J.S. MILL AND THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS: WHOSE LAW? WHOSE LIBERTY? WHOSE GREATER GOOD?

Abstract:

In 1871, John Stuart Mill appeared before the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Contagious Diseases Acts. He testified that these Acts violated the principle of the 'security of personal liberty', not just for prostitutes but potentially for all women. He did not concede that the rationale for these Acts, namely the greater good of protecting public health, should trump personal liberty as a matter of course. Mill's testimony provides a unique perspective from which to consider the relationship between law, liberty, and the greater good. A close examination of Mill's testimony in the context of his broader political philosophy would suggest that this relationship is rarely a straightforward trade-off between the public good and personal liberty. Rather it reveals the way in which the law masks its particularity while claiming to mediate between two assumed universals, namely liberty and the greater good.

Date: 2 August 2016, Tuesday
Time: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Venue: Room B-408, PSB Academy, Delta Campus
Speaker: Dr Jim Jose, Associate Professor in Politics, Deputy Head of Faculty, Assistant Dean Research (FB&L), Newcastle Business School, Faculty of Business and Law
Register: Email Ms. Nway Yu Hlaing at nway.yuhlaing@newcastle.edu.au (Register by 1 Aug 2016, Monday)

Bio-sketch:

Jim Jose is an Associate Professor in Politics & International Relations in the Newcastle Business School at the University of Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia. He is currently Assistant Dean of Research in the Faculty of Business and Law.


Associate Professor Jose’s current research interests include:
- Governance as theory and practice,
- Feminist political theory and the history of political thought
- Postcolonial and the politics of memory

In recent years he has expanded his interest in the concept of governance to include analysing ways in which it contributes to contemporary understandings of the organization of political power. This has prompted an interest in thinking about how the state in the 21st century has come to be restructured and understood, explored in a number of recent papers using the notion of the ‘governance state’. Associate Professor Jose is also involved in the supervision of the ten PhD students, six as principal supervisor and four as co-supervisor. He is also supervising to Politics Honours students.

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