

History, the School of Humanities, the Vere Gordon Childe Centre for
Humanity through Time, and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Powerful Stories

Indigenous and Refugee Histories of Dispossession
and Displacement

14 and 15 March 2024



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Gadigal people, the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which the University of Sydney has been built, and which were taken from them without their consent, treaty or compensation.

This land has always been a learning space for many Aboriginal nations, and as teachers and students we can draw strength and guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, one of the oldest knowledge systems in the world.

Powerful Stories: Indigenous and Refugee Histories of Dispossession and Displacement

The Vere Gordon Childe Centre for Humanity through Time is pleased to host this series of events to celebrate the visit of Dartmouth College's Samson Occam Professor N. Bruce Duthu, an enrolled tribal member of the United Houma Nation of Louisiana.

Film Screening: The Discipline of History in the School of Humanities, and the Law School will screen the Emmy-Award winning documentary film, *Dawnland*, co-produced by Professor Duthu. For decades, child welfare authorities have been removing Native American children from their homes to "save them from being Indian." In Maine, the first official Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the United States begins a historic investigation. *Dawnland* goes behind-the-scenes as this historic body grapples with difficult truths, redefines reconciliation, and charts a new course for state and tribal relations. *Dawnland* aired on Independent Lens on PBS in November 2018 and 2021, reaching more than two million viewers. The film won a national Emmy Award for Outstanding Research in 2018 and made the American Library Association's list of 2020 Notable Videos for Adults.

Workshop: The Discipline of History will host a workshop exploring the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural power of storytelling. This will bring together scholars from a variety of fields with community organisations and members to discuss the intersections of Indigenous and refugee experiences of displacement and how storytelling has, is, and will be used for the cause of Indigenous and refugee sovereignty and self-determination.

The workshop will address the ways and means by which different peoples have shared and continue to share their stories, reclaimed their own histories, and/or uncovered different kinds of self-representations in their current work or research. Indigenous peoples and refugees share and have shared an experience of exile, of dispossession. How have they narrated and preserved those stories? What kind of work have those stories done, and what do they do now? Participants will help expand our collective understanding of what constitutes self-representations or self-histories, amid ongoing settler colonial violence, and how we might ethically and collaboratively work toward supporting the telling of those stories. The workshop will also include keynotes by Professor Chelsea Watego and Dr. Jordana Silverstein, and a special screening of Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation film *We Were Just Little Boys*.

Masterclass: Finally, Professor Duthu will conduct a masterclass on "Narratives of Indigenous and Settler Colonial Relations," that is designed to appeal to a multi- and inter-disciplinary group of students and scholars.

Professor Bruce N. Duthu

Samson Occam Professor N. Bruce Duthu is an internationally acclaimed scholar of Native American law and policy. He earned a degree in religion and Native American studies from Dartmouth College and a JD degree from Loyola University School of Law. He worked briefly as a trial attorney after graduating, but ultimately determined that he could do more for Native American tribes by working on their behalf through the education system. He returned to Dartmouth in 2008 as a professor of Native American studies, serving as the department chair from 2009 to 2015.



In addition to authoring *American Indians and the Law* and *Shadow Nations*, he has also contributed to Felix S. Cohen's widely praised *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* and co-edited "Sovereignty, Indigeneity, and the Law," a volume of *South Atlantic Quarterly* that won the 2011 Council of Editors of Learned Journals Award for Best Special Issue.

Professor Duthu served as a visiting fellow at the University of Wollongong Faculty of Law, Australia, 1999; visiting professor at Harvard Law School, 2000, and at the University of Trento, Faculty of Law, Italy, 2003. He is also a member of the board of directors, Earthjustice: The Joint Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity; and an advisory board member, of the New Hampshire/Vermont Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Program. He continues to work as an advocate for Native Americans, consulting with tribes, the U.S. government, and various academic institutions, as well as with legal experts on tribal law and legislation that governs Native Americans specifically.

Professor Duthu is an enrolled tribal member of the United Houma Nation of Louisiana.



DAWNLAND

A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT CULTURAL SURVIVAL
AND STOLEN CHILDREN



"DAWNLAND" is ADAM MAZO and BEN FENDER-CHOLUP's UPSTANDER PRODUCTIONS FILM
PRODUCED BY UNPUNISHED FILMS, PRINCIPLE PICTURES, and CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARY | WRITTEN BY ADAM MAZO and H. BRUCE DOUTHETT
DIRECTED BY BEN FENDER-CHOLUP | PRODUCED BY KRISTIN D. SALLERNO | EDITED BY JESSICA L. HARRIS | MUSIC BY DAVID MURPHY and REBECCA ROSE | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ANDY KATZ AND JESSICA KATZ | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SHIRLEY K. SMITH
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JENNIFER KOLESKOWSKI | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL YUSSEF | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TRACY RECTOR | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHRIS NEWMAN

DAY ONE

14 MARCH 2024, THURSDAY

DAWNLAND SCREENING

Location: Law School Common Room

9.30 – 9.45 am	Acknowledgment of Country
9:45 – 10.00 am	Welcome from Law and History representatives
10.00 – 11.30 am	Screening: <i>Dawnland</i> . A Documentary about Cultural Survival and Stolen Children.
11:30 – 12:00 pm	Q&A Discussion with Professor Bruce Duthu, Brendan Loizou, Amy Davidson

WORKSHOP DAY 1

Location: Vere Gordon Childe Centre Board Room

12:30 – 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 – 1:50 pm	Welcome and Introduction to the Workshop
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Keynote: Confessions of a Sovereign Storyteller, Professor Chelsea Watego
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Tea break
3:30 – 4:00 pm	Whispers in shadows to Resounding Voices: Refugees' Stories Unveiled, Moones Mansoubi
4:00 – 4:30 pm	Songwriting as Personal History, Toby Martin, Uncle Roger Knox, Dang Lan
4:30 – 5:00 pm	Aboriginal Kinship Networks and Family Structures, Irene Wardle
5:00 – 5:30 pm	Different Ways; Powerful Stories: Life Story Projects by Isabel Flick and Kevin Cook, Professor Heather Goodall
5:30 – 6:00 pm	Refugee Stories Are Not Finished Yet, Madina Mohmood
6:00 pm onwards	Dinner

DAY TWO

15 MARCH 2024, FRIDAY

WORKSHOP DAY 2

Location: Vere Gordon Childe Board Room

9:30 – 10:30 am	Keynote: Statelessness Stories: Testifying to Home and Homelessness Through an Oral History Interview, Dr Jordana Silverstein
10:30 – 11.00 am	Tea break
11:00 – 11:30 am	Reflections on Wakulda: Weaving our Stories as One, a Semi-Permanent Storytelling Installation on the Historic Courthouse, Port Macquarie, 2021-2025, Dr Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley, Dr John Heath, Dr. Sarah Barns
11:30 – 12:00 pm	Trauma Informed Heritage, Dr Charlotte Feakins
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<i>We Were Just Little Boys</i> , Kinchela Boys Aboriginal Home. Discussion with Uncle Bobby Young, Uncle Michael Welsh, Uncle Willy Nixon, Aunty Lesley Franks, Tiffany McComsey
1:00 – 1: 30 pm	Lunch
1:30 – 2:00 pm	Rewriting Refugee Jurisprudence, Dr Neeraja Sanmuanathan and Dr Jessica Hambly
2:00 – 2:30 pm	Leave No Trace: Truth Telling at Wybalenna, Stephenie Cahalan
2:30 – 2:45 pm	Closing Remarks by Professor Duthu and Workshop Close

MASTERCLASS

3:00 – 5.00 pm	Masterclass with Professor Duthu
----------------	----------------------------------

Food on both days provided by House of Welcome Catering, a social enterprise supporting refugees and people seeking asylum.

Keynote Speaker

Professor Chelsea Watego

Confessions of a Sovereign Storyteller

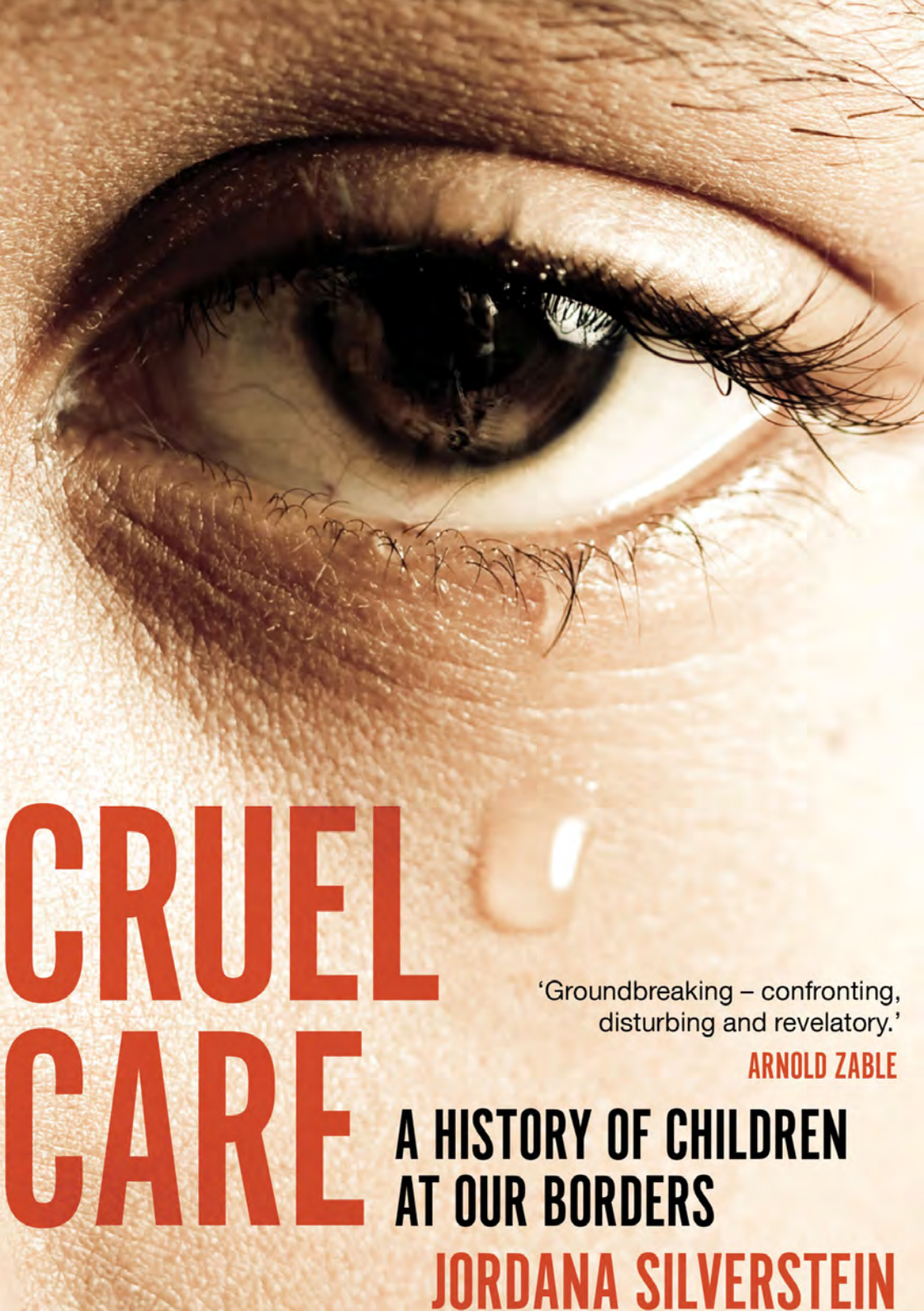


Chelsea Watego (formerly Bond) is a Munanjahli and South Sea Islander woman with over 20 years of experience working within Indigenous health as a health worker and researcher. She is currently Professor of Indigenous Health at QUT's School of Public Health and Social Work. Her scholarship has drawn attention to the role of race in the production of health inequalities and her current ARC Discovery Grant seeks to build an Indigenist Health Humanities as a new field of research; one that is committed to the survival of Indigenous peoples locally and globally, and foregrounds Indigenous intellectual sovereignty. She is a prolific writer and public intellectual, having written for *IndigenousX*, *NITV*, *The Guardian*, and *The Conversation*. She is a founding board member of Inala Wangarra, an Indigenous community development association within her community, a Director of the Institute for Collaborative Race Research, and was one half of the *Wild Black Women* radio/podcast show, but most importantly, she is also a proud mum to five beautiful children. Her debut book *Another Day in the Colony*, published by UQ Press, was released in November 2021 and met with critical acclaim.

Another Day in the Colony

chelsea watego





CRUEL CARE

'Groundbreaking – confronting,
disturbing and revelatory.'

ARNOLD ZABLE

**A HISTORY OF CHILDREN
AT OUR BORDERS**

JORDANA SILVERSTEIN

Keynote Speaker

Dr Jordana Silverstein

Statelessness Stories: Testifying to Home and Homelessness Through an Oral History Interview



Dr Jordana Silverstein is a Senior Research Fellow at the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness at the University of Melbourne. She is the author of *Cruel Care: A History of Children at Our Borders* (2023), which was shortlisted for the Non-Fiction prize in the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. She is also the author of *Anxious Histories: Narrating the Holocaust in Jewish Communities at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century* (2015) and co-editor of *In the Shadows of Memory: The Holocaust and the Third Generation* (2016) and *Refugee Journeys: Histories of Resettlement, Representation and Resistance* (2021). Jordana researches histories of statelessness, Australian child refugee policies, and Australian Jewish history, focusing on questions of belonging, nationalism, identity, historiography, emotions, sexuality and memory.

Whispers in shadows to Resounding Voices: Refugees' Stories Unveiled

Moones Mansoubi

Moones Mansoubi is a community, arts and cultural development worker based in Sydney. Her work is dedicated mainly to supporting and collaborating with migrants and people seeking asylum in Australia. She has managed numerous community and cultural projects and the first translator of Behrouz Boochani's work when he began writing from Manus Island. She was translation consultant for Boochani's book *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison* (Picador Australia, 2018). Her translation of the article "An Island Off Manus" (Saturday Paper, 6 May 2017) was included in Boochani's winning nomination for the Amnesty Media Award in 2017. Moones has a Masters Degree in International Relations and is passionate about social justice and social cohesion. She is currently coordinator of the SSI's Community Refugee Welcome Centre in Inner West Sydney and a former content producer for SBS Radio, Persian program. This involves delivering daily news, updating listeners on current affairs and highlighting events of interest to a Persian audience.

Passionate about politics here and in Iran, Moones's cultural and linguistic knowledge of human rights issues that impact the Iranian-Australian and refugee population means that she is a regular contributor to media stories on these issues, while her linguistic skills combined with her passion for refugee rights has seen her involvement in several noteworthy human rights publications. Moones migrated to Australia in 2013 and has been busy making lots of lovely memories ever since with her partner and her son.



Songwriting as Personal History

Dr Toby Martin, Uncle Roger Knox, Dang Lan

Songwriting, and song-singing, can be a way to tell personal histories, and to engage with larger narratives. It can be a sensuous, embodied reaction to life events. Songwriting is a deeply personal response to memory, but, through fictionalisation, craft and convention, also offers a way of telling stories in a safe way that gives the writer and singer control over the ways the stories are told. Songwriting negotiates the line between person and persona in ways that are creatively satisfying and empowering. Song also enables historical narratives to be heard by a wide audience.

This presentation will look at two collaborative songwriting projects. The first, between Uncle Roger Knox and various collaborators, is an album of country/folk songs that draw episodes from Uncle Roger's life. These songs deal with growing up on Toomelah Mission, the importance of community, restrictions on freedoms, and his families' experience as part of the Stolen Generations. The second is between Dang Lan and Toby Martin, and is a set of songs that tells stories of displacement and migration – in particular Lan's experience as a refugee from Vietnam to Australia in 1975, and the complex feelings of belonging and identity that this move caused.

Bios:

Toby Martin is a musician, songwriter and historian living and working on Gadigal-Wangal land, currently also known as Sydney. His research interests include country music in Australia, music and colonialism, and place and cross-cultural collaboration in popular music practice. He is currently Co-Chief investigator on the ARC Discovery Projects 'Hearing the Music of Colonial NSW 1788-1860' and 'Policing Australian Popular Music'. His publications include the books *Yodelling Boundary Riders: Country Music in Australia since the 1920s* (Lyrebird Press, University of Melbourne, 2015) and *Because the music is very immense: cross-cultural collaboration in popular music* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). He has also released eight albums with the band Youth Group and under his own name, the most recent of which is *I Felt the Valley Lifting* (Ivy League Records 2021). He is Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Music at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Huddersfield (UK).

Uncle Roger Knox Uncle Roger is a proud Gomeroi Song-man and Elder. He was born in Moree NSW and raised on the Toomelah Aboriginal Mission Station on the bend of the Macintyre River. Charlie Duncan taught him how to play guitar at an early age and Roger also loved to sing with his mother and grandmother in the church choir. Although Gospel music was his first love, once he found his way to Tamworth in his late teens Roger's passion for Country music grew and he began to invest it with his own Aboriginal style. Uncle Roger is a pioneer of Aboriginal country music, has released five albums, and received numerous awards, including the Jimmy Little Award for Lifetime Achievement at the Deadlys and has been inducted into the Tamworth Galaxy of Stars. He tours nationally and internationally, performing in mainstream and across First Nation communities. By recognising the importance of music and song within Aboriginal culture, Uncle Roger uses it to bring people together for healing and self-awareness. He uses his voice to uplift people's spirits, bringing more joy and laughter into their lives. With a kind and generous spirit he is a well loved and inspiring role model.

Dang Lan is a musician, singer, actor, dancer, educator and broadcaster, specialising in traditional Vietnamese music. In Vietnam she studied literature, philosophy and performed Vietnamese and western music in clubs and theatres. Since moving to Australia, she has performed at Vietnamese community events, at events such as the Festival of Asian Music and Dance and has worked as a broadcaster for ABC, SBS Television and Channel 7.

Aboriginal Kinship Networks and Family Structures

Irene Wardle

This paper will explore the significance of the Native Bee within the context of Aboriginal Kinship networks and family structures, as shared by Irene Wardle, who recognises as a descendant of the Darug and Biripi Nations. Through her personal experiences and cultural teachings, Irene highlights the parallels between the Native Bee's hive structure and the interconnectedness of Aboriginal families. Just as the bee colony relies on cooperation and support to thrive, Aboriginal Kinship systems emphasise the importance of love, resilience, and unity among family members. The reference to Grannies Law underscores the role of traditional wisdom in preserving cultural customs and guiding familial relationships. By drawing parallels between the native bee's adaptation to harsh conditions and the resilience of Aboriginal families, Irene emphasises the importance of nurturing strong, resilient children within the framework of Kinship networks. The abstract concludes with a call to professionals to support and celebrate the uniqueness of Aboriginal Kinship systems and cultural traditions that have endured for generations.

Bio:

Irene Wardle, a proud Darug woman with connections to the Biripi Nation, holds a Master's degree in Education by Research from the University of Sydney, focusing on Family Group Conferencing. She is actively involved in teaching Aboriginal Education and Indigenous Studies and has served as the Aboriginal Research Partnerships Manager at the Research Centre for Children and Families at the University of Sydney. With a background in roles such as an Aboriginal Intensive Support Child and Family worker, who has extensive experience in supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged young Aboriginal individuals in navigating employment and educational pathways. She has also worked in the fields of Health and with the NSW Police Force. Irene strives to embody her values through the Kanyini Principles by promoting interconnectedness, caring, responsibility, and unconditional love for all living things.

Different Ways; Powerful Stories: Life Story Projects by Isabel Flick and Kevin Cook

Professor Heather Goodall

First Nations people have many different ways to tell powerful stories. Two First Nations activists I have been able to work with were Isabel Flick (1928-2000), a Kamilaraay leader across many communities in north west NSW and Kevin Cook (1939-2015), a Wandandian-Yuin man who was a trade union activist, a land rights campaigner and the general secretary of Tranby Aboriginal Coop from 1980 to 1997. Both invited me to work with them on books about their lives, but they both wanted to tell very different types of story. This paper will outline the very different approaches they took and the very different books they made. Both of those books have been powerful stories!

Bio:

Heather Goodall is a Sydney historian and Professor Emerita at UTS. Her early research with First Nations people focussed on the centrality of land issues in Aboriginal politics, published as *From Invasion to Embassy* (1996). While living in Central Australia, in 1984, Heather worked for the Pitjantjatjara Council to research their case to the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Testing. She has since published on cultural and environmental relationships in rural and urban areas, including, in south-western Sydney, with Indigenous Australians, Arabic-speakers, Vietnamese Australian and Anglo-Irish residents along the Georges River. Her publications include the 2004 life story, co-authored with Isabel Flick: *Isabel Flick: the many lives of an extraordinary Aboriginal woman* and, co-authored with Kevin Cook, the 2013 account of major campaigns, *Making Change Happen: Black & White activists talk to Kevin Cook about Aboriginal, Union & Liberation politics*. Heather continues to work with First Nations people on life histories and with Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative on histories of land rights, community politics and activism.



Refugee Stories are not Finished Yet

Madina Mohmood

How does a commitment to Indigenous sovereignty radically transform refugee story-telling away from a politics of appeal, and toward building anti-racist and anti-colonial solidarities? My presentation considers two modes of refugee story-telling. First, I analyse the politics of the refugee status determination process, through which refugees present their claims for protection to the state. Through this process, the state doubts refugee life stories. The administrative process demands they fit into a narrow individualising framework, which scrutinises every detail of the refugee's stories, and seeks to deny their credibility. I see the 'grateful refugee' stereotype as a colonial narrative positioning the white nation-state as saviour, and ask how this mode of storytelling impacts the psyche and personality of the refugee subject. Second, I contrast this with the shared histories of black and brown people resisting the colonial state. I seek to honour the radical traditions of story-telling between First Nations people and non-white migrants. Ultimately, I argue that refugee stories do not end upon arrival in so-called Australia, they need to be situated as settlers within a colonial present and commit to Indigenous futurity. Only then can refugee story-telling in the colony be a liberatory practice.

Bio:

Madina is a diaspora Afghan woman, the daughter of Afghan refugees, born on Waddi Waddi country and currently living on Quandamooka country. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Queensland University of Technology researching how the refugee status determination process maintains white settler sovereignty. She previously worked as a policy officer at the Refugee Council of Australia.

Reflections on Wakulda: Weaving our Stories as One, a Semi-Permanent Storytelling Installation on the Historic Courthouse, Port Macquarie, 2021-2025

Dr Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley, Dr John Heath, and
Dr Sarah Barns

In this presentation Dr. Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley, Dr John Heath, and Dr Sarah Barns reflect on working together in the creation of *Wakulda: Weaving Our Stories as One*. A digital interpretation & storytelling project commissioned by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council to mark the bicentenary of the founding of Port Macquarie as a penal colony in 1821, *Wakulda* was led by Biripai Elder, Knowledge Keeper and Gathang language leader Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley, in partnership with digital interpretation specialist Dr. Sarah Barns, and supported by historian Dr. John Heath, a senior Biripai Goori knowledge keeper, as well as many other community and creative contributors.

In this presentation we reflect on the co-creation process for *Wakulda*, centring the story-weaving motif and the intentional framework established by Aunty Rhonda to utilise the project as a space for reconciliation and healing. Critical tensions between the celebratory ethos of the commemoration and its 'activation' agenda, and the need for acknowledgement of trauma and truth telling among Biripai people, are discussed with a view to establishing recommendations for future commemorative events.

Bios:

Dr Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley is proud Birrbay/Dhanggati woman from the mid-north coast of New South Wales, Australia and walks with her saltwater, freshwater ancestors. Anjilkurri has recently been awarded her PhD in the field of language and education, MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour & Development, Western Sydney University, holds a Bachelor of Teaching, Graduate Diploma in Adult Community Education (Australian Catholic University) and a Master in Indigenous Language Education (University of Sydney). She is an active Aboriginal community elder supporting the revival of culture through language and practices in her local communities. Her passion is to revive Gathang language, she advocates for Aboriginal languages to be learnt, spoken, taught and integrated into every-day life.

Anjilkurri values the sharing of stories to teach cultural expressions, learn from others and connect to other people's life journey. She often walks with her grandchildren on Country listening to the ancestors and messages from Ngaya Barray 'Mother Earth' encouraging the grandchildren to walk the right way on Country and in life.

Dr John Heath is a Senior Birrpai Goori with extensive experience in Australian Indigenous education, community development, community action research, and historical research. He currently holds a fractional Indigenous Research Fellow position at University of Melbourne. His publications provide a Birrpai perspective of the white historical record and he embraces various technologies for outreach to ensure greater understandings necessary for Truth and Treaty. This outreach includes documentary footage, TV and newsprint interviews, stage performance, audience presentations and input into works such as Wakulda and the Gould Birds of Australia STORYBOX both the latter, working collaboratively with Sarah Barns.

Dr Sarah Barns is a digital interpretation practitioner, curator, storyteller, sound practitioner and researcher currently investigating how contemporary place-making practices incorporate non-traditional methods of storytelling, historical commemoration and civic engagement. A practitioner-scholar at RMIT and Director of Esem Projects, her approach to digital technologies and storying places directly engages with diverse epistemologies of place-based knowledge & practice. Her work seeks to provoke trans-disciplinary practices around platform urbanism, digital interpretation and public space media, while bringing First Nations and community perspectives at the forefront of placemaking frameworks. She was the creative director and project lead of Wakulda, working closely with both Aunty Rhonda and Dr. John Heath to support and facilitate creative interpretations to diverse stories shared through the creation of the project.

Trauma Informed Heritage

Dr Charlotte Feakins

Over the last 25 years, a number of concepts that broadly centre on human suffering, conflict, and death have developed and proliferated in heritage studies. As a 'trauma and truth telling' discourse is embraced globally, there is a marked increase in the recognition of heritage connected to trauma, suffering and tragedy. Yet, despite the breadth and depth of research in this space, psychological trauma has been largely unexamined in the field of heritage studies. Therefore in this interdisciplinary paper, we ask: what is trauma? What is the relationship between trauma and heritage? And what does it mean to be trauma-informed? We introduce the concept of trauma-informed heritage (TIH) and suggest that heritage connected to traumatic events can be conceived as trauma-heritage (TH). Together, the TIH and TH concepts shine a light on heritage connected to trauma, which is multiplex and multiscalar. We offer this framework to better acknowledge and understand trauma and critically explore the relationships between trauma and heritage. This frame will provide awareness of the impact of trauma on people in the wake of traumatic events and help mitigate the risk of re-traumatising, now and for the future.

Bio:

Dr Charlotte Feakins teaches heritage studies and historical/contemporary archaeology at the University of Sydney. Charlotte is a heritage practitioner, researcher, and lecturer with a background in historical archaeology. Since 2011, she has worked in a wide range of roles across research and industry including recently leading Community Heritage services at GML Heritage and conducting research to support the nationally significant Growing Tourism in Kakadu Australian Government initiative.

We Were Just Little Boys

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation released *We Were Just Little Boys* for NAIDOC Week 2022. Narrated by KBH survivors and illustrated by Uncle Richard Campbell, #28 it is not only an important contribution to truth telling, but is an evocative glimpse into the lived-experiences of the KBH atrocity.

After the film screening, there will be discussion with Uncle Bobby Young, Uncle Michael Welsh, Uncle Willy Nixon, Aunty Lesley Franks, and Tiffany McComsey.



Rewriting Refugee Jurisprudence

Dr Neeraja Sanmuhathan and Dr Jessica Hambly

This presentation draws on our work together in the context of 'Rewriting Refugee Jurisprudence' -a critical project aiming to rethink, reframe, and rewrite legal decisions from the perspectives of scholars and lawyers with lived experience of forced displacement and migration. Our contribution is a re-imagining of the 2016 Federal Court of Australia decision in *Plaintiff S99*, which concerned a young woman who required urgent medical evacuation from offshore detention.

In our rewrite of *Plaintiff S99*, we explore the legal decision and its legacy that continue to minimise and erase the experiences of refugees. Stories shape, strengthen and challenge our opinions. In drawing on personal experience and perspectives, and introducing a trauma and violence informed lens, we highlight the pluralities of lived experience and challenge dominant tropes that position refugees as villain or hero. Refugees are portrayed through single dominant narratives that centres on their story beginning with a crisis. Systems and processes within their journeys flatten their identity, reducing human to numerical figures. As a result, we often fail to see the person behind the story. We fail to acknowledge their histories, celebrate their resilience, and validate, their dreams for their future. The colonial legal system and traditional forms of legal decision-writing play a central role in perpetuating harmful refugee stereotypes. We aim to provide a platform to hear an asylum seeker's lived experience beyond the label. In doing so, we challenge the idea of who's story we get to hear, how this is shared, and who gets to share it.

Bios:

Dr Jess Hambly is a Senior Lecturer at the ANU College of Law and Director of the Law Reform and Social Justice programme. She has previously worked with a number of grassroots refugee advocacy organisations in the UK, France and Greece, including pro bono legal aid with Lesbos Legal Centre and Samos Legal Centre in 2017-2019.

Dr Neeraja Sanmuhathan is a Senior Sexual Assault Counsellor with NSW Health providing trauma informed counselling support to those impacted by sexual violence, and a lecturer within the Master of Counselling program at the University of Notre Dame. Neeraja's doctoral thesis explored Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and intergenerational trauma following Sri Lanka's 30-year civil war. She has worked with asylum seekers and refugees impacted by sexual violence, displacement, and torture.

Leave No Trace: Truth Telling at Wybalenna

Stephenie Cahalan

Wybalenna on Flinders Island is the place to which 147 First Tasmanians moved following a verbal treaty agreed with Van Diemen's Land Governor Arthur in 1832 and was shut down in 1847.1 Wybalenna became a detention centre where people died of despair and sickness through the systematic efforts to disconnect them from their culture and Country. The cemetery holds the remains of over one hundred ancestors in unmarked graves, and in 1999 ownership of the land was vested to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania and Palawa- warlpiri historian Nunami Sculthorpe-Green observed the unending line of historians who continue to convey Euro-centric bias and lack of understanding about her community and culture. It is recognised that First Nations stories must be told by that history's owners, and cease becoming the intellectual property of non-Indigenous researchers and writers. I am a non-Palawa historian invited to work on the 'Truth Telling at Wybalenna' project and my challenge is to learn from scholars sharing First Peoples history non-propriotorially, so that I can leave no trace of my presence in this important project.

Bio:

Stephenie Cahalan is an author and historian based in nipaluna-Hobart completing a PhD in History at University of Sydney. Her research focuses on legacy, and her PhD thesis examines bequests to Australian cultural institutions to understand how private benefactors influence the public experience of culture. Stephenie has worked in environmental and social justice, and philanthropy in private land conservation and the cultural sector. She is currently working with the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania on the Truth Telling at Wybalenna project and Giving Land Back campaign.



Professor Michael McDonnell



Dr Niro Kandasamy



Thomas Cafe





History at the University of Sydney

In the School of Humanities and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

CONTACT US

michael.mcdonnell@sydney.edu.au; niro.kandasamy@sydney.edu.au

CONNECT WITH US

<https://www.facebook.com/HistoryMattersSydneyUniversity>

<https://historymatters.sydney.edu.au/>

@HstyMattersSyd

Cover photo: Georginia Sappier-Richardson sharing her story at a TRC community visit. Photo by: Ben Pender-Cudlip. Courtesy: Upstander Project.