



# Cross-sections

The Bruce Hall Academic Journal  
Volume XIII 2022

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*Cross-sections: The Bruce Hall Academic Journal*  
is an annual publication co-ordinated by the students of  
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*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*

Happy is the person who knows the reason for things.

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## About the Front Cover

This abstract painting combines gestural and geometric pictorial devices. The basis for the work was a series of small studies in ink focussing on organic forms and the built environment on the ANU campus. These drawings were then transferred onto transparent perspex sheets and projected onto the canvas, which had been covered with a moody series of grey tones. The projections of new and unique shapes were then painted over in different earthy colours. The final result is a multi-layered work that balances geometric and organic lines and forms.

*Duncan Currie*

Bruce Hall has long stood as the academic hall. Its dedication to resident-led tutoring and collaborative learning environments has fostered a strong sense of community and a commitment to knowledge-driven endeavours. This is aptly represented by the symbol of the Ouroboros, which has been associated with Bruce Hall since its establishment in 1961. The Ouroboros, depicting the cyclical nature of life and the relentless pursuit of knowledge, aligns perfectly with the Hall's motto, "Felix Qui Potuit Rerum Cognoscere Causas," meaning "Happy is he who is able to discover the reason for things." Thus, the inclusion of the Ouroboros serves a dual purpose: it symbolises both Bruce Hall itself and the pursuit of knowledge that it upholds. Ultimately, it reflects the outstanding works showcased in Cross-Sections and the high standard of academic rigor demonstrated within.

*Sreenath Didugu*

## Foreword

The community at Bruce Hall make an extraordinary contribution to the university through sharing the scholarship and ideas of students. The 2022 issue of Cross sections is a testament to the excellence of scholarship of residents of the Hall with a range of articles that make a nationally significant contribution to knowledge.

Bruce Hall opened in 1961, with the new state of the art residence opened after rebuilding in 2019. The community has led through many innovations over the decades including being the first undergraduate hall of residence at the university and the first in Australia to admit both men and women. The Hall's motto "Felix Qui Potuit Rerum Cognoscere Causas" means "Happy is he who is able to discover the reason for things" inspiring students to be part of a community that will bring lifelong benefits to them. Cross-sections most ably reflects the discoveries achieved by the students providing the opportunity to realise their commitment to share that knowledge to create new scholarship.

The first issue of Cross-sections was published in 2005. There are now five student journals published at the university by ANU Press, with Cross-sections leading through its excellence, regularity and wide readership.

It has built on a commitment to include diverse disciplines in a way that promotes academic excellence. Authors gain extraordinary benefits from learning first hand capabilities relating to scholarly writing and publishing. The relationship between undergraduate students, academic staff and alumni inspires connections that will contribute to future achievements for the students whose work is contained in the volumes.

Volume XIII contains extraordinary scholarship that places important voices into many debates. Readers are challenged to think in new

ways about the past, the present and the future. I have no doubt that the articles and art will stimulate much debate and be the cornerstone for new career steps for the authors.

Bruce Hall's reputation of academic excellent is demonstrated on every page of this excellent issue.

I congratulate the editor-in-Chief Manett Gill, Managing Editor Chloe Woodburn and all who have contributed to this volume. It a great pleasure to acknowledge the work of authors and the editorial team. I encourage all readers to reflect and engage with the content of this volume.

*Roxanne Missingham, FALIA, PFHEA, OAM*

*University Librarian (Chief Scholarly Information Services Officer)*

## Introduction

It is a pleasure to introduce Bruce Hall's newest instalment of *Cross-Sections* for 2022. Volume XIII marks the first issue of this important ANU journal since the global pandemic took hold in 2020 and it represents some of the outstanding qualities displayed by students across the last few years, not least of which are resilience and community cohesion. Specifically, the collection reflects the tenacity of Bruce residents who have continued to pursue excellence in their studies – as illustrated by the number and quality of its contributions. Just as significantly, these students have also collaborated actively as authors, editors, and peer reviewers, to produce a broad-ranging journal which exemplifies the academic strengths and personal interests binding the Bruce Hall community.

*Cross-Sections* was conceived in 2005 to offer Bruce residents an opportunity to refine their research skills and to showcase the interdisciplinary range of academic interests across the hall. In this, the journal supports the ANU commitment to inspire curiosity and to foster several core intellectual attributes among its graduates. Notably, contributions demonstrate students' attention to Indigenous perspectives and knowledge through essays discussing the importance of supporting processes of 'Healing Country', including through Indigenous land management and native title structures, and debating the place of colonial statues in modern Australia.

Journal contributions also illustrate students' capacity to apply disciplinary knowledge to address transdisciplinary contemporary issues, with essays exploring the use of technology in the legal profession, and investigating ethics and population health in relation to Covid-19. Further, the ANU goal to nurture critical thinking among its graduates is represented in articles which sensitively appraise such issues as home-grown radicalism and terror, the competing political and socio-cultural interests which inform the construction of memorial museums, and financial compensation for executives. These essays sit

alongside more technical contributions critically investigating supramolecular assemblages and thermodynamics, and continued fraction algorithms.

The internationalism of Bruce residents is moreover reflected in outward-looking multilingual discussions of German national identity, class and morality; post-war nation-building and alliances across Asia and Europe; consumer law in China; Papuan languages; and the European Court of Justice. These contributions reflect not simply the diversity of the Bruce community but their active involvement in the world beyond ANU.

This is an inspiring collection of essays which offers insights into a range of contemporary global and regional issues. Contributors' attention to detail and nuance demonstrates their sensitivity to the complexity of the challenges of the modern world, and to the historical influences shaping our society. The volume also collectively highlights the capacity of Bruce Hall residents to engage with the wider world and to make positive change as national and international leaders. In providing an avenue for students to share their research and visions for society, this volume of *Cross-Sections* reflects the vibrancy of the Bruce Hall community and their commitment to the future.

As Academic Fellow and a former resident of Bruce Hall, I congratulate everyone who participated in the production of this volume of *Cross-Sections* and encourage all members of the ANU community to explore its contents – there's something for everyone!

*Dr Tania M. Colwell*

*Academic Fellow (Residential Experience)  
Bruce Hall alumna 1993–1994*

## Editorial Note

Cross Sections serves as a testament to the academic calibre of Bruce Hall, showcasing the best works, insights, and essays from our talented residents. This collective body of work truly represents a diverse cross-section of their interests, studies, and extracurricular activities. It not only demonstrates the intellectual diversity within Bruce Hall but also reinforces its reputation as a hub for academic excellence, fostering a sense of community among its members. Through this publication, students have the opportunity to explore topical issues and express their opinions freely.

As an inherent chronicle of contemporary Australia, Cross Sections delves into a wide range of subjects that shape our nation. It addresses pressing matters such as vaccinations, Indigenous concerns, and legal issues that arise in the modern age. Additionally, it examines international issues and their complex dynamics, influenced by geopolitical factors. The inclusion of transnational analyses of geopolitical situations and examinations of international bodies enriches the publication further. By combining domestic and international pieces, along with a diverse range of academic topics, Cross Sections ensures accessibility for readers with varying interests.

Reflecting on my role as Editor-in-Chief, I see myself as an artistic curator, deriving immense pleasure from observing the academic excellence within Bruce Hall and capturing the remarkable talent of its residents. However, this responsibility also came with the daunting task of selecting a diverse and exceptional few pieces from a vast array of knowledge for the thirteenth edition of Cross Sections. It was a challenging yet rewarding experience, as I had the privilege of working with an incredible and hardworking team.

Delivering Cross Sections, alongside this dedicated team, has been an extraordinary journey filled with both highs and lows. Producing an academic journal is no easy feat, but with the support of such a

remarkable team, the process felt slightly more manageable, and the act of publishing brought even greater satisfaction. The unwavering dedication and persistent efforts of the entire team cannot be overstated. Through numerous revisions and drafts, the editing team worked tirelessly to polish and refine these exceptional pieces, elevating them to their fullest potential.

I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the contributors of this year's Cross Sections, as well as those from previous editions. These exceptional 'Brucies' come from various year groups and have been a pleasure to work with. I commend them for their outstanding work, unwavering dedication, and commitment to academic rigor.

In conclusion, I am incredibly proud of the team and the final version of Cross Sections that we have published. Our goal was to foster intellectual diversity and make the publication accessible to all readers, and I firmly believe that we have achieved this objective.

*Manett Gill*

*Editor-in-Chief  
Bruce Hall Community Coordinator 2022  
Bruce Hall alumna (2019-2022)*

# Do Future People Matter?

*Harrison Bailey*

## I. INTRODUCTION

While many people instinctively agree that future generations are worthy of consideration when deciding between policy options, whether this instinct can be rationally justified has been a matter of philosophical dispute. Most notably, the nonidentity problem challenges the notion that existing people can, in any way, harm future people. As such, many philosophers have attempted to produce an account of well-being and harm that solves the nonidentity problem without leading to absurd conclusions. This essay will argue that we cannot justifiably ignore future people when deciding what policy option to pursue. This argument will be predicated on a sufficientarian theory of welfare, which I deem the best response to the nonidentity problem. I will first articulate how the nonidentity problem compellingly refutes our supposed duties to safeguard the well-being of future people. I will then argue that sufficientarianism can justify these duties and thereby, resolving the nonidentity problem. In doing so, I will demonstrate how the present theory circumvents the flaws of alternative solutions and will defend it against various objections.

## II. THE NONIDENTITY PROBLEM

Parfit's (1984) nonidentity problem questions our intuitions about the obligations we think we have toward future people. Suppose the person-affecting principle is true which states that an act can only be wrong if it harms some existing or future person, i.e., it makes that person worse off than they would have otherwise been under an alternative act (Parfit 1984, 363). We can also observe that ordinary acts often have an