# ACCANect 2018

**Session 18: 4:25 –4:45pm**

**Cyber Safety in Remote Aboriginal Communities and Towns**

**Presenters:**

**Associate Professor Ellie Rennie, Principal Research Fellow, RMIT University**

**Dr Tyson Yunkaporta, Senior Lecturer, Deakin University**

**In this session Ellie Rennie and Tyson Yunkaporta will give a presentation of the main findings of the research report and some unique cultural attributes, alongside geographical isolation, income and education-related factors which need to be taken into account in addressing cyber safety.**

**4:45 – 4:50pm Q&A**

JULIE McCROSSIN: Ladies and gentlemen, would you give a round

of applause to Helen Campbell, thank you very much. It gives me

great pleasure to welcome welcome our final presenters, Associate

Professor Ellie Rennie and Tyson Yunkaporta, senior lecturer in

indigenous knowledges from Deakin University and they'll be talking

about cybersafety in remote Aboriginal communities and I'll hand

over to them. Another clap please. (APPLAUSE)

PROFESSOR RENNIE: We also like to acknowledge the traditional

owners of the land where we meet today and also to say thank you

to the traditional owners of the lands where the research took place,

which was in the Barklay region in central Australia as well as up in

Cape York, we'll be keeping the communities anonymous for the

purpose of today's talk. We also thought because we're the last

presentation heavy topic, we might try and keep it a little bit

conversational and that's pretty much how we've worked throughout

this project, is just to we're going to back and forth and see how

that goes. First, this is Tyson, we also had another coauthor, my

PhD student and we'd like to thank Telstra who funded this project

as part of their reconciliation action plan and in particular Mark who

was there throughout helping with work shop and field work at one

point. I don't know if you saw a couple of days ago there was an

ABC online article about some communities in the Kimberley who

had decided that they didn't want Optus towers and one reason

because because they had Telstra phones, and SIM cards and there

was some device management issues there which I think does come

into our talk today, but the other reasons were around conflict and

concerns about what was occurring in communities as a result of

social media use so our project really - this has been going on for

some time, one community that we did work with in the first phase

of the project which is Canteen Creek many years ago said they

didn't want a mobile phone tow for those reasons, what we these

issues to what extent, are they unique to indigenous communities

and peoples, and what kinds of ways should we be thinking about

this? We finished the project, the final report is up on AP.org.au, we

also have a pilot pod cast the series is called Disconnect. There will

be a series which we're just about to start working on as well. So in

that first phase of the research where we did these work shops, we

really focussed on identifying those issues and in the second face

which is when Tyson came into into the project this was in Cape

York went and did more in-depth ethnographic work with a

particular community and those findings from the first stage of the

research were very much these - some of the issues we've already

heard about today, things like image based abuse or bullying, but

also issues like when phone use can overstep cultural laws or

community expectations, and some pretty interesting things around

credit and financial vulnerability, kids transferring credit off phones

but also things which related to our newsroom identity so getting

into each other's Facebook accounts or Internet banking accounts,

this thing called hacking, that's the colloquial term out in central

Australia anyway, impersonating someone else by using their social

media, and we worked with an artist in one of the work shops and

you can see how people through her pictorial representation of

those work shops how some people were talking about it. Things

like thinking about where you're leaving your phone, using pass

codes, don't steal my credit, those kinds of issue were coming up a

lot. But then we started to look a little bit into the data and realised

after we wrote the interim report that actually over 70% of people

we had interviewed in that first stage did know how to use phone

settings, did know how to block people on social media, but there

were other pressures so social norms and social obligations,

pressures that were stopping them from using those settings

possibly and in media studies we talk about this as boundary work,

the way that we manage ourselves, our information which can

extend into technology and there's been stuff written by authors

such as Boyd with young people about how the way that devices or

platforms institute privacy, can sometimes go against the ways that

we communicate and network and relate to each other and that

leaves us with very difficulty choices. Tyson?

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Defining the problems becomes a little bit

more difficult because the usual terms don't fit. Particularly around

notions of privacy for example and governance in a community n a

society that sort of runs on very different rules so for example

where privacy in our communities you can't - you can never be

alone, it's just - it's anathema you're never alone, there's never

privacy. If you walk somewhere you walk with somebody. If

somebody is trying to be alone and do something private it's viewed

as suspicious behaviour and you could get blamed for anything that

goes wrong so everybody is always watches all the time. Everything

is always transparent, it's like a massive block chain but everybody

sees every transaction is transparent recorded it's on the ledger,

you can't get away you know? When we start to think about privacy,

issues, it's a different thing, we talk about even just the idea of a

personal device, if you're in a culture that is that communal and

socially dense, what does personal mean? You got like a personal

device, that's not personal, that's a communal device, and we have

demand sharing, which is our indigenous economy where if

somebody has a surplus of something or they have a resource you

demand it, everybody has to share, it's like compulsory sharing.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: How did that affect these things we were

talking about in the project around people changing number or

changing phones?

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Everybody knows how to do security

settings but there's no point. You are losing phones all the time.

People are losing phones because they're getting locked out of their

phone because someone has tried their password eight times and

it's locked. It locks down. It's better to not have the password there.

You have your phone and it's just can I borrow your phone and it's

gone and they've lent it to someone else and you don't have that

phone anymore. Or kids are playing on it and they smash it, by

mistake, I don't know about this digital natives, these millenials,

supposed to be so brilliant, my kids, how come they always drop

their phone.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: One hinge that came up a lot in the project

that we were hearing was conflicts that can start on social media

can escalate?

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: That comes down to another aspect is

indigenous sovereignty, what it really means, not just are in

response to colonialism. We are our own regulators, we don't have a

commissioner to go to. If that guy does something mean to this girl,

that's all her cousin, brothers, uncles everybody, we go out to their

house and stand out on the street and call them out and then they

call out and there's punchup, you get payback if somebody does

something wrong you got payback, we don't have like a place force,

we haven't surrendered our agency of violence to an elite group who

is the only West Australians allowed to do violence of justice, we

manage our justice ourselves. There are consequences, so suddenly

if you think about how that includes with privacy, in a community

where everybody is under the microscope, everything is transparent

suddenly you have these devices where you can cause a lot of

trouble in private without getting caught without anybody knowing

who this anonymous identity is online spreading these rumours, this

gossip, hacking a Facebook account and pretending to be

somebody's girlfriend, talking to another boy, or something like

that, so suddenly we have these fights, and these fighter with

escalating and it's like hundreds hundreds of people involved mostly

as spectator but the police are worried about it because everybody

is out and lots of shouting and violence and fighting.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: So we had a bit of hesitation at looking at this

but sometime those fights are captured on phone cameras and

shared online. And we did end up looking at this, going to skip that

one - for a number of reasons but first just to describe them, so

these fight videos when we're talking about them there's a

description on the left, don't know if that's too small to read from

our notes when we were watching the videos but they're short

content, they can multiple people involved, often kids are seen

filming the fight, mostly in day time in public settings although

sometimes at night, mostly when it's teenage girl involve for some

reason, more women than men in the particular community where

we were looking at these videos, and there may be two or more

fights occurring in one video, and a number of bystanders which

we'll talk about, sometimes as well they're identified as community

Y versus community X suggesting that this was some kind of

intercommunity or interfamily hostility. The reason why we did

decide to look at this in the end with consultation with the reference

committee was that some people were concerned particularly for

instance people in the justice sector that the videos were

exacerbating conflict in community or that things were not getting

resolved, because of course videos stay up, the other main reason

was that there were some pretty revolting mainstream media

reports coming out which were referencing these videos, and

depicting them as gang style violence and community social

dysfunction, probably familiar with that genre of reporting in the

Northern Territory in particular.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: They didn't really pick it up until they

noticed it was mostly women and then it was outrageous, it didn't fit

the narrative of all these indigenous victim women. People are

seeing these strong warrior women shaping up and, no, that's

disgusting.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: The way we decided to do this because you're

not under the term of service we did read those, you're not allowed

to save YouTube videos, we just decided to look at a whole lot over

the course of the day and look at some metadata around things like

play lists.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: That was interesting.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: We got to saturation at about 55 video and

using the - this was the name of the town and then the term fight

videos, and out of that 55, 40 met our definition of a community

fight video, so some of them were being watched in this sample,

over 25,000 times, and that was rising when we reinvested them, it

had increased by about 14% six weeks later. There's a lot more to

say but we don't have a huge amount of time, but interestingly only

three of the videos that we analyse had more dislikes than likes.

When we were watching them we began to notice some very

common elements to these videos, first of all most of them are

occurring in 2016 and 2017, the six months prior, this was October

last year that we started doing this, six months prior there hadn't

been any that we could see had been uploaded, the algorithm was

generating ones that went back to 2012 but mostly they were over

this particular time, as you can see here, community B, the search

term we were using definitely had more women than men, women is

the pink, where it's purple and it says men and women it was never

men against women, that was when there were two or more fights

occurring but it was in this case with these videos, the ones that

stayed up, it was not men against women so I'm going to let Tyson

talk about these a little bit now.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: It's never men against women. One of the

videos I saw...

PROFESSOR RENNIE: Not to say that that's not occurring.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: It's rarer than you think and it is usually

public. I guess the difference between indigenous and

non-indigenous violence is that our violence isn't behind closed

doors, if you mean it then you better be prepared to do it in front of

everyone. Everybody sees. Always public display. There was always

a lot of by-standers, might be a couple of hundred people all

watching but those people have an active role, we've got to call out

if anybody breaks the rules, because there are unspoken rules

because this is a traditional rule governed violence which is a really

important social mechanism for dispute resolution etc but also as

punishment as well, and administering justice in real time. So we've

always done this, it's always been public, in the old days there use

to be fighting grounds it was lightly ritualised so for my mob there

was an angry dance that you'd do and very specific things that you

had to go through, men and women, in doing this, and in some

places I know down south here I had an obligation if you harmed

the other person you had to heal them as well, so there was always

a kind of resolution that came out of it and mission times it turned

into this idea of fair fight, so they brought in boxing rules and they'd

have a fighting ground in the community and then that's evolved

into what we see today which is calling people out on the street on

the front of their houses and it's evolving again now with the digital,

with the fight YouTube videos, it's kind of changed the little bit

again, the genres and some people are doing these productions with

hip hop like sound tracks and stuff going on. Yeah!

PROFESSOR RENNIE: These are other cultural things occurring and

in fact that's what we became interested in, is the status of these

videos.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: We looked at other non-indigenous fight

rules there's no rules, there's kicking in the head. There's no kicking

allowed in our fights if someone falls or you get them a good one

you got to step back, not allowed to pull hair. We saw this a lot with

the by-standers pulling people up on rule breaking like that but the

non-indigenous it was free for all and there was a lot of collateral

damage, by-standers would get hurt but in this one, there's one I

saw, a man was standing there with a pram holding the pram while

his woman was fighting another woman right there and there was

no consideration that there would be any, that fair feet would even

move or that there would be any spillover or collateral damage like

that.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: Just to I suppose - anthropologists have

written about fighting for a long time, there are some as we've been

talking about, some parallels or continuation from that of course it's

also the case that will are dynamics in communities which are

changing the nature of, at times it's definitely about other issues

that can be substance abuse factors and we heard a lot about that

as well from the research participants, one thing that was a bit

disturbing was that these videos attracted a lot of hate speech,

racism in the comments and that there were even in the actual

account descriptions and name of people who were creating play

lists they were being used for racial abuse, and there was of course

in the non-fight videos in the sample there was just as much hate

speech.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Funny that nobody ever complained about

that as a cybersafety issue. Not once I don't think. Particularly in the

second stage, even when prompted it's like, "Oh no, that's not a

problem, we don't worry about that."

PROFESSOR RENNIE: Yeah. I suppose just in terms of the play lists

were kind of interesting because you can see when something's

been taken out of a play list, you can see the proportion of

moderating that occurred. They could have been other videos as

well. But about 10% of the videos in these play lists were fight

videos coming up but then what we found interesting was that

YouTube was generating its own play lists the algorithms you type in

the name of the town, and it would generate these - this is town X,

this is a compilation and it would be full of the fight videos, so you

can see how the algorithms influencing why the media is picking up

on this and interpreting it in certain ways, and that - but also the

way that we were interested in is that these things would be

impossible to moderate if you had 30 seconds as we've heard today

from Julie and others if you had 30 seconds and you're somewhere

overseas, you wouldn't know what to make of these videos, we

didn't know what to make of these videos.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Took us 30 weeks.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: What we kind of come back to in both the

privacy issues but also these issue of platform governance versus

indigenous governance is how do we think about - how do we think

about the way platforms are shaping culture but also the ways that

cultures resist that and do their own thing? And that platforms are

not neutral in the way that they're designed both in terms of privacy

but also these other types of attributes one thing that was a bit

disturbing we talk about it in the pod cast, for instance we heard

that there was a middle aged man getting kids to play fight and

putting that on YouTube, that is problematic, and there was wasn't

even advertising attached to these videos so they're creating their

own Internet culture and that's important to understand. I don't

think we're fully at the understanding this and there's a lot you can't

say about the videos but what we want to conclude with is this idea

of what to you do about this? In the communities we'd hear to

face-to-face mediation is really important in resolving conflict but

that is not necessarily easy to do now and it's...

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: You can't just banish somebody for a

couple of weeks before they still have their phone and they're

making trouble. That traditional punishment doesn't work anymore.

A lot of of the elders power has undermined.

PROFESSOR RENNIE: We need we thought maybe this tool of

trusted flaggers where there are people who are identified from

communities who have knowledge of what's occurring who are able

to flak something and in this same way the eSafety commissioner

works there would be a response to that. I'll leave it there but we

also need to think about the capacity of those communities and the

organisations that we're asking, if we go down that route, do they

actually have the capacity to be dealing with platforms and with

these new challenges to their typical ways of governing?

JULIE McCROSSIN: Guys, what you've done is provide probably one

of the most fascinating and sense tiff presentations I've ever seen in

my life at the end of a day. Normally I would ask them for questions

but may I on you behalf say, I've got one question I'd like to add

but the main thing I want to say to you is can you offer us a couple

of questions that you think we need to be thinking about in response

to your own presentation and the other question I have is do we

know if there's any other international or national similar

experiences, is this happening with the Inuit, the native American

Indians, are there other American of this...

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: I've seen native American girl fight and

stuff like that.

JULIE McCROSSIN: Am I doing the wrong thing. I'm interested in

what they think are the questions. I have a question so I should just

do the normal thing. Excuse us slightly, the arthritic old women

running towards you.

>> I'm from Optus, thank you for that informative presentation. On

the indigenous governance, what are you proposing what are some

of the solutions that industry/Government should be considering?

PROFESSOR RENNIE: We've talked a lot about this, we're not

solutionists, and it really we went in there trying to understand the

dynamics and Telstra was wonderful in accepting that sometimes

there are not going to be easy answers to these questions even

when you ask people to go and look at them, but there are a few

things I would say, there are a few predatory products 1800 mum

and dad was something that I and Tyson identified as being

problematic because of those demand issuing being doing reverse

charge issues and being charged $6 a minute and the expectation

you have to pick up because of your family obligation is a lot

stronger in community, there are some apps that we identified

might be more problematic than others because of the anonymity

but it's very hard to get quantitative data on the scale of this stuff

because you expected just go into a community or do a phone

survey or certainly got do anonymous surveys easily with

indigenous people and we talk about the reasons why in the report.

In terms of what Government should do I think that we certainly

heard a lot about, you know, people wanting someone to go to so I

do think the office of the eSafety commissioner is important in the

respect, the issue is how do we create awareness that that exists,

that people can go to it and that they feel ownership over it? Did

you have anything to add?

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: When you're exploring complex problems

no point to be going in with a solution orientation. Can we take

these steps as and fix it. It's more about can you learn it and apply

it to your planning, what kind of - where are we steering this, where

is it going? That was the conversation we had earlier. I'd turn that

question back on itself and ask what can indigenous governance

structures, our traditional, as structures that are hierarchical and

that aren't centralised, where all the participants in that structure

have agency, sound familiar to you? What could those systems have

to offer you in resolving your issues of platform governance, etc?

JULIE McCROSSIN: I happen to have a friend, an Aboriginal women

who is the head of Red Cross in NSW and I want to talk to her about

the work I've just seen, she's originally from a remote community in

Western Australia, this is really rich information to give to

communities isn't it, for them to grapple,

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: It's a conversation starter really.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: That's right.

>> I have one question, I'm actually asking what the problem is,

because what you are describing is a culture that actually looks after

itself to make sure nobody is hurt so I'm trying to understand what

the hurt is that cannot be solved within the framework, I guess

that's my question?

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Over our long history, what really is

ancient, we've adapted to three ice ages, massive volcanic

eruptions, huge shifts in the landscape, massive extinction events,

sea level rises that were just catastrophic, we've adapted to all

these changes and in the last couple of hundred years nobody has

ever thought about ameliorating the problems of the thing they're

introducing, rabbit, you know, water buffalo, pig, all those things.

JULIE McCROSSIN: IPhone.

DR TYSON YUNKAPORTA: Exactly. IPhone, I'm sure why not? My

community was kind of late coming to the tech but the uptake was

really swift. On the pollution side adult lit ratione has been very,

very low and never been any intervention that could fix that.

Texting, overnight everyone had a reason to learn how to read and

so you saw this massive surge in adult literacy and people learnt to

read and write in two weeks. CUZ, done, finished.

JULIE McCROSSIN: We have to finish, I want do but it's my job.

Could you give these people a big round of applause? (APPLAUSE)

JULIE McCROSSIN: I'll invite Teresa to make some closing remarks.

Could you make her welcome?