

## 2017 -- the making and the talking

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Time to take stock of the year that was...

2017 certainly had its ups and downs. In the middle of the year, my university's management decided that they could do without undergraduate teaching in cultural heritage. We managed to hold on, but it's the sort of thing that makes you wonder why you bother.

On the flipside, the highlight of the year was working with my undergraduate class in [Exploring Digital Heritage](#) to create and promote a [site for the transcription](#) of records used in the administration of the White Australia Policy. It's something Kate and I [have been talking about](#) for many years, so it was a rather emotional experience to see it finally happen. But it wasn't just about the website — it was about the way [my students responded](#) to the records (many of them knew little about the White Australia Policy before we started); it was about seeing the records [on the ABC news](#); and it was about seeing the faces of the people who lived under the weight of the White Australia Policy [projected onto the walls](#) of Old Parliament House. That's why we bother.

Also in 2017 (and somewhat related to the above) I decided to [adjust my working arrangements](#) in attempt to find some balance. You can now find me [over on Patreon](#).

### The making

- Closed Access 2017 update! [Complete dataset of records](#) held by the National Archives of Australia that had the access status of 'closed' (withheld from public access) on 9 January 2017.
- Wrestled with RecordSearch to extract [summaries for all series](#). Along the way I found out some interesting stuff about [the use of functions](#). Putting the two together, I tried to build a picture of what [NAA holdings look like](#) through the perspective of government functions.
- [Played around with Twarc](#) to create a collection of #invasionday tweets. Later in the year I [captured and shared tweets](#) with the tag #australianvalues.
- Have you ever wondered how the cut and thrust of parliaments past might translate to the world of social media? Wonder no longer, for [here you can explore interjections](#) in the Australian parliament from 1901 to 1980, reimagined as tweets. You might even find some emoji...
- [Code](#) and [work-in-progress website](#) exploring the language of Hansard.
- Went [back to basics with LODBook](#) — now developing a series of components using Jekyll and javascript.
- The Redaction Zoo — this [collection of creatures](#) was discovered amidst thousands of ASIO surveillance files held by the National Archives of Australia. While the practice of redaction is intended to withhold information from public view, an unknown archivist has used redactions to add an artistic flourish to the files. They are reminders that the processes that limit our access to information are human in their operation and design. There is nothing magical about the 'secrets' preserved in government archives. Video first exhibited as part of 'Beauties and Beasts', Belconnen Arts Centre, 6-28 May 2017.
- Here's [a repository of images](#) in JPG and SVG format drawn from a collection of #redactionart discovered in ASIO surveillance files held by the National Archives of Australia. Use them to create your own #redactionart projects!
- I finally added a [decent full-text search facility](#) to Historic Hansard. Yay! Search for

speeches or bills. Filter by date, house, and speaker. There's even an option to save your complete result set as a CSV file for further analysis and exploration.

- *The Tribune* was a newspaper published by the Communist Party of Australia. The State Library of NSW holds more than 60,000 negatives and photos from the Tribune which document a wide range of political events and social issues from 1964 to 1991. This is [a work-in-progress site](#) documenting my exploration of the negatives as a DXLab Digital Drop-in.
- [Help transcribe records](#) that document the lives of ordinary people living under the restrictions of the White Australia Policy. The Real Face of White Australia site was built using the [Scribe Framework](#) with the help of students from my [Exploring Digital Heritage](#) class.
- Explore [regular updates of data](#) generated through the Real Face of White Australia project. Includes CSV files with transcribed fields, as well as photos and handprints.
- There's lots of exciting new digitised content being added to Trove's journals zone, but it's not always easy to find and search. I made an [app that lists journals](#) that have been digitised by the NLA and have searchable records for individual articles. This means you can search *inside* the journal, just like you do in the newspapers zone. The code for the [harvester](#) and [web app](#) is on GitHub.
- Demonstrated [how to harvest Parliamentary press releases](#) from Trove. The repository includes a sample dataset of politicians talking about refugees.
- Kicked off my new 101 Digital Heritage Hacks site [with a userscript to add a 'copy permalink' button](#) to Trove.
- I made a little bot to post stories from the Real Face of White Australia data to the [@invisibleaus](#) Twitter account.
- Created two new DIY Trove bots using Glitch. The [Trove Tag Bot](#) tweets items with a specific tag, while the [Trove List Bot](#) tweets items from one or more lists. Both bots come with detailed instructions and, because they're hosted on Glitch, it's easy for anyone to modify the code and launch their own bots.
- Added a [battle mode](#) to Headline Roulette. It's really just a way of generating a url to specific newspaper article in Trove. This means groups can compete on a level playing field, but it could have other uses. You could create a curated set of challenges for students, or use them in something like a scavenger hunt.

## The talking

- 13 February 2017 - [Digital humanities workshop](#) at ALIAOnline.
- 24 February 2017 - Keynote presentation at HDR Summer School, Deakin University, [The practice of play](#),
- 1-3 March 2017, attended 'Always Already Computational: Library Collections as Data' national forum in Santa Barbara. Read the [position papers](#) and the [final statement](#).
- 20 April 2017 - [Public lecture](#) and [workshop](#), University of Wollongong.
- 4 May 2017 - Presentation with Professor David Lowe, 'The Political Language of the 1970s in Australia', at The 1970s: Australian and Indian Perspectives on a Decade of Transition, Deakin University.
- 23 June 2017 - Workshop, [Random acts of meaning: Digital skills for a post-truth world](#), NLS8.
- 4 August 2017, ['The struggle for access'](#), presentation at DHPathways 2017, Canberra.
- 10 August 2017 — ['Doing DH'](#) presentation for ACT teacher librarians.
- 13 October 2017 — ['Trove tips and tricks'](#), at the Denilquin Family History Expo.
- 8 November 2017 — ['Making this happen'](#), presentation at Collaborating around Collections, ANU.
- 20 November 2017 - ['"The badge of the outsider": Open Access and Closed Boundaries'](#), invited presentation at Sharing is Caring 2017, Aarhus. Also put together a last minute ['Hack the world' workshop](#).
- 4 December 2017 — [Digital methods workshop](#) for the UTS Legal History group

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