

16th June – 14th July 2025

09.00 am – 10.30 am

Rory O'Brien

Political History of Southern Africa

In this course Rory takes us to South Africa, the surrounding countries of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique and out to the Island of Mauritius. We begin in 1820 when the British government offered passage and land to English people to occupy the Eastern Cape Colony to stop the Xhosa (Nelson Mandela's tribe) from migrating west. Meet Cecil Rhodes who, with his British South Africa Company founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia, named after him in 1895. Learn how Namibia, and its Coastal Diamonds progressed from South African administration to independence. In Mozambique, hear of Rory's contact with the Shangaan people and wild animals along the Limpopo River and, finally, learn of the early days of slavery on the Island of Mauritius and its amazing progress as an independent Republic.

Rory O'Brien grew up in Cape Town and Namibia. He obtained a degree in the Arts and Honours in Geography from Rhodes University and Master of City and Regional Planning from Cape Town University. He worked in Planning both in South Africa during the apartheid years and his adopted home in WA and retired a Life Fellow of the Australian Planning Institute. He has lectured at Curtin, Murdoch, Edith Cowan Universities and the University of Notre Dame and is a member of and lecturer for U3A.

16th June – 14th July

11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Dr Benjamin Kaebe

The Future of Energy in Australia – Renewable or Nuclear?

This course provides an exploration of renewable and nuclear energy. It begins with the similarities and differences between these two energy sources then delves into technological advances in renewable energy, showcasing recent innovations and case studies in solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal technologies. It examines nuclear energy's current state, future prospects, and the safety measures and advancements associated with it. It explores the integration of renewable and nuclear energy systems, presenting hybrid energy solutions and strategies for building a resilient and sustainable energy infrastructure. Lastly, the course addresses the impact of energy systems on the environment, communities, and future economies, offering a glimpse into the potential consequences and opportunities that lie ahead.

Dr. Benjamin Kaebe is a professional engineer, researcher and teacher who studied engineering science at Technische Universität in Berlin. He subsequently completed a PhD in aerospace engineering from UNSW, Canberra. In 2018, he made the move to Perth, where he assumed the role of a Research Associate in quantum physics at UWA.

16th June – 14th July

1.30 pm - 3.00 pm

Jan Altmann

Shakespeare's Unruly Women

Why did Kate the shrew have to be tamed? Was she tamed? Were Juliet and Ophelia literature's greatest lovers, or just rebellious teenagers who refused to follow their fathers' orders? Were Hamlet's mother and Lady Mabeth ambitious and murderous or just supporting the men in their lives? In Tudor England women were supposed to obey their fathers, marry well, and produce male heirs. They were not supposed to speak out or have their own opinions. It was acceptable for a man to beat his wife, so long as the stick was no thicker than his thumb. A woman who killed an abusive husband could be charged with treason and burnt at the stake. Despite all of this, Shakespeare's women were strong minded. They defied their fathers and their husbands. What happens when they break the rules?

Dr Jan Altmann holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Murdoch University. She spent many years teaching English, Literature, Art History, Art Theory, Women's Studies and Cultural Studies. She has written many art reviews and catalogue essays and has co-authored a book on Western Australian women's art of the colonial era.