

Thanks so much, look, it's really a wonderful thing to get to be here, in the State library, which I think is one of the most extraordinary places that we have as a resource as historians. It's, we're very, very lucky to have this library and to have the Mitchell collection, as well, which I have used extensively and I'm sure many of you will as well. It's really great fun to get to be here today and I'm looking forward to hearing about some of your projects as we progress for the day. I have to keep an eye on the time, so we will try to remember to do that.

So I am going to talk about four ways of making history matter today, by describing some of my own work. Which was almost just given to you now, so feels a bit funny to do it, but I thought I would do it in four ways. The first is to describe how we might make history matter, giving it substance, what historian Greg Denning called present in the past. The second way, I thought we might talk about making history matter, is to make it matter to present political stuff and you can see the ways that I have been interested in that and what you think matters to the present politics is not going to be the same as what I think matters and your project will need to be about what you think matters, but I'm just going to talk about what I think. The third way is making history matter by thinking about the big structures that shape the world, and then the fourth way, that I discovered accidentally, I have to say, is doing history with others, with communities. Which I know that Doctor Tanya Evans is going to talk you about this afternoon, so I'm not going to go into too much detail about the kind of shared authority that we might have with communities, because I think she'll do that. But that the ways that doing history with others helped history to matter to me in ways that were unexpected for me. So we'll get started.

So I know that I'm in a room full of history nerds, like me, because you know there's not another reason to do history, really is there. It's not like it's going to train you to be a stockbroker or become a millionaire. I can attest to that, but what I can tell you is that I've had a full-time job as a historian for four years now and it's an extraordinary privilege, a really wonderful thing to get to do. But before I move on to a very serious discussion about the oh so important uses of history, I think we should acknowledge that one of the really big reasons that we do history is that it's really fun. It doesn't mean that every bit of it is fun, no one likes footnotes, no one, no one. We have to do them, but it's really not fun. But I did, so I'm not just showing you this ridiculously over the top picture of ECB hub, because it's silly, but it is. My very first serious project, if you're going to call it that, was a history of New Year's Eve in Sydney, which I did because I thought it would be fun, sort of. I'll tell you a bit more about it in a second, and the reason of saying this is because doing things for fun in history is actually a really legitimate way of approaching it. So if your topic is something that you like, as well as something that you care about, that's a good way to go about doing it. In order to try to show you a little bit about why I chose the history of New Year's Eve as a project, have a look at this source. This is a fairly typical picture that you would have found in a newspaper during, at around the New Year's, at the end of the Nineteenth Century. The end of the Nineteenth Century was the moment for the emergence of urban form of New Year's Eve, in Sydney as well as in New York and in other cities around the world. This old man, up here, does anyone know who he is? Father Time, yes and the reason we know he's Father Time, is not just because there's a clock behind him, we'll get to the clock in a second, but it's because he's holding the scythe. He is drawn from the Greek mythological figure of Cronus, not the Titan Cronus, but the figure Cronus who's about time and he's holding a scythe because it's time that kills us in the end, not death, death will just carry us over the river, into the next world but time is what kills us in the end. The old man, is father time, who do you think he is accompanying here? This figure was known as Baby New Year. So, so you can kind of see the little bit of modesty that's, that's held there. It also tells us which year it is, which is 1895. Now, so what we can see from this source is that every year Father Time brings Baby New Year into the world and this created all sorts of interesting rituals in the conduct of New Year, New Year's Eve as it is developed.

So at Manly Surf Club for example, they used to take a boat out with the oldest member of the club, throw him in the water and come back with the youngest member of the club, kind of as a, as part of a, kind of continuity of life from drawn from old rituals around harvest and things. Now behind Father Time, as I said is a clock, clocks in 1895 were like, you know, Twitter. That they're new, they're modern and they're technological. 1895 was a really important time for clocks too, because that was the year that standard time was introduced in Australia and so, if you are thinking about celebrating New Year's Eve, time was high in your consciousness because standard time meant that what we used to have was local time, it would be based on where the sun was on and things like that. And so everybody aligned themselves to Greenwich Mean Time from 1895 onwards. The clock is set to midnight, which we all know is the right time to celebrate the new year, except this was fairly new too, for the most part before this, people were celebrating the New Year on the New Year's Day in picnics and cricket and dances and things like that, but this shift, this shift to celebrating at night is, is, we can see something about this by the midnight clock. It was also important because the few people who used see the New Year in at midnight, you used to have to go by the bells that rang at, from the churches. This meant that we could all gather around and watch time pass literally together as a crowd.

Now, so we also need to think democracy is emerging, we're just about to become a Federation, people are gathering in the city, but what makes them think it's a good idea to gather in the city at night? This is new. Can anyone think what changed that might let that happen? Street lighting. So there was street lighting before, but the city council had just installed a new kind of street lighting called incandescent gas lighting, which made the street much brighter and it seemed like an excellent idea to stay in the city, the shops agreed, we're not surprised they stayed open so that people could flood in through the Strand Arcade, which is still there and buy things from the shops and participate in this festival that was all about this combination of things that all of a sudden seemed like it was a good idea to celebrate New Year's Eve in the city, in the city streets at night. Time, the crowd, lights and consumption. All of these intersected, to make it seem like good idea.

Now, depending on where you're up to in your history extension work, you may recognise this sort of history as cultural history. It is a consequence of what historians have called the linguistic turn, in the practice of history. So notice that we've been reading this source almost as if it's a piece of literature. Now, so this is the kind of history that I was trained in and it was really terrific fun. While there were many playful aspects to the work, it was still serious research. What I was trying to do, was trying to use history to understand what gave modern, the modern city its buzz, and in doing that I was interacting with theorists like Walter Benjamin and Marshall Berman. So let me explain a little bit about how I ended up here, because at first I thought I was interested in the energy of the city and these fireworks that you can see there, I thought this seemed like some, an interesting symbol of the energy of the city, maybe I should look at those.

Now, I did this research before we had this amazing resource, everyone familiar with this right? Trove. If you're not, this is, this is nearly as good as the State Library, its an amazing, amazing resource, where we've got digitised newspapers and many other sources that are searchable online. This has revolutionised what we can do as historians, but I did this research before this was available which unfortunately meant that I had to use one of these. This, does anyone know what this is? Yep, it's a microfilm reader! Oh my goodness, it is a piece of torture and so it, we still have to use them often. I'll explain a bit, why I've still done that. I was using one of these and I was going through the newspapers trying to find news about fireworks, it was awful, but it was what, but what I realised was that if I went straight to the first of January, I would find it every time. Now, so this is a confession to lazy and dodgy history, but it's also to tell you not to be frightened to change the topic as you, as you find the sources and find the limitations of your sources. Pragmatic decisions are part of the historical practice as well. So, cultural history was really fun, and it gave me this

opportunity to consider some things that have really shaped Western society and what was important about them, was that these things that were experienced by real people, literally in the street rather than just politicians and military leaders. So, let's try to connect this then to the making history matter. This kind of cultural history becomes matter, I think, what we are doing when we do it is presenting the past. This is Greg Denning, who died just a few years ago, an amazing historian who was specialised in being able to bring the issues of the past into the present. It invokes the lived experience of the past, so that even though we might be decades, centuries or even millennia away from our historical actors, we can still feel them, they become like matter to us. And in that process that affects, and changes, their lives affect ours.

Okay next one, making history matter to the present and this is what I was doing when I wrote first, my Ph.D. And then this book. This piece of research I did using much more traditional approaches, than the cultural history ones. So I was using our university minutes, minutes of meetings and the papers of what historians often called great men. So people who were famous or who were, had, had some sort of importance. I did use student newspapers and other newspapers again microfilm because Trove doesn't come up to the 1980s, so I still needed to do that and I interviewed some former vice chancellors. Now, how on earth did this matter? Looking at the, I was interested in moving away from the, from the very specific types of, types of research I'd been doing about everyday people to thinking about the past in a big picture kind of way. And when I was doing that I was thinking that our world now is in part defined by the University.

We can think about past periods in all sorts of different ways but, if we're going to sweep past them very quickly, one of the things that we could do is say, once upon a time we had a world that was the age of the Cathedral. Say, dominated by religion where religious institutions were determining many of the things that were changing and shaping the world. In the nineteenth century, we could talk about the age of the tower, like the Eiffel Tower, a world where spectacular technologies began to push capitalism literally to new heights. But at the end of the twentieth century I thought, we could discern the age of the University. It was in part that universities grew spectacularly in this period, this is the worldwide growth in participation in universities over that time. We might think that this is primarily Western nations, it's not, it's actually everywhere, and the upturn is amazing isn't it? Ninety, almost ninety degrees angle, but it's not just that they grew spectacularly, but it is also that education, especially university education was in, was now the key to wealth and status. So, in the history of the world, education has not been traditionally, the key to status. Birth, wealth, land ownership, skin colour, all sorts of things, have, have been the way of earning of, of having status in society, but by the end of the twentieth century, it was most certainly education that shaped social hierarchy. Now this, I realised made universities incredibly powerful. So, how did the University come to grab this much power I wondered, in the way that made it the key to social hierarchy.

So when I started this project, I was working in a university. I love education and believe that it is really important to all of us. I love teaching and I think that being a teacher is one of the, one of the best thing that you can be, but it seems to me that there were problems. Several of the problems seemed to belong in the area of the commodification of education, that education was increasingly for sale and I wondered in a world where education is the key to social standing, what it meant, that, to be selling this is, as a kind of product. What would this do to the social fabric of our society? And so, my research showed me that there were, that these were part of a set of wider problems and I wanted to use the university to think about those.

So I thought I would just point, I'm sure there is nothing new about this to you but thought I'd point to some of the problems that we have in our society. Let's speak very quickly, because it's a bit depressing. The share of income is becoming less equal, very quickly. This is a graph about income inequality in the United States where income inequality is increasing at a much more rapid rate than

the rest of the world, but the rest of the world is following that pattern, it's not quite as high. But Thomas Piketty, who wrote the, really the definitive work on income inequality says that the United States is headed to become the most unequal place ever, in the history of the world and we think about medieval periods, or antiquity, or even the late nineteenth century, or the French Revolution. If this is the most unequal place in the world and we are living in a very unstable, unstable world. We know about gender inequality which is underpinned it, in terms of the pay rates and other things, but this is underpinned by a systematic power imbalance that has also resulted, as we've seen recently in significant personal traumas. I don't even want to get into this, or this. We know that far too many children's backyards look like this or this, and as far as the environment is concerned, we really don't need to list all the things that could go wrong, based on our current trajectories, though I did just read this morning that someone's island has altogether disappeared. So the thing is, writing history doesn't actually fix this, which is a thing that I learned at great cost, in fact, and I think historians often overestimate what writing history about stuff can achieve, and I find this a great frustration to myself, but I still wanted my history to matter in the world.

So when I came around to turning my Ph.D. into a book, I spoke to a publisher about it and she suggested that the government, so this was in about 2013. She said, 'so Hannah I think that the government is going to do something to higher education next year, we can kind of see this coming. I think this is when it's going to happen, can you finish your book in time for that?' I went, okay, I'll give it a go and we also then thought about who would need to read it, at the time and it would need to be people that were in a position of influencing decisions going on and so I wrote the book, I should have brought a copy actually, because it's this tiny little thing. I wrote to that, to be able, so a politician or a Vice Chancellor or somebody could just read it over a weekend, it would be easy, they wouldn't have big, complicated concepts to grapple with, those things were underpinning the work but they wouldn't have long sentences, and big words, they'd be able to just read this, see what's going on. So I worked pretty hard at getting the right tone, it would be light, and fun, and readable in a short amount of time. Now sure enough, the publisher, here are some of the things that I was interested in, how, how the university effects class structure, what's the role of knowledge in a capitalist economy, why is that so important and how did it come at the university help to effect social mobility. How might we be able to change the world using this. I wanted to use the university to reform what was going on, I've been unsuccessful so far, but it's not too late, and sure enough, the publisher was spot on, almost the moment I published the book, Christopher Pyne released this plan to let universities charge whatever the market could bear. This was even more horrifying than I had been able to imagine actually, because what I could see is that this was going to hold an entire generation of young people and, and indeed the middle-class to ransom because, because universities have now become the tool to be, for our, for status, and work, and employment, and, and wealth in society. We can charge you anything we like, if they're the things that you want. Now, so I saw that this was going to hold up an entire generation to ransom and would necessarily lead to increasing levels of inequality, so I was very excited when Senator Kim Carr quoted from my book in order to oppose these dreadful reforms, and in fact, in the Senate where this, where his speech was made, did refuse to pass the reforms, which is why we don't have them now. Now I am not in this process attempting to tell you how to vote, or what, what your politics ought to be, that's entirely up to you.

Now this example of this engagement with politics in the present is a very small example. So I do want you to notice, see the "talented historian Hannah Forsyth". But we do have historians in Australia whose work has really affected, public policy, so that it has helped to shape history as well as describe it. The example that I always think of is this one, Peter Read is a historian here in Sydney, and some decades ago he was sitting in the archives when they were down at The Rocks, where they're now out at Penrith, which is a much less pleasant trip in fact to get to those particular records. He was reading the archives of the Aboriginal Protection Board, and he, he was observing

over and over that bad things were happening to Aboriginal children at the hands of what he initially thought were bad guys. This bad person, he, gee they really did that child a disservice, but what he realised is that this was not about bad guys, this was a system. This was a systematic problem, and so, when he realised it was a system, he called it, he called it the Stolen Generation. Now that, the Stolen Generation was a concept that nobody had thought of, or understood, but a historian observed this in the past and that then led to a Royal Commission that, I have no doubt that you have studied the Stolen Generation at school. It has shaped the way, not only the way we see Australian history, but that we perform policies in the present. One of the things that I'd like to point out about this, is the distinction between these types of history. So, an event, someone did something wrong, bad guy did something wrong. A structure is, is where the system encouraged individuals to remove children.

So if we're interested with, we in history are often interested in isolated events and what caused them, but we're also interested in the structures and how they help to shape those events. Let's think about that a little bit more, because this is where I've gotten to now. Think about this problem, let's ask the question. What causes financial inequality? Is it greed? I've often had students say, if the problem is greed, if we can get rid of greed, we would, we would be okay. How many greedy people does it take to make inequality? Is every society greedy? Look, let's think about this from another perspective again. Caesar crossing the Rubicon, that was an event, but the Roman military is a structure. We have structures in our society, things that consist of the institutions like education, the law, governments, but they also consist of systematic ideas like marriage, gender, family, race and then systems, that don't have formal institutions that govern them entirely or are made of ad hoc ones like Capitalism. Now, so we can see then, that there's a difference between thinking about an event and the structures that shape them. So I was interested in, I was interested in thinking about structures because for me this helps to create some hope. I don't think, for example, that I could ever get rid of greed, I think every society has had greedy people in it, but I reckon what we could do is change the structures that encourage or discourage the effects of greed in society. This is how I got to my new project, it's called 'Are we all middle class now? A history of professions in Australia.' I'm really extremely fortunate to have the funding and the time to be able to pursue this.

Our understanding of class as historians, and thinkers, and people has been largely shaped by the nineteenth century. This is a cartoon that was very common towards the end of the nineteenth century, early twentieth century. What you can see, and there are lots of different versions of this all over the place, so what you can see is a, two, a man on the left, who is carrying the burden and the man on the right who is carrying weight, and so we have labour on the left, who is doing the work and capital on the right, who is gaining the benefits. Now this division between labour and capital has defined what we think of as the structures that create class, throughout our thinking. However, educated, middle class, white collar professions, professionals, now seen to be voting differently to both capital and labour. Though of course this is not the universally the case, but these people are sometimes demonised as the liberal elite. Now for the new right that it, that call these people the liberal elite, this pejorative has an actual argument. The expertise of professionals, their critique suggests has put an educated elite into an unprecedented position of power, especially in the political sphere as journalists, academics and political speechwriters, but also in shaping public policies around science, health, food and the environment. So I'm not going to go into what I think is behind that debate, but my feeling is that this debate points to a problem that we are experiencing in the present in navigating class divisions. Now, I think some of it is captured quite well by this TV show 'Upper Middle Bogan', it sees some of the, some of the ways that we trying to work trying to navigate class but don't have the intellectual tools with which to understand the task.

So my hypothesis is, I'm still fairly early on this project, my hypothesis is that the reason we're

struggling to do, to really understand class in our society is because we don't understand the economic underpinnings to the professions. Now this is because what we do understand the economic underpinnings to the divisions between labour and capital, but what on earth has led to the the growth of the professions. This is a question about structure, have a look at this, 1901, 7% of the labour market are professionals but by 2001, it's 51%. So something has, has changed structurally in the economy, I don't know what it is, so that's what i'm going to try to figure out. This also then, requires us to rethink gender. This graph might be, you can see how I've changed from the cultural historian that was looking picture to this, I crunched numbers in a statistical package to be able to produce this. What you can see, this is a little bit harder to see, what you should be able to see is that the growth of the professions is not being driven by lawyers, doctors or the clergy, which are the traditional professions. In fact, it's the big one at the top, that's teachers, the next one is nurses but by the 1947, by about this time of the Second World War, that's quickly being caught up by accountants and engineers.

What this means is that we also then have to think about the relationship between gender and the bossiness that is the subject of Conservative criticism. Now this is a little bit tricky, but have a look at this. We have always had a bossy middle-class, so this is again, from the late nineteenth century, these are the middle class, white women who were relentlessly, actually telling both capital and labour, what to do. I wonder, whether the nature of the professions is not... I don't mean to say that only women are bossy. Although, there's a reason why this is, but the reason, the reason why this is, this is the case at this period, is because of the association between women and morality. And that morality enters into the professions and often still seeks to control both capital and labour, you'll see professionals telling, telling capital, telling the government or the economy that they ought to behave in this way, they'll also tell workers that they need to behave in a certain way, or that they should have a certain level of education. So how I'm doing this, hopefully can see why it is important, I'm doing this, using three different approaches and I'm mashing them together. This is, this is an interesting way of doing it, but as you think I'm using statistics, so I'm drawing material out of the census to analyse over the whole, really about 120 years, though I've only gotten up to 1947 so far. I've got a sample of professions which I'm looking at the ways that they're there regulating themselves, in the ways of, who do you let in and who do you keep out and on what criteria? As a way of trying to understand the class interest, but then also other ways that the professions are protecting the interests. So that sample of professions is doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, teachers, nurses, journalists and social workers, where I'm trying to get a spread of professions based on when they entered the University, that's about the sequence of them, as in when the university started training them, and also that will give me a good gender balance. As well as doing that I'm looking at doing culture study of magazines, newspapers and movies and TV shows and this is still totally fun. Why does it matter? We are clearly undergoing major global, political, economic shifts right now, resulting in conflicts over class, also race, also gender. Things are changing and we need to understand the structure that we live in, in order to understand this change. Okay, last bit.

So I was interested in, so I started off doing this professions thing by going of all places to Broken Hill, which is, if you haven't, if you don't know where that is, it's a small town, mining town, outback New South Wales, almost all the way at the border of South Australia, takes about 18 hours to get there. So I thought I would start that there, it seems crazy, because, for two reasons. One was that I thought this project, if I'm not careful, will be all about the city. I grew up in the country. I think the country matters and I would like to understand the ways that, that the economy has worked across the whole of Australia. The other one, other reason was that Broken Hill as a mining town has been the site of capital versus labour, it's really melodramatically that, that the capital has been. This is where BHP was born. BHP is Broken Hill Proprietary and where the labour movement pushed for things like the eight hour day and a whole lot of things very successfully. Walking through Broken

Hill, you can feel labour versus capital, seeping out of the ground. So I wanted to go there and see whether professionals fit, that's another story in fact, because while I was there I made friends with some local Aboriginal people. Who kept telling me about a town nearby called Wilcannia. This is a protest that was held in Wilcannia late last year over the supply of water into the river, there has been, you would have seen that there's been a lot of controversy over the use of water in the Darling River. So, my friends kept saying 'Hannah, you have to go to Wilcannia, it's an amazing place. Just go and see and, see.' So I had a day where I wasn't particularly busy, I said 'Alright, I'm going to go to Wilcannia. What should I do? Who should I talk to?' And so, I went there and what I saw was something quite, that I'd never seen before that it got me to think about some other stuff. I began to think about the big history of capitalism.

So Australia is colonised in part to supply Britain with resources, this is a capitalist story. How does that interact with racism? How does that interact with what, what's the structure that that connects that settler colonial project and the economy? But then, I thought you know the way to do this, this is crazy by the way, but you know the way to do this is to think about it from the other perspective. What do Aboriginal people think about this? What, what, what do people in Wilcannia think is, has been going on in the structure of the economy and how have they engaged with it? So I began to just ask people, also look at the, look at the longer history. How have Aboriginal people engaged with the economy? What would an Indigenous centred-history of capitalism look like? Wilcannia is a very small place now, but where in the 1870s when it was established, it was, it was the third largest port in Australia on the river. It was shipping wool and ore from the mines, from there down the Darling into the Murray, down to Melbourne to be exported. It was a very wealthy place but it was also Aboriginal land. So Aboriginal people, there are four main phases of this, where, so initial conflict, violent conflict as settlers are moving into the area, followed by a long, a long period of working, of Aboriginal people working on, on stations, on the very large stations that were bit like towns. As those stations began to collapse, because you know the price of wool is not what it was in the 1870s, the people moved into town and as the town started to decline from being a very wealthy place, to now it is one of the most impoverished towns in Australia, it, white people moved out of town in general and that means that it is now primarily a Barkindji town and its on Barkindji land. Throughout that time there have been many different policies, some of them contradictory and segregation at the same time, which is a confusing thing to navigate. So we want you to stay and be like us, or we want you to be over there and do your own thing. This, the logic of those policies, has been described by a historian Patrick Wolf, as the logic of elimination. As settlers come in, now this is not to say that all these people are bad, this is about the structure, this is to say settlers come in they need this land, they believe and the only way of acquiring this land is to push the people out of it, one way or another. So I asked Aboriginal people what they thought about this and what they thought about their engagement with the economy over the history of this time. Now what I should say is that not everybody agreed, there is no single Aboriginal voice in Wilcannia or anywhere else, people have different political perspectives.

So for example, this is my friend Harry Kennedy, he thinks that reconciliation and working together is the way to go and this is the, this is the path through. This woman, Virgean Wilson thinks that the system needs to be turned upside down to give Aboriginal people a fair go. Murray Butcher, shares a more radical view that Aboriginal people should seek sovereignty. And the Barkindji in Wilcannia have been the recipient of the largest native title claim ever in New South Wales, in the past year or two, at something like a 128,000 hectares. And Murray worked very hard with many others on that native title claim which took some like 18 years to get through. But he said we had to give up a lot to get this and I wonder if now if that was the right thing to do, I reckon we should have gone for sovereignty. But over and over, regardless of their very diverse politics, people kept telling me the same story about Aboriginal engagement with the economy almost word for word. Aboriginal people, they say can go into the bush and find food and water. At first, I was confused, everyone I spoke to

knew I was asking about the economy and they kept telling me about Aboriginal camping habits. So I was going, this is nice but I don't really understand why you're telling me this. So one woman I spoke to, helped me by putting it little differently, she said we know that "the Bush is there to nurture you". Now, I grew up in the country, the bush is not to nurture you, that's not how I grew up, the bush is out to get you. You've got to build a fence, you've got to keep snakes out, walls inside. Your stance towards the world, certainly according to the settler economy that I grew up in, is one of fear and you try to hoard what you've got, you've got, you worry about the future but that, what they were trying to tell me, was this is the world upside down, this was a stance towards the world, it's a structure that shaped the way Aboriginal people in Wilcannia interacted with capitalism. While the colonial capitalist structures sought to exploit, assimilate and even in some periods, eliminate Aboriginal people, "The bush is there to nurture you", turned that structure upside down, producing a faith that reproduced nourishment, rather than exploitation in order to structure survival. So this really a wonderful man Woddy Harris, who has, who gave away all his possessions to his grown up children and squats on the edge of town, in a shack that he has built. Woddy, I was dropping some things to him one afternoon and he just spread his arm across the town, and said, "Mother Nature, will outlast all of this", he meant something bigger by "Mother Nature" than just the environment. I think he means big, eternal things like nourishment, as well as, literally, nature. Now, I found this very moving, this helped history to matter to me, in a way, that I hadn't expected.

Survival is a word that Indigenous people in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA, all use in order to describe the resilience with which they have confronted very serious incursions, but we are all in fact, surviving the structures in which we find ourselves. We've seen that there, that the changes that are going on in the world are big and scary, and profound. So, I learned from the people that I spoke to in Wilcannia, it is possible to draw on another structure, to take a stance towards these things that does not tolerate the bad in the world but sees that the things that nourish are always available and will outlast even the deepest structure.

Okay, so it's time for me to finish up, which I will do. So I've talked about some of the ways that history might matter, it could matter by evoking the past, by making the real present, at making the past real in present, it can matter by speaking into current events, things that matter now. It can matter by giving voice to communities, to real people and their everyday lives and it can matter to us as historians, and as people, and we can learn things that matter in our everyday lives as well. So I think the most important thing as you begin to pursue your project, is to think about "why does this matter? " and one of the things that I love about history is that we can all share in the things that matter, and I'm really excited about the possibilities that year 12 extension projects produce, because you have the opportunity to make history matter in the way that you think it ought to matter, and I think that that gives some hope for both history and for the world.