



Centre for Workforce Futures

SEMINAR SERIES

**Really, really ridiculously good-looking:
The corporate elite and capitalist
imagination in twentieth century Australia**

12 December 2019

2:00–3:30 PM

Dr Claire Wright
Macquarie Business School

LOCATION: 120 Lend Lease Room, 1 Management Drive, Macquarie University NSW 2109

ABSTRACT

Economic systems are reproduced by the ideas and behaviours of their participants. This paper examines Australian economic life in the early- to mid-twentieth century through the role of the corporate elite in Australian capitalism, notably those who were board members of multiple large firms in 1910, 1930 and 1952. It then examines contemporary reflections that portrayed the elite as the source of moral leadership, important knowledge resources for the firm, and as risk-taking entrepreneurs. This reveals the nature of Australian capitalism, the place of elites in the system, and the ways in which corporations were packaged to the public.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr Claire Wright is a Research Fellow at Macquarie Business School. Through her work on corporate networks, interlocking directorates, the global wool trade, and multinational enterprises, she explores the ways that interpersonal connections affect knowledge, markets, and business strategy. She adopts a variety of methodologies to understand historical phenomena, including social network analysis, geographic information systems, oral history, prosopography, and archival research. She serves on the Executive of the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand.

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