

29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (E5)
Interactive Presentations - 29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (IP)

Author: Dr. Sara Langston
Senmurv Consulting LLC, United States

Dr. Sarah Jane Pell
ESA Topical Team Arts & Science, Australia

COSMIC SENSATIONS: UNDERSTANDING SPACE ACTORS, SOCIETY AND LAW THROUGH
PERCEPTIONS OF 'SPACE'

Abstract

Perception envelops both a concept of a thing and an understanding of a thing. The incomprehensible vastness of space has long rendered a multiplicity of ideas concerning space as well as spacefarers. Significantly, space itself requires engaging one's senses to perceive, experience and communicate an interpretation of a space—whether one refers to a closed or open space, small or large space, inner space, outer space, or cyberspace. Each scenario likewise invokes both an objective and subjective interpretation of human integration within the perceived environment. How one identifies and interprets oneself or another in any of these spaces is convoluted and depends on a combination of factors. As law and governance apply to actors and activities, juridical and human perceptions and experiences are inextricably linked. Cosmic voyagers therefore raise philosophical and practical legal challenges of how to accurately develop and apply societal and governing parameters to new concepts of technologically-assisted, physical and personal experiences in space. For instance, how does one define and signify the human experience of an astronaut exploring the infinite bounds of outer space while enclosed in a confined spacecraft or even spacesuit? What are the implications of space phenomenology on developing applicable governance, best practices and norms? The same analogy may likewise apply to deep sea stations and divers. We know, for instance, that astronauts have tried to articulate the phenomena of the 'overview effect' and 'orbital perspective.' Similarly, aquanauts and divers describe the 'L'ivresse des grandes profondeurs' or 'rapture of the deep' and the turbulent state of 'aquabatics'. Each of these scenarios may invoke diverse objective and subjective values and perceptions, requiring interpretation and communication.

This presentation will utilize a multi-media digital format with interdisciplinary representations of art, language, philosophy and law to address some of the questions raised above. A short video will provide a narrative approach to frame the discussion and engage the audience through Astronaut spacewalk/ Aquanaut dive profiles. The aim of these scenarios is to 'see the essence of the phenomena' through first-person and third-person experience and trigger discussions with viewers. This platform for exchanging social perceptions of order, sensory experience and environment will assist in connecting the dots between theories, experience and law. The paper will further outline our research and resulting complexity and inter-subjectivity for human actors in space, individually and collectively, as well as note impacts on social norms and governance concerning identity form and function in space.