

Jurisprudence Centre
JurisTalks



**“Seeing Power, Unseeing People:
Disaggregating Identity”**

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Video Conference



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This presentation explores the value of disaggregating identity in theoretical discourse following discussion of three approaches to thinking about identity:

1. The political value of identity: its capacity to galvanize support, (e.g., Black Lives Matter), identify subordination (e.g., intersectionality), and regulate space (e.g., intra-community discussions).
2. The personal theoretical costs of identity: how the speaker has come to view notions of identity as heuristics rooted in rendering the self—and others—legible; a means of simplifying the world through narrative in order to lower the mental burden of navigating the complexity of human experience and interaction.
3. The collective theoretical cost of identity: how thinking of identity as “real” compromises our ability to detect the systems of power that create and deploy that identity for the purpose of sustaining hierarchy—indeed, viewing identity as real can, perversely, reify the logics through which identity-based hierarchies are mobilized.



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