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## Editorial Journalism with integrity

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THIS IS the third issue *Pacific Journalism Review* has published on the theme of investigative journalism in recent years. Our first issue (*PJR*, 2011) followed the first regional Investigative Journalism conference held at the Pacific Media Centre at Auckland University of Technology in December 2010. In that issue, we argued that universities and academic journalists have an important role to play in building a culture of investigative reporting in the region. This issue follows up on that suggestion by focusing particularly on investigative journalism produced in an academic context.

The second edition followed the ‘Back to the Source’ conference hosted by the Australian Centre for Investigative Journalism (ACIJ) and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in September 2011 (*PJR*, 2012). Since our 2011 issue, pressures on the business model that once sustained high quality investigative journalism have continued to increase. As we go to press, photographers’ jobs at Fairfax media are threatened. Journalists have mobilised to focus public attention on the role of photographers as newsgatherers. Walkley Award-winning Fairfax photographer Kate Geraghty’s picture of asylum seekers holding up their identity cards as they are transported in buses into the Manus Island detention centre in Papua New Guinea in 2013 is a reminder of how images recorded by journalists courageous enough to defy official restrictions on media have both humanised and publicised the plight of asylum seekers in our region.

While high quality journalism of this kind still exists inside traditional mainstream organisations and should be strongly supported, a lack of resources and media organisation leadership means that media is as likely to celebrate power as it is to challenge it. In an interview with *The Guardian* in September 2013, Seymour Hersh, a leading investigative reporter of his era, was critical of US journalists who he said were too timid and close to power. He reminded journalists their fundamental job was to be an ‘outsider’, confronting, not acting as a handmaiden to power.

However, even an ‘outsider’ needs supportive networks and opportunities to publish. It is clear that within our region, many urgent issues that need investigation will never adequately be covered unless alternative models to support in-depth journalism are pursued. We begin this issue with a report by

**Peter Griffin** who, while on a Fulbright Harkness Fellowship in 2012, visited public interest journalism start-ups in the United States. He discusses how not-for-profit models for investigative journalism that have grown in the US might be adapted to New Zealand where the flow of philanthropic funds is likely to remain limited.

If universities are to play a role in building a culture of independent investigative journalism, this must involve collaboration between academic institutions. Pacific Media Watch (PMW) is one of the longest lasting of such cooperative efforts. **David Robie** presents a case study of PMC and examines it as a catalyst for struggles and protests around media freedom in the Pacific.

There is also an emphasis in this issue on how those producing journalism as a form of research inside universities, in the context of either staff or advanced student work, can link that practice with scholarly reflection. **Chris Nash** addresses the question of what might constitute an exegesis for higher degree students and links the issues involved with an exploration of the characteristics of knowledge-producing journalism as a research practice.

Practice based journalism researchers by implication will use professional journalism ethics. For some, internal processes rather than external requirement have presented difficulties. **Kayt Davies'** survey of different approaches taken within institutions to ethics applications demonstrates a diversity of approaches. The possibilities for individual researchers, she concludes, may well depend on which institution employs them.

**Amanda Gearing** provides a case study of a transnational collaboration between *The Australian* and *The Times* of London and applies network communication theory to argue that online networks have the potential to expand the range of voices and issues included in investigations.

The ability to protect confidential sources is essential for investigative journalism and with technological change and surveillance is becoming even more difficult. After recent Australian statutory changes, **Joseph M. Fernandez** provides a timely discussion of whether Australian journalists' union the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) is correct when it argues that journalists' sources are not adequately protected. Fernandez suggests potential reform areas.

Throughout its 20-year history, this journal has fostered ways of thinking about how the study of journalism can be linked to its production. Aware that there were few outlets for this work, we began the *Frontline* section of the

journal in 2012. In this issue we feature the work of **Bonita Mason** who has drawn on the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Donald Schön to develop a critically reflexive approach, which she applies to an interview in her investigation of a death in custody.

Another way universities foster investigative journalism is by highlighting and exploring high quality work. Each year, the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism presents an award in memory of George Munster, a pioneer in the investigation of corporations, including that of Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd. This year the Munster Award was won by **Jo Chandler** for her series of articles about Papua New Guinea. We feature a transcript of parts of an interview with **Tom Morton** about her stories, her motivation and how she covered them. It is disappointing that *The Global Mail*, an independent online venture, which published her work, and aimed to publish in-depth and investigative features, has now closed.

In the un-themed section of our journal, **Trevor Cullen** provides a case study of how journalists covering HIV and other communicable diseases in the Pacific need to develop a wider frame than 'drugs and doctors'. We also feature two content analyses of New Zealand media. One by **Matthew Gibbons** compares investment strategies and quality of newspaper companies. A second by a team of eight researchers, **Tim McCreanor** et al of Massey University's Te Rōpū Whāriki finds that major media coverage of Māori stories is low, focuses on a narrow range of topics and prioritises Pakeha sources over Māori sources.

COLLABORATION between universities continues. In the first major collaborative investigative journalism initiative in New Zealand since that inaugural investigative journalism conference at AUT in 2010 (and the three special editions published by *Pacific Journalism Review* since then), a New Zealand Centre for Investigative Journalism has been established this year in Wellington at [cij.org.nz](http://cij.org.nz). The founding steering group is James Hollings, Keith Ng and Nicky Hager. Both Hollings, on the editorial board of *PJR*, and Hager were at the inaugural AUT conference. The centre is hosting its first investigative workshop/conference at Massey University over the weekend of June 28-29.

*Pacific Journalism Review* will be celebrating two decades of publication in November. A special edition is planned for May next year and this year's second issue will come out in November instead of October to coincide with

the celebration conference at AUT on November 27-29. The primary theme is 'Political journalism in the Asia-Pacific' but there are also several sub-themes, including asylum seekers and the 'Pacific solution', and climate change (*more information on page 138*). The journal was founded at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1994 and published there for four years. *Pacific Journalism Review* subsequently relocated to the University of the South Pacific in 1998 and became a research journal of AUT in 2003. A mini-documentary about the 'life of *PJR*' will be screened at the anniversary conference.

In many ways these are grim times for journalism. In leaving *The Guardian*, where he broke the shocking revelations by whistleblower Edward Snowden about how the US National Security Agency had been gathering information about US citizens and intercepting communication worldwide, Glen Greenwald warned of a 'sustained and unprecedented attack on press freedoms and the news gathering process'. Yet Greenwald also wrote of his respect for the integrity and courage of *The Guardian* journalists who had been his partners in the story. He shares a hope for journalism with Seymour Hersh, who told students at City University that despite his disappointment with American reporters, reporting with integrity was still possible. If such journalism is to survive and grow despite economic and political pressures, it needs organised support. We hope this issue of *PJR* helps show how academic journalists can be part of a collective effort to ensure investigative journalism not only survives but deepens its roots in our Pacific region.

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**References**

*Pacific Journalism Review* (2011, May). New investigative strategies [Edition], 17(1), 254pp.

*Pacific Journalism Review* (2012, May). 'Back to the source' [Edition], 18(1), 254pp.