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Cover: *Journalists take photos of a body discovered by a roadside garbage dump in suburban Quezon City, Philippines. 10 February 2017. Image: Fernando G. Sepe Jr.*

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JOURNALISM UNDER DURESS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

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JOURNALISM UNDER DURESS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

The night watch – Filipino TV journalists and Duterte's bloody 'war on drugs'

SPECIAL REPORT: The Qatar-Gulf crisis and media freedom

EDITED BY DAVID ROBIE, PHILIP CASS AND KHAIRIAH A. RAHMAN

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PLUS

- Representations of Islam and Muslims in New Zealand media
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EDITORIAL: Killing the messenger

THE statistics globally are chilling. And the Asia-Pacific region bears the brunt of the killing of journalists with impunity disproportionately. Revelations in research published in this edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* on the trauma experienced by television journalists in the Philippines covering President Rodrigo Duterte's so-called 'war on drugs', or as many describe it, a 'war on poverty', with more that 12,000 dead is deeply disturbing (Amnesty International, 2017). While these deaths, allegedly mostly extrajudicial killings, do not relate directly to the murders of journalists, the highest death toll ever of journalists in a mass execution took place in the southern Philippines almost nine years ago.

Justice has yet to be served for the savage killing of 32 journalists in an ambush—among a larger group of 58 people in an electoral convoy, including two human rights lawyers—on the island of Mindanao on 23 December 2009. In spite of more than 150 witnesses and 'thousands of pages of documentary evidence' being presented before a special court in the case known as the Maguindanao Massacre, no verdict has yet been brought against any of the 195 accused (Mateo, 2015; PCIJ, 2016). *The Philippine Star* reported that for Maguindanao governor Esmael Mangudadatu, who lost his wife Genalyn and two sisters in the ambush, along with a number of female lawyers and staff, 'justice is still an elusive dream'. As the Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism noted in an analysis seven years after the massacre:

> The trial … was designed for delay, a nod to another political alliance. A lengthy trial allows more time for highly paid lawyers to manipulate the court system, argue through technical loopholes. Delays can wear down or lose witnesses and their testimonies. Sanctioned by the rules of court, the system seems designed only for lawyers and those who can afford them. (PCIJ, 2016)

In December 2013, the Supreme Court passed a resolution enabling the judge to decide cases against the accused separately. But no judgments have been made against the killers of the journalists and two prosecution witnesses have been killed in the past eight years.

According to UNESCO, about 1,010 journalists globally have been 'killed for reporting the news and bringing information to the public' in the 12 years until 2017—or on average, one death every four days (UNESCO, n.d.). 'In nine out of ten cases the killers go unpunished. Impunity leads to more killings and is often a symptom of worsening conflict and the breakdown of law and the

judicial systems.' Many argue that the Philippines, with one of the worst death tolls of journalists in the past decade, is an example of this breakdown. In addition to the 'drug war' killings, President Duterte has extended martial law on Mindanao in the wake of the five-month battle of Marawi in 2017, in which a historical Muslim city was gutted and destroyed (and an Australian journalist was wounded by a sniper and more than 1,000 people were killed). The president has also waged a vindictive war on the critical news website *Rappler* and daily newspaper *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (now owned by a business crony); and critics increasingly liken him to the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Compared with the Philippines and some other Asian countries, such as Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar, media freedom issues in the Pacific microstates and neighbouring Australia and New Zealand may appear at first glance relatively benign and certainly not life threatening. Nevertheless, the Pacific faces growing media freedom challenges as demonstrated by the Micronesian state of Nauru which banned the Australian public broadcaster, 'arrested' Television New Zealand Pacific correspondent Barbara Dreaver (albeit only detaining her for four hours) while she was covering the Pacific Islands Forum leaders' summit in September 2018 and tried to gag other journalists from reporting allegations of human rights violations against asylum seekers in Australian detention centres on the island. Several countries in the Pacific, notably Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Samoa, are also using tougher legislation to clamp down on media, especially the internet.

In this context, Auckland University of Technology's Pacific Media Centre marked its tenth anniversary in November 2017 with a wide-ranging public seminar discussing two of the region's most critical media freedom crises. The 'Journalism Under Duress in Asia-Pacific' seminar in November 2017 examined media freedom and human rights in the Philippines and in West Papua. Invited speakers were the PCIJ's executive director Malou Mangahas from the Philippines and Johnny Blades of RNZ Pacific. Mangahas recalls how the global financial crisis fed into media freedom issues in the Southeast Asian region:

> In 2007, when the Pacific Media Centre was born I thought the world was in a better place, but actually Wall Street wasn't. So there will be crises every so often and some things will turn out okay politically or in the political sphere because at that time there was some opening up in some countries but not in other parts of the Pacific. So now it's 2017 and what we see perhaps is a bigger role for groups like the Pacific Media Centre because what we are observing in the region is a general pushback. (Mangahas, 2017)

The hosting of this seminar and the publication of research papers and commentaries in this edition of *PJR* have been planned in recognition of the International Day To End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, which has been

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Figure 1: Asia-Pacific media freedom advocates, including Pacific Journalism Review editor David Robie (centre), at a Reporters Without Borders strategic consultation in Paris, France, in July 2018.

marked annually on November 2 since it was declared by UNESCO in 2013, and as a reflection of a growing body of academic research about the safety of journalists (George, 2017).

The introduction by **David Robie** to the PMC seminar, later presented at a Reporters Without Borders summit for Asia-Pacific freedom advocates and activist journalists in Paris in July 2018 (Figure 1), offers an overview of the culture of impunity over crimes against journalists and journalism safety as a major factor undermining media freedom in the region.

Access to the Indonesian region of West Papua (Papua and West Papua provinces) for foreign journalists, while still restricted, remains critical for helping Papuan voices to be heard. **Johnny Blades** of RNZ Pacific argues that the plight of West Papua is of major concern among Pacific people, especially Melanesians, and is becoming a growing geopolitical and media issue.

In the Philippines, journalists covering the 'graveyard shift' were the first recorders of violence and brutality under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's anti-illegal drugs campaign. The first phase in 2016, called Oplan Tokhang, was executed ruthlessly and relentlessly. This chilling study by ABS-CBN news executive **Mariquit Almario Gonzalez** examines how graveyard-shift TV journalists experienced covering Oplan Tokhang. The intention is to get a deeper understanding of how the experience affected the way they reported on the Oplan Tokhang stories.

Her colleague, award-winning photographer **Fernando Sepe Jr**, has contributed an associated photoessay drawn from his groundbreaking 'Healing The Wounds From the Drug War' gallery. He reflects on the impact of Duterte's so-called 'War on Drugs' onslaught on the poor in his country:

> The families of the dead, mostly from the poor who get by in hand-to-mouth existence, end up buried in debt only to have their loved ones get a burial. But it also a story of hope for those given a new lease of life by organisations willing to assist in the rehabilitation of drug addicts. (p. 147)

Across the Pacific, there have been startling news stories about governments attempting to censor the internet, a move seen to point towards silencing dissenting views on popular online forums. **Romitesh Kant, Jason Titifanue, Jope Tarai** and **Glenn Finau** demonstrate how conflicting trends between the new political forum ushered in by the new media on the one hand, and the restrictive mode of state censorship on the other hand, pose serious challenges to the broader framework of rights and freedom of expressions, especially in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Samoa.

In a separate commentary, **Jope Tarai** explores the Fiji situation in more depth and provides compelling evidence that the public has been 'conditioned' to accept the new *Online Safety Act 2018*. However, he questions this law and argues that it has been a subtle form of online regulation ushered in under a cloak of 'online safety'.

In Indonesia, **Nasya Bahfen** and **Febri Nurrahmi** examine the representation of Acehnese identity post-civil conflict and in relation to national identity of the republic by drawing on a content analysis of the local newspaper *Serambi Indonesia*.

In Timor-Leste, Australian media consultant and press freedom advocate **Bob Howarth** reflects on two days of presentations and roundtable discussions which ushered in the capital, Dili, as the hub for a proposed alliance of Asia-Pacific press councils committed to raising media standards and providing freedom of information benchmarks.

In Australia, whistleblower advocate **Brian Martin** deconstructs a case study of how a media hatchet job, or *beat-up*, by a daily newspaper, in this case the *Daily Telegraph*, can have a disportionately damaging impact in an academic environment. This commentary, and the evidence presented, is a disturbing revelation in the context of a series of attacks on journalism academics and researchers from Suva to Sydney.

In the wake of the Fifth Pacific Media Summit in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, in May 2018, **Geraldine Panapasa** and **Shailendra Singh** analyse how journalists and media policymakers are responding to growing efforts by governments in the Pacific region to deploy ever harsher media legislation to 'contain the fallout from social media, citizen journalism and fake news'.

Finally, rounding off the 'journalism under duress' themed section, **Joseph Fernandez** was present in Doha for a global media freedom conference in July 2017 in the wake of a 'brazen attack on media freedom' by a Middle East bloc led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that demanded (among

other things) the shut down of the Al Jazeera television network. He analyses the media responses for *Pacific Journalism Review*.

WHILE there is no 'Frontline' (journalism-as-research) section in this edition of *Pacific Journalism Review,* there is a strong unthemed section, opening with a study of representations of 'the other' in New Zealand and how the Muslim voice is neglected. This article by **Khairiah A. Rahman** and **Azadeh Emadi** identifies a growing trend of stories in the New Zealand media relating to 'Islamic terrorism' and critically analyses a random sampling of five news articles between 2014 and 2016 in terms of the negative, positive and ambivalent news content, both in their use of the written text and visual representations of Islam and Muslims.

A Philippines qualitative research study over the development of a model on 'ASEAN-centred journalism and journalism education' has revealed country-level 'realities' that need to be faced before proceeding, argue **Jeremaiah M. Opiniano** and his University of Santo Tomas student colleagues **Aira l. Bagtas, Karl C. Basco, Ralph J. Hernandez, Elyssa, C. Lopez, Michael C, Rodolfo** and **Anne K. Vicho**.

In Micronesia, research fellow **Sylvia C. Frain** of the Pacific Media Centre examines the implications of the *Make American Secure Appropriations Act 2018* and recent United States federal policy in the Marianas Archipelago. She critiques the expanding militarisation of the region and the construction of bombing ranges on the islands of Guam, Pågan and Tinian.

In the final unthemed paper, investigative journalist **Michael S. Smith** analyses the framing of the surge in illegal rhino poaching in South Africa linked to an increasing demand for rhino horn in Vietnam. One of the key frames is 'Voodoo Wildlife Parts,' which has been deployed by environmental non-government organisations (ENGOs) in their campaigns against the illegal trade.

This edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* has another strong review section. Books being discussed include recently appointed UNESCO chair for journalism in Australia Peter Greste's *The First Casualty: From the Front Lines of the Global War on Journalism,* and two new books with contrasting insights into West Papua—Peter Bang's *Papua Blood* and Maire Leadbeater's *See No Evil*. Humour in the media gets an airing with a review of *The Funniest Pages* and life as a foreign correspondent in *Moscow Calling*.

Professor David Robie
Editor
Pacific Journalism Review
www.pjreview.info

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THEME: JOURNALISM UNDER DURESS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

1. A decade of resistance

The Pacific Media Centre, Pacific Media Watch, impunity and human rights

Abstract: Auckland University of Technology's Pacific Media Centre marked its tenth anniversary with a wide-ranging public seminar discussing two of the region's most critical media freedom crises. The 'Journalism Under Duress in Asia-Pacific' seminar in November 2017 examined media freedom and human rights in the Philippines and in Indonesia's Papua region, generally known as West Papua. The introduction to the PMC seminar, later presented at a Reporters Without Borders (RSF) summit for Asia-Pacific freedom advocates and activist journalists in Paris in July 2018 examined the culture of impunity over crimes against journalists and journalism safety as a major factor undermining media freedom in the region.

Keywords: activism, advocacy, Asia-Pacific, crime, impunity, journalist safety, media freedom, New Zealand, Philippines, press freedom, West Papua

DAVID ROBIE
Pacific Media Centre, Auckland University of Technology

Introduction

WHEN the Pacific Media Centre was founded just over a decade ago in October 2007 at Auckland University of Technology—and launched by Laumanuvao Winnie Laban who was then Minister of Pacific Island Affairs—the region faced a turbulent era. Fiji's so-called 'coup culture' had become entrenched through yet another coup in December 2006, by military commander Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, although this time it was not an ethnocentric putsch, but a 'coup to end all coups' and claimed to be in support of a multiracial future (Fraenkel, Firth & Lal, 2009, p. 4). A six month state of emergency followed with many human rights violations, ending in May 2007 (US State Department, 2008a). There were concerns in Papua New Guinea over human rights violations, including police brutality and killing of suspects in law enforcement episodes (US State Department, 2008b). Relations were strained between Solomon Islands and Australia over the Moti affair, about an Australian lawyer Julian Moti who had been appointed to the post of Attorney-General, culminating in an Australian police raid on the Solomon Islands Prime

Minister's office (Nautilus Institute, n.d.). Corruption, gender violence and other human rights violations were rife.

In the wider Asia-Pacific region, arbitrary, unlawful and extrajudicial killings by elements of the security services and political killings, including of journalists, were already a major problem in the Philippines (US State Department, 2008c)—but not on anything like the scale that has occurred since President Rodrigo Duterte came to office in 2016, with more than 12,000 killings in the so-called 'war on drugs' (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In Timor-Leste, security forces carried out nine killings that year (2007)—less than a third of the 29 the previous year—and there were human rights violations against journalists and other civilians (US State Department, 2008d).

Figure 1: The Pacific Media Watch anchor page at Auckland University of Technology and (inset) the news page.

Since 2007, media freedoms in the Asia-Pacific region have steadily declined with a Chinese model of state-controlled news and information being 'copied in other Asian countries, especially Vietnam and Cambodia' (RSF Index 2018: Asia Pacific democracies threatened, 2018). The Chinese model has also become increasingly influential in the South Pacific, too, with at least one country, Papua New Guinea, flirting with a Beijing-inspired social media platform to replace Facebook (Ainge Roy, 2018; Marshall, 2018).

Background

The circumstances of the 2007 era prompted the establishment of the Pacific Media Watch freedom project (www.pacmediawatch.aut.ac.nz) as one of the first research and publication initiatives under the Pacific Media Centre umbrella, having been transferred there from the University of Papua New Guinea and University of Technology Sydney where it had been founded by ABC *Four Corners* investigative journalist Peter Cronau and I (Figure 1).

Billed as an independent, non-profit network reporting on media developments in and around New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region, the initiatives and work were inspired by the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism (ACIJ)—which formally closed in April 2017 after a quarter of a century of cutting edge investigative journalism (Adair, 2017)—and especially by the work of Cronau and two former directors of the ACIJ, Professors Chris Nash and Wendy Bacon. The ACIJ was 'best known for its groundbreaking investigative work' in its magazine *Reportage* (Figure 2), and its research into Australian media bias and reporting, according to *Altmedia*.

> 'It's been the best journalism school in Australia, no doubt. In fact, it put the [University of Technology Sydney] on the map,' Michael West, a former Fairfax journalist turned business watchdog, told *City Hub* … at the [ACIJ] 'Hidden stories past and present' symposium. (Adair, 2017)

Despite its limited resources, the PMC has contributed to greater diversity and more analysis of the region's media. The Pacific collaboration goes back to 1993, and especially 1995, when Wendy Bacon travelled to the University of Papua New Guinea and conducted a short course in investigative journalism. The journalism programme newspaper *Uni Tavur* won the 1995 Ossie Award in Australia for best publication partly due to her investigative inspiration. The collaboration continued at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, when the ACIJ stepped into the breach in the aftermath of the George Speight coup in May 2000 by publishing the USP student journalists' articles at UTS after the student website *Pacific Journalism Online* was closed by the university for two months (Cass, 2002; Pearson, 2001; Robie, 2001, 2010).

As faith in neoliberalism and the quality of newspapers has eroded in Australia and New Zealand, universities and other non-profits are becoming increasingly regarded as potential alternative producers of serious journalism (Robie, 2018). The Pacific Media Centre is regarded as an early example of such a venture, and project Pacific Media Watch, was originally launched in 1996 at UTS and fuelled on the 'smell of an oily rag' (Robie, 2014a). The PMW project was awarded the AUT Dean's Award for Critic and Conscience of Society in 2014 (PMW freedom project wins, 2014) and a year earlier in 2013, the then

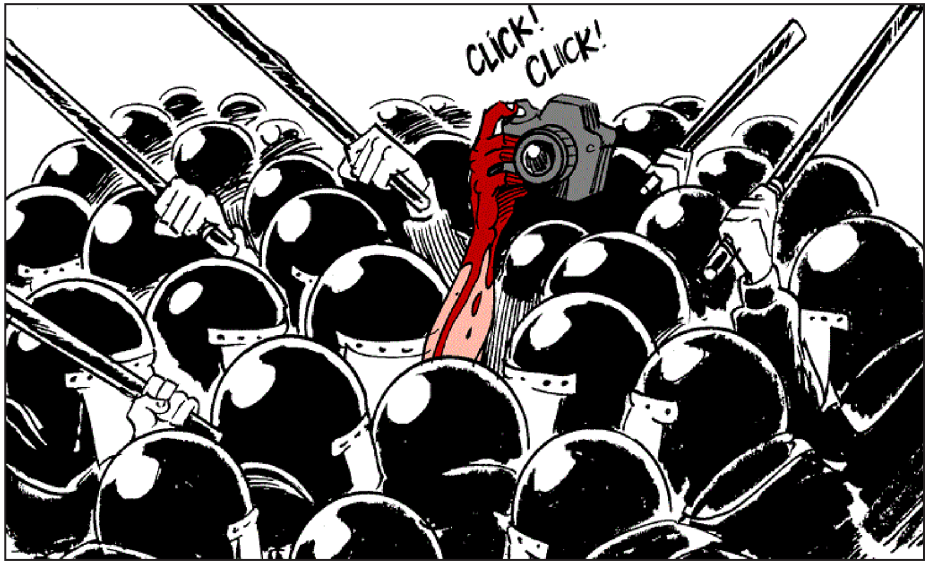

Figure 2: Sydney's independent journalism centre, the ACIJ at the University of Technology, Sydney was 'killed off' by campus authorities in April 2017 after 25 years of groundbreaking investigations.

student PMW project contributing editor Daniel Drageset, a Norwegian broadcast journalist, won Columbia University's Dart Asia-Pacific Media Centre Award for Journalism and Trauma Prize for a multimedia series in which he reported on the torture of two Fijian prison escapees by security forces (Torture series wins, 2013).

Another cornerstone of the Pacific Media Centre's publications has been *Pacific Journalism Review*, a Scopus-ranked international research journal that was originally launched at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1994 and has now been published for 24 years. At a conference at AUT in 2014 celebrating 20 years of publishing and the production of 710 articles, an academic analysis by Queensland University of Technology journalism coordinator Dr Lee Duffield (2015) concluded that *PJR* 'gives oxygen to campaigns that decry suppression of truth' and examines self-censorship by news media.

> *Pacific Journalism Review* is concerned with freedom, and with truth, easily defined as the outcome of inquiries based on plain evidence. Its stance is above all journalistic; as a publishing outlet for investigative journalism, and for scholarship in media and community; as an outlet for reflective debate within the media community about its work, and as a contributor to the formation of new entrants into journalism—in their values and aspirations to best practice. (Duffield, 2015, p. 31)

Duffield observed that the conditions in the Asia-Pacific region offered more publishing opportunities for *PJR*. 'Change continues in the region, calling for a continuation of the monitoring and research,' he added (2015, p. 32).

Origins

The Pacific Media Watch project was founded as an independent, non-profit and non-government network by two journalism academics. In 1996, the kingdom of Tonga jailed two journalists and a pro-democracy parliamentarian in an event that shattered any illusions about press freedom and democracy in the South Pacific. The two *Taimi 'o Tonga* editors, 'Ekalafi Moala and Filokalafi 'Akau'ola, had been accused of contempt. The Member of Parliament, 'Akilisi Pohiva, was at the time the best-known whistleblower in the region, having waged a decade-long campaign for open government and democracy (Robie, 1996). Since 2010, Pohiva has been the Prime Minister of Tonga, having been re-elected in November 2017 with a decisive majority, Ironically, he has had a conflicted relationship with the media since he gained power (Vaka'uta, 2017).

Many media commentators saw the jailings in Tonga as the most serious threat to media freedom in the South Pacific since the Fiji coups in 1987. Although news media in neighbouring Australia and New Zealand largely ignored the episode, journalists at the ACIJ launched a campaign in support of the so-called 'Tongan Three'. Pacific Media Watch was established in their support.

A voluntary group with no funding, Pacific Media Watch developed a media freedom news service and organised an international letter campaign calling for the three detainees to be released. More than 170 protest letters from academics, journalists, media commentators and students were sent to the kingdom. The three men walked free on 14 October 1996 after having served three weeks of their 30 day sentence after the Tongan Supreme Court ruled that they had been detained illegally in violation of the Constitution (Robie, 1996).

Pacific Media Watch later became a regional independent Pacific media freedom monitor based at the University of Papua New Guinea (1996-98), the University of the South Pacific (1998-2002) and AUT (2002-2007), before being adopted by the PMC (Robie, 2014a). It gained its first development grant in 2007, engaging postgraduate student interns. It was subsequently awarded a grant by the Pacific Development and Conservation Trust of New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2009 (Pacific Media Watch expands resources, 2010).

Pacific Media Watch developed a strategy to challenge normative views of ethics, media freedom, industry ownership, cross-cultural diversity and media plurality. It has been involved in reporting coups d'etat, civil conflict and struggles for media independence. The media service has been an important catalyst for journalists, media educators, citizen journalists and critical journalists collaborating amid a broader context of Pacific power and protest.

Figure 3: The UNESCO 2018 trends report notes a trend of continuing legal restrictions on the media such as criminal libel, 'insult', blasphemy and lèse-majesté (an offence violating the dignity of a reigning sovereign) laws.

Probably the watchdog's most consistent campaign over many years has related to the West Papua self-determination issue. Although it is independent of activist agencies, Pacific Media Watch has worked to robustly report on and profile a range of West Papuan development, self-determination and social justice issues, advocates and newsmakers through its related website *Asia Pacific Report* (asiapacificreport.nz) (Robie, 2018; Leadbeater, 2018, p. 235). West Papua figured prominently in the inaugural region-wide 2011 media freedom report published as a *Pacific Journalism Monograph* (Perrottet & Robie, 2012).

The UNESCO World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development (2018) reported that public perception of media freedom had declined globally, citing a 2015 Gallup poll covering 131 countries in every region of the world. In 2012, 67 percent of residents in surveyed countries said their country had a 'good level' of media freedom (Figure 3). This had declined by six percentage points by 2016 and remained on that level the following year. Nevertheless, while media freedom was perceived to be under threat, it was still valued globally. The report noted a trend of continuing legal restrictions on the media such as criminal libel, 'insult', blasphemy and lèse-majesté (an offence violating the dignity of a reigning sovereign) laws.

Declining freedoms in Asia-Pacific were highlighted sharply with cases in Myanmar and Cambodia in mid-2018, and to a lesser extent in Nauru. In the case of Myanmar, two Reuters correspondents, Kyaw Soe Oo and Wa Lone,

were jailed for seven years after what was widely condemned as a 'sham trial' and a 'dark day for press freedom' (RSF, 2018d). The journalists were convicted of violating the country's *Official Secrets Act* for investigating the massacre of 10 Rohingya civilians by soldiers in Inn Dinn, a village in the north of Rakhine state on 4 September 2017.

In Cambodia, 69-year-old Australian documentary filmmaker James Ricketson was jailed for six years on an espionage charge after using a drone to film a rally by the main opposition party, which was banned a few months later (RSF, 2018c). In Nauru, Television New Zealand's Pacific affairs correspondent Barbara Dreaver was detained for three hours at the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) leaders' summit after attempting to interview refugees at the Australian government-established detention centre for asylum seekers, which had been widely condemned by international agencies for human rights violations (Benedict, 2018; Cook, 2018).

The George Speight affair:

JOE YAYA/PACIFIC JOURNALISM ONLINE

Figure 4: Two USP students, Laufa Eli (Samoa) and Noora Ali (Maldives) pictured with Fiji third coup frontman George Speight in May 2000 while reporting on the unrest.

In May 2000, during George Speight's 'attempted coup', the University of the South Pacific regional journalism programme's website *Pacific Journalism Online* and its newspaper, *Wansolwara*, were heavily involved in the reportage The website was closed down by the USP administration on 29 May 2000 when martial law was declared in Fiji in response to threats, and news stories about the Fiji crisis were not permitted to be published (Figure 4). For three months, University of Technology Sydney journalists Fran Molloy and Kate MacDonald published the stories and photographs from Fiji journalism students and USP staff on the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism (ACIJ) website—now zip file-archived in the UTS Library (Internet archive of 2000 Fiji coup, 2000). The site was designed and set up within hours by Fran Molloy, and with the support of then ACIJ director Chris Nash and head of journalism department Wendy Bacon, the USP journalism students were able to have their stories published shortly after they were filed. The USP students subsequently won several awards for their online (and print) coverage of the coup in the annual Journalism Education Association (JEA) Ossie Awards, including best regular publication in the Australia/NZ and Pacific region. Awards went to *Pacific*

Journalism Online and the students working on *Wansolwara* (Pearson, 2001, p. 19; Robie, 2001, 2004, p. 93).

Philippines and the 'war against the poor'

'Eight years, zero convictions.' This is how IFEX, the global media freedom exchange, in November 2017 summarised the status of the trial of the accused in the Ampatuan massacre in which 32 journalists were among 58 people killed in a political ambush. With more than 100 charged, even a dedicated branch of the court could only do so much. The magnitude of the trial necessarily imposed a slow pace. The decision to include so many individuals on the same charge necessarily delayed the delivery of justice. (Looking back at the 8 years, 2017)

The hearings began on 5 January 2010, less than two months after the massacre in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao, on the southern Philippines island of Mindanao on 23 November 2009. At first, only Andal 'Unsay' Ampatuan Jr. was named and charged before the court in Cotabato City. Unsay was positively identified by witnesses to have led the attack on the Mangudadatu convoy.

Other Ampatuan clan members, police officers and Civilian Volunteer Organisation members were included in the charge list for the murder of 57 (later extended to 58 counts). This brought the number of the suspected masterminds and accomplices to 197. These were individuals who were identified in two separate investigations, one by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and another by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). At the time of preparation of this article, the Department of Justice (DOJ) data showed 188 people had been officially charged before the trial court.

Threats to journalists in the Philippines since President Rodrigo Duterte came to office on 30 June 2016 and unleashed his so-called a 'war on drugs' have punctuated a death toll of more than 12,000 so far,[1] including drug addicts and innocent people, many of them children. Many commentators describe the drug war as in reality being a 'war against the poor' (Wells, 2017). *Vice* journalist Gianna Toboni concluded in an article earlier in 2017: 'It's super dangerous to be a journalist in the Philippines—but a brave few are working hard to maintain an independent press' (Toboni, 2017). She continued:

> Discussion of oppressed journalists generally focuses on Russia, China, Turkey, Syria, and Mexico. What many don't know is that outside of active war zones, the deadliest place to be a journalist is the Philippines. Despite boasting the longest-standing democracy in Southeast Asia and a functioning free and independent press, journalism in the Philippines has a dark history. (Toboni, 2017)

Research published in this edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* has revealed the serious impact of trauma on Filipino television journalists who have been

covering the 'graveyard shift' and becoming witnesses to the violence and brutality under the 'war on drugs' campaign. The first phase, called Oplan Tokhang in 2016, was 'executed ruthlessly and relentlessly'. Four graveyard-shift TV journalists agreed to face-to-face in-depth interviews (Gonzalez, 2018).

On 15 January 2018, President Duterte's government revoked the operating licence of the largest news website in the Philippines, *Rappler*, founded by former CNN Philippines investigative journalist Maria Ressa. A Justice Ministry announcement next day said the state was bringing legal proceedings against the popular news and current affairs website (RSF, 2018a). The government claimed it had violated a constitutional provision under which only Philippine citizens can own media.

President Duterte claimed in a state of the nation address: 'Try to pierce the identity and you will end up [with] American ownership.' However, according to *Rappler* this was just a rumour spread on social networks. The website plans to appeal against the licence ruling based on documentary evidence. Daniel Bastard, head of RSF's Asia-Pacific desk, says:

> The revocation of *Rappler's* licence is the latest stage in President Duterte's open war against independent media. *Rappler* is highly professional and its journalists stick to reporting the facts, facts that apparently annoy the government and its supporters, who have waged a smear campaign against the website on social networks. Instead of seeking the truth, the authorities have now clearly demonstrated their desire to kill the messenger. (RSF, 2018)

In March 2018, RSF accused the Duterte government of 'hounding' *Rappler* after National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officials confirmed that a previously dismissed defamation action against *Rappler* had been revived. This followed the opening of a $2.5 million 'tax evasion' complaint by the Bureau of Internal Revenues (BIR, a division of the Ministry of Finance) against the website (RSF, 2018b).

Social media censorship and sedition threats in the Pacific

On 22 May 2018, with Fiji facing its second general election after eight years of post-coup military backed rule, the so-called 'Fiji Times Four' were acquitted on sedition charges in what was celebrated around the Pacific as a heartening victory for media freedom. (Cava, 2018). 'It's a victory for the media in Fiji and we should be encouraged to keep going and to stay within the law,' said publisher Hank Arts as he and his staff celebrated (Figure 5).

After three assessors unanimously found the quartet not guilty, High Court Justice Thushara Rajasinghe ruled that the prosecution had failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that an article published in the Fiji-language *Nai Lalakai* newspaper on 27 April 2016 was seditious and that it had the tendency to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility among Muslims and non-Muslims. *Nai Lalakai* letter writer, Josaia

Waqabaca was acquitted of sedition while *Nai Lalakai* editor Anare Ravula and *The Fiji Times* editor-in-chief Fred Wesley were acquitted of aiding and abetting the publication of the article. Hank Arts and Fiji Times Ltd were acquitted of publishing a seditious article in *Nai Lalakai* newspaper. The drawn-out courtroom saga of the *Fiji Times* group focused attention on the deteriorating situation of media freedom in the South Pacific where governments and politicians increasingly resort to legal actions and bans on social media to gag news organisations (Field, 2018; Hearne, 2018; Maclellan 2018; McGarry, 2017, 2018; Makin, 2018; Morris, 2017; *Pacific Media Watch*, 2018a; Vaka'atu, 2018).


THE FIJI TIMES

The Fiji Times

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018

60 PAGES $1.10 VIP OUTSIDE VITI LEVU $1.40 VIP THE FIRST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE WORLD EVERY DAY

ARTS: IT IS A VICTORY FOR MEDIA IN FIJI

The Fiji Times publisher/general manager Hank Arts, right, gestures to supporters and the media after he and two senior officials of the newspaper and a letter writer were acquitted of sedition charges in the High Court in Suva yesterday. He is joined by Fiji Times Ltd director Rajesh Patel, left. Picture: JOVESA NASUA

Not guilty

Figure 5: *Fiji Times* publisher Hank Arts waves to colleagues and supporters after being acquitted in the Nai Lalakai sedition trial on 22 May 2018.

> For journalists working in small island states, treading on the toes of someone powerful in government or business is an occupational hazard for which, sooner or later, they'll make you pay. In recent years, however, there is a noticeable trend to use serious legal charges to hobble journalists and media organisations in an attempt to promote a climate of self-censorship. (Maclellan, 2018)

Islands Business freelance contributor Nic Maclellan, writing on the Lowy Institute blog *The Interpreter,* pointed to an example of this involving his colleagues at the Fiji-based regional news magazine (Maclellan, 2018). A police investigation into *Islands Business* probed its reporting of a long-standing industrial dispute at Airport Terminal Services in Fiji, which operates Nadi International Airport. The magazine had exposed the fact that a magistrate who ruled in favour of striking ATS workers would not have his contract renewed. The police detained a former company managing director, the editor and the reporter involved, and seized mobile phones and computers in an ill-fated attempt to identify the whistleblower. The news magazine staff faced serious charges and although the public prosecutor's office declined to proceed, the incident highlighted the pressure faced by Fiji journalists with an election due later in 2018.

The pressure is severe elsewhere in the Pacific. In Papua New Guinea, for example, media freedom advocate and former EMTV news editor Titi Gabi said there was no media freedom in her country, with journalists 'working in fear'. She claimed local media had become a 'public relations entity for the powers that be' and the annual May 3 Media Freedom Day simply served to remind the public about the many issues at stake not being covered (Pacific Media Watch, 2018b). She told RNZ Pacific:

> With interference from outside influence, right up to setting the news agenda to bribing journalists to threats to threats of court action against journalists. There is a lot of censorship, there is a lot of control. We no longer enjoy media freedom so today it is really sad times here in PNG. (Pacific media Watch, 2018b)

Noting that there was little prospect of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg 'turning up' in Fiji, Papua New Guinea or Samoa to defend his company's method of dealing with political issues as he did in Washington, veteran journalist Michael Field highlighted the Pacific concerns: 'South Pacific leaders see Facebook as an even greater social threat than do their Western peers and are not waiting on Facebook to address their concerns (Field, 2018). He added:

> Facebook is proving revolutionary across a region where ordinary citizens have been expected to remain quiet and on the sidelines of decision-making, which remains largely in the hands of traditional elites, even when trappings of democracy exist. Elite older males unaccustomed to public criticism have found the social network unsettling; while gossip, known here as the 'coconut wireless', has always been present, its power has been magnified by the sharing of posts across scattered communities at home and overseas. (Field, 2018)

In January 2018, Nauru President Baron Waqa lifted a three-year ban on Facebook, saying he had created a safer nation and a more transparent justice system. However, other Pacific nations, including Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu have moved to impose bans or have threatened to do so with new 'cybercrime' laws. Papua New Guinea's Communications Minister, Sam Basil, used a *Post-Courier* interview to threaten a one-month shutdown of Facebook to 'allow information to be collected to identify users that hide behind face accounts, users that upload pornographic images, and users that post false and misleading information on Facebook to be filtered and removed' (*Pacific Media Watch*, 2018c). Basil initially backed off after his comments caused an uproar and with the knowledge that PNG was due to host the APEC conference in November, but he later again repeated the threat. Prominent EMTV television journalist Scott Waide wrote on his blog:

> Maybe it was a slip of the tongue or a misinterpreted statement… But there is no doubt that whatever it was that Papua New Guinea's Minister responsible for Communications and Information Technology, Sam Basil, said this week has created a storm now being reported on global media outlets. (Waide, 2018)

In Samoa, 73-year-old Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi threatened to ban Facebook and other social media platforms, saying this would be his government's last resort if bloggers critical of government did not start revealing their identities (Online blogger, 2018; Samoa PM threatens, 2018). According to Michael Field, who lived and worked for many years in Samoa, Tuilaepa has faced almost daily accusations from powerful, but anonymous critics on Facebook on the page of *O le Palemia*, Samoan for 'prime minister' (2018). The posts are mostly defamatory, alleging that a range of politicians are engaging in sexual affairs and financial corruption. On 13 June, Malielegaoi named two overseas Samoans who he claimed an investigation had identified as the page's key authors.

On 16 May this year the Fijian Parliament passed an *Online Safety Act* which threatened those whose posts caused harm with fines of up to F$20,000 and prison sentences of up to five years. Government officials said the law was intended to protect women and children (Swami, 2018). However, Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum claimed in Parliament some social media pages and forums were becoming 'a web of lies, racism, bullying and hatred'. He said it was always the same 'same cowards' hiding behind fake profiles and insisted many were opposition politicians (Lacanivalu, 2018).

In Vanuatu, Prime Minister Charlot Salwai warned that a cybercrime bill was being developed that would 'take care' of Facebook and social media issues following an allegedly fake news attack on a former prime minister, Sato Kilman (Vanuatu plans cybercrime law, 2018). Allegations have been made that a minister in Salwai's government was responsible for the attack. This follows a police raid on 31 May against the agency managing the Facebook group called *Yumi Tok Tok Stret*—'Straight Talk'—seeking data on social media critics.

New Zealand

Although New Zealand regained a top 10 placing in the 2018 RSF Media Freedom Index after dropping to 13th in the 2017 Index, there are still serious concerns about the state of media freedom. 'That's not bad considering we plummeted down the ladder last year,' observed RNZ National *Mediawatch* presenter Colin Peacock, adding: 'But does that mean everything is rosy?' (*Media Watch*, Peacock, 2018).

Writing for the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) Media Freedom Review, he remarked how in 2016 New Zealand had been placed fifth

behind Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark, and the global transparency watchdog Transparency International had ranked the nation as the least corrupt country in the world for the second year running in 2018.

The 2017 RSF report explanation for New Zealand's 'plunge' was government secrecy and journalists' struggles with the *Official Information Act (OIA)*, adding: 'Political risk has become a primary consideration in whether official information requests will be met and successive governments have allowed free speech rights to be overridden'.

The then chair of the country's media industry's advocacy group, the Media Freedom Committee, Joanna Norris, was broadly in agreement: '[There is] consistent and cynical misuse of official information laws which are designed to assist the release of information, but are often used to withhold it.' (cited by Edmunds, 2017)

However, this was not the full story. The RSF Asia-Pacific summary gave a hint about why New Zealand had leapt back into the top 10 countries. It said:

> The authorities blocked a proposed merger between the country's two biggest media groups, thereby providing media pluralism and independence with new guarantees. At the same time, investigative reporting should be strengthened by a law protecting whistleblowers. (RSF Index, 2018)

Peacock cited many concerns of New Zealand journalists:

1. Journalists routinely 'vent their frustration on social media' about official information obstruction using the hashtag #fixtheOIA. 'Media management plays a big part in [OIA holdups]. Delays take the sting out of politically-sensitive newsworthy details' (Peacock, 2018).
2. Resistance by officials is also routine over information sought under the related Local Government Information and Meeting Act (LOGOIMA), which requires local bodies to provide information unless there is sufficiently good reason not to. 'In March, RNZ's reporter Todd Niall revealed a letter to Auckland Mayor Phil Goff which said the release of information should be delayed so it could be "managed". The letter was withheld from RNZ for 15 months despite intervention by the Ombudsman' (Peacock, 2018).
3. During elections (especially the 2017 election), politicians called in the lawyers or even police against journalists doing their jobs, reports Peacock (2018). Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters launched proceedings for a breach of privacy against two journalists who reported that he had been paid too much superannuation. He later dropped the case (Young, 2018).
4. A new law passed in 2017 strengthening the powers of the nation's spy agencies created a new offence for passing confidential information to

journalists, risking up to seven years in jail.

5. A new bill to 'tidy up' the New Zealand law on contempt of Parliament is before Parliament and could impose heavy fines on journalists for breaches.

While media freedom threats have been regarded as endemic in the Pacific, increasingly they are becoming a concern in New Zealand as well.

Malou Mangahas and Johnny Blades

In the Philippines, Malou Mangahas, executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and her team are among those brave few journalists and media researchers trying to expose the truth in a chilling environment. Mangahas is a veteran of Philippines journalism and as well as her role with the PCIJ, she is host of the weekly public affairs programme *Investigative Documentaries* on GMA NewsTV. In her earlier years, she was a university campus journalist and the first woman president of the Student Council at the state university, where she finished her thesis on a portable typewriter while on the run from Ferdinand Marcos' military intelligence teams. She was eventually arrested and was a political detainee in 1980-81, but still finished her journalism degree with honours (Malou Mangahas, 2017).

A fellow of the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University in 1998-99, Mangahas has worked as editor-in-chief of a national newspaper, radio programme host, executive producer of a TV debate programme and was the first editor-in-chief of gmanews.tv online, while working as vice-president for research and content development of GMA News and Public Affairs. She has conducted training on investigative reporting, data journalism, campaign finance, covering elections and uncovering corruption for journalists in the Philippines and across Southeast Asia and parts of Africa.

I met Mangahas for the first time during a visit to the PCIJ in Manila on a sabbatical in 2016 and was at her presentation on the 'war on drugs' at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day 2017 conference in Jakarta. She was one of the two panellists at a seminar marking 10 years of the PMC on 30 November 2017.

In an editorial introduction to a special PCIJ report *Speak Truth to Power, Keep Power in Check* produced for World Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2018 (PCIJ, 2018), Mangahas noted that Duterte's presidency had 'altered and controlled the public disacourse so radically in its favour in ways rude and bold' that it had produced a tragic result—restricting and narrowing the 'celebrated freedom' of the Philippine press and the public right to know (see Figure 6).

> In his first 22 months in power, [Rodrigo R.] Duterte has earned the dubious honour of logging 85 various cases of attacks and threats on those dual values that the Constitution upholds as inalienable rights of the citizens. The number far exceeds those recorded under four presidents before him.

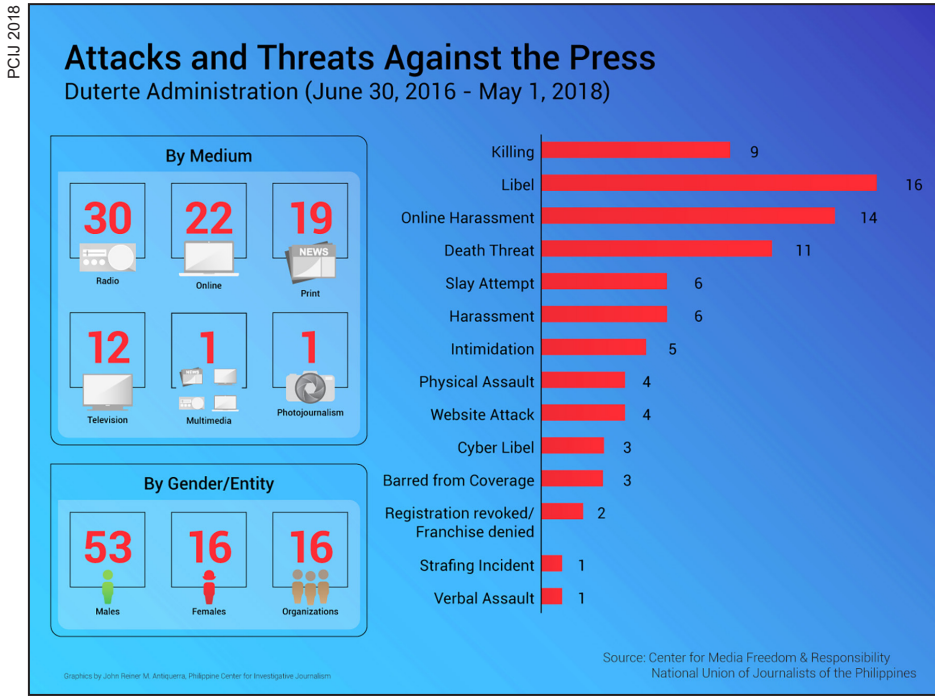

Figure 6: Attacks and threats against the Press in the Philippines, 30 June 2016-1 May 2018. The 85 attacks and threats against the Philippines media under the Duterte Administration, 30 June 2016-1 May 2018. Source: Centre for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) and the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

> These 85 cases—murders, death threats, slay attempts, libel, online harassment, website attacks, revoked registration or denied franchise renewal, verbal abuse, strafing, and poloice surveillance of journalists and media agencies from 30 June 2016 to 1 May 2018—have made the practice of journalism an even more dangerous endeavour under Duterte. (PCIJ, 2018)

According to the PCIJ, such cases 'project the force of presidential power dominating the political sphere', with relentless support from Duterte's allies and appointees and their paid online trolls. Duterte's supporters have accused the media of press 'corruption and misconduct' with no evidence to back up their allegations. These constant, ill-founded, attacks on the Philippine media undermine the role of the press in sustaining democracy through an exchange of ideas on public issues.

Closer to home in the Pacific, but equally ignored by most New Zealand media, is the ongoing human rights crisis in the two Indonesian-ruled Melanesian provinces of Papua and West Papua, which we generally group together as the region of West Papua.

It has been very difficult, even dangerous, for journalists to go to West Papua independently. Many have chosen to go there illegally as tourists and report under cover at great risk to themselves, and even greater risk to their sources (Robie, 2017). Johnny Blades, a senior journalist of RNZ International, and his colleague Koroi Hawkins took advantage of incoming President Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo's change of policy to go there in October 2015, the first New Zealand journalists in decades to visit there with a green light from the Jakarta bureaucracy.

Johnny Blades is host of *Dateline Pacific* and has written and reported extensively about the Pacific Islands, covering some of the most remote corners of this diverse region. However, in recent years he has specialised in Melanesian affairs, a woefully under-reported part of the Pacific. His profile on the RNZ website says:

> Whether it be dodging rocks in Papua New Guinea's Highlands, probing the militarised border of West Papua, being force-fed kava by cargo cultists in Santo, or sitting in RNZI's office in Wellington negotiating the worst phone connections in the world in search of audio, Johnny has shown a keen commitment to learning about the Pacific and helping New Zealand make sense of its wider region. (Johnny Blades, n.d.)

Both the Philippine and West Papua crisis situations are examined in more depth in the following pages of *Pacific Journalism Review*.

Note

1. According to Human Rights Watch (2018), Duterte's 'murderous "drug war" entered its second year in 2017, resulting in the killing of more than 12,000 drug suspects … Duterte and his officials have publicly reviled, humiliated, and in one instance, jailed human rights advocates'. The death toll has been a disputed statistic for most of Duterte's presidency. An opposition senator, Antonio Trillanes, claimed in a speech in February 2018 that the death toll had surpassed 20,000 (Regencia, 2018). Trillanes cited the Duterte administration's own report showing 3,967 'drug personalities' had been killed during police operations betwee 1 July 2016 and 27 November 2017. A further 16,355 homicide cases—from 1 July 2016 to 30 September 2017—had been classified as 'under investigation'. *Rappler* ran and updated a tally of the drug war statistics with a total of 7,080 killed by 31 July 2017 compiled from the information supplied by the police to its reporters. This is no longer updated: In Numbers: The Philippine 'war on drugs' www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/145814-numbers-statistics-philippines-war-drugs Other media kill lists included the television station ABS-CBN and *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. President Duterte accused the media tallies of being 'fake news' and set up a 'Real Numbers' public relations campaign to challenge the media and human rights organisations' figures (Deutsche Welle, 2018).

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Dr David Robie is director of the Pacific Media Centre. This is a revised and updated version of the public address presented at the 'Journalism Under Duress in Asia-Pacific' seminar in Auckland marking 10 years of the Pacific Media Centre on 30 November 2017 and at the Reporters Without Borders Asia-Pacific summit in Paris on 4-6 July 2018. The original address video can be viewed at: https://livestream.com/aut/events/7945794/videos/166601569

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2. Internationalisation of the 'hidden' West Papua issue

A regional media matter for Melanesia and the Pacific

Commentary: Auckland University of Technology's Pacific Media Centre marked its tenth anniversary with a seminar discussing two of the wider region's most critical media freedom crises. The 'Journalism Under Duress' in Asia-Pacific seminar in November 2017 examined media freedom and human rights in the Philippines and Indonesia's Papua region, otherwise known as West Papua. In the discussion about West Papua, the PMC seminar heard that access to the Indonesian region for foreign journalists, while still restricted, remains critical for helping Papuan voices to be heard. The plight of West Papua is of major concern among Pacific people, especially Melanesians, and it is becoming a growing geopolitical and media issue.

Keywords: advocacy, geopolitics, human rights, media freedom, Melanesia, Melanesian Spearhead Group, press freedom, West Papua

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IT IS a great paradox how, despite the natural resource abundance of their home region, Papuans are among the worst-off people in the Indonesian republic. With the worst human development outcomes, parlous access to health services and limited opportunities in education and business, Papuans' indigenous culture is rapidly losing ground in Indonesian-ruled Papua region. The region is known widely as West Papua, and is officially divided into two provinces named West Papua and Papua. Its indigenous Melanesians are dominated by Javanese and other non-Papuans, and have long been subject to violent abuses, torture and intimidation by the military and police who have been largely able to do this with impunity.

The plight of West Papuans in the face of this simmering tension is of deep concern to other Pacific peoples, especially Melanesians. This concern

has galvanised regional support for the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) which has been lobbying fervently in the Pacific for greater representation by Papuans in regional fora, and for an internationalisation of the Papuan plight, arguing that the many years of seeking dialogue with Indonesia's government has not helped forge a solution to persistant rights problem faced by Papuans. The ongoing cordon around foreign access to Papua—be it for humanitarian, research, cultural or other interests—has entrenched the sense of despair for West Papuans.

Five decades under Indonesian rule have been tough on West Papuans as a people, even despite the democratic reforms that the wider republic has gone through. West Papua's controversial incorporation into Indonesia in the 1960s was not a fair self-determination process, especially because Papuans were not consulted about it. Now they are steadily on track to becoming a minority in their own land, a territory where security forces rule and Indonesia extracts significant wealth from abundant natural resources, such as minerals, gas and forestry. The giant Freeport gold and copper mine in Papua's Highlands is the single largest source of revenue for the Indonesian state and an ongoing source of environmental destruction, land alienation and human rights problems that Papuans struggle with.

It is now more than three years into the tenure of current Indonesian President Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo, who declared one of his aims was to lift West Papuans out of poverty and made big commitments regarding major infrastructure projects in Papua. However, major problems remain in Papua. Human rights workers indicate that abuses in both West Papua and Papua provinces are persistent, many of them about infringements of the right to freedom of expression. However, a notable thing Jokowi did at an early point as president was to announce that he was lifting restrictions on foreign journalists visiting Papua. My colleague, Koroi Hawkins, and I were then able to enter Papua in 2015, although not before a complicated and testing application process (Blades, 2016).

Media coverage

Jokowi's move was a step in the right direction, but restrictions and significant pressures remain in place for the few foreign journalists who get in to Papua (Leadbeater, 2018, pp. 233-235). Earlier in 2018, Indonesian officials deported BBC's Indonesia editor, Rebecca Henschke, an Australian, from Papua after she travelled there to cover the state response to a deadly measles outbreak in remote Asmat district in January. She was expelled because her social media posts had 'hurt the feelings of soldiers' (Harvey, 2018), with officials later claiming that photos and comments that she tweeted had misrepresented the actions of military in its response to the related malnutrition outbreak.

The issue of ongoing rights abuses and killings associated with the suppression

of the independence struggle in West Papua has gained traction in recent years on social media. But most mainstream media continues to be a void on this front, in Indonesia and abroad. Indonesia touted its media freedom credentials as it hosted World Press Freedom Day in May 2017, but on the margins of the event were warnings about the 'shocking press and human rights violations' that were ongoing in Indonesia's far eastern Melanesian region of Papua (Robie, 2017a).

Restrictions on what the media can cover in West Papua seem to exacerbate the problem in New Zealand where there is a lack of media coverage about most of Melanesia. It is a similar situation with Australia. Media outlets in the metropolitan countries are accustomed to getting their foreign news handed on a plate from a small pool of networks, mainly covering two regions, the US and Europe. There is little news about Asia, Africa and our own Pacific Islands region. It is probably a mix of things. Some international media outlets, such as AFP and Al Jazeera, have established Indonesian offices whose coverage includes Papua. But the whole region of Melanesia, and the Pacific Islands, is largely a media black hole. Only one foreign media organisation has a journalist permanently based anywhere in Melanesia: the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in Papua New Guinea. When it comes to Papua, that is another level of remoteness and difficult access altogether. RNZ Pacific, *Vanuatu Daily Post* and *Asia Pacific Report* do what they can from afar. But mainstream media outlets have mostly appeared disinclined to bother trying (Robie, 2017b).

Despite the lack of coverage, social media discourse about West Papua is highly active in the Pacific Islands region, especially New Zealand. I am witnessing many New Zealanders becoming aware of the situation in West Papua, where they previously had no interest. It is of particular importance to those who see Papuans as a fellow Pacific people. Social media activism has played no small part in the spread of the Free West Papua Campaign (*www.freewestpapua.org),* and has energised more young people into taking up the issue these days, in the spheres of universities and activism, particularly Māori. Discourse on Papua has picked up among New Zealand lawmakers, and has also been intensifying in the international diplomatic realm. The independence struggle of West Papuans and the human rights situation have become a leading regional cause that governments of Melanesia are involved with. In Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, the issue of West Papua is important in their own domestic politics. For the past two years, it is also an issue that has been taken up at the United Nations by countries in other parts of the Pacific, including Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu. The statements on West Papua made by leaders of these countries at the UN General Assembly gained some international headlines. In their replies, Indonesian diplomats attacked Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, in particular, over human rights abuses in their own backyards.

Development

So much of Jakarta's response to criticism, and scrutiny over Papua, is framed in terms of the development paradigm that has unfolded since the introduction of the rather flawed special autonomy status introduced in Papua region in 2001. In its drive to foster economic development, the Jokowi government is pursuing big infrastructure projects such as the Trans-Papuan Highway, railways, hydropower, and mega markets. Jokowi himself has made far more visible efforts than his presidential predecessors have done to understand West Papua, visit the region, and to improve living conditions. However, his focus on development seems unlikely to quell discontent with Indonesian rule among West Papuans. They have a sense that the kind of development on offer will further entrench the system that has marginalised them for the past few decades. Who will be using these roads, the power and trade networks? In Papua, 'development' has so often meant cutting earth, chopping trees, uprooting their traditional ways. This is similar on the Papua New Guinean side of the border.

This boundary has been a stark division, but the line is becoming blurred. Much alike Papua New Guinea and Indonesia's relationship as neighbouring nations, the neighbouring provincial governments of Indonesia's Papua province and PNG's West Sepik have a growing relationship forged through trade and infrastructure links. Sepik people increasingly travel to Papua for better services: health in particular, but also the markets. It is so close, and according to some Sepiks, the services on offer so much more efficient and cheaper than in Papua New Guinea. The difference in quality of the roads on each side is stark, but so too are the political differences. Papua New Guinea cannot help but be affected by what happens in West Papua. Their cultural links mean people hurt for their Melanesian kin on the other side in times of disaster and struggle. There is a shared pain. Look no further than the environment. That season when Hawkins and I travelled across the border into West Papua, there was significant toxic haze from fire used to clear land for oil palm plantations. A well-established regional problem in Southeast Asia had spread to Papua with a vengeance. The haze was having an impact on border area communities on the Papua New Guinean side too. Children in the border village of Wutung had acute asthma problems. Deforestation has already done massive damage to the ability of Melanesians to access food, traditional medicine and livelihoods from their forests, compromising their health.

Uneasy media reality

To be independent as a Papua-based journalist is very difficult. Police and military forces apply pressure on Papuan journalists to not probe stories about military abuses, land and resources exploitation among other areas. Papuan journalists risk their lives in pursuing independent coverage of what is happening

Figure 1: An editorial meeting at the Papuan newspaper *Tabloid Jubi* chaired by editor Victor Mambor (right). 'There are dozens of cases of journalists in the region being assaulted, threatened or arrested in the past five years.'

in West Papua. There are dozens of cases of journalists in the region being assaulted, threatened or arrested in the past five years, according to the Civil Society Coalition for the Enforcement of Law and Human Rights in West Papua, while at least two have been killed since 2010 (Robie, 2017a).

In the wider Indonesian republic, there is a shortage of nuanced reporting on Papua. Because the Papuan issues do not really rate on the large national scale, they do not often make the news in national media. When reports of security flare-ups in Papua do make it to the daily newspapers, the state media can tend to blame Papuan 'separatism' or tribal fighting for the problems. Papuan freedom fighters are an easy scapegoat. Recently there has been a pattern of referring to independence fighters as 'armed criminals'. This avoids mentioning the independence goal. Late in 2017, deadly violence flared in the region around the Freeport mine, as it has done sporadically for decades. A standoff emerged between the Indonesian military and a faction of the military wing of the Free West Papua Movement (OPM), which has been waging a long-running campaign against the Indonesian state and a campaign to close the troublesome Freeport mine. However, when police claimed the OPM (or so called 'armed criminals' as they call them, preferring not to mention them by name) held local villagers hostage, the Indonesian media largely ran with the claim without question (Anderson, 2017). The problem is, there was no hostage situation, but rather a roadblock

manned by the OPM. Yet mainstream media reports made it seem like the OPM was targeting Papuans. Such discrediting was a distraction from the genuine grievances that the local communities have around the mine, its controversial generation of wealth and the rights abuses associated with it.

Given the misleading reports, it is little wonder Papuans mistrust state media. A member of KONTRAS (Indonesia's Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence, which is the major independent Indonesian human rights organisation), recently told me that a lack of trust in both media and state agencies prevents West Papuans who are victims of rights abuses from reporting their cases. Therefore, he said, the cases of abuses coming across KONTRAS' desk tend to be relayed though agencies and media outside West Papua and Indonesia. This is a core reason why coverage of Papua by foreign media is important.

Indonesia's Pacific outreach

Indonesia has become increasingly sensitive to foreign media coverage of West Papua, Papuan diplomatic campaigns in international fora, and the growing solidarity movement. Seeking to quell support for Papua independence, Jakarta has undertaken a significant diplomatic outreach in the Pacific region. As part of that, Indonesia sent a new Ambassador to New Zealand (also to Samoa and Tonga) this year. Ambassador Tantowi Yahya is a household name in Indonesia as former presenter for the successful local version of the TV show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*? He is also a country music singer with a string of slickly produced albums. Before he arrived in Wellington, he declared that his aim was to educate New Zealanders about 'improved conditions' in West Papua, in recognition of an intensifying debate about the region in New Zealand (Tama, 2016).

That he should single out this matter as a priority for addressing in Indonesia's relationship with New Zealand speaks volumes about Jakarta's sensitivity over coverage about Papua. An able diplomat with charisma and an effective communicator, Tantowi's appointment heralded a more forthright approach from the embassy about putting forward Indonesia's side of the story on Papua-related events and issues that we cover at RNZ Pacific. For their part, the officials at the embassy in Wellington have made it clear they believe Indonesia is misunderstood in New Zealand, and they seek to address this.

Jakarta's forthrightness was evident in the Pacific Islands region itself when Tantowi led a delegation to Samoa which hosted the Pacific Islands Forum leaders summit in September 2017. A group of local people held a protest outside the Forum venue, highlighting the plight of West Papuans and their support for an independent Papua. In response, Tantowi and his government's Papuan envoy, Franz Albert Joku, held a rather heated press conference, chiding the protesters and local journalists for talking about Papua and not sticking 'to the main agenda' of the Forum. 'We have seen our worst; where the hell were the Pacific Island

nations when we really needed that kind of expression and that kind of concern coming from them?' an irate Joku asked (Feagamaali'i-Luamanu, 2017).

The Apia press conference demonstrated how Jakarta appears to want to restrict foreign journalists from talking about West Papua even on their own patch. But beyond the sensitivities of the Papua problem, elements of the Indonesian government are working with the genuine aim of improving conditions in Papua. There is also a bid to better understand Pacific mindsets, if not to lure regional governments from any support for Papuan independence aspirations.

As well as the now regular pro-West Papua demonstrations in numerous cities around the world, including in other parts of Indonesia, in the past couple of years there have been big mobilisations in Papua itself calling for independence. Mass arrests took place in 2016 in relation to the largest of the demonstrations in the Papuan cities. Some of the big demonstrations were in support of the ULMWP which, soon after forming in 2015, was given observer status in the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). The concurrent elevation of Indonesia's position in the MSG, and its increasing influence on the group, has proved divisive among leaders of the free Melanesian states.

At the time of writing, the MSG's five full members were divided over the thorny issue of whether to grant full membership to the West Papuans. While Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia's FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front) have supported the Liberation Movement's application, Papua New Guinea and Fiji have been opposed, reluctant to upset their relationships with Indonesia. It is unclear whether the new leadership in Solomon Islands (Rick Hou replaced Manasseh Sogavare as prime minister in November, and Sogavare is now the deputy) will continue to advance the West Papua human rights and self-determination causes. But so long as the Charlot Salwai-led government remains in place, Vanuatu can be expected to continue to speak out.

Regional matter

Jakarta has put considerable resources into countering the Liberation Movement's diplomatic forays in the Pacific. Indonesia's aid relationships with Pacific countries are growing. It was no coincidence that after hosting the Forum summit last year, Samoa's government came away with a bolstered relationship with Indonesia in a raft of new assistance packages. In early 2018, cabinet minister Wiranto (who has a single name) led an Indonesian delegation on a quick diplomacy circuit of some Pacific states, including two nations which had recently spoken out at the UN on their concern about Papua.[1] His trip was a success for Jakarta in that it resulted in about-turns by Nauru and Tuvalu whose leaders then declared their support for Indonesia's efforts in Papua, pledging commitment to non-interference in Indonesia's domestic matters, and abandoning their lofty statements of concern just a few short months earlier at the UN.

From a regional security point of view, it is in Australia and New Zealand's interests to follow West Papuan affairs and do what they can to ensure against regional spillover from the security and environmental crises. The Indonesian military has long made incursions into Papua New Guinean territory, ostensibly in pursuit of Free West Papua Movement members, and it undermines PNG's security forces. New Zealand and Australia are concerned about PNG's poorly resourced military and police and their inability to quell the type of violence triggered by the 2017 general election in the Highlands. A general ongoing lawlessness in PNG, including abuses by police and disciplinary forces, as well as worsening sorcery accusation-related attacks, has been central to the rationale for Australia and the United States getting closely involved in the security arrangements for APEC summit in Port Moresby in November 2018, the biggest event the country has ever hosted.

Papua New Guinea has a growing defence relationship with Indonesia, which is also helping out with APEC. This sort of arrangement troubles the Australian government: the prospect of losing influence in the Pacific to other countries, China in particular. The security problems in Papua New Guinea are New Zealand's concern too. It has a good reputation among Pacific Island countries, and is seen as an honest broker with a history of helping resolve conflict in Melanesia, having facilitated the process which brought peace to the protracted Bougainville civil conflict. The potential to play a role in a solution, or improvement in West Papua, is where New Zealand could display its leadership to Pacific Island countries.

In the past five years, the internationalisation of the Pacific region's hidden conflict has been significant. The key theatres in this process are the media and international diplomacy. Both are avenues which can be used to ensure the stories of Papuans are brought out from behind the veil. For now these stories remain too much of a fringe story. Independent journalism remains highly relevant to the wider region's understanding of West Papua, to be able to wade through the fogginess of reports about unrest, or the spin of every government claim about accelerating development. Yet the pressures on West Papua-based journalists, and on independent coverage of the region, can be expected to continue, perhaps even to increase.

Note

1. As a former Indonesian military general, Wiranto is accused by human rights groups of playing a significant role in severe rights abuses as Indonesian forces withdrew from the occupied territory of East Timor in 1999.

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3. The night watch: Filipino TV journalists and Oplan Tokhang

Experiencing coverage of the Duterte Administration's bloody campaign against illegal drugs

Abstract: Filipino journalists covering the graveyard shift were the first recorders of violence and brutality under Philippine President Duterte's anti-illegal drugs campaign. The first phase in 2016, called Oplan Tokhang, was executed ruthlessly and relentlessly. This study aims to explore how graveyard-shift TV journalists experienced covering Oplan Tokhang. The intention is to get a deeper understanding of how the experience impacted on the way they reported on the Oplan Tokhang stories. To get the essence of the Oplan Tokhang coverage experience, the study used a phenomenological research approach. Four graveyard-shift TV journalists agreed to face-to-face in-depth interviews. The participants came from major TV networks in the Philippines. Analysis of the results was framed within the lens of symbolic interactionism and discussions of past literature. The study presented constructed realities of four television journalists who described their nightly struggles to perform their duties, surrounded by a climate of death and suffering, in the violent world of Oplan Tokhang. Four themes emerged describing the experience: a) A 'horror fest' of violence, brutality and suffering; b) A constrained and controlled coverage; c) Objectivity and the truth; and d) Post-mortem: Falling short of fulfilling journalistic duties. These themes revealed ethical dilemmas encountered by the television journalists. They faced realities of intimidation and threat, resorting to self-censorship. Repeated exposure to violence desensitised the television journalists. The rush to meet nightly deadlines resulted in simplified treatment of stories, missing the context of the issue. In reflection, the TV journalists realised they fell short in fulfilling the journalist's obligation to search for the truth and to report it.

Keywords: Duterte's war on drugs, graveyard-shift news, intimidation, television journalists, journalism ethics, journalism trauma, media harassment, Oplan Tokhang, phenomenology, Philippines

FERNANDO G SEPE JR

Figure 1: With many of the killings happening at night, graveyard-shift television journalists who service 24-hour news operations led in covering Oplan Tokhang operations. The killings became a staple of nightly newscasts.

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Introduction

WHEN the day is done, and most people go to sleep, they are the ones who go out to keep watch at night. They are the journalists assigned to the graveyard or night shift. They cover and report newsworthy events to keep the public informed of what happened while they were sleeping. For major broadcast networks in the Philippines, news operation is 24 hours. With a largely Metro Manila-centric news content (Rimban & Cabaero, 2008), major television networks assign TV crews on the graveyard shift to cover urban Metro Manila after dark.

At night, journalists mostly cover events related to criminality, disaster and violence (Corotan, 2008), such as street brawls, fire disasters, vehicular accidents, robbery, police raids and homicide. In July 2016, however, the regular graveyard-shift crime coverage started to change. There were more dead bodies and more killed in police raids in connection to President Rodrigo Duterte's anti-illegal drugs campaign, which has become the cornerstone of his presidency (The kill list, 2016; ABS-CBN Investigative and Research Group, n.d.).

Oplan Tokhang

The anti-illegal drugs campaign became widely known as Oplan Tokhang. It was initially implemented in Davao City where Duterte was a mayor for almost 23 years. Under Oplan Tokhang in Davao City, the police knocked on the doors of suspected drug pushers and peddlers in the *barangay,* or village. The Davao police would warn drug suspects to stop their illegal trade or else the police would make them stop, with an implication of physical harm (Colina, 2016).

A consolidated report on the killings in Davao City from 1998 to 2015 (Picardal, n.d.) identified 1,424 cases of people, mostly suspected drug users and pushers, killed by the Davao Death Squad. The Davao Death Squad is a group of assassins believed to be composed of the Davao police (Arguillas, 2017).

When Duterte assumed the presidency on 30 June 2016, the Philippine National Police adopted Oplan Tokhang nationwide as part of a 'two-pronged approach' in the government's campaign against illegal drugs labelled as Project Double Barrel (National Police Commission, 2016).

Soon after, what happened in Davao was replicated in Metro Manila and elsewhere in the country. Early morning newscasts, primetime news programmes and newspapers bannered deaths from Oplan Tokhang raids. ABS-CBN news online counted at least 3,155 drug-related deaths from 10 May 2016 to 21 March 2017, an unprecedented number of killings in less than a year. The perpetrators were either policemen claiming that they had shot the suspects in self-defence, or vigilante killers whose identities have not been established except in very few cases. Although Duterte has disavowed knowledge of the summary executions, which have been called extrajudicial killings, some of his pronouncements tended to support or encourage such killings.

The night-shift news beat

With many of the killings happening at night, graveyard-shift television journalists who service 24-hour news operations led in covering Oplan Tokhang operations. The killings became a staple of nightly newscasts. Soon enough, reporters and photographers became news themselves, cited as sources who had first-hand knowledge or bore witness to the killings and their aftermath. Several articles published on international online news sites and institutional websites (Berehulak, 2016; Coronel, 2017; Espina, 2017; Syjuco, 2017; See, 2016) told of Filipino, as well as foreign, journalists' accounts of horror and dread in covering the violent operations.

Extrajudicial killings and media coverage

In the Human Rights Watch report titled *License to kill: the Philippine police killings in Duterte's 'War on Drugs'* (Bouckaert, 2017), investigators found that law enforcers were behind the extrajudicial killings and that those targeted

were mostly poor. These killings, according to HRW, are proof that the Duterte government has disregarded the rule of law and summarily executed suspects without the benefit of charges and trial.

Given the controversy that has attended these killings, and the many questions surrounding them, journalists are relied upon to tell the stories behind them by providing factual and complete accounts of these cases. They are expected by the public to expose abuses and hold authorities accountable. Considering the front-seat view graveyard-shift television journalists have in covering Oplan Tokhang, it is important and necessary that they report events accurately and give context to the Oplan Tokhang stories.

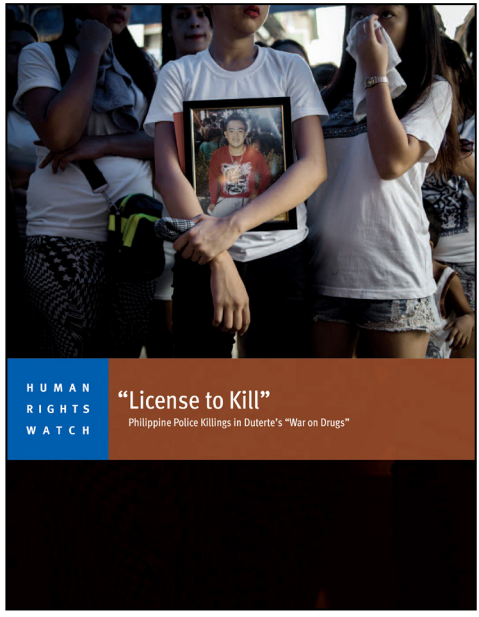

Figure 2: In the Human Rights Watch report *License to kill: The Philippine police killings in Duterte's 'War on Drugs'*, investigators found that law enforcers were behind the extrajudicial killings and that those targeted were mostly poor.

The purpose of this study is to describe what graveyard-shift TV journalists experienced in covering Oplan Tokhang, what meanings they made out of it and how these meanings affected their coverage and reporting of the events. The study focused on television journalists who, unlike their print counterparts, have to rush to the scenes of the killings in their immediate aftermath, as the medium requires visuals for the story, and produce stories within a short span of time. Among television journalists, those on the graveyard shift are the ones who consistently cover the Oplan Tokhang. This study also aims to find out how interaction with their peers in the news beat and interaction with their respective newsrooms influenced the presentation of the Oplan Tokhang stories.

Violence in drug-related coverage in Mexico

Although much has been written about journalists' experience in covering Oplan Tokhang as journalistic account, there is not much social science research into this problem. Similarly, in Asia there are not many published studies about journalists and their coverage of state-run campaigns against illegal drugs.

There have been a few studies, however, conducted on journalists who covered the 2006 Mexican war against drugs. In 2010, a seminar conducted at the University of Texas gathered 26 journalists from Mexico and the US who

were part of the violent coverage of Mexico's war on drugs and the drug cartel wars. The Mexican government's 2006 declaration of war on drugs had resulted in the deaths of more than 100,000 people (Associated Press, 2016). The outcome of the seminar was a report (Medel, 2010) that revealed several daunting challenges faced by the journalists in their coverage. Among these challenges were physical and verbal threat and intimidation; psychological and emotional stress; restricted access to information; lack of training in trauma coverage and not enough support from newsroom and media owners. The journalists became scared and constrained in their coverage. Some were manipulated while some were corrupted. These challenges negatively affected the quality of the stories produced, resulting in the failure of the press to comprehensively discuss the complicated issue of illegal drugs and the war launched by the Mexican government to eradicate it.

In 2012, a study was conducted among Mexican journalists who were exposed to traumatic and violent coverage, and to intimidation and harassment (Feinstein, 2012). The study found that Mexican journalists who covered the war on drugs suffered similar symptoms of psychological distress as the author's previous research found on war journalists.

Methodology

This study used a phenomenological approach to explore the television journalists' experience of the Oplan Tokhang coverage. In phenomenology, the study is concerned with discovering the definition of the experience or the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2013) shared by the participants. In this case, the phenomenon is the Oplan Tokhang coverage. The intention of the study is to be able to attain deeper understanding of the news coverage experience shared by journalists who moved in the same environment—that is the graveyard news beat and the world of TV news.

This research chose as participants Filipino TV journalists who covered the nightly Oplan Tokhang raids within the period July 2016 to March 2017. The incidence of killings and violence, as monitored in various news sites, was highest during the months of July, August and September 2016 (ABS-CBN, 2016). The TV journalists chosen were limited to the positions of reporter and cameraman to make the sample manageable. The participants are affiliated with major TV networks based in Metro Manila, where most of the Oplan Tokhang killings happened (ABS-CBN Investigative & Research Group, 2016).

The study also used the lens of symbolic interactionism, zooming in on how the graveyard-shift television journalists viewed their world as individuals and as a group of individuals.

American sociologist Herbert Blumer (1969) described symbolic interactionism as an approach to understanding 'human group life and human conduct'

(p. 1). In his book, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*, Blumer said there were three premises to the theory: 1, people act towards things or objects based on the meanings they place on them; 2, the meanings are conceived from social interaction with other people; and 3, people interpret the meanings and continually recreate meanings as they interact with society. Blumer explained that the 'things' referred to in the theory include not only physical objects but anything that a person can refer to or acknowledge in his world such as individual values, institutions, other people's activities or situations one encounters.

This study analysed how interaction between things defined the television journalists' reality or world situated in the context of the coverage of Oplan Tokhang (see Table 1).

Data collection and analysis followed these steps:

1. The researcher conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews with the participants using open-ended questions.
2. The researcher transcribed interviews and examined the texts for key words, phrases and themes.
3. After extensive examination of transcripts and notes, the researcher looked for common meanings and grouped them together. Cresswell and Poth (2013) refer to these groupings as clusters of meaning.
4. From these clusters of meaning, the researcher identified general themes that describe the essence of graveyard shift coverage of Oplan Tokhang.
5. The resulting themes are presented and discussed within the framework of past literature and through the lens of symbolic interactionism. The themes provide a deeper look into the constructed world of graveyard-shift TV journalists who cover Oplan Tokhang.

Research ethics clearance and protocol

The research was conducted after receipt of approval from the Ethics University Research Office of the Ateneo de Manila University. Protocol was established to address potential risks and emotional distress that may be experienced by the participants. DART Centre for Trauma and Journalism Fellow Rowena Paraan and Dr Reggie Pamugas of Health Alliance for Human Rights were on call during the interviews to address potential emotional distress. The DART Centre is a global network of journalists and trauma professionals that advocates awareness on trauma journalism (DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma, n.d.). After the research was completed, participants were offered stress debriefing sessions but all participants chose not to avail them. Participants have been given contact details of the researcher if they choose to avail of trauma debriefing.

Table 1: Clusters of meaning derived from significant statements

Basis for clustering	Clusters of meaning	Sample of selected significant statements
Witnessing the event	1. Oplan Tokhang was a showcase of blood, violence and extreme human anguish replayed every night	*Para akong nanood ng horror film. Magsta-start makakita ka ng taong nakatakip ng packaging tape and mukha. Tapos may alambre sa leeg. Tapos meron pang saksak ng ice pick. Meron pang pako sa ulo. Parang nakakatakot.* (It's like I'm watching a horror film. You start to see a person whose face is wrapped in a packaging tape. Then, one has a wire around his neck. Then one was stabbed with an ice pick. Another has a nail on his head. It's horrifying.)
	2. Many of those killed have criminal records but police operations were dubious and questionable.	*Yung iba natutulog nung binabaril, e. Marami na akong experience, yung iba natutulog.* (Others were killed while sleeping. I've experienced this a lot, knowing they were killed while sleeping.)
	3. Covering Oplan Tokhang was exhausting to the body, the mind and the emotions due to the number of deaths to be covered in various areas in Metro Manila	*Talagang sunod-sunod, gabi-gabi. Patayan kabila't kanan.* (It's really incessant, every night. Killings left and right.)
Covering the event	4. Access to information is limited and controlled.	*Pag sasabihan kami (ng pulis). Pag inulit pa raw. Sige, subukan nyong ulitin pa. Sige subukan nyo kuhanan.* (We would be scolded by the police. Go on and try it again! Go and try us and shoot your video.)
	5. Emotions are numbed or purposely detached to be able to continue to function in the coverage	*Nagko-cover lang talaga ako. Kuha lang ako ng detalye. Wala na akong nararamdaman. Umiyak yung family, ok wala, wala sa akin.* (I just cover. I just get the details. I feel numbed. The family is crying and I feel nothing. It's nothing to me.)
	6. The press corps and pack reporting	*Sa amin sa gabi kami-kami yung mag-kakakampi. Kung baga kami-kami yung magkakadikit. Ang then tulungan sa info kasi may kanya-kanya kaming asset.* (Every night, we are allies. We stick together. We help each other with information because we have our own police assets.)

Basis for clustering	Clusters of meaning	Sample of selected significant statements
Writing and reporting the event	7. The way to address internal struggle between risks and pursuing truth behind police operations is to report the basic facts available.	*Para akong nanood ng horror film. Magsta-start makakita ka ng taong nakatakip ng packaging tape and mukha. Tapos may alambre sa leeg. Tapos meron pang saksak ng ice pick. Meron pang pako sa ulo. Parang nakakatakot.* (It's like I'm watching a horror film. You start to see a person whose face is wrapped in a packaging tape. Then, one has a wire around his neck. Then one was stabbed with an ice pick. Another has a nail on his head. It's horrifying.)
	8. Newcasts air Oplan Tokhang stories as regular police stories fit for short TV reports.	*Unless meron akong visuals na very compelling na puede sya umere sa amin, saka ko lang talaga pinu-pursue.* (Unless I have very compelling visuals acceptable for airing, that's the only time I pursue the whole story.)
Post-mortem: Assessment of the whole coverage.	9. Challenges in covering Oplan Tokhang leads to measuring a journalist's fulfillment of his/her duty.	*Parang sa journey ko as a journalist na nag co-cover nitong Oplang Tokhang, parang di ko ma- prove yung worth ko as a journalist kasi parang di ako nagiging totoo. Wala po kasing, ano ba, venue para masabi ko sya o maisulat ko sya.* (In my journey as a journalist who is covering Oplan Tokhang, I can't seem to prove my worth as a journalist because I have not been truthful in my reporting. I don't have a venue to tell the truth or write it.)

Results, findings and discussion

Brief background of the participants

The researcher invited nine television journalists from the three TV networks that permitted their reporters and cameramen to be approached. Four agreed to participate in face-to-face interviews under the condition of keeping their identities hidden. For this study, the participants are labelled as such: TVreporter1 or TVR1, TVreporter2 (TVR2), TVreporter3 (TVR3) and TVCameraman1 (TVC1). The anti-illegal drugs police operation Oplan Tokhang was launched in July 2016. All four television journalists have covered Oplan Tokhang.

Clusters of meanings

From extensive analysis and contemplation of significant words and phrases, the researcher came up with nine clusters of meaning that describe the experience of covering Oplan Tokhang. In clustering the significant statements, the researcher

used as a basis the simple process of covering news events. This process involves witnessing the event; covering the event; writing or reporting the event; and assessing the coverage.

Table 1 shows selected significant statements that were formed into nine clusters of meaning. The clustered meanings are:

1. Oplan Tokhang was a showcase of blood, violence and extreme human anguish replayed every night.
2. Many of those killed have criminal records but police operations were dubious and questionable.
3. Covering Oplan Tokhang was exhausting to the body, the mind and the emotions due to the number of deaths to be covered in various areas in Metro Manila.
4. Access to information was limited and controlled.
5. Emotions are numbed or purposely detached to be able to continue to function in the coverage.
6. The press corps and pack reporting
7. The way to address internal struggle between risks and pursuing truth behind police operations was to report the basic facts available.
8. Newcasts air Oplan Tokhang stories as regular police stories fit for short television reports.
9. Challenges in covering Oplan Tokhang leads to measuring a journalist's fulfillment of his or her duty.

Themes

From the nine clusters of meaning emerged four themes that describe the essence of the experience of the graveyard-shift TV journalists in covering Oplan Tokhang. Each theme is discussed and includes direct quotes and narrations from the participants. The narrations in the language of Tagalog are translated by the researcher in English. Table 2 shows the emergence of four themes from the clusters of meaning.

Theme 1: A 'horror fest' of brutality, suffering and criminal minds

When the four participants were asked to describe police operations under Oplan Tokhang using a phrase or a word, they all used the word *madugo*, or bloody. The participants narrated feeling shock at the many dead bodies they covered every night.

TVReporter1 related how he reacted to the first few months of Oplan Tokhang operations in 2016:

> *Yung may kino-cover kami na patay, mamaya may patay nanaman sa isang lugar. Parang tama na. May patay na naman? Ayoko na. Kasi bihira lang ang ano dati e, ang patayan sa gabi.* (We would be covering a dead body

> in one place and then we will get a tip that there's another one in another place. Another one again? I don't want to go anymore. Before, it was rare to have a story on killings and dead bodies at night.)

TVReporter2 has a more vivid description of her coverage. She described her coverage as if she was watching or acting in a horror film. She made this comparison:

> *Para akong nasa isang...para akong nanood ng horror film. Ganun sya sobrang nakakatakot. Imagine sa isang bahay limang patay. Sabi ko hindi lang limang patay yan. Masaker yan! Kinikilabutan tuloy ako.* (It feels like I'm inside…like I'm watching a horror film. That's how scary it is. Imagine, in a house there are five dead bodies. I say to myself, those are not just five dead bodies. It's a massacre! I'm having goosebumps.)

Table 2: Themes that emerged from clusters of meaning

Clusters of meaning	Themes
1. Oplan Tokhang was a showcase of blood, violence and extreme human anguish replayed every night	1. A 'horror fest' of violence, brutality and suffering
2. Many of those killed have criminal records but police operations were dubious and questionable.	
3. Covering Oplan Tokhang was exhausting to the body, the mind and the emotions due to the number of deaths to be covered in various areas in Metro Manila	2. A constrained and controlled coverage
4. Access to information is limited and controlled.	
5. Emotions are numbed or purposely detached to be able to continue to function in the coverage	
6. The press corps and pack reporting	
7. The way to address internal struggle between risks and pursuing truth behind police operations is to report the basic facts available.	3. Objectivity and the truth
8. Newcasts air Oplan Tokhang stories as regular police stories fit for short TV reports.	
9. Challenges in covering Oplan Tokhang leads to measuring a journalist's fulfillment of his/her duty.	4. Post-mortem: Falling short of fulfilling journalistic duties

TVReporter2 described the brutal ways the suspects were killed. One dead body had his face wrapped in a packing tape. One was found dead with barbed wire around his neck. Another body was stabbed with an ice pick while another one had a nail on his head. TVReporter2 revealed that the Oplan Tokhang coverage had given her frequent nightmares.

The participants admitted they were unprepared to witness and cover the intensity of violence and killings from Oplan Tokhang. In a night, they had to cover an average of three to five incidents of Oplan Tokhang operations. Running from one incident to another prevented them from finding out more about each story they covered, resulting in spot police reports.

In the code of ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists (2014) in the United States, one of the principles of ethical journalism is to 'seek truth and report it'. The code stated that journalists should be accurate in getting information and should provide context of the story. The participants in this study failed to provide context in their stories. What they produced were simplified versions of the events: that those killed were suspected drug users and pushers, and they were killed because they tried to shoot at the police operatives. This became a sort of story template that repeated itself night after night.

The participants shared they did not exert effort to get the background of the suspects and the circumstances surrounding the killings because of lack of time. There was also no effort to analyse and look at the big picture in the conduct of Oplan Tokhang operations.

TVReporter3 shared:

> *Dahil nga sunod sunod yung nangyayari, may mga time na one side lang talaga makukuha mo. Kasi kailangan mo tumakbo from one area to another area kasi may incident na naman dun. Kaya hindi rin nakukumpleto yung pagbuo ng storya.* (Due to simultaneous crime incidents, there are times when you can just get one side because you must rush from one area to another because there's another incident there. That's why you can't complete the story.)

Another factor that discouraged the participants from taking time do more inquiry were the disturbing images of brutality and suffering. TVReporter3 purposely avoided looking at the crime scene because the images caused her nightmares. She just wanted to get basic details of the event and then move on to cover the next dead body.

Deadline pressures and disturbing images in violent crime coverage like Oplan Tokhang both negatively impacted on the emotional state of the participants and their coverage. This result is aligned with general findings of studies in trauma journalism (Smith, Newman & Drevo, 2015; Dworznik, 2011; Long, C.C., 2013; McMahon & McLellan, 2008; Simpson & Cote, 2006; Shulman, 1997).

A report on the coverage of the Mexican government's war on drugs (Medel, 2010) found that journalists' treatment of drug-related killings as simple police stories took away public discussion from the complicated and complex issue of the illegal drugs in the country (Medel, 2010). Similar to the 2010 report findings, the result in this study showed that under the pervasive climate of violence and fear, the participants tended to focus more on getting graphic details and compelling videos than completing the stories.

As the number of dead bodies increased over the months, the participants found themselves numbed and desensitised from the suffering and anger coming from relatives of those killed. Lack of sensitivity and respect in treating victims of violence, like relatives of killed suspects, goes against the journalist's ethical principle to minimize harm in reporting on a story (SPJ Code of Ethics, 2014). TVCameraman1 related how he guides a new reporter on the graveyard shift in getting interviews from the relatives:

> *Yung reporter ko bago, (sabihin ko) wag na nya tanungin kung puedeng ma-interview. Itutok na nya kaagad yung mic saka na nya tanungin para hindi na makakatanggi yung ano. Makita mo reaksyon nya, umiiyak, mas maganda yun.* (My reporter is new. I would advise him to not ask for permission for an interview. Just shove the mic right away then quickly ask the question so the person won't have the opportunity to decline. If the person reacts by crying, that's even better).

TVCameraman1 has become unaffected by grieving relatives after covering the same thing every night. He focused mostly on getting the most 'compelling' videos for the story. Journalists, however, have the responsibility to respect the dignity and rights of the victims to refuse interviews (Hight & Smyth, 2009). Crime trauma experts believe that television journalists should especially be careful in using the camera since many victims are intimidated by broadcast equipment (Bucqueroux & Seymour, 2009). TVReporter2 was aware that she has stopped empathising with the relatives because, like TVCameraman1, she got used to witnessing the sufferings and horror every night. TVReporter2 shared:

> *Kinabukasan ganun na nanaman ulit. To the point na na-de-de-sensitised ka na. Parang tipong wala ka nang maramdaman. Na normal lang sayo na may patay. Umiyak yung family, ok wala, wala sa akin.* (The next day, it's the same again to the point that I've become de-sensitized. I don't feel anything anymore. It's normal for me to see dead bodies. The family would be crying, and I would feel nothing.)

The participants did not consult or share their experiences with their news editors or managers. Instead, they shared their thoughts with peers on the graveyard shift.

The participants added that on the other hand, their news managers did not ask nor encourage them to talk about their experiences.

Theme 2: A constrained and controlled coverage

In their coverage of Oplan Tokhang stories, graveyard-shift television journalists faced several difficulties in getting relevant and vital information about the killings. The most daunting task was getting credible sources to relate what really happened. The participants stated that neither the police nor the witnesses would agree to be interviewed. The participants observed that when they asked police operatives details about the incident and the crime scene, the police would either ignore them or tell them to direct all questions to the station chief. The witnesses, meanwhile, were too scared to talk. The participants observed that the suspects' relatives were usually in a state of intense grief and suffering, unable to provide coherent account of what happened. In the few times that the police agree to an interview, the police would always claim the suspect was killed because he fought back. The participants, however, detected inconsistencies with the statement and the observable evidence in the crime scene. TVReporter2 narrated:

> *Yung pakikipag-usap rin sa mga pulis, may times na alam mong nagsisinungaling sila. Itshura palang ng patay sa crime scene alam mo na tinanim lang yung bala. Like nasa isang maliit lang na kwarto sabihin nila nanlaban, nagpaputok. E ang liit ng kwarto. Sir, nasaan po yung tama ng mga baril sa pader? Wala! Wala silang masabi.* (In conversations with the police, you just know they are lying. The way the dead body is positioned in the crime scene, you know the bullet was planted. Like inside a very small room, the police will say the suspects shot at them. Sir, where is the bullet hole in the walls? Nothing! They have no answer.)

The participants experienced doubts and suspicions over the legitimacy of Oplan Tokhang. However, the participants felt conflicted in exposing inconsistencies due to police intimidation, threat and harassment. TVReporter2 revealed that when a police officer is grilled on suspicious circumstances surrounding an operation, the officer would appear composed on-camera. The intimidation happens off-camera. TVReporter2 shared this encounter with a police officer:

> *Kahit gisahin mo sila ng mga questions sasagutin lang nila yan. Pero after nun.. minsan may lumapit sa aking pulis: Alam mo naman yung profile di ba? Opo sir. O, bakit ganun pa yung tanong mo? E sir gusto ko lang po malaman…Parang napapahiya ako. Kasi pag may nakakarinig na reporter baka iniisip ko, baka tama nga si sir. Masyado nga ba kong aggressive?* (Even if you grill them with questions, they'll just answer them.

> But after that…one time a police officer approached me: You know the suspect's profile, right? Yes, sir. Then why are you asking those kinds of questions? I just want to know the answers sir…I feel embarrassed. I'm conscious other reporters around me might think that maybe sir is right. Am I being too aggressive?)

TVCameraman1 also shared his encounters with police operatives. In one instance, he was warned not take videos of a crime scene, yet he continued to do so. The police threateningly scolded him not to again challenge the police order. In the end, TVCameraman1 decided not to shoot crime scenes when not allowed by the police.

The participants faced the dilemma between discharging their duty to investigate the events and suffer police intimidation or cover what is allowed by the authorities and maintain good relations with police sources. The participants chose the latter.

Another factor that constrained graveyard-shift journalists from pursuing other story angles was pack journalism in the form of the police press corps. The participants are members of the press corps that exist in each major police district in Metro Manila. Press corps generally represent a group of journalists covering the same beat. In covering Oplan Tokhang operations, the participants go as a pack to cover the event. This kind of arrangement limits efforts for enterprising stories on Oplan Tokhang that may go beyond the common story coverage. TVReporter2 admitted that pack reporting results in uniform coverage and presentation of Oplan Tokhang stories. She pointed out, however, that the press corps provides safety in numbers and emotional support to graveyard-shift journalists who face intimidation and threats. TVReporter 3 described her relationship with the press corps:

> *Parang family din sa press corps. In a way nakakatulong din sya na parang coping up dun sa mga nakikita. Kasi after nun, parang tinatawanan nyo na lang after yung mga shooting incidents na nakikita ninyo e.* (We are like a family in the press corps. In a way, it helps me cope with what I witness during the coverage because after the coverage we just laugh off what we see in the shooting incidents.)

Theme 3: Objectivity and the truth

This theme focuses on the TV journalists' mental struggle in writing and reporting on Oplan Tokhang operations. The TV reporter-participants struggled over inconsistencies between suspicious evidence in the crime scene and contradictory accounts of the police operatives. Knowing that it is a journalist's responsibility to find out the truth and report it, the participants felt guilt and frustration that they could not do so for the reason discussed in the previous themes.

Journalists are supposed to make ethical decisions when faced with moral dilemmas, but it is not an easy task and there is a lot of gray area in the situation (Knowlton & Reader, 2009). TVReporter2 shared this conversation with a police officer who was then informing the media of a scheduled Oplan Tokhang operation:

> *Minsan nakaka-guilty actually kasi may mga pulis talaga na parang sobrang comfortable na sila sa media, sinasabi nila sa amin: "O meron tayong trabaho mamaya." Ayan, trabaho ang term. "Sir, may trabaho?" Expect mo na na merong mamamatay. At ikaw as a journalist alam mong may mamamatay, anong gagawin mo? Nandun ka lang naman kasi to cover the story.* (Sometimes I feel so guilty because there are some police officers who appear too comfortable with the media and they talk to us like this: "Hey, we have a job later." Job, that's the code. "Sir, we have a job?" You should expect that someone will be killed later. And you're a journalist and you know someone will die later, what are you to do? You're here just to cover a story.)

TVReporter1 felt bothered and confused on how to report on doubtful police accounts. He sought guidance from his news editors on how to write his stories. He narrated:

> *Bothered ako. Yun din ang consult ko sa boss ko na, pano ko isusulat yung ganung storya? Kasi para sa akin, isulat ko kung ano yung katotohanan. Sabi nya, puede mo naman isulat yung katotohanan pero dapat hindi maano yung buhay ko kasi walang katumbas na storya ang buhay. Sabi nya, kapagka may ganung sitwasyon, kunin mo yung parte ng pulis, kunin mo yung sinabi ng kamag-anak, yung ang ipalabas mo.* (I was bothered. I consulted my boss on how to write the story. For me, I wanted to write only the truth. He said, you can write the truth but you don't have to put your life at risk because no story is worth your life. He said in those kinds of situations, get the side of the police, get the side of the suspect's relatives, that's how you report it.)

All participants resorted to the template of reporting simple facts or adopted the He-said, She-said news writing formula in an effort to present both sides of the story. By presenting the side of the police and the victims, the participants believed they were objective in the treatment of the story. Objectivity, however, is not achieved by just getting all sides of a story. According to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2014), 'balancing a story by being fair to both sides may not be fair to the truth if both sides do not, in fact, have equal weight' (p. 63). The participants admit that in their television reports, the police version was usually given prominence since relatives and witnesses were afraid to give interviews.

The participants shared that the news producers' treatment of their stories also

influenced how they covered and wrote their reports. TVReporter1 and TVReporter2 noticed that due to similarities in circumstances surrounding the killing incidents, their news producers tended to compile the coverage and produce them into one short packaged report. If the several Oplan Tokhang operations they covered would be compressed into only a one-and-half-minute television report, the participants considered that getting basic facts and not pursuing more angles was acceptable to their editors. TVReporter2, however, acknowledge the disadvantage of this kind of news writing:

> *Nung una, nakaka alarm na ang dami. Tapos nung tumagal ng tumagal parang nasanay ka na. To the point na ni-wra-wrap na yung stories. Parang di na masyado na bibigyan ng importance yung isang particular na crime kasi pinag-sasama-sama na lang sa isang story.* (At first, the [dead bodies] were too many it became alarming. Then after a while, you get used to it to the point that the stories were wrapped into one. This fails to give importance to a particular crime because they were lumped into one story.)

All participants described their interaction with news editors and producers as mostly limited to discussion of crafting stories and beating deadlines. There were no extensive discussions and guidance in handling ethical dilemmas that would have helped them make better decisions.

Theme 4: Postmortem: Falling short of fulfilling journalistic duties. Among journalists, the search for truth is an obligation (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2014). All participants looked at their coverage of Oplan Tokhang as a test of their worth as journalists. Common among them was the need to convince oneself that each tried to do her/his best to report on the truth.

TVReporter3 and TVCameraman1 measured their value as TV journalists by the number of reports aired on their newscasts. TVReporter3 lamented, however, that most of her Oplan Tokhang stories failed to make it on air because her network's newscast followed a format not inclined to give prominence to crime stories.

TVReporter1 and TVReporter2, on the other hand, were concerned with more than just the airing of their news reports. Both tended to agonise over their perceived failure to question the legality and morality of the police operations. TVReporter2 reflected:

> *Parang sa journey ko as a journalist na nag co-cover nitong Oplang Tokhang, parang di ko ma prove yung nga po yung worth ko as a journalist kasi parang di ako nagiging totoo.* (In my journey as a journalist who is covering Oplan Tokhang, I can't seem to prove my worth as a journalist because I have not been truthful in my reporting.)

TVReporter1 has been bothered by his inability to write about certain incidents he witnessed or information he gathered that may get him in trouble with the police. He reflected he could not be 'fearless' in his reports for fear of retaliation from the police. TVReporter1 said the recurring thought on his mind is: no story is worth your life. He determined that in his reports he would just present the claims of all involved sides and let the viewer decide who is telling the truth.

Despite these challenges, all participants believed their stories had somehow opened the eyes of the public to the alarming gravity of the illegal drugs problem. However, to prove their value as journalists, the participants yearned for the chance to report truthfully on Oplan Tokhang operations without fear and repercussions.

Symbolic interactionism: Interpretation of realities

The symbolic interactionism theory promotes the belief that people act on things based on the meaning they give to these objects, and that these meanings are derived from interpretation of language and symbols (Blumer, 1969; Carter & Fuller, 2015). Adapting this theoretical lens, this study was able to formulate realities constructed by the four graveyard-shift television journalists in their coverage of Oplan Tokhang operations.

From the resulting themes, this study found that graveyard-shift television journalists who covered the extremely violent Oplan Tokhang operations experienced constant mental struggle as they faced moral dilemma in the practice of their profession. The study provided a look at the world of TV graveyard-shift journalists where they consider themselves not free to report the truth without consequences of police intimidation, threat and harassment.

In the themes *A horror fest of violence, killings and suffering* and *A constrained and controlled coverage*, the study found that television journalists experience the grim atmosphere of violence and the menacing attitude of the police as deterrents to their intention to present an accurate and complete picture of the Duterte administration's war on drugs. They practise self-censorship to avoid intimidation and complication in reporting on inconsistencies.

This study also found that TV journalists face the reality of the lack of willing credible sources. With witnesses silenced by fear, the journalists depend on the police to provide the details. This, despite them being aware that the police lie or at least do not tell the whole truth.

In the themes *Objectivity and the truth* and *Postmortem: falling short of journalistic duties*, the study discovered that television journalists resort to treating the complex issue of the war on illegal drugs as simple police stories that at most contain the two sides: of the police and of the victims. This is an attempt to convince themselves that despite daunted by police restrictions and threats, they are still able to adhere to objectivity. Objectivity, however, is a journalism

principle that does not simply mean reporting two sides of the story. Objectivity is achieved through a dedicated and thorough search for facts and the truth (Knowlton & Reader, 2009). The TV journalists are aware of this—that they have an obligation to report the truth. Yet they are unable to.

Guilt and shame over failure to abide by ethical and moral standards of journalism may imply moral injury. A study by clinician-researchers (Litz et al., 2009) associated emotional distress—particularly guilt and shame over ethical and moral violations—with moral injury. The study that focused on war veterans contends that moral injury 'involves an act of transgression that creates dissonance and conflict because it violates assumptions and beliefs about right and wrong and personal goodness' (p. 698). Although no extensive research has been conducted on moral injury as a clinical condition (Litz, et al., 2009), a recent quantitative study (Feinstein & Storm, 2017) on journalists who covered the 2015 refugee crisis found many experienced emotional stress related to moral injury. Feinstein and Storm (2017) revealed these journalists were distressed when they witnessed or failed to act on events that violated personal morals or ethical codes.

Faced with similar moral dilemmas, the television journalists exposed to state-sanctioned violence and killings under Oplan Tokhang, suffered doubts about their worth as journalists. This experience has influenced their reporting on the killings, missing out on the bigger context of the issue and failing to expose abuses in the anti-illegal drugs operations.

In the middle of this internal struggle, news managers are unaware of the ethical dilemmas that graveyard shift journalists face in covering such events. This study found that newsroom managers have not exerted much effort to find out what challenges graveyard shift journalists face in covering the anti-illegal drugs campaign. They have failed to address the fact that the extreme violence and brutality that define Oplan Tokhang make it an unprecedented type of coverage. Lack of attention and encouragement from newsroom managers send a signal to the journalists not to actively seek guidance on their coverage.

Conclusion

Media critics have criticised media coverage of the initial months of implementation of Oplan Tokhang in 2016. They found media slow and shallow in reporting on the violence and brutality that happened every night ('Media and the war on drugs,' n.d.). This study has provided a deeper insight on what graveyard-shift journalists experienced in covering the violent operations of Oplan Tokhang. It presented a world where TV journalists grappled with realities that challenged their commitment to uphold the principles of ethical journalism.

Four themes described the essence of the experience of graveyard-shift TV journalists in covering Oplan Tokhang. These four themes are:

- A "horror fest" of violence, brutality and suffering

- A constrained and controlled coverage
- Objectivity and the truth
- Post-mortem: Falling short of fulfilling journalistic duties

These themes revealed the ethical dilemmas they faced. Initially shocked at the death toll, the reporters talked about becoming desensitised to the violence, and foregoing basic duties like interviewing relatives of victims. There was also the reality of censorship that took the form of policemen dictating the coverage, or news editors not airing stories for some reason or another. Truth became a casualty as reporters sacrificed a probing reportage for good relations with policemen. And all these leading to their realisation that they fell short of journalistic duties.

Journalists champion the truth (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2014). Yet, the four graveyard-shift television journalists who participated in this research found themselves assigned to cover the violent world of Oplan Tokhang characterised with brutality, sufferings and untruths. All the participants described the experience of reporting Oplan Tokhang stories as a process of constant struggle in deciding how to stick to their journalistic duty to truthfully report on the incidents despite limitations and constraints they faced every night. Surrounded by a climate of crime and death, the four participants displayed anxiety and disappointment in what they witnessed and how they translated it in their reports. Attention and guidance from newsroom managers on how to handle the Oplan Tokhang coverage could have helped the television journalists courageously make ethical decisions. However, with their attention focused more on daily news operations, newsroom managers missed detecting the internal conflict experienced by television journalists.

In the study, the television journalists also expressed the desire to break away from restrictive coverage. The experience affected not only how they covered but also how they presented the news to the public. It is time to heed the signs to counter threats against good journalism.

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4. Internet under threat?
The politics of online censorship in the Pacific Islands

ABSTRACT: In the Pacific, there have been disconcerting news releases of governments making attempts at censoring the internet, a move seen to point towards silencing dissenting views on popular online forums. The conflicting trends between the new political forum ushered in by the new media on the one hand, and the restrictive mode of state censorship on the other hand, pose severe challenges to the broader framework of rights and freedom of expressions. This article aims to examine the regulatory approaches being developed and proposed in response to the emergence of new media in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). This article reviews two ways in which Pacific Island governments are attempting to regulate the internet, firstly through the development of legislation to prosecute cybercriminals, and secondly through the banning of specific internet sites, most notably Facebook. Despite the disparities in internet penetration levels, the article reveals that nearly all countries in the Pacific are increasingly regulating or are moving towards regulating the internet. The justifications for internet regulation and censorship are primarily predicated around the rhetoric of protecting its citizens from the adverse effects of the Internet. However, these regulations seem to be a response to Pacific Island governments' fears of growing criticism and political dissent on social media platforms.

Keywords: cyberbullying, e-democracy, ICT policy, internet censorship, media freedom, Pacific Islands, social media

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Introduction

OVER the past decade, and particularly in the last few years, the influence of the internet as a means to spread information and challenge government-imposed media controls has steadily expanded in the Pacific. Politicians and government agencies frequently find themselves the target of criticism on social media (Singh, 2015). This mounting influence directly correlates to the growth in the number of users throughout the Pacific Islands:

approximately seven million people have access to the internet, and the figure has more than doubled in the past five years (see Table 1). However, as more people use the internet to communicate, obtain information, socialise and conduct commerce, governments globally are stepping up efforts to regulate, and in some instances tightly control, this new medium.

The internet brings about significant challenges regarding how monolithic institutions such as governments can adequately regulate such a rapidly evolving technology (Warf, 2011). These challenges include determining which part of the Internet to regulate, for instance, which websites, social media sites or content should be regulated or filtered. Another challenge is what should be regulated? What is considered an inappropriate use of the internet? Is, for instance, the criticism of the government on social media regarded as improper use of the internet? These are ethical problems that governments have to face, but issues that if not given due deliberation could lead to governments abusing their authority and the curtailment of freedom of expression on the internet.

The rise in social media usage in the Pacific has led to many cases of cyber-harassment, cyberbullying and defamation (Nisha & Farik 2015). Facebook pages and Facebook groups have sprung up where users expose marital affairs, corrupt individuals, and, what is most common, corrupt politicians (Finau et al., 2014). The integrity of these posts is mostly unchecked, but the impacts can be real. In 2016, the Pacific's first case of defamation on social media was heard and involved an individual who alleged that the organiser of Fiji's Fashion Week was prostituting young models to white men (Fiji *Fashion Week v Emosi Radrodro* (High Court of Fiji, January 18, 2017)).

Governments in the Pacific nonetheless are actively seeking to regulate the internet (Finau et al., 2013; Blythe, 2006). The most common justification for the growing moves towards internet censorship is around 'protecting public from destructive thoughts' or 'national security and integrity'. This article examines the two regulatory approaches being developed in the Pacific islands region in response to the emergence of social media; first, through the development of legislation to prosecute cybercriminals and second, through the banning of specific internet sites, most notably the banning of popular social media site Facebook. With regards to banning specific sites, Nauru is the first country in the Pacific region to successfully ban the use of Facebook (Farrell, 2015) while Papua New Guinean government is proposing to block Facebook for a month to research PNG users of Facebook (Roy, 2018).

ICT landscape in the Pacific

While Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and social media platforms are relatively new phenomena to the Pacific region, statistics show that ICT elements such as mobile phone and internet accessibility have been

Table 1: Internet users, social media use for PICs, 2017

Country	Population	Internet Users		Active Social Media Users		Mobile Connections		Active Mobile Social Media Users	
	(000's)	000's	% Population	000's	% Population	000's	% Population	000's	% Population
Cook Islands	17.4	11.38	65	9.5	55	9.38	54	8.6	49
Fiji	908.6	500	55	500	55	1290.6	142	470	52
Kiribati	117.4	32	27	32	27	24.3	21	30	26
Marshall Islands	53.15	21	40	21	40	50.02	94	20	38
Nauru	11.34	6.06	54	38	34	10.58	93	3.4	30
Papua New Guinea	8330	0.91	11	0.73	9	361	43	0.67	8
Samoa	197.1	100	51	100	51	142.1	72	94	48
Solomon Islands	617.3	75	12	75	12	479.6	78	68	11
Tonga	108.5	57	53	57	53	106.9	99	54	50
Tuvalu	11.24	5.17	46	1.9	17	8.49	76	1.7	15
Vanuatu	279.2	82.8	30	69	25	251.8	90	63	23

Source: We Are Social. Digital in 2018 Report: Internet users, social media use and population statistics for Pacific Island Countries in 2017.

increasing at exponential levels (Titifanue et Tarai, Kant & Finau, 2016; Titifanue, Kant, Finau & Tarai, 2017). Pacific Islanders are becoming consumers of ICT technologies. In many Pacific Islands, the use of mobile phone technology has become pervasive, especially in urban centres. At the same time, increasing penetration rates have resulted in their use exponentially increasing in rural areas. Mobile phone penetration in the Pacific has grown to the extent that it has far outstripped fixed line usage (Titifanue et al., 2016; Titifanue et al., 2017).

With the rapid ICT development and innovations taking place around the world, there is enormous potential for exponential increases in the use of social media in the Pacific. Social media thus has significant potential to play a role in developing political discourse and activism within the Pacific region. Writers such as Walsh (2010) have provided analysis on the rise of alternative forms of information dissemination and discussions of political developments due to curtailment of media freedom in Fiji after the 2006 coup. Additionally, other writers have found that in the Pacific, social media enables the discussion and dissemination of information relating to issues censored from traditional media (Finau et al., 2014; Tarai et al., 2015). Through social media, citizens can criticise government policies and to some extent hold government officials to account (Cave, 2012; Logan, 2012).

Recent scholarly research has demonstrated how citizens and activists have used the democratic potential of the internet to bring about social and democratic change. Finau et al. (2015) have demonstrated how political Facebook groups like *Yumi Tok Tok Stret* (Vanuatu), Forum Solomon Islands International (FSII - Solomon Islands) and the Letters to the Editor Uncensored (Fiji) is facilitating e-democracy, thereby transforming political processes by developing new forms of accountability and transparency. To this end, FSII transformed itself from a Facebook discussion forum to charitable organisation, with a set governance structure and a thriving online site for free and moderated speech. As demonstrated by Tarai et al. (2015), politicians have started actively employing social media for political campaigning in order to directly engage with their voters and constituents in the context of the restrictive media environment in Fiji. In PNG, politicians (mainly Brian Kraemer and Garry Juffa) have also started leveraging Facebook to expose government corruption and calls for greater accountability and transparency.

Robie (2017) and Titifanue et al. (2016) demonstrate how Pacific Islanders have leveraged social media as a means to report on human rights issues in repressive media countries such as West Papua. Titifanue et al. (2017) further demonstrate how local, national and regional groups and organisations in the Pacific concerned with, and striving to address, the issue of climate change are using platforms afforded by the internet for climate change advocacy both nationally and internationally. Both in the context of West Papuan activism and climate change advocacy, ICT tools and platforms have rejuvenated a bottom-up push for regional solidarity and identity. Additionally, young technology-savvy feminists in Fiji have leveraged social media's potential to challenge patriarchal attitudes, calls for more gender-responsive institutions and public policies (Brimacombe, Kant, Finau, Tarai & Titifanue, 2018).

Digital technologies are also providing a space for Pacific Islanders' voices to be heard in times of natural disasters. Using Tropical Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, Spyksma (2017) and Tropical Cyclone Winston in Fiji (Finau et al., 2018) argue digital technologies are enabling NGOs and citizens in documenting the impact of the cyclone for its international advocacy; they unintentionally acted to fill a global news gap for reporting from the Pacific region.

Media freedom in the Pacific under siege

Media and communication networks in the Pacific Islands region are heterogeneous (Papoutsaki & Harris, 2008; Papoutsaki, McManus, & Matbob, 2011). Numerous researchers reveal that these diverse forms of media and communication networks play a vital role in the socio-economic and political change in the region (Harris, 2014; Robie, 2014). While the radio remains the most effective and far-reaching coverage in the region and television maintains viewership

mostly in urban centres, the print media is undergoing significant changes with the advent of ICT revolution, with many newspapers now accessible online (Tacchi et al., 2013). The ICT revolution that the region is undergoing is having an impact on the media and communication landscape, with many people now accessing radio via mobile phones (Cave, 2012; Intermedia Europe, 2012).

Despite the existence of numerous media bodies and associations, the state of media freedom in the Pacific is fragile and tenuous at best (Perrottet & Robie, 2011). Media in the region have faced a 'growing minefield of media abuses', ranging from unofficial clampdowns on freedom of expression in Tonga to violent attacks on media staff in Vanuatu and PNG, and official laws silencing criticism of Fiji's military-backed government (Robie, 2014). Since 2015, some governments have called for the media to focus on a developmental, nation-building role, rather than playing a watchdog role, denouncing it as overly critical, even destructive (Singh, 2015). Fiji has one of the most draconian legislative frameworks for restrictive media, and other countries (such as Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu) have declared their intention to set up similar legislative frameworks to control media (Pokiton, 2015; Shing, 2015).

The internet and especially social networking sites are having a profound impact on the media in the region. Facebook is being increasingly utilised by activists acting as citizen journalists who are 'playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information', ranging from commenting on an existing news piece to publishing articles (Singh, 2015). Governments are routinely accused of corruption on Facebook forums. Unhappy about the unprecedented level of public scrutiny and criticism afforded by the internet, governments are becoming increasingly concerned by the unlimited access to information provided by the internet. They are also increasingly concerned by the propagation of provocative and abusive content on social media, and the potentially destabilising impact on their comparatively small and fragile societies, are proposing harsher controls (Singh, 2015).

Government attempts to regulate the internet in the Pacific

Throughout the region, individual country responses to cybercrime vary significantly, and most changes are quite recent. While Tonga, Nauru and PNG have created new legislation specifically to prosecute individuals for cybercrime offences; Fiji and Samoa has added specific provisions within their existing crimes legislation that addresses forms of cybercrime (*Fiji Crimes Act, 2009*; *Samoa Crimes Act, 2013*). Additionally, Fiji in 2018 passed the *Online Safety Act* aimed at protecting the vulnerable from the excesses of the internet.

Legislation is a means to ensure that people will be prosecuted for committing an offence. However enforcement, especially given the limited resources of the Pacific, and also the difficulties in tracking cybercriminals who hide behind

aliases and fake accounts, presents a significant challenge for the Pacific. The laws in themselves are not sufficient to bring people to justice or to deter people from committing cybercrime. While Nauru is the only country in the region to place a national ban on Facebook in May 2015, lasting almost three years (RNZ, 2018), governments in Papua New Guinea and Samoa have called for or threatened to ban Facebook. The following sections details with attempts by the Pacific Islands governments to control the internet.

Papua New Guinea: The *Cybercrime Code Act* (2016) and calls for a temporary Facebook block

Papua New Guinea's *Cybercrime Code Act* was passed and certified on the 13 December, 2016 (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2016). The government defines cybercrime as 'offences committed using electronic devices, systems and or networks' (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2014). The Act is predicated on the Papua New Guinea Cybercrime Policy, which was initiated in 2014 (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2014).

PNG's Communication Minister Jimmy Miringtoro had highlighted security concerns for individuals, government agencies and corporate entities as one of the government's main agenda on cybersecurity (Mou, 2016). The minister went further to emphasise the need for updated laws to be responsive to the rising cases of cybercrime and threats to information security in PNG's liberalising ICT market (Mou, 2016). The Act carries a penalty of one million Kina maximum (approximately A$400,000) for a whole range of illegal online activities such as— but not limited to—hacking, data and system interference, electronic fraud and forgery, pornography, animal pornography, child pornography and defamatory publication (Government of Papua New Guinea , 2016). The previous legislation did not address cybercrime in its multifaceted aspects but was more direct and limited, such as the *Criminal Code Act, 1974*, which dealt with pornography specifically. This act was part of 19 other legislations that were deemed relevant to Cybercrime and related offences.

However, the *Cybercrime Code Act* has been criticised by the opposition, journalists and activists for its implications on freedom of expression, political discourse, lacking consultation and weak justification of threat (RNZ, 2014). The capability of expansive ICT devices as a tool to galvanise public dissent and dissatisfaction was witnessed in what was labelled as the 'PNG Spring' of April 2012 (Logan, 2012). The 'PNG Spring' saw widespread political protests that were addressed by PNG bloggers, which indicated how vibrancy PNG's blogosphere (Logan, 2012) was. Therefore, the introduction of the Cybercrime Policy a little less than two years later in 2014 received strong suspicion and criticism from the PNG opposition leader at the time, Belden Namah, who stated that 'the new policy will block freedom of speech' (RNZ, 2014). Namorong and

a variety of other critics were particularly concerned about the lacking clarity in the references to 'defamation' made in the Act (Galgal, 2017; Namorong, 2016). The section on Defamatory Publication highlights electronic material that can be deemed to directly or indirectly harm a person's reputation, profession and also if such material causes other people to 'avoid' the supposed defamed person (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2016). The blurred line between this section and internet censorship becomes evident when the Act does not have a clear section or subsection which protects freedom of expression, specifically critical political discourse. Critical political discourse in highlighting accountability issues, especially from public office holders runs the risk of being dismissed as 'defamatory material'. Therefore, a citizen seeking accountability online can be easily exploited by a disgruntled public official and be imprisoned or fined.

The Act has also been criticised for lacking critical and transparent consultations, especially in excluding the media industry, as expressed by the former PNG Media Council president, Alexander Rheeney (Pacific Media Watch, 2017). This argument is coupled by the fact that the Cyber Crime Policy, which later informed the *Cybercrime Code Act,* enlisted only 314 respondents to a vague survey, in a country of more than 7 million people, with less than one million active social networking site users (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2016). The policy has also been criticised for poorly concealing the fact that it failed to determine and contextualise the level of threat that cybercrime posed in Papua New Guinea. In a section titled 'Challenges in Determining the Threat Level', the policy has emphasised global data on cybercrime as a point of concern but veiled the fact that it was not able to produce contextual cybercrime data relevant to PNG (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2014). This exposed the tenuous justification of cybercrime as a threat in Papua New Guinea and ultimately the genuinity and purpose of the Act itself, as claimed by the government.

In addition to the Act, on 29 May, 2018, the *PNG Post-Courier* reported an announcement by the government of PNG that it was contemplating imposing a 'temporary' block on Facebook to investigate how best to regulate the site (Geteng, 2018). The PNG Communications Minister Sam Basil further stated that PNG could also look at the potential for creating a new Social Networking Site specifically for Papua New Guineans within PNG and abroad (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2018).

The motivation for the proposed blocking of Facebook was in response to illegal uses of Facebook in order to enforce PNG's *Cybercrime Act 2016*. The minister stated that 'the time will allow information to be collected to identify users that hide behind fake accounts, users that upload pornographic images, users that post false and misleading information on Facebook to be filtered and removed' (Geteng, 2018; Tlozek, 2018). While the minister later denied that his ministry planned to ban Facebook, the *Post-Courier* , which initially broke

the news on the proposed ban stood by their story (*PNG Post-Courier*, 2018).

Overall the PNG government rhetoric has been that they want 'genuine people with real identities to use the social network responsibly' (RNZ, 2018b). However, the motives for the move came under significant criticism from parties both within and outside PNG. Criticisms were raised that with a growing mistrust of local media in PNG (Gware, 2018), many Papua New Guineans were being pushed towards social media and that shutdowns, whether fully or partially, are typically undertaken by regimes attempting to suppress freedom of expression (Galgal, 2018). In a similar parallel to Nauru (discussed later), critics have also highlighted that the proposed ban seems to be censorship being disguised as protection (Galgal, 2018). PNG opposition MP Bryan Kramer also questioned the logic of a research methodology that would shut down the platform in order to research it (Kramer, 2018). It is worth noting that after Kramer raised this opinion in a Facebook post titled "DID DUMB JUST GET DUMBER???", he was referred to the Parliamentary Privileges Committee (Patjole, 2018b). The opposition strongly criticised this move as being a 'ploy to censor freedom of expression' (Patjole, 2018a).

At present, PNG has low internet penetration levels with about 11 percent of Papua New Guineans having Internet access, and approximately 730,000 active Facebook users (We Are Social, 2018). However, it must be noted that despite this limited internet outreach, PNG citizens are harnessing the internet and the information flows that it provides. Government attempts at internet censoring are not a new phenomenon: in 2010, the PNG government made its first attempt, when citizens leaked copies of a corruption enquiry report on blog sites (Logan, 2012). The government reacted by sending a writ to the country's ISP and ordered them to block blogs, which hosted the report (Logan, 2012).

Besides, PNG has an uninspiring score concerning press freedom, with a ranking of 53 in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index. Reporters Without Borders (2018) describes press freedom in Papua New Guinean as 'real but fragile freedom'. In such an environment, social media plays a crucial role in keeping the public informed on matters that the mainstream media may have missed (Hopkinson & Driscoll, 2017). Opposition politicians have also harnessed the internet as a means to disseminate information to the public and critique government policies. It is also noteworthy that PNG's current Communications Minister has ardently spoken out against Facebook had been previously described in 2011 as an MP who 'uses Facebook extensively to communicate with the public' (Stewart, Dwyer, & Lagerstedt, 2011).

Fiji: The *Online Safety Act, 2018*

The Parliament of Fiji enacted the *Online Safety Act* in May 2018 (Fijian Government, 2018), has been promoted as legislation designed to protect

Fijians against online forms of abuse and harm (Swami, 2018). These include cases of cyberbullying, harassment and manipulation through threats of exposure of intimate images, videos and or any other online material (FBC News, 2018). There has been an increase in the reporting of cyberbullying, harassment and manipulation in recent years within Fiji's media landscape. This has created a veneer of necessity and justification for the Act. However, critics remain suspicious of the Act and the intent of the Fijian government (Prasad, 2018).

Opposition concerns around the Bill mostly have to do with the implications on free speech and critical discussions (Swami, 2018). Robie & Perrottet (2011), point out that Fiji's media has been fragile due to its censorship in the early days of the 2006 coup. This has impacted on the free flow of information and also the expansion of online activity and discussions. Online debates and discussions have become crucial in informing and updating Fijians. Therefore, it is difficult for critics to fully trust or accept the purported intent of the *Online Safety Bill*, especially when its media landscape has been a victim of censorship from the same administration. At the time of writing, the *Online Safety Act* was only a few months old, and their implications on online discussions are yet to be seen.

Tonga: The Cyber Crime Legislative Framework (2011)

Tonga had introduced its Cybercrime Legislative Framework in 2011, encompassing some laws, which seek to address cybercrime related offences (Kefu, 2011). The primary legislation within this framework is the *Computer Crimes Act 2003*, which has two main objectives, namely to address computer-related crime and provide for the collection and use of electronic evidence (Kefu, 2011). Other laws in the framework include the *Criminal Offences Act, Pornography Control Act; Communications Act 2000; Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act;* and *Extradition Act* (Kefu, 2011). By 2016, there was draft legislation designed to add on to the Crimes Act 2003, which was put forward to parliament (Radio New Zealand, 2016).

In 2016, the Tongan chief executive of the Ministry of Information and Communications has publically stated how difficult it was to 'stop, censor or regulate information on social media' (Radio New Zealand, 2016). In 2017, Tonga signed onto the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime Treaty and signed up with Australia to share cybersecurity information (*Matangi Tonga*, 2017). The legislative framework appears to be broad, and its implications on online free speech are yet to be seen.

Proposed cybercrime legislation: Vanuatu, Samoa and the Solomon Islands

Governments in Vanuatu, Samoa and Solomon Islands have all indicated that they are in the process of drafting legislation on cybercrime. While Vanuatu and Samoa have been working with the Australian Government and the Council of Europe in preparing the bill. Much like other cybercrime, bills in the Pacific,

it is drafted with the intent to protect their citizens against cybercrime-related activities (Fikiasi, 2013; RNZ, 2018; Ah-Hi, 2018).

The Ni-Vanuatu government, which has been critical of discussions on both traditional and social media, warned of introducing a law to curb 'excessive liberty', including unwarranted allegations and abusive comments made on radio talkback shows and social media (Shing, 2015). The then Kilman government singled out the *Yumi Toktok Stret* Facebook group, and accused it of 'inciting social anarchy, instability and social disorder'. The wrong use of media could 'easily destabilise' the social peace and order in a vulnerable country like Vanuatu, said Kilman (Shing, 2015). Statements by the then PM were criticised that while some concerns about some of the excesses were reasonable, the government's reaction was disproportionately strong (International Federation of Journalists 2015). While the Cybercrime legislation while still in the drafting process, the current Prime Minister Charlot Salwai admitted that part of the bill was targeted at what he termed as 'false claims' on social networking sites such as Facebook and that 'Facebook has gone beyond [control]' (Pacific Media Centre, 2018). He stated that the proposed bill will tabled in Parliament 'so we can control the use of social media' (Pacific Media Centre, 2018).

In Samoa, the Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegoai, had openly stated his concerns about what he described as the 'illegal skimming of cash flow machines' and the need for Samoa to be up to date with the international community on combating cybercrime (Ah-Hi, 2018). At the time of writing, Samoa has yet to establish specific legislation on cybercrimes and online activity. However, it has introduced amended specific laws, such as the *Crimes Act 2013* (2013, No. 10) to include crimes concerning online activity. These include sexual offences involving the use of mobile devices and the internet (RNZ, 2013; Samoa Planet, 2018). However, new questions emerge around what cybercrime legislation in Samoa would cover, considering the government's response to 'Ghostwriters' (Finau & Garae, 2018). In November 2017, the Samoan government had revived a criminal libel law that it had removed in 2013, to address the issue of 'Ghostwriters' (*Samoan Observer*, 2017). Online social media users with pseudonyms have been disdainfully dubbed 'Ghost Writers', for their writings mostly targeted towards the Samoan government (Samoa Planet, 2017; *Samoan Observer*, 2017).

In an effort to bring the 'Ghostwriters' to task, the government in late 2017 re-introduced the Criminal Libel Law, which was abolished in 2013 (Luamanu, 2017). In addition to this, the Samoan Prime Minister threatened to ban social media platforms from Samoa completely if 'gutless anonymous bloggers' continue to use the freedom social media affords them to abuse government officials and innocent members of the public (Luamanu, 2018). The government is working on strengthening this legislation that already exist to meet, regulate and prosecute cybercriminals (Finau & Garae, 2018).

While there are no plans in motion by the government to draft cybercrime legislation in the Solomon Islands, the Director of Public Prosecution, Ronald Bei Talasasa, indicated a need for cybercrime legislation to overcome the vulnerability of the country to cybercrimes and other related activities (Bilua, 2017). The director had also mentioned Facebook specifically being a site where '…people are just running free…' and that 'it is time for people to think again' (Bilua, 2017). In recent years former Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare has threated to have the Facebook group, Forum Solomon Islands International (FSII), deregistered because of what he had then claimed was the group's 'political nature' (Aatai, 2015). FSII over the years has built significant citizen awareness and drive towards greater accountability, transparency and responsibility from government officials and their planned policies, registering as a non-government organisation with a set governance structure and a thriving online site for free and moderated speech (Finau et al., 2014; Afuga, 2014; Afuga, 2015).

The Nauru Facebook ban

On 1 May, 2015, the government of Nauru announced through a media release that access to a site showing pornography (particularly children) would be blocked. Also, the government revealed in 2015 that new cybercrime laws were being drafted (The Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015a). In undertaking the crackdown on pornographic sites, the Nauru government directed the island's sole internet service provider (ISP) Digicel, to block specific sites. As a result, numerous 'applicable' sites were blocked (Raines, 2015). The Nauru government justified its use of the method of blocking of various sites because Nauru possesses limited resources and cannot thus monitor the internet (The Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015a).

In justifying the ban, the Nauruan Minister of Justice, David Adeang, alluded to an increase in children exposed to explicit content. He added that 'Nauru is a small country with limited resources, and we cannot monitor the internet like larger nations, so this move and our new laws are both significant measures" (Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015a). In a further press release on the 13 May, the President of Nauru argued that the internet blocks enacted would serve to protect women and children better, stating that such blocks were '… part of the government's efforts to curb the glorification of criminal activities and offences against Nauruan women and children through the posting of distressing images and footage of these individuals in compromising and dehumanising positions' (Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015b).

While the Nauruan government has cited moral grounds, and the aim to protect children from pornography, as critical reasons for the blocks enacted, it has come under fire from numerous parties including CSOs, NGOs, opposition MPs, and refugee advocates (Radio Australia, 2015a). Those in opposition to

the Nauruan government actions have argued that the rhetoric of morality and child protection have been a veil for the censorship of social media and stifling of criticisms directed at the government (Farrell, 2014). In an interview with *Pacific Beat*, opposition MP Matthew Batsiua dismissed the government's claims of being motivated by 'moral grounds', and stated the first reason they gave [for the closure] was due to a technical problem. Now it is all about porn' (Radio Australia, 2015a).

The Nauruan government also came under fire by refugee support groups who viewed its move as a means to stifle the voice of refugees, detained indefinitely in Nauru, seeking entry into Australia. The Nauru government initially denied that social media sites had been subjected to the 'blocks'. In a government media release almost a month after the implementation of the 'crackdown on pornography', the Nauru Minister of Justice stated that 'The internet in Nauru is completely open except for those pornographic sites', and that 'those who are living as refugees in Nauru have complete access to all communications including phone, internet, email and a myriad of social media platforms' (Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015c). However, Facebook administration confirmed that their data revealed that their site had indeed been blocked in Nauru (RNZ, 2015a). In response to the statement by Facebook, the Nauruan government denied a deliberate move to block Facebook but did concede that some social media sites may have been blocked temporarily (RNZ, 2015a).

Nauru's moves to ban 'applicable sites' to curb child pornography may appear to be a move in the right direction, but when taken in the broader political context of Nauru, the social media ban reveals arguably ulterior motives. In 2013, a trend of censorship began, with the Nauruan government preventing local television from airing concerns by opposition politicians on an asylum seeker deal with Australia, with the Nauruan Minister of Justice alluding to the fact that this ban was needed in order to prevent confusion about the agreement (Flitton, 2013). Further to this, in January 2014, Nauru increased the visa application fee for foreign journalists by 4,000 percent, with a single-entry media visa now costing A$8,000 which is non-refundable should the visa application be rejected (Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2018). This move has come under significant fire as being a means to limit media coverage of activities taking place within the refugee detention centre on Nauru. The refugee detention centre has repeatedly come under fire, for the mistreatment of refugees in the centre, with UN organisations, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International has highlighted refugees being victims of neglect, assault, and denial of essential services (Amnesty International, 2016; Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016). A culture of secrecy has been imposed on Nauru, with many journalists (particularly from Australia) and researchers being refused permission to visit (Human Rights Watch, 2016). RNZ (2018a)

reported in January this year that only two Australian journalists have visited Nauru since the inception of the increased visa fees.

When the context above is taken into account Nauru's motivations in banning Facebook denote sinister implications, particularly so given the vociferous denials on the part of the Nauruan Minister for Justice that social media sites had not been banned despite reports from Facebook to the contrary (Radio New Zealand, 2015a; Government of the Republic of Nauru, 2015c). It is further worth noting that the denials by the Nauruan government of Facebook being blocked were reported by RNZ (2015b) on May 1. However, by May 29, Nauru's president was vigorously defending a Facebook ban, by alluding to Facebook's power to 'disrupt, embarrass, destroy one's reputation and to create instability' (Radio Australia, 2015b). Furthermore, allegations have been made that the banning of Facebook in Nauru came about at the instigation of the Australian government (Raines, 2015).

Overall, the government of Nauru has claimed noble intentions in its banning of social media. However, an analysis of political trends within Nauru reveals a political culture of political dissent being stifled, and high visa fees hindering impartial media from entering the country—this is repetitive. In such a repressive media environment, social media plays a crucial role in disseminating information through citizen media and fostering activism (Robie, 2017; Titifanue et al., 2017; Titifanue et al., 2016). Blocking of Facebook when placed in Nauru's broader political context reveals a transparent attempt by the government to stifle dissent from opposition politicians and citizens, as well as limit the dissemination of information on the treatment of asylum seekers.

Conclusion

As the internet grows by leaps and bounds, its social and political applications and their implications have risen respectively. The global diffusion of the internet has created a growing challenge for many democratic and authoritarian regimes and significantly enabled the growth and effectiveness of global civil society. This trend is also visible in the Pacific. Online petitions and protests, calls for action, advocacy of various marginalised political causes, and the rise of the blogosphere have become an integral part of the political and social action, allowing local, regional and global social movements to reach national and global audiences. In response, government censorship, ranging from relatively mild steps such as anti-pornography measures to lose control of internet content has become an inevitable element of the characteristics of cyberspace.

The struggle for creating viable and vibrant democratic societies in the Pacific Islands continues to be an ongoing battle. This article has painted a troubling picture of online freedom of expression in the Pacific. Despite the relatively low levels of internet penetration, and internet accessibility being a comparatively

urban phenomenon, governments in the region are determined to regulate the internet. So far two approaches have been used to control freedom of information and communication: regulation via legislation, and outright banning of Facebook under the pretext of protecting its citizens from harmful excesses of the internet. While the move by Pacific governments might seem reasonable, there are reasons to remain sceptical. Pressure on new media through regulation in the Pacific should be contextualised in the broader issue of media freedom. While the state of media freedom remains precarious, these new moves to regulate the internet, coupled with lack of public consultations, signals a worrying trend for freedom of expression and rights to information in the Pacific Islands region.

While there are strong reasons to keep the internet free from unnecessary regulation, it is however acknowledged that some regulation must occur to protect the rights of all Internet users. Regulation of the internet should be considered in the frame of new policies, which are designed to protect illegal and harmful internet content whereas deliberations and decisions need to be transparent and democratic. Respect for freedom of speech and privacy of communication should also be taken into consideration. When this regulation does occur, the government should not dominate it but rather involve the engagement of all stakeholders including the wider public. Freedom of information and communication protections must continuously be re-analysed in light of new technology that continuously increases people's ability to communicate. In order to guarantee that citizens have a voice in the privately run internet spaces where they spend increasing amounts of time, the law must embrace new approaches to protecting digital rights: namely by carving out rights of access, speech, and transparency and accountability in online spaces.

Notes

1. www.facebook.com/bryan.kramer.90. MP Byran Krammer also has a Facebook page, *The Krammer Report,* an independent blog providing articles and commentary on political and socio-economic issues affecting Papua New Guinea by revealing systemic injustice and endemic corruption through in-depth investigative reporting and critical analysis. The page can be accessed at www.facebook.com/kramerreportpng/
2. www.facebook.com/garyjuffa/
3. See pg. 6 & 7 for the 19 Acts relevant to Cybercrime (PNG Cybercrime Policy Background). www.unodc.org/res/cld/lessons-learned/png/papua_new_guinea_cybercrime_policy_html/PNG_Cybercrime_Policy.pdf

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5. Unpacking Fiji internet law narratives

Online safety or online regulation?

Commentary: It took approximately six seconds, with 27 votes against 14 on the 16 May 2018 at 5:03pm for the Fiji Parliament to pass the *Online Safety Bill* (Fijian Parliament, 2018b). Thereafter, the Bill came into force as the *Online Safety Act, 2018* (Fijian Government, 2018), despite concerns about its impact on free speech. This commentary examines how the public was conditioned by certain prominent actors, such as the Attorney-General and Media Industry Development Authority (MIDA) chair, with support from government-aligned media. The *Online Safety Bill* had been touted as legislation designed to protect Fijians from harmful online activities (Doviverata, 2018; Nacei, 2018). However, the Bill's implementation was preceded by a set of supportive media-facilitated narratives that seems almost too convenient. This commentary scrutinises the series of media facilitated narratives that justified the *Online Safety Act*. The discussion briefly examines the connection between the media, blogs and social media in Fiji. It then explores the media facilitated narratives to provide a brief critique of the Act as a so-called 'Trojan Horse' for safety while risking responsible political free speech. Finally, it seeks to answer whether it is about online 'Safety' alone, or 'Regulation' of online media.

Keywords: Fiji, free speech, internet politics, media, media regulation, media freedom, social media

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Media transition from blogs to Facebook

FIJI'S media landscape has been considerably restricted since the 5 December 2006 coup (Robie, 2016; Singh, 2010a, 2017). The restrictions ranged with outright censorship by military officials placed in newsrooms to the use of intimidation and threats against journalists before the promulgation of the *Media Industry Development Decree (Act)* in 2010, which enabled a culture of self-censorship (Pareti, 2009; Morris, 2017; Robie, 2009a, 2009b, 2016; Singh, 2010a). However, alongside the media constraints, online interactive websites have blossomed as alternative avenues for the exchange of information and

discussions (Tarai, 2015; Foster, 2007; Singh, 2010b; Walsh, 2010). While alternative spaces online were the consequence of the variety of restrictions on free speech, this did not exempt some of the content being vitriolic and inaccurate (Singh, 2010b; Walsh, 2010). These online interactive sites began with blogs, followed by social networking sites such as Facebook. This transition and expansion of discussions from blogs to social networking sites was evident in the lead up to and during the 2014 National Elections (Tarai, Kant, Finau, & Titifanue, 2015b; Finau, Kant, Logan, Prasad, Tarai & Cox, 2014).

Social networking sites in Fiji such as Facebook, had begun to take off shortly after 2010, through Facebook Groups such as *Letters to the Editor Uncensored,* which had gained traction in 2011 (Administrator, 2013). This Facebook group was set up to publish letters that were censored from the national dailies at the time (Administrator, 2013). However, most of these Facebook groups were small, totalling around 10,000–15,000 active accounts, and did not grow beyond their limited likeminded active membership. This dynamic shift began in the lead up to the 2014 elections as Fiji's Facebook user population began to substantially increase. In January 2014, the estimated total Facebook users in Fiji stood at 260,000; by August it had increased by 20,000 to 280,000 users; but in less than a month in the lead up to the polling day of the September 17, it escalated to 298,000 users (Tarai, Kant, Finau & Titifanue, 2015c). This indicated the increasing number of new Facebook accounts that were created as the polling day drew near at the time.

Fijian Facebook

Facebook discussions and debate in Fiji at the time began to garner more national attention compared to blogs because of the technological shift that created greater ease of access, increasing use and social media political campaigning. More and more locally based Fijians were creating accounts and actively following discussions even if they did not post comments. This marked a difference from blogs where a number of administrators were based overseas. In addition to this, the variety of technological access had shifted from desktops which were mainly used for access to blogs (typically at home, internet cafes or at work) to hand held devices such as smart phones for social media (Tarai et al., 2015c; Walsh, 2010). This meant that there was greater ease of access for Facebook, in part because of the technological shift from desktop computers that were used to access blog sites, to more affordable data plans and smart hand held devices for social media. Political campaigning inevitably incorporated social media because of its growing use in the Fijian population. More and more political parties and actors began to campaign online via social media, and this meant that Fijian citizens and voters were able to directly engage with these parties and candidates (Tarai et al., 2015c).

As more and more accounts engaged in discussions, similar to the wave of blogs in Fiji, there was a tendency to have vitriolic and mediocre debates in some unmoderated discussion forums. However, in spite of the aforementioned, it is noteworthy and often unacknowledged that a variety of social media discussions have proven crucial to driving and pressuring accountability from decision makers at large. A notable example was in 2013 when the Bainimarama government announced plans to change Fiji's national flag as a means of removing its colonial symbols (Tarai, Kant, Finau, & Titifanue, 2015a). The public were invited to send in new designs as a competition but the social media discussions began to indicate the general public's dissatisfaction with the proposition. Ultimately, the public's dissatisfaction was amplified through social media and the proposed flag change was shelved (Tarai et al., 2015a). Another example includes the online discussions and campaign against the scholarship termination of a University of the South Pacific (USP) student for working as a volunteer for an independent political candidate in 2014 (Pacific Media Centre, 2014). The online and subsequent offline critiques led to the reinstatement of the student's scholarship (Tokalau, 2014). Regionally, social media has proven effective in amplifying collective concerns about West Papua, climate change and responses to natural disasters such as Cyclone Pam and Cyclone Winston (Finau, Cox, Tarai, Kant, Varea & Titifanue, 2018; Finau, Prasad, Kant, Tarai, Logan & Cox, 2014; Titifanue, Tarai, Kant & Finau, 2016; Titifanue, Kant, Finau & Tarai, 2017).

These incidents exemplify greater social accountability being motivated from the *bottom-up,* proving great potential for enhancing wider citizen participation and empowerment through social media. These cases also highlight the utility in the responsible use of social media in Fiji and the wider Pacific region.

The 'Regulation' narrative

Unfortunately, the potential to harness social media use for greater citizen participation and empowerment has often been overlooked. Instead, what prevailed was a largely one-sided, sensationalised obsession on the dangers of vitriolic and mediocre online discussions. This has been perpetuated by statutory bodies such as the Media Industry Development Authority (MIDA) and the more government-inclined media outlets, namely the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) and the *Fiji Sun* (Tarai, 2015, 2018a; Raj, 2014).

In essence these news and information institutions, being powerfully financed and backed, have selectively focused on saturated discourses only on the irresponsible use of social media, rather than on the benefits. This is despite the fact that some media commentators have called for a balanced approach but have unfortunately been ignored (Singh, 2017). An SSGM paper titled *State of the Media Review in Four Melanesian Countries—Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu*—in 2015 had predicted that 'with clear evidence

that the social media movement was gaining momentum, the prospect of stronger media laws remains a grim reality' (Singh, 2017). This was as the paper went on to state that due to the rising levels of government criticism and the government challenge to address these criticisms, without out rightly undermining free speech (Singh, 2017).

One person who played an instrumental role in the eventual adoption of the *Online Safety Bill* was the MIDA Chairman and Fiji's Human Rights Commissioner Ashwin Raj, who was consistently vocal about the issue and received considerable air time on FBC and newspaper space in the *Fiji Sun*. Among the first strong calls for controlling or regulating social media was made in 2014 on FBC's radio *Aaina Programme*, where the host asked Raj if *'*…social media could be unplugged?'[1] (Tarai, 2015; Raj, 2014). The MIDA chairman responded by highlighting the risks of international condemnation if social media usage was contained by legislation. This was the juncture where on record, FBC and MIDA had the earliest discussions about regulating social media in Fiji. The 'regulation' narrative was born on the suggestion of 'unplugging' social media, solely predicated on its 'irresponsible' use, with its responsible and constructive potential overlooked and denied.

By 2015, the narrative of 'regulation' took on a more specific tone. MIDA Chairman Raj specified, at a *National Security Symposium* at the University of the South Pacific, that vitriolic and divisive discussions on social media were being perpetuated by the youth of Fiji (Tarai, 2015; Vuibau, 2015). Without any quantifiable evidence, or technical basis, Raj claimed that young people in Fiji were behind the irresponsible use of social media and proposed what he called an 'epistemological' approach to address the problem (Tarai, 2015). What an 'epistemological' approach involved was not clarified by Raj and did not eventuate beyond its mere words.

This marked a lost opportunity on the part of Raj, notwithstanding the evident conflict of interest, as the Chairman of MIDA and also as the Director of Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission in Fiji. There was an opportunity at that point for Raj as the holder of these two crucial positions with access to statutory resources to roll out a thorough, contextual, national awareness and educational programme encouraging the responsible use of social media, targeting high schools, telecommunication companies and the public in general. Instead of encouraging and implementing education as an approach, the 'regulation' narrative was groomed and emphasised.

By 2016, social media in Fiji had earned a full blown negative reputation as far as the government inclined media outlets were concerned. In early 2016, the *Fiji Sun* began to amplify social media as 'the dark side' and ended the year calling it, the year of 'fake news' (Delaibatiki, 2016; Ross, 2016). Fiji's first ever Facebook defamation case emerged in August, over allegations made online

by Emosi Radrodro against Ellen Whippy Knight (Gounder, 2016). By early 2017, the Civil High Court ordered Radrodro to pay Knight damages amounting to FJ$10,000 (Pratibha, 2017a). This case was expected to set a precedent for defamatory remarks on social media. It indicated that the existing laws and systems in place were adequate to address online remarks that were found to be defamatory.

In early 2017, Raj, in his capacity as the Director of the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission, was quoted by FBC, calling for the regulation of social media comments (FBC, 2017). He went further and called on the state to move from looking at mainstream media to social media (FBC, 2017; RNZ, 2017). Raj along with government inclined media organisations had accumulated momentum in lamenting 'Hate Speech' as an adequate justification for regulation (Delaibatiki, 2017; FBC, 2017). However, it was apparent that Raj as MIDA Chairman and Director of the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and the government inclined media outlets, were the only actors pushing for the regulation of social media without acknowledging the potential of responsible social media use at that point. Ironically, even the Head of Government, Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama, had admitted the usefulness in responsible use of social media, specifically highlighting Facebook and Twitter as social networking sites, while urging USP students against its misuse (Bainimarama, 2016).

By the end of 2017, at the Attorney-General's annual conference, Raj's long-held crusade for social media regulation was finally vindicated with the endorsement of the Attorney-General, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum (Pratibha, 2017b). However, it is interesting to note that at the same event the Police Commissioner, Brigadier General Sitiveni Qiliho, had called for the regulation of cyberspace, specifically referencing cybercrimes committed online, which is by law handled by the Cyber Crimes Unit, empowered under the *Crimes Act 2009* (Tarai, 2018a; Chaudhary, 2017). The Police Commissioner was echoing Prime Minister Bainimarama's sentiments at the opening of the conference around controls being put in against cybercrimes, which had totalled 158 cases since 2008 (Chaudhary, 2017).

In this regard, the MIDA Chairman and Director of Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Attorney-General were more specific about controlling social media comments and debates compared to the Police Commissioner and the Prime Minister. The regulation narrative proved problematic for cybercrime because it was already regulated by the *Crimes Act 2009*. In addition to this, there was an already established Cyber Crime Unit that investigated cases. Therefore, the regulation narrative at this point attempted to conflate social media discussions and cybercrime issues into one package. By the end of 2017, social media regulation appeared to be inevitable, while cybercrime regulation seemed repetitive and unnecessary. The conflated and somewhat convoluted dynamic of regulation between social media discussions and cybercrimes did

not provide a convincing 'regulation' narrative. It created a bland, vindictive narrative against Fijian citizens, especially for those online. This paved the way for the 'Safety' narrative.

The 'Safety' narrative

The 'Safety' narrative had been cultivated through a series of highlighted cases prominently featuring revenge porn on social media in late 2017. The *Fiji Sun* covered a series of articles on the story of an online Dropbox that contained images of nude young Fijian women (K. F. S. Chanel, 2017). The Dropbox was being accessed by a number of men, and the ex-boyfriends of the women, who were disgruntled and had sought to humiliate these women (K. F. S. Chanel, 2017; S. Chanel, 2017). Some of the young women were subjected to emotional and psychological abuse and manipulation from men who exploited the situation (S. Chanel, 2017). This was then followed by another case in early 2018, of an intimate video of a couple being leaked on social media but being quickly deleted by the online user (S. Chanel, 2018). Other notable cases have included cyberbullying and harassment. These cases emphasised the vulnerability of women and children in the excesses and abuse of digital technologies and social media.

These cases appeared and escalated quickly around late 2017, early 2018 largely being covered or pushed by state-inclined media outlets, such as the *Fiji Sun*. Cases of 'revenge porn' have been largely well known in Fiji, as far back as the early 2000s. Most notable among these was the case of Mereia Tuiloma, who eventually came out in public about overcoming her emotional torment and situation in 2013 (Valentine, 2013).

The Bill, now an Act

At the height of the 'Safety' narrative in early 2018, the Attorney-General, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum introduced the *Online Safety Bill* in the Fijian Parliament on 15 March and called for its immediate passing in the May parliamentary sessions (Fijian Parliament, 2018a). The Attorney-General capitalised on the 'Safety' narrative and referenced specific elements of the aforementioned publicised cases of 'revenge porn' and cyber harassment (Fijian Parliament, 2018a). The claimed overarching intent of the Bill in the debate was about protecting Fijian citizens by ensuring their online safety. Interestingly, the issue of cybercrimes, as was often mentioned by the Police Commissioner in late 2017, had not been discussed in the introduction of the Bill on 15 March. It was evident at that point that the 'Safety' narrative created a moralistic predisposition for the Bill and that to argue against it was to argue against the safety of Fijians.

However, there are a number of revealing observations that pose questions about the intent in the process of the *Online Safety Bill* becoming the *Online*

Safety Act. These observations include the duration of consultation and the lack of clarification in some sections of the act.

The Bill emerged as a detailed draft by early March 2018, shortly after the Attorney-General's 2017 conference. The opposition chambers were not properly informed about the draft bill in the lead up to the March 2018 parliamentary sitting (Fijian Parliament, 2018a; Personal Communication, 2018; Prasad, 2018). In addition to this, the government only allowed two months for public submissions on the Bill to be made to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights. This restricted the depth and scope of consultation about the Bill, considering the fact that it was going to affect the estimated more than 500,000 active online users in Fiji (Audience Insights, 2018; Tarai, 2018b).

The lack of clarity was a pervasive feature in the act. For instance, the 'Online Safety Commission' and its role appears to mimic the Fiji Police Force-based Cyber Crime Unit's functions, in terms of investigating complaints. This lack of a distinction between the Cyber Crime Unit and Commission risks duplication of functions and wastage of taxpayer funds. Perhaps the most evident lack of clarity, is the fact that the act does not have a clause or section that outright protects responsible online free speech, discussions and debate. This is despite the fact that a considerable number of the public submissions had alluded to the implications the Bill would have for free speech (Fijian Parliament, 2018c).

Part 4, in the *Online Safety Bill No. 7, 2018* lists offences such as *'Causing harm by posting electronic communication and posting an intimate visual recording'* (Fijian Government, 2018). However, the broad interpretation of 'harm' has been highlighted as a concern and possible threat to free speech (FWCC, 2018). For instance unethical politicians covered in the print media as a matter of public interest would be legal but can be argued as causing 'harm' once it is covered online (FWCC, 2018). In addition to this the stipulated Online Safety Commission in Section 6 of the Bill is given broad powers, which has raised concerns on its possible threat to free speech. This is especially so, when the bill asserts that to perform the Commission's functions part of its guaranteed power is to 'do *all things necessary* for the performance of its functions'(Fijian Government, 2018).

These aspects put into question the scope of the Act and whether it is leaving the door open to impinge on cases of responsible free speech online, especially since 2018 is an election year for Fiji.

Conclusion

The claimed intent behind the *Online Safety Act* is certainly a noble one and long overdue in so far as protecting women, children and victims of irresponsible online behavior is concerned. However, the 'danger' narrative creatively cultivated by Fijian state officials ignored the strengths of social media. This has been successfully done with the help of a series of media facilitated narratives

focused on the vitriolic content of social media, and calling for regulation. These media-facilitated narratives disregarded the need to protect responsible online free speech, discussion and debate. The fact that there is no outright acknowledgement and protection of responsible online free speech, the rushed process of the Bill and the vague areas in the legislation, raises questions about the timing of the Bill becoming an Act. In a way the two media-facilitated narratives reveal the conflated nature of the Act. The Act on the surface professes online 'Safety', while its vagueness on responsible free speech leaves the act open to being a Trojan horse for online 'Regulation' and censorship of dissenting voices.

The Fijian government has maintained a tight grip on Fiji's traditional media landscape through the *Media Industry Development Act* (formerly *Media Industry Development Decree*) and this has led to a culture of self-censorship (Morris, 2016; Robie, 2016; Singh, 2017). The online landscape is now the new frontier that it seeks to have some control over and the *Online Safety Act* could very well provide that control. Perhaps the greatest evidence lies in the fact that both the *Media Industry Development Act* and the *Online Safety Act* are placed under the responsibility of the same minister, whose demeanor and approach has consistently been about greater controls of the Fijian government. However, at least for the moment, the *Online Safety Act* professes to be more about 'Safety' than it is about 'Regulation'.

Note

1. Aiana Ep 144-www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZrY_br2E-8–the question was asked at the 26:17 minute of the 45:46 minute interview.

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6. Acehnese or Indonesian?

Post-conflict representation of identity in a local newspaper

Abstract: To what extent does a local newspaper in the Indonesian province of Aceh construct Acehnese identity as distinct from Indonesian national identity? In this article, the authors examine the representation of Acehnese identity post-civil conflict and in relation to Indonesian national identity by drawing on a content analysis of Aceh's local newspaper, *Serambi Indonesia*. There are few studies of representations of local ethnic groups in their local newspapers, let alone the representations of ethnic groups with a history of separatist movements. Therefore, this study sets out to bridge the gap in the literature on how a formerly separatist ethnic group is positioned vis-à-vis its nation-state in its local media. This study examines the representation of Acehnese in the local newspaper in terms of Anderson's (1983) 'imagined community', Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism', as well as 'media representation and identity'. In doing so, this study attempts to give a more comprehensive approach to show that the local newspaper continues to be a means for the reproduction of 'imagined communities' and the delivery of the narrative of collective identity through the everyday representations of the nation.

Keywords: Aceh, community, content analysis**,** culture, framing, identity, Indonesia, media, media representation, nationalism, newspapers, post-conflict

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Background

THE FREE Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) fought for Aceh's independence from Indonesia for about 30 years. During this decades-long separatist insurgency in the resource-rich province, between 10,000 and 30,000 people were killed (Amnesty International, 2013). The insurgency officially ended in August 2005 after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indonesian government and GAM in Helsinki, Finland.

Since the Helsinki peace talks, the Aceh peace process has been viewed as a promising model for peace implementation in other conflict areas (Ahtisaari, 2008; Lingga, 2007; Barron & Burke, 2008). However, Aceh faces what Rajasingham-Senanayake (2009, p. 213) describes as continuity and stability to consolidate the peace. A key post-conflict task for reconciliation is to create mutual trust among formerly conflicting parties. Self-identity can play an important role in ensuring the establishment of a respectful relationship that is necessary to determine the reconciliation process. We argue that the Acehnese perception of their identity determines the viability of the reconciliation process in Aceh. Following the Helsinki agreement, there has been a wealth of studies investigating the reconciliation process in Aceh. However, previous work placed emphasis on the role of the Indonesian national government, civil society, development agencies and international involvement (Feith, 2007; Lingga, 2007; Barron & Burke, 2008) rather than on that of the role of local media in representing Acehnese identity. In considering identity as a cornerstone of the reconciliation process, it then becomes important to interrogate Acehnese identity after the signing of the peace treaty. An anti-essentialism view maintains that cultural identities are not fixed but are culturally produced phenomena (Barker, 2012, p. 217). Cultural identities are discursive constructions of meanings, continually being produced over time (Hall, 1996, p. 4; Barker, 2012, p. 229). In this regard, media are central to the discursive construction of cultural identities, and therefore cultural identities are constructed within media representation (Hall, 1996, p. 4; Barker, 2012, p. 216). Media representation delivers a narrative of identity which defines the boundaries of one identity to another (Schneeberger, 2009, p. 87); in this context, Acehnese and Indonesian identities.

Our focus is on local newspapers, because of the potential of these publications to set agendas within communities as they are specifically directed towards their own regions. Local newspapers are implicated in the construction of local identity (Richardson, Huckesby & Williams, 2008). A nation's capacity to create and sustain their imagined communities is made possible by a number of processes, one of the most important being media and mass communication. Anderson (1983) emphasises that the ritual of reading newspapers has made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves and to relate themselves to others. According to Anderson (1983), these imagined communities developed along with the rise of mass communication or 'print capitalism'. Anderson's central thesis was that the search for a market under 'print capitalism' led to a standardisation of vernacular languages being disseminated, hence enabling a number of people within particular geographical boundaries to understand each other through a common print language. This provided the conditions for the emergence of a national consciousness, a sense of being part of a nation. Likewise, using the concept of banal nationalism, Billig extends the

idea of the newspaper as a vehicle for the reproduction of imagined communities (1995). Banal nationalism refers to the everyday representations of the nation which builds an imagined sense of nationalism amongst the inhabitants of a particular territory. In this process, newspapers significantly contribute to the reproduction of national consciousness where nationalism has become embedded and naturalised in the disclosures of its everyday life (Billig, 1995).

Media representation and national or cultural identity

By referring to Anderson's (1983) conception of imagined community and Billig's (1995) notion of banal nationalism, it can be argued that newspapers are the vehicle for the reproduction of imagined communities through reading and the use of language. Local newspapers significantly contribute to the process of local identity formation and reproduction to form what Anderson (1983) defines as an 'imagined community'. Local newspapers provide the everyday representations of the imagined community, building a collective identity among the inhabitants in the local area (Billig, 1995).

Beyond playing a key role in the formation of identity, the media significantly contributes to construction of meaning by informing the ways in which we make sense of the world. O'Shaughnessy and Stadler argue that the media significantly influences how people perceive themselves and their surroundings (2012). Through representation, the media facilitates a process 'by which signifying practices appear to stand for or depict another object or practice in the "real" world' (Barker, 2012, p. 487). Barker further contends that representation does not reflect objects in 'a direct "mirroring" mode' (2012, p. 487). This supports the argument that representation is not reality, but the construction of reality, suggesting that there is no objective representation of the world, particularly through media representations (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012, p. 76). Representation is constituted by a particular person or group. As a result, culture, meaning, and knowledge of the person or the group are involved in the process of representation.

In relation to identity as a collective identity, a broader concept of identity is cultural identity defined as a description of people with groups they identify with (Barker, 2012, p. 476). Moreover, cultural identity links to all social categories, most notably class, gender, race, ethnicity, nation and age (Barker, 2012, p. 476). In this regard, it takes into account two forms of cultural identities: ethnic identity and national identity. Ethnic identity according to Phinney and Ong (2007, p. 271) is derived from a sense of peoplehood 'within a group, a culture, and a particular setting'. It relies on shared cultural symbols and practices which are created in political and socio-cultural contexts. Meanwhile, 'national identity is a form of imaginative identification with the symbols and discourses of the nation-state' (Barker, 2012, p. 252).

In this regard, media and mediation is central to the discursive construction of cultural identities. As Georgiou argues, 'media as means/technologies/contexts for communication in specific locations and beyond, have become institutions and organised mechanisms of great significance for constructing identities in local, national and transnational contexts within modernity' (2006, p. 11). The media plays a significant role in influencing the way people see themselves and others. In doing so, media provides a wide range of representations which is part of a complex process involved in the formation of identity. It is argued that identities are constructed within, not outside representation (Hall, 1996; Barker, 2012).

Media representation, as described by Schneeberger, 'defines the boundaries of one identity to another' (2009, p. 87). The representation of a particular group of people delivers a narrative of identity which is surrounded by symbolic codes in opposition to other identities. It then provides audiences with the symbolic codes for distinguishing between self and other (Schlesinger, 2003, as cited in Schneeberger, 2009). It can be concluded that media takes part in the identity formation process through the representation of the mediated notion of difference. Thus, media representation is influential in the shaping of our perception of self and others.

Constructing Acehnese/Indonesian identity

Studies of national identity suggest an overriding identity affiliated with the nation-state and promoted by the media, which includes ethnic identities encompassed by that one nation-state. Theoretically, national identity should unite people within a particular territory in spite of their differences. However, this is not the case with Aceh, where there is an ongoing struggle between different concepts of national identity amongst individuals and particular political groups in Acehnese society. The independence movement (and how it is represented) underlines the differences between Aceh and Indonesia as a whole. In the context of Indonesia as a multicultural country, whose motto is *'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika'* or 'unity in diversity' (Suparlan, 2014) it is unrealistic to have a homogenised national identity overriding various ethnic identities. Instead, it is preferable to have a national identity which acknowledges the cultural diversity within the Indonesian community. However, by asserting cultural differences from Indonesia, distinctive and separate identities (such as Javanese, Minang, Batak or Acehnese) are maintained. Acehnese identity is recognised as either an ethnic or national identity among Acehnese society. In this regard, Acehnese identity as a collective group identity is, as Barker asserts, 'intrinsically connected to, and constituted by, forms of communication' (2012, p. 253). Thus, it can be asserted that Serambi Indonesia, which is specifically directed towards people living in Aceh province, becomes the agent of the construction of Acehnese group identity through the ritual of reading and the use of language. It shares a common local identity amongst the Acehnese within

the area of Aceh province. Therefore, the representation of Acehnese in their own local newspaper influences the way Acehnese define themselves in relation to Indonesia and how they see other ethnic groups in Indonesia. The representation of the Acehnese highlighting the notion of difference from Indonesia leads to the construction of Acehnese identity (in addition to Indonesian identity).

The construction of identity based in difference occurs elsewhere—for example, Schneeberger (2009) looked at how Turkey serves as an important reference point against symbolic boundaries to define European identity. Negative media representation of Indonesians, and the Indonesian government in particular, can make it hard for the Acehnese to identify themselves as Indonesian. Bruter identified that positive or negative news coverage can impact on the construction of collective identity when he found that positive news coverage about Europe 'clearly influences' the likelihood of identifying with Europe and vice versa (2005, as cited in Schneeberger, 2009, p. 87). Another study which explicitly shows the dual roles of the media in conflict is that of Şahin (2011) who found that the changes in the characteristics of national identity in North Cyprus are influenced by the representation of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in newspapers. When Turkish Cypriots were constructed as a separate group in opposition to Greek Cypriots, it created a distinctive national identity; yet when the cultural similarities of both communities were highlighted and their differences were suppressed, the construction of a common Cypriot identity was facilitated. Previous research into the role of *Corse-Matin*, the only local newspaper in Corsica, where tension between French and Corsican identities intersected within the community (Richardson et al., 2008) revealed that while implicitly suggesting that Corsica should be a part of France with a limited degree of autonomy, *Corse-Matin* successfully negotiated political tension by constructing conciliatory representations of Corsicans (Richardson et al., 2008). Such a finding helps to contextualise the dilemma faced by a local newspaper representing the local community but intersected historically by a separatist movement.

The implication of such similar studies for this research is that the way in which a local newspaper covers tension between Acehnese and Indonesian identities represents both a substantial means of promoting peace as well as escalating conflict in Aceh. Furthermore, these studies suggest that the local press has significant power in the process of identity integration post-conflict, and can contribute to the integration of Aceh through the representation of Acehnese with a positive allegiance to Indonesia. Our argument is that each media outlet promotes their distinct natures, with respect to globalism and localism. While television is much more global, newspapers are local in their scope of coverage which is implicated in their ways of thinking about nationalism. Unlike television, newspapers are concerned with traditional ways of thinking about nationalism which is restricted to certain geographic territories, which emphasises how news-

papers are the vehicle for the reproduction of 'imagined communities' through the everyday and naturalised representations of the nation.

Methodology and sample

This study looks at the daily Acehnese newspaper, *Serambi Indonesia*. Due to the impact of a long period of violent civil conflict, it is extremely hard to make a profit in the media industry in the province of Aceh (Bahari, 2005), However, Serambi Indonesia has succeeded in surviving in a largely unprofitable industry. It is part-owned by one of the largest national media groups, Kompas Gramedia (Kahar, 2009). *Serambi Indonesia* was first published in 1989 and it is the only local newspaper in Aceh. Besides its print version, Serambi Indonesia has digital and e-paper formats. It is the most prominent media outlet among other local media platforms in the province. The newspaper is distributed throughout Aceh, read by different segments of Acehnese society and often forms the basis for discussion among Acehnese people (Bahari, 2005). The circulation of the newspaper is approximately 48,000 a day (Bahari, personal communication, 20 May, 2012). Eighty-five percent of the daily copies of the newspaper are bought by permanent subscribers—institutional and individual subscribers (Bahari, personal communication, 20 May 2012). Income from advertisements is high, accounting for approximately 50 percent of revenue (Din, 2009).

The Helsinki memorandum of understanding enacted special authority for Aceh to have self-governing status within Indonesia, guaranteed by Indonesian law number UUPA11/2006 (on 'the Governing of Aceh'). Also, the agreement stipulated that Aceh has the right to have its own legislation and bylaws (*Kanun*), to establish Acehnese-based political parties, and a monarch institution, *Wali Nanggroe* and to use regional symbols, including a flag, crest, and hymn (Memorandum of Understanding, 2005). Such privileges are not afforded to other provinces in Indonesia and relates to the polemic of dual sovereignty from the Indonesian government and the Acehnese administration. In this regard, *Serambi Indonesia*, through the coverage of the aforementioned issues, inevitably constructs Acehnese identity in relation to Indonesian identity. Therefore, issues of nationalism are best considered in light of the news frames of the relationship between Aceh and Indonesia, with reference to the implementation of the memorandum of understanding.

Data was gathered from the digital version of *Serambi Indonesia*, a form of electronic archives of the print forma,t as direct access to the print news data was difficult, particularly from outside of Indonesia. The time span for data collection was after the peace accord from September 2005 onwards. However, as the data collection was reliant on the digital news, it was subject to the limitation of online data availability; data became available from 29 July 2011.

Our preliminary look at the trends of news coverage from July 2011 to May 2013

showed that there was little or no news coverage involving issues between Aceh and Indonesia during July 2011 to June 2012, as news coverage in Indonesia as a whole was dominated by issues surrounding the Jakarta gubernatorial election of 2012. Data collection thus fell within the period of July 2012 to May 2013. The selected time span represented the current Acehnese government under former separatist group leaders Zaini Abdullah and Muzakkir Manaf, who were sworn in on 25 June 2012. They contested the 2012 Acehnese gubernatorial election with the strong support of the local Aceh Party, which is the political manifestation of the former separatist group after the Helsinki agreement. Moreover, the Aceh Party retained 33 seats from a total of 69 seats in the Aceh Parliament, as it won the 2009 parliamentary election. This meant that the current executive and legislative branches in the provincial government were led by former separatists. As they are representatives of the former separatist group, it was assumed this study would find issues of nationalism under their governance, featuring in the local newspaper coverage.

The terms 'GAM' for *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*—the term by which the separatists were known throughout Indonesia, 'MoU' for the memorandum of understanding reached in Helsinki, and '*Kanun'* (local Acehnese bylaws) were employed in the data selection process. The sample for this study included hard news stories, opinion pieces, editorials and letters to the editor. The selection of hard news stories was restricted to politics and national sections, which were assumed to have a more local-national perspective. All articles included were also checked manually to make sure that they contained the appropriate Aceh-Indonesia dimension. The total sample was 88 articles, consisting of 60 news stories, 18 opinion pieces, seven editorials, and three letters to the editor. We drew on content analysis techniques, combining content analysis with framing analysis. These mixed analysis techniques were expected to increase the validity and reliability of the findings, as well as to inform a better understanding of how Acehnese identity is organised and portrayed in the local newspaper.

As Weerakkody explains, 'content analysis is a systematic, objective, and quantitative research method for analysing texts' (2009, p. 144). This definition refers to content analysis as a form of quantitative method. Weerakkody defines quantitative content analysis as a technique of 'counting to describe the manifest content and measure the amounts of the categories of variables empirically and systematically' (2009, p. 146). This technique uses 'coding manuals' with 'clear operational definition of the categories' (2009, p. 144). After the coding completion, it was suggested that there was a need to perform inter-coder reliability to then test the categories (Weerakkody, 2009, p. 158). Inter-coder reliability refers to 'the extent to which two or more independent coders agree on the coding of the content of interest with an application of the same coding scheme' (Cho, 2008). The inter-coder reliability is a crucial part of content analysis, as Neuendorf (2002, p. 141) explains.

> given that a goal of content analysis is to identify and record relatively objective (or at least inter-subjective) characteristics of messages, reliability is paramount. Without the establishment of reliability, content analysis measures are useless.

The minimum acceptable level of agreement between coders should be 80 percent (Weerakkody, 2009).

As previously mentioned, newspapers construct a sense of nationhood among community members through the use of symbolic language, the use of implied togetherness and the presentation of nation-centric news. Therefore our considered coding categories for this content analysis spans:

- the use of 'labels' to describe Aceh and Indonesia, including references to people, government, body, legislation, symbols, etc;
- the depiction of Aceh-Indonesia relations; and
- a framing perspective.

The coding variables were derived and adapted from Eurosphere's coding categories for European Print and Broadcast Media, namely, 'labels when referring to groups/individuals, depiction of persons/groups' belonging, and framing perspective' (Sicakkan & Tonnevold, 2008, pp. 2-5). This analysis also considered coding categories looking at the theme and type of article. Once the coding variables were completed, a pilot study of 10 articles was conducted to assess inter-coder reliability. The articles were coded with the help of an independent coder. It was found that the agreement percentage was in the range between 85 percent and 95 percent. Based on these results of inter-coder reliability, the categories can be said to be scientifically valid to use for this content analysis.

We combined the content analysis with framing analysis. There are several definitions of framing (Gitlin, 1980; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Entman, 1993). Gitlin defines it as 'persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organise discourse' (1980, p. 7). Gamson and Modigliani (1987, p. 143) describe frames as:

> a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them. The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue.

For Entman (1993, p. 52), to frame is to:

> select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.

Given the news orientation of this study on the use of symbolic language to give meaning to a sense of collective identity, we drew on Gamson and Mogdialini's framework because it refers to frames as 'a set of interpretative packages that give meaning to an issue' (1989, p. 3). Gamson and Modigliani's four symbolic devices for this framing analysis are metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases and depictions. Although these symbolic devices enable a comprehensive analysis to unpack news articles, as Kwan and Graves (2013) suggest, it is necessary to acknowledge that not all framing devices can be found within text and many elements of framing devices overlap and intersect with one another. Accordingly, this study focuses on the metaphors and exemplars found within the sample. The sample for framing analysis was selected to represent major themes within different types of articles discovered in the content analysis. We considered the percentage of different types of news articles as a proportion of the whole sample, to ensure the sample proportionately represented each type of news article, thus yielding a sample of 20 articles.

Findings

The sample of 88 news articles was analysed using these coding categories: themes, framing perspectives, labels for Aceh, labels for Indonesia and depiction of Aceh-Indonesia relations. Thus, the following quantitative results of the analysis are presented according to those categories in a row. Also, in order to give proportional representation of different types of news articles, the results are presented in the percentage of each type of news article.

The analysis uncovered several main themes in the news coverage in *Serambi Indonesia* from July 2012 to May 2013. Those themes were categorised thus:

- The most significant theme was the dispute over the official flag of Aceh which accounted for 63 percent of the overall news coverage. This theme has been predominant in this newspaper since the end of March 2013 to May 2013. Despite the fact that the Helsinki agreement provided special privileges for Aceh to have its own flag, symbol and hymn, controversy over this has erupted since the governor of Aceh signed bylaw number 3/2013 on Aceh's flag and symbol, allowing the use of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) flag as the provincial flag of Aceh.
- Unsurprisingly (given the time frame) another significant theme was that of the local elections (10 percent). Indonesian laws often conflict with each other; as part of this theme the issue discussed was conflicting national regulations faced by the Independent Election Commission in Aceh (KIP Aceh) for deciding on quotas for legislative candidates.
- The remaining themes included Aceh Governing Law (6 percent), *Wali Nanggr*oe (5 percent), bylaws (3 percent), Acehnese development (2 percent), Acehnese history (2 percent), and miscellaneous (9 percent).

In addition, even though most of the themes discussed were based on laws and regulations, two—on Aceh development and Aceh history—were exceptions. Coverage of both themes took different positions from the others, capturing relationships between Aceh and Indonesia through the focus on the Aceh-Indonesia relationship in the past and in the future. Both themes were, however, only found in opinion pieces. The themes uncovered shared common ground, suggesting ongoing tensions in relation to the Aceh-Indonesia relationship after the Helsinki accord.

In terms of framing, the most dominant framing perspective found in connection with Aceh-Indonesia relations was a local perspective with 68 percent. Other perspectives included national perspective (19 percent), followed by group perspective (8 percent) and individual perspective (5 percent). By investigating framing perspectives across news sections, it was evident that a national perspective was only found in news stories. Opinion pieces and editorials were fully immersed within local perspectives (despite opinion pieces being contributed by members of the public, while editorials were written by the senior editorial staff). Not surprisingly, an individual perspective was mostly used in letters to the editor. As far as framing perspectives are concerned, this local framing perspective may be justified as being part of the nature of a local newspaper. However, considering such perspectives were found within the reportage of Aceh-Indonesia relations, the use of a framing perspective could suggest a tendency towards the privileging or exclusivity of Acehnese identity.

Our framing analysis further attempted to uncover labels—words used in articles when referring to Aceh, such as *government, body, people, legislation*, and *symbols*. This study found that there were three main types of labels, namely: references to government, references to *people* and references to a flag/emblem. The references to government included *Aceh government* (32 percent) and the *local/provincial government* (12 percent), followed by the reference to the *head of administration as governor* (13 percent). Further, the references to people included *citizenry* (1 percent), *citizen* (13 percent) and *society* (17 percent). Finally, the references to flag/emblem included the *GAM flag/emblem* (4 percent) and *Crescent-Star flag/Bouraq-Lion emblem* (8 percent).

In terms of the use of labels for government, it could be seen that the use of '*Aceh government*' was not always followed with that of 'the l*ocal/provincial government'*. The use of the local/provincial government to refer to the government of Aceh might be regarded as a referential word to Indonesia. It also applied to the governor and vice governor: when referring to the heads of administration in Aceh, *Serambi* frequently used the *names* of the governor and vice-governor, instead of using the labels *governor/vice governor* (which indicated references to Indonesia).

We also found three labels used to describe the people of Aceh. The most frequently used was *society*, followed by *citizen*, and finally *citizenry*. Interestingly, the

label '*citizenry*' was only found in news stories. This finding suggests a particular meaning ascribed to these words—in Bahasa Indonesian, *citizenry* is a label mostly used to describe the group of people who live in a particular city, town, or province, while citizen is a label specifically used to denote the group of members of a particular nation-state. Therefore, *citizen* is used to describe the people of Indonesia, while people in a particular province or area in Indonesia are called citizenry. Hence, using '*citizen*' to describe Acehnese people might underscore ties with Indonesia, of which the Acehnese are technically citizens. In addition, society was deemed the most neutral word to refer to people, unlike *citizen* or citizenry. Finally, the most significant labels to describe Aceh's flag and emblem were *'Crescent-Star flag'* and *'Bouraq (Lion) emblem'*. The use of these labels are considered neutral in referring to Aceh's provincial flag and emblem, as the dispute over the current flag and emblem between the Indonesian government and Aceh administration still continues.

In contrast to labels for the government of Aceh, the words *central* or *national governments* were mostly used to mention the government of Indonesia, which accounted for 45 percent of the overall sample. Another significant label for the government was *Indonesian government* with 33 percent. Further, in relation to the head of the government, Indonesian labels also presented a converse finding to Acehnese labels. Labels such as *'President of Indonesia'* or *'Minister of Home Affairs'* were employed to describe the head of the government of Indonesia or the authorised minister responsible, instead of using only the names of the president or the minister. The use of such labels, central government or president, unconsciously created a sense of Aceh as part of Indonesia. Comparing the use of labels for Indonesia in each news section, it was found that editorials showed obvious gaps between the use of the *central/national government* and *Indonesian government*. While other news sections did not show significant differences in the use of both labels, editorials employed the highest proportion of the use of '*central/national government*' and the lowest proportion of the use of '*Indonesian government'*.

Based on the findings with regard to themes, it was obvious that the Aceh flag was a dominant and current issue in the coverage of Aceh-Indonesia relations. Therefore, the selection of the sample for framing analysis was mostly taken from the news article under this theme. A flag is commonly perceived as a symbol of identity of a particular nation, and thereby issues surrounding the current Aceh flag could be asserted as having clear-cut identity issues in relation to Indonesian state. Gamson and Lasch define metaphors as analogies and symbols depicting the frame that describes an object through a reference to something that is considered to have similar characteristics to the object (1983, p. 4). In this regard, a metaphor always has two parts: 'the principal subject that the metaphor is intended to illuminate and the associated subject that the metaphor evokes to enhance our understanding' (Gamson & Lasch, 1983, p. 4). Our study documented the use

of metaphor in Serambi's news coverage of the provincial flag of Aceh. In brief, the choice of words to describe the provincial flag has been changed according to political circumstances. When the draft bylaw on Aceh's flag and coat of arms was still in discussion in the Aceh parliament, there was no use of metaphor to describe the flag, though the proposed flag was already recognised as the GAM flag at that time. Instead, the word 'flag' was used to refer to the proposed flag; it was evident in the news article headlined 'Flag is not for certain groups'. However, since the local government passed bylaw number 3/2013 which allowed the flag used by the former rebels to be the provincial flag, *Serambi Indonesia* explicitly devised the term 'Aceh flag' to describe the flag. This term was first used in the news article headlined 'Aceh flag surprises Jakarta', published a day after the flag bylaw passed. Yet this term was no longer used as the rising controversy over the use of the separatist flag as the provincial flag. Currently, *Serambi Indonesia* has employed 'crescent and star' to refer to the flag because of the flag's design bearing the crescent and star image. In this regard, 'crescent and star' could be argued to be the metaphor of the Aceh flag in which the crescent and star act as 'the associated subject' that has a similar characteristic with and intended to signify the Aceh flag as 'the principal subject', as Gamson and Lasch explain (1983, p. 4).

The second framing device is exemplars which can be defined as events or historical examples used to exemplify the frame; they are not found either in news stories, in editorials or in letters to the editor (Gamson & Lasch, 1983). Exemplars were only employed in opinion pieces. The opinion piece 'Why the 1976 flag?' attempted to argue why Aceh should adopt the GAM flag as the provincial flag through a historical reference to the rebellion period led by GAM where thousands were killed, as the writer argued, to defend the flag for the sake of Aceh. The writer went further by referring to the profile of Hasan Tiro, the founder of GAM as well as the creator of the flag to assert that the acceptance of the 1976 flag as the official flag could be regarded as the commemoration of Hasan Tiro's merits and sacrifices for Aceh. Another opinion piece 'Aceh; between red-and-white and crescent-and-star' discussed the controversy surrounding the Aceh flag through a citation to the history of Aceh. The writer argued that the Aceh flag was already recognised in the history of Aceh since the sultanate period. The exemplars used were similar in the sense of using the history of Aceh. As Gamson and Lasch argue that such exemplars aimed to 'frame the principal subject', in this regard the current Aceh flag, that the adoption of the GAM flag as the provincial flag was already appropriate and it thus should not be contested (1983, p. 4). Irrespective of the controversy over the flag, the use of Aceh history as exemplar was also found in other themes, such as '*Aceh development*' and '*Aceh history*'.

Conclusion

Our study suggests that in the construction of Acehnese identity, *Serambi Indonesia* has not promoted a separate Acehnese identity as distinct from an Indonesian identity, but in addition to Indonesian identity. The newspaper embraces a distinct Acehnese identity within the framework of Indonesian national identity, and it further attempts to construct the distinctive identity within the symbolic boundary of Indonesian identity; this is apparent in the editorials which are supposed to reflect the news organisation's stance towards particular issues. *Serambi Indonesia's* editorials have used distinct labels for Aceh, including the '*government of Aceh*' and '*citizen*' which indicate the exclusivity of Aceh as a free nation. On the other hand, the editorials produce more referential labels for Indonesia, including the '*central/national governmen*t' which signpost Aceh as part of the Indonesian state.

The coding categories used demonstrated two concurrent constraining indications in favour of distinction and allegiance to the Indonesian state. A source of distinction was evident in themes capturing disputes between the Indonesian Government and Aceh administration, local framing perspectives, and the use of distinctive labels for Aceh. On the other hand, a source of allegiance could be found in the use of relational labels for Indonesia and the depiction of 'Aceh within Indonesia'. However, these findings needed bolstering through further investigation within a framing analysis. Our framing analysis revealed the use of exemplars and metaphors which signify ethnocentrism to the extent that they convey the idea that Aceh is more privileged from other provinces in Indonesia and thus it deserves special treatment from the Indonesian government. These ethnocentric depictions and exemplars are mostly found in opinion pieces and letters to the editor, which are written by members of society, not from the editorial staff of the paper.

In comparison to similar studies, our findings confirm previous research that concludes that newspapers play a significant role in the construction of collective identity. In particular, this study shares some similarities with Richardson et al's (2008) findings on *Corse Matin*, to the extent of the construction of a conciliatory identity between cultural and national identities in local newspapers. The study conducted by Richardson et al. concluded that *Corse-Matin*, the only daily newspaper on the Corsican island, played a neutral stance by concurrently showing sympathy for the French state and the Corsican nationalists, while avoiding criticism of either (2008). We found that *Serambi Indonesia* goes further by acting as a bridge builder for the Acehnese to manage the tension between their Acehnese and Indonesian identities through the overt idea of peace commitment and against separatism.

The tendency of *Serambi Indonesia* to frame a distinctive Acehnese identity within the Indonesian state may result from several possible factors, including ownership structure and the orientation of the news organisation under which Serambi

operates. Firstly, this newspaper is partly owned by the Kompas Gramedia Group, one of the largest media conglomerates in Indonesia. Moreover, as Bahari argues, *Serambi Indonesia* has survived in the unprofitable media industry in Aceh as it enjoys the financial support of its owner (2005). In this case, Kompas could exert more control towards *Serambi Indonesia* through financial influence. With regard to stories related to national security issues, such as separatism, national media networks might experience political pressure to clearly state their position, and it is in their interests not to be seen supporting separatist movements. In addition to ownership factors, according to Bahari, Aceh's long history of violent conflict makes it hard for media to survive (2005). *Serambi Indonesia,* which is the only 'survivor' in the local newspaper industry is fully aware of the negative effects of violent conflict on its own business. In this regard, it is looking towards its own financial interests in pushing for sustainable peace in Aceh, and hence a conducive atmosphere for the media industry in the province.

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7. Phoenix rising 2000

How Timor-Leste's media bloomed from the ashes of violence and bloody conflict

Commentary: The second annual Dili Dialogue Forum in July 2018 was sponsored by UNESCO, UNDP and the Timor-Leste Press Council and the governments of New Zealand, Japan and the Netherlands. Delegates came from Asian press councils and media freedom bodies, including the South East Asian Press Alliance, and from Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines and Thailand. For the first time, Papua New Guinea's Media Council was represented by its secretary and popular television presenter Belinda Kora. The author reflects on two days of presentations and roundtable discussions at the Forum—which saw Dili becoming the hub for a much bigger alliance of Asia-Pacific press councils—in the context of his long involvement in Timor-Leste media freedom issues.

Keywords: Dili Dialogue Forum, journalism education, media councils, media freedom, press councils, Timor-Leste

BOB HOWARTH
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THE FIRST time I flew into Dili on February 25, 2000, to help launch its first independent newspaper, the *Timor Post*, the airport was burning, like much of Dili. It was a pure accident. I was on a media rescue mission.

The Aussie sitting next to me on the Air North 'puddle jumper' flight that day as we watched the fire remarked casually: 'Situation normal'. And no customs or immigration, only soldiers, UN police and Blackhawk choppers were on the tarmac.

Welcome to the capital of the tiny former Portuguese island colony, a 90-minute hop by air from Darwin on the northern tip of Australia. Australian military forces headed a UN mission to restore peace on the divided island of about 900,000 people after Indonesian-controlled militias went on an orgy of destruction and killing after the Timorese voted overwhelmingly on August 30, 1999, for independence from Indonesian control. Indonesia invaded the country in 1975 with US and Australia's quiet nod after the Portuguese left in a rush after centuries of rule (Jolliffe, 1978). The invaders murdered five Aussie newsmen, the legendary Balibo Five, for which no-one has faced justice (Maniaty, 2009; Morris, 2017). It was later estimated more than 100,000 Timorese died at the hands of their invaders.

In the rampage of occupying forces, much of Timor's infrastructure was destroyed. Buildings burnt, livestock slaughtered and tossed down wells, and massacres of innocent civilians. All media facilities, printing presses, offices with computers, transport and housing were wrecked before UN peacekeepers brought relative calm to smouldering Dili (Peake, 2013).

In early 2000, as editorial technology manager I was winding down an operation I helped plan to beat the dreaded Y2K bug at Queensland Newspapers (QN) in Brisbane. Remember it? Planes were going to fall out of the sky, computers would crash because they had only two digit dates for the year and we scrapped millions of dollars worth of IT equipment because it couldn't handle four digits… the dreaded year 2000. It turned out to be a fizzer and the world didn't end, nor planes fall out of the sky.

To cut a long story short, I got a call out of the blue (as a disaster recovery 'expert') from the University of Queensland to meet 13 leading Timorese journalists who had flown to Brisbane to attend a special course in 'post-conflict reporting' run by the Reuters Kosovo bureau chief. Basically, it was about how lazy, unprofessional reporting could cause flare-ups and more deaths in conflict areas.

The journalists rated the course excellent but added: They had nothing to go home to. Nada. Not one computer, not one printing press… nothing.

After meeting them I asked my boss, the managing director of QN John Cowley, if I could save the company $10 per item we were paying a contractor to take away the non-Y2K equipment. He said go for it. The following day, the Timorese team flew to Darwin on a now-defunct Ansett Airlines jet (half-owned by News Limited) carrying half a tonne of cargo including 12 PCs, seven laptops, two laser proofers and half a pallet of A3 and A4 paper. None of it was Y2K-compliant … but who cared which year it was then?

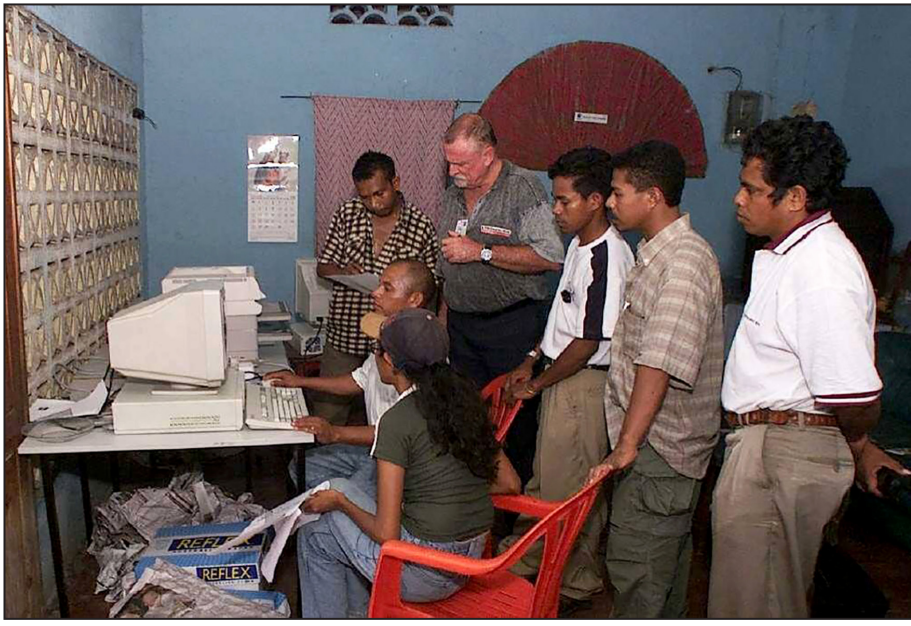
When they landed in Darwin all the equipment was left behind because under UN flight rules passengers on their C130 Hercules shuttle to Dili could only take what they could carry. The gear was left on pallets in the *Northern Territory News'* paper store, part of the News Limited empire.

Fortunately, I was able to fly to Darwin a couple of weeks later on another News group assignment to train NT News staff on our brand new online NewsText library system. During three days of training I contacted Perkins Barges who were ferrying bulk supplies to Dili for the UN from Darwin. Perkins agreed to carry free-of-charge all the Timor gear and I wrote a nice story for the *NT News* about how they were helping the first 'free press' newspaper start up.

News HQ in Sydney told me I might as well keep going and fly to Dili to help set up the paper. Mission Impossible loomed. My friends Hugo da Costa (founding editor-in-chief, now an MP), Santina Santos (current director) Rosa Garcia (current editor), Jose Ximenes (current Press Council director) and another 12 dedicated journalists awaited the equipment arrival and yours truly, *de*

facto production editor. They were, and still are, proudly the owners, not some foreign media company.

When I got there, the power blacked out every couple of hours: Ayah! Biggest headache, no aircon, no UPS (uninterrupted battery power supply to stop computers crashing) and general mayhem in sauna conditions.



TIMOR POST

Figure 1: Flashback to the first edition of the Timor Post being produced in sauna conditions in Dili, Timor-Leste, on 28 February 2000. Standing left are founding editor Hugo Da Costa (now an MP) and the author, Australian journalist Bob Howarth.

We solved the power crisis thanks to the Brisbane-based Army support battalion billeted in the government building (still smouldering with destroyed land title records) next to the new *Timor Post's* designated office and the army had huge generators. So I knocked on the barbed wire, saw the obliging colonel who generously assigned two of his electricians to run cables across a narrow lane to the *Timor Post*. Beautiful. Lights, action, computers!

We hooked up the computers and used 'sneaker-net' (wearing sneakers carrying floppy disks to transfer copy and pix to the page designer's PC). Deadline was only two days to the launch on Sunday, February 29, when the Indonesian President Gus Dur was due to visit and virtually apologise for the damage his withdrawing army had caused.

Next problem: How do we print with every local machine wrecked or burnt by the outgoing Indonesian forces?

I was staying at a construction-camp-type *donga* hotel called The Paximus (now the Ventura Hotel) and in the manager's office I spied a gleaming new

high-speed A3 photocopier. When I told the Canadian manager, Bob Buskins, what we were up to, he agreed we could use the machine as long as we supplied paper and toner. Our target was 10 news pages in Tetum language (a world-first) and another page in English and one in Portuguese, a format the *Timor Post* still runs with much bigger Tetum pagination.

I bought up all the A3 paper in Dili later that day on my big boss, Rupert Murdoch's, company credit card. Thank you, *obrigado, terimah kasi* Uncle Rupert (another expenses secret).

Saturday February 28, 2000:

The Timorese worked all day and night with beautiful nonstop power from the army gensets purring away next door and put the paper to bed working 20 hours straight then high-speed photocopying for another four hours till sunrise to produce 300 copies. The only hiccup was earlier when a large pig (Dili still has the odd loose pig, goat, chicken roaming back streets) waddled through open doors into the sweltering newsroom and I objected. They agreed. No pigs in the newsroom.

Then next morning as huge crowds gathered for the Indonesian President's arrival (highly-controversial at the time with unfounded rumours of assassination plots) our happy, bleary-eyed team drove around Dili's pot-holed streets in battered yellow taxis flinging out free copies of the *Timor Post*. I was interviewed later that day on ABC radio in Australia. I said I wished I could see one day

BOB HOWARTH

Figure 2: Pix: The audience at the Dili Dialogue Forum with former President and Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr Jose Ramos-Horta in the centre front row.

people literally fighting over the *Courier-Mail* newspaper back in Brisbane. The *Timor Post* continues proudly today in the same building with its own colour press and circulates all over the country. *Viva Timor-Leste! Viva Timor Post!*

Fast forward to July 15 2018:

I fly back to Dili from Darwin on an Air North Embraer jet and arrive at a modern small terminal where customs and immigration is fast and pay a US$30 visa fee for one month. Dili has the cheapest duty-free in the Asia/Pacific, usually half the price of goods in Darwin.

And Dili is booming. Four days later I join 400 people in the US$8 million conference centre in the gleaming high-rise Ministry of Finance, one of several new landmarks on this city of 200,000 plus. The occasion is the second annual Dili Dialogue Forum. It is sponsored by Unesco, UNDP and the Timor-Leste Press Council, New Zealand, Japan and the Netherlands. Delegates fly in from Asian press councils including the South East Asian Press Alliance, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines, Japan, China and Hong Kong. For the first time, Papua New Guinea's Media Council is represented by its secretary and popular TV presenter Belinda Kora.

During two days of presentations and round-table discussion the Forum agrees Dili will become the hub for a much bigger alliance of Asia/Pacific press councils, media freedom strength in unity.

Speakers include senior representatives from Unesco, Timor-Leste's Minister for Communications, the International Federation of Journalists' barrister Jim Nolan and the various country media councils who all report on threats to their national press freedom. Several speakers highlight the fact that Timor-Leste has the highest World Press Freedom ranking in Asia—95th in Reporters Sans Frontières' annual World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2018).

So how did this happen?

From early 2000 with the launch of the *Timor Post* and the revival of an existing daily, *Suara Timor-Leste*, the media scene in Dili bloomed as aid money poured into the latest emerging independent country. Major donors like USAID, AUSAID, JIKA (Japan), the EU and even Australian journalists all helped with cash, kind and training. In my case I flew to Dili on several occasions to help with training at the *Timor Post* and later the *Jornal Independente* daily. As of August 2018 all these dailies continue publishing plus the daily *Diario*.

However, some NGOs and foreign donors started questioning whether a country of 1.5 million people could support four daily newspapers with radio the most popular media across the country and local TV plus a vast range of neighbouring Indonesia's TV stations easily accessible. All print media were struggling with advertising revenue dropping heavily as their Parliament met in crisis to establish a stable government and pass much delayed budget legislation.

The country meanwhile had its two-year old Press Council (*Conselho De Imprensa*) set up with government funding plus assistance from UNDP for professional training. The TLPC impressed delegates to the Dili Dialogue Forum with its statistics. The council has 38 staff including a five-man board, 38 staff covering media monitoring, dispute resolution, training and admin plus transport including two drivers (who multi-tasked on data input and as photographers). The hardware included nine vehicles, 21 motorbikes and a network of 50 computers for admin and training plus their own IT specialist.

The TLPC's latest projects include lobbying Google Translate and Facebook to include one of its two official languages Tetum. Portuguese (on Google Translate) is also an official language but it is not taught in local schools until high school level. The Timorese know that a viable online media will need Tetum Translate as an option. After centuries under colonial rule Timorese children did not have any schooling until 1940. Only Portuguese citizens' children were allowed to attend a handful of schools. Later they were taught in Bahasa Indonesia during the 25 years of occupation until 1999.

Investigations continued at the time of writing into setting up a Timorese Fact Check authority combining resources of the TLPC and the University of Timor-Leste, similar to the Fact Check partnership in Australia between the ABC and Melbourne's Monash University.

The President of the TLPC, veteran newsman Virgilio da Silva Guterres (Gil) told the Dialogue Forum that when the council was set up he and fellow director and lawyer Paulo Arujio were appointed by Parliament and other directors elected by journalists. However, he said their aim was for the President and legal advisor director to be directly elected by the journalist membership. Gil Guterres said the TLPC was not regulated by the government of the day and stressed the importance of media self-regulation without government influence.

Nobel Peace Prize winner and former President Dr Jose Ramos-Horta spoke on the disturbing of low levels of press freedom in many countries. He said he had never seen such hostility to mainstream media as in the United States under President Trump. A strong, professional, independent media was essential in any country to fight for good government.

Dr Horta told delegates his country had its only truly fair election in 2002 when no-one had any money. He said now Timor-Leste had learned the lessons from Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines of 'money democracy'.

His advice to journalists investigating corruption was 'do not rush… take your time'. Reporters covering corruption should be as careful as a prosecutor-general, he added.

Dr Horta addressed the issue of dwindling revenues for print media in Timor-Leste. He suggested subsidies for newspapers to encourage the nation to develop better reading habits and other assistance such as lower power bills and

cheaper newsprint and ink.

In the week following the Dili Dialogue, 25 journalism students and junior reporters completed five months of professional training organised by the TLPC and funded by the UNDP. The chief organiser UNDP's Yuichi Ishida introduced the concept of data gathering and inclusion of graphics and bar charts as well as video editing and news photography. The training finished at a students' retreat at the five-storey landmark Timor Plaza complex to discuss future professional training such as layout and design and writing for online publication.

Plans for the 2019 Dili Dialogue Forum on May 9-10 have already drawn expressions of interest from Pacific press councils in Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Fiji. As a result, the 2019 forum is shaping up to become a very real alliance between Asia and the Pacific media councils.

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8. Analysis of a beat-up
The structuring of a sensational media story

Abstract: Media beat-ups are sensationalised stories that greatly exaggerate or misrepresent the significance of otherwise unremarkable events or issues. To illustrate how beat-ups can be analysed, a front-page story in Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper is examined in terms of its venue, the journalist and the content of the story. The features of a beat-up may be less arbitrary than they appear on the surface.

Keywords: attack journalism, Australia, beat-up, *Daily Telegraph,* News Corp Australia, newspapers, sensationalism, tabloidisation, terrorism, trolling, yellow journalism

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Introduction

ON 26 May 2017, the front page of Sydney's *Daily Telegraph,* Australia's second highest circulation newspaper, had a huge headline: 'THREAT LEVEL: HIVE' (Figure 1). The story (Loussikian, 2017), which covered most of pages 4 and 5 of the tabloid, was apparently triggered by a few sentences in the doctoral thesis of Aloysia Brooks (2016), a human rights campaigner and recent graduate (Figures 2, 3). She noted, in a passing comment, that more people died in Australia from bee stings than terrorists, yet there was no war on bees. The *Telegraph* story featured photos of her and her former husband, David Hicks, who had been one of two Australians imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

The story was unexpected. There had been no previous coverage of Brooks. Nor was there any follow-up on subsequent days. The story was a 'one-day wonder', apparently important at the time but of no lasting media significance. It stimulated commentary in several other newspapers (e.g., Bolt, 2017; Eddie, 2017), reliant on Loussikian's treatment, but without any independent investigation.

I had been the principal supervisor for Brooks' doctoral thesis and immediately recognised the tone and content of the *Telegraph* story as hostile towards Brooks. The story took a single passage out of context and made fun of it without any rationale. Readers of the story would have been hard pressed to realise that the focus of her thesis was Australian media coverage of torture in the war on terror. Seemingly unwittingly, the *Telegraph* story provided an additional example

of the sort of media coverage examined in Brooks' thesis.

In Australian terminology, the story was a 'beat-up': treatment of an issue in a greatly exaggerated way, far beyond what would normally be considered newsworthy. A beat-up turns something that few would say is of any significance into something of seeming importance. Why should a peripheral comment about bees and terrorism in a doctoral thesis be considered newsworthy?

Because I had a personal interest in this story—it was a blatant attack on my PhD student, and to a lesser extent on me as a supervisor—I had some insight into why it had happened. Most readers would not have had any inside information and hence been unable to see beyond the story as presented.

Figure 1: The *Daily Telegraph* front page, triggered by a doctoral thesis, 26 May 2017.

My aim in this article is to analyse this particular story in order to show that a beat-up, though seemingly random in its target, can reflect the predilections of the outlet and the journalist. To begin, I describe the nature of a beat-up and its connection with related concepts such as sensationalist media coverage. Then I look at three contexts for the story about Brooks' thesis: the venue, namely the *Daily Telegraph*; the journalist who wrote the story; and the content of the story. What is striking about this particular example of a beat-up is that in attacking Brooks' thesis, it exemplifies exactly what she documented in her research. In conclusion, I comment on the value of studying beat-ups.

Media beat-ups

The concept of 'beat-up' seems not to have been defined in the scholarly literature. According to YourDictionary, a beat-up is 'an artificially or disingenuously manufactured alarm or outcry, especially one agitated by or through the media.' This term is used in Australia, Britain and New Zealand. Because 'beat-up' is not commonly used elsewhere, it is worthwhile saying a bit more about the concept.

In the context of the media, a beat-up is a story that, by conventional journalistic standards, does not deserve to be published because it is unverified, grossly exaggerated and/or knowingly false. Typical features of beat-ups include presenting manufactured claims, giving otherwise unexceptional information

Figure 2: The inside spread on pages 4 and 5 in the *Daily Telegraph*, 26 May 2017.

an exaggerated importance, highlighting facts taken out of context, presenting highly misleading portrayals and using weak or dubious sources. For example, a story might portray a few incidents as revealing a dangerous trend. There might be lurid reports about break-ins in a particular suburb, indicating a crime wave, even though there has been no increase in break-ins and this particular suburb has no more crime than average.

It is useful to describe beat-ups in the context of other terms relating to journalistic practices. News and current affairs can be distinguished from other facets of the media, for example advertising, entertainment, travel and reviews. News reporting is governed by a set of implicit rules about topics and writing style, usually following the priorities dictated by news values (Bednarek & Caple, 2012; Brighton & Foy, 2007). Beat-ups can be reported as news but can also occur in other areas of the media. It might be argued that some advertising, for example for miracle cures, falls in the category of a beat-up.

Another relevant concept is sensationalism, which refers to stories aiming to attract readers by dramatic and lurid headlines, tantalising titbits of information, and emphasis on crime and scandal. Some outlets specialise in reporting scandals and outrageous exposés, notoriously the US magazine *The National Enquirer,* and many of its stories could be considered beat-ups. Historically in the US, what was called 'yellow journalism' was characterised by sensationalism (Campbell, 2001).

Sensationalism is standard in reporting devoted to scandal and gossip, and conversely scandal relies on publicity (Adut, 2008; Entman, 2012). Stories about celebrities, as seen for example in headlines in Australian magazines such as *Women's Day* and *Who,* take an everyday sort of event and turn it into something sensational. A celebrity might be overweight, pregnant, dating someone new, ill or revealed in photographs, and this is treated as a big story. The increasing media coverage of the private lives of public figures has been called tabloidisation (Sparks & Tulloch, 2000). Such stories are most obviously beat-ups when there is no basis for the claims made, as when a celebrity is not actually seeing a new person and is bemused to read about it.

The phenomenon of celebrity gossip stories—especially when celebrities, such as the Kardashians, are primarily known for being well-known rather than any notable accomplishments—shows that the concept of beat-up may apply to entire genres of reporting. A story is manufactured out of something that is incorrect or banal and presented to audiences as exciting.

There is a connection between beat-ups and what are called 'moral panics,' which are alarms about threats to the moral order (Cohen, 2002). In a typical sequence, something is defined as a threat to social values, the media provide a convenient portrayal of the threat, generating public concern, to which authorities respond (Thompson 1998, p. 8). A beat-up can be part of a convenient media portrayal of someone or something, such as drug use, criminal gangs, transsexuals, or political correctness, as a threat to social values. A prominent example is terrorism: someone arrested for possibly planning an attack receives saturation media coverage whereas cases of domestic violence, which kill far more people, seldom receive a mention. In a 'political moral panic' (Shafir & Schairer, 2013), the government defines terrorism as a threat to the integrity of society and the mass media follow the government's agenda. However, beat-ups do not have to be part of an ongoing moral panic: they can be singular stories without much connection to a campaign or current issue.

Relating to the role of the media in moral panics is the concept of 'media-hype' (Vasterman, 2005), in which reporting on a topic triggers more investigation and reporting on the topic. In essence, media coverage becomes self-reinforcing. Waves of media-hype can involve beat-up stories, but not necessarily so.

Another relevant category is 'attack journalism', referring to stories that denigrate particular individuals or groups. For example, for years Sydney University peace studies academic Jake Lynch has been targeted in some media outlets over his support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement (Blizzard, 2017; Higgins, 2013). David Robie and his colleague Ingrid Leary, when they worked in the University of the South Pacific's Journalism Programme, were the targets of a hostile campaign by some Fiji journalists over investigative journalism (Robie, 2003). Attack journalism is common in political reporting (Sabato, 1991) and

in various other areas. Some media outlets specialise in making attacks. Hager (2014), who obtained a large number of leaked documents about New Zealand political shenanigans, provides a particularly revealing account of the operation of attack journalism in politics. A notorious and extreme example is certain media in Rwanda, for example the radio network RTLM (Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines), prior to and during the 1994 genocide. RTLM, covertly serving government agendas, broadcast hate against Tutsi, including many lies. It denounced individuals by name, putting their lives at risk. As the genocide proceeded, RTLM provided specific guidance for killing activities (Article 19, 1996). There is an overlap between attack journalism and beat-ups, but they are not identical. A beat-up can be about an innocuous matter and does not have to be personal—for example, a story about a change in house prices—and attack journalism can be accurate. There is also an overlap between attack journalism and reporting of scandal and gossip. In political attack journalism, the private foibles of politicians, having no direct connection to their professional performance, become the target for exposure and denigration.

My focus here is on beat-ups in the attack category. Typically, these serve to stigmatise the target, which can be an individual or category of people, or particular activities. A characteristic attack beat-up highlights a few facts taken out of context that serve to give a misleading picture.

A deeper critique of the media would lead to the suggestion that much regular news reporting is a type of beat-up. For example, Western media coverage of armed conflicts typically concentrates on a few current issues, such as North Korean nuclear capabilities, with some conflicts such as Israel-Palestine being perennial favourites. Meanwhile, many more deadly conflicts receive little or no coverage, such as the wars in the Congo that killed perhaps five million people (Hawkins, 2008).

However, to call the majority of media coverage a systematic set of beat-ups is not illuminating and mainly serves to draw attention to well-canvassed shortcomings of the mass media, for little advantage. It makes more sense to reserve the term beat-up for particular cases of journalistic practice, distinguished by their contrast with reporting norms. Characteristic types of beat-ups include alarm, attack, amazement, human interest and humour. Because any of these may sometimes occur in quality journalism, there is no sharp separation between regular stories and beat-ups. A beat-up is towards one end of a spectrum of practices.

Phillips (2015) examines the activities of trolls—individuals who transgress the usual boundaries of good taste and proper behaviour. For example, in so-called RIP trolling, trolls go the Facebook pages of recently deceased youths and make nasty comments about them. Phillips makes the point that trolling often involves behaviours that mimic the worst tendencies of sensationalist mainstream media. When a young, white attractive female dies, this can become a significant media

story, sometimes involving reporters intrusively seeking comments from and news footage of grieving relatives. Trolls, according to Phillips, simply go one step further in this sort of ghoulish obsession with particular deaths. Meanwhile, other deaths go unreported.

In summary, the concept of a media beat-up points to a particular type of coverage, and has overlaps with other concepts. Some, but not all, beat-ups are in news coverage. They usually involve sensationalism, but there are also stories of scandal and gossip that are not beat-ups. Some, but far from all, beat-ups contribute to moral panics and media-hype. Some, but not all, beat-ups are part of attack journalism.

My interest here is in showing how it is possible to go about trying to understand unanticipated beat-ups, ones that are not part of an ongoing issue. The sudden occurrence of a beat-up story may appear random, especially when it has no precedent or follow-up. My aim here is to illustrate how even an apparently idiosyncratic story can be understood as part of a wider pattern.

In the following sections I examine three aspects of Kylar Loussikian's story in the *Daily Telegraph* about Aloysia Brooks' thesis: the outlet, the journalist and the political assumptions underlying the story. None of these determine the selection or content of the story, but they provide constraints or influences. A beat-up might be a random choice in some ways, but selected from a lottery with a restricted set of winners.

In undertaking this analysis, I started with an understanding of Brooks' thesis, and familiarity with relevant portions of Loussikian's reporting. I looked at coverage of related matters in the *Daily Telegraph* and other media, and compared the content of Loussikian's story with Brooks' thesis. I sent a draft of this paper to both Loussikian and the *Daily Telegraph* inviting comment but received no response.

The outlet

The *Daily Telegraph,* sometimes referred to as the *Tele,* is a newspaper published six days per week with its stablemate, the *Sunday Telegraph,* on the seventh. Published in Sydney, Australia's largest city, it is distributed primarily in the state of New South Wales. It is the highest circulation daily in Sydney and second highest in the country.

The newspaper is owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp Australia. Murdoch initially built his media empire in Australian newspapers before expanding worldwide and becoming a US citizen (Tiffen, 2014). The *Tele* is tabloid in format and in style: it is a downmarket newspaper aimed at a working class readership. Its primary newspaper competitor is the *Sydney Morning Herald,* often characterised as a quality daily, and with a more middle-class and progressive readership.

The political slant in the *Tele* is conservative. It is anti-union and anti-Labor Party, sometimes aggressively so. This is most apparent in the pieces by regular

columnists Tim Blair, Andrew Bolt, Miranda Devine and Joe Hildebrand, who adopt stridently conservative positions on a range of issues. Quite a few front-page stories target disadvantaged groups such as welfare cheats and refugees.

Universities, especially their humanities faculties, are occasional targets in *Telegraph* stories, as part of hostility to allegedly left-wing bias. For example, in 2018 a *Telegraph* journalist covertly attended classes at universities in Sydney and wrote a story decrying in-class comments by three named academics, presenting them as exemplifying 'a culture of cotton wool and political correctness' (Harris, 2018).

The *Telegraph,* along with much of the rest of the Australian media, has enthusiastically supported the government's war-on-terror agenda, so it runs breathless stories about terrorist threats and supports repressive anti-terrorist legislation. This provides a receptive context for a beat-up about a passage in a PhD thesis about the war on terror.

Aloysia Brooks, when she did her doctorate at the University of Wollongong, had been a human rights campaigner for a decade. She previously had been married to David Hicks, an Australian who was imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay and tortured there before being released in a plea bargain.

In the years after 9/11, Hicks was a divisive figure in Australian politics. As one of two Australian citizens imprisoned at Guantanamo, the Australian government treated him as a terrorist. He became a whipping boy for defenders of a tough, militaristic orientation to terrorism. However, others saw him as a naïve, misguided individual who went to Afghanistan following his acquired Muslim convictions but who was not involved in terrorism. Opponents of torture and of the excesses of the war on terror saw Hicks as a victim. His imprisonment without trial became symbolic of problems with the war on terror, and pressure increased on the Australian government to do something. Prior to the 2007 national election, the government negotiated with US authorities to release Hicks and have him serve a remaining year in an Australian prison. This alleviated the political pressure on the government. Subsequently, the US government exonerated Hicks of all crimes (Hicks, 2010; Joseph, 2016).

For conservative commentators though, Hicks continued to be seen as a traitor, as a symbol of the enemy at home in the war on terror. Castigating Hicks was part of supporting the Australian government's war-on-terror agenda, and News Corp media have been enthusiastic in that support. In contrast, in the *Telegraph*'s rival daily newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald,* backing of the government's anti-terror agenda has been strong but more qualified, with occasional voices of dissent (Gittins, 2017).

From the beginning (Dunn, 2001), most *Telegraph* reporting about Hicks was hostile to him. The context for the 2017 story about Brooks' thesis is suggested by commentary about Hicks in the preceding few years in the *Telegraph.*

After Hicks confronted Attorney-General George Brandis at a talk given by Brandis, Piers Akerman (2014) criticised Hicks and criticised the ABC for reporting on the confrontation, saying the ABC 'is once again showing it's [sic] loony-Left bias to real good news'. Miranda Devine (2014) complained about Hicks 'playing the victim, and being applauded by leftist stooges like [Greens senator] Sarah Hanson-Young.' In early 2015, after the US Court of Military Commission Review exonerated Hicks, dismissing his guilty plea, *Telegraph* columnists continued to condemn him. Devine (2015) wrote, 'Far from being owed an apology and compensation from the Australian government, one-time al-Qaeda pin-up boy David Hicks should be apologising to us.'

Akerman (2015) said: 'Hicks is still guilty in the court of public opinion.' Political reporter Daniel Meers (2015) wrote about politicians who condemned Labor Party leader Bill Shorten's comment that Hicks had suffered an injustice. When Hicks was charged with domestic violence against a new partner, this was the basis for several *Telegraph* stories (e.g. Dowdell & Fewster, 2016). In recent years, the one exception to the *Telegraph*'s otherwise uniform defence of the Australian government in relation to torture of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay was a long story by Paul Toohey (2014) telling about torture methods used.

The Telegraph's enthusiastic support for the war on terror and critical commentary on Hicks provided receptive context for a story about Brooks' thesis. The context in which it was published and *The Telegraph*'s previous record suggest that the story provided an opportunity to condemn Hicks via his former wife's supposedly silly comparison with a war on bees.

The journalist

The story was written by Kylar Loussikian, relatively new to *The Telegraph.* For the previous few years he had reported for *The Australian,* a national daily also owned by News Corp Australia and with roughly the same political orientation, though a far more sober style.

Loussikian in 2015 wrote several stories about issues involving conflicts of interest among members of the governing body of the University of Wollongong (UOW) (Loussikian, 2015a, b). In January 2016, he wrote a front-page story in *The Australian* about Judy Wilyman, a recent doctoral graduate from the University of Wollongong. I was Wilyman's principal supervisor. Her thesis was a critical examination of the Australian government's vaccination policy, and for several years during her candidature she came under attack from members of a pro-vaccination citizens' group, Stop the Australian Vaccination Network (SAVN). Loussikian's article, published on 13 January 2016, attacked Wilyman's thesis, Wilyman, me as her supervisor and UOW for granting her a PhD (Loussikian, 2016). As I have documented elsewhere (Martin, 2016), Loussikian's article condemned Wilyman's thesis on the basis of quotes taken out of context, alleged

that the thesis promoted a conspiracy theory, and used guilt by association.

Loussikian's 13 January 2016 article, published just two days after Wilyman's thesis was available online, unleashed a huge attack, including hundreds of blog comments, freedom-of-information requests to obtain the names of the thesis examiners, a petition signed by over 2,000 people, and calls for her thesis to be revoked. Loussikian followed up with numerous further stories during the year about the thesis and the controversy his reporting had triggered. UOW leaders took a strong stand in support of academic freedom and weathered the onslaught (Martin, 2017).

The point here is that Loussikian had a track record of writing stories critical of UOW and critical of my doctoral students. The tone of his 26 May 2017 story was set by the banner above the main front-page headline: 'Loony uni's degrees of madness'. Towards the conclusion of his article, Loussikian commented about two of my other PhD students.

> Dr Brooks was supervised at Wollongong by Brian Martin, who gained notoriety after overseeing another thesis which claimed the World Health Organisation was colluding with pharmaceutical companies to spruik vaccines.
>
> Another of Professor Martin's students was Michael Primero, who has been associated with 'truth in health science' journal *Medical Veritas*, which claims the Rockefeller Foundation is trying to control consciousness.

Loussikian does not name Judy Wilyman, nor does he mention that the 'notoriety' he ascribes to me was triggered by his own stories in *The Australian,* nor that I comprehensively replied to his story and its misleading claim about collusion. Loussikian does name another student of mine, Michael Primero—who began his PhD with me in the 1990s but discontinued—and uses guilt by association to discredit him and me. Primero's association with *Medical Veritas* was separate from his PhD. The journal does not make any claim about controlling consciousness; rather, a 2015 article in the journal made that claim.

Loussikian initially brought up Primero being my student—one of 30 PhD students for whom I have been principal supervisor—in his articles attacking Wilyman's thesis. Thus, prior to his story about Brooks' thesis, Loussikian had previously targeted the University of Wollongong, me and two of my PhD students. In this context, the story about Brooks' thesis was not random.

The thesis and the story

Brooks' thesis is titled '*The annihilation of memory and silent suffering: Inhibiting outrage at the injustice of torture in the War on Terror in Australia*' (Brooks, 2016). In 2017, Brooks received the Professor Jim Hagan Memorial Prize, awarded annually to the PhD student with the best thesis completed in

the previous year in the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the University of Wollongong.

The contents of the thesis are clearly spelled out in its abstract.

> The War on Terror, initiated by the US Government under George W. Bush, reintroduced torture as an overt tool of the state. The Australian Government was heavily implicated in colluding and covering up the US torture program. Drawing on a model of outrage management, newspaper articles from 2002–2012 reveal extensive evidence that government officials, their agents, and the media, utilised methods that served to reduce outrage over the use of torture in the War on Terror. These tactics not only inhibited outrage, but promoted acceptance of torture as a legitimate security tool in the post 9/11 era.
>
> There is significant evidence that government officials, and a mostly compliant media, engaged in cover-up, either by omitting information, destroying evidence of torture, or failing to call into question statements made by US or Australian officials. There is extensive evidence of dehumanising or devaluing the survivors/victims and their experience including denigrating them as liars, casting them as unreliable sources, or, alternatively, attacking their personal character. Evidence extends to the reinterpretation of events and the way in which language was used to shift focus off torture to concerns about innocence or guilt. Rather than naming torture for what it is, terminology such as 'abuse' or 'mistreatment' was commonly used throughout the decade of analysis.
>
> The use of official channels to minimise outrage was apparent through the use of official spokespeople, or investigations that only gave the appearance of justice. There was also extensive evidence of the use of intimidation towards whistleblowers and torture survivors in order to prevent them from telling their stories. Those involved in torture were rewarded, commonly through promotion.
>
> These tactics were enabled by networks of individuals, organisations and institutions that carry out ideological, economic, practical or political functions to support the facilitation and cover-up of state-inflicted torture. These networks include shallow governments that deploy misleading political rhetoric related to torture and terrorism, the increased role of militarism and covert operations, and the expansion of the surveillance state. Therefore, challenging torture in the War on Terror requires broader structural and societal change to eliminate the pillars of support for torture. Removing the structural support for torture may require the dismantling of the entire network through a process of nonviolent resistance. (Brooks, 2016, pp. 3-4)

Her thesis addresses torture in the war on terror using a model of outrage management, which is a set of techniques commonly used by powerful perpetrators

to reduce public outrage over injustice. The five techniques are: cover-up of information, devaluation of targets, reinterpretation of actions, official channels that give only an appearance of justice, and intimidation (Martin, 2007). The striking aspect of Loussikian's article is that it uses several of these very methods, without any self-reflection.

In relation to cover-up, Loussikian's article gives little attention to evidence about the torture of David Hicks or to the Australian government's role in hiding this evidence. In relation to devaluation, much of the article comes across as implied criticism of Hicks, continuing a long tradition in the *Telegraph* and much of the Australian media. A central feature of Brooks' thesis is an analysis of the subservient role of the Australian media in relation to Australian and US government agendas in the war on terror, which included demonising the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay (e.g., 'the worst of the worst'). Loussikian's article is hostile to Hicks, thus exemplifying Brooks' argument.

In relation to reinterpretation, Brooks' thesis addressed the way 'language was used to shift focus off torture to concerns about innocence or guilt.' Loussikian's article does exactly this: it doesn't address torture in the war on terror, but instead concentrates on Hicks' activities.

In her thesis, Brooks wrote about the intimidation of torture survivors and of whistleblowers. Loussikian's story could be seen as a form of intimidation: a full-scale mass-media attack on the work of a recent graduate who had the temerity to criticise media coverage of torture in the war on terror. By pointing to alleged shortcomings in the thesis, Loussikian's story suggests the potential for violations of university procedures, something quite threatening to the reputation of a scholar (no such violations were ever verified). It requires courage to challenge the dominant narrative on torture and terrorism and to question the reliability and veracity of media treatments, because the mass media have large resources to disseminate their viewpoints and condemn critics.

So what does Loussikian's article actually cover? It picks a few passages out of the thesis, without a suggestion that these are representative or especially significant in relation to the overall argument of the thesis, and either holds them up to ridicule—taken to be self-evident, as in the case of the bee comparison—or quotes individuals who said their views had been misrepresented. This is as close as the article comes to providing any official endorsement to the alleged shortcomings of the thesis. Loussikian is critical of the thesis but cites no authorities in the field to say it is substandard or that her PhD was inappropriately granted. Loussikian's article was supported by an editorial (Figure 3) and a Warren cartoon (Figure 4).

Loussikian's ridicule of Brooks' sentences about bees and terrorism can be understood as based on an implicit acceptance of the assumptions underlying the war on terror, leading to an unreflective rejection of any comparison suggesting

that the dangers from terrorism have been inflated. The three sentences on page 147 of her thesis about bees and terrorism were at the end of an examination of the Australian government's harsh anti-terror laws, in which she noted that they had been criticised in the 2011 annual report of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (Walker, 2011). As she noted, this report compared the number of Australians killed by terrorism with the much larger number of murders at home by family members. As well as bees, similar comparisons could readily be made with domestic violence, tractor accidents, falling out of bed, drowning in swimming pools and numerous other activities, each of which kills many more people in Australia than terrorism.

There is ample scholarly commentary pointing out that the war on terror has involved a gross exaggeration of the dangers of non-state terrorism (e.g., Mueller, 2006; Zulaika, 2014), while meanwhile state terrorism is ignored (e.g. Gareau, 2004). Even further off the media radar is the role of the mass media in enabling terrorist communication to audiences (Nacos, 2002; Schmid & de Graaf, 1982; Tuman, 2003).

The Daily Telegraph

PhD stings as standards slip

When David Hicks was still cooling his heels in the Guantanamo Bay detention centre, a Sydney theatrical troupe presented a dramatic work inspired by the former Islamic convert.

This high-stepping production, featuring massed David Hicks dancers in orange prison ensemble, ran for a time in 2006 to no great acclaim. The show closed before Hicks was again able to walk Australian streets the following year. Given extremist Islam's unfriendly attitude towards tunes and enjoyment in general, David Hicks: The Musical would have been outlawed by the Taliban.

Yet that unusual stage production is possibly shaded in novelty terms by Wollongong University's decision to award Hicks's estranged wife, human rights activist Aloysia Brooks, a doctorate in philosophy — for her thesis on none other than Hicks himself.

It's quite a tome, at one point making a very important statement about insects. "More people die in car accidents, from domestic murders and bee stings in Australia than terrorist attacks," Dr Brooks writes. "One could hardly imagine a war on bees occurring any time soon, and therefore, it can be concluded, that the counter-terrorism laws have been largely politically driven, rather than as a result of the need for legislation against new criminal acts."

Brooks's thesis continues in this manner for a long time. A very long time. Frankly, some of David Hicks's correspondence to his parents during his travelling days in Pakistan is more concise and tells a livelier tale.

"I learnt about weapons such as ballistic missiles, surface to surface and shoulder fired missiles, anti-aircraft and antitank rockets, rapid fire heavy and light machine guns, pistols, AK47s, mines and explosives," Hicks wrote in one letter.

"After three months everybody leaves ... war-ready ... I am now very well trained for jihad."

But let's worry about bees instead. Brooks's PhD is indicative of an overall decline in the rigour and authority of Australian academia. Scholarly standards have declined, with doctoral theses now being written on topics that in eras past would have been barely sufficient for a first-year literature student.

It would be interesting to learn if any topics that are rejected as potential doctorate material.

Figure 3: The *Daily Telegraph* editorial 'PhD stings as standards slip', page 30, 26 May 2017.

Curiously, a few years previously there had been a story in the British newspaper *The Telegraph* comparing deaths from terrorism and insect stings (Beckford, 2012). The angle was the opposite of Loussikian's. *The Telegraph* considered it newsworthy that David Anderson, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, had reported that British deaths from terrorism were far less than from numerous everyday causes. The story in *The Telegraph* quoted this passage from Anderson's report:

> During the 21st century, terrorism has been an insignificant cause of mortality in the United Kingdom. The annualised average of five deaths caused by terrorism in England and Wales over this period compares with total accidental deaths in 2010 of 17,201, including 123 cyclists killed in

> traffic accidents, 102 personnel killed in Afghanistan, 29 people drowned in the bathtub and five killed by stings from hornets, wasps and bees. (Anderson, 2012, p. 27)

Any piece of research is potentially vulnerable to attack by using Loussikian's techniques: pick a few passages out of context and hold them up to ridicule, allege shortcomings and quote critics. For most students, an attack like this would definitely be intimidating, and the possibility of being denigrated in the mass media would be enough to discourage some students from tackling a controversial topic. The saving grace in the case of Loussikian's article is that his treatment was so unbalanced, and in a publication noted for its partisan attacks, that it had little credibility among informed audiences.

In summary, Loussikian's story gave scant attention to the substance of Brooks' thesis. Instead, the methods used in the story exemplified the methods that Brooks had documented were commonly used in the Australian mass media when reporting torture in the war on terror.

Loussikian's article was a beat-up in that it turned a small matter—a non-central passage in a PhD thesis—into a front-page story. It was an unusual beat-up in that it actually illustrated the very techniques documented in the thesis it was attacking.

In the previous paragraphs, I started with Brooks' thesis and have commented on how Loussikian's article did not address its central contentions. Another approach is to analyse the text of Loussikian's article, seeing whether it fits the characteristics of a beat-up and of attack journalism. In a separate treatment (Martin, 2018), I have assessed all the text in Loussikian's article both for characteristic features of a beat-up and for characteristic features of attack journalism. Of the typical features of a beat-up mentioned earlier, three are prevalent in Loussikian's story: giving otherwise unexceptional information an exaggerated importance; highlighting facts taken out of context; and presenting highly misleading portrayals. More generally, the story:

- takes quotes out of context and magnifies their importance;
- makes no attempt to present the argument in the thesis or to put it in context; and
- provides no independent support for why this topic is noteworthy.

In relation to attack journalism, Loussikian's story includes derogatory language (e.g., 'bizarre thesis'), guilt by association (especially by highlighting Brooks' connection with David Hicks), and humorous dismissal (reference to a war on bees).

Conclusion

The term 'beat-up' is used occasionally in everyday conversation, but as a genre of journalism it seems under-studied, perhaps because it is simply one type

of sensationalism, which itself is understudied. Yet for those who are affected, whether as readers or as subjects of stories, beat-ups can be a serious matter and are worth understanding.

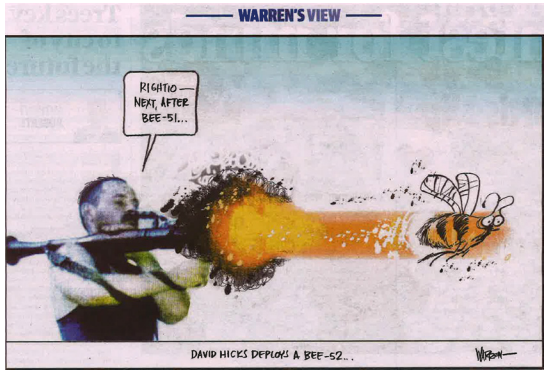

Figure 4: The Warren 'bee blast' cartoon in the *Daily Telegraph*, page 31, 26 May 2017.

Many of those at the coalface of media production—journalists, editors, headline writers, proprietors—might be able to provide insider accounts of how sensationalist coverage is crafted, but tell-all accounts are uncommon. For nearly all stories as they appear, there are no insider accounts, so readers must rely on other means of interpretation.

I analysed a particular story. I have categorised it as a beat-up and as a particular type of beat-up, an example of attack journalism. It also can be described as sensationalism, and it draws on the ongoing political moral panic about non-state terrorism. Most readers would not have any particular knowledge about the matters addressed in the story. Despite lacking inside knowledge, it is possible to analyse such stories. Three ways were illustrated here: analysing the media outlet's track record, analysing the journalist's track record, and analysing the story. Loussikian's story about Aloysia Brooks' doctoral thesis is compatible with the war-on-terror perspective commonly adopted in the News Corp newspaper the *Daily Telegraph.* The story denigrates David Hicks, who had long been an object of contempt by *Daily Telegraph* columnists. Finally, the story has several of the same targets as in Loussikian's previous stories, and uses the same sorts of attack techniques.

However, patterns in media coverage do not provide definitive evidence that a particular story is a beat-up. For this, close familiarity with the subject matter is vital. However, few readers have such familiarity. For those who lack knowledge of the topic, few make any attempt to obtain additional and independent information. In the aftermath of Loussikian's story, not a single person contacted me for more information. Nor was there a spike in downloads of Brooks' thesis, although its title was given in the story and would have been easy to find on the web. This suggests that few readers made an attempt to independently assess the story.

This analysis of Loussikian's story shows some ways to proceed in the study of beat-ups. There is more to be learned, including whether there are effective ways to counter them.

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9. Pacific media under siege

A review of the PINA 2018 Summit

Abstract: The rapidly-changing technology and transforming political situation across the Pacific have seen a noticeable shift towards harsher media legislation as governments facing unprecedented scrutiny try to contain the fallout from social media, citizen journalism and fake news. These developments were at the heart of the discussions at the Pacific Islands News Association's PINA 2018 Summit in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, in May. The biannual event is the largest gathering of Pacific Islands journalists to contemplate issues of mutual concern, formulate collective responses and chart the way forward. This article reviews this year's meeting, where discussions centred around the opportunities and challenges of the expanding social media sphere, as well as taking a fresh look at some perennial problems, such as corruption, political pressure and gender violence.

Keywords: citizen journalism, corruption, fake news, internet freedom, gender violence, Pacific Islands, Pacific Islands News Association PINA, internet freedom, media ethics, media legislation, social media

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Introduction

EVERY two years, Pacific Island journalists gather for the biannual Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) Summit to exchange ideas, raise issues of mutual concern, discuss possible solutions and jointly formulate a way forward. The PINA Summit, as the only event of its kind in the Pacific, provides a useful snapshot of the challenges confronting the region's news media sector. This year, as in past years, there was much to discuss, with 99 delegates from 12 of the 19 countries affiliated with PINA attending. Topics for discussions ranged from the challenges posed by the digital media revolution and the role of the media in promoting good governance to climate change, gender violence and the increasingly tough working environment for regional journalists, largely due to hardening government attitudes and tougher legislation. (PINA_Summit_2018_Programme, 2018).

A meeting place for news media and CSOs

An interesting element of the Summit is the strong interest shown by non-journalists and non-news media organisations. Attendees included communications managers from regional and international civil society organisations, (CSOs) representatives of development agencies and a range of technical experts. They made up 61 percent of the delegation, which was larger than the journalistic cohort. Their attendance was strong despite the meteoric rise of digital media in the region, with many organisations no longer fully reliant on the mainstream news media for communicating their messages (Finau et al., 2014). Most, if not all, major regional and international organisations boast their own websites and social media pages, creating and distributing their own content and connecting directly with followers (Finau et al., 2014). The heavy presence of the non-journalism delegates indicated that the mainstream news media were still seen as influential and relevant to their work, even though news media no longer hold a monopoly on news production and dissemination.

The non-journalism participants did not merely contribute to the discussions: as the sponsors of some events, they had prior say in the programme, selecting some workshop topics that were aligned to their organisational mission and thus played a part in setting the Summit's agenda. Typically, the news media guard their independence fiercely and some traditionalists would question the level of CSO involvement at a gathering for journalists. That being said, there are some realities to contend with: for example, without sponsors, it would be difficult to organise the PINA Summit in the first place. Indeed, besides sponsorship from regional and international organisations, the Summit is often bankrolled by the government of the host country.

Moreover, CSOs not only proliferate in the Pacific, they are an important source for regional news media. The CSOs are often staffed by experts working in developmental areas, who share their specialist knowledge and research findings with media. The CSO involvement makes sense, given the lack of capacity in the Pacific news media sector for in-depth reporting. This shortcoming can be attributed to low salaries, high staff turnover and lack of long-term training and study opportunities (Tacchi, Horst, Papoutsaki, Thomas & Eggins, 2013). As long as the media maintain their independence and neutrality, their relationship with CSOs can be mutually beneficial. Towards this end, PINA formalised collaboration with the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) on the sidelines of the Summit. This offered PINA membership of the sub-regional political grouping and a seat at the same table with Pacific leaders, heads of the private sector and civil society organisations. In return, PINA would consider PIDF as an associate member of the regional media body.

In some ways, Pacific CSOs are a natural fit with their news media counterparts, not the least because of their intersecting priorities. An obvious example

of this is the crusade against corruption, which aligns with the news media's core watchdog role. A two day pre-summit corruption workshop was sponsored by the UN-Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption unit. Another workshop sponsored by the Pacific Environment Journalists Network (PEJN) discussed climate change, reportedly the biggest threat to the Pacific. The workshop on subsistence and commercial agriculture was facilitated by the Tongan Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries. Subsistence agriculture is regarded as an important food source in the Pacific, whereas commercial agriculture is seen to hold tremendous potential, but is still underdeveloped. The workshop addressed what useful role, if any, the media could play in reporting the agriculture sector, which receives scant coverage compared with politics, sports and entertainment (PINA_Summit_2018_Programme, 2018).

The digital dilemma

While the topics were relevant, correlated and fed into the overall theme of the Summit, most concerns centred around the ongoing digital media trends, whose impacts were being widely felt (Finau et al., 2014). These included the loss of advertising revenue caused by a decline in the number of news consumers, and the ongoing government crackdown on social media abuse, news media organisations and professional journalists (Finau et al., 2014).

Mainstream media across the world have lost their monopoly on news production and dissemination, with social media putting the power in people's hands to produce and distribute their own 'news', giving rise to citizen journalism (Patel, 2010). In order to retain news consumers, mainstream media are adapting to the new paradigm by incorporating social media tools into their editorial strategy and business models, with varying levels of success (Patel, 2010). The PINA Summit heard that the news media in most Pacific Island countries had not escaped this trend, even though media digitisation in the region is not as advanced as in developing countries. Pacific Island mainstream media organisations, especially in the larger island countries, were struggling to adapt to this new normal, as they battled declining profits, diminishing readership and waning influence. As a result of this seismic change, important questions about the fate of the news business emerged, especially around print media (PINA, Invitation, 2018)

The Summit heard that the news media were fighting back: Fiji media organisations had jumped on the social media bandwagon in attempts to maintain, if not boost readership. During his presentation at the Summit on 'Twitter—a new form of journalism', Fijian Media Association general secretary Stanley Simpson (Simpson, 2018) observed that Facebook was the most popular platform in Fiji with the masses, and that some news media organisations, which boasted their own Facebook pages, had built a massive following. For example, *The Fiji Times* embraced social media earlier than most, thus creating a relatively large following

(141,000 as at September 21). Twitter, while not as popular as Facebook, was gaining ground. Simpson observed that Fiji journalists had taken to Twitter with gusto, tweeting from both their individual accounts and the official media organisation account. Said Simpson:

> Fiji journalists are starting to tweet breaking news when they see an event happening live—fire, road accident, etc. They are tweeting quotes from press conferences before they even get back to the office. They are also tweeting headlines or promoting/teasing out stories in their upcoming news bulletins. This allows the public to get news on the go; that is the trend today. (Simpson, 2018)

According to Simpson, the largest Twitter audience in Fiji was the Fiji Rugby Union with more than 74,900 followers, Tourism Fiji with more than 62,600 followers and *The Fiji Times* with more than 52,300 followers (Simpson, 2018). Other fast-growing profiles on Twitter included Fiji One News with more than 17,500 Twitter followers, FBC TV with just over 11,400 and *Fiji Sun* with more than 7,200 followers (Simpson, 2018). It's a game of catchup for Pacific Islands news media as the number of internet users worldwide continues to increase by up to seven percent year-on-year, totaling 4.021 billion in 2018 (Kemp, 2018). Social media users in 2018 totaled 3.196 billion while mobile phone users totaled 5.135 billion (Kemp, 2018).

On the subject of social media abuse and the subsequent government crackdown, Tongan Prime Minister ʻAkilisi Pōhiva set the tone in his opening address. A former broadcaster/publisher and democracy campaigner, Pōhiva, has been accused of suppressing the media since forming government in 2014. An unrepentant Pōhiva used his platform to draw attention to what he sees as a serious threat; allegations circulating freely on social media, supposedly designed to discredit and destabilise his government. He gave an example of what he termed as false claims of a member of his Cabinet using foul language in an online chat room to denigrate King Tupou, which had created an uproar (Pōhiva, 2018). When journalists questioned him about the relevance of raising matters discussed on social media, given that it was beyond anyone's control, Pōhiva said:

> Although social media is beyond our control, it is important that the government addresses issues raised via social media, especially when it can endanger the political stability of our island nation. It is very important that we are all empowered—media and government alike—to deal with the challenges posed by the ever-changing digital world. (Pōhiva, 2018)

While Pōhiva's concerns were widely shared at the Summit, there was also a sense that some governments were cynically using social media abuse as a pretext to impose sweeping censorship to discourage public discussion of

important national issues on both social and mainstream media. In an effort to regulate 'harmful' social media content, the Tongan government adopted new laws in 2015 for the creation of an internet regulatory agency with the power to block websites without reference to a judge (Reporters Without Borders, 2018).

Just days after the PINA Summit, the Fiji Parliament passed the controversial *Online Safety Act 2018* to promote 'responsible online behaviour and online safety' (Nacei, 2018). However, there are concerns about the impact on free speech given Fiji's restrictive media environment. The Summit heard of social media's important role as a platform for discussing issues that the Fiji mainstream media were reluctant to touch (Simpson, 2018). Indeed, one of the major concerns of Fijian citizens who made submissions on the *Online Safety Bill* was the absence of a clause to protect responsible free speech (Tarai, 2018; Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice, 2018).

In Samoa, Prime Minister Tuilaepa Maleilegaoi threatened to ban Facebook after what he described as 'gutless anonymous bloggers' using social media to abuse government officials and innocent members of the public (Luamanu, 2018). This included Facebook posts by 'faceless ghosts' making countless allegations of extramarital affairs, corruption and sensitive details about public figures, and their families (Luamanu, 2018). Maleilegaoi claimed that some governments had banned Facebook, but Samoa held back because of social media's positive impact (Luamanu, 2018). Journalists Association of Samoa president Rudy Bartley said personal attacks by 'faceless ghosts' often caused a rift in families and communities. In Bartley's view, the rise of fake news and citizen journalism were major challenges for journalists:

> There is a lot of fake news circulating but as a good journalist, you have to use it as part of your new format. There is a responsibility in using social media wisely. (Bartley, 2018)

However, Bartley prefers awareness campaigns to encourage responsible social media usage to draconian legislation that stifles legitimate discussion. In Papua New Guinean, too, authorities considered blocking Facebook due to what were described as defamatory publications, fake news, identity theft and pornography (Tlozek, 2018). At the PINA Summit, PNG's Acting Secretary for the Department of Communication and Information, Paul Korni, said his government would not hesitate to legislate social media in order to put a tight lid on fake news and other defamatory publications (Panapasa, 2018).

Korni revealed that some sorcery-related attacks in PNG were linked to social media, in particular Facebook posts that openly encouraged mobs to attack and kill people suspected of witchcraft (Blades, 2018). He also decried the use of social media platforms to attack politicians:

> In my country, there is a realisation that social media is doing far greater damage to the integrity of politicians and leaders. If you use social media to attack political leaders then of course those leaders have authority to say we will put a lid on the freedoms. (Korni, 2018).

While sharing Korni's concerns about some of the excesses on social media, journalists and publishers at the Summit noted that news media were not involved in the abuse, bound as they are by professional protocols, yet they would be inevitably caught up in any restrictive legislation. *Solomon Star* publisher and operations manager Hilda Lamani was concerned about the fallout of any social media legislation on mainstream news media, and social media's effect on the work and integrity of journalists. She said the reliance on social media and citizen journalism was fueling fake news, which created a trap for journalists.

> Journalists need to be aware of the social media costs following media regulation (introduced) in other countries. Cultural barriers limit the usage of social media, which takes away face-to-face communication—meeting people and understanding their needs. We write stories taken from social media, not understanding the livelihood of those who are affected. (Lamani, 2018)

Tongan journalist and democracy campaigner Kalafi Moala pushed for more education and less legislation:

> Instead of monitoring, we need to continue to educate people to tell the truth. It is telling the truth and authenticity that will expose the fake. I have never seen social media as a threat to journalism. I see it as an extension of the media when it is used properly. (Moala, 2018)

Notwithstanding Lamani and Moala's sentiments, some regional governments clearly prefer tougher legislation, despite concerns that such legislation, often backed by jail terms and hefty fines, could have a chilling effect on journalism.

Corruption and political intimidation

The Summit heard that the old, politically-motivated threats faced by journalists who dared to scrutinise governments and other powerful figures were still very much part of the Pacific media landscape. In one parallel session on members under threat, several Pacific Island journalists and communication officers shared first-hand experiences of what they encountered in the course of carrying out their watchdog role. The session heard that journalists and media organisations that were targeted the most were those making an impact in society by holding power to account. Some panelists spoke about intimidation and illegal detention by police and politicians who were unhappy with what

was published. One Tongan journalist talked about how asking tough questions resulted in her removal from the newsroom to the advertising section, while another from Papua New Guinea spoke about legal threats and physical assaults dished out by politicians and their supporters because of a story they did not agree with. Tongan media veteran Moala said autocratic governments were still the biggest threat facing Pacific media:

> The real threat facing every media in the Pacific is the threat from government, whether it is Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga or Samoa. (Moala, 2018)

The problem that has consistently earned media the ire of governments is corruption, one of the most persistent and challenging issues in the Pacific Islands. During a presentation on the role of the media in oversight and accountability, Mihaela Stojkoska, the anti-corruption specialist with the United Nations Regional Anti-Corruption Project (UN-PRAC), said the objectives of the Pacific framework for Pacific regionalism included strengthening governance and legal systems to ensure safety (Stojkoska, 2018). Stojkoska said that among the institutions most affected by corruption at the global level were the judiciary and police. Corruption, bribery, theft and tax evasion cost developing countries about US$1.26 trillion each year, money could be used to lift those who are living on less than US$1.25 a day above US$1.25 for at least six years (Stojkoska, 2018).

As we argued at the summit in our own presentation, in some Pacific countries corruption is prevalent in government sectors, including the police, customs, minerals sector, fisheries and forests. In the Pacific, corruption manifested itself in a variety of forms, such as petty corruption, embezzlement, nepotism and the creation of patronage networks. Delegates were reminded that corruption diverts expenditure from key public goods, weakens poverty-reduction efforts and undermines political legitimacy and stability.

We argued that while there was a need to prioritise news coverage and address corruption from a variety of angles for maximum impact, competing newsroom priorities, lack of time and resources, lack of journalistic capacity and unethical journalists or media owners were hindering coverage. A sound knowledge of media law and ethics was deemed vital for reporting corruption effectively and safely, in terms of avoiding lawsuits or losing public trust credibility.

Plausible solutions to these issues were also discussed, including encouraging journalists and media owners to prioritise corruption reporting, negotiating for time and space with the editor, training and workshops, as well as institutional-strengthening and increased public awareness campaigns.

Delegates were told that journalistic scrutiny acted a deterrent to corruption and that the core media role, based on the traditional Fourth Estate principle, was

geared towards keeping government accountable. Without the scrutiny, government was no longer accountable to the people and would act with impunity.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence emerged as another major concern, with the news media urged to take a stronger line against this form of abuse. Data tabled by NZ Pacific Media Network senior journalist Lisa Williams indicated that two out of every three Pacific women would experience violence (Williams, 2018). With regards to media coverage, Williams said there were issues concerning verification of facts and upholding ethics with regards to the protection of victims (Williams, 2018). She said the gender dimensions of violence had also shifted to social media, with issues of such as cyber bullying, online harassment and 'flaming' of women who voiced an opinion. Her concern, shared by many others, was the number of closed groups that existed online, social media groups that did not have a public face. The anonymity encouraged cyber-bullying, a major problem for some women in the online sphere, particularly over their opinions on a particular issue. Stated Williams:

> Combine this with structural discrimination and women being denied an education and you have the perform storm of conditions for violence against women. (Williams, 2018)

As a multimedia journalist, Williams also highlighted the advantages of cyber-journalism, such as providing the platform to find story angles, leads and information from the online community of Pacific voices, which opened the path to investigative journalism into issues concerning gender-based violence.

Tonga Women's Crisis Centre community education advocate Lesila To'ia provided a snapshot of the grave situation in the Pacific Island kingdom. Social media in Tonga played a positive role. Tongan women used Facebook to highlight instances of gender-based violence, which alerted the Crisis Centre about the extent of the problem. The cases involved the sexual exploitation of women who had recently come out of personal relationships. The impact on some of the female victims of online bullying, harassment and victimisation was devastating, with some young women considering suicide (To'ia, 2018).

Williams' and To'ia's presentations underlined the inadequacy of gender-based violence reporting, and the need for specialised training for journalists to focus on this particular area, using social media as a tool to create awareness.

PINA's challenges and future directions

A major Summit event was the tabling of the review of PINA's 2013-2016 Strategic Plan, which set the benchmark for the development of the new five-year, 2017-

2021 Strategic Plan. The review found that while the stakeholders were generally satisfied, there was consensus that PINA was seen as a 'news only' organisation, and that more needed to be done to change this impression (PINA, 5th Pacific Media Summit Outcomes Statement, 2018). The report recommended that PINA increase its advocacy for freedom of the media and freedom of expression.

Another key recommendation was strengthening links between the region's national media associations. Two new associations were launched at the sidelines of the Summit, the Media Association of Tonga (MAT) and the Pacific Environment Journalist Network (PEJN). MAT saw the coming together of two rival Tongan media organisations while PEJN signaled the arrival of the Earth Journalism Network (EJN) in the Pacific. The new group aims to provide support, resources and training for journalists interested in reporting environmental issues. PEJN will be supported by the Earth Journalism Network (EJN), which was also keen to formalise a memorandum of understanding with PINA.

The review emphasised the need to boost PINA's numbers by retaining existing membership, seeking out new members and encouraging former members to return to the PINA fold, especially in light of a decline in subscription revenue. It also recommended improving relationships with the region's journalism schools. (PINA, 5th Pacific Media Summit Outcomes Statement, 2018).

Conclusion

The 2018 PINA Summit provided a window into the state of the Pacific Islands news media sector, and the picture is not a pretty one. Besides coming under political pressure for reporting long-standing problems in the region, such as corruption, the news media is also challenged by social media, both financially and in terms of harsher legislation being proposed or implemented by some regional governments. Gender violence emerged as another major concern in the region, and the need for the news media to step up and create greater awareness about this problem. Among the reaffirmations and commitments made at the 2018 PINA Summit was a general consensus that media practitioners and journalists had to exercise a higher degree of responsibility when incorporating digital media and new media in their work processes. In the current climate, PINA's recommendation for greater support for media freedom issues in the Pacific is quite timely, and should be seriously considered. However, the question remains: How can the Pacific media make social media an effective form of journalism? The onus is on journalists and media workers to adapt and embrace these current media practices without compromising their ethics and code of conduct as the Fourth Estate.

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PHOTOESSAY

Buried in debt only to have their loved ones get a burial

Abstract: The photoessay *Healing The Wounds From the Drug War* was compiled on the trail of people's lives that have been disrupted by this brutal campaign in the Philippines. It featured what happens to those people left behind after the killings. Some who survive end up in decrepit jails. The families of the dead, mostly from the poor who get by in hand-to-mouth existence, end up buried in debt only to have their loved ones get a burial. But it is also a story of hope for those given a new lease of life by organisations willing to assist in the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

Keywords: Duterte's war on drugs, extrajudicial killings, photojournalism, reality, rehabilitation, visual language

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I JOINED the 'nightshift' midway into the first year of the war on drugs in the Philippines. By then, hundreds of foreign journalists had descended on Manila to cover the 'hottest' story coming out of Asia. By then also, hundreds of publications had treated the story from the point of view of the photojournalists covering the campaign.

It was an easy decision to make. The photojournalists covering the war on drugs drove head on into the subject, first because it was an assignment that was dominating the headlines. Second, the story lent itself naturally to the visual language, with the blood and gore unable to translate itself other than in a medium that can capture reality while at the same time show empathy for the subject. It was akin to photographing a real war, where the medium has been proven by history to rouse the empathy of the viewer. But it was also the photographers who chose to stick to the story, even after the blood on the pavement has been cleared and the crowds have dispersed. The photojournalists chose to do this to be able to follow through to the victims, and to see how their lives are being changed by

this unimaginable circumstance, and this is the third and most compelling reason.

What shaped the story I did later. *Healing The Wounds From the Drug War*, was the trail of people's lives that have been disrupted by this brutal campaign. It was about what happens to those people left behind after the killings. Some who survive end up in decrepit jails. The families of the dead, mostly from the poor who get by in hand-to-mouth existence, end up buried in debt only to have their loved ones get a burial. But it is also a story of hope for those given a new lease of life by organisations willing to assist in the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

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Fernando G. Sepe Jr is the head of the multimedia team of ABS-CBN's news website and previously worked for the Associated Press, as photographer, video journalist and eventually senior producer for TV documenting global events such as Hurricane Katrina in the US, the civil unrest in Myanmar, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and the 2006 World Cup in Germany. In 2018, he topped the excellence in feature writing category of the Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) Awards for his photoessay on the Philippine government's war on drugs.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 1: The body of a victim of extrajudicial killing in the Philippines is loaded into a funeral service van after being discovered on a sidestreet in Manila. 14 January 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 2: Journalists chase after a body recovered from a crime scene for one of the casualties of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's bloody war on drugs. 17 January 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 3: A relative of one of the casualties of the Philippine government's war on drugs weeps as she sees her partner dead inside their home in Manila. 17 January 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 4: Media people interview police after a police operation resulted in the death of an alleged criminal on a busy street corner in Manila. 18 January 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 5: Brother Ciriaco Santiago, one of the nightshift photographers covering the Philippine government's brutal war on drugs, in one of the crime scenes. 8 February 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 6: Journalists take photos of a body discovered by a roadside near a garbage dumpsite in suburban Quezon City, Philippines. 10 February 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 7: Journalists stay behind the crime scene tape as crime scene investigators work on the scene of an apparent extrajudicial killing in Manila. 20 March 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 8: Journalists cover the scene of an apparent extrajudicial killing in Manila. 20 March 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 9: The Philippine media cover the killings related to Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs. 21 March 2017.

FERNANDO SEPE

Figure 10: Bodies are discovered almost every night in the streets of Metro Manila as the Philippine government's brutal war on drugs continue in its second year. 2017.

SPECIAL REPORT

The Qatar-Gulf crisis

The attack on media freedom and the West's loss of moral authority

Abstract: Four Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia in mid-2017 launched a brazen attack on media freedom by demanding that Qatar shut down the Al Jazeera television network, as part of a list of demands prompted by a diplomatic crisis. The standoff has not ended although the immediate threat to Al Jazeera appears to have abated. The world's media responded to the threat to Al Jazeera by convening in Doha for a conference in July 2017 and by issuing a statement containing recommendations for the protection of freedom of expression.

Keywords: Al Jazeera, freedom of expression, Gulf States, journalism, human rights, media freedom, Qatar, television

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Figure 1: Al Jazeera's newsroom in Doha—target of repeated threats by the four-country Saudi Arabia bloc demanding close of the satellite television network.

Introduction

IN mid-2017 four Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia severed ties with its neighbour Qatar and imposed a blockade accusing it of, among other things, 'backing extremism' (Agencies, 2017, p. 1); and supporting 'terrorism' (Al Jazeera News, 2018a). Qatar has repeatedly denied these allegations. The bloc, comprising Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, issued a list of demands and gave Qatar 10 days to comply (Wintour, 2017). The bloc, collectively known as the Anti-Terror Quartet (Al-Jaber, 2018), cut off land, sea and air links to Qatar (*Tribune News Network*, 2017, p. 1). The diplomatic editor of *The Guardian* (UK) called it the Gulf's 'worst diplomatic dispute in decades' (Wintour, 2017). One key demand by the bloc initially was that Qatar close the Al Jazeera media network (ibid). The network called the closure demand 'nothing short than (sic) a siege against the journalistic profession' and vowed to remain 'resolute to continue our courageous journalism, reporting frankly, fairly, and truthfully from around the world' (Al Jazeera News, 2017). Qatar's National Human Rights Committee also sprang to action and organised an urgent 'freedom of expression' conference in collaboration with the International Federation of Journalists, and the International Press Institute. The conference was titled Freedom of Expression, Facing Up to the Threat, and it was held in Doha, Qatar, 24–25 July 2017. Its aim was to support and promote freedom of expression, information access and exchange, among other things. Two hundred participants representing international, regional and national organisations of journalists, human rights and freedom of expression groups, academics, researchers and policy experts attended the event in a strong show of solidarity and to highlight the threats to freedom of expression in the region and globally. The bloc's assault on Qatar began with a list of 13 specific demands. This transformed into 'six broad principles' including demands that Qatar commit to combatting terrorism and extremism and to end acts of provocation and incitement (BBC News, 2017). The blockade entered its seventh month in February 2018 (Al Jazeera News, 2018a). Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani told a major security conference in Munich in 2018 that the crisis 'manufactured by our neighbours' was 'undermining the region's security and economic outlook' (Al Jazeera News, 2018b).

Roots of the tension

The roots of the demand for Al Jazeera to close can be traced to the Arab Spring in 2011 (Al Jazeera News, 2017). Diplomatic conflicts in the Arabian Peninsula, however, have a long history (Cherkaoui, 2017, p. 112). The Al Jazeera sore festered again during the Gulf crisis of 2014, when the three Gulf Cooperation Council states—Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE—cited Al Jazeera as a grievance (Al-Jaber, 2018). As Cherkaoui observed:

> From the time it was launched in 1996, AJ has contributed to energise the Arab public sphere, and has been a perennial irritant for autocratic leaders and dictators in the Middle East. (2017, p. 116)

The 'ultimate driver of the current crisis' is said to be 'Qatar's insistence on maintaining an independent foreign policy' (Barakat, 2017). The Al Jazeera network is viewed as a 'key pillar of Qatar's foreign policy and soft-power influence among a wider Arab/Muslim audience' (Al-Jaber, 2018). On another view, the conflict goes beyond the recent boycott and that the roots of the crisis lie in Qatar's media policies 'that have, since the launch of the Al Jazeera TV channel, disdained the depth of [the region's] relationships' (Toumi, 2017). A key difficulty with the Gulf countries' demands on Qatar is how countries choose to interpret 'extremism and terrorism' and how such an objective can be effectively distinguished from the Qatari view that it accommodates 'alternative views to the edited, government-approved ones aired by its conservative neighbours' (BBC News, 2017). A further difficulty, summed up by Dr Khalid Al-Jaber who heads a Washington DC-based Gulf forum, is the view held by the blockading group that Al Jazeera 'has broken countless rules that media outlets in Arab countries obey' (Al-Jaber, 2018).

Qatar's relatively stronger commitment to rights and freedoms has been a thorn in the side of the other Gulf states. That said, however, even established democracies—including the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia—have been increasingly facing accusations of undermining freedom of expression. Reporters Without Borders, for instance, has noted that press freedom in the United States 'has encountered several major obstacles over the past few years' (Reporters Without Borders, 2017c); while it found the approach in the United Kingdom 'heavy-handed towards the press—often in the name of national security' (2017b). The Australian federal government is grappling with severe opposition to a Bill aimed ostensibly at strengthening national security but about which media groups, among others, expressed 'serious concerns' because it 'criminalises all steps of news reporting' (Joint Media Organisations, 2018).

Doha conference recommendations

The Doha conference ended with a wide-ranging statement addressing media freedom and workers' rights and concerns, and it condemned the bloc states' demand for the closure of Al Jazeera and other media outlets including Arabi21, Rassd, Al Araby Al-Jadeed and Middle East Eye (Recommendations, 2017). The statement expressed solidarity with journalists and other media workers at the targeted media. It recognised the 'numerous resolutions adopted in recent years by the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council deploring the impact of attacks against journalists and other media

workers on the public's right to information and freedom of expression'. On media freedoms the statement said:

> [The conference] calls on governments to recognise the right of media organisations to report information freely and without interference from government and to allow citizens to access information on their own government and institutions in the cause of transparency and accountability. It also calls on governments to limit their ability to curtail media access and set the limits of reporting and access to information and allow transparent and independent adjudication on decisions relating to publication.

There is an exquisite irony in the demands to Qatar to deal with extremism coming, as it does, from a bloc led by a nation, which itself is widely seen as a key sponsor of international Islamist terror. Saudi Arabia is not alone among the states that have funded and fuelled extremist ideology. According to one FactCheck 'the accusation is common: that the House of Saud is allowing a flow of money to finance ISIS' (Williams, 2017). Saudi Arabia, however, strongly denies such claims. The FactCheck notes, however, that although the House of Saud may not be directly financing terrorists themselves 'there are almost certainly some difficult and worrying questions to answer' (Williams, 2017). Another bloc nation, Egypt, is notorious for its human rights violations and the catalogue is substantial, according to the Human Rights Watch World Report 2017 (Human Rights Watch, 2017a). By mid-June 2017 Egypt had shut down more than 60 websites although some were later allowed back on (Tager, 2017). The UAE 'now imprisons anyone for three to 15 years and imposes a fine of AED 500,000 (US$136,000) if the person publicly "expresses sympathy, inclination or favouritism toward Qatar"' (Al-Jaber, 2018). Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are imposing increasingly oppressive measures aimed at tightening these three governments' control of language, tone, and expressions in the media (ibid).

Qatar's support for Al Jazeera and others targeted by the bloc have been said to describe the Qatari people's 'desire to have accountable government' and Qataris' tiredness of the autocracy, corruption and repression 'that is the norm in this region' (Fernandez, 2017). Qatar itself does stand as an exception to the region's norm of autocracy, corruption and repression although, according to a leading human rights organisation, Qatar 'has its own reforms to do as well' (Fernandez, 2017; Human Rights Watch, 2017b). Qatar's human rights record, however, is far less opprobrious than that of its bloc adversaries who clearly see Qatar and Al Jazeera as a threat to the region's political order.

West's loss of moral authority

Global press freedom indices such as those conducted by Reporters Without

Borders and Freedom House generally place Western liberal democracies higher up in the rankings. For example, the Reporters Without Borders 2017 Press Freedom Rankings shows as follows: Australia ranked number 19; Canada (22); New Zealand (13); the United Kingdom (40); and the United States (43) (Reporters Without Borders, 2017a). The Gulf nations, however, ranked as follows: Bahrain (164); Egypt (161); Qatar (123); Saudi Arabia (168); and United Arab Emirates (119). A similar picture emerges with the Freedom House 2018 rankings where Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US are each ranked as 'free', while the five Gulf nations—including Qatar—are each ranked as 'not free' (Freedom House, 2018a**)**. Western Liberal democracies have, however, over the years succumbed to legislative tightening of laws that impact adversely on human rights and liberties, in overt and subtle ways that appear to have the tacit endorsement of their own citizens. Consequently, these countries' moral authority to challenge moves such as the one by the Gulf states against Al Jazeera and other media has been considerably compromised. Freedom House in its 2018 report notes that the United States has 'retreated from its traditional role as both a champion and an exemplar of democracy amid an accelerating decline in American political rights and civil liberties' (2018b). Australian journalist Peter Greste who endured a sham trial in Egypt for threatening national security and was held for 400 days observes that the United States—which tended to be viewed as a freedom of expression, human rights and civil liberties beacon—has 'never quite been able to arrange a perfect marriage of its noble founding principles to its daily practice' (Greste, 2017, p. 184). Every president 'standing in a pulpit to lecture other leaders has been rightly accused of hypocrisy' (Greste, 2017, p. 185). A representative from the US writers' organisation, PEN, told the Doha conference the country under President Donald Trump was 'undergoing a new form of assault against the press from senior members of the American government' (Tager, 2017). Dictators of the world, it has been further said, would be emboldened by Trump's public display of hostility towards the media (Gerson, 2017). According to Greste, however, the previous administration under Barrack Obama, was 'the worst' on issues of national security and press freedom (2017, p. 186). In Australia, legislators without compunction describe concerns about civil liberties as a 'luxury' when dealing with anti-terrorism efforts (Gomes, 2017). The state's national security powers are increasing 'bit by bit, increment by increment' (Murphy, 2017).

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ARTICLES

Representations of Islam and Muslims in New Zealand media

Abstract: In the global media scene, media ownership is controlled by groups with political agendas. Intolerance of 'the other', from Islam and migrants to people of colour, show the rise of fundamentally prejudiced groups who relate well to negative media representations of 'the other', further fuelling financial support for dominant public voices, at the expense of those silenced by discrimination. Media studies on Islam show negative portrayals in Western media which neglect the Muslim voice. Some reasons include news culture, lack of knowledge about Islam and unawareness of the consequences from such narratives. This article identifies the growing trend of stories in the New Zealand media relating to 'Islamic terrorism' and critically analyses a random sampling of five news articles between 2014 and 2016 in terms of the negative, positive and ambivalent news content, both in their use of the written text and visual representations of Islam and Muslims. The tendency to use negative framing is evident with the absence or manipulation of the Muslim voice. Using the Islamic perspective of dialogue and persuasion, the theory of Ta'will, and socio-political rationale, the effects of and motivations for the written and visual news content are discussed. A case is made for a greater understanding of the textual and visual elements and more ethical reporting through intercultural engagement.

Keywords: bias, dialogue and persuasion, framing, intercultural communication, Islam, Islamic theory of *Ta'will*, media representations, New Zealand

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Introduction

THERE is a tendency for international media to frame Islam negatively and almost exclusively link Islam with terrorism. Studies in media representation have highlighted how Western media freely stereotype Muslims[1]

(Ahmad, 2018; Eid, 2014; Fitriyani, Karmidi & Estiani, 2015; Kabir, 2016). In such studies and in the context of this article, Western media refer to media owned by groups in the Western world (defined by historical Greek and Roman influences) which have socially divisive and culturally prejudiced outlooks. In such media, terms like 'Islamic fundamentalism', 'Islamic extremism' and 'Islamic radicalism' are used to describe violent actions by Muslims compared to cautious description such as 'hate crime', rather than 'domestic terrorism', when reporting the violent actions by non-Muslims (Bergen, 2015; Eid, 2014; Ruiz-Grossman, 2017). Islam dominates the 'terror' landscape in these media stories although a study on 'homegrown terror' in the United States from 2008 to 2016, found that 'far right plots and attacks outnumber Islamist incidents by 2 to 1' (Neiwert, Ankrom, Kaplan & Pham, 2017).

The biased tone against Islam in news content is also captured in media studies. In a meta-analysis of 345 published studies on representations of Islam in the media from 2000-2015, Ahmed and Matthes (2017) reported largely negative representations with majority of the studies covering Western countries, 'while Muslim countries and Muslim media have been neglected' (p. 219). The authors also noted that these studies lacked comparative research and neglected visuals and online media. They further reported that most studies investigated the themes of 'migration', 'terrorism', and 'war', showing 'that Muslims tended to be negatively framed, while Islam is dominantly portrayed as a violent religion' (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017, p. 219).

As stories from international news networks are picked up and repeated in local news, it is necessary to understand how Islam is reported in major regional media. In 2017, OnePath network, a not-for-profit Islamic video production and media outlet based in Sydney, looked at how five of Australia's biggest newspapers reported on Islam. Owned by Rupert Murdoch's company News Ltd., these newspapers (*The Australian, The Daily Telegraph, The Herald Sun, The Courier Mail* and *The Advertiser*) published 2891 negative articles that referred to 'Islam' or 'Muslims' alongside words like *violence, extremism, terrorism* or *radical*. On average, there were 'over 8 articles a day in the Murdoch press slamming Muslims' with 152 front pages of negative news about Islam in 2017 (OnePath network, 2017, p. 6). Stories by six of the most controversial commentators in the Australian news media were analysed, where 'on average, 31 percent of their opinion pieces were devoted to Islam, with the overwhelming majority of them being negative and divisive in nature'. The study concluded that 'the way the media talks about Islam in Australia is disproportionate, divisive and dangerous'.

The disproportionately negative media narratives about Islam have developed a popular culture for labelling violent actions as Islamically-motivated to the extent that destructive behaviour is blamed on the religion rather than the personalities responsible (Neiwert, 2017). The snowball effect over time has

caused tremendous fear and anxiety on the psyche of the Australian public with 49 percent calling for a ban on Muslim immigration (Essential Research, 2016). Yet, this fear is irrational since, in a study on non-Muslim Australians' knowledge of Islam, '70 percent acknowledge they know little to nothing' about Islam or Muslims (O'Donnell, Davis & Ewart, 2017, p. 42). The persistent Western media bias against Islam has ultimately created an unreasonable culture of hate and fear, consequently resulting in frequent unwarranted attacks on innocent Muslims.

The Islamophobia Register Australia was established in September 2014 by Mariam Veiszadeh, following a spike in the number of reported violent incidents towards Muslims. Based on data from the Register, researchers from various organisations including Charles Sturt University, The University of Western Australia and Just Media Advocacy, published a Report on Islamophobia in Australia 2014-2016. The report discussed both institutional and political Islamophobia, noting correlations between spikes in reported abuse of Muslims, anti-terror legislation and negative media coverage of Australian Muslim leaders.

Despite the media referring to Muslims as a typical group, Muslims are diverse. A Pew Research Centre survey (2017) reported that most American Muslims are open to multiple interpretations of Islam. 64 percent say there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of Islam while 31 percent say there is only one true way to interpret its teachings. This balance is similar to American Christians' perception of their faith with 60 percent saying there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of Christianity, while 34 percent say there is just one true way to interpret their faith. Despite this similarity in faith interpretation, Muslims continue to be typically misrepresented in the media. Attempts to address Muslim community issues, such as *hijab* (headcover) and *halal* (permissible) food on national media, have met with opposition and backlash. 2.6 percent of the population in Australia that identify as Muslims is seen as 'alien, foreign and incompatible with Australian cultural values' (Aly 2007, p. 29). Overall, Muslims are regarded as one homogenous group stereotyped by violence and intolerance.

Studies on Islam in the New Zealand media are limited to three national newspapers (*Otago Daily Times, The Press* and *The New Zealand Herald*) and largely analysed as negative (Kabir, 2016; Kabir & Obaidul Hamid, 2015; Kabir & Bourk, 2012). Some contradictions in representations relate to the difference between hard news and editorials, suggesting that a recycling of news stories from international sites were responsible for the conflicting narratives in the same media outlets. In their study of news stories between October 2005 and September 2006, Kabir and Bourk (2012, p. 333) explained that with few exceptions,

> …local Islamic community and culture is largely invisible in the New Zealand mainstream press. Neither negative stereotypes are specifically promulgated nor are many positive depictions presented.

Consequently, Muslims are advised to counter the negative media depictions via Muslim media responses (Kabir & Bourk, 2012; Onepath Network, 2017). The lack of interest in representing a voiceless community by national media has not been adequately addressed in media studies although a recent study involving interviews with 29 journalists, journalism educators and journalism students in Australia and New Zealand identified a range of factors for the dearth of accurate stories on Muslims and Islam. These included newsroom culture, the lack of knowledge about the Islamic faith and unawareness of the impact of journalistic actions on Muslims in social-political contexts (Ewart, Pearson & Healy, 2016). The acknowledgement of ignorance appears to be normalised since even media studies on Islam tend to have an Anglo-centric focus (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017), giving attention to Western media, Western journalism and applying Western ways of interpreting and knowing.

Rationale and methodology

A search on the Newztext database showed that between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2017, international news stories on Islam have increased annually, showing a corresponding increase between local and international news. The search used the topics 'Islam', 'Islamic terrorism', and 'Islamic jihad' for both international news (UK Independent and news wires) and New Zealand news. The trend shows a growing number of narratives on Islam identified as 'Islamic terrorism' and 'Islamic jihad' compared to 'Islam' alone (Table 1). In 2014, there were five times more stories on Islam categorised as 'Islamic terrorism' rather than just 'Islam' to nearly seven times more in 2016. Stories on 'Islamic jihad' are also significantly greater than stories on 'Islam' alone.

Table 1: Representations of Islam in NZ media, 2014-2017

Topic	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	NZ	Int'l	NZ	Int'l	NZ	Int'l	NZ	Int'l
"Islam"	1,233	1,561	1,510	1,934	1,015	1,957	1,376	2,515
"Islamic terrorism"	7,178	8,258	10,301	11,683	8,024	10,745	7,774	11,472
"Islamic jihad"	5,630	6,364	8,407	9,291	6,148	7,780	5,199	6,997

Note: Results of searches using the terms "Islam", "Islamic terrorism" and "Islamic jihad" on Newztext database on 17 July 2018

Interest in Islam is growing with the results clearly illustrating a tendency to typecast Islam negatively. Stories on "jihad" interpret the term to mean violent acts rather than its original positive Islamic definition which is a struggle towards self-improvement and goodness. More critical analysis of media stories on Islam and Muslims in New Zealand is needed to address some of the gaps

outlined in research such as situating the Muslim voice in media reports and interpreting content through the use of Islamic theories. A random sampling of five articles on Islam in New Zealand media between 2014 and 2016 will be discussed in this article[2] The analyses seek to determine the tone and the persuasive content in the depiction of Islam (the religion) and Muslims (followers of Islam), both textually and visually. Islamic theory of dialogue and persuasion (Rahman, 2016) is used to interpret the textual purpose while Islamic theory of *Ta'will* by Mulla Sadra Shirazi (c. 1571/2–1640) (Emadi, 2014) is applied to interpret visuals used. Textual analysis will be addressed first followed by the visual elements.

Construction of textual meaning

Dialogue and persuasion from the Islamic perspective

Traditionally, dialogue and persuasion in communication studies are seen to be mutually exclusive. A dialogic exchange is seen as impossible if participants use persuasion in their communication approach. Dialogue requires mutual respect, empathy, listening with understanding and suspension of predetermined outcomes. Since persuasion has an end result that seeks to influence and shape the views of another, it is seen as external to dialogue. Also, in a dialogic exchange, there are no power imbalances and parties have equal exchange opportunities. This is often not the case in a persuasive communication context. The persuader would likely have some privileged information that can be used to sway opinion.

Another difference between dialogue and persuasion in mainstream thinking is that dialogue is regarded as the ideal communication model while persuasion is seen to be unethical, prone to manipulation and deceit. At its worst, persuasion is akin to propaganda, where lies are manufactured as truth while at its best, it can be an ethical way of presenting truth to advocate a point of view. In Islam, any communication that resorts to intentionally manipulating the facts or misleading the discussion is considered a sin and therefore un-Islamic. Only ethical persuasion is permissible, that is to advocate on the grounds of truthful evidence. Based on her preliminary study of dialogue and persuasion from the Islamic perspective, Rahman (2016) found that Muslim communicators and religious scholars expounded on dialogue and persuasion with reference to the *Quran* (considered by Muslims to be the verbatim word of God) and *Hadith*s (records of the prophet's advice and practices). In Islam, dialogue and persuasion are not mutually exclusive. In fact, persuasion is considered ethical and resides within dialogue. This may be best illustrated by the missionary purpose of Islam which is to share the message of the one god by the last prophet. In conveying this message, there is the persuasive element of advocacy and conviction.

However, persuasion in Islam ends in the delivery rather than a predetermined outcome. Conversion is not the end goal that defines persuasion in Islam. As God's attribute is 'the turner of hearts', so acceptance of the message rests with the recipient and God's wisdom.

Thus, persuasion in Islam is not about achieving an end by a stipulated time. It is about presenting viewpoints with conviction and evidences. It sits within dialogue simply because to truly understand the other, one should come away from an exchange with new knowledge and appreciation of the other, whether or not one agrees with the message. Extending this theoretical analysis to news stories, the representation of the Muslim voice will be identified, if they exist at all, to determine the purpose of the articles. Was there a dialogic process that could suggest engagement and some understanding of the reported situation? Also, what persuasive elements were used? Do they promote opinions that were factually presented to achieve a purpose?

Textual analysis of the Muslim representation is divided into three content categories—positive and balanced, negative, and ambivalent or conflicting.

Positive and balanced representation

Article 1: Lifting the veil on the life of Muslim women in NZ (The New Zealand Herald, 2014)

The tone is largely neutral. The article presents the experiences of several Muslim women and leaders in the community. It provides a platform for the Muslim women to explain their dresscode. A female leader from the local Islamic Council explained how the *burqa* (a fully-hooded covering) was not a requirement of Islam but more of a personal and cultural preference. Another female from a Malaysian Muslim association denounced the *burqa* as oppressive for those forced to wear them. A male Muslim academic also explained the limitations of a study on Muslim female dress code in the United States which only surveyed Muslim women from seven Muslim-majority countries. The article depicts a diverse community of women from different ethnicities and experiences. The five women interviewed supported the hijab as a marker of the Muslim female identity, although each had varied experiences. The stories of three born-Muslims and two converts to Islam are captured in their own voices through direct and indirect quotes. One of the converts spoke of her contentment in her assured self-identity as a hijab-wearing undergraduate while another spoke of living a 'double life', practising her Muslim faith in private for fear of social repercussions. Such contents depict the individual woman's handling of her Muslim identity and the social reality of her struggles. There is evidence of Islamic dialogue used here as the stories highlight the good and bad about the hijab experience, leaving readers to make their own interpretations. The

Muslim women are presented as a group that is self-empowered and spiritually conscious although they face social challenges both internally, within their communities, and externally from society's discrimination. The writer's choice of content inclusion reflects a genuine attempt to present the complexities of the Muslim women's narratives.

Negative representation

Article 2: 'Jihadi bride' fears over Kiwi women (Otago Daily Times, 2016)

The report is short, but the tone is alarming and focused on specific information that cannot be verified. For example, the director of the Security Intelligence Service (SIS) had confirmed that there was 'less than a dozen' *jihadi* brides who had travelled to Iraq and Syria from New Zealand but it was unclear if they had gone 'to fight themselves or to support Isis fighters'. From the context of the news story, '*Jihadi*' describes a violent action in support of a group associated with terror. The media is presenting its own definition of '*jihad'* and '*jihadi* brides*'* through quotes with negative interpretations. For example, the SIS director identified 'a pattern of people who seem kind of disengaged in some way with productive life' and that 'there were a range of age and a range of backgrounds—quite a diversity of people actually'. These details describe several *jihadi* brides. Yet there was no information on how many brides had returned. The article simply reported that the SIS director would not comment on this. Also, it was unclear how these brides were monitored as according to the SIS director, 'SIS did not know about every single person'. With basic information missing, it is rather unusual that this article was published. The alarming combination of the visual of a man brandishing a weapon with a caption identifying him as a terrorist creates the impression that *jihadi* women from New Zealand were joining such men. The overall choice of content was clearly biased and lacking evidence. The persuasive content was meant to cause alarm and create fear and suspicion of the Muslim community. Subsequent news reports have exposed these claims of *jihadi* brides to be false (Green Party, 2016; *The Nation*, 2016; Watkin, 2016). The Muslim voice is completely absent from this story.

Article 3: Imams sent to New Zealand to foil radicals (The New Zealand Herald, 2016)

The overall tone is suspicious and alarming while the content is misleading. Although there is inclusion of the Egyptian Ambassador and FIANZ (Federation of Islamic Associations New Zealand), the story is framed as a cover-up to distract people from a potential trade partnership between Egypt (referred to as 'a dictatorship') and New Zealand. The intentional juxtaposition of the two conflicting political systems creates tension and incites reaction.

The heading 'Imams sent to New Zealand to foil radicals' arouses fear as it gives the impression that there are radical groups operating in the country. Also, the caption for the visual states that these 'Cairo-educated imams … "take control" of New Zealand mosques … to reduce radicalisation and counter jihadism', suggesting that 'jihad' is a negative concept and that radicalised teachings are present in mosques when there is no evidence of this.

The caption intentionally creates a sense of power struggle in the arrangement of text: 'Egypt government…"take control" of New Zealand'. This presented context of aggression by a foreign political system is aggravated by the terms 'radicalisation' and 'jihadism', inciting panic and anxiety. The story cites 'an international expert' who questioned the motive of the Egyptian embassy, suggesting that a prospective trade deal has the government 'cosying up to a dictatorship'. Clearly, the voice given to Muslims in this article was undermined and depicted as controlling and manipulative.

Ambivalent or conflicting representation

Article 4: Fears of terror in our own backyard (Sunday Star-Times, 2014)

This article reports that a group of Muslim men have been identified as potential threats to society. It introduces a religious leader as both a 'firebrand preacher' promoting '*jihad* against infidels' and a peaceful man who engages youth. Prominence was given to the negative attributes by introducing the unfavourable elements first. The caption under the preacher's photograph reinforces this with 'Firebrand preacher or man of peace' in upper case. Both the preacher's son and another Muslim protested the preacher's goodness and blamed the unfair allegations on a rival faction and international security agencies that target the Muslim community without facts. There is intentional irony in the presentation of the Muslim voice that 'just want to live in New Zealand peacefully…but we will attack when we are attacked'. It is alarming when one proclaims peace but is prepared to retaliate rather than seek justice through laws of the land.

The article reports that Muslim leaders are concerned about aggression by local governments, such as targeting Muslims in terror raids by Australian police, causing unnecessary fear and mistrusts of the government among local Muslims. A quote from a Muslim academic and former politician described New Zealand as 'a fair and just society' with no need for 'resorting to military and security measures which further alienate people'. This positive close is immediately followed by a list of four local Muslims who have joined (via Australia) or have tempted to join terrorist groups, although one of them claimed to have originally travelled to find a wife. While we could argue that dialogue may have been present in the process of information gathering from Muslim sources, the overall outcome shows otherwise. While Muslim voices are presented to disclose

their fears, desire for social harmony and sense of victimisation, these voices are undermined using irony, repetition of negative attributes and negative content highlights.

Article 5: Cannes' burkini ban is an Isil-like attack on personal liberty (Fairfax Media, 2016)

This political opinion piece against France's burkini ban supports a condescending tone. The Muslim voice is absent although the writer advocates for the burkini as part of democratic rather than autocratic rule. As a country, France is depicted as severely autocratic where 'nothing is allowed until the law permits it' compared to England 'where everything is allowed until the law forbids it' (Samuel, 2016). While the writer extolled the virtues of 'freedoms the West holds dear', the article is littered with ethnocentric perceptions of 'the other' from men 'cutting their beards' to 'women smoking cigarettes and uncovering their faces' as examples of 'control over their own bodies', failing to recognise that those who do not do either are also exercising rights over their bodies. The burkini is viewed as a backward dress code that 'harks back to an age where a woman's worth is measured by her modesty' and where 'the female form is shameful and provocative'. There is no female Muslim voice explaining the rationale for their dress code. While the writer supports freedom of dress in private and state functions, she justifies the removal of 'face-coverings', labelling them 'obstructive'. She also assumes that other types of justice systems are inferior: 'Strong societies cannot permit legal or political systems, such as Sharia courts or caliphates'. The article closes in support of the burkini, as 'one of the most important values of a free society'. This opinion piece promotes the greatness of Western societies as civilised and tolerant. While it champions the rights of 'the other', it also reduces them as a marginalised and inferior group deserving protection and benevolence.

Construction of meaning through images

Spoken and written language, even though it is considered as a primary form of communication, is formed after the act of perception. As noted by Barry (1997), in humans' cognitive development, perception precedes the language. The organisation of meaning and making sense of the world begin by seeing. In time, cultural and environmental factors influence the interpretation of what is seen to form a verbal structure (p. 117). Due to associated meanings images become an influential tool that can subtly, yet intensely, influence perceivers' understanding of life and socio- political events. In journalism, photographs are to support the text with visual evidence and reflect the standpoint of the story. However, photographs are considered secondary to the text and, as a result, the significance of images in constructing meaning is usually underestimated and less developed (MacAuliffe, 2007, p. 31). This section analyses the visual

representation of Islam and the Muslim community in New Zealand media by applying Islamic theory of *Ta'will* (meaning interpretation and intensification) to go beyond the immediate message of the image.

Most current studies on the visual representation of Muslims in Western media are based on the Western framework of semiotics, which attempts to analyse the formation of visual signs and the cultural meanings hidden in these signs (Smith-Shank, 2004). These studies criticise Western media for producing visual codes of negative and stereotypical connotations. Visuals that accompany articles about Muslims often have an emphasis on threat (MacAuliffe, 2007). This study is timely and significant because there is little research on the visual representation of Muslims in New Zealand media, and there is no study that applies Islamic concepts to investigate this area. This analysis aims to initiate and encourage the development of a new model that is based on Islamic knowledge and that encourages a visual communication of Islam and Muslims, which promotes a dialogue across differences.

Ta'will and perception as a method for the study of visuals

For the Persian-Islamic philosopher Mulla Sadra, *Ta'will*[3] (interpretation and intensification), is an Islamic concept that encompasses perception. Sense perception, in the Islamic worldview, is considered to be limited to human survival and receives only the necessary information from the world; the rest is filtered out (Moris, 2003). Hence, we cannot perceive the reality of existence beyond our physical needs (Yazdī, 1992). Also, perception tends toward fixity; we assign meanings to forms in order to give them an identification that is separate to our own. In doing so, we select information and construct meaning based on a fragmented set of evidence gathered and interpreted by the mind (Kalin, 2003). In this fragmented view, the self is unable to see the true reality of entities and their interconnection. Because of these limits of perception, Sadra emphasises that one should doubt what is apparent to sense perception.[4]

According to Sadra, despite all the limitations, human perception can be expanded if one questions the reality of what is seen. *Ta'will*, as a method that encourages continuous questioning and doubting of that which is understood by the mind, promotes curiosity and interpretations (Yazdī, 1992, pp. 38-40) that leads to a wider perception to eventually intensify one's being (Rizvi, 2009, p. 44). The more we delve into understanding the reality of the world and its entities through constant doubting and questioning, the more intense and more singular one's being becomes (intensity refers to more or less in quality) (Emadi, 2014).

In this study, *Ta'will* assists in thinking beyond the semiotic understanding of images to become more aware of the socio-political factors contained within the images. Adapting and applying *Ta'will* to the visual representation of Islam in Western media encourages us to question images beyond their building blocks

of visual codes that are isolated from the whole image. Instead, through *Ta'will*, the visual elements are explored in relation to the underlying events that have led to the production of such an image and its associated meanings.

Unpacking the visuals

The representation of Muslims in New Zealand media centres on particular media frames that in most cases, in the first instance, seem to present a fair image of the community. This section analyses and explores such a presentation to see how these images contribute to a certain understanding of the Muslim community and whether they add to the existing stereotypes of Islam. The study of visuals is categorised into three parts: 'falsification', 'contradicting representation', and 'negative representation'.

Falsification

This section looks into two images that abstractly visualise the topic of their articles and they seem to have no negative connotations. However, after considering *Ta'will*, the lack of cultural sensitivity towards the Muslim community is revealed.

Figure 1 is from an article titled 'Imams sent to New Zealand to foil radicals' (2016), from *The New Zealand Herald*. The article is about 'educated' Egyptian imams that are going to be sent to New Zealand to 'promote moderate Islam and tolerance'. The image with the exotic and beautiful Islamic patterns and calming colours can be considered as a peaceful representation of Islam. However, the caption, with terms such as 'taking control' and 'reduce radicalisation', implies an urgent need to 'counter jihadism' by seeking help from imams outside of the Muslim community in New Zealand, although there has not been any incident of extremism in New Zealand.

Beyond the obvious contradiction between the photograph and its caption, the image of the exotic costume and patterns resembles the Western paintings of the Orient in the 18th and 19th centuries by artists such as Paolo Veronese and Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, Frederico Bartolini. The East is presented as a mysterious place full of secrets, where there is backward thinking, where the Arabs are lustful and have a dissatisfied sensuality in harems (Needham, 1982). The paintings are overly imaginary because most artists from this time never travelled to the Middle East. Instead, they referred to "travel prints" to achieve a convincing image of the Orient (p. 339). As postcolonial theorist Edward W. Said noted (1979), the Western painters presented pure fantasy and their ideal vision of the Middle East; a vision that the West hoped for, where the Middle East was to be scowled and looked-down upon. The representation of the Orient had very little to do with the real Orient. Said locates Orientalism within the history of imperialism in which the West aimed to understand the 'other' in order to control them

NEW ZEALAND

Imams sent to New Zealand to foil radicals

5 Apr, 2016 5:00am

4 minutes to read

Egypt's Government is sending Cairo-educated imams to "take control" of New Zealand mosques and Islamic centres in a new drive to reduce radicalisation and counter jihadism. Photo / iStock

NEW ZEALAND HERALD

Figure 1: 'The image with the exotic and beautiful Islamic patterns and calming colours can be considered as a peaceful representation of Islam. However, the caption, with terms such as "taking control" and "reduce radicalisation", implies an urgent need to "counter jihadism".'
Source: www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11616833

(Said, 1979). Hence, the West produced a body of knowledge about the Orient to serve the Occident (the West). This system of knowledge, called Orientalism, relies on the objectification of the 'other' in order to study them. Hence, Orientalism survives on the study of the 'other' and to create an "ideal other". The Orient continues to be portrayed as a "timeless image" that never changes and is always behind the current time; uncivilized and cruel with mysterious and exotic beauty (Jhally, Smith, Talreja, & Watson, 2014).

The Orientalist tradition that informed the Western paintings of the East has also been informing the current contemporary image making and the media representation of the East. It is not surprising that the photograph from the article (Figure 1) also presents an unidentifiable imam in an exotic costume within an Eastern setting like in 'The Blue Mosque' painting by Jean Leon Gerome (Figure 2). The photograph in the article is evidence of an ongoing 'othering'. Similar

Figure 2: 'The Orientalist tradition that informed the Western paintings of the East has also been informing the current contemporary image making and the media representation of the East.'

to the painting from 1878 by Gerome, the photograph is a Western fantasy that objectifies the culture and people. This becomes even more evident when we come to realise that the image was selected from a photo website, Istock (see image caption), rather than produced specifically for the article.[5]

Similarly, Figure 3, from the article titled 'Cannes' burkini ban is an ISIL-like attack on personal liberty' (2016), is sourced from another photo website, Getty. The article refers to the burkini as a form of freedom for Muslim women. Apart from the figure in black clothes, the digitally created image does not have any other exotic reference to the Orient (e.g. there is no desert, Islamic architecture, patterns). However, a faceless figure of a woman in water looking towards a calm horizon of the sea makes one wonder if the image was influenced by Surrealist paintings that always carry an element of surprise or of the unexpected within a dreamy setting. The woman covered in black (a common stereotypical representation of Muslim women), unexpectedly placed in this dreamy setting, seems to be another form of a mysterious, fantasy-like representation of and about Muslim people of the Orient, as noted by Said (1979).

Both images indicate carelessness and laziness of the media. Instead of challenging and breaking away from the old form of representation, they consciously or unconsciously continue to contribute to the reproduction of Orientalism.

STUFF

Cannes' burkini ban is an Isil-like attack on personal liberty

JULIET SAMUEL
Last updated 16:08, August 16 2016

Getty

Burkinis have been banned at Cannes.

In Manjib, Syria, the men are cutting their beards. The women are smoking cigarettes and uncovering their faces. Newly liberated from the rule of Isil, they're expressing the most basic freedom a human can possess: control over their own bodies.

Figure 3: 'A faceless figure of a woman in water looking towards a calm horizon of the sea makes one wonder if the image was influenced by Surrealist paintings that always carry an element of surprise or of the unexpected within a dreamy setting.'
Source: www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/fashion/83234432/cannes-burkini-ban-is-an-isillike-attack-on-personal-liberty

Contradicted representation

The images studied in this section demonstrate a better attempt to represent members of the Muslim community in a fairer manner. However, subtle but significant decisions in the making of the image, such as the choice of visual composition, construct profound meanings that, in an indirect manner, influence the public's view of Muslims.

The article titled 'Lifting the veil on the life of Muslim women in NZ' (2014), from *The New Zealand Herald*, demonstrates a fair attempt to communicate the difficulties Muslim women face in a Western country (Figures 4, 5). Instead of stereotyping the hijab, the mid-shot permits a close enough proximity to see the

NEW ZEALAND

Lifting the veil on the life of Muslim women in NZ

23 Jan, 2014 5:30am

12 minutes to read

Sahar Farhat (left), Alena Katkova and Rawand Shiblaq feel they have been shown respect for wearing the hijab. Photo / Greg Bowker

NEW ZEALAND HERALD

Figure 4: 'A fair attempt to communicate the difficulties Muslim women face in a Western country.'
Source: www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11190464

joyful expression on the women's faces with a body language that indicates their close sense of connection to each other. The article includes close-up shots of each individual woman with a simple background. A close-up framing captures each individual's character and facilitates a level of encounter between each woman and the reader, creating what is considered as a 'one-on-one relationship' (Barry, 1997, p. 137).

A close-up shot attempts to show the subjects beyond the perceived stereotype by focusing on their individuality. However, the close-up shot also isolates and separates the subject from its environment. When looking at something too closely, our vision is limited and distorted. In the context of cinema, film theorist, Laura U. Marks (2002, pp. 1-22), formulates a concept of 'haptic visuality', which refers to a manner of viewing that draws on all sense perceptions for an embodied experience of the visual. In haptic visuality, one perceives so closely that the lack of distinction in the image activates bodily senses. This can be seen

Figure 5: 'The article includes close-up shots of each individual woman with a simple background.'

in extreme close-up shots when the close proximity between the camera and the subject asks for an experience of the image rather than only a view of it. Optic visuality, on the other hand, is looking at something with enough distance to understand the relations. Although they are different, haptic and optic visuality exist on opposite ends of the same spectrum; each one creates different meanings but they complement each other.

Borrowing Marks' (2002) terms, close-up shots and wide shots can be considered in terms of haptic and optic.[6] Although in media news coverage close-ups are used differently to cinema, they still use personal proximity to emphasise emotion and experience. A wide shot, on the other hand, highlights the relation amongst different elements within a space. An individual is no longer emphasised, as in a close-up, instead, connections and relations between the surrounding elements becomes significant. As discussed by Barry (1997), one of the significant aspects of perception is its ability to structure mental connections amongst entities and make sense out of our relation to the environment. While verbal language achieves its logic from a linear structure, perceptual logic is immediate and experiential. Images grounded in perceptual logic have a direct and immediate influence on viewers. As a result, if a specific element, such as a close-up, is always used in different but similar contexts, in time, it forms a cultural code that eventually results in cultural conditioning.

Cultural meanings and codes are produced through the repetition of the same kind of image. By repeating images with certain cultural codes in different contexts, the media portrays and implants a meaning for that image (Smith-Shank, 2004), which eventually puts an end to the possibility of interpretation that the theory of *Ta'will* encourages. One sees an image and instantly gives it a certain definition (an imposition by mainstream media). An image of a woman wearing a hijab is an example of a visual code or signifier that contains cultural meaning. One sees it and instantly understands it as a representation of Islam (Youssef –Zayzafoon, 2005). The signifier (cultural meaning) of Islam is in the image, however, depending on *how* that particular image is shown, the associated meanings can differ slightly.

Although close-up shots of members of the Muslim community, mainly women, appreciate and celebrate their individuality, the framing also connotes isolation and separation. It not only isolates and separates them from the society, it also dehumanises them, if all we see is always only them. On the other hand, an optic visuality that shows them as part of the society could normalise their presence. In this case, diverse uses of haptic and optic visuality are essential to provide both close encounters, as well as a distanced view that incorporates them as part of a whole, the society. Hence, an image cannot become an icon that carries a particular meaning if it varies depending on each individual case and situation.

Negative representation

When meaning is attached to an image and when an image becomes an icon, there is no place for interpretation. Lack of interpretation means limited perception, which prevents one from questioning what is seen in order to explore the possibilities and the reality of the perceived image. This eventually closes the potential for dialogue; if the image or event is already judged, the potential for dialogue is likely to vanish. This is present in images from two articles, "Fears of terror in our own backyard" (2014), and "Jihadi bride's fears over Kiwi women" (2016), from the New Zealand Herald. Both articles use the stereotypical image of Muslim men and terror to bring across meanings of terrorism and fear.

The first article is about a Muslim Sheikh who has been accused of promoting Jihadist ideology and 'banned' from Avondale Islamic Centre in Auckland. The image used in the article (Figure 6) carries a double meaning. On one hand the Sheikh with a long beard in a white robe is a familiar figure that is associated with Muslims. This common figure almost always signifies aggression and terror associated with the Islamic religion. It is not hard to find similar images of people that are introduced as terrorists in Hollywood movies and Western

Figure 6: 'The image used in the article about a Muslim Sheikh carries a double meaning.'
www.stuff.co.nz/national/10606918/Fears-of-terror-in-our-own-backyard

media. On the other hand, the image shows a full-shot of an old-aged man. His position in the centre of the shot gives him power and stability. The surrounding environment (backyard of a humble-looking neighbourhood with a child in the background) suggests an ordinary man with an ordinary life. One wonders if this man could be a terrorist. However, because of the stereotypical image of terrorists as Arab men in white robes, the image is more likely to be interpreted negatively and encourage a sense of fear that is based on distrust.

Friday, 8 January 2016

'Jihadi bride' fears over Kiwi women

OTAGO DAILY TIMES

News > National

An increasing number of New Zealand women are heading to Iraq and Syria, SIS director Rebecca Kitteridge told the intelligence and security committee today at Parliament.

But she did not know whether they were going as "jihadi brides", to fight themselves or to support Isis fighters.

"What has changed over the last year is that the issue of New Zealand women travelling to Iraq and Syria wasn't something we have seen previously or been aware of previously," she said.

Asked by Prime Minister John Key if they were "jihadi brides" she said: "Presumably. It is difficult to see what they do when they go. We definitely have intelligence that they went. Whether they are going to fight or whether they are going to support other fighters is not clear but it is a real concern that they would go at all."

A member loyal to Islamic State waves the group's flag in Raqqa, Syria. Photo by Reuters

Figure 7: 'The image of the second article is a negative representation of Islam. It shows a male figure in black clothing with a covered face. The man is holding a gun in one hand and a flag of the Islamic state, ISIS, in the other.'
www.odt.co.nz/news/national/jihadi-bride-fears-over-kiwi-women

The image of the second article (Figure 7) is a negative representation of Islam. It shows a male figure in black clothing with a covered face. The man is holding a gun in one hand and a flag of the Islamic state, ISIS, in the other. The flag states the testimony of Islam, and contains words such as Allah, and Prophet Muhammad. The scary and mysterious figure of the man with a gun and a black flag can hardly be interpreted as anything other than Islam and violence, where the two words become equal.

These images present the demonisation of Islam in the media. The first image achieves this by creating an ambiguous message, which is insecurity and fear of a neighbour, while the second image is very clear and direct in its negative message. One refers to the *possible* terrorist that *could* be your neighbour, while the other can be clearly identified as an international terrorist. Even though the first image is implicitly negative, its effect is far greater than the second image as it is implanting the seed of fear through its double meaning (or ambiguity), which promotes 'Islamophobia'.

According to Said (1979), Islam is a useful foreign enemy to turn attention away from internal issues in the Western societies, mainly in the United States. As a result, the human quality of Muslim people is hardly found in media representation.

Instead, there are mindless and impulsive images of terror attached to stereotypical images of Muslims. These images are seen at different levels in Western media, from the news to Hollywood films, such as The Shaykh Steps Out (1937), Arabian Nights (1942), Ambassador in Hostage (1986, and Mummy Returns (2001). Shaheen (2003), who has documented and studied over 900 Hollywood films, argues that almost every feature American film ever produced systematically portrays Arabs/Muslims as the threatening 'other' that looks and lives differently.[7] The exotic magical quality of the East is shown to contain forms of barbarism. Hence, Islam is portrayed as something to be feared and that Muslims only understand the language of force, and, therefore, should be either confined or destroyed.

To summarise, there are clear patterns of falsification, contradiction and negative representation in the use of visuals. Firstly, while many of the visuals seem to explicitly illustrate either a positive or a balanced view of Islam in New Zealand society, there exists an underpinning negativity. Secondly, stereotypical elements are always present in the images. And lastly, the composition and visual elements of the image are designed in a manner that conforms to a Western audience's expectations, further reinforcing stereotypes.

Conclusion

The treatment of Islam by Western journalism can be traced to a past Anglocentric conceptualisation of the Orientals as exotic, depraved and decadent (Said, 1979). This negative view of the unfamiliar is described in intercultural studies as a defensive form of ethnocentrism and a way of 'othering' people considered as the out-group. A dominant group defends their own culture as superior by undermining the out-group who is diminished in value, silenced and marginalised. Physical, psychological and emotional abuses become normalised and are persistently inflicted on the out-group.

Historically, devaluation of the 'other' was experienced by colonised indigenous people of various nations; the Aboriginal Australians, the Māori in New Zealand and the indigenous natives of Canada and the United States. The superior sense of race held by Colonialists was supported by the 'objective' scientific concept of Eugenics. It supports racial superiority through subjugation and ill-treatment, where one dominant group believes itself to be the best and must therefore maintain racial purity and the expansion of one ethnicity or cease to exist because of intercultural mixing. Such ideology involves the consistent destruction of the 'other' and hits at the core of human existence which is the right to dignity and social value. The othering of Mexicans, Blacks, and Muslims in the United States, the Rohingya genocide and the ill-treatment of Palestinians are new forms of imperialism. Out-groups are framed as homogenous, alien, barbaric and thus require control for society to attain a civilised existence. This is apparent in negative news stories where the Muslim voices were manipulated

or missing. It is also evident in the images of the faceless and distant Muslims, either in an explicitly violent setting, wielding paraphernalia or alone and separated from a visible background.

Ironically, even in media studies on Islam, Islamic theories are missing. This article's introduction of theoretical lenses based on Islamic knowledge is a step towards filling this gap. If we accept that human dignity and respect are essential civil liberties, then media needs to be aware of their misrepresentations and improve their practice. If the 'other' is framed according to the interpretation of the dominant culture, dialogue is absent and mutual understanding can hardly be achieved.

As research shows, journalists generally lack knowledge about Islam and perpetuate the negative stereotypes mindlessly. However, stories with a range of Muslim voices indicate some level of dialogic exchange and underscore the writers' ethical stance to interculturally engage 'the other'. According to the Council of Europe (n.d.),

> Intercultural dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's global perception.

The media can rectify their misrepresentations of Muslims by adopting intercultural dialogue. The outcome would present a holistic story that uses the voices of those involved respectfully. This work is timely not only because there appears to be a growing misconceived hatred for a faith supported by 1.5 billion of the world's population, but more importantly, this destructive trend is promoted by the media, consciously or not, and has the potential to ultimately cause an unnecessary and irreparable rift in civil society.

Notes

1. Muslims are diverse. In this article, "Muslim" refers to the identity that is typically represented in the media, and not an acknowledgement of a presumed homogeneity.
2. This was necessary to meet the journal's word limit. For the other analyses, please contact the authors.
3. It is important to note that Sadra is a Shia Muslim whose philosophy was influenced by previous Eastern thinkers such as Persian philosophers Ali Ibn Sina (980-1037 CE) and Shahāb ad-Dīn Suhrawardī (1154-1191)**.** *Ta'will*, literally means 'bringing back to the root', is part of a hermeneutical method to understand the inner meaning of the Qur'an (Hixon & Douglas-Klotz, 2003). It is understood that the Quran has many layers of hidden meaning that cannot be understood by ordinary people. This hidden meaning can only be revealed to those who achieve higher-levels of perfection. *Ta'will* is used to understand meanings beyond the apparent and to the root of the text.
4. The Real, for Sadra, is equal to the Divine Being that is present within every existing entity, but perception is incapable of comprehending the Divine presence in entities (Jambet, 2006, p. 119).

5. While using the stock photo is a common practice in journalism, in this case, the chosen picture relies on and reinforces the existing stereotype image of the Orient. Similar to early orientalist paintings, this image is selected based on an assumed understanding of the East.
6. It is important to note that for the purpose of this article Marks' theory of haptic and optic visuality has been simplified.
7. It should be noted that, as part of the process of othering, Hollywood generalises Muslims as Arabs who are always from the Middle East. Needless to say, Muslims come from broad backgrounds and the region of Middle East also consists of non-Arabs. The generalisation of the region and its people serve a Western approach to dehumanise a group of people based on their race and religion.

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Journalism, journalism education and a region's integration

The case of Southeast Asia

Abstract: The 50-year-old Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is now in its third year implementing the mechanics of regional integration. How does this region-wide development affect journalism in individual countries and in the region? This qualitative research sought to find out the meaning and implications of regional integration to journalism practice and education in Southeast Asia. There is enthusiasm over developing a model on 'ASEAN-centered journalism and journalism education', however there are country-level realities that news organisations and journalism schools face before proceeding to even attuning reportage and journalism instruction to the needs of ASEAN.

Keywords: ASEAN, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, journalism education, journalism practice, journalism models, Philippines, regional integration

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Introduction

REGIONAL integration by countries reflects the influence of globalisation. Regionalisation of economies helps aggregate resources and politically positions the region—and the countries that belong to it—in the league of nations. Such was the vision of the European Union when most of Europe's countries integrated in the early 1990s. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), grouping ten economies, is the latest regional bloc to join the trend. (ASEAN was formed in 1967 with five countries, which expanded to include a further five.)

ASEAN operationalised regional integration recently to fulfill an agreement in 2007 for the region to become an 'ASEAN Community' by 2015. Regional integration is largely motivated by a region's economic potential, what with

ASEAN having a combined economic output of US$2.2 trillion or a quarter of world trade (Salvosa, 2014). ASEAN economic integration can transform the region into a potentially influential single market and production base that other economic blocs can take note of.

Given this development that also affects individual countries, what about journalists and journalism schools: Should they 'regionalise' as well? How can Southeast Asia's news media and journalism schools work together —for professional and academic networking objectives—given political-cultural diversity and the prevailing media environment and press freedom conditions in individual ASEAN countries, 'from the freewheeling to totalitarian to something in between' (Chongkittavorn, 2002)? Given the diversity of journalism in ASEAN countries, and with journalists within ASEAN countries serving either the public or their nations' leaders (Chongkittavorn, 2002), how can regional 'integration' by ASEAN news media be made possible?

Regionalisation of both journalism and journalism education thus provides an interesting research question. To what extent are students taught and trained to report on the wider region? To what extent are affairs of neighboring Southeast Asian countries reported in individual ASEAN member-countries' news media? These questions are asked in a region wherein the free press and journalism's roles in individual countries have their own challenges. In recent years, some individual ASEAN countries have come to regard democracy as problematic (especially Myanmar and Indonesia), although it is not easy for journalists to stamp their editorial independence and be monitors of power within their countries. Yet seeing how journalism can be a force for regional-level freedom of expression (even if they come from countries where this freedom is shut out or is being challenged) is a prospect.

Looking at the bigger picture, however, with observations such as a lack of 'ASEAN identity' and limited awareness on ASEAN integration (ASEAN Secretariat, 2013) on the background, how will these factor in the desires of journalists and journalism schools to work together under a milieu of regional 'integration?' What about the observations on the way the ASEAN conducts itself as a regional bloc: how will journalists report ASEAN and its member-countries—as a voice of their respective governments, or as advocates for press freedom and security of journalists in semi-authoritarian ASEAN members? Meanwhile, ASEAN aspires to create a 'common identity' by the year 2020 amid the mosaic of identities, cultures and ethnicities within the region (Jönsson, 2008). Even if this 'common regional identity', however, remains unclear (Jönsson, 2008), his journalism and journalism education poised to address this identity-building issue under ASEAN integration?

This qualitative research is structured according to the following outline: First, the article will give a literature review on regional integration—to include

ASEAN integration— and on how the news media and journalists operate under the ambit of regional integration. Second, the state of journalism, journalism education and press freedom in ASEAN will be provided as contexts. Third, views from journalists and journalism educators will be presented. Finally, the implications of these views to research and practice on journalism and regional integration will be discussed.

Literature review

A. Media and regional integration: The pre-internet McBride Commission (1980, in Churchill, 1991) carried a definition of media integration:

> The provision to all persons, groups, nations of access to the variety of messages which they need in order to know and understand each other, to appreciate other's living conditions, viewpoints and aspirations. (Churchill, 1991)

In this kind of integration, harmonising media policies and news content are priorities so as to create a common media culture and provide people with the right to be informed (Churchill, 1991). The Commission that time thought of 'shifting national media loyalties to larger entities, establishing and maintaining an information community, or even harmonising media policies among countries' (Churchill, 1991, p. 19), and yet cultural, socio-economic and political nuances in a geographic region are understood. However, given the internet and social media, news and information have speedily traveled and geographic boundaries have tumbled; people receive news and information from various sources.

For economies integrating regionally, the media may have to be included as a stakeholder in promoting integration and making their public understand this process. However, regional identity and building such an identity remain unclear. In ASEAN, for example, the region is said to be a community that is 'rule-based' rather than 'identity-based', with almost nil evidence of a collective regional identity that is based on 'shared meaning structures, mutual identifications and norm compliance within the 'ASEAN way'. Even differences in values and political systems hamper the building of this regional identity. Individual countries still remain concerned about state sovereignty and domestic stability, or even national security and macro-economic progress (Nischalke, 2002).

A region that can provide lessons on regional integration and the media is the European Union. (Although, the Brexit vote of 2016 and United States President Donald Trump's 'America First' agenda are challenging regional integration.) Russ-Mohl (2003) thinks having a 'European journalism' is improbable and impossible given language barriers between and among countries. European journalists speak their local languages and operate within their locally-centered

professional groups. EU is even deemed to be 'elitist' given that it is always leaders who are talking (Russ-Mohl, 2003).

While media outfits in the EU may have structured 'EU news' as important, the problem lies in how often EU news is presented (Peter & de Vreese, 2004). This leads to lukewarm support from constituents to news stories about the European Union; the regional body's limited efforts on external communication are even to be blamed. African countries and their journalists meanwhile also encountered difficulties integrating given their cultural diversity, given a wide variety of public interests, and given prevailing politics (Churchill, 1991).

For bodies working on regional integration, the natural course of action was the staging of awareness-raising workshops on regional integration by regional intergovernmental bodies, targeting journalists. This was seen, for example, in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) (Nevis Pages, 2014).

B. Journalists and regional integration: Even before the trend of regionalising countries and economies, journalists from integrated regional communities have established regional associations for their respective members of the media. Examples include the Eastern African Journalists Association for Eastern African Community (EAC); Southern African Journalists Association for Southern African Development Community (SADC); Journalists for Regional Integration (JORIN) for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and the Association of Caribbean Media Workers for (ACMW) for CARICOM. These organisations aim to foster camaraderie among the journalists and develop media practice across the region. Eventually, these groups were pushing for issues like greater press freedom, better work conditions for journalists, and journalists' safety. The Accra-based JORIN, for the ECOWAS region, seemed to be explicit in saying that the group is 'campaigning to fast-track the economic and political integration of the sub-region' (JORIN's website at http://integrationreporters.com/).

In some regions, however, there are some issues cropping up. For example, since journalists from CARICOM are among the skilled workers to freely move, regional officials disregarded the idea of CARICOM licensing the journalists (Stabroek News, 2009). Even skills certificates that may be honoured in other countries within CARICOM are disregarded by some journalists (Williams, 2010).

Regional bodies pushing for integration have also been platforms for regional journalism groups to push for advocacies related to freedom of the press and freedom of expression. This is seen in the ECOWAS region (Article 19, 2012). Regionalism had also helped some journalists to form groups covering the same beat, such as science journalists from countries under the EAC (SciDevNet, 2012). Some journalism educators, for example in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), have also explored the possibility of

regionalism helping to harmonise journalism education while leaving space for cultural diversity (Sibanda, 2010).

C. Studying journalism and regional integration: Some studies, such as surveys and content analysis, have been done on news coverage on regional integration, including how journalism influences public opinion on integration. One can observe that since regional integration covers various countries, the quality and depth of the news coverage vary depending on the news media outfits' editorial policies, target policies, or media ownership and management. Thus regional-level media coverage, say for example East African issues as one beat, remains disparate and centered on national concerns (Nyabuga in Society for International Development, 2011).

The studies reveal that the news media's coverage of regional integration can influence audiences in individual countries. Vliegenthart et al (2008) found a relationship between news media coverage and citizens' attitudes toward the European Union, as tone of the coverage and framing of EU policies affect audiences' support for the EU. Carey (2004) found that the British press' 'highly partisan and biased' coverage exerted both positive and negative influences, even as audiences' attitudes toward the EU were more dependent on party preferences. Again with the reportage in the United Kingdom and British audiences' public opinion, Dursun-Ozkanca (2011) found the news media has transferred their own set of salient issues to the British audience.

The themes of these regional stories are obviously economic. Cauwenberge et. al. (2009) found that the economic consequences of regional integration are the leading news frame in four European newspapers' coverage of the EU Constitution. However, how do regional stories go side-by-side with local stories? The regional news stories, in one study, are 'simply irrelevant' compared to stories from the established national news media outfits (Russ-Mohl, 2003). As to the newsworthiness of EU news reports, there is 'high visibility' during key EU events and 'low visibility' during ordinary periods (de Vreese, 2001).

Heikkilä and Kunelius (2006) went against the tide of quantitative research and did qualitative interviews with journalists from ten EU countries. The interviews led Heikkilä and Kunelius to develop four quadrants covering the varying perspectives of how journalists approach covering regional stories (contextualised in the case of the EU). These perspectives can serve as a preliminary theory or framework on media and integration (*kindly see Theoretical Framework section*).

The themes of previous researches on journalism, journalism education and regional integration have covered the following: analyses of region-wide reportage vis-à-vis public opinion (Vliegenthart, 2008; Dursun-Ozkanca, 2011) and vis-à-vis local stories (Russ-Mohl, 2003); a continent's views on another continent's efforts at regional integration (Chaban and Holland, 2008); and the

state of journalism/communication education in regions (Maslog, 1990; Hwa and Ramanathan, 2000; Sibanda, 2010; Skjerdal and Ngugi, 2007; Terzis, 2009). Thus, this current paper will attempt to weave the links between regional integration and conditions of journalism, journalists and journalism education in individual countries as these relate to a greater region.

Theoretical framework

Heikkilä and Kunelius (2006), from interviews with 149 journalists from 10 European countries, developed a model on journalists' professional imaginings on a regional public sphere (in this case, the European Union). The authors found three discourses on EU journalism: classical professionalism, secular news discourse, and cosmopolitan discourse.

The nation-state is the locus of the *classical professionalism discourse*, as journalists under this discourse pursue the common good (similar to the "national interest"). Journalists under classical professionalism are detached observers, neutral mediators, or critical commentators. Readers of these journalists' stories are informed citizens and national communities. As found by the researchers to expound on the classical professionalism discourse, journalists point to the EU's political problems (lack of efficacy and popular support) and communication problems (lack of transparency, manipulation, and EU propaganda).

The *secular discourse,* for its part, is more consumer- or market-driven, concerned with everyday life and the 'realm of meanings.' This discourse is dependent on public opinion, utility, and pleasure, as journalists here function as 'consultants' or whistleblowers. The implied readers for such stories carrying a secular discourse are apolitical news consumers. Applying the secular discourse, journalists who answered to Heikkilä and Kunelius also found different political problems (intangibility of EU politics and the consequences of EU policies) and a communication problem (alienation of EU elite).

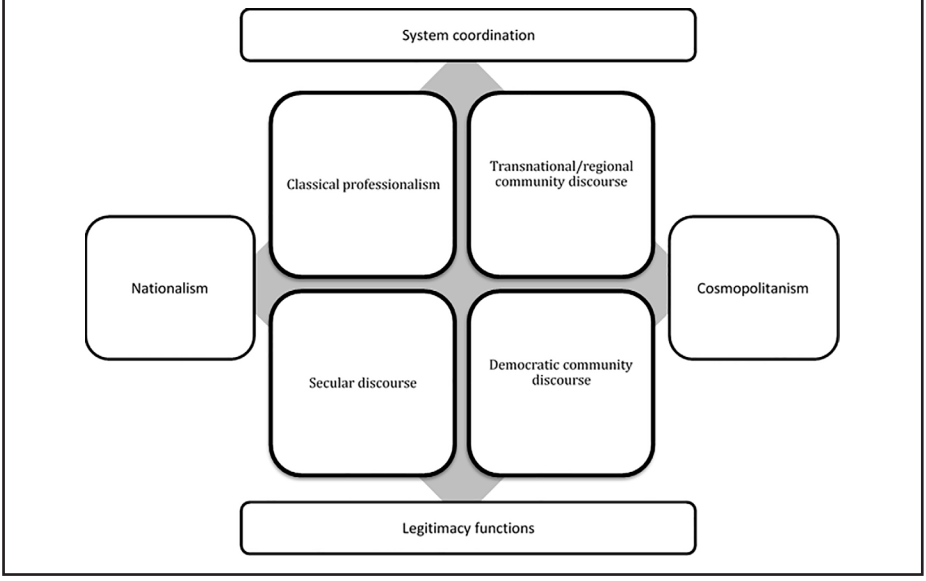
Finally, the *cosmopolitan discourse* is 'shaped by emerging supranational trends in international politics and business'. This transnational approach is something foreign affairs journalists prefer; the approach caters to elite audiences using the 'need to understand others' and 'future orientation' as news frames. Journalists here are experts, educators, 'citizens of the world'. Journalists here found the EU's political problems like lack of political dynamism, problems in the enlargement, and relating to the rest of the world. Meanwhile, the incapacity to communicate European values is the communication problem found by journalists under the cosmopolitan discourse.

Heikkilä and Kunelius then developed a model that has four quadrants (Figure 1). The classical professional and cosmopolitan perspectives occupy the top two quadrants, as both are oriented toward the 'horizontal' function of political communication (which concerns the interaction between institutional actors). Meanwhile,

the secular perspective and a fourth 'perspective' ('cosmopopular', wherein the EU is covered from a transnational perspective but is not pitting member-nations over one another) are at the bottom quadrants—leaned toward 'vertical' function that concerns the relationship between citizens and those in power. The left-hand quadrant (classical professionalism, secular) see journalists oriented towards nationalism, and the right hand quadrants (cosmopolitan, 'cosmopopular') lean journalists toward nationalism.

In a sense, Heikkilä & Kunelius (2006) gave a context of journalists' perspectives to cover a region like the EU. This considers the editorial dispositions of journalists originating from a geographic region and those outside of that region in their approach to events and news coverage. This paper builds from this model and looks into operational measures of how a geographic region's journalists (as well as journalism schools) consider reporting about Southeast Asia under the ambit of regional integration.

Figure 1: Journalists' professional perspective model



Note: This matrix provides a context in a regional (European) public sphere such as European Union (Heikki Heikkilä & Risto Kunelius, 2006)

Methodology

This qualitative research sought to find out the meaning and implications of regional integration unto journalists and journalism educators in ASEAN. Interviewed here were four journalism professors (two from Indonesia, one each from Laos and Vietnam) and five journalists (two from the Philippines and one each from Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand). Researchers from the

Philippines reached respondents via electronic mail and face-to-face visits. Researchers targeted to get at least one journalist and one journalism educator in each of the ASEAN member-countries but only a few responded. Even those who initially said yes did not respond to interview requests anymore. Using English as the method of communicating also seemed to intimidate the respondents, except for respondents from Singapore and the Philippines. (Even if an ASEAN-wide conference of journalism educators, held in December 2014 in Manila, was an avenue to ask for respondents, those who agreed to respond did not eventually answer the researchers' questions.)

The themes of the questions covered the following: a) The meanings of 'ASEAN integration' according to respondents; b) Reporting about ASEAN and ASEAN identity; c) Roles of journalists and journalism schools in reporting about ASEAN and its member-countries; d) Views on regional integration vis-à-vis integration efforts by journalists and journalism schools; and e) Challenges of doing region-centric journalism practice and journalism education.

Contexts

A. ASEAN integration: On December 2007, in Cebu City, Philippines, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) set a bold goal to achieve regional integration by 2015. ASEAN envisioned a single market and production base resulting in a highly-competitive economic region that is fully integrated into the global economy. The root of such efforts at regional integration is the ASEAN Charter that seeks to promote a 'common ASEAN identity and a sense of belonging among its peoples in order to achieve its shared destiny, goals and values' (ASEAN Secretariat, 2008).

ASEAN Integration is banked on three pillars: The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASSC). Of interest here are the AEC and the ASCC (the latter aims to 'nurture human, cultural and natural resources for sustained development in a harmonious and a people-centered ASEAN').

Essentially, the thrust of ASEAN integration is harmonisation and cohesion of activities, policies and programmes of member-governments. This harmonisation will be made evident in arenas such as trade (AEC) and education (ASCC). AEC will also see entrepreneurs in the region compete against each other for a regional-wide market.

However, the differing histories, beliefs, values, levels of development, and political systems in Southeast Asian countries have made regional integration more difficult to comprehend. ASEAN policy makers have also been criticised as being 'elitist and high-handed', with a lackadaisical attitude toward soliciting public opinion. This is not to mention the usual perception of policy analysts on ASEAN: meetings by ASEAN leaders as usually 'talk-shop', filled with efforts

that stress much on achieving consensus and on defending national sovereignty. There is also the observation of ASEAN not building 'stronger institutions' like the European Union —and thus, 'initiatives to build real cooperation, or to bring (about) change to a specific … ASEAN country, are inevitably ineffective' (Milner, 2012). A democratic deficit among other member states also factors in as constraint in the progression of ASEAN's goals. The more ASEAN claims and tries to transform Southeast Asia into a community, the more the Association may be challenged by questions about democracy.

B. Journalism and media in ASEAN: There is unequal media development in ASEAN (Löffelholz & Arao, 2011). This is owing to the differing media systems in member-countries, with countries' political systems impacting on media freedom and independence in those countries (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2015). One has to take into account ASEAN member-countries' highly-diverse political systems—from democratic and transitioning societies such as the Philippines, Indonesia and Myanmar to highly repressive, single-party regimes such as Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam (Reang, 2014).

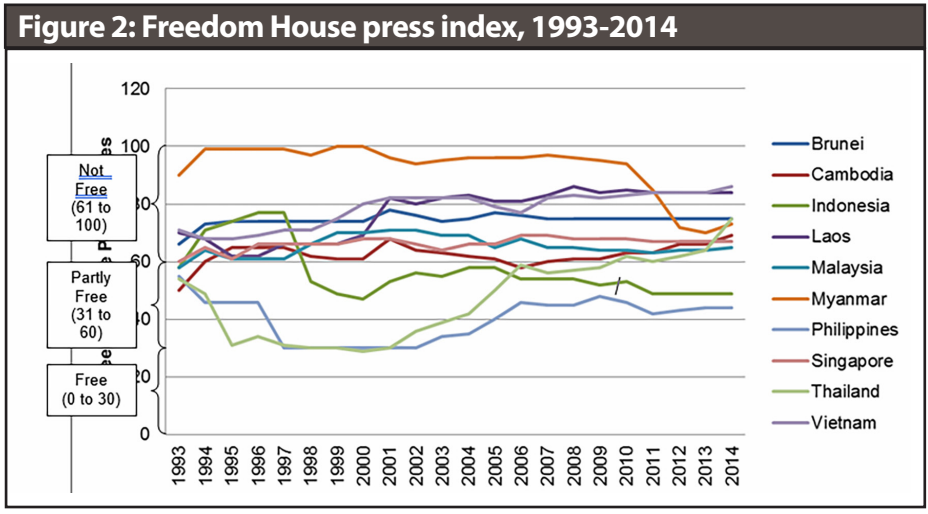
In general, ASEAN member-countries' media is not always free (Chongkittavorn, 2002, 2011a, 2011b; Löffelholz & Arao, 2011; Arao, 2008). Assessments and surveys of press freedom and media, with Southeast Asia as geographical focus, reveal the challenges that remain in member- countries' individual media environments. An insightful analysis comes from Freedom House which has been tracking countries' freedom of the press (or media independence) for decades. Looking at two decades of Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*, most of the ASEAN-member countries' press freedom conditions are 'not free' (Figure 2).

The latitude of freedom of expression and right to information varies by ASEAN member-country in consideration of their 'politically, socially, economically and religiously disparate' conditions (Reang, 2014). The range of press freedom conditions in ASEAN member-countries, as made evident by the Freedom House surveys' scores, is uneven: from the Philippines that is 'partly free' to Laos where news media outlets are controlled by the government. Countries such as Cambodia and Thailand also find negative reporting on their monarchies as apprehensible since this will compromise the culture of these countries (Löffelholz & Arao, 2011).

Seven of the 10 ASEAN member-countries have enacted press laws that are different from media licensing laws. However, these press laws differ in approach —from Indonesia's 1999 law that defines and protects journalistic work from state intervention and harassment, to Laos' and Vietnam's laws that see the news media as propaganda arms of the government (Southeast Asian Press Alliance, 2015). Beyond media laws, ASEAN member-countries' journalists continue to confront media impunity—especially the Philippines.

Government leaders have also felt the pressure of an active citizenry who voice their comments on policies in social media (the backdrop here is growing

Figure 2: Freedom House press index, 1993-2014



Source: Freedom House, 2015. Note: The lower the score, the freer the country's freedom of the press.

internet penetration by Southeast Asian countries). Apart from warnings issued by state leaders on voicing out criticisms online, websites are being blocked or put under surveillance. 'Investigative bloggers and cyber-dissidents' are even investigated. Some ASEAN member-countries' prospective and actual internet laws and regulations were even seen as threats to freedom of expression and internet freedom, citing the cases of Laos, Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2015).

These challenges facing journalists and the media in Southeast Asia are despite the fact that digitisation, privatisation of media and increased accessibility of news have all transformed the media landscape of the greater Asian continent. This means that there had been a 'substantial increase in the production, consumption and distribution of media… contributing to greater pluralism' (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2015).

The Southeast Asia Press Alliance (SEAPA), a network of media development and journalists' organisations in Southeast Asia, summed it up best in describing the situation facing journalism and the news media in the region:

> Overall, the media situation in Southeast Asia remains largely where it is: countries with relatively freer media remain beset with the problems of impunity for violence and politics-related control through threats and lawsuits.
>
> On the other hand, those with restricted media environments remain unchanged as their politics. There may be little overt censorship reported because control has been institutionalised through self-censorship by media houses or individual journalists who do not wish to risk their professions, safety or freedom. (SEAPA, 2015)

C. Journalism and media's role in ASEAN integration: Media's role in ASEAN integration is lodged under the ASCC pillar. The ASCC carries the vision of '…achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the nations and peoples of ASEAN by forging a common identity and building a caring and sharing society' (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009). The problem, however, is people's limited awareness about ASEAN and ASEAN integration. The ASEAN Secretariat's own survey (2013; also in Salvosa, 2014) itself revealed that while 81 percent of survey respondents located in member-countries' capital cities were familiar with the name 'ASEAN', three-fourths of respondents lacked a basic understanding of the ASEAN Community.

The ASCC pillar document of the ASEAN Secretariat then gives media the role of propagating awareness of ASEAN and promoting a sense of community in the region. This includes producing media materials on ASEAN, increased media exchange and networking of ASEAN's communication personnel, and engaging the mainstream media in promoting all ASEAN programmes and projects (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009). Banking on the media becomes logical because the ASEAN Secretariat's survey (2013) showed that the number one source of information of respondents about ASEAN is television (78.4 percent), school (73.4) and newspapers (70.7).

Such is why ASEAN journalism organisations, for example, have been organising events that have cited the role of journalists in regional integration. Training activities and handbooks for journalists surrounding the work of ASEAN, ASEAN integration and experience of regional integration followed suit (Löffelholz & Arao, 2011). There have also been regional-wide alliances of journalists in ASEAN, some of which were created prior to the 2007 signing of the ASEAN Charter in Cebu City, Philippines. Veteran alliances such as the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) and the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists (CAJ), and young networks such as the Southeast Asia Journalists Union (SEAJU) and the ASEAN Journalists' Club, had been formed. (Even an idea to form an ASEAN Press Council was floated [Lim, 2013], with the 'integration' of media personnel from ASEAN member-counties in mind.)

However, there is a perceived lukewarm reception to journalists in ASEAN. Even with the over-three decades that the CAJ had been formed, the ASEAN itself was said to have done little to promote solidarity and cooperation between journalists within the region, 'let alone media freedom and professionalism' (Chongkittavorn, 2011b). ASEAN's interaction with journalists may be more for exchange visits and views on non-sensitive issues, taking note of the non-interventionist, non-interference nature of ASEAN member-countries (Chongkittavorn, 2011b). Not surprisingly, it is observed that ASEAN journalists report on their own countries and many journalists within ASEAN countries are tied to the nature of their press systems and government control. Issues such as the

territorial disputes between some Southeast and East Asian countries and China, and the Rohingya refugee crisis, has seen Southeast Asian newspapers criticise the ASEAN for not acting on these issues as a solid bloc (Deutsche Welle, 2015).

Chongkittavorn (2002), a veteran Thai journalist, succinctly wrote this observation on ASEAN journalists that can perhaps be the trajectory for Southeast Asian journalists' place in regional integration:

> In general, journalists in ASEAN seldom write about, let alone analyse, the organisation as a whole. Most written reports, when they appear, are parochial and narrow, focusing on bilateral relations—which country gets from what and whom. It is ironic that most reports and analyses about ASEAN as a group come from wire services and foreign journalists. ASEAN journalists still do not appreciate the organisation's [ASEAN's] values, strengths and bargaining power.
>
> While ASEAN leaders and senior leaders hail the… arrival of the ASEAN community in 2015, very few journalists bother to ask how we are going to get there. Can a so-called 'people-oriented ASEAN Community' be attained without active media participation and understanding? How many journalists have read the key documents that made the grouping what it is today? The implication is obvious: There can be no community if there is no media involvement. (Chongkittavorn, 2002)

Inter Press Service (2014) did a content analysis of the stories (N=1,882) in major ASEAN member-countries' newspapers (English and local language) on ASEAN, published in months when there is the ASEAN summit and on ordinary months. Spanning the years 2009 and 2010, the results revealed that the most number of stories were spot and straight news; were about 'territorial disputes and conflict, foreign affairs and diplomacy'; had government officials, politicians and diplomats as the most-cited sources; were written by staff journalists of the major ASEAN newspapers; were mostly found in the 'other inside pages' of the newspapers and were text-only stories with no accompanying visuals; were of medium length (25-to-50 column centimetres); and were mostly not related to any ASEAN event/summit/meeting. This content analysis research gives us a glimpse of the prominence of ASEAN as a beat, giving hints if regional integration will lead to increased numbers of stories or not.

The news media organisations themselves have taken the initiative to report about ASEAN and ASEAN integration (that is beyond writing ASEAN news as under the foreign news sections). Most of the focus of these editorial initiatives is business, given the importance of the AEC pillar. *The Bangkok Post* of Thailand had introduced a weekly page on ASEAN matters to report about business and investment opportunities. *BusinessMirror* in the Philippines also has an ASEAN section in cooperation with a chamber of foreign business people.

Stories on Southeast Asia are staple fare in regional news media outfits, such as *Asia Times* and *Asian Correspondent* (with operations based in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom, respectively). The *Southeast Asian Globe* magazine (www.sea-globe.com), a political magazine operating out of Siem Reap, Cambodia, has existed since 2009.

Through a continent-wide network of newspapers in Asia, the Asia News Network (ANN, funded by the German political foundation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung) frequently reports on Southeast Asia. Under the aegis of the British business newspaper *The Financial Times*, a 'digital research service' focusing on ASEAN investment themes was launched as a subsidiary media product: the *FT ASEAN Confidential* (now renamed *FT Confidential Research,* covering China *and* ASEAN). Aimed at international investors, fund managers, corporations and finance professionals, this for-subscription service by FT shares journalistic analyses and data surrounding real estate, investment, consumption, manufacturing and trade in ASEAN (Financial Times, 2013).

With funding from the ASEAN Secretariat, the nonprofit Inter Press Service (IPS) has been operating a journalism fellowship and grants programme enticing ASEAN journalists to report about various development issues in the region. The project 'Reporting Development in ASEAN' (www.aseannews.net) sought to fill the gap of reporting on development issues in the region, in the context that there is little space for in-depth stories on what ASEAN does and how member-countries contribute to today's pursuit of integration (Son, 2013; also in Chongkittavorn, 2011a, 2011b).

D. Journalism education in ASEAN: Journalism education in ASEAN is growing in an era when journalism education is becoming globalised. However, accurate figures on how many journalism schools (to cover universities, colleges and institutes) are wanting. The 2008 World Journalism Education Census of the World Journalism Education Council (WJEC) lists 60 journalism schools found in six ASEAN countries, though since that time journalism schools have opened in other countries like Myanmar (RTT News, 2013). It is also noted that foreign universities have opened up branches in foreign countries, including Malaysia and Thailand, and among their degree programmes is journalism.

In terms of journalism education in the region, there are similarities and differences in ASEAN nations. Almost all institutions that offer degree programmes in journalism followed a Western model, mostly from the United States (Sarkar et al, 1990; Hwa & Ramanathan, 2000). In addition, most of the journalism educators teaching in countries like Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia studied in foreign countries, and the people involved in setting up journalism schools in Asia are also mostly Americans (Hwa & Ramanathan, 2000). An exception is the Philippines, which has an active journalism education sector.

Given press systems and political environments in varied Southeast Asian countries, government-owned media and journalism schools, compared to privately-owned ones, have the tendency to use informal ways to teach journalism or get constrained by the government. In the case of Brunei where the Department of Information takes control of the media, the department only conducts informal on-the-job training services for their staff. As for Indonesia, educators must follow the curriculum set by the government—thus making all educational institutions 'uniform' which is a constraint for privately-owned schools (Hwa & Ramanathan, 2000).

If countries' political systems impact on news media practice (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2015), so does the delivery of journalism education in some ASEAN countries. Vietnam, for example, teaches journalism —the most in-demand social science course in the country— aligned with the values of the Communist Party of Vietnam. This situation impacts even on pedagogy; while students are taught the tenets of the CPV, teaching journalism skills is done through in-classroom exercises and not immersions to the communities and news beats where students can gather and write stories. The Vietnamese government highly regulates the delivery of journalism programmes in universities (Nguyen, 2008). Malaysia had seen the immense growth of journalism schools. However, the teaching of journalism is still aligned to training students the required industry skills but not on developing students' critical thinking (Luan & Hoon, 2008). The Philippines sees its journalism education enjoying the leverage of exercising a free press, up to the level of classroom exercises when students find stories from communities and news beats. English literacy is also a plus for overall Philippine journalism education. There are concerns, however, of matching industry's needs and universities' traits of (supposedly) process-based learning, the fusion of social sciences and humanities disciplines in journalism instruction. The quality of journalism instruction in various areas of the Philippines was also a concern (Gapasin, Mirandilla, San Pascual & Sanqui, 2008). Regardless of the type of news media system and educational delivery, these three ASEAN countries' journalism education face common issues: students not having the reading habit leading them to know less about issues; competence of the English and national languages; limited industry involvement in journalism education (not just through students' internships); and journalism instructors with limited news media experience (Gapasin, Mirandilla, San Pascual & Sanqui, 2008; Nguyen, 2008; Luan & Hoon, 2008).

There have been nagging issues on journalism education in ASEAN countries, apart from those earlier mentioned (Sarkar et al, 1990; Hwa & Ramanathan, 2000). Muppidi (2008), for his part, notes the following issues and concerns for Asian journalism education: a) Absence of a regulatory body to set standards on journalism education in some countries; b) Problems of the contents ('what should

be taught') of journalism courses, given variances within countries (skills based versus liberal arts orientation or both); c) Confusion on the roles and functions of journalism in individual countries (watchdog versus propaganda arm of the state); d) No systematic procedure for process-based learning of journalism given the stress on output (i.e., the stories students produce); e) Limited resources and facilities; f) Lack of industry support for broad-based journalism education; and g) The production of journalists who are 'not necessarily well-trained' (p. 31). Hwa & Ramanathan (2000), surveying communication programmes in ASEAN (including journalism programmes), found similar issues.

Ownership of the schools and universities that offer journalism degree programmes in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand are mostly government-owned, while the majority of those in the Philippines are privately-owned (Sarkar et al, 1990). Malaysia and Singapore offer up to a doctoral degree programme in journalism while the rest of Southeast Asia only offer bachelor's and master's degrees. Privately-run universities offering journalism programmes abound in the Philippines.

Admission requirements, processes and policies also contribute to the variation of journalism education in the ASEAN region. Even the argument between formal and non-formal education is implied since some countries focus more on skills training rather than contextual and academic knowledge, the latter which university-based journalism programmes provide (Sarkar et al., 1990; also in Gapasin, Mirandilla, San Pascual & Sanqui, 2008).

Journalism schools had made attempts to bond as a regional network. An attempt was made at a UNESCO conference in 2009 when the UN agency's model curricula for journalism were presented. Another attempt was made last year at a workshop on integrating disaster risk reduction in journalism curricula. Both events were held in Manila, with the latter event seeing the informal creation of a Southeast Asian Journalism Educators Network (SEAJEN). The Manila-based Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC) pushed for the creation of this journalism schools network in the region (Leoni, 2014).

Quality assurance had become a buzzword in global education, to the point that universities had become conscious of being ranked worldwide (even regionally). One of the firms doing world university rankings is Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The trend of the rankings of ASEAN universities, at least for the 'Communication and Media Studies' discipline, is that the richer universities —especially those in Singapore— are on top (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2015). Except for the Philippines, the world-ranked ASEAN communication schools do not mind the freedom of the press conditions in their countries (Tables 1 and 2). What regional integration may push is not only the harmonisation of standards of educational quality assurance but the push for (particularly) journalism programmes to benchmark with the region's best.

As regards employment, countries are now harmonising their national-level qualifications frameworks leading to the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework. This AQRF means that qualifications may be compared across countries covering senior schooling, technical and vocations education and higher education (Manzala, 2013). Eventually, skilled workers from ASEAN countries will freely move around the region and their credentials recognised by the labor ministries of member-countries.

On the part of education, an ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework for Higher Education (AQAFHE) is set to harmonise country-level assessments of the quality of education in universities (Pijano, 2014). Some even allayed fears that given the AQRF, higher education will be 'homogenised' and may disregard cultural diversity and uniqueness of programmes in ASEAN countries (Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, 2015).

Findings

This section presents the implications and challenges of 'integrating' journalists and journalism schools in ASEAN. These take into account the verbalisations of respondents of what do the terms 'ASEAN integration', 'ASEAN community' and 'ASEAN journalism' mean. Items such as operationalising "integration" efforts by journalists and journalism schools, and roles of these actors under the milieu of

Table 1: Top ASEAN universities for communication/media studies

University	World ranking, communication			World university ranking		Freedom of the press index scores of relevant countries		
	2013	2014	2015	2013/14	2014/15	2012	2013	2014
National University of Singapore	4	9	13	24	22	Not free	Not free	Not free
Nanyang Technological University	11	6	15	41	39	Not free	Not free	Not free
Universiti Sains Malaysia	—	101-150	—	355	309	Not free	Not free	Not free
Universiti Putra Malaysia	151-200	151-200	—	411-420	376	Not free	Not free	Not free
Chulalongkorn University	151-200	—	—	239	243	Not free	Not free	Not free
University of the Philippines	—	—	151-200	380	367	Partly free	Partly free	Partly free

Source: Quacquarelli Symonds (2013 to 2015)

regional integration are background material for the presentation of implications and challenges of 'integrating' journalists and journalism schools in ASEAN.

A. Meanings: Journalism educators interviewed clearly understood ASEAN integration, with some of them remarking that integration can be a 'push factor' to help provide the socio-economic and cultural needs of Southeast Asians through information. Educators as well welcome regional integration as a mechanism to bridge people's understanding of individual countries' peculiarities, and of the bigger region. Journalists interviewed are, not surprisingly, aware of the ASEAN's nature: as a 'political and economic bloc', as a 'forum that can spread awareness about the differences [of countries], and an umbrella mechanism to ensure that differences are not misplaced… and disputes and misunderstandings resolved' (Respondent J2). The journalism educators also took note of the similarities and differences in individual countries' cultures and histories, and recognised how political systems in the individual countries impact on countries' press systems (which the educators affirmed as influenced by Western countries).

Journalist-respondents showed eagerness in having an 'integrated ASEAN media' (meaning, a harmonised news media reporting about Southeast Asia to individual ASEAN news media). The educators took a step further and floated the idea of an 'ASEAN media center'. At the basic level, there is still limited appreciation as to what 'ASEAN news' deeply means since such a concept is not yet developed, say the educator-respondents.

The journalist-respondents think that having an 'ASEAN media centre' or whatever form of integrated news media for the region can lead to the easier flow of regional/ASEAN country reports, without much cost (Respondent J1). This kind of a regional editorial set-up can also lead the sharing of news content and resources, thus helping the news media in individual countries spread awareness about ASEAN. The educators added that if such a 'news center' solely for the region exists, countries can send their representatives and journalism schools can cooperate with each other.

There were also interesting insights from educators and journalists on what 'ASEAN journalism is'. The educators think the concept of 'ASEAN journalism' is reporting about all the member-countries by forming a unified media network or system wherein participating journalists know and understand each member-country. ASEAN journalism, for these educators, is also editorial production coming from ASEAN journalists themselves. Even the style of reporting that the concept of 'ASEAN journalism' brings about may have to be displayed to separate the ASEAN journalists from other journalists, with 'no traces' of the Western press influence (Respondent JE2).

Yet there is no 'ASEAN journalism' (Respondent JE3) because of the influence

of the Western press and their philosophies. It is also in this perspective that the diversity of cultures reveals the challenge of operationalising the 'ASEAN journalism' concept. Collectively, journalists in the region 'are not identified collectively' (Respondent J1) and, as a baseline, are journalists of individual countries. Even in a single country, what with its cultural and language diversity, it is difficult to forge a national identity (Respondent J1). At best, during international events like ASEAN summits when Southeast Asian journalists band together, they work as a team and respect each other (Respondent J4).

For a journalism-educator, if 'ASEAN journalism' were to fly off, the problems of fellow ASEAN nations is a paramount concern: 'The harmony of the society is more important than freedom of individual expression' (Respondent JE2). Another journalist-educator's remark seemed to reveal the character of how Southeast Asian nations conduct each other —as non-interfering— and the influence of the individual country's culture and press system: 'News media should not exaggerate or over-expose some unnecessary issues. They should instead practice peace journalism to avoid conflicts, especially in religion' (Respondent JE1).

B. Mechanisms: The answers from both journalists and journalism-educators point to having a regional media centre for a mechanism, and this mechanism funneling ASEAN-centric stories to individual member-countries.

Yet a concern is how ASEAN is portrayed in the individual countries' news media. What the Inter Press Service content analysis research (2014) did not show was if the stories were localised angles about ASEAN-level concerns. It seems that even with the craze ASEAN integration brought about, there is little appetite for news about what is happening in other ASEAN countries—and thus the approach is to treat the ASEAN story with a local angle so that national-level audiences connect with the report (Respondent J1). So highlighting the country of operation thus becomes a first priority for the Southeast Asian journalist (Respondent J5).

Journalism-educators, for their part, think that story angles may not only have to factor in the proximity of the news to the affected audience (i.e., Southeast Asian news audience). Other ASEAN-centric news values that have to be considered include: *relevance* of the story to the shared socio-historical background of the region; *impact* of the story to Southeast Asians; *importance* of the story to the common interests and needs of ASEAN citizens; and the unique identities of each ASEAN nation as *news currency*. But pragmatically, the journalists reporting about other ASEAN countries will bring in their own local orientation and disposition since covering their own nation 'would be difficult or impossible to detach' (Respondent J1).

Apart from the editorial roles associated with having a 'regional journalism' concept, the journalism-educators interviewed ascribed five roles that ASEAN's

journalism schools bring to the vision of regional integration —roles that even journalists, under the ambit of integration, can assert. These roles are: a) The *voice of the voiceless*, with journalism as a tool of power; b) The *agitators of critical thinking* unto students and news audiences, especially since audiences are no longer passive news consumers; c) The *values teachers*, taking into account journalism's role as a "public service" and journalists' adherence to press ethics; d) The *competent practitioners and professionals*, all of whom are equipped with skills and experience to present engaging reports locally and about the ASEAN; and e) The *disseminators of regional news*, a role that even journalism teachers (not just the journalist) may have to practise.

The designation of these regional 'roles' by the journalism-educators also challenges the journalism schools, if the journalism-educators are to be believed, to integrate the pursuit of media integration through the university system. Examples of mechanisms include having a course on ASEAN reporting in prevailing curricula, and awareness about the cultures and histories of Southeast Asian countries (through courses on Southeast Asia). As well, what may have to be expected is the 'standardisation' of journalism education programmes in the region (Respondent JE1) that can compete (Table 2) with the rest of the world. The journalism curriculum thus plays a role since, in recognising ASEAN eccentricities in journalism (and not just the traits of the Western press), Southeast Asian reporters can become more capable to write about regional integration with cultural diversity as backdrop.

The journalist-respondents even acknowledged the role of the schools system in raising ASEAN literacy, taking note of the limited knowledge of citizens about the region—even among journalists in individual countries (Respondents J1 and J3). With limited knowledge about ASEAN, journalists will encounter difficulties integrating background and context into ASEAN reports, and stereotyping of countries and their citizens may possibly happen.

C. Challenges: The various qualities of press systems and journalism educational systems in individual ASEAN countries are obvious challenges to operationalise media integration and a regional approach to journalism education. And the cultural and political backgrounds of countries are the systemic challenges present in such desires for regional integration by journalists and journalism schools.

Language is another visible challenge, say both journalist and journalism educator-respondents. Even what language to be used in the stories can be debated, as English can be spoken fluently in only three of the ten ASEAN-member countries. Another obvious challenge is limited resources of news media outfits owned by Southeast Asian nationals, or even sending correspondents to other ASEAN countries.

Regardless if the party involved is a news media outfit or a journalism school, respondents acknowledge the nationally-centric approach of these players as a

Table 2: ASEAN country rankings for communication/media studies				
Country	**University communication/ media studies, 2015**	**QS country ranking**	**QS world ranking (2014/ 2015)**	**QS Asian ranking 2015**
Indonesia	University of Indonesia	1	310	79
	Universitas Gadjah Mada	2	551-600	137
	Airlangga University	3	701+	147
	Universitas Negeri Makassar	4	—	—
	University of Brawijaya	5	701+	—
Malaysia	Universiti Malaya	1	151	29
	Universiti Putra Malaysia	2	376	66
	Universiti Sains Malaysia	3	309	49
	International Islamic University Malaysia	4	501-550	151-200
	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	5	259	56
Philippines	University of the Philippines [151-200]	1	367	70
	Ateneo de Manila University	2	461-470	114
	De la Salle University	3	651-700	151-200
	Polytechnic University of the Philippines	4	—	—
	University of Santo Tomas	5	701+	143
Singapore	National University of Singapore [13]	1	22	1
	Nanyang Technological University [15]	2	39	4
	Singapore Management University	3	—	—
	Nanyang Institute of Fine Arts	4	—	—
	DigiPen Institute of Technology Singapore	5	—	—
Thailand	Chulalongkorn University	1	243	53
	Kasetsart University	2	651-700	151-200
	Mahidol University	3	259	44
	Thammasat University	4	601-650	143
	Chiang Mai University	5	501-550	99

Source: Quacquarelli Symonds (2015)

challenge if ASEAN journalism wants to put as template the regional perspective in the reporting and editing of the stories and in the teaching of journalism. Taking this regional perspective into account, say journalism educators, will also have to capture people's interests.

Interestingly, a journalist-respondent thinks media ownership is a hurdle for media integration. This is since most of the ASEAN member-countries do not practice democracy, and these countries do not enjoy a free press. The respondent said: 'The biggest barrier will be the question of ownership, and the extent to which the media owners can guarantee editorial independence, a rare concept in most ASEAN countries' (Respondent J1).

Discussion

This article presented the views of some Southeast Asian journalists and journalism educators surrounding the opportunities and challenges of regional integration into the journalism sectors. The concept being analysed by this research is whether regional integration of news media systems and/or journalism education systems is probable.

The answers put forward by journalists and journalism-educators reveal the difficulties surrounding a regional approach towards journalism. These difficulties were seen also in other contexts, like in Africa (Churchill, 1991) and Europe (Russ-Mohl, 2003). Not even a common international language for these journalists (say, English or French as in the case of other countries) is enough to bridge journalists' and journalism schools' understanding of the region, its member-countries and these countries' socio-economic, political and cultural peculiarities. While the ASEAN is mobilising its mechanisms —per pillar (APSC, AEC and ASCC), and covering various aspects (e.g., trade, educational quality assurance, skills recognition)— in order to complete the seeds of regional integration, the journalism sector is still in the early stages of exploring what regional integration implies to individual and regional-level journalism.

It is interesting that respondents floated the concept of 'ASEAN journalism', in the premise that such editorial approach to journalism is tied to the search for a regional identity (even if specific to journalism). This concept, respondents themselves recognised however, takes into account the politics-media relationships in individual countries, and the collective disposition of ASEAN as a body of countries: non-interfering while trying to achieve consensus, but conscious of defending national sovereignty (Moorthy & Benny, 2012; Milner, 2012). Respondents also presented varying allusions to what 'ASEAN journalism' is: a non-interfering approach to news reportage, voice of the voiceless, or agitators of critical thinking. These views reflect the journalistic cultures these journalists and educators came from.

Heikkilä and Kunelius' model (2006) looks at how journalists covering the

European Union approach their coverage of the said regional grouping. Some of the views of this paper's respondents that 'ASEAN journalism' is absent because of the influence of the Western press may give the impression that the cosmopolitan discourse prevails in ASEAN news coverage. What some of these respondents may be looking for are journalists who carry classical professionalism or even secular discourses (leaning towards the nationalism quadrant of Heikkilä and Kunelius [Figure 1]): *reporting about the region for audiences of that region*. If the journalists of ASEAN do not want to pit ASEAN nations against each other (i.e., non-interference, that being the nature of ASEAN), a variant of a 'cosmopopular' discourse—done by journalists within the region—can emerge.

One can also sense from the respondents, especially the journalists, that there is a desire for a freer media even if they did not explicitly say that ASEAN integration can lead to such. Even the concept of an 'ASEAN media center' brought excitement to some respondents, even if the details of operationalising regional integration (e.g., skills recognition, harmonisation of degree programmes) as these affect journalists and journalism education are either less-known or not known to respondents.

What followed after discussing concepts of 'ASEAN journalists' and an 'ASEAN media centre' are the roles of ASEAN journalists in the era of regional integration. The roles journalism educator-respondents enumerated are notably tied to an individual country's journalism culture (Weaver & Wilnat, 2012). Some ASEAN countries were part of a cross-country study on journalism cultures and roles; the top role of journalists in 'partly-free' Indonesia is 'be watchdog of government' versus the top role of 'reporting news quickly' by journalists from 'not free' countries Malaysia and Singapore (Weaver & Wilnat, 2012; Freedom House, 2015). The results show Indonesia's leaning to the 'Fourth Estate' role of journalism in its democracy and less influence of political and economic forces, versus Malaysian journalists' recognition of restricted editorial autonomy and Singapore journalists' circumspect disposition as regards the press' relationship with the state and with the greater society (Weaver & Wilnat, 2012). The interplay of these country-level roles and journalistic role conceptions of Southeast Asian journalists under the ambit of regional integration will thus be interesting. This is especially if some journalist-groups and some journalism schools in the region wish to 'operationalise' a regional media centre.

There is nothing surprising in the challenges enumerated by respondents in the road to media integration in ASEAN. From the responses also, if journalists and journalism schools do see opportunities (including economic, like increased readership, advertising and foreign student intake) from ASEAN integration, calibration of prevailing national-level practices to a regional perspective is a step forward for these players in the journalism sector.

No wonder that research on media and regional integration has yet to

advance a theory or a framework that covers the entirety of journalism's place in regional integration. Heikkilä and Kunelius' model (2006) is a starting point. Salvosa (2014) then adopted Heikkilä and Kunelius' model and situated it to the case of business journalism and regional integration's economic opportunities**.** Yet regional groupings' search for a regional-wide (cultural) identity may be a constraint towards developing theoretical models. Further research on journalism and regional integration may have to reflect deeply on the overall place of the journalism sector in this regional approach. This is because people with limited awareness of regional integration may not realise the direct impacts of regional integration to them and to their countries. These impacts can be explained by journalists and their reportage of the geographic region and of individual countries.

For the meantime, journalists can operationally apply editorial strategies towards reporting on neighbouring countries, whether in individual countries or as a regional grouping. These can include news syndication of ASEAN stories; training of journalists from various beats (news, business, sports) on reporting about ASEAN; special editorial projects on ASEAN and its impact on, say, individual countries in areas like politics, the economy, business, foreign relations, etc.; cooperation between news organisations of various countries (like the model of the Asian News Network); among others. For a start, individual news sections or beats of an ASEAN-based news organisation will be simply broadened to capture news—on a regular basis, not just during annual ASEAN summits—from neighbouring countries (even up to the sports page). With regional integration (especially economic integration) beginning in 2015, an interesting study will be a follow-up content analysis of ASEAN reportage starting the said year (with the assumption that ASEAN integration fueled more reportage on ASEAN and on ASEAN countries).

The research acknowledges the limitation that researchers only interviewed a total of nine respondents across ASEAN. This reflected difficulties of getting respondents, especially journalists. Contrast this to the 149 semi-structured interviews Heikkilä and Kunelius (2006) conducted. Amid this methodological limitation, this paper is an exploratory attempt at analysing how a specific geographic region —with a disparate set of news media systems— will see its journalists and journalism schools work together.

Conclusion

Journalists and journalism schools in individual countries work together to help develop a country's news media system. The latter trains the would-be journalists while professionals help journalism schools train budding journalists as prospective members of the news workforce. Journalism schools also imbibe skills training, disciplinary rigor and critical thinking that are essential in daily journalistic practice. Within a country, depending on the prevailing news media

system, these activities showcase the symbiotic relationship between journalists and journalism schools.

Now that individual countries belonging to a regional aggrupation are 'integrating', how then should country-level journalists and journalism schools respond? This was the thrust of this paper. As viewed from the answers of four journalists and five journalism educators, there is excitement and anxiety on the possibilities regional integration brings forth to journalists and to journalism schools. For now, journalists and journalism educators interviewed are attached to their country-level journalistic cultures and practices, not yet ready to work on 'integration'. Even the ASEAN itself has yet to see the role of journalism in regional integration (in Chongkittavorn, 2011a). It also remains early to see the economic benefits of an 'ASEAN-centered journalism' to the news media and to journalism schools.

For now, 'ASEAN-centered journalism' is operationally the reportage of regional issues (that may possibly be tied to the individual ASEAN country) and of issues affecting individual member-countries. What 'ASEAN-centered journalism' means remains unclear. It may imply that Southeast Asian journalists report on their own news given their individual country contexts, things that the Western press may not be able to see since these foreign journalists report on Southeast Asia for an international audience. 'ASEAN-centered journalism' may preliminarily cover how an event or issue in an individual Southeast Asian community impacts locally, on neighbouring countries, on the entire region, and even on countries outside of the immediate region of scope. For example, the current Philippine government's policy actions against drug users and pushers (as mandated by President Rodrigo Duterte) has motivated Indonesia to take similar measures. ASEAN however has yet to have a region-wide policy on curbing the drug menace, and on drug trafficking.

Having this multi-layered editorial approach to reporting about ASEAN can be the starting point for journalists and journalism schools to work together, not necessarily to 'integrate.' Journalism schools can offer courses on Southeast Asia to raise students' awareness on the region (e.g. University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines); professional journalism courses can then be about 'Southeast Asian reportage' (a single course) or have exercises in news and feature writing courses on Southeast Asian affairs. News organisations and journalism schools in individual countries can then collaborate to train current journalists and journalism students about Southeast Asian reportage. Country-level experiences can then be shared with fellow ASEAN countries. Stories on Southeast Asia by students and by journalists, especially if published and circulated, will then help raise awareness about ASEAN.

Recommendations such as curricular revisions, networking activities, cross-country reporting projects and researches, or even ethics training (given

concerns over media corruption across ASEAN countries [Milton, 2015]), will be expected from the journalism sector in ASEAN member-countries. Prevailing Southeast Asian journalist-groups (e.g., SEAPA, CAJ, SEAJU) can still continue their work on improving the welfare of journalists, highlighting press freedom issues, further improving the skills of journalists in news gathering and writing (even specifically to reporting about ASEAN). Aspiring to a regional-level democratic press system can be envisioned, though this is a long-term project. The internet and social media can easily connect news audiences from different ASEAN countries, benefiting those producing and circulating ASEAN stories.

Regional-level journalism that operates under a milieu of diverse press systems is never an easy project. Southeast Asian journalists may be excited for a future —under regional integration— where the region's freedom of expression is more open. Having an 'ASEAN-centered journalism and journalism education' as a response of the journalism sector to regional integration will be a long-term goal. Practical projects in individual newsrooms and journalism schools are small but viable steps to moving to next levels of engagement that are regional (i.e., ASEAN) in scope. Future studies on regional integration and journalism may also help assess journalists' place and influence before a broader audience.

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‘Make America Secure’

Media, militarism, and climate change in the Marianas Archipelago

Abstract: The 2018 *Make America Secure Appropriations Act* is the latest United States federal policy which prioritises funds for defence projects at the expense of climate change adaptation planning in the Marianas Archipelago. Since 2006, the US Department of Defense (DoD) has released six Environmental Impact Statement documents which outline construction of bombing ranges on the islands of Guam, Pågan and Tinian. Expanding militarisation of the archipelago is supported by US-owned media through the narrative of pro-American ideologies which frames any resistance as unpatriotic. However, both non-voting US Congress representatives for Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) express concerns with how federal funds are prioritised for military projects instead of climate change adaptation. Further, Indigenous Chamorro and Refaluwasch peoples of the Marianas continue to resist by creating content on alternative digital media platforms and through lawsuits supported by the *National Environmental Protection Act* against the DoD and Department of the Navy. This article illustrates how remaining as insular areas of the US directly dictates the lack of sovereignty the people of the Marianas have in planning for climate change.

Keywords: Asia-Pacific Pivot, climate change, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas (CNMI), Guam (Guåhan), media, militarisation, resistance

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An insular archipelago

UNITED STATES militarisation projects in the Marianas Archipelago are prioritised and financed by federal funding at the expense of climate change adaptation planning. This is possible through the political division of the archipelago and insular area status (Office of Insular Affairs, 2015). The two US insular areas include The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the ‘unincorporated territory’ of Guam (Guåhan) (Borja, 2015; Taitano, 2015). Remaining as non-self-governing possessions is a violation of international law which denies the local community self-determination and greatly hinders the region’s ability to formulate climate change mitigation projects (Aguon, 2011). Conversely, the US Department of Defense (DoD) claims that if the residents, who are US citizens, gained more political power,

this would 'compromise' the island's strategic value as a military colony (Clement, 2011, p. 34). Therefore, the local governments of the Marianas Archipelago continue to remain dependent on US federal funds and lack sovereignty and control over their resources (Schwebel, 2018). The US militarisation plans for the region occur without the consent of the local community and is a diversion of funds and energies from climate change resiliency planning and adaptation projects (Natividad & Leon Guerrero, 2010, p. 3).

In July 2017, the *Make America Secure Appropriations Act of 2018*, which provides the US Department of Defense (DoD) with funding for defence related projects on Guam, passed in the US Congress 235 to 192. Guam's non-voting US Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo issued a statement that this

> ... additional funding should not come at the expense of our non-defense accounts and I remain concerned about over-reliance on budget gimmicks such as OCO [Overseas Contingency Operations]. I am deeply concerned that the bill handcuffs federal action to safeguard our ocean and coastal resources by defunding the government-wide National Ocean Policy. We need to make thoughtful investments by the federal government in Guam's future. I will continue my work in Congress to safeguard our ocean resources, fisheries, and island and we must take commonsense steps necessary to address threats to ocean health like climate change. (Bordallo, 2017, July 27)

While Congresswoman Bordallo will continue to 'work in Congress', her non-voting position due to Guam's political status limits her power and sovereignty over how federal funds are used and directed. While the DoD acknowledges that climate change is a 'threat', it continues to invest billions of dollars into construction of bases in locations susceptible to climate change (Mooney & Dennis, 2018). These military projects in the Marianas Archipelago are outlined in numerous Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) which have previously been found to be in violation of the United States *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) (Alexander, 2015, p. 5). Due to the continued colonial political status of the Marianas Archipelago, the region and local communities are excluded from climate resiliency and adaptation programmes, and instead are tasked with responding to military plans.

There are designated US federal funds allocated for the Pacific through the five-year Pacific-American Climate Fund (PACAM). Headquartered in the Philippines, the PACAM programme provides grants for civil society organisation 'to reduce long-term vulnerabilities associated with climate change' in 12 countries impacting 8.5 million people in the Pacific. These island states include the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, the Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Sāmoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and

Vanuatu (Pacific-American Climate Fund, 2018). However, because of political status, PACAM does not extend to Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Instead, as outlined by the 2018 *Keep America Secure Act* and concerns raised by non-voting Congresswoman Bordallo, the US federal government finances and funds militarisation expansion at the expense of climate change resiliency planning or adaptation projects in the Marianas Archipelago.

United States-owned media

The issues of political status and expanding militarisation are ignored by continental US (national) media with the narrative controlled by US-owned outlets in the archipelago (Dalisay, 2014, p. 12). While the local community resists through alternative media outlets and through legal means, the US-owned media outlets and the US military in the archipelago frame this resistance as 'unpatriotic' (Tanji, 2012, p. 109). Further, Chamorro and Refaluwasch understandings of climate change and views for adaptation and resiliency planning remain on the margins.

The largest newspaper on Guam, the *Pacific Daily News*, began in 1947 as the military publication, *The Navy News* and is currently owned by *USA Today*. A Washington-state based researcher found the *Pacific Daily News* 'serve[s] to hegemonically maintain Guam's society as an unincorporated American territory' and employs 'discursive strategies… to rally support for pro-American ideologies'(Dalisay, 2009, pp. 239-240).

Therefore, Chamorro grassroots organisations use alternative outlets and new media platforms to provide space for 'those who would otherwise not have a voice against oppression' and reach audiences beyond mainstream media outlets (Cruz III & Somera, 2016, p. 21). New media and visual methods are increasingly used across the Pacific to highlight Indigenous strategies to promote community-based climate change adaptation (Inamara & Thomas, 2017).

While the local community seeks to formulate plans for climate change adaptation, the US federal government and the DoD control how funding is allocated and consistently prioritise military projects (Green & Skeele, 2014; Prasad, 1994). Within media discourses, there is no discussion of the role that militaries play in *contributing* to climate change or how current plans *divert* funding from climate change adaptation projects. Reinforced by US-owned media, it is within this militarised and colonial context that climate change planning and policies are controlled. Ignoring the local communities' sovereignty and perspective on climate change continues to be a contemporary challenge across the region (Bryan-Tokalau, 2018).

'Blue colonisation' and the 'Pacific Pathway'

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration renders the United

States 'a Pacific nation and a Pacific power' (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2011). As an 'Ocean Nation', the security of the US is framed as controlling the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) extending 200 nautical miles offshore of US states and territories (Figure 1). This encompasses diverse ecosystems and vast natural resources. The US EEZ is the largest in the world, spanning over 13,000 miles of coastline and containing 3.4 million square nautical miles of ocean—larger than the combined landmass of all 50 states (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2011).

The US continues to privatise and militarise the EEZs and the greater Pacific region, recognising the economic value of the EEZs and the importance of US control over the 'Pacific Pathway' (Polk, 2017, p. 1; also see C. S. Perez, 2014). Through conservation efforts and the establishment of 'Marine Protected Areas', the DoD is able to use these spaces for war training and weapon testing, as it is exempt from environmental protections (Cagurangan, 2017). Chamorro poet and

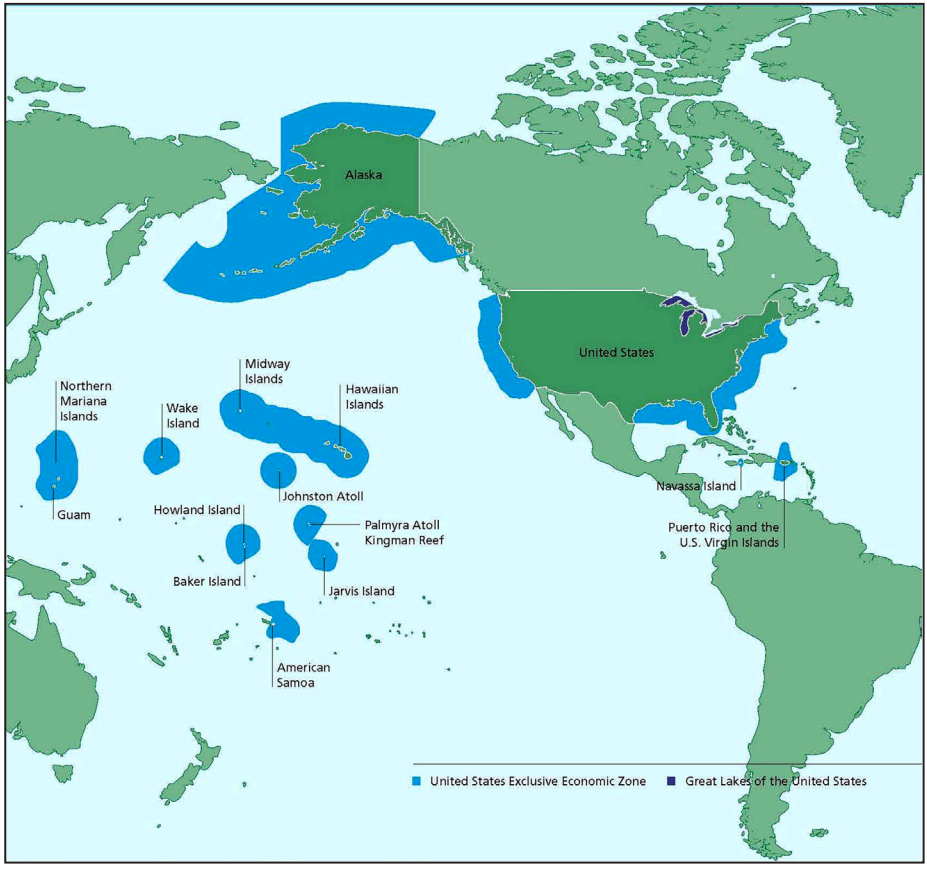

Figure 1: The United States Exclusive Economic Zones.
Source: www.gc.noaa.gov/documents/2011/012711_gcil_maritime_eez_map.pdf

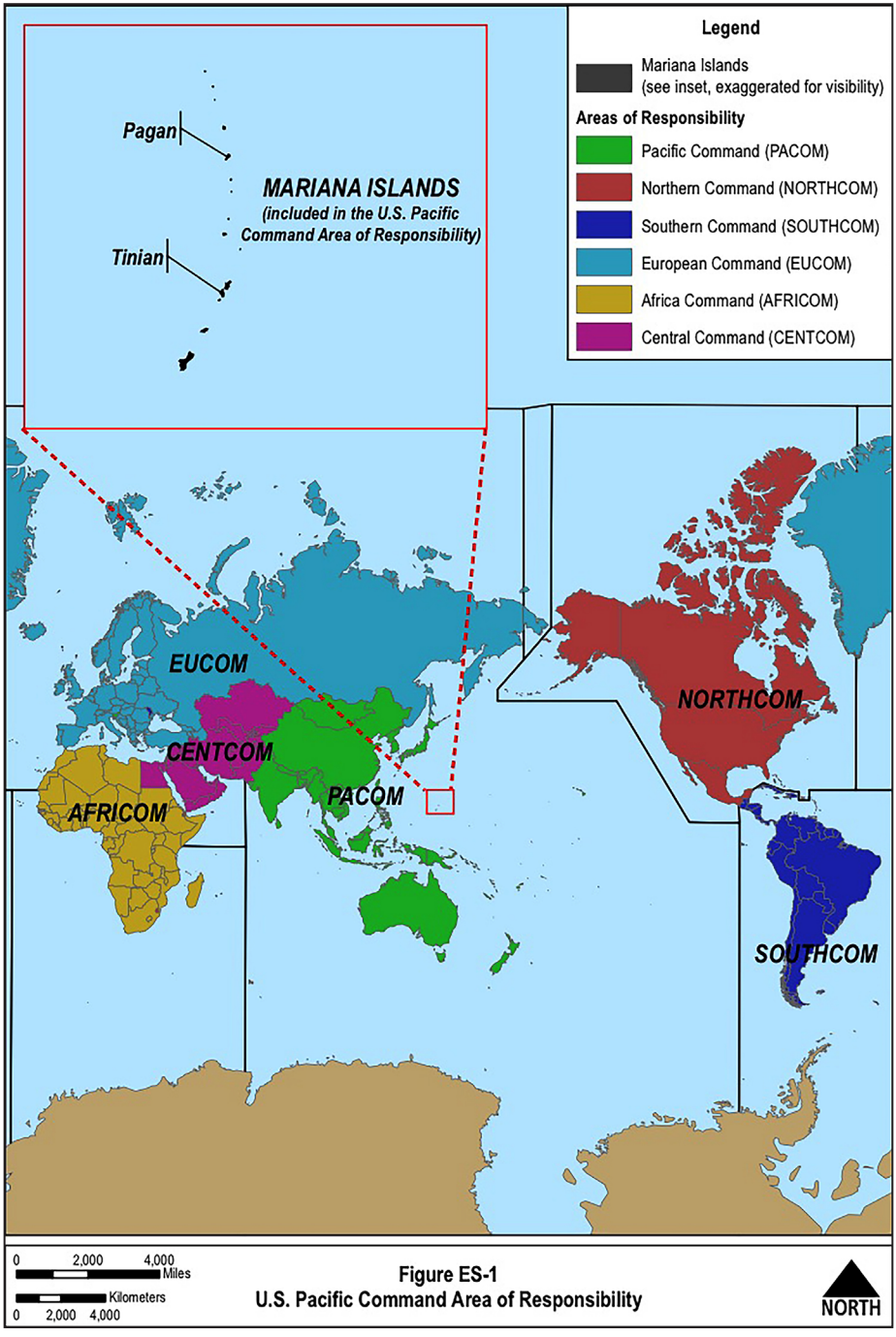

Figure 2: 'US Pacific Command Area of Responsibility', p. ES–2, 2015.
Source: www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com/documents

scholar Craig Santos Perez argues on the alternative new media outlet, *Hawaiian Independent*, this 'blue capitalism' occurs through the creation of 'national monuments' and 'protected areas', which are easier to 'secure and protect [US] shipping and military routes, as well as to issue licenses and leases for maritime investment and development projects' (2015a, p. 3). Within these ocean conservation frameworks, climate change resiliency policies and adaptation projects are not included (Jones, 2016).

The Pacific Ocean is also viewed as a 'strategic water barrier' protecting the continental US from potential enemies (Na'puti & Frain, 2017, p. 14). Current US military sites and training ranges span the 64 million square miles of Pacific Ocean. There are more than 160 US military installations throughout the Pacific region that fall under the authority of the US Pacific Command (PACOM), headquartered on O'ahu, Hawai'i (K. L. Camacho, 2011, p. xii; Genz et al., 2016). The Mariana Islands, as well as Aotearoa New Zealand, are included within PACOM's area of responsibility, with more than 3.5 billion people, 36 nation-states and 20 territories and 10 possessions of the US in the region (Keating, 2008) (Figure 2).

The US military base network in the Pacific today 'serves to maintain the hierarchy of power and privilege created as a result of World War II' (Carroll & Calhoun, 2001, p. 27). Both US bases and weapons training complexes extend beyond the US EEZs with foreign US bases in Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Japan, South Korea and, most recently, Australia's Northern Territory (Vine, 2015, p. 7). The base network especially occupies the landscapes, seascapes and airspace of the Pacific insular areas and 'quasi-colonies' of the United States: American Sāmoa, Hawai'i, Johnston Atoll, Wake Island, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia (Davis, 2011, p. 221). Micronesia is part of the US militarised 'imperial archipelago' with 52 bases, installations, and outposts (C. S. Perez, 2015b, p. 619). The irony of the continuing imperial ideology is that the US continues to use insular locations for militaristic purposes to support US forces worldwide in the name of 'freedom' and 'democracy' while denying the island residents self-determination (Dardani, 2017, pp. 34-35).

The history of the archipelago includes the systematic implementation of DoD projects too risky for the continental US (Winchester, 2015). The militarisation of the Marianas Archipelago has been consistently explained in the name of US 'national security' (US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, 2015). While the DoD recognises climate change as a 'significant and direct threat' to the US military itself, it continues investment into military projects at installations in high risk zones across the Asia-Pacific, which many in the region see as directly preventing local expertise from practical climate change resiliency planning (Foley, 2012; Mooney & Dennis, 2018; Reuters, 2016).

The Asia-Pacific Pivot

The Asia-Pacific Pivot foreign policy advances the US economic agenda through the DoD (C. S. Perez, 2015a, p. 3). US military advisers at the Pentagon, defence corporation lobbyists and neoconservative leaders in Washington, DC promote the militarisation of the Asia Pacific region. According to the former US Secretary of Defense, Ashton B. Carter, the DoD is 'realigning', 'rebalancing' and 'refocusing' US foreign policy to the Asia-Pacific since the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan are 'winding down' (Carter, 2013).

In 2006, a 'bilateral' decision between the US and Japan was formalised as the United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation Agreement. This Roadmap comes with a price tag of US$10.2 billion with Japan contributing US$6 billion (US Secretary of State Rice, US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Aso, & Japanese Minister of State for Defense Nukaga, 2006). In addition to the returning military hardware and personnel, all departments of the armed forces repositioning in the Asia-Pacific region will need to maintain a 'forward presence' and require locations for Live-Fire Training Range Complexes (LFTRCs) or bombing ranges (US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, 2015). The original Roadmap included relocating 8,000 Marines and 9,000 Marine dependents from Okinawa to Guam, which would cause the population of Guam to become 42 percent US military (Bevacqua & Bowman, 2016, p. 79).

While the DoD pledges to 'clean-up' former sites in the Roadmap agreement, the environmental track record in the Pacific indicates otherwise (Chan, 2015; Zucker, 1984). To clean up DoD locations in Hawai'i, American Sāmoa, Guam, and the CNMI, the US Army Corps of Engineers receive between US$12-15 million every year. Hawai'i's former Waikoloa Training Range is estimated to cost $723 million alone, with an additional US$1.7 billion needed (Hofschneider, 2016a). Guam's funding rate is four percent, while other states and territories receive 16 percent to clean up former military sites (ibid, 2016). Thus far, Guam has received US$12 million with an additional US$113 million needed (Hofschneider, 2016). The CNMI received 'only' about US$43 million, with at least US$51 million more needed (2016). This demonstrates not only the environmental contamination but also the enormous cost and amount of work to 'clean up' the former military sites. Many of these efforts take years (if ever) to complete, and the methods of the clean up process remain inconsistent and controversial (Bordallo, 2017, January 5). Sites that are classified as 'hazardous, toxic, and radioactive' get priority, with more located in the CNMI than Guam. In addition, these are only the sites that the DoD has recognised and agreed to address (Bordallo, 2017, January 18). The US federal government is not obligated to clean-up munitions used during war, and there is no way to know how much is left, and no plan to clean it up (Hofschneider, 2016a). Today, there continues

to be concern about the toxicity levels on Guam relating to the improper disposal of chemical weapon Agent Orange during the Vietnam War (Andrews, 2017; Dimond, 2013). The veterans who participated and witnessed the disposal are sceptical about the 'accuracy' of the testing by the DoD (O'Connor, 2018). Instead, members of the community believe funds used to 'clean-up' former military sites could be used for climate change resiliency and adaptation programmes (personal communication, May 6, 2018).

Continual militarisation

Rather than directly addressing and cleaning up toxins from previous wars, the DoD is developing Guam as a 'strategic hub' and will transform the island into a 'forward base' (US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, 2015). The plan establishes a Global Strike Force on Guam involving 48 F-22 and F-15E fighter jets, six B-1, B-2, and B-52 bombers and adding as many as six nuclear submarines to the three already home-based on Guam. Sixty percent of the Navy's Pacific Fleet will be based on Guam (Leon Guerrero, Borja, Perez, & Castro, 2006, p. 5). As a highly militarised space, Guam is considered the 'Tip of the Spear' and an 'unsinkable aircraft carrier' that hosts the US Pacific Air Forces' continuous bomber presence mission (Pacific Air Force Public Affairs Headquarters, 2016). Within the Asia-Pacific region, 'all of the Pentagon roadmaps lead to Guam', and it is the 'largest refuelling point outside the US for all military forces' (Insular Empire, 2011; New Zealand Foreign Affairs & Trade • Manatū Aorere, 2016). This is highly significant, as the DoD is the largest 'institutional consumer of oil in the world' (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2016). In 2014 alone, the DoD used over 87 million barrels of fuel, costing nearly US$14 billion (Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, n.d.). Yet, Guam's military installations are among the five most vulnerable of the US military base network according to a 2012 report by the American Security Project, a think tank in Washington, DC (Foley, 2012). The DoD plans to construct a LFTRC adjacent to the only Wildlife Refuge on the island, Nasion lihing lina'la'machålik gi halmo tåno' yan tasi- puntan Litekyan, or Ritidian National Wildlife Refuge (K. L. Camacho, 2008; Frain, 2016; Na'puti & Frain, 2017, pp. 31, note 29; Carson, 2014).

Due to the 'limited landmass' of Guam, however, the DoD cannot fulfil the '42 joint training deficiencies' (US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, 2015). Therefore, additional war exercises and weapons testing must take place in the CNMI. The northern two-thirds of the island of Tinian and the entire island of Pågan are 'needed' for LFTRCs for the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Marines (Zotomayor, 2015) (Figure 3). In addition to the LFTRCs, the DoD intends to use Tinian and Pågan for ammunition storage and Saipan as a location for troop 'R&R' (rest and recuperation, rest and relaxation, or rest and recreation) (Limtiaco, 2012).

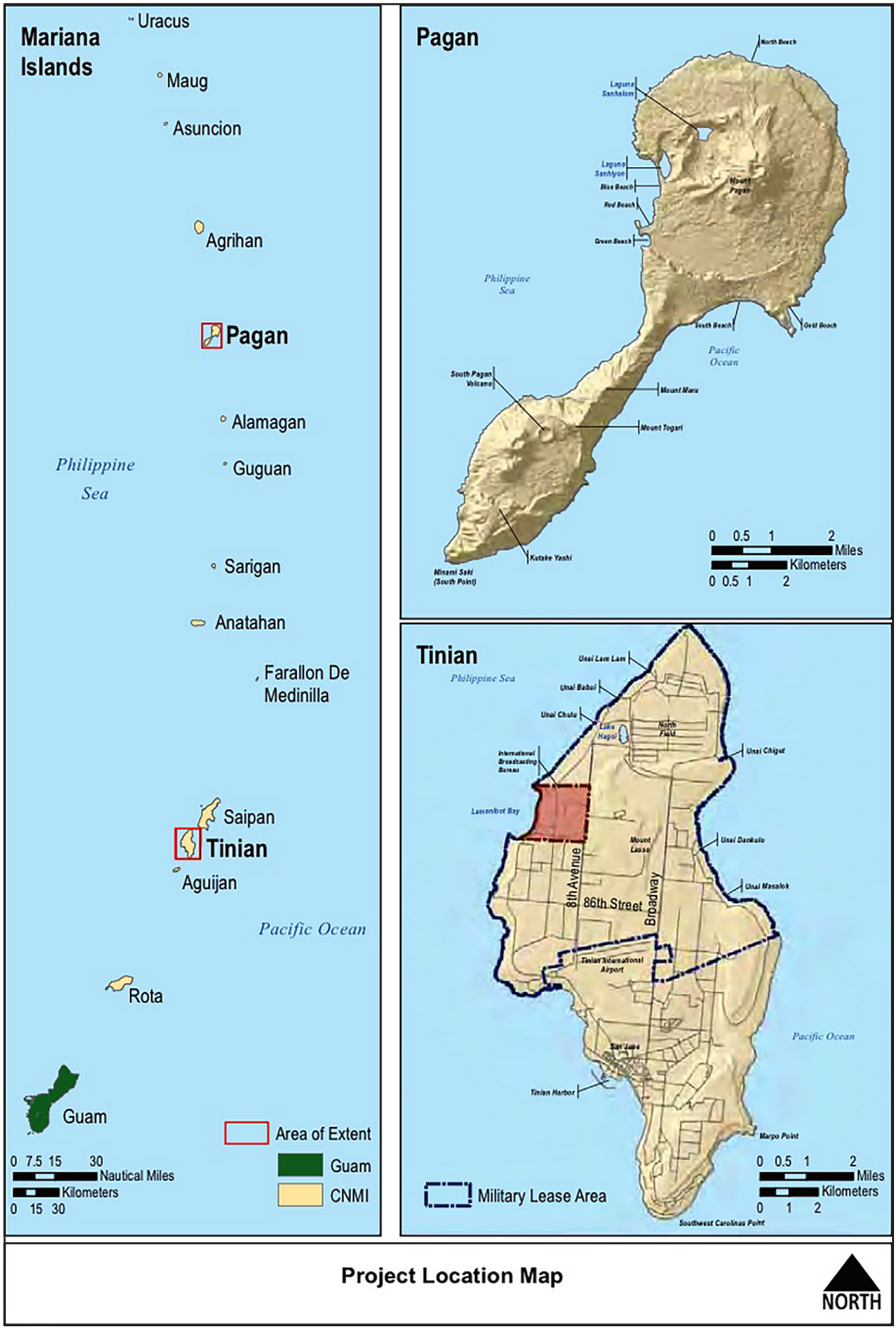

Figure 3: 'Project Location Map' indicating which islands the US Navy plans to develop into Live-Fire Training Range Complexes (LFTRCs). Source: www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com/documents.

This would give the DoD control over 25 percent of the CNMI landmass and would prevent freedom of navigation between islands (Chamorro.com, 2016).

The 2015 report, *The US Asia-Pacific Rebalance, National Security and Climate Change*, by The Center for Climate and Security suggests that the Asia-Pacific Pivot Strategy 'is an important reaffirmation that the United States is and will remain a Pacific power' (Werrell & Femia, 2015, p. 9). While the Indo-Asia-Pacific region is the 'most disaster-prone area of the world', with five of the world's nuclear powers and seven of the ten of the world's largest standing militaries, the proposed solution is US control of the Marianas Archipelago through increased militarisation (Werrell & Femia, 2015 p. 14). The report ignores the implications of the military projects and the direct amplification of destruction to endangered species habitats, coral reefs, coastal erosion and the contamination of freshwater systems and limestone forests. This oversight is in violation of law 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq., the *National Environmental Policy Act* designed to protect people from harmful environmental actions by federal agencies and to prevent the military from engaging in operations harmful to US civilians (United States Environmental Protection Agency, [1970] 2017). The Indigenous Chamorro and Refaluwasch peoples of the archipelago are US citizens and 'protectors and defenders' of their environment who continue to resist expanding US militarisation through alternative media and legal means (Frain, 2017, 2016, March 3; Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2017).

The National Environmental Policy Act

The Department of Defense is required to follow the legal frameworks of the US *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) to evaluate the environmental and related social and economic effects of their proposed actions in the form of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents. The military is also required by NEPA to provide opportunities for public reviews and comments of those documents. However, there is no additional legal framework to directly ensure that the DoD incorporates and considers the communities' comments (Figure 4).

Since 2006, the DoD has released a 'series of apparently independent proposals that worked to hide the cumulative impacts from the public and local governments and ignore the cumulative environmental impacts and threats of climate change, (Chamorro.com, 2016). Separate documents reveal plans for Guam and for CNMI. Each EIS document costs an estimated US$25 million (US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, 2015). Subcategories include the Draft Environmental Impact Statements (DEIS), Overseas Environmental Impact Statements (OEIS), Supplementary Environmental Impact Statements (SEIS), Environmental Assessments (EA) and Overseas Environmental Assessment (OEA). The final document required by NEPA is called the Record of Decision (ROD).

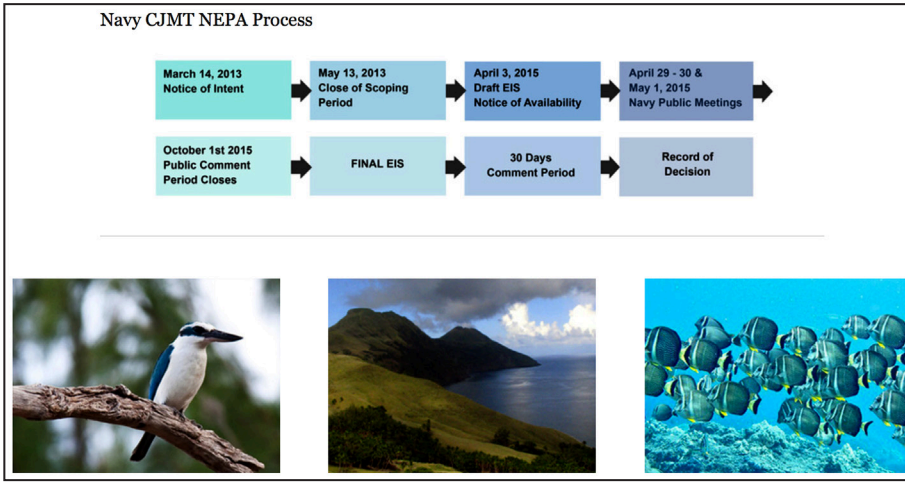

Figure 4: Outlining the Navy's Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Joint Military Training (CJMT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
Source: www.cnmieis.org

The size and technicality of these documents, coupled with culturally inappropriate public forums with short timeframes and controlled avenues for submitting 'comments', highlight the imperial and militarised experiences of the people of the Mariana Islands (Cabrera, Kaipat, Marsh-Taitano, & Perez, 2015). The Aotearoa-based blog, *Non-Plastic Māori*, has addressed this intentional separation as 'unbundling' (Ngata, 2016, October 18). When there is a large activity that, when viewed in its entirety, would 'undoubtedly cause concern, corporations [US Military] will break the activity up and apply for consent applications for each constituent activity… In this way, the actual impacts are shrouded within a more drawn out, convoluted process. Assessors, and the community, are incrementally lulled into accepting a state of affairs that would be absurd if originally assessed in its entirety' (Ngata, 2016). In addition, these federal funds, local resources and international expertise in preparation and response to the military planning and EIS documents could be used for climate change resiliency planning and adaptation projects, according to local community members.

The six highly technical and often contradictory EIS documents describe the impacts of the proposed construction, training, and testing that often violate or disregard NEPA. Additional relevant protection US federal protection laws include the *Endangered Species Act*, the *Migratory Bird Act* and the *Marine Mammal Protection Act* (Na'puti & Bevacqua, 2015, p. 850). The EIS documents underestimate and omit impacts on local communities, particularly surrounding environmental justice, including protection of coral reefs, marshlands, and limestone forests—important natural structures which can mitigate climate change,

and instead threaten freshwater supplies, already vulnerable due to climate change, with munition pollution.

The 2009 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Guam and Mariana Islands Military Relocation: Relocating Marines from Okinawa, Japan to Guam is 11,000 pages. It includes nine volumes and 22 chapters. It took more than five years to create and is the longest in US history. Local government officials working on the draft had to sign non-disclosure agreements 'punishable by federal penalties' if violated (L. T. Camacho, 2013a; 2013b, p. 185). The public and local agencies were only given 45 days to comment. The community expressed their outrage and opposed the project verbally at the 'public hearings' administered by the DoD and through over 10,000 written comments, second only to the 30,000 produced by residents in the CNMI in 2015 (Na'puti & Bevacqua, 2015, p. 846). In February 2010, the US Environmental Protection Agency conducted a mandatory review of the DEIS, giving the document the lowest possible rating: 'Unsatisfactory: Inadequate information (EU3)' (Alexander, 2015, p. 5). Despite the communities' negative response, the 'dominant media discourse would have us believe that the majority of residents in Guam were in support of the military buildup' (Viernes, 2007, p. 111).

In April 2015, an additional 1,400-paged EIS document titled the *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Joint Military Training* (CJMT) was released. This proposes the creation of Live-Fire Training Range Complexes (LFTRCs) or bombing ranges on the islands of Guam, Pågan and Tinian, and the use of the beaches for amphibious landings and the sea around the islands for war exercises and sonar testing.

The 2015 CJMT document outlines the Navy plans for Tinian for 20 weeks of live-fire training and 22 weeks a year of non-live activity, including munitions storage, danger zones and airspace and sea space restrictions. The military wants to employ the entire island of Pågan as a high-level bombing range for exercises from the land, air, and sea, including 'guns-blazing war games' for at least 16 weeks a year (Cloud, 2015). However, the document includes the possibility of such activity 40 weeks per year on Pågan and 45 weeks on Tinian (Hofschneider, 2016c). Similarly, as for the EIS for Guam in 2010, the 2015 US Environmental Protection Agency review of the document expressed concern over the 'significant impacts to environmental justice for the population', specifically drinking water systems, munitions contamination and degradation of coral resources and wetlands (Johnson, 2015).

After the release of this large and highly technical CJMT document, and as required by NEPA, the US military provided only 30 days for the public to submit written or verbal comments from elected officials, governmental agencies, the private-sector, businesses, community organisations and the general public. However, Super Typhoon Soudelor, considered the 'world's powerful storm in 2015', devastated the island of Saipan during the 'comment period' of the EIS

(ABC News, 2015). The DoD extended the deadline for comments from 30 to 90 days for the community to respond, as the island was without power, internet and fresh water supplies were problematic (Pinaroc, 2015a). This event demonstrates the diversion from focusing on climate change the immediate impacts and forces the community to instead use resources and energies to challenge US militarisation.

During this period, the DoD held (and controlled) culturally inappropriate open-house style public meetings at schools on Saipan and Tinian. In order to speak at the meeting, local residents had to register in advance and verbal comments were limited to 'only three-minutes' (Pinaroc, 2015b). Four Chamorro and Refaluwasch scholars and residents outlined how the EIS 'public meeting' forum is culturally incompatible with Chamorro and Refaluwasch methods of gathering community input and feedback (Cabrera et al, 2015). They discuss how reciprocal culture creates generous hosts, but there are 'obligations and proper etiquette for the guests' [e.g. a US government agency like the military] (Cabrera et al, 2015). Within the framework of being a 'good guest', the authors discuss how to properly and respectfully gather input from the community and the importance of oral culture—contradictory to the NEPA process.

Numerous residents are also US Armed Forces veterans and they spoke of their experience of 'protecting and defending' US interests abroad, and now they are resisting the destruction of their homeland. At the EIS meetings, women highlighted protecting and defending, while honouring the ancestors and the genealogy of resistance to keep the islands, language and culture safe (Frain, 2017).

Despite the recurring release of numerous 'lengthy, technical, complex American English-language documents that refer to one another, which have been 11,000, 4,000, and 1,500 pages long', CNMI residents, including politicians, and even US federal agencies, have expressed strong opposition to the expanding militarisation (Cabrera et al., 2015). A record number of nearly 30,000 comments opposing the project were submitted in response to the 2015 CJMT document (Hofschneider, 2016a, 2016b, 2016d).

Dentons Environmental Science Associates

In addition to the public hearings and a record number of comments submitted, politicians of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) collectively oppose the further militarisation of the archipelago (Kedi & Scaliem, 2015). In April 2015, shortly after the release of the CJMT proposal, the Federal and Foreign Affairs Committee in the Marianas House voted 19-0 in favour of a resolution introduced by the late CNMI Governor Inos to 'oppose any and all proposed military use of Pågan' (Cloud, 2015). The House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs Chair, Representative Angel Demapan, referred to Guam's experience with the DoD, stating:

> The military used the same tactics with the people of Guam when they tried to build a base in a Chamorro village which the people of Guam opposed. You would think after the military's experience with Guam that they would learn, but it appears that they didn't learn and they are treating us the same way and with the same tactics that they imposed on the people of Guam. But we will remain vigilant and we will fight for our position. (as reported by Villahermosa, 2016)

In support of this stance, the CNMI administration hired a team of legal experts, Dentons Environmental Science Associates (hereafter Dentons), to review the 'legal adequacy' of the CJMT document and proposal on behalf of the CNMI government. They found it 'fails to meet even the most basic requirements… and the limited evidence presented in the document suggests that the CJMT would violate both federal and CNMI law' (Dentons US LLP Environmental Science Associates, 2015). Attorney Matthew Adams, added that the DEIS lacks 'alternatives, impact analysis, mitigation, and public input' and concluded, based on these initial findings, that the CJMT is 'non-complaint with the basic principles of the NEPA' (Kedi & Scaliem, 2015). Adams also said that the CNMI is 'one of the poorest, most isolated and least well-represented entities in the US'. Brian Turner, an attorney at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, says the EIS proposal demonstrates 'environmental injustice' and 'if this sort of thing were purposed in North Carolina [the continental US], it just would never happen' (as quoted in Hofschneider, 2016a).

Non-voting US Congressman for the CNMI, Gregorio 'Kilili' S. Sablan, supports the 'right of concerned citizens and community groups in the Marianas to raise grievances' through the NEPA process (Dumat-ol Daleno, 2016). Similar to the non-voting US Congresswoman for Guam, he recognises that the islands play an important role for 'national defence' of the US and that is 'why two-thirds of Tinian, major portions of land on Saipan, and the entire island of Farallon de Medinilla (FDM) have [already] been leased to the federal government for military purposes' (ibid, 2016). The Marianas community, supported by CNMI elected officials, including the Mayor of Tinian, the Governor of the CNMI, filed a lawsuit against the DoD and the Department of the Navy to ensure that the NEPA federal law is followed (L. J. Perez, 2016). Instead, the local government would rather focus and build upon the 2012 report, Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Island of Saipan, which outlines the most vulnerable areas of Saipan to climate change (Green & Skeele, 2014).

Current lawsuit

While the US citizens of the Marianas Archipelago with their non-voting US Congress representatives do not have power over how federal funds are spent

and are excluded from Pacific-American Climate Fund, they are instead tasked with holding the DoD accountable to the NEPA process. Rather than federal funding and local energy going towards climate change adaptation and resiliency, the community continues to resist the militarisation of their archipelago. The currently filed lawsuit against the US Navy and DoD is specifically related to the past ten years of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents released since the 2006 Roadmap announcement, culminating in the CJMT document of 2015.

On 27 July 2015, the Law Office of Kimberlyn King-Hinds (F0495) of San Jose Village, Tinian, supported by David Henkin of environmental law organisation Earthjustice, filed Civil No. 16-00022, in the United States District Court for the CNMI on Saipan on behalf of the local organisations: the Tinian Women's Association; Guardians of Gani'; PaganWatch; and the Center for Biological Diversity. The lawsuit accuses the US Navy and the DoD of failing to produce one concise EIS to evaluate the 'connected actions' and the environmental effects of 'the build-up' including the permanent stationing of thousands of US Marines on Guam and the military tests, Live Fire Training Range Complexes (LFTRCs) for those Marines on the islands of Tinian and Pågan in the CNMI (King-Hinds, 2015). The attorneys reminded the local media that the 'Navy has made a decision to move 5,000 Marines and their families to Guam without considering all the alternatives or whether Guam can absorb that many people in such a short time' (Pang, 2016). In addition to the lawsuit, members of the community create online petitions and alternative media to share across digital platforms to ensure that the community stays informed and updated (Frain, 2018, p. 113).

Alternative Zero Coalition

On 5 December 2016, the DoD and the Department of the Navy, through the US Department of Justice, filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit claiming the 'court lacks subject-matter jurisdiction and the lawsuit presents a political question because the executive branch decided to relocate the Marines as part of a treaty negotiated with Japan' (Manabat, 2016). This motion displays how the US DoD continues to deny the US citizens of the Marianas Archipelago sovereignty while promoting the narrative through the media that considers the Asia-Pacific Pivot plans as a 'political question' between the US and Japan. It is this treatment of the archipelago as possessions used for US security purposes which divert finances for climate change resiliency and adpatation projects, and instead prioritises funding for military projects.

Conclusion

This article highlighted how the 2018 *Make America Secure Appropriations Act* is the most recent US federal policy which prioritises funds for defence projects at the

DAN LIN/ALTERNATIVE ZERO COALITION

Figure 5: An aerial shot of Pågan, a beach the DoD intends to use as a Live-Fire Training Range from the land, sea, and air.

expense of climate change adaptation planning in the Marianas Archipelago. The US federal government and the DoD continue to treat the archipelago as 'garrison islands' (Camacho, 2013 p. 176). While the DoD acknowledges the threat and risks of climate change, it continues to invest billions of dollars into the construction of installations in high-risk zones and creates EIS documents which systematically violate the *National Environmental Policy Act* (Cabrera et al., 2015). While the Marianas community was told in 2016 to expect a Supplemental EIS to be released in 'early 2017 and a ROD by 2018', the website now reads, 'late 2018 or early 2019' (CNMI Joint Military Training EIS/OEIS, 2018).

Expanding militarisation of the archipelago is supported by US-owned media through the narrative of pro-American ideologies which frame any resistance as unpatriotic. However, both non-voting US Congress representatives for Guam

and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) express concerns with how federal funds are prioritised for military projects instead of climate change adaptation. Further, Indigenous Chamorro and Refaluwasch peoples of the Marianas continue to resist by creating content on alternative digital media platforms and through lawsuits. This article illustrates how remaining Political possessions of the US directly dictates the lack of sovereignty the people of the Marianas have in planning for climate change and how they are excluded from US climate change funds. Climate change is already occurring and the local government and community wish to focus and prepare for these serious impacts. Instead, the archipelago and the community are tasked with the lengthy and disruptive process of NEPA and ongoing toxic legacy of US militarisation.

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The author would like to express support for the local organisations in their lawsuit against the United States Department of Defense. To support the environmental justice efforts by the Indigenous Chamorro and Refaluwasch 'protectors and defenders' of their environment follow the Facebook pages:
Alternative Zero Coalition www.facebook.com/AlternativeZeroMarianas/
Oceania Resistance: www.facebook.com/OceaniaResistance/

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Framing rhino horn demand reduction in Vietnam

Dismissing medical use as voodoo

Abstract: According to Milliken and Shaw (2012) a surge in illegal rhino poaching in South Africa since 2006 was linked to increasing demand for rhino horn in Vietnam. This article examines one of the key frames, the 'Voodoo Wildlife Parts' (VWP) frame, which Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs) in Vietnam have been using in rhino horn demand reduction media campaigns. The VWP frame emerged from the findings of a research project that investigated the news frames present in the media outputs of seven ENGOs, both local and international, opposing the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) in Vietnam. This article will briefly outline the four frames that emerged from that research, then discuss the two subthemes of the VWP frame and its scientific basis and the nature of the feedback from journalists and the public that influenced the frame's production.

Keywords: environmental non-government organisations (ENGOs), framing, illegal wildlife trade (IWT), news framing, rhino, rhino horn, South Africa, Vietnam, wildlife trafficking

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THE ILLEGAL Wildlife Trade is considered the world's biggest threat to many species (Truong, Dang, & Hall, 2016). Environmental NGOs have been working to combat a resurgence in the poaching of rhinos for their horns in Africa and other rhino range states for the past 10 years. The poaching is directly linked to demand in Vietnam (Rademeyer, 2012), where rhino horn is widely purchased and used (Truong, et al., 2016). Milliken (2014) reported that the illegal supply of rhino horn from Africa to Asia increased by 30-fold from 2000 to 2013.

Critically endangered Black Rhino are listed in Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix 1 (Emslie, 2012a), while near threatened White Rhino in South Africa are listed

in Appendix 1 and 2 (Emslie, 2012b). Efforts by ENGOs in South Africa to directly reduce the poaching have been coupled with communication efforts in Vietnam and China, which are the main markets for rhino horn, to strengthen enforcement and change consumer behaviour to reduce demand. ENGOs, government stakeholders and international donors attended a high-level international conference to tackle IWT in Hanoi in Vietnam in November, 2016. ENGOs at the conference discussed various communication strategies they were developing to reduce demand for rhino horn and other priority IWT products.

This article outlines findings of a project that researched the media outputs of ENGOs working in Vietnam to reduce demand for rhino horn, by identifying and analysing the news frames present in their press releases (Smith, 2017). As news framing concerns the construction and interpretation of meaning (Gitlin, 1980; Entman, 1993), the framing analysis of the ENGO press releases provided valuable insights into the ENGOs' media strategies. The frames that emerged from the analysis were: Voodoo Wildlife Parts, Responsibility, Empower and Lip Service. This study focuses on Voodoo Wildlife Parts, perhaps the most widely mediatised and most contentious of the four frames.

Table 1: Dominant and competing press release key frames, 2017

Frame	Dominant	Competing	Total
Responsibility	22	30	52
Lip Service	22	15	37
Empower	14	30	44
Voodoo Wildlife Parts	14	32	46

Source: Table showing the total of dominant and competing ENGO key frames in the Vietnam press release sample (see Smith, 2017)

The name Voodoo Wildlife Parts was derived by an evocative *in vivo* term (Given, 2008) coined by an ENGO personnel during an interview. The VWP frame concerned the medical and emotional use of rhino horn from a scientific and Traditional Medicine (TM) aspect. Although rhino horn has been shown to have some medical efficacy to treat fever and has been used by TM practitioners for millennia, the increasing demand for rhino horn in Vietnam was fuelled by rumours of unscientifically proven medical benefits such as a body detoxifier and a cure for conditions from hangovers to cancer to a potion for success.

By drawing on interdisciplinary literature on ENGOs, IWT, environmental communication and news framing, this article aims to fill a gap in the framing research regarding the specific area of IWT. It aims to complement recent studies into rhino horn consumer behaviour and demand (Truong, et al., 2016; Drury, 2009; Burgess, 2016) by using framing theory to analyse the strategies used by ENGOs. Hansen (2011) argued that framing studies provided productive frameworks to analyse environmental communication, but noted that there were

few studies into the careers of environmental claims makers. There is a growing NGO lobby in Vietnam (Smith, 2008), while ENGOs are responsible for new ways of talking about the environment in China (Yang & Calhoun, 2013) and Vietnam (Cooper, 2006; Mol, 2009). A better understanding of the media work that these ENGOs are doing is critical, as rhino poaching figures in Africa have increased (Milliken & Shaw, 2012). This article also aims to suggest ways the VWP frames and the processes can be improved to assist ENGOs to be more effective in their communications to reduce demand and contribute to saving a threatened species.

Methodology

The research project this study is drawn from (Smith, 2017) used a mixed method approach to firstly identify key frames used to reduce demand for rhino horn in Vietnam, secondly to discover the cultural and other factors that influenced the production of the frames and thirdly to investigate the efficacy of the frames and strategies used by the ENGOs to achieve their goals.

The ENGOs selected for the study came from a small pool of ENGOs working in the IWT area and were selected on three main criteria:

- They were prominent.
- They had an office or a partner with an office in Vietnam.
- They produced press releases that were archived on their website regarding the illegal rhino horn trade in Vietnam.

The ENGOs that produce media outputs to reduce demand for rhino horn in Vietnam were all present at the Hanoi Conference on IWT on 17-18 November 2016. Seven of the nine ENGOs at the conference doing work on the rhino trade were included in the study, including a mix of international and local ENGOs. These were local ENGOs: Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV), WildAct and Change, and international ENGOs (IENGOs): Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and WildAid. To identify the framing that the ENGOs used, the study used press releases and interviews with key personnel.

A total of 76 English language press releases from between 2014 and 2016 were selected from the websites of the ENGOs. A traditional analogue approach using printed out press releases and different coloured highlighters was used in the analysis. To identify the four key frames, framing theory (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Tankard, 2001; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997) and a framing analysis methodology adopted by Blood, Putnis & Pirkis (2002, p. 59) were employed. Frames were identified through persistent inclusion, exclusion and emphasis (Gitlin, 1980); placement of information, its prominence, repetition or association with culturally familiar language and symbols (Entman, 1993, p. 53; Phalen & Algan, 2001, p. 303; and images (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Entman's (1993) four functions of frames: 'problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation' and Benford and Snow's (2000) motivational tasks for social movements were used to further clarify the nature of the frames

To explore the factors that influenced the framing, the methodology drew on a combination of internal and external approaches (Anderson, 1997, p. 34) used by Lowe and Goyder (1983) in a seminal study of environmental groups in Britain. A social constructionist perspective (Blumer, 1971; Schneider, 1985; Spector & Kitsuse, 1973, as cited in Hansen, 2011, p. 9) that views how knowledge and meaning is created by the subjects' interactions was taken. At the conference I conducted semi-structured interviews with key ENGO personnel involved in the production of media outputs. Recordings of four key TRAFFIC personnel, presenting at the 'Behaviour change to combat wildlife crime' seminar at the conference, were also included in the data. The interviews were transcribed and coded using the qualitative analysis programme In Vivo. Inductive and deductive coding was carried out, while drawing on framing theory to analyse the factors that influence frames. Entman's (1993) four framing sites: the communicator, audience, text and culture were analysed; while Scheufele's (1999) and deVreese's (2005) influencing factors of media frames: political and ideological orientations, routines and political and financial constraints were adapted to the ENGO context. To further triangulate the data and investigate the efficacy of the frames, nine experts were interviewed including Vietnamese journalists, media scholars and public relations practitioners. The interviews with experts were transcribed and coded using In Vivo.

Literature review

Sumrall (2009) recommended that ENGOs working in the IWT sector in Vietnam should build relationships with journalists. The interviews with key personnel revealed that ENGOs employed routines with journalists that influenced the framing of the press releases (Smith, 2017). DeLuca (2009) found in his discussions with a Greenpeace organiser that Greenpeace's communication strategies are underpinned by scholarly theories. Greenberg, Knight and Westersund (2011) found that many ENGOs in the US were employing creative agencies.

Hansen (2011) noted a dearth in journalism research on source strategies and their framing activities. There are several communication studies, however, that are relevant here. Anderson (1997) researched the campaigns of ENGOs in Britain and identified Science as an effective frame that claims makers enacted. Nisbet (2009) also found Science frames to be common in environmental campaigns. Anderson (1991) and Hansen (1993, p. 75) argued ENGOs were tied to using scientific evidence to gain legitimacy. Environmental framing scholar Lakoff (2010) argued that the truth about the environment had to be framed the right

way to be effective because it had to resonate with audiences and cultural frames, or it would be rejected or ignored. Lakoff (2010) emphasised the importance of never repeating opposing arguments as it is impossible to negate a frame that way, something relevant to the VWP frame. Risk scholar and sociologist Ulrick Beck (1991) argued that the press could frame scientific facts in various ways to influence the public's definition of social problems and, if a cause of a risk was socially recognised, there would be pressure for change.

Collins' (2013) research into anti-logging claims makers found that it was important not to use vilifying frames in order to keep negotiations open. Lin's (2012) study of the local and international campaigns of an elephant welfare group in Thailand agreed with Collin's point, but from an Asian context. Lin found that gentle rather than critical approaches were more effective at gaining public support in Asian cultures. However, she found that negative messaging, was effective at raising awareness internationally. There was consensus among scholars of the importance of culture in framing (Entman, 1993; Anderson, 1997; Lakoff, 2010; Nisbet, 2009; Lester, 2014), while Lester (2014) argued that foreign claims makers sometimes did not understand important cultural nuances. In a finding applicable to audience frames in Vietnam, Hansen (1993) argued that Greenpeace's focus on the environmental problem and not themselves was a factor in their legitimacy.

Solesbury (1976) argued there were three main tasks for claims makers. These tasks included commanding attention, claiming legitimacy and invoking action. Benford and Snow (2000) echoed Solesbury's task of invoking action by noting the need for communications that motivate change. Key personnel that were interviewed discussed the importance of communicating issues that directly affected rhino horn users. In line with the ENGOs, Maibach, Nisbet, Baldwin, Akerlof & Diao (2010) argued that framing issues pertinent to audiences were persuasive.

Findings

As superstitious beliefs are considered to be unscientific, the VWP frame belonged to the generic environmental framing category of Science (Nisbet, 2009; Anderson, 1991, 1997).

The frame occurred in two subthemes that were related, but clearly differentiated, which I called the Medical subtheme and the Success subtheme. It performed a causal function (Entman, 1993) blaming demand on false beliefs. The subthemes related to the two key purposes of using the horn: medical and emotional. The VWP frame appeared in the media releases of five of seven ENGOs that were analysed: ENV, Change, WildAct, WildAid and TRAFFIC and in over half of the sample overall. It did not appear in the media releases of two IENGOs in the sample: WWF and WCS.

This sentence from a WildAid press release illustrates how the Medical

sub-theme used a metaphor framing device (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) to illustrate the unscientific basis of the belief:

> Belief in its purported health benefits, including treatment for cancer, fever reduction and other health problems, remains relatively high in Vietnam, despite the fact that rhino horn is composed of compressed hair and keratin, the same protein found in fingernails. (WildAid, 2015, para 2)

In its causal function as a frame, it broadly criticised the unscientific nature of traditional and recent beliefs in the medical efficacy of rhino horn by employing the fingernail framing device.

The Medical subtheme was enacted by a variety of framing devices. Framing devices included a metaphor (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) that the campaign has become known for, comparing rhino horn to fingernail. Other devices include words (Lakoff, 2010) or catchphrases (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) that challenged the belief, such as 'magic,' 'myth', 'superstition,' 'miracle cure,' 'ignorant' and 'false beliefs.'

Framing device images (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) included photos of rhinos photoshopped with fingers for horns, celebrities chewing their nails and bottles of fingernails, which act as fingernail metaphors (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) emphasising the lack of science. Framing devices enacting the Science generic frame also included selecting traditional doctors, cancer experts and hospital patients as messengers, sources, influential peers or potential interpersonal sources (Nisbet, 2009). These framing devices focused on what the buyers and users wanted, which was effective medical treatment, rather than criticising their intelligence.

In press releases, where the ENGOs focused less on what was wrong with the belief and more on what the consumers wanted, such as 'proper cancer treatment options' and how using rhino horn could 'worsen the disease and waste time and resources' (Change, 2015), the ENGOs used relevant sites (Cox, 2010) to motivate change. The medical expert sources or messengers that Change used in their press releases were Science framing devices that the ENGOs used to communicate this aspect.

The Success subtheme represented a shift away from the Medical subtheme, focusing on a wide-spread aspect of the demand, in which consumers used rhino horn to gain success (Burgess, 2016; Truong, et al., 2016). Rather than focus on a false belief, the Success sub-theme suggested an alternative to rhino horn.. TRAFFIC's Chi campaign alerted wealthy businessmen rhino horn users to the Asian cultural belief of Chi as this sentence illustrates:

> The Chi campaign promotes the notion that success, masculinity and good luck flow from an individual's internal strength of character and refutes

> the view that these traits come from a piece of horn. (TRAFFIC, 2014, September 22).

It expressed a positive view of Vietnamese culture, providing a solution, rather than a critical view as the Medical subtheme did with the fingernail metaphor. Framing devices included words and catchphrases such as 'chi', 'success', 'status', 'masculinity', 'prosperity' and 'good luck'. Images featured photographs of expensive cars with successful businessmen. The use of sources including celebrities, business leaders, and government officials also enacted the 'Success' subtheme.

ENV, however, was quite critical of users and their beliefs in the Success sub-theme as these exerts from a press release illustrates: '…by letting consumers know how foolish they are for thinking that the use of rhino horn makes them special in any way' and 'If consumers look in the mirror they may see an important person but if they look at their hands they will see the blood of rhinos' (ENV, 2014).

Cultural and other factors of influence and efficacy

This section will discuss the cultural and other factors that influenced the production of the VWP frame (Table 2).

Interviews with key personnel showed the Medical subtheme of the VWP frame was possibly influenced by frames that were held by the communicators, or ENGO ideologies. A number of ENGO personnel said they thought the belief in rhino horns medical efficacy was false or 'a complete fallacy' (Representative B, personal communication, November 17, 2016), while others, as animal-lovers, actually 'hate' (T. Tran, personal communication, July 2, 2016) users, because they saw them as harming animals. John Baker, WildAid's managing director, said WildAid's 'Nail Biter' campaign was designed in conjunction with creative agencies to attract attention with humour. He said the campaign aimed to make rhino horn users 'look dumb' by portraying them as fingernail biters (J Baker, personal communication, November 17, 2016). These communicator ideological factors may help explain why ENGOs compared a highly regarded medicine in TM to chewing fingernails.

The comments of one source suggested that the fingernail framing device was originally conceived to be a fun scientific message targeting international audiences, before it was applied in Vietnam:

> … if we talk about saving rhino in far off lands, the average consumer in America or the UK or whatever, they're like, 'Oh that's nice and I hate to see them die, but what can I do and how does that relate to me.' So you always look to make the connection, so by talking to the people about their fingernails you can certainly have an impact. (Representative B, personal communication, November 17, 2016)

Table 2: Influencing factors of the 'VWP' frame	
Categories of influencing factors	**Influencing factors revealed in interviews**
ENGO political and ideological orientations and communicator frames	• ENGOs believed the TM use was a fallacy. • ENGOs were animal lovers. • ENGOs disliked users. • ENGOs believed the fingernail device was funny. • ENGOs recognised and respected the medicinal use of rhino horn in the traditional way.
ENGO routines	• ENGOs responded to feedback from public and government. • ENGOs employed local staff. • ENGOs sought feedback from friends and family. • ENGOs sought feedback from journalists. • ENGOs copied and pasted background information from previous press releases. • International ENGOs worked with local ENGOs on messages. • ENGOs looked for catchy messages and images. • ENGOs used expert messengers. • ENGOs used messengers with cultural and socio-economic proximity to their target audience. • ENGOs translated and simplified scientific papers for the public. • ENGOs were informed by scholarly research.
ENGO political and financial constraints	• ENGOs with funding commissioned research organisations. • ENGOs with funding commissioned creative agencies.

Several personnel said the critical aspects of the Medical sub-theme, such as the fingernail framing device, were met with distrust and anger by the Vietnamese government and public, because it was not seen as true, or as an over-simplification of the science. Hence audience frames came into play:

> But even with the message of the fingernail, we got a lot of complaints from the government officer and other public member. That's why we stopped using that message. When the conservation organisation says that rhino horn is the same, like fingernail, it's not true at all. (D. Nguyen, personal communication, November 18, 2016).

Representative A suggested that simplifying the science was an ENGO routine that was problematic: 'A lot of the time we are sending out messages that are too simplified' (Representative A, personal communication, November 18, 2016). Feedback, from the public and the government, through employing local staff and seeking feedback from family and friends, was an important influencing factor, particularly in respect to the culture:

> …you always need to have the local people to check to see it fits with the cultures…Of course the first is the office. We are the local people. We understand the messages and then our friends and families and if they are all opposed to it, other audience who do not understand the problem they will be opposed to it as well… (V.H. Duong, personal communication, November 18, 2016)

Two ENGOs, Change and TRAFFIC, debranded their campaigns, as personnel said the Vietnamese public would dismiss messages that came from a 'conservation voice' (T. Nguyen, personal communication, November 17, 2016). WCS Policy Director Duong Viet Hong said WCS did not try to refute rhino horns' medical credentials on the basis of it being made from keratin, as rhino horn has been shown to have medical benefits for a long time:

> We do not say that because some people are really angry. Of course, it has fingernail, it has keratin but it has other substance that you don't… That's why it's been used in Traditional Medicine for a long, long time and according to the research we've seen it does have the effect of reducing fever. (V.H. Duong, personal communication, November 18, 2016).

Interviews with journalists revealed some of them shared Duong Viet Hong's views that ENGOs' fingernail claims had no scientific basis, while other media representatives said the fingernail claims were widely reported, because they were effective at illustrating that the belief is false. ENGOs in Vietnam sought the feedback of journalists following Sumrall's (2009) research. A range of the media relations routines had potential to influence frames.

In addition to the long list of journalists on their contact list, ENV cultivated a 'top ten list' of journalists for whom they organised 'media café chats' (D Nguyen, personal communication, November 18, 2016). These are casual events rather than press conferences. 'It's kind of like an informal café discussion', where journalists and ENGO personnel can 'talk freely' (D. Nguyen, personal communication, November 18, 2016). They talked about important stories in more detail and tried to explain the ENGO's position, when journalists did not understand. Sometimes they tried to encourage journalists to investigate an important issue more deeply. At the media café chats the journalists often provided

feedback about the ENGOs press releases, 'about our approach, about the media statement, whether it's interesting or not' (D. Nguyen, personal communication, November 18, 2016). Often the journalists complained the ENGO included too many messages, making the press releases too long. ENV Vice-Director Nguyen Thi Phuong Dung explained that ENV tended to include too many messages in their press releases because they were targeting diverse audiences.

Change Director Hoang Thi Minh Hong described a similar tactic employing casual media briefings rather than press conferences. Another ENGO worked collaboratively with journalists via e-mail to edit press releases:

> I do take advice from the journalist about fixing or changing the media release, because they work with the public more than I do… So we draw up a media release form and if they don't understand it they send it back. And if there's something they want to fix, they want to add more, something they want to remove, they send it back… So we work with them together to make sure we get the draft and when we get the final draft, we send. (Representative A, personal communication, November 17, 2016)

Duong Viet Hong explained that WCS provided Vietnamese journalists with a broad range of relevant information that was not related to WCS, to keep them generally informed about important issues regarding wildlife trafficking. She said WCS held media training workshops, where they fed journalists stories and explained how journalists could avoid inadvertently promoting demand:

> And we also present some of the do and don'ts while writing about wildlife trafficking because some of the journalists might unintentionally promote the wildlife trade in their writing and we don't want that (V.H. Duong, personal communication, November 18, 2016)

Duong Viet Hong said WCS messaging focused only on the spurious medical claims and who was to blame for spreading them:

> Then we can give them a message of how the research has been done on the features of rhino horn to say that it doesn't have all those advertised benefits people are talking about right now. And those benefits don't have any basis. And it's often created by the wildlife traders and each year there's more new benefits and that's the proof that it's not traditional. It doesn't have any basis. (V.H. Duong, personal communication, November 18, 2016)

This suggests that the frame could be adjusted to be more accurate, as Lakoff (2010) argued, to better connect with audiences. It could be argued that such frame adjustments could be done via Entman's four functions of the frame (1993), in this case by adjusting the causal/blame function.

The fingernail framing device, despite several ENGOs' decision not to use it,

still persisted in press releases in a competing frame. A possible explanation was an ENGO routine of copy and pasting background paragraphs, which could be remedied by making personnel more frame-aware and breaking the routine. To additionally reduce the journalists' routine of copying and pasting the fingernail device into stories noted by Journalist A (personal communication, November 22, 2016), ENGOs could utilise their unique relationships with journalists.

Partnerships between IENGOs and local ENGOs, and the relationship between IENGOs' head office and their Vietnamese office were also influencing factors. WildAid's director John Baker described a routine with their local partner Change: '… we work together on crafting the press releases, I often start with their drafts and we craft them together' (J. Baker, personal communication, November 18, 2016).

Theoretical discussion

The Medical subtheme was widely used by ENGOs and in the media, as it was an effective framing device for raising awareness (Newspaper Editor A, 2016, personal communication, November 22, 2016), fulfilling an important function of claims makers (Solesbury, 1976). However, the subtheme apparently angered some members of the Vietnamese public and the government because it was culturally insensitive. Collins (2013) argued that frames should avoid being vilifying to keep negotiations open, while Lin (2012) observed that in cross cultural communication with Asian cultures a gentle approach was needed.

Some interviews with ENGOs showed the ENGO personnel had strong negative feelings about both belief in rhino horn's efficacy (Baker, personal communication, November 18, 2016; Representative B, 2016, personal communication, November 17, 2016) and the consumers themselves (T. Tran, personal communication, July 2, 2016; D. Nguyen, 2016, personal communication, November 18, 2016). This suggests an underlying motivation in the communicator's frames and ideologies that influenced the Medical subtheme to make them critical or insulting of users and their beliefs.

The interviews also suggested that ENGOs were thinking of international audiences when they designed fingernail messages. (Representative B, personal communication, 17 November 17, 2016) because the fingernail metaphor was easily relatable and humorous. Lin (2012) found with an elephant ENGO in Thailand that while local messages should be gentle, critical international messages were successful at raising awareness and building support overseas. This dual approach, however, appeared to be problematic in Vietnam because Vietnamese journalists consume the international news media where they would come across critical messages. Critical messages were perpetuated because foreign claims makers did not understand important cultural nuances (Lester, 2014).

The ENGOs received feedback from the public and the government that the

fingernail framing device was culturally insensitive, through an ENGO routine of employing local staff and seeking feedback from friends and family. Hence several ENGOs rejected the fingernail device. Instead of using the fingernail and myth devices, some ENGOs used medical sources who recommended modern cancer cures. Thus, ENGOs switched from a causal function of the frame, where the cause of the problem was a false belief, to a more culturally sensitive treatment function (Entman, 1993). This approach performed an important motivating task (Benford & Snow, 2000) by using issues pertinent to the audience (Maibach et al., 2010) and contemporary medical opinion.

By suggesting that ENGOs should blame new spurious medical claims and the illegal traders that spread them, Duong Viet Hong of WCS was referring to fine tuning the causal/blame function of the frame to avoid criticising the audience frame, a deep-seated belief in rhino horn's lofty place in TM.

ENGOs received feedback from journalists via a variety of unusual media relations activities discussed in the findings. Some journalists said the fingernail claims lacked scientific evidence, echoing Hansen (1993) and Anderson's (1991) view that ENGOs rely on science for legitimacy, while other journalists said they had used the device as it was an effective way of communicating the lack of science (Newspaper Editor A, personal communication, November 22, 2016) suggesting that the metaphor was a powerful framing device (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Research activities that TRAFFIC undertook were a key influencing factor in the production of the Success subtheme, reflecting their financial capacity. The approach was much more audience focused than the Medical subtheme. Research activities included engagement with scholarly research in related disciplines, social marketing research and online communities of practice. In line with other IENGOs and TRAFFIC's previous campaigns, TRAFFIC employed a creative agency for its Chi campaign.

Conclusion

ENGOs have extensively employed a science frame that questions the science behind rhino horn's medical effectiveness to discourage strong consumer demand in Vietnam. By employing the science frame, ENGOs questioned the medical and health benefits of this long standing and highly regarded traditional medicine in Vietnam by comparing the medical or health effect of taking rhino horn to chewing fingernails. The ENGO media outputs often called the belief or the science behind its medical efficacy a myth or a false belief in a magical medicine.

ENGOs employed two subthemes of the VWP frame in their media outputs: the Medical subtheme, which questioned the medicinal qualities of rhino horn, and the Success subtheme, which questioned the use of rhino horn as a status

symbol and as a magical potion to achieve success. Both subthemes are underpinned by a belief in Vietnam that rhino horn is extremely valuable and rare as a traditional medicine.

The findings suggested that when ENGOs used the fingernail and myth framing devices in the VWP frame it was problematic. Feedback from the Vietnamese public and government suggested the devices were untrue and disrespectful of Vietnamese culture. However, the devices were effective at commanding public and media attention, possibly because of the powerful framing effect of the metaphor. More focus was needed in respect of audience and cultural frames rather than communicator frames. Hence ENGOs tried to be more accurate in communicating what beliefs were the culprits and who was to blame for them. Instead of negating audience frames, ENGOs employed more science and medical experts that suggested alternative ways for the public to achieve what they want. This helped to gain legitimacy, which emerged as a chief concern, illustrated by de-branding media outputs in line with Greenpeace's practice (Hansen, 1993), and to avoid vilifying traditional beliefs.

A key finding was in the way ENGOs routinely accessed local feedback from friends, family and local staff, that helped them to be culturally sensitive. Feedback from journalists was sought, as Sumrall (2009) had recommended. Local ENGO personnel had developed strong relationships with local journalists, through activities such as media café chats and co-editing of press releases. The two-way communication model benefited both sides by enhancing better understanding of the illegal demand for rhino horn for journalists and better understanding what was interesting to journalists and the public for the ENGOs. The media provided a mix of feedback on the Medical subtheme of the VWP frame, so ENGOs appeared to give the frame less prominence, but continued to include it as a competing frame. The mixed feedback included that the fingernail message was effective at raising awareness, but it wasn't scientifically supported or culturally appropriate.

The factors that influenced the Success subtheme appeared to be less organic, with more focus on an evidence-based approach than the way in which the Medical subtheme evolved. The use of creative agencies in Vietnam shows that the practice of ENGOs in the US and Canada employing creative agencies (Greenberg et al. 2011) is also employed in Vietnam. The importance that TRAFFIC placed on scholarly research of multiple disciplines to find solutions to reduce demand echoes DeLuca's (2009) findings with Greenpeace. Implications for further research may be the influence of international donors on ENGO campaigns in IWT, the influence of creative agencies on framing in IWT and the use of the VWP frame in media stories about the medical use of other animal parts such as tiger penises in Asia.

The research revealed the use of journalism framing theory as an effective

theoretical framework to analyse and evaluate the communication strategies of ENGOs in cross cultural contexts. Overall the ENGOs' media outputs suggest their campaigns are taking a positive direction. As Lakoff (2010) argued, reframing environmental issues to overcome entrenched conservative values takes time.

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The New Zealand Institute for Pacific Research (NZIPR) is a new national institute to promote and support excellence in Pacific research. Established in March 2016 and led by Associate Professor Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa, NZIPR is a collaboration between the University of Auckland, Otago University and Auckland University of Technology. Key support partners are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Pacific Cooperation Foundation.

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Dr David Robie is editor of Pacific Journalism Review.

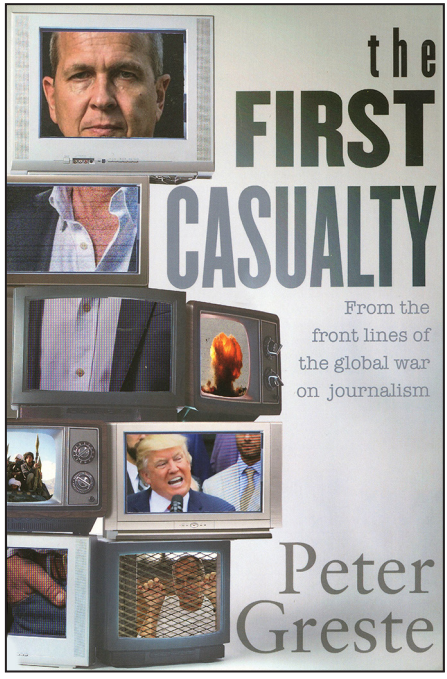
A crusade for media truth and justice

The First Casualty: From the Front Lines of the Global War on Journalism, by Peter Greste. Sydney: Viking. 2017. 335 pages. ISBN 9780670079261.

PETER GRESTE, the Australian journalist who became a thorn in the side of the harsh Egyptian authorities from the inside of prison cells and in a courtroom cage for 400 days, hasn't wasted opportunities since he became the UNESCO chair of journalism and communication at the University of Queensland earlier this year. He chose World Press Freedom Day as the moment to launch a new independent body dedicated to campaigning for reporters whose 'voices have been stifled' by regimes around the world.

Greste's new advocacy group, the Alliance for Journalists' Freedom, was established with a mission to campaign for press freedom in Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region. He launched it while being awarded the Australian Press Council's 2018 Press Freedom Medal. He said:

> If we want to be taken seriously as a country that defends human rights and the principles of a liberal democracy, then we need to make sure that we publicly restate those positions and make sure that those people, those governments who we're close to, follow the same principles. (Journalists' free alliance advocate calls, 2018)



Although he was referring to Myanmar's jailing of two local Reuters journalists who had been arrested in 2017 after investigating an alleged act of genocide against a group of persecuted Rohingya people, Greste's 'watchdog' message didn't just end there. He was equally scathing about Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte who has been accused of ordering the deaths of journalists among the 7500 plus people who have been killed in his so-called 'war on drugs.' He also backed international campaigns to free 120 journalists being imprisoned

in a harsh crackdown in Turkey.

Greste's unjust imprisonment in Egypt for reporting news 'damaging to national security' inspired his personal crusade to fight back against what he perceives to be a growing 'global war on journalism'. He argues that global press freedom is at its worst ebb for the past 13 years. This book is both a narrative of his ordeal and a documentation of the killings of journalists.

'The First Casualty', as a title marking wartime abolition of 'truth', is hardly original. It follows the lead of Philip Knightley and his original 1975 work of the same name revealing how governments have manipulated the media during wars from Crimea to Iraq; and Ricky Phillips' 2016 *exposé* on what really happened in the Falklands invasion by Argentina in 1982, a story hidden from the public for more than three decades.

The phrase has even featured as the title of a historical novel, Ben Elton's 2006 equally conflict-inspired book about the murder of a British aristocratic officer by a shell-shocked soldier on a Flanders battlefield in World War I. However, it is still a compelling title for this inspirational media freedom book.

Grest, a journalist with extensive experience of war reporting in the battlefields of Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan, was imprisoned in Cairo by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's regime following the 3 July 2013 coup against the Muslim Brotherhood-inspired government which was popularly elected after the Arab Spring upheaval of 2011.

He arrived in Egypt just six months after the military coup from his base in Kenya. 'Pro-Brotherhood protesters were still on the streets, while the authorities were rounding up MC officials and supporters, accusing them of supporting terrorism,' recalls Greste (p. 7),

This provided the background to his arrest, along with an Egyptian, Baher Mohamed and a Canadian-Egyptian, Mohammed Fahmy. They were thrust into a Kafkaesque world of 'obscure conflict between journalism and belligerents on both sides' in the so-called War on Terror.

> Critically for me, Qatar and its government-funded news network, Al Jazeera, had been accused of working to undermine national security. The already-bleak political environment had turned toxic. (p. 8)

Greste arrived in the country without press accreditation, a process which usually takes a couple of weeks, because he planned to be there for only three weeks. However, the network's relationship with the regime had become so strained that it was increasingly difficult, even dangerous, to turn up at official events. Instead, they used freelance cameramen to gather footage.

While Al Jazeera English was supposed to be 'fully licensed to operate from and broadcast into Egypt', the network's Egyptian affiliate had had its licence cancelled by the regime— 'but our bosses have insisted that we don't need to worry about our legal status'. Their equipment, such as standard video cameras, lights, microphones

and laptops, did not need any special permission.

> We have no military equipment beyond bulletproof vests that have become standard issue for journalists working in places with bullets flying around. We are not using any special satellite equipment or banned communications gear. We are sending our material to Doha over the hotel's high-speed internet service. (p. 9)

Although Greste had studied the Australian legal system as part of his university degree, he found the Egyptian legal system baffling, an 'awkward blend of British common law, Islamic sharia law and Napoleonic codes that reflects the country's history of occupation' (p. 39). For most of the hearings, the three faced a prosecutor acting within the 'Napoleonic, inquisitorial' code. It was also not encouraging to know that

> political activists and suspected MB members are still disappearing off the streets, often for months at a time, and emerging with stories of torture and abuse, with nobody seeming sure of just what laws the authorities are using to detain them. If any. (p. 40)

By the time Greste and his colleagues were arrested, human rights organisations had estimated 20,000 people had been 'thrown in prison'. Conditions were dire too, especially in the holding cells during the early weeks of their detention.

In one tiny cell, a concrete holding block in the middle of a courtyard that Greste estimated had been built to hold two or three prisoners, there were 16 detainees jam-packed within the walls at one stage.

One of the intriguing aspects of this book are Greste's revelations about how he survived the boredom, uncertainy, harshness, cruelty and depression of the incarceration—the early optimism for freedom rapidly gave way to the fear of spending years in lockdown. He points to the Islamic world expression 'inshallah' or 'God willing', meaning accept what fate brings, as one helpful approach.

Routines of meditation, memory games (books—later, when they were allowed in), physical exercise—35 daily laps in the Mulhaq Prison compound—smuggling out toilet paper letters about prison experience information, and hearing about the global 'zipped lips' campaign all played a role (p. 77).

The book is structured around two parallel narratives, one around his arrest and repercussions with chapter titles such as 'Interrogation', 'Tora Limen Prison, Mulhaq Prison' and 'The case for the prosecution'. The other narrative tracing his 25 years of war reporting with alternating titles such as 'Afghanistan 1995', 'Afghanistan, 2001', 'Somalia', 'The renegade network', 'Syrian hellhole', 'Press freedom in the land of the free' and 'Charlie Hebdo'.

The problem for journalists, when the War on Terror began after the Twin Towers outrage in September 2011, was that this was a war about ideas and

the battlefield extended 'to the place where ideas themselves are tested—the media' (p. 54).

The assault on journalism began with the US assault on Al Jazeera on 13 November 2011. Prior to 9/11, Al Jazeera Arabic had been broadcasting largely unnoticed by the West since 1996. However, the channel then began broadcasting messages from Al Qaeda and the Taliban in an attempt at balancing reporting from all sides. After the US failed in its bid to persuade the Qatari government to 'rein in' Al Jazeera, an American bombing mission blasted the 'renegade' network's bureau in Kabul, destroying its offices and equipment and also damaging the BBC bureau next door and the nearby Associated Press office.

Just six days later, the Taliban ambushed a convoy including four journalists, Julio Fuientes of the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*, Maria Grazia Cutulli from the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, and two Reuters staff, Australian cameraman Harry Burton and Afghan photojournalist Aziz Ullah Haidari, at Jalalabad on the road to Kabul (p. 58). They were stoned to near death and then sprayed with bullets.

On 23 January 2002, *Wall Street Journal's* Islamabad correspondent Daniel Pearl, who had been writing about the Islamic world 'with intelligence and nuance', was kidnapped by radical activists and handed over to Al Qaeda. Weeks later, after being forced to denounce American foreign policy in a video, he was gruesomely beheaded.

> The Pearl kidnap and murder made it clear that journalists were being specifically targeted and then used as tools of propaganda. And with its bombing of the Al Jazeera bureau in Kabul, there was a chilling suggestion that the US government's tolerance for independent reporting had reached its limits. (p. 63)

Ever since, journalists worldwide have been forced to confront the truth – that since 9/11 the world had become a vastly more dangerous place for the media (p. 324).

Greste was eventually freed by Egyptian judicial authorities on 1 February 2015 (after being convicted and sentenced to seven years on the trumped up charges) and Fahmy and Baher were pardoned more than seven months later on September 24. But there are many hard lessons from their ordeal, admits the author, including how vitally important it is 'hold the line on standards' in newsrooms and journalism schools, especially with trust in the media at an all-time low.

A final lesson is the need for global solidarity and to defend attacks on media freedom.

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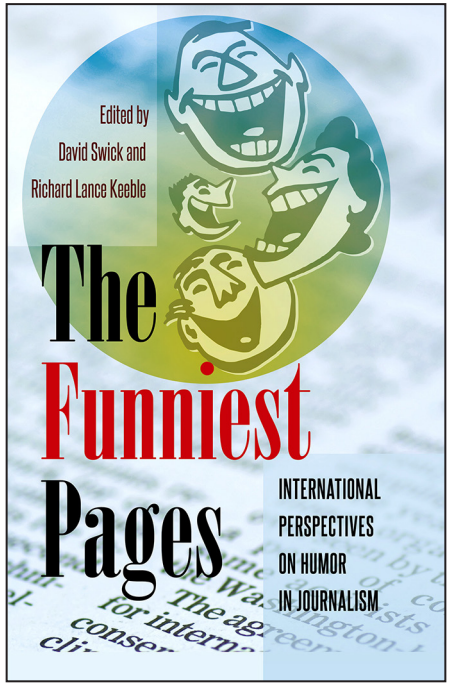
Humour cuts through to the truth



The Funniest Pages: International Perspectives on Humor in Journalism, edited by David Swick and Richard Lance Keeble. New York: Peter Lang. 2017. 288 pages. ISBN 978-1-4331-3099-1 (hardcover); ISBN 978-1-4539-1781-7 (e-book)

SOME of my most treasured moments in journalism have come, not through some painstaking excoriation of the powerful and corrupt, but thumbing the pages of *Private Eye*, or watching John Clarke take down the vanity of politicians across the ditch. Satire, humour and the cartoon page are as much journalism as investigative exposés; they're the foam on the beer of journalism, the froth that stops us gagging on the otherwise relentless wholesomeness.

Often, they cut through to a truth that can't be told in more obvious ways. So why is it that journalistic humour is almost entirely absent from university journalism programmes? And so understudied in the academy? This is one of the questions posed by this important and long overdue study of humour in journalism.

Divided into four sections, the first has eight chapters surveying the deployment of humour in journalism up to the present day. Beginning with some of the first uses of satire, in the English Civil War, it moves on with a scholarly, if strangely humourless account of Addison and Steele's founding role in journalistic satire through the creation of *The Spectator* and *Tatler*. Dickens, James Cameron and Hunter S. Thompson are there, as well as *The Clinic's* role in post-Pinochet Chile.

The second section looks at the way columnists such as Clive James and John Clarke have invented new comic genres within journalism. Section Three explores sports humour; Dermot Heaney examines the use of humour in live text cricket coverage. Section Four brings us into the 21st century, with Sue Joseph on Australian female comedy and others on the transformation of humour by millennials and the online world.

Some of the best chapters are by writers who are not academics: Blake Lambert explores the central role of Twitter in the renaissance of black humour, suggesting it has complemented the work of traditional journalists, still bound by the 'myth of objectivity' and publishers' reluctance to challenge. It has allowed journalists to speak truth to power, using incision and wit and ridicule to make connections that they cannot do in other forms. One of the best examples he gives is #Presidentobiang, a parody of the hideous tyrant of Equatorial Guinea; 'To my Twitter followers, you may follow me, but my security forces will always follow you #AFCON2015'

'Is it wrong to give 36,000 hectares of public land to one's 24-year-old son to start a lucrative timber business? Asking for a friend' (p. 239). Lambert argues that 'Through its commitment to free speech and to identifiable parodies, Twitter has reinvigorated black humor and turned it into a social good. Outrageous lies and questionable practices by politicians merit scepticism and hard questions. For years, these duties exclusively belonged to journalists. Twitter, with its black humor, demonstrates that the definition of who and what is a journalist has changed.' (p. 243).

Although at times one yearns for a few more jokes to leaven the analysis, this is serious and useful survey of the uses of humour in journalism. There is, perhaps, too much of an American weighting; Twain and *Mad Magazine*, *Spy* and *Snark* are well covered; as the authors note, *Private Eye*, *Le Canard Enchaîné* and much of the rest of Europe and Asia are not. But it is has certainly got me thinking about what we can do to make journalism study fun, as well as inspiring.

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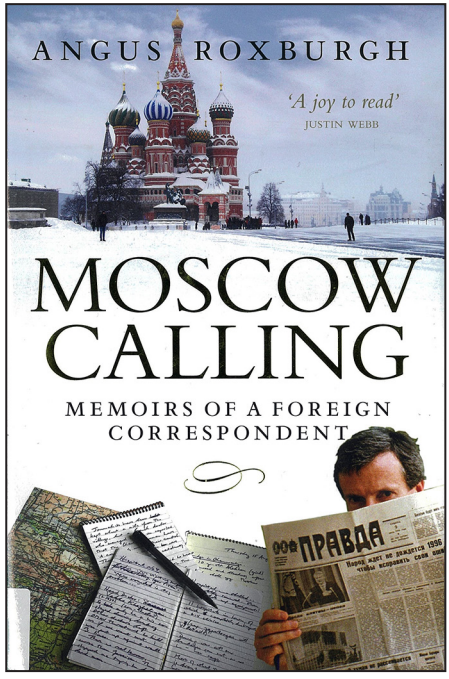
Love of Russia drove journalist's work

Moscow Calling, by Angus Roxburgh. Edinburgh: Birlinn. 2017. ISBN 978-1-78027-492-8



SCOTTISH journalist Angus Roxburgh's account of his life as a correspondent in the Russian capital struck a chord with me immediately, for his infatuation with Russia began with listening to shortwave broadcasts from Radio Moscow.

I too used to listen to Radio Moscow, then the voice of Soviet ideology and power. I knew the Soviet Union was truly dead the night Radio Moscow broadcast a Russian Orthodox Easter service.

Roxburgh began his life as a journalist in the Soviet Union by working as a translator, edging himself into journalism as a stringer and then as a fully fledged journalist, armed with persistence, contacts, language skills and a desire to learn everything he could about Russia and its people.

He charted the seismic changes that brought down Gorbachev and the death of the USSR, the disaster of Boris Yeltsin and the return of bearded Orthodox patriarchs.

Along the way he fended off the attentions of the KGB as best he could and, after covering the murderous Chechyn war, appears to have suffered some kind of crisis that ultimately cost him his job with the BBC and his marriage.

His love for Russia remained unabated and he caused a scandal among the Moscow press pack by then joining Putin's staff as a PR hack for a few years. Notwithstanding the scorn of some of his former colleagues, his insight into the Russian government paid off in two BBC documentaries about the Russian leader.

Roxburgh's book is a highly readable addition to the canon of literature produced by Western journalists who have lived in and reported on what was once the United States' only serious rival.

Dr DAVID ROBIE is editor of Pacific Journalism Review[1]

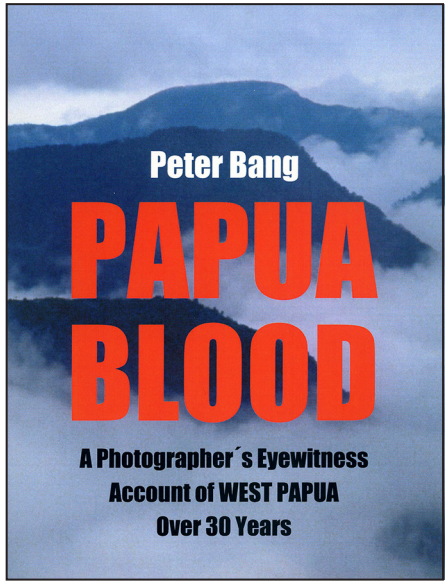
Indonesian repression and betrayal in West Papua

Papua Blood: A Photographer's Eyewitness Account of West Papua Over 30 Years, by Peter Bang. Copenhagen, Denmark: Remote Frontlines, 2018. 248 pages. ISBN 978-87-430-0101-0
See No Evil: New Zealand's Betrayal of the People of West Papua, by Maire Leadbeater. Dunedin, NZ: Otago University Press, 2018. 310 pages. ISBN 978-1-98-853121-2

TWO damning and contrasting books about Indonesian colonialism in the Pacific, both by activist participants in Europe and New Zealand, have recently been published. Overall, they are excellent exposés of the harsh repression of the Melanesian people of West Papua and a world that has largely turned a blind eye to to human rights violations.

In *Papua Blood,* Danish photographer Peter Bang provides a deeply personal account of his three decades of experience in West Papua that is a testament to the resilience and patience of the people in the face of 'slow genocide' with an estimated 500,000 Papuans dying over the past half century.

With *See No Evil*, Maire Leadbeater, peace movement advocate and spokesperson of West Papua Action Auckland, offers a meticulously

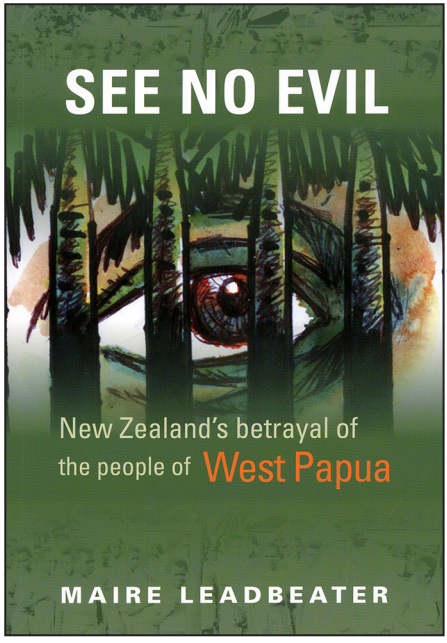


researched historical account of New Zealand's originally supportive stance for the independence aspirations of the Papuan people while still a Dutch colony and then its unprincipled slide into betrayal amid Cold War realpolitik.

Peter Bang's book features 188 of his evocative images, providing colourful insights into changing lifestyles in West Papua, ranging from pristine rainforest, waterfalls, villages and urban cityscapes to dramatic scenes of resistance to oppression and the defiant displays of the *Morning Star* flag of independence.

Some of the most poignant images are photographs of the use of the traditional *koteka* (penis gourds) and traditional attire, which are under threat in some parts of West Papua, and customary life in remote parts of the Highlands and the tree houses of the coastal marshlands.

Besides the photographs, Bang also has a narrative about the various



episodes of his life in West Papua.

Never far from his account, are the reflections of life under Indonesian colonialism, and the extreme racism displayed towards the Papuan people and their culture and traditions. From the beginning in 1963 when Indonesia under Sukarno wrested control of West Papua from the Dutch with United Nations to the approval six years later under a sham 'Act of Free Choice' against the local people's wishes, followed by the so-called 'Transmigrassi' programme encouraging thousands of Javanese migrants to settle, the Papuans have been treated with repression.

'Disaster for Papuans'

Bang describes the massive migration of Indonesians to West Papua as 'not only a disaster for the Papuan people, but also a catastrophe for the rainforest, earth and wildlife' (p. 13).

'Police [and] soldiers conducted frequent punitive expeditions with reference to violation of "laws" that the indigenous people neither understood nor had heard about, partly because of language barriers and the huge cultural difference,' writes Bang (p. 11). The list of atrocities has been endless.

> There were examples of Papuans who had been captured, and thrown out alive from helicopters, strangled or drowned after being put into plastic bags. Pregnant women killed by bayonets. Prisoners forced to dig their own graves before they were killed. (p. 12)

A book that provided an early impetus while Bang was researching for his involvement in West Papua was *Indonesia's Secet War* by journalist Robin Osborne, a former press secretary for Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan, the leader who was much later ousted from office because of the Sandline mercenary affair. This book also influenced me when I first began writing about West Papua in the early 1980s.

After travelling through Asia, a young Peter Bang arrived in West Papua in 1986 for his first visit, determined to journey to the remote Yali tribe as a photographer and writer interested in indigenous peoples. He wanted to find out how the Yali people had integrated with the outside world since missionaries first entered the isolated tribal area just 25 years earlier.

When Bang visited the town of Angguruk for the first time, 'the only wheels I saw at the mission station were punctured and sat on a wheelbarrow …

PETER BANG

Figure 1: Dani warrior at a ceremony in Jiwaka, Balien Valley.

It was only seven years ago that human flesh had been eaten in the area' (p. 16).

During this early period of jungle trekking, Bang rarely 'encountered anything besides kindness—only twice did I experience being threatened with a bow and arrow' (p. 39). The first time was by a 'mentally disabled' man confused over Bang's presence, who was scolded by the village chief.

Political change

Ten years later, Bang again visited the Yali people and found the political climate had changed in the capital Jayapura—'we saw police and military everywhere' following an incident a few months earlier when OPM

(Free Papua Movement) guerrillas held 11 captives hostage in a cave.

He struck up a friendship with Wimmo, a Dani tribesman and son of a village witchdoctor and healer in the Baliem Valley, that was to endure for years after he was adopted into Wimmo's family.

Years later, Bang met tribal leader and freedom fighter Benny Wenda who, with the help of Australian human rights activist and lawyer Jennifer Robinson, was granted asylum in the United Kingdom in 2003: 'I felt great sympathy for Benny Wenda's position on the fight for liberation. By many, he was compared to Nelson Mandela, although he was obviously playing his own ukelele' (p. 81)

Wenda and Filip Karma, who at the time was serving a 15 year sentence for 'raising the *Morning Star* flag', were nominated for the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.

Bang founded the Danish section of the Free West Papua Campaign and launched an activist Facebook page. https://www.facebook.com/FreeWestPapuaCampaignDenmark/

Oner of the book's amusing and inspirational highlights is Bang's secret 'freedom paddle' on the Baliem River when he used a yellow inflatable rubber boat and a pocket-sized *Morning Star* flag to make his own personal protest against Indonesia (p. 123). This was a courageous statement in itself given the continued arrests of journalists in West Papua by the military authorities in spite of the 'open' policy of President Joko Widodo.

In a special section, Bang devotes 26 pages to the indigenous people of West Papua, profiling some of the terriritory's 300 tribes and their cultural and social systems, such as the Highlands communities of Dani and Yali, and the Asmat, Korowai and Kombai peoples.

Fascinating insight

Peter Bang concludes: 'Nobody knows what the future holds. In 2018, the Indonesian regime continues the brutal crackdown on the native population of West Papua.'

This book is a fascinating insight into West Papuan life under duress, but would have benefitted with tighter editing by the English-language volunteer editors. Nevertheless, it is a valuable book with a strong political message.

In contrast to Bang's authentic account of life in West Papua, Maire Leadbeater's *See No Evil* book is an activist's historical account of New Zealand's shameful record over West Papua, one that is just as disgraceful as Wellington's record on Timor-Leste during the 24 years of Indonesian illegal occupation. New Zealand's behaviour towards East Timor has at least been tempered by a quietly supportive post-independence role.

Surely there is a lesson here. For those New Zealand politicians, officials and conservative journalists who prefer to meekly accept the Indonesian status quo, the East Timor precedent is an indicator that we should be strongly advocating self-determination for the Papuans.

One of the many strengths of Leadbeater's thoroughly researched book is that she exposes the *volte-face* and hypocrisy of the stance of successive New Zealand governments since Walter Nash

and his 'united New Guinea' initiative (p. 66).

'A stroke of the pen in the shape of the 1962 New York Agreement, signed by the colonial Dutch and the Indonesian government, sealed the face of the people of West Papua,' the author notes in her introduction. Prior to this 'selling out' of a people arrangement, New Zealand had been a vocal supporter of the Dutch government's preparations to decolonise the territory.

In fact, the Dutch had done much more to prepare West Papua for independence than Australia had done at that stage for neighbouring Papua New Guinea, which became independent in 1975.

Game changer

Indonesia's so-called September 30th Movement in 1965—three years after paratroopers had been dropped on West Papua in a farcical 'invasion'—was the game changer. The attempted coup triggered a massive anti-communist purge in Indonesia leading to an estimated 200,000 to 800,000 killings and eventually the seizure of power by General Suharto from the ageing nationalist President Sukarno in 1967 (Adam, 2015).

As Leadbeater notes, the bloodletting opened the door to Western foreign investment and 'rich prizes' in West Papua such as the Freeport gold and copper mine, one of the world's richest.

> New Zealand politicians and diplomats welcomed Indonesia's change in direction. Cold War anti-communist fervour trumped sympathy for the victims of the purge; and New Zealand was keen to increase its trade, investment and ties with the 'new' Indonesia. (p. 22)

The first 13 chapters of the book, from 'the Pleistocene period' to 'Suharto goes but thwarted hope for West Papua', are a methodical and insightful documentation of decolonisation and New Zealand's changing relationship are an excellent record and useful tool for the advocates of West Papuan independence.

However, the last two contemporary chapters and conclusion do not quite measure up to the quality of the rest of the book.

For example, a section of fewer than two pages on 'Media access' gives short change to the important media role in the West Papuan independence struggle. While Leadbeater quite rightly castigates the mainstream New Zealand media for a lack of coverage for such a serious issue, her explanation for the widespread ignorance about West Papua though is simplistic:

> A major reason (setting aside Radio New Zealand's consistent reporting) is that the issues are seldom covered in the mainstream media. It is a circular problem: lack of direct access results in a dearth of objective and fully rounded reporting; editors fear that material they do receive may be inaccurate or misrepresentative; so a media blackout prevails and editors conflate the resulting limited public debate with a lack of interest. (p. 233)

Mainstream 'silence'

She points out that the mainstream

media coverage of the 'pre-internet 1960s did a better job'. Yet she fails to explain why, or credit those contemporary New Zealand journalists who have worked hard to break the mainstream 'silence' in spite of the absence of specialist foreign editors in the local media, ill-informed mainstream editors and the closure of the country's national news agency NZPA in 2011 (Robie, 2017).

Leadbeater dismisses in just three sentences the courageous and successful attempts by at least two New Zealand media organisations—Māori Television and Radio New Zealand—to 'test' President Widodo's new policy in 2015 by sending two crews to West Papua. Since then, she admits, Indonesia's 'shutters have mostly stayed shut' (p. 235).

One of the New Zealand journalists who has written extensively on West Papua and Melanesian issues for many years, RNZ Pacific's Johnny Blades, is barely mentioned (just the RNZ visit to West Papua), *Tabloid Jubi* editor Victor Mambor, who visited New Zealand in 2014, Paul Bensemann (who travelled to West Papua disguised as a bird watcher in 2013), *Scoop's* Gordon Campbell, Television New Zealand's Pacific correspondent Barbara Dreaver and documentary maker Tere Harrison (who produced a shirt film, *Run It Straight* in 2016) are just a few of those who have contributed to growing awareness of Papuan issues in this country who have not been given fair acknowledgement.

Even in my own case, a journalist and educator who has written on West Papuan affairs for almost four decades with countless articles and who wrote the first New Zealand book with an extensive section on the West Papuan struggle (Robie, 1989), there is a remarkable silence.

One has a strong impression that Leadbeater is reluctant to acknowledge her peers and the selective sourcing weakens her work as it relates to the millennial years.

The early history of the West Papuan struggle is exemplary, but I look forward to another more nuanced account of the contemporary struggle. *Papua Merdeka!*

Note

1. Dr David Robie was awarded the 1983 NZ Media Peace Prize for his coverage of Timor-Leste and West Papua in *'Blood on our hands'*.

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NOTED:

Moral quandary over social and political use of mobile phones

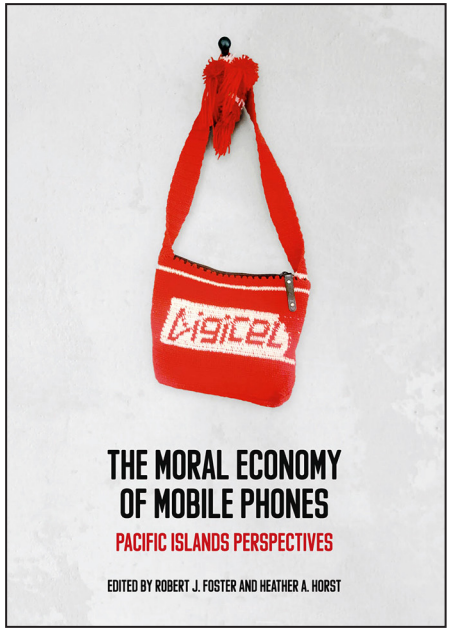
The Moral Economy of Mobile Phones: Pacific Islands Perspectives, edited by Robert J. Foster and Heather A. Horst. Canberra: ANU Press, 2018. 163 pages. ISBN 978-1-7604-6208-6 (print); 978-1-7604-6209-3 (e-book)

WHILE anthropologists have mainly studied mobile phone use at an individual or group level, the entry of Digicel into Pacific nations' mobile markets over the past decade has introduced a wider set of issues that are explored here in detail.

Robert Foster details the tradeoffs of managing mobile phone credits and airtime in Papua New Guinea, showing how airtime credits and reduced calling rate promotions influence the ways people conduct their relationships and maintain social networks.

Holly Wardlow's chapter on mobile phone use in HIV treatment highlights not just how technology offers new approaches to treatment, but also the complex moral territory of 'phone friend' relationships, which offer support and safety through what often amounts to fantasy or deception.

Dan Jorgensen describes Toby, who claims mobile phones are a conspiracy to bring US surveillance to Papua New Guinea; yet, the mobile network once saved his life when he was stuck in the mountains without shelter and close to death.

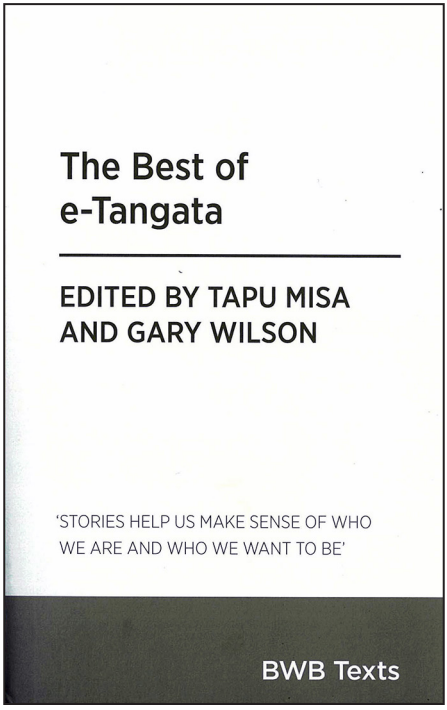


While deep ambivalence towards the adoption of digital technologies is nothing new, the moral element of these analyses in their Pacific contexts is striking, particularly where tensions between use and misuse and questions of social and political power are involved. - *Dr Christopher Thomson, co-director, Arts Digital Lab, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.*

E-Tangata—getting it right

The Best of e-Tangata, edited by Tapu Misa and Gary Wilson. Wellington: Bridget Williams, 2017. 208 pages. ISBN 978-0-9475-1845-5

THE BEST of e-Tangata is a collection of pieces from the online site (https://e-tangata.co.nz/) that offer insights into the lives of Māori and Pasifika people in Aoteoroa. Some of their



stories are quite harrowing, like that of Gilbert Enoka, who was raised in a series of homes after his father abandoned his disabled mother

Others, like that of Naida Glavish, are almost beyond belief today. Glavish—real first name Rangimarie—was threatened with the sack from the Post office in the 1980s for answering the phone with 'kia ora'.

Others verge on the surreal, like the story of Ngapuhi kaumatua Kingi Taura, who was told by his school teacher to choose a Pākeha name and decided to name himself Albert, after the family rooster.

Eliota Fuimaono-Saolu talks about his attempt to rectify what he considers to be the distortion of Pacific history in New Zealand schools by producing a DVD that told a very different story about the peoples of the great ocean.

Of great interest, too, is the interview with former Prime Minister Jim Bolger, who talks about the Treaty and settlement issues and concludes that the lesson he had learned from working with Māori on the Treaty process was that the important issue was 'getting it right'.—*Dr PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.*

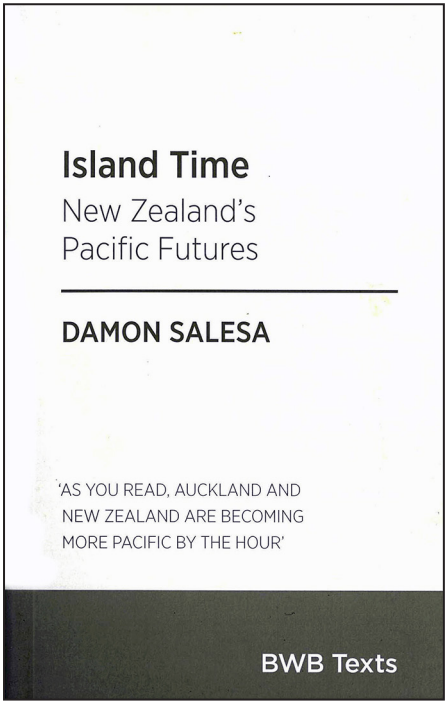
New Zealand's future is Pacific

Island Time: New Zealand's Pacific Futures, by Damon Salesa. Wellington: Bridget Williams, 2017. 256 pages. ISBN978-1-9885-3353-7G.

PEOPLE occasionally claim that Auckland has the largest Islander population in the world. While that claim is manifestly untrue—Port Moresby clearly takes that crown—Auckland's demographics are changing. As Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa points out in this fascinating book, Pasifika are the wave of the future.

Political parties have begun to recognise the potential of Pasifika voters and there is a lengthy section on the growth of Pasifika people as a political force and he argues that forcing political parties to pay attention to them has actually made New Zealand politics better.

Pasifika voters have usually supported Labour and he traces the attempts of other parties to woo them away, including a disastrous attempt by the Māori Party to run Pasifika candidates against



sitting Labour Pasifika politicians (including his wife Jenny in Manuka East).

Life for many Pasifika families in New Zealand is tough. As he points out, they are more likely to live in worse housing than Pākeha, are even more unlikely to be able to buy a home and live in what he calls a city within a city, a concentration of suburbs that are in many ways cut off from the rest of Auckland.

The future, however, is likely to be different and indeed he argues that those differences are already emerging.

In a series of detailed chapters, he sets out to show how Pasifika are living now and what the future is likely to hold: 'The Pacific will, or most New Zealanders, not be at the margins, but will instead be one of a number of centres in a multi-centred New Zealand.'

To make the future work, however, will require what Salesa calls 'a new vision of nationhood…[in which]… Pacific people, communities and cultures will—if they are empowered—to be one of the great resources.'—*Dr Philip Cass is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.*

Journalism an ever more dangerous profession

World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the University of Oxford. 2018. 200 pages. ISBN 978-92-3-100242-7

TRENDS of violence against journalists remain extremely alarming, admits UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay in the foreword to the 2018 edition of this annual survey. However, the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity offers hope.

'There is a fresh momentum for mechanisms to monitor, prevent, present, protect, and strengthen justice for crimes against journalists,' she says. 'This momentum must be encouraged' (p. 11).

Perhaps this development is the most significant since this volume made its debut in 2014. This was certainly the impression I got while attending the week-long UNESCO World Press Freedom Day conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, in May 2017.

While the deaths of foreign correspondents attracts the most global publicity, it is overwhelmingly local

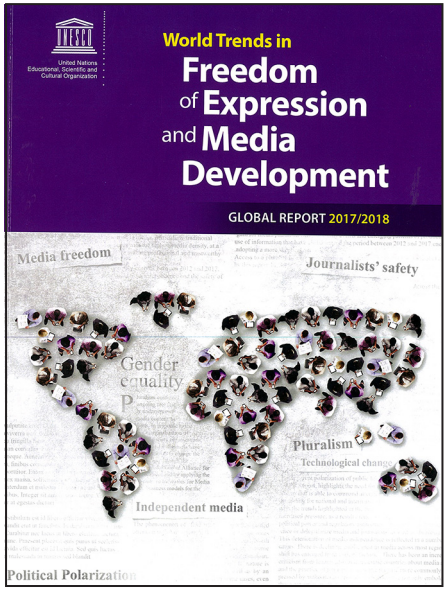
journalists who are killed while reporting on expressions of war, corruption or the activities of criminal groups (p. 13).

The Arab region heads high rates of abduction and torture, especially from insurgent groups. While impunity for crimes against journalists is still the norm—only one in 10 cases result in justice—this latest UNESCO report suggests there has been an improvement of sorts.

It has been encouraging that member nations have shown 'increased responsiveness' to UNESCO requests for information about progress in judicial investigations into killings of journalists. In contrast to 2013—the year the UN declared November 2 as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists—when only 30 percent responded, 74 percent provided information in 2017. *—DR DAVID ROBIE, editor of Pacific Journalism Review.*

Theatre empowerment for gender violence communication

Voices Against Violence, as told to Kate Burry and Connie Grouse: Women living in the Solomon Islands share their stories as survivors of violence and/or participants in the ground-breaking Stages of Change theatre project funded by the European Union. Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand: British Council. 2015. English & Bislama dual language edition. 89 pages. ISBN 978-0-473-31329-6



THE SUBJECT of violence against women is one that is prevalent in Pacific countries such as the Solomon Islands. Gender-based violence, particularly violence against women, is an issue that is often treated as a cultural or societal norm.

To enhance awareness about the issue is a communication challenge due to the silence in both the Solomon Islands' private and public spheres. Through the European Union-funded Stages of Change theatre project, however, Solomon Islands women have been given the opportunity to share their lived experiences in gender-based violence.

The design of Stages of Change reiterates the power of silent theatre in raising awareness on violence against women. In Voices Against Violence, the Solomon Islander actresses recall how the absence of a dialogue compelled the audience to reflect on and interpret their choreographed movements. Their perspectives highlight the necessity for messages that empower both women

and men. While empowerment is crucial in the movement to end violence against women, partnership is also paramount—as explored in this book.

The stories told to Kate Burry and Connie Grouse—which have been published in both English and Bislama in this book—indicate that new approaches must be made when it comes to speaking up against gender-based violence. This is especially relevant in societies that have low levels of literacy.

Solomon Island's cultural context also places women in the background as emphasised in Voices Against Violence. To foster attitude changes about gender-based violence requires a locally-driven tactic geared towards a two-way dialogue. The narratives in Voices Against Violence underline this notion that 'lectures on human rights' will not permeate all levels of Solomon Islands unless they value the voices of its people.

As with any other project, the issue of sustainability is of great concern. The success of Stages of Change, as reflected in Voices Against Violence, has prompted the various actresses to think about ways in which they can contribute to its longevity in different parts of Solomon Islands. While funding is a huge catalyst behind raising more awareness, Voices Against Change emphasises that innovative and inspiring agents like Stages of Change are equally important.—*PAULINE MAGO-KING is a postgraduate student at Auckland University of Technology researching gender violence in Melanesia.*

Pacific Journalism Review
PACIFIC MEDIA CENTRE

Vol. 25, No 1 & 2, July 2019

Call for articles and commentaries: Special unthemed open edition

The next edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* will be a double "open theme" publication. We have a backlog of accepted unthemed papers for publication and welcome a range of additional submissions for this edition, marking the 25th year of *Pacific Journalism Review*.

Papers can include but are not restricted to:

- Journalism education pedagogy and studies
- Journalism-as-research (Frontline section)
- Journalism theory and practice
- Sociology and history of journalism
- Development communication and journalism
- Human rights journalism
- Climate change journalism and strategies
- Environmental journalism and sustainability
- Asia-Pacific media storytelling
- Teaching journalism in conflict countries

The above list is a guideline and other related topics will also be considered. The journal has an unthemed section and other papers related to journalism studies, and journalism education, theory and practice will also be considered.

Submissions must be uploaded to the new OJS open access website for Pacific Journalism Review on the Tuwhera indigenous research platform at Auckland University of Technology:

https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/

Deadline: February 20, 2019

Pacific
Journalism Review

Notes for contributors

Pacific Journalism Review, founded at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1994, is a peer-reviewed journal covering media issues and communication in the South Pacific, Asia-Pacific, Australia and New Zealand. It is now published by the Pacific Media Centre, AUT University, and has links with the University of the South Pacific. While one objective is research into Pacific journalism theory and practice, the journal is also expanding its interest into new areas of research and inquiry that reflect the broader impact of contemporary media practice and education.

A particular focus will be on the cultural politics of the media, including the following issues—new media and social movements, indigenous cultures in the age of globalisation, the politics of tourism and development, the role of the media and the formation of national identity and the cultural influence of New Zealand as a branch of the global economy within the Pacific region. It also has a special interest in environmental and development studies in the media and communication—and vernacular media in the region.

Main sections:

• *Research:* Academic research and analysis papers (up to 6000 words)
• *Commentary:* Industry insights, developments and practice (1500-3000 words)
• *Frontline*: Reflective journalism research (up to 6000 words)
• *Reviews:* Books, films, online developments, multimedia (800-1500 words).
• *Noted & Books:* 300-350 words.
• *Forum:* Letters, brief commentaries (up to 800 words)

Submission of papers:

Within the editorial scope of the journal, we invite the submission of original papers, commentaries and reviews. Submissions are reviewed by the editor, or editorial committee.Submissions are double blind peer refereed.

Editorial deadline for next issue:

February 20, 2019. Submissions should be filed through the new submissions website on Tuwhera: **ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/**

Correspondence should be emailed to the managing editor,

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School of Communication Studies
AUT University

Style: Use *APA (American Psychological Association) Style* for author-date system of referencing. See style guide at **www.pjreview.info**