

INTRODUCTION

The *Thesis Eleven* Centre for Critical Theory was formally established in 2001 and commenced activities in 2002. It is closely aligned with the international critical theory and historical sociology journal of the same title, published by Sage, London. The journal is now in its 26th year of operation.

We are pleased to present the 4th Annual Report.

MEMBERSHIP

How the Centre Works:

The Centre focuses on organizing four kinds of events:

1. *Annual and public lectures* by leading and renowned intellectuals and scholars, both here and overseas;
2. *Full day seminars* on the work and thought of such intellectuals with them present and working in conversation with a range of local interlocutors and discussants of their work;
3. *Half day seminars* on particular themes with invited speakers;
4. *Symposia and colloquia* in other cities either connected to the work of the journal or to international social theory and social science conferences.

The Centre has four fields of operation:

local - Bundoora and City campuses;

regional – especially Mildura Campus;

national (Curtin, Murdoch and University of Western Australia in Perth; Flinders University in Adelaide);

and international (in the past 12 months spanning three continents: Europe, Asia and North America but also New Zealand).

In all cases we are pro-active, working through our own international and national professional and intellectual networks, minimising overheads and resources and maximizing local-global connections and networks, and ensuring intensive face to face encounters.

The co-ordinating editors of the journal, *Thesis Eleven*, Professor Peter Beilharz and Dr Trevor Hogan, are the founding Director and Deputy Director of this Centre, respectively. As such they are also *Chair and Deputy Chair* of the *Board of Management*.

Ordinary Members of the Centre who are also on the *Board of Management* appointed by the Dean of the Faculty, include the Dean himself, Professor David de Vaus, as well as Professors Johann Arnason, Joel Kahn, John Carroll (as Associate Dean Research), and Ms Mary Reilly.

Student Members are Suzi Adams, Darrell Bennetts, David Freeman, Kirsten Henderson, Miriam Riley, and Karl Smith.

Associate Members are: Simon Marginson, Peter Murphy, David Roberts, John Rundell, and Vince Marotta.

Honorary Members are: Professor Jeffrey Alexander (New Haven), Professor Joanna Bourke (London), Professor Craig Calhoun (NYC), Dr Luis David SJ (Manila), Professor Maria Pia Lara (Mexico City), Professor Emeritus George Markus (Sydney), Dr Maria Markus (Sydney), Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki (Canberra), Professor Peter Newman (Fremantle), Professor George Ritzer (Maryland), Professor Emeritus George Seddon (Fremantle), Professor Emeritus Bernard Smith (Melbourne), Professor Keith Tester (Portsmouth).

OBJECTIVES

The Centre has nine main aims, as set out in its Constitution:

1. To encourage the development and application of social and political theory throughout the world through publishing and presenting material in printed and electronic form and through delivering educational workshops, forums and conferences;
2. To facilitate international exchanges of internationally recognised scholars in the field of social and political theory;
3. To attract overseas students to enrol in the Faculty's postgraduate programs in the field of social and political theory;
4. To encourage local postgraduate research culture and scholarly research in the field of social and political theory;
5. To promote *Thesis Eleven* as an international journal of social and political theory;
6. To significantly expand the opportunities for research in the field of social and political theory;
7. To promote the teaching and research activities of members of staff of the University in the field of social and political theory;
8. To promote the training of postgraduates in research in the field of social and political theory;
9. To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above aims.

ADMINISTRATION

The Centre is a small operation with limited resources and big ambitions. It runs on the entrepreneurial imaginations of its Directors and their colleagues in the journal. It depends on the goodwill of academic and general staff in the Sociology and Anthropology program in the School of Social Sciences. In particular we record our thanks to the initiative, drive and support of Mary Reilly (who administers the Centre's account) and her team of administrative staff, Barbara Matthews, Bronwyn Bardsley, Kathy Ward, and Elaine Young.

In July 2005, Tracy Lee was appointed to work one day a week as Project Officer for the Centre. Her appointment is funded by School and the Vice-Chancellor. We are grateful to her for her cheerful and unstinting efforts in attending to the details of event planning and logistics. The Centre also piggybacks on the resources of the journal office and in particular of the work of the two Production Assistants during this period, Suzi Adams (January to August, 2002) and Karl Smith (September, 2002-). The Directors of the Centre report regularly to the Editors' meetings of the journal and we are particularly grateful to our colleagues on the editorial team who are always imaginative, good humoured, generous-spirited and hard working.

The Centre does not have a separate budget as such. The modest funds associated with the Centre are kept (and earmarked) in the journal's La Trobe University operating account administered by Mary Reilly on our behalf.

We also wish to take this opportunity to express and record our appreciation and thanks for the enthusiasm, wise counsel and support of Professor Brian Stoddart, the Acting Vice Chancellor (who provides the Centre with annual vote), Professor Roger Wales, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences until July 2006, and Professor David de Vaus, the new Dean, and previously Head of the School of Social Sciences, respectively. We thank the School for its consistent administrative, financial, and intellectual support and interest. This year the financial support has been increased to match the VC's vote, providing more resources for journal production, and to subsidise this report.

2006: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Bundoora:

Annual Lecture:

5th July: *'Can we speak of the holocaust without speaking of evil?'*, Maria Pia Lara, Professor of Philosophy at the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana–Unidad Iztapalapa in Mexico City. With Raimond Gaita, Professor of Moral Philosophy at King's College, University of London, as discussant.

Seminars/Colloquium

21st March: Public lecture by Jeffrey Alexander, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Centre for Cultural Sociology, Yale, on *'Terrorism and War: A performative Approach'*. Professor Alexander was Centre visitor February - March.

28th March: Seminar by Jeffrey Alexander on *'Romanticism, Place and Performance'*. Alexander discussed papers by David Roberts, Peter Murphy, Suzi Adams and Kate Rigby.

31st March: A postgraduate seminar with Jeffrey Alexander and Peter Beilharz on discussion of *'Me and the Sixties'*.

4th – 5th May: Clinton Walker visited the Centre to give classes and to help plan the Centre's next research project, on the history of Australian Rock Music.

11th July: A Colloquium on "The Philosophy Of Culture", organised with The Ashworth Program For Social Theory At The University Of Melbourne, and The School Of English, Communications And Performance Studies, Monash University. Speakers were Professor Agnes Heller (Hannah Arendt Chair of Philosophy, New School for Social Research, New York) *Radical and Historical Evil*; Professor John Carroll (School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University) *Western Culture's Foundation in Being, Not Morals*; Professor Robert Pippin (Raymond W. And Martha Hilpert Gruner Distinguished Service Professor, Committee on Social Thought and Department of Philosophy, University of Chicago) *Hegel's Social Theory of Agency: The "Inner-Outer" Problem*.

1st September: Orlando Patterson, Professor of Sociology at Harvard, *'Slavery, Gender and Work in the Pre-Modern World and Early Greece: A Cross Cultural Analysis'*, organised in co-operation with the School of Social Sciences

4th September: In conjunction with his visit to La Trobe to deliver the Bernard Bailyn Lecture and receive an honorary doctorate, Orlando Patterson joined the editors of *Thesis Eleven* Journal and the *Thesis Eleven* Centre to share discussion of his work in an informal setting.

10th October: Bernard Smith 90th birthday party. We celebrated Bernard Smith's life and achievement and life, in his company, with speakers including special guest from the University of Queensland, Rex Butler; Miriam Riley, and Peter Beilharz. Music was offered by Adrian Barker's Irish Mafia, and song by Joe Kinsela.

17th October: David Walker, Professor of Australian Studies at Deakin University, '*Anxious Nation and After: Australian Representations of Asia*'.

20th-22nd October: Clinton Walker returned to the Centre to visit, to give classes and to further plan the Centre Rock Project.

6th November: David Kelly, Honorary Visiting Research Fellow in the School of Social Sciences, "*Citizens, Social Justice and Chinese Modernity*".

20th November: Meet Gerard Delanty, University of Liverpool, Editor of *European Journal of Social Theory*.

Christchurch:

20th to 26th April:

A colloquium by the New Zealand and Australian teams working on parallel Antipodes projects was held in Christchurch as a sequel to the Inaugural Workshop meeting which was held in Melbourne in April 2005. The Melbourne delegation of nine was represented by Divya Anand, Peter Beilharz, Darrell Bennetts, Lloyd Cox, Kirsten Henderson, Trevor Hogan, Robyn Mitchell, Gwenda Tavan, and Amanda Watson. Unfortunately, Miriam Riley was a late withdrawal due to family reasons.

Mildura:

31st March:

"*Iconic Experience in Art and Life: Standing before Giacometti's 'Standing Woman'*", Professor Jeffrey Alexander, Director of the Centre for Cultural Sociology, Yale.

18th to 23rd July:

Writers' Festival

Guest Writers were Stephen Edgar, Raimond Gaita, Helen Garner, Alan Gould Marion Halligan, Barry Hill, Paul Kane, Bronwyn Lea, Les Murray, Petra White, Peter Beilharz, Judith Beveridge Peter Goldsworthy, Trevor Hogan, Ivor Indyk, Peter Rose and Chris Wallace-Crabbe. The Centre ran a special session on placewriting and the idea of a new journal for the Murray Darling Basin, including Peter Beilharz, Peter Rose , Ivor Indyk, Trevor Hogan and Stefano de Pieri.

1st to 2nd September:

Murray Darling Palimpsest #6 Symposium: *'After the Flood'*. Centre team members Beilharz, Hogan and Kirsten Henderson joined with Stefano de Pieri to give papers and engage in public discussion on the themes of water, flood, and earth in the Murray Darling Basin and across time and place, from the Bible to New Orleans .

PROJECTS:

Launch of *'Sociology: Place, Time, and Division'*

A new textbook produced by the Centre Directors and published by Oxford University Press was launched on 2 August at Readings, Melbourne by Professor Stuart MacIntyre, The University of Melbourne.

As Professor Jeffrey Alexander wrote: 'Beilharz and Hogan have produced a unique book: The book applies sociology to interpret and explain – and evaluate – contemporary Australian society. The beautifully written and wonderfully succinct contributions by over 70 different contributors show the power of the sociological perspective, whether it appears in fiction, geography, history, economics, or politics. Has contemporary Australia ever received such serious and accessible sociological consideration before? Has any other national society? Students will be well served by this exemplary book.'

It is hoped the book will be useful in multi-disciplinary and international Australian studies undergraduate teaching settings. It is already being used for the first year introductory sociology course here at School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University on both the Bundoora and Mildura campuses – a course with an enrolment of over 400 students. Oxford University Press has put up an online

teaching support manual on their website.

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC) GRANTS PROJECTS:

The Antipodes (2004-2006): Beilharz continued to research his book on Australian modernity across the twentieth century. Lloyd Cox continued to work on his transtasman comparison, covering the period since the 1980's. Darrell Bennetts continued research on his doctoral dissertation on the work of New Zealand pioneer social scientist, William Pember Reeves.

Jean Martin and the Social Sciences in Australia (2004-2006): the team, Beilharz, Hogan, Sheila Shaver and Amanda Watson continued team research on Jean Martin. This included team archive work in Canberra in May and interviews throughout the year, and two closed research seminars, one in Canberra with Jeremy Beckett , Tim Rowse, and Nic Peterson in May, and one in Melbourne in October, with Stuart Macintyre, Rob Pascoe and Helen Bourke.

The History of Australian Rock Music (1945-1995): Beilharz and Hogan continued to plan the next major Centre research project, on the history of Australian Rock Music 1945-1995, in collaboration with independent Sydney music writer Clinton Walker, potentially for 2008-10.

Activities of the Directors:

Peter Beilharz visited England in June. He met with cofounder of Thesis Eleven journal and ongoing adviser Julian Triado in London. He visited with Keith Tester in Portsmouth, and in Manchester met with Kevin Morgan and Graeme Kirkpatrick. In Leeds he met with Zygmunt and Janina Bauman. In August he launched *Reflected Light* – La Trobe Essays, together with Robert Manne, Malcolm Fraser and Brian Stoddart. He was invited speaker at the Institute of Advanced Studies conference on Food at the University of Western Australia, together with Sidney Mintz, Alan Warde and Doug McEachern. In August he gave three papers at the ASA in Montreal, and met with Craig Calhoun, George Steinmetz, Loic Wacquant, Irving Louis Horowitz, Eleanor Townsley and Peggy Somers. He joined in the launch of George Ritzer's Encyclopedia of Sociology, of which he is subeditor, and met with publishers Chris Rojek and Jason Weidemann, of Minnesota. In New Haven he met with Jeff Alexander and Charles Lemert. He interviewed Sandra Lauderdale Graham for the Jean Martin project in Santa Fe. He visited New Zealand three times later in the year, to conduct the review of Sociology at Wellington in October; to give the closing keynote at the NZ Sociology Convention in Hamilton in November; and to work further on the Christchurch collaboration in December.

Trevor Hogan returned to India in January to attend the India Association for the Study of Australia (IASA) Conference at Pune and to consolidate our links with scholars in Delhi. Plans are afoot for a *Thesis Eleven* series of events in Kolkata and Delhi, January 2008. In June, he visited Mexico, and explored possibilities of one of the universities in Guadalajara or Mexico City, hosting an annual conference of the International Social Theory Consortium in 2009 or 2010, of which *Thesis Eleven* Centre is a member, and Trevor is an executive committee member, with a followup *Thesis Eleven* Colloquium. There were three institutional expressions of interest. In the second half of the year he has focused on planning for the *Thesis Eleven* events to be held in Manila and Bangkok respectively in June, 2007. In November-December, he travels to Shanghai to teach four weeks of seminars on Australian Studies at East China Normal University.

FORTHCOMING VISITS in 2007:

Emeritus Professor Alastair Davidson, Visiting Research Fellow, all of 2007.

Professor Brinda Bose, Hindu College, Delhi University, May-June, 2007.

THESIS ELEVEN CENTRE FOR CRITICAL THEORY

ANNUAL LECTURES

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| 2002 | BERNARD SMITH |
| 2003 | GYORGY MARKUS |
| 2004 | TESSA MORRIS-SUZUKI |
| 2005 | JOANNA BOURKE |
| 2006 | MARA PIA LARA |
| 2007 | STUART MACINTYRE |

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