australians with relation to children and institutionalisation.

shannon.ross1@uqconnect.edu.au

**David Roth**

*Australian National University*

**'Nutrition in a 'Total Institution': The Dietary Regime at Callan Park Hospital for the Insane, Sydney, 1877–1923**

The surviving evidence suggests that great attention was paid to the provision of food and nutrition at Callan Park Hospital for the Insane in Sydney from its foundation in 1877. The design and regime of this asylum were explicitly intended to implement the then prevailing policy of moral management, under the aegis of F. Norton Manning, the first New South Wales Inspector-General of the Insane. This policy was continued under Manning's successor from 1898, Eric Sinclair. Several scholars have argued that close attention to all aspects of patient victualling, including nutrition, variety and regulation of meals was seen by asylum officials and 'head office' as an integral part of patient well-being and the implementation of moral management. Based on my study of management records and a detailed laboratory report, I show that close attention was paid to nutrition at all New South Wales asylums, refuting claims of poor feeding or indifference at the Royal Commission of 1923. Indeed, management was determined that patients must eat, prescribing force-feeding to patients who refused food. Nevertheless, as I discuss here, there was always a tension between economy, monotony, and patient welfare. While paying patients with wealthy connections or working patients had dietary supplements, I show that the standard patient diet at Callan Park was comparable to, or better than, the working-class diet of the time, if deficient in certain nutrients by modern standards. There is no evidence of differentiation of menus by gender, as was the case in other Australian jurisdictions.

Medical historian, researching mental health care before 1920, in particular Callan Park in Sydney. I have written on vaccines during the 'Spanish' flu, General Paralysis of the Insane, tuberculosis, patient microhistories, and chemical restraints. I have articles in *People Australia* on mental patients

david.roth@anu.edu.au

**Tim Rowse**

*Western Sydney University*

### **An ordeal of peoplehood: representations of Indigenous collectivity in the 2023 referendum**

Consistent with the language of UNDRIP, many Indigenous Australians presented themselves as a 'people' or as 'peoples'/First Nations in the 2023 referendum. Some rallied behind the Uluru Statement from the Heart and supported Yes. Others, while asserting sovereignty, urged No. Insisting that Indigenous Australians are not a 'people' but a 'race', other advocates of 'No' argued that 'race' should not be the basis of distinct constitutional entitlement or sovereignty. And among advocates of Indigenous sovereignty there were different views about whether a national 'Voice' could give it institutional expression. Meanwhile, an unprecedented volume of survey data sampling 'Indigenous public opinion' added to the Reconciliation Barometer's biennial exposure of variety among Indigenous Australians' historical consciousness and political agendas. My paper describes these differences and argues that the referendum campaign demonstrated some of the difficulties facing Indigenous Australians' assertion of sovereign people-hood.

Tim Rowse is a graduate of the University of Sydney and Flinders University. He has worked as a teacher and researcher at: Macquarie University, the Menzies School of Health Research, the Australian National University, the University of Sydney and Western Sydney University. He has held short appointments at the Universities of Queensland and Melbourne and at Harvard. He was on the AHA Executive 2014–2018. His most recent monograph is 'Indigenous and other Australians since 1901' (2017). With Murray Goot he is writing a book about the 2023 Voice referendum. He contributes to Inside Story, the Conversation and Australian Policy and History.

t.rowse@westernsydney.edu.au

**Melanie Roylance**

*University of Queensland*

### **Suddenly a Widow: Uncovering the Home Truths about Australian War Widows of the Great War**

The military achievements of Australia have been surrounded by a mythology centred on men, with early historians emphasising nation-building and Australian exceptionalism rather than the cultural aspects of the war and its aftermath. As a result, Australian widows of the Great War were depicted as victims of war and symbols of their husband's patriotic sacrifice. This reflected popular contemporary perceptions of them as grief-stricken unfortunates to be pitied and protected. Considered a homogenous group of grieving women with little control over their situations but supported by government pensions and charity, they were regarded as little more than walking war memorials. However, facts and perception do not always equate to truth. This paper aims to shed light on some uncomfortable home truths from the perspective of Australian WWI war widows. It uses family records and correspondence in their Repatriation files and the service records of their husbands to explore how widows coped with the often-overlooked realities when informed of their husbands' deaths, such as applying for their husband's back pay, protesting government officials' inflexible application of rules and fighting challenges by grieving parents for the status of next-of-kin. This paper is part of my broader research topic, 'More than Walking War Memorials,' which argues that although they were not a unified group, most widows made active choices about their futures, albeit constrained by economic, political and social pressures. This research will interest historians studying women's history, the cultural aspects of war, or Australian society in the inter-war years.

Melanie Roylance (she/her) is a PhD candidate in Australian History at the University of Queensland.

With a life-long interest in genealogy, she is fascinated by the effect critical historical events had on individuals, families, and communities. Her Honours thesis at the University of Tasmania investigated how the First World War and its aftermath affected the people living in the Tasmanian Central Highlands municipality of Hamilton.

Her current research project, "More Than Walking War Memorials," focuses on the experience of war widowhood in Australia during the First World War and the inter-war years. By analysing the correspondence and repatriation files of these women, she aims to challenge the common perception of war widows as helpless victims of war. Instead, her research shows that most of these women made conscious decisions about their futures. They chose to be more than just walking war memorials dependent on charity and government support.

m.roylance@uq.edu.au



**Mary–Ellen Ryan**

*Central Queensland University*

### **1985 Queensland Police raids on abortion clinics – impact on the fight against AIDS**

The emergence of the AIDS public health crisis in Queensland in 1983, took place inside a series of compounding political crises which culminated in Premier Joh Bjelke–Petersen's 1987 downfall. This paper will argue that the Premier's mishandling of the AIDS crisis, exposed key vulnerabilities in his leadership, and was a key factor in bringing Bjelke–Petersen down. Under Bjelke–Petersen's Premiership, Queensland was the only mainland state not to join the Australian Government's co-operative AIDS response model. This was consistent with the Premier's perceived 'strong man' leadership. Alternative home truths about his leadership have emerged, using an AIDS policy lens. I have conducted Elite Oral History interviews with key public figures directly involved in high-level aspects of managing Queensland's AIDS threat from 1983. A prominent emerging theme has been the question of agency. That well-placed and motivated individuals, state government and non-government agencies, exercised greater agency than the AIDS history records, have emerged. This then raises questions about the true nature of the power of Bjelke–Petersen's leadership. Using 1985 police raids on two Queensland abortion clinics as a frame, this paper considers the consequences this devastating breach of trust had for the fight against AIDS. The personal medical records of hundreds of Queensland women were removed, and it was not clear for some time whether individuals' identities would be exposed and criminal charges laid. Watching on, Queensland's gay community went on high alert. Sex between consenting adult men was illegal, and being publicly identified brought serious risk. The police raids coincided with Queensland Health encouraging gay men to take part in newly available AIDS testing. Two former Cabinet members recalled Bjelke–Petersen did not order the raids. Both named different individuals, neither part of Executive Government. These accounts bring the Premier's agency into focus. As the project continues, the question has emerged, 'was Bjelke–Petersen a 'strong man' leader, or was he instead a 'useful idiot'?

Research Masters student undertaking a thesis on the impact of the emergence of the AIDS crisis in 1980s Queensland upon the leadership of Premier Joh Bjelke–Petersen

maryellen.ryan@cqumail.com

**Ingrid Ryan**  
*UNSW Sydney*

### **White women artists in Central Australia 1925–33: Historiographical correction or reproducing whiteness?**

Between 1925 and 1933, non-indigenous women artists, including amateur painter, Frances Yeates and professional artists, Jessie Traill and Violet Teague, travelled to Central Australia from the southern capital cities of Adelaide and Melbourne to explore the 'desert' as a new artistic subject matter. After their respective 'sketching tours' of Arrernte country in and around Hermannsburg–Ntaria, the women exhibited their paintings to curious urban audiences in the southern capital cities. This paper explores the contribution of women artists to the elevation of the 'desert' as a place and idea during the interwar period. Histories of interwar settler artist interaction with the desert landscape have focussed on the artistic partnership between Arrernte painter, Albert Namatjira and settler painter, Rex Battarbee. I demonstrate that settler women artists were important figures in the early exposure of the desert landscapes of Central Australia proper to urban audiences and in their inspiring a settler embrace of the arid interior as integral to a national imagery and identity. I explore the paradox that white women artists both challenged settler representations and understandings of the desert and its exploration while also being viewed by themselves and others as part of the settler pioneer trope. As a non-indigenous historian writing about white women explorers, the challenge that arises is writing a critique of the pioneer trope without reproducing it. The question around 'home truths' is particularly pertinent in relation to settler representations of and stories about the desert and the elevation of particular settler 'truths' around the desert landscape over others.

Ingrid Ryan is a History PhD candidate in the school of Humanities and Languages at UNSW. Supervised by Associate Professor Zora Simic and Dr Laura Rademaker, her doctoral research is exploring non-Indigenous women artists, both professional and non-professional, who explored Central Australian landscape and society during the Interwar period. With a dual background in History and Visual Arts, Ingrid is interested in the intersection of art histories, feminist histories and Indigenous-settler histories. Ingrid is approximately 1.5 years (FTE) into her candidature.

[ingrid.ryan@unsw.edu.au](mailto:ingrid.ryan@unsw.edu.au)

**Jade Ryles**

*University of Adelaide*

### **'Look after Mummy': Australian Children's Emotion Work during the Second World War**

The absence of Australian servicemen fathers during the Second World War changed the emotional responsibilities of their children on the homefront. Despite studies of the Australian homefront providing valuable contextual information on families during wartime, children's wartime experience within the home remains an underexamined area. Drawing on Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of 'emotion work', this paper will argue that children of servicemen engaged in three categories of emotion work within the familial setting: happiness, care and help. It is evident that this work placed a burden upon them – a burden which was often unintentionally exacerbated by their servicemen fathers who wrote to them. As a result of engaging in this kind of work, children's roles within their family changed, although the extent to which this occurred varied depending on the child's gender, age and birth order. Outside of the home, the press expressed anxieties about about the prospect of these changing roles, which were considered inappropriate for children to undertake. Indeed, later reflections from adults who were children during the war confirm that they were negatively affected by their new responsibilities. The reality of wartime circumstances, however, meant parents (and the children themselves) often had little alternative but to allow children to engage in emotion work. For some children, the change was temporary, and they were able to forgo some of their responsibilities when their fathers returned. For others, their fathers' war-related illnesses or death meant it was a role they would maintain for the rest of their childhood.

Jade Ryles (she/her) is interested in the histories of family, marriage and childhood in the twentieth century, and particularly the way in which family relationships are shaped and disrupted by migration and war. She completed a MPhil. thesis at The University of Adelaide in 2023 titled 'Dear Daddy': Australian Children and their Servicemen Fathers during the Second World War'.

[jaderyles@outlook.com](mailto:jaderyles@outlook.com)

**Lauren Samuelsson**  
*University of Wollongong*

**Contribution to panel "A Sense of the Past: Historical Practice Beyond the Page"**

Dr Lauren Samuelsson holds a PhD in history from the University of Wollongong, Australia, where she is an Honorary Fellow. Lauren's research interests include cultural history, the history of food and drink, the history of popular culture and gender history. Her research traces the influence of the Australian Women's Weekly magazine and cookbooks on the development of Australian food culture from the 1930s to the 1980s. She has also worked on the social and cultural history of liquor legislation in mid-twentieth century New South Wales. Lauren's award-winning academic work has been published in *History Australia* and *Australian Historical Studies*. Her work as a digital curator and web designer for the online exhibition *Ayahs and Amahs: Transcolonial Journeys* won the 2022 History Council of New South Wales Addi Road Award for Multicultural History and was shortlisted for the New South Wales Premier's History Prize in Digital History in 2023.

slauren@uow.edu.au

**Zara Saunders**

*Australian Catholic University*

### **Court Reporting, Open Justice and (Mis)Representations of Sexual Assault: The Age print newspaper's coverage of Andrew Lovett's rape trial**

Sexual violence is a pervasive and urgent issue. The media play a fundamental role in shaping public perceptions and core beliefs on societal issues such as sexual violence. Such perceptions and beliefs feed into policy proposals, law reforms and jury decision making. It is therefore crucial to interrogate the narratives media institutions construct and disseminate to their readership. In this paper, I conduct a close analysis of The Age's coverage of former professional footballer Andrew Lovett's criminal rape trial in 2011 to consider what messages are disseminated to readers on sexual assault. I demonstrate how the genre of court reporting impacted the dissemination of messages and beliefs around sexual violence to readers. I illustrate how despite court reporting's duty to provide fair, accurate and balanced coverage specific language and imagery choices influenced Age readers' sympathies. This is a useful case study as the trial gathered significant media interest (with the defendant's connection to the AFL) during a period in which sexual assault victim survivors' experiences within the Victorian criminal justice system were under examination.

Zara Saunders is currently undertaking a PhD in Media and Cultural History at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, researching The Age print newspaper's coverage on sexual assault against women and teenage girls from a historiographical lens. Her research interests include women's history and the intersection of history, media, and politics.

[zara\\_anne11@hotmail.com](mailto:zara_anne11@hotmail.com)

**Karen Schamberger**

*National Library of Australia*

### **Art, assimilation and citizenship**

In 1953, various groups of post-World War II migrants presented an illuminated manuscript of testimonials to the Australian government on the occasion of the Australian Citizenship Convention in Canberra. This manuscript is now in the collection of the National Library of Australia and will be displayed in the 'Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories' exhibition in 2024. The testimonials were organised under the auspices of the New Australians' Cultural Association (NACA) which was formed in Sydney in 1949. The Association aimed to welcome newcomers to Australia and introduce them to Australian art, literature and music, and also to advance Australian cultural development through the knowledge and experience of New Australians. The NACA organised annual folk festivals, talks on cultural topics, sponsored prizes for visual art and folk songs, and organised handicraft exhibitions. This paper will examine the activities of NACA, alongside the organisations and individuals who contributed to the illuminated manuscript of testimonials to unpack the ways in which these New Australians entwined the visual and aural cultures of their homelands, with ideas about Australian citizenship. I will be building upon Melissa Miles' work on visual citizenship and post war migrants (2023).

Dr Karen Schamberger is currently a curator in the Exhibitions team at the National Library of Australia. The team are developing an exhibition 'Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories' to open in 2024. She has previously worked at the National Museum of Australia and Immigration Museum in Melbourne and completed her PhD in museology and history at Deakin University in 2016. Her interests are in Australian social history, especially migration history, transnational connections between Australia and the world, and environmental history.

[kschamberger@nla.gov.au](mailto:kschamberger@nla.gov.au)

**Christeen Schoepf**  
*University of Tasmania*

**The Truth of the Matter: When oral history and local history collide with accepted family rhetoric, community narrative, and the law**

Oral history and local history are methodologies that reflect the complex events and experiences that have shaped the lives of individuals and communities through written words, material culture, illustrations, and recorded memories. They are constructed from the ground up – memory by memory – individually, and as a collective. They are the grains of sand that form the bricks and mortar of a community's history, and spatially and temporally locate that individual experience and community response within the bigger history events that have affected the wider world such as wars, disasters, technological advances, and financial depression. But not all recorded words and memories truly capture that family, community, or organizational journey. Through the lens of several real, but unidentified case studies, this paper will present the reasons why recorded oral and local histories do not always provide an accurate representation of a locality's history or individual experience.

Christeen Schoepf is an independent Historical Archaeologist, Community and Oral Historian, Genealogist, Author and Content Creator experienced in a multitude of cross disciplinary methodologies. Her expertise is in the field of Object Biography where history, genealogy, biography, and oral history are used to reveal the contexts and stories of objects, buildings, and other heritage items including bridges, cemeteries and monuments. She also facilitates best practice oral history, storytelling and community history and genealogy workshops, consults on local history projects, is the current Membership Secretary for Oral History Australia SA/NT and the South Australian delegate on the national body of Oral History Australia.

christeen.schoepf@gmail.com

**Rochelle Schoff**

*La Trobe University*

**'Terrific hot 123°, terribly windy, dust': Climate knowledges during the 1938–39 summer heatwave in southeastern Australia**

The summer of 1938–39 has been remembered for the devastating Black Friday bushfires which burned through two million hectares across the state of Victoria. In the days preceding the fires, temperatures reached over 45 degrees Celsius in major cities throughout Australia, claiming the lives of at least 420 people. Heatwaves have one of the highest death tolls of all natural phenomena globally and are the focus of growing research in view of predicted increased frequency, duration and severity of extreme heat events resulting from climate change. The study of heatwaves provides insights into how previous temperature shocks have been survived and understood. My research examines cultural understandings of the WWII Drought in southeastern Australia. This paper examines the experiences of heat stress during the 1938–39 summer heatwave in southeastern Australia. In particular, I explore how contemporary weather observations predicted the breaking of the drought by connecting the 1938–39 summer heatwave to historical droughts. I also question the problems of defining heatwaves and highlight the role of news media in determining when an extreme heat event has occurred. This paper draws from farm diaries, newspapers and historical weather data to show how climate knowledges have been shaped by extreme heat events.

Rochelle Schoff is completing her PhD at La Trobe University as a member the Parched Research Project led by Professor Katie Holmes. Her research centres on the environmental history of soil erosion and the WWII Drought in southeastern Australia. Rochelle completed her Bachelor of Global Studies and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) at the Australian Catholic University in 2021, studying how regional identity in the southeastern Australia has been shaped through interwar political movements and cultural celebrations.

21131172@students.latrobe.edu.au



**Kathryn Schumaker**  
*University of Sydney*

## **Wives and Concubines: Interracial Marriage and Inheritance in the 19th Century United States**

This paper examines an inheritance suit filed by a Black woman, Mary Covington, who claimed to be the common law (or de facto) wife of a deceased white man, William Covington, in the 1890s in the US South. During the late nineteenth century, laws governing interracial marriage changed rapidly in the United States. In Mississippi, interracial marriage was made illegal in 1865, but this law was quickly repealed. By the time Mary Covington filed her lawsuit in a Mississippi court claiming to be the widow of William Covington, the legislature had once again outlawed interracial marriage. But their relationship had spanned decades, and many of their children were born in the era when interracial marriages were explicitly legal. Examining the rich archive of letters, depositions, and other documents filed in the lawsuit, which languished in state courts for nearly ten years, this paper will explore how the legal regulation of interracial marriage shaped and was shaped by broader cultural and social ideas concerning the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality. This paper argues that the concept of concubinage came to acquire quasi-legal status as a means of denigrating all relationships between Black women and white men—even those like William and Mary's, which had once been a legal marriage. By casting Black wives as 'concubines,' judges and lawyers erased the history of the era in which interracial marriage was legal. By denying that their relationship was ever legal, the court also ensured that Mary's children would not be considered William's heirs, ensuring that white wealth would remain in the hands of more distant white relatives.

Kathryn Schumaker is a Senior Lecturer in American Studies at the US Studies Centre at the University of Sydney. She received her PhD in History from the University of Chicago and previously taught at the University of Oklahoma. Her work explores intersections of race, gender, sex, and law. Kathryn is the author of *Troublemakers: Students' Rights and Racial Justice in the Long 1960s* (NYU Press, 2019). Her next book, *Tangled Fortunes: The Hidden History of Interracial Marriage in the Segregated South*, is forthcoming in 2025 with Basic Books. Kathryn has received grant and fellowship support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Society for Legal History, the American Historical Association, and the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation.

kathryn.schumaker@sydney.edu.au

**Richard Scully**

*University of New England*

### **The Fighting Cartoonist of the 'Melbourne Punch': Tom Carrington and His Times**

This paper explores the life and career of Tom Carrington (1843–1918), the longest-serving and most influential cartoonist to work on the 'Melbourne Punch' (1855–1925). Between 1866 and 1887, Carrington chronicled almost every aspect of colonial politics, society, and culture in his weekly drawings. He is particularly well-known for his vicious attacks on the governments and person of Victorian premier Graham Berry (1875; 1877–80; 1880–81), but also for his eyewitness account of the Glenrowan Siege of 1880. His 'Australasian Sketcher' drawings of Ned Kelly are the closest thing to an iconic representation of the bushranger, but the artist who created them is little-known and little-appreciated. This paper argues that this is in part due to the ascendancy of the rival paper *The Bulletin*, and the place of that publication in Australian historical consciousness; while the 'Melbourne Punch' has faded into relative obscurity, dismissed as a British import, or a conservative and imperialist survival of a bygone age. Carrington epitomised this Britishness and conservatism, but a revisiting of his work reveals a great deal more about the man and his context than mere radical nationalist caricature can allow for.

Richard Scully, BA (Hons), PhD (Monash), FRHistS is Professor in Modern History at the University of New England. Co-lead investigator on the ARC-funded project 'Cartoon Nation', he is a Life Member of the Cartoon Museum (London) and the Political Cartoon Society, and is an Associate Member of the Australian Cartoonists' Association. He has edited a number of books (with Palgrave Macmillan and Manchester University Press), and is the author of 'Eminent Victorian Cartoonists' (3 volumes, London, 2018).

rscully@une.edu.au

**Paul Sendziuk**  
*University of Adelaide*

**Contribution to panel "The Future of Academic History in Australia"**

paul.sendziuk@adelaide.edu.au

**Deepak Kumar Shahi**

*North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India*

### **Extracting Truth through time and wilderness in India**

Colonialism brought unprecedented change in the ecological landscape all around the world. Environmental Truths established during the age continue to persist and effect both humans and wildlife. The effects of climate change can be felt across the globe prompting investigations and studies to find out the historical causation of the present crisis. International summits have resulted in a site for blame games and unrealistic promises and rhetoric by world leaders. For a viable solution, there is an urgency for historical inquiries alongside collective accountability from humanity. In the context of India, however, the pre-existing social truths entangled with the colonial truths which resulted in a double blow to the non-human life forms. A longer civilization history of India demands weighing both colonial and pre-colonial traditions of ecological truths for a better assessment of the wildlife crisis in the region. Existing literature has its limitations as their perspective remains isolated concerning the impact of colonialism on society as well as wildlife. Nevertheless, the exchange and interaction, between human and non-human components of the environment, require a combined approach. The current study examines colonial versus Indian environmental truths, different narratives, contestation, and conjunctions. The paper gives a comparative remark of local and colonial approaches to human and non-human relationships.

The author is a Ph.D Candidate in the Department of History, NEHU, Shillong, currently working on wildlife history. His interests reside in environmental history, and aboriginal's relationship with wildlife in particular.

deepakshahi@nehu.ac.in

**Ben Silverstein**

*Australian National University*

Rosanne Kennedy, *Australian National University*

### **The Deep Present: Sovereignty, Language, and Place in Tara Jane Winch's *The Yield***

'I am writing because the spirits are urging me to remember, and because the town needs to know that I remember, they need to know now more than ever before.' *The Yield*. Tara Jane Winch's novel, *The Yield*, is concerned with memory, language, and sovereignty, and their significance in the present. The novel draws on and is informed by historical records, oral storytelling and the sustaining memory of Aboriginal presence on Country through deep time. In weaving these together it moves between times: from the deep past to the colonial past, and sits with the material and felt impacts of pasts in the contemporary present, narrating the reclamation of Wiradjuri language and simultaneously circulates the language into the reading public through the form of the novel. In this paper, we draw on the methods of cultural memory studies and historiography to consider the novel's merging of genres of realism and romance – a potent combination in historical fiction – and its creation of powerful characters to carry the story of struggle and survival across cultural and temporal borders. Through its form, *The Yield* develops innovative ways of engaging with and transmitting the remembered experience of the past, drawing out its cultural and political significance in the present. We argue that what is distinctive and important is the novel's cultural imaginary of this deep present, achieved through its transmission of and layering of different temporalities – the deep past, the settler colonial past, and the capitalist colonial present.

Ben Silverstein is a Lecturer in Indigenous Studies at the Australian National University on Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country, where he researches in colonial and Indigenous histories. He is the author of *Governing Natives: Indirect Rule and Settler Colonialism in Australia's North* (Manchester University Press, 2019), editor of *Conflict, adaptation, transformation: Richard Broome and the practice of Aboriginal history* (Aboriginal Studies Press, 2018), and is a co-editor of *Aboriginal History*.

[ben.silverstein@anu.edu.au](mailto:ben.silverstein@anu.edu.au)

**Jordana Silverstein**

*University of Melbourne*

**Feminist fragmentations and connections: stories of making home in/from statelessness**

Over the last couple of years I have been conducting oral history interviews with people who were stateless when they migrated to Australia in the second half of the twentieth century. While globally, most stateless people are in situ – that is, they are not migrants or refugees – there is a long history of stateless people migrating to Australia. Drawing on the theorisations of 'multidirectional memory' by Michael Rothberg and 'stateless memory' by Marianne Hirsch, in this paper I want to posit that through these stories – or testimonies – of formerly stateless people, we can identify something which becomes a feminist anti-nation-state project of living through and with fragmentation and building community across and with those fragments. That is, I want to think about how the fragmentations caused by statelessness produce both horrors and possibilities. I want to think about how in these memorial testimonies we can see new ways of building homes and connections amongst us that defy and refute the nation-state order. These are not simple memories and histories, as no memory or history is: and how can those of us who are not stateless learn from these narratorial and memorial crafts, I wonder? How can feminist projects of listening to see what can be said open us up to new possibilities of how we organise ourselves?

Dr Jordana Silverstein is a Senior Research Fellow in the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness at the University of Melbourne

jordys@unimelb.edu.au

**Zora Simic**  
*UNSW Sydney*

### **Seeing the Signs: Thinking historically about coercive control**

In 2023, the South Australian Government launched a public awareness campaign 'See the Signs of Coercive Control'. First, it presents signs to help the person experiencing it to identify the pattern. The signs can include: 'making it hard to see your family and friends' and 'any actions or behaviours that make you feel forced into doing something you don't want to do'. Next, the campaign targets the abusers, who are encouraged to ask themselves a series of questions to begin to take accountability for their actions, such as: 'have I ever made loved ones feel scared or anxious about how I'm behaving?' In the current moment, identifying the signs – a coming into consciousness – has helped people affected by coercive control make fresh sense of their lives. Taking this campaign as a starting point, this paper considers how coercive control can be thought about historically. In the current moment, advocates for criminalisation include the parents of Hannah Clarke, who along with her three children, was horrifically murdered by her estranged husband in early 2020 – a tipping point moment in the visibility of coercive control as a "home truth" about domestic violence in Australia. Yet coercive control is not new. The archive is replete with examples alongside persistent understandings of domestic violence as primarily physical. Theorising around coercive control is more recent, and its key theorist Evan Stark makes a series of historical arguments which have been heavily debated. How can historians contribute to and extend contemporary understandings of coercive control?

Zora Simic is an Associate Professor in History and Gender Studies in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. Her teaching and research interests are histories of gender, sexuality, migration and feminism. She is currently writing a book about the history of domestic violence in Australia since 1850 with Ann Curthoys and Catherine Kevin.

[z.simic@unsw.edu.au](mailto:z.simic@unsw.edu.au)

**Robyn Smith**

*Charles Darwin University and University of Newcastle*

### **Massacre Men of Australia's North**

This paper presents an overview of the perpetrators of frontier massacres in the north of Australia together with some of the places that have been named in their honour. Unsurprisingly, perpetrators were overwhelmingly white and male, although there was a singular notable exception. Some were agents of the state; others were the agents of well-connected wealthy landowners with pastoral interests. Few operated in isolation. They were, almost without exception, enabled and exonerated by the parliaments and political masters of the day. Records relating this part of Australia's gestation were stricken by an epidemic of wilful amnesia, shrouded in Western positivism to be falsely presented as fact. It came at the expense of the truth. In its stead emerged portrayal and perpetuation of the massacre men as pillars of civil society rather than marauding mobs of serial rapists and mass murderers.

Dr Robyn Smith is the author of the recently published *Licence to Kill: massacre men of Australia's north*. She is a lecturer in Indigenous Futures at Charles Darwin University, and a Conjoint Lecturer at the University of Newcastle where she was a member of Professor Lyndall Ryan's massacre mapping team.

[robyn.smith@cdu.edu.au](mailto:robyn.smith@cdu.edu.au)



**Zoe Smith**

*Australian National University*

### **The brutality of the breadwinner: historicising economic violence in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria**

In 1982, Judith Allen illuminated a crucial 'home truth', that late-nineteenth-century women's economic dependence on the male breadwinner was both 'the precondition for family violence and the reason for its continuation'. Despite this, not only was the male breadwinner valorised under ideals of domestic masculinity that were increasingly culturally and legally asserted as the norm, but women's dependence on the male breadwinner would be enshrined in legislation in the 1907 Harvester Judgement. Drawing on established frameworks by Alana Piper and Claire Morey, this paper historicises economic violence in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, connecting feminist concerns about women's economic dependence in marriage explored in colonial women's fiction and non-fiction writings to masculine marital behaviours detailed in wives' petitions, framed by them as 'cruelty', that were either then considered a form of economic abuse or can now be considered such by use of modern frameworks. In doing so, I demonstrate how the valorised breadwinner ideal, whose legislative enshrinement was lauded for its progressiveness, instead facilitated and to an extent justified financial abuse and coercion in marriage. Although the economic constraints of coverture were thought to have been eroded with the passage of Married Women's Property Acts in the late nineteenth century, women's economic dependence in marriage was not only maintained, but legislatively endorsed in the early twentieth century, despite continued feminist attempts to highlight the deleterious impacts of such. As opposed to being alleviated, the 'bonds of wedlock' were tightened under the sanctioned regime of a brutal breadwinner.

Zoe Smith is a PhD candidate and gender historian in the School of History at the Australian National University. Her doctoral research is a feminist, social, and cultural history of domestic violence in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria between 1880–1914, with a focus on both colonial women's divorce petitions and the fiction and non-fiction writings of Barbara Baynton, Ada Cambridge, Louisa Lawson, and Rosa Praed. She has published and presented prize-winning research on histories of sexual violence, domestic violence, Australian literature and film, colonial literature, masculinity, and gender and race in the context of nineteenth-century Britain and Australia.

Zoe.Smith1@anu.edu.au

**Michelle Staff**

*Australian National University*

### **Telling the truth through (or about) feminist biography**

A whole range of books telling the life stories of women from the past are published each year in Australia and around the world, sometimes adopting the mantle of 'feminist biography'. But what is feminist biography? In the 1980s and 1990s scholars were thinking theoretically about this question, debating what they considered the parameters and core qualities of feminist biography were or should be. For some this was dependent on the biographer's identity or subject matter; for others, it constituted a distinct approach that was markedly different from other biographical practices. The 2020s presents a very different context with its own set of challenges and opportunities that are in many ways quite different to those in which this original scholarly discussion took place over thirty years ago. Given the genre's great popularity with a general reading audience, biography has the capacity to bridge the divide between the academy and the public. It can make a difference to society's understandings of its past and the place of this past in the present. It is therefore important to revisit this discussion from a contemporary perspective to understand what feminist biography is (or might be) today and how it functions (or could function) in a world shaped by rapid change and contestation over the very meaning of 'feminism'. In this paper I explore these questions and more, using examples drawn from the Australian biographical landscape as well as from other English-speaking contexts.

Dr Michelle Staff (she/her) is a feminist historian based on Ngunnawal/Ngambri Country at The Australian National University. Her research investigates the feminist past using a transnational perspective. Having completed her PhD in 2023, she is currently working on a biography of the Australian feminist Bessie Rischbieth. As of 2024, she is the Online & Outreach Manager for the National Centre of Biography, the home of the Australian Dictionary of Biography.

michelle.staff@anu.edu.au

**Nicole Starling**

*Macquarie University*

### **Eugenics, Progressivism and the 1911 'Sterilisation of Defectives' debate within the South Australian WCTU**

The South Australian WCTU is rightly celebrated for the pivotal role that it played within the campaign for universal female suffrage in the 1890s. Less widely remembered is the fierce controversy that broke out within the WCTU early in the new century in response to proposals emanating from the new pseudo-science of eugenics that had found a number of enthusiastic advocates among the WCTU's members. In this paper I examine one important episode in that controversy, catalysed by a paper entitled 'The State and the Sterilisation of Defectives,' published in 1911 by the prominent social reformer Rev. Joseph Coles Kirby. The history of the controversy neatly illustrates some key fault-lines within the thinking and allegiances of groups such as the WCTU within this period, exposing uncomfortable home truths about early twentieth century progressivism and raising important questions for disability policy and social reform movements in our own time.

Nicole Starling is an honorary research fellow with the Department of History and Archaeology at Macquarie University. She also serves as Academic Dean and lecturer in Christian history at Morling College, Sydney. Her research publications include the forthcoming monograph, "Evangelical Belief and Enlightenment Morality in the Australian Temperance Movement 1832-1930" (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024).

nicole.starling@mq.edu.au

**Marguerita Stephens**

*La Trobe University*

### **Messages from Home: Australian POW Radio Messages 1941–45**

After Singapore fell in February 1942, brief messages from POWs became a key part of Japanese propaganda broadcasts across Asia and the Pacific. For many families, and for the Australian Military itself, these brief, often barely audible messages provided the only news of the fate of prisoners. Intended to undermine the allied war effort, instead, in Australia, the broadcasts produced a now largely forgotten nation-wide network of scribes who transcribed the staticky shortwave messages and sent them on to POWs' grateful families; local newspapers also reprinted them as good news stories. In June 1942 the POW Relatives Association set up a 'listening post' and also circulated the messages to families. All this despite the prohibition in the 1942 Commonwealth Broadcasting Act on the circulation of such messages and warnings from defence officials that the messages were likely false. In August 1944, the POW Relatives Association and the Commonwealth established a shortwave message service from Australia initially through All-India Radio then directly through the ABC. It was overwhelmed by queuing relatives of POWs on its first day. My father's March 1945 message from Changi began: 'Received Radio Message'. This paper focuses on the community network of scribes and its contribution to the morale of the nation and to the families of 'the Lost Battalions' of the 8th Division, 2nd AIF.

Dr Marguerita Stephens completed her PhD in History at the University of Melbourne in 2003 for which she was awarded the Dennis-Wettenhall prize in 2004. From 2007–2010 she held a University of Melbourne Interrupted Career Fellowship. From 2010–2014 she worked in collaboration with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages to complete the transcription of the Journal of Assistant Protector William Thomas. In 2013–14 she held the Redmond Barry Fellowship at the State Library Victoria. In 2023 she published 'The Years of Terror: Banbu-deen. Kulin and Colonists at Port Phillip 1835–1851 (Australian Scholarly Publishing), in partnership with Boonwurrung Elder Fay Stewart-Muir. She lives in Ballarat and has recently become an Adjunct Research Fellow at La Trobe University.

mstep11@gmail.com

**Kate Stevens**

*University of Waikato*

## **Geographical Indications as Environmental History**

This paper examines geographical indications (GIs) —a place-based intellectual property system—as a form of environmental history, where authorised versions of past are negotiated, solidified in law, and retold through marketing. In contrast to company-held trademarks, GIs are collectively held and tied to a specific, local geographic area and its history. Emerging out of early 20th century France, this type of protection has most often been applied to wine and food products—notably products known for their ‘nose’—and has recently expanded to include other manufactured products in France, the EU, and beyond. To receive this form of legal protection, producers and their representative organisations must define both the geography and history of their products, and how these combine to create its distinctive local, sensory qualities. The agreed odour and taste, manufacture, terroir and history, of a specific food, drink, or commodity then becomes crystallised in law. I will explore how diverging claims to specific ‘senses’ of place and past are constructed and narrated by applicant groups, legislation, and subsequent marketing, and how these narratives connect and contrast with environmental history practices. What are the challenges in narrowing histories of specific odours, flavours, products and places to fit legal definitions? What environmental or sensory histories and experiences of colonialism, capitalism, and labour are reified through law, and what are erased? I address these questions using case studies from the Pacific to Europe under the French GI regime, such as *mono’i de Tahiti*, *savon de Marseille*, and *absolue Pays de Grasse*.

Dr Kate Stevens (Pākehā) is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand. Her research focuses on connected histories of cultural, environmental, and economic exchange in the colonial and postcolonial Pacific world. Her first book *Gender, Violence and Criminal Justice in the Colonial Pacific 1880–1920* was published with Bloomsbury in 2023. Other research examines women’s role and environmental knowledge in southern Aotearoa whaling worlds, the ways in which coconut commodities connected the Pacific to the global economy, and an environmental history of Suva, supported by a Marsden Fund Fast-Start grant.

[kate.stevens@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:kate.stevens@waikato.ac.nz)

**Ana Stevenson**

*University of Southern Queensland*

### **Academic Blogging and the Public Humanities in the Twenty-First Century Knowledge Economy**

This paper will share the preliminary results from a research project about academic blogging and higher education, especially within the discipline of history. This research project aimed to investigate the influence of academic blogging on the twenty-first-century knowledge economy. Building on a developing literature about the position of academic blogging in the scholarly publishing landscape, this paper will offer a deeper understanding of the position of academic blogging across the three core domains of a university's mission: teaching, research, and public engagement. The research team undertook qualitative data collection through a survey and interviews with academics about their experience and practice of academic blogging. Research participants included academics across all levels in Australia, Africa, Europe, and North America whose teaching and research relates to the humanities, history, and education. Additionally, a case study of bibliometric data relating to a history blog further informed the qualitative data. This paper will share initial findings about the use and impact of academic blogging at a juncture when the importance of public-facing research outputs is increasingly recognised.

Dr Ana Stevenson is a senior lecturer at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, and a research fellow of the International Studies Group at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Her first book was *The Woman as Slave in Nineteenth-Century American Social Movements* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). Stevenson's research about feminist media history has also appeared in journals such as *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies*, *Gender & History*, and the *Women's History Review*. Since 2016, she has been a Managing Editor of *VIDA: Blog of the Australian Women's History Network*.

[ana.stevenson@unisq.edu.au](mailto:ana.stevenson@unisq.edu.au)

**Carolyn Strange**

*Australian National University*

### **Stories versus Statistics in Canada's Consideration of the Death Penalty's Abolition in the 1950s**

The adoption of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, with its explicit recognition of the dignity of the individual, shone a critical light on death penalty, which remained in law and practice in all but a few countries in the 1950s. Yet, when the Canadian government struck a Parliamentary committee to consider the prospect of abolition in 1954, part of a major overhaul to the national Criminal Code, neither the Declaration nor the discourse of rights featured in witness statements or committee members' questions. Far more prevalent was the concept of 'civilisation', a protean value that retentionists and abolitionists tried to manipulate to support their opposing positions. In this atmosphere, statistics that cast doubt on the deterrent effect of capital punishment did not stand a chance. Drawing on the minutes of evidence of the Special Joint Committee on Capital Punishment, its final report (which recommended retention in 1956), Parliamentary debate and editorial news coverage, this paper analyses how civilisationist home truths swamped the quantitative evidence tabled by the world's leading expert on the death penalty and rates crime. A close reading of these sources questions the characterisation of the 1950s as the heyday of "the expert" and his supposed cultural cachet and policy sway, and secondly, demonstrates the scant impact of human rights rhetoric in support of abolition in the mid-twentieth century.

Carolyn Strange has published widely on the history of capital crime, capital punishment and clemency in Canada, the U.S. and Australia. She is Prof. of History at the Australian National University.

carolyn.strange@anu.edu.au

**Rodney Sullivan**

Mrs Robin Sullivan, University of Queensland  
*University of Queensland*

**Irish Women Poets in Queensland: Achievements and Vicissitudes**

This paper investigates the lives of Queensland's first women poets, Eva O'Doherty and Olivia Hope-Connolly. Both were Irish nationalists who arrived in the colony in the early 1860s. While their antipodean lives followed different trajectories, they carried memory of Ireland, wrote poetry intermittently, published collections of verse, and negotiated the tension inherent in being Irish while becoming Australian. We retrieve home truths in the Queensland lives of both women, and, in conclusion, consider their memory legacies.

Rodney Sullivan is an Honorary Research Associate Professor in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry at The University of Queensland. He was formerly an Associate Professor in the Department of History & Politics at James Cook University, Townsville. He has published in the fields of Australian and Philippine-American history, and recent articles on the Irish in Queensland. He has contributed to the Australian Dictionary of Biography and the Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate. In 2023 he co-authored *A Hundred Thousand Welcomes: The History of the Queensland Irish Association*. Rodney holds an MA in History from the University of Queensland and PhD from James Cook University, Townsville, Australia.

rodsull@bigpond.net.au



**Carol Summers**

*University of Richmond*

### **'No one else can do your duty': Australians' citizenship and money in the Second World War**

This paper explores the propaganda and practice of patriotic thrift in Australia from the war's declaration through Prime Minister Curtin's austerity initiative and to its end, examining Australia's intensive and inclusive efforts to educate and recruit Australians as savers, and the messages that savings propaganda sent about citizenship and belonging. Australia's central government, its local systems of governance, and civic allies including the Commonwealth Bank, advertising industries, women's movement, and omnipresent savings groups, worked to educate Australians about economics and wartime expenses. They provided institutional support and applied social pressure for a savings apparatus that extended from elites through ordinary people—including children—across Australia. And in doing so, they proclaimed an Australian identity as available to all through a sort of accountable citizenship, paid for with savings, recorded in notebooks and ledgers and visible to coworkers. Money, membership in the 'Savings Army' and proving 'that Australia means something to you' by investing to fund the war were all part of Australians' wartime experiences. Histories of soldiers' and workers' mobilization are central to popular histories of the era. Less commonly considered, though, was the era's rejection of individual consumerism in favor of thrift, and Australia's part in a worldwide British effort to fund defense, survival, and victory without triggering inflation and wrecking its economy. That effort called and organized people of metropole, dominions and empire, to contribute money and by doing so win the war—with varying results.

Carol Summers is a professor of African and comparative history at the University of Richmond (USA), and in 2023 was a visitor at the Humanities Research Center of the Australia National University. Her past books have examined struggles over segregation, development and education in colonial Zimbabwe. More recent research and articles examined ideas and activism around citizenship and loyalty in Buganda. Her current work pulls together research in Britain, Canada, Uganda, Australia and beyond to examine ideas of patriotic thrift, money, and citizenship in the British world during the second world war.

lsummers@richmond.edu

**Marita Suresh**  
*Goa University*

**A Jesuit 'Way of Proceeding' between Europe and Asia: A historical review of the Martini-Nickel overland survey project (1656–64)**

This paper examines an overland survey project undertaken by the Society of Jesus between 1656 – 1664. Although the notion of an overland links between Jesuit headquarters in Rome and overseas missions in Asia had existed in the Jesuit imagination long before this expedition was conducted, socio-political events in this century were particularly conducive to such an undertaking. An overland survey expedition was first proposed by Martino Martini, S.J., a Jesuit affiliated to the Jesuit Vice-Province of China when (he) was on a diplomatic mission to Rome. In a letter to the then General of the Society, Nickel Goswin S.J., Martini proposed the establishment of a Jesuit-administered network between Europe and Asia, to reduce Jesuit dependence upon maritime transport administered and controlled by the Portuguese state, upon which the Society had historically depended for travel between Asia and Europe, and within Asia itself. Goswin initiated the survey ten months after Martini's proposal was made. The survey team was to determine which of two routes proposed by Martini could better link Jesuit missions in Persia, China and India, and provide additional links to headquarters in Rome. My research draws on archival material and documents from archives and libraries in Goa and Mumbai, such as the Xavier Centre of Historical Research, Goa, and the Heras Institute in Mumbai. My research in this paper looks closely at Jesuit knowledge production arising from the overland survey, including its socio-cultural and political impact, and its contribution to the shaping of European intellectual engagement with Asia.

Marita Suresh is a Ph.D student of history, working under the guidance of Dr. Pratima P. Kamat at Goa University, India. Her doctoral research focuses on the socio-cultural contributions of the Jesuits in 17th century Asia, with particular reference to the history of Goa. Her M.A. dissertation, 'Eurasians of French Descent in India and Indochina: Colonial Policies and Post-Colonial Integration' studied French Colonial policy toward children of Eurasian descent in India and Indochina. In 2019, she executed a sponsored research project with a fellow student, Ms. Minnu Mathew. This project, 'A Study on British buildings in South Arcot with special reference to the St. David Fort', was commissioned by the Arcot Lutheran Church, and drew on archival sources from the Tamil Nadu State Archives at Egmore, Chennai. She has a B.A. in history from Women's Christian College, Chennai, and an M.A. in history from Madras Christian College, Chennai.

marita.suresh8@gmail.com

**Hannah Swaine**

*Australian War Memorial*

### **'Rough, Rude and Coarse Men': Australians in the Imperial Camel Corps**

This paper examines the Australian experience of the Imperial Camel Corps in the Sinai–Palestine Campaign of the First World War. Formed as a response to Libyan desert warfare in 1915, four battalions of Australian soldiers were relieved from their Infantry Brigades or Light Horse Regiments and mounted on camels in early 1916. Following the Cameleers from these humble, and at times rough, beginnings in the western Egyptian desert, this paper presents the history of the Australian troopers of the Camel Corps and their unusual experience of the Allied Middle Eastern Campaign as mounted infantry. Tracking their participation in significant battles in the Sinai, Palestine and the Jordan Valley, the life of the supposedly troublesome Camel Corps was filled with combat, comradery, and the occasional 'mangoon' camel. Their life and legacy has been plagued by a reputation of coarse behaviour and coarser men, and this narrative has remained historically dominant due to a lack of scholarship surrounding the Cameleers. This paper follows the Corps from its foundation in 1916 to its disbandment in 1918, drawing on a combination of personal experiences and operational history to present the story of a truly unique Australian war experience.

Hannah is a 2023 graduate from the University of Queensland having completed her Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History. Her Honours thesis examined the history of Terendak Military Cemetery and its place in the Australian commemorative landscape. By conducting original research into the cemetery's significance in the history of Australian repatriation policy, this work addressed a gap in scholarly literature surrounding death in war and commemorative practices post-1945. She was awarded the Australian War Memorial's 2024 Summer Scholarship in which she was provided the opportunity to conduct six weeks of intensive archival research on a topic of the Memorial's choosing. Her research into the Imperial Camel Corps of the Sinai–Palestine Campaign drew on a wealth of primary information recorded about the Corps in Official and Private Records held by the Memorial, and culminated in a paper presented at the end of February 2024.

[hannah.swaine01@gmail.com](mailto:hannah.swaine01@gmail.com)

**Natasha Szuhan**

*Australian National University*

**'My body, my choice. Their science': Female Technologists and Oral Contraceptives in Australia, 1961–91**

It has been 63 years since the Pill was released onto the global market as a (mostly) female-controlled contraceptive technology. This product was unlike any of the messy, fiddly, inconsistent, fallible, and sometimes mood-killing mechanical and chemical contraceptive methods and products that preceded it. Oral contraceptives basically sold themselves through the promise of spontaneous and guaranteed safe (from pregnancy, at least) marital sex through the regimented daily ingestion of a pill that 'c[ould] be eaten like candy'. The rapid uptake in the Pill in Australia (and most of the western world) in its first decade of sale demonstrates that there was a broad enthusiasm across ecumenical, economic, and ethnic cohorts for an efficient female-managed technology that didn't require constant maintenance, extensive pre-sex preparation, or the use of fine motor skills. But how did this shift in contraceptive practice – and its resultant socio-cultural and gender ruptures – relate to scientific communication and education? Was it a product of an incremental increase in public appreciation and application of medico-scientific knowledge built up over several decades by contraceptive scientists and activists? Or a by-product of the apparent scientific breakthrough that had rendered the reproductive female body wholly manageable? No one has yet asked these questions – but they are central to my oral history of oral contraceptives in Australia. This talk will present initial findings from this project's pilot trial and seek to draw some useful conclusions about the intersection of science and technology communication and gender and reproductive autonomy in recent Australian history.

Dr Natasha Szuhan lectures in History and Sociology at the Australian National University. She holds a BA (Hons) and Graduate Diploma in the Humanities and Social Sciences, an MA (Research) and PhD (University of Melbourne). Natasha has completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in the medical humanities with the University of Strathclyde and Shanghai University and researched and lectured at the Australian National University, University of Melbourne, University of Adelaide, University of New South Wales, and Shanghai University. She has published two manuscripts and is currently working on 'An oral History of Oral Contraceptives in Australia', 1961–1991.

natasha.szuhan@anu.edu.au

**Louise Thatcher**

*Potsdam University, Germany*

### **Jumping Ship and Managing to Stay: Desertion as Evasion of White Australia**

This paper uses archival records from the Collector of Customs Sydney to tell the stories of some Chinese and Indian men who successfully jumped ship in Sydney in the early twentieth century. Coming to Australia as workers on ships provided a means for them to evade racist immigration restrictions, despite attempts to regulate the mobility of maritime labour. I explore the attempts of Australian officials and shipping company agents to find and deport them, as well as the networks that enabled some deserters to live and work in Australia for years or even decades. Through this, I contribute to a better understanding of how the rhetoric and legislation of the White Australia policy were put into practice, as well as methods of clandestine travel through which people continued to move.

Louise Thatcher is a PhD candidate at Potsdam University. She has a BA in History from the University of Sydney and an MA Global History from the Free University and Humboldt University Berlin. She is currently a Bucerius Foundation 'Beyond Borders' fellow.

[louise.thatcher@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:louise.thatcher@uni-potsdam.de)

**Annie Thomas**

*University of New England*

**Mr Punch goes to Ballarat: An examination of the Ballarat Punch magazine  
c. 1867–70**

Punch or the London Charivari (1841–1992; 1996 – 2002) was the most successful satirical magazine of the Victorian era. This success stimulated a global proliferation in Punch-like periodicals that accompanied nineteenth century British imperial expansion. Until recently, most scholarly treatments of magazines bearing the Punch name have focused on the original. There has been a shift in the last few decades toward analyses of Punch magazines produced outside of London, and much of this work has been focused on Indian Punches, which are now being treated as significant sources for understanding the colonial history of India. Analyses of Punches in other areas of Asia and the Middle East, South Africa, and North America have also been produced. However, there are still significant gaps in our understanding of numerous Antipodean Punches. The Ballarat Punch (1857; 1867 – 1870) is one example. Largely neglected until now, the Ballarat Punch confers a uniquely humorous window into the defining decades of the city's history, as the mid-nineteenth-century Victorian gold rushes rapidly transformed Ballarat from a small pastoral community to a sophisticated municipality. Focusing on themes of nationalism, egalitarianism, race, and gender, this paper demonstrates that the Ballarat Punch provides valuable insights into the earliest days of complex imperial-colonial culture during unprecedented levels of European immigration. The paper also supports previous arguments that satirical periodicals – and especially cartoons – are important yet under utilised historical sources.

Annie has come to the discipline of history a bit later in life. She has worked as a clinical and forensic psychologist since 1996 and was awarded a PhD in psychology in 2001. Annie decided to indulge her passion for history several years ago and work toward transitioning as an historian and was awarded a Master of History degree through the University of New England in 2023. During her studies, Annie developed a keen interest in satirical magazines, especially cartoons, and produced a thesis examining the Ballarat Punch magazine and its representations of race, gender, and class in a contested imperial-colonial space during the mid-19th century. Annie is interested in the use of satire to either reinforce or challenge representations of 'other' and commenced her PhD candidature this year with the intention of examining various largely unexplored nineteenth century New Zealand and Queensland Punches.

dr.anniethomas@bigpond.com

**Emma Thomas**

*UNSW Sydney*

### **'Queen' Emma, Revisited: Reassessing Race and Labour in the Colonial Pacific**

Born in the mid-nineteenth century in Apia, Emma Coe was the daughter of Samoan royalty on her mother's side. Her father was an American-born whaler and later US Consul in Apia. In 1878, Emma and her then-partner, the blackbirder, Thomas Farrell, relocated to the island of Mioko in today's Papua New Guinea. Remembered for her ambition and entrepreneurship, Emma soon acquired land and great wealth in the Bismarck Archipelago, and was soon joined there by her sister, Phebe Parkinson, and brother-in-law, the Danish-born ethnographer and collector, Richard. Following the German Empire's annexation of the islands in 1884, Emma's luxurious home, overlooking Blanche Bay, became a social centre of colonial life in German New Guinea, and many of her family members married German colonial elites. Given the unlikely history of a Samoan-American woman who built a small personal empire in nineteenth-century Melanesia, 'Queen' Emma and her family have piqued the interest of people like anthropologist Margaret Mead, and of organisations like Australia's Channel 10, which produced a romanticised miniseries about her in 1988. In this paper, I propose a different approach to Emma's story—one that embeds her in the histories of unfree labour that underpinned colonial enterprises in the Pacific. Starting with the fact that Emma's wealth was generated largely through the labours of Solomon Islanders whom she recruited to work on her extensive plantations, I argue that her story opens up multiple avenues for understanding Pacific mobilities, including the 'home truths' of subaltern actors obscured in dominant accounts.

Emma Thomas is a Laureate Postdoctoral Fellow with the Laureate Centre for History and Population at the University of New South Wales. She is a historian of gender, labour, and colonialism who focuses on transnational histories of Oceania and Europe. She earned her PhD from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 2019. Her current book project analyses intersections of gender and sexuality, labour regimes, violence and demographic concerns in Papua New Guinea under German colonial rule (1884–1914). Her dissertation, upon which this book is based, was awarded the Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize by the Friends of the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC, in 2022. She is currently leading a collaborative, transimperial project focusing on population change in the colonial Pacific, as well as collaborating on a database documenting the 'Pacific Labour Trade'.

emma.thomas@unsw.edu.au

**Claire Thomas**

*La Trobe University*

### **Canberra 1926–66: Not just men and the business of nation making**

In 1932, thirty members of the federal parliament presented a crystal table lamp to Isabelle Southwell, manageress of the Hotel Kurrajong. The occasion is retold on a storyboard in the foyer of the now 4-star Canberra hotel. But why is Southwell's twenty years at the helm of a significant site of early accommodation for politicians and public servants not widely known? Why have women's contributions to the building of Canberra been largely left out of the general histories and popular ideas of the city? The answer appears to lay in the word support. The working women who inhabited the public accommodation of Canberra between 1926–66 were overwhelmingly in support roles. Due to the nature of the work, a supporting role's undertakings easily become subservient to the narrative being driven by the leading roles; in the case of post-Federation Canberra, the narrative was nation building and the roles were played by men. Building on the work, started in the 1970s, of feminist labour historians my paper explores the lives of working women in mid twentieth century Canberra, their experience of living in public accommodation, and the absence of this cohort's contribution from most histories of Canberra. Using the frame of where they lived, I will examine the work they did, the choices they were forced to make because of their gender and labour laws, and how the opportunities and discomforts of public accommodation shaped their lives.

After a couple of decades working in theatre, Claire restarted her history journey in 2020 at the University of Melbourne (Grad Dip- Advanced) and then moved to La Trobe for her masters by research (2023). A fascination with the women who worked from, lived in and managed the hostels and hotels of mid-twentieth century Canberra is the mission that brought her back to the academic world. Claire is curious about how women in these spaces influenced gender relations and social roles, labour culture, and the absence of these liminal sites and their convention-breaking inhabitants from much of the written history of Canberra.

Claire.Thomas@latrobe.edu.au



**Nicole Townsend**

*UNSW Canberra*

**'We cannot stress too strongly the importance we attach to holding this area': the Middle East in the Australian official mind, 1939–41**

Australian involvement in the Mediterranean and the Middle East during the Second World War is often portrayed as merely a prelude to the war in the Pacific. Whereas the latter has been referred to as the 'real war', Australian involvement in the Mediterranean and the Middle East is portrayed as being undertaken for British or imperial interests. This paper contests this assumption by highlighting Australia's strategic interests in the region from the opening days of the war through to the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines. It demonstrates that the Middle East ranked as being of paramount importance to both the Australian High Commissioner in London, Stanley Bruce, and Prime Minister Robert Menzies. Both actively urged the reinforcement of the Middle East as they attempted to influence British strategy in the theatre, taking particular interest in the Soviet threat in the Middle East and the security of Palestine and Egypt. Both also linked victory in the Middle East to Australia security as they foregrounded the indivisibility of events in this region from those closer to home in the Pacific. In this regard, Menzies and Bruce argued that victory in the Mediterranean was not a sideshow for Australia, but a bastion against 'any fresh adventure' by the Japanese. On the other hand, they believed that a British defeat—or any indication that such a loss might be imminent—would prevent the deployment of naval reinforcements to defend the all-important British fortress at Singapore, and thus encourage Japanese aggression.

Nicole is in the final stages of completing a PhD at UNSW Canberra. Her thesis focuses on Australia's relationship with the Mediterranean and the Middle East between 1919 and 1939. She currently works as a Researcher on the Official History of Australian Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. She is also a Director of the Second World War Research Group, Asia Pacific. Her work has been featured both in Australia and internationally, with her most recent publication, an edited collection entitled 'Australian Perspectives on Global Air Power: Past, Present, Future', was published by Routledge in 2023.

n.townsend8136@gmail.com

**Saneze Tshayana**

*University of the Free State, South Africa and University of Southern Queensland*

## **The 'Second Pandemic': Changing Responses to Gender-Based Violence in South Africa**

In 2006, a woman known only as “Khwezi” accused Jacob Zuma of rape. He was later acquitted, and one of his most vocal supporters during his rape trial was the African National Congress’s Women’s League (ANCWL). Nearly 20 years later, on 8 February 2024, the current president of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, delivered his State of the Nation Address. He once again highlighted the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in contemporary South Africa, reinforcing its labelling as the ‘second pandemic’, a phrase first used during the Covid-19 crisis. How does one read these statements alongside each other – Zuma would eventually ascend first to the presidency of the ANC before being inaugurated as South Africa’s third democratically elected president, while his successor, Ramaphosa, continuously speaks out in the present against exactly what Zuma stood accused of having done. What has changed? Violence against women in South Africa certainly merits Ramaphosa’s attention, with some of the highest incidents of rape and murder perpetrated against women in the world. In the search for local truths – home truths – this is one truth that cannot be ignored. This paper will therefore, using Zuma and his supporters’ remarks as reported in local newspapers during his trial, and Ramaphosa’s notions of a ‘second pandemic’, and also drawing on the works of Pumla Dineo Gqola and Kopano Ratele, chart changing responses to gender-based violence in South Africa. In doing so, this paper hopes to contribute to contemporary understandings of gender-based violence in post-1994 South Africa.

Saneze Tshayana is a PhD researcher, jointly enrolled at the University of the Free State, South Africa, and the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. Her PhD research focuses on contemporary histories of love among black people in South Africa. Using an interdisciplinary methodology, which incorporates historical and literary methods of analysis in particular, she is investigating whether the dawn of democracy in South Africa has changed, in any way, how black South Africans practise giving and receiving love. The proposed paper ‘The ‘Second Pandemic’: Changing Responses to Gender-Based Violence in South Africa’ is an early draft of part of the last substantive chapter of her PhD thesis, which will focus on infidelity and violence.

sanezetshayana@gmail.com

**Karen Twigg**

*La Trobe University*

**'We actually learnt a whole lot of useful things': drought, place and rural change.**

The Millennium Drought was an extended period of dry, that parched much of south-eastern Australia between 1997 and 2009. Using life history interviews, I explore how the specificities of history and locale shaped the ways in which people experienced, responded to, and remembered this drought. In particular, as climate change threatens more frequent and severe droughts, I examine how water scarcity and the distinctive ecologies of place fostered new ways of thinking about land use practices. Part of the Parched: Cultures of Drought project, the paper draws on insights gained from the team's oral history project encompassing 50 interviewees from across regional Victoria.

Dr Karen Twigg is an environmental historian at La Trobe University's Centre for the Study of the Inland, with core interests in oral history, gender and rural settlement. Her current research centres on changing responses to drought, water and climate in regional Victoria and within the Murray Darling Basin.

k.twigg@latrobe.edu.au

**Brad Underhill**

*Deakin University*

### **How do you reduce teenage smoking rates? Public education and tobacco control in the 1960s and 70s**

Recent research from the Cancer Council Victoria's (CCV) Centre for Behavioural Research showed that the proportion of teenagers smoking has increased for the first time in 25 years. In seeking to turn this trend around we can look to earlier attempts at tobacco control among younger Australians. This paper describes how non-government cancer organisations utilised the behavioural sciences, education campaigns and political lobbying in an attempt to prevent young people from taking up smoking. I focus on the inner workings of the Public Education Committee of the CCV and how it specifically targeted cancer prevention in Australian teenagers from the early 1960s. It will show how, and why, this committee targeted teenagers, both with educational information on the dangers of smoking through official channels such as school curricula, and by engaging with them through film and promotional materials. The paper identifies how advancements in technology and behavioural science informed the strategies available to the Public Education Committee and further, reveals changing perceptions of youth culture.

Brad Underhill is a tutor, lecturer and research assistant at Deakin University. His forthcoming book *Preparing a Nation; The 'New Deal' in the villages, 1945–1964* will be published in 2024 by ANU Press. Brad's doctoral thesis jointly received the Hank Nelson Memorial award for best PhD, internationally, on any aspect of Papua New Guinea's history. His research has most recently appeared in the *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *Journal of Pacific History*, the *Victorian Historical Journal*. Brad is a guest editor and has three forthcoming articles in a 2024 special issue of *Australian Historical Studies* on 'Remembering Papua New Guinea'. In 2017 he received the Vice-Chancellor's Prize for academic excellence at Deakin, and previously was awarded the Bowater Trust medal, for best all-round undergraduate student. He is also employed as a research assistant on an ARC linkage project investigating the history of anti-cancer campaigns to understand the nexus between science, advocacy, policy and behavioural change.

b.underhill@deakin.edu.au

**Jessica Urwin**

*La Trobe University*

### **Following the yellowcake road: Tracing the imperial and colonial roots and routes of Australian uranium**

Over the past 40 years, environmental justice activists and scholars have drawn greater attention to the disproportionate environmental burdens borne by marginalised communities. This includes the consequences of 'nuclear colonialism', a modern phenomenon defined as constituting 'a system of domination through which governments and corporations target indigenous [sic] peoples and their lands to maintain the nuclear production process'. In this paper, I seek to complicate this definition of nuclear colonialism by considering the role of uranium mining in consolidating both British imperial power and Australian colonial influence during the first half of the twentieth century, well before the dawn of the so-called 'nuclear age'. I will do so through an examination of Australian uranium's 'roots' and 'routes' as both a manifestation and facilitator of settler colonialism in Australia in the early-to-mid twentieth century. Combining sources from both British and Australian archives, this paper seeks to expand considerations of the settler colonial dimensions of mineral extraction in two ways. Firstly, by explicating the role uranium played in fuelling the extractive mentalities of settler colonial Australia. And secondly, by exploring Australian uranium's contribution to the consolidation of the British Empire's waning power in the twentieth century.

Jess is a postdoctoral research fellow on the Murray Darling Basin Authority Water and Environment Research Program funded project 'Navigating Change', based at La Trobe University. Her previous doctoral research and ongoing work engage with the intersections between Australia's nuclear and colonial pasts, illuminating the colonial dimensions and broader politics of uranium extraction, nuclear weapons testing, and waste disposal in Australia.

[jessica.urwin@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:jessica.urwin@latrobe.edu.au)

**Jo Vandeppeer**

*University of Adelaide*

### **The Bulldog Track, the Engineer and the Silk Jacket**

During WWII, a young South Australian escaped by foot on the Bulldog Track when the Japanese air force began their invasion of New Guinea. Incredibly, the twenty-year old man carried with him a pink, silk jacket as a gift for his little sister. Bill Neill and the other New Guinea Airlines ground engineers remained on the tarmac when the pilots took to the air, just moments before the Japanese bombed Lae on the 21 January 1942. Left to fend for themselves, the ground engineers climbed to 3000m through dense rain forest. Remarkably, the jacket arrived in perfect condition. But it should not have, for the Bulldog Track is acknowledged as a longer, steeper and wetter route than the Kokoda Trail, and Bill walked it a year before the army built the road. Through the study of a single object, this paper reveals a truth on three levels: Firstly, it tells an untold personal history that the engineer kept from his own family; in doing so, it uncovers the truth of the jacket as a 'trophy' in a tale of fortitude and courage; and thirdly, the trophy tells a wider truth that enriches our understanding of the expat groups who were living and working around the goldfields in New Guinea but were forced to make their escape over the Owen Stanley Ranges, a route much less documented and examined than the Kokoda Trail.

Dr Jo Vandeppeer is a visiting research fellow at the University of Adelaide. Her research focuses on the Adelaide School of Design and applied arts. Her work can be found in the quarterly journal *Australiana*. In 2023, she was awarded an AHCAN grant to examine the SA Portiere in the Royal Collection. In 2022, she won the James MacGinley Award and in 2021, the Peter Walker Fine Art Writing award. More recently, her article on the unique SA malachite brooches was published in the *Jewellery History Today* journal, British Museum and she was the guest speaker for the David Roche Foundation for SA History Month.

Jo.vandeppeer@icloud.com

**Nikita Vanderbyl**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Slavery and South Australia's colonisation: resituating George Fife Angas**

This paper considers some of the key contradictions in the life of George Fife Angas (1789–1879), a significant figure in South Australia's colonisation and an inheritor of Caribbean-derived wealth. During the 1830s Angas transitioned from merchant managing his family's coach-making business (using mahogany milled by slaves) to being a banker and Colonisation Commissioner for South Australia. He resigned to form a joint-stock company in 1836 taking a pecuniary interest in the colony and ensuring necessary land sales could be made, along with significant profit to himself. He later settled in the colony with his family until his death in 1879. Highlighting the contradictions between his collecting slave compensation on behalf of Honduran residents, his family's connections to the trade through their coach-making business and his stance as an abolitionist, this paper explores Angas's reputation as the colony's founding father. As a fervent Baptist whose network of correspondents across multiple colonies in the empire brought many business opportunities Angas embodies the ironies of men of his class who benefitted materially from systems of oppression they seemingly opposed. Using the Angas Family papers in the State Library of South Australia, compensation records and slave registers at the National Archives, London, and multiple glowing biographies, this paper examines the complex character of Fife Angas in South Australia's early colonial history.

Nikita Vanderbyl is an historian of nineteenth-century Aboriginal art and colonial history. Her research focuses on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung art and history in the context of colonial cultures of collection and display. After publishing with Alan Lester in *History Workshop Journal* 'The Restructuring of the British Empire and the Colonization of Australia, 1832–8' (2020), she has joined the Western Australian Legacies of British Slavery project. Nikita's research has appeared in *Aboriginal History*, *The La Trobe Journal*, *Agora* and on the *Conversation*. Most recently she has published with Prof. Barry Judd on Indigenous masculinities. She teaches history part time at La Trobe University in Mildura and she lives on unceded Barkindji Country in southern New South Wales.

nikita.vanderbyl@unimelb.edu.au

**Andrekos Varnava**

*Flinders University and De Montfort University*

### **A Prosopography of Cypriot Migrants to Australia, 1947–52**

This paper explores the type of Cypriots arriving in Australia in the post-war period, specifically from December 1947 to February 1952. It will do so through a quantitative and prosopographical study across typologies such as their age, sex, marital status, ethno-religious affiliation, and skills/occupation. This will show trends and patterns across type and also across time. The first section covers Cypriot passengers on 17 ships, all of which contained a mixture of migrants from various parts of the Mediterranean and Europe. These have been selected as the top 17 trips carrying the most Cypriots, ranging from about 80 to just under 300 passengers. This will provide a sample of 2,494 Cypriots, which represents almost 50% of Cypriot arrivals to Australia, which is estimated to be around 5,200 between the censuses of 1946 and 1954. In the second part, the focus will be on the 761 who came on the Corsica in February 1952. In addition to comparing across the same typologies to understand the differences and similarities between those arriving on earlier voyages and those arriving on the Corsica, this section will also explore from where in Cyprus 500 passengers on the Corsica came from. This will allow for an understanding of whether they originated from rural or urban areas of Cyprus and whether they had moved to other parts of the island, especially from rural to urban settings, where the data is available.

Professor Andrekos Varnava, FRHistS, FRSA, is a historian of the British Empire, British, Australian and Commonwealth migration, and of Cyprus. He has published four monographs, 17 collections, and 70 papers.

andrekos.varnava@flinders.edu.au



**Mario Vecchi**

*University of New England*

**More than just a list of names. Using the NSW Immigration Lists of 1849 to determine areas of socio-economic distress within the UK**

On their arrival into NSW, pertinent information on each immigrant was recorded in both the Immigration Agent lists and Immigration Board lists. This information ranged from departure villages, occupation, religious affiliations to their mother's maiden name. While Genealogists have long relied on these lists for familial information, they can also provide a wealth of information to the historian. Indeed, by utilising the 'native place' information recorded, it is possible to quantify the 1849 immigration into NSW to a localised departure-village scale. Therefore, mapping can aid in visualising the geographical extent of UK emigration during this time. Utilising simple mapping techniques such as town location, proportional circles, and contouring, it is possible to determine areas of the UK which provided more emigrants than others. However, by determining which towns provided an above-average percentage of their population to NSW immigration during 1849 the data is further reduced to six distinct clusters: the Scottish Highlands and the county of Fife; the towns at either end of Loch Derg in central Ireland; and Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, and the West Country of England. Helping focus attention to these regions, further research reveals that these are areas of major socio-economic distress. This was especially so for the Dorsetshire towns of Child Okeford and Stourpaine, which provided well above the UK average of inhabitants wanting to migrate to NSW. The scale of emigration from these towns suggests that rather than being emigrants, those leaving were refugees. The presentation will test this hypothesis.

Completing a Geology major at the University of NSW in 1981, Mario Vecchi spent the next forty-one years employed as a Geophysicist. During that time, he also completed further study in Palaeontology and Astronomy. However, in 2016 Mario's interests switched from the Sciences to Humanities, completing the Diploma of Family History at the University of Tasmania in early 2018. Inspired by his foray into the Humanities, Mario enrolled in a Master of Philosophy at the University of New England. However, realising there was more to his research on a group of Dorsetshire emigrants, he upgraded to a PhD at the end of 2019. Mario hopes to have completed his thesis, titled 'Dorsetshire Refugees, not Immigrants. The Blandford Branch of the Colonisation Society and the 1849 Voyage of the Emigrant' by mid-2024.

mvecchi@myune.edu.au

**Bianka Vidonja Balanzategui**

*James Cook University*

**'Not many free colour folks lef'round here': Uncomfortable 'home truths' in the sugar country narratives of John Naish**

John Naish, Welsh author and playwright did not shy away from uncomfortable 'home truths', rather he scathingly condemned Indigenous-white relationships, highlighting the institutionalized post-colonial legacy of disadvantage and dependence resulting from the enforcement of the protection system. This was a legacy that spilled over into the Queensland cane fields where, as a £10 Pom immigrant, Naish laboured as a cane cutter in the 1950s and 1960s. Post-World War 2 immigrants directed to the dirty, labour-intensive work that Anglo-Australians avoided in the post-war boom of over-full employment invariably encountered people of colour. In the cane fields of north Queensland Naish was uniquely placed to write of the tensions he observed of a multi-racial society and the selective amnesia which blinkered most Anglo-Australians to the means used to displace the First Nations people and subjugate them to ongoing surveillance and control. Naish was ahead of his time in his appreciation of the reality of Indigenous dispossession writing sensitively giving his Indigenous characters subversive power that challenged the white characters' assumption of rights. He also wrote realistically, replicating racially charged language with an awareness of its implications and political and destructive nature. Naish's scathing condemnation of Indigenous-white relationships, his truth telling, makes uncomfortable reading even today for its prescience of the intergenerational injustices perpetuated by displacement and the protection system.

Dr Bianka Vidonja Balanzategui is an adjunct lecturer in History at James Cook University. She is an active researcher in global sugar industry and Australian migration history. Bianka's honours thesis published as *Gentlemen of the Flashing Blade* originated from her personal and academic interest in the history of labour in the Australian sugar industry in the context of post-World War 2 displaced persons migration. Her masters thesis extended on this interest in the Australia sugar industry, with the subject being the material culture of the Queensland sugar industry. Her PhD thesis *Small sugar farmer agency in the tropics 1872 -1914 and the anomalous Herbert River Farmers' Association* examined Australian sugar farmer associational behaviour locating it in its global context. Bianka's current research interest extends the examination of fictional sugar industry literature, precursed in *Gentlemen of the Flashing Blade*. Currently she is researching Welsh born John Naish, author and playwright.

[bianka.vidonjabalanzategui@jcu.edu.au](mailto:bianka.vidonjabalanzategui@jcu.edu.au)

**Hannah Viney**

*Independent Scholar*

**Was she 'co-operative' or could she 'play dumb very well'? Finding the truth between ASIO files and oral histories**

In Brisbane 1963, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) enlisted the help of the Queensland Special Police to find the individuals responsible for the publication and distribution of a 'seditious' anti-nuclear pamphlet. During the extensive man-(and typewriter-)hunt, secretary of the Brisbane Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Janet D'Urso was interviewed three times by ASIO officers. In official reports of the investigation, D'Urso was said to have been 'co-operative' and 'readily gave details' to the investigating officers. Fifty-six years later, Janet D'Urso recounted this same event to me unprompted in an oral history interview for my PhD thesis. In her more recent account, Janet was not cooperative but subversive. She described an active effort to mislead the investigators by embodying a particular image of fragile femininity, leaning into the fact that at the time of the interviews, she was five months pregnant and sick with the flu. As they sat around her dining room table, Janet did her best to look 'at my dumbest and most innocent', well aware that she 'could play dumb very well'. With two wildly contrasting accounts of the same incident, neither of which can be proven or disproven, where does the truth lie? In this paper, I use women's anti-nuclear campaigning of the mid-twentieth-century as a platform to explore these issues. I argue that finding the truth of such accounts is less important than the opportunity they provide to consider how subjective truths are intertwined with identity construction and the creation of historical narratives.

I am a consulting historian with a focus on Australian twentieth-century history. My current research explores women's anti-nuclear activism between 1945 and 1965 to both investigate women's political history between WWII and the Women's Liberation Movement and to understand more about women's experiences of the Cold War in Australia.

[hannahgviney@gmail.com](mailto:hannahgviney@gmail.com)

**Shveta Vyas Pare**  
*Flinders University*

### **Turning Decolonial Truths into Historical Falsehoods: The Peculiar Distortions of Indian Islamophobia**

In this paper I would like to examine what has become a popular, 'commonsensical' truth: that the Mughals colonised India and that therefore any action erasing the traces of their presence in India is decolonial in nature. I would argue that this narrative construction of the Mughal as colonial is false and relies on an ahistorical conflation of colonialism and empire. It disregards and/or minimises the specific racism underlying British colonialism, as well as the active role played by the British in the construction of religious identities in the Indian subcontinent in the nineteenth-century. Precolonial religious identities and feudal loyalties were configured differently, with a variety of continuities existing among them. To give one example, feudal loyalty of the Rajputs was not always aligned along kinship lines, and a Rajput who allied with Mughals would not see it as a betrayal of religious faith, in the manner in which it was later understood to be. Moreover, these false histories speak directly to, and fan, present-day Islamophobia. Even as decolonial theories help people in the global South understand, contextualise and theorise the continuities of coloniality, in India decolonial theory has been appropriated by the Right-Wing. Indian thinkers who call themselves decolonial use the theory to claim liberation from Muslim conquerors who were not colonial, in order to demonise the Muslim citizens of the present. A discourse that is implicated in formulating uncomfortable but necessary truths around the world is thereby made complicit in oppressive practices, and popular history gets further away from truth. In Indian historical circles, truth-telling has become fraught for historians even as truth-claims abound.

shveta.vyaspare@flinders.edu.au

**Claire Waddell-Wood**

*La Trobe University*

### **Bureaucratic and Scientific Masculinities: The Post-War Gender Constructions of Forests Commission Victoria Workers**

In the post-war years, the forests of southeast Victoria were simultaneously recovering from the 1939 Black Friday fires and experiencing intensified logging operations. The Forests Commission Victoria were the main government body who controlled and managed much of Victoria's treed landscapes at this time. The ecological conditions of this period, coupled with the escalating resource demands of the Great Acceleration, necessitated greater levels of forestry management. The post-war organisational, technological, and scientific changes to the industry moulded how foresters came to know forest ecosystems through their profession, and concurrently shaped those workers' constructions of masculine identity. This paper will track how the construction of masculinity in forestry work transformed as the timber industry underwent great changes between 1946–1964. Characteristic of the post-war period, the overlapping traits of hegemonic masculinity and modernity were applied to an increasingly bureaucratic, scientific, and spatially alienated work context. Forests Commission workers bolstered their rational, objective, and authoritative masculine traits through their post-war extractive work, demonstrated through forester's discussions on forestry science, technology, and policy. Therefore, the post-war masculinities of forestry workers were implicated in the ongoing degradation of forest ecosystems in southeast Victoria. Untangling how masculinities are woven into extractive work can potentially reveal solutions to contemporary socio-ecological crises in Victoria's forests.

Claire Waddell-Wood is a graduate researcher at La Trobe University on Wurundjeri Country. Her research investigates settler-colonial relations with colonised landscapes—encompassing topics of extraction, activism, and more-than-human worlds. Claire's thesis examined the dual social construction of forest spaces and masculine identities of timber industry authorities in southeast Victoria, Australia, following the Black Friday fires of 1939. Claire is also interested in histories of environmental activism, having published on the role of emotions in women's protest to save Lake Pedder in lutruwita/Tasmania.

c.waddell-wood@latrobe.edu.au

**Ben Wadham**

*Flinders University*

### **New ways of understanding veteran suicide**

In 2022, after significant community pressure, the Coalition government authorised the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (DVSRC). The DVSRC has assessed veteran suicides since 1997 to the present. This presentation discusses a recent successful ARC Discovery project investigating the social and historical dimensions of veteran suicide in Australia. The project investigates veteran suicide from 1914 until the present. The research design uses microhistories from 1914–1975 and life history interviews from the Vietnam War to the present using a sociological autopsy methodology. The aim is to describe the complementarity of micro histories with life history interviews which both include the collection of significant documentary evidence, either from the interview participants or repatriation files. This approach outlines the value in multi-disciplinary collaboration between sociologists and historians demonstrating how both distinct fields can inform and deepen our work on veteran suicide.

Prof. Ben Wadham is the Director of Open Door: Understanding and Supporting Service Personnel and their Families. He is a veteran and a sociologist of the military culture and veteran and family health and wellbeing. Prof. Wadham is the co-author of *Warrior, Soldier Brigand: Institutional Abuse in the Australian Defence Force* (MUP, 2024) and *What Does a White Man Want: White Australian Masculinities and Aboriginal Reconciliation* (2007). In the last decade he has researched and published on veteran transition, veteran higher education, scandals and military institutional abuse, female veteran transition, veteran suicide, and civil military relations in Australia. Prof. Wadham is the vice president of the Defence force Welfare Association in South Australia.

ben.wadham@flinders.edu.au

**Jacinta Walsh**

*Monash University*

### **The Voices of Aboriginal Families: Writing for Self-Love, Justice & Reconciliation**

The organising committee of this conference have asserted: "The search for truth and the dispelling of lies sits at the heart of popular understandings of the task of the historian." In 2023 our Nation violently and publicly debated the rights of First Nations families to have a constitutionally recognised Voice to Parliament. In this process, politics and lies took hold and the voices of Aboriginal families were lost. The people overwhelmingly said NO. Now more than ever, the historian "as offering necessary complexity to the process of uncovering truth", needs to consider how we can do better to give official recognition and public voice to Aboriginal families and communities AND bring "Home Truths" about Australia's past and present into the homes of everyday Australians. There are over 22,000 Aboriginal children in the out-of-home-care system currently and this number is on the rise. Indigenous families are paying the ultimate price for a Country in divide. It is important that we as historians, do better for these children, their families, and our collective futures. In this paper Jacinta will show how life story research and writing, undertaken critically and compassionately, can bring self-awareness, self-love, and empathy for others into our own homes and be a catalyst for this meaningful change. Through life story research and writing we can make the world a better place.

Jacinta is a PhD Candidate, Researcher with the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre and a member on the Victorian Stolen Generations Reparations Package Steering Committee. Jacinta is a Jaru Yawuru women with Irish heritage and proud mother to three young men. As an adoptee, in 1998, Jacinta approached Link-Up and began a lifetime journey of Family reunification. With care and compassion, in collaboration with her Family in Western Australia, Jacinta is sharing the Life Story of her Great Grandmother Mabel Ita Eatts, née Frederick (1907-1990). Jacinta's PhD thesis echoes the voices of many First Nations Families who have and continue to look deeply into living memory, Country, the archives, and the scholarship of others, to remember their ancestral lineage and love for themselves. Jacinta advocates for First Nations Family standpoints inside of the Academy, their access to archives, and intergeneration truth-telling, reconciliation, and healing through Life Story Research and Writing. Jacinta is the co-author of numerous publications relating to Aboriginal children and youth leaving out-of-home-care (AIFS, 2023; JCS, 2021; CYSR, 2020; Monash, 2020; Lens, 2020; The Conversation, 2020), with Professor Lynette Russell, she is the co-author of "Yarning with the Archives" (The Routledge Handbook of Australian Indigenous Peoples and Futures, 2023) and the sole author of "Married to a 'British Subject'" (Australian Journal of Politics & History).

[jacinta.walsh@monash.edu](mailto:jacinta.walsh@monash.edu)

**Elizabeth Walsh**

*University of Tasmania*

### **Local truths: Using digital mapping to write a new local history**

In the twentieth-century, local histories of rural and remote Australia were mainly written by well-intentioned amateur historians. Today these often formulaic offerings still grace the shelves of many public and private libraries across Australia. Written for an audience looking for nostalgic origin stories, tales of stalwart 'pioneers' and accounts of historic achievements, these local histories often omitted the traditionally silent, including First Nations people, women, and non-European migrant groups. Once written, these histories became the 'authoritative' source of historical information about a particular place, and many remain so today. It is time, however, to take another look at writing local histories. My research on settler women of the northern Flinders Ranges, the traditional lands of the Adnyamathanha people, looks at presenting an alternative version of local history, which both builds on and challenges existing histories. My research examines the, predominantly British, settlement of the Flinders Ranges from a female perspective, and it investigates how digital technologies can be used to construct a history of women that has remained unwritten for over one hundred and seventy years. Using a Geographic Information System, my research situates settler women in the local landscape, a place where their presence was previously obscured by nineteenth-century cultural norms, androcentric record-keeping and twentieth-century historical bias. Finally, the research explores novel ways to present local history to an online audience by giving voice to the stories of nineteenth-century rural settler women using GIS and online storytelling.

Elizabeth Walsh is a third-year PhD candidate in History at the University of Tasmania. Over the last thirty years, Elizabeth has studied externally at several Australian universities completing her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Aboriginal Studies at UniSA in 2003 and her Master of Education (Leadership and Management) at Flinders University in 2017. Her interest in Geographic Information Systems began in the 1990s when she used an early version of ArcMap to map historical references relating to the Narungga peoples of the Yorke Peninsula. Elizabeth's current research uses GIS technology both to situate nineteenth-century settler women in the landscape of the northern Flinders Ranges and to develop ways to tell their stories to an online audience.

en.walsh@utas.edu.au



**James Watson**

*Australian National University*

### **Fibro Home Truths: On Contested Asbestos Histories in Australia**

In the decades of the post-war economic boom, Australia was the highest per-capita consumer of asbestos in the world, peaking in 1975. This mass consumption produced a mass epidemic, with Australians now suffering one of the highest rates of mesothelioma. By necessity, Australians have not lacked their asbestos historians – including Lenore Layman, Jock McCulloch, Humphrey McQueen, and Gideon Haigh – who have historicised the material and ideological conditions of this industrial epidemic. But while there is a rough consensus on the causes of this crisis, there are still disagreements on which parts of Australian society constitute its 'victims.' Early asbestos historians saw asbestos workers (such as Wittenoom miners and James Hardie factory workers) as the primary victims, and understood their deaths as a product of capital and the state's exploitation of labour. A new wave of asbestos historiography has reframed Australia's asbestos past as a middle-class tragedy, emphasising asbestos' disruption of suburban domesticity and privacy. But do we lose something of the truth in this epidemic when we strip it of class and power, and we rewrite it in middle-class terms? Engaging with Australian asbestos historiography published since the 1980s, this paper thinks through the politics of the 'victim' in histories of capitalism and disease in Australia.

James Watson is a PhD candidate at the ANU's School of History, where he is writing a social history of the use of asbestos in Australia.

James.Watson3@anu.edu.au

**Amy Way**  
*Griffith University*

### **Doing 'Deep History' in Australia: Conflicting concepts in an empire of time?**

This presentation reflects on some of my recent fieldwork in Carnarvon Gorge, QLD, with Bidjara Elders Uncle Fred Conway and Prof. Jackie Huggins. It explores understandings of 'deep history' as both an emerging academic discipline and the embodied, living history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' enduring connection to Country. How is deep time expressed and understood in Carnarvon Gorge? What really is deep history? Does it mean something different in the Australian context than elsewhere in the world? Can historians actually do deep history, in partnership with Indigenous Australians? Or are our explorations of deep history yet another example of the settler-colonial appropriation of First Nation histories, cultures and knowledges? This paper touches on the complex intellectual history of 'deep time' in Australia and offers reflections on the inherent challenges of teaching and understanding 'deep history' in a settler-colonial present.

Dr Amy Way is a Lecturer in History with expertise in Australian history, Aboriginal history, and intellectual history. She specialises in the history of human antiquity and deep time in Australia. Amy is a Collaborating Scholar with the Research Centre for Deep History at the Australian National University, Canberra, and a Visiting Fellow with the New Earth Histories Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, Sydney.

[a.way@griffith.edu.au](mailto:a.way@griffith.edu.au)

**Amanda Wells**

*University of Newcastle*

### **Citrus Queens: Selling Produce, Place, and Gender in 1950s and 1960s Riverland Communities**

In the 1950s and 1960s, communities in the Riverland region of South Australia held several annual competitions to crown Citrus Queens. Drawing on well-established traditions of rural beauty pageants from across Australia, Citrus Queen competitions were unique in their emphasis and celebration of the central primary produce of their region: Riverland citrus. The events saw successful candidates commenced a year of official duties which, depending on the specific competition and its sponsors, involved being the 'face' of Riverland citrus in their town, region, state, and nation. This paper examines the performance of gender and national or ethnic identities by candidates and winners of Citrus Queen competitions, in context of a particular commodity which came with established sets of gendered and emplaced meanings. While Citrus Queen participants drew upon established aesthetics and meanings to do with femininity, environment, and health, the socio-cultural context of the 1950s and 1960s influenced how Citrus Queens were understood, and how they performed their role in promoting produce and region.

Amanda Wells is a PhD candidate at the University of Newcastle, researching the environmental and more-than-human history of citrus growing in the Riverland region of South Australia between 1948 and 1970. Amanda is on the general committee of the History Council of South Australia, 2022–2023 South Australian History Fund Grant Recipient, 2022 Jack Cross Fellow (FSAA), and 2022 Historical Society of South Australia Fellow. She also serves as the HDR Representative for the Australian and Aotearoa NZ Environmental History Network, seeking to encourage and connect emerging scholars of environmental history and environmental humanities. Amanda is based in the Barossa Valley in South Australia, living and working on unceded Ngadjuri Country.

amanda.wells10@uon.edu.au

**Kay Whitehead**

*Flinders University*

### **Disqualifying Torres Strait Islander teachers from the profession**

In 1977, John Budby, an Aboriginal advisory teacher in the Queensland education department, offered some rare historical 'home truths' regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers: 'In Queensland, some people have had up to twenty or thirty years as either a teacher and/or teacher aide. When the missions and the Department of Native Affairs were in charge of the community, Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander] people actually taught. Teachers unions [along with state education departments and teachers colleges] have made it impossible for this to continue. Only qualified teachers are permitted in front of classrooms ...The chances of ever becoming recognised as a teacher are quickly fading away.' This presentation focuses on Torres Strait Islander teachers from the late nineteenth century until their schools were eventually taken over by the Queensland education department. I provide a brief history of the 'Torres Strait Teaching Service' (1890s - 1960s) and then I explore the ways in which Torres Strait Islander 'community' teachers were gradually disqualified from the profession, paradoxically at the same time that specific teacher education programs for Indigenous teachers were being introduced! From 1985, the Torres Strait Island schools were taken over by qualified white state school teachers. In essence, highly-regarded, multilingual Torres Strait Islander teachers were excluded from the profession by a range of measures, most notably the core requirement for training and qualification being standard English.

Kay Whitehead is an Emeritus Professor at Flinders University. Her historical research focuses on teachers. She is currently writing a history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers.

kaywhitehead88@gmail.com

**Roger Wilkinson**

### **Accretions of History: A short history of the aortic valve**

The modern mind tends to accept the present with little or no thought of how it arrived at the present. As the medical historian, John Callahan pointed out, 'We are the products of the accretions of history, but even the best of us have only a superficial knowledge of how large the foundation really is.' This is as true in Medicine as in other disciplines. This lecture briefly outlines the pathway from the initial discovery of the cardiac valves to the present modalities of treatment for problems specifically of the aortic valve. It is not a clinical paper of symptoms, signs and results of treatment. Rather, it is a miscellany of how an understanding of the valve, its functioning and types of treatment, have come about from Hippocrates through Leonardo da Vinci to Harken's first artificial valve replacement in 1960 and Cribier's first demonstration of the transcatheter aortic valve implantation procedure (TAVI) in 2002.

Roger Wilkinson is a retired cardiologist. His biography on the life and times of his great uncle, Dr John Francis Wilkinson, - 'The Myth of Uncle John' - was published by HistorySmiths in July 2023. Wilkinson was a prominent physician in Melbourne in the first 30 years of the 20th Century and was largely responsible for the early introduction of 'Insulin' into Australia for the treatment of diabetes. Roger has a Master's degree in History from the University of New England, Armidale, NSW. He has written and presented extensively on the history of doctors in all Antarctic expeditions from Cook to Mawson, on several aspects of his own discipline and on social history topics in country Australia in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, both nationally and internationally. He was awarded an AM in 2019 and received the prestigious, Kempson-Maddox Award from the National Heart Foundation of Australia that same year.

roger@buckwellmanor.com.au

**Anna Wilkinson**  
*Deakin University*

**'A love story that would have inspired immortal Shakespeare': Asian Australian war bride marriages during the Vietnam War**

After the Second World War, Asian war brides became one of the few official exceptions to the White Australia Policy. The arrival of Japanese war brides in 1952 has been characterised as a symbol of reconciliation: a pivotal turning point in Australia's immigration policy as well as a reunion between Japan and the Allied Powers after the Pacific War. Although Australia continued to engage militarily within the region, little is known about subsequent Asian Australian war bride marriages including over 100 couples who met during the war in Vietnam. Using a microhistorical approach, this paper will present a biographical analysis of one Vietnamese–Australian couple who met in 1969, married the following October and returned to Australia in the early 1970s. By combining oral testimony with official documentation, the paper will bring attention to these little-known marriages and their impact on Australian society during a time of rapid change. It will also address the difficulties of finding Asian women in the archive and the effect this has had on understanding our past. This paper posits that Asian war bride marriages are an important framework that can assist with understanding Asian–Australian relations in post-war regional engagement and challenges the masculine discourse surrounding wartime histories. These intercultural marriages contribute to emerging Asian Australian histories between the end of the Second World War and the end of the White Australia Policy. These histories – spearheaded by the immigration of women – will add to the richness of our country's complicated past.

Anna Wilkinson (she/her) is a PhD student at Deakin University. She is the granddaughter of a Japanese war bride and, wanting to discover more about her Eurasian background, began her doctorate in Asian–Australian History at the beginning of 2022. Her thesis focuses on the larger history of Asian war bride marriages between 1945 to 1975. She is currently examining the meeting and marriage of Japanese, Malayan and Vietnamese women to Australian servicemen, and their subsequent migration to Australia. Utilising an 'Asian war bride' framework, Anna hopes to contribute to the discourse of Australian history in the immediate post-war period, which is too often characterised by a distinct lack of Asian–Australian history and identity.

[a.wilkinson@deakin.edu.au](mailto:a.wilkinson@deakin.edu.au)

**Kasia Williams**

*Australian National University*

### **Between silence and memory: Commemorative activities of Polish Siberian exiles in Australia**

The “Soviet story” has been largely missing from public narratives and understanding of World War II and its aftermath in Australia. This is in spite of Australia being the home to many survivors of the Stalinist repressions and their descendants. Exact numbers of the gulag survivors finding their home in Australia are unknown as this was not a coherent group and came through different routes. However, those who did come together – such as displaced persons of Polish descent who in 1950 came to Fremantle from refugee camps in East Africa aboard the ship General WC Langfitt – or those who found each other in Australia’s migration camps, formed a tight-knit groups connected by their shared experiences of war, exile and displacement. From the early days of their life in Australia, they worked together on preserving language and culture, established cultural clubs, sport teams and churches. The acts of remembering and dealing with their shared memory came later and with various challenges. This paper examines commemorative activities and acts of remembrance of Polish Siberian exiles in Australia, assesses collaborations between Eastern European diasporas in memory building, and reflects more broadly on the role of a diaspora in (re)shaping public remembrance.

Dr Kasia Williams is deputy director at the ANU Centre for European Studies. Her research focuses on migrant and diaspora cultures, particularly life narratives, transfer of memory between generations and communities, mediation of memory and constructions of the self within the contexts of migration, displacement and transcultural belonging.

[kasia.williams@anu.edu.au](mailto:kasia.williams@anu.edu.au)

**Ian Willis**

*Independent Scholar*

### **The convalescent soldier and the British Red Cross on New South Wales wartime home front in the First World War**

The sick and wounded soldier was the central actor in the performance of Red Cross care during the First World War. This paper uses Jeffrey Reznick's 'culture of caregiving' in his book *Healing the Nation* to examine the role of the British Red Cross in New South Wales in the convalescent stage in the lines of communications in the early months of the war. The Australian military medical response in this period of the war mirrored many of the events in Great Britain, as did the response of the British Red Cross in New South Wales. This paper will follow these early events and the Red Cross's groundbreaking role in convalescence in the military medical war machine on the New South Wales wartime home front.

Dr Ian Willis has been an honorary fellow at the University of Wollongong and completed his PhD in Australian History at Wollongong in 2004. He has awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his service to community history in 2019. His general area of research is centred on local studies in and around the Macarthur region of New South Wales, with works published in popular media to peer-reviewed journals. Dr Willis currently has several continuing research projects based on this regional area.

iwillis804@gmail.com



**Nadine Wilson**

*University of Newcastle*

**Worimi, 'hearts', water and fire: The environmental and cultural devastation of a million meters of timber in Sydney's Garden Palace, 1879–82**

From 1873 the Hudson Brothers operated a timber mill in Worimi Country in the Bungwahl/Myall Lakes region of the lower Mid North Coast of New South Wales. This company extracted vast quantities of hardwood trees from Bungwahl forests surrounding a place settlers called Neranie. The milling process removed the heart-wood centres of thousands of hardwood trees. The mill company used these 'hearts' to construct the break-wall called Hearts Point that permitted cargo boats to land and load. The Hudson Brothers used the waterways of the lakes to transport timber to nearby Port Stephens for shipping to the company-owned a wharf in Sydney. In 1879 the Hudson Brothers won a government contract to build Sydney's Garden Palace to host the colony's first International Exhibition in 1879–1880. This construction required a million metres of timber. By 1881, the Hudson Brothers' mill at Neranie employed 350 colonists, likely including a significant number of Worimi men. In 1882 the Garden Palace burnt to the ground. The blaze destroyed a famed Ethnological Court collection containing a significant number of First Nations' artefacts, including items belonging to the Worimi Nation. Using a range of primary sources this paper argues that the construction and destruction of the Garden Palace and the ethnological collection impacted Worimi peoples and Country. The 1882 fire destroyed plant and animal habitat that Worimi had sustained for millennia as well as technologies connected with management of Country and culture. At Neranie today the tree 'waste' that settlers discarded at Hearts Point are ghostly aquatic remains of tragic devastation.

Nadine Wilson is undertaking a PhD at the University of Newcastle. Her project is titled *A Gendered Bioregional History of Myall Lakes/Worimi Country, New South Wales: Place and peoples from deep time to the mid-twentieth century*. In 2023 Nadine received the History Council of NSW First Nations History Prize for her paper *Rebecca 'Becky' Johnston: A Worimi woman in colonial New South Wales, 1858 to 1938*.

nadine.wilson@uon.edu.au

**Josh Woodward**

*Australian National University*

### **Women, Water and Wonder, The Great Barrier Reef in 1960s National Advertising**

This paper deals with the imagery and symbols promoters used to market the Great Barrier Reef between 1958 and 1970. Drawing on archival material and promotional ephemera, it details the Australian National Travel Association's and its successor, the Australian Tourist Commission's (established 1967) attempts to market the Reef as one of the nation's foremost travel destinations. Advertising texts for the Great Barrier Reef contain important insights into the commercialisation of Australian nature during the rise of mass-tourism. But the changing vision of the Reef during the 1960s was also broadly representative of Australia at time of significant transition in social and cultural values, and through each poster and photograph, I argue that we can trace the cultural shift from the conservatism of the Menzies era toward the more liberal, open-minded zeitgeist that came after. Historians of the Reef in the 1960s have tended to focus on narratives around the environmentalist 'Save the Reef' campaign. I argue in this paper that advertising images for the Reef contain important insights into the evolving environmental consciousness of the mainstream population and may have assisted the groundswell of popular support for establishing the Great Barrier Reef as a marine park in the 1970s.

Josh Woodward is an Australian environmental historian whose research explores representations of nature in tourist advertising. He has published articles on the tourist promotion of Australian national parks and their emergence as important sites of the settler-nation. He completed his Master's at the University of Western Australia, where he was the 2019 recipient of the Frank Broeze scholarship for academic achievement. Josh will complete his PhD on twentieth century Australian tourist advertising at the Australian National University in 2025.

josh.r.woody@gmail.com

**Angela Woollacott**  
*Australian National University*

**Jessie Street and her international allies stand up to Eleanor Roosevelt: Fighting for women to be in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948**

Jessie Street was the only woman on the Australian delegation to the 1945 San Francisco conference that met to plan the United Nations, culminating with all the nations represented signing its new Charter. As a long-standing feminist and prominent internationalist, Street worked actively with women from other delegations, such as Bertha Lutz of Brazil, to ensure that the phrase 'the equal rights of men and women' was inserted into the preamble of the United Nations Charter. In 1947 Street was appointed as the Australian delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women, of which she was then elected 'vice-chairman'. On that body, Street again worked with women from other nations to include women's rights in the draft Declaration of Human Rights. They fought successfully to have the word 'sex' included in the statement that respect for human rights was to be without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. But to do so they had to stand up to Eleanor Roosevelt, a powerful advocate of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, who opposed women being mentioned specifically. As Street noted twice in her autobiography: Eleanor Roosevelt was not a feminist. This paper uses correspondence from Jessie Street's collection at the NLA to investigate the, ultimately successful, feminist collaboration among delegates in 1948. Both in 1945 and 1948, these victories for global feminism--with continuing influence now--were only achieved thanks to the dedicated cross-cultural collaboration and negotiating skills of a handful of feminists from a variety of countries, including Denmark, Byelorussia, France and Chile.

Angela Woollacott is the Manning Clark Professor of History at the Australian National University. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and a former president of the Australian Historical Association. Her most recent monograph is *Don Dunstan: The visionary politician who changed Australia* (Allen & Unwin, 2019), and her most recent book is *Michelle Arrow and Angela Woollacott (eds.), How the Personal became Political: The Feminist and Sexual Revolutions in 1970s Australia* (Routledge, 2020). She currently holds an Australian Research Council Discovery grant 2023-25 for the project on which this paper is based.

angela.woollacott@anu.edu.au

Daozhi Xu  
*Macquarie University*

### **Indigenous-Chinese relationships in Chinese Australian newspapers, 1894–1937**

Research on Indigenous encounters with other peoples will continue to be a critical focus of Indigenous Studies. Since the early 1980s, scholars have given attention to the history of contact between Indigenous Australians and Chinese migrants. Indigenous-Chinese relationships furnish a significant body of knowledge, the importance of which remains not self-evident for many Chinese in Australia who have little experience with Indigenous people and their cultures. By drawing on the Chinese-language newspapers published in Australia between 1894 and 1937, this paper attempts to address how relationships with Indigenous Australians will help re-define the ways in which we understand early Chinese migrants at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This paper is concerned with these questions: Were the Chinese colonised or colonisers, sojourners or settlers, victims or perpetrators of racism, or simultaneously all of these? Most scholarship to date, with exceptions, considers the identity of Chinese migrants in the context of the relationships between the Chinese and European settler society, and rarely through the lens of their relationships with Indigenous people. This paper will use early Chinese Australian newspapers to explicate Chinese complicity in the process of colonisation and Indigenous dispossession, and to illustrate the contested and at times misplaced Chinese position in Australia's entangled race relations. It will argue that these news reports, albeit isolated and sporadic, open up a critical view of Chinese diasporic identity at the turn of the twentieth century which remains obscured within a binary Chinese-European framework.

Dr Daozhi Xu is currently an ARC DECRA fellow in the Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language, and Literature at Macquarie University. She completed her PhD at the University of Hong Kong where she is an adjunct Assistant Professor. Her research interests include postcolonial studies, Indigenous studies, Chinese Australian history, children's literature, race and ethnicity, and settler colonialism. She is the author of *Indigenous Cultural Capital: Postcolonial Narratives in Australian Children's Literature* (2018). She has published in *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *Australian Historical Studies*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Journal of Australian Studies*, *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, *JASAL*, *Antipodes*, etc. She is a member of the Centre for Global Indigenous Futures at Macquarie University, and a member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. She has served as secretary of the International Australian Studies Association since 2021.

daozi.xu@mq.edu.au

**Neville Yeomans**

*University of Melbourne and Whitlam Institute at WSU*

### **Secretive or Over-Cautious? The redactions in the Palace Letters to Sir William Deane**

Following Jenny Hocking's successful 2020 action in the High Court of Australia against the National Archives of Australia (NAA), the NAA digitised and made publicly available the correspondence between Buckingham Palace and six Australian Governors-General from Lord Casey to Sir William Deane. However, except in the correspondence to and from Sir John Kerr, the archives made many redactions of text. The largest number of redactions can be found in the correspondence from the Palace to William Deane, with a peak in those written in the twelve months between July 1997 and June 1998. I applied in January 2023 to the NAA for an internal review of the redacted folios in the two volumes of the Deane files. In May, the archives responded by releasing 16 folios in Deane volume 1 (AA14512: 'The Governor-General's periodic confidential reports to The Queen [Sir William Deane ... Palace Letters]') This presentation will analyse the now released folios and test the appropriateness of the original redactions against the wording of s. 33(1)(j) of the Archives Act 1983 No. 70 [Cth], which the NAA had invoked. I argue that the now revealed text in the Palace correspondence indicates that the NAA was unnecessarily secretive or cautious in making those decisions.

Neville Yeomans AM is Professor Emeritus at both Western Sydney University and the University of Melbourne. Originally a gastroenterologist, with research interests in how the stomach protects itself from acid and drugs, he was Foundation Dean of the medical school at Western Sydney from 2004 to 2009. The Order of Australia (AM) was awarded for 'services to tertiary education, research, and clinical medicine.' Recently, he has retrained as a historian at the University of Melbourne, with one focus on the history of medical migration.

nyeomans@unimelb.edu.au

**Neville Yeomans**

*University of Melbourne*

### **Home truths about Australia's treatment of refugee and other immigrant doctors, 1930–70**

For long periods of Australia's post-colonial history, immigrant medical practitioners who were not trained in Britain or Ireland were actively discriminated against – via sometimes xenophobic medical Acts, and the local medical practitioners. One particular period that will be discussed was that circa WWII. In the lead-up to the war, many Jewish refugees escaped the coming holocaust, but those who arrived in Australia had numerous obstacles placed in their way – some motivated by anti-semitism, others by medical protectionism. In the years soon after the war, a second wave of medical refugees arrived, many from Eastern Europe, who were resettled in Australia through the agency of the United Nations' International Refugee Organization, created in 1947. They too faced large barriers created by the local medical profession and its Medical Boards and Acts – often working in menial positions for extended periods while they tried to have their credentials registered. A further group of immigrant doctors was given limited registration in New South Wales under an amendment to the Medical Practitioners Act 1938 (NSW), to fill areas of unmet medical need. At the end of their period of service, none managed to achieve general registration in that state. Some of the illustrative journeys of these doctors will be presented and analysed.

Neville Yeomans trained in clinical and academic medicine and practised in both for many years – in internal medicine, gastroenterology and gastrointestinal basic science. In 2004, he started the Western Sydney medical school as Foundation Dean. On return to Melbourne in 2009, he retrained in the humanities with an honours Arts degree at University of Melbourne (history major, linguistics minor), followed by a PhD in history at the same institution, supervised by the late Stuart Macintyre AO, titled: "A History of Australia's Immigrant Doctors, 1839–2021: Colonial Beginnings, Contemporary Challenges."

nyeomans@unimelb.edu.au

**Renzhe Zhang**

*University of Wollongong*

### **Shaping of New and Old Cultures: Perspectives of the Chinese Diaspora in Australia**

The period from the 1910s to the 1930s witnessed the New Culture Movement in China, which was a succession of debates centred on vernacular Chinese, individual liberty from the family, women's emancipation, criticism on religion and superstition, and advocacy of democracy. The rise of nationalism in China and the White Australia Policy also led Chinese Australians to become more politically and ideologically aware, prompting discussions on these issues. The ideological disputes in the Chinese community revealed how Chinese–Australian leaders constructed their leadership with their diverse ideological stances in the community. We will discuss how their stances had shaped their involvement in these ideological discussions.

Renzhe Zhang is an honours graduate from the University of Queensland. He began his studies at the University of Queensland in 2014 with a major in modern history and minors in Chinese–English translation and the study of religion. In 2017 he graduated with Honours degree in the field of History. He is a current PhD candidate of the University of Wollongong and his research topic is about the influence of the New Culture Movement on the Chinese Diaspora in Australia from 1910s to 1930s.

rz949@uowmail.edu.au

**Hengguang Zhu**  
*University of Sydney*

## **From Myth to Truth: Western Perceptions of Chinese Walls in the Nineteenth Century**

China has a hierarchical system of walls, from the Great Wall to house enclosures, and especially the former had long existed in the Western imagination. When the West militarily, economically, and ideologically penetrated China in the nineteenth century, all Chinese walls were destined to face modernity. The first one was the Great Wall, which hadn't physically confronted the West as the latter came eastward via sea but was nevertheless envisioned as a barrier. China finally opened its door after the Opium War, symbolizing the breakthrough of the Great Wall, and then it reached the city walls. It found that there were thousands of walled cities standing internally, notably in some treaty ports, on the two sides of which the new and the old were in confrontation. Naturally, they were associated with civilizational division. With travel to China's inlands available, the existence of walls surrounding villages was gradually revealed. After that, a contour of hierarchical Chinese walls, 'China is a country of walls,' came into being. It is argued that walls, as a component of human 'signifying behavior', need interaction to be useful. In this regard, Western perceptions of Chinese walls developed over time and they were reinforced in relation to the shift of walls as material or imaginary borders or boundaries between the West and China. Though each one may have individual political and cultural implications, every sort of Chinese wall gradually inspired Westerners with the same images of China: backward, exclusive, and static.

I am an HDR student at the Department of History at the University of Sydney. My research interests lie in modern Chinese history, modern Asian history, and international history. My current project is focusing on the perceptions of Chinese walled space in global interactions, supported by the John Frazer Scholarship.

hzhu8040@uni.sydney.edu.au



**Bart Ziino**

*Deakin University*

### **Remembering the civilians' First World War in Australia**

In the effort to understand what shaped memories of the First World War, the civilian urge to affirm their experiences has not been especially prominent. In Australia, as elsewhere, the themes of civilians' war experiences suffered by comparison with the exploits and sacrifices at the battlefield. Indeed, civilians themselves were often responsible for subordinating their own experiences to those of soldiers, both during the war and as remembrance practices took firmer shape in its aftermath. Nevertheless, the keys to civilian experience of war were there. They included the difficulties of coping with the absences of family and friends, reorganised family responsibilities, working directly in support of the war, the debilitating fear and anxiety of waiting for news from the front, and the encounter with mass loss and bereavement in the community. Such experiences may have been subordinate, but this paper seeks to remind us that they constituted the war for civilians, and they still had their expressions during and after the war. Investigating civilian modes of remembering – not just through memorials but the persistence of wartime organisations and through informal events –exposes the quieter and more intimate ways in which Australians could recall their war in the decade after 1918.

Bart Ziino is Senior Lecturer in history at Deakin University. He has published widely on the politics of commemoration, private sentiment in Australia during the First World War, and most recently on children's experiences of the war. He is author of *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (UWA Press 2007), and editor of *Remembering the First World War* (Routledge, 2015).

bart.ziino@deakin.edu.au