

Conference on Managing Diversity in Singapore

Friday, 5 August 2016
Ballroom 2, Level 3
Orchard Hotel

PANEL 2
New Tensions when Global Meets Local

PRESENTATION BY

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Negotiating Singapore's New Pluralism

Managing Diversity Conference
5th August 2016

Singapore's New Pluralism

A New Era of Cultural and Value Pluralism?

NLB's decision 'guided by community norms'

singapore

NLB pulls two children's books that 'don't promote family values'

Christians to don white for services as Hong Lim Park hosts Pink Dot

National Library Board takes a strong pro-family stance in selecting books for young ones, says its chief librarian



Last year, most of Faith Community Baptist Church members turned up in white for service to support the traditional family unit. ST FILE PHOTO

VOICES

Abortion destroys nation building

VOICES

Provide support, comfort to all women mulling over abortion

The New Singaporean Pluralism

The Government Takes the Backseat



“When it comes to issues like the economy, technology, education, we better stay ahead of the game, watch where people are moving and adapt faster than others, ahead of the curve, leading the pack.”

“On moral values, on issues of moral values, with consequences to the wider society...we will let others take the lead, we will stay one step behind the front line of change; watch how things work out elsewhere before we make any irrevocable moves.”

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The Advent of Social Media

Republic has second highest social penetration rate with 59%, more than double the global average of 26%



Protected by online anonymity, hate speech becomes an online mainstay

By **Sachin Seth**, CNN

August 17, 2010 -- Updated 0026 GMT (0826 HKT)

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Points of Contention

LGBT Rights: A Choice or a Given?

Pro-LGBT Rights Advocates	Anti-LGBT Rights Advocates
Sexual identity is a condition of birth, and thus deserves equal rights.	Sexual identity is a choice, so no special rights.
<i>"...but I don't choose to be gay. I am gay. I am making the best of what was given to me out of life."</i>	<i>"So, why should you protect this kind of thing, it's a thing of the mind rather than race which is born with, you can't change it if you're born a Chinese or Malay."</i>
	Even if sexual attraction is not a choice, sexual behaviour is.

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Points of Contention

Sanctity of Life: Abortion

Weighing Lives	Who Chooses?
Value of the foetus' life vs value of mother's life	Mothers' autonomy
<i>"You cannot address that kind of question, whether she should carry a disabled child to term, only in terms of that child's life, you have to talk in terms of the mother's life, her life may be totally ruined, she could become suicidal, as a result of that."</i>	Legal = moral? <i>"It's almost like the laws help me to also say, "What's moral, what's not moral? What's right, what's wrong?""</i>

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Points of Contention

Sanctity of Life: Death Penalty

Weighing Lives	Who Chooses?
Value of a convict's life vs public's safety	Fallibility of human justice system
<i>"Would a life of a criminal be less than one that is not?"</i>	<i>"The death penalty at its limit, calls for very refined judgments that we are just not humanly capable of."</i>

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Points of Contention

Sanctity of Life: Euthanasia

Weighing Lives	Who Chooses?
A long life vs. a life with less suffering	Playing God?
<i>“If this person is actually suffering so much pain and you can actually see that he is suffering, the problem is that for some of these cancer patients is that you cannot even walk to the flats to jump down.”</i>	<i>“Are you God? Can you go and make the decision on somebody’s life like that?”</i>

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Fair Play

Rules of Engagement

1. Legal Status Quo	Most satisfied to let laws be enforced	<i>"I think that within reasonable limits people should be allowed to say what they want online. I agree there are enough laws to policing speech and censorship."</i>
	Significant minority want less restrictions on free speech	
2. Rules of engagement pessimists	Dismissive of enforceable Trust self-policing	<i>"We don't actually do the policing ourselves. There will be somebody who will correct the person. It will be self-policed in a way. Another user will correct the person."</i>

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Platforms and Principles

1. Face to face meetings	Reconstruction of opponents	<i>“Because you always find that both sides tend not to be able to sit down together because everyone has either some misconception of the other side or the other side is just very hard to sit down and talk to.”</i>
2. Telling stories	Deconstructing opponents	Tale of two 16-year-olds

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Platforms and Principles

3. Provisional nature of democratic decisions

Commitment to discussion

“I don’t want to bring up my children in United States and some of these Western countries. But if this door is opened, you are going to lose loyal people who really believe in this nation. “

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