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Mapping Media and Communication Research: Australia

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Abstract

Media and communication research in Australia is internationally well recognised. The field also has a solid position within the country's academy: media and/or communication studies are represented in 37 of Australia's 39 universities. Students who wish to study journalism have 25 universities to choose from. However, in most of the universities journalism departments are quite small, with academic staff fewer than ten people. There are two private universities, and the rest are funded from the federal budget.

Media research in Australia is concentrated in the universities; there is only a weak connection between the media industry and the academy, and the industry generally does not fund academic research. The research conducted and commissioned by the industry focuses on market and audience research that produces direct economic benefits.

The main source of media research funding is the Australian Research Council, a statutory authority within the Australian Government. The Council's average grant is about 180,000 euros, and the success rate is about 20 per cent. The Council is currently funding six projects in journalism, media and communication. In Australia there is no funding source that concentrates on media research. Media is a popular topic within other areas of research, such as political science, economics and law, and much of the funding that is allocated to media research goes to people who are not full-time media researchers.

Media and communication research in Australia can be divided into five areas: 1) Journalism and news media research, 2) cultural studies (also known as media studies), 3) communication studies, 4) film and television studies, and 5) creative industries. These operate partly in a common area and partly in their own distinct areas. Media and communication studies were introduced into Australian higher education in the early 1970s, when the government set up a binary system of higher education. Established in 2005, creative industries is the smallest and youngest of the five, but its influence on the other areas is growing.

Because the country is vast yet has a population of just 21 million, the overall research and teaching effort is quite small and geographically scattered. Since the 1990s, however, media, journalism and communication studies have grown rapidly, and they have become an increasingly significant part of Australian higher education landscape. As an academic discipline, journalism research in Australia is young and developing. Cultural studies are said to enjoy higher academic status. Journalism scholars generally find it harder to win research funding than do their colleagues in cultural studies.

Theoretically speaking, there is no such thing as an Australian paradigm. Rather the research carried out in the country is a mixture and fusion of ideas developed elsewhere. Given the highly concentrated media ownership structure, it is not surprising that political economy is arguably the most influential approach in Australian media and communication research. "Backroom machination" of the media has attracted a lot of attention among scholars. British theoretical influence has also contributed to the adoption of a political

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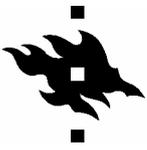
economy approach, although critical or Marxist tradition has never been very strong in Australia, which has adopted theoretical ideas to fit its own, unique reality and place in the world.

Journalism research in Australia is defined by a strong focus on the domestic stage, more than in many comparable countries. A country like Finland, for example, is more likely to become a part of a bigger project, as a representative of a Nordic or an EU country; Australia does not fit any such grouping.

Scholars and other experts who were interviewed for this report are generally optimistic about the future of media and communication research in Australia. They see media playing a more and more essential role in everyday life, a scenario that will open new research opportunities and increase funding. Journalism education is being transformed into a multi-platform training, as a response to the rise of new communication technologies and online reporting. One scholar predicts that in the coming decades there will be several big innovations on the scale of the Internet and several smaller innovations on the scale of DVD. Understanding the media future through its history is thus becoming increasingly important. Finally, it seems inevitable that the traditional policy and political economy approach will be challenged by the emergence of new business models outside media conglomerates. Decentralised user-led media, also known as nanomedia, which audiences adopt in multiple and unpredictable ways, might well show the direction of Australian media and communication research in the decades to come.

Keywords: Australia, media, communication, journalism, research, university

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Introduction

Mapping Media and Communication Research is a project of the Communication Research Centre (CRC, University of Helsinki). The project examines the contents and trends of the current communication and media research in eight countries. These countries are Finland, the United States, Germany, France, Japan, Estonia, South Korea, and Australia. The project is funded by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation.

The focus of the project is on mass communication research, but it also takes into account studies in speech communication, organisational communication, public relations, research and development of communication technology as well as the economy of communication to the extent that each of these is related to mass communication research. The project maps not only academic communication and media research but also the research made by governmental institutions and private research agencies as well as – insofar as is possible – private media companies' research activities.

The goal is to provide a general overview of communication and media research in the forementioned countries. The project maps the main institutions and organisations, the approaches and national characteristics of communication and media research in each country. The focus is on the years 2005 and 2006, but some parts of the project have sample data from a longer period. The gathering and analysis of the data were carried out during the first half of 2007. The sample consists of secondary data from previous studies and existing statistics and primary data from interviews with key persons in the media and communication research branches.

The project's main research questions are the following:

1) What kinds of media and communication research are carried out in a specific country?
2) How do different approaches relate to each other?
3) What is the relationship between research and the media industries and what kinds of applications does the research have?
4) On what is media and communication research focused in each country and in which direction is research aimed in the future?

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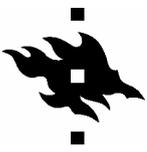
Each country creates a unique context for communication and media research. Thus, research has been organised in different ways in the countries examined. In addition, the definitions and conceptualisations of communication and media research vary among contexts and countries. Therefore, meaningful comparisons of research among different countries proves to be a difficult task. For example, the national media statistics of the countries studied are often based on data and methods that cannot be compared. As a result, this paper will not provide statistically comparable data on the communication and media research of the target countries. Due to these difficulties in comparability, every subreport provides country-specific explanations for the concepts, samples and methods used.

To enhance meaningful comparability among the subreports, the research questions, research principles and structure are same in every report. The researchers together decided on the organisation, themes and questions for the interviews. Each report starts with an introductory chapter which provides information about the target country and its media landscape – i.e., communication and media systems and markets.

The most important part of the project is the interview study with key persons. The interviews produce primary data not only about facts on media and communication research in each country, but also about evaluations and visions of the state and the future of research. These interviews create the backbone of the project; they constitute a unique collection of statements given by recognised researchers.

In the Australian subproject the main attention was on news media and journalism research, including such related fields as cultural studies and creative industries. The key word here is media; communication research, like speech communication or organisational communication, which does not deal with media, is given less emphasis in this subproject. In Australia "media studies" and "journalism studies" are often treated as separate disciplines, but in this project "media research" is a general concept that embraces all the research done on media, regardless of the school or faculty in which the research is situated. Because media and communication research in Australia is dominated by universities, the main focus of this study is on academic research. The research conducted and commissioned by the industry is also taken into account and examined in connection with academic research.

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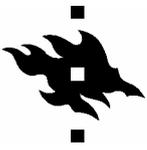
Every effort has been made to be systematic in mapping Australian research, but it is important to understand the conditions in which this project was carried out. I spent the entire period in which this report was made, almost half a year, at the University of Queensland's School of Journalism and Communication as a visiting scholar. Therefore, most of the interviews were done in universities located in Brisbane and its surroundings, resulting in a kind of "Queenslander" perspective to the study. However, I did travel to other cities and states. In addition, almost every person interviewed had a wide range of experience from overseas and other parts of Australia. Most of them, though now working in South eastern Queensland, earned their degrees in other Australian universities.

Although the main focus of this report is on mapping the country's media and communication research, my goal was to provide a wider picture of Australian culture and society – a picture that goes beyond describing a particular academic discipline. I believe it is possible properly to understand the characteristics of media research (or any other cultural practise) carried out in a foreign country only by trying to understand the cultural and historical context as a whole. Given this attempt, my time at the University of Queensland turned out to be a fascinating voyage in the search for the soul of Australia.

I wish to express my gratitude to all those who were interviewed for this report, and to the University of Queensland's School of Journalism and Communication and its then head, Professor Jan Servaes, for providing the facilities and the support of the academic community. Levi Obifiojor assisted in making the plan for the project, and John Harrison introduced me into the Australian way of life. Professor Stuart Cunningham made essential comments on the late version of the report. In the beginning, Professor Kaarle Nordenstreng from the University of Tampere and Juha Herkman from the University of Helsinki were invaluable in helping to organise my visit to Australia. Without the generous assistance of many colleagues in Australia and Finland, this project would not have been possible.

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St. Lucia, Brisbane
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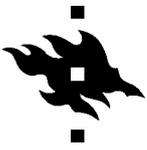
1. The Australian media landscape

A land of distances

Distance, more than anything else, has shaped Australian history and society. Distance between places within the country and distance between Australia and the rest of the world have created a unique context, which has an inevitable effect on media and communication studies. Australia is nearly as large as Europe or the continental US, but there are only 21 million inhabitants, 75 per cent of whom live along the coast. This means that there is a vast inland with few people. When one takes a road to the west from Brisbane, on the East Coast, for example, she or he can see clear signs of the huge distances in the country: Darwin, capital of the Northern Territory, is 3423 km away – only beyond that is Western Australia, the country's largest state.

Many media scholars who live and work in Australia often point out the distance from other academic centres of the world and say it has an effect on their work: it is not easy to participate in conferences and meet colleagues from the US and Europe. Although the academic community is isolated, it has not developed in the same way as Australia's extraordinary wildlife – ideas travel overseas, koalas do not.

Viewed on the map of the world, Australia seems like a great power. It is indeed a major political and economic factor in the South Pacific region, but its population is about the same as a medium-size European country, Romania, for example. Although Australia is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, its small population and isolated location clearly mean that the overall output of Australian media and communication research cannot be very great on the world scale. But within the country's academy, media research is well represented.

Figure 1 shows where media and communication research is located in Australia. Nearly all media/journalism programmes are in the capital cities or close to them, with few exceptions: James Cook University in Townsville and Central Queensland University in Rockhampton have the only media and communication programmes located more than 500 kilometres from capital cities. There are also some regional media programmes between Sydney and Brisbane (the distance between the two is 750 km by plane and 1000 km by road), but this is a densely populated area. The most isolated journalism programme can be found in Darwin.

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Figure 1
Australian map and university cities with
media, communication and/or journalism program

Darwin (Northern Territory)

Townsville (Queensland, QLD)

Rockhampton (QLD)

Brisbane, Springfield, Gold
Coast, Maroochydore (QLD)

Sydney, Newcastle, Armidale,
Wollongong, Lismore, Coffs
Harbour (New South Wales)

Canberra
(Australian Capital Territory)

Perth,
Fremantle
(Western
Australia)

Adelaide
(South Australia)

Melbourne,
Ballarat,
Churchill
(Victoria)

Hobart (Tasmania)

1000 km

This is the Australian context: cities towering in the middle of a vast bush. The Australian media landscape is a mixture of strong metropolitan and regional media. Ownership is highly concentrated: in Brisbane (pictured) News Ltd has a local monopoly on the newspaper market. Brisbane has three universities that offer media, journalism and communication education. Photo: Juho Rahkonen

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A nation built by immigrants

Australia is a settlers' society. Most of its inhabitants are descendants of British and Irish immigrants. The first settlers were convicts; later there was free immigration from British colonies in order to satisfy Australia's growing need for a Labor force. In the progressive version of history, which until recently dominated Australian education, Australia was transformed from a convict colony of Britain to a modern Western nation. Progressive history is a story of growth and economic expansion. According to this semi-official version of history, Captain James Cook discovered Australia in 1770. Cook did find the country for the Europeans, but indigenous peoples have lived in Australia for more than 40,000 years. In their view, no one needed to "discover" Australia, because they have always been there. From about the 1960s, alternatives to progressive history have emerged in Australian society. These new histories include those of working classes, women, and Aborigines. They are "histories from below", concerned with everyday life experiences. (Bulbeck 2000b.)

The first permanent European settlers arrived in 1788, and white Australia began its history as a collection of colonies. Today in these locations rise skyscrapers of the capital cities of six Australian states: Sydney (New South Wales), Melbourne (Victoria), Perth (Western Australia), Adelaide (South Australia), Hobart (Tasmania), and Brisbane (Queensland). The federation of Australia was created in 1901, when the British colonies joined together to form the nation. Australia has experienced unbroken democratic government longer than most countries, and it was one of the first nations in the world to give the vote to women.

Since the First Fleet of European settlement, in 1788, there have been several waves of immigration. In the 1850s the Gold Rush brought many Europeans to Australia; cities founded during the Gold Rush, most notably Melbourne, have a strong European character in their architecture. Later in the nineteenth century, immigration, mainly from Ireland and Britain, helped to create farms and settle inner Australia. After the Second World War, many migrants escaped Europe, and people from Indochina came to Australia because of the Vietnamese war. About 40 per cent of today's Australians arrived from overseas after the Second World War or are the children of those who came then. In the recent decades, Europe has become less significant for Australia, which has shifted its political and economic focus towards the United States and the Asian region. (Bulbeck 2000a, 3–4.)

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Table 1
Australia in brief

Land area	7 692 000 sq km (sixth largest country in the world)
Population	21 000 000 (53rd most populous country in the world)
Population (1985)	18 017 800
Population (2050, projected)	28 100 000
Indigenous population	458 500 (2.3 % of the total population)
Overseas-born population	4 859 500 (23.7 % of the total population)
Biggest cities	Sydney (4.2 million), Melbourne (3.8), Brisbane (1.8)
Political system	Constitutional democracy, federal and state/territory governments, formally under the Queen of England who is represented by the Governor-General
Gross domestic product (GDP)	891.5 billion AUSD (543.8 billion euros, 15th largest economy in the world)
GDP per capita	36 553 USD (17th in the world)
Average annual economic growth rate 1996–2005	3.2 %
Unemployment rate	5 %

Sources: 2007 Yearbook of Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics), Wikipedia

Questions of culture, identity and technology

In Australia there is a philosophical link between the welfare state and public broadcasting: it is thought that some things should be left to the public sector and kept under political control. However, under the conservative John Howard government, in power since 1996, the welfare philosophy has been challenged more than ever before. Supporters of Howard praise the blooming economy, but his opponents accuse him of ignoring the part of the nation that is not doing so well, such as low-paid workers and indigenous people. At the end of 2007 there will be a federal election in which the main competitors are Howard's Coalition and opposition leader Kevin Rudd's Labor Party.

One indicator of a relatively state-central society is that Australia has a progressive taxation system. The evidence can even be seen on many street corners: there are offices that provide assistance with income taxation. In other words, Australia is not as much a liberal market society as the United States, for instance. "Australia's a bit like Canada", says Professor Graeme Turner, a leading figure in Australian cultural studies. Geographic isolation has made Australia a country

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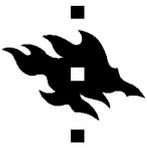
that is unique. Unlike in Canada, "sovereignty has never been an issue here, it hasn't been challenged", says Turner. Despite the taxation system and welfare state, Australia is one of the most economically unequal countries in the Western world (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007).

Australian people are individualistic and egalitarian. They also hold a widespread belief that the truth, or at least the best outcome, emerges from competition. This can be seen in many institutions – from education, where students are encouraged to challenge the teachers' views, to media. In radio and TV interviews even the Prime Minister calls journalists by their first names, and they chat to each other like good friends; there is little if any sense of formality or hierarchy in relationships among Australians. Despite a growing interest in Asia, powerfully driven by the demands of globalisation and the economy, Australia is not an Asian nation in cultural terms and is unlikely to become one in the foreseeable future (Bulbeck 2000a, 4–6).

Australian character: the holy trinity of beer, sport and gambling

Australians are generally known as easy-going, pragmatic people. "No worries" is a usual response to "thank you". There is also a certain word for helping and being good to each other: "mateship". Australia's unofficial national food is barbeque, usually grilled outdoors. Australians, or Aussies as many call themselves, like football, the beach and have a down-to-earth approach to life.

The country's way of life is sometimes described as the *holy trinity of beer, sport and gambling.* "Australians would even gamble on two flies walking on the wall", says journalism scholar John Harrison of his countrymen. For many people it is a gamble to come to Australia, and certainly it was a gamble for the early settlers. Arriving in an unknown land, many lost their lives. European settlers did not possess the millennia-old knowledge about natural conditions as did the Aborigines. Often settlers did not bother to ask, which caused fatal judgements in estimating living conditions such as temperatures, winds and rainfall. The coast, for example, might have looked like an evergreen paradise when the settlers arrived, but it turned out to be dry bush the next year. However, Europeans did settle the land, through hard work, sweat and tears, creating the myth of the typical Aussie. Nowadays, "battler" is a name commonly used to refer to ordinary Australians.

Although Australia is the second most urbanised country in the world, the myth of a bushland adventurer is deeply rooted in Australians' self-understanding, and also in the image that media and adversisers are selling to the audiences. A good example of utilising this myth is a TV advertisement of an Australian car maker, Holden. In the ad there is a man – blond-haired, strong, sure of himself – pulling a tree away from field with a four-wheel-drive pickup Holden Rodeo (look at the name of the car model, does not it symbolise the free spirit of cowboys?). Overwhelmingly loaded with symbols, this ad is a particularly strong example of identity building. It is important to observe that the man driving the Holden Rodeo in the ad does not look like a man from the backwoods. Rather, he is a modern, well-established, self-conscious suburban father-of-three mixed with the mythical bushland-Aussie.
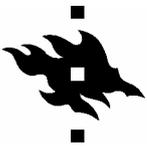
The idea of "Australian character" is somewhat problematic. In Australia there are people from so many ethnic and national backgrounds that it can be questioned whether such a thing as "Australian character" exists. However, it would be a useless and empty statement to say simply that there is no Australian character. Rather it seems that Australian character consists of at least three major elements: 1) "White Australia", 2) "Black Australia", and 3) "Ethnic Australia". First, there is the Anglo-Celtic, "white" Australia, which without doubt is the mainstream cultural form in the country. The media is dominated, even overpopulated, by this group. Thus, Australian media and media research can only be understood in light of this mainstream experience. Much that has been said and written about Australian character touches on this vast group of "ordinary" Australians, no matter how heterogeneous the group actually is. Second, there is the group of indigenous Australians, "black" Australia, which consists of Aborigines on the mainland and the indigenous people living on the Torres Strait islands in the tropical north. Despite their long history in Australia, the indigenous population today is just 2.3 per cent of the total Australian population. Third, "ethnic" Australia includes all those who do not fit into the categories of "white" and "black" Australia. Most have come from Asian countries.

Anzac Day parade in Brisbane. Every year 25th April this day is held through the country to honour those who went to war.

Aboriginal elders from Uluru, central Australia, attend cultural festival The Dreaming 2007 in Woodford, Queensland. Photos: Juho Rahkonen

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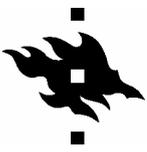
These days, the Australian nation is still a work in progress. New people continue to immigrate to Australia, as they have done for more than 200 years. The English language, spoken throughout the world, makes it easier for people to move to Australia. Many key academics in Australian media and communication studies were born elsewhere. Newcomers bring with them ideas and cultural habits developed overseas, which are then adapted to the unique reality of the Australian continent. As the following chapters will show, many theories and methods of media research have been successfully imported to Australia and modified to local conditions. But because Australia is so different an environment from Europe, not all European cultural forms fit Australia. One example is gothic literature, which is a mixture of horror and romance. A Perth-based literary critic Richard King put it this way in an article published among the book reviews in *The Weekend Australian* on 4th August 2007:

> Given that British settlement of Australia started as the gothic genre was just beginning to hit its straps [in the latter half of 18th century] (…), it comes as no surprise to find the earliest stories in this anthology are steeped in Old World atmospherics. (…) The stories with more Australian flavour are, on the whole, a lot less enjoyable. *Dangerous though the outback is* (…), *it just doesn't strike me as all that creepy.* (Italics added)

King draws a line between geographic features and cultural atmosphere. For him, the outback – the Australian wilderness – does not provide the inspiration needed for gothic-style horror fiction. Indeed, Australian landscape in general is flat and plain. It is dry, harsh, and beautiful without a doubt, but it does not appear overly dramatic. The shape of eucalyptus – the tree that is Australia's most characteristic plant – does not have the sharp, threatening appearance of the spruce tree, which covers the rugged mountains of Central and Eastern Europe. King also mentions that "Australia is a fairly sunny place", which makes it even more difficult to place gothic fiction there.

That said, it is fair to recognise that a sense of mystical and deep atmosphere can be found in certain parts of Australia, but it is an atmosphere of its own. Take, for example, Aboriginal cave art deep in red-sanded desert, where echoes of age-old Dreamtime stories still resound. Or the monotonic but irresistible sound of a didgeridoo, an aerophone instrument made of hollow wood. There is also a romantic and story-like atmosphere in pioneer-Australian bush legends, of which the 19th-century poem *The Man From Snowy River* is one famous incarnation.
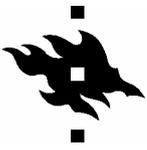
The changing media landscape

A European visiting Australia may find many familiar features in the country's media landscape. There is a strong public service broadcasting sector, which consists of two companies, the ABC and the SBS. Many newspapers are broadsheet size and can be described as quality papers. But when it comes to information technology, Australia lags behind other developed countries. The OECD ranks Australia 17th out of 25 nations for internet speed. In 2007 there is a hot public debate about a plan to build high-speed broadband to all Australia. This would connect 98 per cent of Australian households to high-speed broadband internet services 40 times faster than most current services. There seems to be support for the plan. For example, *The Courier-Mail*, Brisbane's main daily, stated in its leading article on 26 March 2007 that "there is no question that broadband is a good investment with vast potential to boost the economy, including small business and rural and regional Australia."

However, in Australia there is also debate on how broadband should be organised. Right-wing politicians argue for private enterprise and competition, whereas the left puts more emphasis on governmental intervention, given the large distances and small population density. In March 2007, the Labor Opposition leader Kevin Rudd proposed that the investment would be financed from the Future Fund, which in effect means taxpayers. *The Courier-Mail* concluded: "Regardless of where the money comes from, Australia needs a fast broadband network; and the time to get moving is now."

"Digital revolution is just about to hit Australia", says media historian Martin Hadlow, an associate professor at the School of Journalism and Communication, the University of Queensland. "Because of the size of the country we need the government to organise the broadband; private companies wouldn't do that." Why would a company build an infrastructure for the whole country when the majority of the population – and the markets – are in small area along the East coast, Hadlow asks. "A government intervention is necessary."

Increasingly, new communication technology is being developed and applied to daily life, and this means changes in journalism research and education. "Convergence has re-written the script", says John Harrison, Lecturer in communication and public relations at the School of Journalism and Communication, the University of Queensland. "We are in the process of
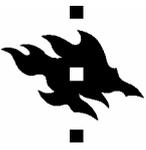
transition into new journalism – journalism which can be applied in several platforms. It's a very significant shift. In Australia, very few reporters make journalism for one platform only. We lag behind the industry about three to five years, but we are ahead of other universities. Our curriculum is being transformed from platform-based education to a more general model." Digital editing is much the same regardless of the platform. Convergence and new habits of media use are continuously shaping the established field. According to Harrison, some scholars predict that after five years the biggest player, News Corporation, will no longer be in the newspaper business. Harrison does not fully agree with that prediction: "I would say it will take ten years."

Change, indeed, appears to be the magic word. Whenever there is talk about Australian media, there is also talk about change. This frame is often used not only by the media industry, but also by many scholars. Changing the media is the message in the preface of the book *Australian Media & Communications* (Cunningham & Turner 2006). Published in many updated editions through the years, it is probably Australia's most widely used course book in media studies. However, technological and institutional change is not the only possible frame for understanding a cultural object such as media. Some scholars argue that it is not even the most relevant frame, at least from the ordinary audience's perspective (McKee 2001). As the following chapters will show, there is a variety of approaches, and they are under constant and lively debate within the Australian academic community.

Media policies and regulation

Australia has one of the most concentrated media ownerships in the world. For example the largest media company, News Ltd (a subsidiary of News Corporation), has 68 per cent of the capital city and national newspaper market. News Ltd also owns 77 per cent of the Sunday newspaper market, 62 per cent of the suburban newspaper market, and 18 per cent of the regional newspaper market. News Ltd owns most of Australia's major newspapers, including the country's only national daily, *The Australian*, as well as *The Sunday Mail* and *The Courier-Mail*. (Media Ownership Regulation in Australia 2007.) Only one major metropolitan daily, *The West Australian*, is controlled by a proprietor who is independent of either News Ltd or the Fairfax Group.

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The concentration of ownership has its roots in the small size of the population, in the structure of the media market, and in politics. The fact that the Australian market is relatively small and power is concentrated in the areas of Sydney, Canberra, and Melbourne has fuelled the ownership development. For a long time technology did not allow national distribution, but reader interests and advertising markets were overwhelmingly local (Tiffen 2006b, 103). With over 90 per cent of its population living in cities and their suburbs, Australia is the world's second most urbanised country after Belgium.

"The money you make of media in Australia is in the cities", explains John Austin, journalist-in-residence at the School of Journalism and Communication, the University of Queensland. "Once you get a certain amount of TV and radio stations and newspapers in a city, that's it. In Australia media is a brutal market: the winner takes it all." Associate Professor Michael Meadows from Griffith University points out that the concentration is also a political question: no government in Australia has really tried to limit media ownership (see also Griffen-Foley 2003, 250.) In Australia there is a large, well-to-do middle class that does not show a great deal of interest in political issues. "We don't have a long history of political activism", Meadows says. "There haven't been revolutions."

Australia has a history of close connections between politicians and media barons. In the earlier post-war decades the involvement was more direct than nowadays. The media dynasties not only expressed editorial support for one party, but also at times they even funded election campaigns, wrote speeches and skewed news coverage. This they did out of genuine ideological commitment, commercial interests and a desire to be involved with power at the highest level. (Griffen-Foley 2003, 236.) One of the most famous examples of media partisanship has been when nearly all News Corporation's 175 newspapers, as well as the Fox Channel, supported the US invasion to Iraq (p. 245). Four years later, News Ltd-owned papers, among them the national daily *The Australian*, still support the Iraq operation and Australia's involvement in it.

Largely because of the concentrated ownership, Australia does not stand very high in comparisons of freedom of the press: in the report *Global Press Freedom 2007* Australia is ranked only 39th (Freedom House 2007). The undesired consequences of highly concentrated ownership can be summarised as follows: 1) potential abuse of power, 2) lost of diversity of expression, 3) conflict of interests, and 4) repressive journalistic culture. Pressure for conformity

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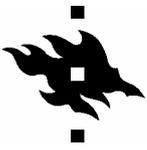
has become more serious in recent years in Australia's smaller capital cities, Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart and Perth. If a journalist gets into conflict with the *de facto* monopoly media company, he or she has few if any alternative opportunities to work in that area. (Barr 2000, 6–10).

Although large conglomerates were formed decades ago, and nowadays there is little space for newcomers, media ownership is in constant flux. While this report was being written, media baron James Packer sold control of his media operations to a private firm and moved into the casino business. The richest person in Australia, Packer inherited his multibillion dollar ownership when his father Kerry Packer died in 2005. James Packer is a grandson of Frank Packer, who founded the Nine Network, which owns one of the five national TV channels. Frank Packer also created *The Australian Women's Weekly*, in 1933, which became the country's best selling magazine. Before James Packer's sellout, this print media institution had never had an owner outside the Packer family. On 2 June 2007 *The Australian* wrote that the ownership change "brings to an end the longest family saga in Australian media".

There are laws regulating ownership, although deregulation has taken place since the 1980s as a part of globalisation and neo-liberalism. According to Australian law, a person may not control television broadcasting licences whose combined licence area exceeds 75 per cent of the population of Australia, or more than one licence within a licence area. In radio broadcasting, the law prohibits owning two licences in the same licence area. There are also limits on foreign ownership, multiple directorships and foreign directors. Cross-media ownership and directorship are also regulated. For example, controlling a commercial television broadcasting licence and a commercial radio broadcasting licence having the same licence area is not allowed nor is controlling TV and a newspaper or radio and a newspaper associated with that same licence area. (Media Ownership Regulation in Australia 2007.) However, in April 2007 many foreign ownership regulations were removed from legislation.

Broadcasting in Australia, as in most other countries, is regulated more heavily than print media. The reason is that the capacity of the electromagnetic spectrum to carry broadcasting is limited. Also it has been believed that images and sound have greater influence on their audiences than do print media. (Cunningham 2006, 47–48.) Broadcasting in Australia is regulated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). It was formed in July 2005 by the merging of the Australian Communications Authority and Australian Broadcasting Authority.

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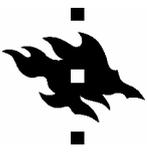
ACMA is responsible for the regulation of broadcasting, radio communications, telecommunications and online content. It is also the place where the public may complain about electronic media content, for example, if a program is recommended for too young an audience. Australian media has recommendations ranging from General Audiences (G) to Adult Violence (AV15+). Similar recommendations apply to computer games.

Print media has its own self-regulatory body, the Australian Press Council (APC). It was established in 1976, on one hand, to oversee press freedom and, on the other, to ensure that this freedom is used responsibly and ethically. Like the similar body in Finland, which oversees all the media, not just print, the APC serves as a forum to which anyone can make a complaint about the press. The Council is funded by the newspaper and magazine industries. Although basically free, the content of Australian print media is to some extent regulated by law. There are restrictions on advertising (cigarette and tobacco advertising is prohibited) and on the language used about ethnic and otherwise identifiable groups. Even the term "protection of public morals" is mentioned in the press law. Australia has a relatively long, unbroken democratic tradition and its media is considered free, but unlike in Finland, the freedom of the press or freedom of speech is not explicitly guaranteed in the Constitution or in a bill of rights. Rather, in accordance with English legislative tradition, press freedom is thought to be best protected by common law (Australian Press Council 2006).

The Internet, as a highly decentralised global network, does not fit into such nationally-based policies as the traditional media do. There have been attempts to exercise control over the Internet in Australia, but they have been criticised for being either too hard-handed or too difficult to administer. (Cunningham 2006, 49.)

Most media scholars tend to take a positive view of media regulation, because regulation is believed to prevent many undesired consequences of commercialisation and ownership concentration. But there are also academics who think differently. Some, like emeritus professor David Flint (2005, 261–262), in his book *Malice in Media Land,* even see a "left-wing bias" in the Australian media and would like to weaken the state's control. Academic commentators from the other side of the political spectrum, for example Curtin University scholars Niall Lucy and Steve Mickler (2006), argue in their book, *The War on Democracy*, that instead of left-wing bias, Australian media is dominated by conservative opinion. They write that "the real opponents of

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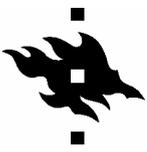
democracy are conservatives, whose attack on 'the left' reveals a contempt of and hostility for the liberal ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity".

Broadcasting

Broadcasting in Australia is a mixed system of commercial enterprise and public service. There is also a "third sector" of broadcasting which is community media. The highly developed public service broadcasting sector is comparable to those in Europe. Australian public service broadcasting has two main companies, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS). The concept of the Australian model originated in Britain in the 1920s and is based on the same values and principles as the BBC, namely to democratise and educate society and to act as a cultural and moral force. (Jacka 2006, 344.) Thus, from the beginning the Australian public service broadcasting has been developed in order to provide audiences with something the commercial sector does not offer.

The broadcasting sector in Australia has taken a different path than, for example, in the US, where it has always been based on commercial enterprise. Public broadcasting, especially the ABC, is widely appreciated in Australian society. Says journalist-in-residence John Austin: "For decades the ABC was the sole broadcaster in Australia. It had a unifying aspect for the nation. Because of this history the ABC has such a strong brand, and killing it would be like burying your own grandmother."

The tasks of the two companies are differentiated: the ABC serves Australia first and foremost as a nation state, while the SBS has a multicultural orientation. The SBS broadcasts in more than 40 languages; the Eurovision song contest was seen in Australia via the SBS. The company's slogan promises to offer "News from home, if you live in the world". The functions and duties of the ABC are based on regulations and law, particularly the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act of 1983. According to law, the ABC's duty is to broadcast "programs that contribute to a sense of national identity and inform and entertain" and to broadcast programs of an educational nature. The SBS has advertisements, but the ABC does not, if promoting the company's own products is not counted.

The future of public broadcasting is under constant discussion in Australia, as it is in many countries. Given the neo-liberal market economy and the keen competition, the legitimacy of

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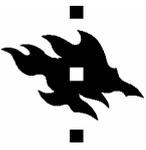
non-commercial broadcasting can no longer be taken for granted. In Australia the public broadcasting sector is often under attack, especially by conservative commentators. John Roskam, executive director of the Institute of Public Affairs, criticised the ABC in *The Age* on 11 April 2007, an article also quoted in *The Australian*. In Roskam's view, the ABC fails to be either neutral or diverse, and it operates on the basis that "because the commercial media is conservative and right-wing, the national broadcaster should be radical and left-wing". In Finland, the national broadcaster YLE has faced similar accusations through the years.

According to Elisabeth Jacka (2006, 335), who has conducted research on the future of public service broadcasting, such broadcasting will not disappear, despite the pressure of market forces. Public service broadcasting's traditional mission of providing an independent and non-commercial public sphere is still as relevant as it was in the twentieth century. Jacka concludes that both the ABC and SBS continue to occupy a valuable place in Australia's media landscape, but they must constantly reinvent themselves.

The free-to-air television consists of five national channels: the ABC, the SBS, Seven, Nine and Ten. The content of the three commercial channels is quite similar to that of their counterparts in Finland: The day's program starts with a morning talk show accompanied by brief news reports and continues with fictional programs. Prime time is dedicated to popular serials and reality-TV programs such as *Desperate Housewives*, *Boston Legal*, *24* and *Lost* (on Seven), *Extreme Makeover*, *CSI:NY*, *Cold Case* and *Without a Trace* (on Nine), and *The Simpsons*, *House* and *Big Brother* (on Ten). Along with the American productions there is also some Australian-made fiction. Probably the most famous Australian soap opera is *Home and Away* on Seven. Both public service and commercial broadcasters also have their regional transmissions. The ownership of television is not as concentrated as newspaper ownership, because Australian law does not allow newspaper owners to own television channels in the same city. However, these cross-ownership laws are under pressure to change.

Pay TV in Australia is relatively young, introduced in the 1990s. The medium's overall share of viewing across Australian homes is about 17 per cent. The audience is dispersed across nearly one hundred channels. This means it is not as attractive to advertisers than commercial free-to-air television. (Flew & Gilmour 2006, 186–189.)

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Radio is the most pervasive media in Australia: the average citizen spends sixteen hours a week listening to radio. (Griffen-Foley 2006, 133.) In Australia there are about 260 commercial radio stations and at least 300 community radio stations. More than two hundred stations, many of them community stations and narrowcasters, serve a special group of listeners. The number of these stations indicates the differences among Australia's six states and two main territories. In the Northern Territory (NT) there are more indigenous radio stations than anywhere else in Australia, although the NT's population is small. For some reason South Australia (SA) appears to be the most religious region in the country, to gauge by the number of Christian radio stations. The most populous states, New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria (VIC), represent, not surprisingly, the greatest cultural diversity, both having stations which broadcast in languages other than English: Italian, Greek and Arabic.

Table 2
Number of Australian radio stations* serving a specific group of listeners, by state or territory

	ACT	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	Total
Indigenous		8	1	24	15	7		32	87
Christian	2	15	12	13	7	19	3	2	73
Disadvantaged/ age group	3	8	11	4	2	1	6		35
Italian		4	4	3	1	1		1	14
Greek		4	1						5
Arabic	1	2	1						4
Islamic		1	1						2
Spanish	1	1							2
Gay & lesbian			1		1				2
Hindi				1					1
Macedonian					1				1
Chinese			1						1

*Includes both AM and FM, from community to national, narrowcast and broadcast, commercial and public service stations
Source: www.ausradiostations.com

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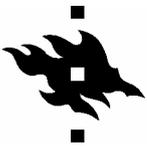
Newspapers

Australia has 49 daily English-language newspapers. In addition, there are 186 suburban/community newspapers, 238 country press newspapers, and 162 regional community newspapers. Some of the small newspapers are little more than advertisement carriers, but many others have substantial journalistic content. As in many other countries, in Australia newspapers had their highest circulations in the late 1970s (the total circulation of metropolitan papers was more than 3.5 million copies). Since then, circulations have declined to the present level of about 3 million. (Australian Press Council 2006.) Australia's biggest newspaper is *The Herald Sun*, a tabloid published in Melbourne. Its weekday circulation is 554,700 and its readership about 1.5 million. However, the Sydney-based tabloid *The Daily Telegraph* reaches the highest circulation on Saturdays, 702,000. Both are owned by News Ltd.

Australia has the most concentrated newspaper ownership of any established democracy: there are only eleven metropolitan daily newspapers, and until 2006, six of them were owned by News Ltd, three by Fairfax and two by independents. (Tiffen 2006b, 98.) In late 2006, the number of independently-owned newspapers fell to just one, when the owner of *The Canberra Times*, Rural Press Limited, merged with Fairfax. Now the only independent major daily is *The West Australian*, which is published in Perth, thousands of kilometres away from the power centre of South Eastern Australia. Murdoch-owned papers account for about two-thirds of Australia's metropolitan daily circulation. By comparison, the biggest press owner in the United States, the Gannett company, owns just about 10 per cent of American circulation. (Tiffen 2006b, 38.)

All the major cities except Sydney and Melbourne have monopolies on the local newspaper market. For instance, Queensland's capital Brisbane, a city of 1.8 million people, is served by only one major daily, the News Ltd-owned *The Courier-Mail*, which turned from broadsheet to tabloid in 2006. In most of Brisbane's kiosks and newsstands, the only newspapers available are *The Courier-Mail* and *The Australian*. This means that newspaper readers' access to alternative sources is limited. *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, which balance the viewpoints of *The Australian*, are available in Brisbane only in some of the biggest newspaper kiosks, not in supermarkets or other places were everyday business is conducted.

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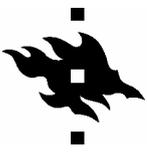
In Australia many media and communication scholars – probably most of them – have a critical view of newspaper ownership concentration. One media researcher observed that the national daily newspaper, *The Australian*, is "hopeless". By this he was referring to the paper's conservative orientation, its support for the Iraq war and Australia's participation in it. The same scholar disliked Brisbane's only daily *The Courier-Mail* as well; it too is a News Ltd paper. This scholar's favourite paper is *The Sydney Morning Herald*, a Fairfax newspaper.

However, there is a danger of exaggerating the effects of concentrated ownership, since that is not the only factor that shapes journalism. Characteristics of the society, journalistic work practises, organisational culture and routines, and finally individual characteristics of journalists all play crucial roles in shaping journalistic content.

Ultimately, those who want more ownership regulation and those who advocate deregulation, come down to the same principle: diversity. No one disagrees with the desirability of content and perspective, but the idea that these ideals can be guaranteed through diversity of ownership is under attack (Cunningham 2006, 57). John Roskam, Executive Director of the Institute of Public Affairs, put it this way in his article from *The Age* mentioned above: "According to our present media laws, if every media outlet in the country were owned by a different proprietor, our media would be diverse. Yet there wouldn't be much diversity if every one of those outlets expressed exactly the same viewpoint." Having said that, in Australia media ownership *does* make a difference in a more visible way than in many other countries.

The demographic and geographic structures have implications for the media. Australia is not dominated by one city; instead there are several big cities. In Australia one city's population does not dwarf all others, and nor is there a financial, political and cultural capital such as Helsinki in Finland, London in the UK and Paris in France. In Australia, the national capital does not dominate the press market. Australian newspapers tend to be more centrist, both journalistically and politically, than newspapers in Britain, for example. There are not such extremes: Australian tabloids are not as sensational and "yellow" as they are in Britain. (Tiffen 2006b, 104–105.) Sunday papers are especially important in the Australian print media market, as can be seen from Table 3 below: Saturday circulations are 32 per cent higher and Sunday circulations 52 per cent higher than weekday circulations (Australian Press Council 2006).

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Table 3
The metropolitan newspapers of Australia

Paper (Sunday or weekend edition in parentheses)	Home place and owner	Circulation (top weekend circulation in parentheses)	Description of the paper	Founded in
The Australian (*The Weekend Australian*)	Sydney (local offices around the country), News Ltd	131 500 (294 000)	Australia's national newspaper, quality broadsheet, conservative	1964
The Age (*The Sunday Age*)	Melbourne, Fairfax Group	201 000 (301 000)	Victoria's major daily, quality broadsheet, liberal	1854
The Herald Sun (*Sunday Herald Sun*)	Melbourne, News Ltd	554 700 (623 000)	Victoria's and Australia's highest circulating newspaper, tabloid, conservative	1990 (The Herald in 1840)
The Canberra Times	Canberra, Fairfax Group	36 000 (67 400)	Capital city's major daily, quality broadsheet	1926
The Daily Telegraph (*The Sunday Telegraph*)	Sydney, News Ltd	396 500 (702 000)	New South Wales' major tabloid, sensationalist	1879
The Sunday Times	Perth, News Ltd	353 000	Western Australia's major tabloid, sensationalist	1890
The Financial Review	Sydney (national), Fairfax Group	86 200	National business daily, economic issues, tabloid, market-liberal	1951
The Sydney Morning Herald (*The Sun-Herald*)	Sydney, Fairfax Group	212 000 (366 000)	New South Wales' major daily, quality broadsheet, liberal	1831
The West Australian	Perth, West Australian Newspapers Ltd	205 600 (370 000)	Western Australia's major daily, tabloid	1833
The Advertiser	Adelaide, News Ltd	195 900 (270 000)	South Australia's major daily, tabloid, right-of-centre	1859
The Courier-Mail (*The Sunday Mail*)	Brisbane, News Ltd	216 100 (327 000)	Queensland's major daily, tabloid, moderate conservative and sensationalist	1933
Northern Territory News (*The Sunday Territorian*)	Darwin, News Ltd	21 200 (32 000)	Northern Territory's major daily, tabloid	1952
The Mercury (*The Sunday Tasmanian*)	Hobart, News Ltd	48 900 (64 000)	Tasmania's major daily	1854
The Sunday Examiner	Hobart, Rural Press Ltd	61 400	Tasmania's oldest newspaper	1842

Sources: The papers' Internet pages, the newspapers themselves, Australian Press Council (2006), Wikipedia
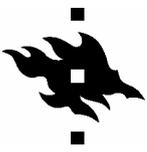
The concentration of ownership, and closures resulting from it, may be one reason why newspaper circulations have dropped in Australia more sharply than in similar countries (Tiffen 2006, 98). However, print media companies have been growing in recent years, thanks to the increase in the advertising market.

It has been known for many years that in developed countries traditional print media is losing its readers, and Australia is no different. The Australian Press Council summarised the situation in its *State of the News Print Media in Australia Report 2006*:

> The data are threatening. Reading habits are changing. Some age groups are reading newspapers less. Circulation is threatened. Nearly half of those who read Australian metropolitan newspapers are over fifty.

Australian newspapers are well aware of the development, and they are addressing it in many ways. *The Age*, Melbourne's broadsheet daily, is going online. "Our paper readership is solid and strong, but the growth is in the Internet audience. Over the next year we will move more breaking news and other content to our website before printing it on paper", says deputy editor Steve Foley. In two years *The Age* will move to a new building which is designed to meet the requirements of online journalism. The current editorial building dates from the time before the Internet, and it serves first and foremost the needs of traditional newspaper journalism, which is defined by a daily rhythm. In the new building print and online journalists will sit face-to-face in a circle to enable them to communicate better with each other on a real-time basis.

The second big change, Foley reveals, is that in March 2008 the newspaper will become one column narrower; now it is eight columns wide. "Because the paper gets smaller, we need to spend more time thinking what is the right material for the web and what for the paper. In the paper there will be more analysis, background and in-depth reporting. The paper explains why things happened. More and more readers are getting their news from the web." *The Canberra Times* has similar plans for the next year, says editor Mark Baker. Despite many foreign and domestic examples, Foley and Baker are convinced that their newspapers will not go tabloid.

A traditional quality paper, *The Age* seeks to reach the highest socio-economic audience which includes educated people and decision-makers. "A lot of newspaper planning is influenced by that audience", Steve Foley says. "It's a critical audience. They don't accept sensationalism, but
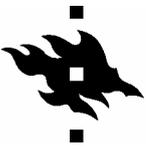
they want analysis. Without this audience we wouldn't be making very good business." As part of its pursuit of quality, *The Age* has adopted quite a broad and liberal way of reporting. It also has three investigative journalists on its editorial staff.

"There are dangers in putting material online", says Mark Baker, editor of *The Canberra Times*. "If you are not careful, you will make newspapers irrelevant. I think that online and paper versions could be developed separately. Our website is pretty basic; we haven't developed it very much. We don't do any video, and we are really not a 24-hour service." Like *The Age*, *The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Canberra Times* seeks an audience with a high socio-economic position. But Canberra is different from other Australian cities. It was established in the 1920s to serve as a national capital, and its geographic location was a compromise between the two major cities, Sydney and the former capital Melbourne. The political and administrative centre, Canberra has an older and more educated audience than other cities. The circulation of *The Canberra Times*, 36,000 on weekdays, is much smaller than that of other capital city papers, but it has a powerful and mature audience.

As a result of declining newspaper readership, especially among the youngest age groups, newspapers are increasingly becoming media for the elite – particularly for the 50+ baby-boomers. It has long been the trend that the older, wealthier, more educated and more powerful readers want serious content such as newspaper editorials, but this tendency seems to have become even stronger in the digital era. This means that the knowledge gap between the powerful and the not so powerful is deepening. Formerly, even pleasure-seeking youth were exposed to some serious content, because they were not able to choose what content to view, read or listen to. Now that they have nearly full command to select and cherry-pick from the media flow, they can more easily bypass all the educational and "boring" content. This is, of course, quite a critical and perhaps old-fashioned point of view. But evolving consumer habits certainly may strengthen the effect of market censorship, a mechanism leading to a uniform, entertainment-dominated media landscape.

Free city newspapers are not as visible a part of the media market in Australia as they are in many European cities. In the three largest cities there is *xM*, an international newspaper, which, according to its own words, seeks to reach an audience of "highly influential and affluent young people". However, traditional papers do not see the introduction of free papers as a threat.
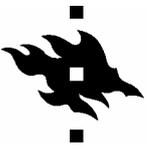
According to Foley, free papers cultivate newspaper reading habits in general. It is also not impossible that in future newspapers like *The Age* could become free in order to maintain their circulation. "It's an option we need to think about carefully", Foley says. When asked how he sees the future of newspapers in Australia, Foley responds: "There's no guarantee if there *is* a future."

Magazines

Australia's magazine sector is among the largest in the world, and it is an important part of the country's media industries. In fact, per capita Australian consumption of magazines is second only after New Zealand. According to 2003 data from the polling company Morgan and the Magazine Publishers of Australia, around one third of Australians can be classified as heavy magazine readers. In 2004, the total number of magazines sold increased to an all-time record of 120 million per year. The largest publisher in the field is Murdoch Magazines, followed by the Federal Publishing Company. Foreign publishers have also rushed into the Australian market in recent years, among them the country's third largest magazine company, Time Inc. The Australian magazine industry is dominated by five major companies. (Bonner 2006, 193; 207.)

In Australian kiosks and bookshops, the importance of the magazine industry is evident. Shelves are full of different titles – 90 per cent of Australia's magazines are sold through the newsagent or at the supermarket. Among them are many familiar from other countries, such as *Cosmopolitan*, but also publications that are characteristic of Australia, like *Australian Geographic*, which with its circulation of 150,000 is among the country's 15 most popular magazines. However, circulations of almost all the older magazines have fallen recently – a trend is familiar from other print media industries as well. The most popular magazine, *Australian Women's Weekly*, sold as many as 1.1 million copies in 1991. Thirteen years later its circulation was still considerable, but considerable too has been its decline to 680,000. (Bonner 2006, 195.)

Table 4
Australia's Top 15 Magazines

	Circulation	Publisher
Australian Women's Weekly	682 000	Australian Consolidated Press (ACP)
Woman's Day	521 000	ACP
New Idea	401 000	Pacific
That's Life	360 000	Pacific
Super Food Ideas	344 000	Federal Publishing Company (FCP)
Reader's Digest	332 000	Reader's Digest
TV Week	298 000	ACP
Better Homes and Gardens	262 000	Pacific
Take 5	241 000	ACP
Cosmopolitan	210 000	ACP
Cleo	190 000	ACP
NW	184 000	ACP
Australian Good Taste	170 000	FPC
Dolly	155 000	ACP
Australian Geographic	152 000	Australian Geographic Society

Source: B&T Weekly; Bonner 2006, 194. Circulation numbers are from the first half of 2004

The rest of the magazines with circulations of 60,000 or more deal with much the same topics as the top 15: lifestyle, garden, home, and food. Their ownership is centralised: ACP controls 21 of the 50 top-selling magazine titles. The Australian magazine industry is dominated by five major companies, and they all have wider media interests. Women's magazines comprise almost 63 per cent of all magazines sold (Bonner 2006, 207).

Media content

Media content may be measured in many different ways. Perhaps the most usual approach is to classify the content by topics, as shown in Table 5.

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Table 5
The Content of Australian Newspapers, %

Content type	All	Page 1	Metropolitan	Regional	Sunday
Crime	15	16	14	16	15
Federal politics	12	12	15	5	10
Entertainment	12	7	11	13	16
Accident	11	11	9	16	11
State politics	8	7	10	4	4
Business	8	7	8	7	6
Lifestyle	6	3	6	10	4
Sport	6	14	5	3	10
Terrorism	4	6	5	1	6
Other	18	17	17	25	18

Source: Van Heekeren M, & Simpson L, The Australian Press Council 2006

Culturally speaking, Australian media content generally overrepresents some groups of people while ignoring others. As Kate Bowles (2006, 74) puts it, "media representations in Australia tend to be overpopulated with young, white, attractive, middle-class, healthy and cheerful men and women, who never need to 'chop their own onions' – unlike most people's experience of real life". This is especially obvious in commercial electronic media, which always have to balance the contradictory concerns of pleasing the advertisers and fulfilling their task as information providers.

Every Thursday in *The Australian* there is a section called *Media and Marketing*, which provides information and analysis of current affairs in the field of media. These issues are also discussed on TV, ABC's weekly *Media Watch* program. On commercial TV channels there are morning talk programs.

The opinions expressed in Australian newspapers' leading articles are relatively strong and explicit. Often an Australian newspaper writes "we support…" or "the line of this newspaper is that…"

Content can be also analysed by investigating the ideological positions the media occupy. This approach is particularly useful in researching print media, because newspapers (and magazines to some extent) tend to have certain ideological presuppositions that reflect their content. Ideology

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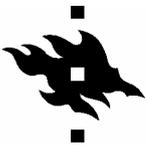
is present not only in opinion articles but in news, features, reportage and other journalistic writings. In fact, no article can be written without some underlying point of view.

The Australian is conservative. It supports the US invasion of Iraq and favours keeping Australian troops there. On Easter 2007, for instance, there were two lead articles that indicated the paper's right-wing orientation clearly: in the first, the paper emphasised the importance of the Christian faith and tradition in making the world a better place. The article included several citations from Australia's Catholic leaders, and the paper itself concluded that "the Christian God cares about the world's suffering" and "there is plenty to gain from the story of sacrifice and resurrection of a first-century Jew", namely Jesus Christ. Below was another leading article in which the paper demanded stronger actions against Iran. In both articles *The Australian* explicitly identified itself as a part of the Western, Judeo-Christian world. Nor did *The Australian* miss an opportunity to criticise *The Sydney Morning Herald*, its main competitor. This time, the criticism was for treating Iran too softly. The staff of *The Australian* even includes a post for a "religious affairs writer".

Using *The Australian* as an example here is not to say that one ideology is be better than another. But undoubtedly, the conservative ideology does effect the newspaper's coverage. Fairfax newspapers, like *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, tend to be more liberal in their reporting than the News Ltd papers. However, liberalism is as ideological as conservatism.

A newspaper's ownership is often clearly visible. The News Ltd-owned *The Australian* unhesitatingly prints negative things about Fairfax-owned *The Sydney Morning Herald*. On 29 March 2007 *The Australian* wrote in its *Media and Marketing* section about the *Herald's* having published Labor Party's advertisement on its front page. *The Australian* called this "a distinctly odd approach", then brought up the *Herald*'s other article, published in 2004, and accused the *Herald* of giving its audience a "mixed message". This is just one example of papers from different companies striking out at each other.

The division between conservative and liberal ideology is often present in Australian public discussion, although the party practising the most right-wing politics is called The Liberal Party of Australia. Niall Lucy and Steve Mickler (2006, 87) describe this division by using newspaper columnists as examples. For a right-wing elite, they write, "the conservatively correct posture to

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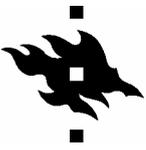
adopt is that of independent, straight-talking, bare-fisted brawler who can dish it out, week by week, to the grant-fed, latte-sipping, ABC-loving parasites who are the class enemies of ordinary, hard-working Aussie battlers".

In public debate, such ideological and political differences are often brought back to the institutional level, particularly to issues of ownership. This topic will be discussed in the following chapters.

Advertising

Although advertising is not a medium itself and is sometimes neglected by media scholars because of its purely commercial and acritical nature, these days one cannot fully understand media without considering the advertising industry. The commercial media are increasingly deriving their income from advertisements, and the relationship between media and advertisers has thus become closer than ever before.

The list of Australia's biggest advertisers (see Table 6) is dominated by major retailers, car manufacturers and food companies. An indication of a relatively state-central society, the governmental sector – both federal and state – is a visible part of the Australian advertising landscape. When watching Australian television or listening to radio, one can often hear the words "authorised by the government". In 2003 the New South Wales government was among the biggest advertisers with 55 million dollars spending, and the Victorian and Queensland governments both spent more than 40 million Australian dollars on advertising – nearly the same amount as did the fast food giant McDonald's. By contrast, News Corporation, while a major factor in the Australian media field, was only 18th on the biggest advertisers list.

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Table 6
The biggest advertisers in Australia

Advertiser	Branch of activity	Key brands and products	Money spent on advertising in 2003 (AUS$)
Coles-Myer	Major retailer	Coles supermarkets, Myer Stores, K-mart Stores	160 000 000
Telstra Corp	Telecommunications	Bigpond Broadband, Telstra Mobile, Telstra Shops, Foxtel Package	120 000 000
Woolworths Ltd	Major retailer	Woolworth's Supermarkets, Big W, Dick Smith	80 000 000
Nestle Australia Ltd	Food and beverage	Nescafe, L'Oreal, Garnier, Milo	80 000 000
Australian Government	Public institution	Defence, Health Care, Australia Post, Medibank	75 000 000
Harvey Holdings	Computer and technology retailer	Harvey Norman stores, Rebel Sports stores	75 000 000
Toyota Motor Corp.	Motor vehicles	Toyota, Lexus, Daihatsu	75 000 000
General Motors	Motor vehicles	Holden, Daewoo	70 000 000
New South Wales State Government	Public institution	Lotteries, tourism	55 000 000
AOL-Time Warner	Media, entertainment	Roadshow, Village Cinemas, Austereo radio network	55 000 000
Mitsubishi Motors	Motor vehicles	Mitsubishi, Triple Diamond, National Dealer Group	45 000 000
Unilever Australia	Consumer goods (food, cosmetics etc.)	Dove, Sunsilk, Lipton, Streets	45 000 000
Nissan Motor Company	Motor vehicles	Nissan, Renault	45 000 000
Ford Motor Company Group	Motor vehicles	Ford	45 000 000
McDonald's	Fast food	McDonald's	45 000 000

Sources: Sinclair 2006a, 214–215, Internet pages of the advertisers

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2. Research institutions and organisations

Media and communication research in Australia is dominated by universities. The following list shows all Australian universities in which these fields are represented. The universities with the five biggest journalism programmes are mentioned first, but the rest are not in any specific order.

Table 7
Australian universities with media and communication research/education

Name of the university	Home city and state	Where media and communication research is located	Areas of media and communication research/education
The University of Queensland	Brisbane, Queensland	School of Journalism and Communication, Centre for Critical & Cultural Studies, School of English, Media Studies and Art History, School of Business	Journalism, communication, cultural studies, media studies, film and television, public relations
RMIT University	Melbourne, Victoria	School of Applied Communication	Journalism, media, public relations, editing and publishing, professional communication, communication design, communication
Deakin University	Melbourne, Victoria	School of Communication & Creative Arts	Journalism, media and communication, film and video, animation and digital media, photography, interactive media, public relations, creative and professional writing
Queensland University of Technology	Brisbane, Queensland	Creative Industries Faculty	Journalism, media and communication, film and TV
University of Technology Sydney	Sydney, New South Wales	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, Faculty of Creative Industries	Journalism, media arts & production, public communication
Bond University (private)	Gold Coast, Queensland	School of Communication and Media, Centre for New Media Research and Education	Journalism, multimedia design, public relations, film, television and creative arts
Murdoch University	Perth, Western Australia	School of Media Communication & Culture	Media and multimedia theory and production, journalism, cultural studies, interactive TV research, media arts

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| Name of the university	Home city and state	Where media and communication research is located	Areas of media and communication research/education
Griffith University	Brisbane and Gold Coast, Queensland	School of Arts, Centre for Public Culture and Ideas	Journalism, film and television studies, popular culture
University of Wollongong	Wollongong, New South Wales	School of Social Sciences, Media & Communication, School of Journalism and Creative Writing	Journalism, Media and cultural studies, creative writing
University of Western Australia	Crawley, Western Australia	School of Social and Cultural Studies	Communication studies
University of the Sunshine Coast	Maroochydore, Queensland	School of Communication	Journalism, communication, public relations
University of South Australia	Adelaide, South Australia	School of Communication	Journalism, communication, public relations, Media Arts
University of Tasmania	Hobart, Tasmania	School of English, Journalism and European Languages	Journalism, media and communications
University of New England	Armidale, New South Wales	School of English, Communication & Theatre	Film and TV, radio and print media, new media
Victoria University	Melbourne, Victoria	School of Communication, Culture and Languages	Communication and Media Studies, Public Relations, Multimedia
Charles Darwin University	Darwin, Northern Territory	School of Creative Arts & Humanities	Communication and cultural studies
James Cook University	Townsville and Cairns, Queensland	School of Humanities, School of Creative Arts	Journalism, new media arts, creative industries
The University of Melbourne	Melbourne, Victoria	School of Culture and Communication	Journalism, media and communication, public relations, film and TV
Monash University	Churchill, Victoria	School of Humanities, Communications and Social Sciences	Journalism, communication
La Trobe University	Melbourne, Victoria	School of Communication, Arts and Critical Enquiry	Media studies, film and TV
The University of Southern Queensland	Springfield, Queensland	Faculty of Arts	Journalism, communication and media studies, editing and publishing, media production, multimedia, public relations
Edith Cowan University	Perth, Western Australia	School of Communications and Contemporary Arts	Journalism, media and cultural studies, public relations, advertising, film and video, interactive media

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Name of the university	Home city and state/ territory	Where media and communication research is located	Areas of media and communication research/education
Curtin University of Technology	Perth, Western Australia	Faculty of Media, Society & Culture	Journalism, film and television, internet studies, media studies
Charles Sturt University	Bathurst, New South Wales	School of Communication	Journalism, public relations and organisational communication
Australian National University	Canberra, Australian Capital Territory	College of Arts and Social Sciences	Film studies, new media arts
Australian Catholic University	Melbourne, Ballarat, Victoria	School of Arts & Sciences	Media
Central Queensland University	Rockhampton, Queensland	School of Arts & Creative Enterprise	Journalism, film and television studies, multimedia, publishing, public relations
Swinburne University of Technology	Melbourne, Victoria	Faculty of Life & Social Sciences	Media and communications
The University of Adelaide	Adelaide, South Australia	School of Humanities	Journalism, media studies
Southern Cross University	Lismore, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales	School of Arts & Social Sciences	Journalism, multimedia arts, screen
The University of Ballarat	Ballarat, Victoria	School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities	Film and media studies
The University of Canberra	Canberra, Australian Capital Territory	School of Creative Communication, School of Professional Communication	Media and multimedia production, PR, journalism, advertising, creative writing
The University of New South Wales	Sydney, New South Wales	School of English, Media and Performing Arts	Media production, new media
The University of Newcastle	Newcastle, New South Wales	School of Humanities and Social Science, Cultural Institutions and Practices Research Centre	Media and popular culture, film and television studies,
The University of Notre Dame Australia (private)	Fremantle, Western Australia	School of Arts & Sciences	Journalism
The University of Sydney	Sydney, New South Wales	School of Letters, Art & Media	Journalism, digital media production, public relations
The University of Western Sydney	Penrith, New South Wales	School of Communication Arts	Journalism, communication

Sources: Australian Education Network, Internet pages of the universities, interviews and e-mail questionnaires with scholars, Adams & Duffield 2006, Putnis et al. 2002

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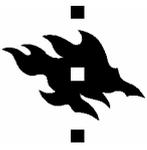
Students who wish to study journalism in Australia have 25 universities to choose from. The field has grown rapidly: in 1987 journalism was taught in only 11 universities. The five biggest journalism programmes are at the University of Queensland, Deakin University, University of Technology, Sydney, RMIT University, and Queensland University of Technology. (Penny O'Donnell: Journalism Education in Australia – a report.) Media and communication studies, in the term's wider meaning, are represented in 37 universities. in fact, only two Australian universities do not have this area in their curricula.

According to staff information on the universities' webpages, there are roughly 400 media and communication academics working in Australian universities. It is difficult to determine the exact number, because many scholars work in areas that belong partly to media and communication and partly to some other discipline, such as literary studies, creative writing, media arts, and cultural studies. The universities with biggest programs, RMIT University and the University of Queensland, have 40–50 academics working in the area of media and communication studies, although most universities have 10–20. Two figures below illustrate the number of Australian scholars who are reported to have published academic media research (books, book chapters, journal articles, refereed conference papers) over the last two years:

Men 58 %   **Women 42 %**
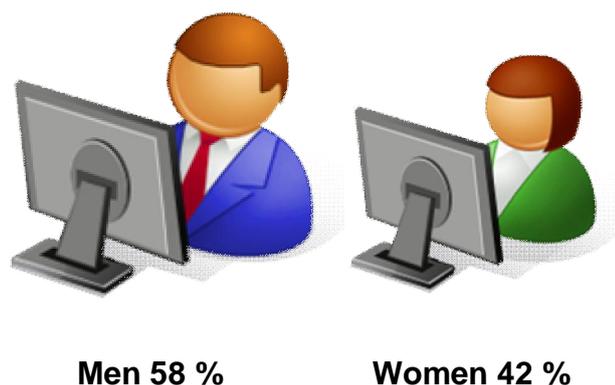
Although men slightly outnumber women in this comparison, there seems to be no significant gender gap in the Australian media and communication academy. *(This comparison was done by browsing the information about staff on the universities' webpages. Each scholar was coded only once, so the percentages above do not indicate the volume of research publications but the number of individual academics who published in the field in 2006 or 2007, up to July.)*

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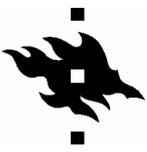
There is a diversity of opinion about where journalism belongs in a university: it is situated in 14 different faculties, with Arts faculties representing 40 per cent of all journalism degrees. The second most common place is Humanities and Social Sciences. The content of teaching across all universities is clustered as follows: professional practise, 31 per cent, theoretical and contextual education, 25 per cent, cognate disciplines, 44 per cent. (Adams & Duffield 2006, 14; 24.) Most Australian universities offer a full range of disciplines, and it is not only media and communication that are scattered. This is at least partly due to the size of the country.

Criticisms of university journalism education

Many people both from the academy and from industry recognise that employers are not entirely happy with journalism graduates from Australian universities. Some scholars see this as a sign of anti-intellectualism or a lack of education among industry leaders. Media employers by contrast point out that journalism graduates are just not ready to work as reporters when they leave university. "We have as a newspaper been disappointed with the quality of journalism programmes in some Australian campuses", admits Steve Foley, Deputy Editor of the Melbourne daily *The Age*. According to Foley and many other employers, journalism graduates lack necessary skills such as an instinct for the news and the ability to write fluent articles from different perspectives.

"We want people who are ready to work in modern newsrooms", says Colin McKinnon, Learning and Development Manager for Fairfax Group, which publishes *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Financial Review* among many smaller newspapers. University education should produce skilled journalists, but "I'm afraid that in many cases it's not there yet". Having said that, McKinnon observes that in the last ten years across the Fairfax Group roughly half the new reporters have come from journalism programmes and the other half from other disciplines, such as law and economics. "We only take the very best, and many journalism graduates have been very good. We are not looking for the same kind of people. They should have various backgrounds." After all, it goes without saying that these days a university degree is a must: more than 90 per cent of new journalists have one.

"I can understand why the industry is not fully happy with journalism graduates", responds Stephen Lamble, Head of the School of Communication at University of the Sunshine Coast.
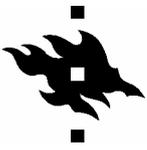
"There are too many people teaching journalism who themselves do not have working experience across Australia's media field." As an example of the attempt to bring industry and the academy closer, Lamble mentions the recent training sessions in which journalists from regional media gather in one place to learn from journalism academics. These places include regional cities such as Toowomba, Lismore and Rockhampton. According to Lamble, the benefits of these sessions have been mutual. Lamble also states that since its beginning in 2002, journalism education at University of the Sunshine Coast has been multi-skilling, which gives graduates abilities to work for several platforms.

There is an age-old question about whether journalism should be considered a profession or an occupation (formally it is not a profession), and whether journalists are made or born. Certainly it takes both to make a good journalist, but some people emphasise one side more than another. After the close of the First World War, Australian journalists who hoped to raise the status of journalism thought that this could be achieved through university level courses (Kirkpatrick 2006, 65). At the present time, journalism does not enjoy a high academic status in Australia. There is also a gap between the thinking of journalism educators and their employers. Debra Adams and Lee Duffield (2006, 2), who examined journalism programmes in Australian universities, write in their report that it "highlights proposals to develop the theoretical arm of the journalism program". They also call for strengthening abstract learning. This is obviously not what the employers are seeking. Take, for example, a typical advertisement for a news reporter's job vacancy in a mainstream medium:

> *The Australian* is looking for an energetic all-rounder to join our reporting team in Adelaide. You will need a demonstrated ability to break news, to write clean, vibrant copy and to file to daily deadlines. You should be able to generate and deliver quality news reports and features which will resonate with our national readership. Ideally, you will have a background of reporting in South Australia, with local news contacts. (*The Australian*, Media & Marketing section 7 June 2007)

There is no mention of any required (or even recommended) education, let alone a journalism or communication degree. There is no mention of an ability to handle complex issues or to evaluate and filter large amounts of information from several, often contradictory sources. There is no mention of the level of general knowledge or understanding of the society. It could be that these missing things are so obvious and so taken for granted that they do not need to be written down in a job advertisement. But more likely they are just not considered important by employers.

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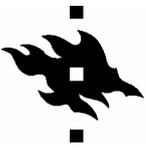
Colin McKinnon from the Fairfax Group confirms that there is a lot of distance between practitioners and academic media research. He thinks the industry does not pay much attention to academic research, and says that many people in the industry know little about what is being done in universities. When asked whether this situation is desirable, McKinnon says: "Perhaps there could be more room for co-operation, for example, organising advisory panels and meeting more frequently. But everybody's busy and it's not that easy."

Another question then is, to what extent tertiary journalism education *should* match employers' preferences. There are many arguments supporting the point of view that university education should maintain a critical distance from the media industry which, after all, is largely driven by other motives than a sincere desire to serve democracy and the public. The achievements of media are measured first and foremost by commercial success. Even though the media are keen to defend the principles of a free market economy, in the age of oligopoly the major virtues of the free market – responsiveness, openness, dynamism – are not necessarily manifested in media's own actions (Tiffen 2006, 41). As the famous saying has it, *journalism is too important an issue to be left to journalists.* Advocates of more critical and theoretical journalism education argue that the media possess such great power within society that they should be scrutinised by sophisticated approaches and methods that only the academy has to offer.

In fact, journalism and the academy operate in different fields. As French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu (2005) pointed out, social reality comprises various fields. Each field has its internal laws, which cannot be applied to another field. A journalist has to "obey the rules" set by the *journalistic field*, but her/his work is not determined by the academic field. Anyone who works as a researcher is influenced first and foremost by the forces of the *academic field*, which are in many ways different from those of journalistic field. This may at least partly explain why there is tension and distance between journalism practitioners and academics. In the light of field theory, it can be suggested that journalism research has a somewhat controversial place, because it is a paraprofessional field.

Journalism research is in a tricky situation by its very nature. Having so close a connection with journalism practise, it is often undermined by scholars from other, "purely" academic disciplines. In other words, many journalists think journalism research is *too* academic, while many scholars think it is not academic *enough*. Professor of Communication Peter Putnis at the University of

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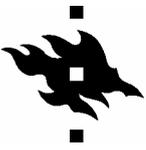
Canberra, who was the main author of a comprehensive report on Australian communication and media studies (Putnis et al. 2002), admits that there will always be a certain tension between the academy and practical journalism. "You can't expect them to be a single paradigm", he says. "Journalism is journalism. It is its own, particular genre and form of knowledge. Journalism has to be judged by standards that come from journalism itself." Despite this statement, Putnis himself is not a journalism practitioner, but a pure academic.

"You don't need a journalism degree to do this", says a young intern in the editorial of *The Canberra Times* while writing a news story for the next day's paper. A journalism student in a university, she thinks that journalism is more about common sense than theoretical thinking. While many of the young staff in Australian media have a journalism degree, the message from the field indeed challenges the idea of university education: increasingly, journalism schools have to think what they have to offer in a changing and competitive world, where every institution has growing pressure to justify its existence.

Life on campus

Life in Australian universities is not very hierarchical. Rather it reflects the egalitarian, down-to-earth attitude for which Australians are famous. In Australia, professors are not next to God, and the relationships between students and teachers is often quite close. The smaller the campus, the closer the relationships tend to be. Although titles such as Dr or PhD are often used before names, Australian academics do not make a big issue of their social position.

Most of the journalism departments in Australia are relatively small, usually with fewer than ten people on their academic staff. "The smaller the institution, the more research becomes compromised because of the demands of other duties like teaching and administration", Bond University Professor Mark Pearson points out. In a big department, such as the University of Queensland's School of Journalism and Communication, duties can be shared and researchers are able to specialise in certain areas. In a small department, everybody has to do everything.

The University of Queensland (UQ) is without doubt one of the most important – if not the most important – centres of Australian media and communication research. Three academic journals (*Australian Studies in Journalism, Media International Australia* and *Australian Journal of*

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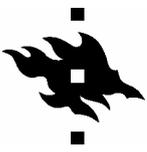
Communication) are published there. UQ has the highest undergraduate intake and the biggest journalism staff in Australia. Journalism has been taught in UQ's School of Journalism and Communication for 86 years, which makes it the oldest journalism school in the country. Media research at UQ is also carried out in three other places. In the Faculty of Arts, there are School of English, Media Studies and Art History and Centre for Critical & Cultural Studies. In the Faculty of Business there is School of Business, which also provides journalism education.

The School of Journalism and Communication is part of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. The staff of the School has a diverse background: there are researchers from China, India, Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, and South Africa. Half the 20 persons on the academic staff are Australian-born. Many undergraduate and PhD students as well as visiting scholars come from all around the world. Only four scholars on the academic staff do not have a doctoral degree. However, there are only two full professors, accompanied by four associate professors and one adjunct professor. Most of the scholars have experience as practising journalists.

The School has two main fields, journalism and communication. Communication Program Director Elske van de Fliert illuminates the differences between these two areas: "Mass media is good at raising awareness, but it's not that good at gaining collective action. For that you need interpersonal and group communication." Her research is based on a broad understanding of communication in which mass media is involved. She says that communication at UQ is still a young and developing discipline, and there is much work to be done to strengthen it.

Sydney, with more than 4 million inhabitants, is the declared "media capital" of Australia. In the city are four universities in which media and communication research is represented. However, 3.8 million people's Melbourne has six. Brisbane, a city with a population of 1.8 million, has three universities offering media education.

Most Australian universities are funded from the federal budget, but there are also two private universities: the University of Notre Dame Australia in Western Australia and Bond University on the other side of the continent, Queensland's Gold Coast. How does a media scholar's life in a private university differ from a colleague's life at a public university?

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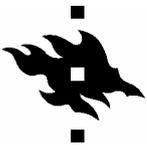
"We are not just private but we are small", says Professor Mark Pearson, Head of Journalism at Bond University. Almost all funding for private universities comes from students' fees. This means everybody has to teach, including the top researchers. "In some ways it is good for education, but there is not as much research being done as there is in larger universities." Bond University has a different semester structure from most other Australian universities. Bond has three semesters per year, as in the American system. Every year the full-time staff gets a research semester, which is four months and includes the annual leave.

According to Pearson, being private has some benefits for research, especially when the research is carried out in co-operation with the media companies: "Our private nature gives a message of being independent from government. This attracts many people in the industry."

Another, even smaller, journalism programme can be found in the coastal area north of Brisbane, at University of the Sunshine Coast. Founded ten years ago, it is the youngest public university in Australia and its journalism program is also the youngest, just five years of age. The journalism programme is situated at the School of Communication in the Faculty of Arts. There are two full-time and six part-time academics on the journalism staff. There can be no doubt that this university is in Australia: kangaroos jump on the grass, visible from scholars' working rooms.

University of the Sunshine Coast journalism programme has 30 to 50 graduates per year, whereas Australia's biggest journalism programmes take in more than 400 students annually. Head of the School of Communication Stephen Lamble states that the employment rate of graduates is nearly 100 per cent. "Only those who aren't ready to leave this region have difficulties in finding a job." Lamble thinks that 400 graduates per year is too many: there are not enough jobs. According to Lamble, University of the Sunshine Coast journalism programme has two distinctive features: first, since the beginning their journalism teaching has been teaching multiple skills, so that graduates will be equally comfortable working in TV, radio, video, print and online. Every course is integrated, and there are no separate education programmes for different forms of media. Second, Lamble points out that their programme has a very strong relationship with the media industry. They can offer internships to everybody, because the student intake is small. "And we want to keep it that way".

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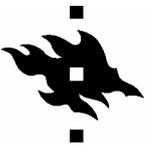
At the University of Melbourne the environment is totally different: wandering around its old, European-style buildings, one feels a sense of tradition and history – many social movements began from here in the early 20th century. The buildings together with the cool, rainy weather and autumn leaves on the ground (between May and July) create a somewhat bohemian and poetic atmosphere.

The University of Canberra is on a bush hill some fifteen minutes drive from the nation's capital. This university, relatively new and small, has two units that offer media and communication education: the School of Professional Communication and the School of Creative Communication. The very location of the university has implications for the research done there. "This is a unique place, because we are the seat of government", explains Kerry McCallum, Lecturer in the School of Professional Communication. "We are particularly interested in communication in politics and political journalism." The university has relatively strong ties with the media industry, especially *The Canberra Times*, through internship programmes.

Each university has, of course, its own character. This is created by the combination of the people working there, the programmes and courses offered, the historical (and sometimes political) background, and – last but not least – the geographical location and the buildings. Peter Putnis et al. (2002, 41–58) have placed Australian universities in six institutional categories:

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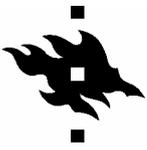
Sandstones

Long-established universities, some of them dating before the Federation in 1901. Four universities are in this category: the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney, the University of Melbourne, and the University of Tasmania

Redbricks

Established in the post-war boom of the 1950s. They have much in common with the "sandstones", but they are newer. Three universities are in this category: Monash University, the University of New South Wales, and the University of New England

Gumtrees

Referred to by the family of fast growing eucalyptus-trees – an Australian national symbol – these institutions reflect the rapid expansion of higher education during the 1960s and 1970s and a government policy of decentralisation. Eight universities are in this category, including Griffith University

Unitechs

Institutions in the tradition of universities of technology. Seven universities are this category, for example Queensland University of Technology

New universities

These institutions became universities after the introduction of the Unified National System in 1987. Ten universities are in this category, including the University of Canberra and University of the Sunshine Coast, the youngest public university in Australia

Private providers

In addition to two private universities, Bond University and the University of Notre Dame Australia, there are two colleges, Avondale and Macleay, that offer media and communication education

The research output is heavily concentrated in the biggest media and communication studies providers. In 2006 RMIT University media researchers produced 3 books, 7 book chapters, 10 refereed journal articles, 21 unrefereed publications and 26 conference papers (School of Applied Communication, 2006 Research Report). The School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Queensland has recently produced 7 books (see the Appendix at the end of this report). The University of Melbourne also has an outstanding publishing record in the field. Most media and communication units in Australian universities are small, and in many schools the staff has no recent books on their publication list. There is a significant number of academic staff in Australian media and communication programs whose most notable publications are conference papers and who have never written a book.

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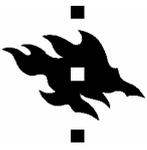
Research publications

Australia has eight academic refereed journals for media and communication, including one open access journal.

Australian Journal of Communication. A refereed international scholarly journal that publishes original papers on human communication research, theory and practise. Published by the School of English, Media Studies and Art History, the University of Queensland

Australian Studies in Journalism. Articles from various disciplinary perspectives on topics associated with Australian journalism and news media. Published twice a year by the School of Journalism and Communication, the University of Queensland

Australian Journalism Review. Articles on topics reflecting a broad range of perspectives on journalism practise and education. Published twice a year by the Journalism Education Association

Media international Australia incorporating Culture and Policy. Publishes articles on media, telecommunications and the cultural industries, and the policy regimes within which they operate. The primary focus is Australia, but there are also articles with an international perspective. Published four times a year by the School of English, Media Studies and Art History, in association with the Centre for Critical & Cultural Studies, The University of Queensland

AsiaPacific MediaEducator. Publishes articles that challenge the conventions in journalism education and training and provide practical ideas on improving media reportage and media training. A refereed journal published annually by the School of Journalism and Creative Writing at the University of Wollongong

Continuum. Journal of Media & Cultural Studies. Publishes refereed articles on the relationship between media texts and wider questions of culture. It has an international scope. Edited in Australia, affiliated with the Cultural Studies Association of Australia and published by Routledge, four issues a year

Southern Review. An interdisciplinary, refereed journal focussing on the connections between communication and politics. Published three times a year by the School of Applied Communication at RMIT University, Melbourne

Ejournalist. A refereed, open access media journal, published by the Faculty of Informatics and Communication at Central Queensland University, Rockhampton

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Figure 2
**Australian Journalism and News Media Research 1992–2002**
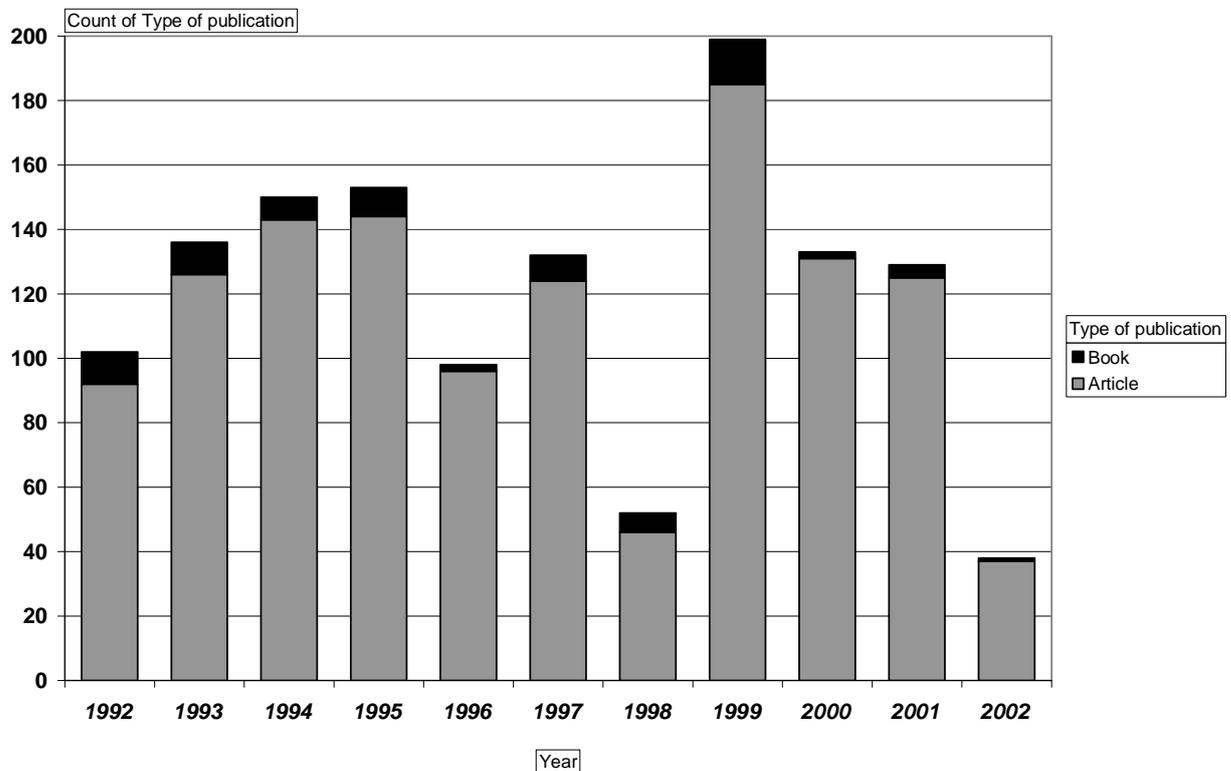
Figure 2 has been created using the Australian journalism research index (Dobinson 2003), published in Australian Studies in Journalism 10–11 (2001–02) 268–356. In the index, some publications appear under several subject listings. In this listing, publications appear only once. Subjects have been listed by their primary subject. For example, if a publication is listed under Indigenous issues, it will not be listed again under the following subjects, such as print or television, although it might deal with these topics as well. Every effort has been taken to make an accurate tabulation. However, the difference between subjects is not always clear, and some publications may be missing. The listing is used here for guidance and to create the big picture of Australian journalism and news media research.

Australian journalism and news media research has produced about 1,300 articles and books in the ten-year period 1992 to 2002. The annual research output has varied considerably: in 1999 there were five times more publications than in 2002. It is worth mentioning that despite the expansion of journalism education during the 1990s, the annual amount of research has not increased, according to this index. This might indicate a relatively weak connection between journalism and news media education and the research undertaken in this area.

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More recent numbers show that in 2006 and 2007 (up to July) Australian scholars published about 50 books and more than 200 journal articles and book chapters. As Figure 3 shows, about 50 per cent concerns journalism and communication, 30 per cent TV, film and popular culture, and 20 per cent is about new media and new technologies. The data for this figure have been collected by visiting the webpages of the universities.

Figure 3
The share of recent publications by area of research
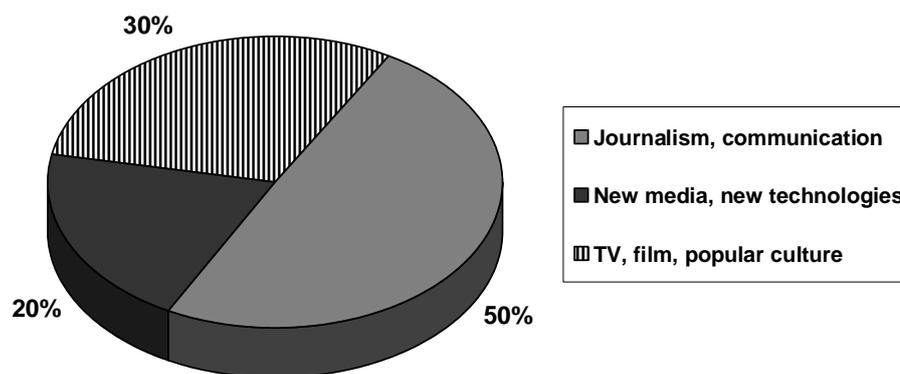
Table 8
Media and communication research in two selected Australian journals 2005–2007, %

	Media policy/ economy	Theory, ethics, history	Print media	TV/film	Radio	New media, Internet	Journalism as profession	Case studies	Total number of articles
MIA	22.3	27.2	2.9	14.6	7.8	12.6	-	12.6	103
ASJ	0.3	18.2	12.1	0.3	-	6.1	51.1	12.1	33

Table 8 highlights the different roles the two journals occupy. Rather than competing with each other, the combatants of Media Wars (see pages 68–69) contribute to research output in their

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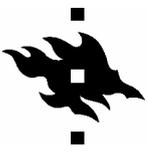
own way. Whereas *Media International Australia* (MIA) publishes articles mostly on general, cultural themes and policy issues, *Australian Studies in Journalism* (ASJ) concentrates on practically oriented research that serves the needs of journalism education. In ASJ there are few articles that focus on theoretical issues or seek to deepen journalism theory. However, the contradictory relationship between academic journalism research/education and the media industry is widely discussed.

Research agencies and companies

Commercial media research in Australia focuses on aspects that differ dramatically from most academic research. The five biggest companies offer their clients a large proportion of services, which help in managing the media and targeting audiences. Commercial research does not maintain the critical distance to media that academic research does. There are few links between the two. One linkage organisation is *The ARC Communications Research Network* (ACoRN), which consists of universities and the industry that are involved in telecommunications research. ACoRN does not directly fund research, but rather supports nation-wide collaborative research. A network of researchers and research students, ACoRN endeavours to stimulate creativity, innovation and breakthrough science, leading to technological advancement in telecommunications.

The official source for television audiences in Australia is OzTAM. It covers the five city metropolitan areas and nationally for Subscription TV. The research service is provided by AGB Nielsen Media Research, and research is carried out through selected viewing panels and telephone interviews. But while industry audience research is becoming increasingly developed in tracking what media people use, academic research still has the task of moving beyond mere description to explore how and why media are used in a given way. (Turnbull 2006, 92.) Rather than being substitutes for each other, academic and industry research both increase our understanding of the media from different perspectives.

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Table 9
The biggest non-academic media research institutions in Australia

Name of the institution	Description	Services
AGB Nielsen Media Research	Operates in 40 countries, including Australia. Focus is on consumer marketing and media measurement.	Provides TAM services (Television Audience Measurement), which is designed to maximise the profit of TV programme and commercials producers.
Roy Morgan Research	Market research and public opinion polling company led by "Australia's leading pollster", Gary Morgan.	Polling and media monitoring with company's own analysis software ASTEROID.
Media Monitors	A media research company, headquarters in Sydney, 500 staff in Australia and New Zealand. Clients both corporate and governmental. "Know what the media says about you."	A wide range of services including mediaportal, mediadisc, mediadirectory, press releases (written and video), press clips, coverage monitoring, news alerts, campaign analysis, audience targeting.
The Media Research Group	Provides media monitoring to help organisations, for example, to evaluate the success of their media campaigns and assist them in dealing with the media and publicity.	Media analysis, news letters, press clippings.
Rehame Media Monitoring	Monitors print, radio, television and online media around the clock, seven days a week.	Issues management, tracking in which medium the business is most likely to appear, intelligence on media effectiveness and competitors' role in media.

Sources: The companies' webpages

Australian media companies spend a lot of money on media research, but their research is very different from academic research. Newspapers conduct research simply because they want to know which sections their audiences read and for how many minutes per day. This information is used first and foremost for selling advertising space. Big media companies have entire departments dedicated to research. They also use the services of companies like Roy Morgan Research, AGB Nielsen Media Research, The Media Research Group and Media Monitors. Media companies commission both quantitative and qualitative surveys, and they regularly use focus groups to obtain information about their readership. Although designed to serve internal purposes, much of the material about the readership is available to the public.

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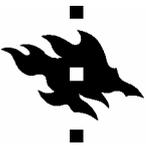
Research funding

The most important source of funding is the *Australian Research Council* (ARC). It is a statutory authority within the Australian Government's Education, Science and Training portfolio. The ARC supports both fundamental and applied research. The average grant size is nearly 300,000 Australian dollars (180,000 euros). The success rate is around 20 per cent.

According to the ARC Searchable database, the Council is currently funding six projects in journalism, communication and media. Their topics are:

1) Globalisation and the media in Australia (The University of Melbourne, Prof JG Sinclair)
2) Turkish community in Australia (Swinburne University of Technology, Dr L Hopkins)
3) Rupert Murdoch, News Ltd and the global contest for dominance in sports television (University of Western Sydney, A/Prof DC Rowe)
4) Television presenters as cultural intermediaries (The University of Queensland, Dr FJ Bonner),
5) Australian responses to the images and discourses of terrorism and the other (Edith Cowan University, A/Prof LR Green; Prof M Balnaves)
6) The effectiveness of online support in building community (Edith Cowan University, Dr LR Green; Dr AI Omari; Mr MG Swanson)

There are many other grants currently available in the field that do not appear under the Discovery Grants – the biggest research scheme of the ARC – in the designated code called Journalism, Communication and Media. Therefore, the funded research base is considerably broader than the list above indicates. The ARC does not have a policy to prioritise particular areas within media and communication research.

Much of the audience research is sponsored by the Australian Broadcasting Control Board/Tribunal/ Authority (nowadays Australian Communications and Media Authority), and its history is as long as television's (McKee 2001, 312). Media companies, both print and electronic, spend a lot of money for their own audience research.

The ARC has 90 Federation Fellowships taken up since the first awards in 2002. Federation Fellowships are funded under the ARC's National Competitive Grants Program, as part of the

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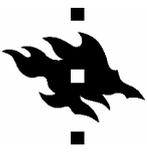
Government's 10-year 8.3 billion dollar commitment to innovation called Backing Australia's Ability. Among these Federation Fellows is also a media researcher, The University of Queensland's Graeme Turner. His research topic is *Television in the post-broadcast era: The role of old and new media in the formation of national communities.* The ARC also has expert panels. About ten years ago there were no media scholars represented in these panels, but recently there have been three, Graeme Turner, Stuart Cunningham and University of Canberra professor Peter Putnis. Professor Cunningham has been in the Humanities and Creative Arts panel during 2005–07, and he is currently its Chair. According to Peter Putnis, these positions indicate that respect for media and communication studies in Australia is growing.

However, as Putnis also points out, all humanities and related disciplines operate nowadays in a more challenging environment than before, and media research is no exception. "Humanities are becoming less supported", he says. "Government is becoming more interventionist in setting research priorities. There is a pressure to justify, and people are legitimately asking whether government should support such activity as humanities research. People want to see some kind of national and community benefit from research, and it's hard to be totally critical about that." Putnis thinks that universities no longer have the shield of elite status they used to enjoy. At least their elite status is weaker in pragmatic and non-hierarchic Australia than in more meritocratic societies.

Putnis gives an example of a media research project that could quite easily be justified in the eyes of the general public: Professor Warwick Blood from the University of Canberra led a project about reporting suicide and mental illness in the media. The results were applied into practise by guiding journalists in reporting of these sensitive issues. "Everybody understands the importance of this kind of research", Putnis says. But the general environment is not that supportive for more abstract and critical forms of research. "You could still get away of doing textual analysis of a high culture product like a poem, because that's an elite thing, but with popular culture it would be more difficult." Of course, in a free society creativity is not prohibited as long as it can be afforded. "If you want to do textual analysis, go ahead, but don't come and ask for 100,000 dollars", Putnis says with irony.

The media industry in Australia is not famous for its generous research funding. "We find it very hard to get research funding from media companies", says journalism Lecturer John Harrison

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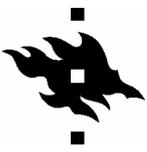
from the University of Queensland. Harrison is not alone. "Media companies in Australia are notoriously suspicious of the tertiary sector", confirms Professor Mark Pearson, Head of journalism at Bond University.

By contrast to many journalism researchers, cultural studies professor Graeme Turner says he does not experience problems in getting funding. For example, the ARC readily approves his applications. "It took a while, but now we have been quite successful. You can get money if you know how to operate in that context. People who have trouble don't know how to do it. It's hard to get the first one; after that finding funding is easier." In Australia there is no funding source like the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation. "Certainly it would be easier if there was a foundation which funds media research directly. But it is possible to get funding for good research. Cultural studies have always competed internationally, but that is not so true in journalism studies."

Turner's view that journalism does not have as strong a research tradition as cultural studies is shared by many journalism scholars. "There is no great history of journalism research in Australia", says Martin Hadlow. "People here do not think it's a real thing. Journalist is not a highly regarded occupation." There seems to be the same kind of paradox as in Finland: journalism education is among the most desired and hardest to attain, but there is distrust of journalists among the general public. "Other academics often consider this to be a soft option, not real science." Gillian Cowden, Associate Lecturer of journalism at University of the Sunshine Coast, uses exactly the same words to describe the situation. Indeed, journalism research stands between the academy and the industry, and paradoxically faces criticism that it is both too intellectual and anti-intellectual.

Senior Lecturer in journalism Levi Obijiofor from the University of Queensland relates a harsh reality of academic life: "To be a media and journalism researcher in Australia is to be struggling with a number of issues. First, the environment here does not appreciate and value journalism research. Second, there is lack of funding. Third, there are many schools in different faculties that claim to own media and communication studies. This is a problem in the Australian field. Why is it that there are communication studies in at least four faculties?" Obijiofor asks. "No single school or faculty at UQ can claim ownership of communication and media studies. We already have problems in funding, and the situation that there are many small units makes it even harder."

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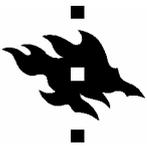
Is it easy to find funding? "I wouldn't say it's easy. There is a long tradition in Australia that media companies don't fund academic research. Industry takes the graduates but puts very little back to the journalism academy", says Stuart Cunningham. "The ARC is the main funding source. Media research is not discriminated against there, but it has to compete with everybody else." Media and communication research is funded by several institutions, and often they do not have much to do with journalism. For example, Elske van de Fliert's research is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. "This one basically came to me; I had a research profile and the connections already. But if you are an outsider with no networks, it is difficult to get funding."

Is it easy to get funding? "No, it's terrible", says Stephen Lamble, Head of the School of Communication at University of the Sunshine Coast. "Most of my research I have done on my own time, on Fridays, weekends, five weeks leave from work. You really just have to grab your time from other duties. We have a small journalism programme and we haven't had any big grants here."

Bond University Professor Mark Pearson observes that in Australia a great deal of money goes to media *research*, but not so much to media *researchers*. Media is a very popular topic within other areas of research, and much of the funding allocated to media research goes to people who are not full-time media researchers. Whereas journalism experiences difficulties in satisfying the industry, some other areas in media research are luckier. For example, Jeffrey Brand of Bond University has had success with the computer game industry.

Much of the research is funded by the institutions themselves with seed money, encouraging researchers to apply for larger grants. A great deal of work consists of exploratory and pilot projects rather than large-scale projects. A large number of researchers receive indirect funding from their institutions. Mark Pearson is using part of his four-month research semester, which is paid time, for completing his book. Finally, there is a huge amount of intellectual work done without actual research funding. Research is often done on people's own time, holidays and after hours. When the inspiration is flowing, personal time and efforts are not measured – that is what creative work is all about.

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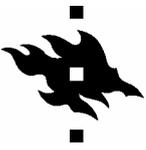
3. Main approaches to media and communication research

Isolation and Pragmatism

As emphasised in the beginning of this report, distance from the rest of the world has had a profound effect on Australian society and the research carried out there. Even in the age of light-speed communication technology, it is best to share thoughts and update knowledge in personal meetings. From Australia it is a long way to international conferences. Many characteristics of the country's media and communication research are the results of *Australian isolation*, the term Australian scholars often use themselves.

Another important factor is *pragmatism*. Australia is probably among the most pragmatic cultures in the world, together with other settler societies, most notably Canada and the US, where pragmatism as a philosophy originated in the 19th century. Pragmatism holds that an ideology is true if it works satisfactorily, and that the meaning of a proposition is to be found in its practical consequences. There are several everyday examples that indicate the pragmatic nature of Australian society. For instance, there is no such thing as *Australian cuisine*. The unofficial national food is simply barbeque. Other cultural forms and habits, such as national clothes or dances, are also absent from Australia. In the European mountains, the Alps and the Carpathians, there is a distinctive highlander culture, but the Australian alpine region has nothing like that. Finally, religion does not play a visible role in the ordinary life of Australians.

The reasons why Australia is so pragmatic can be found in its history as well as in its geographic features. Culture is not necessary for living, in a pragmatic sense – it cannot be served for dinner. The early European immigrants faced harsh natural conditions, and adopting a pragmatic, straightforward approach was definitely useful in settling the land. Unlike most European countries, the whole development of Australia has taken place in the age of modernity and the modern media. "The history of communication networks in Australia has always been transnational", explains Professor of Communication Peter Putnis from the University of Canberra. Because of the colonial and multicultural roots of the country, in Australia there has never been much room for distinctive culture building – apart from indigenous culture, of course. In the era of globalisation and Americanisation, it is unlikely that Australia would have the same kind of cultural development that took place when the world was less connected and networked.

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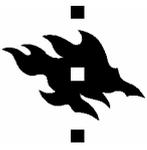
Most countries in Europe, let alone in Asia, have developed their cultures over more than a thousand years, and they are rich in traditions, local customs and architecture. They have thus developed ways of thinking that are more complex than pragmatism. Because of this, European communication and media research appears to be more "philosophical", theoretical and critical than Australian research. From the perspective of global critical discourse, Australian traditions in communication and media studies do not appear overly radical. Marxism, for example, has not had a strong intellectual or political influence in Australia. Much Australian media and communication research has been led by administratively-oriented intellectual pragmatism rather than by critical tradition. This is especially the case in the new field of creative industries. (Flew 2004, 2.)

Political economy as a major approach

Theoretically speaking, there is no such thing as an Australian paradigm of media and communication research. Rather, the Australian approach is a mixture of fused theories (European critical tradition and American attention to empirical detail), which have been adopted to meet the requirements of the Australian context and deal with its own, unique reality (Sinclair 2006b, 26). Australian media scholars have continuously adopted theories and research approaches from Europe and then modified them to local conditions (Turner 1993, 6).

The theoretical traditions that have most affected Australian media and communication research can be summarised as follows (Sinclair 2006b):

- Political economy
- British cultural studies
- American empiricism
- Western Marxism and ideological critique
- French structuralism and semiology

Many of these traditions, with the exception of American empiricism, have arrived in Australia via British intellectual life. "British influence is the strongest", says Graeme Turner, from the cultural studies point of view. Journalism scholar Michael Meadows adds that the concept of the *public sphere* is popular among Australian journalism researchers, as it provides a fruitful theoretical approach to what journalism is about. The term public sphere is usually associated

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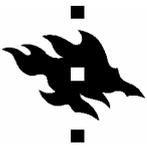
with the German scholar Jürgen Habermas, and thus it goes under the large umbrella of Western Marxism and ideological critique. The work of French critical theorist Michel Foucault is often mentioned as having a particularly significant influence in Australian media and journalism research.

At the risk of oversimplifying, it could be said that Australian *cultural studies* represent European-born critical tradition, whereas Australian *journalism studies* have drawn more from the American empirical approach. Professor Sean Cubitt, Director of the Programme in Media and Communications at the University of Melbourne, has experience in both approaches. Born in England, he migrated to Melbourne in 2006 after spending a few years in New Zealand. "What is striking to me in Australia is the high degree of empirical data gathering", Cubitt says. The British tradition from which he comes is more theoretical. He finds it refreshing to be in an environment where research has a stronger empirical background. According to Cubitt, the real empirical heart in the work distinguishes journalism studies from the humanities. He describes Australian media and communication research as a spectrum that has two dimensions (Figure 4).

Figure 4
The spectrum of media and communication research

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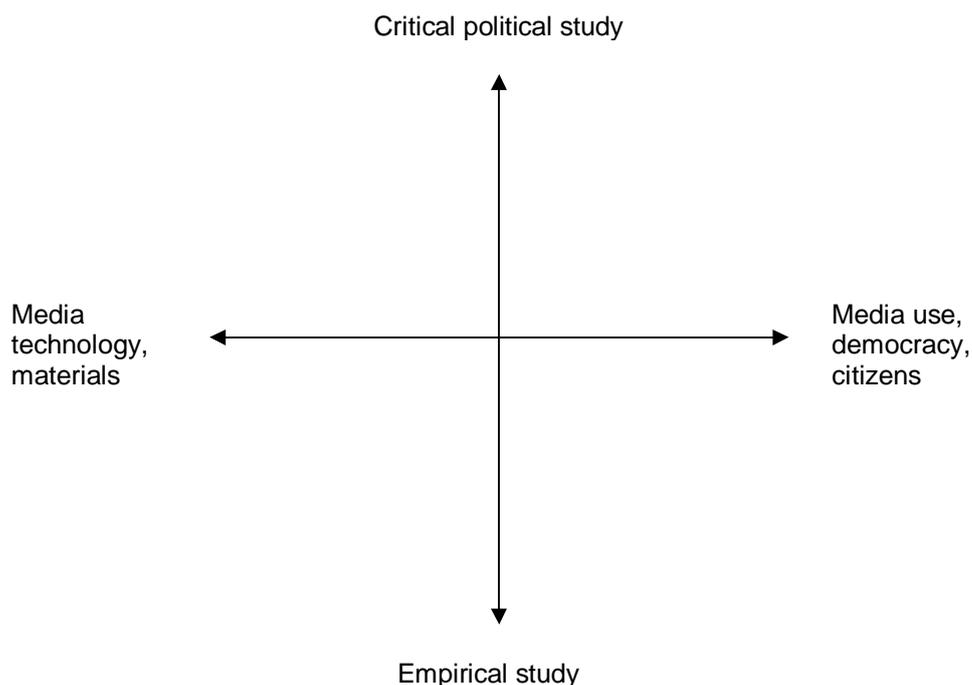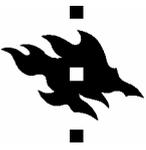
According to Cubitt, Australian media research is not located at any one point, but rather is clustered around the spectrum. In the big picture, political economy appears to be the major tradition in contemporary Australian media and communication research. However, it has taken different forms than elsewhere. (Sinclair 2006b, 23.) There are two key factors that have made political economy so popular in Australia: 1) the exceptionally concentrated ownership structure has made political economy a highly relevant approach, and 2) the strong influence of British and European tradition has encouraged the adoption of such theoretical underpinnings.

Terry Flew (2004, 7) dates the birth of Australian critical communication research to the year 1975, when Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation was seen taking a too dominant role in shaping politics:

> It looked like a systematic attempt by a powerful media mogul to use his newspapers, which had supported Whitlam and Labor only three years earlier, to engineer the downfall of a democratically elected government of the left. Given the global expansion of News Corporation, and both the willingness to get politically involved and the well-publicised move to the political right of its head, it seemed to be an obvious focus for radical, politically motivated research in Australian media and communications.

The Australian version of political economy is also known as the "media mates" approach, which refers to the close patterns of interaction between Australia's powerful media proprietors, such as the Packer and Murdoch families, and leading politicians in both major parties, Liberal and Labor (Cunningham 2006, 44).

"Australian media and communication research is well known for having a particular policy emphasis", confirms Professor Stuart Cunningham, one of the leading media scholars in the country. "There is also a strong emphasis on film history; film has been around for longer than other media. Print history is strong, too." These are among the features that distinguish Australian research. However, as Cunningham says, "I wouldn't call it methodologically or theoretically innovative". The lack of theoretical innovation is at least partly explained by the pragmatic nature of Australian society, which has not encouraged very complex and abstract social theorising.

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Figure 5
The Fields of Australian Media and Communication Research
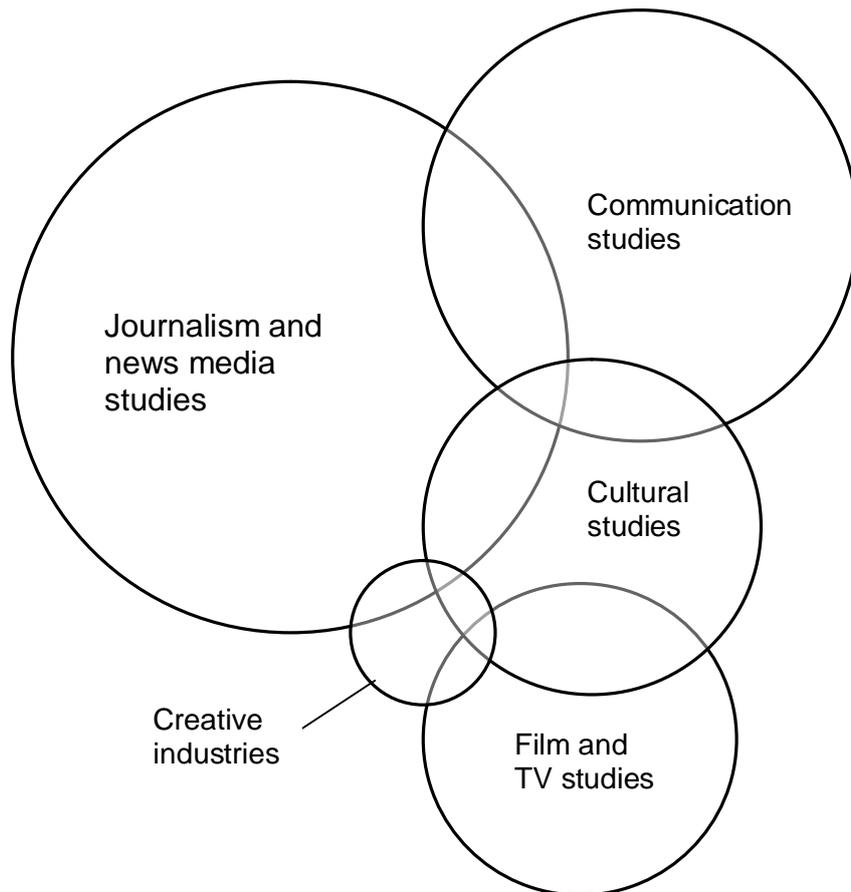
Media and communication research in Australia can be divided into five fields. They operate partly in common areas with other fields and partly in their own distinct areas. Journalism and news media research has much in common with cultural studies and communication studies, as well as with creative industries. Film and TV research refers here to entertainment industry (fiction). It comes close to cultural studies and creative industries, but does not deal with journalism or news media. Communication studies share a great deal with journalism and cultural studies. Many scholars work within several fields, and the boundaries between these areas have become increasingly blurred in recent years.

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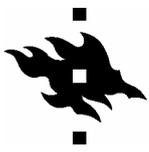
Figure 5 indicates the relative weight of the fields in Australian higher education (the sizes of the fields are exaggerated). The sizes have been estimated on the basis how many universities mention a given area of research. Journalism is reported to be included in the curriculum of 25 universities. Communication is taught in 19, Film and TV in 10 and cultural studies in 8 universities. Creative industries is the smallest with 5 mentions.

To some degree it is a matter of interpretation as to how big the fields actually are. But creative industries certainly is the smallest of the five, while journalism has the largest representation. Cultural studies is a larger field than it appears in Figure 5, but here it has been taken into account only in relation to media and communication, i.e., when it is mentioned in a university's media and communication curriculum. Not all research done in cultural studies is concerned with media or communication. Broadly understood, the communication field also would be bigger than it appears in Figure 5, but not all research done under the term communication has to do with media.

Communication is the broadest term used here: all journalism research is about media, and all media research is about communication. *Journalism* comes from the French word *journal*, which means 'diary'. *Media* is a Latin word, meaning equipment or means (used for communication). *Communicare* in Latin means making something common. Much of the research done under the title Communication, such as speech communication and organisational communication, does not concern media, and therefore is not taken into account in Figure 5.

There is a diversity of approaches within each field. For example, in television research, there are four major approaches. Political economy is the strongest; second is an interest in news; third is medium theory, which considers the ways in which media alter perceptions and uses of time and space; fourth is audience research. (McKee 2001, 310–312.)

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Table 10
Australian Journalism and News Media Research 1992–2002 by subject

Subject	Articles	Books	Total
Journalism education	103	1	104
Print	93	5	98
History	80	12	92
Asia-Pacific	88	3	91
Work practises	82	6	88
Ethics	75	3	78
Politics	57	8	65
Content analysis	63		63
Television	61	2	63
Australians on other countries	53	3	56
Media theory	46	2	48
Technology	46	1	47
Ethnic issues	39	1	40
Ownership	33	7	40
ABC	33	3	36
Indigenous issues	29	3	32
Law	28	4	32
Foreign news	28	3	31
Radio	21	1	22
Industrial issues	21		21
Women	21		21
Textual analysis	20		20
Regulation	18	1	19
Photojournalism	17	1	18
Audience studies	17		17
International comparison	13	3	16
Regional journalism	16		16
Surveys	16		16
Public journalism	14		14
Science/medicine	10		10
Gay and lesbian media	4		4
Religion	3		3
Total	*1248*	*73*	*1321*

Print media has, not surprisingly, attracted the most attention among media scholars. This is without doubt a result of the significance of the print media, but also for practical reasons.

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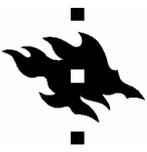
Everybody who has done media research knows how much easier it is to gather a sample of newspapers than to hunt electronic media content, which is often in companies' archives for which permissions are required.

The journalism studies approach

As noted earlier, journalism is taught and researched in 25 of Australia's 39 universities. However, as a discipline it is not as developed as many other areas of research. "I'm afraid that it's still quite immature as research", Professor Mark Pearson says. But it is old enough to have some traditions and characteristics. Its distinctive features include the following:

- **Pragmatist approach** means that Australian media research in general is not as theoretical as European, but because of the strong European influence in recent history, it is not as empirical as in the US
- Research is strongly **focused on the domestic stage** (for example, a country like Finland is more likely to become a part of a bigger project, representing a Scandinavian or EU country; Australia has no similar geographic partner). Having said that, it should be pointed out that there is also a large body of serious academic work by Australian scholars done from a global perspective.
- **A strong comparative approach** (because of the distance to other countries and various relationships with the US, Britain and Asia, there is a need for Australians from any background to prove themselves; this is reflected in research carried out with a comparative approach)
- Australian academic journals are also distinctive in having more **commentary** than journals of many other countries

It is no longer news that media are more and more going to the Internet, but research about online journalism in Australia is still a relatively young field of interest. "We lag behind some other countries, such as the US, much because we were so slow to adopt broadband", says Associate Lecturer Gillian Cowden, who is starting her PhD research about the online news process. The University of the Sunshine Coast scholar says that it was only about three years ago when serious studies about the Internet began to emerge in Australia. Her research concerns
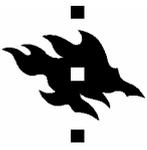
journalism, but as a study about people and their media use it also draws from the field of cultural studies.

The cultural approach

The question of national identity is always present in the Australian public sphere. Australians continually ask themselves: who are we? Representation of nationality is also explored by many media and communication scholars, especially those in film and television studies. Unlike journalism studies, film and television studies concentrate on fictional content such as drama and advertising. Television as a liveable and pervasive medium is a major site for identity construction.

Many scholars, like Alan McKee (2001, 125) argue that the concept of a "typical Australian" has little to do with reality. McKee uses Australian actor Paul Hogan's famous cigarette advertisements, from the 1970s and 1980s, to show how nationality is constructed on Australian television. Hogan's easy-going, individualistic bushland-Aussie character provides an image that many Australians (though not all) find attractive and familiar. Hogan, best known for his role as Mike "Crocodile" Dundee in Australia's most famous movie ever, analysed the nationality building project: "I'm a typical Australian character", he said, but "there's no such thing as a typical Australian, but there are thousands walking around the street who are just like me" (MacDonald 1973, 54; quoted in McKee 2001, 125). In McKee's words, "Hogan is *not* a 'typical' Australian, but he *should* be. This is not showing the audience what they *are* like; it is rather providing a model around which a community can be formed, behaviour measured, and identity appreciated."

Although there are many examples of the constructivist, cultural approach to film and television studies, it is difficult to avoid making connections with the industry and its policy. This is especially the case when exploring advertisements. As McKee (2001, 1–2) himself points out, much of the Australian TV and film research concentrates on the issues "behind-the-scenes", such as legislation and media ownership.

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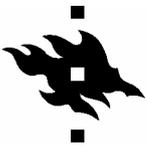
The creative industries approach

The concept of creative Industries may sound unfamiliar to many foreign readers, but in Australia it is an integral part of media and communication research. However, as an approach creative industries is quite new. The Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation (CCI) was established in July 2005. It is based at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane.

The creative industries approach addresses questions connected to the challenges raised by globalisation: How does Australia build a "creative" economy and society suited to the conditions for content creation, business sustainability, employment, vocation, identity, and social structure and communication emerging across the globe in the 21st century? Originated in Tony Blair's Britain in 1997, the concept of creative industries has recently been adopted in some Australian universities. It can be understood as part of the shift towards a service-based economy and the rise of knowledge and creativity as key factors in economic growth and competitiveness (Flew 2004, 20).

According to director Stuart Cunningham, the "structure of the Centre's research can be conceptualised as a 'value chain' that starts with sizing up the dimensions and dynamics of the sector, seeks to promote education and training for a creative workforce, creates ways of addressing bottlenecks in content generation and dissemination, assists in improving the business structures and practises of creative enterprises, examines policy settings and regulatory regimes for better outcomes for creators and consumers alike, and engages in depth with Australia's place in the region and with crucial export markets and cultural partners".

An interview with Stuart Cunningham clarifies how creative industries actually differs from other media research fields. "The approach of creative industries is constructive rather than critical", he says. "It tends to be regional, emphasising small business and entrepreneurial activities. It deals with user-led media, which are often outside big conglomerates. It's all about blurring of commercial and non-commercial." Cunningham compares creative industries with experience industries, which is a Scandinavian approach. Compared with other Australian media and communication research areas, creative industries is "a small field'". But, according to

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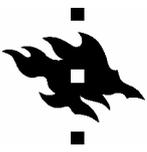
Cunningham, it is also vibrant and prominent. Researchers in this field have won a large number of high profile grants.

As newcomers often do, creative industries has faced criticism. Some of the biggest academic criticisms of creative industries have come from journalism academics. Creative industries does not maintain the tradition of critical distance to its objects. In the view of many journalism academics, creative industries is too positive about the changes going on, such as those in media production. These academics ask if creative industries is a research program at all, or if it is just a fashionable way of gathering funding. Others have criticised the field for having too narrow an understanding of "creativity", since not all creativity produces – and is not supposed to produce – economic benefits.

Some media scholars, who themselves are not directly related to creative industries, think that this field has the potential to become an increasingly influential area and that it is already guiding much of Australian media research. "There have been a lot of good applications in this area", says Angela Ndalianis, Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Information Technology and Multimedia at the University of Melbourne. "The boundaries between media are breaking down." Ndanialis was the first person to teach computer game studies in an Australian university. She sees new innovations, such as artificial intelligence, becoming a more essential part of games. With artificial intelligence games can, for example, interact with players, thus making the games increasingly user-led.

Media Wars – still fighting?

One characteristic feature of Australia media and communication research is the divide between journalism studies and media studies (cultural studies). The conflict between the two was highlighted in the 1990s, at a time of rapid expansion of journalism education in Australian universities. On 27 November 1998 at Queensland University of Technology there was a seminar called *Media Wars: Media Studies and Journalism Education*. One of the speakers was journalist Keith Windschuttle, who had criticised media and cultural studies. According to Windschuttle, there was a need to return to the "Holy Trinity" of journalism education: an empirical method and "realist" worldview; an ethical orientation to audiences and the public interest; and a commitment to clear writing. The debate was largely around the question of

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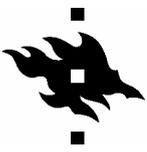
whether media and cultural studies have something to offer journalism education and vice versa. (Flew & Sternberg 1999, 9.) Despite some anti-theorist arguments, it seemed inescapable that in order to be in the academy, journalism needed theory.

Cultural studies professor Graeme Turner, writing about the seminar, stated that "there was considerable division over just everything that was said". He realised the discussion was not just a division between two kinds of educational models, but part of an older and larger debate – especially that between professional education and academic education, and a reaction against theory (French critical theory in particular). However, Turner thought that there was no need to consider journalism education and media studies oppositional. Instead, both have valuable things to offer one another. Turner thought that those working in education should not attack new forms of knowledge just because they challenge the discipline's conventional practises. (Turner 1999, 1;4.)

In 2007, echoes of the Media Wars still resound in the corridors of UQ and other Australian universities. At UQ journalism research and media studies operate in physically different places, do different kinds of research, and have not always been able to avoid disagreement. Defining the key approaches also depends on terminology: in this report, media and communication research includes all the research done in the field, and journalism studies is a part of that, but in Australia many scholars consider these two areas quite separate.

Issues in media research

It is not theory or methodology that gives Australian media research its typical character, but rather the issues that are examined. Much of academic work is international or non-national, which means it is not related to any specific country or culture. However, Australian media and communication research as well as journalism research have a strong domestic emphasis. This is, of course, natural: if Australian scholars do not explore Australian media, who else will?

Despite its significance, radio is a widely neglected theme in Australian media and communication research (Griffen-Foley 2006, 133). As Graeme Turner points out, media scholars and other academics tend to go along with fashion, trying to find the next big thing, and "radio hasn't been the next big thing for 50 years". However, occasionally radio has drawn more

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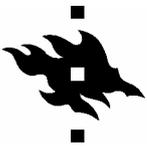
attention, as in the February 2007 issue of the journal *Media International Australia*, which is devoted to Talkback Radio, a format particularly popular and influential in Australia.

A relatively strong research effort has been made to understand issues in the Asia-Pacific region. From Australian an point of view, this region is geographically close but culturally distant, yet it is interesting and important in many ways. Ninety one publications were produced on the topic from 1992 to 2002, according to Dobinson (2003). Seventeen of these concerned Australia in one way or another.

Because of its geographic location, Australia is a regional superpower in the South Pacific region. Australian peacekeepers, for instance, played an important role in the independence struggle of East Timor at the turn of the millennium. Despite the significance of the region, little media research has been done about the Pacific region by Australians. According to Brisbane-based journalism scholar Mark Hayes, the Pacific has traditionally been a field of anthropology and international relations research, but there are just a handful of media scholars concentrating on this area. "The Pacific has always been marginalised. There's no money in it", says Hayes. "It's exceptionally hard to get any research grants." Hayes himself is specialised in Pacific media practises and content, and he has visited the islands several time. Locals even call him by a name derived from the language Tuvalu.

When Australian media content is concerned, the issue of indigenous public sphere cannot be ignored. Although indigenous people count for just 2.3 per cent of the Australian population, they are an essential part of its cultural and historical heritage. In Australia there are two main groups of indigenous people: Aborigines, who live mostly on the continent, and Torres Strait islanders. Their home area is on the islands of the Torres Strait, which is between Queensland's Cape York peninsula and Papua-New Guinea. With their happy-sounding and melodic music as well as their flowered dresses, Torres Strait islanders look more like other Pacific island people than Aborigines.

However, most of what is said and written about indigenous Australians, concerns Aborigines. Since the 1960s it has been widely accepted in Australian society that Aborigines should enjoy the same rights as other citizens. Nevertheless, the notion that Aborigines might have rights in

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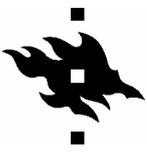
accordance with their status as original peoples has not found a place in the mainstream of Australian politics or culture. (Attwood & Markus 1999, 264.)

Research shows that throughout its history Australian journalism has represented Aboriginal people as an underclass, through discourses of anomaly, correction and protection (Hartley & McKee 2000, 339–340). For example in the middle of the year 2007 there was enormous media coverage on the problems in Aboriginal communities, including alcoholism and child abuse. In the media it was often pointed out, correctly, that Aboriginal children had suffered abuse not only by Aborigines but also by white people living near their communities. The social and historical roots of the situation were also analysed in a great number of newspaper columns and TV and radio conversations. Despite the analytical approach, the overall result of the media coverage was that Aboriginal people once again were framed negatively in the mainstream media. A content analysis by University of Canberra researcher Kerry McCallum shows that for many years there had been several sharp peaks in media coverage of Aboriginal people. In normal times Aborigines were invisible in the mainstream media, but as soon as something unusual came out, media attention ballooned. According to McCallum's data, *The Australian* had the largest number of articles about the child abuse issue in 2007. She calls this "moral panic".

It is hardly a coincidence that *The Australian* had much more coverage on the Aboriginal child abuse issue than other newspapers. While there is without doubt some genuine concern about Aboriginal people, one could suggest that by paying a huge amount of attention to this issue, *The Australian* maintains its conservative values: emphasising the problems in "primitive" Aboriginal communities, the newspaper highlights its view that a Western, market liberal and high-consumption way of life is superior to other ways of life. This is not necessarily intentional, but rather a by-product of the editorial decision of *The Australian* to cover the child abuse issue more extensively than other papers. Journalism is a modern "white" discourse, and to be able to act within it, one has to adopt and follow its common sense pre-suppositions. Therefore, journalism often faces difficulties in covering issues from an Aboriginal perspective. The ethnic and cultural diversity among Australian journalists has increased since the early 1990s, challenging the Anglo-Celtic dominance in news rooms (Forde 2005, 119).

After months of intensive coverage about the problems in Aboriginal communities, there was an outstanding response, from a different point of view. On 28 July 2007 *The Weekend Australian's*

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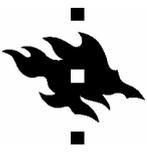
feature section, named *The Inquirer*, published an article by Robert Manne, professor of politics at La Trobe University. A senior journalist of *The Australian*, Cristopher Pearson, had previously criticised Manne for being a hopeless romantic who views traditional Aboriginal society through the fantasy Enlightenment prism of the "noble savage". Manne, one of the leading public intellectuals in Australia, presented historical evidence of pre-European Aboriginal life and ended his article by making his own position explicit:

> For me the hunter-gatherers who the British encountered after their arrival were not noble savages but *fellow human beings*, part of our common humanity, who, for that reason, were owed then and are still owed now both understanding and respect. (Italics added)

Although Aboriginal people have long been excluded from mainstream media and the public sphere, new communication technology has enabled them to make themselves heard more than before. Surfing the Internet, one can easily find dozens of webpages maintained by indigenous people. The Aborigines even have their own news service.

In indigenous media, there are many success stories, like Radio Goolarri in Broome, Western Australia. According to an exhibition at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, Radio Goolarri is one of the country's foremost indigenous radio stations. It grew out of the frustration of indigenous musicians who wanted to have their music played and their stories told on radio. In spite of several obstacles and economic hardships, Radio Goolarri has managed to gain a strong position in its region and build a network that covers much of Australia from coast to coast. The core of this kind of media emergence is the strong will of indigenous communities to tell their own stories and maintain their traditional relationship to their homeland.

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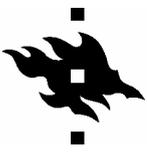
4. The future of media and communication research

History never stops, nor does the past disappear. "Our history tends to be written the opposite way down", says Professor Sean Cubitt, Director of Journalism Programme at the University of Melbourne. By this he means that media phenomena of the past are often understood in the context of today. For example, 19th-century civil society can be seen as an early form of today's virtual communities like Wikipedia. In such an approach there is, of course, the danger of anachronism, but it is the constantly changing nature of media that keeps alive an historical approach such as this. "A colleague in English literature might still be researching Shakespeare, and do that for his or her whole career, but I wouldn't think of researching the coverage of the first Gulf War", Cubitt says.

John Cokley, journalism lecturer at the University of Queensland, is optimistic about the future of his field: "It is very good, because of the democratisation. More and more people are integrating with publishing. Mobile industry also opens possibilities: almost every new mobile thing has a media connection, like news service. There will be a clear and well-defined market for journalism products and journalism research." Cokley points out, however, that this development will not be driven by technology itself – he is not a technological determinist – but rather by an audience's *applications* of new technologies. "More and more, people know what they want to do with technology. Audiences are beginning to drive technology. That gives me hope."

UQ Senior Lecturer Levi Obijiofor believes that the future of media research in Australia is "very bright". "Communication is central to everything we do. New technologies are the basic tools for survival in the 21st century and beyond. Although this is not the case at the moment, in future the importance of media studies will be realised as the new technologies come into our everyday life." Some of the computers used in the School's Focus Group Facility are very advanced, and there are a number of organisations involved in that group, including the Defence Forces. There is, for example, voice recognition technology; instead of having to write down what has been said, the computer does it for you. In short, according to Obijiofor, the future of media and communication research will be increasingly technology-driven. "Now we are the ones begging for funding, but in future, companies will come to beg from us. In my speculation,

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this will take about 15 to 20 years." Communication studies scholar Elske van de Fliert is optimistic too. "To be able to manage conflicting interests is going to be increasingly important." This will create more demand for the kind of research she is carrying out.

The scholars interviewed here are generally optimistic about the future of media and communication research in Australia. The same kind of result was found in a survey by Putnis et al. (2002, 86). However, there are also more sceptical views. Folker Hanusch, a postdoctoral fellow who moved to Australia nine years ago from his native Germany, is concerned about the theoretical strength of current journalism research: "I'm hopeful, but… The current standing is not a very good base." If journalism research manages to develop a stronger theoretical basis and interact more with other disciplines, the future could be better. "I think journalism research needs to get out from its purely practical approach. But I really don't know where it will go." Mark Hayes, a Brisbane-based journalism academic, thinks that external forces threaten to make journalism research "an endangered species". "I don't see the future will be very bright. We are under an enormous pressure for doing commercialised research, but the kinds of things we are saying are necessarily critical of journalism that is done nowadays." As a result, Hayes sees there will be less room for proper, critical journalism research.

Stuart Cunningham says that media and communication research in Australia is a diverse field. Solid work has been done in media history, for instance, but further work on media and multiculturalism would be necessary. "The traditional policy and political economy approach will be challenged by the emergence of new business models outside media conglomerates. No one doubts that the Internet is the big thing, the prime mover of change. And it's becoming more and more important. Technology is always present, but it is not now more important a factor than it has been before. What is important is the way the Internet is being used."

Journalist-in-residence John Austin thinks journalism research only has a future if it engages with the industry more than it does now. "Otherwise it will always be poorly funded and led. Also we need more international perspective and to set Australia in international comparison." He thinks journalists graduating from university should be encouraged to do more research themselves, widening the perspective of journalism. Stephen Lamble, Director of the School of Communication at University of the Sunshine Coast, also would like to see closer ties between

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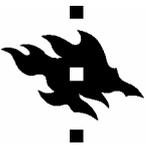
the academy and the industry. He thinks that nowadays there are too many people teaching journalism who have no actual journalism experience.

Mark Pearson observes: "I am optimistic about it. I think the media themselves are becoming more sophisticated. They are also changing, and when there's change there's always need for research." Journalism as a subject of higher education is young in Australia, having been introduced only about 30 years ago. Therefore, it is not as theoretically advanced as many older areas of research. "I am hopeful that as journalism matures as a discipline, the future of the research will be better."

Another trend that affects the future of media and communication research is the generation gap. The generation that is now in power in the media industry does not have a background of university-level journalism education. In fact, many industry leaders do not have any higher education at all. Mark Pearson hopes that the current suspicion and anti-intellectualism will whither away as the new generation enters the industry's key positions. "As our graduates become industry leaders, there will be more appreciation for media research than now."

Researching the future is about vision. One source offering vision is science fiction, which has inspired a recent Australian book *Communication and new media: from broadcast to narrowcast* (Hirst and Harrison 2007). Throughout the book, however, the authors argue against both technological and cultural determinism. They point out that "new" technologies are not new, in the sense that technological development and change have been part of the human experience since the beginning of the modern era (p. 75).

Interviews with Melbourne scholars bring new elements to the discussion about the future of media research. It looks as if there is a whole new world waiting just around corner. According to Sean Cubitt, research will be more future-oriented, more about emergent media. "Within the next 40 years, there will be two or three big innovations (on the scale of the Internet) and 60 smaller innovations (on the scale of DVDs, for example). The pace of innovation is going to increase." Objects of research are one thing, conducting research is another. Cubitt was involved in making a global survey of the audience for *The Lord of the Rings*. It included 36,000 questionnaires in 32 languages. Unusual it was, Cubitt predicts that this kind of megaprojects

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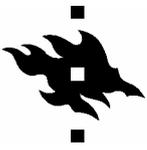
will become more common in the future. When it comes to scientific publishing, Cubitt says the move from paper is inevitable: "The economics of research publishing just doesn't work."

Associate Professor Angela Ndalianis from the University of Melbourne says that understanding media future through its history is becoming increasingly important. The Australian government is pushing universities to more interdisciplinary research, and this encourages fields like creative industries. "There is a lot of re-thinking in Australian media research." Ndalianis mentions the concept of transmedia, developed by an MIT professor, Henry Jenkins. Transmedia, in short, means telling a story (like *Lost*, *Matrix*, or *Lord of the Rings*) through several forms of media and thus providing the audience an opportunity to make their own interpretations of the story. For example, in order to fully experience the world of Matrix, one has to embrace various media in addition to television and cinema.

Will the fashion pass?

Cultural studies professor Graeme Turner thinks the future of media and communication research in Australia is good. "I don't see a problem in maintaining the current level." He thinks that the focus of research is driven by fashion, more than anything else. Yet Turner is a little sceptical about whether the current trend of online media, convergence, etc. will continue to guide research: "The fashion will pass."

Indeed, it is questionable whether the future of media and communication research in Australia will be directed by traditional large-scale media, emerging nanomedia, or a combination of both. It could also be directed by something we are not yet even aware of, something totally new. On one hand, history seems to show that new forms of media do not replace old forms, but rather new forms join the company of the oldies – the book has not disappeared; neither has the radio. On the other hand, young people's media-using habits are strikingly different from those of mature audiences, and there is obviously more involved than just rebelling against earlier generations' conventions. Media use, particularly reading home-delivered newspapers, contains strong ritualistic elements, and if young people are not socialised with that daily ritual in the first place, it is unlikely that they will adopt newspaper reading habits later.
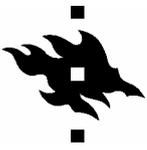
Teenagers tend to surprise their elders by introducing them to unheard-of media. The author of this report, myself just 29, was struck by my seeming lack of expertise when I saw ten-year-old boys and girls watching video films by means of an interactive mobile television. One way to look at the possible future of media and communication research is to look at where media, technically speaking, are obviously going. According to a report published in July 2006 by the Sydney-based Future Exploration Network, there are five major ideas transforming media: 1) **Shifting**: for example, podcasting is changing ways to listen to radio, putting audiences more and more in charge of programming; 2) **Time compression**: people are busier than ever and have less time than before, creating markets for snappy content and filtering for targeted audiences; 3) **Infinite content**: "the million-channel universe" makes it easier for masses to create content for themselves, highlighting the need for filtering and branding; 4) **Generational change**: having for decades invested in old-media infrastructure and large-scale business models, many of the established media companies will find it difficult to adjust to the new media landscape of mobile platforms and customer-created content; 5) **Media is everywhere**: in the future even clothes may be screens, while e-paper will add video and audio to the formerly static pages of newspapers. Advertising might increase explosively unless it is regulated. (*Future of Media: Report*, July 2006.)

The report cited above is written from the perspective of market-driven media and enterprises. There is no mention of public service broadcasting, which still plays a significant role in many countries. Implications for democracy, civil society, and ethical questions are also bypassed. It would be fair to say that *Future of Media: Report* gives an insightful and practically detailed, yet narrow-minded picture of the media. This is an argument for academic media research provides perspectives and future scenarios that commercial research fails to offer. Academic research can be understood as a public good. It is like the road system, welfare benefits, defence forces, libraries and many other things that are essential for the functioning of society, but cannot be produced by private enterprise alone.

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Appendix

A representative list of recent books (2006 and 2007)
by Australian media and communication researchers and researchers working in Australia

Journalism and news media

The Media and Communications in Australia 2nd edition (Allen & Unwin). Edited by Stuart Cunningham, Queensland University of Technology, and Graeme Turner, The University of Queensland

Communication and New Media. From Broadcast to Narrowcast (Oxford University Press). Martin Hirst, Edith Cowan University, and John Harrison, The University of Queensland

I journalist. Coping with and crafting media information in the 21st century (Pearson Educational Australian). Edited by John Cokley, The University of Queensland, and Lee Duffield, Queensland University of Technology

The Daily Miracle: an introduction to journalism 3rd edition (Oxford University Press). D. Conley and Stephen Lamble, University of the Sunshine Coast

Media and Journalism: a user's guide to theory and practise, forthcoming (Oxford University Press). Jason Bainbridge et.al, University of Tasmania

The Writer's Reader: Understanding Journalism and Non-Fiction (Cambridge University Press Australia). Susie Eisenhuth, University of Technology, Sydney, and Willa McDonald, Macquarie University

Giving Ground: media and environmental conflict in Tasmania (Quintus Publishing). Libby Lester, University of Tasmania

Christian Fundamentalism and the Media (WACC). Pradip Thomas, The University of Queensland

The Media and Political Process (Sage). Eric Louw, The University of Queensland

Media Relations: issues and strategies (Allen & Unwin). Jane Johnston, Griffith University

Us and Them: A journalist's investigation of Media, Muslims and the Middle East. Peter Manning, University of Technology, Sydney

Media Relations (Oxford University Press). Richard Stanton, The University of Sydney

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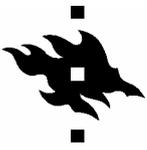
Media Globalization: how the western media imagines world news (McFarland & Co).
Richard Stanton, The University of Sydney

The Media City (Sage). Scott McQuire, The University of Melbourne

Adult Themes (Pan McMillan). Kate Grawford, The University of Sydney

Reimagining Diaspora: transnational lives and the media (Palgrave). Edited by Ramaswami
Harindranath et.al, The University of Melbourne

Southern Discomfort: global media, local elites, and neo-liberalism, forthcoming (Pluto).
Ramaswami Harindranath, The University of Melbourne

Audience-citizens in India: the media, public knowledge, and interpretive practise, forthcoming
(Sage). Ramaswami Harindranath, The University of Melbourne

News in Public Memory: an international study of media memories across generations (Peter
Lang). Ingrid Volkmer, The University of Melbourne

The Global Public Sphere, forthcoming (Polity Press). Ingrid Volkmer, The University of
Melbourne

The Ends of the 60s: performance, media and contemporary culture (Performance Paradigm).
Edited by Edward Scheer, The University of New South Wales, with Peter Eckersall

Communication studies

Towards a Sustainable Information Society (Intellect Books). Edited by Jan Servaes,
The University of Queensland

Information Society and Knowledge Societies? UNESCO and the Smart State (Southbound).
Edited by Rhonda Breit and Jan Servaes, The University of Queensland

Intellectual Property Rights and Communications in Asia: Conflicting Traditions (Sage).
Edited by Pradip Thomas and Jan Servaes, The University of Queensland

*Renegades and Rats: Betrayal and the Remaking of Radical Organisations in Britain and
Australia* (Melbourne University Press). J. Dickenson, RMIT University

Government Communication in Australia (Cambridge University Press). Edited by Sally Young,
The University of Melbourne

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Television, film and popular culture studies

Understanding the Global TV Format, forthcoming (Intellect Books). Albert Moran, Griffith University

Film in Australia: an introduction, forthcoming (Cambridge University Press). Albert Moran, Griffith University

Historical Dictionary of Australian Radio and TV, forthcoming (Scarecrow Press). Albert Moran, Griffith University

New Television, Globalisation and the East Asian Cultural Imagination (Hong Kong University Press). Michael Keane, Queensland University of Technology, Albert Moran, Griffith University

Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward (Routledge). Michael Keane, Queensland University of Technology

Chinese Documentaries: from dogma to polyphony (Routledge). Yinghci Chu, Murdoch University

King Hu's a Touch of Zen (Hong Kong University Press). S. Teo, RMIT University

Sheep and the Australian Cinema (Melbourne University Press). D. Verhoeven, RMIT University

Tracking Culture: popular music and global cinemas, under contract (Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield). Edited by Amanda Howell, Griffith University

How to Study the Event Movie: The Lord of the Rings – a case study (Manchester University Press/Palgrave). Edited by Sean Cubitt et.al, The University of Melbourne

Perspectives on Global Cultures (Open University Press). Ramaswami Harindranath, The University of Melbourne

Men in Tights: Comic Book Superheroes (forthcoming). Edited by Angela Ndalianis, The University of Melbourne

Neo-baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment (MIT Press). Angela Ndalianis, The University of Melbourne

Super/Heroes (New Academia Publishing). Edited by Angela Ndalianis et.al, The University of Melbourne

AsiaPacifiQueer: rethinking gender and sexuality, forthcoming in 2008 (Illinois University Press). Audrey Yue et.al, The University of Melbourne

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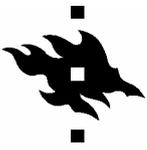
Sonic Synergies: Music, Identity, Technology, Community (Hampshire). Gerry Bloustien et.al,
The University of South Australia (forthcoming December 2007)

Cell Phone Culture: mobile technology in everyday life (Routledge). Gerard Goggin,
The University of Sydney

Mis/takes: archetype, myth and identity in screen fiction (Routledge). Terrie Waddell, La Trobe
University

24 Frames: Australia and New Zealand (Wallflover Press). Edited by Geoff Mayer, La Trobe
University, with Keith Beattie

Encyclopedia of Film Noir (Greenwood Press). Geoff Mayer, La Trobe University, with Brian
McDonnell

Allegorical Images: Tableau, Time and Gesture in the Cinema of Werner Schroeter (Intellect
Press). Michelle Langford, The University of New South Wales

*The list includes only newly published or forthcoming books. Book chapters, journal articles and
conference papers are excluded. Sources: Internet pages of the universities*

Remarks on the list: In 2006 and 2007 there have been nearly 50 books published by media and
communication scholars who are based in Australian universities. About 45 per cent of recent
books concern journalism and news media, but the same number of books is published about
television, film and popular culture. This indicates the strong position that TV and cinema
studies have within Australian media research.

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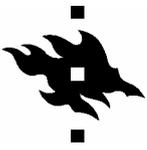
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Interviews

Dr **John Harrison**, Lecturer in Communication & Public Relations**,** The School of Journalism and Communication (SJC) at the University of Queensland (UQ) (15.3.2007)

Dr **Levi Obijiofor**, Senior Lecturer in journalism and communication, SJC at UQ (20.3.2007)

Martin Hadlow, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Communication for Development and Social Change, SJC at UQ (23.3.2007)

Dr **John Cokley**, Lecturer in Journalism, SJC at UQ (23.3.2007)

Prof **Graeme Turner**, ARC Federation Fellow, Professor of Cultural Studies, Director of the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies at UQ (28.3.2007)

Dr **Elske van de Fliert**, Associate Professor and Program Director of the Bachelor of Communication and the Master of Communication, SJC at UQ (12.4.2007)

Dr **Folker Hanusch**, Postdoctoral Fellow in journalism and communication, SJC at UQ (16.4.2007)

Prof **Stuart Cunningham**, Director, ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation at Queensland University of Technology (24.4.2007)

Prof **Mark Pearson**, Head of Journalism and Co-Director of the Centre for New Media Research and Education at Bond University (27.4.2007)

Dr **Michael Meadows**, Associate Professor, School of Arts at Griffith University (4.5.2007)

John Austin, Journalist-in-residence, SJC at UQ (17.5.2007)

Prof **Sean Cubitt**, Director of Media and Communications Program, the University of Melbourne (29.5.2007)

Dr **David Nolan**, Lecturer, Media and Communications Program, the University of Melbourne (30.5.2007)

Steve Foley, Deputy Editor (development and production), *The Age*, Melbourne (30.5.2007)

Dr **Angela Ndalianis**, Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Information Technology and Multimedia in the Faculty of Arts, the University of Melbourne (30.5.2007)

Colin McKinnon, Learning and Development Manager, Fairfax Group (18.6.2007). Telephone interview

Dr **Mark Hayes**, Brisbane-based journalism academic and journalist (20.6.2007)

Dr **Stephen Lamble**, Head, School of Communication at University of the Sunshine Coast (26.6.2007)

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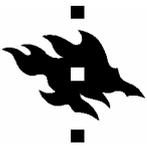
Gillian Cowden, Associate Lecturer in Journalism, PhD student,
School of Communication at University of the Sunshine Coast (26.6.2007)

Dr **Kerry McCallum**, Lecturer in the School of Professional Communication,
The University of Canberra (16.7.2007)

Prof **Peter Putnis**, Professor of Communication, Division of Communication and Education,
The University of Canberra (16.7.2007)

Mark Baker, Editor, *The Canberra Times* (17.7.2007)

Ian Bushnell, Chief-of-staff, *The Canberra Times* (17.7.2007)

Prof **Krishna Sen**, Executive Director, Humanities and Creative Arts, Australian Research Council
(3.8.2007) E-mail interview

The interview method used in this report is the semi-structured thematic interview. This means that there is a structured set of questions, but other relevant issues are also allowed to arise during the discussion.

Interview questions (for everyone):

1) What, in your opinion, makes Australian media and communication research uniquely Australian?

2) Which are the most important theoretical and methodological approaches in Australian media and communication research?

3) Is it easy to get funding for media research in Australia?

4) How do you see the future of media and communication research in Australia?

In addition to this general set of questions, targeted questions regarding each person's special area of knowledge and research were discussed.
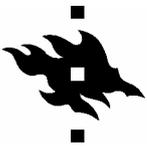
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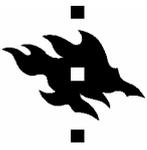
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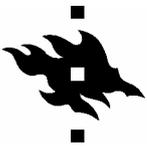
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