



Objects and Emotions: New Perspectives

University of Adelaide

7 December 2022

Venue

9.00–11.00 am Benham Laboratories G10 Lecture Theatre
11.00–5.00 pm Braggs 213/214



<https://adelaide.zoom.us/j/88971224309?pwd=bGRjdmxQeFkrRisrQTdFejFhR0d3dz09>

Passcode: 087839

Program

9.00 am Registration

9.15 am Conference open and welcome

9.30 am Encounters: stories of people, place, art, and landscape in western Arnhem Land
Associate Professor Sally May (University of Adelaide)
Title TBC

10.30 am Morning Tea

11.00 am Panel 1
Jane Haggis (Flinders University)
Bullets, Bones and Stuffed Heads in Martindale Hall and its Archive: The Limits of Object-Mediated Empathy?
Margaret Allen (University of Adelaide)
Bertie's Lion and the Glass Case
Andrew van der Vlies (University of Adelaide)
Forced Landings: Anti-Apartheid Books and Genealogies of Affect in South Africa, 1980–2019

- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 1.30 pm Panel 2
- James Kane** (Flinders University)
Fear and Loathing in Languedoc: Persecution, Emotion, and the
Yellow Cross of Penance in the Thirteenth Century
- Claire Walker** (University of Adelaide)
Crowns, Marzipan Hearts and the Great Crucifix in the Garden:
Gifts, Spaces and Emotion in Eighteenth-century Bruges
- Katie Barclay** (University of Adelaide)
Objects in Accounts: Ordering Things; Ordering Feelings
- 3.00 pm Coffee Break
- 3.15 pm Panel 3
- Maria Adamopoulou** (European University Institute, Firenze)
What's in a Suitcase? Emotionality and Materiality of Migration
in the Case of Germany's Gastarbeiter (1960s-today)
- Emma Carson** (University of Adelaide)
War Writing and Peacetime Preservation: The Role of Families
in Salvaging Letters from Twentieth-Century Conflict
- 4.15 pm Conference Close
- 5.00 pm Adelaide CHE node Christmas drinks
- [Roxie's Garden](#)
188 Grenfell St
Adelaide

Abstracts

Maria Adamopoulou (European University Institute, Firenze)

What's in a Suitcase? Emotionality and Materiality of Migration in the Case of Germany's Gastarbeiter (1960s-today)

Six headless human figures and nine suitcases scattered in space make up Vlassis Kaniaris' art installation "Hopscotch". Created in 1974, the work was presented in West Germany and England in 1975-76 as part of the itinerant exhibition *Gastarbeiter–Fremdarbeiter*. In 2021, the "Journey to Hope" monument was inaugurated in Kadıköy, Istanbul, in memory of the migrant workers who set off with hope and longing in their suitcases for a better life. The statue represents a man holding a suitcase and waving farewell and stands across the Haydarpaşa Train Station, the migrants' main departure point. Omnipresent in the early photos of the so-called guest workers - migrant workers from the South of Europe to the industrial centers of the West - the suitcase became a metaphor of their mobility. A positive symbol of carefreeness and freedom for tourists, the migrant's suitcase acquired a rather negative connotation as a sign of uprootedness, poverty and precarity. In this paper, I would like to investigate the different meanings with which the suitcase is invested. Why is it a powerful medium for the expression and transmission of the migrant's condition? In which ways is it used in the pop culture to provoke specific emotional responses?

Margaret Allen (University of Adelaide)

Bertie's Lion and the Glass Case

Visitors to the Adelaide Club, an exclusive male club in Adelaide, might be surprised to see a stuffed lion in a glass case, an African lion shot by club member, Bertie Barr Smith in the Rift Valley in 1908. Bertie's hunting safari in British East Africa (now Kenya) was guided by ex-Adelaide men Leslie Tarlton and Victor Newland who were making their names establishing their firm as the leading safari outfitter in British East Africa.

Victor Newland corresponded with Bertie as he organized the mounting of the lion with Newland Ward, the leading London taxidermist and assured Bertie that soon the lion, arranged in the 'sphinx pose' would arrive in Adelaide where he could display it in 'his ancestral halls.' The reference to Bertie Barr Smith's ancestral halls must be read ironically for Bertie was the third and rather wayward son of Robert Barr Smith (the son of a poor Free church minister), who had come to Australia to make his fortune. Robert Barr Smith had indeed made a fortune in Australia, benefitting enormously from the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and from shrewd investment in mining ventures. This family's acquisition of a vast pastoral empire and also of exotic hunting trophies speak of Stoler's notion of 'imperial dispositions of regard.' This paper will explore the emotions and meanings around the stuffed lion in the glass case.

Katie Barclay (University of Adelaide)

Objects in Accounts: Ordering Things; Ordering Feelings

Account books often list purchases, producing rich evidence of people's material worlds and how they choose to describe and categorise it. These records have been used by scholars to build histories of consumption, not least highlighting global networks of goods, and the economic relationships that underpin our home lives. Goods have also been considered in terms of the materiality of the domestic sphere, productive of comfort and intimacy. This paper uses accounts made between 1750 and 1850 as an opportunity to explore the emotional worlds of those who made them. Here I recognise accounting as a disciplinary practice for the frugal self, but also one that is productive of particular forms of emotion lives that are materialised through things.

Katie Barclay is a historian at the University of Adelaide. She has written widely on the history of emotions, gender and family life.

Emma Carson (University of Adelaide)

War Writing and Peacetime Preservation: The Role of Families in Salvaging Letters from Twentieth-Century Conflict

Since the late nineties, the vital role of exchanging letters between loved ones who were separated during the World Wars has been widely recognised in military studies. However, this historiography neglects the relationship between war letters and families who inherited these collections. This paper outlines my experience of being entrusted with letters that were written between my great-grandfather William Wiseman and great-grandmother Florence during World War II. From initially sparking my interest as an untapped primary source, which I have used in my broader research on marital relationships and the performance of emotions in letters, this collection of correspondence has become my most prized possession by connecting me to my family's past. The letters introduced me to William, who died twenty-three years before I was born, helped me to appreciate Florence beyond the brief and distant interactions we had, and gave me a glimpse of my paternal grandmother Gwen's infancy and early-childhood. In general, war letters are often cherished by the writers' predecessors due to the insights they reveal, including the nature of familial relationships and what correspondents claimed to believe about the war. In nations such as Australia, that mythologise modern war, there is an assumption that private records relating to war have greater intrinsic value to historians and the wider community than other private documents that were produced by working-class people. This likely motivated more families to keep war letters than other private records and, in many cases, to donate them to public archives where they join a substantial, pre-existing corpus.

Jane Haggis (Flinders University)

Bullets, Bones and Stuffed Heads in Martindale Hall and its Archive: The Limits of Object-Mediated Empathy?

In their 2019 article, Auld, Ireland and Burke use an object-biographical method to bring to life the poignant remnants of aprons (amongst other objects) secreted away by inmates of the Royal Derwent Hospital in New Norfolk, Tasmania. Their intention is to “democratise heritage through affect”, by challenging the normative assumptions held by both the local community and visitors concerning asylums and their inmates. The aprons become change agents, eliciting empathy and hence insight into the humanness of their makers. In this paper, I outline a different set of objects that throw up the question of democratising heritage differently. Martindale Hall is an icon of pastoral wealth as well as a marker of the dispossession of the Nadjuri people from Country in what is now the Mintaro district of the Clare Valley in the mid-north of South Australia. Now a house museum, the Hall and related archives, largely consist of the objects of the Mortlock family’s men. The technologies of killing and preserving animals constitute a significant cache of what survives. In this paper, I explore the possibilities and constraints of the concept of object-mediated empathy in re-storying and re-presenting this heritage in the mid twenty-first century.

James Kane (Flinders University)

Fear and Loathing in Languedoc: Persecution, Emotion, and the Yellow Cross of Penance in the Thirteenth Century

Between 1209 and 1229, crusaders from various parts of the Latin Christian world subjected the region of southern France that many medievalists call ‘Occitania’ to almost two decades of violence and dispossession under the auspices of the papacy and the French monarchy. The crusaders’ main goal was to root out the allegedly dualist heresy often referred to as ‘Catharism’, and their victories paved the way for the Church to establish the first major papally-approved ‘inquisition into heretical depravity’ (*inquisitio haereticae pravitatis*). Emboldened and empowered by their new status, Franciscan and Dominican inquisitors imposed a range of different penances on the thousands of ordinary men and women they found guilty of heresy in Occitania. One of the physically least painful but psychologically and socially most humiliating of these punitive outcomes was being forced to display yellow fabric crosses on the outer layers of one’s clothing. This paper draws on the surviving inquisitorial registers of the thirteenth century and other sources to examine the emotions associated with the wearing of the yellow cross of penance. In particular, it focuses on the stigma associated with the symbol and analyses the impulses that prompted penitents to make the fraught decision to conceal, remove, or dispose of their crosses. The paper also reflects on the challenges of interrogating emotional considerations through a highly formulaic type of evidence that makes little, if any, allowance for the inner lives of the subaltern voices it appears to foreground.

Sally May (University of Adelaide)

Encounters: stories of people, place, art, and landscape in western Arnhem Land

The interconnections between Aboriginal art, landscape and identity in western Arnhem Land are complex and ever-changing. In this remote part of Australia there exists artistic traditions spanning thousands of years. In more recent centuries, contact with outside groups such as Indonesians, Dutch and English explorers and invaders have created a seismic shift in relationships to place, art and people. Art, and in particular, rock art is a visual representation of these experiences. Paintings on bark continued this tradition in the more recent past.

In this paper I present a series of cross-cultural encounters to explore the theme of objects and emotions. Globally, and across time, cross-cultural encounters have presented extreme challenges to cultural groups and have, at times, been a key driver of innovation. As people responded to new cultural practices, languages, material culture, and societal structures, so too did their artistic practices such as body art, rock art and portable art change. Yet, the encounters presented in this paper are examples of both past and present experiences. Rock art and bark paintings are not seen by local Aboriginal people as stagnant remnants of the past. In fact, such art is an interactive tool, it carries with it the emotions of those who created and interacted with the art over long periods of time, and it provides opportunities for the creation of new relationships to Country and community today.

Andrew van der Vlies (University of Adelaide)

Forced Landings: Anti-Apartheid Books and Genealogies of Affect in South Africa, 1980–2019

Browsing in a second-hand shop in South Africa in 2019, I stumbled on a book once owned by a late relative. This in itself was no particular surprise: this was the city in which she had lived at the time of her death; her family had consigned a shipment of paperbacks to the store. What *was* a surprise, however, was that the book was a collection of work by Black South Africans published in early 1980 as part of a radical series from the oppositional Ravan Press, in which I have interests as scholar of South African literatures and Book History. I had not expected to find *this* book inscribed with my relative's name. In this short paper I want to balance a series of scholarly questions -- asking how we read for the affordances of feeling in the form of texts *like* these here collected; how we speculate about the imbrication of ethics, aesthetics, and emotion in differently contextualised moments of reception -- with an attempt at something like participant-observation self-reflection. What happens, I want to ask, when a material object, encountered by chance, forces a recalibration of a scholar's sense of their own relationship to the field of emotional responses about which they might otherwise attempt objectively to reflect?

Claire Walker (University of Adelaide)

Crowns, Marzipan Hearts and the Great Crucifix in the Garden: Gifts, Spaces and Emotion in Eighteenth-century Bruges

In September 1729 the exiled English Augustinian Convent of Nazareth in Bruges celebrated the jubilee of its foundation. Among numerous liturgical and social celebrations, the community gathered at the great crucifix in the garden where ten nuns dressed as guardian angels, representing the cloister's ten founding sisters, recited verses extolling the founders' virtues before singing hymns and distributing crowns and marzipan hearts which were gifts from the prioress, Lucy Herbert. The hearts were said to denote Herbert's affection for her nuns and the crowns were to remind them of the glory of salvation. The garden ceremony in Bruges highlights the interconnectivity of objects, space, performance and emotion. David Morgan has suggested that people "exist within landscapes of feeling" and that belief takes shape within the "objects, spaces, practices, and ideas" of religious material culture. In this paper, I want to consider the gifting of devotional objects in the exiled convents. An analysis of the artefacts, their placement in monastic space and the donors, can map not only devotions and the spiritual geography of the cloister, but also the community of feeling which united the nuns within the enclosure.