



Australian  
National  
University

## ‘A Crafty and Deliberate Murderess’? Poison, Gender, and Justice in Early-Federation New South Wales

Wednesday 31 July 2017 4:15–5:30pm

School of History Seminar Series

Speaker: Carolyn Strange, Australian National University

McDonald Room, Menzies Library, ANU



Kiandra Courthouse and police station, c. 1917.

husband in Kiandra, NSW, in 1904 was neither a case of women’s lethal violence in response to male abuse, nor a straightforward instance of the patriarchal legal system at work. Rather, her dubious conviction illustrates the need for feminist research on gender and violence to place greater weight on contingency.

Scholarship on women and homicide has focussed increasingly on the ways in which race, ethnicity, and sexual identity intersect to produce patterns of severity and leniency toward women accused of murder. However, prosecutions of individuals rarely fall neatly into such matrices. This paper uses an alleged instance of husband poisoning in early-Federation NSW to illustrate the capacity of case studies to illuminate the uncertainties of capital justice. The prosecution of Jane Hetherington for the murder of her



**Carolyn Strange** is a professor in the School of History. She has taught and published in a wide range of fields, including women’s and gender studies, law, and criminology. This paper sits within her new project on the history of inter-gender homicide in Australia and Canada. It also relates to the multi-disciplinary research network she is about to launch, on the History and Legacies of Violence.

ANU College of  
Arts & Social Sciences

ALL WELCOME

Please direct enquiries to [Tania.Colwell@anu.edu.au](mailto:Tania.Colwell@anu.edu.au)  
[Michelle.Staff@anu.edu.au](mailto:Michelle.Staff@anu.edu.au)

School of History Seminar Series