

PUBLIC LECTURE:

Wednesday, May 22

1100-1230

Parramatta South, EA.1.31

ARE FILTER BUBBLES REAL?

Brexiters, Trumpistas, the alt-right—many political movements today seem immune to the facts. In the virtual realm of social media, it seems that we live in **'echo chambers'** or **'filter bubbles'** that shield us from views unlike our own. But do we? In 2016 only 23% of U.S. users on Facebook and 17% on Twitter believed that their followers' views were the same as their own (Pew). 20% had changed their minds about a political or social issue because of interactions on social media. And new large-scale evidence is emerging that social networks are more thoroughly interconnected than they might seem.

In this public lecture, **Professor Axel Bruns** (QUT) considers the evidence for and against filter bubbles. He is the author of four books, including *Are Filter Bubbles Real?* (forthcoming 2019) and *Gatewatching and News Curation* (2018), and has co-edited five others, including *Digitizing Democracy* (2019) and *Twitter and Society* (2014). A big data specialist, he works in the Digital Media Research Centre at QUT, and is President of the Association of Internet Researchers.

