



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED JOURNALISM

Independent and questioning media play a crucial role in ensuring the health of a liberal democracy. While the new media technologies have allowed many more individuals to communicate to others within communities and across national boundaries, they have also enabled greater transmission of assertions and opinions based on prejudice, misunderstanding and ignorance. The need to sort information, analyse it, determine what is true and what is false, uncover what many want hidden and understand the cultural and political context from which that information comes has never been more critical to rational democratic discourse. Despite this, there is little interaction between the community and journalists, and few avenues for such interaction to take place. There is overwhelming evidence that the community mistrusts journalists and the professional media, which often appear unaccountable and unresponsive to community concerns and needs. This general mistrust is reflected in the disconnect between universities and the media. Yet universities are full of people whose specialised knowledge can inform and encourage journalistic enquiry, while journalists have the communication skills and broad experience which would assist universities to strengthen their interaction with the wider community. An enduring partnership between journalism and universities can only enrich both. Despite feared threats of the demise of "quality" journalism there is, and is likely to continue to be, a demand for highly skilled, professionally trained journalists. This is even more the case as the widespread availability of new technologies results in an information overload for the average reader. The sheer weight of facts and opinions available means there is heightened demand for professionally trained journalists with the knowledge and skills to research, filter, analyse, contextualise and present a reliable summary to the consumer.

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REVIEW

research engagement teaching

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This was my final year as Director of the Centre for Advanced Journalism. In 2009, when CAJ was set up, with the support of the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of Arts, my task was to develop CAJ's profile at the University, with media companies and journalists, and in the general community.

Right from the start, our mission has been to improve the practice of journalism for the benefit of practitioners and for the community they serve. Everything we have done, from our public events to our research projects, has been designed to fulfill that mission. With the help of our outstanding staff, and with the unwavering support of the Vice Chancellor Glyn Davis and the Dean of Arts, Mark Considine, I believe CAJ now has a bright future. The University has committed to that future with funding for the next three years. It was therefore time for me to step down and allow a new director to take CAJ forward. I will remain with the Centre as a Senior Fellow, continuing to lead a number of research projects.

I welcome the appointment of Dr. Margaret Simons as the new Director of the Centre for Advanced Journalism. She is an outstanding journalist and academic who I am sure will build on what has already been achieved. At this crucial time for journalism, I am sure Margaret will ensure that the Centre plays a vital role in journalism education and in improving and supporting the practice of good journalism.

I look forward to contributing to the next phase of CAJ's exciting and important work.

Michael Gawenda

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REVIEW



MISSED IT?

Most of our events are in high demand and require pre-booking, but if you couldn't attend, or want to view it again, check out our website for podcasts and video downloads. And don't forget to join our mailing list to receive alerts to our forthcoming events! www.caj.unimelb.edu.au

- 1 Through our **AuSud Media Project** students acquired fundamental journalism skills including feature writing and interviewing techniques
- 2 **WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson** considered freedom of information rights with **former Victorian Premier John Cain**
- 3 **Black Saturday: In the Media Spotlight**. Our landmark study on disaster reporting and its impact on victims and survivors.

- 4 **Tim Costello** examined what the legitimate role is for journalists reporting disasters
- 5 In conversation with Michael Gawenda, **Helen Garner** discussed the ethical concerns confronting the non-fiction writer
- 6 **Malcolm Turnbull** explored how the digital revolution has changed how the media covers politics.

PUBLIC PROGRAM DIARY

Helen Garner on 'Fact, Imagination and Truth Telling'

March

What are the challenges facing the writer of non-fiction? Indeed what defines non-fiction and how does it differ from fiction? What are the ethical issues confronting non-fiction writers? At a time when the lines between fiction and non-fiction have become increasingly blurred, these are important questions for writers and their readers.

Helen Garner is one of Australia's best-known writers. She is a novelist, short story writer, screenwriter and journalist. She is one of the few Australian novelists of the first rank who have also written journalism and non-fiction of great quality and depth. In a conversation with Michael Gawenda in March, Helen spoke about the obligations of a creative non-fiction writer to her readers and the subject.

'Australia and India: the Evolving Relationship in this Asia-Pacific Century'

March

Pramit Pal Chauduri is currently senior editor of India's Hindustan Times and was previously the paper's US correspondent following roles as editorial writer for *The Telegraph* and *The Statesman* of Calcutta. In a lecture presented in collaboration with Australia India Institute, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences and our Centre, Pramit explored the wide-ranging connections between India and Australia.

Tim Costello on 'The Good and Bad of Disaster Reporting'

April

Tim has seen first-hand how journalists cover disasters both in Australia and internationally. In a globalised world and with climate change likely to produce more and more severe natural disasters, the role of the media and the ethics of media coverage of suffering is increasingly in need of scrutiny. Costello asked:

"Have reporters been so filled with cynicism from years of PR spin, political double-speak, and are so inured from ideals of the Fourth Estate's heritage they have become mere 'content machines' and fickle product sales staff?"

"I think the profession of journalism and the industry of media are at a fascinating and critical point in their development. As a profession, it's crowded and competitive. As an industry, it's coming to grips with rapidly evolving technologies, rapidly evolving audiences, and the melting down of boundaries – the boundaries between observer and participant, between professional journalist and citizen journalist."

Tim Costello, World Vision

'The Challenges for the Media in Disaster Reporting'

April

The Black Saturday bushfires, the floods in Queensland and Victoria, the earthquakes in Chile, Haiti, Christchurch and Japan make it seem like natural disasters are on the rise. Whether or not this is true, technological change and the digital revolution have changed the way the media reports these disasters. This new accelerated media environment has led to more immediate and graphic images, more instant interviews with survivors, and less time to decide what sort of coverage is ethically responsible or what represents major invasions of the privacy of victims and survivors. When is an invasion of privacy warranted? What's the point of the media's coverage of disasters? So how do journalists face these concerns?

Following Tim Costello's lecture, a panel of senior journalists reflected on the ethical rules for journalists in reporting disasters. Our panel included Dr Denis Muller, Former Assistant Editor, Sydney Morning Herald and Associate Editor, *The Age* (and CAJ Fellow), Jo Chandler, Senior Writer and award-winning journalist with *The Age* and Peter Bartlett, one of Australia's leading defamation and media lawyers.

"The pressure is on the media to go beyond what authorities are spoon-feeding them – to adequately report to the public... but there is no doubt the ethical standards and codes are too vague. Journalists are reporting in an ethical vacuum."

Peter Bartlett, Minter Ellison Lawyers

'Covering Conflict: Old fashioned war in a new media age'

May

In modern conflict zones journalists are increasingly under fire. Most present day conflicts do not involve standing armies that agree to respect the role of the reporters and photographers, and as a result, do everything possible to physically protect them. Most conflicts are now fought between combatants who see journalists as enemies to be targeted.

There is no harder job in journalism than reporting conflict. Not only do journalists and photographers put their lives at risk but on the front line, a single inaccurate report or image can ignite rage in regions already in turmoil.

Dateline Video Journalist Sophie McNeill and ABC News' Thom Cookes talked about time being a rare luxury in compiling reports.

"There is this enormous swing towards 24/7 news channels, looking for instant, simplified news, not allowing for time to work out what's actually happening on the ground".

Thom Cookes, ABC News

'WikiLeaks: its impact on journalism and government'

June

There can be little doubt that WikiLeaks has had a huge impact on the way journalists operate, on the ethics of journalism, on the relationship between journalists and their sources and on the relationship between journalists and government.

In June, WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson and former Victorian premier and freedom of information proponent John Cain discussed government secrecy in democracy.

Earlier in the year, Mark Baker, Deputy Editor, *The Age* presented a lunchtime lecture on how WikiLeaks has changed journalism. Baker was in charge of editing the WikiLeaks-sourced stories in *The Age* on our Government's relationship with the US and illuminated the process for Faculty of Arts students.

"Wikileaks has challenged traditional media and in doing so made journalists braver... after 20 years as a journalist I was becoming less and less impressed with my profession. Wikileaks has given me new hope."

Kristinn Hrafnsson, WikiLeaks

'If you ask me about the future of newspapers you have asked the wrong question'

November

Giving the prestigious *A.N. Smith Lecture in Journalism* in November, Chief Executive and Managing Director Greg Hywood probed the question of journalism's relevance in a post classified advertising era and spoke to Fairfax's prospects after the Fairfax family's sale of their significant interest in the organisation.

Malcolm Turnbull on 'Politics, Journalism and the 24/7 News Cycle'

December

Concluding an outstanding program of public lectures for the Centre, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, Shadow Minister for Communications examined how the demands of the unrelenting news cycle have changed how politics is reported.

He reflected on the decline of newspapers and the way these changes to the news business are impacting on both the quality of journalism and of our democracy. In this new media age Turnbull believes the most effective means of holding a government to account continues to be through a vigorous and independent media.

"Do we really imagine the great task of reporting, explaining, investigating the powerful and holding them to account can be taken over by twitter and facebook? I doubt it. Our society, our democracy, needs journalism and we need journalists".

Malcolm Turnbull, Shadow Minister for Communications

RESEARCH

Black Saturday: The Survivor Stories

In the aftermath of the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009, the Centre embarked on a two-stage research project to discover the ethical issues that arose for journalists who covered the fires, and the impact of media exposure on survivors who were the subject of media reporting. The Victoria Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, Department of Planning and Community Development, Department of Human Services, Emergency Media and Public Affairs and The DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma committed funds to support the research.

The first stage, 'How the Media Covered Australia's Worst Peace-time Disaster' was published in 2010. Following the second anniversary of the Victorian bushfires, we undertook to report on the impact of media exposure on survivors, for stage 2 of this research. 'The Survivor Stories' included in-depth personal interviews with 27 survivors from eight bushfire-affected communities. Both stages of this landmark study were published in August as 'Black Saturday in the Media Spotlight' and the book was launched at the University. We also hosted a community forum in Marysville to offer bushfire-affected residents the chance to review and respond to the findings.

'Black Saturday in the Media Spotlight' is available to buy through the University Bookshop, online at www.bookshop.unimelb.edu.au or at the campus store.

Media Representations of Sudanese Australians

The AuSud Media research project continues to explore the impact on Sudanese-Australians of current media representations. The initial research study involving academics from the School of Culture and Communication (University of Melbourne), Life and Social Sciences (Swinburne University) and the Graduate School of Management (La Trobe University) informed the 2011 training program and further study. Several journalism articles have been published by the research team throughout the year. For more on the project see 'Education'.

Independent Media Inquiry

In October the Centre was approached by the Federal Government's Independent Media Inquiry to assist with research. Dr Denis Muller, a research associate of the Centre, subsequently provided the inquiry with a literature review, and provided other assistance. The new Director of the Centre, Dr Margaret Simons, was invited to make a submission to the inquiry, and subsequently appeared in a personal capacity at a public hearing in Sydney in November.

OUR ADVISORS

Our Advisory Board comprises distinguished journalists and representatives from business, education and the philanthropic community, both local and international. From January to October 2011 our board comprised:

- **Mr Sam Lipski**, Chief Executive Officer, Pratt Foundation (Chair)
- **Prof Julianne Schultz**, Editor, *The Griffith Review*
- **Ms Sally Warhaft**, writer and media commentator; former Editor of *The Monthly* magazine
- **Mr John Roskam**, Executive Director, Institute of Public Affairs
- **Mr Peter Bartlett**, Partner, Minter Ellison Lawyers
- **Ms Mary Delahunty**, former senior ABC journalist and Victorian Government Minister.
- **Prof Michael Parks**, School for Communications and Journalism, University of Southern California, USA
- **Mr Alan Attwood**, Editor, *The Big Issue*
- **Mr John Lloyd**, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University, UK

"I hope that every journalist and every editor in Australia reads Gawenda and Muller's report. Because it's all too likely that the lessons it teaches will need to be applied again, all too soon."

Jonathan Holmes, *The Drum*

EDUCATION

Master of Journalism

In partnership with the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Centre developed a new Master of Journalism, which will welcome its first intake in 2012. The program is designed for journalists and other professional practitioners working in the contemporary media industry and for other graduate students who are interested in pursuing careers in journalism and journalism-related fields.

The program teaches the full range of journalism skills and critically engages with the professional conventions of journalism, with ethical and legal issues that impact on journalism, and with contemporary issues facing the Australian and global media industries.

The Masters will be co-ordinated by Dr Margaret Simons and taught by leading industry practitioners. For more information on the Master of Journalism, visit www.graduate.arts.unimelb.edu.au



The AuSud Media Project

The AuSud (meaning 'lion' in Arabic) Media Project was born out of concerns over media representations of Sudanese Australians, and a desire to find practical ways of addressing the issue. An Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) report published in 2009 (*African Australians: A report on human rights and social inclusion issues*) noted that "the media usually focuses on crime or on political commentary about African-Australians...has often been negative or critical...and has caused distress to many."

This issue inspired a collaborative project with two aims – a research based journalism training initiative and a research component. The research will serve to tailor the training to the students' needs as well as to provide a framework for future initiatives of its kind.

Through the training the students develop relationships with mainstream media, become sources for journalists when relevant issues arise and will eventually maintain their own online news site.

In 2011, we were proud to receive an Australian Research Council (ARC Project ID: LP110100063) Linkage Grant to fund the initiative for 3 years. Working with our linkage partners, the ABC and AMES, we have developed a journalism training program taught by highly respected journalists. Each student was provided the opportunity to be mentored by a professional journalist. This project also includes media content analysis, focus groups with participants and interviews with journalists.

After completing a successful pilot program last year, we offered the training to 15 students in 2011. They embraced 12 weeks of media training including feature writing, editing, interviewing techniques and ethics. Our thanks to ABC, SBS and *The Herald Sun* who supported the project by allowing our students to tour their facilities and gain valuable insight into real newsrooms.

"The journalism training program delivered by the Centre for Advanced Journalism imparted me with the skills to write a news story, be aware of the ethical obligations around writing news and gain the skills required to be able to handle media interviews".

Kot Michael Monoah, AuSud participant

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to take CAJ to the next stage of its evolution, building on the Centre's existing achievements.

I am particularly concerned to address issues to do with the future of journalism, at a time when Australia's mainstream news media organisations are struggling with rapid technological change. New technology brings threats to the old business models, but also unprecedented opportunities for citizens to inform and be informed. I want CAJ to be part of making the most of those opportunities: a hub of thinking, teaching and experimentation.

My objective is to further enhance the Centre's reputation as a leading journalism research and teaching institution and it is a privilege to have the opportunity to build on its many successes. In addition to launching new research initiatives and welcoming the first intake of Master of Journalism students, I look forward to presenting exciting and challenging public program in 2012 and I urge you to engage with us.

Dr Margaret Simons
Director, December 2011

Investment and support

With the support of our alumni and community partners, we aim to improve the quality and standards of journalism practice and encourage accurate, balanced, fair and ethical practices. The Centre for Advanced Journalism welcomes donations and support in order to further its research, education and public programs.

We would be pleased to discuss how you can support our vision for the Centre for Advanced Journalism and your potential involvement in shaping the future of journalism in Australia.

To discuss your support, please contact:
Dr Margaret Simons
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Telephone +61 38344 7637

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Thank you

We are very grateful for the kind support of several community partners, organisations and individuals who have contributed to our programs. In particular, thank you to:

- The AuSud Media Project partners, ABC, AMES and The Australian Research Council
- The Lew Family for establishing the 'Lew Family Oration' to be delivered by a prominent international guest speaker

The following organisations who financially contributed to the stage II bushfire research:

- Victoria Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority
- Emergency Media and Public Affairs Research Committee
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Planning and Community Development
- DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma

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