



From Digital Data to Decisions to

A symposium with Associate Professor Virginia Eubanks, author of *Automating Inequality*

When: Friday 22 March 2019

Where: University of Queensland, St Lucia, GCI Building (#20), Level 2

Data has always informed decision making, by ourselves, by states and by corporations. With the increasing digitisation of data the nature and shape of data is significantly transformed. From rich, messy and unstructured knowledge, digital data is typically crisp, clear-cut and highly structured. Moreover, the digitisation of data collection in sensors and platforms generates a flow of 'big data' that begets new computational analysis approaches to help inform decision-making.

This symposium focuses on how decisions are made with digital data, the shifts in the nature of both human and machine decision making that result, and the consequences of such decision-making. The symposium draws on recent research and emerging projects involving a range of disciplines and empirical spheres.

The symposium is structured around a series of interactive panel discussions relating to different aspects of digital data and decision-making.

Key participants:

Virginia Eubanks is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University at Albany, SUNY. She is the author of *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor*, winner of the McGannon Center Book Prize for 2018. For two decades, Virginia has worked in community technology and economic justice movements.



Ed Santow has been Human Rights Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission since August 2016. He Commission's work on detention and implementing the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT); refugees and migration; human rights issues affecting LGBTI people; counter-terrorism and national security; technology and human rights; freedom of expression; and freedom of religion.



Registration: Free, including welcome coffee, morning and afternoon teas and lunch.

Due to venue size there is a strict limit of 50 attendees. To register, go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/from-digital-data-to-decisions-to-tickets-56846341939>

Schedule

- 9:00-9:30 Arrive and registration
- 9:30-9:45 Welcome and Orientation
Professor Mohan Krishnamoorthy (UQ PVC Research Partnerships); Dr Justine Lacey (CSIRO Responsible Innovation)
Chaired by: *A/Prof Paul Henman (UQ CPF)*
- 9:45-10:30 Plenary Address, On digital data to decisions: some observations from the USA
A/Prof Virginia Eubanks (SUNY Albany) *Chaired by A/Prof Paul Henman (UQ CPF)*
- 10:30-10:45 Morning Tea Break
- 10:45-12:00 **Panel 1: From Data to Decisions to Practice**
Digital data is used to help to inform decisions to act, including allocating resources. In digital agriculture, the decision might be about whether to plant a crop, of what type and when. In child protection, data based models might inform whether or not to act on a notification of potential harm or neglect, and if so, how urgently. Decisions on resourcing include case mix funding within health settings, and employment services based on assessed risks of long-term unemployment. This panel will examine the strengths and challenges in data-informed decision making for professional practice and resource allocation within organisational or individual contexts.
Panellists: Dr Luk Peeters (CISRO Deep Earth Imaging); Dr Philip Gillingham (UQ); Dr Cara Stitzlein (CSIRO Digiscope/data61) *Chaired by: A/Prof Paul Henman (UQ CPF)*
- 12:00-1:15 **Panel 2: From Data to Decisions to Differentiation and In/Equalities**
Data is used to sort or differentiate between individuals or sub-populations. Markets can be segmented for better targeting of products and advertisements, profiling occurs to automate news feeds on social media, personal characteristics are used to inform sentencing and parole decisions. Such segmentation discriminates, but it not necessarily discrimination. However, such segmentation can reinforce discrimination and exacerbate inequalities, or ameliorate them. This panel will examine the dynamics of data discrimination and effects on socio-economic in/equalities.
Panellists: Dr Jillian Ryan/Dr David Cox (CSIRO precision health); Dr Amelia Radke (UQ Social Science); Prof Greg Marston (UQ); *Chaired by: TBA*
- 1:15-2:15 Lunch Break
- 2:15-3:30 **Panel 3: From Data to Decisions to Data Protection, Surveillance and Privacy**
Digital data are readily copied and circulated that provide constant weaknesses for privacy and data protection. This dynamic is exacerbated in an age of big data and the internet of things, made evermore challenging by the relational aspect of privacy of genetic markers and social media networks. This panel will examine how the use of digital data in decision making tools can disrupt data protection and privacy objectives, and possible technical and policy governance responses.
Panellists: A/Prof Mark Burdon (QUT Law); Dr Simon Fielke (CSIRO digiscope); Dr Caitlin Curtis (UQ CPF) *Chaired by: TBA*
- 3:30-3:45 Afternoon Tea Break
- 3:45-5:00 **Panel 4: From Data to Decisions to Responsibility and Accountability**
In order to capture the benefits of digital data it is important to develop policy, innovation and technical responses to disruptive data to decisions. This panel will discuss a range of ways to increase the responsibility and accountability of digital data decision making. It will then broaden into an open discussion about how to create innovation, technologies and policies that seek to enhance the use of data for decision making while reducing the challenges and problematics that such digital decision making may give rise to.
Panellists: Edward Santow, Human Rights Commissioner; Prof Lyria Bennett Moses (UNSW Law); A/Prof Virginia Eubanks (SUNY); A/Prof Paul Henman (UQ CPF)
Chaired by: Prof Karen Hussey (UQ CPF)
- 5:00-5:10 **Closing reflections and thank you.** *A/Prof Paul Henman (UQ CPF)*

This event is sponsored by:

- UQ Centre for Policy Futures, policy-futures.centre.uq.edu.au
- CSIRO Responsible Innovation Initiative, csiro.au/en/Research/LWF/Areas/Responsible-Innovation
- UQ Digital Data and Society Network
- UQ Faculty of HASS Automation, Society and Ethics Research Network
- Australian Research Council