



## TASA - Understanding our world, making a difference

**TASA 2016 Conference**  
**28-Nov to 1 Dec, 2016**  
**Australian Catholic University**  
**Melbourne**

### Asylum, excision and the breakdown of the nation-state\*

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There is a picture doing the rounds on Facebook of a ship loaded to bursting with people, with some in the water and masses on the wharf trying to get on board. It's not a picture of people fleeing the current war in Syria but of Europeans fleeing to North Africa from World War II. It is a striking reminder of how quickly tables are turned in a rapidly changing world. As we watch news footage of rivers of people flowing away from danger and towards hope, with little regard for national borders, be they represented by barbed wire fences or lines of military and police forces or volunteers distributing food and clothes, it looks very much like the complete breakdown of the nation state. This structure, which has for 400 years been a, or perhaps the, major source of identity, community, and political and economic organisation, appears to be breaking down in a number of ways.

Ironically the actions of Australia's government in 'stopping the boats' also demonstrates this breakdown. The politics of emergency and crisis that have characterised discourses around migration in the West for much of the last three decades have enabled states to take unprecedented action to 'fortify' themselves (Joppke, 2007; Gregory and Pred, 2007; Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013) through processes of securitization (see Buzan et al, 1998; McDonald, 2011). But in this act of fortification some of the fundamentals of the nation-state are being breached, particularly the notion of the rule of law, so precious to Western democracies and their values rhetoric (Fozdar and Low 2015; Kneebone, 2009; Hunt and Wickham, 1992). A hallmark of this phenomenon in the field of refugee law is the attempt by many states to exclude asylum seekers from the international rule of law, namely their right to protection under the UN conventions for refugees and various other human rights instruments. This has been achieved through a range of measures including interdiction at sea and/or at airports; removal to 'safe third countries'; and the use of 'accelerated' processes that have fewer procedural safeguards, such as ability to appeal through the courts (Foster and Pobjoy, 2011:2, Kneebone, 2009).

These 'interdiction and deflection programs [use] exclusionary provisions in migration laws that limit access to domestic protection' (Crock, 2014:249),



# *Sport and the Sociological Imagination*

Free Public Event

**TASA Sponsored Event,  
hosted by the  
Sport Thematic Group**

**Date:** 10 February 2016  
**Time:** 18:30-20:00  
**Venue:** VU at MetroWest  
138 Nicholson Street, Footscray



The sociology of sport, in the Australian context, cuts across the various areas of education, health, policy, multiculturalism, and science. This free public event on 'Sport and the Sociological Imagination' will feature a panel of four distinguished speakers and aims to take sociology of sport to the community as well as to academics and students.

What will be the key areas and issues for the sociology of sport in the next decade? What insights and solutions will the sociology of sport provide? How does the sociology of sport facilitate critical inquiry, social justice, and equity? Each panellist will have 15 minutes to discuss their imagination for the sociology of sport in the future. This will be followed by an opportunity for questions and answers from the audience.

## **The Panel**

Professor Catherine Palmer	University of Tasmania
Professor David Rowe	Western Sydney University
Associate Professor Karen Farquharson	Swinburne University of Technology
Dr Kathryn Henne	Australian National University

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**[www.tasa.org.au](http://www.tasa.org.au)**

# Letter from the editors

SUE MALTA AND CHRISTOPHER BAKER

In keeping with our editorial platform, this issue of *Nexus* showcases a selection of contributions that reflect the diversity and dynamism of Australian sociologists and sociological scholarship. It opens with a series of articles about refugees here in Australia and in Europe. What these articles do is highlight the complexity of many of the issues surrounding forced migration and the ways that many in power (and, indeed, in local communities) respond. We have four articles addressing this important issue. The first from Farida Fozdar talks about the breakdown of the nation state in response to the refugee crisis. The second by Andrew Jakubowicz provides a unique perspective of the refugee crisis from within China and how forced global population movements generate the most significant ethical challenges possible. The third article by David Radford debates the challenges and opportunities faced by refugees – and long-term residents – in rural communities of Australia. The last article in the series, by Val Colic-Pesiker discusses the ‘Sovereign borders’ military operation and calls for the dismantling of the current border protection policy. Whatever your personal stance on refugees seeking asylum, we hope this issue of *Nexus* provides an interesting sociological insight into the current debate within Australia and elsewhere.



We have our usual offerings from TASA Executive members: our President, Katie Hughes reflects on recent developments and Christina Malatzky reports on matters postgraduate and the upcoming postgraduate day at the impending 2015 conference.

The issue includes an informative (and honest) account by Theresa Petray of the vagaries of organising the TASA Annual Conference. We hear from Bruce Curtis (University of Auckland) who once again brings us his unique take on life in *Southern Notes #2* with his usual wit and flair (we just won't talk about the Rugby in Cairns, will we Bruce?).

A number of thematic groups held symposiums during the year and they provide interesting reports on the outcomes of their events:

- The Health thematic group held a symposium at the Newcastle Museum on the theme of ‘The politics of knowledge in health care: science, evidence and experience’.
- The Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism thematic group organised an all-day workshop at Melbourne Law School on ‘Temporary migrants in Australia: work, networks, agency and belonging’.
- The Economic Sociology thematic group organised a forum at the University of Sydney on ‘State of play and fault lines for future research’.
- The Sociology of Emotions and Affect thematic group held their fourth annual workshop at the University of Queensland on ‘Emotions at work: identity, self and society’.
- The Youth thematic group also provide an outline of what to expect at their forthcoming symposium which is being held the day after the 2015 TASA conference on Friday 27 November 2015, in Cairns, Australia. This symposium aims to open conceptual debates in the field of youth studies beyond the current dominant theoretical frameworks in the sociology of youth.

TASA has also received a proposal from Mike Dee of QUT for the development of a new thematic group in ‘Disaster Sociology’. If you have an interest in youth, risk society, urban sociology, economic life, health, media, environment and society, to name just a few, this group might be of interest to you.

In this the final issue of *Nexus* for 2015, the newsletter has sought once again to provide a unique platform in which TASA members express their views on a range of issues both sociological and otherwise. Our editorial platform has been one of promoting the “news” aspect in keeping with the true meaning of a “newsletter”.

In this issue we have also provided a detailed insight into TASA member responses to the *Nexus*-specific questions in the member survey of March this year. As you will see, 90% of respondents to the survey indicated that they read *Nexus* at least occasionally (‘Always’, ‘Often’ or ‘Occasionally’). In a very consistent set of perspectives, 90% of responding members indicated they at least scan *Nexus*. For us as editors, these are beautiful numbers!

In the coming months, the *Nexus* platform will undergo a transformation enabled by the transition away from hard copy to fully electronic delivery. Options under consideration include a more interactive platform for the delivery of and access to three issues each year, or a move to take advantage of the much-improved TASA web and the continuous delivery process associated with the blog environment. Hopefully, TASA members will continue to value *Nexus* whichever format is adopted.

We sign off this our last issue of *Nexus* by thanking the many members who have contributed so generously to this the newsletter of The Australian Sociological Association. We give special thanks to our production team of Eileen Clark, Sally Daly and Roger Wilkinson – go team! *Nexus* wouldn’t be possible without your input and dedication. Lastly, a final great big thank you: to you, the members and enthusiastic readers of *Nexus*. ■

Christopher Baker and Sue Malta  
Co-Editors, *Nexus*

Volume 26 Issues 1, 2 and 3; Volume 27 Issues 1, 2 and 3

### *Nexus* production team

<i>Editors</i>	SUE MALTA & CHRISTOPHER BAKER
<i>Proofreading</i>	EILEEN CLARK
<i>Layout</i>	ROGER WILKINSON & SALLY DALY

## Professoriate and Heads of Department Annual Meeting

Wednesday November 25th, 2015  
12:15PM - 1:00PM  
Marlin Room 3  
Shangri La, Cairns

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<https://twitter.com/AustSoc>

# President's letter

KATIE HUGHES

*Australian Catholic University*

The year has sped past, it seems, with a lot of TASA activity, some of which I'll report on here.

## Conferences

The 2015 TASA conference in Cairns will soon be upon us and I'm very pleased to say that we have had an excellent registration rate and an increase in the number of colleagues coming from our region. This is extremely pleasing given our hope to improve our networks and reach across the Asia-Pacific. It looks like being a fantastic conference, in a fantastic place, and I look forward to seeing many TASA members there.

In the meantime, Dan Woodman and I have been working closely with staff from the Melbourne Exhibition Centre to build our bid to host the 2022 International Sociological Association World Congress. In so doing, we have a Local Organising Committee which includes colleagues from the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, New Zealand and (of course) Australia. The Melbourne universities have been extremely supportive, as has CHASS and local, state and federal politicians. The bid will be submitted in early December and presented by Dan and myself in Teipei, Taiwan in April next year. We feel cautiously optimistic about this, but it depends entirely on who else is bidding, naturally.

Lastly, I am very happy to announce the venue for the 2016 TASA conference! It will be held at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. Based in Fitzroy, the venue has superb facilities, and is close to all the cultural, gastronomical and intellectual sites which Melbourne has to offer. We are announcing the venue slightly earlier than we have in the past after feedback from TASA members who said they'd welcome this in order to plan their year.

## Membership

We made some changes to our membership system this year, with both good and not so great results.

Firstly, we opened our membership to sociologists from B and C countries (using the ISA's table for this designation). The aim was encourage international colleagues to join TASA and I'm pleased to say that we've had a few new memberships as a result. We also added new membership length options enabling people to join or renew for four and five years.

In 2015, TASA moved from offering its members annual membership based on a calendar model (i.e. January to December) to an anniversary system whereby membership runs for one year from the date of joining/renewing. As expected, the membership system changeover has resulted in a lower number of membership to date in comparison with last year's overall figures. However, we do not expect this reduction to continue in the long term.

Membership fees are by far TASA's greatest source of income and as a result of the current reduction in income, and some extra expenditure on further developing the website and resourcing thematic groups' events, the Association's budget has been under some strain. As a result, the Executive made certain decisions at its July Executive meeting to assist in securing TASA's financial health. We decided to replace the 2016 July face-to-face Executive meeting with a teleconference. We will no longer have an Executive dinner, and Sally Daly, TASA's administrative officer, will have her working hours reduced. For the first six months of 2016, Sally will work 24 rather than 32 hours per week. We are all hopeful that the (expected) dip in memberships will right itself in due course. However, if you have colleagues who are not members and who would benefit from membership please do encourage them to join! If each TASA member successfully asked one person to join, the benefits would be enormous.



It's good to see that the interest in TASA from both within and outside the organisation is still very strong. Over the past 12 months, four new thematic groups have been established: sport; aging and sociology; sociology of activism and urban sociology. Similarly, the number of TASA's Twitter followers has doubled in the last 12 months to 1150.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude, and that of the rest of the Executive, to the *Nexus* production team, and in particular to the joint editors, Christopher Baker and Sue Malta, for another great year for *Nexus*. Thank you for your passion and dedication to the newsletter.

Finally, 2016 is an election year so if you, or someone you know, is interested in joining the TASA Executive, do encourage them to nominate. Current office holders would be pleased to speak with potential candidates about what is involved, and you can read the position descriptions on the TASA website. The election will be held in July.

In the meantime, enjoy the rest of 2015 and I look forward to seeing you in Cairns. ■

## Annual General Meeting

As TASA's AGM rapidly approaches, can I encourage members to read the annual report, which is available via: <https://goo.gl/tStiXe>. The Executive will be present at the AGM and look forward to answering any questions members might have about TASA's activities in 2014-2015. Details of the AGM are:

Tuesday 24 November 2015  
5:30 – 7:00pm  
Marlin Room 1  
Shangri La, Cairns, Queensland

### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. President's Overview
4. Business arising
5. Acceptance of 2014 minutes
6. Presentation of Financial Statements
7. Questions on matters in the Annual Report
8. Motion 1: Move for the creation of an Applied Sociology Portfolio Leader within TASA
9. Other Business

Many thanks  
Katie Hughes  
President, TASA

# So you thought organising a conference was a piece of cake...?!!!

Theresa Petray

James Cook University



A few months ago, in a conversation with TASA's professional conference organisers, I confided that I didn't feel that busy; that teaching was more work than organising the conference. I told them that I couldn't understand why previous TASA Conference Convenors said it was a huge job. Now, in October, with the conference just weeks away, I understand why they laughed at me!

I am working with a great team of JCU Sociologists, the Conference Solutions team, and Sally, Dan and the rest of the TASA Executive Committee to make this conference happen, with help from thematic group conveners and others sprinkled in for good measure. We organised as much as possible early, which led to my mid-year bliss. But even the most proficient organising wouldn't stave off the steady escalation of conference-related work that I've seen in the past few weeks, and expect to see until the conference wraps up. The 2000+ emails in my "TASA2015" folder are testament to the scale of the job which I naively thought was easy.

The volume of the work aside, though, I wouldn't go back on the decision to host the conference; in fact, I'm not even totally put off the idea of doing this again at some point in the future (though my opinion might change between now and the conference!). There is always the promise that running a conference will bode well in some abstract way for a promotion or a future job application, but the real benefits of convening this conference are much more immediate and tangible.

I've gotten better at time management. This semester has seen me working in the evenings and on weekends fairly regularly, a marked change from my smug assertions last year that 'I just don't bring my work home'. And I'm working to deadlines a lot more than I would like to. But you should see my super-organised calendar – I have colour-coded, dedicated time for conference work, for teaching and marking, for postgraduate supervision, and even for my own research. And I stick to it. I started a new research project late last year and have made really good progress on it at the same time as organising the conference, and with my usual teaching and administration load. And I still have some semblance of work-life balance. Ask my co-convenor, Anne, about the time I ended a meeting before we were finished so I could go and watch *Pride & Prejudice* (the BBC version) with my friends.

I've gotten better at decision making. I have gone from a self-doubter, to a self-doubter who makes a decision anyway! Organising this conference is a balance between trying hard to accommodate every individual request that comes my way, with the needs of the 300-ish other delegates who will be coming to TASA2015, the realities of the conference venue and schedule, and of course the budget. I know that my decisions have made at least a few people unhappy, but I also know that they are all justified and reasonable decisions, and have been made with the support of my great Local Organising Committee, so I try not to lose too much sleep over it.

I've gotten better at accepting help and delegating. Of course there are times that I feel like it would be easier just to do it myself, but in the end, it will be a better conference because of the great group of people I have worked with along the way. I'll avoid thanking anyone by name here, because I don't want to forget anyone!

The best benefit of all is that, in a few weeks I will be in Cairns with 300 or so of my best sociological friends for a great conference. I knew it would be a good conference when we finalised our keynote speakers and plenary panels, but as I put together the full program and saw the range of excellent papers, I got even more excited. The intellectual content alone will be worth all of the work. The fun that we will have at the social events and the post-conference tours, and the beauty of Far North Queensland is icing on the cake. ■

calling into question what the nation and its values actually are. This is illustrated in Australia's decision to excise itself from its migration zone, making some of its own laws inapplicable within its own geographic territory.

Australia broke new ground, according to Crock, in enacting legislation to deny 'unauthorised maritime arrivals' (UMAs) the right to apply for any form of visa in Australia, including the right to seek asylum. A key strategy internationally has been creatively to designate certain areas within a state's territory 'zones of exception' (see Agamben, 2005) whereby a country's normal rules of engagement with non-nationals are suspended in various ways. In Australia, one of the more bizarre strategies was to excise some of the islands from Australia's 'migration zone', making Australian law not applicable there – these included Christmas Island, Ashmore Reef and Cocos Island, common landing places for Indonesian fishing boats carrying asylum seekers because of their proximity to Indonesia.

It has been argued that this process was 'explicitly designed to operate outside the framework of Australian law, and without the legal safeguards built into that framework' (Foster and Pobjoy, 2011:9). In 2011, a successful amendment to the Migration Act was made which effectively meant that not only these 'excised offshore places' were excluded, but the entire Australian territory was no longer 'Australia' for people who seek asylum by boat. Thus the nation-state, wherein they can seek protection, effectively does not exist for these people.

Crock and Martin (2013:137) argue that the excision of the entire country from its migration zone 'is the most recent in a series of attempts to wipe clean the asylum law slate in Australia, to reduce the law to a *tabula rasa* with as few enforceable rights or standards as possible'. As a result, Australia has done serious damage to its reputation as an effective multicultural, humane liberal democracy that pioneered positive settlement experiences for refugees (Jupp, 2007). But it has also damaged the very notion of the nation-state and the rights associated with it. ■

\*Sections of this article have been adapted from Fozdar F (forthcoming) 'The Violence of Exclusion: Australia's migration zone excision and the state of exception', in Robert Mason (ed) *Rendering the Unspeakable Past*.

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“In Australia, one of the more bizarre strategies was to excise some of the islands from Australia's 'migration zone', making Australian law not applicable there.”

# Seeking refuge in a sea of troubles

ANDREW JAKUBOWICZ

*University of New South Wales*

During September, while Europe was experiencing the ever-intensifying movement of populations from the Middle East and Africa fleeing natural and human calamities, I was on a field trip to China. My contact with the crisis came from the constantly recycling footage on BBC and CNN, topped up with China Daily reports, and occasionally an online hit from the ABC.

Ironically my research was focused on a group of Polish Jews who in August 1941 were shipped by Japanese authorities from Kobe, where their flight to asylum had been halted by the Japanese invasion of Indo-China and the consequent cessation of shipping contact, to Japanese-occupied Shanghai. In Shanghai the Japanese in control of the Hongkew area where most of the 1938/39 German and Austrian refugees already lived, refused to accept the Poles, labelling them undesirable, while the Shanghai Municipal Council, still under effectively British dominance, also tried to withstand their arrival. The local Jewish refugee committee, which had crammed hundreds of the fraught arrivals into a synagogue near the Bund, came up with an inventive solution. They reported the Synagogue to the Council as an overcrowded and unsanitary dwelling that required immediate closure, with its residents having therefore to be housed by the SMC elsewhere.

Events moved on, though here is not the place for the full story; however the dynamic of apprehension, expulsion and rejection by authorities, inventiveness in pursuit of survival by the refugees, and hand-wringing by bystanders, suggests societal alarm in the face of such events repeats well-known rituals, despite the lessons of history.

In major cities in China such as Harbin and Beijing, I was invited to give lectures to large classes of undergraduate students on issues associated with cultural diversity, refugees, and identity. At the conclusion there was question time, which usually went straight to the point, querying Australia's policies on refugees, Indigenous issues, and racism. (One of these question times took place just as my iPhone loaded the story from Sydney of a Chinese Australian woman who had been harassed and vilified on a bus.) The students typically found it bemusing that Australia should claim an international persona as a human rights champion, while so clearly condemning hundreds if not thousands of people to lives of poverty, immiseration and hopelessness.

Answering a question with a question, I asked the students whether China should accept Syrian refugees, and if so, how many? China after all is not without blood on its hands, playing a crucial role in the trans-Asian anti-Sunni alliance that links policies against extremism in Xinjiang, with expanding collaboration with a now 'cleansed' Iran, and close links with regimes in former Soviet Turkestan, and of course with the Russians, supporting the Assad regime itself. Meanwhile, China has indicated a desire for and the acceptance of a responsibility to step up to international obligations in order to claim the legitimacy and influence it seeks at a global level.

With the refugee crisis in Europe reaching a crescendo and no real end in sight, despite Putin's proposal for a new alliance of anti-ISIS forces, China, as a signatory to the Refugee Convention, ought to be demonstrating a humanitarian concern. After all, in 1941, the Chinese government had been one of the few governments globally to be actively seeking to rescue Jewish escapees from the Holocaust.

The first time I asked this question, how many Syrians for China, I was not sure if I had done something weirdly culturally inappropriate. It



Photo: Wanning Sun, Beijing, 2015)  
© Andrew Jakubowicz



Xinjiang 60th anniversary in the PRC exhibition: visualising diversity and human rights in China

Photo: Andrew Jakubowicz, Beijing, 2015

was as though the question hadn't been asked. In a room of maybe three hundred students the response was silence. Not one student thought aloud that China should play a role; moreover, it appeared that not one student had even previously considered the question as relevant.

I was reminded of the wonderful contribution to world refugee history made by the accidental Australian delegate to the Evian refugee conference of 1938, trade minister Col. White MP (himself something of a hero from a post World War One role as one of the Australian military officers who tried to aid the survival of Armenian victims of the Ottoman exterminations). White reflected on the push by the USA to have the world step up to its demands to find homes for hundreds of thousands of Jews being expelled from the Third Reich: Australia, he opined, was not a country with a race problem, and thought it unwise to import one.

Pushing the students to get a more considered opinion than the possible shared wariness of being seen as an outsider on something on which the Party hadn't yet issued a public opinion edict, I posited a scenario of Syrians arriving at the Xinjiang border from one of the 'Stans, seeking refuge among the Sunni Uighur communities around Kashgar (unlikely though that may be). Still nothing much more, than 'Why would we?' Then one brave soul offered this insight, 'the Party would round them up in the night as they crossed the border, and send them back to where they came from'. At least that got a reaction from some young women at the back of the room, who whispered in astonishment 'you can't send them back...'

Klaus Neumann in his June 2015 book *Across the Seas: Australia's Response to Refugees: A History* (reviewed here <http://www.sydneyreviewofbooks.com/across-the-seas-klaus-neumann/>) demonstrated that refugee policy in Australia has always been fashioned firstly by their domestic political interests as perceived by the ruling political party, channelling prejudice and patronage in equal parts. This order of priority was apparent at Evian in 1938, again in 1946–47 when the Shanghai Jewish refugees sought final protection in Australia, during the Bosnian war in the 1990s when Howard in the face of rising and perverse public opinion blindsided Ruddock, who was desperately trying to avoid accepting any Muslims from Yugoslavia, by agreeing to a short-term group, and once more in recent weeks when 12,000 Syrians (Christians, please, and we'll maybe add them to our yearly quota, maybe not) were accepted by Abbott in his last spasm to find a moral compass and save his job. This preferred religious gloss was an attractive addition that almost echoed the first Polish response to European requests to take Syrians earlier this year, when the EU-proposed quota of 800 was held back to 80, all of whom would need to be Christians, and none anything other than Catholics, especially not Evangelicals (take that Scott Morrison, though Kevin Andrews would be pleased).

Forced global population movements generate the most significant ethical challenges possible – for all involved. When Homo Sapiens moved relentlessly out of Africa into Europe along some of the same pathways being used today, their Neanderthal 'hosts' barely had time to register the presence before their world began to change forever. When Phillip and his motley crew unloaded their diseases, ideologies and poisons into the biosphere of Sydney Cove in 1788, and onto the totally unsuspecting Eora people, neither knew the terminal consequences of the interaction, though Phillip at least had riding instructions to be aware of the possibilities.

With Germany set to settle one million immigrants, and Europe as a whole looking at many more, huge numbers of whom are likely to be anything but 'settled' for years to come, we have turned a significant corner. The ethno-national state, once the driver for political development across the planet, now faces erosion from all sides. New empires are flexing their muscles (some even pouring concrete into oceans as they march outwards), non-state actors dominate swathes of territory across now increasingly meaningless national borders, and metropolitan kernels of former empires face multiple fragments of theirs and others' former empires striking back. The decision to import trouble has already been well and truly swamped by the realities of the troubles to be faced. ■

#### **Acknowledgement:**

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*It was as though the question hadn't been asked. In a room of maybe three hundred students the response was silence. ”*

# Nexus and the 2015 TASA member survey

CHRISTOPHER BAKER AND SUE MALTA

*Nexus co-editors*

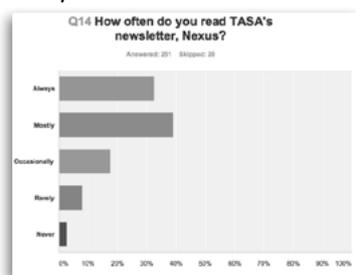
The TASA member survey of March 2015 contained four *Nexus*-specific questions. The first two questions in particular provide insight into the frequency and depth to which members read the newsletter:

## Q14 HOW OFTEN DO YOU READ *NEXUS*?

71.5% of respondents indicated they 'Always' or 'Mostly' read *Nexus*

17.5% read *Nexus* 'Occasionally'

*In total, 90% of the 251 respondents indicated they read Nexus, at least occasionally.*

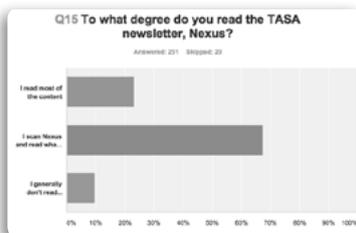


## Q15 TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU READ *NEXUS*?

23% 'read most of the content' and 67% 'scan and read what looks most interesting'

10% responded that they 'generally don't read *Nexus* at all'

*This is (encouragingly) consistent with the results of the previous question. In total 90% of responding TASA members indicated they at least scan Nexus.*



These responses are very positive indeed for TASA, because they indicate a high level of member engagement with the newsletter, and also indicate that *Nexus* is a membership benefit that is very widely accessed by TASA members.

The third *Nexus*-specific question in the survey reveals that the majority of members who access *Nexus* electronically do so via their PC.

## Q16 IF YOU ACCESS *NEXUS* ELECTRONICALLY, WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED DEVICE?

4% My smart phone

13% My tablet

56% My PC

27% NA

The final question provided the opportunity for an open text response.

## Q17 DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE EDITORIAL TEAM OF *NEXUS*?

Of the 36 respondents who made some comment in relation to this question:

- 11 Advised they had no suggestions
- 3 Provided feedback that could be classified as negative
  - Nexus* is not needed
  - Keep it hard copy
  - Not much content from Western Australia
- 9 Were generally supportive, e.g.
  - Keep up the good work!*
  - They're awesome*
- 5 Made suggestions on how on-line delivery could be improved
- 8 Made a range of suggestions, including
  - More space for postgrads*
  - More space for those working outside academe*
  - Always include book reviews*
  - Make it clear how people can contribute*

While there is inevitable variation in views, the responses indicate a high level of member engagement with *Nexus*. There are a couple of options being considered in the planned move towards an on-line only version of the newsletter. In the coming months, the *Nexus* platform will undergo a transformation enabled by the transition away from hard copy to fully electronic delivery. Options include a more interactive platform for the delivery of and access to three issues each year, or a move to take advantage of the much-improved TASA web and the continuous delivery process associated with the blog environment. Hopefully, TASA members will continue to value *Nexus* whichever format is adopted. ■

# Refugees and regional Australia – challenges and opportunities

DAVID RADFORD

*Hawke Research Institute*

*University of South Australia*

The current refugee crisis across Europe, the Middle East, and indeed in South East Asia with the Rohingya, highlights once again the challenges of conflict, globalisation and the increased forced mobilities of very large numbers of people, often in a very short time span. There is no sign that a diminution of these issues is likely any time soon. While much has been written about the ‘push and pull’ factors that precipitate and facilitate this movement, my interest is in the way Australian communities are responding to refugee/asylum seeker settlement.

Increasing numbers of refugees/asylum seekers are now living in the general Australian community. Of significance is the number of these migrants moving into regional areas of Australia, what Galligan et al. (2014) refer to as ‘visible migrants’. Increasing numbers of migrants are not simply from European backgrounds but increasingly come from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. These new arrivals are profoundly reshaping the cultural diversity and social landscape of some rural areas.

Standing out as a visibly different sort of person in a smaller regional town or rural community... heightens sensitivities for both the new entrant and the host community. Visibility, whether because of skin colour, dress or religious [belief or] practice, is a feature of modern multicultural migration (Galligan et al., 2014).

This move to regional Australia has taken place through planned migration such as the State Specific Regional Migration scheme (SPRM) (2003) which encourages skilled immigrants and humanitarian immigrants to move to rural and regional Australia (Hugo, 2008, Forrest and Dunn, 2013). Mt Gambier, in the south-east of South Australia is an example of the SPRM. Karen, Karenni and Congolese refugees have been settled in Mt Gambier, along with others who have moved as skilled migrants on 457 visas. Other locations such as Naracoorte, also in the Limestone Coast region of South Australia, have seen an influx of visible migrants through more organic ways because of work opportunities or because others from their refugee community are already living in the area and seek to attract friends and relatives (Feist et al., 2014).

The challenges are varied; economic, social and cultural. Some studies have indicated the financial benefit that refugee migrants have brought to regional communities such as Nhill (Victoria) (AMES, 2015) and Young (NSW) (Stilwell, 2003). It is estimated that the Karen refugee community in Nhill have contributed more than \$40 million to the local community since 2010. Beyond the potential economic benefits, social and cultural challenges are major factors in refugee migration, both for long-term regional residents and newly arrived refugee migrants. My own research has looked at a regional community that has seen several hundred Afghan Hazara take up residence over the last 5–10 years and who now make up 5–10% of the local population. The Hazara have the added complexity of being non-English speaking people of colour from a Muslim religious background. In the context of the ‘war on terror’ and more recent national and international issues around ISIS this has occasionally been problematic in terms of local community responses. While there has been relatively little direct aggression towards the Afghan community as a result of these events, the effect of the internet and social media have exaggerated fears and concerns in the town about Muslims, and the Hazara, as terrorists, the threatening ‘other’, or of Muslims taking over the town. The reality is that the responses of long-term regional residents are quite mixed. Some do harbour strong overt dislike, as one long-term resident told me, ‘I am racist and want these [refugees] out.’ Many rural Australians have little or no previous experience of ‘other’ people. A few considered withdrawing their children from schools where Muslim [Afghan] children are seen as receiving favourable treatment. Other long-term residents, however, welcome the diversity within the community. This highlights that in order to understand sympathetically how regional communities can successfully transition through changes in the diversity of their population, it is necessary to understand the hopes and fears, conflicts and conviviality that are



reflected in the hearts and minds of *both* the long-term regional residents and refugee migrants. It is also reflective of the challenges around identities. These issues touch on perceptions of what it means to be a 'local' or Australian and how we respond or react to the 'others' in our midst.

Despite some of these concerns, there have been a number of positive steps towards creating a sense of belonging in the town where my research has taken place. Important contributions from the Mayor and local Council have been vital in creating a sense of general welcome and stability during these changes, as have those agencies and individuals who go out of their way to support the Afghan community. A key factor in the process is also time and a generation of young Afghan children who are now attending and completing primary and secondary education in the community. The ability to speak English with an 'Aussie' accent, participate in local sports teams and community events, and the courage to engage in face-to-face relationships in the community are indicators of a growing attachment to the local and wider Australian social and cultural context. Increasingly, a number of Afghan Hazara who have stayed for longer periods in the town, some between 5–10 years, have come to see the country town as 'home' where positive memories and affective attachment are taking place.

The future is still not clear for this regional community, the Afghan community, or for the increasing number of refugees in other regional communities. There are opportunities and challenges for long-term residents and newer refugee migrants. Some challenges do involve creating the social and cultural environment which allow for the possibility of welcome and diversity and understanding difference. Some challenges are common to many regional communities. Will there be enough work to keep people around? The new migrant and the long-term resident harbour aspirations for the future, and for some that will mean a journey away to bigger urban centres. People follow their dreams, a reflection that regardless of the differences that we notice about one another – local resident, refugee, new migrant alike – there is much that we have in common. ■

“... there have been a number of positive steps towards creating a sense of belonging in the town where my research has taken place. Important contributions from the Mayor and local Council have been vital in creating a sense of general welcome and stability during these changes ...”

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## Sociology in Action Award 2016

This award recognizes contributions to the practice of sociology outside of academic settings. It is conferred on a TASA member who has made an outstanding contribution to sociological practice in Australia.

In this context, outstanding contributions to sociology in action highlight the value and impact of sociological methods and theories to society. This includes both broad social issues, as well as more focused issues for industry, government, business or community sectors.

**Nominations close June 15, 2016**

<http://goo.gl/t2njsU>

# What do eating oysters and receiving asylum seekers have in common—and why Europe should not follow Australia's example

VAL COLIC-PEISKER

School of Global, Urban and Social Studies  
RMIT University



On a recent drive to our weekend destination, my partner and I exercised our middle-aged brains by reciting by heart ‘The Walrus and the Carpenter’, a lengthy nonsensical poem by Lewis Carroll. This 18-stanza rhyming verse appears in *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (a 1872 sequel to *Alice in Wonderland*) and may seem completely silly but it contains some serious morals—if one chooses to read it that way. In short, the Walrus and the Carpenter lure the naïve young oysters out of their oyster beds by a promise of a ‘pleasant walk and pleasant talk along the briny beach’, only to eat them all a bit later.

As we drew towards the end of the poem we concluded that the hypocritical and cruel treatment of the oysters by the two ruthless characters reminded us of the Australian government’s treatment of asylum seekers: crocodile tears over those who drown trying to reach Australia, only to lock up those who survive in hot unruly hell holes on no charge and with no date or destination of release. The Walrus may be from the Labor Party—somewhat more sympathetic but at the end of the day not wanting to miss out on the electoral gain, that is, eating the oysters—while the Carpenter would be a Liberal, single-minded in his tough outlook. Here are the finishing stanzas that led to this minor epiphany:

*‘It seems a shame,’ the Walrus said,  
‘To play them such a trick,  
After we’ve brought them out so far,  
And made them trot so quick!’  
The Carpenter said nothing but  
‘The butter’s spread too thick!’*

*‘I weep for you,’ the Walrus said:  
‘I deeply sympathise.’  
With sobs and tears he sorted out  
Those of the largest size,  
Holding his pocket-handkerchief  
Before his streaming eyes.*

This is not to take lightly the issue that I personally and professionally think and feel deeply about: the deteriorating treatment of asylum seekers by our government. Under the Prime Ministership of Tony Abbott this treatment reached its sad nadir in the ‘Sovereign Borders’ military operation, shrouded in secrecy. The policy does not befit a country that is not only a signatory of the Refugee Convention but also considers itself an exemplary democracy. The government of a sparsely populated, rich country built on immigration, which accepts about 200,000 settlers and an additional half a million temporary migrants annually, refuses to allow even one ‘boat person’ to find home in Australia.

If not driven by compassion and international obligations, sheer common sense could lead Australians to reject this bizarre and cruel policy. Many indeed do—protest rallies, petitions and other forms of resistance happen on a weekly basis. However, a majority of Australians support the policy, not on the basis of common sense, but rather on the basis of fear of the invasion from the north—a fear that seems to be in the bones of modern Australia. ‘Reds under beds’ and ‘Asian invasion’ preceded the fear of a flood of ‘boat people’.

The support for this policy rests on another commonly adopted fallacy: that, unlike other migrants that are ‘good for our economy’, refugees are bound to be a burden, a ‘drain on the taxpayer’. In reality, asylum seekers are mostly young people, keen to learn, work and just live like everyone else. In reality,

our 'stopping the boats' policy is a huge drain on the taxpayer: including the cost of offshore detention, about \$3 billion a year. There is no doubt in my mind that history will judge Australia's treatment of asylum seekers in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century harshly. I live in hope that our newest PM Malcolm Turnbull will gradually dismantle the abominable 'border protection' policy.

The high-tech world we live in is also a world of brutal local wars in which the West has had its colonial fingers, historically and currently. These wars—in which Australia and its allies regularly intervene and regularly fail to improve the situation for local people—create steady rivers, and occasionally torrents, of forced migrants. The latest come from Syria, flowing mainly towards Europe; the European 'refugee crisis' has been in the media daily over the past months. It has been comforting to see that most European governments, including, importantly, the highly influential German government, took a humanitarian approach (with the exception of Hungary, with its barbed wire fence towards Serbia, tear gas and water cannons).

The humanitarian approach is the only possible one even if we prioritise *Realpolitik*: only force can stop a torrent of desperate people. We tow asylum seeker boats back to Indonesia waters; if European land borders were 'protected' by military force this would inevitably lead to violent clashes, riots, deaths and very probably a serious unsettling of the continent. It is more fruitful to protect people than borders. Europe's population is ageing and most European nations would quickly shrink without immigration. Germany is taking 800,000 asylum seekers, which is under 1% of its population. The equivalent number for Australia would be 230,000.

In response to the German example, we have pledged to take 12,000 Syrians in an 'orderly' manner, while keeping the 'disorderly' boat people in prolonged detention—unless they agree to go back to where they came from. In a recent radio interview, the head of a Human Rights agency used the word 'rot' in describing asylum detention on Nauru and Manus Island. Indeed, we cause people to suffer and rot in forced idleness, alongside which they are exposed to a full selection of social deviance, from corruption, violence and substance abuse to rape and murder. In this context, taking the 'extra' contingent of Syrians is a weak and contradictory move, a fig leaf not able to cover Australia's shame.

Luckily, Europe did not take the advice given by the Australian PM Tony Abbott in April this year to follow Australia's 'success' in stopping the asylum seekers boats. Even European maritime borders in the Mediterranean have been treated differently. The boats that have been arriving for decades, and especially intensely following the 2011 'Arab Spring', were never towed back. During this time, the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa has hosted as many refugees as there are regular residents (about 6000). Yet, Lampedusa's 'social fabric' did not tear. The local people, in spite of economic losses from dwindling tourism, have been compassionate to the boat arrivals. Many of them volunteered to provide various aspects of humanitarian support and found it rewarding and meaningful. This is not to say that the European reception of asylum seekers is smooth and without problems; but at least one can see efforts to make it reasonable and civilised. Anti-immigration parties are getting stronger in many EU countries, clamouring for harsh measures; but at least these are (still) marginal parties, not the main parties as in Australia.

The stream of forced migrants originating in countries torn apart by civil wars and/or ruled by tyrannical and corrupt governments and flowing towards 'First World countries' will not stop any time soon. The world is a small and unequal place and people travel towards safer and richer countries just like water flows downhill. These days they are also well informed. Every adult refugee shown in recent video coverage of the European refugee crisis clutched a smart phone. Large and intense population movements, always in some sense 'forced', have happened throughout history, and history has not ended.

The current nations of Europe are only recent formations, and the ancestors of modern day Europeans reached Europe as 'barbarians' violating the borders of the 'civilised' Roman Empire. Populations move, merge and change and nations, empires and civilisations live and die: they are historic and social constructs, not eternal entities. What we see as an extraordinary torrent of irregular human movement is just another such instance in history. The kaleidoscope of history is turning faster than ever and population mobility is an important aspect of social change and of globalisation. Europe, North America and Australia are not the same as they were a century ago and will be different in a century's time. Perhaps the typical First World citizen will be a bit darker-skinned then, but why should that worry us?

Nations that call themselves 'civilised'—the architects of 'globalisation'—should embrace a cosmopolitan ethic and strive to reduce the global sum total of human suffering. Ruthlessly defending their borders and privileges the way Australia has done in recent years is not an option that could possibly be widely adopted without turning the world into an Orwellian nightmare. ■

*In reality, asylum seekers are mostly young people, keen to learn, work and just live like everyone else. In reality, our 'stopping the boats' policy is a huge drain on the taxpayer ..."*

# Temporary migrants in Australia: work, networks, agency and belonging

## MIGRATION, ETHNICITY AND MULTICULTURALISM THEMATIC GROUP

*Martina Boese and Shanthi Robertson*

On 21 August 2015, the Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism thematic group conveners, Martina Boese and Shanthi Robertson, organised and spoke at an all-day workshop at Melbourne Law School on 'Temporary migrants in Australia: work, networks, agency and belonging'. Sponsored by the TASA Major Support Scheme for Thematic Groups, along with support from the UWA Mobilities and Belonging Initiative, the Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law (CELRL) at Melbourne Law School, and the Institute for Culture and Society at the University of Western Sydney, the workshop brought together policy makers and policy analysts, migrant advocacy groups, union representatives, service providers, journalists and academics to discuss the role of social networks and belonging in relation to temporary migrants' work experiences, access to workplace rights, and overall experience in Australian society.

### **Temporary migration: public debates and research directions**

There are more than one million temporary migrants currently resident in Australia, making up approximately 6–8% of the workforce. They include subclass 457 or Temporary Work (Skilled) visa holders, seasonal agricultural workers, international students, working holiday makers and New Zealanders as the largest groups. Public debates on temporary migration in Australia have primarily focused on its economic significance, such as the role of international education as an export industry, or employer demands for 457 visa holders and their effects on local workers. Media attention has also highlighted the exploitation of temporary migrant workers, such as the underpayment of 457 visa holders or the gross mistreatment of working holiday makers in the horticultural sector, which was exposed in a recent *Four Corners* episode.

Temporary migration has increasingly attracted scholarly interest from a range of disciplines including population and migration research, political theory and economics, and legal and socio-legal studies. In Australia, a traditional destination of permanent settlement, it has been studied in terms of an 'immigration revolution'. Recent sociological research has challenged the notion of temporariness and highlighted the need for more nuanced analyses that extend beyond the workplace experience of temporary migrants and consider their 'temporary' residencies in the context of complex migration and life pathways.

### **Policy, advocacy and research**

Building on a 2014 workshop at the CELRL that focused on the rights of migrant workers, this workshop sought to extend current debates on temporary migrants through sociological engagement with the role of social networks, agency and belonging in temporary migrant experiences. Invited speakers included representatives from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, the Fair Work Ombudsman, the Migration Council of Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, migrant advocacy groups Know Your Rights and Migrante Australia, and academics from UWA (Farida Fozdar, Loretta Baldassar), ACU (Devaki Monani), Sydney University (Elsa Koleth), La Trobe University (Martina Boese), RMIT (Iain Campbell), and the UWS (Shanthi Robertson). Critical and productive debates occurred throughout the day. The morning sessions focused on current policies, advocacy and services in relation to 457 visa holders, seasonal agricultural workers, working holiday makers, and international students, addressing both primary and secondary visa holders. The afternoon sessions explored the experiences of temporary migrants in selected industry sectors (café and restaurants, farms and caring professions), and considered directions for future research including the implications of temporary migration for Australian multiculturalism, national and post-national belonging, and migration-related service infrastructures. The day ended with a grounding discussion of knowledge production and translation across advocates, service providers, policy makers and academia in a highly topical area of migration.

The workshop 'Temporary migrants in Australia: work, networks, agency and belonging' was a timely and valuable intervention to bring sociological research and evidence into policy debates and discussions of migrant well-being across stakeholder groups. ■

## Thematic Group Conveners' Annual Meeting

**Chair: Karen Soldatic**

Tuesday November 24th, 2015

12:15PM - 1:00PM

Marlin Room 3

Shangri La, Cairns

## Thematic Group Funding

**T**he next thematic group funding round submission deadline is **March 1st 2016 for activities in the second half of 2016.**

The Thematic Group Support Scheme allows for groups to apply for up to \$2,000 for activities that support their thematic area. Grants may be used to fund costs such as postgraduate student attendance, fees for venue hire, advertising, and speaker travel and accommodation. Funding approval is dependent upon the merit of the application, the number of applications received and TASA's financial position at the time of the application round.

Applicants are advised to refer to the new TG Conveners eManual, for the funding guidelines, which can be accessed on the TG overview TASAweb page at:

<http://tinyurl.com/noh2alo>

## Individual Thematic Group Annual Meetings

**Some thematic groups have booked a 30 minute meeting. Room numbers and time slots will be displayed at the TASA conference table.**

Wednesday November 25th, 2015

Shangri La, Cairns

5:00PM - 5:30PM

5:30PM - 6:00PM

Breakout Rooms

Shangri La, Cairns

# Postgraduates corner

CHRISTINA MALATZKY

*Melbourne University*

The Postgraduate Sub-Committee has continued its hard work to canvas the views and priorities of our postgraduate members and to represent these to the Executive Committee and within the Association more broadly.

We have undergone some changes. Because of altered circumstances, Jennie Haarsager-Lieske has resigned her post on the sub-committee. On behalf of the sub-committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jennie sincerely for her service and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavours. I would also like to extend a warm thank you to Thomas, Monika, Laura, Ashlin and Ly for their continuing service. It is a pleasure to serve with you.

We are also trialling roles for each member of the sub-committee, and these roles relate specifically to the postgraduate website launched earlier this year. These roles are: thesis snapshot approver (Ashlin Lee), blog poster (Ly Phan), resources locator and uploader (Thomas Antwi Bosiakoh), podcast locator and uploader (Laura Gobey), and events finder and poster (Monika Dryburgh). Postgraduate members of TASA are encouraged to post a 'snapshot' of their thesis as a way to get to know one another, and please feel free to contact the relevant sub-committee member/s if you have relevant materials to recommend.

In a further effort to help foster more regular communication among our postgraduate members throughout the year, we have established a TASA postgraduate email list. We have been using this list to send out relevant notices to our members and to keep all members informed about and updated on the sub-committee's activities. This list also provides a direct line of communication between the sub-committee and the members we serve. We hope that this email list is enabling wider input and providing a mechanism for feedback to ensure that we are representing the views of our members to the best of our ability. Feedback on the communiqué is encouraged.

TASA's annual Postgraduate Day is fast approaching. The sub-committee has worked hard to ensure that the priorities of our postgraduate members are reflected in this year's program so we hope that all of the postgraduate members attending the conference in Cairns have registered for the day. It is free of charge, everyone is welcome and food and beverages will be provided. Please go to our online program for the full day's timetable. There is something for every postgraduate member and we are really looking forward to catching up with as many of our postgraduate members as possible.■

## Jean Martin Award Sociology in Action Award Outstanding Contributions to Teaching in Australian Sociology

The 2015 winners of the above three awards will be announced at the Conference dinner on Wednesday November 25th, 2015.

## 2015 Postgraduate Conference Scholarship Recipients

TASA's conference is a highlight of the year for many of us, and has a key role in building our identities and opportunities as Australian sociologists. However, as university budgets tighten, many postgraduate students are not funded to attend and cannot otherwise afford to do so. So, the broader community of sociologists misses out on learning about innovative research that will shape the field into the future. This year we received 20 postgraduate scholarship applications compared with 12 in 2014 and 6 in 2013. Unfortunately, we could not fund them all.

TASA's Executive is committed to assisting postgraduate students to be active members of the Australian sociological community. We can do this by contributing to their conference registration at the 2016 TASA conference in Cairns, and we ask for your financial support to help us do so. Donations will be reserved for the postgraduate scholarships, which will cover conference registration and a contribution to travel expenses.

You can donate from \$5 upwards. \$300 will buy one conference registration that will be named after you and/or your affiliation. A dedicated Donors page will appear on the 2016 conference website. Please email Sally in the TASA Office if you would like your donation to be anonymous.

We hope to fund at least 20 registrations, so look to raise \$6000. Any help you can give, however small, will pay rich dividends now and into the future of Australian sociology. Donations can be made via TASAweb at:

<https://goo.gl/2fq1yk>. Thank you!

**Congratulations to the following 2015 recipients:**

1. **Claire Baker, University of New England**
2. **Leanne Stevenson, University of Sydney**
3. **Michelle Dyer, James Cook University**
4. **Ly Phan, University of Sydney**
5. **Thao Dang, University of Queensland**

## Support TASA & Sociology Inform us of YOUR Publications

TASA Members are welcome and encouraged to share their published works, such as new books and articles in *The Conversation*, newspapers and blogs, for example, for promotion via TASA's Members' eNews, Twitter handle, website and *Nexus*. Please help support TASA and sociology by forwarding details of your published works to Sally in the TASA Office at [admin@tasa.org.au](mailto:admin@tasa.org.au)

# Economic sociology: State of play and fault lines for future research

ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY FORUM, 23 JULY 2015, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

*Anoushka Benbow-Buitenhuis, RMIT University*

Since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, mainstream neoclassical economics as the dominating discourse has been challenged across the social and economic sciences. Influential works by economists Thomas Piketty and Joseph Stiglitz have enjoyed commercial success and helped to legitimize discussion about economic inequality and the negative effects of marketisation on society. The Sociology of Economic Life thematic group held this forum to examine the current state of economic sociology in Australia and to highlight these new opportunities. The forum featured five eminent scholars: Emerita Professor Raewyn Connell, Professor Gabrielle Meagher, Dr Ben Spies-Butcher, Professor Jocelyn Pixley and Professor Michael Gilding. These distinguished speakers attracted an audience of 51 postgraduate researchers, early career researchers and interested people from outside the academy.

Ben Spies-Butcher opened the forum, observing that economic theories are now recognising problems of economic inequality, which traditionally have been sociological observations. This seismic shift allows economic sociologists to enter debates around markets and related phenomena. However, Australian sociology has historically shifted most of the discussion about markets to the economics discipline.

Michael Gilding identified three dominant strands of economic sociology in Australia: class analysis, political economy and critiques of neoliberalism. Prof. Gilding proposed that sociologists need to study markets because of the social and the cultural aspects of their operation. Furthermore, this sub-discipline can be greatly assisted by interdisciplinary academic collaborations (with departments as diverse as computer science for their data expertise) and this will strengthen the contribution that economic sociology can make to society.

Raewyn Connell discussed how economic theory is framed by the experiences of the global North and its crises, which can be far removed from Australian concerns. She used the seminal work of Michael Pusey on economic rationalism as an example of how Australian sociologists can map and theorise Australian political economic developments and global marketization. Thus, Connell concludes that sociologists have an important public role of constructing new agendas – in media, government and other arenas. Public intellectualism is highly important in this field, as we need to ask what issues we can acknowledge and how sociology, and its theories, can eliminate problems.

Neoliberal governance and the fairly recent and ongoing reforms to public service delivery has seen the public purse become a new goldmine for private profits. Gabrielle Meagher critically investigated the profitability of private enterprise and ‘public entrepreneurship’. Since the economic reforms of the 1980s, Australia has invited private organisations to tender for public service delivery, which sees services such as health care and social work subjected to market ideals such as efficiency and return to stakeholders. Multimillion dollar contracts are gained by multinational corporations which are commonly explicitly ‘for-profit’.

The final scholar, Jocelyn Pixley, argued that economic sociology needs to reintroduce questions and theories of money back into academia. Often the province of finance or accounting, money is a lever and an abstraction which shapes social relations. From Simmelian theories about economics inherently being social interaction to Giddens’ theory of money as a symbolic token within an embedded system, several sociologists have approached money as a conduit of sociality. While these largely theoretical examples are useful, a more detailed and Australian investigation is required to re-think how our society negotiates money in everyday lives.

After the main forum, the audience and panel undertook a lively debate on a range of issues, from the precariat labour pool working in academia to how technology is disrupting older market practices (via AirBnB and Uber). The night was very successful and confirms that economic sociology is a large

interest area in Australian sociology. I would like to give special thanks to Dr Tom Barnes and Elizabeth Humphreys for their hard work and dedication in putting this fantastic event together. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the five speakers Emerita Professor Raewyn Connell, Professor Gabrielle Meagher, Dr Ben Spies-Butcher, Professor Jocelyn Pixley and Professor Michael Gilding for their continuing service to Australian sociology and strong beginning in pointing us in a new direction for Australian economic sociology.

The debrief that I attended the next day with Ben, Elizabeth, Tom, Lara McKenzie and Quentin Maire allowed us to discuss further some of the issues raised the previous night and plan future events that promote and raise the profile of Australian sociology. Although talking to peers via social media and email is rewarding and provides the opportunity for great discussions, interacting face to face is very exciting and provides a different level of collegiality. On behalf of myself, Lara and Quentin, I would also like to thank TASA for the generous bursary that allowed us to attend this wonderful event. ■

### Award for Outstanding Service to TASA - 2016

This honour is accorded to a TASA member who has demonstrated an outstanding level of participation in and promotion of TASA over a number of years. There are many ways in which this can occur, but in all cases the quality of the service is the determining criterion, rather than the quantity alone. The Executive are calling for nominations for 2016, with nominations **closing 31 May**. If an award is to take place, it will be presented in November at the TASA annual conference in Melbourne. Full details of the Award are available on TASAweb:

<https://goo.gl/72Cpzt>

### Distinguished Service to Australian Sociology Award - 2016

This award is made to a TASA member who has demonstrated outstanding, significant and sustained service to Australian sociology over many years. While not necessarily a lifetime achievement award, candidates for the Distinguished Service Award would usually be nearing the end of their careers. The Executive are calling for nominations for 2016, with nominations **closing 31 May**. If an award is to take place, it will be presented in November at the TASA annual conference in Melbourne. Full details of the Award are available on TASAweb:

<https://goo.gl/PRiT2z>

## Southern Notes #2

BRUCE CURTIS

*Department of Sociology, University of Auckland*



New Zealand, New Zealand. Your name here. What an opportunity. Get in quick for this once in a lifetime chance to associate your brand with this brand. New Zealand Inc, famous for the 'Nnnn-Z' in ANZAC and, ummm, milk powder. Come on guys, naming rights openings like this are few and far between...blah blah.

So yes, the big debates in the actual Godzone in the last couple of months have been the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the TPPA actually because we now have an Agreement, and the flag. Cynics would say that we are having the latter because of the former. A new flag was not seen by anyone except our Prime Minister as a big issue until the TPP started heating up and there could hardly be a starker contrast between the way the two 'debates' have been orchestrated, I mean, conducted. On the one hand, the flag debate has been run like a game show. Indeed, Julie Christie, one of the Flag Consideration Panel members who helped to pick the final four options, is NZ's reality queen. Her big breakthrough was *Rachel Hunter: Cover Girl* and in the decades since she has improved both commercial and public broadcasting with shows like *This is Your Life*, *Changing Rooms*, *My House My Castle*, *Whose House Is It Anyway*, *DIY Rescue*, *Trading Places*, *Treasure Island*, *Game of Two Halves* and you get the picture. The final four (*sic*) options included two black and white renderings of different parts of the silver fern plant or punga or *Cyathea dealbata* (Maple leaf, what Maple leaf?) and two options that are admixtures of the National and Labour Party logos and the front of a Weet-Bix packet. Exciting, no?

Well New Zealand might be a Westminster style parliamentary system (minus the Upper House to provide balance, or ministerial responsibility, or an independent judiciary); but we are not a fusty Westminster style parliamentary system. God no. Through the magic of social media, a fifth option emerged: The Red Peak. The Red Peak is a red triangle in a white triangle with a black triangle in the upper right corner and a blue triangle in the upper left corner. The importance of triangles to the peoples (plural) of New Zealand is well known and thus the symbolism is obvious. The Green Party introduced last-minute (last minute!) legislation into the House to allow the inclusion of Red Peak in the series of referenda that will allow the luckiest people on Earth to decide their ... flag. Red Peak is also the corporate logo of Peak Engineering and Design of Apex, North Carolina. That is OK though, they have said we can have it if we want it. On the other hand, in contrast, New Zealand's position on the TPP negotiations and its clauses have been secret. In the week following the agreement, which means the TPPA is a done deal in New Zealand, (because it is only a treaty Cabinet can sign off on it, meaning it doesn't have to be voted on in the House, for which the opposition Labour Party is extremely grateful), anyway, in the week following, the High Court decided that it was illegal for the New Zealand government to keep this material secret. In the week following. So that would be 'to have kept'. Meanwhile, the Ombudsman is, after six months of inquiring, yet to decide if it was illegal or not. You guys in the ideological state apparatus need to pick up the pace a bit.

Closer to our sociological home, the QS World University Rankings' for 2015 were released and New Zealand had slipped a bit, again, but not as badly as you might expect and some bits almost didn't slip at all. Sociology seemed to do okay, separately and as part of Social Science. A worrying component with the QS methodology is that up to 5% of the score for institutions and subjects seems to come from the presence of international academics (i.e., absence of local academics). To paraphrase some website: International faculty ratio (5%)...The indicator aims to assess how successful a university has been in attracting academics from other nations. This is based on the proportion of international faculty members at the institution. The indicator contributes 5% to the overall ranking results. I think this means that (in New Zealand) the simple act of hiring non-New Zealand academics raises the institution's

ranking in the (QS) world. The same goes for Australia, of course; if you hire New Zealand academics your score goes up. New Zealand academics are increasingly used to being compared—benchmarked—mainly with Australian academics. Typically, this benchmarking excludes the higher rates of pay and superannuation on your side of the ditch.

This isn't really fast breaking news, but the rise of criminology in the context of sociology and the social sciences is undoubtedly the biggest change in a generation. Auckland, AUT, Canterbury, Lincoln, Otago, Victoria, and Waikato now all have criminology programs, where five years ago nothing existed. In most cases, the new criminology initiatives have been hosted by existing sociology programs. This is a mixed blessing, new hires are great, but criminologists rather than sociologists are probably less so. That said, it would be wrong to think of criminologists as cuckoos in the sociological nest. This is because of government funding arrangements in which each university caps its enrolments in terms of the absolute number of students and then seeks to enhance its revenue by moving students into higher-funded categories (more international students, more graduate students, more students in higher weighted subject areas; e.g., psychology is better than sociology but engineering is best of all). In this context criminologists aren't cuckoos, they are our likely overlords. Putting aside the disdain that university administrators and 'policy makers' have for sociology as a critical subject, in New Zealand, undergraduate sociology students are among the least profitable (I mean, least surplus-generating) ways of filling up a lecture theatre. The possibilities for criminology are far more promising because if criminologists can just be persuaded to give up their fascination with social justice (to be fair, our criminological colleagues are resisting this) and embrace profiling, forensics, cop-shop and maybe that hologram they use on CSI, then government can be convinced to provide the requisite higher funding for 'training' that is laboratory-based or clinical and students can be convinced of the new vocational possibilities.

In the good news category: *New Zealand Sociology* celebrates its 30th anniversary and it is the Sociological Association of Aotearoa /New Zealand's 50th. As the journal editor and founder member of the Association (just kidding), Professor Charles Crothers, notes:

*'As with other sociological communities NZ sociologists face the ongoing dilemma of choosing local versus overseas choice of topics or subject-matters and local versus overseas publication and with university reward systems (in our case the Performance-based Research Fund) favouring overseas journal article publication focusing on local topics sometimes is assisted through the pump-priming of developing special issues of commissioned or invited articles. Recent special issues have included a two-issue pair on social class/inequality in New Zealand (a topic largely unvisited since the Pearson/Thorns book of 1984) which has been nicely complemented by another on Progressive Alternatives: Politics, policy, practices and another pair on the History of Sociology in NZ to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Sociological Association of Aotearoa/NZ. Further social issues are in the offing.'*

This isn't quite sociology but the decision by the University of Canterbury to launch its Earthquake Scholarships is timely and commendable, and I think will help secure a database many sociologists might be interested in. I'll just quote the UC website:

*'UC Canterbury Earthquakes Digital Archive (CEISMIC) director Professor Paul Millar is concerned that as time wears on vital information about the response and recovery is being irretrievably lost.*

*The first four scholarships, funded by The Canterbury Community Trust, will support Masters' students to research and write on aspects of the earthquake response and recovery that align with the strategic priorities of the Trust. The successful applicants will have their fees paid and receive a stipend of \$12,000 to support them through a year of study.*

*These scholarships will be known as CEISMIC Learning Legacy Scholarships. CEISMIC has been collecting and preserving information about the effects of the earthquakes for the purposes of commemoration, teaching and research since 2011, but the response is ongoing and it is vital that research continues, Millar says.'*

I think it pertinent to note that Professor Millar isn't a geologist or civil engineer, but a Professor of English with interests in post-colonialism. There is also room here for sociologists, I suspect.

By the time you read this the All Blacks should have won the Rugby World Cup and the dozen or so Kiwis coming over to TASA at Cairns will harp on about it. If, by chance, we lost, then it's only a game and who cares.

Hei konā mai, ■

<https://auckland.academia.edu/BruceCurtis>

# The politics of knowledge in health care: Science, evidence and experience

TASA HEALTH DAY 2015

*Caragh Brosnan, Michelle Black, Emma Kirby*

*Health Thematic Group Conveners*



Keynote speakers and Health TG conveners, L-R: Karen Willis, Caragh Brosnan, Evan Willis, Emma Kirby, Kevin Dew, Michelle Black and Peta Cook

On 26 June 2015 the Health thematic group held a symposium at the Newcastle Museum on the theme of 'The politics of knowledge in health care: science, evidence and experience'. The event was supported by TASA and the Faculty of Education and Arts at the University of Newcastle, with 40 delegates attending from 14 different universities and the public sector.

Health care decision-making and the knowledge underpinning health choices, policies and programmes is highly contested terrain. From public debates about complementary medicine, vaccinations, new drugs and medical technologies, to private decisions around the who, how, what and where of seeking treatment, the uncertainties of health-related knowledge are central concerns in health sociology. The symposium set out to explore how questions around what counts as evidence are negotiated within different health care practices and contexts.

The day began with three keynote talks. Professor Kevin Dew (Victoria University of Wellington, NZ) presented findings from several empirical studies to explore the categorisation work that is undertaken in different settings

where health care decisions are made: in the home, in GP consultations, and in multidisciplinary team meetings in hospitals. He showed that in each setting, scientific knowledge is a key referent, but it is also undermined and transformed through social interactions and encounters with other kinds of expertise. Dr Peta Cook (University of Tasmania) discussed the way 'the public' is constructed through public consultations on new technologies. Focusing on the example of xenotransplantation, she argued that public engagement frameworks used in Australia restrict the public's ability to influence decision making. Presenting new findings from an ongoing project, Professor Karen Willis (Australian Catholic University) examined the rationales people use in Australia when deciding whether to take out private health insurance and how these map onto the public rhetoric around health care choice.

After lunch, a series of shorter papers selected from submitted abstracts continued to develop the theme of contested knowledge. We heard about the experiences and perspectives of people living with HIV who choose not to take prescribed treatments (Christy Newman, UNSW), and how GPs justify decisions not to follow evidence-based guidelines in an effort to treat patients more holistically (Emily Hansen, UTas). The new occupational role of Support Facilitators in mental health work

was explored in relation to work on the sociology of knowledge and the professions (Jennifer Smith-Merry, Sydney) and the social and political implications of using personal stories in new suicide prevention initiatives were critically examined alongside the history of suicidology (Scott Fitzpatrick, Newcastle). Three papers focused on complementary medicine and the meaning it has for patients (David Levy, Sydney), how it is represented in the media (Monique Lewis, Griffith), and how it interacts with knowledge production within universities (Caragh Brosnan, Newcastle).

All papers provoked lively discussion which at times concerned the forms of evidence used in the papers themselves. Professor Evan Willis (La Trobe) responded as invited discussant at the end of the day and emphasised the importance of sociologists remaining im-



Emily Hansen (University of Tasmania) presenting © Geraldine Donoghue

partial when studying debates over health care, while also making a plea for greater theoretical engagement in health sociology. What emerged over the course of the day was a sense of how the politics of knowledge are implicated not just in health care but in social science.

TASA awarded funding for postgraduate travel bursaries, enabling five postgraduate members (Monika Dryburgh, Melissa-Jane Belle, Alison Van Den Eynde, Geraldine Donoghue and Letitia Del Fabbro) to come from interstate to attend the symposium.

The Health thematic group conveners are very grateful to TASA, the University of Newcastle and all speakers and participants for supporting this event.■

#### **Comments from travel bursary recipients:**

*The 'Politics of knowledge in health care' symposium was a great opportunity to hear about the work of others in this area and to network. Interesting venue too.*

Letitia Del Fabbro, Griffith University

*I am grateful to have received a student travel bursary from TASA to attend the Health thematic group's 'The politics of knowledge in health care' event. It provided an excellent opportunity to meet and engage with prominent sociologists in the area, and to catch up with the progression of postgrads' work. The day was enjoyable in that it offered both a wide range of thought provoking presentations, and a forum for enthusiastic discussion.*

Melissa-Jane Belle, University of Tasmania

## **Stephen Crook Memorial Prize - 2016**

***A biennial prize for the best authored book in Australian Sociology***

**T**he Prize was established to honour the memory of Professor Stephen Crook in recognition of his significant contribution to Australian sociology. Nominations for the 2016 Award will open in early 2016 with an April 30, 2016 deadline.

<https://goo.gl/4bKcsI>

## **Raewyn Connell Prize - 2016**

***A biennial prize for the best authored book in Australian Sociology***

**T**he Prize is to honour the work of Professor Raewyn Connell in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Australian Sociology. Nominations for the 2016 Award will open in early 2016 with an April 30, 2016 deadline.

<https://goo.gl/8aqRyG>

# Emotions at work: Identity, self and society

## THE SOCIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS AND AFFECT ANNUAL WORKSHOP 2015

*Rebecca E. Olson and Jordan McKenzie*

*Emotions and Affect Thematic Group Conveners*

On 26 June 2015, the Sociology of Emotions and Affect thematic group held their fourth annual workshop. TASA provided financial support for the workshop, while the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland hosted the event at the beautiful St Lucia campus in Brisbane. The theme for the workshop was chosen by popular vote by thematic group members, perhaps because of the important contribution sociology has made in this area. Studying the emotional dimensions of work has been a primary focus of the sociology of emotions since its inception, with sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983) awakening our recognition of the emotional dimensions of service work in the early 1980s. From the reflexive imperative, to emotional climates in organisations, through to affective, aesthetic and emotional labour – work, emotions and well-being have been a focus of particular interest to scholars within and beyond sociology.

Reflecting the diverse interest in this topic, the workshop attracted attendees from sociology, cultural studies, medicine, learning and teaching, psychology and business. It consisted of two keynote addresses and nine presented papers on topics including emotions in health work, emotional aspects of breastfeeding and shift work, questions about the role of emotions and affect in feedback, and theoretical approaches to understanding post-industrial society and health. The first keynote address was delivered by Associate Professor Debra King, Dean, School of Social and Policy Studies, Flinders University. King's engaging presentation provided insight into her research on group emotional reflexivity during organisational change at a childcare centre, which was of particular interest to postgraduate and academic audience members researching and publishing on emotions in human care work and in the context of reflexive modernity. An introduction to this research can be found in King's (2010) book chapter on the topic: 'Learning by listening: emotional reflexivity and organizational change in childcare.' The second keynote address was delivered by Professor Neal M. Ashkanasy, School of Business, University of Queensland. Ashkanasy's talk aligned with the interdisciplinary tone of the workshop and introduced audience members to the work being done in business and management studies on emotions in organisations, using theoretical tools from psychology and social psychology. Of particular interest was a recent study indicating that contrary to most assumptions, negative mood can work to increase creativity. Further information on this research can be found in a forthcoming article in *Human Relations*: 'Unleashing angst: negative mood, learning goal orientation, psychological empowerment, and creative behaviour' (To, Fisher, & Ashkanasy, 2015). Such diverse keynote talks and presentations ensured the achievement of one of our primary goals for this event: fostering fruitful debate across increasingly porous disciplinary lines on the theorisation of emotional aspects of work.

A second goal for this event was to support emerging sociologists by offering a space for PhD candidates to present, discuss and reflect on their work, and this was also achieved. The program included engaging papers from three PhD students. We are pleased to confirm that the winner of this year's \$200 prize for best paper delivered by a PhD candidate went to Susan Banks from the University of Tasmania for her paper: "I really want to see the value in her – that was my work for those two weeks" – Emotion work in the provision and receipt of support'. We wish to congratulate Susan on her award.

The thematic group conveners are looking forward to facilitating streams on the sociology of emotion and affect again at this year's TASA conference at James Cook University in Cairns. We encourage TASA members – those who are currently members of the thematic group and those who may be new to the group – to join us in what promises to be another year of presentations on theoretically diverse and cutting-edge research.

We plan to continue the tradition of holding vibrant and dynamic workshops of interest to PhD candidates and researchers from sociology and cognate areas in 2016. Members are encouraged to attend our thematic group annual meeting at the TASA conference, where we will discuss possible themes for the 2016 workshop. ■

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## Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe

This scholarship seeks to encourage the participation of sociologists working outside academe (in areas such as private industry, government and non-government organisations, and private contract and consultancy work) with TASA.

**Congratulations to the following 2015 recipients:**

1. Eileen Clark
2. Jennifer Cheng
3. Liudmila Kirpitchenko

## TASA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching in Australian Sociology 2016

This award celebrates outstanding contributions to enhancing the pedagogy, practice or outcomes of teaching and learning sociology in Australia. It recognises contributions at the disciplinary level (rather than acknowledging excellence in teaching within the classroom or institutions).

**Nominations close June 15, 2016**

<http://goo.gl/b5qlX3>

## Disclaimer

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# Theoretical experiments in youth studies: upcoming one-day symposium

SOCIOLOGY OF YOUTH SYMPOSIUM, 27 NOVEMBER, CAIRNS

*Julia Coffey, David Farrugia and Paula Geldens*

*Youth Thematic Group conveners*

A one-day symposium organised by The Australian Sociological Association Sociology of Youth Thematic Group is being held the day after the 2015 TASA conference, Friday 27 November 2015, Cairns, Australia. This symposium aims to open conceptual debates in the field of youth studies beyond the current dominant theoretical frameworks in the sociology of youth. It is open to all TASA members to attend, and it will be of particular interest to those working in the areas of youth and social theory.

Current conceptual debates within youth studies often focus on the critical counterbalancing of concepts based on an established set of theoretical positions. Examples of these debates include social change/social continuity, reflexivities/habitus, transitions/generations, or subcultures/post-subcultures and structure/agency. While these debates have provided a fruitful means by which to explore the changing dynamics of young people's lives, there is the risk that they become taken for granted as the theoretical positions that define youth studies. In a time when the old assumptions of sociology are being destabilised by theoretical challenges from a range of different ontological and disciplinary perspectives, opportunity exists to open new theoretical spaces within the field. In this context, this symposium invites contributions which experiment with new ways of understanding youth. Our aim is to allow the exploration of agendas in youth studies that go beyond the binaries that currently structure debate in this field. To this end, the symposium provides a space for exploring new and perhaps 'risky' ideas and projects, or engaging with perspectives not currently recognised within youth studies.

We received a number of very strong submissions, and organisers selected 15 of these for presentation. Although all submissions were strong and of great relevance and interest to the field, only those which most closely met the symposium brief were selected because of the time constraints. There is a draft program below, including the full titles and authors of the papers.

The day will comprise four sessions. Session one features papers which discuss the nuances of youth cultural practices including clubbing (Armour), 'clowning' (Bennett), 'affinities in the digital age' (Collins & Swist) and conceptualising mental health and social media use (Hendry). The theoretical approaches taken in these papers speak to more dynamic and nuanced understandings of youth than in 'at risk' paradigms.

Session two includes papers which take key concepts used in youth studies such as generations, transitions and cultures perspectives and applies these towards new directions or theoretical possibilities; for example in using 'edgework' to explore youth sociality on Tumblr (Hartt), using a generational perspective to analyse youth public spaces (Giardello) and citizenship and transitions (Wood). Bromdal's paper which explores the place of the body in intersex/transgender discussions with university students highlights the importance of unsettling sex/gender/body divisions relating to youth beyond 'deviance'.

The papers in session three engage with Deleuzian concepts and frameworks to theorise youth. Coffey and Farrugia draw on Deleuzian and other postmodern perspectives that de-centre the human subject to ask questions about what precisely youth 'is' and how it assembles as a fluid process. Nilan's paper uses the Deleuzian concept of 'becoming minoritarian' to explore assemblages of youth environmental activism in Indonesia. Sabet draws on the concepts of Foucault and Deleuze to analyse organisations and policies in a youth-focused and community-based arts programs in Melbourne.

The final session is a panel on 'Constructions of young people and belonging' by the Critical Studies of Young People Research Group, Deakin University. Individually, the papers examine how young people construct and are constructed by the configurations of belonging that are articulated through the discourses young people deploy in accounting for the entitlement of asylum seekers to belong; the policies and practices of young people's citizenship; and incidental and mundane pedagogical moments in the

classroom. Although each paper focuses on different types of identity and belonging (racial/national, citizenship, gender/sexuality) at play in different spaces (focus groups at school, the policies and practices of organisations, classroom spaces), collectively they demonstrate the subtle but potent entanglement of identity and belonging in young people's lives. ■

Full abstracts of the papers can be found at: <https://goo.gl/TQmMMt>

## Conference Scholarship for TASA Members with Disabilities

This scholarship is an acknowledgement that members with disabilities incur additional costs when attending TASA Conferences. The aim of the scholarship is to help defray these additional costs and promote participation by members with disabilities in TASA Conferences.

**Congratulations to the following 2015 recipients:**

1. **Helen Meekosha, Retired**
2. **Christopher Pollard, Deakin University**
3. **Karima Moraby, Flinders University**

## TASA Honours Student Award: 2015

TASA will soon be calling for nominations for the top 2015 Honours student in Sociology from each Australian university. The TASA Honours Student Award was established in 2011 to recognise the achievements of Sociology Honours graduates. Your top Sociology Honours student qualifies for this Award and will receive a one-year student membership to TASA, making the student eligible for conference discounts, membership in Thematic Groups and copies of *Nexus* and the weekly newsletter. Winners will also be recognised on TASAweb, and will receive a certificate and letter from TASA. If you are a Sociology convenor or Honours coordinator, please do email your contact details to Sally in the TASA Office ([admin@tasa.org.au](mailto:admin@tasa.org.au)) so that the 2015 nomination form can be forwarded to you.

## Subscribe to TASA's YouTube Channel

<http://goo.gl/8BAIPf>

# Proposal to form Disaster Sociology thematic group

MIKE DEE

*Queensland University of Technology*

I am a sociologist interested in establishing a thematic group for Disaster Sociology in TASA. It is with some trepidation that I put the words *disaster* and *sociology* together, but I feel there is a case for a thematic group that draws on the abundance of interest and expertise across existing TASA groups in youth, risk society, urban sociology, economic life, health, media, environment and society and others, around the desire to examine, among other things:

- definitions of natural and other disasters, emergencies and recovery;
- what happens to marginalised groups, individuals and communities in times of disaster and recovery;
- the role of the state in preventing/mitigating/causing disasters and emergencies;
- the role of climate change in causing/exacerbating disasters and emergencies;
- the inclusion/exclusion of certain social groups such as children and young people in planning for disasters and emergencies;
- the role of information and communication technologies during disasters and emergencies.

Many of the great social, economic, environmental and political challenges of the 21st century will be shaped by the threat and occurrence of disasters and emergencies. A thematic group for disaster sociology would create opportunities for networking, specialised peer review for conference papers and a critical domestic audience for this valuable, critical work.

I would envisage a disaster sociology group to include researchers interested in areas such as cities, housing, urban inequality as global cities and megacities, Big Data, youth, children, mental health and more.

To establish a new thematic group, we require:

1. A convener and a co-convener (I volunteer to be one of these people)
2. At least 15 members who agree to join the thematic group and who endorse the conveners
3. Endorsement by the TASA Executive.

Please could you respond if:

4. You would like to be member of a disaster sociology thematic group; and/or
5. You would like to be a co-convener of this group; and
6. You have any suggestions about the name and scope of the group. I have suggested 'disaster sociology', but if you feel that some other manifestation of the urban/rural disaster and recovery experience should be included in the title, please let me know.

If enough people respond before the TASA Conference, we could hold the first thematic group meeting for Disaster Sociology during the conference! ■

Dr Mike Dee,  
Lecturer,  
School of Public Health and Social Work,  
Faculty of Health,  
Queensland University of Technology  
[m.dee@qut.edu.au](mailto:m.dee@qut.edu.au)

# TASA Membership

**TASA now has an 'anniversary' membership model, which means that memberships remain active for 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 years from the date of joining/renewing.**

**T**ASA membership offers sociologists numerous ways to enhance their careers through professional activities, scholarly information exchange and networking opportunities. Member benefits include:

- Online access to the Sage Sociology full-text collection;
- The *Journal of Sociology (JoS)* – four hard-copy issues per year published by SAGE (not available for \$0-\$28,999 income category – \$51.65 membership);
- Online access to the *Health Sociology Review* and a collection of other Taylor & Francis sociology titles;
- *Nexus*, TASA's Newsletter – three issues per year;
- The choice to be listed on the TASA Directory of Expertise database for use by the media, government agencies and researchers who wish to locate sociologists with particular areas of expertise;
- Thematic Group membership;
- Having your book listed on TASA's New Books web page, Tweeted about and included in the Members' Newsletter;
- Member conference registration discount of over \$100;
- Targeted email service for making contact with sociologists and sociology students, who are TASA members, for a specific need;
- Postgraduate website, Facebook, Annual PhD Workshop, Postgraduate Conference Scholarships, and Postgraduate representation on the TASA Executive Committee;
- Substantial membership and conference discount rates for student membership;
- Online TASA Directory listing members' interests and contact details. The directory is a real-time, fully searchable and updatable database that is particularly useful for locating potential supervisors and examiners as well as for networking;
- Members-only TASA Email list: access to the latest information on new jobs, scholarships, publications and conferences;
- Members-only section of TASAweb: access to publications and the online TASA Directory;
- The option of being listed on TASA's publicly searchable database for use by the media, government agencies and researchers who wish to locate sociologists with particular areas of expertise;
- Member discount rates for conference registration at the American, British, Irish and New Zealand sociological association annual conference;
- Eligibility for TASA Awards: Jean Martin Award, Raewyn Connell Prize, Distinguished Service to Australian Sociology, TASA Sociology in Action Award, TASA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching in Australian Sociology, Best Paper in the *Journal of Sociology*, Stephen Crook Memorial Prize, Jerzy Zubrzycki Postgraduate Conference Scholarship, TASA Postgraduate Conference Scholarship, TASA Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe, Outstanding Service to TASA Award, Conference Scholarship for TASA Members with Disabilities, and the TASA Honours Student Award;
- Free event advertising in the TASA weekly newsletter;
- Discounts on advertising in *Nexus*; and
- Access to bonus offers exclusive to TASA members:
  1. 15% discount from Footprint Books & 30% discount on all SAGE journal subscriptions
  2. 20% discount off all books published by Taylor & Francis.

# Donation Drive

## Support TASA Postgraduates

**DONATE** via: <https://goo.gl/2fq1yk>

The TASA conference is a highlight of the year for many of us, and has a key role in building our identities and opportunities as Australian sociologists. However, as university budgets tighten, many postgraduate students are not funded to attend and cannot otherwise afford to do so. So, the broader community of sociologists misses out on learning about innovative research that will shape the field into the future.

The TASA executive is committed to assisting postgraduate students to be active members of the Australian sociological community. We can do this by contributing to their conference registration at the 2016 TASA conference in Cairns, and we ask for your financial support to help us do so. Donations will be reserved for the postgraduate scholarships, which will cover conference registration and a contribution to travel expenses.

You can donate from \$5 upwards. \$300 will buy one conference registration that will be named after you and/or your affiliation. A dedicated Donors page will appear on the 2016 conference website. Please email Sally in the TASA Office if you would like your donation to be anonymous.

We hope to fund at least 20 registrations, so look to raise \$6000. Any help you can give, however small, will pay rich dividends now and into the future of Australian sociology. Donations can be made via TASAweb at: <https://goo.gl/2fq1yk>. Thank you!

*TASA has partnered with Goodwill Wines to raise funds to support member activities, specifically thematic group events. All wines are vegan, and all are – we have it on good authority – delicious! TASA receives 50% of the profits of wine purchased through the Goodwill site. So, please feel free to support TASA!*

<http://goo.gl/WeL6Lj>

