Transcript

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Author(s):
Ms Amanda Smith
Dr Susanne Oldmeadow
Dr Brock Bastian
Dr Marilyn Johnson

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Recording: Welcome. You're listening to a recording of the society 4.0 symposium 2019 where we explore the development, maintenance, loss and restoration of trust in the digital age. This is the panel discussion on relationships which took place on the Swinburne University of Technology Campus. Our speakers examine the consequence of new and emerging technologies on our relationships with ourselves, other people and the ultimatum with whom we live.

Amanda: Hello, I'm Amanda Smith from ABC Radio National and I'm chairing this panel discussion today through this part of the discussion about relationships in I guess the age of smart machines. Let me welcome and introduce to you. Thank you. Thank you Susanne, Oldmeadow, Marilyn Johnson and Brock Bastian and as well as hearing from these three, your contribution is of course going to be very welcome. Uh, and we'll leave enough time at the end of our discussion, uh, to, uh, invite your questions and comments as well. I'm going to tell you a bit about each of the panelists as we come to them and we're going to start with you, Susanne.

Dr Susanne Oldmeadow. Susanne is a GP. She's also a Bioethicist. Uh, she has experience in both rural and metropolitan general practice and she holds a Master's of Bioethics through Monash University. Susanne's particular interest and the area that she's going to be speaking about today in relation to all this as Julian flagged is in the social and ethical issues that emerge from the use of assisted reproductive technologies. Susanne as a GP with a special interest in that area. First of all, what are the most common, uh, assisted reproductive technologies that people are seeking right now?

Susanne: Um, thanks Amanda. Look in my practice, you know, I would say probably two or three times a week. People who are in some ways using the assisted reproductive technologies to form their families. Um, at least most commonly we're talking about IVF. Most commonly I'm seeing older people who delay having their families who are then having difficulties falling pregnant. Um, and they, they're the most common group I see. Um, but we're also increasingly seeing single women who are accessing donor ban to have babies on their own. Um, lesbian couples who, uh, also ask this in don't assume, have babies in that way. Uh, and a little bit it's coming in now is women's seeking to freeze their eggs, um, to sort of have a feel of a buffer between the fertility and their aging process.

Amanda: How strong are their motivations?

Susanne: Oh, hugely strong. I mean, we're talking about people having babies when they might otherwise have them. There's a huge amount of emotion about, around these, these are these technologies because mostly

what I'm seeing is people who are desperately wanting to start a family, you can't get anything much, you know, much more motivating than that.

Amanda: What we heard from a, I think, did I read in the, one of the papers this morning, Scott Morrison and his wife whose name I can't remember, I'm embarrassed to say it right. What does it say? What is Jenny, Jenny talking about, uh, going through the IVF process and not being successful and then by some miracle, uh, conceiving afterwards. You know, I mean, I, you're absolutely right, it, it's a very emotional, deep-seated thing. What is though the level of understanding of this range of technologies available now that people who come to see you, uh, have, what information do they have before they talk to you?

Susanne: That's a good question. I think it's still general area where even for me as a GP, a lot of it seems to be watering on magic and, you know, even more so for patients who are accessing it. I think people have, you know, basic understanding that, and you know, you need an egg and a sperm and they need some help outside the body in various ways. I think that the real understanding is very limited. Um, and there is a lot of trust involved because of that. You've got on the one hand, you know, a desperate desire to have a baby and you've got someone who's saying, we can help you put your trust in us and we will tell you what the best processes are to use and what it will cost. Um, I think people aren't really, yeah, there's this, there just can't be a deep level of understanding what's going on or certainly not. I don't feel that the varies and maybe it is better.

Amanda: I mean well do, uh, singles or couples, uh, understand for example, how, um, uh, IVF, uh, well I'm not going to say how unsuccessful IVF is, but the, there is, it's not a guarantee process.

Susanne: Oh, absolutely not. I've certainly seen quite a number of patients who start the process and they had high hopes and then after maybe three or four cycles is really a costly process emotionally, physically, financially. Um, I think people do get given that message, but it's very hard for them to hear it after a certain point. All it needs is one doctor in the IVF industry to say, "we can try this new thing, this new culture, I mean there is new hormone that you can try." Um, and you know, it's very hard for people in my experience and my patients to say, "well, no, we'll stop." That's it. We've done enough.

Amanda: All right. Then really the big question for you Susanne, and perhaps we'll spend a bit of time on this, is teasing out what the major ethical issues are that we as a society and as individuals really need to be aware of and thinking about around is?

Susanne: That is a huge question.

Amanda: Don't fall.

Susanne: I'll try and sort of be coherent, but there's so many issues. I think at the simpler level you talk about family structure. I'm saying, um, I've certainly had many couples who come in later in life. Um, they go through a few years of difficulty and they might've been to get that one child and by that stage the woman might be 38, 39, 40, and then they, um, they're so excited and thrilled to have that first baby. Then I see them two years down the track and something's changed. They really are starting to see how good it will be to have a sibling for their child. Often they can't, they just can't at their stage.

I think, um, that's something that we need to be more aware of that when you're delaying your family and using assisted reproduction, you're more likely to have just one child and you know, what does that mean? What does that look like? I think it has implications for grandparents as well. More and more, um, people who might be expecting to be enjoying being grandparents, uh, at that much older when that first baby arrives and maybe less involved. Um, so that's perhaps wonder with social structure. I think, uh, at a much deeper level, something I really grapple with is, you know, what does it mean to some of these children who are now being born?

Um, for example, increasingly to single women, um, where you're accessing donors from and that you're deliberately setting out to have a child where there's never any idea of a father if you like. Um, so, you know, we have laws in place in Australia where people are able at the age of 18, to access, uh, identifying information at a sperm donor. You can't be anonymous, but I'm more interested in the idea and I think we need to talk more about this issue of, you know, what meaning do we get from knowing our genetic heritage, but not only our genetic heritage, but the stories that come from your family and your ancestors and your grandparents and your cousins and uncles.

Increasingly, with use of donor eggs and sperm. Um, we're creating children who are really cut off from that one side of the family tree. Um, and you know, I think that's worth talking about and thinking about. I just don't think we know yet what all of that mean and then and I guess aligned to that is some idea of is it something we should be doing? From my perspective of a GP, something we are doing with so much enthusiasm. I mean, I've been a GP for 15 years and in the last, you know, when I started out, it was so rare to see people using IVF.

Know it's just so common and increasingly, I mean I know three or four people personally who have babies on their own, a single women, anyone, I think, gosh, you know, maybe it seems to me that the perspective has stayed at the individual level sort of at that, the idea of what the parent wants, what a woman wants. I just perhaps feel that we need to take a step back and maybe slow down and think a bit more about the perspective of the children that are being created and some of the issues that might go, go might arise for them. It's very much an open question.

Amanda: I just want to ask you on that, because I'm sure there are more issues you want to tease out, but I do want to ask you on that. Do you ever counsel against, uh, using those technologies, whether that's with couples or single people seeking?

Susanne: Yeah. Look, that's a really tough one. No is the short answer. Um, and I don't feel that I can do that or whether that's my place or even something I, you know, I want to do. I do sometimes try and help women or couples who but I'm usually seeing that women who I really feel, look, you know, eight cycles of IVF, three years of your life or more, tens of thousands of dollars. It's really time to stop.

I guess at that level I try and help them perhaps take a step back and take a breather and say, well you know, by then is it time to start thinking about what life would look like without a baby in it? I feel that that's something I need and perhaps and better place to do as a family doctor. Because I don't think they get that message very well from the IVF clinics because these are big private businesses. You know, you have to accept that they do have some level of vested interest in continuing to offer, you know, treatments.

Amanda: You and Julian have both, um, hinted at this one of the kind of great barriers to gender equity is how women, uh, try to choose or try to find a balance between career having a career and having a family and the a woman's prime child rearing bearing years, uh, do tend to coincide, of course, with the time that, you know, your developing a career. It's me I think that so, uh, are you know, these technologies like egg freezing, are they going to, are they now are they going to help solve some of those sort of dilemmas between a family and careers for women?

Susanne: That's another huge question and huge topic. Um, I guess my short answer in the re-phrasing would be I think, no, I think it's a problem is very real if women trying to establish and have good careers in, as you say in prime child bearing years. I think the solution with, um, using technology is probably a little bit wrong-footed in large part because we know that the women who are freezing their eggs are already really probably too old to, for those age to ever actually have a meaningful chance of resulting in a live birth. Um, you know,

you really got to be freezing your eggs between ideally in your 20s and nobody's doing that. They're freezing them usually over 35.

I think at that level, if you want to talk about trust there that you know, the information is not being properly and fairly given. Um, so that's one thing. Basically, women are not very likely to have a live birth and freezing their eggs. Then I think you run into those same issues of family structure that I raised and I do use about seeing children and roll around here. It's, and I think it's um, I think really we need to be talking much more about how we change our own structures so that women can be able to have the babies in the old fashioned way when their bodies body's are ready to.

Amanda: Now, I'm sure what I'm Susanne's been talking about will have raised lots of lots of questions for you. Just hang onto those because we're going to move on to our next speaker and I'm actually gonna leap across your Marilyn to Brock. Brock Beston is a social psychologist at Melbourne University. He's the author of the Other Side of Happiness that was published early this year. I think a kind of critique on the Western addiction to positivity on our sort of drive to eliminate pain and risk from our lives. It could be called the Other Side of Hardship, I suppose.

Brock: Could be. That's right.

Amanda: Look, as your, per your assessment, Brock, um, the [inaudible 00:14:08] pursuit of happiness has paradoxically lead to a decline in happiness and there are studies starting to come out, um, that report were a quite rapid decline in heaviness since 2012 in the US particularly among teenage girls. Are you among those who would attribute that to social media, to smartphones to explain that?

Brock: Um, yeah, I think there's an argument. There isn't a lot of evidence. Um, there's a little bit of evidence, small effect sizes and all of that, but there is an argument there that, um, and I think it's a reasonable argument to make it without the evidence fully attend. Yeah. There is something going on in social media, um, which is perhaps making lives more difficult, not easier. Um, you know, one of those things could be about, you know, the sale of positivity and happiness. Again, you know, very few of us post images of ourselves on social media looking sort of disappointed and you know, after a fantastic failure, um,-

Amanda: Gladly we did.

Brock: -that's right. Finding the courage to do that. You know, mostly is on holidays looking great and fabulous and CVI overlays and all this sort of stuff. You know, Instagram makes every photo better than it really is. There is this panacea out there that we have confronted with common commonly and it looks like everyone else's more successful and happier than we are. Um, but of course they're not just looks that way. There's that part to it. Um, I mean there is also the interpersonal component to it as well, which I think is probably becoming quite apparent.

Um, this, you know, there's no better way to unleash the worst parts of human behavior than to make the victim, you know, not apparently you can't see the victim, what's your, you know, who targeted or send me things to or just canceled as people do these days. Um, cancel culture and cancel of anyone yet my own life but you can do it. Um, so, you know, the, it seems as though it's provided a vehicle for, um, perhaps not some of the best forms of human interaction as well, which I don't think it's about, you know, valuing happiness. I do think it might be undermining.

Amanda: I call this my phone. Uh, but the thing I do least on it is talk to people. It's a funny thing when it's a redundant term to call it a phone. What happens to relationships between couples in real life Brock, you know, in a generation that is more used to communicating online than face to face?

Brock: Um, well, I mean we kind of, I don't know if I've got a very well formulated answer to that question, but I think that, um, well I think one thing that happens is you end up doing your forms sort of into each other's eyes a lot. Um, you know, so you aren't distracted by this more distant form of interaction than the most local form of interaction. For some reason. Maybe we're getting bored of that eventually you just start looking to each eyes again. Um, so there is that distraction part to it. Maybe again, uh, I know that it seems that increasingly, there is a tendency of the people like to text and don't like to speak on the phone.

Um, because it's a lower form of engagement. It's easier, it's less costly. Um, and so maybe, you know, sense training. I still have these sort of low form, low cost forms of engagement. Um, and I think in some cultures around the world we're seeing that even, you know, just, uh, I guess the idea that our relationship requires quite a lot of input and adjustment and compromise. Some costs, relationships costs something of us, and social media and phones are a way of engaging people very very low cost avenues. Maybe that's training us to think that's what relationships should be like. I don't know.

Amanda: I'm interested in that because at first at first struck me, um, a few years ago, I was, uh, making a program, a series of programs for Radio National about, uh, video games. I was working with a young freelancer who was the expert on these who was a wonderful person, uh, and who had contacts with all the people around the world who, you know, we really needed to speak to for this series. It was really great at contacting them online, but he wasn't very good at talking to them when it actually came to the real conversation. I just wonder if, um, you know, that's a consequence of what I've just raised with you and what that means, you know?

Brock: Yeah, I guess, I guess you have to develop social skills and if you're not practicing, you're not developing them, perhaps. Um, yeah, I mean, I don't know whether, I mean, obviously there are was there too. I mean, some people who, you know, prefer to interact online might just not find, you know, real life session, drugs are easy anyway, of course. Many of us do still like to have face to face engagement, social engagement. Um, although having said that, loneliness is on the rise and we're seeing that, um, everywhere.

There's a certainly a bit of a tendency to not be engaged, um, in those more maybe meaningful interactions. Yeah, maybe also, I mean a look and there's some evidence to suggest that this ability just to maintain connection through social media is actually a positive thing too. We can kind of say connected, but at the same time that might be a, I suppose a little bit of a, um, yeah, it might make us feel that we are connected and meaningfully, so perhaps less meaningfully connected them. It would be if we had a few strong times. You spend time with them, those sorts of ways to.

Amanda: Bianca, you've done some work on, uh, around texting and cyber bullying. Bianca Clicker is from Deacon University and her research is on the interface between psychology and law. What's your view on the impact social media is having on adolescent relationships and their sense of self?

Bianca: Um, 90% of all the young people are concerned about some online behavior with the, um, the behavior that they were most worried about was receiving unwanted sexts. We know from, well we know from our adult research that um, in the young adult group, roughly 60% of young women will have received unwanted sex and um, roughly around 30% of men. The, so long story short, I think it's really interesting. These are data 13 year old girls and now also worried about other things, just body shaming and um, cyber bullying. The number one thing was receiving unwanted nudes. I thought that was fascinating that at 13, they already have the notion I'm going to get a dick pic, excuse my language.

They are aware of that. They know it, they know it's going to happen. That six out of 10 will get one of them on their phone and there's nothing they can do about it. Because there's nothing to stop these from arriving at their phone. I find that apps, I don't know, horrify, I don't actually even know the attic turf that you know, can

actually describe that because they're worried about it. They know this will happen. It's actually, you know, at the moment it's one of the, you know, biggest concerns. In terms of, and it's funny too, because um, we've done some research onto the motivation of why people send unwanted nudes. We often think that they're very sinister raisins.

You know, people want to be mean or you know, and it's not, I remember this little, this was qualitative research where a young, um, man was asked, why do you send the nudes? Have you ever gotten one back? No. Why do you keep sending them? One day it might. It was almost this sort of, you know, desperate hope, you know, the part of the young, you know, men to send these nudes, unwanted nudes to, you know, just get a response sort of thing. If we take the technology out of it, but used to be flirting. Yeah. It's now, you know, you get a nude image sort of thing.

Amanda: [crosstalk 00:22:18] Yeah. They for people like you, uh, and law makers and policy makers what are the policy implications of that research?

Bianca: A million dollar question. Um, look, I think it's really, really difficult for policy because I mean other than really educating young people about, you know, you should not be sending an unwanted nudes sort of thing. I don't know what else to do. There aren't any, there are some sort of filters that I know are being developed with, you know, you can check that those are nude, but it's much more about, um, it's actually, there's some programs that in essence are tying to prevent your child from sending one. There's not one for receiving one. There isn't a program at the moment that goes, okay, if I, you know, if I install this app I will not get this nude.

I think one of the things that's important is that, you know, we know that girls are much more likely to receive them, but um, receiving this nude is associated with very negative mental health outcomes. We know that depression, anxiety and stress go up, self esteem go down just by just receiving one of these images. It's even more so for young men. Young men get them as well.

I don't mean to just make an a gender at, you know, sort of, I know girls are twice as likely, but it's not just gender young men, will see them as well. From a policy point of view, I'm actually, I'd be happy to, you know, hear other, you know, other people's opinions on this because I think at the moment we don't have anything we don't have any sort of mechanisms to do it by the phone. We don't have an app that stops nudes from getting sent. It will happen.

Amanda: Coming back to Brock as a psychologist, um, uh, I want to ask you, uh, you ways we might manage some of the things that Bianca has raised there because also as you, uh, suggested these things are always double-edged sword, are they? You know, um, we, the technology takes off because of all the good things that they offer. Uh, and then we scramble to try and deal with the inevitable bad consequences, but that come along as well. You know, so cyber bullying, the stuff, Bianca's talking about sexting, Instagramming re, um, you know, the genuine displacement of real life interactions or the negative consequences. There are, of course, lots of benefits in social media as well. What do you think we need to do to sort of better manage the costs as well as the benefits?

Brock: Yeah, it's a good question. I don't know. I think I'm going to show my two daughters the hunting, um, that show on SBS when they're old enough to see that. Um, because I think, you know, I think kids don't, yeah, I mean there's a real issue there. Kids don't always have the capacity to reason through all the consequences that can come out of social media. We're seeing people who are losing their jobs over things that they said, silly, silly things they said years ago. I mean, I think we have to, well there's two, there's two things and we have to just be more aware of what we're doing and social media, but also provides a little more forgiving people to social media that wouldn't be harming and bad thing to be.

Um, but also, um, yeah, I mean I think it's we could sort of say education and we need to teach people how to manage it, but at the same time, there are some basic factors in there that you know, uh, again, human behavior, that it is. Um, it does lead to the less inhibited behavior and not when you feel that it's partly anonymous or, I mean, you analyze anything, you're going to get unwanted behavior. I don't know if there are ways that we can make it less like that or not. Um, yeah, I think the answers is still coming in that space. I don't think we really know quite what to do because we have unleashed a part of human behavior which will be there and will continue to be there. Um, and as you say with that, with those costs come benefits, um, and we can't always regulate those things out in place. We can't always educating that I play the right things. It does leave an open question.

Amanda: Well, let's now meet Marilyn Johnson. Marilyn is a senior research fellow with the Institute of Transport Studies in the department of civil engineering at Monash University. Marilyn is also the research and policy manager for the Amy. Give it. It id give it, isn't it? Yeah. As I said it, I thought have I got it wrong? And you look foundation, uh, Marilyn's expertise is in something completely different as that suggests. That's in cycling including cyclists, safety and cyclists, driver interactions and electric bike use in Australia. Marilyn, what would you say is the sort of current situation on Maryland roads as far as the relationship between cyclists and motorists it goes?

Marilyn: Start with these you want, hi, um, generally I actually think it's quite good and I think what we see generally in the public discourse is really around how easy it is to try realize people into groups and how much the media is sort of presentation of cyclists is driven by sort of clickbait headlines and wanting to get engagement. I mean I drove over here today from my house in Carnegie and it was a gorgeous day and it's lovely and shiny outside and together. The two things I was most concerned about was of, but I don't have sunscreen and I'm not going to flush any on my own DC because this stress kind of fires or leave it on the side in the front.

Because I'm traveling off peak because of most the people who park their cars in front of their house are gone to wherever they need to go today. It's a very different experience on the road for someone on the bike. Then I think what we generally see, and so I think a key thing, in fact, our conversation earlier though we had Susanne and I were saying that the fact that I really know here, and I said there were no cars on the road and not some raised eyebrows, but I don't mind on the streets that you drive on. I run in the secondary streets, I run the smaller residual streets and they tend to be really quiet and they're lovely and they're tree-lined and it's a great way to travel. That's not the public concession.

Amanda: Well for those who are cyclists who are uh, on roads be they, you know, the psychopaths at the side of roads, uh, in peak hour through the city. What's the relationship like at the moment?

Marilyn: That's a different question. That's really to me it's not a question about the people on the road. It's the question about how we've chosen to allocate space on the road. In many cases, particularly when you're going into the city and we were in highly traffic days, the question really is about on street parking. The simple fact is the road space is there, but we've chosen through policy decisions, through the way we've allocated space, deprioritized people's left cars, and we have people who are moving through the space.

Yeah, absolutely. The moment when we have people who run down, particularly security royalties, number of cyclists is where the community come happens every morning, every afternoon. It's also a corridor of death because you are literally between an opening car door and car multiple ends of traffic during 60 kilometer now that's it. Then on car parked and stopped because we pick out, now I'm moving. Then the temptation is the passengers to open the doors. So voting doors on both sides, so it's really not great. I think people out on the roads when you're driving or you're riding or you're walking, or they may say, can employee allocate space.

Amanda: Do you have any sense though of a drivers being annoyed by cyclists because I mean what I will say, of course is that we're not all one thing or the other are we as a driver, I'm also a cyclist, cyclists the drivers. As a driver I can get annoyed by cyclists or I can get worried that I'm getting too close and I don't know what to do. What do you know about what dramas think of cyclists in the, in busy traffic?

Marilyn: The people don't like it. People don't like feeling squashed and squeezed. I think generally drivers have the attitude that they don't want to cause harm, but they also don't want to be impeded by cyclists. The best way I've heard it phrased is my research room transport Marjorie in the UK who reported their drivers attitudes with cyclist is that they have a little patient caution to be cautious around them. They're impatient to get past them. It's something that some of them are already, infrastructures doesn't help because we'll have spaces on the [inaudible 00:30:56] stations where our mid-block pipeline will just continue.

Then it's sort of hoped around to work it out. That certainty that people may have felt they had, their cyclist will stay in that space. That's gone because then suddenly in that mixing zone, in that interpretive dance space between you and the intercession, that's very disconcerting to some people and also the choice that we've made from a policy perspective to add the mind box storage space at the front, which kind of then in the intention originally to put cyclists ahead of the web, the Q traffic that people can be seen and get that headstart encourages a lead from him.

You pass someone during the mid-blog and the cyclists will pass you again at the intersection. You have to repeat it over and over. You're a heightening drivers level of discomfort in trying to get past the cyclists who's just following the space on the road. It's a very, I think it's really problematic to put the responsibility on how things work and don't work on the people when you really haven't done a good job with this space.

Amanda: Well, are there technological innovations in the pipeline that could help improve that relationship and the safety of cyclists?

Marilyn: Yes, and with some concern. As I mentioned, I'm pretty easily, I rode my electric bike here today. Do I mentioned that? Yeah, it'd be hill between [inaudible 00:32:18] not a problems,it's fine. Now, he's changing the people we see on bikes and I'm like pants and on the road. If you have a much lower level of experience, much lower level fitness, older people we're seeing more of those people riding bikes so that-

Amanda: Because of E-box.

Marilyn: Absolutely. There's no hill on any bike it's all flat. It's like if someone's got their hand on the back all the time. It's great. I find it the easiest way to get her own identity to park. I don't even need to worry about traffic jams or any of that stuff. From the cycle side, absolutely technology will change the types of people who ride. From a Jonas side as well, some of the things that are great, so NFC bracing, breaking as long as the chest cycles, that's fine. Other things are not so helpful.

Lane detection warning where you get that morning that you've come out of your lane, depending on the speeds and that you're in, that can kick in when you're actually moving out of the lane to pass the cyclists. That's not the point where you want, you can't automatically pull you back into the line because that's the space at the time of the silence needs the space. While there's some things that are positive, there are other things that are not necessarily going to help. I think that key point, the cycling safety in general is the difference between intention and our attention. That's both at the individual level and muscle broadly than that.

I think our intention is to get from A to B. That's everyone's intention as we all do today. You got an [inaudible 00:33:47] house and our intention was around here. Look at us all. W're here. We are all here safely. Our attention along the way may not have been as dedicated to the task. Whether that's about changing sessions

on radios, being on the phone, whether it's distracted by our own people and things in the car. There's always that distinction. I think that's also happens in the space. The intention is to get people to move, but we've focused on people doing that inside motor vehicles and so the attention has gone to that. We'd give them a little space to pass, we make or is faster and we miss out on how other active transport modes might feed into that.

Amanda: What do you want to see happen?

Marilyn: Two things easy for me. Reduce speeds on residential areas where most people are cycling. The default open ceiling limit 55 minutes is too fast. When we get speeds down to 40 and 30 at the front of my house where people could easily mind if they felt safer, there's no space you can get 50K that's a speed on it that's problematic. Secondly, is relocation free space away from particularly parked cars, but also the notion that we can keep building roads and having more space on the road. The cars is going to mean that we can move our city that is fighting to be 10 billion people by 2050 is just not viable. Speed in right allocation they do might ask and of course Victoria would be minimal passing distance the cyclist this we're not there yet. Rest of the space, the commentary is done but not about-

Amanda: We don't have a minimum. In other States it's one Meter if you're doing a certain.

Marilyn: Yes. The way that, the reason this came about for me, any guilt that I should suspect is because the road rule in Victoria is, I used to be nationally was when you pass the cyclist you need to allow sufficient distance. What does sufficient mean? The way that it had been interpreted and the way this was basically being played out was that if you didn't hit a cyclist and that was sufficient.

We kind of had a problem with that as a foundation focusing on the safety of cyclists. We launched an education campaign in 2009 about a meter. I made a matters minimum passing distance per meter, but we really wanted to say that at least a meter and a half in high speed signs. It came about that we shifted from an education focus to an amendment of legislation and it wasn't a new law, it was just changing that word sufficient.

When there was a case for the death of Richard pilot who was a young cyclists who was killed in Brisbane and the driver involved in that crash was not found guilty because he believed he had left sufficient distance. On the corner of the turn, the driver of that truck hit Richard and Richard was killed. That's when the foundation really shifted gears and said, no, we need to make sure that that's specified in the road rule. It was an awareness that absolutely the first thing we need for safe cycling is separated infrastructure. That's not going to happen on every single road. If people are giving cyclists space when they pass, it doesn't matter if the infrastructure is there or not.

Amanda: How has that minimum distance being well policed I suppose is too strong a word, but okay.

Marilyn: No police is not too strong word. Not at all. When the road rule has been amended in other States, it's been a company with a widespread education campaign and we've done that in Victoria. There's been a parliamentary inquiry, the recommendation was the change in the government chose to run an education campaign and were involved at the Amygdala Foundation with the TAC. They've done a great campaign and there's really good recall on the messaging. What we're not seeing is that without the change in the legislation, that there's been the same change onto behavior on the roads.

There's been two studies that measured before and after the passing distance of cars from the cyclists and it hasn't made a difference. We do need that change and it's policing has been this is, we're not the only place in the world that has this. Policing has been discussed internationally, observationally, from police is absolutely one part of this education for the public on what it means, what those distances look like. There's currently a

campaign that's about to start in the ACT where police will be measuring the distance of passing cars, where they themselves are on a bike.

Amanda: They want to get on a tape measure that got a little-

Marilyn: It's never about tape measure, never has been. It's a minimum. I mean we looked all different ways to message it, to make it tangible. The idea was that if I can touch a car that's passing me, that's too close, but then how does that work for a smaller person, a shorter person, a taller person. It became quite difficult to make it tangible, but it really is about giving them a minimum space, not an exact meter.

Amanda: I think what you're saying too is fascinating for as things move forward with the rise of electric bikes definitely. What that means. Very interesting. Now listen, we're going to get questions from you shortly, but on a different subject, a completely different subject related to this theme that we're talking about of relationships in an age of thinking machines. Another audience member, Sonia Puddle is associate professor in the school of design here at Swinburne University and director of Swinburne's Future Self and Design Living Lab. Now, you've been working with technology Sonia that are designed to assist where one person has dementia. Tell us about those technologies.

Sonia: Our research team really looks into relationships where one person is living with dementia and the other not. Where are very often that's a couple and very often it's on an elderly couple and we are looking into existing technologies and not so much what that technology has an impact on the people. How can we use technology like iPads and we are using, usually don't use anything smaller than that because if you look at this device as a social device in a face to face situation, then you need a bit of a, um, screen real estate in order to share it.

We are looking, um, to give two examples, we had one project in a residential care location where the one person lifts in residential care and at their visitors, their family members, it's called a buzzer visit. What came out of that buzzer apps that's downloadable from a play store and Google play. The idea is that when the person's a family member comes into the residential home, there's this really long meaningful relationship and people come, suddenly there's an awkwardness. Something has shifted in that relationship and in particular, and we think we had one couple, they were married for 70 years, so, and that person would come in every day and then you sit there and say, what did you have for lunch? Oh, I can't remember. Oh, isn't it nice weather? I mean, of course there are huge social issues around it.

Why don't live couples together? Don't, why don't we provide the possibilities of them living together either at home or in the care facility. Or why do people know so little about dementia because they think because some things are not working that well anymore or some simple tasks can be conducted. They think everything needs to be them down and in simplified. People don't want to have these super trivial conversations. Besides these larger issues, it's really about how can we make that visit less awkward. More is a shared good meaningful experience.

That's why we developed that application with eight mini activities where then they're not meant to be like games and you have to start them and finish them. It is more like a, like an interaction, a conversation starter, being in the here and now and doing something together. It's that togetherness and not, I'm the visiting person, most likely haven't been the carer for years and you are the person that went in the aged care home.

Amanda: Give us an example of one of those activities.

Sonia: There is one example would be it's called reveal. It's like a dark Pennell with little tiles and you start turning the tiles and then guessing what's underneath. In a co-design process of 18 months, we have developed the content of that because it's really important that when you reveal the picture, something

comes up people want to talk about. There's a lot of typical Australian content like backyard cricket or a beach scene or familiar places.

Then prompting questions like when have you been at the beach or when there is a farm animal, have you lived on a farm? These kinds of things. While often the conversations triggered was something the partner most likely would have heard already. It was still that delight of having just a conversation and have the person talking and smiling and not just trying to just initiate that conversation.

Amanda: Well, as someone who my mother was in a nursing home with dementia for 10 years, as someone who has experienced that relationship, that sounds fantastic. Don't you reckon, Susanne?

Susanne: Yeah.

Amanda: Let's open up to questions and comments from any and all of you. Also, if there's any questions you want to ask of each other as well, please feel free.

Mia: My name is Mia Lindgren. I'm the Dean of arts, social science and humanities at Swinburne. I'm just asking you a really simple question. We talked this morning about face recognition software, et cetera. How can we not have technology to stop or recognize, I should say body parts being sent to you in a photograph. If we can recognize a face, could we not to recognize other parts of the body? That's kind of question mine and flowing on from that is what is required for us to actually get to a point where we could have those apps.

Amanda: Well who wants to, who wants to take that one on?

Bianca: Let me go first.

Amanda: Oh, Bianca.

Brock: You are more informed and respective learned.

Amanda: That's an excellent question.

Bianca: Yes, I'm not sure. I think one of the things to keep in mind is that 60% of women well-received and unwanted nude in their lifetime. However, if we look at the, if we also look at the 18 to 25 year olds we now know that roughly 90% of them will receive a nude in their lifetime. Pretty much everyone, but those are the wanted ones. Having those, I think for young people would be ideal. With the older ones, they actually want to get them. I'm just need to make that clear that it's a very normative behavior in young people to get these particularly, you know, to initiate sexual relationships.

I do think that it would be great to have something. I've got no idea. There's, there is an app, for example, which I think is great which is called Zipit, which is, [laugs] I've got all the core words done. I, yes, hi. Yes. It's actually app that gives you responses to when someone asks you for nude. Another one of the behaviors that young people were really concerned about was getting requests for nudes that they obviously didn't want to fulfill.

Exhibit is an app, but then gives sort of funny responses back to sort of, you know, to not just go, oh, you're the one who didn't send back a nude, but actually, you know, being a little bit, I don't know, cheeky, you know, sort of sending something back. We've got that. Yes, it's actually really, really good question. Why we don't have something for that in particular.

Amanda: This is,[inaudible 00:46:35] [laughs] you know, you go through, I've got a microphone, so I'm gonna cry. I would honestly say the, for me the bottom line would be it's money. There's a lot of money being

missing, facial recognition, a lot of reasons, whether it's military, whether it's airport, whether it's tracking people on the street, whether it's harm minimization crime impossible, whatever it is, there's not the market for that, for other busy body. I would argue that it's about cash. They're not cheap to invent these and develop these apps and I wouldn't know who would have the best financial interest to invest in your own unique recognition as the most of the face.

Puddle: Thank you. Thanks. It's really interesting conversation. Given that this is, this theme is about relationships and that the development and building of trust is intensely relational. Just to give a bit of background, I do a lot of work in organizations around leadership management development and a lot of that is around accountability conversations and how much people struggle with having those. One of the things that's become clear to me in those conversations with them is that to develop and build trust requires a level of intimacy and the ability to manage closeness and distance in relationships. I guess I'm wondering what you think might be some of the strategies that might, you know, help build the intimacy muscle, if you like, particularly in the context of developing technologies.

Brock: You mean intimacy on technology?

Puddle: No, no, no, no. Well, possibly, but there's also, I guess in a question in my mind about whether you can, unless you have some sort of blended way of interacting, whether you can envelop in fact develop the level of intimacy that's required to give and receive feedback, for example, to have difficult conversations.

Brock: You're a really good question. I think that, again, that stuff is, there's face to face is so important because you've already got all the channels going on. It's very hard to develop empathy for another person's perspective, which is different to yours if you don't see them as a person. It's very hard, you know, we don't see people as people and so, you know, on Twitter and things like this, so I mean maybe we just have to build better technology that has more, you know, I mean maybe if you're a Hologram I will develop more empathy for you during my interactions.

Maybe that's more like a face to face interaction, but I think that when you strip back those channels you do end up in a territory which is very, very hard to navigate in that space. We are seeing those sorts of conversations breaking down people being very uncivil to each other. Again, because then what's most apparent in that space is, do I, do you agree with me or do I agree with you? If we disagree, it's all wrong. Whereas when you have that person to person face to face interaction, it allows for that conflict resolution to take place and for those difficult conversations to actually work well. A 100%, I mean maybe we may, we just have to build a technology better.

Puddle: Yeah. Also recognize its limits. Perhaps. I'm also wondering, because one of the issues that I see is not just the difficulty in having the conversation is the avoidance of having the conversation. You don't even get to think about those [inaudible 00:49:59].

Brock: Yeah, and people are doing this all the time at the moment and organizations, you know, as you're saying in relationships, you know, I think assertiveness is one of the most simple and yet difficult human kind of practices or skills. Yeah, I guess the more that we're retreating into just texting and there's a lot, you know, 60 characters or less or whatever it is. Yeah, I think we're able to kind of hide under the safety of that a lot and you don't have to be vulnerable in that space.

Again, to have those conversations to resolve. You do have to have some vulnerability, you have to have some skin in the game and we're kind of having these interactions without any skim in the game at all. Got to find a way to get the skim back into the game somehow, whether it's through technology or otherwise. I think so. Yeah.

Marilyn: Again, one thing absolutely from the Amygdala Foundation's perspective is that in the cycling space, cyclists are the other for so many people online. I can't even tell you the number of trolls with logos. Individuals who have a really sexy looking logo and then claim legitimacy in the space as being a cycling advocate who then just go to town. It's really it's something that we try not to engage in as an organization, but it's also something that we moderate. I think that there's an, we haven't quite discussed it here today, but moderation is one way to kind of dampen down some of that hate speech that's on there.

Then there's also the risk of the vicarious trauma to the person who is the moderator who's having to deal with that. Yeah, I will run you down and you'd get off my road. There's the hate speech towards individuals who just chose that day not to get in their car but get on their bike is somehow legitimized because they're othered. I think there's how we moderate that. If there's a human element in there, there's a risk to that person of absorbing some of that hate and we need to be conscious of that as well.

Amanda: Susanne, you've got the mic, did you want to say just something?

Susanne: Just something that you said brought made me think of an interesting sort of interface with the IVF technologies and social relationships and the use of technology. When I went to a conference just recently and spoke with a IVF specialist who runs an egg freezing service with Monash IVF. He made this comment, which I found absolutely fascinating. He said, "Tinders ruined everything." What he meant by that was his perspective.

Obviously, it's a bit of a, you know, it's a particular perspective shaped by what he's doing, but he is seeing so many women who are in their mid, late thirties who have been in a relationship for three or four years and they thought this guy was gonna- I really thought this guy was going to have a baby with me. Then when the crunch time comes, they go, oh no, you know, and disappear and they leave this woman in her late thirties high and dry and then that woman goes and sees the IVF got sick, can you freeze my eggs? You know, I'm scared. It was interesting. He felt that Tinder was definitely having an impact that just throw aways what left.

Brock: Yes.

Ryan: I'm Ryan Young from the earlier panel. I'm really interested in read some stuff around the impact on technology and how we think about experience time in terms of spitting up, changing expectations. I think one of the attractions for people finding about text message over talking is it doesn't have to be real time. You can kind of alter that. So just only if the panels got any views on how that kind of changing relationship with time. I think probably IVF is due to technologies having an impact on relationship.

Amanda: Anyone want to take that off?

Susanne: I guess the idea of I certainly think it's had an impact on women's sense of how much time they have to have their babies. I think that has become a good Navy less[inaudible 00:53:52] now. Before IVF, a woman would get to a certain age and that would be, she hadn't had children. Conversation was paged and you have to accept it and find a way to sort of make peace of that. Now, that sense of having sort of a, even I'll get a woman in India head of IVF couple of months ago at the age of 70, and that was always, he dominated on eggs, on her eggs that she carried the baby and it was her husbands sperm. I sense it's time of certainly changed in fertility space.

Brock: Yeah. I mean, I think maybe another way it's doing it is, it's not everything you do are modest forever. That's an interesting sort of special time, but we probably think about that a bit more before we jump my mind. Yeah, so there, so you know, everything we're doing is recorded and can be searched for and people are finding it in the hallway often too. If he brings relationships to pass into the present, pretty good thing.

Amanda: Another way too with texting that occurs to me is just with something you said is that because I don't have to respond immediately to a text, I can actually be more thoughtful and less make less of a knee jerk response, which you know, in terms of relationships can be a very good thing.

Marilyn: Can I do one thing about from a road space is that, I don't know if anyone else here, but my email inbox is a waterfall. It doesn't stop. I curve out moments in time when I think, yeah, I can reply to all of those and I never get to the bottom. It doesn't end. Then I'll come back, I'll come back home to today, then it'll be full again. I think what that does is it creates a sense of timelessness in the sense that I had no time that everybody feels.

There's, I allocated 40 minutes to drive from here to home and there's a cyclist in front of me and you're going into the lane. I don't have time for that. I don't have time for a road roads or a detour or crash or anyone. I have to get where I'm going because I've got all these other pressures that are coming to me digitally that I don't feel that I can push back against. I think it's having to be around people just online just impacted on daily live.

Amanda: Yeah, that's a very articulate summary of our lives I think there Marilyn.

Marilyn: Got one more point on this we talked about this a lot at lash because this happens a lot of view mode 3 to 400 students and you have to apply to them. It's also the shift in the receiver being responsible. We often talk about when we were kids and view in my house and my mom's on the phone, you can talk to me and I didn't know you'd call it, the responsibility was on you to ring me back. Now, somehow we have voice. Now we have inboxes. If you flicked off an email, it took you six minutes and it's going to take me two hours respond somehow that's my responsibility. I think that's a conversation we just have to have as well.

Amanda: I think it's good that we wind up with talking about time. Let's wind up this session now. Let's find some time to do something else. I found it really interesting and stimulating to hear these various perspectives on this subject. I hope you have too. Let me thank Susanne Oldmeadow, Brock Bastian, and Marilyn Johnson and also so know[Sogin 00:57:13] Puddle and Bianca, thank you for your contributions to and thank you for your questions as well. I'm sure the rest of the session today is going to be equally interesting because I'm thank you for letting me participate in this bit of it. It's been really interesting. Thank you.

Recording: We thank you for listening. This was a recording of the society 4.0 symposium 2019 organized by the Social Innovation Research Institute, Swinburne University of Technology. For more information search Swinburne Social Innovation.

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