

In Memory of Now: A Queer History of the Present

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Certificate of original authorship

This thesis is the result of a research candidature conducted for a Doctoral degree. I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as part of the doctoral degree and/or fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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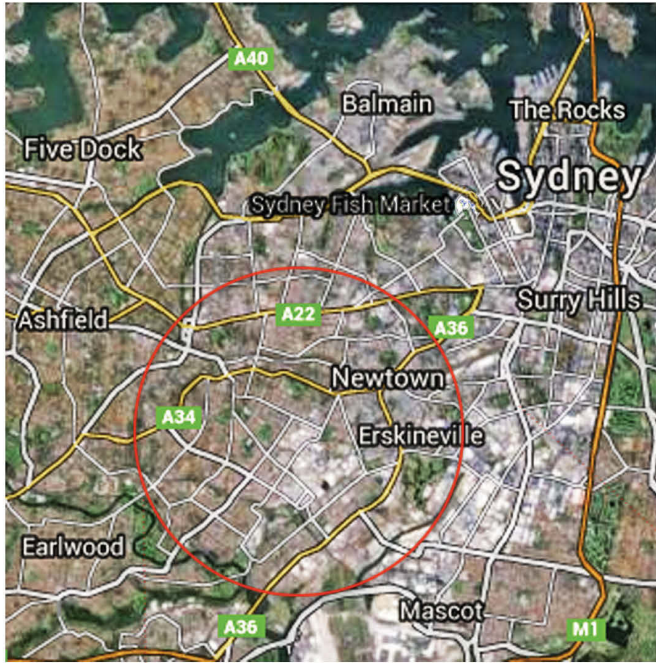
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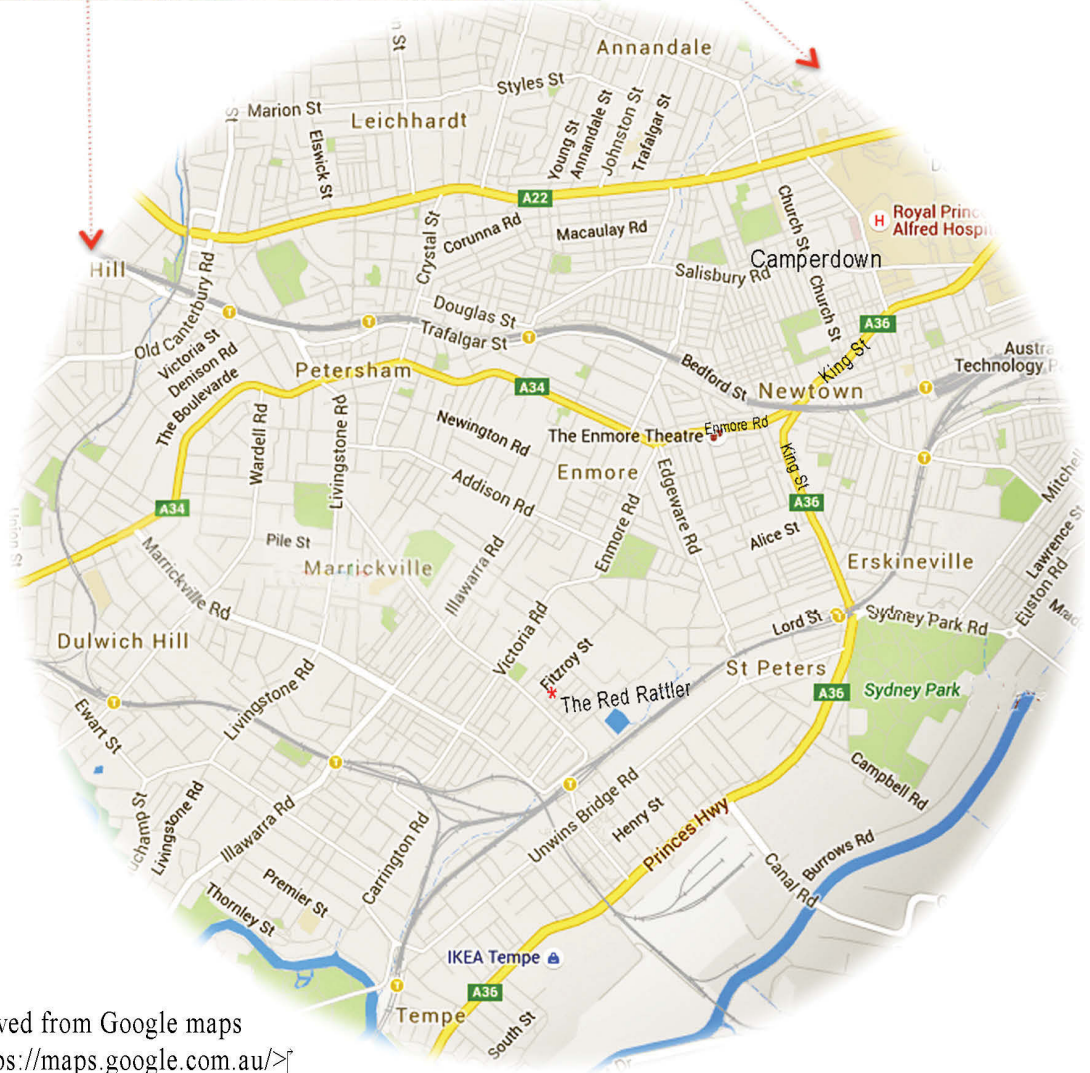
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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on Sydney's inner-west and is a critical ethnography of radical, critical and dissident activism across more than four decades, from the Gay Liberation and Lesbian Feminist movements to contemporary queer and critical social and political networks. The methods use Alberto Melucci's (1995) collective identity as a 'lens' of social movement analysis in a synthesis with a resource mobilisation approach (after Joe Foweraker 1995). They include a new, full analysis of the *1978ers Social History Project* survey (Abello 1998), a reconstructed participant-observation of the *Gay Liberation Quire* (1981-7) and relational interviews with contemporary activists, with participation in their fields of action. The methodology is "post-queer", acknowledging Adam Green (2012), distinguishing, between radical/liberal homosexual normalisation and a new, neoliberal homonormativity and sexual politics (as per Lisa Duggan 2003 and Diane Richardson 2004), and between homonormativity and queer counternormativity, empirically, in the context of their respective historical elements, economic relationships and places. The methods all involve participation, an insider position and are relational (in the past and the present, including with extant *78ers* and *Quire* members). The ethnographic focus in each method is on a mobilisation or collective action: the motivations and predispositions of activists; the multiplicity of movement parts and historical and contemporary elements in each time (politics and sexual politics); the collective identity and normativities of the social networks in which they are embedded; the various and changing intersections with other social movements and political networks and groups; the changing (and bifurcating) spaces of movement and community; and the multiplicitous responses and reconfigurations of movement parts around emergent communities, changes in social and economic relations and relationships with the state. Conservative governments and neoliberal policies have impacted on activists' resources and figured their concerns while gay and lesbian equality politics drives a queer-gay divergence and bifurcation of spaces.



Inner-western Sydney
and environs



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