

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Phillip Adams, the atheist, defends religion

Broadcaster and commentator, Mr Phillip Adams, AO, will be speaking on the topic 'An Atheist Defends Religion' when he presents the 2010 James Martineau Memorial Lecture in Hobart and Burnie tonight and tomorrow night.

Mr Adams is a filmmaker, author, archaeologist, controversialist and satirist. He was elected one of Australia's 100 National Living Treasures in The National Trust's inaugural poll and, for almost 50 years, his columns in major newspapers and magazines have provoked discussion and outrage.

"Phillip has been known nationally for many decades as someone who doesn't have a Christian or other religious faith," said Dr Natasha Cica, the Director of the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Ethics at UTAS.

"That can be a provocative position to hold publicly in Australia, even today. So it will be interesting to hear how Phillip - as both a confirmed atheist and a thoughtful commentator - defends religion."

The James Martineau Memorial lecture is sponsored by the UTAS School of Philosophy, supported by a bequest from Tasmanian educator Samuel Lovell (1851-1936).

James Martineau was an English philosopher who wrote on philosophical and religious topics. The annual lectures that are held in his name enhance public engagement with questions of moral philosophy and the philosophy of religion.

"The Martineau bequest raises the bar of Tasmanian conversations about values, faith and the ideas connected with them," Dr Cica said.

"I'm particularly excited that someone like Phillip, who for so long has inhabited the centre of our national conversations, is prepared to travel to places like Hobart and Burnie to contribute to our discussion on these questions."

Mr Adams will be available to speak to the media immediately following his lectures:

HOBART: 6pm on Monday 13 September, 2010
Stanley Burbury Theatre
Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay

BURNIE: 6pm on Tuesday 14 September, 2010
Room D201-203, Cradle Coast campus
16-20 Mooreville Road, Burnie

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