Australian Academy of the Humanities

HUMANITARIANISM & HUMAN RIGHTS

48th Annual Symposium
Western Australia · 15–17 Nov 2017

SESSION

Freedom, Protection and Safety

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER, 2:00pm-3:30pm

WA MARITIME MUSEUM, Fremantle

How human rights frameworks and discourses seek to protect vulnerable communities and societies.

CHAIR

Associate Professor Katie Ellis

CURTIN UNIVERSITY

Katie Ellis is an Associate Professor and Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Internet Studies at Curtin University. Her research focuses on disability and the media extending across both representation and active possibilities for social inclusion. Her books include *Disability and New Media* (2011 with Mike Kent), *Disabling Diversity* (2008), *Disability, Ageing and Obesity: Popular Media Identifications* (2014; with Debbie Rodan & Pia Lebeck), *Disability and the Media* (2015; with Gerard Goggin), *Disability and Popular Culture* (2015), *Disability, Media Work: Opportunities and Obstacles* (2016) and her recent edited collection with Mike Kent *Disability and Social Media: Global Perspectives* (2017).

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SPEAKER

Dr Tim Soutphommasane

RACE DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER

Freedom of speech and protection against racial discrimination

Recent public debates have involved contests about freedom of speech and its limits. In a multicultural society, there is an imperative to protect people from the harms of racial discrimination and vilification. Legal protections are one means of doing this, but are not the only means. This paper reflects on the continued need for legislative protections and for responses from civil society.

Tim Soutphommasane has been Race Discrimination Commissioner since August 2013. Prior to joining the Australian Human Rights Commission, Tim was a political philosopher and held posts at The University of Sydney and Monash University. His thinking on multiculturalism, patriotism and national identity has been influential in shaping debates in Australia and Britain. Tim is the author of four books: *I'm Not Racist But …* (2015), *The Virtuous Citizen* (2012), *Don't Go Back To Where You Came From* (2012), and *Reclaiming Patriotism* (2009). He was co-editor (with Nick Dyrenfurth) of *All That's Left* (2010). He has been an opinion columnist with *The Age* and *The Weekend Australian* newspapers, and presented the documentary series Mongrel Nation on ABC Radio National (2013). Tim is an adjunct professor at the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Western Sydney University and chairs the Leadership Council on Cultural Diversity. Born in France and raised in southwest Sydney, Tim holds a Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Philosophy (with Distinction) from the University of Oxford, and is a first-class honours graduate of The University of Sydney.

Follow Tim on Twitter

Curtin University is hosting Tim's participation at this year's Symposium.

Mr Caine Chennatt

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN

Caine Chennatt is interested in the role the arts can play in fostering empathetic, inclusive and future-focused societies. At the University of Western Australia's Cultural Precinct he is Audience Engagement Manager, developing programs at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery for people with disabilities to engage with the arts. In 2016, he was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to research international access structures and inclusion programs in art galleries, museums and performing art centres. In addition to arts administration, Caine is an accredited practicing mediator and conflict-resolution coach with the Resolution Institute. He applies this facilitative outlook in projects that use the arts to build bridges between communities.

Professor Gerard Goggin

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Reimagining Communication Rights with Disability

Like many countries, Australia is shaped by long, complex, rich, and contested histories of communication that play a central yet still under realized role in the traditions, dynamics, dispensations, and cultural resources of social life. Communication, of course, is also central to notions of the human (and non-human), as well as humanitarianism, and human rights. With the advent of communication technologies and transformations in recent decades, communication has assumed even greater prominence when we come to conceptualize, discuss, and design institutions and frameworks to secure freedom, protection, and safety.

In this talk, I reflect upon our distinctly antipodean heritage of communication rights; however, I do so from the vantage point of an even more under studied domain of social life and rights — disability.

Disability is one of the newest areas of human rights, in which key Australians with disabilities played a leading role in formulating the ground-breaking 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This treaty puts disability human rights firmly on the global agenda, and also requires states parties to enact new norms and requirements of communication, hinging on digital technologies in particular. So weaving these two themes together, I argue that — not only is disability a vital and rich area of life's diversity — it helps us reimagine the ancient arts of communication to be fit-for-purpose for democratic, fair, and equal social futures.

Gerard Goggin is Professor of Media and Communications at the University of Sydney and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow. Goggin is internationally renowned for his research on the cultural and social dynamics of digital technology. He has made benchmark contributions to the understanding of mobile communication, national and international Internets and their histories, and is a founding figure in research on disability, technology, and culture. His key books include the *Routledge Companion to Global Internet Histories* (2017), *Disability and the Media* (2015; with Katie Ellis), *Global Mobile Media* (2011), *Cell Phone Culture* (2006; with Christopher Newell), *Disability in Australia* (2005) and *Digital Disability* (2003).

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