ANZCA Editorial

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We are delighted to introduce this special issue of *Platform: Journal of Media and Communication*. This issue continues a longstanding partnership between *Platform* and the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA), presenting a selection of outstanding papers authored by postgraduate students at the 2016 ANZCA Conference hosted by the University of Newcastle, NSW.

In her keynote about graduate employability at this year's pre-conference for postgraduates and early career researchers, The Thesis Whisperer Inger Mewburn noted that the maxim of "publish or perish" remains true in the contemporary academic job market (Pitt and Mewburn, 2016). Through this special issue we are therefore very pleased to be able to provide emerging scholars in the field of media and communication with an opportunity to disseminate their work beyond the conference. These papers are a testament to the interesting and high-quality research being undertaken by postgraduate communication students in universities across Australia and New Zealand.

This year's ANZCA conference invited papers around the theme "Creating Space in the Fifth Estate". Scholars and practitioners were asked to consider how the Internet and digital communication technologies have altered interactions, practices, perspectives and collectivities, and what these shifts may mean for communicators and for societies at large. This resulted in a broad range of submissions around issues both new and old in the field of communication, four of which are presented in this special issue.

Ashley Donkin, Donell Holloway and Lelia Green examine the new and uncertain terrain of participatory netnography involving children in their paper, "Towards Participatory Netnography: Collaborating with Children in Virtual Worlds Research". The authors discuss the ethical and methodological challenges they encountered while seeking to conduct a participatory netnography in children's virtual worlds, and describe a novel approach which resulted in a child participant successfully capturing screenshots of their online activities. They argue for clearer policies around conducting netnography with children—policies that balance the protection of children in virtual environments with opportunities for enhancing their agency and autonomy through participatory research.

Caitlin McGregor's piece, "Protecting Camden's Rural Heritage: Rural Discourses in the debate over a Proposed Islamic School in Camden, NSW" reminds us of the enduring relevance of the Fourth Estate. Her paper presents a discursive analysis of the local newspaper coverage concerning a proposed Islamic school in the western Sydney community of Camden. Through a content and discourse analysis of over 300 articles referencing the issue in the *Camden Advertiser*, McGregor identifies how various discursive participants drew on rural discourses to counterpose Camden's rural heritage against the construction of an Islamic school in the area and, ultimately, with the larger Muslim community.

In "Seen but Unseen: Missing Visible Indigenous Women in the Media and What it Means for Leadership in Indigenous Australia", Tess Ryan investigates media representations of powerful Indigenous women. The paper contends that although there is currently a multitude of strong Indigenous women in leadership roles, traditional mainstream media either ignore them or only report on a select few individuals. Ryan has found, however, that Indigenous women are creating space for themselves in the Fifth Estate. Her paper investigates why the mainstream media are not interested in offering similarly positive coverage of these women.

The final paper from Diane Spencer-Scarr, "Cybernetics of Digital Engagement: Optimizing the Self for Social Networking", examines the relationship between humans and digital networked technology. Her paper describes this relationship as a second order cybernetic system, and explains how concepts such as time, memory and space are altered in the Fifth Estate and may affect human behaviour. Spencer-Scarr concludes that certain personality traits are closely related to successful digital-engagement, and she argues that greater understanding of the Fifth Estate as part of a second order cybernetic system will allow humans to better manage digital networked technologies.

As guest editors for this special issue we would like to thank Thao Phan from *Platform* for her support of this joint venture between *Platform* and ANZCA. We are also grateful to Dr Janet Fulton, co-convenor of the 2016 ANZCA conference in Newcastle, for her guidance during the pre-conference planning and the assembly of this special issue, and the peer reviewers who assisted our contributors with refining their papers for submission. We must also extend our thanks to the ANZCA Executive for accommodating a change to postgraduate representation on the Executive in the lead-up to the conference. As postgraduate students, we have found that being members of ANZCA has significantly aided our professional development. The opportunities to present at collegial conferences, publish, and network with some of the pre-eminent scholars in the communication field are hugely beneficial.

We look forward to continuing the vibrant discussion begun in Newcastle this year at next year's ANZCA conference, hosted by the University of Sydney. We are particularly excited to see the diverse and interesting contribution of postgraduate scholars and practitioners continue and be supported, as always, by the ANZCA Executive, members and conference convenors, and journals such as *Platform*.

References

Pitt, R. & Mewburn, I. (2016). Academic superheroes? A critical analysis of academic job descriptions. Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 38(1), 88-101.

Elizabeth Goode is a PhD candidate in Communication and Media Arts at the University of Newcastle. Her thesis examines the life stories and cultural identities of intercountry adoptees in Australia. Her research interests include identity construction, adoption and cross-cultural migration, narrative inquiry and autoethnography.

Caitlin McGregor is a PhD candidate in Communication and Media Arts at the University of Newcastle. Her research interests include discourse, the Other and identity. Her thesis is investigating discursive representations of Islam in Australian newspapers, particularly in relation to proposed mosque developments and Islamic private schools.