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Director's Update

We've had a busy start to 2018 in the Centre for People Organisation and Work (CPOW).

We are currently in the midst of the annual reporting process. I am pleased to convey that the performance of the Centre remained strong in 2017 and improved across a number of metrics, including the total HERDC research income secured, the number and quality of academic publications and HDR completions. In addition, CPOW members were extremely active throughout 2017 in leading and contributing to conferences, workshops, seminars and symposia; undertaking prestigious editorial and advisory roles; appearing in the media; and producing commissioned reports. These activities underwrite industry engagement and the impact of research by the Centre. I would like to thank all members who have contributed to this outstanding work.



In 2018, we will endeavour to build on this success. In this newsletter, you can read the highlights from two successful events held earlier this year. We also profile a new CPOW member, Dr. Louise Byrne, and congratulate several members on their recent grant success, publications and receipt of research awards.

Event Success



Feminist Summer School

The **Feminist Forum seminar series** kicked off the year with another hugely popular event, co-hosted by CPOW and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Australia (CATWA). Held over four days in February, the Feminist Summer School (FSS) initiative was a collaborative community engagement project designed to bring academic research and debate to members of the public, as well as highlighting the strength of feminist and gender inequality research at RMIT. Led by CPOW members **Dr. Meagan Tyler** and **Dr. Kate Farhall**, in conjunction with colleagues from GUSS, Monash University, Swinburne University and The University of New South Wales, FSS was a series of lectures and discussion groups run by academics and HDR students, focusing on key topics in feminist theory.

The FSS initiative garnered an overwhelming response, with all 70 tickets selling out in 48 hours and several attendees travelling from interstate to participate. The formal feedback from participants has been outstanding with many labelling it "extraordinary", "inspiring" and "impressive", while numerous participants also praised the accessibility of the program. In addition, the intensive design allowed attendees to build connections within the Australian feminist community and across generations and backgrounds. Overall, FSS was an overwhelming success that sparked conversations, generated community engagement and knowledge translation, and extended CPOW's public network. Calls from Centre members and attendees alike to make the event an annual fixture on the CPOW calendar, speak to the groundswell of interest created by the inaugural Feminist Summer School. We hope to be back with another iteration in 2019!

CPOW session at the College of Business 2018 ECP Engaging for Impact Conference



CPOW's industry panel session for RMIT's ECP Engaging for Impact conference in mid-February was well attended by a mixed academic and industry audience who contributed to a broad discussion on research priorities, the keys to successful research collaborations and strategies for achieving impact through research. The **'Care systems, disruptive & disrupting work'** session was one of the industry engagement activities as part of The Future of Care stream at the conference. The session was led by **Dr. Fiona Macdonald** and brought together industry representatives with some very diverse perspectives on the ways in which major innovations in social care systems are coinciding and interacting with transformations in employment to reshape social care work. Panel members who spoke about their research priorities and collaborative approaches for impact were **Dr. Caroline Alcorso**, National Manager, Workforce Development, at National Disability Services; **Ms. Lisa Darmanin**, Branch Executive President of the Australian Services Union, Victorian and Tasmanian Authorities and Services Branch; **Dr. Sarah Pollock**, Executive Director Research and Advocacy, Mind Australia; and **Dr. Louise Byrne**, a Fulbright Postdoctoral Scholar and RMIT Vice Chancellor's Fellow.

Visiting academic in the School of Management and CPOW

In February, the School of Management and CPOW were hosting **Dr. Bruno Tinel** from the University of Paris 1 (Sorbonne) as part of an RMIT Foundation Exchange Fellowship. Alongside **Assoc. Prof. Mike Rafferty**, **Dr. Tinel** is working on two papers: *From Employment Rights to Opt in Options and Financialisation of work – sub-contracting as the new normal*. **Dr. Tinel** also delivered the keynote speech at the School of Management HDR Summer Conference on the theme of public debt.

Upcoming Events

Feminist Forum Seminar: French feminists, Australian feminists and the headscarf

Dominant narratives on the Muslim headscarf within feminist circles in France and Australia present conflicting points of view: the majority of French feminists tend to condemn the headscarf as a patriarchal imposition on women, while the majority of Australian feminists tend to focus on the agency of Muslim women to choose to wear the headscarf if they wish to. This contrast in attitudes among feminists is paralleled by contrasting attitudes in mainstream politics: in France laws were introduced in 2004 and 2010 banning the hijab in schools and the niqab in public places (and these laws are widely supported by feminists), while in Australia **Pauline Hanson's** wearing of the burqa in the Senate in August 2017 was condemned by politicians from all parts of the political spectrum (as well as by most feminists). Where do these differing approaches come from? What are their effects on women, whether from Muslim backgrounds or not? What can Australian feminists learn from the French situation, and vice versa? And more broadly, what do these contrasting approaches to the headscarf suggest about a more general approach to feminist anti-racism? This feminist forum will discuss these questions and more from the point of view of a feminist activist.

Date/time: 17 April 2018, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

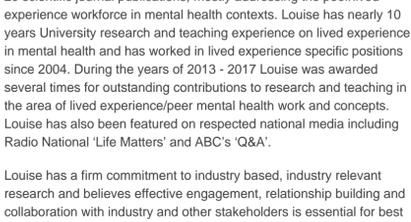
Location: RMIT Building 13 (Emily MacPherson Building), 405 Russell St, Level 1, Room1

Keynote speaker: Catherine Weiss, a feminist and anti-racist activist

Enquiries & RSVPs: catwaustralia@gmail.com

All those interested in feminist ideas are welcome.

Researcher Profile: Louise Byrne



Dr. Louise Byrne is a qualitative researcher with deep knowledge of organisational issues relevant to 'lived experience' mental health employment. Louise's work is informed by her own experiences of mental health diagnosis, service use and periods of healing. Louise originally trained in Intentional Peer Support – a form of face to face lived experience support. Louise previously worked in a variety of lived experience roles across the mental health and higher education sectors, including systemic advocacy positions, the first full-time lived experience mental health academic role in Australia, and as an expert advisory role to the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

Louise is currently employed at RMIT University as a Vice Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow. Louise was awarded the inaugural 2017 RMIT Fulbright Postdoctoral Scholarship to conduct research in the United States and will be based at the Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health for several months in 2018. Louise has been a Chief Investigator on past and present projects that combined have been awarded over \$1.3 million in competitive funding. Louise's research interests include mental health lived experience/peer workforce development, recovery principles, health professional capacity building and diversity/inclusion employment. Louise has over 20 scientific journal publications, mostly addressing the peer/lived experience workforce in mental health contexts. Louise has nearly 10 years University research and teaching experience on lived experience in mental health and has worked in lived experience specific positions since 2004. During the years of 2013 - 2017 Louise was awarded several times for outstanding contributions to research and teaching in the area of lived experience/peer mental health work and concepts. Louise has also been featured on respected national media including Radio National 'Life Matters' and ABC's 'Q&A'.

Louise has a firm commitment to industry based, industry relevant research and believes effective engagement, relationship building and collaboration with industry and other stakeholders is essential for best practice research outcomes.

Grant Success

Dr. Fiona Macdonald and **Prof. Sara Charlesworth** were successful in winning a competitive bid to undertake research with funding of \$US 20,000. They will undertake a scoping review on **Informal care, social protection and gender** to draw out policy implications for countries in the Western Pacific Region, particularly in relation to low to middle income countries undergoing demographic transitions to older populations. The review, being conducted for the World Health Organisation (WHO) Western Pacific Region, is addressing questions about how the gendered nature of work influences access to social protection under different models and the consequences for men and women of different approaches. In particular, it is investigating what models address the higher contributions made by women to informal care. The research is being conducted in collaboration with **Alison McClelland**, an expert on social protection.

Dr. Daniel Richards and **Dr. Fiona Macdonald** have been successful in a grant scheme administered by the Financial Planning Association of Australia (FPA). The name of the project is **"Changing the gender mix of financial planners: What are the drivers and barriers for women entering and succeeding in Financial Planning?"**. **Dr. Richards** and **Dr. Macdonald** are collaborating with an industry partner, **Ms. Nicole Heales**, to research women working in the financial planning industry. Female financial planners are outnumbered by their male counterparts but little is known about the experiences of women working in this industry. Through qualitative interviews of stakeholders and financial planners, the project aims to improve understanding of the experiences, plans and aspirations of women entering and progressing in education and employment for the financial planning profession.

PhD Scholarship in Management – 'Work of Social Care'

Applications are invited from suitably qualified applicants for a PhD scholarship to undertake a higher degree by research through the Work of Social Care research program, which is located in CPOW and led by **Prof. Sara Charlesworth** and **Dr. Fiona Macdonald**. The successful applicant would join the PhD program within the School of Management.

As part of the Work of Social Care program, **Prof. Charlesworth** and **Dr. Macdonald** are international partners on a large UK Economic & Social Research Council Partnership Grant Sustainable Care: Connecting people and systems (2018-2021), led by **Prof. Sue Yeandle** at the Centre for International Research on Care, Labour & Equalities, University of Sheffield. The scholarship offers a valuable opportunity to link in with the international networks and research developed through the ESRC grant, as well as with those established in the Work of Social Care research program.

More details, eligibility criteria and how to apply could be found here: <http://www1.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=nd9gosp0f2juz>

Congratulations

Best article in Australasian Journal of Regional Studies in 2017
ANZRSAI (the Australian and New Zealand Regional Science Association International) has awarded **Prof. Peter Fairbrother** with the *John Dickinson Memorial Award* for the best article published in the Australasian Journal of Regional Studies in 2017. This article (detailed below) is judged to have had the biggest contribution to regional science in Australia and New Zealand of the three issues of the journal published last year.

Fairbrother, P. (2017) 'When politics meets economic complexity: Doing things differently in the Gippsland Region', *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, 23 (3): 400-420.

Book co-author

Dr. Shea Fan has co-authored a book called *Managing Expatriates in China: A Language and Identity Perspective*. This book is one of the Palgrave Studies in Chinese Management Series, Series editors: **Yingying Zhang** & **Anne Tsui**, which was published earlier last month.

Providing fresh perspectives on managing expatriates in the changing host country of China, this book investigates expatriate management from a language and identity angle. The book presents a longitudinal yet contemporary snapshot of the language, culture, and identity realities that multinational corporation subsidiary employees are facing in China in the present decade (2006-2016). It will thus be an invaluable resource for International Management scholars, those involved in HRM and other practitioners, as well as business school lecturers and students with a strong interest in China.

You can find out further information here: <https://hazting.com/publications/managing-expatriates-in-china>

Contribution to Assessment of the Gippsland Region

Ms. Val Prokopiv and **Prof. Peter Fairbrother** contributed to the interesting assessment of Gippsland's possible future, following recent closures and the steps taken to support the region towards a sustainable and prosperous future. The assessment informed by some of the research undertaken by CPOW researchers, scenario research workshops conducted in the region as well as CPOW's involvement with the Food Agility CRC. CPOW members will continue to promote theoretically informed research in applied ways to contribute to a positive future.

You can find more information here: <http://gippslandia.com.au/gippsland-2030/>

Contact

If you would like to join CPOW or include your research activities in forthcoming newsletters, please email these to: cpow@rmit.edu.au

'CPOW acknowledges that economic and social divisions are defining features of the world we live in. The Centre's research focuses on addressing economic inequalities and fragmentation, social questions around gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age and locality, to enhance working lives and advance positive social change. Find out more at: [CPOW](#)