

NSW GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

2021 Honours/Masters Conference

18 November 2021

Program



ACCESS
Australian Centre for
Culture, Environment,
Society & Space



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Conference Practical Details

The 2021 NSW Geography Honours/Masters Conference will be hosted via the zoom platform.

The zoom link for this meeting is:

<https://uow-au.zoom.us/j/83666731874?pwd=cXBmdjl2NDRSUG04YmpNVWUreGw5dz09>

Meeting ID: 836 6673 1874

Password: 430732

The parallel paper sessions will be coordinated through zoom breakout rooms.

Zoom etiquette:

In order to facilitate an interactive conference, we would greatly appreciate participants muting their microphones when entering the conference main room and breakout rooms. Questions can be posed using zoom chat and raising a hand.

Where possible we would also appreciate participants leaving their webcams on – as this greatly encourages conference speakers and facilitations interaction. We are mindful, however, that this may not be possible for all participants.

Acknowledgement of Country

‘The greatest and oldest geographers are Indigenous peoples, and what geographers and Australian Indigenous peoples have in common is a love of Country.’ (Linda Burney MP, 12 August 2017)

Country is the essence of Indigenous cultures, and in Australia Country has nourished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for millennia. A connection to Country is a special gift that is accessible for everyone in Australia.

As geographers, we have relationships with, and responsibility to Country, as the field of all our work. We acknowledge the Dharawal, Yuin and Wadi Wadi peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country in the Illawarra. We also acknowledge the ongoing significance of Mount Keira, the ancient teaching site, below which our School resides.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, to all Indigenous peoples living in the region, and extend that respect to other Indigenous peoples with whom we engage. Through our teaching, research and engagement we seek to help others appreciate and act in respect of the significance of Country.

At the University of Wollongong, the Jindaola program engages participants in an Aboriginal way towards achieving Curriculum Reconciliation. It's also designed to build stronger more intimate relationships with Country. Information about the Jindaola program is available here: <https://www.uow.edu.au/about/services/woolyungah-indigenous-centre/jindaola/>

Welcome

The Council of the Geographical Society of New South Wales extends a warm welcome to all participants attending the NSW Geography Honours/Masters Conference, 2021. Established in 1927, the mission of the GSNSW is to elevate the discipline of geography, as well as to excite and engage the public in geography. The Geography Honours/Masters Conference is an important means by which we fulfil this mission.

This conference began 25 years ago as an opportunity for Honours students to showcase their work and provide an opportunity to meet other people who are passionate about engaging in geographical research. Today we welcome both Honours and research Master Students, recognising the changes in educational structures that have occurred in some universities in recent times. Over the years we have witnessed fantastic presentations from students who have gone on to successful professional and academic careers. I am confident that today's presentations will continue this proud tradition.

Each year the conference rotates between Schools where geography is taught within the universities in New South Wales. This year the Council is indebted to the generosity of the University of Wollongong, particularly the Australian Centre for Culture, Environment, Society and Space. I would especially like to acknowledge the work of Conference Organisers, Dr Laura Hammersley and Dr Sonia Graham, and the Society's Executive Officer, Bronwyn Bate; as well as recognise the efforts of all those people in the GSNSW and elsewhere who have made this conference possible.

Finally, please stay connected with the Geographical Society of NSW as we continue to foster the development of geography and geographers in this state by publishing the journal *Australian Geographer* (which is a wonderful outlet for a journal article based on your thesis research), by holding functions for postgraduate students, initiating conference travel awards for post-doctoral geographers and holding events such as the NSW Geography Honours/Masters Conference.

For further information, please contact the Society's Executive Officer Bronwyn Bate (B.Bate@westernsydney.edu.au). Enjoy the day, make new friends and stay connected with the Geographical Society of New South Wales.

Professor Matthew Kearnes
President, Geographical Society of New South Wales

Cover Image

The cover image for the conference programme is a photo taken from the University of Wollongong towards Mt Keira. It was taken by Dr Laura Hammersley.

Conference Program

10.30 – 10:45 am Welcome to Country and the Honours/Master Conference 2021

Welcome to Country – Jade Kennedy, Yuin Knowledge Holder

Acknowledgement of Country – Sonia Graham

Conference Welcome – Professor Matt Kearnes President
Geographical Society of New South Wales

10:45 – 11:00 am Break

Time to move into breakout rooms ahead of the parallel sessions
Presenters to test screen share works

11.00 – 12.00 pm Honours and Masters presentations

Topic	Rivers, coasts and oceans	Care, healing and nature	Food, water and energy
Breakout	1	2	3
Chair	Dr Leah Gibbs	Dr Laura Hammersley	Dr Sonia Graham
11:00 – 11:15	Rebekah Bradshaw University of Sydney	Clare Fletcher University of NSW	Fayanne Cui University of Sydney
11:15 – 11:30	Alexis Farr University of NSW	Lara Newman University of Newcastle	Ellen Wong University of Sydney
11:30 – 11:45	Stephanie Daborn Monash University	Helen Palfreeman University of Newcastle	Sam Quirk University of Wollongong
11:45 – 12:00	Cynthia Chan University of Sydney	Mary Pilkinton University of Wollongong	Judita Hudson University of Sydney
12:00 – 12:15	Elise Frost Macquarie University	Emily Orman University of Wollongong	Emily Ryan University of Sydney

12:15 – 1:00 pm Lunch break

1.00 – 1.45pm Workshop

Publishing in the Australian Geographer – Professor Chris Gibson

2 – 2:30pm Presentation of Jim Rose Awards

- Best Paper at the annual conference- \$250 cheque
- Highly Commended presentation on a physical geography topic - \$100 cheque
- Highly Commended presentation on a human geography topic - \$100 cheque

2.30pm Conference Close

Abstracts

THE CONTROLS ON THE LIFESPAN AND EVOLUTION OF THE KENN SEAMOUNT, CORAL SEA	
REBEKAH BRADSHAW.....	6
A SEA OF RESISTANCE? SYDNEY’S WATER STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF ANTIMICROBIAL POLLUTION RISK	
CYNTHIA CHAN.....	7
MAKING A SPLASH? WASTEWATER RECYCLING IN SYDNEY AS SITES OF MARKET ENVIRONMENTALISM	
FAYANNE CUI.....	8
ARE YOU SHORE? THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE IN CREATING AND RESOLVING COASTAL ADAPTATION CONFLICTS	
STEPHANIE DABORN.....	9
FEAR-FULL ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OCEAN IN YUIN COUNTRY	
ALEXIS FARR.....	10
TOWARDS EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF THE PILBARA EARLY LIFE SITES AS A MULTIFUNCTIONAL LANDSCAPE: EXPLORING LESSONS FROM NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE	
CLARE FLETCHER.....	11
“OUR RIVER”? DIVERSE VALUES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN PLANNING FOR THE BRIDGE-TO-BRIDGE PRECINCT, PENRITH	
ELISE FROST.....	12
UNLOCKING SOLAR FOR ALL IN NEW SOUTH WALES? A TALE OF ENERGY CITIZENSHIP IN TWO SOLAR GARDENS	
JUDITA HUDSON.....	13
WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS OF NATURE EXPERIENCES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES	
MARY PILKINTON.....	14
A LANTERN FOR MY PATH’: HEALING INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA THROUGH THE INDIGENOUS-LED MURAMA YOUTH SUMMIT	
LARA NEWMAN.....	15
WORKING-FROM-HOME IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY: HYBRID GEOGRAPHIES OF HOME, WORK AND WORKER	
EMILY ORMAN.....	16
PRACTICES OF CARE AND DELTA THERAPY TEAMS	
HELEN PALFREEMAN.....	17
THE GEOGRAPHIES OF FOOD WASTE RECYCLING: ‘CLOSING THE LOOP’ BETWEEN CAFES AND URBAN AGRICULTURE	
SAM QUIRK.....	18
WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINE: UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE FIREFIGHTERS WITHIN THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE	
EMILY RYAN.....	19
DECOLONISING FOOD? THE POLITICAL POTENTIAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIVE FOOD INDUSTRY	
ELLEN WONG.....	20

The Controls on the Lifespan and Evolution of the Kenn Seamount, Coral Sea

Rebekah Bradshaw
University of Sydney

Seamounts are important bathymetric features on the seafloor, acting as a link between lithospheric, hydrospheric, and biological processes and providing insight into the nature of crust-mantle interactions. The Kenn Seamount is a 24 x 127 km edifice located in the northern end of the Tasmantid Seamount Chain, a north-south trending, age-progressive series of extinct hotspot volcanoes. It is situated on the western margin of the Kenn Plateau, and is thought to have erupted through the thinned and extended continental crust of northern Zealandia. There has been a paucity of data surrounding Kenn Seamount until recently. In this study, a new bathymetry grid was compiled including bathymetric data from two recent R/V Falkor voyages. Petrographic, geochemical, and biostratigraphic analyses of volcanic and carbonate rocks recovered from three dredge sites around Kenn Seamount during a 2019 R/V Investigator voyage provided important ground-truthing for features identified in the bathymetry data including volcanic edifices, reefs and carbonate platforms, and lava flows. This new data provides valuable insight into the geologic and geomorphic history of the Kenn Seamount. Constraining the processes that influenced Kenn Seamount's morphology, and how this compares to neighbouring seamounts, is important for understanding crustal controls on the formation and evolution of seamounts.

A Sea of Resistance? Sydney's Water Stakeholder Perceptions of Antimicrobial Pollution Risk

Cynthia Chan
University of Sydney

The rise of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) endangers the ongoing health of the global society. Urban coastal waters in particular serve as a critical One Health interface for human exposure to waste-stream driven AMR. This thesis integrates environmental justice and the social amplification of risk framework to critically assess the institutional, political and social processes that shape the management of AMR pollution in Sydney's coastal waters. Using Terrigal Bay and Rose Bay as case studies, this thesis unravels the complex web of stakeholder responsibilities and examines the way perceptions of risk towards AMR pollution are institutionally amplified or attenuated in water governance. The analysis suggests that AMR pollution is far from being perceived as a threat deserving prioritisation in water management in NSW, as such leading to institutional inaction and risk attenuation. The findings highlight the need for a clear governance framework that adequately supports downstream water stakeholders as well as the importance of further research to address the scientific uncertainties.

Making a Splash? Wastewater Recycling in Sydney as Sites of Market Environmentalism

Fayanne Cui
University of Sydney

In Sydney, wastewater recycling is enjoying a resurgence of interest as an innovative technology capable of addressing crises of population growth, economic development, and anthropogenic climate change currently confronting the water network. The pursuit of wastewater recycling schemes follows a neoliberal turn in the water sector that draws on principles of “market environmentalism” which seek to deliver sustainable water management through market-based processes. This presentation explores the encounter between neoliberalism, water infrastructure and governance through instances of water recycling nestled within Sydney’s centralised system of water provision. Engaging insights from urban political ecology and critiques of market environmentalism, this research politicises the existing literature on wastewater recycling through a critical analysis of how this technology makes and remakes urban socioecological relations, transforming consumers’ relationships with water and the environment. Drawing from extensive document analysis and interviews with water recyclers, industry professionals, researchers, and government stakeholders, I show that the pursuit of wastewater recycling in Sydney involves a complex interplay within, and between, governance and infrastructure. Neoliberal transitions thus entail a constant push-pull approach between the relevant actors and material artefacts underpinning Sydney’s water sector.

Are you shore? The role of knowledge in creating and resolving coastal adaptation conflicts

Stephanie Daborn
Monash University

Under climate change, sea-level rise poses a significant threat to coastal communities. Yet coastal adaptation can be contentious and a source of non-violent conflict. These conflicts can be exacerbated by knowledge, particularly where different groups hold, use, and value different knowledge types. Decision makers tend to value expert knowledge as an entity while community members hold and understand local knowledge for and from learning. Scholars have proposed that knowledge can be used to resolve conflict. Few studies acknowledge and examine the role of knowledge types in coastal conflict resolution. This research asks the question: “what is the role of knowledge in creating and resolving conflict over coastal adaptation?” and focuses on a case study of the MidCoast Council in New South Wales. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with consultants, community members and decision makers, supplemented by publicly available documents, the analysis revealed limited conflict surrounding the acceptability of expert and local knowledge. Instead, concerns were raised about the lack of mutual respect in relationships between community and council. Providing fair, equal, and understandable access to verifiable knowledge forms part of perceptions of respect. To better manage future conflicts, coastal governments need to focus on developing authentic relationships with communities

Fear-full encounters with the ocean in Yuin Country

Alexis Farr

University of New South Wales

The ocean is continuously made and remade, as a philosophical plaything and in its own corporeality. Through shared imaginaries and liquid encounters, our perceptions of the ocean are fluid as the water itself. In Australia, what might emerge from the ocean, or disappear into the ocean, has often been framed in media and influential political discourses as a source of fear. In this presentation, I investigate how human encounters with the ocean are mediated through a lens of fear. With a case study on Yuin Country, the south coast of NSW, I embrace a 'wet ontology' (Steinberg, 2015) and wet methodologies including autoethnography, qualitative interviews, mapping, sound recordings, and video, around the region's seascape. I will share my initial research insights, drawing on community-based interviews and reflecting on how my own experiences of fear are evolving throughout the research process, as I learn how to surf, free dive and swim in deeper waters. I explore how the historical and cultural framings of the ocean in Australia relate to questions of knowledge, access, and individual expressions of fear.

Towards effective conservation of the Pilbara Early Life Sites as a multifunctional landscape: exploring lessons from national and international best practice

Clare Fletcher
University of New South Wales

The Pilbara Early Life Sites contain the oldest convincing evidence of life on Earth. They provide evidence for the conditions that led to the emergence of life on Earth. They are also used in studying how life may have arisen on other planets such as Mars by organisations such as NASA and the European Space Agency. Since their discovery in the 1980's, however, these sites have been under threat from indiscriminate collection, which still remains a key threat. There have been several attempts to conserve these sites to date, however, they have either failed or not been adequate to prevent the theft of these incredibly rare and important fossils.

My research looks how to conserve these sites more effectively while also not impacting local industries or Indigenous communities. The vision for these sites is both geoconservation as well as on-the-ground management. Presently, good progress has been made towards this goal, however, stakeholder engagement is key to effective conservation and will therefore be a major component to this research. The key output of my thesis will be a roadmap that is able to be disseminated that details the methods towards effective conservation and management of the Pilbara Early Life Sites.

“Our River”? Diverse values and community engagement in planning for the Bridge-to-Bridge Precinct, Penrith

Elise Frost
Macquarie University

Urban waterscapes are valued in diverse ways. Despite this, governments continue to primarily value them as recreational and tourist spaces. This is especially contentious in settler colonial states such as Australia, where Indigenous water values are often marginalised in formal planning processes. My research has examined the diverse values and meanings attributed to an area within Dyarubbin (the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment) known as the Bridge-to-Bridge Precinct, in Penrith, New South Wales, and how these values have or have not been incorporated into recent urban planning processes. Using a combined water justice and urban political ecology framework with a focus on power relations between and among community members and planning authorities, I have found that current community engagement processes in urban planning have inherent limitations in their ability to incorporate Indigenous values and diverse conceptions of the river. This is due to hierarchical power relations which exclude community members not part of organised community groups from collaboration with governments, and which ignore unceded Indigenous sovereignty. Data used in the research was collected through semi-structured interviews, an online questionnaire and planning documents related to the ‘Our River’ project. This data was collated and analysed using thematic coding. The emergent themes from this analysis include identification of key values employed in the planning process and public responses to these values. The way values were constructed in the process of planning and executing urban planning in this case shows that a particular kind of placemaking continues to be foregrounded, based on creating a recreational destination at the river, that marginalises Indigenous water values.

Unlocking solar for all in New South Wales? A tale of energy citizenship in two solar gardens

Judita Hudson
University of Sydney

Community energy projects are characterised by proponents as essential in making the renewable energy transition in Australia more inclusive and just. This includes the community solar garden model which promises to unlock the benefits of rooftop solar for people locked-out, including renters, apartment dwellers and low-income households. However, it is necessary to assess what these projects are actually able to achieve, in what contexts and for whom, instead of idealising the 'local' and 'community' scales of participation. Hence, this thesis aims to critically assess what energy citizenship looks like in community energy projects, with a focus on the Haystacks and North Coast Community Housing solar gardens, and what this means for who can benefit from and participate in the NSW renewable energy transition.

Using data collected from document analysis and semi-structured interviews with community energy organisers, participants and advocates, this thesis finds there are diverse practices of energy citizenship which make up the solar gardens. However, there are difficulties involved in supporting people beyond the civic core of active and well-resourced communities to benefit and participate. The process of reaching beyond this civic core is contingent on community energy organisations being adaptive, building their power, and forming multisectoral partnerships.

Wellbeing implications of nature experiences for young people with intellectual disabilities

Mary Pilkinton
University of Wollongong

This study explores the wellbeing impacts of nature experiences for young people with intellectual disabilities in Sydney, Australia. There is a significant amount of research exploring the wellbeing benefits of nature spaces. However, there has been very limited focus on the nature experiences of people with intellectual disabilities, particularly research which meaningfully engages non-verbal participants. This study utilised interviews, mobile sensing, and video and photo submissions to learn about the experiences of young people with intellectual disabilities in nature spaces. Importantly, the study focused on designing methods which enabled non-verbal people to participate outside of just asking their parents or carers to speak for them. The findings reveal that nature experiences provide a range of wellbeing benefits for young people with intellectual disabilities. Spending time in familiar nature spaces facilitates relaxation, social connection and safety, in turn enhancing opportunities for play, freedom, and independence. The study findings signal a need for urban nature management policies that are informed by the experiences of people with intellectual disabilities.

A Lantern For My Path': Healing Intergenerational Trauma Through the Indigenous-led Murama Youth Summit

Lara Newman
University of Newcastle

The presentation considers how the Murama Youth Summit, based in western Sydney, can facilitate the healing of intergenerational trauma across a whole community. The Murama Youth Summit is an Indigenous-led, strengths-based youth leadership program that is conducted over four days each year. Run by the Murama Cultural Council, the program engages intergenerational resilience and the strengths of Indigenous cultures to heal intergenerational trauma. Developed in collaboration with representatives of the Murama Cultural Council, this research project utilised a community-based participatory action research approach and yarning to understand healing experiences. Thematic analysis of yarns found sharing stories; creating a sense of belonging through family, cultures, and purpose; and engaging with international Indigenous partners supported healing. I suggest that reciprocal healing processes enabled by holistic, strengths-based programs led by international Indigenous partnerships can have community-wide impacts.

Working-from-home in the knowledge economy: Hybrid geographies of home, work and worker

Emily Orman

University of Wollongong

COVID-19 and the consequent health regulations required office-based knowledge workers to work-from-home (WFH) en masse. For office workers based in the CBD, lockdown disrupted a common norm of commuting into city office spaces to perform paid labour. This disruption has reshaped the form and geography of office-based knowledge work, with potentially lasting implications for the geographies of both work and home. This research uncovers these reconfigured geographies by engaging with and drawing together feminist economic geography and geographies of home. Empirically, it engages with the lived-experiences of office-based knowledge workers in the Illawarra region: a region with a sizeable cohort of office-based knowledge workers, displaced from CBD work through the pandemic. Feminist economic geography offers the analysis a framework that can grapple with the interconnectedness of paid and unpaid labour; home and office; and mind and body. The geographies of home literature provide insights into how the home space shapes WFH; given feminist interest in interconnectivity of home and work, this literature enables a richer understanding of the co-constitutive relationship of home and work. Together, these frameworks assist in unpacking the emergent geographies of home, work and worker to reveal how the spatialities and temporalities of WFH unfolds as well as how embodied workers perform knowledge work in the home.

Practices of care and Delta Therapy teams

Helen Palfreeman
University of Newcastle

How Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) can become more 'care-full' spaces is an important issue highlighted by the recent Australian Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. This project explores the caring relationships and caring capacities of the voluntary organisation, Delta Society Australia and their program of visiting RACFs with Delta Therapy teams (volunteers and their dogs). It draws on scholarship that views care as integral to living in our world as well as possible by extending consideration of care to more than human relationships. Material gathered from document analysis and semi-structured interviews with Delta Society volunteers and managers suggests that the Delta Therapy teams' visits provide an alternative to the dependency care often associated with RACFs. This alternative involves emotional and embodied care and recognises the shared agencies in care practices of the volunteers, dogs and residents. Changes to the Therapy Dogs program due to the COVID-19 pandemic brought new opportunities for care in RACFs but also reduced the capacity to provide the kind of care usually associated with the program.

The Geographies of Food Waste Recycling: 'Closing the Loop' between Cafes and Urban Agriculture

Sam Quirk
University of Wollongong

Governments throughout Australia are taking steps to eliminate food waste (FW) coming from households and large businesses entering landfill by adopting Circular Economy (CE) principles into waste management frameworks. But implementation is still in its infancy and the recirculation of food waste is an emergent space. Hence, this project aims to bring into focus different forms of value that a CE focused on a more-than-human ethic of care could provide. The project does this through analysing the current and potential circular economy in Wollongong, Australia, through two actors. Cafes, which have a distinct culture and potential being at the nexus of production and consumption. And an Urban Farm, Green Connect, who is distinctly placed to work in a CE with a focus on the more-than-human. The project does this by revealing the current FW recycling practices of 10 Cafes in Wollongong. Then by unveiling what enables/inhibits these practices and finally the potential to and benefits of connecting Cafes and Urban Farms. Findings include FW (from cafes) recycling is occurring in different forms. How this occurs is tied to values, place and materials. Finally, there is commercial interest in a more-than-human CE and social, environmental and economic benefits associated with it.

Women on the Front Line: Understanding the Experiences of Female Firefighters within the NSW Rural Fire Service

Emily Ryan
University of Sydney

This thesis extends feminist critique of female participation in masculinised workforces, specifically exploring women's experiences within the New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS). Drawing on accounts of female experiences, this thesis will argue that women are rendered invisible due to the prevalence of institutional barriers that limit their inclusion and representation, while upholding the current gendered hierarchy. Conversely, examining female embodied experiences with the organisational infrastructure, highlights women's bodies to be overtly visible. By critiquing the institutional and infrastructural processes of the NSW RFS, I challenge the discourse of disaster justice. More specifically, by making females firefighters the 'object of study' rather than survivors of disaster, it is possible to extend and deepen the application of the central concept of 'procedural justice' by shining a light on the experiences of female firefighters as representing unjust procedure.

Decolonising Food? The Political Potential of the Australian Native Food Industry

Ellen Wong
University of Sydney

This presentation examines the Australian native food industry as a window into settler-colonial relations and processes of decolonisation. Grounded by a decolonial praxis, this research draws on the experiences of actors from Indigenous and non-Indigenous led enterprises to examine the multiple ways in which the native food industry perpetuates and challenges histories and continuities of settler-colonialism. Drawing from interviews with key informants, I show that, presently, the native food industry upholds colonial legacies which have and continue to legitimate the exploitation and dispossession of Indigenous land and knowledges. Although seemingly well-intentioned, non-Indigenous efforts to improve Indigenous ownership and representation in the native food industry often have the perverse effect of perpetuating colonial control. I show that, in resistance to ongoing exploitation, Indigenous actors and “white allies” illuminate the decolonising and Indigenising potential of an Indigenous-led industry in their fight for food sovereignty. In following the tradition of critical decolonial scholarship, I turn the gaze to the responsibility of white actors in the native food industry. I caution against ‘palatable’ framings of decolonisation which reconcile settler guilt yet do nothing to advance the self-determined agenda of Indigenous peoples. Ultimately, I contend that in order for decolonisation in the native food industry to avoid slippage into metaphor, material transfers of land, capital and political power are required.