

May Coming in September

The prominent American philosopher Larry May will visit the Castan Centre on 4 September 2008 to deliver a lecture on the moral foundations of international criminal law.

May, who is a Professor of Philosophy at Washington University, St. Louis, lectures in ethics, the philosophy of law and history. His recent work has focussed on crimes against humanity, and particularly genocide. Professor May is currently conducting research on Genocide, Social Groups, and Humanity, and this research builds on his earlier work on the theory of moral and legal responsibility, particularly that of collective responsibility, which has obvious implications for human



Larry May

rights law.

Professor May was awarded his JD at Washington University and also holds a PhD in Philosophy from the New School for Social Research, New York. He has authored a number of books on group morality and responsibility including "The Morality of Groups" (1987) and "Sharing Responsibility" (1992).

An email alert about Dr May's speech will be sent to our mailing list closer to the date. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please call 03 9905 3327 or click the member link on the front page of our website.

Castan Centre Academics Speak up on Forced Migration

By Stephanie Cheligoy

Two Castan Centre academics addressed very different areas of forced migration when they spoke at a recent conference in Cairo.

Highlighting the breadth of issues covered under the rubric of forced migration, Castan Centre Deputy Director, Professor Susan Kneebone spoke about trafficking of women and children, while Centre Associate Azadeh Dastyari spoke about refugee flows.

Professor Kneebone's address to the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) conference in January outlined the initial findings of her project, which looks at the trafficking of women and children in

South East Asia. Professor Kneebone explained that people who begin their journeys by being trafficked against their will may end their journeys as refugees.

Using Cambodia and Laos as examples, Professor Kneebone showed that the lack of effective prevention programs and the weakness of those countries' legal systems allow trafficking to flourish. Professor Kneebone concluded that although knowledge of the issue is increasing there is an ongoing need for awareness raising and international cooperation.

Ms Dastyari spoke on the detention of asylum seekers on Nauru and the recent announcement that the Australian Federal Government will abolish its 'Pacific Solution'. Specifically, Ms Dastyari argued

that it is doubtful that the recent agreement between Australia and the US - which will effectively enable the two nations to 'swap' refugees - will deter people smuggling. Ms Dastyari also suggested that it is plausible that this agreement will undermine various international conventions and protocols relating to the treatment of refugees.

IASFM holds similar conferences every two years, with the aim of creating an interdisciplinary forum for intellectual discussion on the issue of forced migration. The issues discussed in these conferences are outlined in a rapporteur's summary report which is in turn submitted to the Journal of Refugee Studies and Forced Migration Review.

The next IASFM conference will be held in Cyprus in July 2010.

A Word on Our Conference: Thanks to Our Members

The Castan Centre received an overwhelming response to its recent email requesting members fill out a brief online form about its annual conference. The questionnaire addressed a number of areas, including the format of the conference, the type of speakers who usually attend, the concept of having a themed conference, the venue

and issues about cost. We received many excellent suggestions, many of which we will endeavour to adopt for future conferences.

Perhaps most importantly, the questionnaire asked for feedback on the timing of the conference, which falls in December each year. There was a

significant proportion of respondents who felt that it would be preferable to hold the conference at another time. On that basis, the centre has decided to move the conference to a more appropriate time of the year. The new date for the conference - which will be held in 2009 - will be announced soon.