We are pleased to bring you this special issue of *Platform: Journal of Media and Communication* in partnership with the 2017 Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA). This year’s conference theme, “Communication Worlds: Access, Voice, Diversity, Engagement”, brought together scholars from across the diverse field of communication research to consider issues of diversity and accessibility throughout media and communications practice and scholarship.

At the postgraduate/early career researcher pre-conference attendees had the chance to consider more critically the nature of academic labour with a panel of early career experts sharing their experiences and advice on academic life and wellbeing. Alongside this, a Keynote from Professor Paula Gardner tackled issues of community-based collaborative research projects, with a focus on feminism and diverse authorship.

This special issue emerges from these themes, bringing together postgraduate and early career research from a range of disciplinary backgrounds at the forefront of Australian and New Zealand communications.

The issue opens with an examination of voice and access in the digital realm. In “Only for White, Middle-class Feminists? Issues of Intersectionality Within the World of Contemporary Digital Feminist Campaigns”, Jessamy Gleeson explores tensions over intersectionality in the digital feminist campaign Destroy the Joint (DtJ). Gleeson’s paper draws on data from interviews with three former campaign members to examine the digital silencing of the voices of disability activists on DtJ’s Facebook page. Gleeson argues that despite the potential offered by social media for the enablement of diverse voices and intersectional values, this potential was not realised in the DtJ campaign—a shortcoming that must be resolved in digital feminist spaces if voices beyond those of white, middle-class women are to be heard.

Continuing the focus on online interactions, Sean McEwan’s “Nation of Shitposters: Ironic Engagement with the Facebook posts of Shannon Noll as Reconfiguration of an Australian National Identity” considers the rise of ironic posting, or shitposting, as a disruption to contemporary standards of discourse. Focusing on the case study of ‘Nollposting’—posts concerning the Australian singer and celebrity Shannon Noll—McEwan explores the accumulation of cultural capital situated within particular Australian discourses. The article investigates the intersections of the Australian battler trope and hyper-masculine vulgar, situating the practice of Nollposting within the context of hyperbolic and ironic Australiana. Here, McEwan’s thoughtful engagement with contemporary internet culture deals with the simultaneous recognition and subversion of mainstream conventions, contextualised within localised online practices and cultural capital.

Shifting the issue towards considerations of ethics and narrative, Carmen Jacques’ paper “Victim or Survivor? Emerging Narratives from Experiences of Terrorism” provides a glimpse into the
everyday effects of terrorism as it is lived and told by those who survived the 2002 Sari Club bombing in Bali, and the 2005 London bombings. Jacques’ paper engages us in a space where ethics and storytelling are foregrounded—where we “visit” others’ perspectives in order to understand how they seek to “live well” after an experience of violence that has complicated their physical, emotional and relational worlds. The stories presented in the paper demonstrate a delicate traversing of the spaces between “victim” and “survivor”, and how individuals impacted by terrorism reinterpret their pasts to bring meaning and purpose to their present.

The final two articles in this issue engage us in the worlds of sports broadcasting and news media. Edward Reddin’s paper “Cultural Citizenship, Social Utility, and Positive Network Externalities: The Role of Anti-Siphoning Legislation” examines the changing Australian broadcasting landscape and its stagnant anti-siphoning legislation. Specifically, Reddin looks at the link between televised Australian Football League (AFL); cultural citizenship, social utility, and positive network externality; free-to-air versus pay-TV; and Australian anti-siphoning laws. Reddin argues that Australia’s current legislation around broadcasting rights of culturally significant sports, such as the AFL, has its flaws in terms of its obligation to fulfil its cultural remit. Reddin also adds that to gain a better understanding of such tension, audience engagement and consumption must also be examined. This argument then poses the question: What do the tensions emerging from the changing conditions in the AFL broadcasting sector mean for regulation that is designed to preserve the cultural citizenship that is facilitated by access to mediated sport?

In “Propositional Journalism and Navigational Leadership in Tasmania”, Bill Dodd seeks to identify the voices of those most prominent in pitching and commenting on propositions, and how this type of reporting was framed. Examining over 1,100 proposition-centered articles from three major news outlets in Tasmania, the study finds that reporting of the future leadership is primarily led by masculine political and business sources. Although Dodd reasons that through metaphorical framing the dominant masculine political and business sources are legitimised, the opportunity to explore feminist leadership would be of interest.

As guest editors for this special issue we would like to thank Chris O’Neill from Platform for his collaboration and support throughout this process. We would also like to thank the conference organisation team, Gerard Goggin, Fiona Martin, and Jonathon Hutchinson for their support throughout the conference and for this publication. A special thanks too for the hard work and dedication of conference organiser Fuchsia Sellers, as well as Eugenia Lee for her dedication and assistance in co-organising the postgraduate and early career researcher pre-conference. We look forward to further engagement with the postgraduate community at future conferences, with the next ANZCA hosted by the University of Auckland under the theme, “Multiple Realities: Fluidity, Hybridity, and Stability in Global Communication”.

Elizabeth Goode is a PhD candidate in the School of Creative Industries at the University of Newcastle, Australia. Her doctoral thesis utilises a biographical narrative approach to examine the cultural identities and sensemaking of intercountry adoptees in Australia. Her research interests include cultural identity construction, cross-cultural migration and transracial adoption, narrative inquiry (including biographical research), and autoethnography.
Kyle Moore is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney in the department of Media and Communications. His doctoral research explores how location-based gaming practices are situated within our understanding of sociocultural and material circumstances. Drawing from ethnographic observations of the game Ingress, his research develops the concept of situated play to understand this emerging commercial phenomenon. Kyle has previously published research on mobile, portable, and location-based games in journals such as M/C Journal and Games & Culture.

Pita Shelford is of Te Rarawa and Ngāpuhi (iwi/tribes in Aotearoa, New Zealand) and is a PhD student at the University of Waikato, Aotearoa. Pita is an emerging researcher who is interested in indigenous health and specifically hauora tāne Māori (Māori men’s health and wellbeing). In keeping with hauora tāne Māori, Pita’s doctoral research will explore the implementation and health outcomes of a Tuakana-teina/peer education model that focuses on life transitions of korohēke Māori (elderly Māori men) within rural communities.