

EDITORIAL

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'One should always suspect that one governs too much'. This is how Michel Foucault described the modern liberal mindset in his 1978-9 lectures at the Collège de France (2008, p. 319). Such a call appears to have been heard by the authors of Australia's recent Convergence Review (2012), which proposes a series of changes to the Australian Government's policies on media technology, content and regulation. The issue of media ownership has been on the global agenda for some time (e.g. McChesney and Schiller, 2003), and this Review gives a local example of tensions worldwide between freedom and control in media policy.

While the Government's response to the Review is not due for some months, several points made in the review are worth commenting on here. The Final Report gives three justifications for the regulation of media by governments: to ensure that concentration of media ownership does not impede the free flow of information; to protect community standards with relation to content; and to protect Australian content from the vagaries of the market (Convergence Review, 2012, p. viii). Its three key recommendations are that media policy be framed in a 'technology neutral' way (p. 42); that barriers to entry into the market should be reduced (with the exception of perpetually scarce spectrum; see pp. 88-101); and that the targets of media policy should be defined according to size and reach rather than by organizational structure or ownership (and a graph of these 'content service enterprises' appears on p. 12).

Structures of media ownership and patterns of content have long been of interest to the field of media and communications, but the issues of technology and design are becoming increasingly important to our understanding of what media can do, and what people can do with media. This issue of Platform hopes to provide a valuable contribution to discussions around the role of media policy, public communications and political organisation in the present moment.

Maria Bora's article explores the interactions between technological developments and media policy through a study of the failure of interactive television (iTV) in Australia. A difficult regulatory environment, expensive hardware and a lack of faithful collaboration

between platform developers caused the failure of iTV in the period under investigation. Bora's research finds that contemporary media regulations strongly favoured existing players and discouraged risky investment in new media platforms. Development of new set-top-box standards was inhibited by established providers like Foxtel. In addition, sites such as YouTube in some ways rendered the question of interactive television moot. These sites – and proprietary catch-up services like ABC's iView – enable the capturing of audience feedback, engagement and labour promised by iTV. Whether the Convergence Review will inspire renewed enthusiasm for interactive broadcast technologies remains to be seen. In any case, historical studies of technological failure like Bora's (and, e.g. Krapp, 2011) continue to make fascinating reading and to productively complicate the trajectories of new media theory.

The public role of communication is a focus of Maria Fleming's article "Indian international student safety in Melbourne 2009-10 and the Victoria police – the development of a crisis and the frameworks that propelled it," which analyses the reaction of Victoria Police to a series of assaults on international students. Through a discussion of media releases and news articles, Fleming finds that, far from mitigating the crisis of confidence in Victoria Police, statements made by then Chief Commissioner Simon Overland contributed to the unease of Indian students in Australia and the Indian community at large. At stake in the Victoria Police media releases is the question of truth: who is in possession of 'the facts'? Whose testimony is to be trusted? Was Victoria Police responding sufficiently to the rise in assaults on Indian students? Fleming argues that by positioning himself as an expert above the lay opinions of the Indian community, and seeking to 'correct' the misperceptions of the community, Overland exacerbated the problem. More recent responses, such as the 'Think Before' campaign, acknowledge risks to students and offer tools for safer travel. It is important to recognise that not only must people be safe but they must also feel safe; and to attend to the always-unequal distribution of social risks (Beck, 1992, p. 121).

We are also pleased to present in this issue an interview with Jodi Dean, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, New York. Dean has written widely on media networks and politics, including monographs on blogging, communicational capitalism and the political theory of Slavoj Žižek. Her recent writings have focused on the difficulties of conceiving of a digital media public sphere. In this interview, conducted and introduced by Sebastian Kubitschko, Dean unpacks her ideas on communicative capitalism, symbolic efficiency, Actor Network Theory and capacities for organisation. Her recent writing and speaking about and with the Occupy movement provides an example of the possibility of resistance in a thoroughly mediated world.

Our thanks are due first of all to our contributors, without whom we would not have a journal. Our journal manager, Dale Leorke, has been a constant source of support throughout the production of this issue. And, of course, we would like to thank each of our peer reviewers for the time they have taken to review the articles included in this issue.

In 2010, Platform collaborated with the Australia New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA) to produce a special issue. We are happy to again be working together, this time to present a selection of papers from ANZCA's 2011 conference. Shujie (Phoebe) Guo, PhD candidate at the University of Waikato and ANZCA postgraduate representative, introduces this special section below.

ANZCA AND PLATFORM COLLABORATION

It is a great pleasure to present the second collaboration between PLATFORM: *Journal of Media and Communication* and ANZCA. ANZCA is a professional association for re-

searchers, students and teachers working in the broad field of communication and media studies. Its conference is held annually in either Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand. To support the work of new and emerging scholars, ANZCA provides post-graduate students with opportunities to publish the best papers submitted to the ANZCA conference. This special issue of *PLATFORM* presents four of the best student-authored papers from the 2011 ANZCA Conference which was jointly hosted by the Department of Management Communication (MCOM) and the Screen & Media Studies Program at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. These papers were carefully selected by reviewers who are members of the ANZCA Executive to reflect interesting and important topics centred around the theme of the conference, 'Communication on the edge: Shifting boundaries and identities'.

Among these four contributors, Anna Jackson, in her paper 'Inertia and turbulence: Television and innovation in New Zealand's documentary production ecology', examines New Zealand's documentary production ecology, identifying the challenges that have slowed the adoption of the new platforms and technologies, and the development of New Zealand's media ecology. Deepti Azariah, in her paper 'Beyond the blog: The networked self of travel bloggers on Twitter', explores how independent travel bloggers employ specific features and narrative techniques of Twitter to maintain the positions of bloggers and extend a networked self. Eleanor Sandry draws on examples of human-robot interactions, in her piece 'Dancing around the subject with robots: Ethical communication as a triple audiovisual reality', to interpret communication as a dynamic process relying on a triple audiovisual reality that values difference rather than commonality. The last paper 'Shifting online: An exploratory study into PR consultants' attitude towards new media', co-contributed by Katharina Wolf and Catherine Archer, investigates the cautious move of public relations consultants in Western Australia towards applying new media tools for their clients and themselves.

These papers make topical contributions to different angles of communication and media research, demonstrating varied interpretations of the conference theme. More significantly, these contributors capture the spirit of communication at the cutting edge of a rapidly changing world merging with new media and communication tools, channels, and technologies. Their papers inspire us to consider the impact of such changes on our everyday life, communities and organisations. ANZCA, along with *PLATFORM*, will continue to value the important role of graduate research in the communication and media field, and to provide platforms for post-graduates to contribute their voices.

REFERENCES

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