

ANZCA Editorial

Diana Bossio – President, Australian and New Zealand Communications Association

dbossio@swin.edu.au

When I wrote the editorial for the first ANZCA-themed issue of *Platform* in 2010, I was the Association's postgraduate representative. I wrote about helping to initiate both a special post-graduate pre-conference event at the 2009 ANZCA conference and a relationship with the editors of *Platform* to ensure that the fantastic research presented by postgraduates at the ANZCA conference were disseminated and discussed as widely as possible.

Five years later, some things have changed. I am writing this editorial having taken up the position of President of the Association after a highly successful conference held in Melbourne in July. The conference was also the first time ANZCA was able to announce that we are publishing a new journal. *Communication Research & Practice* aims to publish research that contributes to international scholarship and practice in the broadly defined field of communication. The journal is owned by the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA), and will be published four times a year by Taylor & Francis, with the first issue to be published in May 2015. I strongly encourage all ANZCA members to contribute to this new journal as a place to showcase innovative research from our region to the rest of the world.

While there are many exciting changes in store, some things have remained the same. I was happy to see that the initiative I had begun as an ANZCA postgraduate representative with Lucy Morieson in 2009, the pre-conference postgraduate event, has become a very important part of the ANZCA conference and this year was no exception. The event was completely booked out, with almost 50 postgraduates in conversation with four academic mentors about how to use social media in research. I thank the postgraduate representatives Emily van der Nagel and Robbie Fordyce for their assistance and planning of the day, and the four mentors for giving up their time.

As usual, prizes were also awarded to the some inspiring and important papers presented by postgraduate delegates at the 2014 conference. The Grant Noble Prize for Best Student Paper was awarded to Kim Barbour, Deakin University, for her fascinating paper: "Performing Professionalism: Validating Artistness" and has been published in this special collection of postgraduate papers from the ANZCA conference.

The collection of five papers in this special issue represent some of the innovative research and critical examination of digital and social media technologies and the complexity of communicating for inclusion and exchange. These papers encapsulate the conference theme, "The digital and the social: communication for inclusion and exchange", which provided an opportunity for discussion of social media and the paradoxical nature of our ubiquitous communications environment. The conference theme recognised that while the promise of digital and social media was inclusion and exchange, the development of these platforms has become increasingly complex.

Kim Barbour's award-winning paper "Performing Professionalism | Validating Artistness" takes up the challenge set by the conference theme in a particularly interesting way. Barbour investigates the experience of online persona creation of artists, asking what it is like to create an artist's persona online. She argues that defining an online persona as the presentation of the self on and through digitally networked spaces, the artist reflects a "self" as a reflection, extension and distillation of a particular individual and their professional outputs.

Elizabeth Heck's paper "Co-creating stories in social learning systems: The role of community media and cultural organisations in disseminating knowledge" also explores creative practice, through the production of programs in community based media organisations. Using the example of community broadcaster "CitizenJ", Heck explores how community media organisations disseminate knowledge met community and public interest and create quality programs with ethical practices in social learning systems.

From the dissemination of creative products, we move on to the corporatisation of user-generated creative content in Juan Sanin's paper "There's nothing like Australia: From social advocacy to social media populism" explores Australian tourism campaigns from 2003 to 2012. Sanin focusses on the adoption of

social media by Tourism Australia, using a case study of the “There’s nothing like Australia” campaign, which crowd sourced holiday experiences of Australian people. Sanin suggests that while social media networks can be used for opening spaces for social inclusion, the corporatization of these platforms can also lead to a kind of populism disguised by claims of empowerment, democratic participation and authenticity.

The two final papers in this collection take an innovative approach to exploration of different aspects of news media history and representation. Bradley Buller’s paper “Tracing the *Age’s* editorial culture from 1966-97: an oral history approach” explores the oral histories conducted with journalists at *The Age* newspaper since Graham Perkin’s editorship. The research is based on a historical approach, using archival research and oral history interviews and illustrates that *The Age’s* culture and identity is influenced by the ways in which particular editors shape their editorial products.

Finally, Michelle Dunne Breen’s article “Blackout: The mediated silencing of Aboriginal public opinion about the Australian Government’s Northern Territory Emergency Response 2007” also focusses on news media, through the representation of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), forwarded by the Federal government in 2007. Dunne Breen explores the alternative intervention strategy document presented by opponents of the government’s intervention and how this was mediated by the press.

In presenting this collection of articles I extend my gratitude to the editors and editorial team at *Platform* for their support of this initiative and the hard work that they put into producing the journal and maintaining the relationship with ANZCA. The ANZCA Executive team values its relationship with *Platform* because we recognise the importance of maintaining this relationship in order to support the important and innovative research that postgraduates produce.

It gives me great pleasure to be a small part of facilitating this opportunity for ANZCA postgraduate members and conference attendees to share their research with their colleagues and peers. The Association will continue the tradition of supporting discussion and sharing of research in 2015 during our conference to be held in Queenstown, New Zealand from July 8-10. The call for papers and registration can be accessed at the conference website: <https://anzca2015.wordpress.com>. Of course, membership of ANZCA would enable you to access reduced conference rates, but more importantly a network of scholars and mentors that support and facilitate the dissemination of high-quality research from the region. If you are not yet a member of ANZCA, I would encourage you to access the website (www.anzca.net) or our social media sites on Facebook and Twitter for information on the benefits of membership. These benefits include entry to special ANZCA-sponsored events and workshops, reduced conference fees and importantly, access to ANZCA’s newest journal, *Communication Research & Practice*.