

Monday 4 September, 2017

What is it to be human in a digital world?

ABC sparks national conversation with announcement of 2017 Boyer Lecturer

The ABC is pleased to announce that world-leading technologist and anthropologist **Professor Genevieve Bell (ANU/Intel)** is the **2017 Boyer Lecturer**.

Each year since 1959, the ABC has sparked national discussion about critical ideas with the **Boyer Lectures**. In October, Professor Bell continues this proud tradition by interrogating what it means to be human, and Australian, in a digital world.

30 years ago, Professor Bell left Australia to study anthropology at Stanford University in America. That journey took her to the heart of Silicon Valley, where she led Intel's first user experience research and development lab and most recently served as their chief futurist. Her job was to help invent the future and ensure that it was shaped by lived experience.

Professor Bell has been at the epicentre of the biggest set of digital transformations in our lifetime, and now she's returned home to Australia, because there are some urgent conversations we need to have about the role of technology in building our future.

The ABC Boyer Lectures are the starting point for that conversation.

"Twenty years in Silicon Valley has left me with the distinct sense that we need to keep reasserting the importance of people, and the diversity of our lived experiences, into our conversations about technology and the future," says Professor Bell. "It's easy to get seduced by all the potential of the new and the wonders it promises. There is a lot of hype and not so much measured conversation."

"Many conversations seem to originate in the United States, but it is my sense this is a time and place to have that conversation here in Australia. After all, we are not just passive by-standers in this digital world – we have been active creators of it. So it is time for another conversation about our possible digital and human futures and about the world we might want to make together."

Attend the live Boyer Lecture:

Join us for the live Boyer Lecture address, 2:30pm October 21 at ABC Ultimo Centre. To register for this free event click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/fast-smart-and-connected-can-we-be-australian-in-a-digital-world-tickets-37587954584>

The Boyer Lectures will be available on the [ABC Radio app](#), or wherever you get your podcasts, in early October. Subscribe now to the Boyer Lectures wherever you get your podcasts.

#Boyers2017 | abc.net.au/boyerlectures

About Professor Bell:

ANU Distinguished Professor and Intel Senior Fellow Genevieve Bell has spent the past 30 years in Silicon Valley, at the epicentre of the biggest set of digital transformations in our lifetime. It's been her role to ensure that lived experience shapes the direction of future technology.

Prof Bell has pioneered futurist research looking at how different cultures use technology, and helped guide Intel's product development by developing the company's social science and design research capabilities. She completed her PhD in cultural anthropology at Stanford University in 1998.

In 2018, Professor Bell will lead a new Autonomy, Agency and Assurance Institute, to be known as the 3A Institute, co-founded by Australian National University and CSIRO's Data61, Australia's largest data innovation network.

The 3A Institute will be based within the ANU College of Engineering and Computer Science and will bring together the best researchers from around the world and a range of disciplines to tackle complex problems around artificial intelligence, data and technology and managing their impact on humanity. [Read more here.](#)

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