

# MANNKAL'S MUSINGS\*

JUNE 2020 VOLUME 20



## Developing Future Free Market Leaders

\*n. **mus-ings** A product of contemplation; a thought





# CONTENTS

## Overview

The Mannkal Economic Education Foundation is a private, not-for-profit organisation established in 1997 by Ron Manners.

We promote free enterprise, limited government and individual initiative for the benefit of all Australians.

Our core activity is the Leadership Development Program (LDP); A world-renowned professional development and enrichment program for Western Australian university students.

Our students come from varying fields of study from Murdoch, Curtin, Notre Dame and the University of Western Australia. Each year, Mannkal supports high performing scholars to participate in leadership training, seminars in our Mannkal office, domestic conferences as well as a Global Study Tour.

Through involvement in the LDP, students gain an understanding of libertarian philosophy and develop the entrepreneurial skills needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world. The following is a summary of the activities of the Mannkal Economic Education Foundation in 2019 and 2020.

JENN HAMMOND - MANNKAL PROGRAM  
MANAGER

## Contents

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Chairman's Report             | 03 |
| Emerging Leaders Recap        | 04 |
| When to Shape the Future      | 08 |
| Bottled Motivation            | 09 |
| LDP S2 2019 Review            | 10 |
| LDP 2020 Overview             | 12 |
| Shane Herbst LDP Scholar 2020 | 13 |
| Alumni Connect                | 14 |
| Mannkal Research              | 16 |
| Book Review By Alex Wolff     | 18 |
| Credits                       | 19 |



# WHY THE FUTURE IS OURS TO SHAPE

RON MANNERS' MANNKAL'S CHAIRMAN



In the current climate, leaders must develop an overall sense of where they want to go and how they want to get there. To do so, you must start with a clear intention and ask yourself often ‘what am I trying to do, what am I trying to achieve, and what am I trying to prevent?’ The focus when asking these questions ought to be on the end goal, not the process of getting there. Sometimes, in politics, the short-term process of seeking votes, clouds the more important long-term end goal.

Here at Mannkal we often ask ourselves what we are trying to achieve? The answer is always the same: we are here to awaken possibilities in young people. Sometimes these possibilities are qualities that they, or even their parents and lecturers are unaware they possess.

Through our Leadership Development Program we have accepted the challenge of awakening possibilities in our students by constantly improving their study experience. Many hours go into developing these programs, some with our host institutions, not only in Australia, but all around the world. These host institutions often retain our Mannkal scholars and take them into their own organisations, which gives us some measure of the success of what we are doing.

The process of fulfilling our intentions is always being refined, however the end goal remains the same. We ‘awaken possibilities.’

In awakening these possibilities, it is my hope - that our students will adopt what Larry Reed refers to as ‘liberty as a life philosophy’; <https://fee.org/articles/liberty-as-a-life-philosophy/>. It is one thing to learn about the fundamental virtues of personal and economic freedom, and quite another to adopt them as a core philosophy on which to build a good and fruitful life.

What does it mean to adopt liberty as a core philosophy? It means integrating the principles of freedom into every aspect of your life. It means as Jordan Peterson would say ‘sorting yourself out’ first and foremost - taking charge of your life, thinking for yourself and taking responsibility for your own actions, while respecting the lives and property of others. It means refusing to unfairly gain at the expense of others through use of the political process. Adopting liberty as a life philosophy means that you will enjoy benefits not only in your career pathway, but also in your personal interactions and in your family life. By respecting yourself and others, not only will you thrive, but by your very example you will be a magnet to others who are eager and open to learning more about the holistic set of principles that guide you. The principles of liberty are universal, so we ought to be proud to live them and joyful when we see others choosing to do so as well.

That is my hope for all the students that come through our doors at Mannkal: that they seek to always enquire of themselves what their end goals are, to set firm intentions, and in the process of pursuing these goals, that they allow the principles of liberty to guide them. In doing so, the future will be theirs to shape.





# EMERGING LEADER'S 2020

Eva Christensen - Mannkal's Content Manager

Photos by Paul Winzar

Our biggest event of the year, the Emerging Leaders cocktail soiree, held in March, was once again a phenomenal evening celebrating our returned scholars – now Mannkal alumni – in company of our broad base of supporters and friends.

The University Club of Western Australia played host to more than 200 freedom loving guests. We were fortunate to have with us two international superstars, Gloria Alvarez (Mexico) and Lawrence E. Reed (United States), who spoke passionately to the crowd of their success in spreading the principles of liberty throughout their distinguished careers.

We were particularly lucky to have Gloria and Larry with us, as just a few days later, mass gatherings were banned throughout most of the world. Whilst the COVID-19 drama has certainly impacted our program plans for 2020, I would rather like to reflect on what an amazing display of enthusiastic scholars we saw that evening.

Mannkal sent 17 young Western Australians abroad on study tours from early January to late February, the culmination of the semester-long preparatory Leadership Development Program. Divided into two groups, one went to Hong Kong, Europe and Israel; the other traveled across the US, from west to east. Both cohorts spent time with leading libertarian think tanks and individuals, attended conferences and presented their Mannkal experience to crowds of up to 150 people!

Welcoming these scholars back to Perth, we saw them on stage, engaging with new and returning students and giving heartfelt thanks to attending Mannkal donors and ambassadors. It was a delight to see the spark in their eyes as they reminisced on their travels. If this is not 'awakening possibilities', I do not know what is.

**"If this is not 'awakening possibilities', I don't know what is."**

We can't wait to see you again at next year's Emerging Leaders! Tentatively planned for March 2021, we will be sure to keep you updated on our website.





Above  
S2 2019 LDP Graduates  
With Mannkal Staff & Ambassadors.

# EMERGING LEADER'S 2020



Special guests Gloria Alvarez and Lawrence E. Reed

Posing with big smiles! They must have recovered from their jet lag, coming all the way from Mexico City and Atlanta, respectively. Gloria is a political commentator, radio and TV presenter and author of several books. Larry is President Emeritus of FEE.org, the original think tank inspiration for Mannkal. Both expressed their joy at being in Australia and we hope to see them back on our soil soon.



2019 John Hyde Scholar Award Recipient Jason Pang

The annual John Hyde Scholar Award is presented to the 'best' overall Scholar. Jason showed great leadership as Team Leader for the Eurasia Study Tour group, liaising with both think tank hosts and the Mannkal team, as well as dealing with the last-minute headaches of a multi destination international group trip.

Well done, Jason!



Siena Ellison & Robert Abrahams reflect on their LDP experience

Siena and Robert were interviewed by Larry on the big stage, giving the audience a glimpse into what a Mannkal international study tour entails. From visiting the Supreme Court in Washington DC to attending one of the world's biggest innovation conferences in Tel Aviv, this was no ordinary university experience.







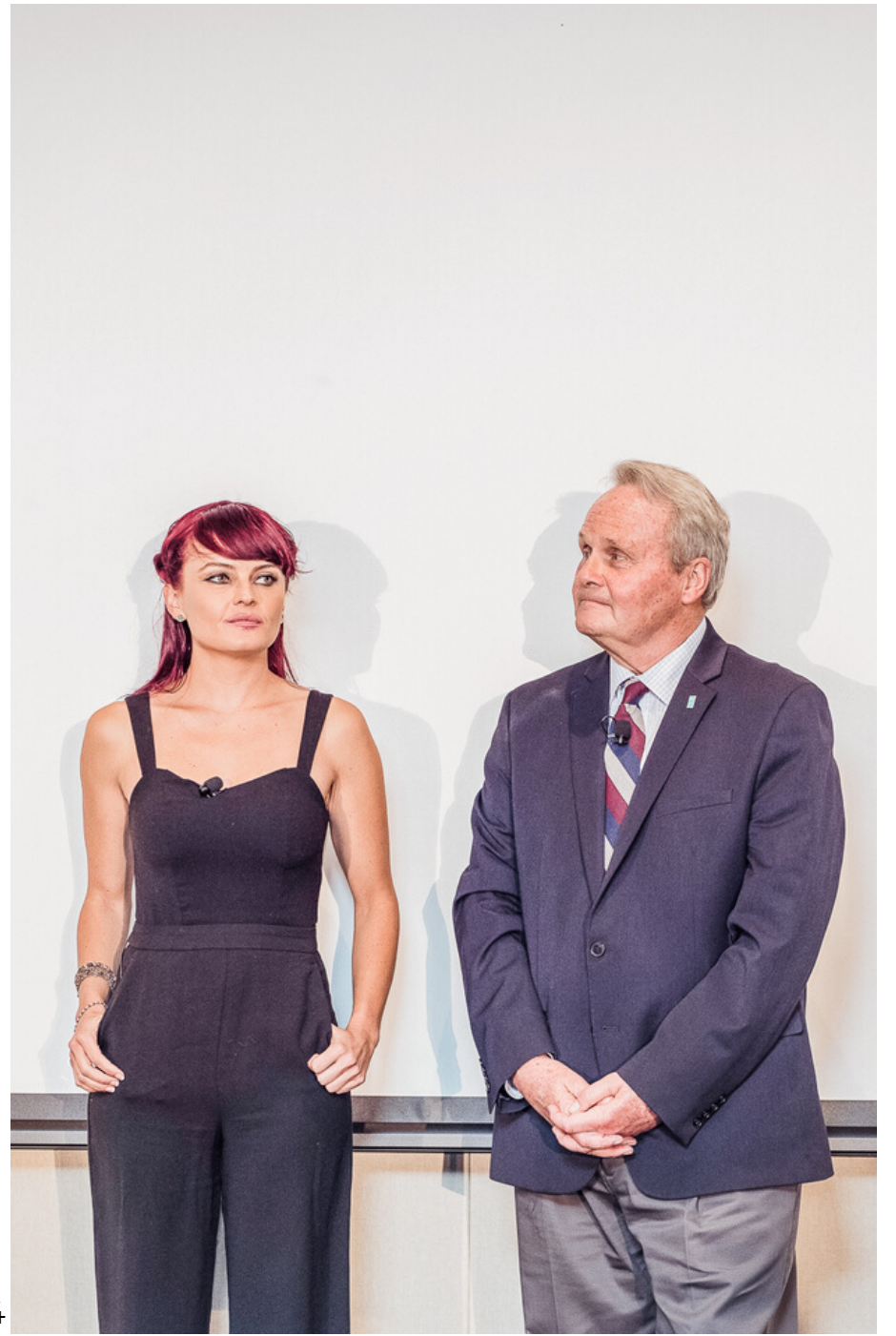
1



2



3



4



5



6





7



8



9



10



11



12



# WHEN TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

ANDREW PICKFORD - MANNKAL'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Too many leadership courses focus on managing and processes. Most business schools conflate adherence to fashionable sentiment and popularity with strong decision making. Some provide skills needed during a crisis. Very few convey insights and lessons from great leaders throughout history.**

My colleague, Mannkal Chairman Ron Manners, talks about why the future is ours to shape. I believe it is important to know when to shape the future. It does not occur at times of plenty or people focus on signalling virtue and showcasing their moral righteousness. In contrast, during times of flux, leaders seize the moment and catapult themselves to centre stage. They do not suit the status quo. Managers thin out when hard decisions are needed and there is real change. A new iPhone or coffee flavour is not such change.

By mid-2020, a pandemic, domestic unrest in the US and rising tensions between the US and China, are said to be signs epoch-defining events. Maybe. We may experience a fractured, disruptive, and troublesome decade. Or longer.

This is exactly the time for personal reflection, understand who you are and where you are going while adjusting to a new reality.



Augustine of Hippo did this while Rome burned to produce the City of God. Such introspection and reflection were not possible in the imperial capital, but rather occurred in what is now modern-day Algeria.

Distance provides space to think and be away from immediate developments. It allows time to consider what comes next and how you can best position for a different and unfamiliar environment.

Perth, and other parts of Western Australia, provides plenty of distance.

It is understanding your own personal strategy which is most important. Ron Manners talks about this in terms of awakening possibilities and adopting a life philosophy.

Students in Mannkal's Leadership Development have made the first step in this process. We are not telling them how to think or act but to start to devise their own approach to life.

The challenges students will deal with in their working lives will be different to that of the Baby Boomers and the Greatest Generation.

Protecting liberty and defending freedoms during a crisis is incredibly difficult. However, this is exactly the time when leaders should be ready to stand up and act. In a broader societal context, we are unlikely to return to the pre-COVID, pre-trade war period of globalisation and commerce. Freedom will be harder to defend; nationalism will be on the rise and governments will seek to control people; direct businesses; and constrain entrepreneurs.

In this era of 5G, AI, and quantum computing, Mannkal is proud to continue its work reflecting on the great works of the Western canon as well as thinkers from all cultures. In understanding the inspiration for freedom throughout history, and reflecting on these texts and insights, we aim to equip Western Australia's future leaders with skills needed when they shape the future.





ALUMNI

**Pictured**  
Siena Ellison (Right) with Annie  
Harfoushian.

# BOTTLED MOTIVATION

## MANNKAL ALUMNI - SIENA ELLISON

Starting the New Year among the bustling crowds of Times Square now seems like the most peculiar way for me to have begun 2020. In retrospect, the entire study tour now feels peculiar in light of current circumstances; travelling on airplanes, touring through highly populated cities, waiting at airports and meeting new people every day. Not long after arriving home, the world went into shutdown enabling me to reflect on Mannkal's Study Tour with deeper appreciation than I had before. What felt like a lifetime ago had been a once in a lifetime experience.

This experience began in sub-zero temperatures in the heart of Yellowstone National Park. We spent our time with the Property and Environment Research Centre (PERC), which was refreshing and inspiring as they offered an entirely original perspective to environmental and conservation issues, with free-market and private sector solutions. With climate change and Australian bushfires being pressing topics of public discussion, I have come home sharing this new perspective with fellow students and friends hoping that the conversation around environmental issues can diversify from the rhetoric pushed by militant climate activist groups across the world.

We spent some more time in the west, exploring the Golden State of California. It no doubt that Silicon Valley was a highlight of the trip. Chicago and Great Barrington, Massachusetts was a time for philosophical thinking and reflection. Being surrounded by two places with such a rich history, it was insightful and inspiring to look back into the minds of free-market thinkers and economists.

As someone who has always had a keen interest in politics, it was no doubt that Washington DC was a favourite destination for me. Walking through the halls of Congress, sitting outside the Supreme Court and reading the Gettysburg Address inscribed into the marble walls of the Lincoln Memorial made everything that we had learnt in our tour come together. This was enhanced by our time spent at the Leadership Institute (LI) where we heard from political professionals and made some lifelong friends with fellow interns.

Since coming home, I have tried to bottle my motivation gained throughout the trip and direct it into something small, but worthwhile during the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the semester I have put the campaign skills learnt at LI into action and led a campaign with students across different faculties at The University of Western Australia (UWA), calling on the University to refund the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF).

The SSAF is essentially a student tax, where students are charged a compulsory fee each semester, amounting to \$308 each year to fund student services and amenities on campus. With Universities going online and most of the services and amenities on university grounds being unavailable for use, it only seemed logical for UWA to support students and refund students their money. In particular, that many students have now lost their part-time or casual work. Unfortunately, this has not been the case and student money has been reallocated without transparency with the insufficient, blanket justification of 'unprecedented times'. Despite UWA's reluctance, we have been successful in gaining student support, as well as various Senator's support who have represented us on their behalf to the Vice Chancellor and the Federal Education Minister.

I hope that my motivation and knowledge gained from the USA Study Tour continues to encourage me to stand up for causes on campus founded in individual freedom.





**Pictured**  
Kade Stone, Ben Hunter, Amelia  
Channer-Holmes, Siena Ellison,  
Francine Greco, Damon Miles &  
Annie Harfoushian.

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM S2 2019

Mannkal’s immersive, up to 5 week global study tour takes Western Australian university students across the world to places that have been vital to the development of individual freedom, property rights and voluntary exchange. Students travel all over the world to places like Europe, the Americas, the Indo-Pacific and Israel, following a structured itinerary arranged by Mannkal. The tours offer an opportunity to develop an understanding of the characters, stories and ideas that have transformed liberal concepts into reality. Participants gain exposure to policymakers and research analysts from leading think tanks, distinguished academics from elite institutions and political and industry leaders across three global regions. They learn through interactive seminars, panel discussions, workshops and site visits.

## Mannkal's liberty tour of the United states.

Mannkal sent seven bright and enthusiastic scholars to the United States in 2020 as part of our Leadership Development Program. The group departed Perth, Western Australia on January 5, 2020, for Bozeman, Montana.

Conservation and Environmental Entrepreneurship was the theme for week 1. The scholars spent a week with the amazing team at Property & Environment Research Center, visiting Yellowstone National Park and learning about free-market environmentalism.

Week two focused on Innovation and Disruptive Technologies with the scholars visiting Silicon Valley. They were privileged to meet with David Friedman (economist, physicist, legal scholar and libertarian theorist, recently retired professor of law at Santa Clara University) to learn about Anarcho-Capitalism & Private Law.

In San Francisco they attended a seminar on “The Crucible of Citizenship” at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. One Scholar quotes:

**"This lecture really cemented the importance of maintaining a strong Western liberal democracy"**  
Mannkal Scholar

Week three, the group traveled to Orange County where they; attended the Ayn Rand Conference; joined events at the Reason Foundation; and spent time at Taliesin Nexus.

Week Four of the tour the scholars were hosted by The Great Connections in Chicago where they learned from Marsha Enright about critical thinking & analysis. One scholar quotes:

**"The skills taught to me this week will undoubtedly be used for the rest of my life."**

The next stop was Activist Training at the Leadership Institute, Arlington, Virginia. The group participated in the Introduction to TV Techniques & Messaging and On-Camera, TV Training and Digital Writing & Video Editing Fundamentals courses. They were stretched well outside their comfort zones in advanced public speaking workshops and the fundamentals of media development. From here they traveled onto CATO institute and the Atlas Network, the theme was Limited Government in Representative Democracies.

The final leg of the tour was a visit to American Institute of Economic Research (AIER) – Harwood Graduate Colloquium, where the scholars focused on Classical Liberalism. One scholar quotes:

**"The experience is eye-opening, and I would not have been doing this if it were not for Mannkal."**





**Pictured Above**  
Carmen Gianfrancesco, Nicole  
Chapman, Ivan Zhou, Aleks Gurak &  
Emma Bolton.

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM S2 2019

## Mannkal's liberty tour of Eurasia

Nine Mannkal scholars traveled together through Europe and Israel as part of our Leadership Development Program. The first week of the study tour, starting in Hong Kong, was hosted by the Lion Rock Institute, by Michael Ko, Executive Director.

The focus of the week was the socio-political tensions as ongoing protests disrupted daily life. Scholars spent time hearing about the tense relationship between the city and mainland China. Scholars visited Polytechnic University, Hong Kong Monetary Authority and spent some time with the team at the Hinrich Foundation, where they heard about the foundations work promoting the values of ethical free trade in Asia.

Scholars then traveled to London, where they spent the next two weeks visiting a range of libertarian think tanks, business leaders and academics. They visited the Institute for Economic Affairs and the Australian High Commission. The scholars were also very lucky to visit Ron's daughter Sarah Basden.

Through involvement in the LDP, students gain an understanding of libertarian philosophy and develop the entrepreneurial skills needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world. Students will also learn leadership skills that will be essential in their personal and professional life. Upon successful acceptance into the LDP, leadership consultants work along-side Mannkal staff to examine students' strengths and weakness and find innovative ways to support their personal growth and individual development.

Week four was spent at the Centre for Political Studies (CEPOS), hosted by the Head of Education, Stefan K. Sløk-Madsen in Denmark. Scholars were introduced to Danish politics and the role of CEPOS in the political space. Denmark was one of the highlights of their trip, the gracious hosts took them on tours of the city and introduced them to incredible Danish food and culture. One scholar quotes:

**"The information and discussions will impact my way of living and developing my free-market ideas for the future."**

From Copenhagen the scholars traveled to Vienna where they visited the Austrian Economics Centre (AEC) to learn about methodological individualism, subjective theory of value and spontaneous order, Austrian economics and the European economy.

Week six and seven were spent traveling through Israel on a very busy and intense schedule. The group were able to see sights like the Red Sea, tour through the Old City and attend the OurCrowd Global Investors Summit where they learned about technology and innovation. The host took them on a Jeep ride along the Lebanon border and they attended a talk with the Director General of the Foreign Ministry.

Israel's rich culture and history has become a critical component of the Mannkal Global Study tours, we look forward to engaging with Jerusalem Institute for Market Studies on the next visit to the region.

**"I was exposed to many new ideas and learnt many concepts that can be applied when I start a business".**

Mannkal wishes to thank it's global network of partners who have generously hosted our scholars on their 6 week study tours.



# 2020

LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM  
SCHOLARS

Developing future  
free market leaders



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM 2020

MANNKAL'S PROGRAM MANAGER - JENN HAMMOND

I have the privilege of working alongside the incredible team at Mannkal to oversee the delivery of our Leadership Development Program (LDP). Ron's vision for the program is very clear, that we: "continue on developing future leaders of the free market and to help them crystallise their very own philosophy with consistency across personal, business and social lives". The program is guided by our Content Manager, Eva, who understands and appreciates the classical liberal philosophy in its most pure form. I describe Eva as our lighthouse. Eva is our constant beacon of light that remains perfectly steadfast, keeping everyone on course.

Mannkal is a place of genuine learning, where risks are accepted and embraced. We celebrate the success of our scholars and alumni, and we take time to consider how we can grow and develop each person that walks through our door. Mannkal promotes the idea that "exceptional character leads to success". What does this mean though? What is considered exceptional character? Our expectations of scholars are clear: Be responsible for your own actions and decisions - accept the consequences. Network and engage and take opportunities for growth, say yes, and show up. Keep good company, make friends with people who genuinely care about you and who will tell you truthfully when you are not the best version of yourself. Set and maintain goals, work towards those goals, don't make excuses. Be honest, reliable, trustworthy and have your house in order.

Over the course of 12 months the program becomes increasingly more challenging and rewarding. Scholars are offered exclusive access to world class speakers who present on a range of libertarian topics. Mannkal's Executive Director and Senior Research Analyst run group Socratic sessions in our Subiaco office, explaining philosophical underpinnings of a free society and how this applies to contemporary issues. The program is also supported by a team of professional psychologists at Critical Components in Fremantle. Psychologists work alongside the participants to provide professional and confidential 1:1 executive coaching. It is our belief that scholars graduating from this program will stand out from their classmates in character, motivation, experience, and skill.

The 2020 cohort of LDP scholars featured here have been with Mannkal now for 6 months. Mannkal recruited for this program in January and envisaged sending the 18 scholars overseas in June and July for a European and American summer of learning and adventure. The Study Tours are the core of our program. They provide an opportunity for scholars to visit our many friends, think tanks and partner organisations all over the world. The scholars spend time networking and learning all about liberty, politics, culture, and travel. Our most recent impact report from the 2019 study tour is available on the Mannkal website.

2020 at home has not been so bad though! Thanks to Zoom we have stayed well connected and engaged with each other, we have heard from a range of impressive speakers from across the globe, and have planned activities for semester 2 that will stretch and grow the minds of the scholars. Ron and Andrew have continuously encouraged us to communicate, take risks and no matter how challenging things get, do not stop! Whatever happens, you just keep pushing forward and looking for new and exciting opportunities. Perhaps this experience has become the measure of our success as a team? We have thrived through this challenging year with optimism and enthusiasm. We are looking forward to the next 6 months, we will be working alongside the cohort as they work on individual research projects and traveling to the southwest. We would like to go interstate to visit our friends in the liberty movement and eventually (all things permitted) we will farewell this group as they head off overseas on a study tour. Stay tuned, and please take time to get to know our incredible cohort by reviewing their profiles online and arranging a time to meet with them in person.



# LDP 2020 SCHOLAR

## SHANE HERBST

LDP 2020

Despite my 20-20 vision, I did not foresee 2020 unfolding as it has. Our new reality is as real as it was once unexpected. The LDP class of 2020 have, like millions of others, been affected – our study tour postponed, domestic conferences cancelled, and physical seminars superseded by virtual alternatives. It is for the above reasons I feel we have been gifted the greatest opportunity of all LDP cohorts. Resilience, versatility and independence comprise the LDP's core. This cohort has required those three traits in spades. Thanks to Zoom, we have still learned the same economic and philosophical content that was planned. We have been exposed to a variety of perspectives on governance, liberty, and personal responsibility. I have also learnt Eva's tin foil hat exists more than metaphorically.

If anything, the current situation has only heightened my personal sense of gratitude. We are being asked to stay at home. We are not being sent to the trenches, we are not living through the plague, nor are we living under a dictatorship. If this is my generation's biggest test, then we have it easy. We are lucky. The world's health systems are more advanced than at any point in history, and thanks to the marvels of modern technology many industries can continue to operate remotely. Had this crisis occurred even 25 years ago, the effects would have been exponentially worse – both in health and economic terms. Back to the LDP, it is designed to fast track scholars' personal and professional development. Covid-19 may have altered the structure of the program, but it has not affected the opportunity for self-improvement. As such, what I want to gain from the next six-months remains unchanged. All I can ask is that I become a better person and professional. If an international opportunity comes with that, well then lucky me.



**"I have also learnt  
Eva's tin foil hat  
exists more than  
metaphorically"**





**Pictured Above**  
Damon Miles, Siena Ellison, Annie Harfoushian, Kade Stone, Adrian Porretta, Harry Lowe and Benjiman Hunter.

# ALUMNI CONNECT:

Mannkal's Program Manager- Jenn Hammond  
Photos by Paul Winzar

Scholars who graduate from the Mannkal Leadership Development Program become part of our alumni network. We enjoy staying connected with our alumni through our monthly newsletter "Alumni. Access All Areas" and our social media platforms. We regularly share photos, interesting content, and stories from our traveling scholars.

One thing we think is important is highlighting the success and achievements of the Alumni Network.

Our Chairman, Mr. Ron Manners recently wrote a letter to the alumni, part of this letter states:

"I often mention how proud I feel when I hear of your many successes in climbing your own career ladders. Particularly, when you mention the small part played by our Mannkal Foundation. The major reason for success, of course, is your own initiative. I also enjoy the many questions, you ask of me, in the hope that I may have confronted similar situations in my 'many previous lives'."

We would love to hear from you if you have been involved in Mannkal, please drop by the office for a coffee or send us an email to let us know where you are in the world.

Mannkal Alumni are also eligible for discounted Executive Coaching with our partners Critical Components. If you are interested in find out how coaching can support your career and professional development, we encourage you to visit the Critical Components website.



Join our Alumni group  
on Facebook &  
connect with other  
Mannkal Scholarship  
recipients





When we developed our Mannkal Scholarship Program (which has more recently morphed into our Leadership Development Program) we had no expectation of developing long term relationships with our returning scholars (now, after 23 years, awarding more than 2000 scholarships).

Recently, during the interesting Coronavirus Crisis we have received many stories of how our enterprising Alumni have taken on imaginative projects to get them through these difficult times.

The latest is our Bayley Novakovic (Mannkal internship at Lion Rock Institute – Hong Kong in 2017 and has maintained a strong continuing relationship) has been busily feeding our neighbourhood with his sensational Micro Green Produce. Bayley, and a partner, are producing a range of fresh greens that contain up to 40 times the nutrition of the normal ‘greens’ that you would purchase from a supermarket. (Produce pictured above) @Evolvegreens are available via Facebook.

Our Alumni are now spread all over the globe and delight in acting as tour guides and information sources for our new travelling scholars (but certainly not this month, as you can appreciate). Please keep our team informed of your current activities so we can maintain our records as, at times like this, it is invaluable to develop collaborative relationships with colleagues who have moved up a few steps in their career ladders.

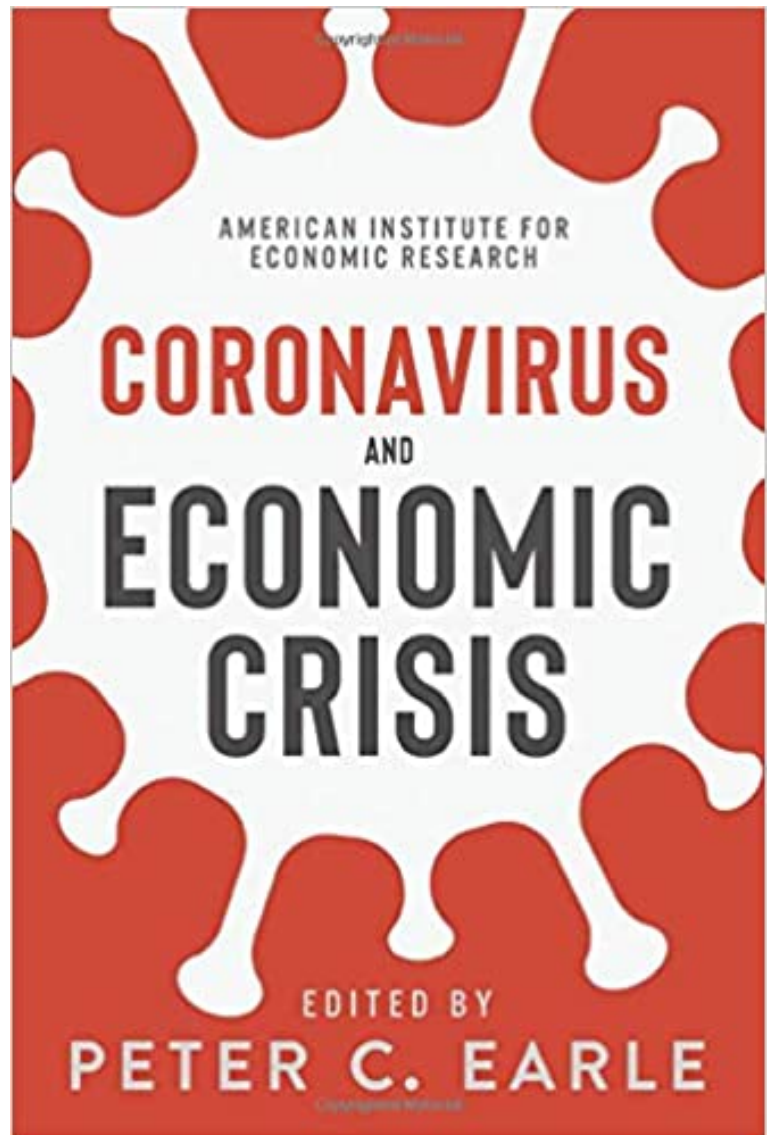
**Hannah Berdal in London (Pictured top right)**

I was lucky enough to come across Mannkal through its incredible scholarship program during university and it has continued to impact my life ever since! After spending a summer in Hong Kong at the Lion Rock Institute in 2012, I was able to join the Mannkal office part time whilst I completed my studies and am now a member of Mannkal’s advisory council. Following graduation I joined a law firm in London and have been living there for almost four years. Although I’m no longer in Australia, the amazing friends and mentors I have met (and continue to meet) through Mannkal’s international network means I never feel too far away!



**Micha Gartz (Pictured above)** Micha has been working with AIER and colleague Peter C. Earle to collaborate on an editorial masterpiece. The book covers key thoughts and observations on the COVID-19 crisis from its onset to speculations on the future of wealth and liberty in light of both the virus and the political response.

*Mannkal wishes to congratulate Micha on her achievements.*





# RESEARCH UPDATE MAY 2020

Mannkal's Senior Research Analyst - Josh Adamson

## "Roads, Rates and Rubbish"

Over the past decade, council rates in Western Australia have increased 63 percent. Over the same period, only tobacco, electricity, water, and medical and childcare services have increased at a faster rate.

What do each of these have in common? All are heavily regulated sectors with high levels of government involvement.

Most ratepayers understand that the exponential growth in council rates is a symptom of a larger problem. The ever-increasing scope of local government responsibilities has meant the traditional mandate of “roads, rates and rubbish” are neglected for non-traditional services. As the size and responsibilities assumed by local government continues to grow, however, there is greater and greater potential for the wastage and inefficiency ratepayers have become accustomed to.

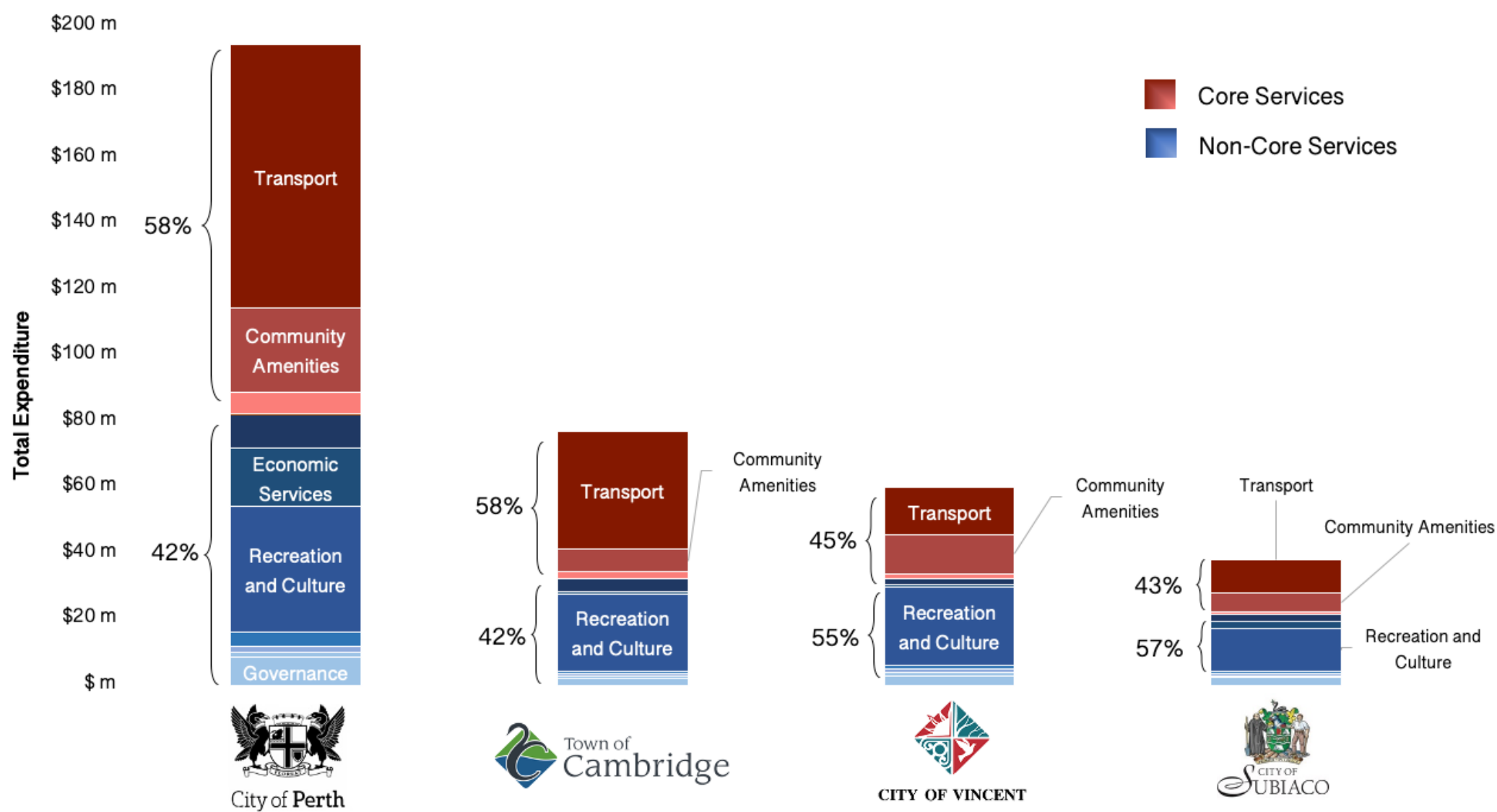
Local councillors, in search of the votes of small pockets of self-interested constituents have endorsed the foray of local government into non-core services. If put to referenda, or tested by market demand, the provision of many of these services would be unsupported by the majority of constituents.

Despite all this, local councils represent a level of government that often escapes serious inspection. One possible reason can be attributed to the influence of Western Australia’s peak local government lobbying body, WALGA. WALGA support the provision of these non-traditional local government services which have become entrenched in local government organisational structures. As a result, all ratepayers, whether they be residential or commercial property owners, are unwilling funders of largess.

There are many reasons which may explain why this occurs. Local governments are not known for their transparency, which makes it difficult for ratepayers to ascertain exactly where and how their dollars are being spent. The introduction of consistent accounting and reporting measures across councils, has made this process easier, however, much of this information never reaches the ratepayer. When it does, it is often hard for the average citizen to infer any meaningful insights.

To provide a structured approach for analysing waste and mismanagement, Mannkal has started the building the WALG Financial Database. This project will analyse the financial statements of metropolitan councils, with the aim of establishing a broader dataset to independently benchmark the performance of West Australian local governments.

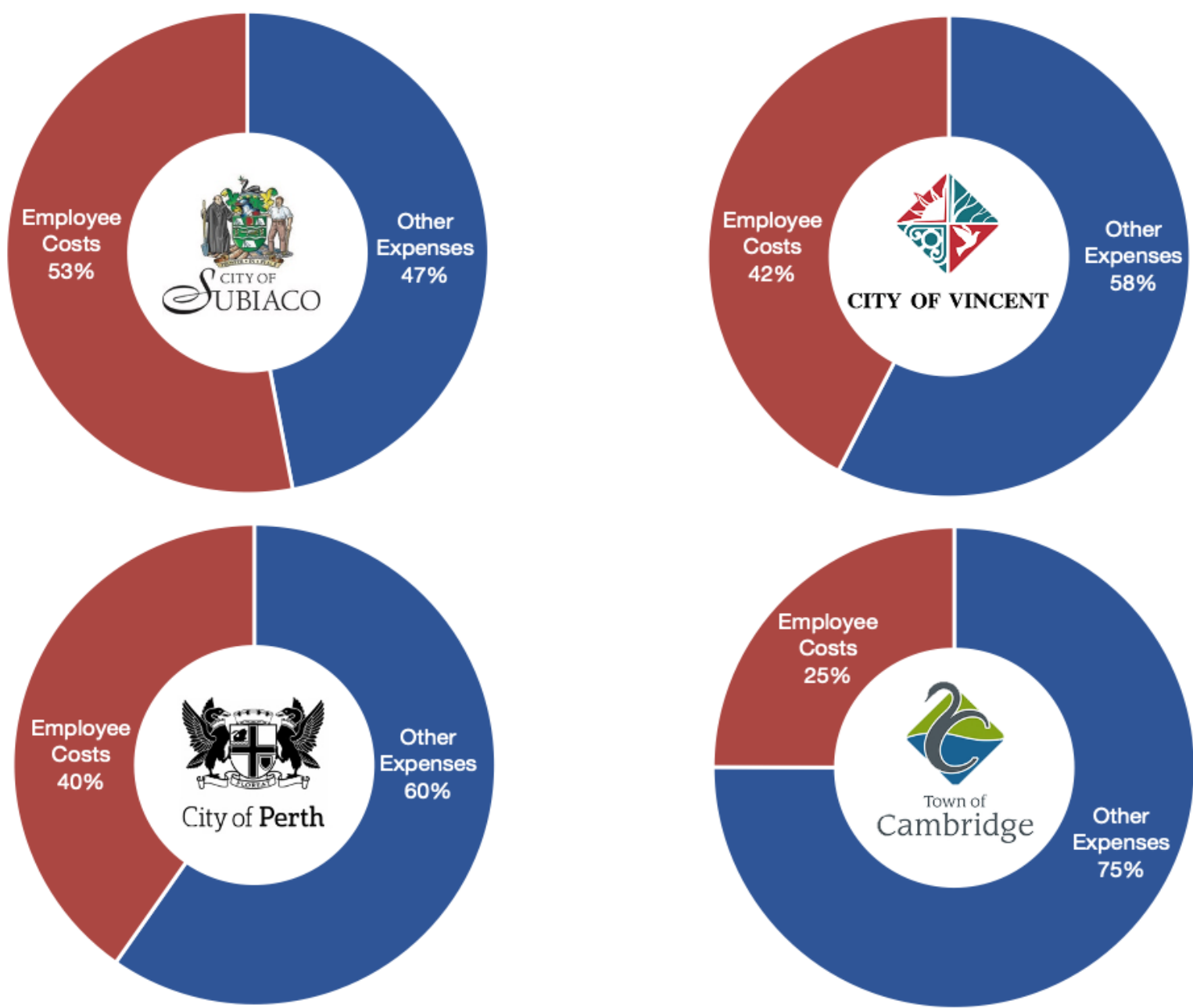
Given the unclear mandate councils operate under, it is not a surprise that preliminary analysis indicates that non-core activities dominate the expenditure of all councils analysed thus far. Illustrated in the chart below is a breakdown of the expenditure of local councils into functional categories for the most recent financial year.





Local ratepayers would likely be concerned to hear that recreation and culture-related expenditures are major outlays in all councils (and are the number one expense item in Vincent and Subiaco). This category, while including the activities and services to do with things such as parks, libraries and recreation centres, also professes a broader aim of supporting the “social wellbeing of the community”. Not only is this a wide net for councillors to cast, it usually results in inequitable transfers of wealth.

Employee costs also make up a significant portion of total expenditure of local governments. In the City of Subiaco, Vincent and Perth, employee costs account for over 40 percent of total expenditures (the Town of Cambridge shift a large portion of these cost elsewhere on their income statement). To quantify this in terms of an average residential ratepayer, around \$700 of Subiaco and Vincent households’ council fees last financial year went towards covering council employee expenses.



In addition to the WALG Financial Database, work has begun on a complementary project which will examine local government through the lens of Public Choice Theory (PCT). It draws on our learnings from the Mannkal-supported, tertiary-level, PCT course at conducted the University of Notre Dame in 2019. The course provided opportunities to interact and learn from leading domestic and international academics, including Professor Michael Munger of Duke University. The paper will apply PCT to explain how, and why, local government has become so unnecessarily large and inefficient, and apply this theory to frame the quantitative analysis conducted under the WALG Database.

Mannkal researchers hope to aid the ability of ratepayers to make their own judgements about the efficiency of their local government’s operations. Going forward, we aim to establish a broader dataset to independently benchmark the performance of West Australian local governments. We believe that providing this will support and stimulate discussion, and identify areas of largess so that relief may be provided to ratepayers who have been picking up the tab for many years.



Mannkal's Senior Research Analyst - Josh Adamson

Josh is a senior research analyst at Mannkal, he holds Bachelor of commerce from Curtin, and a Master of Economics from the University of Western Australia. He is a former Mannkal scholar who interned at the Centre for Policy Studies in London in 2018.

You can view more of Josh's research via the Mannkal website.



# MEDIA WARS

## BOOK REVIEW

**LDP 2020 Scholar - Alexandra Wolff**



According to the founder of Fox News, “Truth is whatever people will believe.” Just because something is widely accepted by society and even condoned by professionals or the government itself, does not guarantee it is objectively true or right. In our modern information age, it is more important than ever before not to blindly accept what we are told but examine multiple sources and arguments. Walter Donway and Vinay Kolhatkar’s new book, *Media Wars*, provides alternative perspectives to prevalent cultural issues challenging the reader to question the mainstream narratives.

Through a compilation of essays spanning a range of topics from science and art to journalism and politics, *Media Wars* illustrates the widespread replacement of traditional Western values with postmodernism. While many Australians believe postmodernism is just about accepting different opinions and challenging conventional boundaries, the authors reveal the philosophy’s dark side with roots in National Socialism and communism.

This explains the rise of identity politics focused on the Marxist idea of “exploiters and victims.” The authors use the “Black Lives Matter” movement as an example where perceived “class conflict” between African American citizens and the police denies the importance of homicidal onslaughts within the black community and vilifies men and women of law enforcement. The feminist movement acts as a more Australian example. What originated as a fight for equal opportunity between men and women has morphed into a shaming of masculinity. In both cases, rather than celebrate individual and cultural differences, it uses them to create conflict and hate between self-constraining groups.

Donway and Kolhatkar go on to reveal the inherent evil behind postmodernist thinking. *Media Wars* uses the climate change panic, regulations on resources and mining, and the transformation of Green Peace as examples of pseudo-environmentalism suggesting such thinking is anti-human and threatens the progress of the industrial revolution. They also look at the tendency of postmodernism to encourage sensationalism by challenging the efficacy of reason to unpack reality.

Though not every essay in the book may appeal to an individual reader and certain sections could have been expanded or reduced in length, *Media Wars* offers insights for everyone spanning a wide range of topics and ideas. The book provides an alternative perspective to mainstream media connecting the chaos witnessed in modern society to the root postmodernist philosophy behind such issues. In doing so, Walter Donway and Vinay Kolhatkar illustrate the danger in placing subjective feelings, identity politics, and political correctness above reason, human progress, and freedom. “Truth is an absolute defence” and will prevail if given the chance. This book empowers the individual to question the world around them, dig deeper into the arguments outlined, and in pursuing the truth melt away the commonly accepted and widespread lies.



**BOARD**

Mr Ron Manners, Mr David Stevens, Mrs Jenny Manners, Mr Neil Fearis, Mr Bill Stacey, Mr Lyndon Rowe, Mr Andrew Pickford

**AMBASSADORS**

Mannkal thanks and acknowledges the support and assistance of our ambassadors.

Mr Colin Agnew, Mr Bob Berven, Mrs Juel Briggs, Mr Gavin Bunning, Mr Ross Cable, Mr Rafe Champion, Mr Jock Clough, Dr Ross Fardon, Mr Doug Hall, Mr Bill Hassell, Mr Peter Iancov, Mr Geoff McNeil, Mrs Sally Jones, Mr Jim Keogh, Mrs Jenny Manners, Mr Ron Manners, Mr Toby Nichols, Mr Willy Packer, Mr David Reed, Mr Russell Rieck, Mrs Gina Rinehart, Mr Maurice Rousset, Mr Peter Sansom, Mr Bill Stacey and Mr Malcolm Steinberg.

**Working In Partnership With**



**Photo Credits**

**Page 06**

01. Mannkal's Chairman Mr Ron Manners' 02. 2019 Scholar Annie Harfoushian with family 03. Mannkal Board Member Mrs Jenny Manners', Mannkal Ambassador Mr Malcolm Steinberg, Mannkal's Program Manager Ms Jenn Hammond & Mannkal Ambassador Mr Doug Hall 04. Ms Gloria Alvarez and Mr Larry Reed from FEE 05. Executive Assistant to Mr Ron Manners' Mrs Judy Carroll & Mr Stuart Hatch 06. 2020 scholars Emily Lee, Louella Eaton, Alexandra Wolff, Luca Proietti Formaggio with Mannkal's Content Manager Eva Christensen.

**Page 07**

07. Mr John & Mrs Helen Hyde 08. 2019 Scholars Carmen Gianfrancesco & Emma Bolton with family 09. Mr Larry Reed with Scholars Alexandra Wolff, Mark Thomas & Luca Proietti Formaggio 10. 2019 Scholar Robert Abrahams & 2020 Scholar Sagar Badve 11. Mannkal's Content Manager Eva Christensen with Mannkal Executive Director Mr Andrew Pickford 12. 2019 Scholar Damon Miles with family.

Published by Mannkal Economic Education Foundation

Designed by Elise Bevan



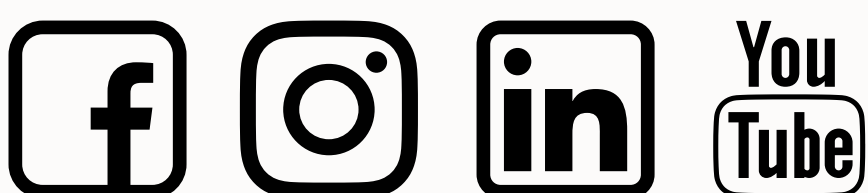
"Seek to learn constantly while you live;  
do not wait in the faith that old age by  
itself will bring wisdom."

SOLON



Since its founding, Mannkal has awarded more than 2000 scholarships. Our expanding Alumni network has built successful careers, both in the private and public sectors and are now entering decision-making leadership roles. Our satisfaction is seeing our current scholars apply these ideas during and after their graduation.

Mannkal believes that the principles of limited government and free markets are essential components for the future success of Australia



**MANNKAL**  
ECONOMIC EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION