

Data Science in the News

Webinar: What can we learn from George Floyd's death, and what role can data and data science play in this?

***Friday 3 July
12pm - 1pm***

The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis USA at the hands of police has been headline news worldwide, sparking discussions, demonstrations, reflections and statements. His death highlights many important issues and questions. It prompts us to reflect on the role that data and data analysis play in these issues and, in turn, how these issues might inform our work as data scientists. To this end, we turn the focus of our "Data Science in the News" panel presentations to the following topic: What can we learn from George Floyd's death, and what role can data and data science play in this?

Our panel

The panel sessions will be co-organised by the QUT Centre for Data Science, QUT Carumba Institute and the Queensland Academy of Arts and Science. The aim is to bring together speakers to discuss this topic from a range of perspectives, with the aim of exploring how data and data science can contribute to meaningful conversations, decisions and changes as a result of this tragic event.

Our second session will include the following speakers:

Professor Peter Anderson, Executive Director of the QUT Carumba Institute and Director of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network (Moderator)

Professor David Lovell, Deputy Director of the QUT Centre for Data Science

Christopher Emzin, Senior Lecturer at QUT, Inspector of Police with over 35 years policing experience as a criminal investigator, prosecutor and legal advisor for the Queensland Police Service

Darren Clinch, Data Analytics Coordinator for the Indigenous Data Network, University of Melbourne

Dr Kate Devitt, Chief Scientist of Trusted Autonomous Systems Defence Cooperative Research Centre (TAS-DCRC)

Panel session topics

Professor David Lovell: "Why are we drawn to technology to tackle complex human issues? Why does it keep happening?". Three weeks before George Floyd was killed, Harrisburg University gave a media release outlining the paper "A Deep Neural Network Model to Predict Criminality Using Image Processing". Furore ensued. The news release was removed. The editor of the publication where it was scheduled to appear has decided to not publish the work. In this session of Data Science in the News, I want to consider why people are drawn to technology to tackle complex human issues.

Christopher Emzin: "Comparative Perspectives on Queensland – US Policing"

Darren Clinch: "Data and data science versus 'fabric of society' conditioning in an Indigenous Australian context". How does mainstream media including social media change the intent of data, and

how can data science change that? Why are more Australians taking notice of George Floyd and not Kumanjaji Walker or Joyce Clarke?

Dr Kate Devitt: “Good Data”. I will discuss citizens using data for social and political activism to assert non-violent democratic pressure on the polity. E.g. smart phone footage of demonstrations, distributed social media campaigns, evasion of state surveillance and public pressure on governments to be transparent with regards to how they collect and use citizen data to make decisions including policy and legislative actions.

More about the panellists

Professor Peter Anderson is the Executive Director of QUT’s Carumba Institute. He is also the Director of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network (NIRAKN). The Carumba Institute aims to transform both Indigenous research and Indigenous education. Central to his role are training and employment-enhancing initiatives and fostering engagement and partnerships that matter to Indigenous people and communities through the Institute.

Professor David Lovell is a Professor in the QUT’s School of Computer Science, Deputy Director of QUT’s Centre for Data Science, and leader of the Centre’s Data-Focused Decision-Making Program. David’s research interests lie at the intersection of humanity, science and technology, particularly data science. We humans are the ones who stand to benefit (or suffer) from systems that use data to make or inform decisions that affect our lives. David wants to ensure that science and technology are developed, designed and delivered with this in mind so that our world is better as a result.

Christopher Emzin is a Senior Lecturer at QUT. He is of Indigenous and South Sea Islander heritage. Christopher holds a Masters and a Bachelors Degree of Laws and has been admitted to practice law as a ‘Barrister-At-Law’. He is also an Inspector of Police with over 35 years policing experience as a criminal investigator, prosecutor and legal advisor for the Queensland Police Service. He has held a range of operational, policy and senior management positions within the QPS including senior roles within Internal Investigations Branch and Prosecutions Services. Chris is currently undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at QUT Faculty of Law. The thesis title is “Law Enforcement Policy & Practice impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland.”

Darren Clinch is a Badimia man from Yamatji country in the mid-west of Western Australia, and is currently the Data Analytics Coordinator for the Indigenous Data Network, University of Melbourne. Prior to this Darren worked for the Department of Health and Human Services, State Government of Victoria, in a variety of roles which included several years as the program coordinator for the Improving Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Patients (ICAP) program. This role involved engaging with all levels of the Tertiary Care sector across Victoria to improve the cultural safety, and appropriateness of services to Aboriginal Victorians accessing hospitals and health services. Darren completed a Masters in Public Health through Deakin University and has also studied statistical programming through the Centre for Big Data Research, UniNSW. In Darren’s most recent role at DHHS, before moving to UniMelb, he was seconded into the System Intelligence and Analytics branch to provide Business Intelligence and Geo-spatial support to a wide range of programs such as the Social Landlord Project, Community Service Investment, Safe Scripts program, and the North Richmond Health’s Medically Supervised Injecting Room. While in this role Darren contributed to the development of an Indigenous status algorithm to improve identification in linked data which required working with the Victorian Social Investment and Integrated Data Resource using tools such as SQL, R, Python and ArcGIS.

Dr Kate Devitt graduated from Melbourne University with BA(hons) history and philosophy of science and psychology. After working with Accenture on the CAMM2 Project for Defence she started her PhD at

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Kate has used her expertise in cognitive science, epistemology and ethics to lead transdisciplinary teams building decision support tools for industry as well as co-founded a startup (mentored through MIT REAP). In 2018 she joined DST as a social and ethical robotics researcher and maintains a part time permanent position with DST two days a week alongside her role as Chief Scientist of the TASDCRC. Kate is currently assigned to ADF Covid-19 Task Force providing specialised advice regarding social and ethical aspects of data, technology and AI systems that may be considered, developed and employed as part of the Operation. She is Australia's representative for the TTCP AI Strategic Challenge and is contributing to NATO and UN discussions regarding frameworks for human control of robotics and autonomous systems. Kate is leading the 'Trust and Safety' chapter for Australia's Robotics Roadmap (V.2). She is co-editor of Good Data (2019) with realistic methods on how data can be used to progress a fair and just digital economy and society. She is also a research fellow with the Co-Innovation Research Group at the University of Queensland, an inter-disciplinary research group crossing conventional boundaries comprising social robotics, interaction design, software engineering and human-computer interaction. Kate is passionate about how autonomous systems should be designed within the large sociotechnical systems within which they are built and deployed, particularly ethical, legal, and regulatory structures to achieve social license to operate and trusted adoption.