



# Members in Profile

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## Emma Power

I'm a Lecturer in Geography and Urban Studies in the School of Social Sciences and Psychology at the University of Western Sydney. I started at UWS in early 2010, having finished my PhD at Macquarie University in 2009 and having 'cut my teeth' lecturing at Macquarie Uni and The University of Newcastle. I joined the GSNSW in my Honours year, and have been a councillor of the Society since 2011. I'm currently the GSNSW representative on the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales.



I developed an interest in geography during my undergraduate degree and decided that I would become a geography teacher. While doing my Graduate Diploma of Education two things pushed me down the path to my PhD and current research: the first was undertaking my teaching prac at St Ignatius College, Riverview, with Sharon McLean who is the Head of Geography at Riverview and the Vice President of the Geography Teachers Association of NSW (GTA NSW). This school has a large number of students from rural areas. I was struck while teaching a series of classes relating to salinity and land management about how different the awareness of environmental issues and change was among these students', compared to the 'city' students. I began to think and read about the connections between urban residents and nature. Second, the dynamic and always inspiring Sue Bliss took me to an event run by the GSNSW and GTA NSW, where early career academics talked about their current research. This event gave me a taste for the possibilities and excitement of research (which was pushed by Sue!), and led me to my Honours year where I began my work about human – nature relations in urban Australia, first in gardens and then during my PhD through the homemaking practices of suburban residents who cohabited (with varying degrees of willingness!) with dogs and common brushtail possums. Since finishing my PhD I have become increasingly interested in the ways that human and nonhuman relations are governed in urban places. Recent research has examined the place of dogs within strata apartments as a window on the operation of strata governance. A current project in partnership with the Petcare Information and Advisory Service ([www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au)) is looking at the place of pets in Sydney's private rental housing market, including the experiences of people renting with pets, the perceptions of real estate agents, and the management of pets within rental agreements.

I'm passionate about the teaching component of my work. I currently teach cultural and social geographies, and sustainability planning, as part of the UWS Bachelor of Social Science and Master of Urban Management and Planning. UWS has a diverse student body – the students come from many different backgrounds and pathways which makes teaching a really dynamic, exciting and rewarding experience. Approximately 50% of our students are the first in their family to go to university. I feel privileged to be part of that journey – it's special to see the opportunities that a university education brings to my students and their families.