



LAW & TECHNOLOGY CENTRE  
The University of Hong Kong



CMEL  
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
CENTRE FOR MEDICAL ETHICS AND LAW



# Governance of Social Listening in the context of Serious Health Threats

22-24 August 2023  
Hong Kong & YouTube

**Tuesday 22 August 2023**

**Morning – Social Listening – 9:30-12:45**

**Afternoon – Ethics & Human Rights – 14:00-18:15**

**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

**Afternoon – Vaccination – 13:30-17:45**

**Evening – Infodemic Management – 18:45-21:30**

**Thursday 24 August 2023**

**Morning – Justice – 9:00-13:30**

11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Cheng Yu Tung Tower,  
Centennial Campus, The University of Hong Kong  
or via YouTube

## Introduction

In collaboration with the Law & Technology Centre (Faculty of Law and Department of Computer Science) and supported by the Medical Ethics & Humanities Unit (Faculty of Medicine), the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law is delighted to present an international conference that seeks to examine:

- (1) The modalities of social listening (SL) applied in response to an infodemic and to ongoing health threats (e.g., antimicrobial resistance);
- (2) The ways in which SL can be used to identify mis-, dis- and mal-information, and the public health interventions that may be applied;
- (3) The ethical and legal basis / implications of SL and ensuing public health interventions; and
- (4) Oversight (if any) that may be required in response to (3), and ethical and/or legal safeguards that should be introduced.

An infodemic is an overabundance of information, including misinformation and disinformation, that surges during a public health emergency. Harmful information may also be generated at a local level and beyond, and can lead to individuals, professions and communities being stigmatized and unfairly discriminated against. As people and communities tend to seek, generate and act on information more intensively during such an emergency, it is important that public health responses and strategies are evidence-based, engaging, reliable and trust promoting. At a technical level, the science of infodemiology underpins infodemic management practices, which have rapidly evolved in recent years. Many tools that have been deployed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have already been applied to other outbreaks, such as Ebola, polio and cholera, and new ones are being developed. SL in public health, for instance, has been enhanced by technological modalities like Big Data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence.

At its core, SL is the process of gathering information about people's questions, concerns, circulating narratives and misinformation about health from online and offline data sources. Data gleaned from social media platforms may be used in a number of ways to identify and understand outbreaks, geographic and demographic trends, networks, sentiment and behavioural responses to public health emergencies. Offline data collection may include rapid surveys, townhalls, or interviews with people in vulnerable groups, communities of focus and specific populations. These data are then integrated with other data sources from the health system (such as health information systems) and outside of it (mobility data) to generate infodemic insights and inform strategies to manage infodemics.

However, the collection and use of this data presents ethical and legal challenges, such as privacy and consent, and may not engender trust. For SL and other approaches to infodemic management to effectively guide individuals, communities and health authorities, important ethical and legal concerns need to be addressed. Some of these concerns have been highlighted in the *Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights & Public Health Emergencies*, recently published by the Global Health Law Consortium and the International Commission of Jurists. This conference considers the ways in which these Principles and Guidelines could apply to SL and associated public health interventions, as well as its relationship with ethics frameworks developed under the auspices of the World Health Organization.

# Tuesday 22 August – Morning

## Social Listening

### **9:30-10:30 Welcome and Introductory Presentation**

**Prof Gilberto K.K. Leung - 梁嘉傑**

Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong

**Prof Calvin W.L. Ho & Ms Jane Or - 何維倫及柯綺婷**

Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, The University of Hong Kong

**Dr Marcelo Thompson / Dr Felix Chan - 陳偉漢**

Law & Technology Centre, The University of Hong Kong

### **10:30-11:00 Keynote I: Social Listening and the Infodemic - An Epidemiology for the Body Politic**

**Prof Larry Catá Backer - 白軻**

Pennsylvania State University, USA

### **11:00-11:30 What they Talk about, When they Talk about Social Listening**

**Dr Theresa M. Senft**

Media Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

### **11:30-11:45 Intermission**

### **11:45-12:15 Ethical Implications of Infodemic Management and Social Listening: A Scoping Review**

**Dr Federico Germani**

Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine, University of Zurich

### **12:15-12:45 Ethical Considerations on Social Listening in Infodemic Management during Health Emergencies: WHO Guidance and Ethical Framework**

**Dr Giovanni Spitale**

Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine, University of Zurich

### **12:45-14:00 Lunch**

# Tuesday 22 August – Afternoon

## Social Listening & Ethics & Human Rights

- 14:00-14:30** **Social Listening as a Strategy to Inform Public Engagement with Science in Diverse Societies**  
**Prof Marina Joubert**  
Science Communication, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
- 14:30-15:00** **Infodemic Management during COVID-19 in South Africa: An Ethics Perspective**  
**Prof Keymanthri Moodley**  
Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
- 15:00-15:30** **Challenges in Infodemic Management during COVID-19 in South Korea**  
**Dr Hannah Kim**  
College of Medicine, Yonsei University, South Korea
- 15:30-16:00** **Moving Away from a Deficit Model: What Should Policy Makers Learn from Social Listening?**  
**Prof Susan Bull**  
University of Oxford, UK & University of Auckland, New Zealand
- 16:00-16:15** **Intermission**
- Social Listening & Human Rights*  
**Chair: Prof Kelley Loper**  
Centre for Comparative and Public Law, The University of Hong Kong
- 16:15-16:45** **The Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Public Health Emergencies: From Expert Consensus to Global Action**  
**Prof Roojin Habibi**  
Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa, Canada
- 16:45-17:15** **Human Rights, Social Listening, and Infodemics**  
**Prof Lisa Forman**  
Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Canada
- 17:15-17:45** **Technology-Assisted Disinformation Regulation: From Platforms to Courts**  
**Dr Jayson S. Lamchek**  
Deakin University Law School, Melbourne, Australia
- 17:45-18:15** **Roundtable Discussion**
- 19:00** **Dinner**

# Wednesday 23 August – Afternoon

## Social Listening & Vaccination

- 13:30-14:00 Introduction**  
**Prof Vivian Lin**  
Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong  
**Prof Calvin W.L. Ho - 何維倫**  
Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, The University of Hong Kong
- 14:00-14:30 Keynote II: Post-COVID : Prevention and control of infodemics , coronaphobia and coronahypognosia**  
**Prof George F. Gao - 高福**  
Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing
- 14:30-15:00 Legal Regulations and Challenges in Processing Big Data in Public Health, Healthcare, and Medicine**  
**Prof Yanlin Cao - 曹艳林**  
Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences & Peking Union Medical College, Beijing
- 15:00-15:15 Intermission**
- 15:15-15:45 Finding a Way Forward for Practical and Ethical Challenges in Infodemic Management: Conceptualizing Social Listening as a Type of Event-Based Surveillance**  
**Dr David Scales**  
Division of Hospital Medicine, Weill Cornell Medicine, New York, USA
- 15:45-16:15 Values and Technology Design: Considerations for Social Listening**  
**Prof Joseph Ali**  
Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, Baltimore, USA
- 16:15-16:45 The Politics of Infodemic Management and Vaccination in Brazil**  
**Dr Isabella Ballalai**  
Brazilian Immunization Society, Sao Paolo, Brazil
- 16:45-17:15 Law and Ethics in the Infodemic Management in Brazil: A Moral Challenge**  
**Prof Márcia Araújo Sabino de Freitas**  
A.C. Camargo Cancer Centre, Sao Paolo, Brazil
- 17:15-17:45 Law and Politics in the Governance of Social Media Platforms**  
**Dr Marcelo Thompson**  
Law & Technology Centre, The University of Hong Kong
- 17:45-18:45 Dinner**

# Wednesday 23 August - Evening

## Social Listening & Infodemic Management

**18:45-19:00** **Welcome**

**Prof Calvin W.L. Ho** - 何維倫

Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, The University of Hong Kong

**Prof Gilberto K.K. Leung** - 梁嘉傑

Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong

**19:00-19:20** **Social Listening, Infodemic Insights and Infodemic Management**

**Dr Sandra Varaidzo Machiri**

Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness & Prevention, WHO, Geneva

**19:20-19:40** **Ethical Guidance and Infodemic Management**

**Dr Andreas Reis**

Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department, WHO, Geneva

**19:40-20:00** **Human Rights and Infodemic Management**

**Prof Dimitra Lingri**

European Healthcare Fraud & Corruption Network, Brussels, Belgium

**20:00-20:25** **Listening for the Truth: Singapore's Attempt to Curb Fake News**

**Prof Kevin Tan**

Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

**20:25-20:50** **To Listen or Not to Listen: Social Listening for Public Health Threats**

**Dr Cherstyn Hurley**

Health Security Agency, United Kingdom

**20:50-21:15** **Q&A**

**21:15-21:30** **Closing Remarks**

# Thursday 24 August 2023 – Morning

## Social Listening and Justice

- 09:00-09:30** **Putting Epistemic Justice at the Heart of Social Listening & Infodemic Management**  
**Prof Calvin W.L. Ho - 何維倫**  
Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, The University of Hong Kong  
**Dr Karel Caals**  
Centre for biomedical Ethics, National University of Singapore
- 09:30-10:00** **Engineering the Discourse: The Role of Engineers and Computer Scientists in Health Disinformation and Populism**  
**Ms Michelle Charlotte Liu**  
University of Ottawa, Canada
- 10:00-10:30** **Media Monitoring to Inform Rapid COVID-19 Public Engagement in Indonesia, Nepal & Vietnam**  
**Dr Mary Chambers**  
Oxford University Clinical Research Unit, Vietnam
- 10:30-11:00** **Social Listening and the Precautionary Principle: International and Vietnamese Experiences during the Covid-19 Pandemic**  
**Mr Thanh Hải Đoàn**  
Bioethics Centre, University of Otago, New Zealand
- 11:00-11:15** **Intermission**
- 11:15-11:45** **Gendered Impact of Social Media on Vaccine Hesitancy – Evidence from Chikaballapur, Karnataka, India**  
**Dr Deepshikha Batheja**  
One Health Trust, Bengaluru, India
- 11:45-12:15** **Social Media Listening during Global Health Emergency: Lessons Learned during COVID-19 Pandemic**  
**Mr Harry Sufehmi**  
MAFINDO, Indonesia
- 12:15-13:15** **Roundtable Discussion**
- 13:15-13:30** **Closing Remarks**

## Social Listening and the Infodemic – An Epidemiology for the Body Politic

These remarks focus on the interfaces embedded in the new approaches to infodemic. The first is between an epidemiology of pandemic (physical health) and infodemic (societal health). The second is between epistemological and normative human (social-political-health systems) and virtual (digital, predictive, and generative AI based systems). The third is between epidemiological and normative systems as they interconnect in pandemic. The model and the warning emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. The start of a resolution appears to blend human and virtual, physical and social threats grounded in an objective of efficient management through the management of the body (medicine) and the social spirit (narrative). Social listening, especially as a tool of social epidemiology, begins to reveal its promise and its challenges, eight of which will be sketched out.

### Prof Larry Catá Backer - 白轲

*W. Richard and Mary Eshelman Faculty Scholar, Professor of Law and International Affairs, Pennsylvania State University, USA*  
ORCID 0000-0002-7492-4527



Larry Catá Backer (BA Brandeis University; MPP Harvard University Kennedy School of Government; JD Columbia University) is a member of the American Law Institute, the European Corporate Governance Institute, The European China Law Studies Association, and the Coalition for Peace & Ethics. He researches and teaches about regulatory systems (global production and data driven governance), economic globalization and human rights, transnational law and institutions, Marxist-Leninist political-economic systems (focusing on China and Cuba), and semiotics. Publications include over one hundred articles and book chapters printed in the U.S., Latin America, China, and Europe. Books include *Lawyers Making Meaning* (Springer, 2013, with Jan Broekman); [Essays on Contemporary China—Heartland, Periphery, and Silk Roads](#) (LC Backer and M McQuilla (eds) CPE (2021)); *Hong Kong Between ‘One Country’ and ‘Two Systems’: Essays from the Year that Transformed the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (June 2019 – June 2020)* (Little Sir Press, 2021); *Cuba’s Caribbean Marxism* (Little Sir Press, 2018). He is currently working on *The UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights: A Commentary* (OUP, forthcoming), and *Elements of Law and the United States Legal System: Policy, Premises, and Practice in National and International Context* (Carolina Academic Press, forthcoming 2024).

## What they Talk about, When they Talk about Social Listening

From research strategies to tools to job titles, “social listening” seems to be the rage these days, yet few people seem to be able to agree on what the term means. How is social listening like and unlike older concepts like market research, data mining, and digital surveillance? In what sense are geographically disconnected users on digital platforms “social,” and in what sense is the practice of using artificial intelligence tools to search for keywords online a form of “listening”? In this talk, I consider three domains where social listening practices are deployed, taught, and debated in very different ways: advertising, public security, and public health. I begin by outlining the definitions, tools, and beliefs about social listening that seem to overlap (or else, diverge slightly) between practitioners in these domains. Next, I consider a few contested ‘hot button’ issues between domains, considering why this is so. I close by discussing what public health stands to gain (and what it may lose) by developing ethical guidelines for social listening that prioritize a commitment to community care and service, as opposed to prioritizing a marketing directive for increased sales (or money-saving), or political directive for increased national (or local) security.



## Dr Theresa M. Senft

Senior Lecturer in Media Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia



Theresa (Terri) Senft is a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. Her research focuses on the cultural effects of digital technologies, with an emphasis on social media, photo, video, and streaming. A founding member of the Association of Internet Researchers, Terri is perhaps best known for helping found the field of “influencer studies.” Her books include *Camgirls* (sole author); *A History of the Internet: 1843 to the present* (co-author); and *The Routledge Handbook of Social Media* (co-editor.) Terri has recently pivoted to public health, working with the WHO and the US CDC to develop methods for studying young people online; assisting with global trainings of health workers to fight the ‘infodemic’; unpacking the environmental and emotional dimensions of information overload; and helping to develop ethical guidelines for social listening practices over digital platforms. She is currently developing a concept called *influence literacy* to help people understand better the emotional nature of decision-making on social media platforms, which frequently turns on our what can feel like an urgent need to establish (or reestablish) personal equilibrium after being subjected to the interfaces, users, and algorithmically fueled “emotions on the move” that typify many people’s everyday experience online.

## Ethical Implications of Infodemic Management and Social Listening: A Scoping Review

The rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation during health emergencies has caused significant challenges for information management and public health response. This scoping review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the ethical implications associated with infodemic management, infodemic insights, and social listening approaches. We identified 2671 papers through a systematic search across PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus databases on research published between 2002 and 2022, and based on the analysis of the content of abstracts, we ultimately retrieved 218 papers. The analysis of these papers reveals the ethical implications of employing social listening techniques to monitor and analyze online and offline data in the context of health emergencies. Findings from this scoping review will inform researchers, policymakers, and practitioners about the key ethical challenges and considerations associated with combating infodemics and harnessing the power of social listening while safeguarding ethical principles. Ultimately, this scoping review aims to contribute to the development of evidence-based guidance and interventions that consider ethical practices for effective infodemic management.

## Dr Federico Germani

Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine (IBME), University of Zurich, Switzerland



Federico is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine (IBME), University of Zurich, Switzerland. Federico is dedicated to contributing to the ongoing effort to better prepare for and manage future global health challenges. His primary areas of interest and expertise include misinformation and infodemic management. With a focus on developing evidence-based strategies to effectively manage information during times of crisis, Federico studies the ethics of infodemics and how to reduce the spread of false information. He is currently serving as a rapporteur for the World Health Organization panel on ethical considerations in social listening and infodemic management. He is also a member of the Digital Society Initiative Health (DSI Health). He is the director of Culturico, a non-profit, non-partisan, non-ideological cultural and scientific media platform, which aims at fighting misinformation and innovate journalism.

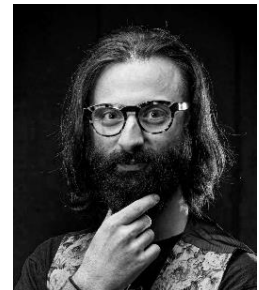
## Ethical Considerations on Social Listening in Infodemic Management during Health Emergencies: WHO Guidance and Ethical Framework

This presentation illustrates a guidance document in development with the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Health Ethics and High Impact Events Preparedness teams, based on expert consensus in the fields of public health ethics and law, infodemic management, and social listening. The guidance document will serve as a comprehensive resource for defining activities, identifying risks and challenges, and establishing ethical principles and implementation guidance for infodemic management and social listening. Drawing on the findings of a scoping review that screened 218 full papers obtained through systematic searches on PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus, this presentation highlights key insights into ethical considerations related to the use of social listening techniques for monitoring online and offline data during health emergencies. The guidance document will provide a clear delineation of the scope and context of infodemic management, accompanied by an analysis of ethical risks and challenges associated with social listening and infodemic response strategies. It will also outline the process aims and objectives for effective infodemic management and introduce a set of guiding ethical principles to ensure responsible and ethical practices.

### Dr Giovanni Spitale

*PhD Student and Research Data Manager, Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine (IBME), University of Zurich, Switzerland*

[Giovanni Spitale](#), PhD is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine, University of Zurich. His research interests revolve around public health ethics, ethics of risk and crisis communication, AI ethics, and quality improvement in healthcare. Methodologically he likes to dip in multiple bowls, combining natural language processing, computational linguistics, qualitative research, and philosophical analysis into mixed methods approaches. He is currently working on different projects about empowering the public in partaking public health ethics discourse. His current favourite free-time side project is [Ethics500](#), a semantic network map that shows what ethics is about and where it is going.



## Social Listening as a Strategy to Inform Public Engagement with Science in Diverse Societies

Presentation will reflect briefly on the trends that have shaped public science communication in recent years, and why these trends make social listening an important topic for science communicators. Speaker will reflect on how and why social listening could be a tool to inform strategic approaches and enhance the efficacy of our efforts to create meaningful and informed societal conversations about issues in science. The talk will conclude with some comments about the limitations of social listening in diverse and unequal societies.

### Prof Marina Joubert

*Associate Professor of Science Communication, Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

Marina Joubert is an associate professor of science communication at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She is recognised locally and internationally as a leading researcher, teacher and trainer in the field of public science communication and engagement. Her research interests focus on scientists' roles in public communication of science, representations of science in the mass media, and online interfaces between science and society. Marina joined Stellenbosch University in 2015, where she was instrumental in establishing science communication as an academic field in South Africa. In the same year, she launched an annual online short course in science communication which has been successfully completed by more than



500 participants from across Africa. She has published extensively in the field of science communication and is deputy editor of the Journal of Science Communication (JCOM).

## Infodemic Management during COVID-19 in South Africa: An Ethics Perspective

The COVID-19 pandemic ravaged South Africa (SA) with unprecedented hospitalisations, death and socio-economic detriment. Social media and television were excellent vehicles for positive health messaging. However, a strong anti-science movement also took hold with rife spread of misinformation throughout the country. Although SA was fortunate to receive vaccines ahead of many African countries, anti-vaxxers thwarted the uptake ultimately leading to expiry and substantial wastage of vaccines. In balancing the benefits and risks of social listening during serious health crises one has to consider the harms to public health against the infringement of individual liberties in the form of consent and privacy. The Protection of Personal Information Act in SA balances these values in a similar way and will be discussed further in this presentation.

### **Prof Keymanthri Moodley**

*Distinguished Professor, Department of Medicine; Head, Division of Medical Ethics and Law, Faculty of Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University, South Africa*



Keymanthri Moodley is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Medicine and Head of the Division of Medical Ethics and Law, Faculty of Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University. The Division was redesignated as a Collaborating Centre in Bioethics for the third time in 2023 by the World Health Organisation (WHO), one of fourteen in the world and the first on the African continent. Keymanthri is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Social Medicine, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, USA. She is a specialist family physician, bioethicist, an NRF rated researcher and a member of ASSAf. To date, she has been awarded grants to the approximate value of R68 million. The Division has trained 40 mid-career professionals from 10 African countries in bioethics and currently has 2 PhD graduates and 6 PhD trainees. Keymanthri serves on the Scientific Advisory Committee of EDCTP. Her most recent NIH funded research project explores ethical, legal and social issues in Data Science Innovation in Africa.

## Challenges in Infodemic Management during COVID-19 in South Korea

Concerns regarding the 'infodemic' stemming from the COVID-19 crisis remains evident in South Korea. While legal provisions exist to penalize the spread of false information on public health crisis, it has yet not to be implemented. In response, South Korea employs dual strategies: government-led removal of misinformation and disinformation interfering with vaccination and societal clarity, overseen by the Korea Communications Standards Commission (KCSC); and a self-regulatory effort by the Korea Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO), representing major online platforms like Naver and Kakao. Challenges include balancing risk mitigation through controlled information circulation, for safeguarding public and community health, with freedom of expression. Considering fast fact assessment to effectively curtail the spread of disinformation is also needed. The current reliance on references from KISO is limited to the WHO and the KCDA, necessitating broader linguistic coverage of data monitoring by the WHO for cross-border infodemic issues. Lastly, systematic collaboration strategy among stakeholders, centered on the general public, is imperative to foster trust in online communication and societal well-being.

## **Prof Hannah Kim**

*Research Associate Professor, College of Medicine, Yonsei University, South Korea*

Hannah Kim (MD, PhD) is a research associate professor at College of Medicine, Yonsei University, South Korea. She studied medicine at Yonsei University and holds a PhD in healthcare law in 2015 from Yonsei University. After working at the Department of Medical Law and Ethics at Yonsei University as a fellow, she studied at the Centre of Genomics and Policy, McGill University, Canada as a visiting professor from 2018 to 2019. Coming back to Yonsei University, she has been a member of the Big-Data Policy Committee of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and Data and Committee of the Clinical & Omics Data Archive of the National Institute of Health in South Korea, and a member of the Ethics and Governance Committee of International Cancer Genome Consortium, and international panels of the International Genetic Discrimination Observatory. Since 2011, she has participated in ELSI and healthcare policy projects and published 25 peer reviewed research articles and 3 book chapters in intellectual property right, genomic data sharing, genetic discrimination, informed consent and privacy.



## **Moving Away from a Deficit Model: What should Policy Makers Learn from Social Listening?**

In the context of serious health threats, this presentation prompts reflection on the goals of social listening and the responsibilities of those who undertake it. Given the range of actors with differing powers and priorities engaging in complex and contested infodemics, important questions arise about: who we should prioritise listening to and why, when social listening should prompt revisions to policy and practice, and how to provide trustworthy and trusted advice.

## **Prof Susan Bull**

*Associate Professor in Bioethics, Ethox Centre, University of Oxford; Associate Professor of Medical Ethics, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland*

Susan Bull BSc, LLB, MA, PhD is an Associate Professor in Bioethics at the Ethox Centre, University of Oxford, and an Associate Professor of Medical Ethics, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland. Her research interests centre on ethical dimensions of health and global health with a thematic focus on the exercise of epistemic power. Her conceptual and empirical research has addressed global health data sharing, consent to research, ethical review of research, controlled human infection (challenge) studies, and infectious disease outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics. Susan leads Epidemic Ethics, a global community of bioethicists and stakeholders involved in public health and research responses to public health emergencies. Susan has served in multiple advisory roles including as a member of the WHO Working Group for Guidance on Human Challenge Studies in COVID-19 and lead writer of WHO Guidance on the Ethical Conduct of Controlled Human Infection Studies. Susan has chaired and served on research ethics committees in the UK and New Zealand, and provided training to research ethics committees in Europe, Asia, Africa and New Zealand.



## **Social Listening & Human Rights**

## **Chair: Prof Kelley Loper**

*Associate Professor, Centre for Comparative and Public Law, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong*

Kelley Loper is Director of the LLM in Human Rights Programme and Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law. She also sits on the advisory board of the Berkeley



Center on Comparative Equality and Anti-Discrimination Law and was previously Director of the Centre for Comparative and Public Law Her work centres on the implementation of international human rights law in domestic contexts, especially Hong Kong. She has researched and published on several related topics including: UN human rights treaties and refugee protection in Asia; the rights to education and legal capacity in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination; public opinion on the rights of same-sex couples; dignity as a constitutional value; and gender constitutionalism. She teaches courses on international human rights law and equality and non-discrimination. In addition to her academic work, she has also served on the boards of the Hong Kong Dignity Institute, the Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre (as past Chairperson), Justice Centre Hong Kong, and Amnesty International (Hong Kong). She has advised various other organisations including the UNHCR, UN Women, and Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor on a range of issues.

## The Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Public Health Emergencies: From Expert Consensus to Global Action

The *Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Public Health Emergencies* (the 'Principles') reflect international, expert consensus on the most pressing human rights and rule of law issues relevant to public health emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Launched by the Global Health Law Consortium and the International Commission of Jurists during the 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, the Principles were developed through a three-year deliberative process between more than 150 individuals from around the world, including international legal scholars and practitioners, human rights defenders, civil society advocates, public health researchers, health workers, and others bearing relevant insights and expertise. This presentation introduces the Principles and explores their content through the lens of social listening, unpacking their contribution to relevant normative frameworks in global health governance, as well as areas require further development of law.

### Prof Roojin Habibi

*Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law (Common Law Section), University of Ottawa, Canada*



Roojin Habibi is an Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law (Common Law Section), Senior Visiting Fellow of UN University's International Institute for Global Health, and Research Fellow of the Global Strategy Lab. Bridging international law, health law, and human rights, she studies norm interpretation and change in global health law. Habibi is at the forefront of building the field of global health law. She was lead author of the 2019 "Stellenbosch Consensus Statement on Legal National Responses to Public Health Risks," interpreting cross-border health measure rules under the WHO's 2005 International Health Regulations (IHR). This effort catalyzed a permanent research collaborative known as the "Global Health Law Consortium" that Habibi has helped shape since 2020. More recently, she founded a three-year partnership between the Global Health Law Consortium and the International Commission of Jurists that culminated in the 2023 "Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Public Health Emergencies." Habibi is currently advising on negotiations to reform global health law, including as an appointed member of WHO's expert committee on IHR amendments. She holds a JD (University of Ottawa), a specialization in transnational law (University of Geneva), and an MSc in Global Health (McMaster University).

## Human Rights, Social Listening, and Infodemics

This presentation will consider the human rights implications of social listening and infodemics during a pandemic. It will consider the rights implicated in both respects as well as the state duties these rights impose. In doing so it will consider rights including to health, privacy, equality, life, and participation. It will also



consider the extent to which such rights and duties can be legitimately restricted during a public health emergency, as well as instances of illegitimate restrictions of such rights.

### **Prof Lisa Forman**

*Canada Research Chair in Human Rights and Global Health Equity and Associate Professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Canada*



Dr Lisa Forman is an international human rights law scholar whose research explores how the right to health may contribute to advancing health equity, including in relation to access to medicines, universal health coverage, global health policy, pandemic responses, and COVID-19. Her work has been published widely, in journals that include Harvard Health and Human Rights, Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics, Global Public Health, and in book collections including from Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press. Dr Forman's work has been supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the World Health Organization, the University of Toronto's Connaught Fund, and the Lupina Foundation. Dr Forman qualified as an attorney of the High Court of South Africa, with a BA and LLB from the University of the Witwatersrand. Her graduate studies include a Master's in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University and a Doctorate in Juridical Science from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law.

## **Technology-Assisted Disinformation Regulation: From Platforms to Courts**

Technology plays a key role in regulating speech. Technological approaches enable platforms' content moderation initiatives to be carried out at scale; however, they currently suffer from limitations that make reliance on platform initiatives a questionable regulatory solution from the viewpoint of human rights. In this paper, I go beyond a call for greater safeguards around content moderation by platforms and focus attention on the necessity of technology-assisted disinformation regulation where courts play a greater role. Courts have an important deterrent role against harmful speech but, in contrast with platforms, they are unfamiliar with technology for speech detection and analysis. Because disinformation campaigns as a phenomenon can only be observed through technological and computational approaches, courts are rendered irrelevant to countering disinformation. Technology may enable clear demonstration of identity, intention and harm of the propagation of false or misleading speech through platforms, allowing prosecution or litigation of identifiable parties. However, the judicial use of such technical methodologies requires that they be further developed to be both accurate and explainable.

### **Dr Jayson S. Lamchek**

*Research Fellow, Deakin University Law School & Australian Government's Cyber Security Cooperative Research Centre (CSCRC)*



Jayson S. Lamchek is a Research Fellow at Deakin University Law School and the Australian Government's Cyber Security Cooperative Research Centre (CSCRC). Jayson researches the intersection of law, security and technology and uses a variety of methodologies including socio-legal and critical approaches. His PhD at the Australian National University was published as a monograph Human Rights-Compliant Counterterrorism by Cambridge University Press. Jayson has explored a number of technology-related themes including science as a human right (with a focus on data science and benefit-sharing in scientific gains), humanitarian applications of data science, governing digital technologies (with a focus on responsible Artificial Intelligence) and cyber-mediated social change (with a focus on disinformation). His research appears in Human Rights Law Review (forthcoming); Information Technology for Development; International Criminal Law Review; Australian Journal of Human Rights; Resources Policy and Asian Studies Review.

## Vivian Lin



Professor Vivian Lin is Executive Associate Dean and Professor of Public Health Practice at LKS Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong. She has 40 years of experience in public health, with a variety of leading roles in policy and programme development, health services planning, research and teaching, and senior administration in complex organizations. She was previously Director of Health Systems in the Western Pacific Regional Office for the WHO and was Chair of Public Health at La Trobe University in Melbourne before serving the WHO. She has consulted widely for bilateral and multilateral organizations and served on numerous government and non-government boards in Australia and internationally. Vivian earned her BA from Yale University and MPH and DrPH from UC Berkeley.

## Post-COVID: Prevention and Control of Infodemics: Coronaphobia and Coronahypognosia

In May 2023, WHO announced that the era of COVID-19 as a global health emergency has ended, which does not mean the end of COVID-19 as a global health threat. At present, the risk of new variants of COVID-19 still exists. The COVID-19 epidemic is not just a health crisis. It has caused serious economic damage, reduced the global GDP by trillions of dollars, and plunged millions of people into poverty. As a result, many countries have long abandoned the zero clearing strategy and turned to the Coexisting with COVID-19 Policy. However, last week, the WHO report showed that the number of global COVID-19 infection cases increased by 80%! The best preventive measures and treatment methods already exist, including vaccination of the upgraded COVID-19 vaccine and timely viral inhibitor treatment. China announced its end of dynamic zero-COVID strategy in December 2022. Looking ahead to the Post-COVID era, many issues such as Infodemic, Inforus, Coronaphobia, Coronahypognosia, Coronafatigue, Vacation Hesitancy are global issues. We are facing the next pandemic, and we call on humanity to unite as one!

### Prof George F. Gao – 高福

*Member (academician) of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)*



Prof Gao is a member (academician) of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), an international member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (NAS), a foreign member of the U.K. Royal Society (RS), a member of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. He is a professor of Institute of Microbiology, CAS, a member of WHO Science and Technology Expert Group, a member of WHO One Health High-Level Expert Panel. Gao has pioneered and made numerous significant original breakthroughs on the pathogenesis mechanisms and pathogen-host interaction of emerging infectious pathogens. His interests also include global public health and health strategy, and is an advocate of international collaboration in global public health. Gao pioneers the COVID-19 research and control with virus discovery, vaccine and therapeutic monoclonal antibody development, etc.

## Legal Regulations and Challenges in Processing Big Data for Public Health, Healthcare, and Medicine

This presentation will provide an overview of the concepts and content related to healthcare big data in China, highlighting the relationship between public health and healthcare big data. It will discuss the application and development of healthcare and public health big data in China. The speech will analyze the current legal regulatory framework, key aspects, and major challenges of health and healthcare big data in China, and present recommendations for addressing these challenges. Additionally, it will explore the key focal points for forthcoming legislation concerning public health.

## Prof Yanlin Cao - 曹艳林

*Director and Researcher, Medical and Healthcare Legal Research Laboratory, Institute of Medical Information, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences / Peking Union Medical College*

Prof Yanlin Cao, Director, PhD, and Researcher of the Medical and Healthcare Legal Research Laboratory at the Institute of Medical Information, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/ Peking Union Medical College. He serves as an expert in the drafting team of the *Basic Health Care and Health Promotion Law*, a member of the Advisory Committee for Health Beijing Action, Deputy Chairman of the Public Health Management and Legal Affairs Branch of the Chinese Preventive Medicine Association, Deputy Chairman of the Medical Humanities Training Expert Committee of the Chinese Medical Association, Managing Director of the China Health Law Society, Deputy Chairman of the Academic Committee, council member of the China Law Society Cyber and Information Law Society, and a member of the Ethics Committee for the Biomedical Research of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/ Peking Union Medical College. He has undertaken over 40 projects, including those funded by the National Social Science Fund of China, the National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China, and the World Health Organization, such as "Legislative Research on Basic Health Care and Health Promotion Law," "Legislative Research on Medical Injury," and revision study of the "Law on Doctors." He has published more than 100 papers in international and domestic journals such as LANCET and the Chinese Medical Journal. He has served as the chief editor or contributor to more than 10 works. He is also a member of several editorial boards, including "Chinese Preventive Medicine" and "China Health Law."

### Finding a Way Forward for Practical and Ethical Challenges in Infodemic Management: Conceptualizing Social Listening as a Type of Event-based Surveillance

Event-based surveillance for infectious disease depends on various official and unofficial data sources to provide early warnings for disease outbreaks. Indicator-based surveillance, on the other hand, generally relies on more robust data sources (e.g., physician reports, laboratory-confirmed diagnosis, or syndromic surveillance data) to monitor trends over time and inform decisions to guide outbreak response. While event-based surveillance offers the advantage of an early warning system, it is subject to low credibility rumors and the possibility of false-positives. Social listening engages in data collection and analysis of myriad data sources of variable quality to understand trends in how distorted information may be spreading, potentially leading to health-related misperceptions in particular communities. Because event-based surveillance and social listening have such similarities, there is much to be learned about the ethics of social listening by understanding the parameters of event- and indicator-based surveillance as well as the roles and responsibilities of various actors predominantly involved in each.

## Dr David Scales

*Internal Medicine Hospitalist and Assistant Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medicine; Chief Medical Officer at Critica*



DAVID SCALES is an internal medicine hospitalist and assistant professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine and Chief Medical Officer at Critica, an NGO focused on building scientific literacy. His research focuses on medical communication in clinical and online settings, including understanding how structural factors affect our information environments to allow misinformation to propagate and misconceptions to persist. Dr Scales' work leverages qualitative and quantitative methods to address the problem of health-related misinformation, training "infodemiologists" to build Covid-19 vaccine confidence in online communities with community-oriented motivational interviewing. Dr Scales received his MD and PhD from Yale University, where his sociology dissertation examined how the World Health Organization seeks to control the spread of diseases across international borders. He was a post-doc at Harvard with HealthMap.org, engaging in infectious disease surveillance using non-traditional sources, then completed a primary care Internal Medicine residency at Cambridge Health Alliance in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dr. Scales holds a certificate



of medical interpretation in Levantine Colloquial Arabic from U. Mass Amhurst and has worked with refugees in the United States and throughout the Levant.

## Values and Technology Design: Considerations for Social Listening

Insofar as social listening utilizes personal digital technologies, social media, and data derived therefrom, it must consider the place of values (individual and corporate) and digital cultures. While often presumed to be fairly fixed, both are deeply connected to multiple evolving sources of normative influence. They have the potential to shift in relation to individual, community, political and global conditions. Indeed, digital cultures are formed through a combination of influences, including the design capabilities of technologies, norms established by communities of users, priorities of technology developers, and other external influences including systems of technology and data governance. Many efforts to develop and use technology and data to support public health understanding and action (including in the U.S. and elsewhere during the COVID-19 pandemic) have explicitly embraced or been constrained by certain priorities and paradigms in their conception and design (e.g., maintenance and growth of corporate interests), at the peril of recognizing the wider needs of the public and public health. While social listening might appear to be immune from these dynamics as an observational process for developing insight, it is not. To understand the “message,” one must understand the multitude of influences on digital communication that can shape or constrain messages, including the choice architectures of social communication systems.

### Prof Joseph Ali

*Associate Professor, Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Core Faculty; Associate Director for Global Programs, Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, Baltimore MD, USA*



Joseph Ali, JD is Associate Professor in the Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Core Faculty/Associate Director for Global Programs at the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics. His research and teaching engage a range of challenges in domestic and global health ethics. This includes empirical and normative work in U.S. and international research ethics, and projects that address the implications of emerging global mobile and digital technologies as applied in the context of health research, public health programs, and disease surveillance. He is particularly interested in how values are expressed, represented, prioritized, preserved and influenced in the context of digital technologies.

## The Politics of Infodemic Management and Vaccination in Brazil

Social listening in infodemic management aims to understand the concerns and narratives expressed in social and traditional medias and in the communities that, when integrated with other data sources, such as epidemiological data, health system, and sociobehavioral data, produce infodemic insights that enable the generation of insights to inform evidence-driven infodemic interventions. In Brazil, the political context is determining factor in the choice for immunization and in the strengthening of anti-vax movements. The president's speeches preceded, fed and supported the narrative of anti-vax groups (strong supporters of Bolsonaro), including with untrue information about epidemiological data of Covid-19 in the country, with the intention of destroying the perception of risk. Formal announcements of the Minister of health (MOH) in the traditional media about discarded reported adverse events by the MOH itself, culminating in the participation of anti-vax physicians invited by the MOH for a public hearing to express "scientifically" criteria on the implementation of vaccination of children against covid-19 in the country. The Brazilian Immunization Society did the monitoring of the president's private channel on social media, of public manifestations of the MOH, in the traditional media and of the exchanges of messages in medical groups on WhatsApp, in addition to the monitoring of the official data published by the MOH itself allowed to direct an adequate information to the Brazilian population and minimize the negative effects of the negative communication propagated by the government.

## Dr Isabella Ballalai

*Director, Brazilian Immunization Society (SBIm)*

Dr Isabella Ballalai is a pediatrician who has been working on immunization programs, with a special focus on school health, for over 30 years. As a member of scientific institutions in Brazil and abroad, Dr Ballalai has been developing health programs, coordinating health communication and educational campaigns targeting the general population and training professionals in the areas of education and health. In addition, she authored the book “The Practical Immunization Manual” and co-authored several publications, such as “Immunization of Adult and Elderly”, and other immunization guides for different medical specialties. Dr Isabella is currently the director of the Brazilian Immunization Society (SBIm). She is also member of the Technical Advisory Committee on Immunizations of Brazilian Immunization Program (CTAI) and co-founder of Permanent Discussion Group on Adult and Elderly Immunization, member of the Vaccination Committee on the Brazilian Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics Associations (FEBRASGO), member of the Brazilian Society of Infectious Diseases (SBI), member of the Vaccine Safety Net Advisory Group from WHO, and coordinator of Confianza en las Vacunas Latino América Project – ConfíaLA.



## Law and Ethics in the Infodemic Management in Brazil: a Moral Challenge

There is an alleged ethical-legal conflict in Brazil between the State's constitutional duty to safeguard the health of the population and the protection that the same Constitution gives citizens in the face of the great State power, safeguarding their privacy, freedom of thought and expression. But there are ways, already in use, to follow social media and actively listen to what the population expresses without breaching privacy guarantees. And not only there is a way to protect individual well-being while promoting collective health, but the first would be at risk if it were not for the later. Perhaps the problem is that, despite the social tone of our Constitution, our culture, especially in the face of great challenges, leans towards individualism. This is how, in addition to the falsehoods in the official speeches that occurred in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic in Brazil, even when the speeches were well-intentioned for sanitary control, they often departed from an individualist point of view to defend the adoption of measures that are fundamentally of collective health. Thus, not only these actions ended up decontextualized from their larger objectives, but the scenario became more conducive to the spread of false news. And whoever has the duty to communicate has to be fully responsible for the ways in which the message reaches the interlocutor. This is how, in our data society, there should not only be social listening, but governance with bioethics and wisdom, understood here as ethics in favour of the best for the future of humanity and the knowledge on how to use knowledge to that end. Despite all recent experiences and traumas, we still seem to be morally unprepared to face contemporary challenges, including new and certain serious health threats arising from climate change, the suppression of biomes, the persistent social inequality and the greater recurrence of pandemics.

## Prof Márcia Araújo Sabino de Freitas

*A.C. Camargo Cancer Centre, Sao Paulo, Brazil;  
Health Systems Unit, St. Jude Global, USA*

Prof Márcia Araújo Sabino de Freitas has a PhD in Public Health from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, an MD in Law from the University of São Paulo, Brazil, and a JD in Law from the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil. She is a Professor at the A.C. Camargo Cancer Center, Sao Paulo, Brazil, and an independent contractor for Global Cancer Legislation and Policies Support at the Health Systems Unit, St. Jude Global, USA. She is a former Member of the Research Ethics Committee of the Barretos Cancer Hospital, Brazil, and a former researcher at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, Brazil, with funding from the European Union. She studied Bioethics at Georgetown University, USA, and has an interest in Health Sciences, Education, Bioethics, and Public Policy.

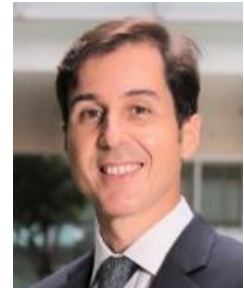


## Law and Politics in the Governance of Social Media Platforms

Studies have identified different risks that contemporary social media (particularly the most widely-used platforms) present for democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights. With reference to laws in the EU and Brazil, this presentation sets out arguments for the governance of online content as a means of mitigating these risks. The presentation will also highlight potential opportunities to advance fundamental rights and other democratic values through appropriate governance of these social media platforms.

### Dr Marcelo Thompson

*Deputy Director, Law and Technology Centre, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong*



Marcelo Thompson is an Assistant Professor of Law and Deputy Director of the Law and Technology Centre at the Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong. Courses Marcelo teaches or has taught at HKU include “Law and Society”, “Legal Theory”, “Privacy and Data Protection” and “Regulation of Cyberspace “. Marcelo’s core research interests lie in the intersection between law, political theory and the study of technological change. He is interested in what new forms of normativity arising from the design of the information environment mean for the life of law and politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Marcelo completed his Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, Oxford Internet Institute, on the idea of neutrality in technology law and politics. Marcelo holds an LLM (Law and Technology) from the University of Ottawa, where he wrote his major research paper on copyright reform and the human right of access to knowledge. A native of Brazil, he was the recipient of a full doctorate scholarship from The CAPES Foundation, of the Brazilian Ministry of Education, for which he was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> place, nationally, in the area of Law. His LLB was concluded at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), from where he also holds a PgDip in Intellectual Property Law.

## Social Listening, Infodemic Insights and Infodemic Management

An infodemic is an overabundance of information, accurate or not, in the digital and physical space, accompanying an acute public health event such as an outbreak or [epidemic](#). The dynamics of the information environment have impacted health authority efforts in promotion of healthy behaviors and adherence to health guidance. WHO convened experts to develop a whole of society framework for managing infodemics, a research agenda on infodemiology, a set of practical tools and innovations to respond to the needs of field responders, a competency framework and capacity building programmes for infodemic management. Infodemic management is the systematic use of risk- and evidence-based analysis and approaches to promote a healthier information environment and resilience against infodemic impacts. Integrated analysis of social listening and other data is used to produce infodemic insights rapidly to identify communities’ evolving questions, concerns, information voids and circulating narratives, including health misinformation. WHO/UNICEF infodemic insights manual explains steps to build an infodemic insights report, which introduces a common approach to developing and using infodemic insights. There is currently a lack of frameworks to be applied on ethical values and standards in relation to integrated analysis of social listening and other datasets for infodemic insights. WHO has convened a group of experts to develop an ethical guidance for social listening and infodemic insights for infodemic management. The guidance will be accompanied by practical tools that can guide health authorities and practitioners in planning and setting up infodemic insights strategies. This presentation was prepared collaboratively with Dr Tina Purnat, Team Lead for Infodemic Management, Department for Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention, World Health Organization, Geneva.

## Dr Sandra Varaidzo Machiri

*Technical Officer for Infodemic Management, Department for Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland*



Sandra Varaidzo Machiri has over 12 years' experience in public health promotion programming from implementation to policy technical guidance. She holds a Master's degree in Public Health (Health Promotion) as well as a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Promotion amongst other qualifications. Her career began as a Health Promotion Practitioner in Zimbabwe, during this period she was also a part time lecturer in the Community Medicine department at the University of Zimbabwe. She has worked for the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a Risk Communication expert providing technical support on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), for African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET) as a Health Communications Specialist Consultant in Vaccine Safety supporting the African region. Sandra is currently working as a Technical Officer for Infodemic Management in the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva. She is involved in managing major Infodemic management projects inclusive of the WHO guidance on ethics of social listening and infodemic management that is being worked on by a panel of experts drawn from various disciplines across the world. Sandra has contributed to many publications in public health over the years.

## Ethical Guidance and Infodemic Management

Infodemic Management has become a key area in public health. As with related public health activities, there are a number of ethical concerns that need to be adequately addressed, e.g., regarding privacy, autonomy and equity. In order to support Member States and other public health actors in identifying and dealing with these ethical issues, the World Health Organization has established an international expert group that has been developing a WHO guidance document on ethical considerations for social listening in infodemic management. Based on the deliberations of the expert group and supported by a scoping review, the document will include an ethical framework to guide social listening and infodemic insights for infodemic management practices for health emergencies. It will also incorporate practical guidelines and case studies which are addressed to public health officials, agencies, and national and international organizations, on how to move from ethical principles to practice when planning and implementing social listening and infodemic management activities.

## Dr Andreas Reis

*Co-Unit Head, Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland*



Andreas Alois Reis (PD, MD, MSc) is the Co-Unit Head of the Health Ethics & Governance Unit at WHO in Geneva, Switzerland. After medical studies and practice in internal medicine in Germany, France and Chile he pursued studies in health economics and obtained a post-graduate degree in biomedical ethics. His work focuses on ethical aspects of infectious diseases, public health surveillance, health research, and AI. He has lectured and organized trainings for WHO in more than 50 countries and serves on the editorial boards of Public Health Ethics and Monash Bioethics Review. He has published widely and is the co-editor of four books on health ethics.

## Human Rights and Infodemic Management

Like many public health interventions introduced in response to an epidemic, social listening and infodemic management may involve the curtailment of rights and freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For instance, social listening could infringe upon an individual's right to (data) privacy.

Especially in jurisdictions where there is no personal data protection legislation, human rights considerations are important in safeguarding the privacy interests of affected individuals and in securing trust. In this presentation, I highlight human rights considerations that are most applicable to social listening and infodemic management. Additionally, I examine possible exceptions to human rights requirements that are necessary to reconcile with other interests at stake, such as the protection of public health (in a state of emergency). Any such derogations must be provided for by law, while maintaining respect for the essence of fundamental rights and freedoms, and should constitute a necessary and proportionate measure in a democratic society.

### **Prof Dimitra Lingri**

*Managing Director, European Healthcare Fraud and Corruption Network (EHFCN), Brussels, Belgium; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece*



Ms Dimitra D. Lingri, LLB, LLM, is a lawyer and senior legal expert in pricing and reimbursement of medical devices and pharmaceuticals. She is currently a member of the WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Medical Devices (STAG MEDEV) and WHO Expert Group on ethical considerations of social listening and infodemic management. She currently serves as the Managing Director of the European Healthcare Fraud and Corruption Network, which regroups Payers and Healthcare Organizations in combatting fraud, corruption, and waste, aiming to promote the quality of healthcare services. She has also been personally appointed as a legal expert in the medical devices task force of EUnetHTA and she co-chairs the Real-World Evidence & Artificial Intelligence Interest Group of Health Technology Assessment international. In the past decade, she headed the Legal Department of the Hellenic National Organization for Healthcare Provision (EOPYY), the national payer for healthcare in Greece. Her main fields of interest are health technology assessment and negotiation proceedings, infodemic management, e-health, and artificial intelligence. Throughout her career, she played a crucial role in the successful implementation of international policies in the national legal system, including cross-border healthcare, negotiation proceedings, public auditing and payment proceedings, and electronic public payment proceedings. She speaks English, French, Spanish and Greek, and she is studying Russian.

## **Listening for the Truth: Singapore's Attempt to Curb Fake News**

'Social listening' emerged as an important commercial tool in the early days of the social media boom to help brand owners track what people are saying *about* them and their brands. This tool and the analytic processes that have been developed alongside it have found application beyond the commercial sphere. In the field of health care and particularly of health threats and emergencies, accurate social listening can help health authorities find the most effective means of stemming fast-growing and imminent threats. However, accurate social listening depends on the listeners' ability to filter out fake information masquerading as substantive content. This paper takes a look at Singapore's effort to stem fake news through the Protection from Online Falsehood and Manipulation Act (POFMA) and the challenges such legislation faces in implementation, and its impact on social listening in the health sector.

### **Prof Kevin Tan**

*Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore*



Kevin YL Tan is Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore where he has taught since 1986. He specialises in constitutional and administrative law, international human rights, and Singapore legal history and has written and edited over 60 books on law, politics and history. He is also currently Editor-in-Chief of the Asian Journal of Comparative Law.



## To Listen or Not to Listen: Social Listening for Public Health Threats

Social listening has been conducted by Public Health England (PHE) since 2014 in meeting its role of protecting the nation's health and preparing for public health emergencies. On 18 August 2020, PHE was replaced by UK Health Security Agency (HSA) and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. This presentation explains how social listening has been applied by the HSA in response to the COVID-19 infodemic, particularly around the uptake of vaccination by vulnerable populations in the UK. The presentation will also set out some of the key challenges encountered and lessons that may be useful for future responses in infodemic management, including policy and regulatory tools that may be considered.

### Dr Cherstyn Hurley

*Immunisation Publications Manager, Immunisation and Vaccine Preventable Diseases Division, UK Health Security Agency*

X handle: @Chersvacc



Cherstyn Hurley is the immunisation publications manager for the Immunisation and vaccine preventable diseases division of the UK Health Security Agency, formally Public Health England. She is a WHO trained Infodemic manager with a specialist interest in public health communications which enable children's, young peoples' and adult health literacy and reach underserved communities. She is also a member of the Vaccine Safety Network advisory committee and committed to providing high quality vaccination information both on and offline. She works in digital, print, video and on and offline solutions to create public health training, advice and guidance for the NHS and their patients. As publications manager she leads on the design, production and distribution of the national immunisation programme resources at the point of care. She works to co-produce Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) resources to support the national routine and selective immunisation programmes and leads on the COVID-19 vaccination programme resources. She has extensive experience and belief in the importance of continuous stakeholder engagement that is central to the co-creation of resources that meet users needs. Agility in promoting and communicating through user channels to build confidence, trust and uptake of all public health measures including vaccination is key to the success of implementation.

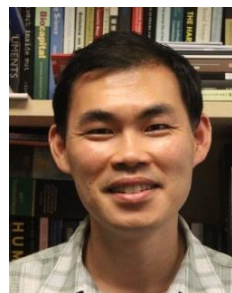
## Putting Epistemic Justice at the Heart of Social Listening & Infodemic Management

WHO Infodemic Management conferences held since 2020 present social listening to be an increasingly important tool for understanding the perceptions and views that individuals and communities share online. As a digital tool for gathering information about people's questions, concerns, and circulating narratives about health, social listening tends to include the use of technologies like Big Data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Social listening may also encompass the collection of offline data through means that include rapid surveys, townhalls, or interviews. However, in the absence of a governance framework and mechanisms that actively seek out testimonies of the marginalised in society or to otherwise identify and capacitate these individuals and communities for epistemic participation, social listening is likely to amplify epistemic injustice. Harm arises when disparate and transactional application of social listening has the effect of ignoring or reducing the value of these individuals and communities as knowers or valid sources of knowledge, and/or through the amplification of the testimonies of the privileged or the better-off in society. Drawing on the ethical framework of Miranda Fricker and the contributions of social epistemologists, we explain why the application of social listening as a purely public health (or infodemic) concern is likely to exacerbate injustice and reduce trustworthiness. Additionally, we broadly propose how epistemic justice could be placed at the centre of social listening and infodemic management.

## Prof Calvin W.L. Ho

*Associate Professor of Law & Co-Director, Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, Faculties of Law and Medicine, The University of Hong Kong*

Dr Calvin Ho's research is on global health law and ethics, and the governance of health and biomedical technologies (with focus on health technologies based on Artificial Intelligence and data analytics). He is Co-Chair of the Expert Group on the Ethics of Social Listening and Infodemic Management, as well as a member of the COVID-19 Ethics & Governance Working Group of the World Health Organization (WHO). Calvin is also an Ethics Board member of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), and a member of the Regulation and Ethics Work Stream of the Global Alliance for Genomics & Health. He was one of the contributing authors of the WHO's Guidelines on Ethical Issues in Public Health Surveillance that was published in 2017.



## Dr Karel Caals

*Research Fellow, Centre for Biomedical Ethics, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, Singapore; Assistant Editor, Asian Bioethics Review*

Karel obtained a PhD in Health Geography, after qualitative field research on the training of healthcare professionals in Timor-Leste to establish the concept of the 'More-than-National Health System'. As part of his interest in health systems, he researches the digitalisation of health, working on topics such as the ethics of artificial intelligence in healthcare and digital health surveillance. Additional interests include various topics in the field of research ethics, as well as stakeholder engagement. As Assistant Editor, he manages and promotes the Asian Bioethics Review, an academic journal established and hosted by CBmE, and published by Springer Nature. Additionally, he promotes the NUS Centre for Biomedical Ethics and its various initiatives via social media.



## Engineering the Discourse: The Role of Engineers and Computer Scientists in Health Disinformation and Populism

In the era of rapid information exchange, engineers and computer scientists are not merely creators of technology but vital players in the shaping of public discourse, including in the context of serious health threats like the COVID-19 pandemic. This exploratory presentation will delve into the legal and ethical responsibilities of the core discipline behind social media and other digital platforms. The presentation will dissect the digital mechanisms that have enabled populism and dis/misinformation surrounding vaccines and masks, namely algorithmic biases, design decisions, and the lack of technological regulation. The presentation aims to demonstrate that engineers and computer scientists play a governing role in the distribution and credibility of information that can profoundly impact the public.

## Ms Michelle Charlotte Liu

*PhD candidate in Civil Engineering, Centre for Law, Technology and Society, University of Ottawa, Canada*

Michelle Liu is an Asian-Canadian engineer, soon-to-be lawyer, and researcher using sociolegal frameworks to understand the interactions between technological designs and the engineering culture. Michelle earned their Honours BAsC and MASc in civil engineering from the University of Waterloo, after which they worked in construction and design for various national and multi-national consulting engineering firms. Michelle went on to pursue their law degree (JD) and engineering PhD simultaneously at the University of Ottawa. Michelle conducts their doctoral research between the Faculty of Engineering and the Centre for Law, Technology, and Society under the supervision of engineering and law faculty members. Across their research, leadership, and volunteer endeavours, Michelle's focus is on using their lived experiences and subject matter expertise to



contribute to equality. Michelle is a recipient of the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship (in the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada stream) and the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Scholarship. Michelle also received the Dean's Award upon completing their law degree. Born in Montréal, Canada, Michelle has lived in various parts of Europe and Asia, including Hong Kong, and is now based in the Canadian capital of Ottawa.

## Media Monitoring to inform rapid COVID-19 public engagement In Indonesia, Nepal & Vietnam

Recognizing the impacts of misleading or fake news on the beliefs and behaviours of the public, the Public Engagement teams at the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit monitored and documented misinformation and public concerns related to Covid-19 in three countries in South and Southeast Asia - Nepal, Indonesia and Vietnam in the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic (Phase 1: Jan-July 2020) and as vaccines were being rolled out (Phase 2: Jan-Dec 2021). Weekly monitoring informed our public health messages that spoke to current public concerns. In Phase 1 the news was categorized by content: prevention, treatment, disease epidemiology, governmental management and related discrimination and xenophobia. The number of engagements (share, repost, or comments) was recorded, to get a representation of the distribution of information. In Phase 2 we used search terms related to vaccines and vaccination. Key themes that emerged in Phase 1 as public concerns were: understanding the SARS-CoV-2 virus, Covid-19 transmission, management of the virus, safety protocols, coping with stress during the pandemic and testing. Key themes that related to vaccines in Phase 2 included: logistical concerns about national vaccination programmes, efficacy issues, prioritization of vaccine recipients, pregnant women, children, 'new normal' and booster doses. In response to emerging public concerns we developed positive, evidence-based responses disseminated through our Public Engagement communication platforms and partner networks in Nepal, Indonesia and Vietnam. These have included public health messaging through posters in public spaces, news articles and online messaging on social media. We have also conducted online, interactive question and answer sessions enabling the public to engage with experts. We conclude that active media monitoring is an effective means to inform relevant public engagement responses to rapidly evolving health emergencies.

### Dr Mary Chambers

*Head of Public and Community Engagement, Oxford University Clinical Research Unit, Vietnam (Wellcome Africa Asia Programme)*



Dr Mary Chambers is an expert in public and community engagement with biomedical research, and medical entomologist (PhD). Dr Mary Chambers has worked at the OUCRU Wellcome Trust Africa Asia Programme for over 20 years. She has developed the public and community engagement programmes for the OUCRU units in Vietnam, Nepal and Indonesia. Her team work on a diverse range of engagement projects to bring community voices to issues such as AMR, vaccine uptake and snakebites. They work with a range of communities including schoolchildren and youth, farmers, healthcare workers and patients in clinical research trials. They place a strong emphasis on strengthening capacity of researchers, young science enthusiasts and health-care workers to engage with their communities. Mary's personal interests lie in using participatory art and film to amplify community voices and bring them into conversations about biomedical research.

## Social Listening and the Precautionary Principle: International and Vietnamese Experiences during the Covid-19 Pandemic

'Social Listening' is a tool recently initiated by WHO, aiming to address public health risks. Yet, the practice of 'social listening' can be traced back to a point in time much earlier and to more fundamental ideas. This paper first recalls the ideas of risk analysis and the precautionary principle – core components of not only public health but also scientific and environmental policy and suggest that social listening is a component of



these ideas. Though there can be other issues concerning social listening which are also demanded deliberations and solutions, this paper illustrates only some issues observed from international and Vietnamese experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely: (i) striking a fair balance between picking up and listening to ‘early warnings’ that lack sufficient and robust evidence and preventing [the spread of] mis- and dis-information, (ii) striking a fair balance between mobilizing the society for promoting the goods and preventing of harassment and coercing, and (iii) responding to criticisms concerning risk management policy. Thus, WHO and states should be prudent and precautionary – the idea that lies in the precautionary principle - during the course of exercising their mandate, functions, and powers, especially by utilizing the tool of social listening. This re-emphasizes the role of the precautionary principle as the framework and the benchmark of social listening.

## **Mr Thanh Hải Đoàn**

*PhD Candidate, Bioethics Centre, University of Otago, New Zealand*

Hai graduated from the LLB honours program at the Faculty of Law, University of Economics and Law, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City. Currently, he is a PhD Candidate in the Bioethics Centre at the University of Otago, New Zealand. His main areas of research interests are inter alia global bioethics and health law, Vietnamese law of contract and property, Vietnamese constitution Law, regulations of technologies. He has published research articles in such journals as Asian Bioethics Review, Comparative Legal History, National Taiwan University Law Review. He is the editor of the Vietnamese student-run Young Lawyer Journal hosted by the Faculty of Law, University of Economics and Law, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City.



## **Gendered Impact of Social Media on Vaccine Hesitancy – Evidence from Chikkaballapur, Karnataka, India**

Social listening (infoveillance) can help monitor public values and attitudes towards vaccines and also assess the channels of dissemination and public engagement with these opinions. However, there is a glaring gender gap in digital access and engagement with social media as an information source. Across LMICs, women are 20% less likely to own a data-enabled smartphone and thus, use the internet to find health information. This implies that engagement on social media is higher among men, which in turn generates greater information/misinformation about their health outcomes. Even if social listening tools are meaningfully used to mitigate misinformation, women’s limited access to the internet results in lesser information about women and their health outcomes. Therefore, it is important to improve women’s access to the internet to address the gender gap in digital access to ensure equitable access to health information and enable them to make informed decisions. In this paper we aim to study the gendered impact of social media as a source of health information on vaccine hesitancy. We randomly surveyed 1,500 households in the Chikkaballapur region in Karnataka, India. Our study’s results find that women who factor in social media as a source of information are less likely to be vaccine hesitant.

## **Dr Deepshikha Batheja**

*Research Fellow, One Health Trust (OHT), India*

Dr Deepshikha Batheja is a Research Fellow at One Health Trust (OHT), India. She holds a PhD in Economics from the University of California, Riverside. Dr Batheja’s broad research interests are in the fields of development, health economics, and labor economics. A key thread in her research has been the impact of gender on economic, health and social outcomes. In particular, her current research focuses on estimating the effect of gender norms on antimicrobial usage (AMU) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Dr Batheja uses real-world data and often relies on randomized controlled trial (RCT) methodology to test economic



theory and inform policy. Her research work has been featured in several top health journals, World Bank Development Impact Blog, Ideas for India, IGC Blogpost and Hindustan Times (leading daily in India).

## Social Media Listening during Global Health Emergency: Lessons Learned during COVID-19 Pandemic

As soon as COVID-19 pandemic began, Mafindo predicted that we will be actually facing two pandemic, the other one being the infodemic. We quickly ramped up our social media listening capacity, supported by Unicef & CDC. We produced weekly reports and monthly insights, and distributed it to various parties, including Indonesia's National COVID-19 Taskforce, various CSOs, and institutions. We will discuss various lessons learned during this activity.

### **Mr Harry Sufehmi**

*Founder, MAFINDO, Indonesia*

Harry Sufehmi founded MAFINDO in 2016, an anti-hoax organization based in Indonesia. Since then, MAFINDO has blossomed into multiple chapters in 30+ cities, 1000+ local volunteers, and 95.000+ online volunteers, managed by offices in 3 cities. MAFINDO combat hoaxes by working together with others, such as creating anti-hoax chatbot in WhatsApp, running a crowdsourced fact-checking operation using Facebook Groups, advocating governments, actively combating hoaxes in Facebook utilizing 3PFC scheme, advising UN and EU that hoax is a cybersecurity issue, actively combating COVID-19 and vaccine hoaxes with national & international institutions, and so on.



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The Centre for Medical Ethics and Law (CMEL) develops new ideas and solutions in response to the big ethical, legal and policy questions of medicine and health. CMEL is the first cross-faculty interdisciplinary institution of its kind in the region. It was founded in 2012 by the LKS Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Law at The University of Hong Kong as a joint inheritor of their vibrant intellectual traditions dating back to 1887 and 1969 respectively.

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