

SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK AT WSU

6-12 September 2021



Social Sciences Week is a week-long series of events held across Australia each September, offering insight into the impact of the social sciences on our lives. Western Sydney University is a partner university again this year and is hosting an exciting program of online events:

- **6th September 3pm to 4:30pm:**
Championing the humanities and social sciences in Education: research, policy and partnerships
- **7th September 10am - 11.30am:**
Tourism, vector, virus: Managing tourism and public health in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic
- **7th September 12pm-1:30pm:**
Micro-chips, big pharma, 5G, the virus escaped the lab': the conspiracy theories and misinformation of COVID-19
- **7th September 2pm-4pm:**
Muslim women's narratives and representations: Creative methodologies and expressions for Social Justice
- **8th September 10am-11:30am:**
Researching Automated Worlds
- **8th September 2pm-3:30pm:**
People, Heat, Dust and the Stars: Social Science at the Extremities
- **9th September 10am-11:30am:**
Sociology and Disability Justice Transforming our World
- **10th September 10am-12pm:**
Critical Race Theory: Transforming Disciplinary Knowledge in Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK AT WSU

6th September 3pm to 4:30pm:

Championing the humanities and social sciences in Education: research, policy and partnerships

Hosted as part of Social Sciences week by Western Sydney University Research Themes: Education and Work, and Urban Living Futures and Society.

This session invites researchers from across the sector to learn about and contribute to an increased attention to the important role of the humanities and social sciences in education. While the session will highlight the context of Western Sydney, conversations and case studies will be of relevance to researchers, policy makers, educators and partners across the Australian education sector.

- Learn about Western Sydney University research that is improving and influencing education in New South Wales and beyond
- Hear from leading researchers and creative practitioners about the value of creativity and teaching
- Contribute to current and new partnerships between researchers, policy-makers, sector partners and communities
- Engage with a panel of specialists on the challenges and benefits of championing humanities and social sciences in Education research, policy and practice

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/championing-the-humanities-and-social-sciences-in-education-tickets-166365980125>



7th September 10am – 11.30am:

Tourism, vector, virus: Managing tourism and public health in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic

This panel of tourism and heritage experts will consider the sustainable future of tourism in our (post-)pandemic future, in the context of Australia's historic efforts to manage mobilities and disease.

Tourism, as the practice of people travelling to other places to encounter other people, is made precarious by the spread of infectious disease and attenuates this spread. This knowledge is not new and the relationship between tourism and the spread of infection has never disappeared. Tourism remains a significant influencer of 'global microbial traffic' (Morse, 1992) but this has largely remained manageable, at acceptable levels of risk, and with the worst-case scenarios remaining mostly dormant. Notable, and fairly recent, exceptions include SARS (2003), Swine flu (2009) and MERS (2012) among the respiratory infections that have influenced tourism in regional concentrations. Not only are such outbreaks appearing to occur with greater frequency, but the greater volume of tourist arrivals increases their potential to do harm. In 2003, against the forecast for volumes of international tourism, Linda Richter envisaged that 2020 would deliver 'an unprecedented risk of infectious disease and other health-related crises' (p. 340). The accuracy of her prediction is now well appreciated.

We'll be joined by academic and industry experts:

Tony Martin, CEO of the Qantas Founders Museum
Kelly Hendry, Destination Management at Parkes Shire Council, NSW
Annie Clarke, Professor of Archaeology and Heritage, University of Sydney
Michael Hall, Professor in the Geographies of Tourism, University of Canterbury (NZ)
Trevor Sofield, Professor in the Economics of Tourism, University of Tasmania
Giovanna Lever, Founder and CEO of Sparrowly Group
Felicity Picken (Chair), Lecturer in Tourism and Heritage, Western Sydney University

Zoom details:

Meeting ID: 896 5278 1912

Password: 779259

SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK AT WSU

7th September 12pm-1:30pm:

**‘Micro-chips, big pharma, 5G, the virus escaped the lab’:
the conspiracy theories and misinformation of COVID-19**

As the COVID-19 pandemic worsens, the spread of misinformation and conspiracy theories has intensified. Like the virus itself, the theories spread quickly and contain multiple variants. While conspiracy theories are often attributed to marginal or fringe populations, COVID has shown the spread of such theories to be more prevalent and accepted across the mainstream population

This panel unpacks some of the theory behind how attitudes and beliefs manifest, but also how to build resilience or resistance to the spread of ‘fake news’ and conspiracy theories. Can we develop an antidote for conspiracy influences that are increasingly present in advertising, media – including online and social media – governance platforms and in familial and community networks. What are the short and long-term impacts on our socio-political landscape? And will the conspiracy theories outlive the virus?

Panel:

Nida Denson, Western Sydney University

Craig McGarty, Western Sydney University

Stijn Denayer, All Together Now

Facilitator: Rachel Sharples, Challenging Racism Project

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/the-conspiracy-theories-and-misinformation-of-covid-19-tickets-166111298365>

7th September 2pm-4pm:

**Muslim women’s narratives and representations:
Creative methodologies and expressions for Social Justice**

This virtual panel discussion hosted by Diversity and Creative Social Change, School of Social Sciences features Firdaws Karim (WSU), Ayah Abubasheer (ACU), Joumanah El Matrah (WSU). The session will be chaired by Professor Linda Briskman, Margaret Whitlam Chair of Social Work, WSU.

This panel brings forth the experiences of Muslim women in different geo-political contexts and showcases the ways and spaces in which they resist their gendered, Orientalist or Islamophobic representations. From their expressions of pious agency in the Gaza strip to their agency in challenging everyday experiences of racism and Islamophobia in Australia, this panel of speakers provide an alternative standpoint to view Muslim women.

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/muslim-womens-narratives-and-representations-tickets-166766369701>



SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK AT WSU

8th September 10am-11:30am: Researching Automated Worlds

Automation is finding its way into many systems that impact our everyday lives. AI and machine learning programs increasingly make decisions about a person's credit score, determine the routes that food delivery operators should take via UberEats or Deliveroo, automate medical diagnoses, or determine who should receive a loan or a welfare payment. Algorithms have become integrated into the information and media we receive and generate, amplifying certain political perspectives or making recommendations about our leisure and entertainment. Moreover, we often know very little about the places and infrastructures – like data centres – that power these automation programs, and their broader political and economic impacts.

What are the methods for investigating the relationships between people, machines and data and what is at stake in these different approaches? To address these questions, the six panellists will draw upon their current research in the following areas:

- Robodebt and the automation of government services
- Labour, work and automated technologies in shipping ports
- Patents, automation and the organization of space in warehouses
- Labour and workflow automation in radiology (or medical settings)

Chair: Heather Horst, Director of ICS

Participants: Tsvetelina Hristova, Brett Nielson, Ned Rossiter and Karen Soldatic

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/researching-automated-worlds-tickets-167008327403>

8th September 2pm-3:30pm: People, Heat, Dust and the Stars: Social Science at the Extremities

Social life is being pushed to extremes. While billionaires explore outer space, city residents from Parramatta to New Delhi contend with the proliferation of heat and dust – by-products of local and global industrial activity. If science could once imagine society as an independent object of research, today there is no area – from the economy to geopolitics, law and the habits of everyday life – that is not conditioned by our environment. And that environment is not the one we once thought we knew...

How are social scientists responding? How do they investigate the interchange between materials, beliefs and attitudes which marks our newly emerging social extremes? If the interview and the survey are no longer the only tools at our disposal, what are the methods for an invigorated social science needing to respond to these extremes and the sense of crisis they produce? And what are the ethics of engaging people and things already pushed to their limits?

Our panellists will discuss a number of compelling projects that explore society at the extremities:

- Outer space and terrestrial extremes
- Heat and dust in the cities of Parramatta and Kolkata
- Environmental disasters in Australia and Nepal

Chair: Liam Magee

Panellists: Juan Salazar, Malini Sur, Vanicka Arora, Stephen Healy

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/people-heat-dust-and-the-stars-social-science-at-the-extremities-tickets-167011709519>

SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK AT WSU

9th September 10am-11:30am: Sociology and Disability Justice Transforming our World

Critical sociological inquiry has been at the forefront of a determination to create socially just change in our world. Sociologically informed research has helped activists, advocates and policy makers to understand the complex issues of discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion. Researchers have utilised the tools of sociology to support the work of disability activists working on the ground, informing their campaigns for change, creating opportunities to generate new ideas, and contributing to the reframing of disability to support disabled people and people with disabilities mobilisation for change. From different standpoints, the four speakers will examine the importance of sociology to their long-standing involvement within the disability area and illustrate the importance of sociological thinking to inform the future of a disability just world and its role in creating socially just change.

Panel: Ryan Thorneycroft, Judy Singer, Raelene West, Lizzie Knight
Chair: Karen Soldatic
(TASA/Critical Disability Studies Thematic Group)

Register here:

<https://socialsciences.org.au/socialsciencesweek/event/sociology-and-disability-justice-transforming-our-world/>

10th September 10am-12pm: Critical Race Theory: Transforming Disciplinary Knowledge in Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

A flagship event from the Institute for Culture and Society's (ICS) Borders and Diversity Research Program, this virtual panel discussion on Critical Race Theory in the HASS disciplines features leading Australian critical race scholars Alana Lentin (WSU), Aileen-Moreton Robinson (RMIT), Debbie Bargallie (UQ), Sherene Idriss (Deakin) and Andrew Brooks (UNSW).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) has had high profile media attention in both the US and Australia this year, with Sky News, the Daily Telegraph and the Australian echoing calls from the US to 'ban' CRT. The Senate passed a motion to 'reject' CRT in the national curriculum. Beyond this moral panic, Australian social science and humanities scholars are yet to fully grapple with how critical race perspectives potentially challenge and transform disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledges in a settler colonial context. This panel, scheduled to align with the national 2021 Social Sciences Week programming, will engage in these debates in a vibrant panel discussion with leading Australia researchers from across the humanities and social sciences.

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/critical-race-theory-in-the-social-sciences-humanities-tickets-166130905009>



More information on Social Sciences Week can be found here:
<https://socialsciences.org.au/socialsciencesweek/>