



EMOTIONS OF THE FUTURE

ABSTRACT *BOOKLET*

Friday 22 November 2024

William Holbrook, *The Lost Balloon* (1882)



Michelle Arrow is professor in Modern History at Macquarie University. She is the author of four books, including *Personal Politics: Sexuality, Gender and the Remaking of Citizenship in Australia* (Monash University Publishing, 2024), co-authored with Leigh Boucher, Barbara Baird and Robert Reynolds, and *The Seventies: The Personal, the Political and the Making of Modern Australia* (2019), which was awarded the 2020 Ernest Scott Prize for history.

‘My handsome, kind, gentle, treasure of a son - and yours too’: Anne Deveson, motherhood and mental health advocacy in late twentieth century Australia

Released in 1991, Anne Deveson’s powerful memoir *Tell Me I’m Here* remains a landmark examination of the experience of mental illness in Australia. The book was a candid account of her eldest son Jonathon’s experience with schizophrenia and it helped to reshape community understandings of schizophrenia in Australia. Deveson’s public narrative about her son’s illness prompted many people to write to her to share their experiences of attempting to care for their mentally ill children. For many parents, one of the most painful aspects of this experience was the loss of their child’s anticipated future: many narrated their endless worries and their acute sense that their child would not proceed along the expected path to independent adulthood. Some of these parents were also, perhaps, grieving their own anticipated future. Based on a reading of correspondence from parents in Deveson’s papers and her advocacy work, this paper will speculate on how a critical analysis of this material can help us understand the history of mental illness, and particularly the rise of parents as significant voices in mental health advocacy in late twentieth century Australia.

Ashley Barnwell is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Melbourne. She is interested in sociological aspects of emotions, memory, and narrative, and the role of life writing, archives, and literature in sociological research.

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Signe Ravn is a sociologist at the University of Melbourne. Her work centres on youth, marginalisation, narrative, gender and temporality. She is currently working on a monograph about the everyday lives and imagined futures of young women on the margins. Signe has published a number of books, most recently *Narrative Research Now. Critical Perspectives on the Promise of Stories* (edited w/ Ash Barnwell, Bristol University Press, 2024). Her articles appear in high impact journals in sociology, gender studies, media studies and youth studies. With Ashley Barnwell, she co- directs the Narrative Network and co- hosts the podcast Narrative Now.

Hoping against hope: a sociological speculation

Hope is the most readily associated emotion with the future. We cannot know our fates, but can only hope. However, some argue that hope is a misguided emotion. Worse, it can be somewhat delusional, unwilling to face harsh realities and put actions into place. In her essay, *Fuck Hope*, Chelsea Watego cautions against putting hope in hopeless situations, or changes that never come. Instead she champions creative nihilism. Sara Ahmed similarly registers hope as an affective strategy to invest in the ‘right’ objects. Miserable at present, such attachments forecast future happiness – a promise that may never arrive. Both thinkers caution against hope, but nonetheless strive to realise better futures. In this paper we take up such a critical rendering of hope to consider the generative future-orientations that might

evolve from a place of despair, or even doom. The paper is in two parts. First we offer a case from a study of young woman school-leavers to explore how people negotiate hope, especially when hope is not so useful. We then build from this case to explore sociological directions for rethinking hope's temporality as forestalled. We argue for a hope against hope that orients futurity without a negation of flourishing in the present.

Leigh Boucher is an associate professor whose research centres on the construction and representation of difference in liberal democratic political and popular cultures. This has produced work that investigates a wide variety of historical contexts and representations. This includes research on the dynamic of settler-colonialism and changing constructions of manhood in nineteenth century Victoria, anthropological constructions of the "Aborigine" in nineteenth century Australia, sexuality in contemporary historical films, contestations over masculinity in the representation of the AFL, and the impact of changing ideas about sexuality on the operation of citizenship in late-modern Australia.

HIV/AIDS in Sydney's Gaybourhood, Historical Catastrophe and the Presence of Joy and Humour

It is an understandable commonplace in histories of (homo)sexuality to configure the emergence of HIV/AIDs as an historical catastrophe. It was, until the development of combination treatments in the mid 1990s, an epidemic that ruptured and reorganised temporalities, both of those who seroconverted and of those who suspected their seroconversion might be inevitable. This catastrophe was felt with particular acuity in 'gaybourhoods' like Sydney's inner east, although less attention has been paid by historians to the spatial dimensions of the epidemic in Australia than we might expect. While establishing the number of gay men who died in this neighbourhood during the worst years of the epidemic is difficult, stories about gay men burying half their kinship networks are not uncommon in the oral history record. So too, imperfect government statistics bear out the spectre of a gaybourhood in which at least fifty percent of its gay male residents died in a ten-year period. The possibility of the future, in a neighbourhood that had only just been remade in the language of unfolding liberation, became suddenly precarious.

The idea of 'community' has often been the rubric through which this history is narrated. In Australia, where the world leading 'community response' has become a figure of homonational pride, this term has been even more naturalised as the frame through which to explain the experience and politics of HIV/AIDs for queer folk. This paper is drawn from an oral history project that explores the local history of HIV/AIDs in Sydney's gaybourhood in the 1980s and early 1990s, although with an emphasis on voices and spaces that often sit at the edge of an historiography that has been dominated by the imaginaries and places of activism. Exploring this history through the stories of three 'straight' women, this paper examines the place of joy and humour in the history of the epidemic. The women interviewed for this project provide an account of these years that is filled with laughter, jokes and humour – emotions that texture the written and artistic archive of those years if one bothers to look for them. These jokes and joys are rarely considered by scholars in and of Australia, and when they are, they are dismissed as a form of 'gallows humour' whose function was to manage the trauma and despair of the epidemic, which have an apparently primary emotional status in this history. What happens, though, if we configure joy and humour at the centre of this story? What does it reveal about the emotional geography and sensibilities through which

this epidemic was constituted? And why have straight women been more able to identify and articulate its presence in their memories of those years? The answer, this paper suggests, lies in the ways in which the social memory and formal historiography of the epidemic has been forced into the frame of (a distressed and traumatised national LGBTQI+) community in which straight women do not have a place. Ironically, though, their subsequent marginalisation from the social memory of the epidemic permits them to reveal emotions that were, perhaps, equally significant in its historical constitution, and perhaps did important orienting work during the intensities of the 1980s and 1990s.

Susan Broomhall is Director of the Gender and Women's History Research Centre and Professor of Early Modern Studies at ACU. This paper relates to her research considering the long history of wartime sexual violence, its memorialisation and activist initiatives.

(Girl) Statues of Peace: Rethinking Past and Future Global Solidarity through Humanities and Feminist Approaches to the Emotions ONLINE

This paper explores how reframing the emotional experience of global solidarity may better achieve future cross-cultural flourishing. Developed in Catholic social teachings in the 1980s and identified by Pope John Paul II as a 'Christian virtue', this affective practice is described as an active commitment and shared responsibility for the common good to create 'a society built on love'. It is now widely adopted in broader domains for approaching many social justice concerns, including gender inequality. Yet the burgeoning literature of emotions studies demonstrates that societies past and present around the world do not share the same terminologies, concepts, expressions and logics for their emotional experiences. If we are to understand and enhance global solidarity as a practice, we need to investigate its historical context for development as a Christian practice and how it is practised today in religious and secular contexts. This paper will analyse these questions in relation to the emotions that inform the advocacy and activist initiatives of East Asian women regarding wartime sexual violence and the materialisation of global solidarity through the construction of (Girl) Statues of Peace worldwide. The paper thus examines the more equitable future world-building that a nuanced emotions-centred approach to global solidarity may elicit, exploring feminist and historicised approaches to notions of care, compassion, and empathy drawn from Western and non-Western perspectives.

Penelope Carpentier is a PhD candidate at Macquarie University, and her research focuses on social imaginaries produced by people in the region of Syria and Phoenicia under Ptolemaic rule. After completing her Masters in Research with distinction (on the political power of the Jerusalem temple prior to the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt), she lectured for three years in biblical interpretation and ancient languages at the Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary in Windhoek, Namibia.

Fear from the Past, Solidarity for the Future: Jewish Literature of the Third Century BCE

The Ptolemaic era (300-200 BCE) saw in the city of Jerusalem a new rise in literature, as its people reflected on the new political and cultural climate that was dominated by Greek powers, which fought over and marched through their lands. This literature has traditionally been interpreted as polemic, speaking against either the influx of Greek culture or against rival Jewish schools of thought. However, this paper argues that these authors were instead primarily motivated by fear.

Looming large in the Jewish consciousness was the Exile, when Babylon invaded and deported large numbers of their people. The presence of armies again in their land provoked the fear that the events of the past would recur, the Jews could again be deported, and their unique cultural identity could be lost forever. In response to this fear, Jewish authors sought to safeguard the future of their people by speaking out against influences from the nations around them, encouraging faithfulness to their people and their traditions, and teaching them to the next generation. They created new literature for a new time, looking to the future by drawing on the profound impact of the past.

John Cash is a social theorist with a particular interest in the incorporation of psychoanalytic theory into social and political analysis, including the analysis of ethno-nationalist conflict, international relations and the nation-state. In his research on both the conflict in Northern Ireland and on ontological insecurity and international relations, he has regularly foregrounded the place of emotions and what he terms competing emotional constellations.

The Future is Ambivalence: Ambivalence and Its competing resolutions.

Ambivalence takes two quite contrary forms and resolves itself in two quite contrary ways. As the pervasiveness of ontological insecurity entrenches itself across the globe, these contrary forms will compete ever more fiercely to determine the emotional states that dominate social and political relations. The outcome of this conflict will play a central role in determining the future of the world risk society. It is already affecting how we feel, think about and relate to the future, and how we act in the present with both future and past in mind. Will norms of recognition that promote the capacity to dwell in ambivalence manage to establish themselves as the proper way to feel, think and relate, or will norms of recognition encoding psychic defences that split ambivalence predominate, thereby promoting defences against ontological insecurity that promote the friend-enemy distinction? That is the issue that confronts our global future. Will ambivalence be split into the idealised and the despised in the false hope of dissolving the anxiety it provokes, or will the capacity to dwell in ambivalence modify and sublimate our emotions without denying them, by accepting and containing the complexity of our emotional responses to challenging situations and challenging relationships?

Stefani Deligiannis is a PhD candidate in the field of History from the School of Humanities and Communications Arts at Western Sydney University. She is a sessional academic at Western Sydney University and Australian Catholic University. Stefani completed a Master of Research in 2021 and is now expanding the project into a PhD. Her research focuses on the comparative study of the role of emotion in both Nazi and Italian fascist propaganda. The project explores two different but related regimes which were among the first historical regimes to deploy propaganda as a central component of building a mass following, and in its treatment of emotion as a bio-cultural phenomenon.

Emotional Strategies in Italian Fascist Propaganda: a case study

Although few periods in European History have received the same attention as Italian Fascism and Nazi Germany, there remain meaningful gaps in knowledge of how two of the most brutal totalitarian systems came to be so convincing to large numbers of people. The 'brainwash' notion of propaganda is invalid as it fails to consider the individual's ability to resist ideas that are presented to them. This project is concerned with the role of emotions

in propaganda manipulation that paved the way for the rise of the *Italian Partito Nazionale Fascista (PNF)* under Benito Mussolini between 1922-1945, looking at original Italian source documents of the interwar period, with comparative reference to existing source contemporaneous collections and scholarship on the rise of the German NSDAP, or Nazi party. It is the central hypothesis of this thesis to consider to what extent, without an emotional dimension of persuasion in Fascist and Nazi propaganda, these political rulers would not have received the loyal following to facilitate their unprecedented dictatorial control. While it is undeniable that propaganda played a pivotal role in the entire apparatus of authoritarian regimes, the ability of such propaganda to weaponise emotions has achieved significantly less attention. Propaganda was thoughtfully designed to exploit the emotional vulnerability of targeted individuals and groups. In order to account for the effectiveness of propaganda in such regimes, it is important to consider the emotions being targeted and for what purposes within the Fascist worldview and Italian culture of the nineteen-twenties and thirties. In Fascist propaganda, specific emotions such as nostalgia, *rausch*, fear and national-esteem were targeted toward the evocation of a politics of passion that leaves no room for doubt.

Ceridwen Dovey is a Macquarie University Research Fellow. She writes fiction (*Only the Astronauts; Mothertongues; Only the Animals*) and creative non-fiction (*On J.M. Coetzee; Inner Worlds Outer Spaces*), and has won an Australian Museum Eureka Award for her science writing. She is co-founder of the Archival Futures Film Collective.

What scientists talk about when they talk about love (for their space objects)

Humans often form deep emotional attachments to space objects of all kinds, from small spacecraft to satellites, rovers to space stations. More surprisingly, these emotions are sometimes openly expressed by space scientists, astronomers, engineers and astronauts who are not, in their ordinary line of work, expected to share their passionate feelings about the objects they've launched into space.

Space objects are a special category. They seem to give scientists permission – in certain contexts – to express emotions (like love and grief) that would otherwise remain hidden. Yet space objects can also resist the emotional investments of scientists, by becoming 'disobedient' (or 'indifferent') to humans once they're launched into space. In this presentation, I will discuss how it can be a subversive act to take a non-human perspective, and consider the agency, subjectivity, sociality and power of space objects in co-making the future – regardless of whether or not their scientists have told them they are loved.

This presentation will be followed by a screening of two of the short films in the [Archival Futures of Outer Space Film Quartet](#) (co-created by Ceridwen Dovey & Rowena Potts). *Memorabilia* (2023; 16 minutes) is a fictional documentary about the emotions that humans invest in 'flown' space objects that end up in museum collections. *Requiem* (2023; 16 minutes) is a speculative documentary where imagined future astronauts grieve the loss of the International Space Station before it is deorbited (with sonnets voiced by real-life astronauts).

Leanne Downing is a Research Fellow in the Digital Ethnography Research Centre at RMIT University. Her current research explores the expression of grief and spirituality in contemporary digital landscapes.

Over the Rainbow Bridge: Facebook and the quest for continuing spiritual bonds with deceased pets.

The practice of expressing grief and bereavement in online environments has become a worldwide phenomenon that is commonly referred to as ‘digital mourning’. Although considerable scholarly attention has focused on how digital media is used following the loss of other humans, a dearth of research exists on how individuals use digital media to express their grief following the loss of pets/companion animals.

Drawing on qualitative research interviews into grieving pet owners’ interactions with a Facebook pet loss support group, this paper considers a series of statements that reveal pet loss in Australia to be a profoundly emotional, spiritual, and, at times, haunting experience that exceeds the epistemological boundaries of contemporary pet loss research and digital media scholarship. Specifically, it brings to the fore a series of unexpected comments made by interview participants about how they maintained (or sought to maintain) ‘continuing spiritual bonds’ with their deceased animals. These experiences included feeling that they could sometimes see, hear, smell, or talk to the spirit of their deceased pet, and/or wanting to access an online digital space in which they could discuss the concept of their pet existing in ‘the afterlife’. The findings of this paper are elucidated through the conceptual frameworks of digital media mourning, continuing spiritual bonds and more-than-human grief.

Regina Fabry is a philosopher of mind and cognition working in the Department of Philosophy at Macquarie University. She currently works on self-narration, grief, human-technology interactions, and their intersections from a perspective that brings together philosophical theorising with research in literary and cultural studies and the empirical cognitive sciences.

Imagining Digital Afterlives: Deathbots and the Future of Grief

Deathbots – chatbots that imitate the conversational behaviour of deceased persons – have recently gained momentum. Applications such as *Project December*, which are based on Large Language Models, are marketed as unique opportunities to continue conversations with significant persons who have died. Deathbots are trained on fine-tuning corpora comprised of the deceased’s *digital remains* (Stokes, 2015), e.g., text messages, e-mails, and long-form writings (Fabry & Alfano, 2024). In this talk, I will explore the question how the increasing availability of deathbot technologies might impact how we imagine future grief experiences and engage in the curation of digital remains. I will focus on two aspects of this question. First, the possibility to curate our digital remains might influence our *anticipatory-vicarious grief* (Varga & Gallagher, 2020). By imagining how other persons will grieve for us, we might decide for or against curating, revising, or deleting our digital remains. Second, the availability of deathbot technologies might change our *anticipatory grief* (McCarroll & Yan, 2024). In anticipating our grief for a significant, terminally ill person, we might encourage or discourage them to curate their digital remains. In sum, I will consider how deathbots might impact grief in the future – and the future of grief more generally.

Chloe Green is a Lecturer in English at the Australian National University. Her monograph, *Affecting Illness: Reading Contestation in Women's Experimental Illness Narratives*, is under contract with Edinburgh University Press, and she is currently at work on a project about the affective economies of wellness in contemporary fiction.

Feel Better Tomorrow: The Aspirational Temporality of Wellness in Claire Stanford's *Happy For You*

In Claire Stanford's 2022 novel *Happy For You*, her protagonist Evelyn abandons her dissertation for a job at a tech company disrupting the "happiness economy," by developing an app that can quantify and optimise happiness. Why, then, is Evelyn so miserable? In this presentation, I will discuss how the prospect of feeling better tomorrow is infused into Stanford's commoditisation of happiness, and into the structure and schema of wellness. This deferred and future-focused temporality, I argue, allows us to overlook the negative effects of wellness practices in the present. As a way to understand this negativity, this presentation will explore the relationship between wellness and the labour of Evelyn's work. *Happy For You's* reframing of wellness as an embodied practice of labour, consumption, and capital, provokes us to think economically about our emotions. In my close reading of Stanford's novel, I aim to investigate how understanding wellness as labour might offer a vital way to reconsider the affective investments and deferred temporality of wellness practices.

Elizabeth Hale (Associate Professor, English; UNE) has published widely on children's literature and classical antiquity. Her recent book, [Classical Mythology and Children's Literature . . . An Alphabetical Odyssey \(Warsaw UP, 2022\)](#), came out of the ERC Horizon 2020 project: *Our Mythical Childhood Our Mythical Childhood... The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges* (ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Katarzyna Marciniak)

Slowly into the future: hope, urgency, caution and conservation in children's stories about turtles and tortoises.

In Michael Ende's allegorical children's novel *Momo* (1973), a little girl saves her city from the predatory 'men in grey,' time-stealers who trap the people in an endless cycle of work and consumption. She does so with the assistance of Cassiopeia, a tortoise who can tell the future. Together, they restore life to the city, showing that walking slowly towards reality is more effective than rushing towards false needs. Cassiopeia is one of many wise turtles or tortoises who appear in children's stories, demonstrating the need for wisdom and balance, in human life and in the wider natural world. In this paper, I shall talk about the path they offer to the future in children's stories. It is not a naive path--in mythology, fable, and children's stories, tales featuring turtles (or tortoises), strike a balance between hope and caution. As such, they provide a case study for considering how children's literature talks about conservation of the natural world: conveying the urgency of action while offering hope: moving slowly into the future, one turtle-step at a time.

Michael Hanaghan is currently Senior Research Fellow and ARC DECRA fellow for the project "Classical Traditions and Future Thinking in Late Antiquity" (DE230100573) at ACU. He was involved in the node of the History of Emotions project at ACU, and has published on emotions in Late Antiquity, especially fear, anger, and grief.

Fixing the Future: Sidonius Apollinaris' Panegyrics and the Politics of Hope

In the mid to late fifth century C.E., the Gallo-Roman poet and aristocrat Sidonius Apollinaris composed three speeches - imperial panegyrics - for the emperors Avitus (456 C.E.), Majorian (458), and Anthemius (468). This article argues that Sidonius' panegyrics conceive of the future as a fixed temporality to project a more confident vision of hope. This enables him to marginalise barbarian threats by focusing on Rome's glorious destiny. Its analysis focuses on Sidonius' use of the language of divination and its literary, political, and cultural traditions to legitimise his claims that future glory awaits the Roman empire. Panegyrics manifest a present moment as an integral part of their composition. Sidonius' panegyrics speak to three moments in time, when Rome's future success could still be envisaged, even as the repeated stress of decades of barbarian pressure made such a future increasingly unlikely, if not all together impossible. Sidonius thus exploited the extreme flexibility of praise, especially when the acts worthy of praise were yet to happen, to develop hopeful political messages amidst the turmoil of the final decades of the Western Roman empire.

Elisabeth Heijmans is post-doctoral researcher at the center for urban history at the university of Antwerp. She studies future thinking in female and male eighteenth century French merchant letters.

Merchant Future: Hopes and Fears in French Eighteenth Century Business Letters ONLINE

In the days following the Lisbon earthquake in 1755, the Bordeaux based merchant Abraham Gradis wrote to his correspondents: "I am desperate (*au désespoir*) about this accident, may God save us from such misfortune (*malheur*)" adding that he was "penetrated by the pain (*douleur*) of all these accidents". Eighteenth century business letters are full of references to the future, but only rarely do they include emotional content. However, when emotions are mentioned, they are telling about how early modern merchants felt about the future, what were their hopes and fears were and how they expressed them.

This presentation will explore the connection between future thinking and emotions by analyzing mentions of hope in eighteenth century French merchant letters. References to hope are particularly noteworthy as they often contain opposite feelings such as despair, fear or sadness. I am particularly interested in examining instances where expressions of hope are combined with a reference to God. By the eighteenth century, mentions of God in French business letters were not systematic but rather a choice of the author. References to God often conveyed an intense feeling of hope (and connected emotions) and were related to moments of high uncertainty spurred by unpredictable political conflicts or natural disasters.

Sanne Hermans is a PhD student at the University of Antwerp and a member of the Back to the Future Project led by Jeroen Puttevils at the Centre for Urban History. Her research explores the impact of upheaval on future thinking and actions in the early modern Low Countries, using mercantile family correspondence.

Anchored in the Fatherland: Navigating Real Estate Decisions Amidst Exile and the Aspiration for Return (1585-1609) ONLINE

In times of war and upheaval, hope acts as a beacon, symbolizing the chance for recovery and a return to the familiar. However, when conflicts drag on, the dream of going home often yields to the necessity of accepting a new place as home. This painful reality was starkly evident after the fall of Antwerp (1585), when many Protestant residents sought refuge in the Northern Netherlands from the Dutch Revolt, also known as the Eighty Years' War (1548-1648). Among these exiles was Hans Thijs, a prosperous merchant who settled in Amsterdam but held onto his family properties in Antwerp, even investing in other real estate as the housing market sank. Year after year, he clung to the hope of returning, convinced the war would soon end favorably for the Calvinist population, and Antwerp would return to the thriving commercial hub from his youth. However, as the conflict stretched on and the exiled merchant grew older, this hope became a heavy burden. Thijs's eventual decision to let go of his dream underscores the profound emotional and financial toll of prolonged warfare. It reveals how hope, initially a source of resilience, can turn into a source of suffering. Thijs's story highlights the difficult interchange between sentiment and pragmatism in the lives of those caught in history's crossfire.

Madeline Jenkins is a PhD Candidate in the Department of History and Archaeology, at Macquarie University, Sydney. Her PhD research conducts lexical-semantic and lexicographic research on ancient Egyptian words for emotion, specifically words attributed to the emotion "sadness".

Exploring Unfamiliar Wor(l)ds: Emotions in Ancient Egyptian Texts and the Implications of Lexical Variation

Studying emotions in the ancient past requires us to explore unfamiliar worlds and encounter unknown words and concepts. Although the ancient Egyptian lexicon does not preserve a word for the metacategory of 'emotion', hundreds of Egyptian words and phrases have been interpreted and translated as denoting familiar emotional states, like "happiness", "sadness" and "fear". This paper argues that there has been insufficient critical reflection about the (in)commensurability of ancient Egyptian and modern words and concepts, and to this end, demonstrates the variability of emotion words and concepts through a case study of Egyptian words traditionally translated as "sadness".

Given that language, concepts and experience are inextricably linked, variations in emotional language must be taken seriously. By being sensitive to lexical diversity, we may hope for a future in which the culturally-situated nature of emotions is further foregrounded, and generalising and universalising approaches to emotions are further challenged. The real world implications of this sensitivity are numerous, ranging from improved mental health services to more diverse 'emotional intelligence'. Thus, thinking about emotions in the ancient past encourages us to problematise our assumptions about emotions in the present, and can positively impact future global 'emotional communities'.

Gabriela Silva Loureiro is a queer latina scholar mainly interested in gender, intersectional feminism, decoloniality, and emotions. She works as a lecturer in Sociology at the University of Wollongong.

Emotions, feminist activism and the search for redemption

This paper discusses the emotional life of feminism and the cruel optimism (Bertant, 2011) present in attempts to build solidarity underpinned by a quest for redemption. Through critical discourse analysis of digital feminist hashtags in contemporary Brazil and of archival work of feminist consciousness-raising groups in London from the 1980s, I unravel some of the dangers that lie in the search for redemption through online feminist activism, particularly when it depends on networks of sympathy based in proximity and sameness. Encountering a reverberation of collective voices in the media (encompassing digital networks and the press alike) can give a false impression of structural change that obfuscates the limitations of the work being done, and therefore discourages the envisioning of new, more radical forms of feminist organising. Considering that new generations are exposed to mediated understandings of feminism in popular culture and on social media, the study of digital media activism becomes increasingly pertinent for efforts to think through the possibilities of intersectional feminist projects today and in the future. My aim with this focus is to rethink the collective sharing of affective experiences with a view to repurposing social media for radical political usages.

Una McIlvenna is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow 2023-2027 and Senior Lecturer in English at the Australian National University. Her research interests lie in the fields of early modern cultural and literary history. Her Future Fellowship project, 'Singing the News: Ballads as News Media in Europe and Australia 1550-1920', explores how songs were used to disseminate news about disasters, politics, military encounters, and crime and punishment. Her most recent book, *Singing the News of Death: Execution Ballads in Europe 1500-1900*, looks at the fascinating and long-lived tradition of execution ballads.

Una McIlvenna, What If The End Is Not Nigh? The Predictions of the 'Great Flood' of 1524

From roughly 1519 until 1523, the end of the world was thought, in Europe at least, to be imminent: the great conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the sign of Pisces that was calculated to happen in 1524 was the sign that the world was to expect a time of great flooding that would usher in famine, war, and ultimately, the end of humanity. A veritable deluge of printed prognostications in the form of pamphlets, books, and songs filled the streets of early modern Europe, urging people to repent before the upcoming Judgement Day. Some astrologers argued against these theories, claiming that the second Great Flood would, as in Noah's time, bring about a spiritual renewal of Christianity. But panic had seized the people of Europe: in Italy, while the nobility fled to mountainous areas, poorer people began building arks. Inspired by the prognostications, both Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer created artworks depicting the upcoming apocalypse. But when 1524 arrived, there was no flood. Rather, it was a notably hot and dry summer. Looking at treatises, songs, prose pamphlets and chronicles from the period, this paper seeks to understand how people were encouraged to act in what were believed to be the end days, what we know about how they actually behaved when faced with the end of the world, and how they responded when their fears about the future did not materialise.

Cissy Namuddu Settumba is a Ugandan scholar at the Makerere Institute of Social Research, Makerere University. Her interdisciplinary PHD includes Political Studies, Political Economy, Historical and Cultural Studies. Her research focuses on the Land question with gendered perspectives. She holds a first-class Bachelor's degree, a Master of Arts in Public Administration and Management, and Master of Arts in Philosophy.

Climate Change: A Smart City From an African Perspective

Thinking about smart futures does not mean a loss of culture nor a loss of cultural architecture, it does not mean a retention of poverty but a hope to social justice. This paper explores the intersection of climate change and smart city development from an African perspective, focusing on the transformative potential for Uganda over the next 25 years. The discussion is rooted in a training recently held where participants were invited to envision the future of Nsimbe-Uganda amidst broader context of climate change and a smart city. This exercise illuminated a spectrum of emotions and aesthetics, offering a vision of a hopeful, resilient Uganda. The paper argues that envisioning such future is not synonymous with sacrificing cultural heritage. Instead, it emphasizes the opportunity to foster social justice and cultural continuity through innovative urban planning that puts into consideration emotions, mind and thoughts of the now and then users. By integrating climate responsive strategies with deep respect for local traditions and needs, future smart cities can achieve a harmonious balance between modernity and cultural preservation. The approach offers a road map for addressing climate crises while nurturing social equity and environmental sustainability and thus paving way for more equitable cities.

Bronwen Neil FAHA is Professor of Ancient History at Macquarie University and deputy director of the Creative Documentary Research Centre in the Faculty of Arts.

Accommodating positive and negative affect for the Pacific in a climate-changing future

In 2005 an Australian philosopher coined a new term for what he identified as a new emotion: solastalgia. The term, formed by the combination of the Latin words *sōlācium* "solace" and the Greek root *-algia* "pain", comes from the Australian philosopher Glenn Albrecht, who describes it in his book *Earth Emotions* as "the homesickness we feel while still at home." (Albrecht 2019). Adopting this concept as the theme of an edited collection, Paul Bogard wrote: "It is the pain and longing we feel as we realize the world immediately around us is changing, with our love for that world serving as a catalyst for action on its behalf" (Bogard 2023).

The identification of solastalgia potentially opens a new avenue of research for climate justice policy researchers in the Pacific region, in nations collectively designated as small island developing states (SIDS). But how relevant is it outside Australia, and does it have applications in the Global South or even the Global North?

Picking up where Pasifika researchers Tupou, Tiatia-Siau and Newport (2023) left off, I analyse the applicability of the term solastalgia, defined as "the homesickness we feel while still at home", for the citizens of small Pacific nations, who face very different impacts from climate change than their neighbours in Australia and New Zealand/Aotearoa. These challenges include diasporic resettlement for work, a system of land ownership that require

presence, and the foreclosed futures faced by those forced to live away from their home islands. I argue that solastalgia is misapplied when used to describe the emotional response of people facing forced displacement from their ancestral homes due to climate change. The separation from their homes is the key difference from the emotional state described by Albrecht and others on the basis of case studies from rural Australia. The incomparability between Australia and its Pacific Island neighbours is based on both (1) factors of scale and (2) the importance of past relationships with ancestors and local environments for future flourishing.

Michèle Plott is a historian and associate professor emerita at Suffolk University, Boston, USA. Her current project examines British period drama of the 2010s and 2020s and its ability to shape viewers' feelings about their own present and future.

Manufacturing Feelings on TV: Viewing Practices, Hope, and Detachment as Emotion Management in the 2020s ONLINE

Is hope irresistible? While hope might be the emotion inhabitants of the global north most associate with the future, it is no longer, in the 2020s, the most reliable feeling to place at the center of their emotion management practices. Hope can be painful in the face of climate change, extremist politics, the rise of oligarchs... Television and streaming services offer a pleasurable distraction from hope, and, for many, form a key part of a practice of coping through detachment, exercising restraint in particular from hopeful expectation. Historical drama sets its viewers within the frame of temporality, and for this reason may do a better job than other texts on screen in facilitating detachment. Rejection of historical accuracy, for example in *Bridgerton* (2020-), *The Great* (2020-2023), and *Persuasion* (2022), also orients viewers toward the present and future. Still, hope can perhaps never be entirely banished, as responses to the political events of July 2024 in the U.S. most recently suggest – and, both addictive and adaptive, television narratives will mold themselves and their viewers to these turns, toward and away from hope, going forward.

Stephanie Russo (Macquarie University) specialises in historical fiction and is particularly interested in the representation of time in historical novels. She is the author of *The Anachronistic Turn: Historical Fiction, Drama, Film and Television* (2024) and *The Afterlife of Anne Boleyn: Representations of Anne Boleyn in Fiction and on the Screen* (2020).

Everything Comes to Pass Eventually: Fixing the Future in the Counterfactual Historical Novel

The counterfactual is a uniquely appealing prospect in a time of seeming perma-crisis. The chance to go back in time and right a historical wrong or reverse a seemingly inexorable decline has an obvious appeal at a time when the future seems so uncertain. The counterfactual historical novel has, accordingly, become increasingly popular in the past two decades, reflecting an anxiety about the future that can perhaps only be thought through by way of reference to the past. The counterfactual allows us a way to think through the conditions under which a better future might be possible, and thus functions as a fantasy of the past, present and future. Equally, however, the counterfactual or alternate history has been used to present us with “nightmare” scenarios that are designed to function as cautionary tales for the present. In this paper, I explore a number of recent counterfactual

Abstracts are listed in alphabetical order by author surname

historical novels that capitalise on the form's ability to alter the past, even if only fictionally, to attempt to "fix" the future.

Emma Seal (she/her) is a research fellow at RMIT University. Emma's interdisciplinary research expertise intersects the cognate areas of sociology and critical theoretical approaches and broadly focuses on examining health and social inequalities.

With

Tom Short (he/him) is a PhD candidate at RMIT University, whose research explores young people's lived experience of a BPD diagnosis. His work is couched in the discipline of sociology, taking a relational approach to the study of diagnostic experience.

Tomorrow's quiet before today's distress: recovery narratives and the diagnosis of BPD ONLINE

Psychiatry's narratives of futurity regarding the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder (BPD) have shifted significantly within the last 20 years. No longer treated as a 'death sentence', those receiving the diagnosis are impelled towards the future through hopeful recovery narratives (Katsakou et al., 2012). Rather than foreclosing any potential change, a BPD diagnosis now places those receiving it amid a 5-act narrative structure: trigger/trauma/distress, crisis, diagnosis, treatment, and recovery (Llewellyn-Beardsley et al., 2019). This narrative arc can deny the emotions people feel in the present as they push towards more 'hopeful' futures. Drawing on lived experience research with people living with a BPD diagnosis, this paper argues that the hopeful and future/recovery-oriented narrative of a BPD diagnosis can generate a dulling of emotionality. Psychiatric recovery narratives, in their imagination of an affectively neutered future, also constrict the possibility for people with a BPD diagnosis to address their present emotions and in turn the present conditions of their lives. Through diffractive narrative analysis of participant's accounts of diagnosis and recovery, significant disjuncture between people's current and future affects and the affects psychiatry demands are revealed.

Marilyn Stendera is a lecturer at the University of Wollongong. Her research focuses mainly on the phenomenological tradition, especially its intersections with philosophies of cognition and mind. She is particularly interested in time – what kinds of temporal structures enable and shape cognition; whether our experience of time is different to that of other cognisers; how lived temporality has been conceptualised; and how our experience of time is shaped by, and shapes, the power structures that we inhabit.

With

Emily Hughes is a postdoctoral research associate in philosophy at the University of York. Her research is situated in the intersection between existential phenomenology and the philosophy of psychiatry and psychology, with a particular focus on phenomenological interpretations of affect and the way in which emotions modify temporal, spatial and bodily experience.

The depths of time and grief: Ecology, affect and the temporalities of loss

In the midst of the climate crisis our relation to the future is defined by affects such as solastalgia, ecological grief and climate anxiety. In this paper, our aim is to understand the complex role of temporality in structuring these difficult affective experiences. On one level, human beings map out the decline of our planet according to horizontal time, a linear, chronological sequence of years, decades and centuries, across which the earth becomes less and less inhabitable. On another level, however, there is the vertical time of the planet itself, a deep, ecological time which holds both presence and absence, growth and degeneration, life and death. As we will argue, complex affective experiences like solastalgia, ecological grief and climate anxiety can be seen to traverse both horizontal and vertical time, which is in part what makes them so distressing but also, potentially, regenerative.

Kath Apma Penangke Travis (Arrernte/Boandik) is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit at Victoria University. Kath is a Stolen Generation survivor and historian.

Hope Is Procrastination, Healing Is Now | A First Nations Perspective On The Future

What is time??? Time is familiar to everyone, yet it's hard to define and understand. Physicists define time as the progression of events from the past to the present and into the future. I observe time as the amalgamation of the past, present, and future - existing as one, the moment of then and the moment of now that weaves together the his-tories and her-stories of all entities like the sun, moon, skies, and stars, creating an eternal connection among all things. It is the interconnectedness between my ancestors and them and us as their descendants, this is how the future is viewed. In reality, though, that connection has been disrupted by colonisation, leading to disconnection, separation, isolation, and transgenerational trauma.

The future may be focused on families, lineage, and children, or learning and education but it is more than that for me. The future for First Nations people is intertwined with a holistic perspective of health that includes connection to culture, Country, spirit and spirituality, connection to ancestors, connection to the body, connection to the mind and emotions, family and kinship, and connection to community. Ours and your current investments need to be refocused on addressing the long-term impact of displacement, exploitation, and violence that First Nations families and communities are still dealing with.

The concept of 'hope' needs to be challenged and questioned in light of existing norms. My presentation will offer insight into the realities of First Nations sovereignty and healing. I will provide an understanding of the expectations, aspirations, and challenges faced by First Nations people as we work towards re-imagining the future. Taking action now is crucial for enhancing the health and well-being of the First Nations community.

Claire Walker is a historian of religion, gender and emotion in the School of Humanities at the University of Adelaide. She has published extensively on early modern monasticism.

Suffering Adversity for the Future: Atmospheres and the Emotions of Death in Early Modern Convents

When the youthful Carmelite nun Mary of the Angels Chichester died at Alost in 1632 her former confessor wrote a letter of comfort to the grieving sisters in Antwerp, chiding them for their sorrow and asserting she was most certainly in the company of Christ 'her Spouse'.

Monastic accounts of final illnesses in obituaries and chronicles commonly describe a nun's agony and suffering in graphic detail, but none the less speak of her 'happy' death. Physical and psychological trauma were considered significant markers for eventual salvation. Likewise a life devoted to modelling the religious community's spiritual ethos and religious rule gave similar cause for optimism – Sister Mary of the Angels had surely pleased God 'by fasting praying meditating humility Obedience and a total Sacrifice of her self'. Indeed monasticism might be viewed as the consummate investment in a happy future for all eternity. Yet, as the confessor's letter to the Antwerp nuns implies, convents were not always so certain about the fate of their sisters' souls after death. This paper explores the complex emotions surrounding death in religious cloisters, and the role of monastic atmospheres in shaping the performance of sentiment at end of life and beyond.

Laura Jayne Wright is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Newcastle University, UK, where she works on auditory hallucinations and sensory experience in women's prophetic and apocalyptic writing. Her recent Cambridge Element, *Shakespeare's Visionary Women* (Cambridge, 2023), considers the ways in which women's dreams and visions offer a space for political protest; her current work explores the apocalyptic faith of the seventeenth century prophetess, Anna Trapnel.

Standing in a Storm: Anna Trapnel Endures the Apocalypse. ONLINE

Anna Trapnel, a Fifth Monarchist prophetess and poet in the 1640s left behind her final meditation on her apocalyptic beliefs in a thousand-page book, of which only one copy survives. Having risked arrest preaching of the end of the world, according to her millenarian beliefs and in response to the devastation of the civil wars, Trapnel turned to poetic contemplations of what the Future might hold, including the return of Christ, and what her own future, limited by illness, might offer.

This paper examines two poems from that final collection: one an exegesis of Revelation, with its promise of doomsday, and one meditating on the role of the visionary who must see the end of times but, like Cassandra, never be believed. The first poem, addressing the apostle John who witnessed the battle between Christ and the Devil relayed in the Book of Revelation, suggests that those who see the future are doomed not to act but to endure. Again and again, the emotional response to the apocalypse is to 'stand': to watch and to hold firm despite fear and doubt. The second poem confirms that the future is, for Trapnel, an inevitable end from which true believers will not run but instead (to borrow a line from Milton's Sonnet 19) *only stand and wait*.

Helen Young is a Senior Research Fellow in Literary Studies at Deakin University, currently leading the Australian Research Council Future Fellowship 'The Politics of Medievalism: Persuasive Narratives.' Helen's research interests include histories of race and racism, popular culture, medievalism, and cultures of violent extremism. They have recently published in *Textual Practice* and *Continuum* and for the Global Network on Extremism and Technology.

The Emotions of Contemporary Christian Nationalism

In the "climate of fear" that Wole Soyinka (2005) identifies as characterising global politics in the twenty-first century, the increasingly powerful globalised far-Right offers a perverse security logic by falsely promising a secure future to a 'in group' predicated on violence against 'out groups.' Drawing on the theories of Sara Ahmed (2004), this paper seeks to add

to an emerging body of research that explores the use of emotions in far-Right political movements (e.g. Ebner 2017) by asking what emotions *do* in contemporary white Christian Nationalism in the United States of America. It examines the functions of the appeals to nostalgia, love, hate and wrath suffuse the writings of Christian Nationalist key figures including Stephen Wolfe, Rod Dreher, Giles Corey and Andrew Isker. This paper argues that their calls for a “great renewal” to re-shape the future of the USA and the West (Wolfe 2022) are animated and made persuasive through emotional shaping of the subjectivities, collectives and social orientations that are conjured in attempts to create a future white Christian nation. The future, for the far-Right, can be re-made from an object of fear to one of hope through love of the (white heterosexual, cisgendered, male) Self, and hatred of ‘others’, that is, by feeling and therefore acting ‘correctly.’

Rachel Yuen-Collingridge is an Associate Lecturer in History at Macquarie University. She works on scribal practice, knowledge systems, forgery, the magical papyri, in short on the way communities think with and through manuscripts.

Prospective emotions in the Greco-Egyptian magical papyri

The Greco-Egyptian magical papyri (dated from the Roman period through to Late Antiquity) provide a record of ritual practices which aimed at transforming the future or at the very least influencing its shape. Within the invocations prescribed in ritual handbooks are emotional states wished upon victims or targets of particular procedures. Most striking are the erotic curses which outline often in some detail emotional states to be induced within the victim as a result of the ritual action. These portraits of desire sit somewhere between imagined states of being and reflections of the distress which has prompted the client to turn to a ritual solution to his or her unrequited feeling. Because of the special role representation had in ritual as a vehicle for the desired transformation as well as the need for that representation to be as meaningful and specific for ritual efficacy, these portraits of emotional states provide a unique perspective on the experience of emotional states. This paper will examine the scope for using such ritual invocations as evidence of the relationships imagined between the present and future of emotional states in Graeco-Roman Egypt.