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Session 10
11am-12:30am - Room: HD 2.006

Practicing Publics

**10A “Fuck off, we’re full’ - The politics of boganism and public relations in contemporary Australia” Kristin Demetrious**

What is meant by the term ‘bogan’ and how does its popular usage distinguish a new public occupying a particular class position and social presence in Australian society. Examining a number of media texts, this paper explores the bogan phenomenon and asks if it normatively repositions Marxist ideas of class within the contemporary construct of lifestyle politics and classless capitalism (Beck). Challenging the idea the term is politically benign, the paper argues that the rise ‘boganism’ and its stigmatic associations has implications for public relations. In particular, it argues successful framing techniques designate a group of people occupying social risk positions and that are dis-empowered by eco-discourses and targeted for social control. These marginalised publics lack the sociocultural resources required for participation in the public sphere and as such are malleable and highly receptive to intrinsic and extrinsic forms of public relations.

**10B “People ‘are’ rhetoric. Get over it!” – Stephen Mackey**

This paper argues that a better understanding of public relations would help us to get an urgently needed better understanding of people. It explains why public relations should be considered the contemporary manifestation of the millennia-old art of rhetoric which in turn should be considered the basis of, at least western culture. This article introduces a thesis that understanding rhetoric properly will lead to the best way of understanding public relations properly. It will critique existing writers about the rhetoric to public relations nexus to suggest that there is a crucial need to more carefully consider the true relevance of massively organised deliberate persuasive discourse. The urgency is because few of these commentators quite capture the extent to which public relations and related activities are creating us. It will explain why we are almost unconscious of this process and it will point out that by contrast ancient sophists and the more accomplished pre-modern rhetoricians have always been aware of this ‘construction of people process’. The approach of this paper is premised on the observation of classicist Werner Jaeger who explains that rhetoric is at the centre of being human. When explaining the use of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic by Greek Enlightenment sophists he writes that: “This educational technique is one of the greatest discoveries which the mind of man has ever made: it was not until it explored these three of its activities that the mind apprehended the hidden law of its own structure." (Jaeger, 1947:314)

**10C “Coming in Like a Wrecking Ball: Power and Responsibility in Celebrity Call Out Culture” – Allison Maplesden**

Recent work on contemporary publics has argued that the West is moving towards “recognition culture” (Raisborough 2011) which “draws our own attention to how we present ourselves to others” (Marshall 2013). One of the key ways that the self is produced in this context is through the call to imagine ourselves as needing to take personal “responsibility” and to regard the actions of others through a frame of “responsibilisation” (Raisborough). This paper will argue that, particularly through the spread of social media, celebrities in particular are asked to “take responsibility” for the cultural politics of their work, by being answerable to a networked public. At the other end of this communication