

Truth-telling and the limits of legal systems

Friday 6 August
10.30am – 12noon
CDU Art Gallery
RSVP: artgallery@cdu.edu.au

Lecture: *Truth-telling in relation to the youth detention* by Professor Thalia Anthony

The 2016-17 Royal Commission into the Detention and Protection of Young People in the Northern Territory promised to be a watershed moment for truth-telling in relation to the youth detention system and affiliated carceral regimes. There was hope that the systems and individuals responsible for torture inflicted on young people in detention – including the use of spit hoods, tear gas, physical attacks, mechanical restraint chairs and indefinite segregation– would be held to account. This presentation examines how the Royal Commission processes and adversarial stance of the Northern Territory Government limited the scope of truth-telling and precluded justice. The evidence of Aboriginal witnesses that pointed to the need for self-determination of Aboriginal families and communities, and decarceration of Aboriginal children, was overshadowed with a set of narrow recommendations and even more constrained government responses. This presentation argues that truth-telling requires spaces in which Aboriginal people design the process and oversee implementation of recommendations.



Thalia Anthony is a Professor of Law at the University of Technology Sydney; who lives and works on the stolen land of the Gadigal people. Her research focuses on the colonial legacy and systemic racism in legal and penal institutions, with a focus on the Northern Territory. Her books *Indigenous People, Crime and Punishment* and *Decolonising Criminology* highlight the harms that flow from state punishment on Aboriginal people. She works with Deadly Connections and Aboriginal Legal Services to further self-determination. Thalia recently campaigned against the draconian bail laws that disproportionately incarcerate Aboriginal kids in the Northern Territory.

Friday 6 August
Following Professor Thalia Anthony

Artist's talk: *I See Red* by Lee Harrop

I See Red was commissioned by the City of Perth, Western Australia as a public artwork in 2015. However, it was decommissioned after permission to install the work was denied by the sitting judges of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. In the process of examining what ultimately led to the decommission, much was revealed about the power of art and how it can be used in the process of truth-telling.

Lee Harrop is a PhD candidate at Charles Darwin University undertaking practice-led research. Harrop's artwork is word-focused and context-specific. Her recent artworks offer a representation of mining that can be considered alongside the wider global discourse about mining and its environmental impact.



Image: Artist Impression *I See Red*, red neon, acrylic and electrics, Old Court House Law Museum, Perth, Western Australia, Image copyright and courtesy of Lee Harrop

Ursula Raymond, the Deputy Treaty Commissioner for the NT, will facilitate the Q&A following the lecture and presentation. Ursula Raymond was born and raised in Darwin on Larrakia country and has cultural connections through to Kakadu (NT), Wuthathi (Shelburne Bay in Far North Queensland), and the Torres Strait Islands (particularly Horn Island and Thursday Island). Following a career in media and as a media, policy and political adviser at in Federal and Territory parliaments she joined the Northern Territory Treaty Commission.

