



THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SINCE 1821

Minutes of the 1297th Ordinary General Meeting of The Royal Society of New South Wales held by ZOOM Webinar on Wednesday 1 September 2021 at 6.30PM.

There were 62 Members, Fellows and guests in attendance.

1. WELCOME

The President, Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN presided at the meeting. She welcomed members and guests and gave an acknowledgement of country. She also referred to the Society's Diversity and Inclusion Policy and asked that members consider nominating female candidates and those from diverse backgrounds for membership of the Society.

1.1 Minutes of the 1296th Ordinary General Meeting held on 4 August 2021

The Minutes of the previous Ordinary General Meeting, previously circulated, were approved.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

As no valid objection had been lodged within two weeks following the 1296th Ordinary General Meeting, the election of the following new Members took effect from the date of that meeting held on 4 August 2021.

2.1 Members

Ms Catherine Carter
Dr Rhea Friederike Cornley
Associate Professor Wei Deng
Mr Trent Pohlmann
Mr James Tanna
Ms. Melinda Tursky

3 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Fellows

It was noted that the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee had met on 10 August 2021. If no valid objection is lodged within two weeks of this Ordinary General Meeting, that is, by 6.30pm on 15 September 2021, the election of the following new Fellows will take effect from the date of this meeting.

Professor David John Adams
Professor Philip Stewart Bolton
Ms Carolyn Jan Bowen
Professor Min Chen
Dr Simon John Devitt
Dr Jai Christian Galliot
Emeritus Professor Anthony John Hulbert
Professor Christopher Bond Little
Professor Nathan Lo
Dr Colin Pardoe
Professor Jennifer Robyn Potts
Professor Lisa Rae Jackson Pulver
Professor Leigh Albert Sullivan
Associate Professor Rebecca Suter
Professor Xiaoke Yi
Professor Ken-Tye Yong

3.2 Members

It was noted that if no valid objection is lodged within two weeks of this Ordinary General Meeting, that is, by 6.30pm on 15 September 2021, the election of the following new Member would take effect from the date of this meeting.

Ms Kate Carruthers

4 REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President drew to members' attention the lunchtime talks by Drs Saul Griffith and Adi Paterson entitled *Our Energy Future: The Unrecognised Opportunity in Glasgow*. She said the first one had been successful and she recommended attending the second one to be held on 15 September at 12.30pm. Additional information was available on the Society's website.

Dr Pond also mentioned the new Fellows '3 minute' videos, eight of which were on the Society's website. She said new Members videos would be produced soon.

5 QUESTIONS

There were no questions sent to the President prior to the meeting.

6 THE PRESENTATION

TAKING HUMOUR AND LAUGHTER SERIOUSLY: EXPLORING THE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY FIELD OF HUMOUR STUDIES

Dr Jessica Milner Davis FRSN
Honorary Associate, University of Sydney

Jessica Milner Davis is a research associate at the University of Sydney and at Brunel University London's Centre for Comedy Studies Research. A life member of Clare Hall, Cambridge, she has held fellowships and lectured at the Universities of Cambridge, Bologna, Bristol, and NSW, as well as Stanford, Hofstra, and the Jagellonian University. A Past President of the International Society for Humor Studies (ISHS), she founded and continues to co-ordinate the Australasian Humour Studies Network

(AHSN: <https://ahsnhumourstudies.org/>). In 2018 she received the ISHS Lifetime Achievement Award for her interdisciplinary research and publications on humour, comedy, and laughter.

From the time of Aristotle and Plato, philosophers have speculated about humour and laughter, proposing that *ridere est humanum*. But we now know that chimpanzees and rats also laugh. Sociologist Norbert Elias believed that laughter evolved as an antidote to aggression; but humour can also be damaging. The lecture explored the question of whether humour unites or divides the human race. Studies in neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, literature, performance, history, sociology, religion, health, and the emotions all now contribute to our understanding of the functions and consequences of humour. We honour its creators and practitioners, but we still can't define it.

There followed a question and answer session moderated by Dr Elizabeth Deane, Secretary of the Events Committee, who also gave the vote of thanks.

7 CLOSE

In closing the meeting, Dr Pond thanked Dr Milner Davis for a stimulating talk and everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.