Geographical Society of New South Wales
The 11th Annual Honours Conference,
Friday 16th November, 2007

University of New South Wales, Biological Sciences Building

Conference Program

8:30 - 9:00 Registration (entry to Room 456)
9:00 - 9:20 Welcomes by Professor Paul Adam, Associate Professor Kevin Dunn

Session 1: Urban and Social Geographies, Chair (Therese Kenna) (Room 456)

9.20   David Hayes (University of Sydney)
        Across the walls: Gated communities and the public realm in Sydney

9:40   Robyn Howarth (Macquarie University)
        Battlers polishing the rustbelt? Managing disadvantage in W. Newcastle

10:00   Helen Karathomas (University of New South Wales)
        Comparing urban spaces and identities in Moore Park

10.20   James Kite (Macquaire University)
        Obesogenic environments in Sydney – A comparative study

Morning Tea 10.40-11.00 (Tea Room)

Session 2: Economic Geography, Chair (Pauline M[c]Guirk) (608)

11:00   Lauren Bell (Macquarie University)
        Weighing the Scales: A scale analysis of microfinance in Fiji

11:20   Benjamin Holt (University of New South Wales)
        Demographic change of spectator attendance at Randwick Racecourse

11:40   Sophie Pieters-Hawke (University of Sydney)
        'Business' and 'Bisnis': Evaluation of a microfinance program in Vanuatu

12.00   Miriam Williams (University of Newcastle)
        Supplying the ethical latte: a study of the discourses shaping the Fair
        Trade movement in Australia

Session 3: Resource Management and Fire, Chair (Scott Mooney) (456)

11:00   Laura Boness (University of New South Wales)
        Fire in high altitude ecosystems - a study of the changes in the fire regime
        for Blue Lake (Kosciusko National Park) and the surrounding area.

11:20   Rebecca Cross (University of New South Wales)
        Attitudes and behaviours of dairy farmers towards natural resource
        management in NSW

11:40   Mitchell Lendrum (Macquarie University)
        Fire management, carbon abatement and sustainable futures on country:
        The West Arnhem Land experience

12.00   Rebecca Williams (University of Sydney)
        Ecological modelling in Australian fisheries management: a predictive
        habitat preference model using Bayes' Theorem

LUNCH 1220-120pm (Room 456)

Session 4: Indigenous and Development Geographies, Chair (Daniel Robinson) (456)

1:20   Philip Couch (Macquarie University)
        Larrakia people are still here": Contested presences in post-colonial Darwin

1:40   Scott East (University of Wollongong)
        Negotiating spaces of dissent: Socially engaged art practice in & beyond
        Australian municipal museums

2:00   Stephanie Russo (Macquarie University)
        Saltwater Futures: Marine resource-based livelihoods for remote Indigenous communities
        in the Northern Territory

2:20   Gemma Smart (University of New South Wales)
        Validity of biological control of coffee green scales in Papua New Guinea

2:40   Husnia Underabi (Macquarie University)
        Tourism in Afghanistan: prospects, opportunities and challenges for tourism-led
        development in a war-affected setting

Afternoon Tea 3.00-3.20 (Tea Room)

Session 5: Citizenship and Identity, Chair (Wendy Shaw) (456)
3:20   Alanna Kamp (University of New South Wales)
        Rhetoric of exclusion: Chinese and the nation in parliamentary debates, 1901

3:40   Tamsin Lloyd (University of Sydney)
        Cyber-citizenship: Wikipedia's 'world in the wires'

4:00   Tom Ptak (Macquarie University)
        The struggle to retain Tibetan culture and identity in the modern geopolitical landscape

4:20   Warwick Shepherd (University of New South Wales)
        East Asian youth pop culture

4.40   Alexis Carroll (University of New South Wales)
        Caravan parks of last resort

5.00 Presentation of the Jim Rose honours prizes (456)

5.15 Council meeting (Room 608)

Conference abstracts

David Hayes
University of Sydney
Across the walls: Gated communities and the neighbourhood public realm in Sydney

The growth of private walled residential estates, or gated communities, in Australia since the mid-1980s has sparked spirited debate over the consequences of these communities for Australian society. It has been argued by authors in Australia and overseas that gated communities are causing the splintering of the public realm and socio-economic polarisation. This research used two case study communities in northern Sydney (The Manor in Cherrybrook and Zenith Garden in Frenchs Forest) to explore how the estate community, estate walls and other societal factors are impacting upon the vitality of the public realm on a neighbourhood scale. The study of gated communities in Australia and overseas has tended to focus on the attitudes and experiences of residents of gated communities. This fills an academic void by utilising interviews with individuals who live on the estate perimeter, as well as estate residents. Key findings of this research are, firstly, the estate walls are splintering the neighbourhood public realm on a street-level scale at The Manor and Zenith Garden by decreasing the likelihood of interaction between residents and estate outsiders, creating dichotomies of us/them and inside/outside. Second, although community exists inside The Manor and Zenith Garden, residents are also engaging in the wider neighbourhood public realm through social public 'spaces' such as local schools and physical public spaces such as local parks. Third, the vitality of both neighbourhoods is being shaped by other forces such as rising working hours and neighbourhood traffic. I argue that the desire for neighbourhood amenity and pedestrian safety is a major dynamic driving the popularity of gated living. This research explored the complex relationship between gated communities, community formation and the neighbourhood public realm in Sydney.

Robyn Howarth
Macquarie University
Battlers polishing the rustbelt? Networks and managing disadvantage in Western Newcastle

This thesis examines the development of support networks within four disadvantaged communities of western Newcastle using qualitative methods including research diaries, focus groups and personal interviews. It found that the marked local scale differences between these networks reflect historic associations and related middle-class expectations and value systems rather than responses to or from those currently experiencing disadvantage. These results are considered in regard to social capital theory and the impact of gentrification.

Helen Karathomas
University of New South Wales
Comparing urban spaces and identities in Moore Park

Sydney's inner city suburb of Moore Park has recently experienced an urban residential character change that is exemplary of the gentrification process. Crown Square (CS) and Moore Park Gardens (MPGs) are two new apartment developments that have contributed to the suburb's transformation from an industrial to post-industrial landscape. Their uniqueness lies in their striking differences to each other, despite their close proximity. MPGs is found to consist of 'higher classed' residents, while CS contains far less specific 'types' of residents. Architecture, heritage and neighbourhood design, as well as promotional material that attempted to create distinction from other surrounding suburbs or nearby developments, have all been found to be influential in creating cultures of exclusivity and exclusion. From the results of surveys and in-depth interviews it is clear that these have had effects on the residents that occupy the two sites and their neighbourly relationships. This has created two new and separate urban identities between the sites. MPGs' residents have been found to have higher overall satisfaction levels than CS's residents. This is influenced by issues pertaining to the quality and design of the developments, as well as neighbourly relationships. This study contributes to a greater understanding of the localised effects of gentrification and to place-based reconstruction and re-imaging.

James Kite
Macquaire University
Obesogenic environments in Sydney – A comparative study

Overweight and obesity are at present at epidemic proportions in Australia and the evidence suggests that our environment plays a significant role in promoting this epidemic. This research investigated the extent to which Sydney's suburbs promote obesity in an attempt to assist policymakers in combating the obesity epidemic. Three suburbs, Balmain, Campbelltown and Eastwood, were chosen for comparison and analysis because of their contrasting natures and differing urban designs. To assess the obesogenicity of both the food and built environments three methods of data collection were used: a questionnaire of parents with young children, observational research and a spatial analysis of selected fast food outlets. It was found that Campbelltown was the most obesogenic of the three suburbs due to issues with affordability of healthy foods and organised sports for children, high availability of fast food, poor urban form, high dependency on the car and comparatively poor neighbourhood aesthetics and safety. It was concluded that to combat the obesity epidemic these issues must be addressed before the problem becomes unmanageable.

Lauren Bell
Macquarie University
Weighing the scales": A scale analysis of microfinance in Fiji

Since the 1990s, as previous development strategies have been critiqued, there has been significant shift towards bottom-up approaches, and their emphasis on participation and empowerment. Microfinance cannot be characterized as either a bottom-up or top-down approach. A radically relational scale analysis is applied to two case-studies within Fiji: the National Government's Microfinance program, using the microfinance institution Microfinance West as an example of operations, and ANZ Bank's Rural Banking program. Paternalistic power relationships, in which both programs are not informed by the local context nor are recipients part of the decision-making process, are identified and problematise microfinance's position as part of the bottom-up development paradigm. However, a top-down characterization fails to acknowledge the national and regional initiatives behind the replication, the multidirectional flow of power, nor the ability of recipients to express their own autonomy and empower themselves. The experience of microfinance in Fiji reveals the problematic nature of the embrace of bottom-up approaches by the mainstream development community and reinforces calls for a more contingent and flexible understanding of scale and power relationships within the development context.

Benjamin Holt
University of New South Wales
Demographic change of spectator attendance at Randwick Racecourse

This presentation will draw upon research conducted this year on changing spectator attendance at Randwick Racecourse. It investigates what the demographic change in spectator attendance has been, why there has been a change and how the change has been received by the established spectator community. The project is important because changes in spectator patterns reflect, as they have traditionally done, changes in Australian society (for example, changing economic conditions, changing leisure pursuits for both men and women). Preliminary findings suggest that there has been a significant change in spectator demographics over the last ten years, with the main attendance varying from males over 45, to males and females 18-35. The response to this change by the established spectator community has not been positive due the changing event activities that accompany this new demographic (increased alcohol consumption, decreasing focus on the racing and increased noise). Reasons for the change can be attributed to a mix of historical, social and financial processes. These processes have created a situation whereby a new marketing direction was needed. This new direction seems to have had the greatest direct influence on the changing cross section of demographics at the racecourse.

Sophie Pieters-Hawke
University of Sydney
'Business' and 'Bisnis': A social and economic evaluation of a microfinance programme in Port Vila, Vanuatu

Since its emergence in Bangladesh in the 1970s, microfinance has grown to become one of the most progressive and effective means of poverty alleviation through the provision of small-scale loans and other financial services to the disadvantaged, especially poor women. While much research has been conducted in developing counties in Asia, Africa and Latin America, very little attention has been paid to how microfinance operates in Pacific Island Countries. This research helped fill the academic void by presenting a detailed case study of a microfinance organisation that has been operating in Port Vila, Vanuatu for eleven years. Based on extensive fieldwork that utilised both qualitative and quantitative methodology, this thesis documents the variety of social and economic impacts that have resulted from access to financial services. It explores these impacts within the global debate regarding evaluation of microfinance programs, and the regional debate relating to microfinance in the Pacific. This thesis explores how the operating environment of the Pacific poses many challenges, and forces us to reconceptualise how scale, impact and success are viewed. Contra to previous research, this research demonstrates that microfinance does work in the Pacific, but with a Melanesian Twist.

Miriam Williams
University of Newcastle
Supplying the ethical latte: a study of the discourses shaping the Fair Trade movement in Australia

This paper draws from an analysis of the diverse discourses shaping meaning and practice within the Australian Fair Trade movement through the entry point of the Fair Trade coffee supply chain. The analysis shows that the Fair Trade movement has historically been positioned as an opponent to a hegemonic capitalism within the confines of a capitalocentric discourse (Gibson-Graham, 2006). However, the discursive history of the Fair Trade movement reveals that it has experienced a phase shift away from embeddedness in a capitalocentric discourse towards the adoption of a discourse of the diverse economy (Gibson-Graham, 2006). Inspired by Gibson-Graham's (2006) project, this research used an analysis of the diverse discursive origins of the Fair Trade movement and of the discourses surrounding its practice in Australia. Through a multi-method approach it identifies and investigates the nature of a mainstreaming, a fairness and a care discourse and how these discourses are discursively positioned in relation to capitalism. The paper provides insight into the way in which particular actors mobilise these discourses in order to promote Fair Trade and reveal its potential as a more caring and just economic practice.

Laura Boness
University of New South Wales
Fire in high altitude ecosystems - a study of the changes in the fire regime for Blue Lake (Kosciusko National Park) and the surrounding area

The 2002/03 bushfires which burnt extensive areas of Kosciusko National Park, the Monaro region and the Australian Capital Territory have raised a number of concerns over the fire management practices in the high altitude areas of mainland Australia. There is particular concern for the alpine ecosystems, which were severely affected by the 2002/03 fires as they have a slow recovery time from such events. A better understanding of the pre-historic fire regime, and whether this has altered through time as a result of changes in climate and human activities, would build capability with respect to management strategies. There is little knowledge of the extent of Aboriginal activities in the alpine areas of the Snowy Mountains region and the effects, if any, on the fire regime of this ecosystem. While it has been believed that they may have had some impact on the fire regime of the area, it is now suggested that climate may have played a larger role in changes to the fire regime. The purpose of this study was to review the changes that have taken place within the fire regime for the alpine area of Kosciusko National Park. Charcoal analyses of sediment cores removed from Blue Lake, were compared with previous studies documenting changes in climatic conditions in the late Holocene and the effect of these changes on vegetation distribution and composition, changes in the fire regime and in human activity (both prehistoric and historic). The data were also compared to the human impacts (both Aboriginal and European) in the region in order to better understand the controlling factors (climate or humans) for fires.

Rebecca Cross
University of New South Wales
The attitudes and behaviours of dairy farmers towards natural resource management in NSW

The adoption of Natural Resource Management (NRM) by Australian farmers is an issue which has far-reaching implications for the future of both Australia's natural environments and the long-term viability of intensive agricultural practices such as dairy farming. Extension programs are vital in promoting the widespread adoption of NRM; and to be most effective they need to be tailored to understanding what influences farmers' NRM adoption. This study analysed dairy farmers' attitudes and behaviours at an industry specific and state-wide level, by surveying 113 dairy farmers across NSW in order to understand these influences. Dairy farmers across NSW have a strong commitment to improving the natural resources on their farms. This is demonstrated both through their attitudes towards NRM and through their current adoption rates of specific on-farm NRM practices. Dairy farmers were motivated to adopt NRM due to the on-farm management benefits of NRM, and importantly, a personal desire to reduce the environmental impacts of dairy farming. However, the results also demonstrate that their adoption of NRM is constrained by a number of factors. These are predominantly related to the financial costs and risks associated with NRM adoption, time constraints, and a lack of financial incentives and benefits associated with NRM. A further constraint is a lack of information dissemination on NRM related issues from government and industry to dairy farmers. The Farmer Targets for Change program and the DairySAT are both farmer-driven extension initiatives devised by the industry to facilitate NRM adoption. These initiatives are having some success with promoting the adoption of NRM and providing advice and information on NRM to farmers.

Mitchell Lendrum
Macquarie University
Fire management, carbon abatement and sustainable futures on country: the West Arnhem Land experience

Securing sustainable and just economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in the remote regions of the Northern Territory has been an elusive goal for national and Territory governments, various public agencies and community groups for many years. The increasing value and the intact environmental nature of much of the Indigenous estate across the North of Australia in a carbon and biodiversity trading context offers opportunities that could underpin sustainable on country development trajectories for Indigenous people in the region through new and exciting economies. The West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement project (WALFA) is the first of these opportunities to be operationalised. WALFA produces a carbon abatement from improved fire management that has been sold in a ground breaking commercial agreement. One of the strengths of WALFA is that it has the potential to deliver across the quadruple bottom line of: environmental, economic, social and cultural outcomes. This research offers a constructive, empirically grounded, critique of WALFA that identifies that while WALFA has the potential to deliver in these four areas, the application of the current dominant, technocratic, market driven resource management paradigm has prioritised the environmental and economic outcomes over the social and cultural in the way in which the project has been conceptualised and operationalised. The reconceptualisation of WALFA based on a postdevelopmentalist theoretical framework that seeks to elevate the social and cultural criteria is integral to the environmental and economic success of the project. It is a hopeful narrative that outlines some operational opportunities that such a reconceptualised WALFA could create, as well highlighting some potential implications within the wider resource management field. This reconceptualisation seeks to create sustainable futures on country for the people who really matter in resource projects on Indigenous lands; the local Indigenous community members themselves.

Rebecca Williams
University of Sydney
Ecological modelling in Australian fisheries management: the development of a predictive habitat preference model using Bayes' Theorem

Ecological modelling can play an important role not only in fisheries management but also in the implementation of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM), providing information on the complex interactions between the social, physical and biological processes of which the fishery is a part. This research investigates how GIS-based ecological predictive models may be applied to Australian marine capture fisheries to facilitate EBFM. The Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery is used as a case study. A descriptive model was developed to illustrate the spatio-temporal relationship between Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), Albacore tuna (*T. alalunga*) and Bigeye tuna (*T. obesus*) and three environmental variables: Sea Surface Temperature (SST), Chlorophyll-a (Chl-a) and bathymetry. The model was then further developed into a predictive model based on Bayes' Theorem. Relationships were discovered between SST and Chl-a and all tuna species, and Bigeye tuna presence and bathymetry. Probability surfaces generated from the predictive model for January 2005 indicate higher probability of Yellowfin and Albacore tuna presence in east-Australian coastal waters with Bigeye tuna presence more likely in south-eastern coastal waters. Validation of the model showed high frequencies of species presence in areas with high probabilities. With further development, this model has the potential to be used to assess the designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Marine Reserves (MRs). This model is effective under the larger EBFM framework, which highlights its importance as an effective tool in facilitating the understanding of ecological systems in fisheries, imperative in the conservation of this great resource.

Philip Couch
Macquarie University
Larrakia people are still here": Contested presences in post-colonial Darwin

The research investigated how the Larrakia people, the traditional owners of Darwin, Australia are asserting their presence and identity in a post-colonial and post-Native Title context. Exclusionary geographies, informed by colonial discourses of urban place, traditional Aboriginal culture and western legal frameworks, present Larrakia people as being out of place on their country. Dominant perceptions of Aboriginal culture reinforce a colonial gaze that maintains colonial power and perpetuates injustices towards Indigenous people. These pre-eminent discourses must be challenged so that relationships between Aboriginal and settler culture can be reconceptualised. This research examined how tourism, art, economic development and a Ranger Program result in uncanny experiences for non-Larrakia as they are rendered both in place and out of place by the Larrakia presence. These uncanny experiences reveal geographies of co-existence and contribute to the decolonisation of Darwin as Larrakia people demonstrate that the city is a place of interaction, belonging and co-habitation.

Scott East
University of Wollongong
Negotiating spaces of dissent: Socially engaged art practice in & beyond Australian municipal museums

This paper demonstrates that re-thinking the space of the art museum has important implications for understanding the role art can play in imagining alternative futures. Specifically, it moves from an acceptance of the pervasive modernist white cube as a neutral and natural frame for works of art towards examining the ways in which the spaces of contemporary museums are negotiated and contested spaces-in process. Drawing on recent feminist geographers' understandings, space is conceptualized as the outcome of uneven social relationships. In the Australian context there is increasing uncertainty surrounding museums as sites for giving voice to political discussion. Fears for the silencing of discontent are even more well founded in a neo-liberal policy context where cultural institutions are increasingly required to compete for funding, justifying their practices in terms of measurable benefits. Art museums managed by municipal authorities are seen as spaces where these complex issues and relationships play out. Preliminary examples will show how the project is employing reflexivity, in-depth interviews and discourse analysis to examine issues surrounding the practice and display of socially-engaged art. Providing a platform from which to consider the polyvalent aesthetics and values of contemporary art, the focus of the paper shifts our attention from the politics on display, to the politics of displaying.

Stephanie Russo
Macquarie University
Saltwater futures: Marine resource-based livelihoods for remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory

Coastal Aboriginal communities actively seek participation in marine resource-based development, continuing to assert that they hold rights to their saltwater country. They advocate these rights and interests in legal, political and cultural arenas despite having received little support and significant opposition. This research investigated the barriers which Indigenous people face in securing sustainable and just economic outcomes through marine resource-based development. In particular, it focused on the colonial imaginaries of emptiness, occupation and possession, which manifest themselves in constructions of property rights and resource entitlements and continue to dominate institutional arrangements for the use and management of marine resources. The findings indicate that a significant reimagining of sea space and a reconceptualisation of property rights in marine environments based on pluralistic and inclusive discourses which acknowledge the Indigenous realities of presence, persistence and coexistence is necessary.

Gemma Smart
University of New South Wales
Validity of biological control of coffee green scales in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea (PNG) accounts for approximately 1% of world coffee production. Coffee is the largest earner of foreign exchange within the PNG agricultural sector. The majority of this is grown by smallholders in the highlands region, with minimal management inputs. Inadequate pest management is one impediment to productivity. Currently, integrated pest management systems including the use of biological controls are being developed for coffee green scale (CGS), one of the significant pest species affecting crop yields. In the PNG context there appears to be a gap in understanding how factors such as farming methods, intra-household relations and politics are likely to affect the success of biological control in Integrated Pest Management. Imperative in both the planning and implementation stages is a need to develop long-term strategies that are both in harmony with natural and cultural control methods, and appropriate for the smallholder farming community. This study aims to quantify the predicted constraints and pathways to uptake of biological controls by assessing the socio-economic and political factors which may affect them. A combination of discourse analysis, survey data analysis and in-depth interviews with extension officers will be used.

Husnia Underabi
Macquarie University
Tourism in Afghanistan: prospects, opportunities and challenges for tourism-led development in a war-affected setting

It is hard to imagine tourism flourishing in a country that has suffered over a century of misrule, nearly a quarter of a century of imposed wars, topped most recently by the Taliban and their global terrorist allies, and still occupied by foreign troops. However, in parts of the country tourists are starting to trickle in. Since the fall of the Taliban, a UK based tour operator, Hinterland Travel is leading large numbers of people to Afghanistan while Lonely Planet has made available a Travel Guide to Afghanistan. Such developments appear to indicate that the tourism wheel is ready to roll again in Afghanistan. For a war ravished country however, ambitions about tourism development need to address a number of significant barriers. Accordingly this paper reviews the prospects for tourism development in Afghanistan. It seeks to identify the challenges facing the country through an 'essentials of tourism framework' and moreover, indicates windows of opportunity by examining the connection between Afghan diasporas and travel back home as an under-estimated phenomenon. The findings of this research draw upon fieldwork undertaken both in Kabul and Sydney.

Alanna Kamp
University of New South Wales
Rhetoric of exclusion: Chinese and the nation in parliamentary debates, 1901

This study examined the portrayal of the Australian Self and immigrant Other in the federal parliamentary debates regarding the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, with a particular focus on the representation of Chinese. Grounded in social construction theory, whiteness theory and abject theory, the content analysis of these debates indicated that there was an overwhelming negativity towards Chinese and other non-White groups. This negativity was apparent in the general tenor of the parliamentary speeches as well as the negative constructions of the non-White Other. Racialised binary constructions of the Australian Self and immigrant Other were found in the parliamentary debates to legitimise exclusion. The Australian Self was constructed as belonging to the 'White race' which was innately racially and culturally superior (including civilised, moral and racially pure), while the immigrant Other was constructed as belonging to the 'coloured race' which was innately racially and culturally inferior (including uncivilised, immoral and racially contaminating). In constructing the White Australian Self and the non-White Other in this way, the exclusionary agenda of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was justified—the non-White Other, in being inherently inferior, was in opposition to White Australia and thus could not belong or be incorporated into the White nation.

Tamsin Lloyd
University of Sydney
Cyber-citizenship: Wikipedia's 'world in the wires'

"Cyber Citizenship" explores what it means to be a citizen, and whether we can adapt the concept of citizenship to an online context. Can we be 'citizens of cyberspace'? How do the practices of political identity and belonging change over time and space, and how these ideas translate into the new, online worlds we see emerging today? The Internet is providing a new form of shared public space and social interaction, and new forms of citizenship are emerging in these spaces. The case study of Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia with a vast, structured community is used to discuss and illustrate these questions. Extensive, qualitative interviews with Wikipedians were used to discover how they perceive their own state of cyber citizenship, and ask how important this online community is to their life. Investigations into the history and working of the community reveal how citizenship structures have emerged and are sustained in Wikipedia, and discover the importance of social interaction and shared spaces online in the Wikipedia community. What we can learn from Wikipedia, and how can such online citizenship can inform arguments within the broader debates of citizenship today? I contest that cyber citizenship can show us a practical use for cosmopolitan ideals, and that the notions of cosmopolitan citizenship can be realised in the shared public space of online places. Through online public spaces such as Wikipedia, cosmopolitan ideologies and citizenships can find concrete and productive realisations.

Tom Ptak
Macquarie University
The struggle to retain Tibetan culture and identity in the modern geopolitical landscape

This research investigated current issues surrounding the struggle to retain culture and identity within the Tibetan community of Sydney. It examined the importance placed on retention and re-creation of Tibetan culture through cultural events and daily cultural practices in Sydney. The research also unearthed the broader politicisation of Tibetan identity in exile. In order to adequately understand localised outcomes one must holistically examine and understand geopolitical forces operating and producing outcomes at multiple scales. This multiscaled examination subsequently provides the ability to understand the complex nature of relationships between politics and cultural identity. The contemporary Tibetan diaspora challenges the common fractured and fragmented notions pervading academic studies on diaspora theory by exhibiting a cohesive functioning and essentialised cultural model. The issues of cultural retention and identity amongst the Tibetan community of NSW are prominent topics at the forefront of many individuals' daily motivations, whilst also being understood and utilised in broader terms across collectivised multi-scaled applications. There is an intimate awareness amongst participants relating to the various economic, biophysical and political outcomes surrounding aspects of the Tibetan occupation, whilst also exhibiting an advanced understanding of the nature of relationships these policies have established within politicised Tibetan cultural practices and identity in exile.

Warwick Shepherd
University of New South Wales
East Asian youth pop culture

This study, to be conducted until June 2008, investigates the consumption patterns of East Asian youth pop culture by university students in Sydney, who are themselves from an East Asian background. It will utilise a transnationalism-based conceptual framework, and produce qualitative and quantitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews. This study will identify how cultural practices produced within East Asia such as manga, pop music, and video games impact upon students distanced from their homeland in a more Western setting. It will examine the establishment and maintenance of transnational networks of youth culture by East Asian students and Sydney. This study also seeks to investigate the effects that the consumption of youth pop culture has on identity and the sense of belonging, both within the local community i.e. Sydney, and the homeland. By interviewing students from a range of East Asian nationalities, comparisons will also be made between nationalities, such as between South Korea and Japan, for example.

Alexis Carroll
University of New South Wales
Caravan parks of last resort

This study addressed a gap in understanding of a growing form of long term housing in urban Sydney. Firstly, this study examined the experiences of a growing group of households who reside permanently within caravan parks in urban Sydney. Secondly, this study addressed stakeholders' views and perceptions about the role residential and caravan parks are playing as affordable primary places of residence within Sydney. To understand the function that caravan parks are now playing as alternative housing spaces I conducted mixed method case studies on three caravan parks in Sydney. This involved conducting a questionnaire with 59 long term residents and 8 semi structured interviews with the managers of the caravan parks, the residents and stakeholders who work in the field. The results were analysed using SPSS, also drawing upon ABS Census Statistics, to compare the community structures of the caravan park residents against the community structures of the surrounding suburbs.