A IVth Year Honours thesis is about 18,000 words based on original research and exposition by the student. It is examined at a professional standard. Students also complete units of study in the IVth year Honours. Many are enrolled in combined award courses.

Honours graduates from Government and International Relations have gone on to careers as problem solvers in public service, international affairs, public policy and administration, consultancy, journalism and media, lobbying organisations – domestic and international, and more.

Recent graduates have been employed by Aristocrat Technologies, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Federal Police, Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority, Bearing Point, BT Financial Group, Citi-Group, Clayton Utz, Clubs NSW, Commonwealth Bank, Department of Defence, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Housing NSW, Elektroskandia AB, Fox Communications, GHC entertainment, HarperCollins, Macquarie Group, NSW Parliament House, RailCorp, SBS Television, Westpac Banking, and World Vision.

Many graduates pursue a post-graduate degree shortly after graduation. Honours Graduates in Government comprise a long list of distinguished contributors to Australian society and its place in the region and the world. They contribute to all walks of life.

Previous panellists at Best and Brightest have been Rhodes Scholars, Menzies Fellows and have pursued higher degrees at Harvard University, Oxford University, Yale University, and the University of Sydney. A former panellist is now a documentary film-maker in London, a senior advisor to a cabinet minister, a portfolio manager at a major accounting firm, an ABC producer, and several are legal practitioners.
For the first time in the post-World War 2 era, the number of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people worldwide has exceeded 50 million people. The Australian government’s harsh immigration laws which regulate asylum seeker boat arrivals result in their indefinite detention beyond the territorial and legal boundaries of the state. A situation arises in which fundamental human rights are suspended and human dignity is threatened.

Drawing upon the political thought of Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, this thesis examines different modes of power and the relationship between sovereignty, rights, and outsiders. These developments are applied to the present situation of the Australian asylum detention regime.

It will be shown how and why human rights are afforded only when aligned with the national interests of a sovereign state. Detainees in Australian immigration respond to the plight of being cast beyond the pale of the law in resisting state power through violent acts of self-harm. The emancipatory possibilities from power through embodied resistance are analysed through the underexplored first person, experiential perspective. Self-harm-as-resistance for politically and legally excluded detainees is revealed to be severely circumscribed by the lack of a truly public realm. Consequently, their reinstatement as rights-bearing individuals is left hanging in the balance.
The sexual abuse of children by clerics within the Roman Catholic Church has received considerable community and scholarly attention. Most commonly, this scholarship has sought to diagnose the origins, scale and typology of the abuse of children by individual clerics. However, arguably the most significant implication of this crisis is in regards to the failure of Catholic Church officials to manage disclosures of evidence of clerical sexual abuse. This thesis accounts for this failure of Church authorities to appropriately disclose matters which are evidently criminal to civil structures of law enforcement.

In approaching this problem, this thesis tests three discrete hypotheses: (i) that the individual agency and autonomy of Catholic Church decision makers lead to their ‘cover up’ of disclosures of clerical sexual abuse; (ii) that the Catholic Church created structures for the management of disclosures of clerical sexual abuse which inherently reduced the likelihood that allegations would be disclosed to civil authorities; and (iii) that the Catholic Church encompassed formal and informal organisational cultures which constrained the agency of Church officials, providing meaningful disincentives to the reporting of disclosures of child sexual abuse.

Through a comparative study of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Republic of Ireland, this third explanation will be shown to be the most persuasive. In reaching this conclusion, this thesis will draw substantially upon institutionalist literature to interrogate this complex relationship between the Catholic Church and the state.

This thesis benefits immensely from evidence brought forward by the ongoing Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and various commissions of inquiry into particular dioceses in Ireland.

This thesis shifts away from speculative journalism about the relocation of Myanmar’s purpose-built capital, Nay Pyi Taw (2005), towards an academic critique of the built form of the city, and the political context in which it was constructed. This combination has received less attention to date but offers a considerably larger window through which to explore the regime responsible for its construction – the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), formerly known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) – which ruled Myanmar from 1988 to 2011.

It advances the argument that Nay Pyi Taw was built as part of a systematic programme to legitimise the military’s position in government during a period of ideological change, and to hedge against an existential, rather than irrational, threat of civil unrest. Focusing on its monuments, architecture and urban plan, the capital is interpreted as a stage on which the SLORC/SPDC could craft a new image of itself as a progressive regime with a cultural entitlement to military rule.

In Murray Edelman’s terms, Nay Pyi Taw can be considered a “political setting” (1964), a symbolic stage designed expressly to capture an audience’s attention and to “screen out” alternative voices. The SLORC/SPDC’s rule is also exercised through more subtle tactics that underpin the configuration of spaces in the new capital. Focusing on precedents for the design of Nay Pyi Taw, this thesis traces a shift in the forms of power deployed by the regime’s military elites.
This thesis provides insight into the emergence and impact of income management in Australia – a controversial policy that has wide-reaching public and political support, but lacks supporting evidence and is heavily opposed by the communities it affects.

This thesis analyses the policy in two ways. First, by observing its origins in the neoliberal paradigm that has dominated Australian social policy. It explores this paradigm in contrast to evidence that structural barriers to unemployment exist, and that a policy of income management is not an effective solution to such problems.

Second, by undertaking a discourse analysis of political rhetoric and the results of interviews done with community representatives, this thesis tracks the key themes that dominate concerns about income management, and demonstrates how the intentions and values espoused by political elites are not met by the effects of the policy on the ground.

It concludes by showing that political perceptions of unemployment and welfare are shaped by a powerful neoliberal paradigm, rather than the lived experiences articulated by communities.

Consequently, support for income management thrives, despite the fact that it is a policy that is expensive, ineffective, and causes further harm to already vulnerable communities.

At the 2014 European Parliamentary elections in the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) became the first political party in over one hundred years to finish ahead of the Conservatives and Labour at a national election.

Despite similarities with the far right parties that have come to permeate European politics over the last decade, UKIP’s rhetoric is considered too moderate and the party’s ideology too oriented around Euroscepticism to be a member of the far right party family. However the literature has failed to develop a clear definition of the Western European far right party family’s essential characteristics.

This thesis develops an integrated three-step definition of the party family and uses it to argue UKIP is a member of the far right party family. First, it explores the construction of British political space and the opportunity this has created for UKIP. Second, it conducts a content analysis of UKIP’s ideology through ten election manifestos.

Third, UKIP’s issue framing is analysed to understand how UKIP strategically connects its internal ideology with its opportunity in political space. The thesis concludes that UKIP is a member of the far right party family as its more moderate rhetoric is explained by the nation specific institutions within its opportunity structure.
IVth Year Honours
Other theses from 2014

Bernadette Aniva
One Nation Under Drones: Securitization and the Rise of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as America’s New Extraordinary Measure

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles—commonly known as drones, have become an integral part of America’s counterterrorism program. Their increased usage by President Obama marks the conclusion of President Bush’s Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and the beginning of a new era in which drones are instead used to combat terrorism. By utilizing the Copenhagen school’s securitization theory, this paper will contribute to current understandings of security and securitization theory.

Through a comparison of the macrosecuritization of President Bush and the securitization of President Obama, this thesis will provide credence to the argument that securitization theory must have a deeper appreciation of the agency of the audience, particularly in relation to extraordinary means and desecuritization.

This thesis will demonstrate that the higher the cost imposed on an audience through an extraordinary measure, the harder it will be to achieve support for prior to, and during, the undertaking of an extraordinary measure.

Lexie Bucholtz
Private Authority and Disney: It’s a Small World After All?

The development and use of private authority in cultural globalization is under-investigated. Addressing this, I will ask how one key private actor, The Walt Disney Company, perceives its authority in cultural globalization. Guided by three overlapping ideas; private authority, cultural globalization and discursive power, I will investigate how Disney defines its global footprint and how this has evolved between the mid-1990s and 2013. This will reveal three major findings that extend Norris and Inglehart’s (2009) firewall theory from societies to the corporation.

First, Disney defines its identity in a way that gradually presents an interest in reflecting its global audience. Second, Disney progressively understands its global footprint as pervasive and deterritorialised. Third, Disney has developed a growing sense of cosmopolitan private authority. Together, these findings will illustrate that Disney has lowered its firewall and transformed its identity to shape a global footprint that reflects global cultures. Countering the cultural imperialism thesis, this means that Disney has responded to globalization by defining and self-governing its cultural influence as a cosmopolitan agent of globalisation.

Candice Gillmore
Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Nationalism, Economic Interdependence and the 2012 Senkaku/Diaoyu Island Conflict

While trade and investment between China and Japan has, in the past, been responsible for preventing the historical and ideological grievances over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands from escalating into a militarized interstate dispute, sustained economic growth, expansion of trade ties with other states and regions and diversification of its economy have both led both political elites and the public in China to place less value on the economic relationship with Japan.

Since the mid-1990s the primary goal of China’s foreign policy has been to achieve great power status in order to restore the country’s national pride. This goal has increasingly brought the history issue into the foreground and the Chinese government is tying the historical and ideological grievances with Japan.

The confluence of the decreased importance of the economic relationship with Japan and the CCP’s pursuit of national pride is causing it to place disproportionate importance on a tiny uninhabited group of rocks which have particular resonance in the public imagination because of their symbolic connection to the two nation’s war memory.

The thesis argues that these three factors have a causally multiplicative and resonating influence on each other. In response to this situation theorists have sought to grapple with the politics and practises of particular forms of urban security. Four of these – ‘New Military Urbanism’, ‘Algorithmic Security’, ‘Resilience’ and ‘Time–Spaces of Emergency’ are examined. As heterogeneous clusters of polices, actors, technologies, practises, programs, institutions, and approaches, which come together in unpredictable ways, these accounts of urban security suggest the value of considering security responses as ‘assemblages’. This concepts allows for the analysis of the heterogeneity and complexity of urban security responses, and the investigation of the relations between elements and their importance within the assemblage.
Stephen Ke
The Productivity Commission and the Car Industry: The Power of Neoliberal Ideas and Discourse

Since the 1960s, Australia’s long-standing protectionist industry policies have slowly been phased out in favour of a neoliberal policy paradigm. Although many studies address the reasons behind the historic rise of neoliberal policies in Australia, there has been comparatively little research into how neoliberal policies are formed by our government institutions. Employing a discursive institutionalist framework of analysis, this thesis examines the way in which the Productivity Commission constructs neoliberal policies for the car industry.

Firstly, the study investigates the evolution of the Commission’s institutional structures, and illustrates how neoliberal ideas came to be embedded within them.

Secondly, the thesis shows how the Commission constantly constructs and reconstructs neoliberal ideas through normative and cognitive discourses. In doing so, this thesis demonstrates how both institutional structures and thought processes of agents must be considered in order to reveal how ideas inform policy-making.

Aun Qi Koh
The Unbearable Heaviness of Symbols: Culture and Semiotics in the Cultural Revolution

This thesis intends to explore two issues: Mao’s intentions in launching a revolution in the cultural arena through the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution, and the role of culture in the Cultural Revolution itself. This thesis will address these questions through an interpretivist social semiotic analysis employing primary documents such as photographs, paintings and films, as well as interviews and experiences captured within tertiary sources.

Through symbols, the use of culture in constructing the early official myths of the People’s Republic of China will be examined. The subsequent rise of competing symbols that demonstrated political support Mao’s subordinates, and as a form of dissent against the existing regime, will demonstrate how the cultural arena served as a channel for political conflict to be aired. Mao’s previous attempts at revolutions in culture will also be highlighted.

The Cultural Revolution provided an opportunity for Mao to use culture to unseat his political rivals, reinforce the masses’ personal loyalty to himself, and use new cultural mediums to rejuvenate the construction of socialism in China. However, Mao’s effectiveness in dominating the cultural arena during the Cultural Revolution will be questioned by through the use of an ‘evocative transcript’ by society to subvert prevailing symbols. It is hoped that this thesis contributes to existing research by adding a further layer to literature on the origins of the Cultural Revolution, and showing how semiotics provides a method for analyzing the role of culture in politics.

Jackson Kwok
A Fragile Stability: Re-Evaluating China’s Maritime Disputes

This thesis explores the considerations of the People’s Republic of China in its negotiations over two of its maritime disputes. It attempts to better understand the uneasy stability present in the region by testing three hypotheses against relevant qualitative and quantitative data, including a number of Chinese-language sources. It compares and contrasts two case studies: (1) the Spratly Islands dispute between the PRC and the Philippines, and; (2) the Senkaku / Diaoyu Islands dispute between the PRC and Japan.

This thesis approaches the dilemma using a cost-benefit analysis, though also considers theories and arguments from other schools within the study of International Relations. It finds that while current explanations regarding stability remain relevant, they need to be revised in light of these two most recent case studies. The result is suggests the current stability is more fragile than previous scholars have claimed.

Anna Lorigan
Winning Medals or Winning Minds? Olympic Success as a Mechanism for Nation Building in China and The USA

This thesis assesses the role that Olympic-related discourse has on the construction and strengthening of national pride in China and the USA. Both states exhibit similar preoccupations with achieving Olympic success; yet operate under opposing political systems. All states require the development of a collective sense of identity amongst their people in order to strengthen their legitimacy and ensure their survival.

The Olympics facilitates this process by creating an arena in which states can measure their national prowess against that of others which in turn allows for the development of national pride. The construction of political narratives, which connect sporting success with national ideals, enables the USA and China to express their own unique illustrations of national pride in a very similar way. Having analysed the media discourse surrounding sport in both states, this thesis concludes that the media plays an integral role in fusing sporting achievement and national pride in the USA and China.
Abigail McCarthy

Examsing the Securitisation of Tuberculosis in Public Policy in Australia

Securitisation theory is a vital tool in understanding how ‘security issues’ are constructed in public policy. Exposing a variety of non-traditional (non-military) threats to the impacts of a security frame, the process of securitisation has profound effects on the treatment of a ‘threat’, by silencing opposition, and allocating greater political and financial resources to its management. However, securitisation is not applied to all issues equally, with diseases, in particular, noted for the inconsistencies in their securitisation.

This dissertation contrasts the securitisation of communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and pandemic influenza, against that of Tuberculosis (TB) within Australia. Arguing that TB is a significant threat that has the potential to be securitised, it determines that securitisation has not occurred within domestic policy discourse. Utilising peer-reviewed journal articles, grey literature including Australian Government publications, media reports, and semi-structured interviews, the explanations for this failure are subsequently explored. Contributing to both understandings of TB in Australian policy debates and securitisation theory, this dissertation holds significance for current critiques of securitisation, and for understanding the ‘felicity of conditions’ required for securitisation, first highlighted by theorists Buzan, Wæver and Wilde.

Joseph McDonald

Unconventional Gas, Unconventional Movement: Political Diversity within the Movement against Unconventional Gas in Australia

Recent years have seen the growth of a remarkable social movement in Australian political and social life. The grassroots movement against unconventional gas is acclaimed for its unique diversity: young and old, urban and rural, farmers and environmentalists. This thesis seeks to account for the political diversity within this living, breathing movement, by examining the movement in the localised settings of the Northern Rivers and North West regions of New South Wales.

It will identify and explain the factors that are motivating people from diverse political backgrounds to mobilise against unconventional gas. This thesis finds that the movement participants are responding to a specific combination of common grievances, which include threats posed by a broad range of risks, environmental injustice, and government illegitimacy. These are unifying motivators, even though different people might experience them in different ways.

The diversity of people and the messages within this movement are already transforming citizen participation in Australian democracy, human interaction with the environment, and citizen expectations for the legitimate functioning of the state.

Angus McKenzie-Wills

Major Players in Minority Governments: A Comparative Study of Australian Hung Parliaments

The 2010 Australian Federal Election resulted in the first hung Commonwealth Parliament for almost seventy years. While this was unfamiliar territory for the House of Representatives, since 1989, every state and territory in Australia has experienced a hung parliament.

This thesis compares two minority governments in Australia formed under the conditions of a hung parliament; the Greiner/Fahey Coalition Government in NSW from 1991-1995 and the Gillard/Rudd Commonwealth Government from 2010-2013. In both contexts, the independent and minor party parliamentarians entered into formal agreements with a major party in order for them to form government.

These agreements saw the major parties commit to implementing a number of policies that would go on to significantly impact the legislative agendas of both governments. The parliamentary reforms introduced as part of the two government’s agreements with the crossbench members resulted in legislation being effectively examined, scrutinized and amended. This comparative study examines the important role the crossbenchers played in the structure and function of these two minority governments.

Joseph Miller

The Village People: Examining Localism & Change in the City of Sydney

Local government is a crucial cog in the structure of the Australian Federation. Its role is felt at the most fundamental level and is often the most significant layer of government in relation to the everyday lived experience of individuals. In the Australian context, local government bodies have long been subordinate to both State and Federal governments.

In the twenty-first century however, Australian local governments are exhibiting an increasingly dynamic role as they attempt to realign their role(s) to suit the demands of a changing constituency. To investigate this phenomenon, this thesis employs the theories of ‘localism’ and ‘place-shaping’ in the context of the City of Sydney with particular reference to its ‘City of Villages’ concept.
Utilising a combination of discourse analysis and elite interviews, this thesis demonstrates the importance of 'place' and representation in regards to the nature of local governance and highlights some of the influences changing governance patterns within the City of Sydney.

Cathy Monro

The 1989 Tiananmen Movement: Understanding Democracy in the Chinese Context

The 1989 Tiananmen Movement was a pivotal moment in China's reform era. The movement has been portrayed as a campaign for Western liberal democracy due to its demands for freedom and democracy. However, despite the numerous studies that have focused on the 1989 Tiananmen Movement, the subject of clarifying the actual understanding of democracy by the participants of the movement has largely been underexplored.

This thesis investigates the understanding of democracy by the movement’s participants and identifies the differences between democracy in the Chinese and the Western contexts. The findings of this thesis contribute to increasing the level of understanding between the cultures.

Christian Myers

Diplomatic Democratisation in Myanmar: Foreign Policy and Regime Type Change in Small States

Since 2011, Myanmar has undergone two radical political transformations. As well as its transition to democratic civilian government, Myanmar has pivoted towards the US, EU and Australia in its foreign policy. Both are monumental shifts, and the close timing and complementarity of these two reforms suggests some kind of relationship between them.

This thesis uses Myanmar, Taiwan and Cuba to identify an unexamined dynamic in small state foreign policy; namely, how they can change their internal political systems as a means of achieving foreign policy objectives, in a strategy this author has termed ‘diplomatic democratisation/autocratisation’. Because of their material weaknesses, small states rely on external balancing to ameliorate a high balance of threat. Diplomatic democratisation/autocratisation involves a small state changing its regime type to overcome its soft power deficits and facilitate diplomacy.

In demonstrating this strategy, this thesis also makes a minor secondary conceptual contribution to international relations by examining how domestic divisions in small states can amplify and be amplified by external threats.

Helen Oh

When Celebrity Policy Entrepreneurship is Not Good Enough: Inter-Country Adoption Policy in Australia

There are times when even the most effective policy entrepreneurs are unable to induce punctuated periods of substantive and accelerated policy reform. This paper finds one such case in Deborra-Lee Furness’s policy entrepreneurship pertaining to Australia’s intercountry adoption policy.

Three possible explanations are posited to examine the disjuncture between Furness’s efficacy in agenda-setting arena and the lack of corresponding policy outcome. Firstly, the possibility of symbolic policy decisions resulting from positive yet powerless construction of adoptive parents is considered. Secondly, the effect of anti-separationist bureaucratic discretion on policy outcome is explored. Thirdly, the impact of the stolen generations narrative on Australia’s current intercountry adoption policy decisions is examined.

In conclusion, it is argued that Furness’s efficacy in the agenda-setting arena has not translated into a greater number of intercountry adoption due to the past Australian governments’ involvement in unethical adoption practices casting a heavy shadow on the present government’s ability to introduce policy that actively promotes adoption.

Antony Paul

Micro Parties, Front Parties And Gaming The System: The Formation, Characteristics and Electoral Strategies of Parties at the 2013 Senate Election

The 2013 Senate election was a watershed for micro parties in Australia. A record 50 non-major parties contested the election, and almost one third of Australian voted for them. As micro parties settle into Senate representation, policy and public debate. The unprecedented results of 2013 have been termed illegitimate amid claims that spurious micro parties formed to harvest preferences and game the electoral system. But what is a micro party? The concept is widespread in the public sphere but almost entirely absent from scholarly literature.

This thesis examines the parties of the 2013 election to inductively analyse the concept of a micro party. Particular attention is paid to the features that scholars have consistently emphasised in their examination of political parties. These include why micro parties form, their organisational structures, ideologies, and electoral strategies. It presents new empirical research grounded in detailed interviews conducted with micro party elites. It finds that micro parties are much like other parties, with small; the differences from minor and major parties are of size rather than kind.
Micro parties are as diverse as other political parties. The empirical data presented in this thesis helps us better understand Australia’s party system and the role of micro parties within it. The work informs our scholarly understanding of these parties and the ongoing policy debate on a subject about which little is currently known.

**Timothy Slow**


This study assesses the Chinese Communist Party’s reforms to healthcare under President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao (2003–2012). Given the People’s Republic of China’s highly decentralised governance structure, its expansive landmass and huge population, this study focuses on the reforms’ impact on spatial inequalities.

From a macro-level perspective, it finds some signs of improvement to China’s health status, the affordability of medical care, health infrastructure and utilisation of medical services. However, these trends do not play out consistently in Jiangsu, Shanxi and Gansu – three provinces that represent China’s uneven economic development. It concludes that provinces with greater economic and political resources benefited the most from the reforms. That is, the central government must do more to ensure that central policy is more uniformly implemented by sub-national governments.

**Kate Steggles**

Stability and the Cold War: The Role of Reconnaissance Satellites 1959–1972

The Cold War has had a profound impact on the world and reconnaissance satellites had a profound impact on the Cold War. This thesis seeks to examine the role of reconnaissance satellites in the maintenance of stability between the superpowers during the Cold War, specifically focusing on the years from 1959 to 1972.

This paper draws much of its assumptions and explanations from the realist theoretical framework. It is argued that the anarchic nature of the system influenced the way in which the U.S. and the USSR understood security and consequently their interactions with each other. The phenomena of the security dilemma and the arms race are used to explain the development of reconnaissance satellites during the 1950s and 1960s and why they were initially used as a means of strategic intelligence to increase relative power. Through an analysis of the 1961 Berlin Crisis and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis it becomes evident that in order to avoid an all-out nuclear conflict between the U.S. and the USSR a mechanism for creating trust between the superpowers was needed.

Further, game theory demonstrates that even with a mutual interest in arms restraint the U.S. and USSR continued to compete with each other until a means for unilateral verification of arms control agreements could be found. It is argued in this paper that reconnaissance satellites provided the unique features that were necessary to create trust between the superpowers and ensure defection from agreements could be detected. It is therefore the central argument of this thesis that reconnaissance satellites developed during the 1950s and made operational in the 1960s were the most crucial factor contributing to the ability of the U.S. and the USSR to cooperate on nuclear arms control. Consequently, stability was established with a balance of power that recognised the importance of strategic deterrence based on mutual second-strike capability.

**Ned Talbot**

Marketing Self-Determination: A Comparative Study of Independence Movements in East Timor and West Papua

The purpose of this thesis is to address the difference in support for independence movements in East Timor and West Papua. The significance of this research is evident in the history of the two movements: despite having fought for independence for almost the same period of time, the issue in West Papua has until recently fallen on deaf ears internationally. In a novel application of social movement framing, I argue that a major variable that differentiates the two movements is their ability to market themselves and build subsequent coalitions of support with civil society groups at home and abroad.

By reframing the goals of the movement to appeal to liberal norms of human rights coupled with nonviolent means of resistance, the East Timorese were able to tap public sympathy, thus mobilising support for their cause. In comparison, a similar movement in West Papua has been less successful in making this transformation, although signs recently show that some factions are trying to copy the success of East Timor. This research fills a gap in the literature not only in that it attempts to compare the characteristics of the separate movements, but it also seeks to explain why some transnational social movements gain recognition and support, while others go unnoticed.

**Alexander Thalis**

Russia’s Relations with the West After the Cold War

This thesis examines Russia’s foreign relations with the West in the post-Cold War period. The aims of this study are twofold. Firstly, drawing on Wendtian constructivism, this thesis will trace the emergence and evolution of Russia’s identity after 1991 and use this variable to explain Russia’s behaviour. Secondly, this thesis will test and evaluate Wendt’s theory and suggest some minor refinements.

In accordance with Wendt’s theory, this thesis finds that Russia’s “personal” and “role” identities have been the crucial determinants of its behaviour. Russia’s personal identity was Western from 1991–6, but shifted to being that of a great power thereafter. Russia’s
role identity has fluctuated between friend, quasi-adversary and adversary of the West. Following this analysis, two revisions to Wendt’s theory are suggested. Firstly, Wendt’s theory would be improved by the adoption of a broader nomenclature to describe states’ role identities. Secondly, Wendt wrongly disregards the role that leadership and domestic politics can play in the construction of a state’s role identity.

Nicole Tooby

Between Changing Tides: Lake Cathie and Sea Level Rise - Testing the Margins of Coastal Management Policy

In 2008, owners of 17 beachfront properties in Lake Cathie were alarmed to discover that their local Council was considering the demolition of their houses without compensation, as a response to identified erosion risk.

Over the next of four years, these residents mobilized through the grassroots ‘Save Lake Cathie’ movement and succeeded in gaining widespread public support for the protection of their homes. The empirical case study presented in this thesis highlights the polarizing debate that revolves around ‘retreat’ from sea-level rise threats as it is implemented, on the ground, in Australia’s coastal communities. From the Lake Cathie narrative much broader lessons are crystalized to reveal the role that local voices play in shaping climate change adaptation from both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ official channels of public participation.

John Tsaousidis

Good Enough? Bounded Rationality, Cognitive Dissonance and the Iran Hostage Rescue Mission

Hostage crises are amongst the most difficult challenges a democratic leader can face, short of war. As such the 1979-80 Iranian Hostage Crisis, in particular Carter’s ill-fated decision to attempt a rescue operation, has attracted significant interest and been explained in many ways. Although it is clear a number of factors shaped Carter’s decision, most explanations only focus on a variable or two. This thesis therefore aims to explain Carter’s attempt to release the hostages with military force by integrating the range of factors that influenced the decision into a single model. It specifically finds and concludes that the various factors that shaped Carter’s decision combine to conform to a model of bounded rationality, followed by an unconscious effort to overcome cognitive dissonance.

Carter therefore behaved sub-rationally first in searching for, and making, a satisfactory rather than optimal decision, and secondly in attempting to dispel the dissonance generated by a logical challenge to his decision.

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Kim Van Vu

The Residential Segregation of Second-Generation Vietnamese-Australians: The Impact of Prime Minister John Howard’s Multicultural Policy

Between 1996 and 2007, the Australian federal government ended decades of bipartisan support for multiculturalism. Prime Minister John Howard introduced an ‘Australian Multiculturalism’ policy, which emphasised an overriding commitment to Australian culture and values and markedly prioritised Anglo-Saxon culture.

This thesis investigates the effect of the Howard government’s multicultural policies upon the housing decisions of second-generation Vietnamese-Australians. As this previously unstudied population reached maturity during the Howard era, it offers a useful case study for analysing the capacity of federal government multicultural policies to affect immigrants’ settlement patterns. The findings suggest that the policies did not directly influence the studied population’s housing decisions.

The research found a significant implementation deficit. This resulted from local organisations choosing to prioritise their social responsibility to the community over any formal responsibilities to the Commonwealth’s funding bodies. Further, the policies’ limited effects upon organisations did not subsequently affect the studied population. However, the stated policies and Howard’s rhetoric did indirectly influence some second-generation Vietnamese-Australians by encouraging discrimination by the media and the public.

Finally, personal factors including familial and cultural attachments were the main influences upon housing decisions. Overall, the complex nature of the decision-making processes of renters and buyers limited the Commonwealth’s capacity to influence the settlement patterns of second-generation Vietnamese-Australians.

Jordan Welsh

Experts in Decision-Making: A Case Study of the Proposed Abbot Point Port Expansion

In January 2014 the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) authorised the sea dumping of 3 million cubic metres of dredge spoil in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park associated with the Abbot Point port expansion. In September 2014, after significant community opposition, the proponents decided to consider alternatives to avoid the permitted sea dumping. The controversy centred on speculation that scientists had been overruled within GBRMPA, bringing into question the role that scientists play in the decision-making process. Using this case example, this thesis examines the role of the expert in the decision-making process and political outcome of GBRMPA’s permission of the sea dumping.
It investigates the knowledge flows and policy networks informing the decision; evidence of regulatory capture and the closed nature of decision-making; and the mobilisation of an oppositional social movement. The research utilises interviews with key-informants, content analysis and participant observation. It finds that the expert is a peripheral actor in the decision-making process in this case for two reasons: the barriers in the relationship between experts and the primary decision-maker, constraining knowledge exchange; and the nature of power distribution among stakeholders, producing regulatory capture and political interference.

Further, the thesis finds the lack of input from experts decreased the legitimacy of the decision, creating a political opportunity for a popular oppositional movement. As such, the expert has multiple roles in decision-making, namely providing knowledge and political legitimacy, depending on their utilisation by other actors such as governance structures or social movements. This is an important finding regarding future governance of the Reef to achieve knowledge-based management and political consistency. It also highlights several problematic areas in the governance structure that require further research.

Yie Yu

**Balancing Acts: Liberty vs. Security in the Post-9/11 Preventative Detention of Suspected Terrorists in the United States and Australia**

The age-old paradox between simultaneously maintaining civil liberties and national security has only assumed increasing prominence since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. However, a review of the literature indicates that few existing studies have adequately addressed the underlying factors causing the post-9/11 counterterrorism policies of liberal democratic states, with the same threat trigger and desire to ensure national security, to vary so significantly.

This thesis addresses the gap by undertaking a comparative analysis of the due process protections in the preventative detention of suspected terrorists in the United States and Australia between 2001 and 2008, the period during which the majority of modern terrorist attacks took place, and counterterrorism policy made.

The findings indicate that the dominant pre-existing arguments have limited explanatory value when applied independently. Policy deviation between the U.S. and Australia is therefore the result of the interaction between threat perception, constitutional structure, legal framework and public opinion.

Previous Panelists

Aishwarrya Balaji

**Movement Institutionalisation in India: The ‘Hanging Sword’ Over Grassroots Mobilisation**

The mainstream Indian women’s movement is characterised by an urban, upper-class, upper-caste agenda with a marginal capacity for generating grassroots participation. The less prominent Dalit movement has, in contrast, developed an inclusive agenda with strong community level organisation. The Political Process model of mobilisation is unable to contend with this contrast because it fails to reflect the pre-eminence of the state in movement mobilisation in India.

This study locates the grassroots mobilising capacity of the women’s movement and the Dalit movement in the tendency of the former to work in partnership with the urban, upper-caste, Hindu-nationalist government, and the tendency of the latter to resist co-option to remain independent.

This study develops a multi-layered index for conceptualising the membership’s role beyond the formal selection process, analysing a wider range of consequential party rules and using qualitative research to ascertain how pre-selection works in practice.

The age-old paradox between simultaneously maintaining civil liberties and national security has only assumed increasing prominence since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. However, a review of the literature indicates that few existing studies have adequately addressed the underlying factors causing the post-9/11 counterterrorism policies of liberal democratic states, with the same threat trigger and desire to ensure national security, to vary so significantly.

This thesis addresses the gap by undertaking a comparative analysis of the due process protections in the preventative detention of suspected terrorists in the United States and Australia between 2001 and 2008, the period during which the majority of modern terrorist attacks took place, and counterterrorism policy made.

The findings indicate that the dominant pre-existing arguments have limited explanatory value when applied independently. Policy deviation between the U.S. and Australia is therefore the result of the interaction between threat perception, constitutional structure, legal framework and public opinion.

Pat Bateman

**Explaining Variation in the role of the membership in candidate selection: A comparative study of Political Parties in New South Wales**

It is well documented that the role allotted to the membership in the candidate selection process may vary widely over time and between different parties. However, there has been very little research into explaining this variation. The few interpretations that there have been, have not sought to draw general conclusions or systematically integrate potential variables. Methodologically, they have tended to focus on the quantity rather than the quality of participation. This study develops a multi-layered index for conceptualising the membership’s role beyond the formal selection process, analysing a wider range of consequential party rules and using qualitative research to ascertain how pre-selection works in practice.

It develops an analytical model for explaining variation in the membership’s role. When applied to a comparative study of four new south Wales political parties, this model reveals three critical determinants. First, the membership’s role is subject to centripetal electoral pressures, exacerbated by exogenous decline in membership participation. Secondly, organized factions tend
informally to distort the role of active members. Finally, the cultural and structural barriers to the centralization of the process will be determined by a number of party level variables, including the origins, ideology and membership of each party.

The success of this model in understanding variation in the case studies suggests a wider generalisability.

**Madison Cartwright**

**Globalisation: Volkswagen and Ford in South African**

In the modern era of Globalisation, the strategic autonomy of both firms and states is considered to be on the decline. Developing countries such as South Africa are considered to be especially susceptible to the demands of highly mobile and fickle capital. The result is said to be a convergence on neoliberal policies, including in labour relations. However the Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) approach has argued that the modern era of globalisation has seen a continuance of diversity amongst Liberal and Coordinated Market economies.

This diversity, in turn, influences the strategies of firms that are embedded in these economies. Using a case study in a VoC analysis, this thesis will show that Volkswagen and Ford retain the industrial relations strategies of their home economies, even when operating in institutional environments considered to be the most conductive to convergence; Export Processing Zones in a developing country (in this case South Africa). The thesis thus illustrates the path dependency of firms in their multinational operations.

**Cindy Chen**

**Singing for Europe: Nation branding of Baltic states in transition at the Eurovision Song Contest**

This thesis will examine the Eurovision Song Contest as a tool for nation branding, specifically the Baltic transition states of Estonia and Latvia in the early 2000s. In academia, much has been made of Eurovision’s political influence, cultural salience, international viewership and commercialisation, acknowledging Eurovision as a prime arena for broadcasting messages to an internal and external audience. However, these analyses largely focus on a single portion of the broadcast rather than the entirety of a nation’s involvement in Eurovision, and largely ignore the problem of agency.

This thesis addresses these issues in comprehensively tracing the process of brand creation and Eurovision using the nation branding framework. Interpretivist structural discourse analysis will be used to conduct comparative studies of the winning performances of Estonia and Latvia, as well as the Eurovision shows that they hosted in 2002 and 2003.

Through analysing the agency, interests and strategies of those involved in constructing branding images for Eurovision, this thesis will analyse the strategic goals of transitional states, how they are translated into symbol-laden entertainment, and ultimately the utility of nation branding as a framework for political strategy and scholarly analysis.

**Lisette Collins**

**Implementation Sustainability Policies**

We are now more than halfway through the United Nations’ ‘Decade for Education for Sustainability.’ Universities around the world are working to teach and exemplify sustainable modes of thinking. This thesis is a case study comparison of two universities in Sydney, Australia who have declared a commitment to becoming more sustainable with a view to systemic transformation.

The thesis outlines the different implementation paths of the University of Sydney and Macquarie University and concludes with the presentation of a model to explain the differences in implementation. Through inductive research, based on open-ended interviews, it is understood that the universities have achieved different levels of fulfilment in ‘groundwork factors’ of Vice-Chancellor (VC) support, position in university structure and financial support. These factors are shown to affect the ability of sustainability teams to communicate and promote sustainability visibility on campus.

Further analysis uncovers that Macquarie University has entered a positive capacity cycle that requires the sustainability team to be adaptive in their implementation while the University of Sydney is caught in a negative capacity cycle which stalls implementation.

**Charles Cull**

**Beyond the Short Term: Coal Seam Gas as a Case Study of Political Decision Making in NSW**

The coal seam gas industry presents a vexing problem for policy makers. While it provides certain economic wealth, its operation generates a number of significant risks to water and agriculture that if realised would far outweigh any possible economic benefit.

This thesis investigates what factors have led successive NSW Governments to allow the gradual expansion of the CSG industry in NSW, to the point that it has established a small but significant presence, while uncertainty has remained around its potential long term impacts. Underpinned by normative institutionalism and bounded rationality, this case study will be used to reflect on how the NSW Government’s policy processes could be improved so that future decisions might better reflect long term considerations. It concludes that government must improve its use of foresight and also reconsider its fundamental problem definition.
The Relationship between Temporary Migration and Vulnerability to Climate Change in Rural Vanuatu

It is well documented that New Zealand’s Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) migration scheme is a successful development policy for the Pacific. However, there has been little research that has examined the broader effects of the scheme on community wellbeing. In particular, existing research fails to consider how migration may increase vulnerability to climate change in sending areas. This study develops an analytical model for better understanding the relationship between temporary migration and vulnerability to climate change, and uses qualitative research to ascertain how the relationship works in practice.

Using the case study of Lamen Bay, Vanuatu, it shows that migration does indeed have the ability to increase vulnerability in sending communities.

In Lamen Bay, migration affects a number of contextual factors that influence exposure and the capacity to respond to change including labour supply, food security, migrant attitudes, underdevelopment and institutional viability. While the community is responding to these challenges, this thesis finds these responses are largely unable to mitigate migration-affected vulnerabilities.

United Nations Security Council Reform And New Institutionalism: Power, Path Dependency And Ideas

This thesis analyses why there has been a lack of reform to the UN Security Council’s structure, despite consensus that change is urgently required. In explaining this paradox, the thesis draws on New Institutionalism. This marks the thesis as distinctive, by facilitating analysis of how the Security Council’s status as an institution affects the dynamics of reform.

Initially, it considers the competing claims of two of New Institutionalism’s most prominent sub-schools: Historical and Discursive Institutionalism. They highlight the key themes of power and path dependency, and ideas, respectively. Finding that neither sub-school compellingly accounts for the lack of Security Council reform, the thesis then examines an alternative version of Historical Institutionalism put forward by Stephen Bell. This seeks to integrate Discursive Institutionalism’s idealational focus into Historical Institutionalism’s macro-structures.

Through applying Bell’s insights, the thesis concludes that the lack of Security Council reform owes to an inability to forge the idealational and structural conditions needed to overcome states’ focus on amassing relative power in an anarchic world.

Risk and the Airport: A Political Geography of Sydney International Terminal

Any international airport represents a complex and often unstable organism. It is at once the gateway to city and nation, a node of global mobility, and the site of essential border and security practices. In particular, since the events of 11th September 2001, the airport has emerged as the site of new geo and bio-political practices, while continued increases in global flows of passengers put pressure on airports to work harder than ever.

This thesis takes as its starting point the tension that exists between the different roles of the airport. Using the case study of Sydney International Airport, and drawing on a literature of risk and governmentality, it shall look at the roles of the airport. Using the case study of Sydney International Airport, and drawing on a literature of risk and governmentality, it shall look at the roles of the airport. Using the case study of Sydney International Airport, and drawing on a literature of risk and governmentality, it shall look at the roles of the airport.

In each case it is argued that the central aspect of risk is managed through a security apparatus and spatial logic that both constructs and address a particular mode of subjectivity in the individual passenger: as neoliberal subject, governmental subject and biopolitical subject.

From Neo-conservatism to Neo-Reaganism: The Naturalisation of a Foreign Policy Discourse

Neoliberal foreign policy campaigns fuelled by adulation of Ronald Reagan in the years after his presidency are in contrast to neoconservative criticism of Reagan’s foreign policy during his presidency and in light of this inconsistency I ask how it is that President Reagan came to be a neoconservative idol.

To answer this question, I reconceptualise neoconservatism as a foreign policy discourse and examine how despite Reagan’s more nuanced foreign policy record, a discursive practice of naturalisation has enabled a retrospective neoconservative claim to Reagan’s foreign policy legacy.

My discourse analysis of neo-Reaganism demonstrates the relevance of a discursive approach to studying American foreign policy by showing how discourse can produce a powerful political myth about the role of the United States in the world.
Participatory Governance and the Policy-Making Process: A Study of Community Engagement in the Minto Public Housing Estate Renewal Project

The emergence of participatory governance theory as a lens through which to view the policy-making process has fundamentally challenged the conceptualisations of citizen engagement that are presented in traditional policy cycle models.

Through an in-depth study of the trajectory of community engagement within the Minto Public Housing Estate Renewal Project this thesis seeks to evaluate the differing conceptualisations of community engagement that are offered by public policy and participatory governance theories.

Using primary evidence from 15 in-depth interviews with policy stakeholders and document analysis, it will be asserted that while there are practical and conceptual tensions evident in policy practice, the Minto Renewal Project reveals that the network governance and social constructivist approaches inherent within participatory governance theories are of greater saliency in understanding the complex dynamics of community engagement in estate renewal projects.

Making ideas matter: The Think Tank Phenomenon in Australia

Over the past three decades, independent public policy research institutes, commonly known as think tanks, have proliferated on a global scale. In addition to the increases in their numbers, budgets, staff and the range of activities in which they are involved, think tanks are now widely regarded as having a significant influence on the policymaking process. As in many other countries, this has been the case in Australia where the number of think tanks has more than tripled in the past twenty years. Despite these contemporary developments, however, the so-called ‘think tank phenomenon’ remains a vaguely understood area within political science.

Using original qualitative data obtained by conducting eleven in-depth interviews with senior directors of Australian think tanks combined with a close analysis of think tank publications, this thesis interprets the think tank phenomenon. It establishes that common to all think tanks are several core characteristics related to why they exist, how they view the policy process and how they operate. In line with these characteristics, this thesis advances a theoretical explanation for the think tank phenomenon based on the Argumentative Turn in policy analysis.

In contrast to their traditional image as scientific problem-solvers, think tanks are fundamentally argumentative in nature.

Revolutionary Waves and Parallel Games: Propagation of Revolution in the Arab Spring of 2011

While revolution has been one of the most well-examined topics in the study of politics, the propagation of revolution in revolutionary waves has remained under-theorised. This thesis proposes three modes by which revolution might spread from one country to another. These are: coercive coupling—the effect of one country on the domestic power balance of another; payoff coupling—international effects that reorder the preferences of actors within a state; and strategic coupling—an identification of individuals of one country with the political situation of another country, that revolution in the latter will allow citizens of the former to infer the preferences of their compatriots.

Using game theory, this thesis constructs simple models of revolution to derive five predictions about the nature of a revolutionary wave driven by strategic coupling; political and cultural similarity of countries involved, a pre-existing will to revolt, rapid propagation, decentralisation, and adoption of symbolism of parallel revolutions.

By showing that coercive and payoff coupling were not substantial effects in the propagation of revolution in the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011, and that these revolutions fit the aforementioned five criteria, this thesis proposes that strategic coupling provides a plausible explanation for the spread of revolution in the Arab Spring.

Journalism 2.0: Permutations of power in the virtual newsgame

This paper investigates the propensity for ‘recreational’ newsgames to unsettle professional news paradigms and reappropriate spaces violated by the invasive preoccupations and practices of the news media. Content analyses of news data from Yahoo News, MSNBC, and CNN websites on the Afghanistan War and crime were collated and cross-analysed with related tropes within the games Medal of Honor and Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas. It was found that where the news media dwelled on uncanny, traumatic memories, both national and personal, the games offered a “way home” to destabilised identities through the creation and control of abstract space.

The newsgames were analysed as incorporating players into an imperialism spatial ideology, engaging them in a sovereign project of (re)colonising the gamespace as a metaphor for the private realm. Players became sutured into private narratives visually and viscerally, called upon to personally witness news stories merely profiled in the news, but elucidated and lived in the games.
Lucy Pearson

The responsibility to protect

The thesis analyses the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), whether the doctrine has a future in the workings of the international system as an effective mechanism for conflict resolution and for consensus on issues that surround violations of life, liberty and security of person. The R2P is acknowledged as a very new doctrine that has its fair share of warranted criticism and a long way to go before it becomes customary law in the international system.

Through an in-depth analysis of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), the thesis aimed to highlight the potential of the R2P in addressing modern conflict situations and providing long-standing stability through committed assistance in capacity development. Despite failures in the RAMSI intervention, and the relatively small-scale nature, it stands as a significant success in implementation of the R2P and exemplifies the doctrine’s potential in application.

At its base the R2P demonstrates a powerful normative shift towards the protection of the fundamental human rights of all people, and a shift away from traditional understandings of sovereignty as absolute.

Anya Pounkachanski

Russia, United? The Rise and Rise of the United Russia Party

Since its foundation ten years ago, the United Russia part has obtained a position of unrivalled influence in the Russian political system. This thesis provides a account of the United Russian Party’s ascent and its role in Russian politics. In so doing, it contributes to a theoretical framework for analysing political parties in contemporary authoritarian states.

The argument is that the rise of the United Russia Party entailed a profound restructuring of Russia’s political system from one of shifting and fragmented groupings to one of centralized, vertical control through the Party.

The means used to achieve its dominance brought Russia into authoritarian rule under a hegemonic party. The Russian experience, moreover, demonstrates the inadequacies of existing research on authoritarian hegemonic party politics. This thesis uses the example of the United Russia Party to better explain the origins, structural role, and source of power for such parties more generally.

May Samali

Venue Shopping, Issue Framing, And The United Nations Systems

Despite the growing importance of non-government organisations (NGOs) at the United Nations, few analysts have explained the factors that determine NGOs’ selection of strategies in pursuit of agenda and policy change. To fill this gap, this thesis offers a multi-dimensional framework in which NGOs’ choices can be understood in general theoretical terms. The central argument of this thesis is that NGOs’ choices of strategies at the united nations are influenced by the dynamic interaction between both external and internal factors. External factors, which are largely external to the organisation engaged in lobbying United Nations institutions, include: institutional rules and norms; influential allies and opponents; and the political context. On the other hand, internal factors, which originate with the organisation itself, include: mobilising structures; perceptions, culture, and identity; and political learning.

I demonstrate the utility of this framework by applying it to the Baha’i International Community (BIC)’s campaign to end the persecution of Baha’is in Iran. I trace the issue framing and venue shopping strategies employed by the BIC to influence the agendas of three different un institutions: the united nations Commission on Human rights; the United Nations General assembly; and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Ultimately, the BIC’s choices of strategies were influenced by political opportunity structures as well as organisational dimensions.

William Thomas

The Howard Battlers: The identity, power, and place of a new phenomenon in Australian class voting

The Howard Battlers, the battlers, and the working families of middle Australia. Are they as crucial to explaining federal election results as the media suggests?

Despite the popular interest in the topic, there are no serious works of scholarship that directly deal with the questions of whether these people exist in any numbers, who they are, how they vote, or where they live. In an attempt to fill this gap in the literature, this thesis does four things. Firstly, it develops three distinct definitions or models of the Howard Battlers on the basis of media discourse between 1996 and 2007. Secondly, it tests these models quantitatively against data from the Australian Election Study for the election years 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007 to determine their usefulness in the real world. Thirdly, it examines how prevalent the Battlers were on the national stage, how they voted, and where they lived, to assess how much power they really had over elections. Finally, it examines these findings in the context of existing class voting literature and draws conclusions regarding the Battlers’ place in the academy. In so doing, this thesis concludes that the Battlers do exist, that they do hold some power— although not as much as is popularly believed— and there is continued evidence for the decline of class voting in Australia.
Nina Ubaldi
The Lega Nord: The language politics of dialect promotion

Dialect is a pervasive characteristic of the speech and policies of the Lega Nord (LN), a right-wing Italian political party. This is despite the falling usage and low status of dialect within the electorate, and the apparent disinterest on the part of the LN to foster dialect revival.

This thesis argues that the LN deploys dialect symbolically, through both its language policies and language practice. Dialect policies are advocated strategically to foment a latent secessionist threat, thereby extracting greater concessions from Rome.

By using historically stigmatised languages, the LN profits from the politics of oppression. Furthermore, the LN uses dialect in its public communications to appeal to a northern industrial class, drawing on resentment of Roman politicians and nostalgia for a more economically secure past.

Brigit Verey
Public Policy and Parallel Importation in Australia

On July 3 2008 the Australian Federal Government reopened a divisive policy debate concerning restrictions on the importation of foreign editions of books into Australia. These restrictions give authors and publishers who hold the Australian rights for a book sole copyright of that book title within Australia. Both the necessity and the impact of these import barriers have long been contested. Following an 18 month campaign in which authors, publishers, printers, unions, booksellers and a host of other actors attempted to see their preferences translated into the policy outcome, the Government decided to leave the regulatory regime for books unchanged.

This thesis explains how this decision came about, arguing that the key to understanding the policy process in this instance is through conceptualising the interactions between industry representatives and actors from various levels of Government. In analysing these interactions as a ‘policy network’, this thesis sheds light on the complex links between supply chain relationships and the maintenance of status quo conditions, providing a comprehensive and compelling analysis of publishing, parallel importation and policymaking in Australia during the 2008-09 debate over parallel import restrictions.

Jane Want
Risky Business: The Political Risks of Mining in Sub-Saharan Africa

Political risk is a common phenomenon experienced by mining companies operating in countries around the world, particularly those operating in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Whilst the current political risk literature explains what political risks are and how these events arise, little or no attention has to date focused on why different actors respond to and manage political risks in different ways.

This thesis seeks to analyse this issue by carrying out a comparative analysis of the strategies used by foreign mining companies to manage the political risks involved in their operations in SSA. Specifically, the thesis will seek to answer why Chinese and Australian mining companies have such different approaches to managing their operations in SSA.

In contrast to the existing globalisation literature, which asserts that a sameness and trans-nationality is evolving in the behaviour of firms, this thesis contends that the embeddedness of corporations in their home state impacts the way different countries’ multinational corporations manage political risk. In other words, a mining company’s country of origin will directly influence the way it behaves when investing overseas.

Through the comparative analysis of the behaviour of Australian and Chinese mining companies in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and South Africa, the validity of this argument is established.

Alice Zheng
Narrating the nation: the making of ethnic minorities in China’s northwest

This thesis takes a constructivist approach to explaining instability in Xinjiang, a province in China’s northwest. It seeks to explicate the logics that underpin the Chinese state’s interpretation of civil unrest and acts of violence as acts of Uyghur ethno-nationalist separatism that threaten the stability and unity of China.

The argument this thesis makes is that the operational logic is that of ethnic difference. The state’s perception of a separatist threat in Xinjiang is the effect produced by the localisation of that logic in the specific geographic, historical and demographic context of Xinjiang. This logic operates throughout the People’s Republic of China. It is produced through the processes by which the Chinese state is writing the Chinese nation, drawing upon the materials of imperial Chinese history, which is predominantly the history of the Han Chinese.

In this narrative, ethnic minorities are assigned the role of the non-Chinese Other against which the Han Chinese Self is narrated.
The Department of Government and International Relations

The Department of Government and International Relations is a large and active group of students, teachers, and researchers covering all aspects of government and politics from the local to the national to the international. Its work reflects current developments and activities in the ever-changing world of politics, but it offers in-depth perspectives that go to the enduring structures that determine the day-to-day reality of government, politics, and international relations. Politics is always local and it is never only local. That is the paradox that political science unpacks. Everything arises in a local context and everything has parallels, roots, and implications beyond the local in time or in space. Terrorism, human rights, globalization, voting and elections, environmentalism, immigration, justice, defence, ethics, leadership, power, prime ministers, gender, human rights, political parties, the rise of China, these are only some of the specifics analysed in the department.

At the same time, the Department does not lose sight of the fundamentals and so Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Niccolò Machiavelli, Harriet Taylor, Ayn Rand, Hannah Arendt, and other enduring thinkers also play a part in teaching and research.

In 1910 the university first recognized political science and it has been offered continuously since then. When students join us today they are also joining the thousands of alumni who have majored in Government and International Relations, done Honours in Government and International Relations, or a post graduate degree in either a professional or research masters, or a Ph.D.

We prepare students for life, not just the first job!

Find out more

The Department has a small suite of prizes for outstanding students like those who presented tonight. These prizes do much to encourage students to do their best work, but, sadly, most are underfunded.

To discuss a financial contribution contact: Dr Michael Jackson, Emeritus Professor at michael.jackson@sydney.edu.au or on 0412 194 672

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Robert Flicker Don Harwin Michael Neylan Colin Wight
Josh Fry Alistair Henskens Alice Oppen Miguel Yamin
Anika Gauja Duncan Ivison Maria Robertson

and many others.

Michael Hogan’s history of the Department of Government and International Relations is available from Connor Court Publishing, www.connorcourt.com

It includes profiles of many graduates and staff members, as well as account of the evolution of the Department early in the Twentieth Century. In addition, Hogan shows how the Department fostered the systematic study of government and politics in other Australian universities.

Find out more

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