

UNSW Law Week Public Lecture

"Law, lawyers and lattes: ...the (ir)relevance of the chattering classes in a time of insecurity"



Professor Andrew Byrnes

Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales

Wed 29th March, 2006

6pm–7pm

McCauley Theatre, UNSW

(Level 1 Quadrangle Bldg)

The last few years have seen intense controversy about the way in which legal institutions and legal arguments have been drawn on by the Australian government to implement and justify its policies in areas ranging from use of force against other countries, to immigration and anti-terrorism laws.

Many academic lawyers and legal professional bodies have been vocal in their criticism of what they view as excessive measures which they view as illegal or subversive of fundamental values of the rule of law. Their concerns have often been dismissed as the formalistic concerns of complacent or self-interested elites who have little understanding of the broader social context and the real urgency for such measures.

This lecture will reflect on aspects of this experience and the relevance of the views of experts, elites and lawyers in public policy debates.

Professor Andrew Byrnes is a Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law at UNSW. He is Chair of the Committee of Management of the Australian Centre for Human Rights, Co-Director of Studies of the International Law Association (Australian Branch), Co-Rapporteur of the ILA's Committee on International Human Rights Law and Practice, and a member of the Executive Council of the Australian and New Zealand Society of International Law. Professor Byrnes was previously Professor of Law at the ANU and prior to that was Associate Professor of Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong.

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