



UNSW Law Legal Education Research Group

Call for Papers

LEGAL EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Teaching as a Subversive Activity

27 and 28 November 2019

Hosted by UNSW Law *Legal Education Research Group*

In December 2017 the UNSW Law School's Legal Education Research Group ran the inaugural, biennial Legal Education Research Conference on the theme of what constituted excellence in research into legal education. Proceedings from that conference are forthcoming in an edited book with Routledge. The theme of the 2019 conference is: '**Teaching as a Subversive Activity**'. We will be looking for panels, papers, posters and performances on legal education research related to the theme, which we have drawn from Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner's classic *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (1969). We take this to mean the consideration of research into legal education as lifetime learning, as 'crap-detecting', as creating meaning, as transformative and as developing world-changing thinking within the legal context.

In an age when everyone aspires to teach critical thinking skills in the classroom (or, at least, no teacher would say they want to produce *uncritical* students!), what does it mean today to be a *subversive* law teacher? Who or what might a subversive law teacher seek to subvert – the authority of the law, the university, their own authority as teachers, perhaps? Are law students ripe for subversion, agents of, or impediments to, subversion?

We welcome a broad range of responses to the conference theme – from research into classroom experiences to theoretical and historical interrogations of what it means to teach law subversively. Proposals can deal with a range of issues including, but by no means limited to, the following questions, themes and provocations:

- What does teaching subversively mean? What is the relation of subversion to transformation, critique, appropriation, and related concepts?
- Can we (and should we) teach our students to be subversive? And subversive of what?
- Subverting... the authority of the law, the norms of legal education, the expectations of students (about law, the future, themselves), the university?
- Can we teach black letter law subjects subversively – or is this something you can only do with legal theory or more abstract courses?

- Subversion and “the other” – is culturally-sensitive legal education subversive, or pandering to a discourse of political correctness that stifles subversion?
- Does subversion in legal education take as a point of reference something internal or external to the law? Is subversion about the law itself, or its engagement with politics, economics, culture?
- Critiques of legal education: historical and contemporary;
- The future of legal education;
- Attempts to subvert and reimagine the law school and the university;
- Traditions of critical, radical and subversive pedagogy – and their relation to law, legal education, and critical legal thinking.

More broadly, we welcome any paper or poster proposal in the genre of legal education on any substantive area of law that makes an effort to think through the question of what it means to teach subversively and what it means to think of teaching as a subversive activity. We particularly welcome doctoral, early career and junior scholars. We welcome scholars within the discipline of law but also those outside law who are interested in questions of legal education and the reproduction of legal knowledge.

There are three main types of participation in the conference: individual conference papers, poster presentations and panel proposals. **Please send paper abstracts, poster descriptions, and session proposals for this conference to leconf@unsw.edu.au by 1 July 2019.**

For session proposals, we encourage traditional and non-traditional (or subversive!) session formats. These can include debates, interviews, conversations, roundtables, a mini-reading group, or other formats. They can also include the standard conference format of 3 x 20 minute papers plus a chair, in which case the panel organiser needs to submit a brief (100 word) description of what the panel is about followed by 3 x 500 word abstracts (one for each of the papers). For non-traditional formats, please include the names of the participants and an explanation of the planned format and theme for the panel.

Participants wishing to present an individual conference paper should send abstracts of no more than 500 words. If accepted, participants should plan to present papers of 20 minutes’ duration. If accepted, the conference collective will organise your paper into a thematic panel.

Participants wishing to present a poster should send a 300 word description of their poster presentation by the same date.

The conference will be held at UNSW Law School. Registration is free but required as numbers will be limited. Registration details to follow.

Any inquiries can be directed to: leconf@unsw.edu.au