Welcome to the first edition of SLJ Research.
2017 has been an exciting research year at the School of Law and Justice, celebrated with major publications, the institution of a Research Seminar Series, and the innovative Law and Humanities Artist in Residence program.

The year was capped off by the successful launch of the School’s inaugural Greta Bird Lecture in Legal Theory and Critique, presented with aplomb by our 2017 Distinguished Visitor and Chancellor’s Professor of Law at UC Irvine, Professor Michele Bratcher Goodwin.

SLJ Research profiles the rich and diverse research underway at the SLJ and its national and international impact. A full picture of our 2017 publications is available at scu.edu.au/law.

I trust that you will enjoy reading our stories of success and join us in celebrating the SLJ as a leading national and international centre of critical theoretical, cultural, environmental and inter-disciplinary legal research.

Associate Professor John Page
Deputy Head of School (Research)
Juris-Apocalypse Now!

William MacNeill’s current research interests in science fiction, horror and fantasy as vehicles for critical legal theory continue to take him in interesting and unexpected directions. After presenting (in Usmore, Hong Kong and NYC), then publishing his paper, (in a Finnish based, English language journal) on zombies -- The Litigating Dead: Zombie Jurisprudence in The Walking Dead, The Rising and World War Z -- MacNeill picked up, and rearticulated the theme of catastrophic dystopia in his light-hearted (yet deadly earnest) address, ‘Juris-Apocalypse Now! The End of Legal Education As We Know It?, as a member of the concluding plenary panel at The Academy of Law’s recent Sydney-based conference, The Future of Legal Education.

Leading legal history scholar of the British Far East

2017 was a busy year for Dr. Rohan Price, following on the publication of two books, Going Native: The Passions of Phillip Jacks, and Reading Colonies: Property and Control of the British Far East in late 2016, and with a third upcoming in mid-2018, Violence and Emancipation in Colonial Ideology.

Rohan is a prolific and passionate scholar in his fields of comparative legal history, colonialism and property law, and the ethics of anti-colonial terrorism. Rohan is pictured presenting a copy of Reading Colonies to staff at the Hong Kong Archives during a recent research visit.

Lawyer ing in Rural & Regional Australia

Associate Professor Jennifer Nielsen recently celebrated the publication of her co-edited book, The Place of Practice: Lawyer ing in Rural and Regional Australia.

A collaboration with Dr. Trish Mundy (UOW) and Associate Professor Amanda Kennedy (UNE), this important book draws together the work of leading Australian commentators on rural and regional legal practice, canvassing how lawyer ing differs in the rural, regional and remote (RRR) context, and identifying particular regional legal practice, canvassing how lawyering differs in the rural, regional and remote (RRR) context, and identifying particular regional legal practice.

As a consequence of this ground breaking work, Jennifer was recently invited to attend the British Far East Staff at the Hong Kong Archives during a recent research visit.

The biggest public order challenge faced by NSW Police

Aidan Ricketts’ ongoing research into the Bentley Blockade led to formal interviews in November with the region’s two most senior police for an upcoming paper on police/protester illation. Aidan’s research focuses on the high quality police liaison that was in place during the 2014 conflicts over unconventional gas drilling at the now iconic Bentley site which was described as ‘the biggest public order challenge ever faced by the NSW police service’. The research highlights that the social movement’s proactive approach to policing played a vital role in the blockade’s successful (and peaceful) resolution, and ultimately led to a dramatic change in NSW government policy.

This research project complements the publication of two articles by Aidan in the Alternative Law Journal in 2017, ‘Anti-protest laws: Lock up your nannas’, and ‘Roadside Drug Testing: Incoherent Policy or Uncertainty-by-Design?’

Law as if the earth really mattered - wild law and climate change narratives

Dr. Nicole Rogers’ profile as a leading scholar in climate change activism and wild law jurisprudence was highlighted in 2017 with an impressive range of publications and conference invitations.

Her co-edited book, Law as if the earth really mattered: the Wild Law Judgment project (Routledge), was launched in Research Week by Chief Judge of the NSW Land & Environment Court, Judge Brian Preston. Featuring chapters from Nicole, plus SLJ colleagues Aidan Ricketts, Dr Tom Round, Professor Bee Chen Goh, and Dr Cristy Clark. The book interrogates the anthropocentric and property rights assumptions embedded in existing common law by placing the earth... at the centre of their rewritten and hypothetical judgements.

As evidence of her research’s national and international impact, Nicole was invited by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO to present a paper on the wild law judgment project at its General Assembly in May, and at the UNESCO World Conference on Humanities in Belgium in August. These appearances followed two earlier invitations in the year to speak at symposia in Melbourne and Brisbane.

Nicole published 1 co-edited book, 2 book chapters and 3 journal articles in 2017, with another article accepted for the 2018 Summer issue of the Journal for the Study of Radicalism. Nicole is also working with colleagues at the University of Auckland in December to participate in an expert’s group consultation on RRR Justice issues for the ‘Justice Project’, and present a paper on Social Justice for Rural and Regional Communities to the 6th Australia & NZ Legal Ethics Consortium Conference at the University of Auckland in December.


Research Week 2017

Judge in Residence. The Hon. Margaret McMurdo, was our keynote speaker for Research Week 2017. ‘Possible Future directions for the Academy, the Profession and the Judiciary’ was enjoyed by all who attended.

A radicalised human right to water

From Flint, Michigan to Dublin, Ireland, Dr. Cristy Clark’s research into the human right to water and community activism has yielded rich research outcomes. These include a journal article in the Human Rights Law Review (Oxford University Press), ‘Of what use is a deradicalized human right to water?’, conference papers at the Association for Law, Property & Society conference at the University of Michigan, and the Critical Legal Conference at Warwick University, UK, and invitations to publish in a special issue of the Community Development Journal (2018), and edited book, Governance, Rights and Justice in Water: New Ideas and Realities (Routledge, 2018).

Cristy’s visit to Michigan also provided an opportunity to interview residents impacted by the Flint and Detroit water crises, the notorious mass disconnections and ongoing contamination of the public water supply to poor neighborhoods that saw a deadly outbreak of Legionnaire’s disease. Included was an interview with the attorney assisting the State Attorney General’s investigation into this national scandal.

Cristy is pictured with members of the Detroit Water Brigade, and separately with Associate Professor John Page at the Michigan Urban Farm Initiative, where SLJ academics practised grounded property principles, planting sensory plants in a new community garden at a Detroit urban farm collective.

Prestigious honour as our national representative on UN General Assembly high level meeting on human trafficking

Dr. Natalia Szablewska had the honour of being selected as the Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) representative for a High-level Meeting on the Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, held at the UN General Assembly in September. Over two days in New York, Natalia joined with representatives of UN member states and civil society as the meeting debated the best way forward to end trafficking in persons and other forms of modern slavery. Opened by the UN Secretary-General, the session adopted a Declaration reaffirming a commitment to implement the UN action plan to end this heinous crime.

Natalia’s invitation to the UN capped a successful year of publications comprising 3 peer-reviewed journal articles, 2 book chapters and 2 places in Popular Press, plus grants success and continuing editorship roles. Natalia is here pictured in the UN General Assembly chamber.

Compliance and culture in the age of big data

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