

## **International Research Projects Winter 2025**

- 1. Project title:** Public Policy, Precarious Peoples and the Emergency Humanitarian Visa Pathway in Australasia

**Area:** Politics and International Relations

**Project supervisors:** Dr Ritesh Shah, Dr Tim Fadgen, Prof. Jay Marlowe

### **Project description:**

Against a backdrop of record numbers of peoples forcibly displaced, and the precarity of current bordering regimes that currently severely restrict the ability of many to seek temporary or permanent safety and sanctuary, are growing calls for countries to establish more regularised “emergency humanitarian” visa pathways.

### **Researcher’s work:**

The aim of this summer scholarship opportunity is to firstly, map out Aotearoa/New Zealand’s varied response to past humanitarian crises and the affordances it has provided to those fleeing. Strengths and limitations of these past responses will be identified. From this, the research will then identify what a more streamlined, equitable, predictable, and effective response to assist people facing a real risk of persecution, extreme danger or other serious harm would look like. This will be based on comparative analysis of other jurisdictions where this has been done, along with a review of recommendations of UN bodies about such a visa category.

### **Research outputs:**

A key outcome from this summer scholarship will be to develop a policy brief that can be used to engage with government officials, politicians, and other civil society organisations around this issue, and to mobilise support for this new visa pathway.

### **Required skills/prerequisites:**

The ideal candidate will have a strong interest in the subject area and a passion for research and detail. In addition, the candidate must have an ability to communicate clearly, both orally and in writing.

## **2. Project title: 'Emergence': A New Approach to Artistic Creativity**

**Area:** Art History

**Project Supervisor:** Professor Greg Minissale

### **Project description:**

An opportunity for a study abroad student to act as a guest editor for the contemporary art magazine *Drain*, helping to peer-review, edit, and publish responses to the call for papers and artworks on the topic of 'emergence.' In philosophy and science, emergence is a new way of understanding how interactions between complex processes can produce unexpected and innovative outcomes. This approach has been very useful in reconceptualising creativity and artistic practices as interactive behaviours involved with complex social and material entanglements. This allows us to move away from the figure of an individual 'genius' producing innovative ideas in an ivory tower.

'Emergence' suggests that artworks can arise, like hope, spontaneously and unforeseen from complex interwoven events in the world. Yet, somehow, these artworks are not reducible or precisely traceable to these events. How is this emergence to be understood?

### **Researcher's work:**

1. The student would learn how to peer-review, liaise with other peer reviewers, and plan an issue for an international academic art magazine with a good academic reputation, particularly among artist practitioners and theorists (4 weeks).
2. The student will upload and help design the presentation of articles and artworks to the journal website. Teaching on the job is very much part of this opportunity, as well as learning how to upload material in a digital format relevant to all online academic publishing, and they would have me to support and advise them on best practices. The student would get full recognition as Guest Editor (3 weeks)

### **Research outputs:**

A full issue of *Drain* to be published online. This usually consists of four or five articles and digital images by four contributing artists. *Drain* is a peer-reviewed academic journal catalogued by the Library of Congress and established in 2004. It has an impressive advisory board of editors to draw on as peer reviewers that the student could rely on and work with <https://drainmag.com/about/>

### **Required skills/prerequisites:**

The ideal applicant for this project is a student with an art, design, critical theory, or art history background, accomplished communication skills, and the ability to critically engage with contemporary and contemporary art and theory texts. Proficiency in using digital technology-- WordPress is an advantage.

This would be an invaluable experience for an ambitious student interested in being introduced to academic networks and practices and eager to gain experience in academic publishing. They would help to develop an innovative topic in contemporary art with an enthusiastic and supportive team.

### **3. Project title:** Linguistic Diversity and Discrimination in Higher Education

**Area:** Asian Studies

**Project supervisor:** Mi Yung Park

#### **Project description:**

Auckland is a superdiverse city. Its population by ethnic background currently comprises 11.5% Māori, 15% Pasifika, 28.2%, Asian (an increase of 15% since 2003) and 53.5% Pākehā. Meanwhile, 41.6 % of Aucklanders were born overseas (the fourth highest percentage internationally) with many in this group being bi/multilingual (Statistics New Zealand, nd). As a result, in addition to English and te reo Māori, over 160 languages are now spoken in Auckland, with over 50% of New Zealand's bi/multilingual speakers living here (RSNZ, 2013). This ethnic and linguistic diversity is also clearly reflected among University of Auckland's 46,000 students and 13,000 academic and professional staff. In 2022, approximately 47% of the University's student body identify as Asian, 9% as Pasifika, and 7% as Māori. Given this context, this study examines the linguistic profile of the university's staff and students, along with experiences of linguistic discrimination/exclusion on the one hand and linguistic affordances (if any) on the other hand, particularly for bi/multilingual staff and students. The research will encompass all bi/multilingual speakers across the university, including te reo Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other language speakers.

#### **Description of the researcher's work:**

The student researcher will support this project by: (1) conducting a summary of relevant research articles and (2) transcribing interview data and conducting a summary of the transcribed interview data. The student researcher will be guided in all aspects of the work.

#### **Required skills/prerequisites:**

This research project requires a highly motivated student who is interested in the issues of linguistic diversity and discrimination. The successful applicant will have: (1) the ability to communicate effectively in English; (2) strong writing and analysis skills; (3) strong work ethic and organizational skills, and (4) ability to work independently. Given the nature of the research, speaking more than one language and/or personal and professional experiences of linguistic and cultural diversity would be an advantage. The student researcher will acquire valuable research experience by participating in a research project involving university students and staff members from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

4. **Project title:** Colonial Photography and Global Advertisement: Germany in Samoa 1900-1914

**Areas:** German/Pacific Studies

**Project Supervisors:** Dr. Nicole Perry (German and Comparative Literature); Lemoa Henry Fesuluai (Pacific Studies)

**Project Description:**

Called the “Pearl of the German Colonial Crown” German Samoa (1900-1914) and the relationship between Germany and Samoa was markedly different to those in German Southwest Africa. Romanticized and erotically charged images, whimsical stories, and noble savages layer the landscape of German Samoa, a former colony in Polynesia, whose distinctive colonial past can be attributed to such things as its distance from Germany, the trading routes and relations upon which it was created and the governing practices at the time. The legacy of German Samoa is one of a certain fondness and nostalgia; not only for the German residents who were forced from their island paradise after New Zealand took control in 1919, but also many Samoans tend to see the German occupation nostalgically especially when compared to New Zealand’s colonial governance until Samoan independence in 1962.

**Researcher’s work:**

Working with online databases and archives the student will create a database of important events in the German colonial holdings of not only Samoa, but more broadly the South Pacific to contextualise the years before, during and after Germany’s presence in Samoa, many sources which also exist in English. By providing the historical background of the era, the student will be able to contribute to the analysis of photographs, postcards, and newspapers, to analyse the interest and knowledge of German Samoa in Germany and other German speaking countries.

1. Compile an annotated research database, tracking newspaper entries, postcards, and advertisements from 1889-1920 that report on or advertise German Samoa, or Germany’s interest in Samoa, depending on the time period.
2. Create a bibliography of key secondary texts (in German and/or English), identifying those relevant to German colonial holdings in both the South Pacific and Africa.

**Required Skills/prerequisites**

While the knowledge of German is not necessary, it is beneficial. The Scholar should have the ability to conduct independent research using academic databases and other internet resources. Students who have studied German, History, or Pacific Studies courses at the University level will have priority. An interest in postcolonial histories is advantageous.

5. **Margaret Wiedenhoeft** [Margaret.Wiedenhoeft@kzoo.edu](mailto:Margaret.Wiedenhoeft@kzoo.edu) **Project Title:** *Still Women: Alternative Representations of Ageing Women in Shorts*

**Area:** Film and Media Studies and Gender Studies

**Project Supervisor:** Bernadette Luciano

**Project description**

The aversion to addressing ageing in cinema leads to a desire to mask or erase old-age and is reflected in film industries that shy away from that highly non-commercial subject. As Sally Chivers suggests in *The Silvering Screen* when mainstream films have broached old-age centered plots they have tended “to reduce old age to a manageable and controllable set of expectations that continues to reinforce the idea that age is physical and physically demeaning” (Chivers xviii). Studies on the Italian context have produced similar findings with older characters in movies commonly being classified as “ugly, old and marginalized” (Cavigioli 2005, 215) and postmenopausal women are nearly always caricatures and/or minor characters (Dolasinski 2021, 4).

This study moves from the title and spirit of the Swiss documentary, *Ancora donne*, in its exploration and classification of a range of representations of women’s experience of ‘old’ age. While recent scholarship indicates the dearth of such representations in feature films and television series, alternative narratives have been proliferating in the short film space internationally and many are available through on-line sites. Festivals such as the Women Over-50 Film Festival (UK), the Legacy Film Festival on Aging (San Francisco), the Life in Pictures (Perth), Silver Fern Film Festival (Bilbao) continue to encourage discussion around ageism and promote positive ageing. In Italy, Corti di Lunga Vita promoted by the Associazione 50&Più shares the aim of providing a positive and inclusive vision of ageing. Since 2017, it has been inviting films that explore the diversity, complexity and reality of ageing through a different thematic lens each year. By focusing on this non-mainstream form of film production, this study proposes alternative ways of looking at and thinking about ageing bodies and talks back to ageist discourses.

**Researcher’s work**

Components to this research project:

1. Using library and on-line resources, the researcher will develop a database of US and New Zealand shorts in the past decade that address issues of gender and ageing. They will provide a summary and comment on each item.
2. The researcher with the assistance of the PI will attempt to categorize the types of representation of ageing in this films and how they either reinforce stereotypes or provide alternative representations of ageing that move away from prevailing attitudes of ageism and gerontophobia.

**Research outputs**

- An annotated database of primary sources.
- A 2000 word essay which reflects on the representation of ageing in these films.

**Required skills/prerequisites**

The researcher for this project would ideally have a background in gender studies and/or media studies with an interest in contemporary culture.