



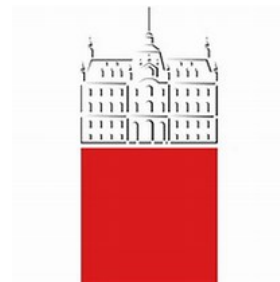
Program

Western Australian Economic History Summit 2022

“WA Economic History: Moving Toward 200 Years”

Date: Thursday 10th November 2022, 9am to 3.30pm (AWST).

Location: Michael Chaney Case Study Room, Ground Floor, UWA Business School, University of Western Australia Perth, Australia



**UWA History & Philosophy
of Social Sciences Research
Network**

A collaboration led by UWA Business School and including the University of Ljubljana, UWA Centre for WA History and the RWAHS

The convenor's contact details are:

Professor David Gilchrist, University of Western Australia: david.gilchrist@uwa.edu.au

Please contact the organisers on +61 404 515 270 if you require assistance.

To register for this free event, please click [here](#).

Western Australian Economic History Summit 2022 Program

WA Time	AESST	Session	Presenter	Topic
9.00am	12nn		Professor David Gilchrist	<i>Commencement and Acknowledgement of Country</i>
9.02-10.30am	12.02pm	Session 1: The Place of Economic History	Claire Wright – Keynote Speaker	Australian Economic History and the Interdisciplinary University
			Michael McLure	Evidence-based Policy and the Credibility Revolution
10.30-11.00				<i>Morning Tea – Self Catered</i>
11.00-12.00nn	2pm	Session 2: WA & Secession	Sukrit Sabhlok	Palmer v WA: the High Court’s Endorsement of Unilateral Secession?
			Rok Spruk	Persistent Effects of the Secessionist Tendencies of Political and Institutional Development: Evidence from the 1933 Succession Referendum in Western Australia
12.00-12.45	3pm			<i>Lunch Break (Self Catered)</i>
12.45-1.45pm	3.45pm	Session 3: Early Days	Xavier Reader	The Western Australian Legacies of Slavery and Imperial Wealth: Examining the Swan River Land Returns of 1829 – 1830
			Bill Edgar	Early Days, Early Difficulties
1.45-2.00	4.45pm			<i>Afternoon Tea Break (Self Catered)</i>
14.00-15.30	5.00pm	Session 4: Local, National & International	Tom Goode	West Midland in the 1940s
			Zhangxin (Frank) Liu	Trading Activity and Sentiment on the Sydney Stock Exchange 1901 – 1950
			Dean Kotlowski	Whatever Happened to the Indian Point Four? Economic Development, Liberal Assimilationism, and the Origins of American Indian Self-Determination
				<i>Close</i>

Abstracts

All abstracts listed in order of presentation.

Keynote Presentation: Claire Wright

Australian economic history and the interdisciplinary university

Interdisciplinary research is the key to addressing the challenges of our current moment. Climate change, global development, pandemics and so on are infuriatingly complex, and rarely respect disciplinary boundaries.

Interdisciplinary research is seen as a source of innovation and scientific breakthroughs, with discourse in Australia and elsewhere voicing the need for 'job-ready' graduates and 'useful' real-world research. Despite this, the policies and practices of universities continue to reinforce the dominance of disciplines. Everyone wants interdisciplinary research, but very few actively implement policies to encourage it.

Economic history is one of the world's oldest interdisciplinary fields. Connecting economics and history – the humanities and social sciences – the field has flourished in the empty spaces left between disciplinary 'tribes'. Economic historians in Australia have operated in various states of autonomy, negotiating relationships amongst themselves, with parent disciplines, and with a higher education sector that has fundamentally misunderstood interdisciplinary knowledge. Rather than the traditional growth and consolidation of disciplines, Australian economic history has progressed through a series of transformations: from individual satellites, to 'disciplinary'-style growth, neoliberal crisis, and a modest renaissance recently.

In this paper, I set the field's progress within the structures of Australian universities, examine the opportunities for economic historians to bridge otherwise disparate disciplinary silos, and outline the lessons this history provides to workers and managers seeking to develop robust interdisciplinary conversations. I advocate for the field's diverse intellectual possibilities, and for the creation of vibrant cross-disciplinary spaces as the key to ensuring its continued value and relevance.

Evidence Based Policy and the Credibility Revolution

Over the last decade or so there has been increasing emphasis placed on ‘evidence-based policy’. Of course, evidence has always been at the heart of policy making, but ‘evidence-based policy’ is suggesting that the quantity and quality of evidence for the policy purposes should increase. It appears to me that ‘evidence-based policy’ is now, in the minds of many of my colleagues at least, increasingly associated with policy development being undertaken in the light of empirical studies of the type Joshua Angrist characterised as the *credibility revolution*. I argue, however, that the exclusive association of evidence based policy with empirical studies and the *credibility revolution* is something of a cliché and suggest that ‘evidence’ for policy purposes should include ideas from economic theory; ideas from economic history and the history of ideas; as well as empirical findings. I also give some consideration to when it is, and when it is not, legitimate to treat economic and historical ideas as evidence for the purposes of evidence-based policy.

Sukrit Sabhlok

Palmer v WA: the High Court’s endorsement of unilateral secession?

Palmer v Western Australia is notable for what the High Court of Australia did rather than what the judges said. What the justices said they were doing was upholding border closure directions preventing interstate Australians from travelling into Western Australia due to these directions being a proportionate response to the COVID-19 pandemic. What they actually did was to endorse the partial secession of WA on public health grounds. By using utilitarian public policy reasoning – ‘structured proportionality’ – to justify the Western Australian government’s emergency directions, the Court effectively endorsed a secession that lasted intermittently for about two years. While WA has now re-entered the Commonwealth after removing its border restrictions, the constitutional position remains favourable to secession. This has significant economic implications.

David Gilchrist, Nuno Garoupa and [Rok Spruk](#)

Persistent effects of the secessionist tendencies on political and institutional development: evidence from 1933 referendum in Western Australia

We examine the contribution of secessionist political tendencies in mature jurisdictions to the institutional quality. To this end, we exploit the 1933 secession referendum in Western Australia to consistently estimate the contribution of the separation vote on the long-term trajectory of political and institutional development of the state. Our empirical strategy relies on the estimation of latent residual series of institutional quality from the existing datasets through the application of Monte Carlo Markov Chain (MCMC) sampling algorithm in a learning environment with flat priors and large-scale generation of random sequences of samples used to build the ideal points and chart the long-term paths of political and institutional development. To isolate the effect of the 1933 secession referendum, we match Western Australia with a several variants of control samples drawn from a donor pool of 212 former colonial jurisdictions in North America, South America and Africa with similar degree of factor endowments. Our preliminary results suggest that the 1933 secession referendum has importantly shaped the trajectory of Western Australia's political development. A further disaggregation of the effect to the regional level suggests a notable effect heterogeneity between more temperate regions in the south in comparison with more isolated regions in the north of the state.

Xavier Reader

Western Australian Legacies of Slavery and Imperial Wealth: Examining the Swan River Land Returns of 1829-1830.

Through a quantitative analysis of the Swan River land returns register, 1829-1830, this paper examines the private investments, modes of asset valuation, and calculation of capital that underpinned the Swan River colony. The land returns register documents the amount of property imported to the colony and its assessed monetary value, based on the theory of 40 acres per 3 pounds of investment. This quantitative analysis reveals significant discrepancies between the amount of land that was granted to colonists versus their theoretical entitlement, often by many hundreds of pounds in the colonists' favour. I quantify several key parameters, including the total capital investment that underpinned the Swan River settlement and the top ten largest individual investments, before turning to consider the origins of this massive wealth and how the discrepancies present between the actual amount of land granted versus individual theoretical entitlement may be explained. In turn, I draw attention to the ways in which financial legacies of British slavery and imperial wealth more broadly played a key role in the founding of the Swan River colony.

Bill Edgar

The Swan River Colony: Early Days, Early Difficulties'

From its foundation in 1829 and onward, the Swan River settlers ran into many un-countenanced difficulties, a critical shortage of labour being paramount among them.

In consequence the first of an eventual 9,500 convicts were introduced into the colony in 1850, helping to stabilize the economic fortunes of many of the floundering agricultural enterprises. In the second phase of the convict era (1862-68), a dedicated infra-structure program was implemented. Despite the considerable controversy, it laid the foundations and the hope of a new prosperity for the colony.

Toward the conclusion of the convict era (1850-68), representative government was introduced into the state and a high proportion of ex-convicts began progressively to qualify for a vote. The foundling Western Australian colony, therefore, became a part of a worldwide humanist movement, which heralded the rise of the lower classes into an eventual political and economic force in the years that followed.

Tom Goode

West Midland in the 1940

West Midland was a dormitory suburb for the railway workshops at Midland. This paper examines the history of the suburb from 1898 with a particular focus on the years from 1940 to 1950. The paper provides a detailed examination of the facilities in a small urban community for shopping, transport, education and health services during and after the second world war.

This is the history of a small residential suburb that was never at the cross-roads of history. The growth and change in this small enclave have been steady rather than dramatic, reflecting the constancy of its major role as housing for workers employed in the surrounding district. The wider events of history affected the people as they did elsewhere and there were the family stories of joy and pain, but no cataclysmic event shattered the peace. The question may be asked why then write the history? My answer is that the history of this suburb provides a reflection of the consequences of decisions made elsewhere and hence adds understanding to those decisions.

Grant Fleming, [Zhangxin \(Frank\) Liu](#), David Merrett and Simon Ville

Trading activity and sentiment on the Sydney Stock Exchange 1901-1950

We use handwritten daily stock and share lists from the Sydney Stock Exchange (SSX) to examine the relationship between media sentiment, trading volume and key economic and geopolitical events between 1901 and 1950. The data is collected using Amazon Textract and algorithms developed by Sherratt (2022) for the ANU SSX digitisation project, converting handwritten records of buy, sell and sales prices into machine readable text. We construct daily and monthly media sentiment, trading volume and order imbalance variables to provide the first quantitative analysis of the relationship between media sentiment and trading activity on a major Australian stock exchange in the first half of the twentieth century. We measure trading volume as the number of securities that had sales over the total number of tradeable securities on a given day, given that the SSX did not track turnover (the number or value of shares traded) at that time. Order imbalance is calculated as the number of securities that had a bid price over those with an offer price. Our findings are fourfold. First, we find that media sentiment plays a key role in explaining the dynamics of trading activity, with positive tone resulting in higher trading volume and higher order imbalance. Second, we show that the relationship between media sentiment and trading volume holds despite there being significantly lower trading in three major geopolitical episodes; namely, World War I, the 1929 Wall Street Crash and World War II. Third, we find that sellers withdrew from the market during World War I and World War II as opposed to seeking liquidity amid geopolitical uncertainty. By contrast, sellers increased in proportion to buyers during the 1929 Wall Street crash and its aftermath. Last, we confirm existing literature in behavioural finance that investors tend to trade less (more) before (after) scheduled public holidays. This implies that higher trading volume may be associated with more information exchange during public holidays. The relationship between media sentiment and trading volume remains despite the public holiday anomaly

Dean Kotlowski

Whatever Happened to the Indian Point Four? Economic Development, Liberal Assimilationism, and the Origins of American Indian Self-Determination

During the 1950s and 1960s, assimilationism defined Indigenous policy in Australia—and in the United States. For example, Harry S. Truman’s foreign aid program—“Point Four”—inspired a push to modernize Indian reservations. Truman’s initiative sought to provide countries with technical assistance, so that they might develop thriving economies and become US allies. Leading liberals, some conservatives, and American Indian leaders and activists saw benefits in extending Point Four to Indian tribes. Raising Indians’ standards of living would ease their entry into the wider society, an aim shared by conservatives and liberals. Point Four also became a flag around which Indians and concerned liberals rallied, as they sought to slow or stop the government’s termination policy, designed to end the rights of federal-recognized tribes. Most important, Indian-rights activists envisioned Point Four as a way to empower tribes with knowhow and to revitalize reservations economically. For national politicians, however, Point Four became a catchphrase that promised financial assistance and integration to Indians, ideas embodied in JFK’s “New Trail” for Indians. Talk of economic development, and of an “Indian Point Four,” receded, as the Kennedy administration relied on modest measures to bolster Indian housing, education, and job-training. LBJ’s government put added emphasis on economic development for tribes in order to promote Indians’ entrance into the “American mainstream.” Yet Indian leaders’ dream of asserting control of their resources and futures as sovereign entities—a concept embodied in the Indian Point Four—endured. It received a somewhat unintentional boost from the War on Poverty’s Community Action Program. In some respects, the stillborn Indian Point Four sowed the seeds of American Indian self-determination.

Speaker Biographies (Alphabetical Order)



Bill Edgar (tammar@westnet.com.au) is the author of a dozen books on various aspects of Australian social history. A close interest in the Australian colonial era resulted in his doctoral thesis entitled: *The Convict Era in Western Australia: Its Economic, Social and Political Consequences*. This work included a forensic examination of the 43 convict transport ships that voyaged to Western Australia between 1850 and 1868, bringing 9,500 British miscreants, often of the worst kind according to British law at the time, but who, by enlarge, helped transform the colony's fortunes from a parlous state to a modicum of stability.

He is also the author of three military volumes, including *Warrior of Kokoda*, the biography of Brigadier Arnold Potts DSO OBE MC, the man who led the Australian troops in their heroic defence of the Kokoda Track in 1942.

Tom Goode (tomgoode@inet.net.au): after a varied career mostly in education and technical training, Tom is a late arrival on the history-writing scene. In 2016 he published *The Cold Footed Mob, A History of the 5th Australian Broad Gauge Railway Operating Company*. This unit was raised in WA and served on the Western Front in WW1 as part of the First AIF. In 2021 Tom completed a Master of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, Fremantle. Thesis topic: The Great Southern Buy-Back, The Government of Western Australia and the Great Southern Railway 1880-1897. When not managing the Royal Western Australian Historical Society bookshop, Tom is currently researching the way the farm-to-kitchen supply chain has evolved in Western Australia.

Dean J. Kotlowski (DJKOTLOWSKI@salisbury.edu) is a professor of history at Salisbury University. He is the author of *Nixon's Civil Rights: Politics, Principle, and Policy* (Harvard University Press, 2001) and *Paul V. McNutt and the Age of FDR* (Indiana University Press, 2015) and the editor of *The European Union: From Jean Monnet to the Euro* (Ohio University Press, 2000). He has published over forty articles and book chapters, including in such journals as *Diplomatic History*, *Pacific Historical Review*, *Journal of Policy History*, and *Business History Review*. He has been a Fulbright Scholar four times, in the Philippines (2008), Austria (2016), and Australia (2020, 2022), the last of which was a distinguished chair. He has served as an historical adviser to the National Archives, Richard Nixon Library, and U.S. Mint. His next book, *Toward Self-Determination: Federal Indian Policy from Truman to Clinton*, is under contract with University of North Carolina Press.



Zhangxin (Frank) Liu (frank.liu@uwa.edu.au) is currently a Senior Lecturer of Finance in the Department of Accounting and Finance at the University of Western Australia (UWA), and a fellow of the Centre for Business Data Analytics at UWA. He works in the areas of asset pricing, business history, corporate governance, and fintech. He is a recipient of the 2019 Australian Awards for University Teaching – Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Students. His recent publications include, with Daniel Cahill, 'Limitations of Imitation: Lessons from another Bitcoin Copycat' *Journal of Corporate Finance*, 69, 2021, 101992; with Grant Fleming, David Merrett, and Simon Ville, 'Underpricing in a Developing Capital Market: Australian Equity Issuances, 1920-1939' *Economic History Review*, 74(3), 2021, 831-855; with Doug Cumming and Grant Fleming, 'The Returns to Private Debt: Primary Issuances versus Secondary Acquisitions' *Financial Analysts Journal*, 75(1), 2019, pp. 48-62.

Michael McLure (michael.mclure@uwa.edu.au) is a Professor of Economics at the UWA Business School. His research activity is focused on the history of economic thought, which has included the co-editing of the English translation of Pareto's *Manual of Political Economy: A Critical and Variorum Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2014, 2020), co-editing the *History of Economics Review* from 2007 to 2011 and authoring *The Paretian School and Italian Fiscal Sociology* (Palgrave-Macmillan 2007). In October 2020 Michael was awarded the *Premio Galileo Galilei* by the *Fondazione Premio Internazionale Galileo Galilei dei Rotary Club Italiani* for his contribution to the history of Italian political economy; and in November 2021 he was presented with the *Austin Holmes Award* by the *WA Branch of the Economic Society of Australia* for contributing to economics in Western Australia.

Xavier Reader (xavier.reader@uwa.edu.au) is a research assistant at the University of Western Australia for the Centre for Public Value (Business School) and the West Australian Legacies of British Slavery project (School of Humanities). He holds an honours degree (first class) in History from UWA and a Graduate Certificate in Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies from Deakin University. Xavier's research interests include exploring the intersections between slavery, capital, and power through a variety of interdisciplinary frames.



[Sukrit Sabhlok \(sukrit.sabhlok@students.mq.edu.au\)](mailto:sukrit.sabhlok@students.mq.edu.au) completed a PhD on the legality of Western Australia's unilateral secession from the Australian federation at Macquarie University Law School, where he argued that secession is a constitutional remedy available to the state. His main research interests lie in constitutional law and in particular secession and federalism. He was awarded a Master of Arts for his research examining the impact of the United States and Confederate Constitutions on the military outcome of the American Civil War. Between 2012 to 2015, Sukrit was editor of the *Journal of Peace, Prosperity and Freedom*. In addition, he has authored articles for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Centre for Independent Studies, the Foundation for Economic Education and Indian Link on a variety of topics. He also contributed the foreword to the book *Mencken's Conservatism*.

[Rok Spruk \(rok.spruk@ef.uni-lj.si\)](mailto:rok.spruk@ef.uni-lj.si) obtained a PhD in quantitative economic history in 2016 from Utrecht University, The Netherlands. He is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana and is a joined member of Econometric Society, American Economic Association, Austrian Society for New Institutional Economics, American Law and Economics Association and German Law and Economics Association. In 2010, he started working at the European Enterprise Institute in Brussels and published two reports on Iceland's economic and financial crisis. In 2012, he enrolled in a Master program on international economics specializing in the globalization and development track at Utrecht School of Economics and graduated in the same year with a thesis on the augmented Solow growth model with institutions. In the same year, he was employed to prepare the proposal for the PhD in economic and social history under the supervision of prof. dr. Jan Luiten van Zanden. In 2013, he obtained the PhD position at the Department of Economic and Social History in a research project on institutions, growth and long-run development which resulted in this thesis. In 2015, he won Young Scholar Prize at the International Law and Economics conference in Ankara, Turkey for the paper on electoral law enforcement, political institutions and Latin America's long-run development. His research interests encompass economic growth and development, new institutional economics, applied econometrics, causal inference methods, intellectual property and empirical economic history. At the moment, he has published several high-ranked SSCI publications. His work has been accepted for full presentation at several high-profile conferences such as American Economic Association's Annual Meeting and Econometric Society meetings.



Claire E. F. Wright (Claire.Wright@uts.edu.au) is a business historian at the UTS Business School. She is interested in the ways that interpersonal connections affect knowledge, markets, and business strategy, focussing particularly on intellectual communities and corporate networks. She is the author of *Australian Economic History: Transformations of an Interdisciplinary Field* (ANU Press, 2022), and is currently an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) Fellow (2022-24), working on the first history of Australian women in corporate leadership across the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.