



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED JOURNALISM



REVIEW

research engagement **teaching**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



My first year as Director of the Centre has been busy and exciting. It is a time of rapid change in the news media industry, bringing both threats and opportunities. On the one hand, old business models are under strain. On the other, we have never had such efficient tools for informing and being informed. I think the Centre has been able to play a positive role in advancing journalism in this context.

I am glad to have this opportunity to reflect on the Centre's achievements, and also contemplate the work that lies ahead. I am particularly proud to highlight several initiatives that address the present and future of journalism, and embody the University of Melbourne's triple helix of teaching, research and engagement.

The Master of Journalism commenced in 2012 with an enthusiastic and dedicated cohort of students. I think the distinguishing feature of this postgraduate degree is that it has been designed with the challenges presently facing news media in mind. As well as teaching the essential skills of journalism – investigating and communicating – we also teach the newly important skills of multimedia storytelling, journalistic entrepreneurship and journalistic use of social media to connect with sources and audiences. We are also the only university in Australia with a course in the new techniques of data journalism.

The Centre for Advancing Journalism is a hub of connections with both mainstream and emerging media industries. Our researchers are at the cutting edge of the changes in journalism practice, and this is reflected in our teaching and curriculum.

The Master of Journalism is delivered by teaching staff who are outstanding professional practitioners and student experience surveys yielded excellent results and informed further curriculum development for the current program.

Looking ahead in 2013, students will be preparing stories for publication in our new journal, *The Citizen*, which launches in March under the editorship of *The Age*'s former Washington correspondent Simon Mann, who will play a key role in mentoring our students.

Turning to research, we have developed an action-based research project, to commence in the lead up to the 2013 federal election, aimed at exploring the potential for social media to improve political engagement and inform political journalism. The "Citizens' Agenda" will be a social media intervention in ten key seats during the federal election campaign. Using the OurSay social media website, we will ask electors to ask the questions they would like political candidates to address. We are not asking the arid question "who will you vote for", but rather "what do you want the election to be about?". These social media forums will then culminate in public town hall meetings at which the candidates will answer the questions that have been most voted for on the OurSay website.

The public program continued to offer a range of challenging and exciting free events. In addition to our public lecture program at the University, we established the 'New News' series of events.



Our research will provide empirical and robust data on the potential of social media to inform journalism and improve civic engagement.

In further research news, a team led by my predecessor, Michael Gawenda, was successful in obtaining an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant, in partnership with the National Library of Australia and the Walkley Foundation, to research the history of photojournalism in Australia.

Meanwhile as part of the Faculty of Arts China strategy I have made two visits to Chinese universities since my appointment in December 2011. Four scholars from Fudan University visited the University of Melbourne in October and as a result we are presently developing a collaborative research project that explores the comparative influence of social media in China and Australia. We are also exploring the possibilities of student and staff exchanges with Fudan.

The public program continued to offer a range of challenging and exciting free events. In addition to our formal public lecture program at the University, we

established the 'New News' series of events. A highlight of this series was the New News Conference held at the Melbourne Writers Festival and at a number of regional forums within Victoria. The public program concluded the season with a lecture by Lord Justice Brian Leveson, direct from delivering his report on the Inquiry into Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press in the United Kingdom.

We have played a key role in initiating productive conversations and collaborations between established and emerging industries through the New News events and, in October, our hosting of the inaugural New Media Entrepreneurs' seminar. This was both a useful learning experience for students in the Master of Journalism, and helped to foster conversations between founders of new media start-ups who might otherwise not have met.

I am also particularly proud that the Centre has provided a venue for debates on the controversial topic of news media regulation and self-regulation, in the wake of the Finkelstein Report. We have hosted public events where a diversity of views

have been expressed, with speakers including the Chair of the Australian Press Council, Julian Disney, Professor Matthew Ricketson, Lord Justice Leveson and the CEO of News Limited, Kim Williams. It is particularly fitting for a public spirited university to host such debates, perhaps particularly when the news media fails to do so, or presents only one side. The staff of the Centre hold a diversity of views on appropriate news media regulation, but we all agree on one thing – the debate must be aired. The issue cannot simply be wished away, with uncomfortable views ridiculed or suppressed.

This year we joined the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (GSHSS) within the Faculty of Arts and have enjoyed terrific support and encouragement in our new "home". Overall it has been an exciting year in which we established our future plans and directions for the Centre. We look forward to consolidation and further implementation of our initiatives during 2013.

Margaret Simons
January 2013

IN THE PICTURE



Alpha Lisimba completes the AuSud Media Skills training, acquiring valuable skills in journalism.



Ms Carol Schwartz, AM and CAJ Director Margaret Simons host 'A Conversation with Mrs Moneyppenny' (a.k.a. Heather McGregor, *The Financial Times*)



News Ltd.'s Kim Williams makes 'Observations through a rather frosty crystal ball' for the A.N. Smith Lecture in Journalism



Our Master of Journalism cohort enjoy dedicated study spaces in the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences



Lord Justice Brian Leveson, Chairman of the Inquiry into Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press in the UK provides an expert analysis during our 2012 public lecture program.

TEACHING

The Master of Journalism, launched in 2012, has attracted early and mid-career journalists. The curriculum is constantly reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and intensely relevant for those working in the industry, and those who wish to gain work there.

Innovative subjects such as Data Journalism have been introduced. Subjects offered in 2012, including Reporting and Writing Stories, Dilemmas in Journalism, Journalism Entrepreneurship and Public Interest Journalism, gained outstanding student satisfaction ratings in recent surveys. The degree structure includes a professional internship opportunity. Host organisations in 2012 included the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Channel Nine, ninemsn, Business Spectator, *Herald Sun*, *The Monthly*, *Crikey* and *The Age*.

The Centre is also offering subjects through the Community Access Program (CAP), meaning that eligible applicants may enrol for individual subjects, without necessarily committing to the entire Masters program.

*"The Masters staff and lecturers are some of the most experienced players in media. Developing these relationships has already produced some great results. Many of the Masters students have had articles published in *The Age* and the *Herald Sun*, as well as *Crikey* and *Broadsheet*."*

Charlotte Ryan, Master of Journalism, 2012

Student Snapshot

A number of our students' writings were published in mainstream media with assignments that began as part of their coursework. Master of Journalism student Luke Voogt, won a \$2000 prize in the RightNow awards, offered by the Victorian Government's Department of Human Services, for reporting on issues to do with disability. Luke's story focused on the problems caused by lack of disabled access at Geelong Railway Station.

*"We were exposed to some of the most experienced, talented and interesting professionals in journalism, from the contemporary brilliance of *Crikey* editor Sophie Black, to the obsessive genius of investigative journalist John Helmer."*

The best part of the course was that I have begun to realise news is everywhere.

After finishing my first year, I feel a civic responsibility to let the public know what's happening in the world around them."

Luke Voogt, Master of Journalism, 2012



Advanced Non-Fiction Writing Short Course

In October, for the first time, we offered an intensive course in non-fiction writing designed for emerging and established writers. The workshops focused on participants' works in progress, together with highly practical discussions of the problems that writers tackle in every kind of non-fiction: from ethical and structural questions, through research and interviewing techniques, to matters of technique and style.

"Telling True Stories was a revelation for me. Over a span of three weeks, ten writers and I were privileged to have Helen Garner and Michael Gawenda, two luminaries in the world of literature, analyse and help us develop our writing."

Micheline Lee, Telling True Stories participant, 2012

AuSud Media Skills Training

The AuSud project, funded by the ARC, the ABC and AMES and involving collaboration between staff from the University of Melbourne, Swinburne University and LaTrobe University, offered two journalism training programs for Sudanese Australians during 2012. The first training taught students the fundamentals of journalism and, through an innovative individual mentorship framework, the students developed relationships with mainstream media. This training program also offered all AuSud students the opportunity to participate in radio master classes, giving them first-hand experience in broadcasting.

To showcase how far the students had developed their skills, the Centre for Advanced Journalism published a collection of the students' writing, which can be found on our website.

The second, more advanced, training was designed as a simulated newsroom. This educational model allowed students to become trainee journalists, and was highly successful and motivating for the participants who have now started their own blog, *The Gazelle* (<http://ausudmediaproject.wordpress.com/>).



ENGAGEMENT



Picture courtesy Melbourne Writers Festival 2012

New News Conference at the Melbourne Writers Festival

The New News Conference was a two-day exploration of the future of journalism, involving key protagonists – publishers, editors, writers and readers. It was an optimistic conference bringing journalists – citizen, freelance and mainstream – together with new media innovators and the public in a conversation around changes in journalism and media. At a time when traditional media companies are under stress and journalism is challenged by the rise of the Internet and social media, the New News Conference explores how to make the most of the opportunities and tackle the threats.

2012 marked the third year of the conference, proudly sponsored by the Melbourne Press Club and Copyright Agency Limited. The New News Conference hosted over 60 guests, including international appearances by

Andy Carvin (US National Public Radio), Sasha Frere-Jones (The New Yorker) and Henry Finder (The New Yorker), as well as a “hypothetical” in which journalists were led through key ethical dilemmas in scenarios drawn from contemporary news stories.

The Conference also served as a learning tool for some of the Centre’s Master of Journalism students who covered each session in real time (and to real deadlines). Their stories were published at the Melbourne Press Club site, www.melbournepressclub.com/new_news.

The New News Conference broke new ground in the Twittersphere, trending nationally on two occasions with the hashtag #NewNews. A total of 2,560 tweets with this hashtag were published during the Conference by 255 unique Twitter users. Of these, 513 (20%) were retweets.

The Citizen

With mainstream media battling deep cuts to newsrooms and editorial resources, new media enterprises increasingly fill the gap, focusing on under-reported areas of society. In 2013, they will be joined by *The Citizen*, an online publication being launched by the Centre for Advanced Journalism that will showcase the work of students in the Master of Journalism program as well as the research efforts of the Centre.

Edited by former long-time Fairfax correspondent and editor Simon Mann, *The Citizen* will fulfil three purposes. It will be a teaching tool, providing students with real publication deadlines and imperatives, it will be a flagship for the Centre, and it will be a serious publication in its own right, focusing on under reported issues. *The Citizen* will encourage interaction with other new media enterprises and will be, by its very nature, a research-in-action project, exploring innovative journalistic methodology.

The publication will launch during first semester 2013. Read more at www.thecitizen.org.au.

EVENTS DIARY

Lord Justice Brian Leveson

December

We were delighted to host Lord Justice Leveson in his only free public appearance, following the release of his report from the Inquiry into Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press in the United Kingdom. He spoke on the need for international legal responses at a time of great change in news media. He warned that if the law went unenforced against bloggers and tweeters it may “undermine media standards through encouraging them to adopt a casual approach to the law”. A full transcript of his lecture is available on our website.

New Media Entrepreneurs seminar

October

The Centre hosted the inaugural New Media Entrepreneurs seminar over one full day in October. It served a dual purpose: first, as a means for entrepreneurs to meet with other start-up groups and, second, to build awareness of these organisations and their innovations amongst our Master of Journalism students. In 2013, we will co-publish with Scribe a book arising from this seminar. This will be an edited collection of pieces by founders of new media start-ups, about the challenges they have faced and the lessons they have learned along the way. We expect its publication in September.

“If we are to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained, we must meet these challenges, and ensure that the media ... is not placed at a disadvantage where the enforcement of the law is concerned.”

Lord Justice Leveson, ‘Hold the Front Page’, December 2012

Scandal at *Farrago*

October

Past and present editors of Melbourne University’s student magazine, *Farrago*, united to debate the standard of student journalism. The panel took a humorous look at the history of the publication and whether readers were more interested in stories about politics or about sex. This lunchtime forum was held in association with Ormond College.

The A.N. Smith Lecture in Journalism

October

Kim Williams AM, Chief Executive of News Limited, examined the ways in which today’s journalism continues to inform Australians and hold public institutions and businesses to account. His lecture, ‘Media Futures: observations through a rather frosty crystal ball’ also looked at the future of journalism and how it could continue to live up to its own high standards and, in the face of rapid changes faced by all media companies, evolve in new and interesting ways.

The Future of News in Regional Victoria

September – November

As part of our New News series of events we took the debate to regional Victoria, bringing together local media leaders and citizens to navigate the key issues in local journalism. In September we visited Castlemaine, then engaged with the Mildura community in November, assisted by generous support from the Faculty of Arts Engagement Committee. We plan to connect with several more regional centres during 2013, including Warrnambool and the Latrobe Valley, with assistance provided by the University’s Cultural and Community Relations Advisory Group.

New News Conference at Melbourne Writers Festival

August

Now in its third year, the New News Conference has brought together journalists – citizen, freelance and mainstream – with new media innovators and the public to engage and debate about the state of present and future news journalism. Over 1,800 people attended the two-day Conference presenting 15 sessions covering a range of topics such as the effect of the 24-hour news cycle, social media’s impact on reporting, proposed media regulation and making a success of new media start-ups. It was an exciting Conference offering free access to many sessions and forging new relationships between working journalists and their audiences. Highlights included:

Gotcha! A Hypothetical in Three Acts

Hosted by Peter Clarke, Gotcha! presented fictional newsroom scenarios to a panel of Australia’s leading journalists. Each stage of developing a story was dissected, including research, legal consultations, editorial signoff and finally public response on talk-back radio.

New Media’s Upstarts

The drivers behind new media outlets such as *The Melbourne Review* Luke Stegemann, Lauren Martin and others, considered what it takes to start a successful new media venture. What does the business model look like? Can you make money? What does success look like?

Tweeting the Arab Spring: Capturing history, 140 characters at a time

International guest Andy Carvin (US National Public Radio) shared his experiences as he reported the Arab Spring uprisings from his Washington DC-based desk via Twitter. With over 82,000 followers, he became a sought-after ‘eye witness’, breaking news, debunking rumours and reporting about the revolution in real-time.

Australian Journalism Today launch, Mark Scott

June

This collection of works, edited by Matthew Ricketson, explores the ramifications of new technologies on journalism. Dr Margaret Simons and Dr Denis Muller, along with a number of other experts in the field, contributed chapters to this publication which was launched at the University by the ABC's Managing Director, Mark Scott at an event hosted by our Centre.

Hacks/Hackers: What's New About New Media?

May

In collaboration with Hacks/Hackers (Melbourne) and The Melbourne Press Club, we brought together journalists and technologists ('hacks and hackers') to explore the risks and opportunities of the new media age. This event supported Hacks/Hackers who launched their first Australian chapter in Melbourne.

Fair Shake of the Source?

May

With experts Richard Baker (*The Age*), Mary Delahunty (former Journalist and Victorian Government Minister), Tim

Dunlop (Political Blogger) and George Megalogenis (*The Australian*), we navigated the choppy waters of political journalism and chartered issues of 'off the record' briefings and protecting sources.

You Wouldn't Read About it: Everything you haven't been told about media accountability and the Finkelstein Inquiry

May

Following varied media coverage of the Finkelstein Inquiry, Professor Matthew Ricketson, who assisted Ray Finkelstein, QC with his report, argued that the mainstream news media has been silent on what the report actually found about the existing system of self-regulation, and the ills of the Australian news media.

Tweets, Beaks and Hacks: Court Reporting and the Law in the Age of New Media Journalism, Mark Stephens

March

Mark Stephens is one of the world's most prominent media lawyers. He is known as former counsel to *WikiLeaks* founder Julian Assange, the late author Christopher Hitchens and the evolutionary

biologist Richard Dawkins. He was also a victim of phone hacking by *News of the World*. He spoke engagingly on the limits of freedom of speech, and how journalists should operate in the murky area of unauthorised disclosure.

Why Good Journalism Will Always Matter

March

Professor Julian Disney AO, Chair of the Australian Press Council, reviewed recommendations of the Finkelstein Inquiry and looked forward to what the future of journalism might hold and how the industry might then exercise its responsibilities.

Who's Afraid of Gina Rinehart?

March

When Ms Rinehart took a chunk of Fairfax into her portfolio, many assumed her interest in media ownership was due to the power and influence it brings. Stephen Mayne, journalist and shareholder activist and Tim Wilson, classical liberal public policy analyst, debated the possibilities with Margaret Simons at this event, hosted by Readings.



RESEARCH

The Citizens' Agenda

The Citizens' Agenda is an action-based research project, involving a team of staff from our Centre, the Centre for Public Policy and the School of Culture and Communication, aimed at exploring the potential for social media to improve political engagement and political journalism in the lead up to the 2013 federal election.

The core of the idea is a collaboration with the participatory democracy organisation OurSay Australia, to conduct a world first research initiative exploring the potential for media organisations to divine and pursue a citizens' agenda to influence both journalistic practice in political reporting, and the conduct of an election campaign. We expect this exercise to be newsworthy in itself and attract considerable interest both locally and internationally.

The core OurSay method is to host town hall meetings and community forums, and secure the agreement of political candidates and other decision-makers to attend and answer questions. These questions are crowdsourced through the OurSay website and social media presence. People registered with OurSay can 'like' a question, meaning that those

questions with the most backing rise to the top. Then, at the community forum, the most popular questions get asked.

We will be studying how this intervention effects political engagement, and whether making a 'Citizens' Agenda' of issues visible in this way alters political journalism.

AuSud: A Media Intervention

In addition to offering media skills training (see AuSud Media Skills Training under 'Teaching'), significant research associated with this intervention is being undertaken. Over the course of the Media Skills Training workshops, six focus groups were conducted and transcribed. In addition, researchers attended the second training program as participant observers to study the process, challenges and outcomes of the newsroom project. Throughout the project qualitative, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with participants, trainers and mentors, as well as journalists who have been involved in covering the Sudanese community, with a number of further interviews yet to be conducted.

A large data set of relevant print and broadcast media coverage of Sudanese

people in Australia since 2001 has also been gathered, and content analysis of this data will be completed early 2013. In 2012, a book chapter written by the team of investigators, discussing the process and challenges faced by this project, was accepted for inclusion in a forthcoming international monograph, *Media Interventions* published by Peter Lang. Additional publications, based on quantitative and qualitative media analysis, qualitative interview and focus group findings, and ethnographic data from the participant observation study are currently in preparation for submission in 2013.

The research team are working closely with participants and industry partners to facilitate the next phase of the study. This has involved the formation of a managerial steering group with the goal of establishing an African Australian website, *The Gazelle*, as a viable and ongoing media resource. The researchers continue to explore opportunities for making the work of AuSud sustainable after the expiry of the existing ARC Linkage Grant, including through collaborations with other organisations.



INVESTMENT AND SPONSORSHIP

Our Centre welcomes individual donations in order to continue its research and public programs. In addition, we offer key opportunities each year where a partner organisation may sponsor all or part of an event, seminar or research activity. To discuss this opportunity in confidence, please contact us.

The University is a certified Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR), and all gifts to the University of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible for Australian tax purposes.

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Melbourne Research Office
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Organisation

Dr Matthew Ricketson

Ms Carol Schwartz, AM

University of Melbourne Cultural and
Community Relations Advisory Group

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Organisation

We would also like to express our gratitude to our Advisory Committee, who provided valuable guidance and support throughout the year:

- **Mr Peter Bartlett**, Partner, Minter Ellison Lawyers (Chair)
- **Prof Julianne Schultz**, Editor, *The Griffith Review*
- **Ms Sophie Black**, Editor, *Crikey*
- **Mr Craig Butt**, *The Age*
- **Ms Mary Delahunty**, National Director, Writing Australia
- **Ms Jill Baker**, *Herald & Weekly Times*
- **Ms Jenny Taing**, Australian Securities and Investments Commission
- **Ms Carol Schwartz**, Schwartz Group
- **Mr Bill Birnbauer**, Monash University
- **Prof Michael Parks**, School for Communications and Journalism, University of Southern California, USA
- **Mr John Lloyd**, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University, UK

And our thanks also go to our many distinguished guest speakers who gave their valuable time to participate in our public lecture program.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In 2013, many of the things we began in 2012 will come to fruition. The Citizen will be launched. The Citizens' Agenda research project will be operational during the federal election. New subjects in the Master of Journalism will be taught for the first time, and our first graduates will complete their degrees.

During 2012, we had a number of planning days to clarify our vision for the future. We emerged with a statement of core values which includes a determination to be innovative and useful at a time of great change. We wish to advance journalism that is useful to engaged citizenship.

In keeping with this emphasis on the future, and on change, we have decided to make a small but significant change to the Centre's name. From early 2013, we will be the Centre for Advancing Journalism. The name better reflects what we strive to do – to take journalism forward, through our teaching, research and engagement.

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED JOURNALISM

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