Flesh and Blood:
A Feminist Symposium
on Embodied Histories
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## Financial Support and Sponsors

**Gender Institute, Australian National University**  
[www.genderinstitute.anu.edu.au/](http://www.genderinstitute.anu.edu.au/)

**School of History, Australian National University**  
[www.history.cass.anu.edu.au/](http://www.history.cass.anu.edu.au/)

**Australian Women’s History Network**  
Welcome

The Lilith Editorial Collective of the Australian Women’s History Network would like to welcome you to this conference, *Flesh and Blood: A Feminist Symposium on Embodied Histories*. The symposium is intended to celebrate and build upon the rich tradition of placing the body at the centre of feminist historical analysis. It will explore how gendered norms are reflected, reinscribed and contested through bodies, and encourage consideration of new methods and sources for studying the elusive bodies of the past.

The papers of the many participants in *Flesh and Blood* 2015 reflect these themes. The gendering of bodies intersects with issues of race, class, sexuality, nation and ethnicity. From movements toward women’s equality to the social construction of femininity and masculinity, the body is at the heart of the many histories under consideration as part of today’s symposium.

We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Australian National University’s Gender Institute and the School of History. Thanks also to ANU’s China in the World Building for hosting *Flesh and Blood* 2015.

**Australian National University: An Overview**

Established in 1946, the Australian National University is one of Australia’s leading tertiary institutions. Its most notable alumni include former prime ministers Bob Hawke and Kevin Rudd, as well as historian Manning Clark and the symposium’s keynote speakers, Professor Joanna Bourke and Professor Joy Damousi.

ANU is a member of the national Group of Eight (Go8) and the International Alliance of Research Universities. The Go8 is a coalition of leading Australian universities, intensive in research and comprehensive in general and professional education. Collectively, Go8 members account for 70 percent of all research income in Australia’s university system, enroll more than half of all higher degree by research students, hold over 90 percent of US patents for inventions, and generate 80 percent of spin-off companies created by Australian universities.

Originally a postgraduate only institution, ANU began offering both undergraduate and postgraduate programs in 1960. In 2006, it developed seven colleges of teaching and research: Arts and Social Sciences; Asia and the Pacific; Business and Economics; Engineering and Computer Science; Law; Medicine, Biology, and Environment; and Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

ANU is affiliated with eight residential facilities: Bruce Hall; Ursula Hall; Burgmann College; John XXIII College; Toad Hall; Burton & Garran Hall; Graduate House; and Fenner Hall.

**Acknowledgements**

The conference organisers would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Ngambri people. We are all the beneficiaries of great sadness, and remember this as we come together to share knowledge over the course of this symposium.

**Thanks**

The Lilith Editorial Collective is grateful for the assistance, generosity, and competence of the many people who have helped in the planning of this conference. We would like to extend our appreciation to our keynote speakers, Professor Joanna Bourke and Professor Joy Damousi, without whom this gathering would not be complete.
This symposium could not have come to fruition without the ongoing commitment and enthusiasm of the Lilith Editorial Collective. The Collective is comprised of a group of postgraduates and early career researchers who come together from across Australian universities and beyond:

- Dr. Helen Bones, University of Western Sydney
- Robyn Curtis, Australian National University
- Brett Goodin, Australian National University
- Samantha Khaw, Australian National University
- Kate Laing, La Trobe University
- Hannah Loney, The University of Melbourne
- Petra Mosmann, Flinders University
- Bethany Phillips-Pedclesden, The University of Melbourne
- Dr. Alana J. Piper, Griffith University
- Maria Quirk, The University of Queensland
- Dr. Laura Rademaker, Australian Catholic University
- Anne Rees, Australian National University
- Dr. Ana Stevenson, University of Pittsburgh

We would also like to thank the Australian Women’s History Network for their support of this symposium. Again, we acknowledge the support of the Australian National University’s Gender Institute and the School of History. The logo, poster, and programme design is by the Collective’s Ana Stevenson. Our especial thanks to those scholars who volunteered to chair sessions throughout the conference.

Conference Information

Venue

Flesh and Blood 2015 will be held at the Australian National University, Acton campus, Canberra, ACT. To access the ANU map online, please visit: http://www.anu.edu.au/maps. There is also an iPhone and android application of the ANU map available.

All sessions will take place within the listed rooms, located in the China in the World (CIW) Building. For more information about the venue, see: http://ciw.anu.edu.au/building/index.php.
Registration

The registration desk can be found in the China and the World Building (see above map). Conference delegates will be able to register from 8:30am on Friday morning.

Presenters

The seminar rooms have the facilities for PowerPoint presentations. Please arrive a few minutes early for setup. Each speaker has a maximum of 20 minutes for their presentation, with a further 10 minutes for questions and discussion. We ask that you respect fellow presenters, your audience and the chair, by keeping to time. Thank you for your consideration.

Meals

Welcome tea and coffee, morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea will be provided for all registered conference delegates. The final keynote will be followed by a drinks reception. All meals will be held in Lotus Hall of the China in the World Building (see above map).

There are also many food options, including cafés and restaurants, on and nearby campus. For information, please visit: http://lostoncampus.com.au/anu/main/food.

Twitter

The twitter hash tag for the conference is #fleshandblood2015. Our Lilith: A Feminist History Journal twitter account can be found and followed @LilithJournal. We encourage delegates to promote the symposium and tweet about their thoughts during the conference.

Assistance

If anyone should need assistance over the duration of the conference, the conference organisers will be wearing identifiable lanyards. Please feel free to seek them out, or visit the registration desk, should you have any questions. For all emergency queries regarding on-site ANU Security, please call: + 61 (2) 6125 2249.

Public Transport

Public transport to the university, via bus, is readily available. For more information, please visit: http://www.transport.act.gov.au/.

Accommodation

The colleges affiliated with the ANU have some accommodation availability. Subject to availability, some have the potential to accommodate conference delegates. Please contact individual colleges for information.


Lilith: A Feminist History Journal – Special Edition Submission

Following the symposium, Lilith: A Feminist History Journal will be producing a special edition based on symposium presentations. If you would like to have your paper considered for peer review in this special edition, please submit a written version of your paper (6000 to 8000 words, including footnotes) to lilithjournal@gmail.com. Submissions are due by: September 30, 2015.

The conveners of Australian Women’s History Network are Professor Vera Mackie and Dr. Sharon Crozier-de Rosa, from the University of Wollongong, and Dr. Zora Simic, from the University of New South Wales. Dr. Jane Carey from the University of Wollongong is Lilith’s Managing Editor.

For editorial guidelines, please visit the Lilith website: http://www.lilithjournal.org.au/.
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<td>“Flows and Fluxes: Towards an Embodied Understanding of Infanticide Practices in Colonial Western Australia”</td>
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<td><strong>Evan Smith and Marinella Marmo</strong></td>
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<td>“The Embodiment of the ‘Truth’: The body as evidence in the UK Immigration Control System and the Case of Anwar Ditta”</td>
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<td>12:30pm</td>
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### 1:30pm  Session Two

**Seminar Room A**

**Gender Performance**

Chair: Dr. Karen Fox, ANU

- **Bethany Phillips-Peddlesden**
  “‘A stronger man...and a more virile character’: Australian Prime Ministers, Embodied Masculinity and Leadership in the Early 20th Century”

- **Stephanie Woodbridge**
  “‘Just a few lines’: The Physical Experience of Women’s Correspondence with the Repatriation Board, 1920-1940”

- **Laura Rademaker**
  “Religion, the Female Body and the Modern Girl: Maude Royden’s 1928 Australian Tour”

**Strategising Violence**

Chair: Dr. Patricia O’Brien, ANU

- **Murray Chisholm**
  “‘Mentally upset and a nymphomaniac’: The intersection of Gender and Colonialism in R. v. Kita Tunguan, 1954”

- **Isobelle Barrett Meyering**

- **Hannah Loney**
  “‘My body is no longer mine, but my soul will be mine forever’: Women’s Experiences and Memories of Sexual Violence During the Indonesian Occupation of East Timor (1975-1999)”

### 3:00pm  Afternoon Tea

Lotus Hall

### 3:30pm  Session Three

**Seminar Room A**

**Challenging Gender Experiences**

Chair: Dr. Anni Dudgale, University of Canberra

- **Rebecca Preston**
  “Awakening ‘the most thrilling electric, and exquisite sensation known’: Rethinking Female Passions and Sexuality in the Women’s Movement”

- **Susannah French**
  “Silenced Voices, Regulated Bodies, and Autistic Insight: A History of the Female Experience”

- **Melissa Madera**
  “The Body as Archive: Listening to Embodied Experiences in Narratives of Abortion”

**Masculinity and Celebrity**

Chair: Associate Professor Frank Bongiorno, ANU

- **Clare Corbould**
  “Harlem’s Man of a Thousand Faces: Artists’ Model Maurice Hunter and the Performance of Black Masculinity in Mid-Twentieth Century America”

- **Chelsea Barnett**
  “The Same Old Chips? Chips Rafferty and the Embodiment of Masculinity in Australian Postwar Cinema”

- **Rebecca Sheehan**
  “Jimi Hendrix’s Penis: Desire, Liberation, and Exploitation”
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Keynote Speakers

**Joanna Bourke, Birkbeck, University of London**

“Re-Presenting Rape: Aggression and Vulnerability in Twentieth-Century Warfare”

Professor Joanna Bourke is a professor of history in the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology at Birkbeck College. Completing her PhD research at the Australian National University, Professor Bourke’s research interests encompass social, cultural, and economic history between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in Britain, the United States, and Australia. In 2000, she was awarded the Wolfson History Prize for *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare* (Granta Books, 1999). More recently, Professor Bourke has researched the history of emotions in monographs entitled *Fear: A Cultural History* (Virago, 2005) and *Rape: A History from the 1860s to the Present* (Virago, 2007). Her latest publications include *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (Oxford University Press, 2014) and *Wounding the World: How Military Violence and War Games Invade Our World* (Virago, 2014). In 2014, Professor Bourke became a Fellow of the British Academy.

**Joy Damousi, The University of Melbourne**

“Mind, Body and Gender: The Body, the Senses and Masculinity on the Battlefields of the Great War”

Professor Joy Damousi is a professor of history in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at The University of Melbourne. Following her PhD research at the Australian National University, Professor Damousi’s research interests include war, trauma, sound in World War I and World War II, and child refugees in war. Her publications include *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Cambridge, 1999) and *Colonial Voices: A Cultural History of English in Australia, 1840-1940* (Cambridge, 2010). In 2004, she became a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. *Freud in the Antipodes: A Cultural History of Psychoanalysis in Australia* (UNSW Press, 2005) won the 2006 Ernest Scott Prize. Currently, she is an editor for the History series of The University of Melbourne Press. Professor Damousi is also the Kathleen Fitzpatrick Australian Laureate Fellow.
Abstracts and Biographies

**Chelsea Barnett, Macquarie University**

“The Same Old Chips? Chips Rafferty and the Embodiment of Masculinity in Australian Postwar Cinema”

**Abstract:** Following his passing in May 1971, *The Canberra Times* was but one publication to eulogise famed Australian actor Chips Rafferty. Not only paying homage to Rafferty as “the Australian image as represented on film screens all over the world,” the short editorial also made mention of Rafferty’s “lean, brown, honest, soft-hearted bushman” who was “ready to drink, fight, or ride at the lift of a bushy eyebrow.” Rafferty maintained a prolific presence in the Australian filmmaking landscape of the period immediately following the Second World War, in which he became synonymous with a specific understanding of working-class masculinity. This masculine identity was intimately connected to Rafferty’s own embodied masculinity. A station hand, drover, and pearl diver (among other things) before his success as an actor, the *Times*’ eulogy observed the importance of Rafferty himself to this masculine understanding: “he lived to create the illusion that he was somebody else. He never quite convinced anybody of that fact, of course.” However, while a number of Australian postwar films capitalised upon Rafferty’s reel- and real-life embodiment of this understanding of working-class masculinity, other films in which he was cast seemingly abandoned this recognisable working-class model for a middle-class version.

Susan Bordo’s work on the male body in Hollywood films of the fifties identifies the cinematic representation of two separate models of masculinity, the middle-class provider, and the abusive albeit sexually dominant man. These antithetical images are represented not only in different films, however, but by different actors. What does it say of understandings of Australian postwar masculinity, then, when Rafferty’s working-class persona was also made to represent its middle-class antithesis? This paper will examine Rafferty’s place in the Australian postwar cinematic landscape and explore not only the specific understandings of working-class masculinity with which the actor became synonymous, but also the conflicting middle-class masculine model with which he was also connected.

**Biography:** Chelsea Barnett is a third-year PhD candidate at Macquarie University. Supervised by Robert Reynolds and Leigh Boucher, her doctoral research focuses on the representation of masculinity in Australian films from 1949 to 1962. Her research interests more generally include cultural history, gender history and theory, and twentieth-century Australian history.

**Isobelle Barrett Meyering, University of New South Wales**


**Abstract:** In March 1974, Sydney women’s liberationists established Elsie Women’s Refuge, the first of its kind in Australia. Soon feminists in other cities were following suit. As their founders quickly discovered, refuges would not only serve as important places of shelter for women escaping domestic violence, but for their children too. By the end of June 1976, 6935 children were recorded as having stayed in women’s refuges across the country.

With children making up well over half of the shelter population – and in some cases closer to two-thirds – workers were quickly forced to devise strategies for managing their presence. In addition to addressing practical issues, including the provision of nappies, toys, books and other supplies, the question of how refuges should respond to children’s own experiences of abuse inevitably arose.

As well as witnessing violence against their mothers, many children who stayed in women’s refuge had themselves suffered recurrent physical or emotional abuse. Where the perpetrator of abuse was the mother, workers found themselves ideologically torn. How should they respond if they disagreed with a mother’s approach to disciplining her child? What was the line between
“discipline” and “abuse”? Did they have the right to intervene? If so, how could they best support both the woman and her child? Was the alternative – inaction – itself a form of “childism”?

This paper explores refuge workers’ early efforts to grapple with the problem of child abuse from a feminist perspective. Drawing on the archival records of three women’s refuges – Elsie (Sydney), the Halfway House (Melbourne) and Shelta (Brisbane) – I argue that children’s bodies, as well as women’s bodies, were central to feminist analyses of violence. Part of a wider project on children and the women’s movement in the 1970s, the paper positions refuge workers at the forefront of feminist efforts to “liberate” children.

**Biography:** Isobelle Barrett Meyering is a PhD candidate in the School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales. Her research examines the place of children in the Australian women’s liberation movement (1969-1979). Isobelle graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours I) from the University of Sydney in 2009. Her work has been published in *History Australia*, *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal* and *Outskirts*, and is a founding member of the editorial collective for *History in the Making*. Isobelle was a Postgraduate Teaching Fellow in the School of Humanities and Languages in 2014 and previously worked as a research assistant at the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse from 2009 to 2013.

**Murray Chisholm, Australian National University**

“ ‘Mentally upset and a nymphomaniac’: The intersection of Gender and Colonialism in *R. v. Kita Tunguan, 1954*”

**Abstract:** In Port Moresby, a Nuiginian man Joseph Kita Tunguan raped his employer’s wife, Dr. Blanka Nesbit in her home on 25 May 1954. Tunguan was convicted under the White Women’s Protection Ordinance 1926, which made a rape, or attempted rape, of a white female by a Nuiginian man a capital offence. An analysis of this case provides insights into colonialism, race, gender and punishment in PNG in 1954. Despite the stringent word of the law, Joseph Kita Tunguan wasn’t hanged and was instead imprisoned. Thus the question I propose to pursue in this presentation is: Why wasn’t he hanged? I will argue, using a textual analysis of the clemency files for Joseph Kita Tunguan that despite the anxieties around women’s bodies in colonial societies, the communal judgment of Nesbit’s sexual behaviour, her use of her own body, meant this trial followed a trajectory comparable to a rape case in western societies at this time, rather than a colonial trajectory. That the discretionary review of this death sentence was more concerned with gender issues than concerns over colonial authority allowed her assailant to be granted mercy. Her sexual behaviour meant that she did not fully embody colonial authority and thus Tunguan was not killed to preserve colonial authority as embodied in the white woman.

**Biography:** Murray Chisholm is a PhD candidate at the Australian National University writing a thesis on Australia’s administration of capital punishment in Papua and New Guinea from 1954 to 1964. He completed a Master of Arts at the University of New England, as well as a Graduate Diploma of Education, and a Bachelor of Arts with Honors at ANU. He is currently a teacher at Canberra College in the ACT and teaches History, English, ESL and Philosophy. In 2013 he was awarded the ANU Prize for Excellence in Secondary Teaching.

**Clare Corbould, Monash University**

“Harlem’s Man of a Thousand Faces: Artists’ Model Maurice Hunter and the Performance of Black Masculinity in Mid-Twentieth Century America”

**Abstract:** Hundreds of articles, often with photographs, appeared in American newspapers to profile Maurice Hunter, who lived in Harlem from the 1920s to the 1950s. Hunter’s fame was not limited to New York, although those who knew his face may not have known his name; as the *New Yorker* noted in a 1935 profile of the artists’ model, “you can be pretty sure that any darky waiter you see in a cigarette or whiskey ad is Hunter, or any dusky pirate, sheik, Moor, African, South Sea native, or Negro cotton-picker, convict, or crap-shooter you see in the magazine illustrations.”
As well as supporting himself with advertising work, which usually involved portraying stereotypically servile or foolish African American characters, Hunter also gave frequent stage performances he called “African pantomime.” For these, and for his work as a life model to non-commercial artists, Hunter was lionized in black communities for three decades. Even late in his life, Hunter was lauded for his services to African Americans when a medal for children was named for him. In 1945 and 1965, the Harlem branch of the New York Public Library hosted retrospective exhibitions of his life’s work.

Hunter claimed to have been born variously in South Africa, Dahomey, or Dutch Guiana, and used this heritage to forge an extraordinary career, supporting himself and a family over all those years. He also emphasised in all press coverage his extraordinary work ethic, while downplaying any mention, over thirty years, of his private life, which included a tumultuous marriage and two children. In his work, Hunter provided a living archive of the black diaspora. At the same time, he created a physical, scrapbook archive of photographs and positive press mentions, which he carried around with him on the streets of New York, and left, eventually, to the New York Public Library.

This paper excavates Hunter’s very self-conscious performance of varied black masculinities. It examines how and why Hunter appealed to both white and black audiences, by walking a tightrope between the expectations of different groups as to what racial authenticity entailed. Hunter’s experiences – and the toll they took on him – allow us to probe the limits of black international identifications of the mid twentieth-century at the same time as permitting a glimpse into the life of one of Harlem’s most eccentric, successful, and long-forgotten arts pioneers.

**Biography:** Dr. Clare Corbould is an ARC Future Fellow in Monash University’s History program. Her research has been published in an edited collection titled *Beyond Blackface* (UNC Press, 2011), the *Journal of Social History* (2007), and most recently in *Remembering the Revolution: History, Memory, and Nation Making from Independence to the Civil War* (which she also co-edited, University of Massachusetts Press, 2013). Clare’s monograph, *Becoming African Americans: Black Public Life in Harlem, 1919-1939* (Harvard University Press, 2009), was a Choice outstanding title and the winner of the 2010 Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for First Book of History. Clare is currently working on two major projects: a book about interviews with ex-slaves conducted in the 1920s and 1930s; and a study of the memory and legacy of the American Revolution (with W. Fitzhugh Brundage, Frances M. Clarke, and Michael A. McDonnell).

**Robyn Curtis, Australian National University**

“The Lady in the Graveyard”

**Abstract:** George Godwin described nineteenth-century London as proud, wealthy and the “resort of the intellect of the world,” but also filled with malignant sores, filth and degradation. It was the most populous city in the world and the overcrowding resulted in strongly contrasting landscapes. Reformers aimed to ameliorate the miasma of disease by creating a network of gardens in the highest density areas. Land was at a premium and existing space had to be re-purposed. Isabella Holmes, the unpaid honorary secretary of The Metropolitan Public Gardens Association took on this task. She identified over 200 disused burial grounds in London that could be converted to parks, gardens and playgrounds. Not content with maps and reports, Isabella physically examined the cemeteries and wrote of her experiences. She would work towards her goals through the MPGA for over twenty years.

Young and genteel, Isabella inspected areas in the heart of London’s “darkest” slums, climbing fences, entering neighbouring houses and encountering local residents, not all of whom were friendly. She was convinced of the importance of open air to somatic, moral and spiritual wellbeing. Her middle-class presence in the decidedly poor East End embodied the notion of domesticating threatening urban spaces. What however, does her need to visit the sites tell of the physical representation of women in nineteenth-century environmental organisations? Women such as Isabella have been used as examples of the “colonisation” of the working-class by the middle-class. However there are questions to be asked regarding the motivations of the women. The actions that Isabella engaged contrasted with popular conceptions of female behaviour. It is
possible to suggest that rather than a civilizing element, women in these organisations were utilising the rescue of green spaces as a way in which to rescue themselves and provide their own escape from domesticity.

**Biography:** Robyn Curtis completed her M.A. dissertation, “Diseases of Containment: Leprosy, Syphilis, Law and the Construction of the Diseased Body in Colonial South India, 1860-1900,” at the University of Canterbury, where it won the James Hight Memorial Prize. She is currently working on her PhD at the Australian National University, examining issues of feminism and environmentalism in nineteenth-century Britain.

**Anastasia Dukova, Griffith University**

“The Feminine Blue Line: Women Police in Queensland”

**Abstract:** For much of the twentieth century, Queensland remained the only Australian state that excluded women from the organised police. The key limiting factor in employment opportunities and advancements for women police was the stereotyped perceptions of women’s physical and mental constraints; due to the feeble nature of the female sex nobody “in the Police Force would envisage sending these girls out to do the jobs done by men.” By stressing the bodily differences and associated perceived women’s physical limitations, recruitment standards, regulations, and uniforms style were the most evident materialisations of the gender bias.

From the late nineteenth century, women played ancillary roles in the organised policing as female wardens employed in watch- and court-houses to assist with female prisoners or in housekeeping capacities. The first women officially employed by the Queensland Police Force, in 1931, retained probationary status for the entire duration of their employment, thus lacking powers of arrest. Functions performed by women police were heavily gender stereotyped; their role was one of a carer rather than an enforcer. As late as 1957, it was openly argued that women were incapable of performing the full range of police duties. The “Copettes,” as the Queensland print media coined them, or the first uniformed women officers clad in skirts, heels and armed with purses, were solely assigned to child welfare work and chores related to school children’s interests. While the Queensland Police lagged behind other Australian and overseas forces in the employment of women, comparative analysis suggests that their arguments against the utility and efficiency of female bodies to the police were by no means unique and remained shared concerns well into the late twentieth century.

**Biography:** Dr. Anastasia Dukova read history of crime and policing at the University of Dublin, Trinity College, and completed her Doctorate in 2012. In 2013, as part of a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Toronto, she conducted additional research into the history and development of the municipal police in Canada. Her research interests include Irish municipal and state policing models (1830s-1930s), policing organisations of colonial Queensland and Upper Canada. Anastasia is affiliated with the Griffith Criminology Institute at Griffith University, and contributes regularly to Queensland Police Museum blog, From the Vault.

**Susannah French, Australian National University**

“Silenced Voices, Regulated Bodies, and Autistic Insight: A History of the Female Experience”

**Abstract:** Records from autism pioneers Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger have largely documented the male experience of autism, thereby silencing autistic women. From the 1940s onward, it has been the male experience that has predominately been the accepted profile of autism. Autistic women however have always existed, but a female history of autism has been silenced from both medical and socio-historical discourses. This has had a significant impact on contemporary understandings of autistic women.

This paper moves away from biological determinism and instead explores how the body learns how to do gender “as a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction” (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 125). The neurotypical regulatory norms of the body that have been
generationally reproduced also heavily influence the bodies of autistic women. Rudy Simone writes that autistic females feel that they are “androgyrous creatures – in mannerisms, behaviour and mostly, in essence,” but take up “feminine” ways of being to make sense of their everyday lives (Simone, 2010: 61). And so, because of their repetitive and convincing performances of femininity, autistic women fail to be diagnosed by clinicians, who rely on a medical schema that tends to focus on white, heterosexual, and masculine conceptions of subjectivity.

This paper critically analyses interview responses from autistic women to explore how an autistic understanding of gender can be used to challenge heterosexist understandings of female embodiment. I suggest that female autistic insight can be used to reinvent new definitions of gender. This research hopes to be a step forward into better understandings of autistic females, though it does not claim to represent their experiences as a homogenous whole. To change the picture of the autistic female profile is to begin the process of re-writing women’s experiences of autism into history and to give these women a voice once previously denied to them.

**Biography:** Susannah French is a PhD candidate in the School of Sociology at the Australian National University researching the female experience of autism. Her thesis hypothesises that there is under or misdiagnosis of females with autism rendering them invisible to the autism support community. Susannah’s thesis aims to explore how the social conditioning of females and conventional diagnostic practices contributes to the invisibility of autistic females. Through her research, she hopes to improve the understanding of clinicians and the public of the varied experiences according to gender that autistic individuals have.

**Amanda Gardiner, Edith Cowan University**

“Flows and Fluxes: Towards an Embodied Understanding of Infanticide Practices in Colonial Western Australia”

**Abstract:** Through the case study of Mary Summerland, a woman accused of infanticide in Fremantle, Western Australia in 1832, this paper uses historian Barbara Duden’s “somatic epochs” to explore the behaviours of, and societal responses to, infanticidal women in colonial Western Australia. Applying gendered, embodied historical specificities to archival documentation, the article suggests nuanced approaches to understanding the felt bodies of both the women who engaged in these practices, and their communities. Following Duden, rather than embodied experience assuming a static understanding across the centuries, it is useful to explore history as a succession of somatic epochs, with each era embodied differently according to gendered, social and synesthetic contexts, and the medical and religious understandings of the period. Thus, embodied exploration of pregnancy in colonial Western Australia must evolve from a haptic, feminine historiography because until the medical advances of the mid-twentieth century, pregnancy was a narrative confined to women’s bodily experiences. Child-bearing was a corporeality that was felt, rarely visualised. If, as Duden suggests, within this somatic context, the labouring or suffering body is a bridge between historical and trans-historical time, the pregnant bodies of colonial women later accused of infanticide become potent sites of historic, corporeal understanding.

Summerland’s case, additional child murder trials and settler journals provide evidence in this paper that a mind/body dichotomy was not yet present in the settlers of colonial Western Australia. Indications that colonists still thought of their bodies as a system of flows or humeral temperaments has implications for the denial behaviours that manifested around infanticide practices. Claims by women that they were not pregnant but rather had obstructed menses or other medical complaints, and the hesitation of community members to accuse mothers, despite a suspected pregnancy, are bathed in fresh light. This has additional implications for other embodied explorations of the past.

**Biography:** Dr. Amanda Gardiner is a sessional staff member at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia. Her research area is child murder, infanticide and concealment of birth in colonial Western Australia (1829–1901).
Hannah Loney, The University of Melbourne

“‘My body is no longer mine, but my soul will be mine forever’: Women’s Experiences and Memories of Sexual Violence During the Indonesian Occupation of East Timor (1975-1999)”

Abstract: This paper will examine East Timorese women’s experiences, memories and perceptions of sexual violence during the period of Indonesian occupation (1975-99). Much literature on sexual violence during conflict and occupation focuses on direct instances of rape, sexual slavery, sexual torture and harassment. Particularly when these violations are systematic, widespread and committed with impunity – as was the case during the Indonesian occupation of East Timor – collecting personal testimony and documenting women’s experiences, identifying patterns, and establishing a clear and consistent picture of the nature of sexual violence, is a worthy and necessary endeavor. Many women are often extremely reluctant to talk about their experiences due to a range of personal difficulties, cultural taboos, and political considerations. One method of somewhat reconciling these difficulties, as well as contributing to the development of a broader understanding of the lived realities of a violent regime, is to focus on everyday experiences of sexual harassment, fear and intimidation experienced by a broad range of women. In focusing not only upon direct instances of sexual violence but on the atmosphere in which these acts were perpetrated, a more complex understanding of women’s embodied experiences of military occupation and conflict situations can be revealed.

Drawing upon approximately fifty-five oral history interviews with East Timorese women conducted in situ, this paper will explore the ways in which individual women remember, perceive of, and negotiated a militarized and violent culture in which high levels of sexual violence occurred. Within this endeavor, I will highlight the experiences, language and emotions that individual women deploy within their oral narratives in positioning themselves within this culture, and in articulating their relationships to the prevalence of sexual violence that was being perpetrated by the Indonesian military and their auxiliaries.

Biography: Hannah Loney is a final year PhD candidate in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at The University of Melbourne. She has conducted several funded research trips to East Timor, during which time she interviewed approximately fifty-five East Timorese women. Her research project, written under the supervision of Associate Professor Kate McGregor, looks at these women’s experiences, memories and perceptions of life during the period of Indonesian occupation (1975-1999).

Melissa Madera, Independent Scholar, USA

“The Body as Archive: Listening to Embodied Experiences in Narratives of Abortion”

Abstract: Abortion is a common experience. Yet how often do you hear someone share their abortion story? Have you ever? I started The Abortion Diary, an abortion story-sharing podcast, in order to create a community around an experience that can be extremely isolating, and where people could share these rarely told stories in order to break the shame, stigma and taboos around talking about their own gendered bodily experiences. In just over a year, 107 people have shared their stories with me for the podcast. The experiences are quite diverse across geographic location, socioeconomic background, age, ethnicity, race, religion and gender, and span from the late 1950s to 2014. Through this telling we can also reimagine and redefine what we view as the archive; where history and our stories are held. Our body is an archive; it holds our stories, our feelings, our memory. This paper explores how sharing these abortion stories provides a pathway to sharing other untold and silenced stories concerning our bodies. These narratives situate people’s experiences with their abortion in a broader context. Instead of a compartmentalisation of our bodies, which leads to a further dissociation with ourselves and internalisation of dominant narratives about our bodies, these stories offer listeners an intersectional and intergenerational lens by which to examine our multilayered embodied experiences. Once people begin to share their stories out loud, the doors to other stories start to open. These experiences, whether it be with family, motherhood, infertility, miscarriages, illness, addiction, and domestic and sexual abuse,
among others, offers a wide range of people to connect and interact within each story and, afterwards, with each other.

**Biography:** Dr. Melissa Madera is the creator and curator of *The Abortion Diary*, the first and only publicly accessible audio archive of abortion stories. She is a story-sharer and dedicated story-listener, multimedia historian, full-spectrum doula (volunteering with The Doula Project), and a bilingual reproductive justice educator and advocate. Her own abortion story and the deep impact sharing it (13 years later) had on her, her family, friends and complete strangers inspired her to create *The Abortion Diary*. Since beginning the project in July 2013, she has listened to and recorded over 105 stories in 9 US states (and counting). The experiences that have been shared and recorded span from the late 1950s to 2014.

**Alexia Moncrieff, University of Adelaide**

“‘Short-arm Parades’ and Venereal Disease Prevention in the Australian Imperial Force”

**Abstract:** The Australian Imperial Force is generally acknowledged as having the highest rate of venereal disease (VD) of any combatant force in the First World War with the official historian of the Australian medical services describing VD as the medical services’ “most difficult problem in the war.” Recent histories of Australian sexuality have examined this problem as part of broader attempts to trace changes in gender relations and shifting constructions of masculinity and femininity. In addition to these histories, feminist historians have focused on the many legislative attempts to prevent the spread of VD by controlling women.

In contrast, this paper locates Australia’s response to VD in the First World War within a military context and focuses on methods of controlling the male body. It examines the efforts of the Australian Army Medical Corps to regulate Australian soldiers’ sexual behaviour behind the lines in France and Britain. Using army reports, instructions to Medical Officers, and soldiers’ handbooks, this paper analyses the intent and effect of regular inspections of the male body, otherwise known as “short-arm parades.” It subsequently traces the changes in the medical corps’ policy to maintain the efficiency of the army by advocating self-surveillance in order to police and control Australian soldiers’ sexual behaviour. I argue that the Australian Army Medical Corps achieved its goals by reinforcing, rather than transgressing, gender norms.

**Biography:** Alexia Moncrieff is a PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide. Her thesis examines the medicalisation of the Australian Imperial Force through the work of the Australian Army Medical Corps in the First World War. Due to be completed mid-2015, the research for this thesis has been partly supported by a grant from the Australian Army History Unit’s Research Grants Scheme.

**Bethany Phillips-Peddlesden, The University of Melbourne**

“‘A stronger man … and a more virile character’: Australian Prime Ministers, Embodied Masculinity and Leadership in the Early 20th Century”

**Abstract:** Despite an increasing recognition of the importance of equal political representation, an historical examination of the overrepresentation of men as gendered subjects in Australian political leadership, as distinct from the underrepresentation of women, remains largely unwritten. This omission reflects a dominant historiographical tradition that has perpetuated an association between masculinity and political leadership while rendering masculine privilege essentially invisible. It has also minimised the familial, physical and emotional aspects of male politicians’ lives, serving to frame power relationships and social structures as gender neutral.

The 1907 evaluation of Andrew Fisher as a “stronger man...and a more virile character” and therefore better Labour Party leader shows gendered discourses have had important implications for political leadership. At this time, the strong body of Fisher, carefully presented in a sombre middle-class sartorial style, was evoked to allay simultaneous class-based-fears of Labour leadership and anxieties around racial degeneration. One particularly overlooked aspect of the
intersections between masculinity and politics has been the importance of the lived experience, performance and evaluation of the male bodies of early political leaders. This paper seeks to address this gap by examining how prevalent anxieties around nation, race and population; discourses around public/private and mind/body binaries; and the expansion of manhood suffrage served to frame understandings of the male political body in early 20th century Australia. An examination of the ways early Australian Prime Ministers such as Alfred Deakin, Andrew Fisher and Billy Hughes were perceived as men will illuminate how their classed and raced physical forms impacted on their national leadership.

**Biography:** Bethany Phillips-Peddlesden is an Australian History PhD candidate at The University of Melbourne under the supervision of Professor Marilyn Lake. Her thesis examines the intersections of power and gender in the lives of Australian prime ministers. It is an expansion of her first class Honours thesis, completed with the help of an Australian Prime Ministers Centre Summer Scholarship in 2012. She has a BA (history and literature) and a Diploma in Modern Languages (French). She is part of the Lilith Editorial Collective, one of the postgraduate representatives for the Australian Historical Association as well as being Vice-President of the Melbourne University History Postgraduate Association.

**Rebecca Preston, Australian National University**

“Awakening ‘the most thrilling electric, and exquisite sensation known’: Rethinking Female Passions and Sexuality in the Women’s Movement”

**Abstract:** Issues of sexuality were central to the Australian woman movement (1880-1914), as women’s lack of sexual autonomy and status as sexual objects were seen as the primary cause of women’s socio-economic, political and cultural oppression. Australian feminists sought to enhance women’s sexual autonomy and overthrow the double standard of sexual morality by reforming marital sexual relations, eliminating the root causes of prostitution and redefining women as moral and intelligent human beings who had the capacity to experience sexual pleasure. These reform campaigns contested contemporary medical discourse which defined male sexuality as “hydraulic,” namely automatically aroused, and female sexuality as exclusively maternal and restrained.

A radical minority of feminists sought to redefine the boundaries of women’s sexual identity by dissociating women’s capacity to experience pleasure from their desire to reproduce. In doing so, the movement contributed to the eventual disentanglement of women’s marital, maternal and sexual identities. My paper focuses on the various ways in which the woman movement challenged Victorian ideas of female sexuality and women’s status as maternal bodies. Early feminists primarily did this through expressing female sexual pleasure and desire, stressing the unnaturalness of enforced maternity by supporting natural and/or artificial contraception, and engaging in intimate same-sex friendships with other Australian feminists. Intimate friendships reveal feminist contestations of heterosexual marriage, male sexual dominance and women’s traditional maternal and marital duties. Through examining feminist novels, poems, medical texts and private letters, it is evident that the woman movement substantially contested Victorian sexual norms by promoting a reformed method of sex which recognised women’s sexual urges as equivalent in power and importance to those inherent in men. This notion, which was promoted by women such as Ada Cambridge, Brettena Smyth, Rosa Praed and Agnes and Rosamond Benham, was quite radical as it repositioned female sexuality as non-threatening and natural.

**Biography:** Rebecca Preston recently completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History at the Australian National University. She will complete her Bachelor of Laws at the ANU at the end of 2015. Her honours thesis was titled “Freeing Women from the ‘loathsome slavery of sex’: The Woman Movement and Sexual Reform.” She presented from her thesis at the conference, *A Celebration of Professor Jill Julius Matthews’ Career*, held at the ANU in November 2014. Her interests include feminist history and the history of sexuality.
Laura Rademaker, Australian Catholic University

“Religion, the Female Body and the Modern Girl: Maude Royden’s 1928 Australian Tour”

Abstract: In the winter of 1928 English feminist, Maude Royden, toured Australia. She smoked. She climbed into Australian pulpits and preached; the first woman to do so in an Australian cathedral. Speaking to the “modern girls” of Australia, Royden exhorted young women to be less selfless and more ambitious.

This paper examines Australians’ reactions to the celebrity preacher in order to shed light on the complex relationships between religion, modernity and gender in Australia in the 1920s. Just as they were eager to see Royden’s female body take on the masculine space of the pulpit (the so-called “last stronghold of sex-exclusiveness”), Australian women were eager to hear Royden’s message of a new form of Christianity, scientifically credible and suited to their modern lives and convictions. Royden’s message denied feminine and masculine virtues, insisting that virtue transcended the body and gender. Whereas contemporaries responded to the “feminisation” of religion by promoting a “muscular Christianity,” Royden offered an alternative model of female piety, one which celebrated the female body and erased masculine and feminine spaces. Though Royden’s influence in Australia waned following her tour, a number of Australian feminists took up her cause for sex-equality in the Australian churches following her visit with varying degrees of success.

Whereas narratives of modernity have generally presumed processes of secularisation to be linear, this paper contributes to a growing historiography of the synergies between discourses of modernity and religion. Maude Royden’s popular message and celebrity persona indicate that Australia’s modern girls were open to a diversity of religious messages.

Biography: Dr. Laura Rademaker is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Australian Catholic University. Her current research examines Australian Catholic women’s engagement with modernity and feminism. She completed her PhD in 2014 at the Australian National University on the Groote Eylandt Aboriginal missions, focusing on language and translation in the mission context.

Sophie Robinson, University of New South Wales

“Bar Dykes and Lesbian Feminists: Debates about Lesbian Identity in the Australian Women’s Movement”

Abstract: For some women involved in the Australian women’s movement, close proximity to other women through shared feminist activism allowed the discovery or exploration of a lesbian identity, and subsequently enabled the development of lesbian feminist activist groups, support groups and separatist women’s lands throughout Australia in the 1970s and 1980s. Already existing lesbian communities and identities, some of which revolved around bars, clubs and private gatherings, did not however necessarily match up with these emerging lesbian feminist communities, so much so that the former was sometimes seen as lacking politics and drinking too much, the latter as talking too much. Lesbians that regularly frequented bars and clubs were categorised as non-political butch, bar or ‘army dykes’, seen to be reiterating rather than eschewing sex and gender stereotypes through their interactions with their female lovers and other women, and sometimes through their aesthetic and comportment. Some were known to be particularly rough, terrifying and even dangerous, and seemed to prefer to drink and socialise (particularly with gay men) than join any political movement. This paper will historicise some of these perceptions of the body politics of bar dykes and “non-political” lesbians by feminists in the Australian women’s movement. I will also look at the perceptions of lesbian feminists by bar dykes/non-political lesbians (including their self-perceptions) and how feminists could be viewed as complicating and disturbing the enjoyment of the lesbian bar scene, and by association a lesbian sexuality devoid of politics.
**Biography:** Sophie Robinson is a PhD candidate in Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of New South Wales. Her thesis is looking at the lesbian presence in women’s liberation, gay liberation and queer politics and activism in Australia between 1969 and 2000.

**Rebecca Sheehan, United States Studies Centre, The University of Sydney**

“Jimi Hendrix’s Penis: Desire, Liberation, and Exploitation”

**Abstract:** In 1968, driven by sexual desire, a teenage rock music groupie from suburban Chicago made a plaster cast of Jimi Hendrix's erect penis. The incident became legend in the rock world and musicians from the Beatles and Led Zeppelin to KISS jostled to meet Cynthia Plaster Caster. This paper considers the ways in which Cynthia’s story, and the casts which she now shows in museums around the United States, embody the gendered, sexual and racial dynamics of the late 1960s. Through her active expressions of desire Cynthia overturned the lingering nineteenth century notion that women were sexually passive. But her story also illustrates the paradoxes of female desire in a patriarchal society: Cynthia’s casts were trophies for her collection but they were also monuments to phallic power; while she experienced some sexual liberation, she was still subject to a sexual double standard; and, despite her new freedoms, as a groupie, as a woman, Cynthia was second to men in the gender hierarchy.

That a cast of Jimi Hendrix’s disembodied penis gave Cynthia power in the music fraternity is also testament to the white fetishization and objectification of black masculinity in an era of civil rights. Hendrix was romanticized as the ultimate in authentic, rebellious masculinity: black, working-class, self-trained, a musical virtuoso. I argue that through seeking sexual relations with a woman who had been with Hendrix, white male musicians sought authenticity by proxy. By asking Cynthia to cast them too, they also sought reassurance about their own masculine worth. Groupies, although derided by music critics, held great power in this regard. Their presence conferred status on musicians.

I argue that this story provides new and different sources for studying the history of sexuality and its intersections with gender, race, and power.

**Biography:** Dr. Rebecca Sheehan is Lecturer in US History at United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney where she has also been a postdoctoral fellow. She received her PhD and MA in History from the University of Southern California with a Certificate in Gender Studies, and her bachelor’s degree in English and Linguistics with first-class honours in History from the University of New South Wales. She was the recipient of an Australian-American Fulbright scholarship to UCLA and a Graduate Fellow of the Center for Law, Humanities, and Culture at USC. She has published on rock music in the 1970s, on boxing in Australia and the Philippines, and is working on a monograph entitled *Rise of the Superwoman: How Sex Remade Gender in America’s Long 1970s.*

**Evan Smith and Marinella Marmo, Flinders University**

“The Embodiment of the ‘Truth’: The body as evidence in the UK Immigration Control System and the Case of Anwar Ditta”

**Abstract:** In the UK immigration control system, those seeking to enter the country come under a great deal of suspicion and scrutiny by the authorities, who are looking to detect “bogus” and illegal migrants. Habitually the burden of proof is placed upon the individual to validate their reasons for entering the UK and this often involves a number of interviews to determine the validity of the migrant’s story. Within this process, the authorities often rely on the assumption that the evidence presented by the applicant is likely to false or misleading and therefore documents, as well as the testimony of the applicant, are not to be taken at face value. This has particularly been the case with migrant women from developing countries, who have been traditionally viewed as ‘undesirable’ by immigration authorities due to their perceived lack of labour “value” and their untrustworthiness.
In the 1970s and 1980s, the largest number of migrants to the UK were women from the Indian sub-continent; most of whom were coming the country to join already residing families, rather than for work purposes. However the UK government were looking for ways to discourage this source of migrants and strict measures were put in place to cut down on dependent women from migrating to the UK. This involved a high level of scrutiny of these female applicants. And when their documents and testimony were not to be believed, the authorities turned to their bodies – documents and testimony could be altered or falsified, but it was thought that the body would reveal the migrant’s “true” story.

**Biography:** Dr. Evan Smith is a Vice-Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of International Studies at Flinders University. He has written widely on the UK immigration control system and the politics of race in the UK.

**Biography:** Associate Professor Marinella Marmo is a lecturer in criminology at the Flinders University Law School. Her research interests include international criminal justice, transnational crime and comparative criminology.

**Stephanie Woodbridge, Australian National University**

“‘Just a few lines’: The Physical Experience of Women’s Correspondence with the Repatriation Board, 1920-1940”

**Abstract:** The challenges and failures of the repatriation system are central to current studies of the Great War, and to our understanding of the legacy of that conflict. But what of the thousands of women who cared for, and loved, those who returned injured, sick and mentally scared? Upon the conclusion of the Great War, thousands of men returned to Australia injured, ill and psychologically damaged. By and large, it was mothers, wives and daughters who looked after, advocated for and supported these men. Thousands wrote, often extensively, to the repatriation board, asking and in some cases demanding better pensions, better medical treatment and education and training services to assist their families.

This paper will argue that this letter writing was a form of active, bodily performance. Be it in protest or acceptance. It will explore the embodied experience of letter writing and reading. It will contemplate how gendered ideas of the time provided a lens through which they were read by and assessed by the board. This paper will also include a discussion on the experience of the historian reading these letters some eighty years later. I will argue that the physicality of letters makes them a particularly emotive primary source, which brings new challenges in approaching them. In this paper, I contend that letter writing is inherently a physical, and therefore, bodily act.

Not only did these correspondents negotiate new spaces for women to occupy, I argue that they created new attitudes and behaviours in women and these behavioural changes would contribute to the creation of new philanthropic organisations in the 20s and 30s. By using the Great War Pension Appeals Repatriation files I will explore the repatriation process through the eyes of women as active participants, with an emphasis on including women in Australia’s Great War narrative.

**Biography:** Stephanie Woodbridge is a PhD candidate in the School of History at the Australian National University. She completed her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) at Monash University in 2011. Her article, “Shrill Noise: The Perception of Women during the Great War Anti-conscription movement in Melbourne, Australia,” was published in *Reinvention: A Journal of Undergraduate Research* in 2012. Stephanie acted as an Alumni Ambassador for Monash University on their Gallipoli Study Tour in Turkey 2013. Her PhD dissertation explores the impact the return of Great War soldiers had upon women in the 1920s and 30s. She currently tutors undergraduate history at the ANU.
Blast from the Past

The Lilith Editorial Collective’s Petra Mosmann recently uncovered some *Lilith* history in archives at The University of Melbourne.
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