

SSPS Review



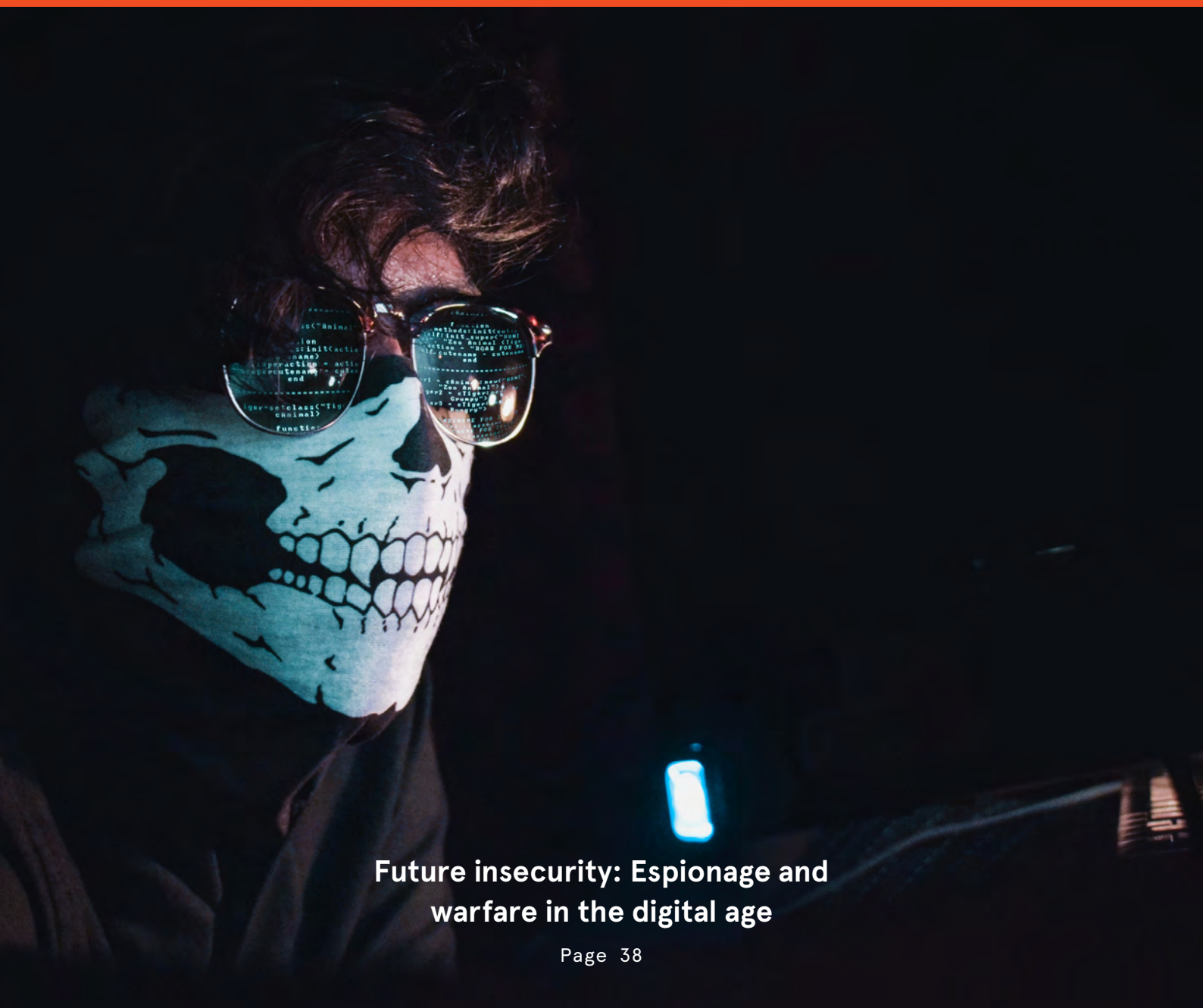
THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Me Too Movement wins
Sydney Peace Prize

Future-proofing the
budget

Shaking up the Sydney
Politics Society

Hate, race and
nationhood



**Future insecurity: Espionage and
warfare in the digital age**



Welcome to the SSPS Review. I'm really excited by the way this issue highlights the significant impact our staff and student activities are having in the world around us. Whether it is interning at the United Nations in New York, providing policy advice on options for future-proofing the state government's budget, or rethinking climate justice in the context of Australia's apparently endless appetite for coal extraction, our activities are making a difference.

This issue also features what has been one of the most inspiring experiences in my time so far as Head of School: the 2019 SSPS Prize Giving Ceremony. Held this year in May, the ceremony was an opportunity for all of us to pause for a moment and to join in celebrating the very real achievements of our students. At the ceremony, I was genuinely moved by the commitment of our staff and students and I am especially grateful to our many donors and supporters who make the event possible.

SSPS continues to redefine social science research and as well as celebrating new grants, awards and fellowships, this issue

highlights the work of Tim Soutphommasane, our Professor of Practice, in his timely new book *On Hate*. In an edited extract from the book, Tim lays out how for all the successes of Australian multiculturalism, we remain conditioned by the cultural power of White Australia. In other words, he reveals how Australian nationhood is racialized. It is only by grasping the power of whiteness in Australia, he argues, that we can understand the recent rise of racial hatred and begin to imagine anti-racist futures.

I hope you enjoy this latest SSPS Review.

Professor Lisa Adkins
Head of School of Social and Political
Sciences

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News in brief

School of Social and Political Sciences farewells influential leadership

Professors Simon Tormey and Linda Connor, two of the School's longest serving academics, will be departing the University of Sydney mid-year.



Professor Simon Tormey

Professor Simon Tormey joined the University as the Head of School for the new School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS) in 2009 and spent the following 8 years building the School's education and research reputation.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Duncan Ivison, who worked with Simon during his time as Faculty Dean, said: "when Simon arrived, SSPS was half the size, was a new School still finding its feet, and needed direction and energizing. Simon provided all of that and more. He was a great recruiter – of both early career and senior staff – and a passionate advocate for the social sciences more broadly across the University.

Just as is the case now, these were heady times of new degrees, programs, strategies and visions. Simon was an articulate and deeply

committed Head of School. He made a very significant contribution to helping achieve our ambitions for the Faculty (and it was fun to have a fellow political theorist and Francophile in the leadership team!)."

Simon was also highly committed to supporting Early Career Researchers, ensuring they were mentored and had the time to develop their teaching and research profiles.

"He brought good judgment, a terrific sense of humour, sensitivity and generosity of spirit in his dealings with us all", said Professor Linda Connor.

We wish Simon all the best in his new role as Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law at the University of Bristol.



Professor Linda Connor

Professor Linda Connor began at the University as Professor of Anthropology in 2009.

After research positions at UC San Diego, the East West Centre, and as lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Newcastle, Linda brought to the task a career that

matched the experience needed to help build a world-class School of Social and Political Sciences.

She was pivotal in the rebuilding of a diverse department with a strong sense of identity, and has been a spokeswoman for disciplinary integrity, bringing mutual respect and easy dialogue to developing a broader social science conversation.

Linda's research on spirit healers in Bali spoke to seminal anthropological problems of the radical scope of human diversity. Her close cooperation with filmmakers also expanded our understanding of the value of film as an ethnographic method.

While grounded in her discipline, Linda has always championed the interdisciplinary value of anthropology, culminating in her ground-breaking contributions to the development of social science perspectives on environmental change and energy transitions.

Linda has always understood that administrative, financial and industrial infrastructure are key to intellectual and disciplinary integrity. She has been a negotiator for the NTEU in enterprise bargaining, a representative of staff in disputes, and her attention to the arcane details of budgets, bequests and prizes has been exemplary.

We wish Linda a happy retirement and will miss her breadth of vision and dedication.



When will the military have its #MeToo moment?

Wednesday, 17 July
6-7.30pm

As global movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp rapidly gain momentum in exposing systemic sexual assault and abuse, the military appears to have been left behind.

Last year sexual assaults in the US military increased by almost 38 percent, according to a recent report by the Pentagon. In Australia the Department of Defence reported earlier this year that the number of sexual misconduct victims for 2017-18 was "similar" to 2016-17.

#MeToo and #TimesUp do not seem to have resonated with survivors of sexual violence within national militaries. While public attention to military sexual violence – including media coverage – remains largely focused on scandals, such as the infamous 2011 'Skype sex scandal,' there is a glaring lack of attention devoted to overall data or trends around military sexual assault.

This panel brings together some of the world's leading experts to discuss why military sexual violence remains a persistent problem across many national militaries, including the Australian Defence Force and the US military.

- bit.ly/2EWujmp



Health Data and Personalized Medicine: How will you be treated?

Thursday, 22 August
6-8pm

Nothing feels more personal than our health but medical treatment is essentially a one-size-fits-all scenario.

But with the advent of precision medicine and advances in eHealth technology, this may be about to change.

Very soon, treatment based on our individual genetic information and health histories will be readily available. But these breakthroughs are not without risk. Others express legitimate concerns as the growing sophistication of our eHealth systems increases security vulnerabilities.

Join us as we learn more about this incoming disruption from experts in metabolic cybernetics, eHealth and sociology and discover what medical treatment could mean for you in the very near future.

- bit.ly/2KJVF2U

Making a Killing: The ethics of true crime

Thursday, 24 October
6-8pm



Serial. Making a Murder. Teacher's Pet. These series have been streamed and downloaded by millions of avid listeners. This latest iteration of true crime is widely accepted as more than entertainment. Due to its capacity to influence public opinion and alter the course of justice, we're convinced that it's meaningful content.

But is it?

The genre has established its own formula – the victim who was “loved by everyone”, the dogged detective, the slick-grimy production values – and viewers are beginning to find themselves in an ethical quandary.

When content makers use real people's lives and deaths to drive audience numbers, questions of accountability and exploitation become harder to ignore. Are these tragedies and crimes ultimately just grist to the mill? Why are we drawn to stories that prioritise criminals over victims? Should watercooler content have this much influence over legal proceedings? Join us as we investigate true crime.

- bit.ly/2R8RbUK



The Rise of Veganism: The end of animal farming?

Thursday, 28 November
6-8pm

Many commentators believe 2019 is the year veganism will finally go mainstream.

Driven mainly by a mounting millennial awareness of animal and environmental welfare, more than 2 million Australian adults now live completely meat free.

With the health benefits of plant-based diets endorsed by Hollywood stars and commissions of scientists alike, the rise of synthetic “meat” and supermarkets selling vast ranges of vegan-friendly products, a lifestyle that was once casually dismissed as “extreme” is now more accessible and widely practised than ever.

Is a vegan diet sustainable? Is an exclusively plant-based diet really better for the planet? And does synthetic meat stand a chance?

Join a leading diet researcher, an agri-food and environmental expert and a political scientist committed to animal welfare as they consider what the rise of veganism might mean for us all.

- bit.ly/31BbpeO



Photo: Annie Spratt

Anthropology graduate receives top honours from Australian Anthropological Society

Gil Hizi (PhD '18) has been awarded the highly competitive Australian Anthropological Society Post-Doctoral Fellowship to develop his research on self-development in China into a book

Awarded by the AAS to authors of high-quality dissertations, the Australian Anthropological Society (AAS) Post-Doctoral Fellowship consists of an honorarium of AUD\$4,000, awarded to a PhD graduate to support the writing up of research already conducted.

We sat down with this year's recipient, Anthropologist Gil Hizi to find about his research into personhood and self-development in China, and some of the surprises and challenges he encountered along the way.

Can you tell us about your research focus?

I am an anthropologist who studies contemporary Chinese society. I have been looking at social change in urban China, in particular at new ideas on what it means to be a moral and competent person. My work focuses on practices of self-improvement, namely workshops for interpersonal 'soft' skills through which young adults aspire to become more individualistic and emotionally expressive. These practices reveal prevalent ideals of personhood in China and how they are conceived by participants in relation to the wider society.

What makes China unique as a case study?

China is unique in its combination of immense socioeconomic transformations and local cultural influences. While China embraces the global economy and aspires to ‘modernity’, the Chinese party-state continues to set the tone in social institutions, nowadays also promoting longstanding cultural traditions (Confucianism, Chinese medicine, Taoism).

As a result, citizens experience a dynamic and fragmented social reality that is laden with both hope and uncertainty. This reality makes China a fascinating case study for many timely social phenomena.

What’s been the most challenging aspect of your research?

As a PhD student your mind is often impatient and tries to reach conclusions prematurely. This attitude goes against a key principle in anthropology of collecting evidence over a long period while suspending analysis until later. As an anthropologist I also had to learn to accept inconsistencies, contradictions and ambiguities in my findings rather than try to gloss over them. It took me a while until I could achieve this, allowing inconsistencies to inform my analysis and how I interpret social life in China.

Is there anything that surprised you along the way?

I have an ambivalent attitude towards many contemporary activities of ‘self-improvement’, which are often associated in my mind (and in many social scientists’ minds) with self-indulgence, social competition and consumption. I was surprised to see that although self-improvement in China is a market-driven practice it is also a site where people discuss non-worldly affairs. In fact, many young adults pursue self-improvement in an attempt to envision and promote a more moral social reality. Through conversations with them I learned about their worldviews as well as about wider social debates in China.

What is the research process like?

I have visited China in the past and of course studied Chinese language for many years. In my PhD studies I spent thirteen months in a city called Jinan in northeastern China and attended workshops for self-improvement as a participant observer. Spending a long period of time in the field also allowed me to cultivate friendships with my informants and follow developments in their lives.

Can you give a snapshot of your book?

I plan to write about self-improvement in China as a practice through which young adults can express themselves in new ways and in turn experience themselves as exceeding their everyday social responsibilities. Self-improvement increasingly prioritises short-lived moments of emotional excitement and hope rather than skills for the actual social reality. This process reveals (and reinforces) contradictions in the experience of social change in China, as well as paradoxes in the ideologies of self-improvement and social development more broadly.



Gil Hizi conducting fieldwork in China (bottom). Photo: Hanny Naibaho (top)



Founder Tarana Burke at US rally. Photo: Me Too Movement

Me Too movement to receive 2019 Sydney Peace Prize

A look at the social movement that's and giving victims of sexual harassment and abuse around the world a collective voice

Written by Katie Gabriel

Starting with two words, 'me too', women around the world have united in solidarity to share personal experiences about sexual harassment. This global call for change - the Me Too movement - has played a game-changing role in destigmatising the experiences of survivors of sexual assault and harassment, and, indeed, has re-imagined a future free from pervasive sexual violence.

In recognition of its impact, the movement will be awarded the 2019 Sydney Peace Prize, with Tarana Burke and Tracey Spicer accepting the Prize on behalf of Me Too, "for empowering survivors of sexual harassment and violence, and elevating their voices; for championing truth and justice; for highlighting the breadth and impact of sexual violence worldwide; and for launching a demand for change that is sweeping the world."

Founder Tarana Burke began building the movement in 2006 in the United States to support survivors of sexual violence, particularly black women and girls, to connect to resources for healing, and to build a survivor-led community of advocates against sexual assault. Her grassroots work has now expanded to reach a global community of survivors from all walks of life.

Tracey Spicer AM is a journalist, author and broadcaster who has spearheaded the Me Too movement in Australia. She has produced award-winning investigations into sexual harassment in workplaces and founded NOW Australia in 2018 to advocate for safe workplaces and to support those who have been sexually harassed at work.

A demand for change sweeping the world

Contrary to popular belief, the Me Too movement did not spontaneously burst into existence, spurred by allegations from Hollywood actresses against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

While much of the mainstream media coverage of Me Too has centred around the entertainment industry and the downfall of powerful perpetrators, Tarana Burke is quick to bring the focus back to where it belongs - to the survivors.

"Me Too is a movement about the far-reaching power of empathy. It's about the millions of people who have raised their hands to say 'me too'. And their hands are still raised," says Tarana.

In recounting the first sparks of Me Too, Tarana recalled her deep despair at witnessing rampant sexual assault in her community.

Laying on the bed in her one-bedroom apartment in early 2006, Tarana pulled out a piece of paper and scrawled 'me too' across the top of the paper. But she didn't stop there. Below 'me too', she began to build an action plan for a movement

based on empathy between survivors that would allow the healing of deep wounds.

From the idea of empowerment through empathy, Tarana built Just Be Inc., a not-for-profit and network with a mission to support and amplify the voices of survivors of sexual abuse, assault, and exploitation.

On our own shores, Australian broadcaster, journalist and author Tracey Spicer has been spearheading the Me Too movement, speaking out about prevalent sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace and seeking to build a support network for survivors.



Tracey Spicer. Photo: Me Too Movement

The spark that truly ignited the Me Too movement in Australia was a tweet from Tracey in 2017 to her 57,000 followings asking people to "contact me privately to tell your stories." The tweet received more than 2,000 responses and propelled Me Too into the Australian public consciousness and discourse.

Following a flood of responses and harrowing stories from survivors, Tracey set up NOW Australia to support people across all industries who have been sexually harassed,

assaulted or intimidated at work.

"Contrary to popular belief, the Me Too movement did not spontaneously burst into existence, spurred by allegations from Hollywood actresses against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein."

Commending Tarana for starting the movement, Tracey spoke of her optimism for a better future, "the Me Too movement has changed everything, it gives women a support base and information with which they can speak out and tell their stories."

In our own back yard

The Me Too movement has kickstarted an outpouring of individual and collective voices shining a spotlight on the universal experience of women and some men with sexual harassment and abuse. And Australian society is unfortunately no exception.

Statistics show that 1 in 5 Australian women

will experience sexual violence in her lifetime, and that 1 in 2 will be subjected to sexual harassment. And these statistics only become more severe for indigenous women and women living with a disability.

It is clear that we continue to have a very serious problem with attitudes towards domestic violence, consent, sexual abuse, and harassment.

The Me Too movement has revealed holes in our cultural norms and legal structures which must be addressed

to better serve our communities and promote progress.

Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins announced in 2018 an Australian Human Rights Commission-led National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. "Me Too has given us reason to be hopeful," says Jenkins.

Julian Burnside AO QC, 2014 Sydney Peace Prize Laureate, strongly supported the choice of the Jury:

"It is a wonderful thing that Me Too is to be awarded the Sydney Peace Prize...The Me Too movement has done a remarkable job drawing attention to a problem which was recognised by virtually all women and virtually no men. Since men are at the heart of the problem, it is a great thing that no man will now be believed if they say they are unaware of the problem Me Too has exposed."

"To create spaces where survivors can speak truth to power in search of a better world requires courage, vision, leadership, and heart."

2019 Sydney Peace Prize

Without justice, peace is hollow and fragile. Every human being has the right to live their life in dignity, and when rampant sexual harassment and violence goes unchecked, we are all diminished and lose sight of our common humanity.

Me Too has changed the way we understand and talk about sexual harassment and violence, by highlighting the magnitude



Tarana Burke marching with survivors at USA #MeToo rally Photo: Me Too Movement

and impact of sexual harassment and violence around the world, in domestic, public spaces, and workplaces. To create spaces where survivors can speak truth to power in search of a better world requires courage, vision, leadership, and heart.

Tarana, Tracey, and the many women and men raising their hands in unison to demand that their voices be heard challenge the societal structures and norms we have thus far accepted.

In Tarana's words, "We owe future generations a world free of sexual violence. I believe we can build that world. Do you?"

The Sydney Peace Prize will be awarded on Thursday 14 November at Sydney Town Hall. Tickets available at:

- bit.ly/SPPMeToo

Masculinity and modern warfare

Over the next 3 years, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Gender and War Dr Nicole Wegner will examine popular assumptions about the 'ideal soldier' and how cultural myths shape military policies and priorities in Australia and abroad.



Hailing from Canada and having spent several years as a lecturer at the University of Saskatchewan, Dr Nicole Wegner joins the Department of Government and International Relations as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow where she will examine issues relating to the modern military including suicides, sexual assault, and the relationships between military and national identity.

What does your research involve?

My current research looks at the gendered relationship between identity and military service. I examine how masculinity and femininity can affect military identity. This includes how 'masculine' attributes such as aggressiveness and physical strength are often promoted as ideal soldierly characteristics. My research reflects upon this type of 'military masculinity' in modern warfare, where counterinsurgency techniques require soldiers to win the 'hearts and minds' of local populations.

I also examine how war-fighting, defence spending, or military bellicosity are viewed as favourable

mechanisms to 'toughen up' a nation's identity. I study cultural myths, such as Canada's long-standing affinity for peacekeeping internationally and Australia's national ANZAC commemorations, and how these myths influence military policies and priorities.

I am currently focusing on how military and national identity were articulated in government policies and media coverage during military interventions in Afghanistan from 2001-2014.

The research process

The majority of my research involves content and discourse analysis. I examine government and military policies, media images and text, speeches by politicians, testimonies of military personnel, and recruitment campaign imagery and text.

Why the University of Sydney?

I am working with Professor Megan MacKenzie, who is a renowned scholar in International Relations and feminist theory. I came to the University of Sydney specifically to work with her on

gender and war research.

We are working collaboratively on two projects. The first project explores connections between ideals of military masculinity and military suicides and the second project explores sexual assault in armed forces and the ways this phenomenon has gendered patterns.

What do you hope to achieve?

There are many 'common sense' assumptions about the military, including who makes a good soldier, what activities and behaviours are normal and acceptable for militaries, and what types of policies and funding are appropriate for defence and military spending.

I hope to unpack these assumptions so that the politics of military service, military identity, and defence funding are made obvious. This will allow us, as a society, to make clear choices and preferences about defence policies.



Photo: Raj Eiamworakul

Hate, race and nationhood

For all the success of Australian multiculturalism we still have a long way to go when it comes to equality

Written by Tim Soutphommasane (BEcSocSc Hons '04)

When Australia achieved political nationhood, in the form of Federation, it bore the racial stamp of White Australia. "Unity of race", as declared by then attorney-general and future prime minister Alfred Deakin, "is an absolute essential to the unity of Australia."

This vision explains the first substantive pieces of legislation passed by the new national parliament. The Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901 expelled all Pacific Islanders working in Australia. The Immigration Restriction Act 1901 served to limit non-British immigration to Australia. This was how the nation arrived.

We've come a long way since then. The advocates of a White Australia would have been horrified to countenance today's society. Successive waves of immigration following the end of World War II have transformed us. Nearly half of the population is either born overseas or has a parent who was born overseas. On one estimate, about 21 per cent of Australians have a non-European background, with another 3 per cent being of Indigenous background.

Even so, the imprint of race and hate remains, if not indelible then difficult to erase. The ideal of White Australia was seminal and for all the success of

Australian multiculturalism, we remain conditioned by its cultural power.

The mere mention of the words “White Australia” is enough to conjure in our minds a certain picture of nationhood and its related anxieties. The popular and cultural definition of who is authentically Australian remains, for the most part, a white European one.

Whether it’s the media and the stories we are told about the nation, or the senior leadership of just about all our major institutions, pause for a moment and you get the message that the place is still run by a particular section of society, defined by its whiteness (largely male). While almost a quarter of the Australian population has a non-European or Indigenous background, only 3 per cent of the country’s chief executives have such backgrounds.

“The popular and cultural definition of who is authentically Australian remains, for the most part, a white European one.”

Whiteness in Australia involves a hierarchy of belonging. It’s what explains why too often, white Anglo-Celtic and European Australians feel entitled to determine who truly counts as Australian. Whiteness, thus understood, is systemic and institutional. It’s not necessarily exercised with conscious knowledge. It’s something that operates in the background, part of the unspoken norms and unwritten rules that guide how society operates.

Racial minorities quickly assimilate an idea of whiteness, again unconsciously or without a great deal of thought. While I was growing up, my parents were quick to impart to me that I was Australian; we had the citizenship certificates to prove it. But it was an insistence that betrayed an insecurity and aspiration, as opposed to an attained reality. We knew that an “Aussie” meant a white Anglo-Celtic Australian, at least that’s how everyone else understood it.

Throughout my teenage years I wouldn’t have necessarily described myself as Australian. It was only when I spent five years studying in England, where others would describe me as Australian, that I became used to thinking of myself that way. Back at home, I was more accustomed to being referred to as an Asian.

Whiteness matters. It shapes how we talk about issues, and who has the right to talk with authority. When it’s in play, it frequently leaves racial minorities as passive players in public debates. Minorities are talked about, but infrequently seen or heard, even when the debate is about them.

When minorities do speak out, they can be made to feel that no one in power listens. Many Aboriginal Australians, for example, took umbrage with the Turnbull government’s rejection of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in 2017.

The culmination of extensive dialogues with Indigenous communities, conceived by Indigenous people and conducted by the Referendum Council on constitutional recognition, the Uluru Statement proposed a guaranteed voice for Indigenous people in the form of an advisory body to parliament. It was an eloquent blueprint for Indigenous reconciliation.



Photo: Daniel Norris

The government, though, summarily dismissed it, arguing that such a body would be seen as a ‘third chamber’ of parliament, which couldn’t possibly win endorsement at a referendum. The result was another abortive attempt to secure constitutional recognition of First Australians.

The voices of minorities can be aggressively policed, as well. I’ve detected this whenever I’ve taken part in public debates about race issues. It’s that old notion of Go Back to Where You Came From. Almost without fail, an opponent somewhere will resort to saying that I’ve somehow – as an Australian of Asian heritage who came

here as an immigrant – displayed a lack of gratitude to the nation in offering an opinion that may challenge something about Australian society. It’s as though the right to express one’s opinion in our democracy is meant to exist for some only in theory. Some will always believe their claim to being heard is superior. To be an Australian citizen doesn’t mean that others will believe you are an equal, or believe you truly belong. It doesn’t guarantee that others will see you as really Australian.

A racialised sense of nationhood doesn’t always involve hate. When people draw lines about who is Australian and who isn’t, there can be multiple forces at play. It could merely reflect a failure of imagination or a narrowness of experience with racial diversity. Indifference and ignorance can overlap with racial hatred, but aren’t always themselves expressions of it.

Whiteness becomes an active hatred, however, when it’s channelled as anger. When anger is directed at people like Adam Goodes or Yassmin Abdel-Magied – people turned into figures of hate – it’s because some find it intolerable for an Aboriginal Australian or a person of colour to question aspects of the national identity. Hate is when an opinionated member of a minority comes to be regarded as an uppity ingrate who doesn’t know their place.

Fear is the other emotion that activates whiteness into hatred. Haters may fear they are losing the power to define the boundaries of the national identity. They may be anxious that the hierarchy of voice within Australian society may no longer be stable, that there is a decline in the authority of Anglo-Celtic or European Australia.

When people are moved to racial hatred, it transforms the way they see others. Hate crimes against a certain group can be committed by people who may have had no history of animosity towards the group.

The effects can be more insidious. Once it’s released into the ether, hate poisons trust. When Pauline Hanson famously declared in 1996 that Australia was in danger of being “swamped by Asians”, this amounted to a direct assault on people like me and my family.

The damage, though, wasn’t confined to how Hanson’s language invited others to label us “gooks” or “slopes”. The feeling of exclusion and humiliation didn’t have to come from outright abuse. Others may have refrained from racist epithets or heated rhetoric, but when they said, “Pauline has a point”, the effect was the same, if

not more troubling. When I heard a line like that from family friends or teachers, it made me think twice about where they stood. It planted doubt where there wasn’t any before.

This is an edited extract of Tim Soutphommasane’s *On Hate*, now available through Melbourne University Press.

- bit.ly/31MI5TF



Tim Soutphommasane

Tim Soutphommasane recently joined the School of Social and Political Sciences as a Professor of Practice (Sociology and Political Theory). He also contributes to the University of Sydney Business School, and works closely with Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Michael Spence on strategic projects through the unique lens of a Professor of Practice.

He is a political theorist and human rights advocate, and from 2013 to 2018 served as Australia’s Race Discrimination Commissioner. He is the author of 5 books and his thinking on patriotism, multiculturalism and national identity has been influential in both Australia and Britain.

 [@timsout](https://twitter.com/timsout)



Interning at the United Nations, NYC

Master of Human Rights student Elizabeth Heath on the reality of working at one of the most popular global organisations

What is your role at the UN and what does it involve?

My role as an Advisor with the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations focuses on 3rd Committee issues, which include human rights issues, humanitarian affairs and social matters.

I work closely with the Ambassador's office, diplomats and assist the Mission in a variety of ways. While a lot of my work involves attending meetings and writing summary reports I've also had the opportunity to be present at the 57th Session of the Commission for Social Development-Sustainable Development Goals, The 63rd Commission on the Status of Women, and the The 18th Substantive session on the Permanent forum on Indigenous issues, to name a few.

I also contribute research towards briefs, proposals, and statements for the delegation. Recently, I've developed country profiles and contributed to writing parts of the

Ambassador's speeches relating to sustainable development, climate financing, women's rights, and issues relating to human rights in Afghanistan.

Are there any key skills or knowledge from your degree that helped prepare you for your current role?

The Master of Human Rights developed my skills in reporting, analyzing and advocating on issues to do with political, socio-economic and humanitarian issues.

I have used these skills throughout my internship at the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations on such tasks as writing reports for the capital, researching states interests for the Ambassador and developing talking points on humanitarian issues in Afghanistan for the diplomats at the Mission.

University enabled me to become a fast and adaptable learner, able to confidently express my opinion

and negotiate complex ideas. These skills are vital in diplomacy.

The degree also provided me with a foundational understanding of the structures of the United Nations and the major international human rights instruments, mechanisms, charters and treaties used in protecting people's rights.

The University of Sydney also gave me the opportunity to attend the China National Model United Nations Conference in Wuhan.

This experience enabled me to develop interpersonal skills and experience working in teams across different cultures. I worked closely with a Chinese student from the University Shanghai to represent the United Kingdom on the United Nations Security Council.

Together, we successfully represented the United Kingdom's interest and were awarded best Security Council Position Paper on the crisis in Syria. This practical

experience really pushed me to improve my complex problem solving and critical thinking skills, skills that are crucial to my career.

Can you tell us some of your on the job highlights?

Some of my proudest moments include assisting in coordinating high-level meetings for the

Is there anything that's surprised you about working at the UN?

There are so many, but the main two are the sheer passion and intelligence of the diplomats working for the UN and just how much comes together in the last possible moment!

Most diplomats I have met are willing to put in very long hours in order to

systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”.

I remember seeing one woman reading her child a bedtime story over Facetime during our 15-minute dinner break. They push themselves to these extremes because they believe in the work they're doing and the benefit it can have for women around the world.

It's also been a huge surprise to see how often everything comes together at the last possible moment. Whether it's instructions from the capital, visas for state leaders to participate in summits, commissions, the General Assembly or even just fulfilling a mandate by passing a resolution or submitting a report, so often it all comes together at the last possible moment. Diplomats run on pure adrenaline.

What's the best part of living in NYC?

Everything. It's loud, busy, aggressive, smelly and crowded but it's also beautiful, artistic, charismatic and vibrant.

Every street is filled with possibility and adventure. I often think of Frank Sinatra's quote "if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere".

I've also loved watching the seasons change from freezing cold winter to sunny spring. People seem to change with the season here.

But perhaps the greatest part of all is Broadway. The talent and sheer volume of shows on offer is second to none. I've seen 18 shows and I plan on seeing more than 20 by the time I leave NYC. Some of my dearest friends I've made in NYC have been the people sitting next to me at Broadway shows.



Dohun Richard Na, Mercy Kimanthi, Former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN Mahmoud Saikal (2015-2019), Dinesh Suryawanshi and Elizabeth Heath.

Permanent Mission of Afghanistan, in particular the side-event "Women and Sustainable Development: Achievements, Opportunities and Challenges".

I also had the opportunity to escort Afghanistan's Deputy Minister for Education, Ms Mateen, around various schools in New York City to meet with the State Education Department of New York, to discuss curriculum development and teacher training to consider how Afghanistan's educational system can be improved.

pass a resolution, which may or may not be successfully implemented at State level.

I experienced this when I was part of the discussions on the Agreed Conclusions at the end of the Commission on the Status of Women. We were stuck in a conference room for 12 hours a day, often staying till 1am debating what concrete recommendations should be implemented by national, regional and local governments, intergovernmental bodies and civil society organizations on the topic of "Social protection

What advice would you give to students who want to work at the UN?

The advice I would give to any student interested in pursuing a career at the UN is to work hard at university and learn as much as you can about the UN systems and the six principal organs of the UN.

I would also highly recommend learning a second language and working on your public speaking skills – these are two very useful skills to possess at the UN which you’ll use daily in some capacity or another.

What’s next for you?

Another internship at the UN! I am currently interning at the Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch/ Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (IPDB/SPFII).



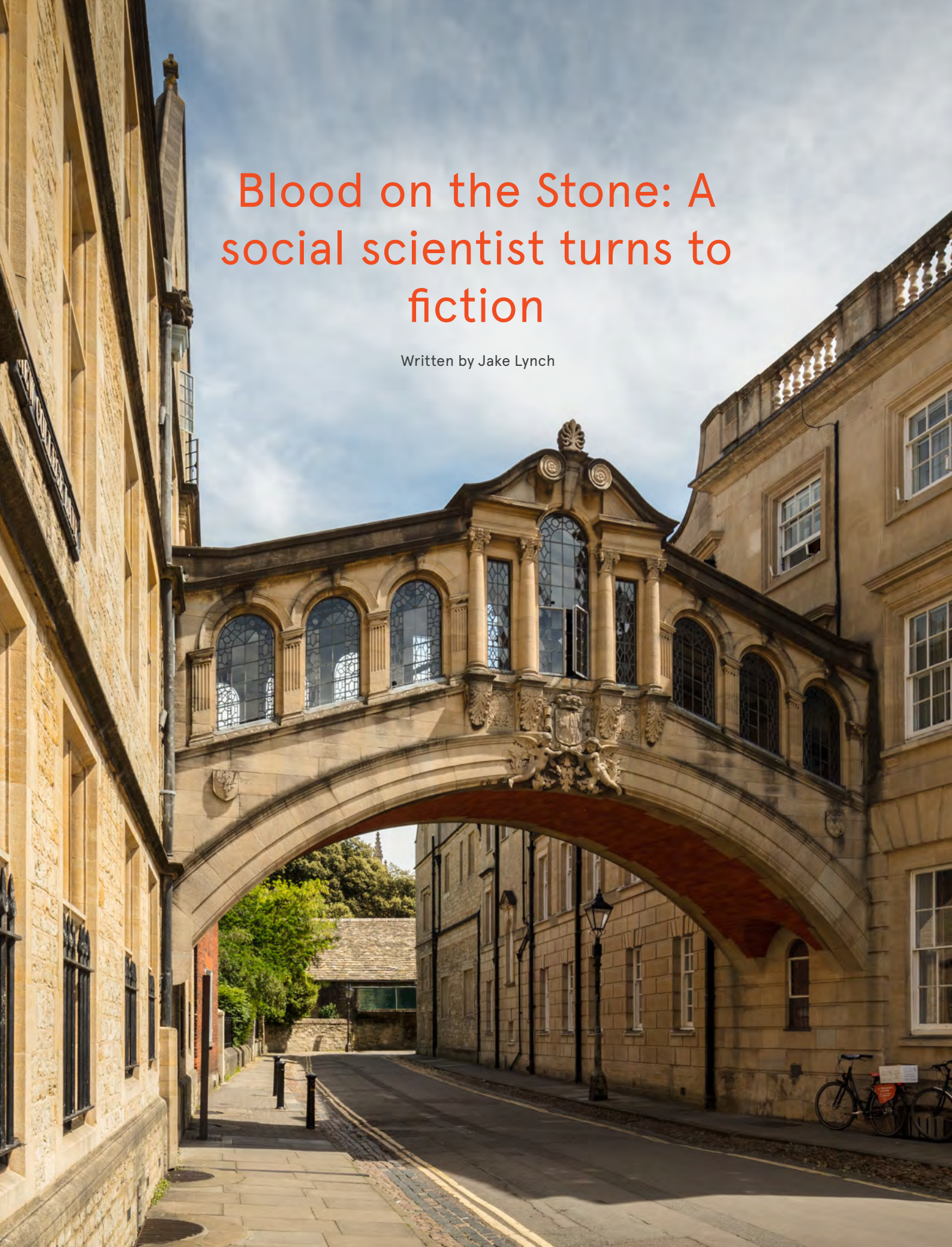
NYC skyline (top), Elizabeth Heath, Dinesh Suryawanshi and Dohun Richard Na at UN social event (bottom left), Elizabeth Heath attending UN assembly (bottom right)





Blood on the Stone: A social scientist turns to fiction

Written by Jake Lynch



Political purpose; historical impulse; aesthetic enthusiasm, and sheer egoism. Of George Orwell's four authorial motivations – from his 1946 essay, *Why I Write* – the last, it must be admitted, came dangerously close to surpassing the others by the time of the launch of my debut novel, *Blood on the Stone*.

A glance back through diary pages revealed this date as exactly two years since I closed my laptop after writing 'The End'. Why turn to fiction, after a productive career publishing scholarly books and articles? Fun – or "aesthetic enthusiasm" – is another prominent feeling at such moments. As it turned out, however, that was not so much an end as a beginning. A first draft is a long way from a finished manuscript. Through extensive re-drafting and editing, there was still much to enjoy; before horizons darkened as I entered the gruelling process of finding a publisher. Orwell's ominous closing remark began to loom larger: "Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness."

Blood on the Stone is an historical mystery thriller, set in 1681, as King Charles II brings the English Parliament to Oxford. It's a fascinating milieu of time and place, and one that is copiously documented, both in scholarly sources and public records. Furthermore, the medieval city centre has not changed much in the last three centuries. Some of the research could be carried out on foot, treading the same cobbled streets as the characters. (It's thirsty work – good job some of the same pubs are still there).

Suffused with excitement as period background meshes with street-level detail, the researcher's historical

impulse is to tell the reader all about it. Which goes a long way to explain why so much of that initial version had to be re-written. The novelist's mantra is "show, don't tell." A line of fiction: "Jane was feeling nervous." A better one: "Jane put down her coffee cup with a clatter." Background and context have to be woven delicately into the fabric of dialogue, character interplay, and the twists and turns of a storyline.

A well-known standard for conducting and presenting social research is that it should be "perspicuous and parsimonious." Methods are adopted with a view to



King Charles II. Photo:Wikicommons

ensuring there is only one possible interpretation of the findings. In a novel, however, the aim is to allow – often, indeed, encourage – multiple interpretations. A detective story plays a game with the reader, constantly posing the questions – what do we really know, and how do we know it? Was that a clue, or a red herring? It is in the nature of writing that there is always a surplus of meaning over intentionality. But a social scientist-turned-novelist must learn to embrace it.

So, why this novel? Oxford in the seventeenth century was a crucible of the 'Scientific Revolution' – an intellectual upheaval that instilled empirical methods and logical deduction as key to understanding and organising the reality around us, not only in the laboratory but in other domains, including both criminal justice and political process, as well.

"A detective story plays a game with the reader, constantly posing the questions – what do we really know, and how do we know it? Was that a clue, or a red herring? It is in the nature of writing that there is always a surplus of meaning over intentionality."

In its 'Natural Philosophy circle', its colleges and coffee houses, Oxford was also beginning to acquire a prototypical public sphere: the discursive realm between rulers and ruled, in which issues of the day could be freely debated, with distinctions of class and status among participants supposedly 'bracketed out.'

These developments did not suit everyone. The King tried to have coffee houses closed down, as dens of sedition. And, in *Blood on the Stone*, powerful political interests seek to bypass evidence and due process to stir sectarian divisions and take the law into their own hands. My hero, Luke Sandys, is Chief Officer of Bailiffs, the nearest equivalent at the time to a modern-day detective. When a prominent MP and leader of an extremist Protestant group is found stabbed to death, Luke must catch the killer

before the murder can be used to bring mayhem to the streets.

In the background as politicians gathered in Oxford was the Exclusion crisis, which saw the House of Commons campaigning to have the Roman Catholic James, Duke of York removed from the line of royal succession. A further twist was added with the so-called 'Popish

the persecution of a minority community. He uses scientific methods, and relies on evidence to distinguish between facts and claims, in a context that includes rampant prejudice, violent street protests and extremist media.

Implicitly, therefore, he contributes to a public sphere in which social and political issues can be

feels increasingly challenged in both fields. Climate change deniers; anti-vaxxers; the proliferation of partisan channels on social media: all have become wearisomely familiar.

So perhaps there is a political purpose in a story that leads the reader on a dance around that line, before finally resolving the outstanding questions on either side of it. For such a drama to occur in an historical period when it was first being drawn, sometimes in the teeth of fierce opposition, might even redouble the satisfaction.

Reviewers of *Blood on the Stone* have expressed hopes of reading more about Luke Sandys: an Oxford detective educated in the classics, who missed his scholarly vocation, nurses an aching heart and is ably assisted by his down-to-earth deputy. Yes, some have spotted the resemblance to Morse and Lewis, from the television series that have delighted audiences for so long on the ABC. So a sequel is in the works, drawing further on the political and intellectual ferment of the 1680s for background and context. Only I shall have to resist the temptation to tell the reader all about it.



Photo: Ian DooLey

Plot': supposedly a Jesuit conspiracy against the Crown, later exposed as fraudulent, but not before it had brought further strife and misery to England's few remaining 'Papists.'

The historical record shows that many local officials – such as Luke – were disinclined to carry out orders from the Privy Council to clamp down on their friends and neighbours, just because they still observed the old religion.

So the novel portrays a detective who stands up for justice against

addressed, and consensus built, through what Jurgen Habermas called "communicative rationality."

Historical fiction is set in the past, but it is not necessarily, or not only, about the past. That line, separating facts from claims, was my stock-in-trade as a journalist, before taking up an academic post.

In its empiricist assumptions, journalism is a discursive endeavour that can claim some distant kinship with science. Now, however, the line separating facts from claims

Jake Lynch's *Blood on the Stone*, published by Unbound Press is now available.

- bit.ly/2Kt4WgA



Future-proofing the budget

Recommendations for protecting the budget from housing market volatility

Written by Frank Stilwell (GradDipEdStud '01) and Gareth Bryant (BEcSocSc Hons '11 PhD '16)



Budgets are crucial for systematic public policy. They reflect the social priorities of governments, whether federal, state or local. What should be the spending priorities? From whom should the taxes be collected to pay for the expenditures? These political economic choices affect the quality of public services, the distribution of post-tax incomes and therefore the wellbeing and sustainability of society as a whole.

Not surprisingly, discussion of budgets looms large in general elections. This has been especially so since governments began claiming that producing a surplus budget shows their economic management credentials.

It is a contentious claim, since governments are not like businesses that make profits for shareholders. We, the people, look to governments to provide for our collective needs. The budgeting process, including both its expenditure and revenue aspects, has to be seen in this context.

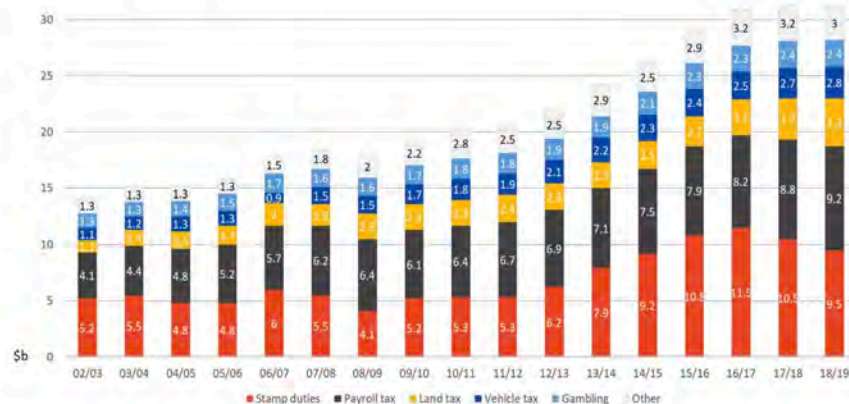
We did some research into budgetary issues, working in conjunction with Sydney Policy Lab, in the run-up to this year's NSW election. As is often the case in elections, the contending parties were saying lots about spending promises, but much less about how the spending would be funded. There seemed to be a general presumption that continued economic growth would produce the necessary State revenues.

However, future economic conditions are inherently uncertain. In the case of NSW, the uncertainty has intensified because of depressed conditions in the Sydney property market. Falling housing prices mean falling State revenues, because

stamp duties levied on the purchase of properties, together with land taxes on existing properties, comprise around 45% of total State revenue.

Our report made some impact in making these fiscal options part of the public debate, gaining coverage in ABC News bulletins, the Australian Financial Review, and other media.

NSW state revenue by type, A\$ billion



Government of Sydney Policy Lab

Earlier this year, well before the State election, the NSW Treasury reduced its projected revenues from stamp duty by \$9.5 billion for the next three fiscal years. Projected land tax revenues also flat-lined.

This raised questions on what to do about revenue shortfalls that were not being addressed by either major political party. Would the incoming NSW government, whichever party won office, need to moderate its proposed spending? Or are there other ways to finance essential services and infrastructure?

The report that we published with the Sydney Policy Lab outlined the options for an incoming NSW government, seeking to show how it could future-proof its budget from housing market volatility. We showed ways to strengthen State finances, both through tax reform and by treating social spending on public services as a budget 'investment'.

Although the State government is constitutionally constrained in the types of taxes it can levy, it could reform its own State-based land taxes to yield much-needed sources of additional revenue. Land tax is one area where States have particularly distinctive capacity, having potentially untapped revenue growth much larger than from any other source.

Our research showed that current exemptions to owner-occupied housing mean that the value of untaxed residential land has now reached \$1 trillion. Can the State government continue to ignore this wealth, which is largely a windfall, and unequally shared, gain from property price inflation?

Broadening the land tax revenue base, with equitable safeguards, could pay for critical funding to services and infrastructure and reduce the State budget's over-reliance on stamp duty which is a more unstable revenue source.

Public financing is not a simply a case of raising more revenue. Equally importantly, it is about how money is spent. Our research showed a paradox at the core of the current State budget. Spending on public services is treated as a 'cost' that needs to be matched with immediate revenue. Yet, spending on infrastructure, which has been

report argued that the State government could overhaul the way it treats spending on public services, making use of its powers to borrow and invest in infrastructure to fund vital public services like health and education too.

This would entail accounting for public services as investments in

taxes but not public spending, while running a budget surplus – quite an impressive three-card trick.

The Labor opposition also promised surpluses, but offered additional spending, funded by removing some tax concessions currently benefiting the holders of certain asset-classes.

The former package of promises won the day. Can it be delivered? What if wage incomes continue to stagnate? What if the Australian economy were to slip into recession? Would tax revenues then be patently inadequate? Would the commitment to budget surpluses have to be abandoned? Would that be consistent with the government's own claims and promises? Would it be economically responsible?

Evidently, monitoring of budgetary policies at all levels of government is an ongoing task. So too is exploring other fiscal options. Whichever political party or parties are in office, reforms of taxing and spending arrangements must always be on the agenda. The fiscal challenge to combine economic management with a fair and more sustainable tax system is an ongoing political economic concern.

Read the report prepared for the Sydney Policy Lab :

- bit.ly/NSWfinances



Photo: Jamie Davies

increasingly privatised, is treated as an 'investment' and is free of the usual fiscal constraints.

Accounting tools that remove spending on privatised infrastructure from the budget have enabled the NSW government to run fiscally expansionary budgets and still preside over apparent surpluses. What this means in practice is that spending on infrastructure such as WestConnex is considered an investment, not a cost, because it delivers future income from user payments and asset sales. Based on this observation, our

the future that deliver returns back to the government, rather than the private sector. With this change of budgeting practices, governments could invest in nurses and teachers, for example, at interest rates currently reserved for toll roads. Such innovative reforms would remove budgetary biases towards privatisation.

Although our research focussed on the NSW budget in the run-up to the State election, similar issues were evident in the subsequent Federal election. The Coalition claimed that, if re-elected, it would slash income

Fellowships

Hans Senior Fischer Fellowship

A/Prof Susan Park has received the 3-year Hans Senior Fischer Fellowship at the Technical University of Munich, Germany. Susan will be working with leading scholars in global environmental politics and international political economy on the role of multilateral development banks in global economic governance.

Leverhulme Visiting Professorship

A/Prof Jake Lynch was awarded a Leverhulme visiting professorship to visit the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University for 12 months. There, Jake will share his expertise on media interventions for peace in situations of conflict as an organizing principle for journalist education.

Weizenbaum Visiting Fellowship

Prof Ariadne Vromen (MA '96) has received a Senior Fellowship at the Weizenbaum Institute in Berlin, with the digital citizenship team. This has led to an ongoing research collaboration with the Institute, investigating citizenship norms and online petitions in Australia and Germany.

Higher Education Academy Senior Fellowship

Associate Professor Alex Lefebvre was made Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA). Since 2016, the University of Sydney has actively worked to have staff recognised by Advance Higher Education, through supporting and mentoring fellowship applications.

Awards

Charles E. Merriam Award

Prof Pippa Norris has received the American Political Science Association Charles E. Merriam Award. The award is given biannually to a person whose published work and career represent a significant contribution to the art of government through the application of social science research.

International Studies Association Feminist Theory and Gender Studies section book prize

Prof Laura Shepherd's book *Gender, UN Peacebuilding and the Politics of Space* (Oxford University Press) received the 2018 International Studies Association Feminist Theory and Gender Studies section book prize award.

Facebook Content Policy Research on Social Media Platforms Research Award

Dr Aim Sinpeng and FASS colleague Fiona Martin have been recognised Facebook for research into regulating hate speech in the Asia Pacific region.

2019 Prize Giving Ceremony

In May, the School of Social and Political Sciences held a Prize Giving Ceremony to honour undergraduate and postgraduate students who have achieved exceptional results in the areas of Government and International Relations, Sociology and Social Policy, Anthropology, Peace and Conflict Studies, and Political Economy.





#5



#6



#7



#8



#9

1. Head of School, Professor Lisa Adkins delivering welcome address
2. Chair of Department of Sociology and Social Policy, A/Prof Catriona Elder and prize winner Georgia Peters
3. Chair of Department of Anthropology Robbie Peters and prize winner John Dooley
4. Sociology and Social Policy academics A/Prof Sonja Van Wichelen, Dr Gyu-Jin Hwang, Dr Allen George, and A/Prof Catriona Elder
5. Australian Federation of Graduate Women NSW representative Tricia Blomberg with prize winners Elle Burke and Aisha Langer
6. Guest speaker, Professor of Practice Tim Soutphommasane
7. Ms Penelope Gerstle with prize winner Sofia Ahmed
8. Ms Annie Corlett, AM with prize winner Nicholas Harrington
9. Emeritus Professor Frank Stilwell with prize winner Antonia Flowers

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin

A/Prof Alex Lefebvre and PhD candidate Llewellyn Williams-Brooks reflect on their residencies at Europe's largest social science research institute, the WZB

A/Prof Alex Lefebvre

I visited the WZB in November and December 2018 in the Democracy and Democratisation research unit, headed by Professor Wolfgang Merkel. It was an excellent setting to begin research on my new book length project, *Liberalism as a Way of Life: on the Spiritual Exercises of John Rawls*.

My days were spent reading Rawls in the morning and Rousseau in the evenings, with a midday walk in one of the coolest and most liveable cities in the world. I don't speak German, but when I type "la dolce vita" into Google translate, it's "süßes Leben" that describes my time.

What's the culture like at the WZB, Berlin?

There is a real sense of camaraderie at the WZB and it's a fun place to be. Everyone packs into the cafeteria for conversation over lunch. Office doors are open and colleagues pop in and out.

The weekly research seminars are attended by each and every member of the twenty-person research unit, with pre-circulated papers read and re-read. My own presentation was tremendously valuable for me, with many suggestions I hadn't anticipated and, crucially, warm encouragement for a set of ideas still finding their legs.

Berlin is a political theorist's dream. In addition to the regular staff at the WZB we had world-class visitors pass through, such as Profs Ian Shapiro (Yale), Rainer Forst (Frankfurt), and Lea Ypi (LSE), all of whom who held excellent conferences and were generous with their time and conversation.

Beyond the WZB community I was lucky to be able to meet with Profs. Susan Neiman (Director, Einstein Forum



in Potsdam) and Christian Volk (Humboldt) who work directly in my areas of interest. My time here has been instrumental to establish real (rather than just virtual) relationships with these scholars. I have every hope that these will be continued, whether through formal channels or else with ongoing exchanges and networks.

Would you recommend Germany in the winter?

As a Canadian shivering through a Berlin winter I've become aware that my eight years in Australia have made me soft. But it's been a delight experiencing real seasons and remembering what falling snow is like.



Llewellyn Williams-Brooks (BA Hons '17)

My fellowship at the WZB offered an engaging institutional context in which to advance and challenge my career development as a researcher. My work focuses on contemporary urban governance in Western Sydney and the implication for labour market policy. The WZB gave me the capacity, at a methodological and empirical level, to compare the Australian experience of work to that of Germany and its regional context.

I was also able to engage with the regional economy of Krakow, Poland at the Jagiellonian University which was an exciting and informative experience. Most importantly, I was given access to a range of department seminars at the the Weizenbaum Institute (part of the WZB), while workshopping my research with a diverse range of colleagues.

My research group, Globalization, Work, and Production, was conducting research on global supply chains and platform economies, which served as a stimulating contrast to my work. I learned much about the German parliamentary structure, and its challenges following reunification after the peaceful revolution.

What's research and academia like in Germany compared to Australia?

The German academic context tends to have more explicit hierarchies than Australia, and this is reflected in cultural and linguistic customs. Also, while both systems have excellent public universities, Germany tends to have a

more decentralised funding structure, in which researchers accrue funding from an organisation, rather than from a university/government directly.

Furthermore, Germany has two public research streams: University and Non-University (WZB fits with the latter).

This means that researchers are often embedded, not only in a research context, but within a distinct funding scheme determined by interest groups (for example, unions and political parties).

I would also argue that postgraduate research is more widely accepted and mainstream in Germany, compared to Australia. Furthermore, multilingual and international collaboration seem far more commonsensical in the European Union due to the distinct institutional and historical context.

What were some of the highlights of living in Berlin?

Definitely, the nightlife and access to the arts. The city hosts a rich variety of bars and clubs, as well as a very diverse number of museums and art galleries. They were very affordable, and accessible for English speakers, making my project of understanding the german economy and society very achievable.

The theatre culture was a stand out also, you can see new and old work on a range of political and social themes. I loved living in an historical neighbourhood and going to the local flea market on Saturdays.

Transforming education around the world

Written by Tessa Lunney (BA Hons '05 M.C.W '09
BA MLitt '09)



Photo: Neonbrand

There seems no end to the creative ways people are using Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) to transform education around the world. Changing the way teachers engage with students in classrooms from primary schools to universities, helping to rehabilitate prisoners in the UK and China, 'decolonising' the curriculum in countries like South Africa, shaping the entire design – right down to layouts of building – of an entire engineering faculty at a new university ...these are just some of the ways LCT is impacting education.

'Legitimation Code Theory' is a framework used by a growing community of scholars and educators. The heart of this multidisciplinary and international community is the LCT Centre for Knowledge-Building, in the School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS). Created by Professor Karl Maton, LCT reveals 'the DNA of knowledge', showing the principles underlying what people say and do in education, principles which are often tacit and so leave many students at a disadvantage. By making these principles or 'codes' explicit, LCT empowers students and teachers to succeed.

Here are some examples of the social impact that scholars associated with the LCT Centre in SSPS are making in education internationally.

Decolonising the curriculum in South Africa

Drs Hanelie Adendorff and Margaret Blackie from Stellenbosch University are using LCT to help make sense of an intense debate over decolonising the curriculum in South Africa.

Since the #RhodesMustFall movement, issues of how to engage with the legacy of colonialism in shaping what is taught and learned in education have come to national prominence. Adendorff and Blackie are using LCT to make sense of the science curriculum, holding workshops with educators at universities focusing on creative assessment practices that use LCT. This can be a very passionate and difficult issue to address and these educators say that LCT allows them to make sense of the issues in less confrontational and more productive ways.

Teacher training

A major area that LCT is shaping around the world is teacher training. In the USA, Dr Andrés Ramírez of Florida Atlantic University is exploring how primary school children are taught.

Using LCT as his guide, Ramirez is working with teachers and providing workshops in the university's teacher-training lab. For Ramirez, as for other teacher educators

in Australia, South Africa, Denmark, Latin America and elsewhere, LCT provides a practical but rigorous framework for both analysing and shaping practice. Using the approach, he identifies what practices work and how those practices can be taught to teachers.

A whole university faculty

In South Africa, Dr Karin Wolff is designing an Engineering Faculty for Stadio Multiversity, a new private tertiary education provider. The Faculty will open in 2021 and is entirely shaped by ideas from LCT. Wolff was supervised by Professor Karl Maton and is a regularly visitor to the LCT Centre.

“I am very excited about how we have started our work on building the faculty – from the design of programmes and the curricular elements to the infrastructure,” says Wolff.

“LCT helps to articulate the ‘relational idea’: engineering is the practice of scientific principles and technological possibilities in service of the needs of society.”

Research translation

A key area for social science generally is research translation: turning research findings into practical impact. At Queen Mary University of London, Jane Waite is using LCT to help achieve this translation in reports for the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE) in the UK.

“The NCCE is funded by the Department for Education in England, with a provision of £84 million to support improved teaching and learning of computing in our schools,” says Waite.

The first report will be published in June and will provide British teachers with more precise teaching tools in computing education.

High-security prisoner rehabilitation

LCT is not just confined to education, scholars at Guangzhou University in China are exploring how LCT can be used to match prisoners with different forms of counselling. In the UK, a prisoner rehabilitation program

in Durham uses LCT to make sense of relations between academic theory and the lived experience of prison. The Inside-Out program pairs Durham University’s criminology students with maximum-security inmates – the different ways of thinking and knowing brought by these two groups are articulated through LCT.

LCT Centre for Knowledge-Building

What unites all these diverse endeavours are their concern with social change, with research having real social impact, and with LCT as their guiding way of thinking. All these projects, and many more, are also connected through the School’s LCT Centre for

Knowledge-Building. As associate member Karin Wolff states, “here is the reality: for every single ‘problem’ one finds in the literature on how we are failing globally in the higher education space, there is an LCT instrument to help us understand the problem.”



Photo: Flickr

“You want to discuss the ‘theory-practice divide’? LCT gives you ‘Semantics’ – concepts that allow you to address that issue. You want to address the fact that practices like engineering are not just scientific but social. Well, LCT gives you ‘Specialization’ – concepts that allow you address that issue. LCT empowers!”

And there is more to come, with LCT underpinning new and innovative ways of teaching at the University of Sydney, innovative ways of thinking about supporting Indigenous communities in Mexico, new approaches to Chinese education, and many other projects underway.

Find out more about the LCT Centre for Knowledge-Building:

- bit.ly/2wDPPrO

Just coal transitions in the more-than-human world

Economic justice and the future of coal in Australia

Written by Rebecca Pearse (BSc '04 BPsych Hons '06)

The future of coal is in doubt. Declining coal production and major challenges to coal mine approvals in Australia are now established trends. Renewable energy is set to become over half of the nation's domestic electricity production by 2030.

This is good news for human and non-human lives on the line as climate crisis develops. At the same time, thinking about coal industry transition requires deeper questioning, about what kinds of economies and relationships with the non-human world are possible beyond fossil fuelled capitalism.

Debating the future beyond coal

There are many well-researched proposals for just transitions away from coal and other fossil fuels,

addressing questions like - What scale of fossil fuel asset write-offs in Australia would be fair and necessary to ensure we don't break the global carbon budget? Could a liberal internationalist program of 'cooperative decarbonisation' make an Australia moratorium on new fossil fuels feasible? How are coal workers and regional economies impacted by industry transition already in play? What kind of industrial policies can best secure decent green jobs?

These are all important questions to tackle. However, any one discrete policy proposal to address Australia's coal question will not alone tackle the structural malaise of inequality in contemporary capitalist societies. Economic justice requires a broader set of reforms.

Recent discussion about a Green New Deal (GND) in the US shows a way forward. A GND could be an ambitious program for economic justice, linking decarbonisation to measures to tackle inequality, precarity and wage stagnation. It calls for major public investment in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and water supplies, and at its centre - new rights to employment, housing, and public transport.

To secure a globalised GND that genuinely tackles the coal question, it will be crucial to push against the techno-speak of 'zero-net emissions' in the existing framing of the climate goal. The latter opens up scope for governments to displace the abatement task away from fossil fuel production e.g. with carbon

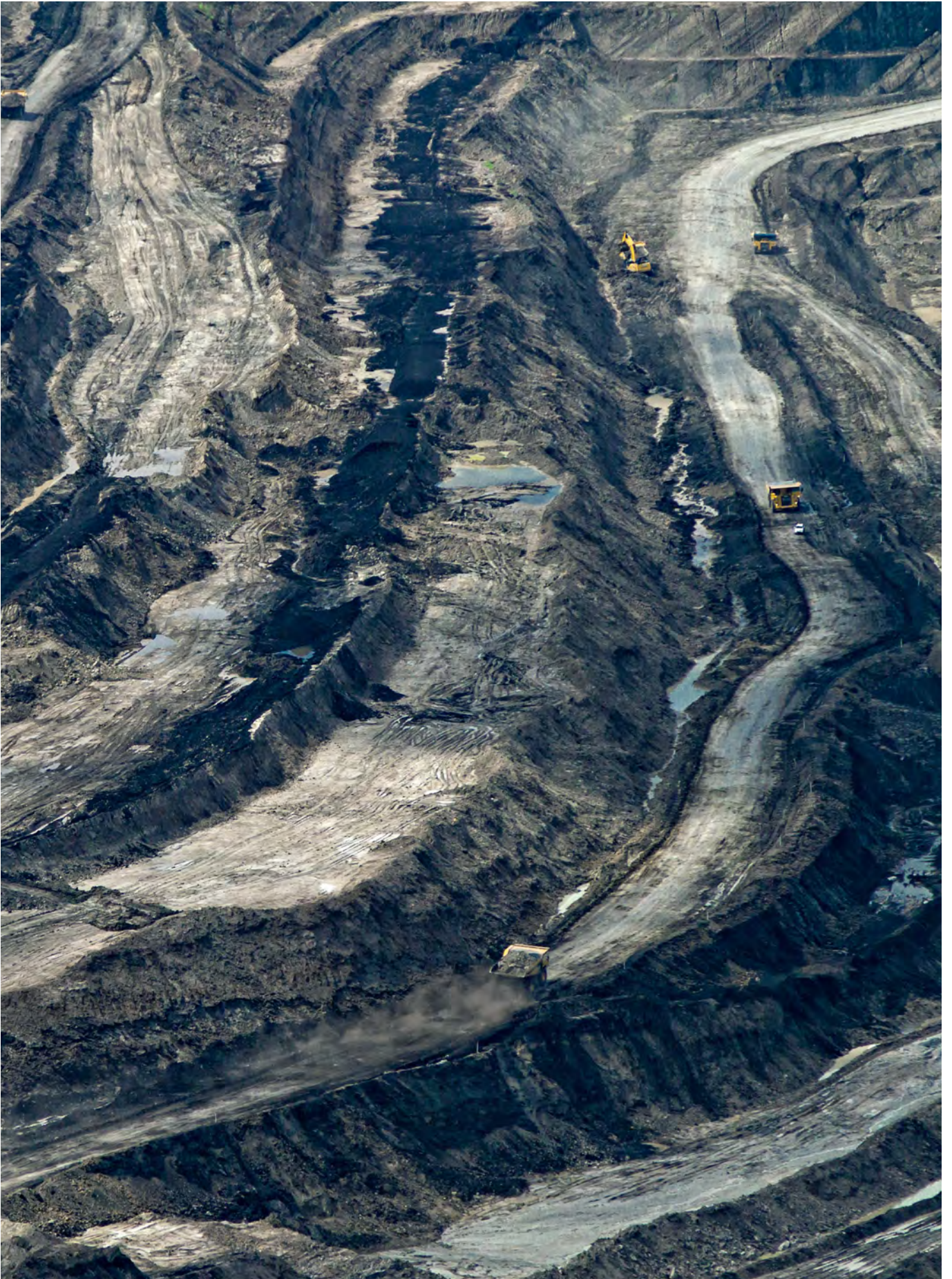


Photo: Dominik Vanyi

offsets or geoengineering. These mechanisms are an evasion of the major questions concerning fossil fuels. Experimental engineering of the carbon cycle may further threaten life on the planet. Campaigns for a GND and other progressive economic reforms will need to resist technological fixes, and prosecute a popular social justice argument for keeping fossil fuels in the ground.

Crucially, there is further reckoning to do when it comes to envisioning economies beyond coal.

Rethinking justice and inequalities in the age of climate crisis

Given the integral role fossil capital accumulation has played in fundamentally altering the biosphere and in turn, threatening human and non-human life, we need to carve out a vision for multi-species economic justice.

Our challenge involves what Dipesh Chakrabarty describes as thinking in two registers. That is, trying to get a grip on humanity's geological agency (which demolishes the human-nature divide) while also attending to enduring questions of social justice (uneven development, rising income and wealth inequalities, gender and racial discrimination, and more).

New lines of ecological thought in marxist, feminist, and decolonial political economics are crucial to the project of rethinking economic justice in the more-than-human world. These traditions provide the tools we need to historicise and politicise how value is extracted from human and non-human natures, helping us to identify who benefits and at what cost.

“Given the integral role fossil capital accumulation has played in fundamentally altering the biosphere and in turn, threatening human and non-human life, we need to carve out a vision for multi-species economic justice .”

The historical and contemporary operations of settler capitalism are at the heart of our ecological crisis in Australia. Since colonial forces declared terra nullius, governments and capital have regarded land and non-human life as unlimited resources. Australia's economic development has proceeded via the domination of non-human others and violent denial of indigenous sovereignty.



Photo: Marcus Spiske

Many hotly contested mine proposals show how the coal commodity continues this brutal environmental change.

Coal capital and the politics of devaluation

Coal capital has a number of orientations to human and non-human life. Some bodies and communities are deemed productive and assigned monetary value; others are constituted as waste, as useful but unpriced, or as a threat.

Expanded coal capital accumulation proceeds through the systemic devaluation of human and non-human life deemed 'outside', or in excess of, officially valued coal. Importantly, there are problems. The scale and pace of coal development has been stemmed in recent times.

Consider the proposed Watermark coalmine proposed for the northwest NSW. Gomeroi people on the Liverpool Plains have objected to Shenhua's proposed mine, which entail plans to cut-out and relocate an entire rock face with grinding grooves and other artefacts from sacred sites during the thirty-year life of the proposed mine. Federal review of the government's 'management' of indigenous heritage has been stalled for over a year, with no resolution in sight. Gomeroi, landholders and environmentalists have all argued the many drawn out mine review procedures fail to meaningfully protect land, water, and non-human life.

Protections for endangered species are also weak and contested. For instance, the Queensland government's recent environmental approval for the Adani mine was given despite its impacts on the black-throated finch. Government decisions like this do the political work of devaluing life rendered 'outside' coal's value proposition.

'Threatened species' are subjects to be managed to make way for coal. Environmental law and regulation has proven an incredibly weak means to avoid loss of life, and the case for a new generation of environmental laws is increasingly urgent.

As it stands, our environmental protection regime calibrates human/non-human relations on profoundly unequal terms. Biodiversity 'offsets'

for coalmine approvals are common. It usually means directing coal companies to purchase land with similar flora and fauna in order to compensate for destruction at the mine site. The goal is 'no net loss.' But the devil in the detail reveals offsets fail to arrest aggregate loss.

Biodiversity offsetting parcels up 'units' of non-human life in abstraction from place. This ignores the material specificity of non-human natures and renders conservation as a matter of trade-offs or exchange in biodiversity credits. Questions like how much coal development is too much?, rarely get asked in mine environmental approval processes.

Thankfully, there is a little good news on this front.

The recent court finding that a coalmine proposed near the NSW town of Gloucester was in the 'wrong place at the wrong time' points to another way to answer the coal question. Here, the importance of place, as well as concerns about the global carbon budget came together in a judge's assessment that the mine should be refused.



Photo: Sandy Millar

Towards multi-species economic justice

A multi-species economic justice outlook on Australia's coal question must take this kind of integrative thinking further.

Only by thinking broadly and deeply will we have a chance at coming up with adequate answers to the coal question and climate crisis. In June 2019, the FASS Multi-Species Justice events will be progressing the vital collective work of building new possibilities for economies with multi-species diversity and autonomy.

Future Insecurity: Espionage and Warfare in the Digital Age

The Centre for International Security Studies Global Forum explores surveillance, cyberweapons and a new precariousness in global politics

Written by Clare Hodgson

In this era of fake news, hacking and increasing online surveillance, traditional notions of espionage and warfare are being rapidly revised. More and more, major disruptions to the global order emerge through cyber attacks, social media and other forms of digital manipulation, with the main players being states, tech companies, organised criminal enterprises... and bored teenagers.

In 2019, the Centre for International Security Studies (CISS) invited leading international experts on digital attacks and cyber warfare to speak on the theme of Future Insecurity at the CISS Global Forum.

David E. Sanger (New York Times national security correspondent) explored the nature of cyber warfare, while Professor Ron Deibert (Director of The Citizen Lab) revealed how this technology is employed by states in acts of targeted digital espionage against civil society.

In his talk at USYD (co-sponsored by The New York Times Australia), David Sanger outlined the key arguments of his best-selling book *The Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage & Fear in the Cyber Age*. In his view, cyber makes the perfect weapon because it is dirt cheap, can be scaled up or down and is easily deniable. But despite the now pervasive cyber threat, states and security agencies have been slow to respond to this non-traditional security challenge.

Unlike nuclear weapons, which require specialist facilities, infrastructure and millions of dollars to build, cyber attacks require only some stolen code, a couple of teenagers and a case of red bull. Perhaps this is why cyber escaped the attention of security agencies, who regarded the technology as primarily a surveillance tool rather than a weapon.

But what happens when the use of cyber warfare by states becomes normalised?

In the course of his investigation Sanger discovered a U.S. program to hack North Korea's missile systems. While the program never eventuated, its existence raises questions about whether this or a similar program of cyber warfare could be expanded to command and control the systems of countries such as China or Russia. Sanger suggests that if the capacity to disrupt missile systems becomes the new normal, states may lose confidence in their defensive capacity leading to the launch of pre-emptive strikes before missile technology is compromised.

So, how do we mitigate this threat when the mere existence of the technology itself introduces a new level of strategic instability and insecurity? There is no easy answer.



Photo:Nahel Abdul Hadi (Left), Unsplash (right)

While David Sanger highlighted the implications of cyber warfare for states and security agencies, Professor Deibert's talk on 'Tracking Digital Espionage' focused on cyber attacks perpetrated by state actors against individuals.

At the Citizen Lab, Deibert and his 'digital detectives' document instances of state-based digital espionage targeting human rights activists and civil society. These attacks send an infected link via text message which embeds spyware on the recipient's mobile phone. The perpetrator thereby gains access to the recipient's mobile phone activity, communications and geolocation services.

Citizen Lab classify targeted digital espionage as a 'silent epidemic' threatening a crisis of democracy.

Much of Citizen Lab's work focuses on the activities of the NSO Group,

a self-described cyber warfare company that sells to international governments. While their technology is sold under the guise of fighting crime and terrorism, according to investigations undertaken by Citizen Lab, it has enabled governments to track and target their opponents, particularly civil society activists and human rights defenders.

The outcomes of this targeted digital espionage are shocking. During his talk, Deibert highlighted the case of Omar Abdulaziz, a Saudi dissident living in Canada. Citizen Lab began working with Abdulaziz when they discovered he was the victim of a digital espionage campaign by Saudi authorities who were monitoring his mobile phone communications.

In a tragic twist, Abdulaziz had been communicating with Jamal Khashoggi prior to his brutal murder in Istanbul. They exchanged sensitive information about a plan to mobilise social media activists in a campaign

against the Saudi regime. Citizen Lab concluded that information gathered from the surveillance of Abdulaziz played a role in the murder of Khashoggi and that Khashoggi's own devices were likely compromised.

Both Sanger and Deibert highlighted the 'future insecurity' the world faces as the weaponisation of cyber technology proceeds, while international law and regulations fail to keep pace. The use of cyber warfare will continue to create new asymmetries in global politics, as states undermine each other's digital and national security, and individuals are manipulated and targeted by campaigns of disinformation, or worse, digital espionage.

View the Global Forum recordings:

- bit.ly/Gobalforum

Shaking up the Sydney Politics Society



A look at the new progressive and inclusive agenda of Sydney's leading nonpartisan politics society

Written by Bethany Pankhurst (President) and Jonty Redman (Vice President)

The University of Sydney Politics Society is the official non-partisan student society for the discipline of Government and International Relations. Our aim is to bring balanced, accessible and meaningful debate on a wide range of political issues to the University of Sydney community.

In 2019, our Politics Society executive departed on a new journey: to modernise our Society, with a rebrand and refocus. Our new logo, which places the Sydney University lion together with an outline of the Australian Parliament House, is just one step in our goal toward becoming a more contemporary and inclusive student society.

Our overhaul coincides with the introduction of the new Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Advanced Studies degree offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which includes a dedicated Politics and International Relations stream.

The stream presented a new and unique opportunity for students from various socio-economic, academic and cultural backgrounds to come together and discuss the issues that shape Australia's future. Ultimately, these changes have meant that our Society has seen a steady increase in the number of first-year undergraduate

and postgraduate members, a change that we are very excited to see.

Our ambition is to hold an event for our members every fortnight, giving students valuable social, academic, and industry networking opportunities.

One of our major aims for these events has been to engage with the large number of students now entering the Politics and International Relations stream, and to simultaneously run events that will allow them to become more familiar with the academics within the Department.

The result of this has been extremely rewarding. Our first 2019 Politics Society event, 'Politics and Pizza' at Courtyard Cafe, was graciously attended by the Chair of the Department, Professor Jingdong Yuan. Some of our more recent events such as 'The Revolving Door: A Movie Night', maintained the ongoing momentum and exposure of the Society in terms of involving some of our newer members.

The Politics Society has also acknowledged the need to build more diversified voices in the areas of politics and policy. Our long-running 'Diplomatic Dialogue' series—which sees Ambassadors, Consul Generals and



Politics Society members Laura Glase, Julia Kokic, Jonty Redman, Bethany Pankhurst and Nick Rigby with The Hon. Bob Carr.

other members of the diplomatic core participate in roundtable discussions with our members—has a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region this year. This decision is a respectful nod to the priority given to our geographical neighbours in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trades’ 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper. This month’s Diplomatic Dialogue, featured the Sydney Consul General of India, Mr. Manish Gupta.

“Our reputation and ability to engage students on campus prompted the ABC’s 7:30 Report to approach our Society for interview on a segment about youth disillusionment in politics.”

Another series which we have been especially proud of is our annual ‘Women in Politics’ event. This year’s event was held in conjunction with Women for Election Australia, who joined us to discuss the ways in which we can improve female representation in Australian politics and remove the barriers that restrict women from being able to fully participate in Australia’s democratic institutions.

Our members have also kept up to date with local and national events relating to Australian politics and international relations through the Politics Society newsletter. Along with current affairs information, our newsletter also informs members of various internship opportunities, conferences and partner-events offered by various organisations across Sydney.

Our reputation and ability to engage students on campus prompted the ABC’s 7:30 Report to approach our Society for interview on a segment about youth disillusionment in politics. Our executive team was featured workshopping efforts to engage with students across the University community and counter the growing discontent with politics felt by today’s youth.

The Politics Society is exceedingly grateful to the Department of Government and International Relations, and the School of Social and Political Sciences for their ongoing support. We look forward bringing a bigger and program of academic, social and networking events and opportunities to our members!

Find out more about the Sydney Politics Society:

- facebook.com/supoliticssociety/

Grants

Australian Research Council

A/Prof Fran Collyer has been awarded \$602,000 in the Australian Research Council Discovery Project round for her project titled *Knowledge-making in Australian society: sociology and its social impact*. This project aims to reveal how Australians, over several generations, have sought to make sense of society in an organised way. Collyer will draw from interviews with key scholars, as well as archival and citation data to ascertain how sociological knowledge has been shaped by a context of post-colonialism, multiculturalism and global capitalism, and the extent to which these ideas have contributed to, and been influenced by, policy, legislation and public debate.

Prof Lisa Adkins, with the University of Newcastle, will investigate how labour performed by young people in the hospitality industry contribute to the creation of economic value. The project titled, *Young hospitality workers and value creation in the service economy* will examine the specific practices through which hospitality workers create value, and will explore the personal capacities and forms of identity that allow young people to become a successful part of the hospitality labour force.

A/Prof Gaby Ramia, is part of a team led by UTS, investigating the housing circumstances of international students in the private rental sector in Sydney and Melbourne. Their project, *The experience of precarious housing among international students* expects to generate new knowledge on their housing circumstances, the extent of precariousness and the impacts on their wellbeing and academic experience.

Office of Global Engagement Partnership Collaboration Awards

Prof Lynne Chester (MPublPol '95) and Dr Amanda Elliot were awarded \$12,030 by the Office of Global Engagement for a collaboration with the University of Glasgow for their project titled *Advancing energy justice through economic democracy*.

Dr Fiona Gill (BA '98 CertEdStud '12) and Dr Denise Donion (Department of Anatomy and Histology) were awarded \$14,000 by the OGE's India Development Fund for their project on *Skeletons in the Closet? British Colonialism, Medical Education and the Human Body Trade: Tracing the Origins of Indian Teaching Skeletons*.

A/Prof Alexandre Lefebvre was awarded \$19,970 to collaborate with the University of Copenhagen on new and practicable ways to defend and promote liberal democracy.

Client Commissioned Research

Dr Gaynor Macdonald received \$5,000 by The Ibbai Waggan-Wiradjuri Pty Ltd to provide anthropological advice and compile field-based research materials.

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences FutureFix

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' six new FutureFix flagship research themes are a collaborative approach between academics, industry and community groups, to design solutions for issues of global importance.

Prof Lisa Adkins, A/Prof Melinda Cooper and Prof Martijn Konings' project, *Asset ownership and the new inequality* will explore asset-based capitalism and investigate the new forms of inequality and precarity that accompany its rise. They'll aim to develop a more nuanced understanding of the forms of stratification associated with the asset economy.

A/Prof Sonja van Wichelen and A/Prof Nadine Ehlers from SSPS, along with FASS colleagues Dr Peter Hobbins (MMedHum '09 PhD '14), Dr Luara Ferracioli, Professor Paul Griffiths, Professor Warwick Anderson will focus on *Biohumanity*, addressing the articulation between knowledge practices in the humanities and social sciences and the life sciences concerning models and categories of the 'human', 'person', and 'self'. Building on advances in biomedical research and biotechnology that present unparalleled opportunities to reframe classic inquiries in the humanities and social sciences, their research will influence health policy.

Prof Danielle Celermajer (BSW '91 BA '94) and Prof David Schlosberg's project, *Multispecies justice* will develop innovative media forms and collaborative relationships with policymakers to reconceptualise justice as a way of accommodating the vast breadth of the multispecies world.

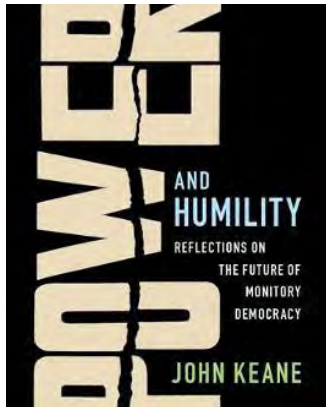
UK Research and Innovation Global Research Challenges Fund

Prof Laura Shepherd will be a co-director of an interdisciplinary multi-country Hub on Gender, Justice and Security. The total amount awarded to the Hub was 15,224,760 GBP.

Commercial Development and Industry Partners Engagement Fund

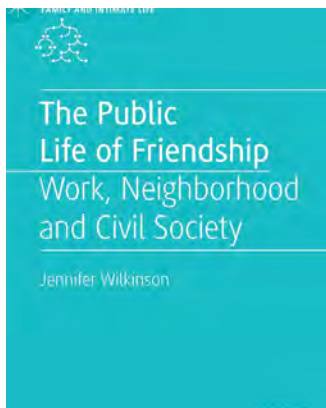
A/Prof Anna Boucher (BA '03 BA Hons '05 LLB '06) and Dr Joseph Toltz (BA '92 BMus Hons '05 BMus PhD '11) from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music were awarded \$1,764 to develop a linkage relationship with the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne.

Selected books



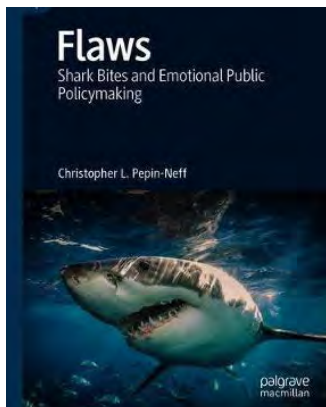
Power and Humility: Reflections on the Future of Minority Democracy – John Keane

Democracy urgently needs re-imagining if it is to address the dangers and opportunities posed by current global realities, argues leading political thinker John Keane. He offers an imaginative, radically new interpretation of the 21st century fate of democracy.



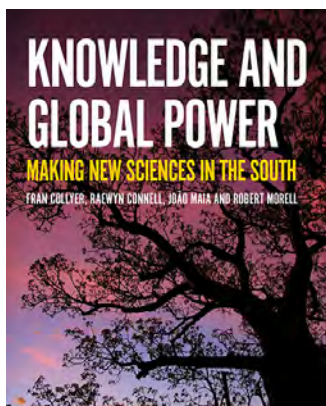
The Public Life of Friendship: Work, Neighbourhood and Civil Society – Jennifer Wilkinson

Identifying the unique relevance which public friendships have to contemporary social problems, Jennifer Wilkinson's new book covers a range of topics, including work-life balance, women's 'double burden' and their leisure deficit, and contemporary neighbouring initiatives. The book also explores the way in which friendships in public settings like work and neighbourhood provide community to those in society who are more likely to be excluded from private familial intimacy.



Flaws: Shark Bites and Emotional Public Policymaking – Chris Pepin-Neff

Chris Pepin-Neff's (MPubIPol '08 PhD '14) new book examines the policymaking process following highly emotional events. It focuses on the politics of shark 'attacks' by looking at policy responses to tragic shark bites in Florida, Australia, and South Africa. *Flaws* identifies politicians as the true sharks of this story for their manipulation of tragic circumstances to protect their own interests. It argues that shark bites are ungovernable accidents of nature, and that we are "in the way, not on the menu."



Knowledge and Global Power: Making New Sciences in the South – Fran Collyer, Raewyn Connell, João Maia and Robert Morell

Knowledge and Global Power examines the processes and politics by which knowledge is produced, distributed and validated globally. Identifying how former colonial nations of Europe and North America continue to dominate the global knowledge economy, it shows how these institutionalised power relations continue to affect the opportunities and experiences of knowledge producers in 'Northern' nations and the global 'South'.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INEQUALITY

FRANK STILWELL



The Political Economy of Inequality – Frank Stilwell

During the last few decades, the gap between the incomes, wealth and living standards of rich and poor people has increased in most countries. Economic inequality has become a defining issue of our age.

Frank Stilwell (GradDipEdStud '01) provides a comprehensive overview of the nature, causes, and consequences of this growing divide. He shows how we can understand inequalities of wealth and incomes, globally and nationally, examines the scale of the problem and explains how it affects our wellbeing.

SECURITY IN ASIA PACIFIC

THE
DYNAMICS
OF
ALIGNMENT

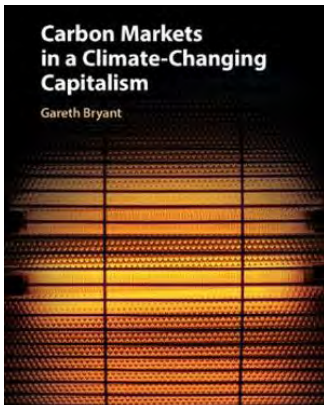
THOMAS S. WILKINS

Security in Asia Pacific: The Dynamics of Alignment – Thomas Wilkins

The complex security dynamics of the pivotal Asia Pacific region, involving disparate and contentious power blocs, clearly have implications far beyond the region itself. Thomas Wilkins (MPh '18) sheds new light on those dynamics, providing a rich framework for better understanding the nature of security alignments in Asia Pacific, as well as a reexamination of the dominant forces at play: the US alliance system, ASEAN, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Carbon Markets in a Climate-Changing Capitalism

Gareth Bryant



Carbon Markets in a Climate-Changing Capitalism – Gareth Bryant

The promise of harnessing market forces to combat climate change has been unsettled by low carbon prices, financial losses, and ongoing controversies in global carbon markets. And yet governments around the world remain committed to market-based solutions to bring down greenhouse gas emissions. Gareth Bryant's (BEcSocSc Hons '11 Phd '16) new book discusses what went wrong with the marketisation of climate change and what this means for the future of action on climate change.

For more information


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