OUR IDEAS LEAD THE WAY

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to introduce you to a sample of the extraordinary teaching and research being carried out in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney.

As a faculty, we are passionate about ideas. For 160 years, members of our faculty have been thinking, writing, and arguing about ideas and their consequences. Whether it is global poverty, chronic disease, climate change, civil war, social and economic reform, reconciliation - or the even the nature of freedom - lying beneath all the spin and froth of everyday debate are fundamental concepts and arguments that require rigorous analysis and careful reasoning. Universities have a special responsibility to bring together the best thinking across the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences to address the fundamental challenges our world faces. At the University of Sydney, we are committed to doing just that.

We are proud of the extensive range of subjects we are able to offer our students, which is unrivalled in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. We are also committed to linking our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching programs with our research ambitions.

In 2011, our faculty was relaunched as a genuinely comprehensive Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, with the addition of a new School of Economics, joining us from the Business School. We are excited about the new pathways and collaborations this development opens up for our students and researchers – cementing our distinctive position as one of the most comprehensive faculties of our kind in Australia.

I invite you to discover more about our faculty, the work we do, and how our ideas are helping to illuminate new pathways in research in the humanities and social sciences.

Professor Duncan Ivison
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
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Established in 1852, our faculty is the founding faculty of the University of Sydney and was the first Faculty of Arts in Australia. In 2011, with a new name and a renewed vision, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences continues its commitment to lead in research and to foster innovative teaching across the breadth of the humanities and social sciences. This commitment guides the daily work of the five schools, forty-eight departments, 9,339 students (including over 500 PhD candidates) and more than 400 academic staff that make up the faculty.

Our research agenda is driven by the pursuit of new knowledge that will be of social, cultural and economic benefit to Australia and the world. Our range of studies in the humanities and social sciences is one of the most comprehensive in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. This means we are able to offer our students and researchers unique opportunities for innovative research in both traditional and emerging disciplines. Our strength in European, American and Asian studies means we are particularly strong in comparative work, a vital capacity in our highly interconnected world.

We are also committed to collaborating with leading institutions around the world. Our research partners include premier institutions in Europe and North America, the Middle East, China and Southeast Asia. Complementing our research connections with leaders such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Harvard University, our students have the opportunity to go on exchange, and, for example, study International Relations at Georgetown University, or French at the Sorbonne; they can experience Hebrew studies in Tel Aviv, or study contemporary media in Seoul.
OUR RESEARCH

Our faculty is renowned for its research excellence, attracting leading researchers from around the world. We also have a strong track record in gaining prestigious external funding in support of our research.

In the Australian government’s most recent (2010) assessment of university research performance – *Excellence in Research in Australia* (ERA) – 98% of our fields of research were ranked at or above world standard, including some that were ranked at the very highest level (e.g., philosophy, historical studies, economic theory, literary studies, cultural studies, and the history and philosophy of science).

Between 2003 and 2009 we more than doubled our research income earned from highly competitive Australian Research Council (ARC) programs, the main source of research funding for humanities and social science research in Australia. Our performance in this scheme places us in the very top tier of faculties of our kind in Australia for ARC funding.

In 2010 we were awarded six ARC ‘Future Fellowships’ funded by the Australian Government and intended to support the next generation of research leaders in Australia. This represents almost a third of the total Future Fellowships awarded to the University of Sydney.

The Future Fellowships include Professor Alison Bashford (History) for her work on climate change and the history of environmental determinism; Professor Catherine Waldby (Sociology) for her work on the ethical dilemmas of human egg use in medical science and research; and Dr Adrian Hearn (Sociology) for his work on Chinese trade and aid in Latin America.

OUR PEOPLE

In addition to winning prestigious grants and fellowships, our researchers continue to push humanities and social science research in new and exciting directions.

In 2010, Professor Shane White (History), along with his colleagues Associate Professor Stephen Robertson and Professor Stephen Garton, received an ARC Discovery grant of over $700,000 for a project that focuses on digitally mapping and reconstructing the Harlem riots of 1935. This project fuses traditional archival research with ground-breaking digital techniques that will deliver an innovative and accessible tool for understanding the complex racial, cultural and economic dynamics of early twentieth century Harlem.

In 2009, our faculty was the first in Australia to receive a prestigious *Andrew W Mellon Foundation Grant* for a Sawyer Seminar on the Comparative Study of Cultures, which funded an interdisciplinary research program over 2009-2010 that brought together historians, philosophers and staff from the university museums – along with a wide range of Australian and international collaborators - to focus on the south pacific as an ‘antipodean laboratory’ of social, cultural and political ideas. This innovative research program highlighted the faculty’s ability to
attract prestigious external recognition of our interdisciplinary strengths in the humanities.

In 2009 the faculty received a major grant from the European Union to create a new program in human rights education and research – the Masters in Human Rights and Democratisation (Asia Pacific). This places the University of Sydney at the centre of a major consortium of universities delivering innovative human rights training and research across the Asia Pacific. This program builds on our emerging research strengths in the theory and practice of human rights and democratisation, as well as providing up to 30 scholarships a year for students from the region to study in the program. Students spend their first semester studying at the University of Sydney and then the second ‘in country’ at one of four partner institutions in South East Asia. (See Associate Professor Danielle Celermajer’s profile on p 26)

In 2010, as part of a strategy to harness our disciplinary depth and diversity, the faculty launched a new Collaborative Research Scheme, which brings together a wide range of colleagues from different areas into seven new interdisciplinary research groups, each tackling questions of major significance.

For example, the Environmental Humanities Group, led by Iain McCalman (History), with colleagues from Archaeology, English, Gender and Cultural Studies, Government and International Relations, Macleay Museum and Sociology and Social Policy, is examining the environmental dimensions of cultural and urban history, English literature, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, politics, gender and women’s studies. Our capacity to address successfully the environmental challenges of the twenty-first century will require more than just technological ingenuity. It will also require the skills and insights brought to bear by key disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, working alongside those of the natural sciences. Environmental humanities represents a set of new approaches to one of the great challenges of our time.

CURRENT RESEARCH STRENGTHS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
Archaeological research is carried out across a broad range of areas. Our current research strengths include the archaeology of Southeast Asia (especially Angkor Wat), North Asia, the Middle East and the classical world. (See Professor Roland Fletcher’s profile on p 6)

ART THEORY AND CRITICISM
The study of visual images pertains to the number of disciplines across the faculty and at Sydney College of the Arts. There is a strong research emphasis on Art History supported by the Power Institute for Art and Visual Culture in the areas of modern Asian art, European art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and theoretical approaches to global practices of artistic production.

CULTURAL STUDIES
In the interdisciplinary field of Cultural Studies particular research strengths include gender and sexuality studies, media and cultural studies, visual cultures, cultural history and everyday life studies. An example of some outstanding research in this field can be seen through Dr Melissa Gregg’s influential work on the social implications of online communication technologies.

ECONOMIC THEORY
The School of Economics joined the faculty in 2011 as part of the University’s strategic plan to
consolidate teaching and research in the social sciences. We have notable strengths in economic theory, with a focus on game theory and strategic behavior. The school is also highly regarded in the areas of macroeconomic theory, industrial organisation and policy, labour economics, health economics, behavioural and experimental economics, and housing. (See Professor Gary Barrett’s profile on p 24)

HISTORICAL STUDIES
The faculty specialises in a wide range of historical research, including ancient history and classical studies. Feature strengths are the history of ancient Greece and Rome, medieval studies, Renaissance and early modern studies, American history, Australian history, modern history and international history. In addition, the faculty excels in research and scholarship on the history and philosophy of specific fields - including early modern philosophy and the history of medicine and science, which extends into important collaborations with the Faculty of Science. (See Professor Shane White’s profile on p 34)

LITERARY STUDIES
Literary studies are carried out in a broad range of ancient and modern languages, and in European, Middle Eastern and Asian languages as well as English. Key strengths include medieval and early modern literary studies (including Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse), as well as nineteenth century and modern literary studies.

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS
Strengths in this field include the philosophy of science, metaphysics, logic, philosophy of mind, political philosophy, the history of philosophy (especially ancient and early modern philosophy), feminist philosophy and ethics. There are also important contributions in ethics and the history of philosophy from the Faculty of Science with whom we collaborate, especially through the Centre for the Foundations of Science.

POLITICAL SCIENCE
Political science has emerged as a research strength in recent years, especially in the areas of comparative politics, democratization, international relations (including security studies), Australian politics, political theory and public policy. The faculty also has related strengths in Chinese studies, human rights, migration studies, science and technology studies and sociological theory and identity.
It is difficult to grasp the overwhelming size of the Angkor Research Program currently being directed by Roland Fletcher, Professor of Theoretical and World Archaeology at the University of Sydney.

Including the massive 13-year, three-phase ARC funded Greater Angkor Project (GAP) and the 5-year Living with Heritage project, Professor Fletcher’s work in Cambodia has helped raise over $4.5 million, secured six major academic fellowships, and contributed to the awarding of ten PhDs – one of them in Finland.

But even more astonishing than these staggering facts and figures are the findings coming out of the extensive projects. GAP, now in its third phase, is beginning to establish strong links between the demise of one of the largest, low-density cities in the pre-industrial world, and the situation that modern cities are finding themselves in today.

“The significance of Angkor to modern cities is that the problems that Angkor faced are the same as the problems that our great cities are due to face,” said Professor Fletcher.

Utilising an international, collaborative approach, the project has pulled together information from a broad range of academic disciplines, including archaeology, geosciences, climatology, dendrochronology, and even the analysis of Chinese trade ceramics, to help create a picture of both the rise and fall of Greater Angkor.

Mapping the emergence and decline of the city has been made possible only through the efforts of a unique group of collaborators, drawing on knowledge from broad academic and national backgrounds. Institutions from around the world including APSARA - the Cambodian National Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap, the Ecole Française d’Extrême Orient, and researchers from the University of Hawaii, the National University of Singapore and students of the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, are participants in the broad-reaching project, as are organisations such as NASA and UNESCO.

The extensive interest areas represented by this wide-ranging group have been one of the hallmarks of the success for the project.

“The essence of collaboration is the concept of difference. Other people do things differently, know different things, and think about things differently. The purpose of working with them is to get a complementary difference. That’s the key,” said Professor Fletcher.

This theme of “complementary difference” carries through to other projects that are being conducted by the group such as the Living with Heritage project which collaborates with APSARA and with Godden Mackay Logan, an Australian heritage consultancy firm, to develop information resources for Angkor to document and manage different interests of the Cambodians who live in the Angkor region and the heritage landscape.

The project was a Geosciences-Archaeology collaboration and Professor Fletcher believes similar projects would find equal success in other tropical forest regions of the world, and would help to assist heritage management and build a clearer picture of the historical lessons to be learned from the other great pre-industrial, low-density cities of Sri Lanka and Mesoamerica. Answers for the future might have their beginnings in examples from years past.
“The significance of Angkor to modern cities is that the problems that Angkor faced are the same as the problems that our great cities are due to face.”

PROFESSOR ROLAND FLETCHER
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY
Dr Rebecca Suter is a global academic in the truest sense of the word. Originally from Italy, her yearning to travel and see the world saw her teaching at Ivy League universities such as Harvard and Brown in the United States before she settled at the University of Sydney. At least, for now.

What makes her truly global is while Western and European in upbringing and style, her area of expertise is Asian Studies, and she is highly respected internationally for her work.

Dr Suter’s main research interest is in modern Japanese literature and comparative literature, however in her spare time, Dr Suter translates Manga.

So why Sydney? Though she jokes that it is the climate that drew her, Dr Suter explains that it was the people as well as the reputation of the University of Sydney that made her take the risk of moving halfway around the world to an unknown city in a country she had never even visited. But the gamble paid off.

In 2009, Dr Suter won an ARC grant to further explore what she calls “creative mis-readings of Christianity in Japanese literature and pop culture, with a particular focus on the Japanization of Western culture and the challenges it poses to current views of colonialism, post colonialism and globalisation.”

A concern Dr Suter held before moving here is that the research environment would be quite isolated, this has proven to be a baseless assumption. “I was actually surprised that the Asian Studies department is very developed here, and I have found there are many opportunities to collaborate, both informally with colleagues and formally through major conferences, which have been very stimulating.”

Further, she remarks that the research environment is far more comfortable and supportive than at other institutions she has experienced. “Research-wise I have found it is very collaborative. In the United States it was my experience that the research field was very aggressive and competitive, which can be good, but I think the aggressiveness stifled collaboration in a way that harms research more than it stimulates it. In Sydney I have found that colleagues are interested in what you have to say for the sake of it, instead of always seeking to tear your theories down.”

Another difference, Dr Suter describes is the students themselves. “Sydney has a large foreign student population, which is a bit of a challenge because you have students from all different backgrounds so you need to adapt a teaching style to suit them all. On the other hand this also becomes very stimulating because they bring in their own types of knowledge and backgrounds to the class. I’ve learned from my students.”

Dr Suter also finds the environment beyond the University to be worthy of praise. “Honestly I love this city. It’s a really nice place to be. Its a really interesting city, and the University reproduces the city on a smaller scale. I mean, you go on a bus and you hear seven or eight different languages being spoken at once. Nowhere else is that possible.”
“Sydney has a large foreign student population, which is a bit of a challenge because you have students from all different backgrounds so you need to adapt a teaching style to suit them all.”

Dr Rebecca Suter
Department of Japanese Studies
OUR PEOPLE:
CÉSAR ALBARRÁN

A REAL-LIFE GAMBLE IN A FAR-OFF PLACE

César Albarrán Torres has just begun the first year of his PhD in the Digital Cultures program in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, but he hopes that these next four years will lead a life-long involvement in academia. Something, he says, that has been made possible only through attending the University of Sydney. “This university has been great - I’ve found my place in the world. I’ve had to work hard, of course, but it has let me realize my dream of being in academia.”

Albarrán received a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences International Postgraduate Coursework Scholarship (IPCS) to complete his Masters dissertation last year on how the White House used social media during the health care reform debate. He has now won an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) and an International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS) that will make it possible for him to complete his PhD at Sydney under the supervision of Dr Chris Chesher.

“After many years working in the corporate world, I never thought I would be able to return to academia, but it is what I really want to do with my life. This is a real job for me, this university has allowed me to do what I want and I especially like my department, because there is a real sense of academia. The system gives you time to think.”

All this thinking has lead to a very interesting research topic - how real life spaces of interaction translate into digital realms - especially when there is something at stake in the real world - through researching online casinos.

Originally from Mexico, Albarrán completed his Bachelor degree at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey before being enveloped by the corporate world for ten years as the editor of Cine PREMIERE, the biggest film magazine in Latin America. Albarrán believes there is a real connection between academia and societal concerns.

“I don’t want to be an academic that spends his time at his desk writing very dense papers for other academics who write very dense responses to them,” he said. That is why he chose online gambling as the basis of his research.

“I believe there should be a connection between academia and the concerns of the public. Gambling is something that can really link these very dense philosophical discussions on digital media and the wider public – it’s something that concerns almost everyone, especially in a country like Australia where gambling is such an extensive cultural practice.”

He continues “I am fascinated by the cultural discussion around randomness. The idea that a lucky person can change his or her life at any time, and how the whole culture of gambling is constructed around this randomness. People gamble to change their lives. And there is a very big philosophical question behind that. What makes digital gambling so interesting is that randomness is impossible to replicate digitally. Instead it is based on an algorithm, and algorithms by nature are not random. So there is this whole culture of digital gambling built around a fundamental misconception of the possibility to replicate randomness digitally.”

Without making any judgements, Albarrán hopes to delve into these philosophical and cultural debates in order to shed some light on what has become a significant social phenomenon, especially in the Western world.

Although he is far away from his family, Albarrán says he is delighted to be here. “Sydney is one of the few universities in the world with a program that allows one to study the Internet from a philosophical and cultural viewpoint.” And the city has surprised him with its cultural dynamism and multi-ethnic identity. “At this stage, I simply want to stay.”
“Sydney is one of the few universities in the world with a program that allows one to study the Internet from a philosophical and cultural viewpoint.”

CÉSAR ALBARRÁN
PHD CANDIDATE, DIGITAL CULTURES
OUR PEOPLE: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JINGDONG YUAN

THE DRAGON’S WILL: A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF CHINESE INFLUENCE

In a world where all eyes are focused on China, expertise like Associate Professor Jingdong Yuan’s is highly sought after. A specialist in Asia-Pacific security, Chinese defence and foreign policy, and global and regional arms control and non-proliferation issues, Associate Professor Yuan is a welcome addition to the University of Sydney’s growing International Security and Chinese Studies programs.

As well as providing commentary on these newsworthy topics to a wide variety of journals and media outlets including Asian Survey, Far Eastern Economic Review, International Herald Tribune, Los Angeles Times and Nonproliferation Review, Associate Professor Yuan has also co-authored a book titled China and India: Cooperation or Conflict? It is Jingdong’s study of the emerging security challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, the rise of China and its relationship to other major powers of the world – such as the United States, Japan and India - which has made the University of Sydney such an appealing place for him to work, and a major factor in his decision to join the Centre for International Security Studies last year.

“The University has just launched the China Studies Centre, which is very attractive because the University does have a critical mass of China Studies scholars – over 120 members - affiliated with the Centre. I’m very excited because the centre is at the beginning phase so it is getting into place many different committees and work plans for the next five years. It will really be a very good platform to attract people who want to work on China-related issues,” says Associate Professor Yuan, who sees great prospects in CISS-CSC collaboration in the coming years.

He continues, “Plus there is the United States Studies Centre, so basically you have these two academic research centers focusing on the world’s two biggest powers at the University. As a result, the University of Sydney is uniquely positioned to engage in cross-disciplinary, cross-faculty collaboration in research, which makes it a very good place to be.”

One of the areas of particular fascination to Associate Professor Yuan is the nature and limitation of Chinese power – just because China has so much growing power, it doesn’t necessarily mean this power will be asserted over others. He says “because of the rise of China there has been a lot of speculation that China will try to exercise power and influence – in places such as Africa and Latin America. I think, however, that there are a lot of limitations, as asserting this power can be at the cost of your other competing interests, so it is not a simple question of having power and therefore tramping force onto others.”

These questions of limitation are being asked by Associate Professor Yuan in his forthcoming book The Dragon’s Will, and being positioned in Australia is helping his research in this field in a variety of ways. “I think Australian universities in the last few years have become more and more interested in the Asia Pacific and particularly in China because of the resource-based economic ties between Australia and China. Australia is very close to Asia, so I knew that the University of Sydney would be the ideal place for this next chapter in my academic career.”
“The University has just launched the China Studies Centre, which is very attractive because the University does have a critical mass of China Studies scholars – over 120 members - affiliated with the Centre.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JINGDONG YUAN
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
“I like the combination of a prestigious past and cutting-edge future at Sydney. Like Cambridge, the University of Sydney doesn’t rest on its laurels but is always striving to remain at the forefront of teaching and research.”

DR RICHARD MILES
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND ANCIENT HISTORY
A Senior Lecturer in the Department of Classics and Ancient History, Dr Richard Miles is committed to making the Ancient World come alive for students and researchers alike.

Dr Miles recently hosted a six-part BBC History series *Ancient Worlds*, in which he explores the concept of urban civilisation from the first cities of Mesopotamia to Imperial Rome. Travelling across Asia and Europe (including remote areas of Iraq and Pakistan) Miles looks at the sacrifice, conflict and consensus that lay behind the creation of the city - which he argues was one of humankind’s most daring and revolutionary inventions.

Dr Miles is currently writing a new book based on ideas of crisis in Roman history, specifically the third century A.D. “Between 230 and 280 AD there were 47 Roman Emperors - that’s almost one per year. How did the Roman Empire survive such a turnover at the top? It begs the question of who actually ruled the Roman Empire?” Miles continues, “This was also a period when the army became increasingly, and many would argue disastrously, embroiled in politics – a situation with powerful resonances to events currently unfolding in the Middle East.

Dr Miles arrived at the University of Sydney from Cambridge University where he wrote his doctorate and subsequently taught for a number of years. "I like the combination of a prestigious past and cutting-edge future at Sydney. Like Cambridge, the University of Sydney doesn’t rest on its laurels but is always striving to remain at the forefront of teaching and research. Another attraction was that the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is one of the University’s strongest areas with a firm commitment to keep investing in the humanities”, says Miles.

“"In terms of Classics and Ancient History, we are by some way the largest teaching department in the Southern Hemisphere. We have also developed a world class reputation for academic research with the recent establishment of wonderful facilities such as the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies in Australia”, he continues "High calibre teaching and research are intricately linked and I have been really impressed by the intelligence and liveliness of the students that I teach.”

“At the University of Sydney we have this critical mass of interested, motivated people – students, teachers, and researchers – and that is what makes it such a great place to work at, to teach at, and to learn from.”
WHO’S LISTENING?
THE CHANGING FACE OF THE PRESS

Speaking about her work with passion is one of Penny O’Donnell’s many talents, and the two main areas of research she loves to speak about within the Media and Communications department are press criticism and the future of newspapers.

“At the moment we’re in a situation where the business model that has sustained newspapers for the last hundred years – the advertising model – is in a state of flux. I’m interested to know how we’re going to keep paying for quality journalism,” she said.

Fortunately, with the help of an ARC linkage grant I’ve been able to work on this with the Walkley Foundation and with David McKnight. We’ve just finished a national study of senior editors and journalists. We’ve been talking to them about how news practices are changing, how they see news and journalism evolving across this multi-platform environment, and also asking them whether they think readers are going to pay for news. Many believe that people will pay as long as the journalism is worth it.

Related to these new media challenges is Dr O’Donnell’s secondary research interest: understanding press criticism.

“It’s very difficult to get a discussion going between journalists and their critics about what is wrong with news and how to do it better. In the Western world we have a very long tradition of valuing freedom of expression, and typically within that tradition any attempt to challenge the press is seen as a form of censorship, and journalists will fight to the death to resist this. So in a sense what we need is some kind of shift in our intellectual paradigm for thinking about criticism as productive, and not as censorship,” says Dr O’Donnell.

“What needs to shift is our notion of freedom of expression, which has always been focused on talking, on speech, and not on listening,” she continues. “Who listens? Everybody is twittering, everyone is facebooking, but who is listening? And why isn’t listening valued as something that is absolutely intrinsic to good communication? Once we put listening into our consideration of freedom of expression, criticism becomes more like feedback, and that is the sort of shift in journalistic thinking that I am interested in exploring.”

From a successful career as an ABC radio producer, Dr O’Donnell found herself teaching radio production to journalism students in Nicaragua. While teaching students who “were so poor they didn’t have money to buy batteries for their tape recorders,” she stumbled upon a thought that has followed her around ever since: “it’s all about taking your understanding of what media can do to contribute to society and making it a reality.”

This theoretical and conceptual challenge led Dr O’Donnell to study communication in Mexico, and finally onward to teaching. She says she has “spent the last 15 years saying to students: ‘media work is all about making decisions, and the more you read and research the history, the more that you can look at the media as an object of study, which makes it easier to see in everyday media practice that there is a range of options available to you to achieve your vision.’

Her move to the University of Sydney some years ago was due to a desire to do more research, and to expose herself to a vastly different cohort of students. “Postgraduate media degrees here attract a large range of international students. In just one of my classes this semester there are 20 different languages represented. To a teacher that presents a lot of challenges in that you have no uniformity of cultural or educational backgrounds, but at the same time you could not ask for a more exciting classroom,” Dr O’Donnell declares.

“I came to Sydney for the great research support,” she says. But she has stayed for the academic community she has found herself enveloped in. “I’ve been able to host international conferences and edit quality publications. People want you to succeed here, and to do the sort of research that matters and has an impact in the world.”
“What needs to shift is our notion of freedom of expression, which has always been focused on talking, on speech, and not on listening,”

DR PENNY O’DONNELL
DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS
In a time of extraordinary upheavals in world politics, Professor John Keane is a man in high demand. An internationally-recognised expert in the fields of politics and political theory, Professor Keane’s work on democracy is more relevant than ever.

After spending three decades abroad, on several continents, building a reputation as one of the world’s most respected academics and public intellectuals, Professor Keane has returned home to Australia as Professor of Politics in the School of Social and Political Sciences. “There was a sense of fresh possibilities, fresh prospects for Sydney under a new and highly committed Vice Chancellor, Professor Michael Spence,” says Professor Keane.

One of these new opportunities was the chance to set up the Sydney Democracy Initiative, a major new venture being launched at the university in 2011, of which Professor Keane is Director. The SDI aims to develop pioneering research initiatives centred on the very broadly defined subject of democracy.

With uprisings across the Middle East, political troubles in the Atlantic region and the rapid growth of Asia as an emerging centre of economic and political power, the SDI’s research will be of increasing relevance to a global political sphere that is moving in directions never seen before in the modern world.

“Much of the inherited scholarly work on democracy remains the monopoly of the Atlantic region in an era where the language, spirit and institutions of democracy have gone global,” says Professor Keane. “One of the things that SDI intends to achieve is shifting the compass of research on democracy, and swinging it towards neglected regions, such as the Arab world, and the Asia-Pacific region in which Australia is now a key partner.”

Professor Keane calls this a “bold new move” by the university, planting the seeds of a unique centre of excellence in an increasingly significant academic field. “There is no existing global network of researchers who are dealing with the past, present and future of democracy, and I’d like this open-hub initiative to be a contributor to this process,” he says.

The SDI also aims to foster new cross-disciplinary projects, and will assist the university in building stronger networks locally and regionally with both other institutions and with broader public audiences. The work of the initiative will extend beyond political thinking to incorporate a large variety of disciplines and themes, from religion and the future of global governing institutions to the vexed relationship between democracy and the biosphere.

“I have in mind a dynamic kaleidoscope of research projects, public events, contacts and networks that make this a really exciting hub — a key place to be, a space where visiting fellows, post-graduate students and members of the public will want to come,” says Professor Keane.

There are already promising signs for the success of the project. Even before its official launch SDI has hosted several high profile events, including an international symposium on the future of social democracy featuring guest speakers from Germany and the United Kingdom, and a number of public lectures and forums on the recent sudden explosion of democratic politics in the Arab region.

“The SDI venture is inspired by the Jean Monnet principle that underpinned the whole process of European integration, the principle that modest small steps can potentially have big effects,” says Professor Keane. “My conviction is that SDI and its partners in the University can help increase the visibility of our social sciences, and contribute to the bonding of the university with wider publics in Australia and beyond our borders, so that together we become an open-source hub of real expertise on all matters of democracy, ancient and modern, present and future.”
“There is no existing global network of researchers who are dealing with the past, present and future of democracy, and I’d like this open-hub initiative to be a contributor to this process.”

PROFESSOR JOHN KEANE
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
A more enthusiastic teacher of American History than Dr Frances Clarke is hard to come by. Since she began lecturing at the University of Sydney in 2003, her classes have become among the most popular in the department. She has been overwhelmed by the interest among students for courses in American history at the University’s School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry.

“One of the most surprising things to me about teaching US history in this country is the high level of student interest,” she says. “I didn’t actually think I’d get to teach the Civil War in Australia because I didn’t imagine that Australian students would either know or care about such a distant event.”

Dr Clarke began studying American history at La Trobe University in her home city of Melbourne, and completed her honours degree in politics and history with a project on the Vietnam War.

“I started out by studying the way wars are remembered and memorialised, and sort of fell into looking at America’s past. But once I started I couldn’t stop!”

Finishing her PhD in late 2001 at Johns Hopkins University, she worked as a researcher at the American Historical Association before starting as a lecturer at the University of Sydney in 2003.

“As soon as I began focusing on America I was fascinated by the similarities and differences between that country’s past and ours,” she says.

“When I first started contemplating research projects on American history, I thought I’d end up focusing on some aspect of Australia’s relationship to America. Then, in thinking about how memories of war are passed down through the generations, I stumbled into the field of Civil War history, and I’ve been there ever since.”

Over the past decade Dr Clarke has become increasingly absorbed in the culture and memories that surround the conflict.

“It’s generally seen as America’s biggest watershed – the moment when modern America came into being. By ending slavery and enshrining the power of the federal government over the states, the war led to a fundamental shift in the way people thought about themselves as members of the nation.”

The popularity of American history courses, as well as those through the United States Studies Centre, underlines the shift in this generation’s interest from Britain to the Americas.

“I think American culture is so influential in our modern world – it’s both so familiar and so strange that students want to know more,” she says. “The same could be said about the nineteenth century as a whole – it’s a subject that’s both recognisable yet peculiar.”

“We’ve come a long way since the Victorian era, yet the echoes of that culture are all around us. We still tell war stories like the ones my subjects told - about virtuous self-sacrifice and noble battlefield suffering - but the stories are not exactly the same. It’s the slow, often imperceptible nature of cultural change in relation to how people have experienced war that I’m trying to chart.”

Dr Clarke has previously written about nationalism, feminism, and volunteerism in the Civil War era, and is currently working on other projects that deal with the memory of the American Revolution and the memory of the First World War.

Dr Clarke’s work is helping to consolidate School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry’s reputation as one of the world’s leading centres for the study of American history.
“I think American culture is so influential in our modern world – it’s both so familiar and so strange that students want to know more.”
“The central question is how do governments develop public policies to protect endangered sharks when the sharks may harm the public.”

CHRISTOPHER NEFF
PHD CANDIDATE,
GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
A childhood interest in sharks has led PhD candidate, Christopher Neff down an interesting academic path. Born and raised in the United States, he came to Australia to complete a Masters degree and is now writing his PhD on the politics of shark attacks.

His thesis is the first of its kind in the world, seeking to challenge the rogue shark theory made popular by such films as Spielberg’s *Jaws*, and also by noted surgeon and the University of Sydney graduate Sir Victor Coppleson’s book *Shark Attack*. Sir Coppleson said the pattern and frequency of attacks suggested the likelihood of a single shark ignoring its natural prey and acquiring a taste for human flesh is quite strong.

In July 1916, during a summer heatwave, a series of shark attacks along the coast of New Jersey left four people dead and another seriously injured. The attacks, over a 12-day period, caused widespread panic, and as newspapers shocked their readers with graphic accounts of the incidents, the vicious man-eating shark soon became part of American folklore.

In the league table of shark attacks the USA leads the world, followed by Australia and South Africa, and the reporting of shark attacks has become an annual summer obsession.

Neff is keen to dispel the idea that sharks deliberately eat people. “I don’t believe that sharks attack people any more than I attack the buffet at Star City. Swimmers who enter their territory are in the way, not on the menu. Sharks don’t have hands and they are wild, so they move things with their mouths.”

He regards Coppleson’s theory as outdated and alarmist. “There was a straight line from the New Jersey attacks of 1916 to Coppleson’s theory, but there is new data now and we need to update the rogue shark theory,” he says.

He completed a Masters in Public Policy with Honours in November 2007 at the University of Sydney. While studying, he worked on carnivore conservation and encountered the riddle that is the predator policy paradox. “The question of how we protect species that we need protecting from is fascinating,” he says.

His master’s studies included a focus on African lions and the way South Africa educates the public on cohabitation with predatory creatures. That led him to ask whether the same principles could be applied to sharks, and became the basis for his PhD research. He started in March this year and will take three and a half years to complete his degree.

He adds: “The central question is how do governments develop public policies to protect endangered sharks when the sharks may harm the public.”

“Shark attacks are very scary, low-probability events that the government has to try and protect people from, both in terms of public safety and in terms of managing the public’s perception of risk. If there is a loss in public confidence, this becomes a safety issue as well.”

Neff’s study is the first social sciences PhD on shark attacks and is a self-funded project.

“I think it will help people understand sharks better and advance the concept of carnivore conservation,” he says.

Neff has received sponsorship to conduct a month-long field research project at the Shark Centre in South Africa, in partnership with the University of Cape Town and the Save Our Seas Foundation in Cape Town. He is also working with the Sydney Aquarium Conservation Fund.

“Solving this riddle is a collaborative effort which needs everyone’s support.”
THE ECONOMICS OF RETIREMENT:
AN ISSUE OF SOCIAL WELFARE

A recent addition to the Economics department (which is itself newly integrated into the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences), Garry Barrett has found himself in an ideal researching and teaching environment.

“What I find most positive about the University of Sydney is the serious commitment to scholarship. The University and school have an ingrained culture of research excellence. There is a real buzz around the place, with colleagues debating their own work, and that of visiting scholars (and seminar presenters) or having current policy debates about the topics in current affairs – it is a fun place to work, to participate in the debates and test one’s own ideas,” he says.

Professor Barrett believes this fundamental ethos of excellence in scholarship underpins the institution. This is important to him because he is very passionate about what he does.

“Economics is the language of modern business and much of public policy discourse – and economics provides fundamental insights into all realms of social interaction. For example, much of what I teach and research is concerned with basic issues of distributional equity and social welfare,” he says.

Currently, Professor Barrett is working on a research program that will trace how individual and family wellbeing is impacted by labour market shocks, changes to wage structures due to globalisation, as well as technological and institutional factors.

“One focus of this research is on whether families are able to effectively insure against the labour market shocks, such as through their saving and borrowing behaviour, and by adjusting family labour supply,” he says.

“There is an important international dimension to this research, and I have been collaborating with a number of colleagues based overseas,” Professor Barrett continued. “This research is also forming the basis for assessing the impact of the economic slowdown following the global financial crisis in late 2007.”

Alongside this research, Barrett is also working through a narrowly focused research question regarding changes in wellbeing at the time of retirement. Supported by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Services, he hopes to shed some practical light on the topic.

“Researchers around the world have documented that household expenditures drop dramatically around the time of retirement – and the drop in spending is much more than that predicted by simple dynamic models of consumer behaviour. This stylised fact (which has become known as the ‘retirement-consumption puzzle’) has important implications for the ability of households to adequately plan for their retirement, for the role of government in providing income support, and for how best to model retirement decisions,” Professor Barrett says.

While his teaching experiences at Sydney has been limited to two semesters, Professor Barrett has been struck by the imagination and preparedness of those students he has encountered. “One thing which sets Sydney students apart is their genuine interest in ideas – it makes for very productive and rewarding class seminars. It is a real privilege to teach such talented and engaged students,” he says.

Although Professor Barrett stresses it is early days in the new faculty, he says “the plan to build a multidisciplinary social science program, with a strong quantitative core, is very bold and has the potential to reshape social science training and research in Australia. It is exciting to be part of this collaborative endeavour with the other schools in the faculty.”
“Economics is the language of modern business and much of public policy discourse – and economics provides fundamental insights into all realms of social interaction.”

PROFESSOR GARRY BARRETT
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
When Associate Professor Danielle Celermajer returned from New York in 2005, filled with the inspiration of that city’s vibrant internationalism and rich culture of human rights activism and education, she found an Australia virtually devoid of postgraduate human rights programs.

Five years later, she is the founder and director of the Regional Masters of Human Rights and Democratisation (Asia Pacific): a bold and innovative course sponsored by the European Union in the largest single grant in the faculty’s history, and operating through partnerships between Sydney and four other universities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Associate Professor Celermajer’s students spend one semester studying at the University of Sydney and a second at any of the four regional partners: Mahidol University in Thailand; the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka; Kathmandu School of Law, Nepal; and Gadjah Mada University in Yokyakarta, Indonesia.

Such an unorthodox degree structure meant it was a riskier program than universities are normally willing to take on. A lack of guiding precedent, to some, could mean an uncertain future. But for Associate Professor Celermajer, it was an exciting challenge.

Associate Professor Celermajer continues: “I think that so often, there are extraordinary opportunities that require taking a big leap of the imagination,” an approach to which, she thinks, the academic personality is not generally prone.

“We are trained to be careful and scrupulous,” she says. “But this was really about saying: this is huge and different and risky and innovative, but could be extraordinary. And of course, with the University of Sydney’s brilliant resources and a region so full of untapped ideas and connections, there is so much that is possible.”

Her boldness paid off. Associate Professor Celermajer’s Sydney project was scouted by the Research Institute for the Asia-Pacific, and in turn was noticed by the European Union. In 2009, the Regional Masters of Human Rights and Democratisation was the recipient of a 1.5 million Euro grant from the European Union under its Human Rights and Democracy Instrument, which sponsors other democracy-related projects outside the EU, including election monitoring in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Vision and imagination, Associate Professor Celermajer believes, are at the heart of human rights work on a much more basic level.

“If you read human rights texts or you hear people talking about human rights, there are these constant references to imagining a different reality, or imagining the suffering of the other, imagining what it’s like to have nothing to eat, or to be a refugee,” she says.

Associate Professor Celermajer herself never had to strain her imagination too hard to know what she wanted to do. Out of her extended family, only her parents and her grandparents survived the Holocaust.

“It was very clear to me all through my upbringing that the world was a place of injustice and suffering, and the privilege that I had inherited – of coming from a family that had survived, and that I was highly educated – meant I should be doing something in the world, so that other people don’t have to suffer the way that we know about suffering.”

To Associate Professor Celermajer, the need for human rights is palpable. “I think that’s why I’m so driven. Because it’s not abstract. I don’t need someone to explain injustice to me.”
“We are trained to be careful and scrupulous, but this was really about saying: this is huge and different and risky and innovative, but could be extraordinary.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DANIELLE CELERMAJER
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY
A BIOLOGICAL ISSUE?:
RACIAL CLASSIFICATION THROUGH TIME

When Professor Warwick Anderson first trained as a doctor, he didn’t expect that he would acquire a passion for the history of medicine that would see him undertaking extensive studies in ideas about race, human difference and citizenship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

But when his attention was drawn to the Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine in Townsville, he found he couldn’t look away.

“The Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine was the first scientific research institute established in Australia, and it was supposed to study whether a working white race could be implanted successfully in the Australian tropics” said Professor Anderson. His acclaimed first book, *The Cultivation of Whiteness*, looks at how medical scientists, anthropologists and biologists have understood and figured whiteness in Australia over the course of history.

In a later project, shining a spotlight on the studies of race mixing being undertaken by biological anthropologists in the 1920s and 1930s, some startling truths were uncovered. “They came away much more sympathetic and decided that these people were decent people and that race-mixing was not really a biological issue. You couldn’t analyse it in terms of two pure races mixing, because everyone, it turns out, was mixed. So they started to challenge racial classification in science and in anthropology.”

Professor Anderson’s research into tropical medicine and race mixing have also seen him travel extensively - especially to places where race mixing was more recent, including to Hawaii, Morocco, Tahiti, the Marquesas Islands and down to Pitcairn Island. For Warwick, exploring new places has not only been for research, however, as his choice of universities has also taken him far and wide.

A self proclaimed ‘intellectual vagabond’, Professor Anderson has held enviable positions at a wide variety of universities throughout the globe, including Harvard, Melbourne, the University of California at San Francisco and Berkeley, and Wisconsin-Madison, but it was more than the lure of an initially research intensive position that drew him to the University of Sydney.

“There is a very supportive research environment at the University of Sydney. I think too that you get opportunities to teach outstanding students and attract excellent graduate students, which is an important part of any researcher’s task,” said Professor Anderson.

In addition, in his current role as Professorial Research Fellow in the Department of History and the Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law of Medicine, Anderson is co-writing a book, a conceptual history of auto-immunity. He was quite amazed that no one had written a history of this causative mechanism of disease before, given that five to ten percent of the population will have an autoimmune disease at some point in their lives. “It’s a fairly recent history since it was only really discovered in the 1940s and 50s and Australian scientists played a large role in this,” said Professor Anderson.

Professor Anderson believes that Australia is now at the forefront of research, and the University of Sydney is an enviable place to be. “Not just by Australian standards but by world standards, in history and philosophy, it’s an excellent place to go and you can see this in that we have started to attract a lot of the best graduate students from the US to junior positions here at Sydney. Ten to twenty years ago that would have been unimaginable. Now a job at the University of Sydney is highly sought after by people all over the world. The international standing of the University has never been higher.”
“There is a very supportive research environment at the University of Sydney. I think too that you get opportunities to teach outstanding students and attract excellent graduate students, which is an important part of any researcher’s task.”

PROFESSOR WARWICK ANDERSON
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
As Editor-in-Chief of the Sydney Morning Herald and Sun Herald, Peter Fray may well be one of the busier academics found in Sydney’s Department of Media and Communications. But he says his time here as the department’s First Decade Fellow has given him time to think.

“It has made me realise that we don’t think enough. It’s great to have a chance to read broadly around a subject, and it’s really interesting to see what other people think of what I do. There’s a lot of good will, there’s a lot of robust debate and I think it’s interesting how little of the debate actually filters into the actual media. I think it’s important to have better links between an industry like the media and the academy,” he says.

Time to think makes for an exploring mind in Fray, who is indulging several research interests while in residence.

“One of the things I am interested in exploring is Wikileaks. What it means for journalists everywhere; what it means for sources; what it means for secrets. It’s an interesting debate,” he said.

“The other thing I’m looking at is how Wikileaks was treated in print as opposed to online,” he continued. “I suspect that you might come up with the idea that the online space has increased the diversity of debate around Wikileaks. Which is contrary to some people who think online news websites essentially ‘dumb down’ everything.”

Although many years have passed since his undergrad years studying Rural Journalism, Fray’s return to media studies last year has been met with great relish, both on his part and the part of his colleagues. “The people are great, not just friendly but also engaging, they want to talk, but they also respect you,” he says of his experience at the University.

“It’s been a great pleasure to sit down and read a book, to talk about some deeper ideas. I’ve been thinking about issues around trust in newspapers and trust between audiences and media. Thinking about the whole idea of ‘you give the people what they want’ that might be seen in online content.” he said.

“That throws up some really interesting models for traditional media, because we traditionally take the view that we should give the people what they need to know, not what they want to know.”

“There’s a third way around this,” Fray continues, “a new compact with readers which engages them in slightly different ways. And I’m not going to tell you how because I haven’t worked it out yet.”

Fray is very pleased to put down the red pen of editor and put on his reading glasses for academia. “It was a great honour to be given this First Decade Fellowship, the first First! It’s a bit of a learning curve for the department and the university, so I’m hoping that I can do some good things,” he laughs.

“And the coffee’s not bad”
“One of the things I am interested in exploring is Wikileaks. What it means for journalists everywhere; what it means for sources; what it means for secrets. It’s an interesting debate.”
“You learn a great deal from fellow research students - their methodology, conceptual framework, how they solve problems, as well as getting advice on how to solve some of your own problems.”

JUDITH BETTS
PHD CANDIDATE, GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Judith Betts’ studies build on an extensive career in the Australian Public Service (Departments of Immigration, Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Finance and Administration); as a political adviser to various federal ministers; and in more recent years in the private sector in government relations, organisational communication and speech writing. Now halfway through her PhD, she acknowledges that her earlier career has influenced her choice of topic.

“My thesis is looking at the relationship between the views of opinion leaders (including politicians), public opinion and what was presented by the print media. I am interested in the debates around the Iraq War, including the reasons for going to war, and the diversity of voices that found their way into media coverage at the time” Betts says.

“I want to understand the factors that contributed to different voices being heard at different stages of the war.”

“As a member of the public and a media consumer, I found it frustrating that some in the media, when writing about Iraq, would focus more on the politics of the debate – the domestic political ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ – rather than the merits of the argument for war. This meant that Iraq was often portrayed in party political rather than policy terms. And that didn’t enlighten Australians about the nature of the threat nor about the appropriateness of our response or our responsibilities as part of the American alliance,” Betts explains.

Betts’ PhD research draws on three bodies of literature: critiques of the media’s role in covering the war (including US, UK and Australian writings from journalists, academics and the memoirs of former participants); literature on agenda setting and framing; and the literature around the role of the media in a democracy.

In addition to degrees from Australian National University, Charles Sturt University and Harvard, Judith is now also a casual communications lecturer at UTS. When asked about why she also chose the University of Sydney, she is quick to offer praise.

“Sydney has an excellent reputation, and my supervisor’s field fits perfectly. The Department of Government and International Relations focuses very much on building a community amongst PhD students. You get to explore research methods and great theoretical works which form the basis of your work later on,” she said.

“You learn a great deal from fellow research students - their methodology, conceptual framework, how they solve problems, as well as getting advice on how to solve some of your own problems.”

The Department of Government and International Relations also runs a colloquium. “Visiting academics present papers every week on a Thursday and PhD students are invited – which really gives you the sense of belonging to an academic community,” Betts says.

“The best thing about researching at Sydney is the colleagues and level of support from staff. They take an interest. Not just my supervisor but also other academics in the faculty. I have also sat in on classes and it’s just been a wonderful opportunity for me to broaden my knowledge. The seminars and courses run by the US Studies Centre have been excellent.”
It is perhaps unusual for an internationally award-winning scholar of New York African-American history to be based in Sydney, but Professor Shane White of the Department of History has become the foremost expert in this field due to his recent work with the Digital Harlem Project.

For one thing, his research and his determination to tell the history of African-American society in innovative ways, has in 2011 earned him an Australian Professorial Fellowship, and a five-year, $700,000 Australian Research Council (ARC) grant in collaboration with two other University of Sydney scholars — one of the largest ever awarded in the humanities.

From remaining shreds of the past, Professor White has tried to recover details of what life was like for everyday black Americans, particularly in New York: stories of riots, murders, street life and gambling, family, clothing and hairstyles, music and language.

As well as the traditional books and articles, of which he has published many, Professor White has also embraced the idea of websites and blogs, indeed any new way of telling history. His 2005 book The Sounds of Slavery included a CD in order to tell African-American history aurally through songs, sermons and speeches.

In 2010 the website and research tool Digital Harlem, tells the history of black Harlem spatially, allowing users to explore the neighbourhood and follow key moments in the lives of its people through interactive layered maps and records of real people from the 1920’s and 30’s. They can find out almost anything, including the number of hair salons in Harlem in 1925.

The website has won two major international awards: the American Historical Association’s 2010 Roy Rosenzweig Prize for Innovation in Digital History, and the American Library Association’s 2010 ABC-CLIO Online History Award.

“Digital Harlem is a cutting-edge thing,” Professor White says. “The difference is, it brings this history to a different audience who wouldn’t read journals or buy academic books. Anyone from school teachers, to genealogists, to people interested in Harlem, to people who just happen upon the website.”

According to Professor White, the process of obtaining detailed sources on the daily life of Harlemites, is not for the armchair historian. He and his colleagues from the Department of History at the University of Sydney have made intensive trips to New York to gather all the records they can before sending them back to Sydney for analysis.

“My colleagues and I will typically spend a month in New York: we go through every court case for the year,” Professor White says. “For our Numbers book we read 39,500 files — opened them, undid the string, looked at them to see if they involved a black person, and if they did, we scanned them: nearly 3,800 cases in all.”

“No one has done this back-breaking work before,” Professor White says, “not even the Americans. It’s not catalogued. Often we are reading things for the first time in 100 years, that have just been locked away in a basement.”

The ARC Discovery grant is to fund Professor Shane White’s current research, undertaken alongside History Department colleagues Professor Stephen Robertson and Professor Stephen Garton, on the Harlem Riot of 1935. They will use the website to reconstruct 1935 Harlem and map the events of the riot.

“The project hopes to reveal the dynamics of the first instance of a new kind of racial violence — against police and property rather than between blacks and whites — and the impact of the Depression on African Americans.”

“We’ll be reconstructing a year in Harlem’s life. It’ll be a website and a book that’ll come out of this,” Professor White says, “so watch this space!”
“The project hopes to reveal the dynamics of the first instance of a new kind of racial violence — against police and property rather than between blacks and whites — and the impact of the Depression on African Americans.”

PROFESSOR SHANE WHITE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
Using eggs for stem-cell research is a topic that at times provokes torrents of vitriolic discourse from the left, right, feminists and scientists alike - but Margaret Boulos is tackling this issue in an entirely different way.

"My PhD is on the provision of eggs for stem cell research. It’s looking at the donor populations – how they feel about giving their eggs away, and whether a donor model is actually appropriate for Australia. Without taking a position, I want to move the subject away from overtly political critiques, and produce a more sociological analysis," she says.

Taking the politics of oocyte donation for research out of the equation, and instead focusing on the donor model – who are the donors, who are the ideal donors, and the efficacy of such a model in the Australian context – will enable Boulos to form a sociological query to the issue, and hopefully open up scholarship on the topic.

“The literature at the moment seems to be stuck. It says selling inherently means one thing and giving another. We need to go beyond that, and look at the symbolic significance of selling, money, and how this relates to the idea of women’s contributions to science. Talking more specifically about particular contexts and being more reflexive about the assumptions that have underpinned a lot of previous works on the topic of stem cells is necessary to design effective systems for the socially sustainable supply of eggs. ”

Boulos sees her PhD at the University of Sydney as the beginning of a lifelong career in academia. An inquiring sociological mind and genuine interest in the underpinnings of our society have fused with a genuine and fervent desire to be a teacher.

Boulos is passionate about education as a transformative process. "I would really like to pursue teaching. I’m a real advocate of social inclusion and I’m interested in trying to get through to kids from populations that wouldn’t be at university traditionally. I’m interested in trying to really engage them in something like sociology, which is a fascinating subject. Sociology can help you stop and think about all the things we do everyday in the world, and how to effect change,” she says.

For Boulos, the University of Sydney was a great place to start because of the research and teaching support on hand. She has a close professional relationship with her supervisors that have helped her foray into a topic that is sometimes dominated by science and gender studies.

Sydney has proven to be a great choice for Boulos, not just for the program, but also for the daily interactions with others at the university.

“The people I’ve met – students and staff – have been the best thing about coming to Sydney University. My supervisors, other academics and other students have exposed me to a great wealth of knowledge.”

She continues, “I’ve had a lot of opportunities to present my work and also hear about other peoples work. And working in an interdisciplinary space (the Fisher PG Research Facility) has given me the opportunity to meet people in other disciplines which has really widened my scope of thought.”
“I’m a real advocate of social inclusion and I’m interested in trying to get through to kids from populations that wouldn’t be at university traditionally.”

MARGARET BOULOS
PHD CANDIDATE
SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY
Professor Jeffrey Riegel, head of the School of Languages and Cultures, has recently been undertaking research in Suzhou, 20 minutes west of Shanghai if you take one of the new high-speed trains.

The historic Chinese “town” (a metropolis by any standard other than China’s) was founded in 514 BCE and sits on the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. For Professor Riegel, whose career has been defined by total immersion in the early philosophy, intellectual history, literature, and language of China, there are few better places to be.

For some 40 years now the focus of Professor Riegel’s education and research has been China. He was trained at Stanford University, where in 1978 he received his PhD in Chinese. From there he went on to teach at the University of California, Berkeley, for 28 years, where he came to hold the esteemed position of Louis B. Agassiz Professor of Chinese.

Of Professor Riegel’s body of published work, many regard his translation of *The Annals of Lü Buwei* as his greatest contribution to the field of Chinese philosophy—though he says he is most proud of what he calls his “miniature studies”. In these, he procured and analysed significant passages in ancient excavated manuscripts and transmitted texts.

It was only in 2007 that he retired from his position at Berkeley, deciding to come to The University of Sydney.

When asked the obvious question—why, after almost 30 years at Berkeley, was he drawn to Sydney?—the top of his list, surprisingly, wasn’t our regional location.

“Obviously the geographical location of Sydney and the University is a great advantage in developing our ties with Chinese research universities and institutions—it has certainly benefitted me. It has meant I have been able to work closely with colleagues at Qinghua University [Beijing] and Fudan University [Shanghai], among others.”

But Professor Riegel could have had his pick of the many other top-ranking universities in Australia, which enjoy the same or similar geographical advantages. Rather, the key reason he cites for the move was to do with the unique culture of Australia’s oldest university.

“I decided to join the University of Sydney because I find it to be a vibrant and exciting intellectual community. The school of which I am head has a very strong research and teaching profile – probably the best of its sort in Australia – and our faculty has long demonstrated a commitment to the study of Asia. The opportunity to contribute to these existing strengths while at the same time developing my own research projects was simply too good to pass up.”

Professor Riegel’s recent book-length analysis and translation of the *Mozi* (another ancient Chinese philosophical text) has just been accepted for publication by the Institute of East Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

“I have also started a new project that has to do with China’s more recent intellectual history,” Professor Riegel says. This project will study a compendium of legal cases from eighteenth and nineteenth century China, in an attempt to better understand the nation’s legal philosophy.

These are merely the latest examples from a career of important research expeditions and collaborations in China. In each of them, Professor Riegel has made significant contributions to our knowledge of Chinese history and philosophy through translation and analysis of invaluable, often ancient, sources.

According to Professor Riegel, understanding the millennia of Chinese thought, as ascertained through these kinds of sources, is not just about preserving the nation’s history, but has turned out to be crucial to understanding modern China.
“The school of which I am head has a very strong research and teaching profile - probably the best of its sort in Australia - and our faculty has long demonstrated a commitment to the study of Asia.”

PROFESSOR JEFFREY RIEGEL
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
“I feel thankful to have unexpectedly found a place as a novelist, and it is from this perch that I am able to continue to probe some of the experiences I had working as a reporter in times of catastrophe.”

GERALDINE BROOKS
ALUMNA, ENGLISH

Photo by Randi Baird.
Geraldine Brooks came to what was then the Arts faculty at the University of Sydney in the 1970s from an all-girls school in a middle-class neighbourhood. “Sydney University was a place that loomed large in my imagination from the time I was a child. I would stare at it as we’d go by on a bus into the city from my home in the western suburbs. It was a romantic dream, the idea of someday being one of those students that I could see up there on the footbridge,” Brooks says.

She left with a Bachelors degree and an experience that broadened her horizons.

“I was very at sea my first year, and I keenly felt my lack of worldliness in this suddenly expanded community of people from backgrounds so different from my own. It was when I joined the Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS) that I found my tribe. I loved being a minnow in the bright wake of dazzling students like David Marr and Neil Armfield. They had a confidence about what they wanted to be that stiffened my spine and inspired me to believe that anything might, actually, be possible.”

Brooks characterises the benefits of an Arts degree by its broadness of disciplines.

“It opens you up to ideas, and gives you an essential toolbox for an ongoing intellectual journey.”

A strong desire to be a newspaper reporter was behind Brook’s pursuit of an Arts degree. “I knew I would need a broad based liberal education to do that job with any skill,” she says. Interestingly it was a chance choice of a first year class in the Government department that truly inspired Brooks.

“I had intended to be an English major. Government was very much an afterthought class for me – the fourth one you pick to fill out the first year schedule. But I came alive intellectually in government; probing the nexus between classical political theory and pressing current events. This was helped along by the fact that the faculty in those days contained quite a few young lecturers from the US, who had come to Australia to evade the Vietnam draft. Matters of ethics and political violence were very vivid to them, and they communicated the urgency of these issues in class,” she says.

From studying these conflicts to reporting on them, Brooks went from the gothic towered sandstone of the university, to the features desk at the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Her three years of excellence there lead her to win the Greg Shackleton Australian News Correspondents scholarship to the journalism master’s program at Columbia University in 1982. Finally she made it to the *Wall Street Journal* where she was offered the prestigious position of a ‘fireman’ correspondent.

“It’s the one who gets called on to go to the worst places at the worst of times. It started for me in the Middle East, where I was a correspondent for six years, and after you get the ability to deal with chaotic situations, it’s all anyone ever wants you to do,” Brooks told Andrew Denton in 2005.

Although she may have been sent there, Brooks admits that her time as a foreign correspondent in turbulent areas has been an important part of her life and career.

“It has been a great thing to have been an eye witness, in my decade as a foreign correspondent, to some of the history of my own time.”

A run in with the Nigerian Secret Police was the catalyst that caused Brooks’ transition to her hugely successful career as a novelist. Her first work of fiction, *Year of Wonders* is an international bestseller, *People of the Book* is a *New York Times* bestseller, and she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2006 for *March*.

“I feel thankful to have unexpectedly found a place as a novelist, and it is from this perch that I am able to continue to probe some of the experiences I had working as a reporter in times of catastrophe.”
Jack Manning Bancroft graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Media and Communications) in 2006. Just two years later he became the CEO of AIME (Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience) – a charity initiative he created at the age of 19.

“When we started the program, the feeling was ‘let’s just get in there and try and do something about Aboriginal attendance rates in school,’” he recalls. “Then, straight away we had this huge success. It was, ‘whoa, what have we done?’”

As a proud, young, Aboriginal man from the Bundjalung nation in NSW, Manning Bancroft is honoured to have the chance to do something for the next generation of Indigenous people.

“AIME is a mentoring program that partners Indigenous high-school students with Indigenous and non-Indigenous university mentors. We aim to raise the completion rates for Indigenous high-school students in years 10 and 12 so that by 2020, participating students are completing school at the same rate as every Australian child. In addition, we are striving to increase the national university admission rate for Indigenous students so that it is on par with the rest of the nation.”

In 2010, Manning Bancroft began AIME’s national expansion and says “By 2020, we ‘aime’ to be mentoring 6000 Indigenous students across our nation – from Melbourne to Mount Druitt, Adelaide to Alice.” An ambitious task, but he has confidence in the program and has been met with success upon success. Manning Bancroft was awarded the Young Alumni Award for Achievement as well as the New South Wales Young Australian of the Year.

“It really confirms that the work we are doing at AIME is having a hugely positive influence across both the university community, and the state,” he said.
“I loved learning about philosophy and having the space to think about thinking. Getting the chance to have a world-class education, and the freedom to make an impact on our society will be something I will remember forever.”

JACK MANNING
BANCROFT
ALUMNUS, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS
Our People: Anna Rose

Make Believe: Understanding the Climate of Politics

Just how much could an Arts/Law graduate accomplish three years out from leaving the University of Sydney? Alumna Anna Rose seems to have taken this question as a personal challenge.

Since her days at the University of Sydney, she has represented Australia in delegations to key international conferences and negotiations, including Montreal’s Kyoto Protocol negotiations in 2005, and most recently, leading a delegation of 30 young Australians to the UN Copenhagen negotiations.

Rose has given speeches, written a book chapter and numerous opinion columns; and co-founded and chaired the board of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) — one of Australia’s largest and most politically influential youth organisations.

2008 saw Rose in the USA working on the Obama campaign in the New Hampshire primary elections at the tail end of her US exchange. In 2009, Kevin Rudd named her the Environment Minister’s Young Environmentalist of the Year, and last year the Sydney Morning Herald deemed her among Sydney’s ‘100 Most Influential People’.

Some might think they could rest on such a bed of laurels, but Anna Rose won’t take so much as a catnap.

As a senior campaigning specialist at communications consultancy Make Believe, she is finding communications solutions for clients such as the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Global Poverty Project. The 2010 Australian Greens Federal election campaign, which saw the first ever Greens member elected to the Federal Legislative Assembly, was a Make Believe operation.

What’s more, Rose has recently been awarded a Churchill Fellowship, which will, over the next two months and beyond, allow her to begin research in the USA, China and the United Kingdom on peer-to-peer youth climate change education projects.

Rose the writer, the activist, the politician, the environmentalist, the emissary, the scholar, the communications consultant, and board director: how did this all begin? For Rose, her passion for environmental issues and politics started with her teachers at the University of Sydney.

“I had fantastic lecturers and tutors for all of my Arts subjects, especially Asian Studies. I remember being so overwhelmed by my first Asian studies tutorial that I carried an enormous stack of books higher than my head from Fisher Library back to college to read. I had to keep peering sideways to make sure I wasn’t going to run into anyone!”

Rose readily admits that Sydney gave her the courage to think internationally in a way few other institutions could. She rates the opportunities for international travel as among her best university experiences. During her studies, she was part of the Department of Geography’s South East Asian field school along the Mekong Delta, and in her final year she went on exchange to Cornell University in upstate New York.

“One of the best things about the University of Sydney,” she says, “is that it really does encourage you to get a global education”.

“The people I met and the groups I was involved in at Sydney — especially through the Arts and Social Sciences faculty — gave me the confidence and the networks to be able to forge my own path”.

This young woman with an international presence, a trophy cabinet brimming with accolades, a passion for environmental activism, and a resume that now requires a wheelbarrow for transportation, looks back fondly at her time at the University of Sydney as enabling all of these ambitions.

“Studying Arts at Sydney opens your eyes to the fact that there’s a whole world out there with infinite possibilities, and gives you the skills you need to go and do just about anything!”
“Studying Arts at Sydney opens your eyes to the fact that there’s a whole world out there with infinite possibilities, and gives you the skills you need to go and do just about anything!”

ANNA ROSE
ALUMNA, ARTS/LAW
Our Research Centres and Groups

Research in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences extends across a diverse range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, embracing traditional, emerging and cross-disciplinary subjects. Our staff enjoy international reputations in their chosen fields, reflected in the high level of publications - books, articles, chapters and conference papers - generated by faculty academics each year.

Many of our students choose to undertake higher degrees in research in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences because of its international reputation and the many different areas of study available. Students may choose from the following list of subject areas available within the faculty:

- Anthropology
- Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Archaeology
- Art History and Film Studies
- Asian Studies
- Buddhist Studies
- Celtic Studies
- Chinese Studies
- Classics and Ancient History
- Creative Writing
- Digital Cultures
- Economics
- English
- French Studies
- Gender and Cultural Studies
- Germanic Studies
- Government and International Relations
- Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies
- History
- Indian Subcontinental Studies
- International and Comparative Literary Studies
- International Security Studies
- Italian Studies
- Japanese Studies
- Korean Studies
- Linguistics
- Media and Communications
- Medieval Studies
- Modern Greek
- Museum Studies
- Peace and Conflict Studies
- Performance Studies
- Philosophy
- Political Economy
- Public Administration
- Sociology and Social Policy
- South East Asian Studies
- Spanish and Latin American Studies
- Studies in Religion
- US Studies

To find out more information about each of the subject areas listed, visit the faculty website: sydney.edu.au/arts/future_students/postgraduate_research.shtml

Centres and Groups

The faculty’s affiliated centres enhance the University’s role as an internationally recognised centre of excellence. The faculty is a lively and diverse research community that contributes to postgraduate and postdoctoral training. Our centres and groups include:

Research Centres
- Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
- Centre for Time
- Sydney Centre for the Foundations of Science
- Australian Centre for Asian Art and Archaeology
- Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia
- Centre for International Security Studies
- Medieval and Early Modern Centre

Research Groups

Collaborative Research Scheme Projects
This scheme was initiated in order to promote new collaborative research projects that would encourage colleagues across schools (and indeed
The Language and Identity Research Group
This group brings together a range of key researchers with shared interests in aspects of linguistics and identity, working across the School of Languages and Cultures, the School of Letters, Art and Media and the Faculty of Education and Social Work. The network formalises and extends existing collaborative projects, grant applications and higher degree research supervision.

The Surveillance and Everyday Life Research Group
This group brings together a number of early career, mid career and distinguished scholars across the faculty – and wider university community – to critically and collaboratively examine the everyday production and experience of surveillance, an issue of rapidly increasing social, historical, political, economic and local-global significance.

Treaty Implementation and the Creation of Domestic Political venues Research Project
This project will analyse the implementation patterns of three international treaties: the World Heritage Convention (environmental), the UN Refugee Convention (human rights), and UN Convention Against Corruption (governance); in Australia, Canada, and the United States.

To find out more about our research centres and groups, visit: sydney.edu.au/arts/research/research_groups.shtml
A team of history scholars in 2010 took out major international prizes for their work on the website *Digital Harlem*. The team, consisting of Associate Professor Stephen Robertson and Professors Shane White and Stephen Garton, were winners of the American Historical Association’s Roy Rosenzweig Prize for Innovation in Digital History 2010; and the American Library Association’s ABC-CLIO Online History Award 2010.

**ELECTIONS AS FELLOWS OF ACADEMIES**

In October 2010 Professor Catherine Waldby from the Department of Sociology and Social Policy, was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia in recognition of her outstanding contribution to scholarship in her field in Australia and internationally. She researches the social studies of biomedicine and the life sciences.

Three of the faculty’s most prominent names were elected fellows of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 2010.

Professor of Modern History, Alison Bashford, who recently held the chair in Australian Studies at Harvard University, was elected for her distinguished work in the fields of medical, legal and social history.

Alison Betts, Associate Professor in Western Asian Archaeology (but also Chair of the Department of Archeology, and Director of the Central Asian Programme), was elected for her work into the prehistory of West Asia and the early history of Central Asia.

Finally, Professor of Philosophy and ARC Professorial Fellow Moira Gatens, was elected for her internationally renowned research into social and political philosophy, particularly in feminist philosophy and her study of the work of the Dutch philosopher Spinoza. Professor Gatens is already a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (since being elected in 1999), and recently held the prestigious Spinoza Chair at the University of Amsterdam.

**AWARDS FOR ACADEMIC BOOKS**

The most recent Ludwik Fleck Prize, which celebrates the best book in science and technology studies each year, was awarded to Professor Warwick Anderson, whose interfaculty expertise straddles History, Science and Medicine. His winning book, *The Collectors of Lost Souls: Turning Kuru Scientists into Whitemen*, was named at the annual meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science in Tokyo in September 2010.

In 2009, our researchers took out a trifecta of major prizes in the various state Premiers’ Awards. Professor Anderson’s aforementioned book also gained the major prize at the NSW Premier’s History Awards. This multi-award-winning book tells the true story of a mysterious virus that caused muscle weakness, tremors, loss of all coordination and ultimately death in the Fore people, in New Guinea’s remote highlands.

Professor of History and Australian Professorial Fellow Iain McCalman was awarded the Western Australian Premier’s Book Award for non-fiction, for his book *Darwin’s Armada*. In it, McCalman threads together the stories of the key biological thinkers who surrounded Darwin prior to his publication of *On the Origin of Species*.

Dr Clare Corbould from the Department of History was awarded the Victorian Premier’s Prize for a first book in history. The judges hailed *Becoming African Americans* as “one of the most engaging and important books on the Harlem Renaissance in years”.


This publication was produced by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Marketing Unit and features photography by David Lawrey and Kate Mayor. Profile contributors: Emily Jones, Callie Henderson, James Mackay and Hamish Boland-Rudder.