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Introduction
Associate Professor Grayson Cooke

As Deputy Head of School and Research Director for the SCU School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS), it gives me great pleasure to present the SASS Research Report for 2019.

SASS is a diverse and socially and environmentally engaged School spanning a wide range of teaching disciplines and research areas across the arts, humanities and social sciences. Topics ranging from the experiences of lesbian women and gay men in residential aged care, to concepts of smell in virtual reality, will sit alongside each other in the SASS publication profile. Despite this diversity however, thematic concerns across the School are also highly convergent, a fact manifest in the two research clusters operating within the School, which focus on Diverse and Inclusive Communities, and Environmental Arts and Humanities. A concern with social and environmental justice motivates the School and drives research employing creative, critical and qualitative methodologies.

SASS staff publish and exhibit widely and are highly socially engaged, conducting work with local and distant communities and speaking at scholarly and community forums locally and across the country and the world. So far this year SASS staff have published and exhibited over 40 journal articles, book chapters, reports and creative works, presented their work at more than 20 conferences, symposia and public talks across four different countries, and published articles in The Conversation with a total readership for the year so far of over 70,000 people.

This remarkable disciplinary and creative diversity, and high level of social and cultural engagement, is what makes the School of Arts and Social Sciences unique, a uniqueness well represented in this collection of research highlights, project profiles and output data for 2019.
One of the most exciting developments this year for research in SASS is that the Centre for Children and Young People (CCYP) has joined the School.

The Centre is led by Professor Anne Graham and staffed by researchers Catherine Simmons, Kate Neale and Antonia Canosa, and is internationally recognised for its research focused on advancing the rights, wellbeing and participation of children and young people in their families, schools and communities. It has attracted over $8 million in external funding, including seven prestigious Australian Research Council (ARC) funded projects.

With a focus on children’s wellbeing in educational, family and community contexts, and on the policies, programs and services of key organisations involved in the care of children and young people, CCYP’s research demonstrates clear alignment with the social justice orientation of much research conducted in SASS.

This new partnership holds great potential for new collaborations that will both expand the range of projects CCYP staff undertake, and scaffold SASS research into new projects of national and international significance.
The partnership is funded by $2 million from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services. $449,349 of this funding was awarded to SCU to conduct research into the needs of children in care and the evidence base for therapeutic group care.

In 2018 and 2019, Dr McPherson and Dr Gatwiri, along with researchers Nadine Cameron and Natalie Parmenter, have produced a scoping review as well as a number of research briefings, podcasts and publications that provide practitioners and clinicians with summaries of the literature and evidence on a range of approaches and issues in therapeutic care.

The next phase of the project involves the formation of a series of focal projects:

- Experiences of care amongst LGBTI Young Adults
- Histories of Young People referred to Therapeutic Residential Care in NSW
- Working effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young People, their Families and Communities
- Long Term Outcomes: what facilitates and maintains relational stability, connection to employment, education and housing for care leavers in the longer term?

Development of these foci for the remainder of the project has involved expanding the project team to include other members of SCU, including Professor Norm Sheehan from Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples. On the basis of this successful partnership with ACF and their extensive research experience, Dr McPherson and Dr Gatwiri are now exploring further options for expanding the project involving other states and international opportunities as well as national funding bodies like the ARC.

In 2018, Lynne McPherson and Kathomi Gatwiri formalized a partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) to work as the research partners in the formation of the Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care.
Her interdisciplinary research interests focus on the intersections between politics and culture, investigating labour histories and their manifestation in theatre and film. Her doctoral work on the films of the Waterside Workers’ Federation Film Unit from the 1950s resulted in a monograph on the Unit, a digitised set of the films, and an oral history audio program which was broadcast on ABC Radio National. Another thread of Dr Milner’s research is radical theatre; she has published on radical and left-wing theatre, often travelling to the UK and the USA to conduct archival research.

Dr Milner’s work is also engaged with her home community on the NSW mid-north coast. She managed the restoration of the Bowraville Theatre, and her artistic and theatrical connections to that work have led to many publications and media presentations, including her recent appearance and contribution to an episode of the television production *Who Do You Think You Are?*, where the featured identity was singer Casey Donovan. One of Casey’s relatives in the Bowraville area is Gumbaynggirr elder Uncle Martin Ballangarry, also a Councillor for the Nambucca Valley Shire Council, with whom Dr Milner worked in getting the theatre restored.

Throughout its early history, the Bowraville Theatre operated as a racially divided business: Aboriginal people had to not only buy their tickets separately, enter the theatre by a separate side entrance, occupy inferior wooden seats below an interior wooden partition, but do so after the program had begun and leave before the end. In 1965 the Freedom Riders, along with a number of local Gumbaynnggirr people, tried to enter the theatre in the same way the whites did. They picketed the theatre, and then planned to stage a stand-in demonstration inside. However, in terms of front-door entry, they failed: the theatre manager shut the front door in the faces of Charles Perkins and other protestors. One of the Gumbaynggirr people at the theatre’s front door that day was 10-year old Martin Ballangarry, who for all of his young life had been denied front-door access. Uncle Martin is now a leader in the community, and a supporter of the theatre’s restoration. In preparation for *Who Do You Think You Are?*, Lisa Milner and Uncle Martin worked with the producers to present Casey with the story of her Granny Flo, who was a prominent elder in the Bowraville community.
The creative arts are strongly represented in SASS staff activities.

This year, two SASS staff in the creative arts have received prestigious grants from the Australia Council. Fiona Fell received $20,969 to support a residency next year at the European Ceramic Workcentre in the Netherlands. She also received €17,131 from the Workcentre to cover costs related to the residency, as well as a $1,500 Quick Response Grant from Regional Arts NSW to support her appearance and exhibition at the Australian Ceramics Triennale in Hobart. Wes Hill received $19,616 to fund a professional development and research project in Brisbane and New York involving curators from the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New Museum and the Smithsonian Institution. Leigh Carriage was again successful in applying for $8,000 in APRA-AMCOS funds to support a long-running program of songwriter workshops. Grayson Cooke was selected for the “Land Arts of the Limestone Coast” residency run by Country Arts SA, and his “Invalid Data” project, which arises out of his ongoing partnership with Geoscience Australia and the Digital Earth Australia satellite-imaging platform, was exhibited in the Alane Fineman New Photography Award at the Ballarat International Foto Biennale. In addition, Cooke’s feature film Open Air was awarded Best Experimental Film at the 2019 SAE ATOM Awards. And for the second year running, Darren Bryant (whose work is featured on the cover of this report) has been selected as a finalist in the Megalo International Print Prize in Canberra.

For the past three years, SASS staff have been involved in a research partnership with Anglicare and TAFE NSW working on a project designed to support and empower settlers in our region who are largely from refugee backgrounds. The project, 3Es to Freedom: Education, Employment, Empowerment, has supported nearly 150 women in the communities of Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Tweed. Louise Whitaker, Mandy Hughes and Barbara Rugendyke were involved in supporting this project and conducting research to document the impacts of the project. The project culminated this year in a series of exhibitions featuring photography, documentary film and 3D installation, held at the Coff’s Harbour Regional Museum, the Lismore Regional Gallery, the SCU Lismore campus learning centre and Helensvale Cultural Centre on the Gold Coast. This project has been nominated for an SCU Impact Award as well as a prestigious Australian Migration and Settlement Award from Migration Council Australia.
SASS ran its annual staff and student exhibition program in the V Block “Pleasure Lab.” The opening exhibition for the year in April was Grayson Cooke’s *Songs of a Changeling Earth*, an exhibition first shown at the CSIRO Discovery Gallery in Canberra, deriving from Cooke’s residency at Geoscience Australia in Canberra and making creative use of the National Mineral and Fossil Collection and the Petroleum Data Repository. In July the exhibition */krik/ (land, air, water: under pressure)* was curated by Fiona Fell and featured the work of staff Rob Garbutt and Lynda Hawryluk, and Art and Design students Beki Davies, Mia Henning and Damien McMinn. */krik/ explored the sensory and material qualities of the riparian zones of the Richmond and Wilsons rivers, featuring works across a range of forms and media including poetry, photography, sound design, video and painting.

Finally, the highlight of 2019’s exhibition program was the *25 Artists/25 Years* exhibition, a collection of works by visual arts graduates from each year of the Art School’s operation. Curated by SCU graduate Annie Long alongside staff members Fiona Fell and Stephen Garrett, the exhibition was held across multiple sites, in the V Block exhibition space, in the library buildings on both Lismore and Gold Coast campus, and outdoors at the Gold Coast campus also. This rich survey of creative work reflected the diversity and strength of creative practice in the Northern Rivers, and the role SCU has played in fostering and contributing to the creative identity of the region.
Community Engagement

Community engaged research is a strong feature of work by individuals and groups within SASS.

This allows a voice or role for community into our research, and community engagement activities in the School demonstrate SASS’ strong commitment to social and environmental justice. We are inspired by the activities we participate in and encouraged to extend our research to issues that matter and audiences beyond the academy.

Organised by LabX member Rob Garbutt, the SASS Annual Lecture this year, “Inspired by Terania: Women reflect on 40 years of activism” was held to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the Terania forest blockade, a turning point in the campaign to preserve the subtropical rainforests of eastern Australia and environmental activism globally. This lecture, facilitated by SASS Director of Community Engagement Adele Wessell, was held as a panel discussion between blockade participants Nan Nicholson, Rhonda Ellis, University of New England academic Vanessa Bible and environmental activist and SCU graduate Maddy Braddon.

The School made a strong contribution to the Thursday Night Live public seminars held at the Lismore Regional Gallery and supported by SCU and the Lismore Quad. Facilitated by Adele Wessell and Kristin den Exter, these seminars put thought-provoking and big ideas in the spotlight and demonstrate the diversity of SASS research and its engagement with urgent questions and debate. Sessions involving SASS staff in organisation and presentation were framed around the following questions: What’s Love Got to Do With It? Do we need the state? How can we fix the housing crisis? Has Australia lost its compassion? How do we fix the food system? Why do we turn our backs on the river?

In a similar vein, Yvonne Hartman, Sandy Darab and Gregory Smith continued their work with the Ngara Institute organising Politics in the Pub at the Rous Hotel in Lismore, with presentations on Neoliberalism (with SASS Adjunct Professor Richard Hil), Compassion in Politics, Deliberative Democracy and Climate Change (with Jean Renouf) and The Erosion of the Right to Protest.

This year also marks the seventh year of SASS’s highly successful Community Seminar series, providing opportunities for collaboration and linking research policy and practice under the 2019 theme “Interventions and Innovations: What is the Evidence?” Hosted by SASS and the SCU Community Reference Group, and directed at workers in human services, social welfare and social work, the seminars aim to support practitioners and managers in developing and evaluating innovative solutions to challenging problems. This year, the seminars focused on Out of Home Care for Young People, Animal Assisted Interventions, and Ageing and Loneliness.

Engagement Highlight:
Barry Hill and the Solar Sunflower

Since its official launch at the Byron Bay Bluesfest Music festival in 2013, The Southern Cross University Creative Mobile Solar Project (or “Sunflower Project”) has showcased the way Sustainable Energy technology can be successfully incorporated into festivals and events.

Led by Barry Hill, the Sunflower Project was initially designed as an interdisciplinary community engagement and arts-led research project that uses creative technology design, interactive social media and multimedia art to investigate community understanding of energy use. In 2018-2019 the Sunflower Project has been installed at 22 music and arts events in NSW and QLD, including Splendour in the Grass, Woodford Folk festival, Byron Writers Festival, and Island Vibes Music Festival. At each of these installations, the Sunflower is used to power various sound and lighting infrastructure in performance stages and venues.

The Sunflower’s captivating sculptural visual design and unique open source power management software has given it the capacity to function simultaneously as

- a solar technology prototype,
- a research data-collection tool for understanding energy use at festivals and community events,
- a mobile soundscape art installation incorporating a unique open source autonomous solar data sonification system,
- and a community engagement project/activation point that engages festival and event participants around the integration of environmentally sustainable energy systems into the event industry and the broader community.

At some of the Sunflower installations this year at Schools, Music festivals and research conferences, lead investigator Barry Hill has led workshops and discussions on the basics of electricity and sustainable energy integration. Dr Hill’s presentations often involve performance and conversation, where the data generated by the Sunflower generates sound used in musical performance, and visual graphs of energy data form the basis for discussions about the nature of solar power and storage.

A research survey conducted by Dr Hill as part of the project has found that over 80 percent of festival-goers surveyed at each Sunflower installation has said that the project had increased their knowledge of Electricity and sustainable energy systems.
This year, two SASS staff members have conducted research while on Special Studies Leave for six months: Jeanti St Clair for the first half of the year, and Wes Hill for the second.

**Jeanti St Clair**’s study leave, which will contribute to her doctoral studies being undertaken through the University of Wollongong, involved an extensive tour of audio walks in the UK, US and Canada.

Jeanti’s thesis examines how app-based locative audio walks and spatial sound design can cultivate place literacy and empathy among participants. Over two months, Jeanti experienced and analysed 25 different audio walks, and conducted interviews with a large number of practitioners of locative and spatial audio projects. She presented elements of her research at the HearSay Audio Arts Festival in Ireland, and the UNITWIN UNESCO Conference on Heritage and Tourism in Belgium.

Whilst on study tour, she also produced an episode of the *Essays on Air* podcast for *The Conversation* website about the impact of the 1973 Aquarius Festival on Nimbin. The podcast, based on her Nimbin Soundtrail audio walk, was simultaneously published on the *Trust Me, I’m an Expert* podcast.

On her return to Australia, Jeanti was also commissioned to develop and deliver a workshop for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services on introducing audio interpretation in national park settings. She is now collating data gathered from the contextual reviews and case studies during study leave, and is also working towards a site-specific sound work for the Lismore Quadrangle in 2020, which will draw on oral histories from the 2017 flood.

**Wes Hill**’s study leave involves conducting research in Brisbane, Paris and New York for a 2020 publication on the sublime in contemporary art. He will be utilising the collections and research facilities of various museums (such as QAGOMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the New Museum) to examine works and large-scale exhibitions that point towards sublime representations of identity politics.

One of the goals of the publication is to put the notion of the sublime in a contemporary context, defining an ethical, or hyper-ethical, aesthetic that contrasts with postmodern accounts of the sublime. Additionally, the $20,000 grant that Dr Hill received from the Australia Council will go towards further developing this research into an accompanying exhibition. The money will go towards professional development, assisting his adoption of a fairly recent model of academic inquiry that unites art-historical scholarship and curating.

His research will involve discussion with Griffith University art historian Dr. Rosemary Hawker, whose 2017 QAGOMA exhibition on the German artist Gerhard Richter exemplifies the integration of research and exhibition-making that he is aiming to achieve.
The School of Arts and Social Sciences benefits from the extensive expertise and activities of a large number of adjunct staff, who variously engage in research, supervision and teaching activities. Some highlights of SASS adjunct staff activities are presented here.

This year, David Cashman published a music textbook, *Performing Contemporary Music: The Art of Creating Memorable and Successful Performances*, co-written with Waldo Garrido.

Environmental historian Jo Kijas produced a substantial report on the Tuckean Swamp for the Tuckean Nature Reserve Options Study.

Denise Rall edited a special edition of *M/C Media Culture* journal on “Rage,” and submitted a book proposal on “Fashion, Women and Power” to Intellect in the UK.

Warwick Mules delivered a series of papers to symposiums over the last twelve months, including a keynote address to the “Geopoetics” symposium at Griffith University. He has also been invited to deliver a keynote address to the *In the Making: On Poetry and Poetics* symposium at the University of New England in November. Most notably, he gained a contract with prestigious international publisher Bloomsbury to write a scholarly monograph entitled *Film Figures: the Figural Analysis of Narrative Film*, due for publication in 2020.

Moya Costello edited a special issue of *TEXT* journal with colleagues in SASS, published prose poems in a Spineless Wonders anthology and in the *Griffith Review*, and wrote reviews of a range of books and art exhibitions.
Research Cluster report: LabX

At the start of 2019 the LabX group developed a plan to focus research activity around interdisciplinary understandings of rivers and river systems. The first output from this focus was the exhibition /krik/, held in July in the SCU Lismore V Block exhibition space, which examined aspects of the Richmond and Wilsons river systems, and which featured the work of LabX members Rob Garbutt and Lynda Hawryluk and was curated by Fiona Fell.

The next major activity derived from the focus on rivers was a 2-day creative symposium “Speaking With the River,” held on SCU Lismore campus in August this year. The symposium brought together artists, community members and local stakeholders in river health with SCU researchers whose work relates to rivers and river systems. Speakers included Yaegl artist and SCU graduate Frances Belle-Parker, renowned sound artist Leah Barclay, LabX members Rob Garbutt and Jo Kijas, environmental scientist Amanda Reichelt-Brushett, artist and SCU graduate Annique Goldenberg, as well as Alessandro Pelizzon and John Page from the School of Law and Justice, and Jo Longman from the University Centre for Rural Health. A focus on finding new ways of understanding rivers using diverse creative, technological, legal and historical frameworks, underpinned the symposium. SCU art and design students Beki Davies, Damien McMinn, Fabian Pertzel, Gala Hazell and Vivian Johnston worked through the day as visual interpreters of the discussion, producing a range of rich creative responses to the discussion which picked up on the terminologies and practices of the diverse disciplines involved.

On the second day of the symposium, Leah Barclay led a “river listening” workshop on the Richmond River in Ballina. Barclay is a world leader in the field of ecoacoustics, and has developed an international practice running citizen science workshops around the world which involve using hydrophones to monitor and assess river health. Future activities on this project will involve a jointly-authored paper by symposium participants, and an exhibition at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery in August 2020.

Research Cluster report: Diverse and Inclusive Communities

This year the Diverse and Inclusive Communities cluster focused on a series of workshops and talks designed to foster Early Career Researcher activity within the group. After an initial meeting in February to scope out activities for the year, two core objectives of growing research capacity through developing a research strategy, and understanding processes for promotion, were identified by cluster convenor Jean Renouf. Deputy Head of School (Research) Grayson Cooke led a workshop on research strategy, and Head of School Mark Hughes and Deputy Head of School (Teaching & Learning) Rob Garbutt led a discussion on strategies and processes involved in applying for promotion.
These grants are designed to support high quality research projects whether in the humanities, social sciences or creative arts, and to provide limited seed funding as a means of generating external research support and growing research collaborations with external partners. In 2019, funds were allocated to the following projects:

**Anderson, Leticia.**
“Islamophobia Index/Cultural competence and cultural safety in higher education.”
$5,000

This grant furthers research activities in two distinct projects. The Islamophobia project explores some of the difficulties involved in defining and categorising Islamophobic discourses through an analysis of the process of constructing, evaluating, validating and applying a unique social indicator, the ‘Islamophobic Index’. The Cultural Competence project involves surveys and case studies aimed at finding the most appropriate and successful ways of delivering culturally competent higher education and maximising cultural safety for educators and students.

**Cooke, Grayson**
“Blinman Slag.”
$5,000

Blinman Slag is an art/science documentary project, a creative examination of copper mining slag waste from the Blinman copper mine in the Flinders Ranges. Through documentary interviews and video art, the project proposes understanding mining slag as a form of anthropogenic metamorphism. It is destined for exhibition at the Lismore Regional Art Gallery in 2020, and for screenings at film festivals nationally and internationally.

**LabX Research Cluster.**
“Speaking With the River symposium.”
$4,952

Speaking With the River was a 2-day interdisciplinary symposium exploring the capacities of creative research practice to develop new understandings of rivers and river systems. It brought together SCU researchers with artists, community members and relevant experts to produce creative work and form new collaborations.

**Renouf, Jean.**
“Living safely in a world of climate change.”
$4,970

This mixed methods research aims to understand the personal adaptation and mitigation strategies of those who are on the frontline of climate change, i.e. climate scientists and climate change stakeholders. In particular, the research asks what measures they personally implement or will be implementing to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on their own lives and on the lives of their (grand-)children.
Higher Degree Research

The SASS Higher Degree Research (HDR) student cohort is as diverse as the disciplines that make up the School. There are over 25 Masters and PhD students housed in the School, with around 50% of these undertaking creative research projects. This year, three PhD and two Masters students graduated, and a number of students presented their work at conferences and exhibitions around the country.

2019 SASS Student Graduations

**PhD**

**Phillipe Chambin**
“Skweeel — Towards a method for music production with an automated large-format analogue audio mixing console used as a sound-generating device through controlled Larsen effects.”
Supervisors: Dr Matt Hill, Dr Barry Hill and Assoc. Prof. Grayson Cooke

**Kimberley Satchell**
“Just coasting: The confluence of space, place and ecology.”
Supervisors: Dr Lynda Hawryluk, Dr Moya Costello.

**Clare Urquhart**
“Container of Dreams.”
Supervisors: Dr Sandy Darab, Dr Elizabeth Stops

**Masters**

**Narissa Phelps**
“Convict to Settler.”
Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Adele Wessell, Dr Robert Smith, Dr Jo Kijas

**Linda Woodrow**
“Imagined Futures: Narrative Fiction and Climate Science.”
Supervisors: Dr Lynda Hawryluk, Assoc Prof R. Garbutt

**HDR student conferences and exhibitions**

**Vosz, Meaghan**
“Giving due weight to children and young people’s views: improving placement stability in out-of-home care.”

**Wolfinger, Emily**
“Beyond Mothering Myths: Motherhood in an Age of Neoliberalism and Individualisation.”
9th International Conference on Mothering, Sydney, July 2019.

**McDonnell, Dan**

**Vatansever, Fulya**