LIRC 2012 Seminar Series

You are invited to a Legal Intersections Research Centre Seminar by:

**Associate Professor Marett Leiboff**

Wednesday 9 May 2012  
12:30 – 1:30 pm  
Room: 67.202  
(sandwiches and juice provided)

**Title:** Talkin’ ‘bout law’s generations: an empirical and jurisprudential investigation into the reading of legal cases by different generations of lawyers

**Abstract:** The Australian TV comedy quiz show, *Talkin’ ‘bout your generation*, pits the knowledge of three different teams of generations against each other, darkly exposing the speed with which knowledge, language and meaning is lost and misinterpreted across and between generations. In an empirical pilot study that drew on both quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry, the study revealed that legal interpretation is similarly affected. It showed that rather than legal thinking being vouchsafed by the inculcation of legal method, factors excluded from standard accounts of legal thinking - the mundane and the everyday as exemplified in popular culture - are deeply imbricated into the tropic imaginaries of legal actors, who draw on these and other cultural reference points when reading and interpreting – and writing - judgments. Thus, it seems, haphazard, everyday misconceptions and trivialities can actively shape reasoning and interpretation in ways not contemplated by conventional accounts of the behaviour of legal actors.

**Marett Leiboff** is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Wollongong Australia where she is a member of the Legal Intersections Research Centre working in the Law and Popular Cultures group. Her current scholarship centres around the theatrical as a cultural legal studies device through which to interrogate law through the externalities of human existence. She is co-author of Legal Theories: Contexts and Practices, and in 2010, she co-edited Law Text Culture Volume 14: Law’s Theatrical Presence, and is now working on the development of a monograph on theatrical jurisprudence. As a sub-set of this work, Marett has been undertaking the empirical study on the way in which legal interpretation is affected by the externalities manifested through popular cultural forms and modes of shared interpretative capacities across different generations of lawyers.