TE KOA KOA
Pacific
Journalism Review

JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Edited by David Robie and Philip Cass

- Unpacking Samoa's media freedom climate *Misa Vicky Lepou*
- Asia-Pacific graduate journalism eduction
- Anonymous sources in the Solomon Islands press
- The Vanuatu media school
- Corruption in the Pacific and the media
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- **SPECIAL REPORT:** Al Jazeera and Back to the Future *Tarek Cherkaoui*

PLUS

- 'No media for refugees' on the Thai-Burma border
- NZ political lobbying
- West Papua and 'media blindspots'
- *Commando* comics and ANZAC
- Muslim mothers and 'sex & smokes' billboards in Indonesia

Pacific Journalism Review

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EDITORIAL: Pacific media advocacy

IN SAMOA during July 2015, a new era in Pacific journalism education and training advocacy was born with the establishment of Media Educators Pacific (MEP) after a talkfest had gone on for years about the need for such a body. A draft constitution had even been floated at a journalism education conference hosted at the University of the South Pacific in 2012. The initiative created unity of sorts between the Technical, Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) media institutes from Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and the regional University of the South Pacific journalism programme. Founding president Misa Vicky Lepou of the National University of Samoa pledged at the time to produce a vision with a difference:

> In a region where media is the least respected profession, governments look to revenue-earning industries and community interests to take care of how media education courses are run. Pacific educators also tend to focus on what is happening on a global scale, forgetting what needs to be done on a local front. (Pacific media educators join forces, 2015)

DEL ABCEDE/PMC

Figure 1: MEP's president Misa Vicky Lepou being interviewed by Pacific journalists in Auckland.

Fast forward a year to July 2016 and a group of seven MEP advocates and colleagues, including Misa and Dr Shailendra Singh from USP, were sponsored by the newly created NZ Institute for Pacific Research (NZIPR and UNESCO) to attend the JERAA-Pacific Media Centre Preconference and the Fourth World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) at Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. They were also supported by a group of media educators from Asia with the assistance of the Asia NZ Foundation (MEP pushes ahead, 2016)

From an Asia-Pacific perspective, one of the highlights of the combined conferences was a seminar on corruption sponsored by Transparency International New Zealand. Convenor Fuimaono Tuiasau noted that corruption was one of the biggest challenges facing the region, along with climate change and the depletion of fisheries resources. 'Corruption is much like cancer: It's got to be treated early, otherwise there are going to be massively expensive interventions—as we see in Africa, as we see in Asia, and as we see in South America,' Tuiasau lamented.

One of the panelists, celebrated *Taimi 'o Tonga* publisher Kalafi Moala, remarked about Tonga after the kingdom had elected a pro-democracy majority in Parliament in 2014, 'We thought all we needed to do was change the system' (Corruption in the Pacific, 2016). However, change was easier said than done. The democrats thought that all they needed to do was have their leaders and government held accountable. Instead, things turned pear-shaped within two years and now the government of 'Akilisi Pohiva has been sacked by an unprecedented royal intervention and Tongans are due to go to the polls to elect a new government in mid-November 2017 in what may be a further setback for media freedoms.

Both Shailendra Singh and Alexander Rheeney outlined similar experiences in Fiji and Papua New Guinea respectively. 'Corruption is blamed for Fiji's debilitating "coup culture"—we've had four coups in the last 25 years,' observed Singh. Rheeney, formerly chief editor of the *PNG Post-Courier* and now president of the Media Council of PNG, is seriously concerned about the absence of adequate checks and balances in Papua New Guinea and the lack of media transparency around government accountability to the public. He said there had been a 'classic example' in 2015 when the government 'basically bulldozed the national budget through without allowing Parliament to dissect and to debate the money plan' for the year.

This debate set the scene for further discussion by a panel two days later at WJEC when a group of MEP educators discussed journalism education in the Pacific. They also touched on issues of corruption and how media schools were teaching strategies to deal with them. As convenor of the panel I spoke of how the highly politicised educational environment in some countries impacted on journalism education, and how media schools had been forced to wean themselves off a legacy of short courses (with donor agendas being too influential) rather

than serious journalism education with recognised qualifications as established in many countries.

I also spoke about how political risks and real dangers of threats and physical attacks confronted student journalists all the time. As an example, I offered the incident on 8 June 2016 when Papua New Guinea police in camouflage fatigues opened fire on a peaceful student protest, wounding at least 23 people. That followed an earlier tragedy in 2001 when PNG shot dead three protesting students. After showing a brief video made by students at the University of Papua New Guinea. about the 2016 shootings, another panelist, Emily Matasororo (of UPNG), spoke of the deep dilemmas faced by student journalists covering the crisis.

This tragedy was written about in an earlier edition of *PJR* that was themed around the JERAA-PMC-WJEC joint conferences (Matasororo, 2016). A first batch of papers was published from the joint conferences, and now in this edition we are wrapping up the balance of the articles.

WHILE the United States was enduring its Vietnam war upheaval and the challenge to the presidency of the Watergate break-in, Samoa was enjoying a period of the finest truth-to-power global reportage, **Misa Vicky Lepou** brings this proud period alive. Tracing some of the highlights of Savea Sano Malifa's trailblazing investigations and struggle for press freedom with the *Samoa Observer*, Misa laments an erosion of ethics and media professionalism in contemporary times.

In the Philippines, **Jeremaiah M. Opiniano** deploys a phenomenological study to analyse the roles and purposes of graduate journalism education based on research involving 16 Asian students from three graduate journalism schools.

The two daily newspapers of Solomon Islands, the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun*, are the subject of an inquiry into the use of anonymous sources by senior *Star* journalist **Eddie T. Osifelo**. Finding widespread and questionable use of anonymous sources in the dailies, Osifelo notes that the two newspapers face many challenges ranging from politicians and other public figures to 'threats, intimidation [and] compensation demands to court battles'.

Dave Mandavah in Port Vila offers a commentary about the status and state of the two-year diploma course in journalism and media and the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT). He backgrounds this AusAID TVET initiative and the development of this programme in the face of difficult odds.

Julie Cleaver provides a transcript of a vibrant panel debate about the level of corruption in the Pacific and the challenges facing journalists, journalism educators and the media. Sponsored by Transparency International New Zealand, convenor Fuimaono Tuiasau facilitated a lively discussion featuring Kalafi Moala, Shailendra Singh, and Alexander Rheeney, with a summing up by PMC chair associate professor Camille Nakhid.

Rounding off the themed papers for this edition, **Mackenzie Smith** offers another transcript, this time on journalism training and education—the new advocacy era. This seminar focused on a range of issues including academic freedom, freedom of expression and even journalism safety issues, such as the shooting by police of peacefully protesting students on the edge of the University of Papua New Guinea campus on 8 June 2016. The repercussions from this shocking event are still unraveling. Chaired by PMC's Professor David Robie, the panel also included Emily Matasororo, Shailendra Singh, Misa Vicky Lepou, and Dave Mandavah with Eliki Drugunalevu (USP) responding.

Al Jazeera has been the defining feature in developing news media in the Middle East (and beyond). The satellite broadcasting network has played a key role in bringing stories and perspectives that other international media ignore, especially on many human rights issues. And it played an important role during the ill-fated Arab Spring upheaval in five nations. **Tarek Cherkaoui**, an AUT doctoral graduate from Qatar specialising in the communication crises of the region and the author of *The News Media At War*, has devoted the Special Report in this *PJR* edition to the so-called Gulf crisis. He analyses the allegations by the 'gang of four'— Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt— that the tiny emirate supports terrorism.

No *Frontline* (journalism-as-research) article has been published in this edition, but the series will return with the next edition.

In the unthemed section, UNSW Forced Migrant Research Network activist and researcher **Victoria Jack** offers a case study of camps on the Thai-Burma border to highlight the 'exclusion' of refugees from the common world and the failure of news media to give 'voice' to their communities.

Catherine Strong and **Fran Tyler** analyse how, unlike in many Western countries, political lobbyists in New Zealand are 'able to skirt around scrutiny' in the media because journalists neglect to identify lobby organisations to the public.

David Robie dissects half a century of Indonesian rule in the Melanesian region of West Papua and challenges why New Zealand and other media are reluctant to shed their 'blind spot' about their near neighbour. Globally, the issues of Papuan self-determination and human rights violations are increasingly becoming a focus of storytelling.

In an article about the challenges confronting Muslim Indonesian mothers teaching their daughters piety, modesty and tolerance, **Hanny Savitri Hartono** exposes the issue of roadside billboards displaying harmful products such as cigarettes and sexualised images of women. Tragically Hartono died suddenly in early 2017 while completing her Massey University doctorate which was awarded posthumously. Her supervisors, Sharyn Davies and Graeme MacRae, assisted with the completion of this journal article from the doctoral research.

Completing the journal edition is **Philip Cass** who deconstruct *Commando*

comics, which have provided a consistent image of Australian and New Zealand ancestors at war—'men, who are inevitably tall, bronzed, shirtless, contemptuous of authority' and with prodigious warrior ability.

This edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* will be launched during festivities marking the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Pacific Media Centre, and also the launching of a new Tuwhera Open Access platform for the companion publication *Pacific Journalism Monographs.*

Professor David Robie
Editor
Pacific Journalism Review
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1. Samoa's media freedom climate: 'Shining the light'

Abstract: Media freedom has had a long, proud history in Samoa. Struggling against the odds, the country's only daily newspaper, the *Samoa Observer*, founded in 1978, championed the free media cause under the leadership of its founder, publisher and inaugural editor, Gatoaitele Savea Sano Malifa. Now, as Samoa, enters into a new media generation, there is a pressing need for more training, better salaries, more women involved in media management, better technology facilities and more emphasis on media ethics and values in a Samoan context.

Keywords: defamation, ethics, freedom of expression, intimidation, investigative journalism, media freedom, media law, media values, Samoa, *Samoa Observer*

MISA VICKY LEPOU
National University of Samoa, Apia

> To practise serious journalism in Samoa during that time, one had to work his way carefully through a minefield of physical assaults, threats to kill, 'suspicious' arson, intimidation tactics such refusing business licences, bans on government advertising, being followed at night as you drive down the street, and all the way to your home, defamation and criminal libel lawsuits. (Malifa, 2007)

AFTER five lawsuits in the early years since the *Samoa Observer* newspaper was founded in 1978, Samoan publisher, editor, writer and poet Savea Sano Malifa has won just half of these cases. The lawsuits cost *Observer* between $200,000 to $400,000 (US$76,000-US$160,000) (Malifa, 2010). In one of his famous and inspiring speeches at the celebration of World Press Freedom Day in 2007, Savea reaffirmed the history of the press freedom struggle in Samoa. At a time when the government had emerged from colonial rule through mid-1970s, Savea still had vivid memories of what he went through during the initial period of struggling for press freedom in his home country. At a time also when the Watergate political events and Vietnam war controversy were unfolding in the United States, where he was living for a number of years, it was easy for Savea to come back home to his sick mother.

He saw the need for investigative journalism in Samoa. What for? As Savea pointed out in the same speech, 'to dig into the mess seen everywhere, and keep

everyone straight. That was the overriding idea' (Malifa, 2007).

I chose Savea's path because it was the source of light shed through all those years which saw a continued improvement in media freedom in Samoa. That light still shines strongly in all aspects of Samoan society. I have enjoyed the legends about Savea's journey and the title of this article was an assessment of the achievements of this prolific veteran journalist and poet in 2001 while I was with the University of the South Pacific's Journalism Programme. Such an epithet still lives on with Savea's passion and commitment without regrets to his profession.

Becoming an ethical and professional journalist in Samoa during the first 17 difficult years of press freedom since the *Samoa Observer* was established in a village cookhouse in 1978, Savea describes as 'the darkest period…when [the newspaper] was hounded to the ground by our political leaders, incurring such serious concern among human rights groups in the international community, that they intervened' (Malifa, 2007).

For years, the *Observer* faced relentless pressure from the politically powerful, including former Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana, for reporting on official corruption and abuse of power. That pressure most often came in the form of costly lawsuits, which nearly bankrupted the newspaper (Freedom of the Press, 2002). Savea said:

> The best rule in journalism is not to be sued, especially by the Samoan government, because even if you were right, you would still have to pay your legal fees, while the government pays for those MPs. (Malifa, 2010, p. 42)

In a faxed message to the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) Secretariat in Suva in 1998, Savea indicated he had paid those legal fees but since a two-thirds majority in Parliament was held by the ruling Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), public money was spent. He said: 'The cost of these legal actions is frightening. This cannot be justice.' (Samoa Observer ordered to pay WS$$50,000, 1998).

Four years earlier, in 1994, the *Observer's* printing plant was burnt down under suspicious circumstances, and the newspaper later revealed that two former cabinet ministers had arranged for these criminal acts. Savea in his 2007 speech said:

> I guess that in developing countries that are politically young, their leaders tend to become unprincipled at times, and want to forge ahead sooner and quicker than they should. In doing so, they cut corners, hack away at well-meaning but frustrating obstacles, and thereby create problems they don't want the public to know about. They end up piling up more and more problems so that when solving them is impossible, they become dictatorial, and lash out at anybody, and everyone suffers.

Since the printing plant incident, the turnaround of the darkest period began during the investigation of the assassination of Minister of Works Luagalau Levaula Kamu. The arrangement to burn the printing plant stemmed from a story run by the *Observer* linking former Minister of Works, Leafa Vitale to a scandal involving the sale of cattle.

The media industry moved on. Tofilau's successor, Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi took over power in 1998 and turned things around towards a more relaxed media environment. I was secretary of the Journalists Association of (Western) Samoa (JAWS) in 2004 when Tuilaepa and his deputy, Misa Telefoni, were presented with Press Freedom Awards. Tuilaepa was hailed for 'his unceasing promotion of, and belief in, transparency, accountability and good governance'. Misa's award was in recognition of 'his unceasing promotion of and belief in freedom of information and freedom of expression'.

In 2008, the government ordered the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry tasked with investigating allegations of gun smuggling being made against then Commissioner of Police Papalii Lorenese Neru, chaired by Ombudsman Maiava Iulai Toma.

This time, a public directive was issued about the commission's intentions of how and what the media should report on. It stipulated the following:

- Counsel assisting the inquiry will provide a press release at the end of each day of the inquiry which the media may publish in full or in part;
- Media may report or comment upon the press release but it cannot report on anything else that would be said or submitted during the inquiry;
- Media may not report or comment upon or provide any details of evidence, witnesses, submissions or any other detail of or information from the hearings or the proceedings of the Commission outside of or beyond that provided in the press release from Counsel Assisting; and
- This restriction shall continue until otherwise advised by the Commission.

The editor of the sole daily newspaper, *Samoa Observer,* Savea, described it as 'bizarrely contradictive' in an editorial column in 2008.

> Just when we thought the (Samoan) government has totally accepted that press freedom and a well-informed public are salient tools it can use… when it [has] allowed some callous bureaucrats to impose a nebulous gag on the media.

But it did not stop here, the commission's intentions were extended to cover international media coverage, photographs, names of witnesses, including:

- Publications either in writing or by photograph, via any medium of the media, of any of the names of the special investigation team witness is prohibited;

- Publication either in writing or by photograph, via any medium of the media, of the name of the American Samoa Police witness is prohibited;
- Please ask permission before taking photos of members of the Commission, the Police Commissioner and his legal counsel, the secretary of the Commission or legal counsels for the Commission'; and
- International media are to comply with the publication requirements of the commission set out in Practice Note 1. It is equally important that the names of today's witnesses not be released to overseas media.

As Savea described it with reference to recipients of the Journalism Association of Samoa (JAWS)' awards, the gag was damaging to the government's image, given that 14 years previously, 'the beacon spoken of was without light…press freedom at the time was barely breathing, unsure whether it will live or die…'

However, there was another suspicious aspect, as Savea pointed out, the way reporters looked, scruffy, ill mannered, not well trained and unprofessional.

The same call was reiterated again by his news editor, Mata'afa Keni Lesa (who later became an award-winning *Observer* editor in his own right) in an interview with me:

> Some journalists do not have pride in themselves, they cannot be compromised and should stand up for principles. It is not an 8am-4pm job but to keep writing stories and make a difference in people's lives. That's what the *Observer* does.

Training

With disappointment aroused over JAWS for not doing its job in producing more awareness about the role of the media in Samoa, Mata'afa admitted it should have done more. 'JAWS should play an active role as the public see journalists as '*faikakala*' [nosey-buggers]'

> There is still a lack of understanding about the role of the media in the Samoan society. Reporters are still verbally abused because of that mindset of journalists being faikakala. The standard of journalism in this country is pathetic and it takes ourselves to set examples.

As one former senior Samoan reporter for the state-run *Savali* newspaper said, that mindset began in the early 1980s when the standard of the industry for most newspapers, including his, was *fagogo* [folklores] and stereotyping rather than what were the principles really were.

In another interview with me, Lupematasila Nanai confirmed that the development of media back in the 1980s was a real challenge in terms of writing structure in Samoan: 'There's a great need to educate potential and upcoming journalists'. Lupematasila published a newspaper called *South Seas* then and

this was closed due to low and unethical reporting which he said led to his being physically abused. He had been called in under the leadership of Tofilau to counter the *Observer* writings of Savea.

This was at a time which Jane Johnston and Mark Pearson in their article in *Pacific Journalism Review* stated: 'The need to question press freedoms was an ongoing challenge in any democracy' (Johnston & Pearson, 2008). Julienne Schultz's (1998) idea was cited by Johnston & Pearson. Her argument focused around the same period (1980s) in Australia on the rising challenge in which the media had entered against the authority of Parliament and the judiciary. She went on to say that the news media had moved from being a cooperative servant to an equal contender in the political system (Schultz, 1998, p.19). Her words are a reminder of the challenges in which the local media had to face, which Savea and Lupematasila were forced to contend with the early political draconian leadership. Regional journalism educational resources with a specific Pacific focus continue to be published by the Pacific Media Centre and the Pacific universities (Lepou, 2012; Robie, 1995, 2001, 2016).

To Ame Sene-Tanielu, news editor of Radio Polynesia Limited, being a journalist was just a job, nevertheless 'it has made a big improvement, yet still a lot of work'. Many times she was threatened over stories she had covered, ranging from court cases to elections. She retold the story of how she had been threatened during the 2006 general election because of a story she aired on murder allegations against one election candidate.

> I've been visited by many village councils because of some stories they think is degrading and brings bad image to the village. I went out for 12 months without news bulletins because threats were also made against the radio owner.

In 2009, Sene-Tanielu was investigating rape allegations made against a village pastor in one of the villages when she was force to flee for her life. She was chased to the main road in search of comfort. With the series of threats she experienced, she recalled the importance of having journalists really trained more about the importance of cultural reporting taking into account the sensitivity of these issues.

One of those stories she aired was a 'tarnishing one', as the late president of JAWS put it, when burglary allegations surfaced regarding a famous rugby sevens representative. Uale Papalii Taimalelagi gave Sene-Tanielu a call to revisit ethics.

Such sensitivity in the Samoan context refers to this case scenario plus many others. As a fanatical rugby country, the sevens team had just returned from being ranked the number one team in the International Rugby Board Seven Series in 2009-2010. In the context of the hype that this rugby-loving country experienced and the

players were everyone's sons, only just to hear such story on radio was a damning slur on the reputation of these players. Explained Taimalelagi:

> The player himself deserves a fair trial and to be considerate of the mood this country fell into to welcome their sons home, need not to come at such a time.

Sene-Tanielu admitted not understanding the consequences that some of these stories would have on those affected. 'The media itself can be caught which is why legislation should still be in place,' she said. Speaking of many attempts by the past JAWS executive and individuals to have two major laws repealed or removed, it has been a painstaking process.

Publisher Savea had been a victim of these draconian restrictions. Former JAWS president Autagavaia Tipi Autagavaia and Savea urged Tuilaepa and Misa to either repeal the following:

- *Printing and Publishing Act 1992*, which requires journalists to reveal their sources; and
- *Criminal Libel Act* that Autagavaia described as a relic from the colonial past (Malifa, 2010, p. 41)

Defamation

The *Defamation Act 1992/1993, No. 33* is a concern to the media as the legislation includes civil and criminal libel. Of equal concern is the *Newspapers and Printers Act 1992/1993, No. 25*. Section 10 requires journalists to make available materials (such as correspondence, photos and sources) to someone suing the media organisation for defamation before the case goes to court. According to the president of the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA):

> We the media see this as mainly a ploy by the government at the time to discourage members of the public from writing revealing letters to the editor under nom-de-plumes, often about mismanagement and corruption in high places. (Pacific Media Facility Study, 2005)

In Papalii's views, these laws should exist to protect the public rather than being the media's excuse. 'We are the cause of public uncertainty and misperception,' said Papalii. Where will the public go if freedom of expression is exercised regardless? In spite of Papalii or JAWS' stance on highlighting the need for press freedom, he would not allow 'irresponsible freedom'. 'Stories should be accurate, balanced and fair,' he said.

> He also made reference to Savea vs the late Dr Enosa case when the *Samoa Observer* was sued for hundreds of thousands of tala

> on a story about government investigations into alleged fraud and financial mismanagement at the Ministry of Health in 2005. The Acts also would serve to protect the good name of individuals. But as we all know, press freedom is not absolute. Which means that as journalists, we cannot abuse that freedom. There are therefore laws in place to prevent the members of the press from doing just that.

Added Savea:

> We already have laws protecting members of the public from careless journalism, so these two are quite unnecessary, and must be repealed. The government should also discontinue its policy that allows taxpayers, to pay for the legal fees incurred by government leaders, who claim they've been defamed. As this policy frustrates efforts by the press to inquire into alleged misconduct by public officials, it must be removed.

Samoa's Constitution is clear about citizens' rights regarding freedom of speech, assembly, association, movement and residence. Section 13 states: All citizens of Samoa shall have the right:

a. To freedom of speech and expression; and
b. To assemble peaceably and without arms; and
c. To form associations or unions; and
d. To move freely throughout Western Samoa and to reside in any part thereof.

The Constitution does not provide specifically for freedom of the press or the right to information. In addition, Samoa does not have any information legislation.

Media sector

Media outlets

The local industry has grown considerably in recent years. There are currently 18 media outlets:

Broadcast media (Television/Radio)

- SQB (TV1), free to air broadcaster and is 100 percent owned by staff, the winning tender after the government's decision to sell shares in 2008. It has a second channel carrying China's CCTV 9 service SQB also runs a commercial FM channel.
- Apia Broadcasting Limited (TV3) was launched in 2006, privately owned by former politician Hans Joachim Keil.
- Graceland Broadcasting Network (GBN) operates both radio and television, run by Ricky & Marjorie Meredith.
- Catholic Church runs Aiga Fesilafai radio and Upu Mana television.
- The Worship Centre operates a television station called Kingdom TV

adding local gospel flavour as well as from commercial run broadcast stations. In addition, it has a radio station called Laufou that is managed by its Youth Ministry.

- Radio Polynesia is privately owned and is fully commercial with several FM stations. Talofa FM 88.5 is the most popular station, the only station with a 100 percent Samoan content.
- Radio 2AP is government-owned also known as the 'Voice of the Nation', and is the oldest and first public broadcasting station in the country that possesses highly valuable government files and assets. Established in 1947 with a regional coverage that spans to neighbouring countries like Tokelau and American Samoa.
- The biggest denomination in country, the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa) also runs a television station under the TV2 channel.
- In 2012, the Media and Journalism Programme at the National University of Samoa was also granted a licence by the Office of the Regulator to set up a campus radio station (FM105.0) with funding from UNESCO. Its frequency covers an 8 km radius from the vicinity of its campus.

Newspapers

- The *Samoa Observer* is the largest newspaper in the country and the only one published seven days a week. It is published in English and Samoan and prints around 5000 copies daily. It has its own press at its new headquarters in Vaitele in Apia.
- *Newsline* is published Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays in English only. It is privately owned by Pio Sioa.
- *Savali* weekly and *Savali Samoa* (monthly) are government-owned newspapers. The weekly publishes in English and Samoan and the *Savali Samoa* in Samoan.

Online news services

- *Samoa Observer* News Group also has an online service which features daily news (www.samoaobserver.ws).
- *Savali* launched a website that features government and general news events (www.samoagovt.ws/tag/savali-newspaper/).
- Talamua Online News website features daily updates from local, regional and international fronts (www.talamua.com).
- Samoa Planet is privately owned byLeilani Wendt-Young (www.samoaplanet.com).

Table 1: Journalism resources in Samoa, July 2016	
Media outlets	**Number of reporters**
Radio	
Radio Polynesia	2
My FM (SQB)	5*
2AP	3
Television	
SQB TV1	5*
ABL (TV3)	4
EFKSTV	3
Upu Mana TV (CCCS)	2
Newspapers	
Samoa Observer	7
Savali	3*
Newsline	3*
Online	
Press Secretariat	2*
Talamua	2*
Freelance	3
Total	**43**

Note: These statistics were presented at the World Journalism Education Congress 2016 conference in Auckland with a few amendments given the continuing number of journalists moving in and out of the industry year after year.

The following government ministries have media units:

- Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC)
- Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)
- Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF)
- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE)

Code of Practice

The enacted *Media Council Act 2015* now guides the work of the local media industry with a new Code of Practice. The new code marshalled the support of the wider media except the *Samoa Observer,* which dissents with the notion that the Prime Minister is out there to 'own the media'. (Code of Practice, 2016).

> Well, what do you know? It takes a tragic tsunami to reveal Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele has another obsession we did not know about. It now appears the man is greedy too.

> He already owns Parliament, Cabinet, the Public Service, the Church, the business community, all the villages and their happy, itching mayors as well, the public media and the little boys and girls there jumping eagerly to his command - in fact, the man owns practically the whole country.
>
> And now he wants to own the private media too, that tiny part of Samoa struggling to remain independent from his control so that it can do as good a job as it possibly can under his regime's austere policies. (Note to Samoa's wayward prime minister, 2009)

The Act also gives the national media association jurisdiction to set the standards required of practising quality journalism in the country where possible through continuing awareness and education programmes. These same standards are often challenged by the '*fa'a-Samoa'* (Samoan way) especially when the traditional presentations are viewed as bribery under the interpretation of the code, whereas the culture deems it impolite if media practitioners do not accept it.

Self-regulation

The Journalists Association of (Western) Samoa (JAWS) is the national media association established to oversee the interests of those working in the industry. Its constitution provides for a president, vice-president, treasurer and a secretary. The executive also appoints two other personnel to become executive members, mainly to assist the office bearers with technical advice. It does not have a fully equipped office yet. Every year, JAWS's constitution stipulates an annual general meeting in which financial members come together to elect new officers.

In 2016, the JAWS executive started the process of establishing a Media Council to receive and investigate complaints from the public about media coverage. The move by JAWS according to a press release (2016), stemmed from 'latest events surrounding the treatment of the late Jeanine Tuivaiki story [on] the front page of the *Sunday Samoan* (2016)'. (JAWS move to set up Media Council, 2016). JAWS president Apulu Lance Polu said:

> This is not an easy task due to the administration work involved in the establishment of the Media Council, the needed resources and the costs involved but there is hope to make a decision as soon as possible once the EOIs are received.

The Media Council will act as a self-regulatory mechanism to ensure that media ethics and standards are observed. Following repeated calls for the recommendations from the Beale's Report to establish such body, the new developments in the history of media in Samoa have been realised. The initiative had also been endorsed and pushed by the government following many concerns raised in the way the media had treated stories in the past. The Media Council is appointed by

the executive committee of JAWS and is to be chaired by a lawyer who has at least five years experience as a lawyer or as a judge and has no direct interest in the association. Other members of the council include five (media representatives and five community representatives.

Ethical issues at a peak

> This article highlights repeated calls by the *Samoa Observer* for years for an independent media in Samoa. The daily publication's double standards drew widespread criticism not just on the national level but the diasporas as well as international media organisations (see Robie, 2016, pp. 78-81; Singh & Druganalevu, 2016). Here is the brief analysis I wrote on the same day the story was published to share light on where the doing of journalism in Samoa came under fire.
>
> The award-winning *Samoa Observer* has obviously breached not just one ethical guideline of how responsible journalism should report on suicide but a series of it. The front page would not act in defence of press freedom and what the role of the Fourth Estate is all about.
>
> Dr Mark Hayes, a Brisbane-based journalist and journalism educator reiterated that is just utterly disgraceful, inexcusable, totally unprofessional, and gives ammunition to those who want greater controls on the media for other purposes, to shut down political criticism or investigations into corruption. Media ethics classes will study this outrage for years to come as it's an awful example of how to absolutely not report these kinds of stories.
>
> What is most unfortunate about this story according to Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson, a freelancer and press freedom activitist, is that the editor of *Samoa Observer* wrote an editorial yesterday demanding the nation to have sympathy for Samoa Observer's battles some twenty years ago – yet today victimises a human being right on the front page. Hypocrisy is a very ugly trait.
>
> *Islands Business* magazine director and owner, Samasoni Pareti said that such [a] story should not be published at all by glorifying it and encourage copy cats...It's out of respect too for the victim and her family. (Lepou, 2016)

So what ethical guidelines have been breached?

Grief or shock: 'In cases involving personal grief or shock, enquiries and approaches must be made with sympathy and discretion and published or broadcast with due sensitivity.' (Code of Practice, 2016) The story did not respect that, first and foremost. No sympathy at all. The grieving family certainly was not approached to get consent before identifying the person has died.

Accuracy: The media must take all reasonable care not to publish or broadcast inaccurate, misleading or distorted material, including modified photographs or other visual images and deceptive advertisements.

Journalists or broadcasters must identify themselves and obtain permission from a responsible official before pursuing inquiries in non-public areas of hospitals

Figure 1: The *Sunday Samoan* publication of 'Suicide in Church Hall' on 19 June 2016.

or similar institutions.

In other words, reporting such a case should have involved having it confirmed as a suicide by official sources so that the report does not attract speculation or interfere with investigations as indicated in the last sentence: 'The police media officer on duty, Maotaoalii Kaioneta Kitiona, said he had not received a report on Tuivaiki's death.' As Lagipoiva put it:

> This story did not serve the interest of people. No information here was verified by authorities—it is hearsay based on what a 'friend' said and on a photo found on Facebook. There is no proof that she committed suicide—it is pure allegations—there was no statement from authorities to confirm the cause of death, name of victim or even time and location of incident.

The General Media Code of Practice for Samoa (Section 1.5 ii) states: 'Reporting suicide: Care should be taken not to glorify or glamorise acts of suicide, and to avoid excessive detail of the method used, which might encourage imitative attempts.'

The government's handling of the international media has involved controversy, especially with so-called 'parachute journalists'. For instance, New Zealand's former TV3 presenter/reporter John Campbell (now with Radio New

Zealand's *Checkpoint* programme) was subjected to lawsuits filed by the Samoan government relating to post-tsunami stories in 2010 alleging mismanagement of aid funds which should have been directed to improvement of housing and infrastructure in the affected areas. Campbell stood by his *Campbell Live* report. However, a decision by NZ's Broadcasting Standards Authority not to uphold complaints by the Samoan government led to the government appealing against this decision to the highest court in NZ (Judge reserves decision, 2011).

Campbell was not the only victim. Pacific correspondent Barbara Dreaver of TVNZ News was also fined NZ$7000 in 2010 by the BSA and her employer apologised to the Samoan government for unbalanced reports suggesting *Samoa* was awash with drugs and guns.

Conclusion: More training

As the sole provider of media studies in Samoa, the National University of Samoa has addressed demands from the industry to enhance training curriculum by forging a strong relationship with the media industry. The existing Diploma in Media and Journalism requires more resources to become a fully fledged programme and also needs more qualified staff.

The university management has some proposals on board. The Department of Media and Communication has proposed a bachelor's degree to produce more qualified journalists in Samoa. The proposal hopes to also attract working journalists into upskilling and gaining formal qualifications.

Forging partnerships between the NUS and its stakeholders is a top priority and the practice of journalism in Samoa should foster more quality than providing just another community service.

During the research for this article, several challenges became apparent about media working conditions and this will be the subject of a future paper. Poor salaries highlight the need for increases, more women should be involved in media management, better technology facilities are needed in media offices because not every reporter has access to the internet, better assignment transport is needed, and much more training is needed.

Areas that require particular training attention are photography, digital and social media, radio news presentation, and the values and ethics of doing journalism in Samoa. A training constant involves media ethics and standards to be observed if Samoa is to maintain its proud record in defence of media freedom.

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2. A two-nation Asian phenomenological study

Roles and purposes of graduate journalism education through the lens of global journalism

Abstract: This phenomenological study sought to describe the essence of the roles and purposes of graduate journalism education through the eyes of 16 Asian students from three graduate journalism schools in Japan and the Philippines. This article is anchored in the theory of reflective practice. Responses of students produced a Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education that illustrates these roles and purposes of graduate studies. This Bridge of Traits also entered into the theory-and-practice discussions, not to mention that this bridge represents respondents' efforts to connect their personal, academic and professional milieus and aspirations as journalists. Making these connections is done within the realm of journalism's theory-practice continuum, which, as respondents surprisingly articulated, is important, complementary and applicable. Respondents' views offer hope that university-based journalism programmes can run viable graduate journalism programmes implementing several elements in pedagogy and substance that espouse a spirit of critical reflective practice in journalists. They aspire to new perspectives and approaches in the teaching, study and practice of journalism.

Keywords: graduate journalism education, journalism school, phenomenology, reflective practice, theory-and-practice in journalism, Philippines, Japan

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Introduction

DEBATES on journalism education persist, especially if the subject matter is based on the 'theory-versus-practice' issue (Josephi, 2015). Journalism is said to be an industry skill that professional journalists can teach students and many journalism schools are then being encouraged to adjust their curricula according to the required skills of the industry. However, journalism schools housed in universities are centres of research and knowledge. Not only

should journalism teachers impart industry-required skills, they also must do research and wear an academic's hat in analysing issues and trends in the news media (Barkho, 2013). This theory-versus-practice debate not only has reached areas such as pedagogy but even the issue of what works are (un)recognised as 'journalistic' and as 'academic' by both parties (Murthy, 2015; Woolley, 2015; Tanner, 2015; Chua, 2015; Anuar, 2015; Duffy, 2015; Kemper, 2015; Mason, 2015). Even the recognition of journalism as a field of study (i.e. journalism studies), while said to be still 'young' is being questioned (Franklin & Mensing, 2011).

This debate takes into context how countries train students in journalism. Some countries, such as the United States, have accommodated journalism degree programmes in universities. In other countries, professional institutes and news organisations, or companies, train journalists and grant degrees (Josephi 2015) in the absence of educational institutions offering journalism degree programmes. Another context here is how a country's news media operates, as well as the levels of freedom of expression in the country.

Many journalism programmes in universities worldwide have followed Western models. However, some of these models may not work (e.g. role of journalism in a democracy) given the varying status of the news media, freedom of expression and of the press in different countries. These internal and external developments impact on how journalism education is delivered (Josephi, 2015; Opiniano et. al, 2015). So continues the never-ending calls to re-assess, re-invent and re-configure journalism education (e.g. Mensing, 2011; Webb, 2015). Now, media platforms have forced news organisations to connect stories from different parts of the world to a global audience. Journalism schools living in isolation will be disconnected from global trends in journalism education and even to other journalism educators and scholars who can help each other out. News media systems also differ across regions and countries, providing an interesting model of how the professional model of journalism may be taught given varied socio-political milieus (Josephi, 2007).

These developments have led to the rising globalisation of journalism education. Some countries now offer graduate programmes in journalism that are on top of the bachelor's programmes that have defined the 'explosion' of journalism education worldwide (Self, 2015; Josephi, 2015). The theory-practice debates surrounding journalism education have now reached graduate levels. The offering of master's or doctorate degrees in journalism is a young phenomenon, and this may be new terrain for both universities/professional institutes and for the field called Journalism Studies. Meanwhile, aspiring and current journalists may be looking at graduate education as a passageway to discover—and to know further—the world of journalism. But why do these journalists take up graduate studies in journalism? What role and purpose does this graduate programme experience have on the student? What do these graduate students think of the

theory-versus-practice debates in journalism education? With journalism as a 'profession' and as a 'discipline' still finding its place in a university setting, studies on graduate journalism education remain scarce.

This phenomenological article seeks to find out from Japanese and Filipino graduate journalism students the roles and purposes of journalism graduate studies relating to them. The article will contribute to the few studies on graduate journalism education (Carpenter, 2008). But this study offers not just non-Western views about journalism education; it will also be a modest attempt to see how graduate students' views relate to similarly-situated conditions (be it the graduate students or the journalism schools) in developing and developed countries, in the spirit of global journalism education.

Theoretical background

Review of related literature and studies

a. Journalism education and the theory-versus-practice debates

Journalism education has come a long way since a first degree programme in the United States was offered in 1869 (Josephi, 2015). The offering of journalism programmes past and present is owed to the growth of media outfits and the resulting demand for trained professionals in individual countries; the dramatic increase in reader/viewer/listenership (Josephi, 2015); and more recently technology and the internet.

The approach to journalism education has also evolved. Journalism education has for a long time been training future journalists of a country's news media industry with curricula aligned to industry needs. However, since many of these journalism programmes are housed in universities, the journalism programme must now consider operating itself under the usual three-fold mission of a university: teaching, research and service.

This is where the theory-versus-practice debates escalate, leading to 'disdain', 'misunderstanding' or 'miscommunication' between and among professional journalists, journalism educators and journalism scholars (see Zelizer, 2004). Meanwhile, Journalism Studies emerged as a field of study. Scholarly journals on journalism became the outlets for scholars to further the theory-versus-practice debates. Even if Barbie Zelizer's (2004) book *Taking Journalism Seriously* had attempted to bring journalists, journalism educators and journalism scholars to the table and let them see mutual benefits from each other's views, recent works provide evidence of continued debates (Anuar, 2015; Barkho, 2013; Clarke, 2010; Lugo-Ocando, 2015; Marsh, 2015; Ray, 2014).

One scholar who has put forward an all-encompassing vision for journalism education is G. Stuart Adam. Journalism's daily grind and the university's intellectualism must be both taught, Adam wrote. Students' reporting, writing and research skills may need to be complemented by disciplinal and specialisa-

tion subjects (e.g. history, law, ethics, economics, political science, sociology, language studies) so that written outputs are sprinkled with substance coming from the influences of these disciplines (Adam, 2006)[1].

Another established journalism scholar, Stephen Reese, affirms Adam's insights in the context that academia and the industry are partners—and journalism's 'intellectual ethos' can be nourished by this academe-industry collaboration. In Reese's own words (1999, p. 90):

> Partnerships can be productive relationships and (can be) necessary in tackling complex problems, and joint ventures a common fixture in corporate life. It must be clear, however, what one is getting out of the relationship. Academia may properly be a partner, but it should not become a mere client of the corporate world or the professions. Educators must think through what they are about, especially in journalism with so many constituencies. For all of its faults, the university provides a valuable source of leadership for society and for journalism that cannot be replicated elsewhere…

Adam and Reese, as well as other journalism education scholars like Donica Mensing (Mensing, 2011; Franklin & Mensing, 2011), put forward these insights so as to ease the theory-and-practice 'tension'. This debate puts people 'between a rock and a hard place', as the late American journalism educator James Carey expressed at the 1972 conference of the Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in the US.

b. Graduate journalism education

Graduate education for journalists serves to 'retrain journalists' who entered the industry and to help undergraduates seek additional specialisation and skills.[2] Folkerts (2014) observes these programmes 'had for many years been given scant attention by industry leaders, academics or associations that formed around journalism education' (p. 287). Yet some of the famous journalism schools are graduate-level programmes, such as Columbia University's in the US.

Basically, a 'higher educational level' for the journalist can be a 'very formative type of education' for journalists (Schultz, 2002, p. 225) as they analyse the works and outputs of media content, the professional conduct of journalists, and other journalism-related phenomena. Journalism degree programmes at the master's level can either be professional degrees (their capstone being an investigative report, a narrative journalism story, and other related outputs) or academic degrees (with a master's thesis as the culminating requirement). This, even as Soloski (1994, p. 6) feared 'professional education' that leads to specialisation will see students being taught with skills 'that limit, rather than expand, their opportunities'.

Then the theory-versus-practice debate ensues at the graduate level. And

James Carey's 1972 plea was resurrected by three former deans of top American journalism schools (in *Educating Journalists: A New Plea for the University Tradition*). The Columbia report focused almost entirely on American journalism education, but there is recognition of the theory-practice tension in journalism programmes worldwide (there is 'no obvious solution to the tension between … university and newsroom cultures' [Folkerts, Hamilton & Lemann, 2013, p. 59]). But basically, *Educating Journalists* affirmed the treatises of Adam (1989) and Reese (1999): graduate journalism education in a university setting is important—and both theory and practice can benefit:

> …(Graduate journalism education) is the place where the fundamental questions that have dogged our field from the very beginning are most likely to be resolved. That is not only because of the prestige of graduate education, but also because graduate programs have to offer a much more complete education: they do not operate under the traditional undergraduate division of skills education inside the journalism program and most of the rest of a student's education elsewhere in a university. Graduate programs claim to turn an educated person into a professional journalist.
>
> …Journalists perform a socially-essential and intellectually-challenging role that ought to merit inclusion in the pantheon of professions. Businesses need to establish themselves only in the marketplace. Professions must also establish themselves in universities, in professional schools of their own that are deeply involved in the larger academic enterprise. That is why… it is especially important that journalism schools take the fullest possible advantage of our university location. If they can do that, all of journalism will benefit. (Folkerts, Hamilton & Lemann, 2013, pp. 59, 64)

Under such a vision, there can be hope that the divides between theory and practice 'must be regarded as one and the same time as vast, but also as ultimately bridgeable'.

c. Studies on graduate journalism education and its students

Studies on graduate journalism education are a mix of scholarly commentaries and empirical research. Most of these studies are West-centric, pointing to the scarcity of related studies from other mediascapes. Students, their published research works and the journalism schools themselves have been these studies' units of analysis.

Graduate education is a welcome opportunity for students, akin to how undergraduates enjoy journalism education. Saalberg's (1970) survey of 43 master's degree-granting journalism schools showed that the degree programmes are welcome opportunities for these students to learn basic and some advanced skills in journalism that they lack.

Undergraduate and graduate education/degrees may or may not have influenced

their views on the roles of journalists. O'Boyle and Knowlton (2015) compared 'postgraduate students' from Dublin, Ireland and Amman, Jordan on their entry into journalism through graduate education. Findings reveal differences in how students view themselves; their roles (e.g. activist, neutral) are impacted on by the culture of their countries' journalism. Hanna and Sanders (2007) compared undergraduate and graduate-level British journalism students' views and news media roles. Results of their study (sample of arriving students: N=291; sample of students who graduated/completed: N=208) showed little evidence of students' attitudinal change during the time that they were students. The results may be attributed to personal and family backgrounds, and to students' exposure to British news media culture.

Schultz (2002) attempted to determine the characteristics of journalists who went to graduate school versus journalists who are college graduates only. Based on two US surveys (1992 and 1996), results showed few differences in those students' perceived influences in education, journalistic role concepts and audience perceptions. But journalists with a graduate degree, Schultz found, were more likely to work for larger news organisations and to support an interpretative role by journalists.

Graduate education in journalism, not surprisingly, had pushed students to do research apart from journalistic writing. Christ and Broyle (2007) did a benchmark study of graduate education at American universities' communication and journalism programs (N=40). The graduate programs surveyed appear to have prepared students for research and teaching but not in community service. Carpenter (2008), for her part, looked at how graduate students as authors or co-authors (N=723 students writing 543 articles from ten journals over a nine-year period) of scholarly journal articles got published in the top journals.

Graduate education can also influence students' ethical practices. Valdez (2013) studied the motivations of Asian students in pursuing a Philippine university's master's program (N=63). Under the guidance of a professional competence model as the author's framework, it was found that there is high knowledge gain in ethical decision-making by students. Ethics had the greatest improvement in students' knowledge acquisition from the graduate journalism programme, and the ethics course the most useful course to students' journalistic work.

These previous studies had looked at the schools' and graduate students' profiles, their views and attitudes on the roles of journalists, and their motivations to pursue graduate education in journalism. Only one study employed a qualitative design (O'Boyle & Knowlton, 2015), although much can still be researched on. One area that remains to be studied is the role and purpose of students' pursuit of graduate education in journalism. Are these students realising how a theory-practice divide may be helpful to their education and, for some, their eventual pursuit of a career in journalism?

Theoretical framework

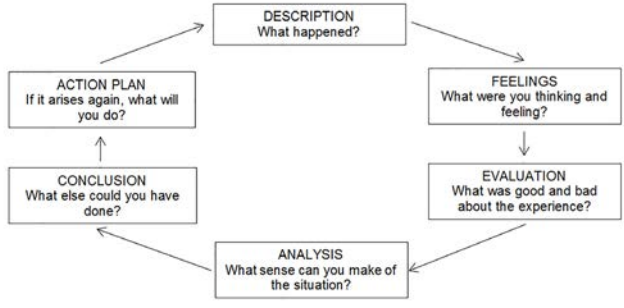
Susan Greenberg (2007) first wrote about using the *Theory of Reflective Practice* by Donald Schön (1983) as a solution to the theory-practice divide in journalism education. Schön's theory of reflective practice is being used as a theoretical anchorage for this article.

Reflective practice is said to be a process of learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and/or practice (also in Finlay, 2008). Reflective practice is said to involve examining assumptions of everyday practice; it also makes individual practitioners self-aware and critically evaluative of their own responses to practice situations. The point of reflective practice is that the student/practitioner 'recapture(s) practice experiences and (mulls these) over carefully in order to gain new understandings and so improve future practice' (Finlay, 2008). A host of models have modified this theory of reflective practice, said to be an outcome of the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) of David Kolb (1984).

A related model that stems from Schön's reflective practice and Kolb's ELT is Graham Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (in Finlay, 2008) (Figure 1). This model proposes the enrichment of theory and practice on each other 'in a never-ending cycle' (i.e. iterative). Learners here make six steps: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan. Gibbs' model (Finlay, 2008) carried the following aims: a) Challenge one's assumptions; b) Explore different/new ideas and approaches towards doing or thinking about things; c) Promote self-improvement given the identification of strengths and weaknesses and taking action to address things; and d) Link practice and theory by combining, doing or observing with thinking or applying knowledge.

Journalism, being an industry-oriented field, does immerse its practitioners to learn the ropes of the profession. Given the pace of journalism work, there may be little room for journalists to discern themselves, their duties, their personal aspirations and their dispositions about the roles of journalists before the public.

Figure 1: Graham Gibbs' Reflective Cycle



Source: Finlay, 2008

Graduate education by journalists may provide that venue of reflective practice. In a sense, the vision of Folkerts, Hamilton and Lemann (2013) for graduate journalism education thus fits into the theory of reflective practice (Kolb) and the reflective cycle model (Gibbs).

Methods

To describe the essence (*lebenswelt*) of the roles and purposes of graduate journalism education unto students, descriptive *phenomenology* was used. Phenomenology (Husserl, 1970, cited in Wojnar & Swanson, 2007, p. 173) is the 'science of the essence of consciousness formed on defining the concept of intentionality and the meaning of lived experience from the first person point of view'. To be characterised here are the individual and collective experiences of graduate journalism students (N=16) from one Japanese and two Philippine graduate journalism schools.

Qualitative research enables to fully describe a phenomenon in the perspectives of both the researcher and the reader. For people to understand better, 'they should be provided with information in the form which they usually experience'. In so doing, the depth and breadth of the qualitative data this research gathered will remain to provide information and insights on the phenomenon being studied. This approach for qualitative research thus yields findings that harmonise with readers' experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Study site and selection

This study was located at three graduate journalism schools in Japan (Waseda University) and the Philippines (Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication [AIJC]), and Ateneo de Manila University and its Asian Center for Journalism [ACFJ]) (Table 1). Having subjects that are from developed and developing countries finds similarity to what O'Boyle and Knowlton (2015) did.

a. Profile of the journalism schools

Waseda University offered Japan's first master's degree programme in journalism. This was to address the need for a 'professional journalism school in Japan' (WU01, interview). It is the newspaper companies that train the journalists, with special emphasis on the on-the-job training. Waseda started off with certificate programmes in science and technology journalism, environmental journalism, medical journalism and political journalism (WU02).

Ateneo de Manila University's Asian Center for Journalism (ACFJ) was founded under the School of Social Sciences. With financial support from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation since the centre began in 2000, journalists across the continent—especially from South and Southeast Asia—are the ACFJ's target and its curriculum rooted in the Asian tradition (AdMU01 and AdMU02, interviews). The Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC) is a professional

Table 1: Brief profile of the graduate journalism schools studied

	AIJC	Waseda	Ateneo
Student diversity (current)			
• All locals	yes	–	–
• International	No	Yes	Yes
Number of units	39	39	42
Scholarship arrangements	None	Yes	Yes
Year of first offering	1980	2008	2000

institute that was formed as a graduate school of journalism in 1980, working then with the Journal Group of Publications in Manila to offer a master's degree in journalism in the 1980s. AIJC stressed development journalism which helped in the transformation of the center as an educational institution-cum-consultancy group that does commissioned research on communication and journalism issues in the Philippines and other parts of the world (AIJC website; AIJC01, interview).

b. Profile of the respondents

This study interviewed 11 graduate students from Japan and five from the Philippines, as well as the programme heads and some colleague faculty of the master's programmes in journalism (Table 2). Most of the respondents are new entrants in journalism education, especially given that journalism in Japan is taught as a master's degree programme. While the Japanese students were currently taking their internship at the time of the interview, three of the five Filipino graduate students have ongoing news media experience. Having a limited number of respondents from the Philippines is admittedly a limitation of this research since Filipino working journalists are cornered by their daily reporting duties and have little or no time to be interviewed.

Homogenous sampling was employed here since participants are all graduate students who may have almost similar experiences. But maximum variation sampling was also considered for this paper since participants have diverging forms of experiences as seen from their backgrounds prior to and during their entry into graduate school.

Procedure and research instrumentation

The Waseda and AIJC students were interviewed in batches of three. The Ateneo de Manila students were interviewed individually given the difficulty of getting an agreed schedule for students who are currently full-time journalists.[3] Interviews conducted were free-flowing and their answers were transcribed with their consent. Statements in Filipino were carefully translated, interpreted and checked in order to remain faithful to the original meaning of their answers.

Respondents' sharings and musings revolved around the key questions for this

Table 2: Profiles of interviewees		
A. Graduate journalism students	Male	Female
Age brackets		
• 21-25	4	8
• 26-30	1	–
• 31-40	1	–
• 41-50	1	–
• 51 above	–	1
With professional journalistic experience prior to MA study (internship excluded)		
• Yes	2	0
• No	5	9
Undergraduate training		
• Journalism or communication-related	3	1
• Other degrees	4	8
Financial support for MA study		
• Self-paying	5	8
• On scholarship	2	1
Nationalities		
• Japanese	2	5
• Chinese	–	2
• Taiwanese	–	1
• Singaporean	–	1
• Filipino	3	2
B. Program heads of graduate journalism program		
• Gender	2	3
• Holder of PhD	1	3
• With professional journalistic experience (news organisation)	1	–

research: a) Personal background prior to entering into graduate school; b) Purposes for taking up graduate journalism education; c) Views on the theory-and-practice debate that these students immerse themselves in while studying and while doing media work; and d) Roles of graduate education for the said student.

Mode of analysis and ethical considerations

To capture the essence of the phenomenon, Colaizzi's seven-step method of phe-

nomenological data analysis was done (1978). The data were read and re-read as selected verbalisations from the 16 respondents helped collectively describe the commonalities of respondents' views and experiences. Condensed meanings of the significant statements led to the categorisation of codes, sub-themes and major themes.

Cool and warm analyses, facilitated by the use of a dendrogram, were done in order to capture the central meaning of respondents' experiences. Themes that emerged from their answers were labeled as truthfully and accurately, with each major theme assigned a metaphor. In turn, an *outcome space* was developed as the result of this phenomenological research (in Larsson and Holmström, 2009).

Member checking and critical friend techniques were done to validate data, especially when assessing their trustworthiness. The researcher also assured respondents that their identities would be kept confidential given the consent they gave.

Findings

Five themes emerged from the articulations of 16 Asian journalism students' meanings of the role and purposes of graduate journalism education. Looking at how the themes emerged, respondents took cognisance of not just their personal realisations while studying but also their understanding of the theory-and-practice relationship in graduate journalism education.

An overall look of respondents' answers, and the contexts where they are situated, can be likened to a truss bridge. A truss 'is a triangulated framework of elements that act primarily in tension and compression' (Tata Steel Construction, n.d.). This type of bridge is a common design for a bridge in many parts of the world. Like any type of bridge, the structure deals with tension (a force that pulls materials apart) and compression (a force that squashes materials together). Vehicles of various loads passing through truss bridges provide those tension and compression forces, which is why truss bridges are considered 'expensive to fabricate' (Tata Steel Construction, n.d.).

Having said that, graduate journalism education can be likened to a truss bridge wherein the compression forces are students' milieus as graduate students (personal, academic and professional), and the tension forces are the theory and practice perspectives of journalism. But the bridge, overall, tries to balance itself—and eventually, remain sturdy—given the compression and tension forces. In the same vein, graduate journalism education bridges the personal, academic and professional milieus of graduate students and their dealings with the usual theory-and-practice tensions in journalism.

Thus, the articulations of the respondent-graduate students can be summed up into an outcomes space which the researcher calls a Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education (Figure 2). This Bridge of Traits carries five major

Figure 2: Bridge of Traits of graduate journalism education

themes: 1) Insights maker (IM); 2) Context provider (CP); 3) Role agent (RA); 4) Capacity builder (CB); and 5) Individual booster (IB).

Insights maker: Graduate journalism education's intuitive nature

Respondents viewed graduate study as a provider of *additional knowledge*. This not only covers beginning knowledge for first-timers but also advanced knowledge. Beginners' responses reveal their interests:

> I am interested about the methods: how to research, how to conduct the interview. I am also taking social psychology classes, so I want to know the methods, how to see this society, how to see this world, how to see this problem. (SP)
>
> Anybody can write. But if you have a background in journalism, you have a guide. You are guided because you have books with instructions to follow, as well as methods and rules that you should employ and follow. Since I have no background in journalism, this is very new to me. It's like, if you want this field, you'll follow it. (AC)

Graduate journalism education also informs students of *advanced principles* on journalism. That was what one respondent from Ateneo realised:

> There are some things that I can't learn as a print reporter producing two stories a day (your bread and butter). How much can you really learn a specific industry? But it is the same people who don't read other publications, like *Financial Times*. You will even learn from the way *The New York Times* is doing their reports. You will see your limitations: Why can't I write like them? Why can they do those things?
>
> So it's boastfulness, for me, that others think journalists do not need to pursue graduate studies. You will see that in your first few days of reporting, and in the way they approach their work. Especially in terms of ethics: They don't understand conflict of interest. If you don't have that classroom training, or nobody tells you, you will not mind those kinds of issues. (MT)

Context provider: Graduate journalism education's explanatory nature

Journalism in general elucidates contexts to stories that were reported. In the same boat, respondents think graduate journalism education carries an explanatory nature. Prior to understanding the situations journalists face, graduate journalism education reminded one respondent of the duty journalists have for the public: 'I think (journalists) explain the difficult things in simple ways. It's a very important role' (SP).

Having said the above, graduate journalism education *explains the situations* journalists face. Such explanations were what one respondent, a veteran journalist, sought for:

> I think graduate study is a big help so that you get re-oriented, especially when you have long been in the industry and you are always plunged into work. You can see changes in the media industry but these are not explained to you. I think when you go back to school and take a master's degree, you are being refreshed, re-oriented and it grounds you about our profession… There are many changes in the industry that, through some courses, you can understand better how to face these changes. (LL)

Respondents think graduate journalism education also *contextualises the encounters between theory and practice*. On this score, some respondents acknowledge the following surrounding these encounters:

1. Theory is a *pre-requisite to practice* ('…When I came to Waseda, I realised the important things in journalism are the theories' [AW]; 'Once you are working, you do not have the time to learn about the theory. But it is important to have both theory and practice before going out to the real world' [MY]);
2. Theory is a *guide for journalism practice* ('I have a better knowledge of how politics works in Japan, so when I write about the accident in Fukushima, I get to understand what happened behind the scenes, how politics was involved in the accident, things like that. So knowledge of political science has helped (me) in (my) journalism' [MY]); and
3. Theory is thought of as a *subconscious mindset in the performance of one's journalistic duties* ('I think theory is helpful. There is a practical class here and we are required to report—and sometimes theory helps me on what should I do, what should I ask, and what part of the information should I take' [RY]).

Role agent: Graduate journalism education's designatory nature

Respondents do acknowledge the roles journalists play. The roles that graduate journalism education had told unto students cover individual journalists (*individual authority*) and journalism as a whole (*societal functions*).

Beginners especially marvel at these roles ascribed unto journalists:

> I think studying journalism is like, you can connect to the newest digital things and you can use social media to express your opinions and influence people. I want to connect to people and express my opinion very smoothly. (KT)
>
> I have to tell the information, the most important things. We need to try to find things that many people don't know. Only a journalist can do that. (RA)

The students also acknowledged the societal influence journalists provide. Even if students come from countries with diverse media systems (from restrictive to being free), the respondents' recognition of the societal roles of journalism is leaned towards being the Fourth Estate:

> Journalism is a watchdog for the people… to change society. Journalists report to citizens and to the origins of the information—editing the information. (TK)
>
> For me, my first impression of journalism is criticism. Journalists have deep introspection of this world, about this society. (TC)
>
> …the MA program we are taking in Ateneo grounds you more theoretically: What is our role in society? What is journalism?... When you are doing your job, it reminds you why you were there. You are the touch point between the people and the people with power. (MT)

Capacity builder: Graduate journalism education's developmental nature

Two sub-themes under this role emerged from respondents' answers: graduate journalism education *sharpens students' journalistic skills* and develops a sense of *critical analysis* unto them.

As graduate-level journalism study still tackles reporting, writing and editing skills, the graduate program helped students refine these same skills—especially geared, says two respondents, to senior and supervisory roles in news organisations (MT and LL). For the new entrants, they learn new skills but with some value-added given that students are at the graduate level. There is even a 'mature' skills set that some respondents claimed to have learned from graduate school. As some of them articulated:

> The Ateneo curriculum has that political aspect to journalism. So I think I can sharpen my skills there [I'm proficient in business]. If work in a different job, with different bosses or beat… I want be able to do it properly. In a way that makes my stories more informative and better for the readers. I want to add more substance in the story, to make people care about it. (MT)
>
> I know everyone can write, everyone can just talk to people. But you… talk to people and write articles in a mature way, (telling) a mature citizen. It

> [no graduate schooling] did not help to journalism, or to improve the quality of journalism. (AC)

But much had been said on the critical analysis skills that graduate journalism education imparts. It is in this respect where theory and practice complement, that which respondents acknowledged. This theory-practice complementation differs from the earlier sub-theme on theory-practice encounters, in the sense that critical analysis is applied in the synergy of theory and practice.

1. One thing some respondents said is that the graduate program provides *theoretical grounding* into journalistic practice. This grounding was 'expected' in graduate study, says other respondents:

> I realise that it (journalism) is not easy and you need to know the theory behind it, as well as the practical side. So yeah, you definitely need both theory and practice. (MG)
>
> I expected theoretical and practical practice [sic] in journalism… we are now (taking an internship) for a newspaper company and so I think we needed theory. (RY)

2. Another insight from some respondents is the need to *operationalise both theory and practice* in conducting journalism:

> I think balance is very important for me because… journalists are the experts in this field so they can have deep conversations with sources. So I think the theories are important. But the practical (things) are also important because you have to know how to ask questions, how to take photos and interviews. You will look so stupid if you don't know basic knowledge in this field and just interview the expert. (SP)
>
> I think before learning to practice, we should learn something about the theories because we could damage (someone's reputation). Students need to know also the practical tips. But my internship mentor said I should know how to interview, take photos. So he said it is very important to learn something, to learn the theories. (TC)

3. The graduate programme provides a third theory-and-practice perspective in which critical analysis is applied: journalistic practice has its *theoretical lenses*. As verbalised by a Waseda student:

> If you want to be a journalist, you need to understand the society that you live in. And in order to understand the society you live in, you need to understand the theory that goes with it. Like in a democratic system, how does voting work? How do people respond to journalism and the process that goes with that? So if you don't understand that, I don't think you can create news that is relevant. I think theory kind of helps journalists understand that… understand their own society better. (MG)

4. Finally, the critical analysis lessons learned from graduate studies have made some respondents realise that theoretical discussions are a *necessity* in real-world journalism:

> I realised why we need theory; as a reader as well of news, like we not only report but we read the news as well right? We need to know the theory in order to be critical to (an) article… Like did (the article) use this process? Is that like, credible? You can't ask these questions if you don't know the theory of journalism. (MG)
>
> If the only training you get is on-the-job training, you won't be able to look at yourself objectively through the lens of theory. This is because you are colored with the company's style and system, you know what I mean? So if you know your theory beforehand, you can have a more critical way of thinking when you look at yourself and other journalists. (IA)

Not surprisingly, theories do clash with daily journalistic practice and mixing theory and practice 'is crazy' (LL). Nevertheless, theories have also made respondents reflect on and analyse things:

> In the future, before we write something, (theory) also helps us in being responsible; there are theories we can get back from, especially the basic ones to help us know what we should write before we share these to the public. Let's face it: we don't have much time while at work. You will be lucky if someone will explain to you why these things happen right now and why the industry is currently this way. If you take (an) MA, these things will be properly explained to you. (LL)
>
> The theory about journalism taught me to show respect to the power of journalism. Many have taught me that journalism is a very powerful thing…and you have to use that power. (SP)

Individual booster: Graduate journalism education's goal-oriented nature

Notwithstanding the tensions between theory and practice in journalism that frequent graduate students' personal, professional and academic lives, the earlier responses show graduate education tries to balance things out. This is especially in consideration of respondents' individual goals, which graduate journalism education helps boost. Graduate studies in journalism adhere to respondents' *self-interest in journalism*, their aspirations for *career growth*, and their pursuit of a *sense of accomplishment*.

Varied reasons surround some respondents' *self-interest* into taking the graduate programme. Some found that interest through reading (MG); some linked their interest in journalism with technology (AW); others got the epiphany that journalism is a 'long-term career' (VL). For another respondent, journalism through graduate studies is an ambition:

> My ambition is to write, and to have authority, and be credible to people. I think it's also an individual aspiration; if you have the inclination of writing, and you want to make your best on it, you should go to school specialising in it. (AC)

Graduate studies in journalism are also viewed as a jump to the next phase of students' professional lives. One wants to teach (LL) while another recognises that a master's degree may be a plus should he be assigned a higher role in the news organisation (MT).

Another respondent even realised that since journalism is not her undergraduate training, and actual jobs in the industry are limited, the graduate degree is a must: 'I tried to find a job in the media. But in Japan it is very difficult to find jobs in newspaper companies because it is a small industry. So I then decided to go for the master's degree.' (RA)

The training from graduate education will even be an upgrade of the skills of the journalism student, which two graduate students recognised:

> So I thought if I'm going to advance in my career. I should be able to offer potential employer, something more than just being a good reporter or whatever. And also we are moving into digital (journalism). So if I have more skills before that transition takes place, or as that transition is taking place, as I think it is now, I'm able to equip myself with better reporting tools—mostly for career advancement. (MT).
>
> Taking a master's degree is a self-upgrade. If you learn more about the media industry, it will put you in a higher plane. You stand taller, especially now that anyone can practically be a journalist. (LL)

And if self-interest and career growth are being buoyed, the graduate journalism programme helps students develop that sense of accomplishment. The degree programme helps in students' aspirations for the following:

- *Authenticity* ('A master's degree [in journalism] is a form of representation for yourself. If you have that degree, you are representing yourself also' [BD]);
- *Credibility* ('Career-wise I think I'd become a better journalist, like I'd not commit errors, especially related to ethics... And I can stand by what I report…to the public' [VL]); and
- *Fulfillment* ('If I have finished this degree and write the book I want to write, I am already fulfilled. Whoever reads it, the reader will find out its worth. Writing that book helps add to your knowledge as well as improves your character' [AC]).

Even one student said finishing the graduate journalism degree programme is a 'stage of life':

> Studying a master's degree in journalism 'is a requirement for me—if you want to write with authority, credibility and inspiration. Writing has no age limit. Journalism is an art, isn't it? And it has no age limit. As long as you can write, as long as your brain is functioning, nobody can stop you. That's why I am here (in journalism master's programme)… This master's degree is important for me, because this is another chapter of my life, and maybe… the last chapter of my life. I want to finish this, that's my ambition for now.' (AC)

With regard to the relevance of graduate journalism education, one respondent averred that simply being trained on the basic skill of reporting and writing may not be enough. Graduate journalism education then comes into the picture as an ego booster:

> Some people think there is no need for… journalism education. But it builds confidence. It is a really good time to build confidence; when you know that you have more knowledge, you have more courage to interview people or to write an article. So it's (journalism graduate programme) really a good place to nurture your confidence. (MG)

Discussion

This study enumerated Japanese and Filipino graduate journalism students' views on the roles and purposes of taking a journalism master's degree programme. This, as respondents have recognised the 'tensions' surrounding theory and practice in journalism. The respondents' answers brought forth a 'bridge of traits' on how graduate journalism education helps these students, be it beginning or mid-career journalists. The use of a bridge to illustrate respondents' answers phenomenologically (i.e., the outcomes space) respects students' overall disposition: Both theory and practice complement, while their graduate programme portrays the roles of insights maker, context provider, role agent, capacity builder, and individual booster.

The contribution of the Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education is that students are providing perspectives on how graduate journalism education may look. From a programmatic standpoint, respondents' answers reinforced, in more ways than one, the elements of an ideal program in journalism that Folkerts, Hamilton and Lemann outlined (2013). There can be intersections surrounding what the journalism deans wrote and what the respondents of this study answered (Table 3), as the fifth trait—individual booster—personalises the place of graduate journalism education unto the student.

Observations on graduate journalism education as insights maker and capacity-builder affirm Saalberg's findings (1970) that non-journalism bachelor's degree holders find value from the skills they learned in graduate journalism education. While many of this study's respondents do not hold journalism bachelor's degrees, these students do understand the demands of journalism practice and analysis at both beginner and advanced levels. And since the degree is a graduate degree, these respondents can

Table 3: Intersections of the elements and traits	
Bridge of traits	**Elements of graduate journalism education**
Context provider	Guided practice, historical knowledge, methods of analysis, theory
Insights maker	Guided practice, evolution and adaptability
Role agent	Guided practice, evolution and adaptability, diversity, media law and ethics
Capacity builder	Guided practice, theory, diversity, media law and ethics

Adapted from: Folkerts, Hamilton and Lemann, 2013

become 'more solidly grounded' in journalism and media (Saalberg,1970).

Respondents' answers on the role agent trait only confirm that the roles of journalism and of journalists are a commonplace discussion in journalism education. It is but inevitable for respondents to share their feelings about the roles journalists play. Journalists' roles were also questioned by Schultz (2002) and O'Boyle and Knowlton (2015). Interestingly, some respondents' answers reveal the influence of their home countries' news media systems. Some answers even affirm a desire by respondents to feel the Fourth Estate disposition of journalism, at least through graduate studies.

The context provider trait is interesting. This set of answers came about as a result of the usual training that journalism provides: that stories on events and issues be contextualised. It is under this trait that the theory-and-practice discussion continues. Respondents were candid in their young views surrounding this debate, given the context that journalism is intrinsically a practice-oriented field.

Respondents may have understood theory as things that do not only make sense of what is happening around them. 'Theory' or 'theories' is/are those that have been taught in school, like definitions, principles, concepts or the theories themselves. What adds up here is the setting, the journalism school in a university set up: the learning of graduate-level journalism is now beyond the skills being taught, but is traversing critical analysis of the writings and actions of journalists, and the interactions between journalism and other stakeholders in the society the journalists cover (also in Chapman & Papatheodorou, 2004). This can be gleaned from verbalisations such as undergraduate training in political science that can be used in reporting and writing (MY), or even the news media system and political milieu that influence journalists' work (MG).

Scholars have engaged in somewhat heated intellectual arguments about how theory and practice collide in journalism and journalism education (Barkho, 2013; Bacon, 2011; Greenberg, 2007; Robie, 2014, 2015). But the responses of these graduate students reveal their simplistic—but meaningful—understandings of how theory and practice complement. Considering theories as *pre-requisites* (AW, MY), *guides* (MY), *subconscious mindsets* (RY) and even *necessities* (MG,

IA) is a modest leap of faith from how scholars abhor either theory or practice, or try to bridge these two worlds but are having a hard time. If such answers came about, the three graduate journalism schools and their courses may have been successful in balancing theory and practice, with journalists learning two categories of knowledge: academic and professional (de Burgh, 2003)

Except for two respondents who have more than five years of journalism experience (reporting, editing), the rest of the respondents are newcomers to the field. This length of experience influences how the Theory of Reflective Practice of Schön and the Reflective Cycle of Gibbs are being applied. A future study, of seasoned journalists who are also graduate journalism students, can see how these theories make journalists exercise critical self-reflection (Chapman & Papatheodorou, 2004). But for now, some verbalisations by respondents show efforts by these graduate students to reflect on the work of journalists, on trends in the profession, on the implications of journalists' articles and roles, and on journalism's place in a society. Graduate journalism school even answers queries on trends in the profession that a respondent's daily immersion in the news media industry cannot, or may not have the time to, answer (LL). This shows that graduate journalism education is a reflective place for him to understand further the news media industry.

Sure, some theories do not apply in real-world journalism. Given also that the majority of respondents are newcomers, their verbalisations may have lacked the insight of how practice can also influence theory (Chapman & Papatheodorou, 2004). But graduate journalism school became a watering hole to ponder on their own skills and on the issues facing journalists and their practice (or even the journalism sector in their own countries).

In the formality of graduate journalism education under a university setting, the individual booster trait provides a personalised feel into the discussion. Not surprisingly, graduate journalism education for some of these respondents is a ticket to career advancement and improved self-confidence. But for some respondents to say that graduate journalism education provides a *stamp of authority* (AC) and *legitimacy* (BD) even to the newcomer will be an endearing statement on the part of the journalism programme head.

The researcher recognises the limitations of having only 16 respondents for this phenomenological study. Having more respondents, especially practising journalists, may have provided further insights. Nevertheless, the Bridge of Traits on Graduate Journalism Education is a humble contribution this paper brings forth to the study of journalism education worldwide.

Conclusion

There is a dearth of literature on the roles and purposes of taking up graduate education in a field—journalism—that is highly associated with its practice. This phenomenological study thus attempted to find out why these beginning and

seasoned journalists from Japan and the Philippines take up graduate studies, and what is the goal of such level of journalism education unto them. Answers from 16 Japanese and Filipino graduate journalism students yielded the Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education that illustrates these roles and purposes of graduate studies. This bridge of traits also entered into the theory-and-practice discussions that have frequently divided scholars, educators and professionals in the journalism field.

Reflective practice in education and learning was evident in some answers by respondents. Their answers may be based on a simple understanding of the things they have learned in the graduate school, or experiences acquired from doing daily journalism work that were brought inside the classroom. But students recognised the possibilities and tensions of blending theory and practice in the field of journalism.

Thus saying, this Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education represents respondents' efforts to connect their personal, academic and professional milieus and aspirations as journalists. Making these connections is done within the realm of journalism's theory-practice continuum which, as respondents surprisingly articulated, is important, complementary and applicable. Such articulations provide hope to visions of graduate journalism education, within or outside a university: *A viable graduate journalism program implements several elements in pedagogy and substance* (Folkerts, Hamilton & Lemann, 2013) *that espouse a spirit of critical reflective practice unto journalists* (Greenberg, 2007; Chapman & Papatheorodou, 2004) *and that aspire for new perspectives and approaches to the teaching, study and practice of journalism*.

This research was done aiming at *moderatum generalisation,* and further refining the Bridge of Traits of Graduate Journalism Education will be helpful. Nevertheless, respondents' verbalizations are indicative and can lead to further studies on other aspects of graduate journalism education: programme delivery, outcomes achieved, the influence of graduate studies unto daily journalism practice, how theories may improve journalism practice, and how trends from journalism practice may advance journalism knowledge and theories.

It is recommended that the three journalism schools determine ways how a reflective education (de Burgh, 2003) will enhance graduate program delivery. For now, reflective practice is a workable approach to bridge the theory-practice divide (Greenberg, 2008). Reflective practice can even open up dialogues between professionals, scholars and teachers/educators (Zelizer, 2004), leading to a more integrated set of views on journalism as a profession and as a discipline. Reflective education can hopefully lead to producing master's degree-bearing journalists who can improve either daily journalism practice or journalism knowledge-generation, or both. This can be a curricular agenda for journalism schools worldwide with graduate programs.

But seeing the graduate student achieve personal fulfillment from completing

this master's degree is, for the meantime, a source of triumph for the journalism school. What these journalism schools hope next is that their products make a difference in the field of journalism.

Notes

1. In an earlier piece, Adam (1989) affirmed an earlier statement of Joseph Pulitzer: journalism is a literary craft in itself, so literature must be taught in the courses.
2. Graduate education for journalism includes taking a PhD in journalism and related fields, with doctoral education preparing graduates to conduct research (Christ & Broyles, 2007). However, doctoral studies as a form of graduate or postgraduate education are not included in this article. Christ and Broyles' paper included master's and doctoral students as respondents.
3. The Filipino students of ACFJ were emailed several times requesting an interview at places and times of their convenience. They did not reply to the researcher's repeated email requests, even to backdoor requests made through classmates who were eventually interviewed.

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3. The challenges of anonymous source stories

A case study of Solomon Islands daily newspapers

Abstract: This article examines the use of anonymous sources in *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* daily newspapers in Solomon Islands. It is aimed to explore why the two newspapers use anonymous sources in the news stories they publish. The two national newspapers face many challenges in maintaining a strong sense of ethics and accountability as most reporters are not qualified, and they compete in a small advertising market to generate revenue. Consequently, they also face challenges from politicians and other public figures over publishing anonymous sources in their papers. The challenges range from threats, intimidation, compensation demands to court battles. This study includes a content analysis of the daily papers and interviews with the editors of both papers and individuals who are affected by the issue.

Keywords: accountability, anonymous sources, content analysis, ethics, newspapers, Solomon Islands, *Solomon Star, Island Sun*

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SOLOMON ISLANDS has encountered many challenges since gaining independence from Britain in 1978. The challenges include politics, economics and social aspects. Media, which was a partner in the country's transition period, has also faced many challenges from government, politicians and the citizens for its role in informing the people. As a young growing industry with a lot of inexperienced journalists in newspapers, radio, television and online outlets, the media is regularly criticised for the way it covers news events. The public has also sued the media in court, demanding compensation, and harassed journalists in their line of duty. This became a common practice during the ethnic conflict from 1998-2000 and the period after this crisis.

This research study set out to investigate why the two daily newspapers in the Solomon Islands, *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun*, use anonymous sources in the news stories they published and what impact this has on the papers. The study was based on a thematic analysis of both newspapers and interviews with editors, politicians, government officers and some members of the public. Allied

to these main questions, the research for this article also sought to examine why editors of both papers allow the use of anonymous sources, why government officers do not release information to both papers, the positive and negative impact of using anonymous sources, the challenges confronting journalists who use anonymous sources, and understanding the perception of the public towards the use of anonymous sources towards both dailies.

Research was carried out during 2014 as part of my degree course at Divine Word University. I faced a number of problems with the content analysis and there were complications with funding and travel to and from the Solomon Islands. I wanted to interview two former Prime Ministers, Dr Derek Sikua and Manasseh Sogavare, who were often directly affected by the use of anonymous source stories in both newspapers, but was unable to do so. During the period when I was doing interviews, the country was preparing for a national general election so everyone, including the candidates and voters, were returning to their constituencies for voting. Consequently, Sikua and Sogavare were busy with campaigns in their respective constituencies.

This research is the first of its kind to be carried out. It is intended to help the public understand why anonymous sources are used even after the newspapers have been threatened and gone to court. It will also seek to show whether journalists have acted ethically or unethically when using anonymous sources in their stories.

Journalists face tremendous challenges when dealing with anonymous source stories. Christie (2014) claims journalists make judgmental errors when under pressure to break news. Furthermore, journalists are under pressure to release anonymous stories because of the deadlines of their newspapers. Dotinga (2004) claims journalists use confidential sources as one means of getting stories. Farhi (2013) argues that the alternative of not using anonymous sources is to have no story at all. Journalists try to negotiate with their sources to publish their names but in reality, this usually does not work out. Wasserman (2014) argues that:

> Certain kinds of reporting routinely incorporate routine reliance on informants who will not talk unless they are assured of anonymity. Although sensitive political and governmental stories are the areas that first come to mind, business and financial news-especially coverage of closely-held companies, professional firms and the like-would be difficult if not impossible to assemble without source concealment. Yet confidentiality poses ethical conflicts, chiefly because it may clash with two professional norms: accountability and verifiability. The result may impede truth-telling.

A clearly negative aspect of using anonymous sources is that courts can demand the journalist or the publisher to reveal the identity of the person who leaked confidential information. Sager and Wilcox (2007) state that every year

publishers, reporters and editors are asked by courts to disclose the identities of sources. For example a publisher, John Peter Zenga, refused to disclose the identity of his source to New York authorities after he criticised the government. One of the positive impacts of using anonymous sources is that journalists have the privilege to expose the unethical or illegal behaviour of national leaders. Sternadori and Thorson (2009) claim that using anonymous sources could open up the door for 'spin doctors' and 'leakers' to manipulate the news. In the United States, news organisations discouraged anonymous sources following the exposure of Janet Cook's child addict story and fabricated stories of Jayson Blair and Jack Kelly. But anonymous stories came alive in the media following the exposure of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal and the 1991 Gulf War.

The public has negative perceptions when newspapers release news based on anonymous sources. Sullivan (2013) claims that the heart of the problem is one of credibility. This could be influenced by untrue stories leading up to the Iraq war and dishonest reporting by *New York Times* journalist Jayson Blair.

Dotinga (2004) claims that journalists use anonymous sources because they are lazy. Some journalists may even think anonymous sources give more prominence to their stories when they use them. The JEA Scholastic Press Rights Commission (2011a) states that when readers read stories with anonymous sources it makes them wonder whether they are true or accurate.

> To avoid questions about plagiarism and/or fabrication, it is best to avoid using anonymous sources. Writing gains credibility when all sources are on the record. Sometimes, though, anonymous sources are the only way to tell the story. (JEA Scholastic Press Rights Commission, 2011b)

Governments have regulations to protect the release of confidential information. Methven (1980) states this is to effectively maintain the functions of the government and protect national security. For example, if the government released an investigative file, it could help the violator to escape punishment. Sager and Wilcox (2007) claim the resignation of former United States President, Richard Nixon, in relation to the Watergate scandal, came about because of one informer in the government, who gave information to two *Washington Post* journalists, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, under the condition of anonymity. Insiders in government try to justify the leak of confidential information to the media in the name of public interest.

Editors always face challenges when dealing with anonymous source stories. According to Kurtz (2010), critics complain that reporters and editors allow anonymity freely and when readers find out about the source of information, they lose credibility. It has been suggested that editors should only publish an article with anonymous sources, if they have the contact details of that person.

Critics also claim that media outlets allow public figures to escape accountability and scrutiny when attributing their claims to unnamed people. Foreman, (1984); Gassaway, (1998) and Smith (2003), also claim that the ethical guidelines of revealing sources of information are in conflict with 'giving voice to the voiceless' or those of un-named voices. Editors may decide to publish a story or letter anonymously, or with a pen name, if it is not legally actionable.

Solomon Islands news media

There are six newspapers in the country: *Solomon Star, Island Sun, Sunday Isles, The National Express, Agrikalsa Nius* and *Voice Katolika. The National Express* has ceased publishing a print edition and now operates online. The Solomon Islands Broadcasting Cooperation (SIBC) is the national broadcaster and operates Radio Hapi Isles, Wantok FM and Radio Hapi Lagun. The other radio stations are ZFM, Gud Nius FM, Paoa FM operated by Solomon Star Co. Ltd and Gold Ridge FM. One Television was a local television station, but it has ceased operations. Other television services are provided by Solomon Telikom Co. Ltd, Satsol and Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) which is broadcast in other countries. Most people listen to the SIBC. The readerships of newspapers is centralised on the capital of Honiara and a few larger provinces such as Malaita and Western Province. This is the same for FM stations which attract mostly young people from the city.

The NGO Anti-Corruption Network Solomon Islands (ANSI), called on the government on Facebook to enact a *Freedom of Information Act* to allow a free flow of information to the public for the sake of transparency, openness, communication and accountability. Article 12 of the Solomon Islands Constitution guarantees Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Press. Media legislation includes the *Broadcasting Act 1997*, *Television (Amendment) Act 1996, Telecommunication Act 2009* and a draft *Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill 2003*.
ANSI (2013) states:

> Freedom of information is a fundamental human right, recognised by international law. Freedom of information laws allow access by the general public to data held by the national government. They establish a 'right-to-know' legal process by which requests may be made for government-held information, to be received freely or at minimal cost, barring standard exceptions. While technological advancement and free flow of information is enjoyed in other sectors of our society, our government system, in particular the public sector, seems to be very backward in providing public access to public documents and information pertaining to the management and use of public funds being administered by public institutions.'

The *Solomon Star* began publishing on 28 May 1982. Originally published on Fridays, it is now a tabloid daily. The late John Lamani from Malaita province

owned the newspaper and its headquarters is in Honiara. Recently, the paper opened a small office in Auki, Malaita province. The paper's circulation varies between 3500 to 4500, with the highest sales on Wednesdays and increased circulation on Fridays. The newspaper's major selling outlets are in Honiara, Malaita and Western province, but it also sends copies to other provincial centres. The paper employs 80 staff working in all departments. There are 16 people in the newsroom which includes reporters, sub-editors and the editor.

The *Island Sun* newspaper began operation in 2003 during the era of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) that came to restore law and order after the ethnic conflict. Former senior reporters of *Solomon Star* started the paper which came out twice a week. Today the paper comes out from Monday to Saturday. The paper is based in Honiara and employs 35 people of whom 12 are journalists. Its daily circulation is 3000 copies. Its major selling outlets are Honiara and Gizo in Western Province.

Methodology

Three different methods were used to collect information. These were in-depth interviews, content analysis and internet research. The interviews were carried out in 2014 and the content analysis for the period October 2014-December 2014 in June 2015. In-depth interviews were conducted with different people to represent the views in the street, government, politics, non-government organisations and both newspapers. A total of seven people were interviewed. The interviewees were:

1. Citizen Donaldson Rusa
2. Forum Solomon Islands International (FSII) chief executive officer Benjamin Afuga
3. Member of Parliament for West Makira Alfred Ghiro
4. *Island Sun* newspaper editor Priestly Habru
5. Ministry of Communication and Aviation permanent secretary Francis Lomo
6. *Solomon Star* newspaper editor Ofani Eremae
7. Member of Parliament for North West Choiseul Connelly Sandakabatu

When I interviewed the editors of the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers, I asked them two main questions: Why does your paper use anonymous sources in its news stories? What are some impacts on the use of anonymous sources on your paper? I then elaborated other questions from these two main basic questions. For the other interviewees, I asked them this question: How do they see the use of anonymous sources in the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers? Then I elaborated some questions from this basic question. I carried out the interviews before I did my content analysis.

Content analysis: October 2014-December 2014

The content analysis focused on the months from October 2014-December 2014, the period leading up to the national general elections. I collected my data on both newspapers based on a week of each month from October 2014 to December 2014 in June 2015.

I looked for anonymous sources stories that appeared under different categories such as politics, health, the economy, business, police and agriculture. This was done mainly on local news stories that appeared on both papers, excluding international news and features. I also looked for total and hard and business news pages, total national hard and business news stories, stories with anonymous sources, types of stories with anonymous sources, pages, and whether the stories were the main stories or not on the page. The size of headline and space and space of stories were examined to see whether the anonymous source stories are lead, second lead, third lead, fourth lead and so on.

The *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers published a total of 133 anonymous source stories between October 2014 and December 2014. The *Solomon Star* recorded the highest with 90 anonymous source stories, while *Island Sun* published 43 anonymous source stories.

Stories with anonymous sources were categorised under the headings Politics, Police, Business, Health and Education. Of the *Solomon Star* total of 90 stories with anonymous sources, 32 appeared on the front page; 23 on page two; 14 on page three; nine on page four; and three on page five. Other anonymous sources appeared on pages seven, eight, nine, 11 and 13. Of the 43 anonymous sources stories in the *Island Sun*, 20 appeared on the front page, 10 on page two, seven on page three and four on page four. Anonymous sources also appeared on pages five, six and eight.

Solomon Star had nine different ways to refer to anonymous source stories. It used 'close sources' more often, followed by 'decline to give name'. It also used 'spokesperson', 'reports', 'no name', 'eye witness', 'anonymity', 'insider' and 'reliable source' to refer to anonymous sources. *Island Sun,* on the other hand, used 15 different ways to refer to anonymous source stories. It normally used 'sources' more often, followed by 'don't want to be identified', 'reports', 'insiders', 'no name', 'prefer not to be named', 'unnamed', 'want name withheld', 'did not want name revealed', 'wished not to be named', 'one officer', 'eye-witness', 'condition of anonymity', 'elder' and 'resident.'

In the period under review. the *Solomon Star* published a total of 66 anonymous source stories under the Politics category. This was followed by nine anonymous source stories under the section for Business. In the Police section, it published 11 anonymous source stories. Under the category for Health, it published two anonymous source stories. For the Education section, it published one anonymous source story and one for Agriculture. By comparison, *Island Sun*

published 23 anonymous source stories under the Politics heading in the same period. In the Business category, it published eight anonymous source stories and five Police reports. Under the Health section it published three anonymous source stories. For the Education category, it published three anonymous source stories and one under Agriculture.

In the period analysed, the *Solomon Star* had 24 stories with anonymous sources in October, a figure believed to be influenced by the national general election then underway (Graph 1). The finding was based on three weeks, which include 11 in the first week, followed by five and eight. The number of anonymous sources dropped in November to 16 (Graph 2). The first week recorded three, followed by six. However, no anonymous sources stories appeared on the third week, followed by seven in the final week. The number of anonymous source stories increased to 50 in December believed to be influenced by the election of the Prime Minister (Graph 3). This is the highest number of anonymous sources that appeared on the period analysed. In the first week, it recorded 24, followed by 19, three and four in the final week.

Total national hard & business news stories

Solomon Star published 391 news pages during the period of analysis. This included 119 in October, 138 in November and 134 in December. There were 1,145 news stories that *Solomon Star* ran in the months analysed. This includes 331 in October, 427 in November and 387 in December. These were news stories, and feature stories were excluded.

Island Sun newspaper, which is published six days a week, with usually 20 pages per edition, used a total of 43 anonymous sources. It recorded 13 anonymous sources in October (graph 4) and dropped to 12 in November (Graph 5). However, in December, the number of anonymous sources increased to 18 (Graph 6). In October, it used four anonymous sources in the first week followed by five, three and one in the final week. In November, it used three anonymous sources in the first week, followed by two, four and three in the final week. In December, the paper published five anonymous sources in the first week, followed by two, nine and two in the final week.

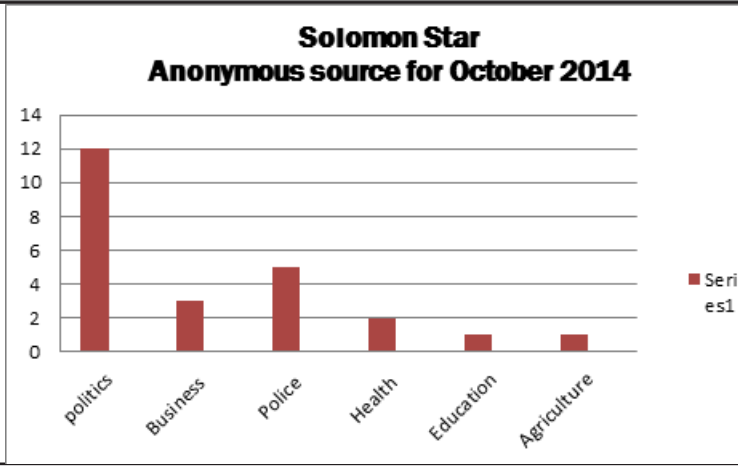
A total of 339 hard and business news pages appeared in the *Island Sun* in the period analysed. This includes 117 pages in October, 117 in November and 105 in December. A total of 857 national hard news and business news stories were published in the *Island Sun* in this period.. This includes 275 in October, 308 in November and 274 in December.

From October 2014 to December 2014, the *Solomon Star* published 66 anonymous source stories under the political category. There were 12 in October, followed by 11 in November and 43 in December. The *Island Sun* recorded the highest number of anonymous source stories under the sections of politics and

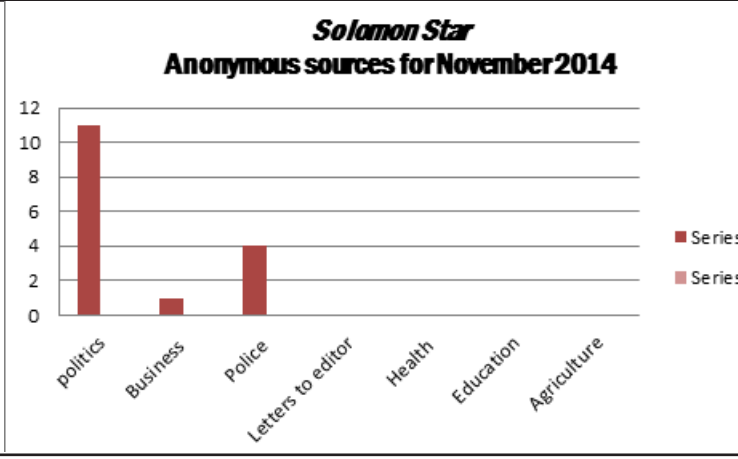
business. It published a total of 23 anonymous source stories under the political category, with seven on October, four in November and 12 in December. In November, business stories got the highest number of anonymous source stories with five.

In the following section, the researcher presents the findings of the content analysis and the interviews. The findings will be based on the tables, graphs and supported by comments from those interviewed. It will provide the reasons behind the use of anonymous source stories on *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* from October-December 2014.

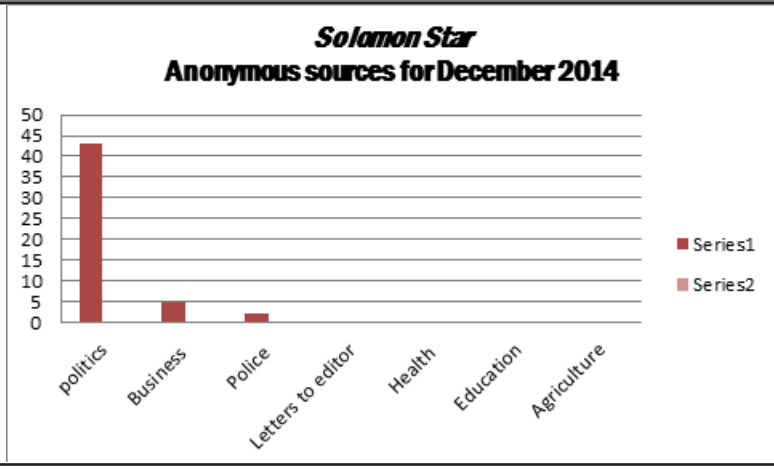
Graph1: *Solomon Star* anonymous sources, October 2014



Graph 2: *Solomon Star* anonymous sources, November 2014



Graph 3: *Solomon Star* anonymous sources, December 2014



Analysis and discussion

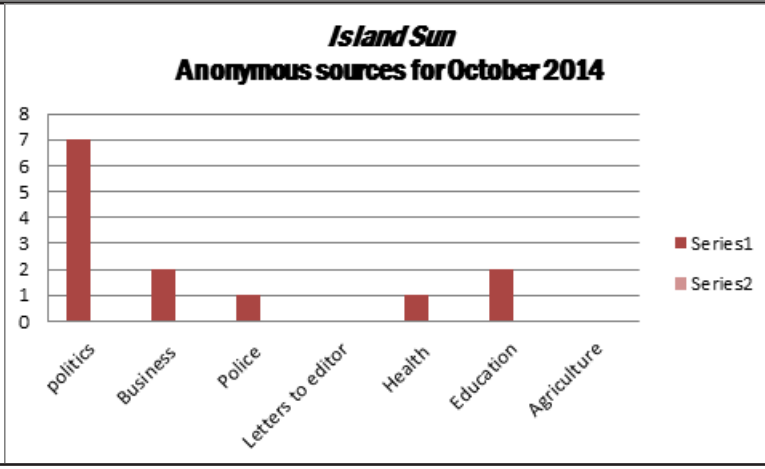
The findings created two perceptions from two different groups of people in regard to anonymous source stories. The public accused *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers for acting unethically in allowing anonymous sources in their stories. But content analysis shows both papers have been using a lot of anonymous sources for controversial or sensitive stories mainly under politics and business. This was evident from the 133 anonymous source stories that appeared on both papers from October to December 2014.

Politicians and other officials have questioned the credibility of both papers when using anonymous sources in their stories. They claim that when newspapers use anonymous sources, it creates a lot of questions about whether the stories are true or fabricated. However, the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers claimed they only use anonymous sources on stories that were sensitive and controversial. *Solomon Star* editor Ofani Eremae said anonymous sources were given prominence in sensitive stories in order to protect their identity. However, he said that in general stories, journalists were encouraged to use real names in their stories for the good reputation of the company and the reporters.

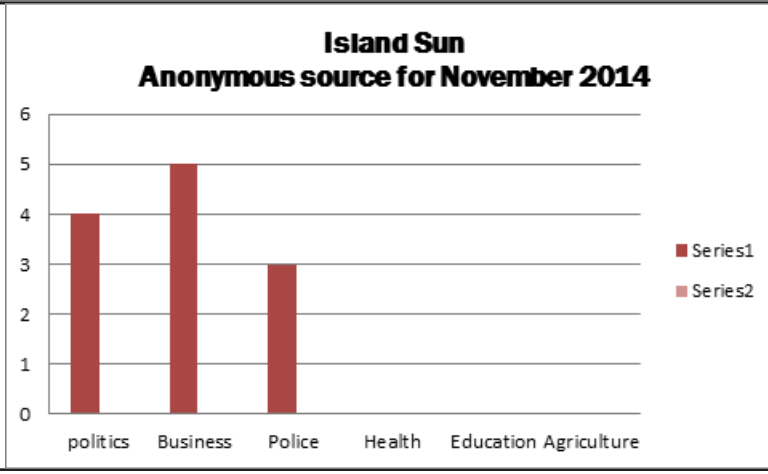
> However, there are some cases where we have to accept the use of anonymous sources. For instance, if there is a story regarding permanent secretary accused of stealing public funds and someone working under the PS likes to reveal what going on there, we will allow that person to talk to us in confidence. (Eremae, 2015)

Island Sun editor Priestly Habru said government officers hid their identities in controversial stories for fear of being disciplined by the Ministry they serve.

Graph 4: *Island Sun* anonymous sources, October 2014



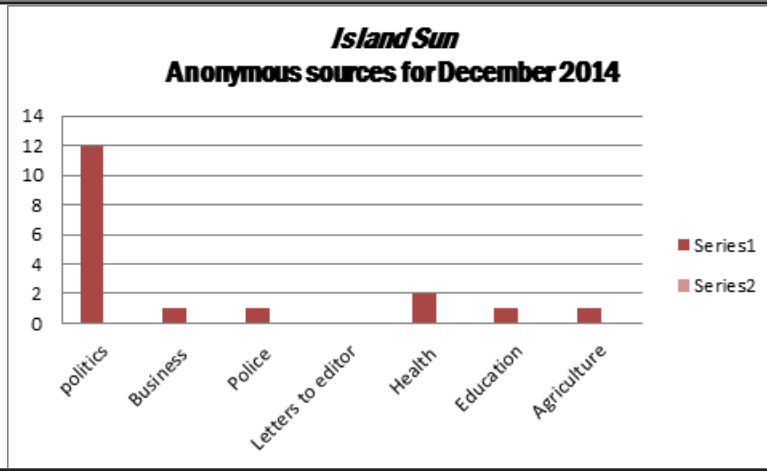
Graph 5: *Island Sun* anonymous sources, November 2014



He said another reason was the *wantok* system, where journalists are living in a small society in which everyone knows each other. For example, if a person criticised a Member of Parliament and if the MP retains his seat, the person might miss benefits from him.

> Another thing is, there is a line of understanding in the public service that information can only be released by their information officers, permanent secretaries or the Government Communication Unit. Therefore in any controversial stories, the public servants normally hide their stories in fear of being disciplined by the ministry they serve. (Habru, 2015)

Graph 6: *Island Sun* anonymous sources, December 2014



However, Member of Parliament for West Makira, Alfred Ghiro thinks it is not good for the public if newspapers use anonymous sources.

> This is so that any replies on allegations and comments should be directed to somebody you know. People should use real names otherwise it should not pass to media for public viewing. Maybe in other countries people hide their names for security reasons. However, I don't see any threats in our country for people to hide their names. I see use of anonymous names as critics and not making constructive comments for the betterment of our constituencies and the country. (Ghiro, 2015)

His colleague, Member of Parliament for North West Choiseul, Connelly Sandakabatu supported his sentiment. He thinks the credibility of the writer must be honest.

> If you want a kind of honest response or feedback, you need to put your name down. But to remain anonymous, maybe what you are writing about could be questioned and therefore, I think it is proper, just and fair that all the writers should really put their names down and that will also deserve a response. (Sandakabatu, 2015)

Forum Solomon Islands International (FSII) chief executive officer, Benjamin Afuga said the the biggest question was whether the media would continue to use anonymous sources or reveal them.

> If we start to reveal true identify, will people come forward to reveal the information public wants? I can't say which one is right and wrong. Journalists need to abide by their ethics and public need to be informed… Some people got fired for revealing stories to media. (Afuga, 2015)

Citizen Donaldson Rusa questioned the credibility of the newspapers and sources, the reliability of sources and newspapers, and whether the sources were 'knowledgeable'.

> Anonymous sources have good and bad sides. But if we see on some of the issues, there should be no need to use anonymous sources. As a reader, I questioned the credibility of the source behind the story. Why did the person hide his real name even though it's a good story? I will also question the journalists of these newspapers. Have they interviewed the right people or someone just tipped [to] them and write the stories? Rather, the journalists should follow up on the stories and confirm the sources. For example, if they quote the Prime Minister, it will have a weight in the story. (Rusa, 2015)

However, Ministry of Communication and Aviation Permanent Secretary Francis Lomo claims he would agree for people to use pen names if their news promoted the good of the country. However, if they printed news to accuse people, sources needed to reveal their names to encourage healthy debate.

> It's good to see companies put notices to verify sources. Some news comes up because of political interests. A lot of things motivate people to write things on paper. Some of the issues that came out on the paper can be sorted out outside of media through phone call or discussion. (Lomo, 2015)

Lomo said the Solomon Islands did not have a clear law about accessing information from government departments.

> We are in the process of developing a national Information Communication Technology policy under a World Bank project. It's an umbrella policy, where under it, we will have individual policy to deal with cybercrime and pornography. (Lomo, 2015)

The *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers have faced a lot of challenges for the use of anonymous source stories. *Solomon Star* editor Ofani Eremae claims one case he remembered was when people came to ask for compensation for a story about a former Prime Minister's extramarital affairs.

> They demanded the company reveal the source of the story, although the source of the story came out of social media. Another incident was when the paper ran a story about outgoing MP from Malaita for abusing constituency funding. The source had provided documents to prove their MP did not account for the money of constituency. After the story came out, three men came and demanded the identity of the source in the office. Although I told them we can't reveal the source, this is the kind of reaction we received when publish story that remain anonymous. (Eremae, 2015)

Habru claims he remembered one issue where people came with legal threats for them to verify the stories or apologise within seven days.

> We responded on them by apologizing. One example is Bank of South Pacific, where one contributor wrote a private view against BSP and they said the article contained a lot of errors. So BSP demanded us to apologise or it will take us to court. (Eremae, 2015)

However, the *Solomon Star* had won a legal battle over the use of anonymous sources in its story. Eremae said in another case a man sued them for defamation and demanded they provide documents from the paper they had quoted.

> The story was based on his previous criminal record in Australia. According to documents, he used to be a drug dealer and got a record with an Australia court as a convicted drug dealer. I wrote the story and after it came out, he sued us for defamation. We went to court; we provided the document the story was based on in court. As a result the accuser did not have any basis to sue us and in the end, the court quashed the case. (Eremae, 2015)

Conclusion

The media in the Solomon Islands have come through a transition period after the ethnic conflict from 1998-2003. Journalists have faced threats in their line of duties to keep government in check and clamped down on corruption. A culture of compensation emerged from the conflict, in which individuals used any opportunity to demand money from media companies for writing sensitive stories, even though they were based on facts and hard evidence.

From the evidence, it appears that the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* use many anonymous source stories on controversial or sensitive issues because people who provided the information did not want to reveal their identities for fear of retaliation and losing jobs. The situation is further complicated by the fact that there is no information law in Solomon Islands to allow media to access confidential information from the government. As such, newspapers are likely to continue to rely on anonymous sources within the government cycle to fight against corruption and malpractices.

However, politicians and individuals do not want to see anonymous sources being cited in stories because this could bring into question the credibility and ethics of journalists. They question whether the stories with anonymous sources were based on facts or used for personal or political interests. Such comments indicate that it would be useful to carry out further research to determine whether the media has improved its role since the ethnic conflict in keeping the public informed. This would give a clear picture of whether journalists have abided by their ethical obligations in disseminating factual information to the public or whether they have fabricated the news.

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4. Media and journalism training in Vanuatu

Commentary: In 2009, a two-year diploma course in Journalism and Media began at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology. It was the first full-time journalism and media course in the country and was long overdue as the local media industry expanded. It is the only diploma level course offered at the VIT. The Pacific Media and Communications Facility was established at VIT seven years ago as part of an AusAID initiative, managed by MDI International in association with MC Media and Associates. Work in the facility served as the basis of the two-year diploma course. It provided a foundation for more than 30 graduates, many of whom are now employed in the burgeoning media industry in Vanuatu. This commentary traces the background and development of this programme.

Keywords: AusAID, journalism education, journalism history, journalism training, TVET, Vanuatu, Vanuatu Institute of Technology

DAVE MANDAVAH
Vanuatu Institute of Technology, Port Vila

IN 2009, a two-year diploma course in Journalism and Media began at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT). It was the first full-time journalism and media course in the country and was long overdue as the local media industry expanded. It is the only diploma level course offered at the VIT. The Pacific Media and Communications Facility was established at VIT seven years ago as part of an AusAID initiative, managed by MDI International in association with MC Media and Associates. Work in the facility served as the basis of the two year diploma course. It has been a foundation for more than 30 graduates, many of whom are now employed in the burgeoning media industry in Vanuatu.

The original co-ordinator of the diploma was Arthur Edgell-Brookers. Although a highly educated man, he had no knowledge of journalism and the media, and was somewhat bemused that he had been chosen for the position.

In 2010, Tony and Elaine Wilson joined the school after moving to Vanuatu from Australia. Tony Wilson is currently in his 43rd year as a journalist and has a proven track record in most facets of the craft. He has worked as a journalist in both print and radio in three continents at the highest levels. He has won awards for his work and is also a published best-selling author. Elaine Wilson has worked as a journalist for 33 years, working in two continents, both in print

and radio journalism. She has extensive experience in layout and design, and sub-editing. She also has a Bachelor of Education specialising in English and Media Studies—most likely the only one of its kind in Vanuatu.

The diploma design showed initial flaws and displayed limited knowledge of ni-Vanuatu and Melanesian mores and way of life. Some courses have been so off the mark that it appears the authors had little knowledge of the Pacific in general and Vanuatu in particular. For example, there is a module devoted to Business and Economic Reporting, in a country which is unlikely to ever see a stock market and where there is no dedicated business media. A few classes about economic journalism and the principles of business writing are more than adequate for Vanuatu and even these are confusing to the students and with very simple terms and detail needing explanation.

By 2015, sections of this course had become outdated and in need of a fresh outlook. Trainers Tony and Elaine Wilson and I have reviewed, refined and tweaked the course over the past six years as we continue to learn from students, graduates and would-be employers.

For the Certificate class we found most of the existing modules were useful. We have found that Writing for Print is pretty much covered in the Basic News Writing module which is the most critical in the course. The other Certificate modules are adequate except for Investigative Journalism. This is not suitable for first year students and the reality is that no media outlet in Port Vila is big enough to have the luxury of being able to have a journalist work on a potential story for weeks. So when we cover this topic, we do not spend too much time on it.

For the Diploma class, we have dispensed with the Mentoring module, which has no relevance in producing employable journalists at all. We have put more emphasis on writing for the internet as this is clearly the future of journalism worldwide. We would like the opportunity to formalise this into a proper module. Students began asking for classes on public relations four years ago and we believe this is an area that will grow significantly in Port Vila in the coming years with greater opportunities for employment. We would also like to create a full PR module.

The principles of good journalism and media clearly do not change, but the delivery and adaptation vary enormously and the right delivery to ni-Vanuatu students takes considerable thought and planning. Like journalism courses around the world, female students outnumber the males by around three to one. In Vanuatu, females are truly second class citizens and as such are not encouraged to speak out or have any significant public opinions.

In the 52-member Parliament, there are no female MPs and that has been the norm for some time. The prospects of females gaining a seat in the Vanuatu parliament are limited at best. Journalists and other media people are outgoing, confident people by their very nature and this is hard to establish in Vanuatu

where females are subdued and loathe to express an opinion publicly. As we teach them how to write a news story we also have to find ways to instill confidence in them so they are even prepared to ask a question.

This is almost impossible to put into a structured form that will work for the majority of female students each year. So, after some time with each group of new students we will work out strategies—more often than not for each individual—to try to encourage the females to speak up and ask questions.

In 2016, for example, we had a total of 13 students, only three of whom were male. Ratios like this become critical as we prepare our classes to achieve maximum successful results. We have to become part time psychologists to build the individuals' confidence while teaching the basic rudiments of the media—and that means media in Vanuatu, not Australia or New Zealand. It is a real challenge, but not insurmountable, once you understand the ni-Vanuatu and how the local media works. We are certain we are on the right path, but the evolution of the original course remains a work in progress as each year passes.

A considerable section of the second semester is devoted to work experience at various organisations in Port Vila and in Luganville on Santo. A number of students have gained full-time employment from these placements.

We conclude the year with CV preparations and how to write a covering letter for a job application as well as mock job interviews. Experience has shown that this preparation has helped a number of students gain employment. We know that not all students will obtain media jobs, but those that do not will be better equipped in the general job market.

None of the organisations that have employed graduates from VIT have complained to us about the standard of the graduates after entering the workforce.

Most of our students have good records from their schools in years 12 and 13, yet many have deficiencies in their written and spoken English, which have to be rectified where possible, as the majority of the media in Vanuatu is conducted in English. This means special English classes are conducted at the beginning of the year for the Certificate III students in an effort to raise their standard to that required to become a competent journalist. We have been forced to place more emphasis on grammar and English to bring students to a required standard.

We established some years ago that many of the students were not computer literate as they came from schools that were under-equipped. We have added to the course some basic training in skills like surfing the net and creating Word documents. We know not all our graduates will gain employment in the media and we hope these added skills will give the students opportunities to obtain jobs at a better level than would have been the case before they did the course.

We have a success rate of around 60 percent in helping graduates find positions in the media industry, a figure of which we are extremely proud.

To the actual classroom work we have added guest speakers such as the

country's first President George Sokomanu, Sethy Regenvanu, senior police officers and environmentalists. We also make field trips to the Magistrates, Court, police headquarters, Parliament, the National Archives, the Meteo and others. All these additions have to be written about in the form of either news or feature stories, adding to the skill set of the students, as well as keeping their classes interesting and motivating.

We ask senior journalists like Evelyne Toa and Moses Stephens to speak to them about various specialist aspects of journalism. Because of Tony Wilson's position as editor of *The Independent* weekly newspaper, the students have full access to a working newspaper and are encouraged to submit articles and photos, many of which have been published over the years. This is believed to be a unique situation for journalism students in the Pacific region. We have also managed to secure two annual scholarships for students whose families are struggling to pay fees.

All this has been managed with an acute lack of resources. The Journalism and Media School boasts six computers, not all of which work all the time, and with limited access to the internet. There are two film cameras; one still shot Canon camera and a few small still cameras. We have no equipment for doing any TV or radio work. There are a few secondhand text books the Wilsons managed to obtain from Bond University journalism school in Queensland.

We have two whiteboards, a motley array of desks and chairs, a photocopier (which occasionally works), and classrooms that leak when it rains. However, the students soldier on with us despite these sub-standard conditions.

There are grey clouds hovering over the future of this school, with efforts by some authorities to turn the diploma into a three-year course. The Wilsons have other duties outside of VIT, as they have to make a living and simply could not teach three year-levels in a week. Despite our best efforts we have been unable to find any other qualified trainers or experienced journalists prepared to take on the role of trainers.

Added to this, the media and journalism course is the most expensive course offered at VIT and many parents struggle to find the funds for two years. We believe few would have the resources to cover those costs for a third year.

Dave Mandavah is co-ordinator of the two-year diploma course in Journalism and Media at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT). He has more than 15 years' experience in print media, graphics design and radio production, filming, video editing and media sales in radio. *An earlier version of this article was presented at the Australian and Pacific Preconference at the Fourth World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) at Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa/New Zealand, on 13 July 2017 with sponsorship from the NZ Institute for Pacific Research.*

TRANSCRIPTS

5. Corruption in the Pacific—a threat to cultural identity

Abstract: This is an edited transcript of a panel discussion at a Pacific pre-conference of the World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) congress in Auckland in July 2016 that relates to fundamentally crucial issues about development in the region. As the world becomes more intensely interested in what is going on in the Pacific, numerous international treaties have been signed with interest in the Pacific from the European Union, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank in partnership with the South Pacific Forum as well as massive interest from foreign donors. How these resources are being deployed is actually crucial to successful development and many news media are trying to trace where the money goes. This is probably one of the biggest challenges, aside from global climate change and depleting fishery resources, facing the Pacific and is a threat to cultural identity. Panel convenor was Fuimaono Tuiasau of Transparency International New Zealand. Panellists were: Dr Shailendra Singh, coordinator of the University of the South Pacific journalism programme, Alexander Rheeney, editor-in-chief of the *PNG Post-Courier*, and Kalafi Moala, owner, publisher and editor of *Taimi 'o Tonga*. Associate Professor Camille Nakhid, chair of thePacific Media Centre, summed up.

Keywords: corruption, Fiji, freedom of information, journalism education, media freedom, Pacific Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, transparency, Transparency International, whistleblowing

Compiled by JULIE CLEAVER
Pacific Media Centre, Auckland

FUIMAONO TUIASAU:

BULA VINAKA, Namaste, asalam walekum. Asalam walekum is an Arab greeting, and it's actually being threatened in Samoa where the church is moving to ban the practice of Muslim worship. The role of media in that country is very, very important. So I greet you in the language of the ancestors greetings.

Figure 1: The Pacific corruption seminar on the eve of the World Journalism Education Congress 2016 conference in Auckland, New Zealand, in July 2016.

The session we are going to be participating in relates to something which is fundamentally crucial to development in the Pacific. As the world becomes more intensely interested in what is going on in the Pacific, numerous national treaties have been signed. There is international interest in the Pacific from the European Union, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, South Pacific Forum as well as massive interest from foreign donors. Where all these resources are going to is actually very crucial to the successful development and a lot of the media is trying to trace where the money goes. It is probably one of the biggest challenges, aside from global climate change and depleting fishery resources that we have, and so are threats to our cultural identity. Corruption is very much like cancer: it's got to be treated early, otherwise there's going to be massive, expensive interventions at the other end, as we see in Africa, as we see in Asia, and as we see in South America.

So Transparency International is really pleased to work with the Pacific Media Centre to bring this forum to this conference. It is important that we discuss what I think is one of the long-range issues that has to be dealt with. So you as practitioners, researchers, business owners, and journalists and lecturers and academics, your role in the future of this discussion—this debate of the Pacific—is crucial. But there are some fundamental questions: how bad is the situation? For those of us who have been paying attention to what is happening in the Pacific, two weeks ago [June 2016] a former Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Apisai Ielemia, was sent to jail for receiving backhanders from Asian businessmen (Former Tuvalu PM to serve jail term, 2016). Earlier in 2016, the former president of French Polynesia, Gaston Flosse, was sentenced to jail and fined for

misusing his power—for essentially paying a radio station to run a campaign for a political party—he was found out and then he tried to backtrack, fast (Gonschor, 2016). But he has been caught out, essentially because the media got on to that story and exposed him and his behaviour. In 2013 Flosse was also sentenced to imprisonment as well for misuse of power (Tahiti court gives Flosse jail, 2013). The stories go on and on.

Misuse of power is essentially the essence of what corruption is about, and as recently as last week [July 2016], a 16-year-old girl was killed in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. She posted on her Facebook a very, very strongly worded criticism of governance, particularly of some disturbances in the Highlands. But she was taken into custody by authorities, questioned about why she is criticising the government, detained for something else, and Alex Rheeney here has led the story on this. It shows that the reach of central authority, even to the highlands of Papua New Guinea, is tremendous and dangerous.

So we have some leading journalists to answer some of the questions I am going to offer, like how bad is the situation? What is the media doing about it? What are the challenges they face? Who's leading the charge? I have had the privilege of meeting these gentlemen before and discussing with them the opportunity to come and tell their stories, so it is with great pleasure that I am able to introduce to you three wise journalists. Now one of them is probably the youngest editor of any Pacific media outlet: ***Alexander Rheeney****, who is the editor of the* Post-Courier*, a national newspaper in Papua New Guinea. Previously he was a communications advisor to the British Embassy in Port Moresby before heading to Australia to get a master's degree at the University of Sydney. He is very qualified to comment on the state of the media in Papua New Guinea as he is also the head of the Papua New Guinea Media Council, and they have been very vigorous in their comments and observations of how the government uses its power.*

We also have an old battler from the last century, and he is still alive: ***Kalafi Moala****. He is publisher and director of Taimi Media Network in Tonga, he is a long-time campaigner for media freedom in the Pacific region, and he has written books on the subject as well. He has observed some major changes in Tonga. One of the curious things that happened in Tonga a couple of years ago was that there is a new Standing Committee established by Parliament for combating corruption. He will make a comment on that as well.*

And to bring an academic and a teaching perspective to the issues in the region, we have Dr Shailendra Singh, who is a senior lecturer and coordinator of journalism at the University of South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. Shailendra gained his doctorate at the University of Queensland. He has lectured on many issues, including media law and ethics. He holds a Master of Business Administration, and he was the former editor of The Review news magazine and is currently

correspondent for the InterPress news service as well as other media outlets. He has a huge research interest. The one that he is really interested in looking at is corruption. So we are very, very fortunate to have someone like him with his experience and teaching abilities to bring to this discussion.

After the presentations and questions, I'm going to ask a senior staff member of Auckland University of Technology, Associate Professor ***Camille Nakhid****, chair of the Pacific Media Centre Advisory Board, to wrap up the themes, common threads in our discussions. The first person I'm going to call on to speak is veteran Tongan media person* ***Kalafi Moala****.*

KALAFI MOALA:

Thank you so much. It's so good to be here this afternoon. It's been a little over 28 years since I've been involved in starting a little newspaper called the *Taimi 'O Tonga*, a Tongan language newspaper. When we started the newspaper we didn't know much about how to run a newspaper, and we were the first independent one that came into being in the Kingdom of Tonga. The only other newspaper was the government-owned newspaper called *The Chronicle*. This was a fairly difficult situation but over almost three decades of being involved in the newspaper—and more recently radio as well in Tonga—we felt that dealing with corruption was the thing to do in those first 10 years. We were trying to uncover every dirty thing that was happening within government, or involving the leaders in Tonga, or even with church leaders and so on. We were looking at Tongan society and saying there's a lot of things that are not right here and we've got to expose this as a way of bringing changes—and we did! The first things we did was uncovering the situation where Tongan passports and citizenship were being sold to Chinese overseas. That was a big thing as the government collected around US$35 for each one for something they were doing illegally.

In 1991, there was a special parliamentary session in Tonga to discuss how they could legitimise the issuing of Tongan passports to the Chinese. And of course they were looking at Hong Kong being free from British rule at the time, going back to China and they thought, 'Well, there's a lot of Hong Kong people that want another passport for travel.' So the Tongans, being very good opportunists, thought this was a very good thing to do—let's sell the passports. It's just that they forgot that it was against the laws of Tonga to do so. Not only that, but you have to be a resident for five years and so on before you get a passport.

One of the amusing things—it's rather sad but also amusing—is that one time I came across a map. That map was given to me by a Chinese general who had come to Tonga because he wanted to go to claim his land that he had just bought in Hong Kong. So he gave me that map of a reef that is covered when it is high tide and exposed when it is low tide and somebody in Tonga decided to sub-divide this

reef and in Hong Kong they were selling off all these different sections for a huge amount of money. And so this Chinese businessman said, 'Can you show me where my land is in Tonga?' He was quite disappointed when I told him his land is a reef, there is no such thing. But such was the beginning of exposure of practices that were going on in Tonga at the time.

When we moved into the second decade of our adventure in Tonga we felt, wow, maybe we've dealt with the major issues of corruption, we will move onto something else, but as we moved on we were finding ourselves in journalism coming across a form of corruption that was far more—the people who were exercising the practice were a lot smarter. They were planning things, and I will not go into much detail about it, but they were a lot smarter in the last ten years of our operation.

It is amazing that after almost 30 years of operation in Tonga with a very vigorous media, corruption in Tonga is worse now then it's ever been. What we did in the early days was believing that what we needed to do was bring changes or reform to our system of government. We thought all we needed to do was change the system; have our leaders and our government be held accountable; let there be good governance; let there be transparency, and then, when we did all that, there would be no corruption—there would be really nice, wonderful people.

So we did that. I personally became very involved in a pro-democracy campaign, and then in 2010 there was acceptance of a whole new system of government. The year 2014 was the first time a government came into being where an elected commoner became the Prime Minister of Tonga. Prime Minister ʻAkilisi Pōhiva called me—I'm kind of fast-forwarding here—he called me after a few days in power and said Kalafi come in and be my media adviser. It was my first involvement in any kind of government job, so I went in for almost 12 months in the Prime Minister's office as his media adviser. At the end of my 12 months' contract I decided it was totally useless and a waste of time for me being involved because I found out that despite the reforms that we're doing, despite who was really in charge, corruption continued to prevail and not be dealt with. And the impact was getting worse because it was affecting the people of Tonga, and especially those that were poor and needy.

Let me take another angle here: as Fuimaono referred to, a committee was founded in the Parliament in Tonga, part of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). I love all of these terminologies they have—UN this and that, and GOPAC. The CEO of this international organisation was a gentleman by the name of Akash Maharaj. At an anti-corruption conference in Puttur, India, in 2015, he made this statement and I want to share it with you.

> There's US4$ trillion that are being siphoned off from all kinds of aid and whatever in the world today. Siphoned off through criminal activities and through corruption. There's only US$481 billion needed to be able

> to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). If we are able to stop this syphoning off, we would be able to solve the world's problems in terms of reduction of poverty, primary education for children and clean water, dealing with HIV and malaria and all the different things listed in the sustainable development goals. It will be many times over if we can stop the corruption.

Now small islands like Tonga and the Pacific, the impact on the poor and the impact of people, with that corruption, is extremely severe. For corruption, it doesn't matter where it happens, in an international organisation it impacts on every single human being on our planet. And so as we live in Tonga we only have a very small population of 100,000 people. I thought it was rather amusing that the first anti-corruption forum was established out of the institution of Parliament because that's where corruption is at the top. Major cases of corruption have involved parliamentarians.

The government that we have in Tonga today is a government of the people, the most democratic government that we've had, and involves people who have been campaigning for the last 30 years against corruption. But our population is broken-hearted because their hope for something different in the society has been wounded. This government has not been able to deliver. It's easy to say, 'Let's change the system'. But if you find good leaders, it doesn't matter what system they operate, they can make something out of it.

There are causes for corruption. Such questions we need to ask in the Pacific: what is the kind of corruption and what does it cause and who is it impacting on? How is the media operating in the Pacific? In every aspect of our society, at least in Tonga, we see the effects of corruption.

I need to tell you a story, then I'll sit down—good Pacific Islanders must tell a story. In a little village there are two women sitting there and they are watching the river flowing down and they are just talking stories, like most Pacific Island women do. And as they are telling stories they look out and see something that is floating down the river. They look closer and one of the ladies says, 'Oh no! That is a baby in a coconut basket!' Both of them, shocked by this sight, jump into the river to rescue this baby. As they dragged it out and onto the river bank where they were sitting, one of the ladies noticed there was another basket flowing down the river. She said, 'You go and rescue that one and I'll take care of this one.' So she jumped in and rescued that baby. Within a few minutes, they saw all these baskets flowing down the river with babies. They rushed to tell the village people, saying, 'Sometimes we have an overflow of fish, but now we have a big overflow of babies flowing down the river.' Someone suggested they make contact with the United Nations—maybe they needed to create a baby rescuing operation for the beach, as all these babies were flowing down the river.

No one ever thought to go up river and check where these babies were coming from and who was throwing them into the river. One of those ladies thought, 'You wait here, I'm going to go upstream and find out who is throwing those babies—we've got to put a stop to that.'

I'm throwing up this story as an illustration. We've got to get to the cause of this, we've got to get to the source and we've got to deal with it. Until we deal with it, we are going to have corruption as part of our life and society every single decade of our lives. We cannot just deal with the impact of corruption, we cannot just put a bandage over it and form committees—there are too many committees! They are doing nothing. We've got to go up there are see who is throwing those babies into the river and deal with it. Thank you very much.

FUIMAONO TUISAU:

Thank you Kalafi. While you were talking, I thought about that saying from Abraham Lincoln: 'most people can deal with adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him money, stand back, and watch what they do with it.' I think Kalafi's recent experience with the parliamentary office is a sad testament to that. Just so you know that New Zealand is not escaping from any of this—New Zealand is ranked fourth in the world on the anti-corruption index. We are the third in the world on the justice survey, our Parliament ranks very highly. And in Forbes *magazine last year, New Zealand was called the second best country to do business with, after Denmark and ahead of Norway. So we've got many things to be thankful for. However, our reputation, our character is constantly being challenged and is at risk—and there are many, as we have seen recently.*

With the Panama Papers we have seen that New Zealand is a tax haven, but they don't call it that, they call it a tax negotiating state (Chenoweth, 2016). We know that there are more than 300 secret trusts set up in New Zealand with money that has come from overseas, a lot of it from leaders, corporates and rich families. The recent John Shewan (2016) report indicated that New Zealand essentially does not know what the real source of that money is. Is it from corrupt leaders from overseas? Or corporates who have avoided paying tax in their own countries? For this session here my question is: how much of this is coming from corruption from third world leaders, corporates from the first world, and that question is yet to be answered.

In the beginning of last week [July 2016] the auditor-general released a report on the silent sheep deal. This is a deal the New Zealand government has started entering into with a Saudi Arabian business man where live sheep were exported to Saudi Arabia. The deal wasn't actually formalised but then on top of that there was a cover up, and then the Saudi businessman threatened the New Zealand government with legal action and a whole lot of other things. He had no legal basis that would support anything that he was alleging. But over the

period of 12 months he received NZ$10 million from the New Zealand government, essentially to make him go away.

Now that $10 million has been characterised as 'I can make him go away'. Or in the new language of anti-corruption, a facilitation payment. I facilitate you to stop hassling me. And the minister responsible for that transaction has now been found to have misreported those transactions in Parliament, so watch this space. Again both this and the Panama Papers is a result of media scrutiny, very clever people looking at the numbers. And there's local corruption here. I know a very clever accountant and he will tell you, one of the biggest challenges for Auckland businesses at the moment is the massive operation from people all over the world as there's a slippery standard at which people operate. Building inspectors turn up to inspect buildings, restaurant health and safety inspectors go to food malls and courts and restaurants and they're offered all sorts of things. The chief executive of the Auckland Council has reported that in his annual report to the council, and there have been a number of prosecutions. So my message to you as an audience of Pacific people is that New Zealand has got a long way to go as well. We've got fantastic systems but they're only good if we can detect the issues early on. Again the media is very, very important for exposing these practices. Now let me introduce to you ***Shailendra Singh****.*

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH:

My presentation is going to be in two parts. First, I will set the Fiji national context, which is quite tricky and difficult and then I will speak on the media aspect—the challenges the media faces. It's hardly a secret that Fiji has been plagued by corruption since its independence in 1970, with little improvement in sight for what is a really complex and entrenched problem. The country's consistently below average ranking on international corruption measures have indicated poor performance for many decades now. Freedom House's 2015 (Discarding democracy, 2015) report stated: 'Corruption is a serious problem in Fiji'. This is undeniably true. Persistent corruption is hampering the country's efforts to escape the poverty trap. We have 29 percent of our population still caught in this trap, partly due to corruption. Fiji has seen it all, from grand scale to petty corruption. Among the worst is government and public service malfeasance. Corruption is blamed also for Fiji's debilitating 'coup culture'—we've had four coups in the last 25 years.

This has stunted growth to a meagre 2 percent in the last 25 years which is simply not enough for job construction or any kind of stable and consistent development. The 1987 and 2000 coups were couched in indigenous rights rhetoric. In reality, the coups were orchestrated by a corrupt, political and business cabal. The National Bank of Fiji scandals were a product of the 1987 coups. And the state bank lost F$372 million. When the National Bank of Fiji story broke, the

Finance Minister said—and I'm not joking here—'It's water under the bridge'.

Understandably so, because his cronies and colleagues were knee-deep in the scandal. One of the problems is that politicians are not taking corruption or Fiji's lack of development in a serious enough manner. Fiji's 2006 coup—the fourth coup—was staged by then military commander Voreqe Bainimarama. This was a bit of a reversal: the previous three coups were executed to mask or hide corruption. The 2006 coup was executed in the name of a cleanup campaign. Because the Fiji population was so fed up with the past corrupt administrations, they lapped up Bainimarama's oratory about a cleanup campaign received quite a bit of support from sections of the general population, and even the media.

Fiji's corruption score had dropped negatively under the pro-indigenous Laisenia Qarase government. This government was ousted by Bainimarama for its alleged racist stance and discriminatory policies. Under Bainimarama's watch there was a noticeable, 20 percent positive upswing. The Bainimarama administration set up the Fiji Independent Commission against Corruption (FICAC)—first for the country. In 2013 alone, this commission received 10,000 complaints. So that's a measure of the scale of the problem in Fiji, at last in some respects. The anti-corruption platform of the Bainimarama government was a winner in the 2014 general election, the first since the 2006 coup. His FijiFirst party won a majority in the elections, so coup leader Bainimarama became the elected prime minister, amid much expectation. However, the opposition frequently accuses the Bainamarama government of failing to live up to its own ideals. It pointed to the seven year delay when releasing annual auditor-general reports. In previous years the auditor-general reports were a testament to the sleaze in the civil service. It made fascinating reading, year after year.

The government has also reduced the number of parliamentary sittings, which the opposition seesas a big problem with regards to accountability. In addition, the government has removed the Opposition Leader as chair of the Public Accounts Committee and replaced him with an allegedly pro government MP. In the eyes of critics, these moves contradict and also compromise the government's expressed anti-corruption stance. So the context is quite complex and quite paradoxical also. From a journalistic perspective, it's even more challenging.

To analyse and report corruption systematically, you need experienced reporters with some investigative skills who are given the time and space to operate. This is sorely lacking in Fiji. For my PhD research in 2012, I did a survey of the state of journalism in Fiji and what I found was that 32 percent of the Fiji journalist corps had less than three year's experience. This is well below the global average. And a staggering 55 percent had less than six year's experience. However, the journalists who have more than six years of experience are not out in the front line doing reporting, they were actually running newsrooms. So experienced journalists are running newsrooms—managing the newsroom—they

are not out there reporting. People who are out there reporting have on average less than three year's experience. Only 49 percent had any form of academic qualifications.

Because the news media in Fiji is not competitive salary-wise, reporters do not hang around for long. They leave for greener pastures on a consistent basis. So there is a perpetual problem with staff turnover and newsroom capacity. Lack of journalistic will is another problem, and this can be linked to two variables: media ownership structure and also punitive legislation. Editors and publishers face stiff fines and jail time for breaching the vaguely worded Fiji *Media Industry Development Decree 2010* (Media Industry, 2010). This decree has criminalised what we once considered ethical breaches. If you put one foot wrong you could end up in jail or face a really stiff fine, or both. So this can have a chilling effect on reporting and also lead to self-censorship.

While media have met their capacity to investigate courageously with published official audits and also reports that might 'fall off a truck'. But media legislation will make even this difficult. Under the media decree, the government regulator can enforce source disclosure by searching media premises and also confiscating material. While cases concerning state corruption are exempt, the disclosure provisions is a disincentive for whistleblowing and this is because in any swoop or raid, the identity of confidential sources could be at risk. The good news for Fiji is that the Attorney-General has promised to table the Freedom of Information Bill in the next sitting of Parliament. The bad news is that the strict media legislation is largely to stay. This takes the teeth out of the freedom of information law, if it is implemented.

With media ownership, after 2010 the decree required 90 percent local equity. What this has done is put Fiji's print media into the hands of two local conglomerates. These entities, with major stakes in various sectors of the economy would rely, to a certain extent, favourable government policies for a good return on their investment. Also the profit from the media business is negligible in comparison to the investments in other sectors of the economy. So this is the key question: will these conglomerates compromise their greater investments by allowing the media arm of the business to criticise the government at will? This is another way, perhaps, of silencing the media, at least in some respects.

Geopolitics and political correctness are further obstacles to reporting corruption. Recently David Cameron, of Panama Papers fame, was overheard telling the Queen that fantastically corrupt countries had been invited to a conference. So there was a media furore, with some saying that the occasion wasn't right for such an insulting comments. But the occasion was a summit on global corruption. So a jokey media chose to focus on the humor of the diplomatic gaff, rather than on the serious side. I bring this up because similarly, Australia and New Zealand have been accused of turning a blind eye on Fiji and this is due to geopolitical considerations

and also diplomatic niceties. If all this wasn't enough, some regional leaders have evolved to develop really thick skin, so the media can name them, yes, but they can't shame them. Plus some of our populations can be quite forgiving because of culture, Christianity and also a cargo cult mentality. So what happens is that corrupt politicians keep returning, they keep being voted back, they keep turning up like a bad coin. The scales of justice are uneven—only the small fry face the brunt of the law, and the sharks get favourable treatment, or they get away scot-free.

To end on a rather sombre note, the odds are stacked against reporting corruption in a sustainable and effective manner. Media is arguably more a nuisance than a deterrent, I think Kalafi Moala said that. Which is not to say that media have not done a marvelous job despite serious resource constraints, and also a treacherous terrain.

ALEXANDER RHEENEY:

Maybe I'll just give some context to the mention of the Facebook post where a girl was actually arrested by police in Papua New Guinea over the posting. It was actually run in *The National* newspaper, which is the rival daily in Papua New Guinea. There is a lot of concern now when authorities are actually reacting to social media postings, when all Papua New Guineans know freedom of expression is enshrined in the PNG constitution. Just to give you a state of play in terms of media press in Papua New Guinea, there's about 13 to 15 mainstream media organisations in the country. Four newspapers, five radio stations, three national television stations and online news service Loop PNG run by Digicel. Now in terms of the breakdown, the government owns two of those radio stations—FM1 and Radio NBC—as well as two television stations, EM TV and NBC. Now for the newspapers, three newspapers are privately owned: I work for one of the *PNG Post Courier*, *The National* [owned by Rimbunan Hijau, a Malaysian logging company], and the *Sunday Chronicle,* which comes out on a weekly basis.

And then there's a couple of radio stations that are locally owned—the major ones are Fiji-owned by Pacific Communications, and PNG FM, which has been around for a long time now. We have a new online news service now which has basically changed the whole media landscape in Papua New Guinea. Loop PNG looks for strategies to capitalise on young Papua New Guineans who are very, very interactive on social media right now. We had some figures today of about 350,000 Papua New Guineans who interact on Facebook. So there is a very energised young population wanting to engage in conversation, and Loop PNG has seen the potential and they have actually invested in that. I can only say, speaking from a mainstream media perspective, Loop PNG and Digicel coming into PNG are a blessing in disguise. Of course it gives competition to mainstream media, to the *Post-Courier*, because you know global trends indicate that Papua

New Guineans will make a shift from opening the daily paper in the morning to checking their smart phones. But I don't see that happening in the next, say, 10 to 20 years. Because firstly, internet penetration still remains at about 2 percent nationally. And secondly, the literacy rate in PNG is somewhere around between 50 to 60 percent, so we still have a large number of Papua New Guineans who can't read and write. Consequently they cannot appreciate the extra features and the joys of using smart phones.

In terms of covering corruption in Papua New Guinea, you just have to look at the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (Corruption perceptions, n.d.). Last year [2015], Papua New Guinea scored 139 on the list. Sadly, there was sort of some improvement when the Peter O'Neill government came into office, and then there was a drop again in the figures, so things haven't been looking very rosy in Papua New Guinea. There was a lot of optimism by Papua New Guineans when the O'Neill government came into office that there would be a change in culture in terms of how politicians behave themselves; in terms of how politicians are transparent in their dealings; in terms of how politicians hold themselves accountable to the constituency. I can say that from my own perspective, the performance of the O'Neill government over four years now hasn't been any different from the Sir Michael Somare government in terms of its dealings and its ability to allow Papua New Guineans to their representatives to hold government accountable in Parliament. And I think one of the classic examples I can think of is last year in November [2015] when the government basically bulldozed the national budget without allowing Parliament to dissect and to debate the money plan for this year. So those are some of the examples of government refusing to allow the checks and balances that are in place in PNG—refusing to allow institutions like Parliament to hold executive government accountable. And sadly, the O'Neill government in my perspective is going down the same path as the Somare government had gone down 10 years ago. And it doesn't augur well for Papua New Guineans because a lot of our development challenges are well known. We've got some of the worst infant mortality rates in the world; we've got an HIV Aids epidemic that needs to be tackled immediately; we've got a tuberculosis outbreak that's just about getting to the national capital of Port Moresby. That has not all been addressed because basically government has failed to allow other institutions of state such as National Parliament to debate those issues and play the role that it's supposed to play. One of the biggest challenges now is the Prime Minister's own corruption proceedings against him when police wanted to take him in for questioning in 2014 (Papua New Guinea prime minister served, 2014). The matter has dragged on for a while now. From my own perspective covering the issue, there has never been a single matter that has never been so stressful for a journalist, because the matter relating to the arrest of the Prime Minister has basically put

a lot of pressure on local journalists to report without fear or favour. I can tell you that—wearing my Media Council of Papua New Guinea hat, I've heard reports of journalists being warned, being threatened by personalities, in terms of withdrawing advertising—if you get to report on this or if you get to report on that. So from my perspective as a journalist I would want this whole case to go away so that we can get back to the normal business of covering issues that matter for ordinary Papua New Guineans. Unfortunately the matter has dragged on since October 2014. The matter has been in court. I've sent an email to the Prime Minister's press secretary asking for a breakdown of how much it's costing the tax payers in terms of the legal bills. The press secretary replied, 'I'll get back to you.' It's been two months and I haven't had a response yet.

Journalists now need to start asking the hard questions: how much is this whole situation costing ordinary Papua New Guineans? How much does it mean in terms of Papua New Guineans missing out on another basic service? Papua New Guinea is going through an economic crisis at the moment with low global community prices. The government is facing a serious cash flow problem, so cash is hard to find at the moment. And then we have the legal proceedings that are currently on full concerning the Prime Minister. So the latest twist to this whole saga was the Supreme Court making a decision on a court application to actually record Parliament. So the Supreme Court has ruled that the decision by the Acting Speaker to adjourn Parliament to August 2016 is unconstitutional and the court has now ruled Parliament must be recalled within five days.

You would love to work as a journalist in Papua New Guinea because we have some of the best stories in the world as politicians can pull something out of the bag that no other politician can do. I just met a brother/colleague from Vanuatu and I was just telling him this morning that I think the story coming out from Vanuatu on the 11 politicians getting locked up for corruption was something that's never happened in PNG (Vanuatu court sentences, 2015). We would definitely want to go down that path!

In terms of journalists holding leaders accountable—it's a big task, it's a really big challenge. And you know, journalists continue to be the meat in the sandwich on both sides: we've got Papua New Guineans who are so passionate about holding government accountable on one side, and we've got leaders who basically want us to move on and cover other issues. So where do we go? So those are the challenges that my colleagues are facing at the moment. Going into the future, I reckon social media is a blessing in disguise, while I acknowledge the fact that it is a threat to mainstream media. In Papua New Guinea, I've always told colleagues that as journalist you are not only defenders of truth, you are defenders of freedom of expression. You have to defend Papua New Guineans' right to express themselves, as journalists. So there have been some indications from government that they are trying to bring down a *Media Tribunal Bill*,

to 'regulate' the media industry—therefore we would be going down the same path Fiji has taken. However, the plans were shelved in 2015, thankfully. But being shelved doesn't necessarily mean being put away for good. Reporting on corruption, fighting corruption from a media perspective, is always a work in progress in Papua New Guinea.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *If you can all turn off your internal dialogue I'm going to jump straight into questions. I'm going to ask Alex a follow-up question: we've seen some terrible pictures of students being locked up and badly treated by police for their plans to march in Parliament (Matasororo, 2016). Those stories are again coming from the media. So do you have a comment on how this has been handled by the media networks?*

ALEXANDER RHEENEY: The shooting of unarmed demonstrators from the University of Papua New Guinea on 8 June 2016 was a very unfortunate incident. It was unwarranted, but basically the police decided to open fire outside the gates of the university when students wanted to go to Parliament to give a petition. And this was after five weeks of protesting in an attempt to force Prime Minister Peter O'Neill to resign and step down from office. It was the government actually, so consequently the police opened fire. Close to 30 people were wounded—there were four who were seriously injured and who were hospitalised. So I think the Supreme Court's decision yesterday, it's a pressure off (PNG Supreme Court orders PM to face no-confidence vote, 2016). You will see most Papua New Guineans will give a sigh of relief knowing the Supreme Court ruled along those lines. Because ultimately national Parliament should make a decision when a country is in crisis.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *Kalafi, last month there was a story that came out of Tonga about a young girl—a journalist—who asked the Prime Minister some very assertive questions about education and other issues, and as a result of that the Prime Minister tried to get her de-registered as a journalist. Can you explain what happened there, and what transpired?*

KALAFI MOALA: She's not a young girl, she's one of Tonga's most experienced journalists, Viola Ulukai, and she has been working in the government media—as you know the biggest media in Tonga (with television, radio AM and FM) is the government. And she's been actually the editor of the news section of the government media. But in interviews with Prime Minister ʻAkilisi Pōhiva, she started probing quite deeply into issues and it offended the prime minister, and it offended his supporters. So there were moves immediately to have her resign (Moala, 2016). They even instructed from the Prime Minister's Office for the manager to

kick her out. And all sorts of pressure came on her. Of course there were a number of journalists who stood with her and encouraged her.

However, that just shows you this [sort of thing] is coming from a government now that had for so many years been campaigning for media freedom and allowing criticism to be a normal thing in Tongan society—so that was a shock. Right now, of course, she has refused to resign, and the government has kind of backed off because there were a lot of pressures from media from overseas on that. But there are quite a number of moves like this from this government. I think if it had been another government it would have been different. People are kind of shocked, and they are asking, 'How can this government; a democratic government, a government which campaigned for reform, how can they do these things?' And it brings me back to some of the things that I said: good leadership, it's not so much a system, you can change a system, but you've got to change people. The leaders, they're the ones who have got to practise good governance. They're the ones who have to practise transparency and accountability. And if they're not, you could have a system and a constitution and everything, and it won't make a difference.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *I'm just going to open it to the floor now: are there any questions, Penny?*

PENNY BRIGHT *(Auckland local government anti-neoliberalism and anti-corruption activist):* Kalafi, I can tell you who's putting the babies in the basket and sending them down the river. I've been to five international anti-corruption conferences, and I went to the Transparency International Conference in 2010, the figure that blew my mind was that the global market was seen as 14 trillion dollars, of which two and a half trillion is said to be lost in crime and corruption. I have exactly the same question: two and a half trillion dollars to feed, clothe and help poor people. Then what hit me like a sledge hammer is that Transparency International were not looking at the underpinning private model, they were looking at the process—were contracts being done in the correct way, blah blah. But nobody was actually asking, 'Hang on a minute, we've had 30 years of this "public is bad private is good", where was that substantiated before it was forced upon the peoples of the world, where has it been substantiated since? Then I realised that those fighting privatisation and those fighting corruption need to work more closely together, because I may be one of the only people saying this, but the root cause of corruption is privatisation.

In order to find out, to do the cost effectiveness, you need to find out where is the money going. New Zealand's *Public Records Act* is a piece of legislation that has transformed transparency in this country, but most people haven't even heard of it. That's the thing, if you have full public records available for public

scrutiny, then you can follow the dot, which is the first step to helping to fight corruption all over the world. So I'm just wondering, does Tonga have a public records act?

KALAFI MOALA: Well, as a journalist one of the things I've always thought about and taught even our journalists in terms of investigation of corruption, is that you follow the money. You find out where the money is flowing and [when] you follow that it usually ends up in the hands of someone who is not honest and it has proven over the years, time and time again, that that's right.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *Just as a follow up question: is it true that the current leaders, maybe for the last 30 or 40 years in Tonga, have all come from three schools in Nuku'alofa and these three schools, and no other schools, have national leaders. It's almost like a, well I'd say it's an old boys network, but there's also some old girls there too. I've heard that rumour several times, and I'm wondering if there's some basis for it.*

KALAFI MOALA: The first school in the Pacific Islands to build a college just celebrated 150 years**,** Tupou College. It was the first school established in Tonga and in the Pacific Islands. And it was the only college for so many years, and so the late King Tupou V had to go forth when his brother was prime minister, so the majority of leaders in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s went to that college. The second one is the government college called Tonga College, established about 1880. And the third one was actually founded much later in 1947, which is Tonga High School. This is a kind of an elite school where they have exams of all the primary schools and they take the top people and put them into this high school, and right now in Tonga, most of the leaders that are emerging come out of that school, so in a sense that's true.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Question to Kalafi regarding the suspension of journalist Viola Ulukai by the Tonga Broadcasting Commission. Given your involvement with and knowledge of local politics, do you have any sympathy for 'Akilisi Pōhiva's fairly obvious feelings that in fact she's part of a bid to constantly undermine him. Would you have any sympathy for the prime minister on this one? And that she's using her position to attack him?

KALAFI MOALA: That's a very, very good question because when you look at politics in Tonga over the past 30 years, it's not so much about what you believe, or what you advocate, it's about which side you are part of. And so even the pro-democracy movement became more of a side to belong to, with 'Akilisi Pōhiva being the leader, rather than what they really believed. And my involvement,

I mean I was in jail together with ʻAkilisi Pōhiva in 1966. But my recent involvement with them really brought it home to me that politics in Tonga has nothing to do with your doctorate or your beliefs, it's which side you are part of. In other words, if you are critical of ʻAkilisi Pōhiva you must be part of the other side, and if you are critical of the royal family and the nobility, you must be part of the other side. However, the reality of that in Tonga is that it's not true—it's not true at all.

I think what the Tongan population is really going for, they want something that is based on substance and, of course, it's proven that with this government, despite the fact that ʻAkilisi himself has been having very good rhetoric on all of that anti-corruption, the first thing he did when he got into office was appoint his son to be his personal assistant. The second thing he did was bring his son out of Fiji to be the second adviser with his friend on education on Tonga, to reform education. So I can go all afternoon with a whole bunch of things that go against what he has done. Sympathies with him? Yes. As a critic and an opposition leader? Terrible, terrible governor.

And I told him [when he first became prime minister], 'Your problem is going to be this: you have an opposition mentality. But you need to shift that mentality to a governing mentality.' And he hasn't done that, he's done it worse. He started investigating his own people, and sniffing them out for corruption, but that's the battle that this government is going through. And there is more corruption that has been uncovered during his time in just the last two years—he's hardly been there two years—than in previous governments.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Give us some help, and I mean that. Because what you're describing could also be a reflection of what's happening around the whole of the Pacific. So where do we go with this? How are things going to change?

In fact, this leads into the same question I was going to ask Shailendra: you're teaching student journalists. What is the picture looking like? In fact, you told me you're teaching 200 journalism students?

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH: There's about 100 students. We have about 100 new recruits. And we have a three-year programme and all that. It's a bit tricky because the legislation covers journalism students, also students are not examined. So you've got to be careful. You've got a student newspaper, *Wansolwara*, that will be scrutinised and judged equally with the mainstream press. So what we can do is discuss things quite openly in panel discussions and in class and hope that nobody will go and talk about that outside the class. We can also set assignments, and we also push the envelope as much as possible with the student publications, but there is a line we will not cross, and that is the situation. And that is the situation post the 2006 coup. Prior to the coup, we could speak

freely without fear of being jailed or being fined in a big way or that sort of thing, so that's the big difference.

FUIMAONO TUISAU: *Are you hopeful, Alex?*

ALEXANDER RHEENEY: Well, the media in Papua New Guinea have played a really big role over the years, over the last 40 plus years, since Papua New Guinea became a sovereign nation in 1975. There have actually been attempts to actually 'regulate' the media before, and the last time it happened there was a big public outcry, and Papua New Guineans actually took to the streets to hold demonstrations against the government trying to censor or regulate. I think now with social media Papua New Guineans are educating themselves and informing themselves on the benefits of joining the conversation but also expressing themselves. And they now know that using the media, either traditional or social, gives them a platform to enable that conversation to take place. I have this feeling that there would be a lot of criticism, there would be a protest if the government decides to go down the path that Fiji has gone down.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *As an observer of Pacific-New Zealand relationships, there has been this belief that young Pacific leaders come to universities in New Zealand or Australia to get their academic training and work skills so they can take these back to the country to improve their development, business, commerce, academic work and even with the media outlets. But has that happened? Because what you're describing is almost like they're going into a sealed chamber where they can do all their business but in terms of expressing their own personal views or public views about matters that are happening in their country, which they are very well versed to comment on, they risk suffering sanctions.*

KALAFI MOALA: I want to respond with something that is very, very important—just because we are going through struggles now with our democracy, it doesn't mean that democracy is not a good system to follow. There are principles in the leadership that need to be there. We're like a boat that has hit a storm or a hurricane, and we just need to manage and adapt and adjust to that. If you think this storm that we are experiencing will have us go back to the thing of the past, that we are now going to go back to the 'rulership' that we had - no, that's not going to happen. We already left the dock, we're already on our way to the future, we've just got to manage the storm that we're in. But I think that some of the messages that are coming through is that we need to make adaptations in the lives of leaders. It's a current issue with a lot of things that we deal with. It wasn't until I got to be operating within the Prime Minister's Office that I saw that a lot of it is a character issue. They don't really follow democratic

principles like we know them. So I think the issue that we are going through in Tonga is a matter of calming down, there's a vote of no confidence going in against this government. This government has been in office just two years and the prime minister will not run again. So we've just got to be patient, manage things and hope that better things will be in the future. Maybe another good suggestion is to exchange prime ministers. We'd like some of the other prime ministers from the islands to come to our island!

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: I think that's important because as you know there's a growing Pacific population, young people born growing up in New Zealand, who are also on a journey of finding their identity and part of that is encouraging them to come back, encouraging them to be interested in what's happening. And unless that message of hope is provided to them, many of these will wash their hands and say, 'that's not my country, if that's the case'.

KALAFI MOALA: And that's why I mentioned before, it's this whole thing of 'who do you belong to'? So many great Tongan people overseas—very qualified who are willing to come back to Tonga to serve the country—but the question normally asked of them is, 'which side are you on?' And we're wanting to move the country to a place where it doesn't really matter whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, or Labour or National—we need good people with good governance who are able to come in and be the new leadership. And that's the process we are going through, and we're hoping it's going to be over soon.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Shailendra has called for a need for more investigative journalism, and that comes out of every institution that is in this room and in this conference. My question to you Kalafi as a veteran in the region, would you position yourself, being a young graduate coming out of an institution, would you position yourself to take the lead in ensuring that young graduates ask the hard questions of the leaders. Because at the end of the day it's about our role as media practitioners to bring those stories out.

KALAFI MOALA: Yes, very much. Of course, I personally believe that all journalism is investigative—you've got to investigate. Investigative journalism is not just another section that when you feel like it you get into it. Every story must be investigated. And so I really believe in that. I think there are other factors that we deal with today, the emerging journalism, and one another gentleman referred to. There's no problem in 'discipling' so-called, and letting them follow through, but the very important factor of the day is that they've got to be paid. And the wage of the day and the needs of the day are so very different from when we were starting out as pioneers. We could go in there and write

stories and because it's our own organisation if there's not enough money we don't get paid but you keep going. Today we have much more educated young journalists that are emerging. I must say, though, they are less passionate about the issues than when we were growing up, and they are demanding high wages. Probably they deserve that, but the island organisations in our region, especially in Tonga, don't have that. We have so many good Tongan journalists who are trained, but they are working for the Australian High Commissioner, for the Chinese High Commissioner, for the Japanese and so on, because they pay them well, and we can't pay them.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *Can I ask you more regional question, it sort of follows up with the other question about hope, what is the status of the regional media bodies that gather and support each other and in fact tell each other stories which the writer can't tell in their own countries? I'm familiar with the Pacific Islands News Association-PACNEWS (PINA) (n.d.).*

ALEXANDER RHEENEY: Well, I've been in conversations and interactions with PINA. There is a lot happening behind the scenes. PINA had a regional summit for all island media organisations, I think two months ago, so it does happen. There is training that they get to roll out at their summits that they hold for media organisations. I think the key is being a member of PINA in order to benefit from the training that they provide.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *So there is some regional… so you've had a long view of these regional bodies, Kalafi, what do you think?*

KALAFI MOALA: I think there's been a decline, a very significant decline in the role that is played by the regional bodies. We've got PINA and it's not like it was in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. We've got a new organisation that I helped found called, PasiMA (Pasifika Media Association) (n.d.). It's great, we have documentation of what we are going to do; we haven't met for three years! But, of course, you've got your own PIMA (Pacific Islands Media Association) (n.d.) here in New Zealand, which I was the founding chairman of for some time. So when you look at the region, the lead organisations, there has been a huge decline, and you start asking what the role is. Whether this means we need new organisations, I don't know, but I think this is a role where the journalism schools will play a major part. The journalism schools will become the forum where a lot of not only training but also where you congregate, like David Robie has done here with the Pacific Media Centre. They do a lot of things that media associations should be doing but are not doing. So maybe there is a shift here and emphasis on creating new forums, like Misa Vicky Lepou in

Samoa, Shailendra Singh in USP, and then the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and then here in Auckland with what's happening here.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *I'll leave the last word with you then we'll wrap up.*

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH: Just very quickly about regional media organisations in the Pacific, they're quite rudimentary outfits. I think in recent times the funding has dried up even more, and if you look at PINA, for example, it's run by only two people, and they're already overloaded with quite a bit of work. And I think what Kalafi said about tertiary education and also media educators playing an important role, yes we can step in and hold media summits, conferences and also research, so that's a possibility of providing training. One last thing I want to say about Fiji, it's not that in Fiji you can't criticise the government. The government is becoming more tolerant of criticism as time goes on. Fiji's case is very complex, it's not like New Zealand or Australia, and I think some of the population is recognising that democracy in Fiji is not an event, but a long process, and a painful one. So some people are a bit more patient than others and we don't forget that this current government was voted in by a 60 percent margin. So some people, it would seem, even if we just passed a history of instability, corruption and all those sorts of things, they possibly prefer a strong centre or maybe a benevolent dictatorship. So that's the observation.

FUIMAONO TUIASAU: *Thank you. I'm going call on the Pacific Media Centre's Advisory Board chair Associate Professor Camille Nakhid to report back to us on some of the themes that she's come across.*

DR CAMILLE NAKHID: Thank you for trying to put this all together. Kalafi Moala spoke about reform and in spite of reforms that took place and have taken part in democracy, the corruption still continues, so it's not about governance, it's the people that are there under good leadership that is required. By stopping corruption, you can stop anti-corruption problems that we have, so we need to address that sort of corruption. Shailendra Singh looked at the fact that the corruption is a serious problem and it hinders opportunities to escape corruption in line with what Kalafi said, and it's responsible for the past four coups that have happened in the last 25 years, because coups are operated by a corrupt business. And politicians you said are not taking corruption seriously. So starting over some of the problems that we have in Fiji are newsrooms capacity, there are problems with investigative journalism—you've highlighted that—you need experienced investigative journalists to highlight the issues of corruption, because apparently corrupt politicians keep showing up.

Alexander Rheeney, you looked at mainstream media in Papua New Guinea

and the challenges there including poverty, HIV, tuberculosis. You said journalists need to start asking the hard questions, and it is a hard task for journalists to do, to hold the government accountable. Social media, you pointed out, is a blessing because it gives you that freedom of expression, but probably not if they are going to be taking and arresting young people for being on social media. And you've cautioned that governments try to regulate media industries. So looking at all you have said and looking at the questions that have come from the audience, in terms of corruption and in terms of the media role and the fact that corruption doesn't seem to be stopping in any way, in fact it's growing, the question I ask to all of you is not 'what next', but I ask 'who is next? Which Pacific Island is next?' With the banning of the media and the control, that is a concern here for not just the media educators but to the citizenry in the Pacific countries.

Resources

Video 1: Pacific corruption 'like cancer' – presentations (Pacific Media Centre, 55m 50s) www.youtube.com/watch?v=HycGQZDU1A0

Video 2: Pacific corruption 'like cancer' – discussion (Pacific Media Centre, 31m 08s) www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE3SO74q7Ow

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6. Pacific journalism education and training—the new advocacy era

Abstract: For years, journalism education training in the Pacific has relied on donor funded short courses and expatriate media educators but in recent times this has been changing with the growth of more journalism schools at both universities and technical institutes and a more home grown actively qualified staff and proliferating research programmes. These changes can be reflected with the establishment of the new advocacy group, Media Educators Pacific (MEP). This is chaired by Misa Vicky Lepou, the president and she is also the head of journalism at the National University of Samoa. This body has a mission to promote and deliver the highest professional standards of training, education and research in media and journalism education relevant to the Pacific and beyond. In a region where the news media and journalism education have been forced to confront major hurdles such as military coups, as in Fiji; ethnic conflict, as in the Solomon Islands; and two rival governments and the ruthless crushing of student protests in Papua New Guinea in June 2016, major questions are faced. Along with critical development issues such as climate change and resources degradation, what are the challenges ahead for teaching contemporary journalists? These were some of the issues explored by this panel at the Fourth World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) conference in Auckland in July 2016. The panel was chaired by the Pacific Media Centre director Professor David Robie. Speakers were Emily Matasororo of the University of Papua New Guinea, Shailendra Singh of the University of the South Pacific, Misa Vicky Lepou of the National University of Samoa and Charlie Dave Mandavah of the Vanuatu Institute of Technology. Eliki Drugunalevu of the University of the South Pacific provided a summing up.

Keywords: culture, ethics, Fiji, journalism, journalism education, journalism training, Media Educators Pacific, Pacific Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Vanuatu, fa'a Samoa

Compiled by MACKENZIE SMITH
Pacific Media Centre, Auckland

PROFESSOR DAVID ROBIE:

KIA ORA and warm Pacific greetings. For years, journalism education training in the Pacific has relied on donor funded short courses and expatriate media educators but in recent times this has been changing with the growth of more journalism schools at both universities and technical institutes and a more home grown actively qualified staff and proliferating research programmes. These changes can be reflected with the establishment of the new advocacy group, Media Educators Pacific (MEP). This is chaired by Misa Vicky Lepou, the president and she is also the head of journalism at the National University of Samoa. This body has a mission to promote and deliver the highest professional standards of training, education and research in media and journalism education relevant to the Pacific and beyond. In a region where the news media and journalism education have been forced to confront major hurdles such as military coups, as in Fiji; ethnic conflict, as in the Solomon Islands; and two rival governments and the ruthless crushing of student protests in Papua New Guinea in June 2016, major questions are faced. Along with critical development issues such as climate change and resources degradation, what are the challenges ahead for teaching contemporary journalists? These are some of the issues being explored by this panel.

I'd also like to acknowledge at this stage the support we've had for having this panel going ahead. It has been supported by grants from the New Zealand Institute for Pacific Research (NZIPR) to bring five Pacific participants to Auckland for this conference, the Pacific Media Centre and UNESCO.

To set a tone for the discussion, we will show a short video by citizen media—students—at the University of Papua New Guinea on the sustained protests over the past couple of months at several university campuses. The peaceful protests were against current Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, calling on him to stand aside and cooperate with a police warrant for his arrest as part of ongoing corruption investigations. The protests culminated with heavily armed police in camouflage fatigues opening fire on students at UPNG on 8 June 2016 in shocking scenes. Early international reports on the day wrongly stated four people had been killed. None were killed, but four out of a total of almost 30 casualties were critically wounded and taken to hospital.

***EMILY MATASORORO**, journalism and public relations strand leader at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG):* Kia ora ladies and gentleman. What you've just seen are real events that took place in Port Moresby at the university and I was there among the students when the police opened fire. For me that event was really traumatising. My presentation is about the student protest that was involved and how the local media covered it. Before I present this, let me give you a brief cultural, and probably socio-economic, background about

Papua New Guinea so that I can present with some context (Matasororo, 2016).

UPNG STUDENTS

Figure 1: Papua New Guinean police in camouflage fatigues try to arrest a student leader at the University of Papua New Guinea shortly before opening fire on the students on 8 June 2016.
Video clip screened on 3m 58s at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTHLC5GBFrg

Papua New Guinea is the largest country in the Pacific with more than 900 different languages and a diverse cultural and socio-economic background. It is a country divided by languages and regions but I think it stands united about wanting to see good governance and transparency taking place in the corridors of power so that basic government services can trickle right down to the bulk of the rural population. According to the rural bank [National Development Bank], this section of people make up 87 percent of Papua New Guinea's total population - that's a large number. Most significantly, it's the number of students who come from these rural and subsistence backgrounds who are trying to make inroads in tertiary education to support their families and tribes and communities in search of a better life. That life can only come from decisions made by leaders who are for the people, leaders who will fight to eradicate corruption and promote good governance and transparency.

You have probably heard a lot about Papua New Guinea and it's highly ranked as a corrupt nation and the images you saw are just some things that are related to the kinds of decisions that our leaders in Papua New Guinea make. Recently in 2016 and—ironically it was on World Media Freedom Day—a journalism student was preparing to celebrate the press freedom events. However, this did not eventuate because our academic space was taken up by a student protest. I got a call from PNG Loop website and instead of asking me questions about media freedom day, as I had thought, they asked me questions about what was happening on campus. For me, I was sad that they had to ask such questions. Anyway, this was the beginning of an eight-week standoff by students who demanded that Prime Minister Peter O'Neill step down from office and face police over allegations of fraud. However, the Prime Minister defiantly said, 'I will not step down'. The Prime Minister has challenged the issue of a warrant of arrest against him and this case is now before the courts.

In fact, earlier in the week Parliament was recalled and a vote of no confidence against the Prime Minister was being planned. Among other things that occurred before the student protest forums began was the disbanding and dismantling of the Police Fraud Squad—the office that was supposed to investigate the Prime Minister. It was later reinstated. And the other being the adjournment of Parliament

Figure 2: The Pacific journalism educators delegation at WJEC16 at a talanoa in the Pacific Media Centre.

to November 2016 to avoid the possibility of a vote of no confidence against the Prime Minister. These were just some issues that the students were concerned about. These events led to students boycotting classes and to show their concerns and frustrations over the Prime Minister's general handling of national affairs. Students set fire to copies of the daily newspapers, the *Post-Courier* and *The National*—it was done in front of the campus gate. They did this to show their frustration about how biased they perceived the media to be, and that the media was taking sides and promoting the government's agenda. The burning was an indication that they disliked the papers' coverage of events leading up to the protest.

Why would the Student Representative Council (SRC) go so far as to prefer certain media outlets over others? The *Post Courier, The National* and television station EMTV were banned from coverage. The UPNG is a government and public-run institution and is a public space open to everyone, including the media. If students reacted that way, it brought up issues of credibility and integrity about the freedom of the press in PNG, which brings to light questions about ethics. This is a quote from one of the student leaders, who was reported in the *Post-Courier*:

> We saw the newspapers and saw that the reports were very shallow and biased. They are not actual reports of what we students are portraying at the university. That's why, to show our frustration, we went out to the bus stop and burned those papers. What we displayed in the morning shows that we have no trust in the media.

For me, that was a very strong statement, a very strong statement indeed. While I acknowledge and appreciate the tireless efforts of the media's coverage of the students' protests, this statement for me needs to be investigated. It needs to be done by all stakeholders concerned in promoting fair and just reporting and the essence of good ethics and good journalism. The stakeholders include, but are not limited to the following: the publisher and the management of the newspapers, the Media Council of PNG, Transparency International, Ombudsman Commission and educators of journalism at the University of Papua New Guinea and the Catholic-run Divine Word University in Madang. For the publishers, credibility is questioned, for the Media Council, it is a threat against the profession, and for the educators, it raises questions about where we are going in terms of teaching ethics in our universities. These questions need to be answered in order to promote a robust and conducive environment in which journalism in Papua New Guinea can operate.

Going back to the events on the 8 June 2016, the protest took an ugly turn. Several students were wounded and some seriously when police opened fire on them. Social media was running hot with images and comments uploaded in real time. Some of what was coming from social media was emotional reporting—information was distorted—with some news stations reporting fatalities. An Australian news station also reported four deaths and isolated reports on radio, television and social media that day created a new level of fear, confusion and anxiety among residents. For me on that day, I saw how powerful the media was and when its power isn't applied correctly, the results can be tragic. On the other hand, among all the confusion, radio broadcasters PNG FM and Legend FM, acted, in my view, responsibly in an attempt to curtail confusion and disorder. It broadcast the message from the capital of Port Moresby's governor telling residents to remain calm and that city services were not affected, when in fact they were. Everything came to a standstill. The governor also said that he could not confirm any casualties at that time and immediately after his address, lines were opened to the public.

One resident called to say he witnessed injured students rushed to the hospital with the possibility of some deaths. Before he could elaborate, the announcer swiftly put him off air. Was that suppression of information or responsible journalism? I don't know. This station on that day had a strategy to control what it could broadcast and it did so for the benefit of the common good of the people even though there were small pockets of disturbances in the city. Every day from then on student activities seemed to attract news coverage. By then, many students had vacated the campus and for many of them, the only way to get updated was from the media.

In this regard, the media played an important role in keeping the students informed. The standoff continued, with the staff locked out of the campus for

periods of time. In one staff meeting, held away from the main academic space, the Vice-Chancellor addressed the staff and, among other things, told them that the management had temporarily ceased involving the media. In fact, UPNG accused the media of misreporting and aggravating the situation. The whole protest turned sour when students stepped right out of line on the 23 June 2016 and damaged state-owned property worth millions of kina. The protest has now come to a closure as the university's governing body announced the termination of the 2016 academic year for the University of Papua New Guinea.

I take my hat off to PNG Media Council president Alex Rheeney, who said, 'It's a wake up call for the industry and we need to pull our socks up. Every person in the industry, including the educators as well.'

In that light, the University of Papua New Guinea, in collaboration with the Pacific Media Centre, sent a final year student from PNG on a recently-concluded Pacific Cooperation Foundation media internship here at AUT and with other New Zealand media. This is the right direction in empowering journalists of the region. I thank you, PCF, AUT and PMC, for that support. Apart from the news that was provided during the protest, I strongly believe that it was the media coverage of the protest that has provoked debate and discussions about the issues of good governance and corruption in Papua New Guinea. I think about we expect in 2017 when PNG goes to the polls. I can only hope that it is through this experience that Papua New Guineans will see wisdom prevail in choosing the leaders they vote into power. In memory of this tragic event, the journalism strand at UPNG is going to unveil a wall to display the untold stories and create a photo montage for the unseen images to serve as a reminder of the student protest and something for future students to ponder over.

***DR SHAILENDRA SINGH**, coordinator of journalism at the University of South Pacific (USP):* Most people in the audience might not know much about the state of journalism education in the Pacific, so I'm going to start really from the basics. Journalism education in the Pacific is really critical to state the obvious and also the not-so-obvious. Why I say the not-so-obvious is based on the lack of support throughout the region for journalism education and for tertiary teaching of journalism. There's a critical lack of resources in most of the technical educational institutes that were set up in the region. We face major threats, for example climate change, overfishing and corruption on a grand scale, and we need a really strong and informed journalism corps to understand, analyse and report these issues, so proper training is crucial.

Emily's presentation was a really strong illustration of the problems we face in the Pacific, and also the need to analyse and report certain issues in a careful and sensitive manner. To train good journalists we need well-qualified and experienced trainers. It's really critical for the Pacific both from a teaching sense, and also from

a research perspective, to develop home grown media educators who not only understand the terrain but also have a stake in it. With regards to teaching for example, it's preferable if the teacher is experienced as a journalist and also academically qualified. I need to restate this because in the Pacific there is a misconception that all you need is to be an experienced journalist, and you can swan into the classroom and start teaching. This might be okay for a while, doesn't work in the long term. Experience as a journalist is essential but not enough on its own to lift the standard of journalism on a consistent basis.

In my experience, what is required for learning and teaching journalism in the Pacific is often underestimated. There was a well-intentioned Australian-donor funded drive to set up all these TVETS, without much thought or regard for the need to resource these institutions with equipment and qualified personnel. Today these TVETS are bare-bone operations with questionable standards. Most of our media educators do not have adequate qualifications. This is more due to the lack of opportunity rather than any lack of desire to study and attain qualifications. Moreover, some media educators have an undergraduate degree, but no field experience.

Pacific media educators' qualifications stop at an undergraduate degree, which is certainly better than nothing, but ideally for the TVETS, the qualification should be upgraded to an MA, and should not stop there, simply because postgraduate qualifications are critical for research. The focus of the research should be into local problems and how to address them.

The teaching gap has been filled by expatriates, who have played a critical role in bridging the local skills and qualifications shortages. However, expatriates are not meant to be, and should not become, a permanent condition. We need some locals to teach local students for obvious reasons. At best, there should be a balance between expatriate and local educators so that the students get the best of both worlds. Local ownership also means taking over financial responsibility rather than relying on donors for everything.

Consistent research into Pacific media is sorely lacking. Besides a few dedicated people such as Professor David Robie (2004, 2014), there aren't many people researching in a consistent manner. The number of local and regional researchers in Pacific media can be counted on one hand. So we've got two major gaps: first of all, not enough people doing research in Pacific media to begin, and secondly, a shortage of local researchers to provide an insider perspective. Just as we need local-expatriate balance in teaching, we need the same kind of balance in research. So this brings me back to my original point—the urgent need to build regional and local capacity in teaching and research. I am a rare example of a local researcher, and this is thanks to David Robie's foresight and mentoring during his days as the coordinator of the USP journalism programme in the 1990s. David was very progressive in that sense. In turn, I am mentoring

our two teaching assistants from USP, Irene Manarae and Eliki Drugunalevu, who are in Auckland at this conference and they have also already published a journal article. So it's really heartening to see our other colleagues from the Pacific presenting their research at this conference.

The challenge is to keep the momentum going, and with the TVETs there is no institutional pressure, incentive or compulsion to conduct research. So the question for the TVET educators is why would we spend our time doing research when there's really no incentive. So my advice to them would be, it is advisable to take the initiative for the sake of their own professional and intellectual development. It's always an asset to have a publication or two on your CV when applying for jobs, scholarships or promotions. Besides career prospects, you can also enhance your teaching through your research, although I may be preaching to the converted with my colleagues that are here today. On its part, USP is investing a lot of money on research to inculcate a research culture. Our School of Language, Arts and Media (SLAM) offers cash incentives and opportunities to attend conferences if you publish. For some media educators, the lack of know-how—how to conduct research—may be a problem. This may be prevalent in the TVETs because the people who are teaching there lack the necessary academic training. The second problem is they've got no one to teach or mentor them. So they are sort of isolated and on their own. Without addressing this situation, it will be hard to change things.

My advice to TVETs staff is to find a mentor and publish jointly. You can do cross publications with people at other universities. For example, if you are in the Solomon Islands, you could perhaps do a joint paper with a lecturer at the University of the South Pacific with a research interest in the country. So there are possibilities for doing cross-disciplinary research.

Another challenge is the flak from the media industry and this is nothing new, nor unique; it happens in many countries. Some of the criticism is fair, but some of it is unfair. Sometimes students are judged too harshly and there are unrealistic expectations placed on them. I have heard similar stories from my colleagues in other Pacific countries. But by and large the mainstream media is very cooperative and an important part in our efforts. We have strong and enduring relations with the news media industry in Fiji, especially in the current political climate.

MISA VICKY LEPOU, *head of journalism at the National University of Samoa (NUS):* Other than Australia and New Zealand institutes being mentors—and we do appreciate that, being mentors in terms of research and to forge partnership with these institutions—we thought, 'why not come together as one body instead of individually approaching help from our developing partners, why not come together and address this with one voice and then as educators'. That's how we formed this Media Educators Pacific (MEP) group, we felt at some point that if we're going

to spend the next five or ten years talking about these challenges, who's going to listen to us. But if we travel together as a group, we've got issues at Papua New Guinea, we've got issues in Tonga. Tonga in fact, we've got our colleague in Tonga here, they're struggling to find trained educators. Even the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT), here is the only person teaching journalism in Vanuatu. We're lucky enough in Samoa and it didn't take me overnight to find additional staff and to push the bureaucrats, the national university to get additional help because the programme itself was sinking at the time, before I came on board. It took me five years to consistently ask for help and these are the same challenges that we face as journalism educators in the region and so we felt we need to do a lot of research.

There are many challenges. We need to find answers to bridge that gap between the media industry and journalism education, not just between these two but also we need to build that trust between ourselves and the community. The key question is how many people in the community respect journalism as an honourable profession in the region? And we've heard that reflected from the case at UPNG, as well as in Tonga—you know, all of us.

I just want to make a special mention of the *Samoa Observer* as the sole monopoly in the daily newspaper print media in Samoa. A recent *Sunday Samoan* edition of the *Observer* published a photograph of a transgender person hanging from the rafters of a church hall. Now this was a front page photograph with the headline 'Suicide in Church Hall' in a Sunday paper. And this was everyone coming after church and it was just too horrific, too dramatic for young people. I have a child who reads the newspaper everyday and that was the only Sunday I decided not to. She consistently asked for the paper, and I said, 'no, not today'. There was a huge public outcry from Samoans here and overseas about that particular front page (Robie, 2016). Seriously, the Samoan media needs a lot of training in ethics.

Now, the role of journalism education. This is you trying to teach the young up-and-coming journalists about media ethics compared to someone with 40 plus years of experience in journalism who publishes a front page picture like that. There's that challenge again within the community. People were asking, 'why would I bring my child to study journalism when this is the kind of journalism that reflects within this small society?' It's not just about journalism education anymore, this is more than building our trust with the community within the region.

***DAVE MANDAVAH**, course coordinator of journalism at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT):* In 2002, the diploma course in journalism and media commenced at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT). It was the first full-time journalism and media course ever run in Vanuatu and long overdue for an expanding media industry. A media course was later introduced in 2007. The curriculum had been put together in a modern module format. Originally the

course was developed through an aid-funded programme and was coordinated by PACMAS (Pacific Media Assistance Scheme). The course was intended to target current media practitioners. However, the student intake was largely school graduates with little or no experience. This has presented significant challenges. It has been an issue at the VIT for at least seven to nine years as the basis of two diploma courses, and this has been a wonderful foundation for more than 30 graduates, many of whom who are now employed in the burgeoning media industry in Vanuatu. But it has some initial flaws. By 2015, a section of this course had simply become outdated and in need of a fresh outlook. Myself as course coordinator and trainers Tony Wilson and Ellen Wilson from Australia have reviewed and refined and tweaked the courses over the past six years as they continue to learn from students, graduates and would-be employers.

The principles of good journalism in media clearly don't change but the delivery and adaptation vary enormously and the right delivery of this to any Vanuatu student takes considerable thought and planning. Like many journalism courses around the world, female students outnumber the males by around three to one. In Vanuatu, females are treated as truly second class citizens. As such, they are not encouraged to speak out or have any significant public opinion. Among the 52 Members of Parliament, none are female, and this has been the norm for some time. The prospect of females securing a seat in the Vanuatu Parliament are limited at best. Journalists and other media people are outgoing by their very nature yet this is hard to establish with the culture in Vanuatu where females are subdued and find it difficult to publicly express an opinion. As we teach female student journalists how to write news stories, we also have to find ways to instil confidence in them so they are even prepared to ask a single question. It is almost impossible to put into a structured form that will work for the majority of female students each year. So after some time with each group of students, we work out strategies. As individuals, we try to encourage the females to speak up and ask questions.

In 2004, for example, we had a total of 14 students and three were male. So this ratio becomes critical as to how we prepare our classes to achieve maximum successful results. We have to become part-time psychologists to build the individual's confidence and while teaching the basic journalism requirements—and what is applicable to the media in Vanuatu rather than Australia or New Zealand. It is a real challenge, but not an insurmountable one, once you understand the new Vanuatu and how the local media works.

After six years, we are certain we are on the right path but the evolution of the original course remains a work in progress as each year passes. Trainers and I have also established some years ago that many of the students were not very computer literate as they came from schools that were under-equipped so we have added to the course some basic training in things like how to surf the net, create Word documents and associated with that, create documents like CVs,

cover letters, and other helpful skills for gaining employment. We know that not all our graduates will be employed in the media and we hope these added skills will give the students opportunities to get jobs at a better level than would have been the case before they did the course. We have a success rate of around 60 percent in finding graduates jobs in the media industry, a figure we are extremely proud of. Despite the best efforts of the first course coordinator and later myself, we have been unable to find any other qualified trainer or experienced journalist prepared to take on the role of trainers. Added to this, the media and journalism courses are the most expensive courses at the VIT and many parents struggle to find the funds for two years.

To conclude, most of our students are female and there are significant cultural and social barriers for women in a male-dominated and very conservative society. Dealing with a societal gender power imbalance to embolden female media practitioners to tackle difficult aspects of media practice has been both a challenge and one of the course's successes. None of the organisations that have employed graduates from VIT have complained to us about the standard of the graduates after entering the workforce.

The open discussion from the issues raised by the panel

ALEXANDER RHEENEY, *editor-in-chief of the* PNG Post-Courier *and president of the Media Council of PNG:* I appreciate the presentation given by Emily on the insight into the student unrest and it was definitely a wake-up call for the media industry back in Papua New Guinea. I am aware of some newsrooms starting to change their reporting culture in response to all of this criticism. And a lot of the criticism was made on social media, there were individual reporters including myself, who were called all kinds of names and accused of all kinds of things by Papua New Guineans. One thing that I get from all these online interactions was that a lot of Papua New Guineans don't really understand the process of news gathering and how individual media organisations have their own checks and balances in place before a story gets on the air or into the newspaper the next day. So I think there's an opportunity for the media industry to hold an expo back in Port Moresby and the general public gets invited to attend the expo. The individual media organisations, both electronic and print media, can basically give them a rundown on how a newsroom operates. The Media Council will need to consider this expo going forward.

A lot of the criticism was warranted because some journalists in Papua New Guinea—being public figures themselves, their conduct has to come under scrutiny on a 24/7 basis—were probably spending too much time with a particular politician, for example. Consequently that information made its way onto Facebook and then media started a lot of debate about what sort of conversations took place, what was exchanged. I think this crisis at the University of Papua

New Guinea, the shooting of student demonstrators, was a wake-up call and it also provides a foundation for us to reach out to the audience out there and of course we take the tracks that social media has for mainstream media.

However, my hope on social media is Papua New Guineans have never been given an opportunity and a platform like that to actually engage in conversation. Not only among themselves, but directly with politicians. There are a couple of MPs who actually have Facebook pages and Papua New Guineans are getting on Facebook and actually talking to the politicians directly. This has never happened before in the 40-year history of the country. So we support social media, we encourage Papua New Guineans to engage in social media but we would like to get them to engage in more critical and educated discourse instead of the raw stuff that they're currently engaging in.

DR DAVID ROBIE: When I was at UPNG between 1993 and 1998, I was fairly conscious of the fact that through our journalism programme there were a number of students who actually saw journalism as a stepping stone to a political career with the communication skills that they achieved, and I found that quite a unique situation compared with many countries where I have taught journalism.

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH: The University of the South Pacific is really pushing for research now and there is also a reward and incentive system and this system is linked to publishing in ranges, for example A tier or A+ journals. I think it's $5000 for an A+ journal if you publish and then about $3000 for an A range journal and this incentive credit can be used for future conference travel or research projects. But USP also includes some local journals in their ranking systems to balance everything out. What this does is allow expatriate lecturers to pursue their own specific interests and also research into local issues and problems. I think it's a fairly good approach and more and more, instead of rankings, USP is now shifting towards research that can affect policy in a positive manner so that's where the emphasis is now shifting for the better.

MISA VICKY LEPOU: We have a similar system with NUS as well, it's also required as part of my job to do more research so there's two more research papers coming. We are hosting 10 Australian media journalists and students next semester, which is next year from January to June and this is what we've been very successful at in terms of the media programme, is forging partnerships with institutions in New Zealand and Australia. So we signed an MOU with James Cook University so we're under a new Colombo Plan. So they're coming to NUS to study a full block semester and that research paper alone is looking at from the indigenous perspective, what would be the experience in

doing journalism in Samoa and the fact is we've always been talking about, discussion in the region was always about parachute journalism. So how to avoid that is to start from that level, to bring a lot of Pacific stories to the minds of, in this case, Australian media students. When they get to the industry, at least somebody somewhere at some point will do a lot of Pacific coverage on stories throughout the region. But we would welcome support from your institution as well, it's one of the things we talked about, as the newly formed group MEP, is to have a journal, a publication or something, together as a team to develop more research skills and I'm not saying that we're experts on that but we welcome the technical assistance of professors and PhDs in this room.

***RICHARD PAMATATAU**, AUT:* The Routledge *Dictionary of Philosophy*—Routledge is one of the publishing people we like to go with—doesn't have the word *Pacific* in its index. I just think that we need to place that thought around how we look at the literature. What my colleague Dr Tina Brown and I are doing here is using an auto ethnographic approach to research and we are writing about what we want to write about, how we want to write about and publishing it on *Te Kaharoa* (n.d.), which is the indigenous journal published by this university. It is really important that scholars are able to use their own thinking, their own methodologies to lift up the thinking around what we're doing.

DR DAVID ROBIE: Out of the Pacific Media Centre here at AUT, we have the *Pacific Journalism Review* (n.d.) which has been publishing now for 22 years and made a long contribution to indigenous media studies, collaborated with USP and in the next edition we're actually dedicating this to Pacific research, papers coming out of this conference that'll be produced later in the year. We also publish the *Pacific Journalism Monographs*, *Asia Pacific Report*, which was founded in January this year has been running now for several months and the policy of this online independent news and current affairs website is very much based around student collaborations across the Pacific, and many have been contributing. During the two-month crisis in Papua New Guinea, we were the only New Zealand media that comprehensively followed and reported on what was happening.

***HANNAH SPYKSMA,** formerly of AUT:* I've recently done some research looking at the role of NGOs reporting from the Pacific, specifically Vanuatu and my research found surprisingly that this particular NGO—I was looking at 350 Pacific, part of the wider 350.org global movement, was able to facilitate ni-Vanuatu voices being pushed into a global discussion about climate change (Spyksma, 2017). The way that it enabled this reporting to happen was in a way that, David Robie, I know that you've described and that Pacific journalism edu cators and scholars have talked about, is more of a Pacific way. But in contrast to that,

I know that there's also a lot of research about the role of NGOs being quite problematic and coming in and providing that funding for small one-off journalism training and so I just wondered, to all of you, what you thought about the role of NGOs should be in training of journalists in the Pacific.

MISA VICKY LEPOU: At the National University of Samoa, our department has been proactive in terms of engaging the NGOs to do annual training and at NUS we have the centre for professional development where the umbrella for NGOs is the beneficiary of most of that funding so we get to do a lot of media training with NGOs. As a trainer of the last two years with NGOs, what I found was most of the participants who came to these training sessions do not have basic access to a computer. First and foremost, if you would like to be a journalist, you are doing this training, and then do what? Next, sustainability. Making sure these skills and knowledge are being applied into that small community media outlet you are working in. When we did the feedback study, neither of these organisations existed anymore. Secondly, most of them do not have a computer to do anything and most of them were doing some sort of newsletter, just a simple one or two pages and that was it. NGOs can play the role of being a media person but at the end of the day, how active are they in making sure that it is sustained in the long-term.

QUESTION FROM MICHAEL: At the meeting yesterday and again today, I'm hearing that relations between some of the media outlets in your countries and the journalism schools are uneasy at best and also that you have worries about the quality of the journalism in some countries—shallow, biased—these are words you've used. I'd like to understand a bit better, among the journalists who are doing that sort of work that you find problematic, the ones who are working in the industry, what's the pathway into those jobs, are they graduates of other sorts of programmes, or are they not graduates? How do the people who are in the industry at the moment and whose work is questioned, how are they getting to be journalists and what training do they have?

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH: I will respond to that in a Fiji context. I did a survey in 2004 at the start of my PhD and I found, I think only 49 percent of the journalist cohort in Fiji had any form of tertiary qualification, and this includes certificates and diplomas. If you join a newsroom, there's not always the opportunity for you to do good journalism because the media organisations want stories to be churned out as soon as possible, and they're not able to devote resources for longer pieces and investigative journalism and all that. But I think the third and the most pressing issue is the fact that journalism is not seen as a viable career in places like Fiji, and other Pacific Island countries, so you don't get the cream of the crop, both in terms of tertiary education and also people doing media. There's a higher

turnover rate because the media industry is not able to compete in terms of paying salaries. So my research also shows that as far as experience is concerned, I think there's about 30 percent or so had less than three years experience and about 50 percent had less than five years experience. What I also found was that the experienced journalists, they were not out in the front lines, they were not out there interviewing or writing news, they were managing the newsroom. So we have all these dilemmas and problems.

FURTHER QUESTION FROM MICHAEL: Are you finding that the problems with the quality of journalism is as a result of directives of senior editors to do a certain kind of journalism or is it simply because people are not trained to do good journalism?

DR SHAILENDRA SINGH: What the editors are telling the journalists is one cause maybe, but I can't speculate, it's one possible cause. In Fiji's case, as I pointed out, it's inexperience. Because of its very young and highly inexperienced journalist cohort, there's a continuous turnover. This is not a new problem, this problem has existed for a number of decades. So when people talk about this talent of journalism, you need to look at the people who are actually doing the reporting and how long they stay in the newsroom and what is the newsroom capacity over the long-term. Then you start to understand the problem.

ALEXANDER RHEENEY: Michael, just to give you the PNG context, there are some reporters in PNG who have got sloppy and lazy. So they are reporters who basically push through unbalanced stories. A lot of times the editors come under a lot of pressure to make the deadlines, there's a tendency to run unbalanced stories on the understanding that we'll get the other side for comments tomorrow. Now that's been happening over the last few years. Most times the stories are run based on the merits of the story, depending on a national issue and there's a lot of fierce competition now, not only between mainstream media colleagues but with social media, so now speed is becoming a necessity in the news cycle in PNG. So a lot of stories get run without incorporating comments from the other side. And there's been one or two occasions when senior reporters do this and they've just become lazy, they just don't want to get the other side of the story to incorporate it into the story.

MISA VICKY LEPOU: When you get to the process of when a media organisation is sued, it's not a question of the reporter getting the story, the whole line of production is responsible for that particular story. This suicide story, the reporter did not come through formal training and I find it's the whole line of production that's in question, it's not just about the reporter or the proofreader.

At some point, everyone's involved so the whole newsroom needs to improve. In Samoa, it's this lack of mentorship. When our graduates do come to the newsrooms, these are just diploma graduates, they are expected to be like PhDs who can do analysis and critical thinking. So they're always on their own and that's something we've raised with our advisory board who are members of the industry, to ensure that there's such a system in place, when they graduate they need at least one, two or three years to be mentored at least. Because there are also other cultural factors involving journalists at the same time. I know this one particular organisation which has done that, at least there is someone senior to mentor these graduates because once they come out of the university, they're out of our hands, we've done our job. So mentorship is very important to ensure they are being maintained and being kept in the industry for a long time.

QUESTION FROM LEO: If you're up against corruption and ethical dilemmas, you must have a very secure professional journalists, well and truly trained up. That's not to betray the large numbers of young people who have wanted to get media training in the past. What you can do is consider a second strand of activity, call in a second strand of activity which we could call media literacy. So if the universities take on media literacy, use online services, students take a shortcut that way with resources that might spare you some resources to put an effort and resources into research that would at least show interest in concerns a little bit there. But this could bring us to this question of ethics and dealing with trouble and tragedy, whether it's a suicide story or police firing on young student protesters in Papua New Guinea—that social media then kicks in and becomes a very powerful public forum. From what I know about this comes from Vanuatu, where it seems to be, there's a culture there that acts as a good civil society. It has to do with media and media training so I want to know what you think about the option of, especially cultivating media literacy and doing that instead of a lot of spread out formal media training for mainstream media.

MISA VICKY LEPOU: Over the last four or five years we've had this discussion with the advisory board with members of the industry: how come this is no longer about journalism itself, this is no longer about not the skills, going through that formal training. But the doing of journalism in Samoa, the Samoan way, the influx of technology, if you come to Samoa, Facebook is considered is a bad thing. It's like if you see that 1980 indie movie, *The Gods Must be Crazy*, when you see that bottle of Coke, it's bad, it's from somewhere else. So our role really, and you have that gap between the older generation and the younger generation, we saw it like we need to take this to the grassroots level and we've had that proposal done to be given to the Ministry of Education to ensure that this is more than journalism. It's media studies, we call it. How to use social media effectively,

I think that's the issue in Samoa at the moment. Instead of that bad picture of Facebook, there's more to it than Facebook. How to connect *fa'a Samoa* with the influx of universal concepts. It's not just media, there's other things as well, there are other thematic areas as well that's in the way of the *fa'a Samoa*. But we really need to come out and explain that and justify why we there's this notion of the older generation not respecting. At the end of the day, we don't have a place in the *fa'a Samoa*, the movement does not have a sitting in that traditional set up of *fa'a Samoa*. They've got protocols, *fa'a Samoa* has protocols and to bring in press freedom with the notion that you're free to do whatever you want, I think we need to start building from here to explain what media is before we actually get into other contexts as well. So we have a lot work to do in trying to build that trust. We need to build that trust first with community before we get to introduce all these philosophies.

SUMMING UP BY ELIKI DRUGUNALEVU *(FROM USP IN FIJI):* I'd like to thank the panelists for those lovely, informative presentations. David Robie addressed the very important mission statement in noting that the panel was basically to promote the highest level of journalism education. To begin with, Emily Matasororo talked about a very important movement that has basically been taking place in PNG and that is the student protest movement calling for the resignation of the Prime Minister to let a police investigation take its course and basically how the media is covering the issue. She noted how the student body had no trust in the media, which is quite a worrying statement, and Emily talked about how this statement needed to be investigated. Shailendra Singh also talked about the basic lack of support in the journalism education in the region, and also the important need to train journalists and how there is not enough qualified and experienced trainers to train the journalists. This is something that has been a long-standing issue. He also talked about how important it is for the support from the institutions to help carry that through. Misa Vicky Lepou also alluded to support of what Shailendra said in terms of the need to have experienced trainers to train the journalists and how there seems to be no sense of respect for professional journalism, particularly from the community which is something that we need to actually address in the future. Also Dave Mandavah talked about how they've sort of become something like psychologists and how they need to address the social and cultural context of how females are not actually getting a say, particularly when in school when they have more females than males.

Resources

Video 1: Journalism education in the Pacific 1 - presentations (Pacific Media Centre, 44m 34s) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTHLC5GBFrg

Video 2: Journalism education in the Pacific 2 – discussion (Pacific Media Centre, 44m 40s) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gnmqdZruE8

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SPECIAL REPORT

Back to the Future

Sparta, Athena, and the battle for the Arab public sphere

Abstract: Al Jazeera (AJ) has been a defining feature in developing news media in the Middle East and beyond. The satellite-broadcasting network has played a leading role in bringing stories and perspectives that other international media do not always cover, if at all. More importantly, it has been a champion for democracy and human rights in the Middle East, thereby provoking the ire of Arab autocratic rulers, which went to great lengths to silence the Qatar-based television news network. The latest Gulf Crisis, in which four countries (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt) blockaded Qatar in July 2017, is another attempt to silence this media institution and peg back the region to the pre-Arab Spring era. The anti-Qatar quartet issued an ultimatum of 13 demands to be fulfilled within ten days. The list included paying reparations, shutting down Al Jazeera, curbing bilateral relations with Iran, closing a Turkish military base, and submitting to monthly external compliance checks. However, the crisis could be a blessing in disguise for Qatar and the network in its campaign for greater freedom of expression in the Middle East. This article analyses the crisis from a media political economy perspective.

Keywords: Al Jazeera, Arab public space, Arab Spring, Arabia, autocracy, Bahrain, blockade, censorship, democracy, dictatorship, Egypt, fake news, Gulf Crisis, human rights, Iran, media freedom, Middle East, political economy, Qatar, satellite broadcasting, Saudi Arabia, television, United Arab Emirates

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Introduction

DIPLOMATIC quarrels in the Arabian Peninsula have a long history, and Qatar aligned itself with stronger powers (e.g. Ottoman Empire, British Colonial Rule) in order to confront regional threats. It is conventional wisdom that states holding more power wield influence and can alter the behaviour of smaller states (Barnett & Duvall, 2005, pp. 49-52). After the British withdrawal from east of Suez in 1971, Saudi Arabia seized the moment to bully its neighbours and claim territories from Abu Dhabi and Oman (Hellyer, 2001,

p. 167), while also becoming the de-facto protector of Qatar. This state of affairs lasted until the early 1990s, when Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded Kuwait and threatened to invade Saudi Arabia as well. It became quickly apparent that the Saudis were unable to defend their own borders, let alone their neighbours' too. This signalled a shift in Saudi—Qatari relations, since state survival supersedes all other considerations, and Saudi foreign policy tools that were commonly used with Gulf countries proved their limitations (Al Rasheed, 2017).

Qatar's path was therefore about to witness a major change at the hands of the Crown Prince at the time, and future Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani,[1] who had a very different view on the future role of Qatar. He sought from the onset to resist Saudi suzerainty and pursued his nation's interest by leveraging its own capabilities and resources, unencumbered by the Saudi threat. Having the world's third-largest reserves of natural gas, the Qatari leaders chose to think outside the realm of conventional pipelines, which would have been hindered by Saudi Arabia. They focused instead on exporting liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the world through maritime routes. Thanks to the most sophisticated LNG infrastructure in the world (QNB, 2015), Qatar has become the world's largest gas exporter (EIA, 2015), and was able to fully capitalise on the basin it shares with Iran—Saudi Arabia's nemesis.

The immense revenues that followed turned Qatar into not just the world's richest nation, with an annual per-capita income of $130,000, but also the world's largest LNG exporter (Champion, 2017). Such achievements irritated Saudi Arabia, which hoped to clip Qatar's wings and restore the status quo with the help of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain (Kamrava, 2009, p. 403). Relations reached their lowest point in February 1996, when an attempted coup against Qatar's leader took place. It is believed that Saudi Arabia financially supported this operation (BBC News, 2000), which severely dented Saudi-Qatari relations (Roberts, 2012). Tensions simmered back and forth between Qatar and neighbouring Gulf monarchies, and in 2014, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain withdrew their ambassadors from the country over its support of the Arab uprisings (Kirkpatrick, 2014). Things returned to normal a year later, and nothing prepared even the most seasoned of analysts to the developments that unfolded in the closing week of May 2017. The scope of hostile actions, speed of escalation, and toxic rhetoric directed at Qatar by the quartet—the aforementioned three countries in addition to Egypt—was unparalleled.

Lacking a manifest *casus belli* to justify escalation, one was swiftly manufactured. On 24 May 2017, unidentified hackers exploited a cyber-bug in the website of Qatar News Agency (QNA) to disseminate fabricated news. The fake report claimed that Qatar's Emir criticized in his speech the United States, while praising Hezbollah and Hamas as resistance movements. The Qatari authorities immediately asked the United States for help, and a team from the Federal Bureau

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.

of Investigations (FBI) led a thorough investigation. A few weeks later, Qatar's attorney general stated that communication used in the security breach originated from countries laying siege to his country. The Washington Post validated the Qatari version of events on 16 July 2017, and referred to information obtained from U.S. intelligence officials, stating that 'the United Arab Emirates orchestrated the hacking of Qatari government news and social media sites in order to post incendiary false quotes attributed to Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani, in late May that sparked the on-going upheaval between Qatar and its neighbours' (Nakashima & DeYoung, 2017).

Shying away from any investigations, the anti-Qatar quartet hastily cut diplomatic ties with Doha, while also blockading Qatar's airspace and shipping channels, stopping their food supplies, and declaring Qatari nationals persona non grata, straining the region's economic and trade relations at heavy human and financial costs. The quartet not only snubbed official denials from Doha about the fake news, but they also issued an ultimatum of 13 demands to be fulfilled within ten days (McLean, El Gamal, & Finn, 2017). The list included paying reparations, shutting down the Al Jazeera satellite-broadcasting network (AJ), curbing bilateral relations with Iran, closing a Turkish military base, and submitting to monthly external compliance checks (*Middle East Eye*, 2017). In the light of Doha's refusal and the shuttle diplomacy undertaken by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, the list was reduced to six principles (Lederer, 2017). A few weeks later, the quartet announced that the 13 demands plus the six principles were in fact still on the agenda before ceasing Qatar's blockade (Cone, 2017).

In any case, the different ultimatums constituted an attempt to 'reduce Qatar to a Saudi client state, and humiliate the Emir of Qatar and the Al Thani dynasty to the point where their rule would be in question' (Lieven, 2017), and consequently they were duly rejected by Qatar. Moreover, observers believe the blockade has been counterproductive, and has in fact deepened Qatari ties with regional powers such as Turkey and Iran, as well as with two other states in the Gulf Cooperation Council: Oman and Kuwait. This has allowed for food supplies and other goods to still flow into Qatar's ports and airports (Tharoor, 2017). Consequently, the quartet no longer insisted on the 13 demands, reducing the list to six broad principles (BBC News, 2017).

However, aligning Qatar with Saudi Arabia and its allies 'militarily, politically, socially and economically' remains the end game (Lieven, 2017), and AJ's closure continues to be on the quartet's agenda. This is made especially stark when considering that its website was also blocked by the four countries' internet providers, and Saudi Arabia has banned hotels and tourist facilities from airing AJ's channels in their premises, threatening to punish contraveners with the closure of their facility and a fine of up to US$26,000. In a statement, the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage ordered that 'all channels from the Al Jazeera Media Network must be removed' and replaced with channels compatible with 'official Saudi television ones'. Additionally, the quartet threatened lengthy jail terms and fines for their nationals if they express sympathy with Qatar on social media. The UAE said offenders would face a jail term from three to 15 years and a fine not less than 500,000 UAE dirhams (US$136,000) (Al Jazeera, 2017).

The Saudis' tendency to impose media censorship and suppress any alternative views invites a sense of *déjà vu*. Journalist Yvonne Ridley observes:

> In 1980, for example, the government in Riyadh threatened governments, politicians and TV corporations across the globe if they dared to broadcast a TV docudrama, *Death of a Princess*.[2] The Saudis tried to intimidate Britain with economic sanctions, including the withholding of oil supplies, and recalled their ambassador from London. In the US, oil-rich companies threatened to withdraw sponsorship and advertising from TV stations if the programme was broadcast. A Middle East state attempting to gag the world? Yes, that is exactly what Saudi Arabia was doing…More than a decade later, in 1996, the BBC was forced to close down its Arabic section following pressure from Riyadh when the Saudis again sought to suppress a documentary exposing more executions in the country. Around 250 journalists lost their jobs. (Ridley, 2017)

What's more is that the quartet's representatives didn't beat about the bush and conceal their dislike for media freedoms. Saudi permanent representative to the United Nations, Abdullah al-Mouallimi said: 'If the only way to achieve

that [i.e. the quartet's demands] is by closing down Al Jazeera, fine. If we can achieve that without closing down Al Jazeera, that's also fine. The important thing is the objective and the principle involved' (BBC, 2017). UAE representatives adopted a similar stance. When asked whether the closure of AJ was a reasonable demand, Omar Ghobash, the UAE's Ambassador to Moscow said: 'We do not claim to have press freedom. We do not promote the idea of press freedom. What we talk about is responsibility in speech' (Wintour, 2017). However, this stance drew the ire of international organisations, and Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad al-Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, denounced it as an 'unacceptable attack' on free speech. Faced with such an opposition, Noura al-Kaabi, the UAE Minister for the Federal National Council, said that the UAE had backed off its demands for either channel to be closed if there was a 'fundamental change and restructuring' (Philp & Spencer, 2017).

Al Jazeera: Perennial irritant for autocratic leaders

To understand the rationale behind the attacks on Qatar in general, and AJ in particular, one must go back two decades. 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. Before AJ's launch, government-controlled television was the defining feature of broadcasting in the region. This meant that official Arab television media was no more than a mouthpiece for government policies. Their coverage consisted mainly of barren and repetitive broadcasts, mostly intended to sing the praise of the rulers' actions (Lynch, 2005, p. 40). Even live interviews were not tolerated, as interviewees' opinions had to be checked before being aired.

The Qatari leadership minimised any government interference with the AJ network's affairs. Therefore, despite being launched as a state-financed satellite channel, the Qatari government's subtle distancing made AJ look similar to the BBC rather than a state-controlled Arab network. In contrast to other Arab television networks, where little to no sensitive political, social, economic, or religious subjects were ever discussed, AJ introduced a new journalistic culture to the Arab world and produced several talk shows that were fast paced, innovative, and daring. The network adopted a daring editorial line, which left no political taboos, and gave airtime to guests from across the political spectrum. After decades of state pressures and censorship, the winds of freedom blown by AJ reinvigorated the Arab public sphere in many ways (El-Nawawy & Iskandar 2002; Miles 2005).

One weekly programme that exemplifies the change brought forward by AJ was *Al Ittijah Al Mo'akis (The Opposite Direction)*. Launched in November 1996 (and still airing today), this programme is presented by Faisal al-Kasim, a Syrian Druze, who had worked for the BBC for many years. The presenter

spends the first two minutes asking questions that reflect positions on a chosen topic, and then opens the floor to two guests representing opposite sides of the spectrum. The show stirred up controversies and regularly features opponents of Arab regimes, and the anchor took pride in 'de-iconising' many of the myths that have dominated the Arab world for decades (Al Kasim, 1999). It also received plenty of official complaints and censure from these governments. For example, Abdullah Al Nafisi, a Kuwaiti intellectual who was the guest of this talk show, launched a salvo of criticism against the Gulf monarchs and attacked the Saudi religious establishment for ignoring major issues such as royal corruption.

As a result, Saudi authorities added more restrictions against AJ, and coerced the only Saudi journalist working for AJ to resign from the network (El-Nawawy & Iskandar 2002, pp. 117, 119). Also, on 27 January 1999, the programme hosted a debate about the then-raging Algerian civil war. The oppositional viewpoint clearly gained the upper hand in the debate, at which point the Algerian authorities cut the electricity supply to the capital Algiers (and other cities) to prevent the programme from screening. Even Qatari government positions constituted no red line for the daring Syrian anchor, whose programme discussed Qatar's overtures to Israel and hosted an episode titled 'Why is Qatar crawling toward Israel?' The local guest, who was a professor of political science at Qatar University, heavily and openly criticised his government's policies (Al-Kasim, 1999).

In an article he wrote for the *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, Al-Kasim related his experience:

> Al Jazeera's editorial policy is so lax that I am hardly ever given orders regarding programme content. The station has an even wider scope of freedom than the BBC Arabic radio, where I worked for 10 years. I tackle issues that I never even dreamed of covering during my service at the BBC. (Al-Kasim, 1999)

With such editorial independence, AJ exposed the misdeeds of local regimes and served as a platform for opposition groups by airing controversial debates, and exposing corruption and widespread human rights abuses. The winds of freedom blown by AJ meant also that repressive regimes no longer had the monopoly over information. By transcending borders, AJ's broadcasts were able to bypass the restrictive state media, connect with communities, challenge the official discourse, and expose the regimes' lack of legitimacy.

Arguably, AJ seems to echo the deliberative-discursive model of a Habermasian public sphere. Jürgen Habermas[3] played a big role in placing the concept of public sphere at the centre of the debate on democratisation and participatory politics. It was in his seminal work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), that Habermas offered the fullest articulation of the concept of the public sphere and traced its historical development economically, socially,

politically, and institutionally. According to him, one of the most important dynamics took place when the members of the bourgeois society engaged in rational discussion through the public use of their critical judgment, which liberated them from the shackles of political and religious authorities and their imposed interpretations, leading to an early formation of public opinion. There are many parallels between this model and the democratic process in the Arab World, which needs open spaces of rational discussion. Democracy is not just a voting-centric arena, in which fixed preferences and interests compete via mechanisms of aggregation. Rather, democratisation starts when everyone has a say. Voices rather than votes are the vehicle of empowerment.

Satellite television: A new Arab broadcast culture of pluralism and fairness

Furthermore, broadcast media also bridges the gaps between different social groups and public cultures. Mass media, especially satellite television, has removed existing barriers and changed the ways these social groups and subgroupings interact with one another. Media can be a powerful vehicle in establishing a strong democratic culture by emphasizing democratic values such as tolerance, pluralism, diversity, and fairness. In this context, AJ has contributed to the making of a new political culture based on the aforementioned values, which echo the argument of several theorists, who have stressed the importance of democratic culture in bringing about democratic change. For example, academics Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba argued in *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963) that a democratic form of participatory political system requires a particular political culture consistent with it. It remains debatable, though, whether democratic culture precedes the democratic process and paves the way for change, or is a result of it.

Such aspects and many more were instigated by AJ. More importantly, they obliged autocratic Arab rulers to become much more attentive to public opinion. The ruling elites viewed with deep scepticism this media institution, in which anchors and guests routinely deliberate democracy, good governance, and human rights. For them, AJ not only plays a big role in the development of free flowing information and freedom of expression, but also acts as an agency of representation that allow diverse social groups and classes to express their views that could, if left unchecked, start influencing decision making processes within their realms towards democracy.

Arab Spring: A narrative seeking an end to nepotism and corruption

By being a long champion for freedom of speech in the Arab World, and by providing airtime to dissenters, opposition groups, and controversial figures, AJ became the household name in the 1990s and 2000s in terms of advancing the democratic agenda, exposing the misdeeds, human rights abuses, and corruption of Middle-

Eastern regimes. This stance has slowly but surely invigorated the Arab public sphere, which became much more conscious of the need for change. Therefore, when a series of uprisings and mass protests hit North Africa and the Middle East from January 2011 onwards—also known as Arab Spring—these demonstrations called for an end to nepotism and corruption, improvement of economic conditions, establishment of democratic representation, and protection of human rights.

After many years of covering events amid heavy censorship, the Qatar-based network proved very skilful in countering attempts by the different regimes to restrain the movement of its journalists. AJ, through both its Arabic and English networks (AJA and AJE), was well positioned to cover these events. With AJA already enjoying strong pan-Arabic viewership, AJE targets different English-speaking markets. Both networks covered events in Tunisia, when a young vegetable cart owner called Mohamed Bouazizzi immolated himself after being humiliated by police, igniting several protests across the country. AJ was one of the first outlets to broadcast pictures of his self-immolation, even though its bureau had been closed for years by the Tunisian regime.

Using mobile phone footage and social media, AJ outmanoeuvred both the Tunisian regime and competing networks by grasping very early the meaning and magnitude of the protests. They eventually brought about the demise of the Tunisian dictator; an outcome many in the region considered impossible. The 24/7 coverage provided by AJ during the Arab Spring events, combined with viral social media, online blogging, and mobile telephony, vividly publicised the uprisings. This boosted the spirits of activists and encouraged more resistance and mass defiance. Jordanian Maisara Malass, an opposition activist, described AJ as a 'media brigade' whose coverage had helped 'to spread the revolution from one city to the other' (Zayed, 2011).

AJ's Arab Spring coverage was sharp and relentless, even if at times it was deemed more sympathetic toward some particular forces, such as the Muslim Brotherhood (*The Economist*, 2013). Nevertheless, AJ's reporting in Egypt attracted world attention to the demonstrations and gave events a human dimension, thereby creating a bond between viewers in their living rooms and the protesters in Tahrir Square. When demonstrators ultimately forced former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to quit power, many people around the world embraced the narrative conveyed by AJ, whose journalistic efforts were rewarded with the Columbia Journalism Award (2011) bestowed by Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism (Reuters, 2011).

On the other hand, the initial success encountered in some Arab Spring countries triggered heavy-handed reactions from the Gulf autocratic regimes, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which felt threatened by the democratic advance in some countries (e.g. Tunisia, Egypt). Many observers might not have paid attention, but the media has often reported the rise of the UAE as the 'little

Sparta' of the region (Chandrasekaran, 2014; Law, 2017; *The Economist,* 2017); a nickname that was incidentally coined by retired US General James Mattis, now Donald Trump's Secretary of Defence. Such viewpoint was echoed recently, when *The Washington Post* commented that 'the UAE's rise as a top-tier US military ally had set it apart from other Arab nations, enhancing its outsize ambitions and regional clout' (Fahim & Ryan, 2017). Under the watch of Muhammad bin Zayed, the Crown Prince of the UAE, the country 'has gone from being a haven mindful of its own business into the Arab world's most interventionist regime. Flush with petrodollars, he has turned the tiny country, whose seven component emirates have a combined population of almost 10 million (only about 1 million of whom are citizens), into the world's third-largest importer of arms. He has recruited hundreds of mercenaries' (*The Economist*, 2017).

The rise of Little Sparta

The rise of little Sparta coincided with the Arab Spring. 'There is a dark side' to the UAE, explains veteran journalist Bill Law who reported extensively from the Middle East, 'as there was in the ferociously militaristic and authoritarian original. It is one that clashes with the brilliantly promoted image of a tolerant, tourist and business friendly oasis that the Emirates, and principally Dubai and Abu Dhabi, have so successfully projected. The UAE has relentlessly crushed human rights in its bid to silence dissent and stamp out what it sees as the pernicious influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. To that end, dozens of people have been sentenced to long terms in jail on evidence widely seen as flawed, much of it secured through coercion and torture' (Law, 2017).

It was no coincidence that the UAE (alongside the Saudis) interfered with and deteriorated the situation in the Arab countries where the Arab Spring made some noticeable progress. They incited and materially supported their proxies to use putsches, counter-revolutionary movements, false-flag terrorist groups, and extended repressive means. Such methods turned peaceful demonstrations into civil and sectarian wars, as in Libya, Syria, and Yemen. It also induced many people around the world to the fallacy of lamenting the Middle East's inability to establish modern statehood, omitting to focus on the strong nexus between the autocratic elites in the region and their foreign sponsors, which remain firmly opposed to any genuine progress for democracy in the Middle East (Davidson, 2016).

Yet, despite spending dozens of billions of dollars to restore the pre-2011 order, the Emiratis, Saudis and their proxies are still struggling to achieve dominance on the ground. Most importantly, their message has not won hearts and minds mainly because of AJ, which deconstructs the counter-revolutionary narrative at every turn. And while the UAE and Saudi Arabia have dozens of satellite television channels, such as Al-Arabiya and Sky Arabic, and tried very hard to challenge AJ, their efforts seem to have failed, as many still consider AJ as 'the trusted eye and ears of the Arab and Muslim worlds' (Mahruqi, 2017).

Palace coup within Saudi Arabia

Last but not least, another layer of complexity has been added to the already convoluted situation. The new Trump administration seems to have tacitly acquiesced to a palace coup within Saudi Arabia, and helped the Deputy Crown Prince, Mohamed Bin Salman (MBS), jump the succession line, and establish himself as the upcoming king (Hearst, 2017). Meanwhile, MBS has tied himself with the UAE, which is bent on pursuing its own regional influence. Amid this real-life *Game of Thrones*, the Trump administration has also encouraged Arab allies to form a military alliance with Israel against common foes (e.g. Hamas). As a result, governments that call for a solution to the Gaza conflict through international law (e.g. Qatar) found themselves ostracised by this new coalition. Therefore, the quartet's blockade of Qatar aims by the same token to pre-empt AJ's role in producing critical reporting in any expected war against the Palestinians.

In fact, the Israelis got a preview of such coverage's impact in July 2017, during the wave of protests by Palestinians against heightened Israeli security measures near the ancient compound, known to Muslims as al-Haram al-Sharif, which houses the al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site. The ensuing closure of the al-Aqsa mosque prevented thousands from praying and resulted in a standoff. AJ's coverage of these events shed an unpleasant light on the practices of Israel to the extent that millions of viewers around the world became aware of the situation, and expressed their solidarity with the Palestinians. In the face of such opposition, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu backed down from his earlier decisions. These developments are reminiscent of the 2000 Al-Aqsa Intifada, which significantly boosted AJ's international profile. At that time, as dozens of Palestinians were killed by the Israeli army and thousands were injured, Western media resorted to self-censorship, while AJA aired graphic footage of death and demolition. Netanyahu later wrote on his Facebook page:

> I have spoken several times to law-enforcement authorities demanding the closure of Al Jazeera's offices in Jerusalem. If this does not happen because of legal interpretation, I will work to enact the required legislation to expel Al Jazeera from Israel. (*The New Arab*, 2017)

Consequently, Israeli Communications Minister Ayoub Kara convened a press conference on 6 August 2017, in which he announced a series of steps aimed at closing down Al Jazeera in Israel (Tucker, 2017). The Israeli government's reaction shows that AJ can be an ominous witness; one that the Israel-Arab coalition against terrorism, as named by President Trump, would rather do business without.

Conclusion

All things considered, at the time of writing 100 days after the start of the crisis,

the latter continues unabated and a swift resolution seems remote. On 9 September 2017, Saudi Arabia suspended any dialogue with Qatar after a phone call between the leaders of two countries which initially suggested a breakthrough in the Gulf dispute (Reuters, 2017). It is evident, however, that the quartet has a long standing score to settle with Qatar in general, and AJ in particular. As explained earlier, the illegal blockade imposed on Qatar and threats against AJ are part of the ongoing attempts to restore the status quo in the Middle East in favour of authoritarianism and against the advancement of media freedoms and quality journalism.

Leading NGOs, such as the Committee to Protect Journalists, Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders, coupled with established news publications like *The New York Times* (2017) and *The Guardian* (2017), noted such adverse development, and subsequently condemned the quartet's efforts to undermine freedom of press and international law. Beyond expressions of sympathy, Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, delivered an important speech on 24 July 2017 in Doha at the Freedom of Expression conference,[4] in which he concluded:

> There are important things that Qatar can do to maintain the moral high ground from which it has so greatly benefited in its dispute with its neighbours. As the old adage goes, every crisis is also an opportunity. Yes, Qatar today faces a crisis, but it is also an opportunity to become a regional leader on human rights. I hope Qatar will seize that opportunity. (Roth, 2017)

Roth was exactly right, for this crisis could be a blessing in disguise. In order to counter Little Sparta, Qatar has to seize this chance, engage with its critics, and continue its political, economic, social, and legal reforms so as to become its enemy's antithesis: Athena.

Notes

1. For a short background information on the former Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the following resource is accessible: Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Emir. Current Leaders of Nations, Gale, 1998. Biography in Context. Retrieved on July 22, 2017, from link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/K1610000166/BIC1?u=fairfax_main&xid=9eb83b4a

2. Death of a Princess was a 1980 drama-documentary that was based on the true story of a young Saudi Arabian princess and her lover who had been publicly executed for adultery.

3. Jürgen Habermas is a German sociologist and philosopher in the tradition of critical theory and pragmatism. He is best known for his theories on communicative rationality and the public sphere. Habermas argues that in a democracy-driven system, the activist public sphere is needed for debates on matters of public importance, and as well as the mechanism for that discussion to affect the decision-making process.

4. More than 150 representatives from civil society, academia and intergovernmental human rights bodies gathered in Doha to discuss key issues in the field of free expression, including internet freedom and journalist safety in a conference organised by the Qatar National Human Rights Committee, in cooperation with the International Press Institute (IPI) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). The international conference, entitled 'Freedom of Expression: Facing Up to the Threat' was held in Doha, Qatar, from 24-25 July 2017. The event was held amid a diplomatic crisis in the Middle East pitting Qatar against the quartet, which have imposed a land, air and sea blockade, and demanded that Qatar shut the influential broadcaster Al Jazeera and other media outlets.

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ARTICLES

‘There’s no media for refugees’

Information and communication in camps on the Thai-Burma border

Abstract: This article uses the example of camps on the Thai-Burma border to highlight the exclusion of refugees from the common world and subsequent omission of their voices from news coverage. Moreover, the article argues that this exclusion weakens the supposed protection offered to refugees by impeding the media in its role as protector and promoter of human rights. While there has been considerable literature examining the reporting of humanitarian crises to a global audience, in contrast there has been little in the way of research—and practice—concerning strategies to effectively communicate with refugees affected by such crises. Fieldwork conducted in three of nine official Thai-Burma border camps involved interviews with 81 participants, including refugees, humanitarian practitioners and journalists. Participant accounts show that a range of factors inhibit the production of news media coverage relevant to refugees interned in the Thai-Burma border camps, thereby preventing refugees from accessing vital information and voicing in common public space their experiences of violence, corruption and discrimination. A handful of exiled media groups provide poorly funded exceptions.

Keywords: alternative media, Burma, communication with communities (CwC), community media, ethnic media, humanitarian, human rights, Karen, protection, refugee camps, refugees, Thailand

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Introduction

THE IMPORTANCE of the media in fostering democracy and providing information is ‘beyond dispute’ (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 2), but little research has been done about the role of news media in the specific context of refugee camps. Refugees are frequently quarantined in camps in remote and hard-to-reach locations where they can rarely be seen or heard. Highlighting this point, Agier (2011) notes the absence of refugee camps from maps of the

world, even in cases where they are home to hundreds of thousands of people and have existed for a decade or more. In addition to this physical dimension of exclusion, refugees also experience social, economic and political exclusion from the common world in that they are often denied social integration, political rights and participation in the global economy (Parekh, 2014). The consequences of this exclusion are that a stateless person loses 'his or her place in a common public space from which action, speech and hence identity become meaningful' (p. 653). This article argues that the potential role of news media as intermediaries between the camp and common public space is particularly crucial in such a context of exclusion. However, the absence of a viable business model for camp-based media groups means that such groups have little hope of addressing the information needs of camp residents unless the humanitarian sector supports their efforts.

Approximately 110,000 refugees—mostly ethnic Karen—live in nine camps scattered along the Thai-Burma border (The Border Consortium, 2015). Camp residents experience physical exclusion—and significant degrees of social and economic exclusion—owing to their confinement in camps that are located amid isolated mountain areas in Thailand, not far from the Burma border. In the face of discussions about voluntary repatriation, which have gained momentum in the wake of political developments in Burma in recent years, camp residents highlighted information and communication as priority concerns. Likewise, humanitarian organisations have recognised that 'refugees have no easy access to formal channels through which relevant information can be requested, accessed, disseminated or made credible' (Committee for Coordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand, n.d., p. 1). On the final page of *Governing Refugees,* McConnachie (2014) notes that a lack of information is 'a core problem for the refugee population' given the possibility of return to Burma (p. 164). The purpose of this article is to explore the role of news media in camps on the Thai-Burma border, and to provide insight into the challenges that must be overcome in order to improve access to relevant news content for encamped refugees. Fieldwork accounts highlight the criticality of journalism that can provide refugees with vital information about the world outside the camps, and project their voices in common public space, where a network of actions and relationships—the sphere of human affairs—shape the course of their lives.

Journalism: A human right regardless of frontiers

UNHCR policy and guidelines explicitly recognise the vital role of communication for refugees in camp settings (UNHCR, 1998, 2006, 2011). The rationale for this position is underpinned by notions of communication as both a fundamental human need and a human right enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (UNHCR, 2006, p. 58)

Of particular relevance to this discussion is the advice provided in UNHCR's global reference guide for the protection of refugees in camps and settlements. The guide states that refugees should have access to 'accurate, reliable, regular and up-to-date information' about matters such as the assistance and programmes available in the camp, the situation in their communities of origin, their rights and obligations, and explanations for the decisions made by humanitarian organisations (UNHCR, 2006, p. 58). Such information should be available upon admission to the camps, and in the many days that follow. In particular, refugees need to know about their rights and responsibilities under international human rights law, national refugee law and national law in general. Refugees may inadvertently violate their obligations if they are not properly informed, and this can result in personal consequences as well as broader repercussions for the host country's treatment of refugees. Alternatively, effective communication with camp residents 'will directly improve the protection of refugees' because they will know how to access services, be aware of their rights and make realistic plans for the future (UNHCR, 2006, p. 61).

Substantiating these ideas, it has been noted that there is an inverse relationship between the protection of refugees' human rights and refugees' lack of access to information about their rights (Holzer, 2010; Saltsman, 2011). In their in-depth study of human rights in refugee camps, Verdirame and Harrell-Bond assert that 'the enjoyment of one's rights is best achieved through an awareness of those rights' (2005, p. 7). The low level of knowledge possessed by refugees about their rights under international law has been acknowledged in numerous camp settings, including in Rwanda (Ho & Pavlish, 2011), Kenya (Verdirame & Harrell-Bond, 2005), Uganda (Verdirame & Harrell-Bond, 2005), Tanzania (West & Wambugu, 2003), Ghana (Holzer, 2010) and Jordan (Saltsman, 2011). Demonstrating the link between understanding and exercising rights, Ho & Pavlish (2011) recounted the experiences of women in camp settings who refused to expose and condemn sexual and other forms of violence, which they had experienced because they did not have a strong understanding of their rights. Moreover, even if they knew their rights, the voices of women and girls were 'unheard' due to a lack of effective processes and mechanisms that made it 'difficult, if not impossible, to demand their rights or resist various forms of abuse and exploitation' (p. 96). Further, Verdirame and Harrell-Bond (2005) linked a lack of awareness of the law among refugees, government officials and humanitarian organisations to the arrest of refugees on false charges and inappropriate decisions to bar asylum seekers from status-determination interviews.

The sense of insecurity that is evoked by a crisis is the reason why refugees seek information, and will continue to do so until they feel they have sufficient information to 'cope' with their uncertain situation (Sommerfeldt, 2015, p. 8). Other studies suggest a link between a lack of information and feelings of anxiety (Glazebrooke, 2004), desperation (Saltsman, 2011), uncertainty (Holzer, 2012; Saltsman, 2011) and confusion (Holzer, 2012). West and Wambugu (2003) suggest that refugees need information and to communicate in order re-establish a sense of security:

> Security is not just a physical entity in conflict and post-conflict areas, requiring military or police presence and the assurance of economic survival, it includes the rather psychological and emotional element of an individual's inherent need to have some control over what he or she understands of a situation and to whom he or she is able to communicate his or her understanding. (p. 1)

A logical follow-on that is yet to be explored in the literature is whether access to relevant and trusted sources of news media can play a part in ensuring that camps are a secure and protected space.

Communication and media in a camp environment

Although the literature points to the importance of information for refugees, there has been little research concerning the role that news media might play in addressing these needs in a camp environment. Existing studies concerning news media in situations of forced migration have focused on examining publicity strategies for communicating about refugee crises to global audiences, rather than communicating with refugees themselves. Numerous studies have explored the role of humanitarian organisations in facilitating and producing news content about humanitarian crises and issues. Scholars have analysed the aims of news content facilitated by humanitarian organisations and suggest these efforts are designed to frame and circulate information that will bring international attention to specific issues in specific locations (Clark, 2001; Dawes, 2007; Powers, 2014), as well as to meet organisational needs for visibility and fundraising (Bob, 2005; Cohen, 2001; Geras, 1998; Powers, 2014). The literature also suggests that humanitarian organisations have been forced to adapt and somewhat corrupt their publicity strategies towards sensationalism in order to reflect the biases and preferences of the news media rather than discuss complex issues such as the structural causes of humanitarian crises and concerns (Powers, 2014). This is hardly surprising given the mass media's tendency to neglect marginalised and less powerful groups (Atton & Hamilton, 2008). On the contrary, community media typically gives voice to the voiceless, and therefore may present a more plausible model for communicating with refugees in camp settings.

The few studies that explore access to news media in camp settings describe a lack of access to regular and reliable sources. In Rwanda, Congolese refugees 'live totally outside mediated communication in the world' (Kivikuru, 2013, p. 36). Their only access to news media is in the form of news bulletins on one or two available radio stations. About 20 percent of households have a radio, but those without are generally welcome to listen at a neighbour's house. (Kivikuru, 2013, p. 45). In Burundian camps in Tanzania, Turner observes that it is common for young people to 'hang around, glued to their small short-wave receivers, trying to pick up any relevant news' (2004, p. 236). The available stations are broadcast in French, Swahili, or English, which are comprehensible to many but not all. In contrast, Saltsman notes that Iraqis displaced in urban areas have access to 'a variety of media' (2010, p. 58). This is perhaps because refugees in urban settings are often subject to fewer restrictions and live in areas where a more diverse range of media is available than in remote camp settings.

The limited range of media that is available to refugees in camps is generally characterised by a lack of direct relevance to the refugee experience. There are some instances, including camps in Palestine and Thailand, where community media platforms facilitate the provision of information about the situation inside the camps. However, it is typical even in camp environments where there are community media that such media do not report in a manner that is directly relevant and accessible to the refugees themselves. Instead:

> The messages—often highly political—mainly focus abroad, trying to convince the rest of the world about the need for peace and democracy. These media rarely transmit stories about the day-to-day life in the camps and their audiences are outside the camps. Thus, although media content is produced on the camps, the focus is actually on the world outside. (Kivikuru, 2013, p. 37)

In light of the established connection between access to information and the realisation of human rights, this article considers the potential role and importance of news media in a camp environment. Moreover, the paper highlights the barriers and challenges that must be overcome in order to improve access to relevant news content for encamped refugees.

Methodology

I conducted semi-structured interviews with 81 participants during the course of ethnographic fieldwork in Thailand between April and July 2013. In the same period, I did about 120 hours of participant observation during visits to Mae La, Umpiem and Nu Po camps. I interviewed a total of 50 camp residents—a fairly balanced mix of males and females from young adults to the elderly. I interviewed 30 camp residents who identified as Karen, which is the ethnic majority

in the seven so-called 'Karen camps'. I also spoke with 20 camp residents from various groups that have a minority presence in the camps, including Burman (10), Muslim (4), Kachin (1), Arakanese (1), Chin (1), Nepali (1), Shan (1) and Mon (1). The age group of camp resident participants and their ethnicity, as self-identified, are listed when quotes are presented. However, I do not state in which camp each quoted camp resident because such detail could jeopardise anonymity, particularly for camp residents from underrepresented ethnic groups. Camp residents have been allocated pseudonyms (e.g. Mr AR) where the letter 'R' is indicative of 'resident'.

I also conducted 31 interviews with three categories of organisational participants. Each interview ranged in length between half-an-hour and one-and-a-half hours, depending on how much the participant chose to contribute.

Firstly, I interviewed 11 senior humanitarian practitioners from seven of the 21 humanitarian organisations that were providing services in the camps at the time. Ten of the humanitarian practitioner participants had roles in senior management—usually involving programme coordination—and the eleventh was an experienced staff member whose role focused primarily on community liaison with camp communities. Five of the practitioners had worked on the border for 10-25 years. Others had fewer years of experience but their positions involved spending significant amounts of time—or living for extended periods—in the camps. Secondly, I interviewed 12 community workers from community-based organisations and committees that support the camp residents or advocate for the refugee communities. The community worker participants were employed by community-based organisations providing services in the camps—in addition and complementary to those provided by humanitarian organisations. Typically, these workers were themselves refugees who had lived in the camps before coming to work for community-based organisations in Mae Sot. Their work—as well as the fact that family and friends remained living in the camps – meant that they returned to the camps frequently and remained part of the camp communities. Thirdly, I interviewed eight journalists from three Burmese media organisations that operate in Thailand. There are a handful of such organisations reporting regularly on issues occurring in or relevant to the camp communities. In contrast, journalists from international media organisations only visit the camps in the event of a 'major' story and therefore were not deemed to have sufficient relevant experience to warrant their inclusion in the sample. All eight journalists had visited the camps for reporting purposes on many occasions. Organisational participants have been given abbreviated pseudonyms (e.g. Mr AJ) where the second letter of the acronym indicates the category of organisational participant (H – humanitarian practitioner; C – community worker; J – journalist).

A bilingual research assistant interpreted the interviews with participants who were not fluent in English, including all camp resident participants and any

organisational participants who expressed a need or preference for the use of an interpreter. The recruitment of a bilingual research assistant fluent in Burmese and Karen dialects was undertaken with careful consideration of factors such as genuine interest in the research project, comprehension of the research focus, and a willingness to be involved for the duration of the fieldwork and beyond (Hennink, 2008; Liamputtong, 2008). Varying dialects can present a challenge for interpreters when conducting interviews with the Karen and other ethnic minority populations from Burma (Watkins, 2012). However, dialectical issues did not arise frequently during the interviews, perhaps due to the reported emergence of a 'camp Karen' dialect intelligible to speakers of both Pwo and Sgaw Karen (Watkins, 2012).

The aim of my analysis was to create second-order constructs; typical descriptions of phenomena that the participants themselves would understand (Schutz, 1962). I used NVivo as an archive for the transcripts and to assist in generating themes. I provided the findings to key informants in order to seek their feedback as to whether the emergent constructs were consistent with their understanding of the phenomena—a process Schutz calls the 'postulate of adequacy' (1962). An important part of the analytical process is reflexivity, which involves 'the interpretation of interpretation and the launching of a critical self-exploration of one's own interpretations' (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 9). My analysis therefore involves an interweaving of accounts from the field that reflect key themes, or social constructs, and theoretical perspectives that inform those social constructs, which are all part of a reflexive process.

Results

This section will present the article's findings by exploring key themes that emerged from the analysis of fieldwork accounts. Several sub-sections each describe a key aspect of the role of news media in the camps and the factors that inhibit news media access. First, in order to situate these findings, it is important to describe the accessibility of various forms of media and communication technologies.

Radio

Radio is by far the most accessible medium for camp residents. About a third of the camp residents I spoke to reported having access to radio at 'home', which is typically a simple house made of bamboo and thatched leaves. While most of those with access listen on battery-operated portable radios, a few camp residents described having mobile phones with FM radio capability. Camp residents who did not listen to radio reported either that they could not afford to buy a radio or that they were not particularly interested in listening. In a small number of cases, camp residents said they did not understand or were not familiar with the concept of radio.

Television

Only a few residents reported having a television at home. Owing at least in part to the extra costs associated with accessing television channels, camp residents who did have a television at home usually said they only watched DVDs. The camp teashops have televisions for communal viewing, but most camp residents reported that they did not go there because they do not have the money to buy something to eat or drink.

Newspapers

Camp residents had no regular access to newspapers or magazines. Copies of mainstream newspapers are intermittently available if someone—usually a camp resident who visits Mae Sot—brings one back to the camp.

Internet

While most camps on the Thai-Burma border do not have internet access, privately-operated internet services are available in Mae La, Umpiem and Nu Po. Internet shops operate in the camps but only a small portion of camp residents reported using them because of cost, illiteracy and a lack of technical skills.

Mobile phones

While mobile phone coverage is not available in most camps, Mae La and Umpiem do have access to privately-run mobile phone services.

Reporting: 'There's no media for refugees'

A lack of reporting designed to meet the distinct needs of camp residents limits the relevance and accessibility of news media. There is limited access to community media in the camps, so Burmese language media—when it is available—is designed for a general Burmese-speaking audience and infrequently reports about events or issues that are directly relevant to the camp populations. A handful of exiled media groups—such as *Mizzima, The Irrawaddy* and *Democratic Voice of Burma*—produce print, online and broadcast news targeted broadly at displaced populations from Burma, including internally displaced people inside Burma and migrants living outside the camps in rural and urban parts of Thailand. The fact that the vast majority of available content is printed or broadcast in Burmese and English means that it is incomprehensible to many camp residents who speak only Sgaw or Pwo Karen.

Preparations for repatriation and the outbreak of deadly fires have been among the camp events to garner attention from exiled media groups and mainstream news outlets in recent times. However, these reports were invariably framed and constructed for consumption by external audiences, not for those inside the camps. For example, news stories about the fire at Ban Mae Surin camp, which killed 37 refugees and left 200 families homeless, focused on relaying basic details of the tragedy and did not provide advice to camp residents concerning how to access

available assistance. Correspondingly, comments from camp residents suggest that the usefulness and relevance of access to news media is compromised by the lack of information that is specifically relevant to their lives and can inform decision-making. For instance, Mr TR (Burmese, 35-44) commented:

> There's no media only for refugees. Sometimes some media announce refugee issues, but [only] little bit.

Voice: 'No one comes to speak with us'

There are limited and sporadic opportunities for camp residents to express their concerns and perspectives to the humanitarian organisations that administer the camps.

> No one comes down to speak with us, to give us a chance or to give us a human right to speak what we need.

Some camp residents expressed a belief that journalists could bear witness, help give voice to camp residents and perhaps hold the humanitarian organisations and Thai government to account. Mr VR (Muslim, 55-64), a section leader, told me:

> We want to tell other people what is really happening in the camp. We are not afraid of the camp authorities.

A number of camp residents described efforts to speak with journalists about issues within the camps but said the camp authorities obstructed their efforts. The topics these camp residents wished to speak about included unsolved murders of camp residents, and allegations against the camp authorities concerning corruption and collusion with human traffickers. Several murders of camp residents are known to have occurred outside the camp boundaries and the perpetrators were never apprehended (Human Rights Watch, 2012; Poe Kwa Lay, 2012; McConnachie, 2014;). Human Rights Watch has reported that the camp authorities physically abuse camp residents who are apprehended outside the camp, and do so 'with utter impunity' (2012, p. 43). Several journalists and camp residents said they believe the camp commanders are involved in a range of illegal businesses, which is one reason why they seek to limit the flow of information into and out of the camps.

Scarce resources for camp-based media

The only community news service wholly dedicated to providing content that focuses specifically on the needs and concerns of camp residents is the Karen Student Network Group (KSNG). The programmes vary from camp-to-camp, but generally consist of a range of news items, as well as music, stories and poems. The teams that produce the programming in each camp are comprised

mostly of fluctuant groups of part-time volunteers who are usually students and have little training or experience in journalism. At the time of my fieldwork, technical difficulties meant that the transmitters were not working in two of the seven camps in which KSNG has a presence. While the transmitters in Mae La, Umpiem, Tham Hin, Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Moe were functional, Nu Po and Ban Don Yang were plagued by equipment failure. The transmitters used by KSNG were acquired second-hand some years ago and were designed to broadcast to a one-kilometre radius, which only covers a small portion of each camp. The age of the transmitters, and the harsh weather they are exposed to, means that they are often in need of repairs that are difficult to facilitate in the camps. Compounding these problems is the fact that the transmitters have to be kept hidden from the Thai authorities because KSNG does not have the necessary permission to broadcast, as required by the Thai government. For that reason, the transmitters are located in places that reduce the possibility of detection—often high in the mountains surrounding the camps. Combined, these factors mean that KSNG broadcasts are only available to some of the camp populations some of the time. Only a few camp residents reported listening to or even having heard of KSNG's broadcasts. Among them, some said that they are not interested to listen, in part because the programming is produced by students and perceived to be amateur or irrelevant. Others said they tried to listen but could not hear the broadcast clearly or were not able to tune in at all.

A handful of other community media organisations—such as *Karen News* and *Kwe Ka Lu*—give voice to Karen refugees and produce content designed for displaced communities on both sides of the border. Free copies of their publications are distributed in the camps. However, their lack of resources means they produce infrequent editions and can only print a few thousand copies per edition, which are then split up and distributed among the nine camps but also migrant and internally displaced communities elsewhere in Thailand and in Burma. Mr AJ said the ethnic media groups—as distinct from other exiled media groups—are 'the ones that are concerned about the camps'. However, their capacity to provide coverage that is directly relevant to camp residents is restricted by a lack of funding, which means 'they don't report very much'. Other journalists also highlighted the absence of a viable business model for ethnic media groups because camp residents are not a lucrative target market for advertisers.

Regulation and restrictions: 'They're not supposed to have press'

Tacit restrictions by the Thai government are instrumental in limiting the potential for relevant reporting and the accessibility of news media to camp residents. Humanitarian practitioners explained that camp residents are not explicitly prohibited from accessing news media, but it is understood that the Thai government is sensitive about these matters.

> This is a closed camp. They're not supposed to have media broadcast; they're not supposed to have press in there. It's a closed refugee camp. We're on Thai soil; it's their sovereignty.

Journalists are also concerned about censorship and what they perceive to be attempts by humanitarian organisations to limit their independence. Handling these situations can be difficult for Karen journalists considering the language barrier between them and senior humanitarian staff or Thai officials who do not speak Karen or Burmese. A few journalists said that humanitarian organisations are active in providing information if it relates to a matter for which they seek publicity, but they are often evasive when the line of questioning is critical. For instance, Mr BJ said that some humanitarian organisations tended to be close-mouthed and circumspect when dealing with media requests because they were concerned about news coverage upsetting the Thai government.

> Even if we try to get information that does not affect anything for them […] they don't want to provide anything. So last time when I worked with, like, Handicap International, in the refugee camp, so they say that 'oh no, don't take the picture of the poster, no logo, no nothing' —something like that. […] And then when I put it in the news, [they said] 'no, no, because we don't want to make big news to the Thai government'.

Likewise, the tendency of humanitarian organisations to 'impose organisationally partisan agendas upon media outlets; as opposed to respecting the overriding independence of the media' has been noted in 'many other contexts' (Abud et al., 2011, p. 52). Host governments and humanitarian organisations typically employ defensive tactics—such as restricting media access or filming in camps—owing to a 'fear of bad publicity' (Harrell-Bond & Voutira, 2007, p. 284). Moreover, the fact that many humanitarian organisations have no media officers dedicated to the task of liaising with news media is also 'a constraint that a lot of media groups come up against and get frustrated by' (Mr AH). This is indicative of a broader problem concerning 'the continual lack of communication between aid organisations and local media in developing countries' (Sommerfeldt, 2015, p. 17).

Discussion

The collected accounts point to the need for a media service that can provide useful information and act as a watchdog over the institutions that control the lives of camp residents. These calls resonate with political communication scholarship, which sees the role of the media as essential to democracy. According to Dahlgren:

> The media are a prerequisite—though by no means a guarantee—for shaping the democratic character of a society; they are the bearers of democracy's political communication beyond face-to-face settings. During the modern era, their role in making politics visible, in providing information, analysis, forums for debate and a shared democratic culture, is beyond dispute. (2009, p. 2)

While media can play an important role in any society, the predicament of encampment—which, as already established, is a predicament of political, economic and geographic exclusion (Parekh, 2014)—creates an environment in which the watchdog role of the media becomes even more necessary. Correspondingly, Harrell-Bond suggests that a lack of media presence in a camp environment enables the abuse of human rights to go unnoticed by the outside world. In an oft-cited paper—'Can Humanitarian Work with Refugees be Humane?'—Harrell-Bond describes several instances of refugees being beaten or threatened with violence, and notes that 'such acts of violence chiefly occur in refugee camps out of eyesight of the media or independent observers' (2002, p. 64).

Although there is a lack of scholarly research concerning the role of news media in refugee camp settings, Internews—a global leader in humanitarian communications—attests to the importance of community media produced by and for refugees. Internews stresses that the humanitarian sector should support local media, where possible, to play a vital role in ensuring people affected by crises have access to accurate and timely information that can save lives and reduce suffering. In 2014, Internews released a report documenting the launch of a Humanitarian Information Service audio programme at Tong Ping Protection of Civilians site in Juba, South Sudan, where about 14,000 people were living after being internally displaced by recent fighting. Internews surveyed the community in order to identify information needs and access issues, and this information was used to inform decisions about what content to provide and how it was to be provided. The result was Boda Boda Talk Talk (BBTT), a twice-weekly programme of 'news-you-can-use' that was broadcast at several static listening stops and from speakers attached to a quad bike that rotates to dedicated 'listening stops' around the site (Internews, 2014, p.1). The programme delivered vital information concerning topics such as access to aid, legal rights and educational opportunities, and provided a platform for people to share their views and experiences about all aspects of life at the site. An evaluation of the programme based on survey data collected from the community concludes that the programme addressed information needs and barriers to access in 'measurable and significant ways' (p. 26). Also pertinent in the context of preparations for voluntary repatriation of refugees in Thailand is Internews' vision of link-up programming, which could enable communication between camp communities and people in Burma. To develop link-up programming, a signal must be available both in the camps and the country of origin.

> [Link-up programming] would be crucial in removing refugees from their enforced isolation (e.g. call-ins or pre-recorded programmes), so refugees from a particular location can potentially locate missing family members, talk to people back in their home location, pass family greetings and messages, share stories, and tell each other what life is like in their areas. (Abud et al., 2011, p. 52)

While this proposition was made for the refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya, it has obvious relevance for the refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border. Increased communication between camp residents and people in their communities of origin could empower refugees to seek information and make informed decisions about whether, when and where they feel safe to return. As preparations for repatriation continue, camp residents need to know about relocation areas, livelihood opportunities, safeguards for human rights, clearance of landmines and other remnants, location of troops, and recognition of education and training received in camp. Communication about these and other matters is necessary if camp residents are to make informed decisions about 'voluntary' repatriation.

Also relevant are studies in the field of media development that explore the importance of community media for marginalised people in developing countries. Tacchi (2012) highlights several examples from an applied research project that brought information and communication technologies to communities in various parts of Asia. In Sri Lanka, participatory content strategies were used to give voice to Tamil youth—who experienced social exclusion due to ethnic and linguistic factors—and provide a forum for debate about important local issues. Another example Tacchi cites is that of a radio programme run by women farmers in rural India. The programme enabled the women to share information to promote food sovereignty, such as how to grow drought-resistant crops. The benefit of such initiatives 'relates to proliferating information sources, and the ability of those traditionally positioned as receivers of development messages, to engage, ask questions, and create messages themselves' (Tacchi, 2012, p. 654). Likewise, Mhagama (2015) found that in rural parts of Malawi, where mobile phones are increasingly popular, talkback radio is providing a medium for marginalised citizens to have a public voice. Phone-in programmes to radio stations are empowering listeners 'to have a say, which has for a long time been denied to them' (p. 278). Likewise, in a study exploring citizen engagement through broadcast media in developing world contexts, Srinivasan and Lopes (2016) found that media organisations have come to be seen as participatory organisations that elevate audience opinions to citizens, governments and international actors. By providing 'opportunities for voice, debate and claim-making in the mediated public realm' (p. 156), participatory media can enable audiences to 'influence decisions that affect their lives' (Srinivasan & Lopes, 2016, p. 157).

A participatory media project could provide a much-needed space for public discussion at a time when refugees in Thailand are facing the prospect of 'voluntary' repatriation and service reductions resulting from the redirection of donor funds to projects inside Burma. An initiative of this kind would require humanitarian funding for staff training and material support (Abud et al., 2011; Quintanilla et al., 2014). As described earlier, the local media initiatives staffed by refugees on the Thai-Burma border were limited in their impact due to factors including a lack of professional equipment, technical support and guidance on reporting about complex humanitarian issues. Humanitarian organisations could also play a part by helping to negotiate permission from the Thai government for local media to operate freely and openly in the camps. Despite the potential benefits of local media initiatives, it is perhaps unlikely that such projects will attract significant humanitarian funding, given that communication programmes are typically among the least-funded areas of humanitarian aid (Mandel & Sommerfeldt, 2012). Although the humanitarian sector has at the highest levels recognised the need to increase the voice of affected persons and improve accountability, 'this transformation has not taken place, or not sufficiently' (United Nations, 2015, p. 12)

Conclusion

This article has argued that relevant and trusted sources of news media can play a part in ensuring that camps are a secure and protected space. Accounts collected in camps on the Thai-Burma border support the assertion that local media initiatives can—if supported by the humanitarian sector—play an important role in addressing information needs in a camp environment (Abud et al., 2011; Quintanilla et al., 2014). Moreover, camp residents expressed a desire for journalists to act as independent observers of the institutions that control the camps, which are zones of exclusion from common public space. There remains a lack of research into models of community media that might effectively be deployed in a camp environment in order to resolve the unmet need for information, as identified in this article. However, Internews' suggestion of supporting community media initiatives to realise' link-up' programming could be a modest and important step towards creating communicative spaces that camp residents might both use and trust. Of course, communication is not a panacea for the fears that camp residents experience in response to the prospect of repatriation—but it is clear that information is a necessity if repatriation is to be truly 'voluntary'. A range of financial, regulatory and technical challenges must be overcome if the potential benefits of news media are to be realised.

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New Zealand media camouflage political lobbying

Abstract: Political lobbyists are a part of government decision-making processes, and many countries have stringent regulations to ensure their activities are somewhat transparent, especially as some use ethically questionable tactics. In New Zealand, however, there are no similar legislative regulations, and lobbyists can stay undetected while trying to influence policymaking. More concerning, however, is that the results of this study indicates that lobbyists are also able to skirt around scrutiny in New Zealand media because of current journalism practices. This research's content analysis indicates the media neglects to identify lobby organisations, thereby allowing them to operate without detection of their agenda, leaving the public unaware of who is influencing decision makers.

Keywords: advocacy, agenda setting, astroturfing, content analysis, framing, lobbying, New Zealand, political journalism, public opinion, transparency

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Introduction

IN DEMOCRATIC countries there is growing concern of lobbyists who try to work below the radar and ensure the public is unaware of who and what are influencing legislative decisions. As outlined in the literature review below, a growing concern is 'astroturfing' whereby the lobby group creates benign-looking spokespeople or groups to put forward their case, and the real clients are able to stay concealed in the background (Hager, 2014; Fitzpatrick & Palenchar, 2006; Stauber & Rampton, 2004). It is challenging for media to investigate the foundation of such groups to expose them as faux. It would seem easy, however, to identify lobby groups as such when they are the ones speaking out in the media, but this study found this was not so. This research initially questioned if journalists identified political pressure groups accurately as 'lobbyists' or used a more palatable label such as 'advocacy', 'government relations', or 'single interest' group. The results were surprising in that the media camouflaged the lobby groups by not identifying them at all, using no labels to identify them.

A lack of academic research into lobbying in New Zealand meant that much background information for this study is from previous news stories and a handful of textbooks. Many of the news stories focused on one-off examples like Members of Parliament accepting perks from lobbyists, such as tickets to Rugby World Cup games, or lobbyists being issued coveted Parliamentary access swipe cards. In 2014, however, investigative journalist Nicky Hager published the book *Dirty Politics* based on a series of leaked emails, which described a covert and manipulative relationship between lobbyists, the government and prominent right-wing bloggers. The information in Hager's book sparked our study on the visibility of lobbyist's activities. This article explores how the New Zealand media identify lobbying groups, which would ensure news audiences are aware of the agenda behind a group's media stance or statement.

Literature review

New Zealand's Parliament does not have an official definition for lobbying, however the two-decade old Kent handbook on lobbying in New Zealand (1998) describes lobbying as: 'the modern communication art of ensuring your opinions are heard by decision makers' (p. 6); and the UK Public Affairs council expands the definition to explain that it is attempting to influence 'government, parliament, the devolved legislatures or administrations, regional or local government or other public bodies in any matter within their competence' (UKPAC, 2014). Simply put, the objective of lobbying is mobilising public opinion to create pressure on decision makers for competitive advantage or commercial gain (Harris, 2002).

While lobbyists sometimes play an important role in the decision-making process by alerting politicians to the viewpoint of some stakeholders, they 'carry a negative connotation in the public' (Greisser, 2013, p. 36), and the tactics used by some practitioners has brought them into disrepute publically (Berg, 2012; Thomson & John, 2007; Zetter, 2008). Lobbyists are generally mistrusted by the public and that there is a view that they 'in some way distort the political process', a reputation blemished when it appears that well-funded groups can hire lobbyists to pressure policymakers to consider their viewpoint more than those with less of a voice (Thomson & John, 2007, p. 4). As a result, many political actors and public servants are reluctant to admit that they have contact with lobbyists, or that they receive valuable and useful advice and briefings from them (ibid). This poor reputation led to the American association for lobbyists to change its name in 2014 to 'The Association of Government Relations Professionals' (Yaeger, 2013).

Transparency in New Zealand

New Zealand has no formal register of lobbyists, unlike a number of other

Western democracies such as Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland and the United States, which have legislation that control lobbying activity among public officials and ensure it is visible (Krsmanovic, D. 2014; Malone, 2004). In 2012, a Green Party's attempt to develop a register and improve transparency was thwarted when Parliament voted down the *Lobbying Disclosure Bill*, which outlined:

> There is no public scrutiny of the activities of people who are paid to lobby parliamentarians, their staff, or public servants. Nor is there any code of ethics. This means there is no way of knowing who is engaged in the lobbying process, who is lobbying whom, and for what purpose (p. 1).

The bill would have established a register of lobbyists and required them to comply with a code of conduct. It also would have required them to file annual returns with the Auditor-General. The main reason for the bill's failure was the difficulty in defining what a lobbyist was, as well as the proposed law would have captured not just professional lobbyists, but anyone wanting to contact their MP about any issue (Crang, 2013).

Without mandatory registration it is difficult to easily identify who is actively involved in lobbying MPs. Some idea can be gleaned from the 105 submissions to the *Lobbying Disclosure Bill* (Parliament, 2013). Among the industries opposing legislation to register lobbyists were: advertising, brewing, energy, farming, financial services, banking, horticulture, hospitality, tertiary education, fast food, meat, forestry, accounting, law, pork, retailers, winegrowers, newspaper publishing, fishing, retirement villages, unions and, not surprisingly, public relations.

Besides the difficulty in identifying who is lobbying MPs, it is also difficult to assess how many there are. A 2004 report on lobbying by the National University of Ireland's Institute of Public Administration found there was 'very little literature on this subject in New Zealand at the moment' (Malone, 2004, p. 17). The only hint is based on anecdotal evidence, such as from former Cabinet Minister Trevor Mallard who stated that there was an increasing trend in organisations using lobbyists, and he predicted it would grow moreso. 'Lobbying as a practice and a discipline is going to get more sophisticated and more common' (Mallard, 2003, §63). Ten years after Mallard's prediction, this growth was evident when the number of lobbyists granted access cards to enter Parliament buildings doubled, to 25 (Young, 2013). Another indication of the growth may be seen in the expansion of the closely-related public relations industry. Since the 1940s, the number of public relations practitioners has increased markedly (Hager, 2012). There are now more than 1350 members of New Zealand's Public Relations Institute, however there are many more who are not members (PRINZ, 2017).

Another indication of the number of lobbyists is to look to other Western

democracies. In Australia, there were 597 registered lobbyists representing 1735 clients in 2016 (Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2017). This register excludes lobbyists working for charities, religious groups and NGOs, so the total figure is estimated to be more than 1000 active lobbyists working in Canberra (Hogan et al., 2011). In the USA there were 11,166 registered lobbyists in 2016, with businesses spending more than US$3 billion each year on the activity (Center for Responsive Politics, 2017). The real number, however, is estimated to be 100,000 lobbyists and $9 billion annual spending, as the industry is finding new ways to keep its activities private (Fang, 2014). According to an investigation by *The Nation* news magazine (ibid), lobbyists have found legislative loopholes to let them escape the registration list, and lobbying in America is going 'underground' so as to be invisible (§8). Furthermore, lobbyists are employing secret tactics, such as 'the development of increasingly sophisticated strategies that enlist third-party validators and create faux-grassroots campaigns', which hide their real identity and motives (§9).

New Zealand lobbying tactics

The scene is similar in New Zealand, where success in public relations and lobbying occurs when the public is not aware of it happening or who is responsible for it, according to independent investigative journalist and author Nicky Hager who has written a number of books about New Zealand politics where lobbyists played a part (Hager, 2014). The common practice of using third-person groups to influence lawmakers is also verified by New Zealand *Public Relations And Communications Management* textbook, which outlines the tactics used by lobbyists as 'direct' when meeting with officials and making public submissions to government, and 'indirect', when influencing public opinions by email writing campaigns, publicity stunts, and encouraging friendly MPs to ask questions in the House (Mersham, Theunissen, & Peart, 2009). An increasingly-used indirect lobbying tactic is to stay in the background and support experts and proponents to speak up in the media (ibid.).

Another, more secretive, tactic is astroturfing, which Hager (2012) described as a 'manipulative public relations' practice (p. 212). Astroturfing involves manufacturing supporters, such as creating false community support groups, secret employment of seemingly independent scientists, spying on opponents and attacking opposing experts (ibid). Astroturfing is a controversial tactic often used in the USA, which aims to influence decision makers by making them believe there is overwhelming public support for a particular position, when in reality it is fabricated by the lobbying business (Fitzpatrick & Palenchar, 2006). According to Mersham, Theunissen and Peart (2009) astroturfing should be avoided. 'It is deemed as highly unethical because it is misleading and thus little more than propaganda' (p. 184). In an investigation into public relations

in the USA, Stauber and Rampton (2004) stated 'even PR practitioners use the term (astroturfing) to deride their competitors' work' (p.79).

Despite the unethical nature of astroturfing, at least two such campaigns have received publicity in New Zealand. One was a political and media campaign aimed at promoting logging of native forests, and involved the fabrication of a pro-logging campaign by creating a fake pro-logging community group, secretly paying so-called independent scientists employed to support logging, employing spies to report on activities by counter groups, and attacking funding sources of scientists on the other side opposed to logging (Hager 2012). All of this was aimed at gaining favourable media coverage for logging and influencing public opinion. Another example was the benign-sounding Association of Community Retailers, which was in fact set up and funded by Imperial Tobacco, to protest tobacco-related legislation (Ng, 2010).

Lobbying and the media

A convenient vehicle for lobbyists to disseminate their political messages is the general media, which is the primary channel for receiving information about decisions and decision makers for most citizens (Stromback, 2008), but as Callaghan and Schnell (2001) state, the public is often 'at the mercy of the media and other key political agents who meet as combatants in the policy arena and determine how issue debates and policy alternatives will be structured and defined' (p. 183). In determining what is newsworthy, journalists sort through a large amount of information to determine what is likely to be considered most relevant by citizens (Louw, 2010). It is in the interest of lobbyists to attempt to influence what is being reported and how it is framed (Hager, 2012). Many public relations practitioners are skilled in media and understand how to frame issues to meet news values, (Comrie, 2002). Lobbyists may influence politicians by getting the media to report their issue in a way advantageous to their cause (Thompson & John, 2007).

A recent trend helping lobbyists push their messages is the commercialisation or private control of the news media where revenue is largely reliant on advertising, described as 'the great crisis in journalism today' (McChesney, 2012, p. 683). The need for news organisations to make ever-increasing profits to satisfy shareholders, combined with ownership of media organisations shifting from a multitude of different companies to a handful of media corporations, has seen a decline in both the quantity and quality of journalism (McChesney, 2012). In the period between 2000 and 2012, McChesney (2012) estimates the amount of both labour and resources going into producing new stories in the USA had dropped by 30 percent, blaming commercialisation for the number of publications decreasing, as are the number of reporters (ibid.). The watchdog role of media is weakened and the decline in newsroom staff negatively impacts on the

investigation and generation of original news stories, resulting in an increase in 'unfiltered public relations' being reported as news (p. 686). McChesney contends that 'slashing' journalism staff allows illegal activities of lobbyists to go undetected, and culprits, such as lobbyists Jack Abramoff, who was sentenced to six years in prison for conspiracy to bribe public officials, mail fraud and tax evasion, would go undetected and unreported in future (p. 685).

In New Zealand, public relations practitioners 'far outnumber the news organisations and their shrinking staffs' (Hager, 2012, p. 212). In addition, public relations practitioners are generally more experienced than their reporting counterparts (Comrie, 2002). As an example of the success of public relations practitioners to get their messages picked up by the media, research by Comrie in 1997 showed that of 66 press releases issued by two New Zealand Crown Health Enterprises, 54 were published by media with 97 stories resulting (Comrie, 1997). Another study of 674 newspaper articles published during the controversial debate over allowing generic engineering found two-thirds omitted contextual information on how the journalist received the quotes or information, such as a media release, news conference, interview (Rupar, 2006). The study also found that business sources were more likely to have no contextual information 'had less-questioned access to the news' than other sources (p. 137). Rupar called for more precision in journalism (a term credited to Myer, 1991) by including in news stories the motive and method of the sources. Her study indicated the reason for giving business groups an unfettered entry into a news story could be the result of business groups' army of public relations staff who produce well-written media releases ready for newspapers to publish without extra effort. If readers are informed that the information came from a media release, they know there are commercial interests at stake and therefore 'factual certainty produces transparency and clarity of news and is relevant for public rebates on important issues in society' (p. 134).

Theoretical foundation: Media framing

It is understandable that the media keep news items concise by taking shortcuts in the words used to describe events or sources, and these selected words can help frame understanding of the context of the news articles (Haskell, 2011). The media framing theory posits that news articles give contextual clues to help the public evaluate the subjects of the articles, but these contextual cues can promote interpretations for the issues and events being covered and, thereby, influence public opinion (Haskell, 2011). How the media frames a news story can have a negative effect by eliminating voices and weakening arguments and this allows the media to 'frame issues in ways that favour a particular side without showing explicit bias', (Tankard, 2001, p. 95). The power of framing stems from media defining a debate without the public realising they are being

influenced, and an example given by Tankard was the reporting of the Watergate case, when public opinion shifted against US President Nixon after the media moved from describing it as the 'Watergate caper' to a "national political scandal at the highest level"' (p. 97). While framing is necessary in reporting, Haskell (2011) states these should be neutral, which includes how sources in the story are described.

This research project looked at how the New Zealand media describe the sources of information, when the source is in reality a lobby group. This goes to the foundation writing rules for journalists, who are taught to adequately identify sources and their credentials or agendas for being included in the story (Hannis, 2014; Reuters, 2015). It is also enshrined in most media codes of ethics (such as EPMU, 2011; International Federation of Journalists, 1986; Society of Professional Journalists, 2014) that instil on professional journalists to strive to find the truth, and not hide relevant information from their audiences.

As discussed in the literature review above, lobbying is a common practice in democracies that foster differing viewpoints, but it becomes suspect when it employs tactics that keep them out of the public view and the policymakers are led to think the general public, not personal-interest groups, hold these viewpoints. This is where the media framing and transparency is involved—in putting the spotlight on the lobby activities so the public knows who is behind each viewpoint, and their respective political or commercial agendas. It is only with this full knowledge that news audiences can adequately weigh up differing opinions and decide which to support, and that policymakers can assess how much public support, rather that partisan support, is displayed. When two opposing sides try to reframe their argument with positive verbiage, citizens should be able to rely on the news media to put each side in context. Journalists and the news media are the ones who accurately describe a group, rather than clouding it with euphemisms or leaving them invisible. This research inspected how the media frames lobbyists in news stories and whether or not they accurately describing lobbyists, or allowed them to remain camouflaged in the background. The research used content analysis to analyse stories produced by the two major newspaper/online news services and used interviews to gain viewpoints from two independent observers of New Zealand Parliament.

Research method

This research used traditional content analysis of news articles published over a three-month period between January 1 and March 31, 2015, on the websites of the two largest newspaper organisations in New Zealand, which published 21 (80 percent) of the country's daily newspapers at the time of the sampling. The full text of the articles to be analysed were sourced from Fairfax New Zealand's *Stuff* website (stuff.co.nz), which draws news from its ten daily newspapers,

two weekend papers, and 65 regional and specialist newspapers; and New Zealand Media and Entertainment's (NZME) *The New Zealand Herald's* website (herald.co.nz), which draws from its two weekend newspapers, six daily newspapers, and 20 regional newspapers. Both websites were searched using the advanced Google search option, which allows for date parameters to be set. In order to ensure the research captured only the work of reporters in New Zealand, the sample excluded letters to the editor, articles written by overseas journalists and republished in New Zealand and opinion pieces written by non-journalists.

The sample was 817 news articles that mentioned any of the 20 prominent New Zealand lobby groups, which representing a mixture of business and public interest causes. The analysis determined how frequently these groups were cited, and what descriptors, if any, were applied to them in the news stories.

The second stage was interviews with two people from differing industries who have observed New Zealand parliament and lobbying over several decades. The first was an academic scholar who has observed Parliament leadership since the 1960s, Dr Margaret Hayward. She had worked within Parliament for many years, before turning to researching it. The second interview was with former senior journalist and director since 1984 of an influential Wellington-based media management public relations company, Karen Barnsley. The interview participants were given the results of the content analysis and asked their viewpoint.

Results

Content analysis results

A total of 817 news stories mentioning one of the 20 selected lobby groups were published on the websites (Table 1). Of those, 458 were published on *Stuff* and 359 on *The New Zealand Herald* website. Of the 817 articles, 90 percent (N=739) did not contain any descriptors to describe or label the lobby group, and used only the group's name. In only 10 percent (N=78) was any kind of label used to describe the group at all. In only 3 percent (N=21) was the label *lobby* applied to identify the group as a lobby group.

A third of the news articles (N=252) reported the groups' political message, an indirect method of getting their side of an issue to politician and policy makers. Only 8 percent (N=21) of these articles used the word 'lobby' and only 18 percent (N=46) used any descriptor at all. Looking at it the other way, the results showed 82 percent of articles expounding the lobbyist message did not declare their interest or agenda.

Looking at the 78 articles in which any descriptor labels were used, *lobby* was the most often used label at 27 percent (N=21), and the group that most often was given the descriptor *lobby* by the media was climate change group Generation Zero, with half of the 16 articles written about them using the term. Other terms

Table 1: Descriptors applied to 20 selected lobby groups, 2016

Lobby group	Total stories	Total descriptors	Percent of total	Stories relating to lobbying activity	Descriptors in stories relating to lobbying activity	Lobby	Advocacy	Charity	Welfare	Business/Industry	Interest	Think tank	Others (specify)
Federated Farmers	273	3	1.1	58	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Influential organisation, farmer body
Business New Zealand	4	0	0	4	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Chamber of Commerce	151	4	2.7	42	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	Voice of business, business leaders, stakeholder
EMA	15	3	20	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Food and Grocery Council	9	2	33.3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	Industry chiefs
Straterra	1	1	100	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	
The New Zealand Initiative	10	9	90	7	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	8	
NZ Retailers Association	5	1	20	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Retailers
Hospitality New Zealand	18	2	11.1	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hospitality leaders, part of alcohol industry
Taxpayers Union	26	4	15.4	25	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	Watchdog group
Greenpeace	22	2	9	11	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Not eco terrorists, environmental group
Grey Power	40	1	2.5	21	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Forest and Bird	11	2	18	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Conservationists, environmental group
SPCA	130	6	4.6	6	1	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	Animal activists
Environmental Defence	11	5	45.5	10	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Environmental group (4), environmental community
Sensible Sentencing Trust	42	5	11.9	24	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	A group wanting tougher penaltiesfor crime, child exploitation and sexual abuse advocates
Family First NZ	16	3	18.8	3	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kill joys
Paw Justice	8	8	100	1	1	-	3	1	4	-	-	-	
Generation Zero	16	11	75.0	13	9	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	Climate change group, environmental groups, cycleways supporter
ASH	9	6	66.7	6	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	Anti-smoking group, anti-smoking purists
Total	817	78	9.6%	252	46	21	5	3	7	2	3	8	31

used for this group were *climate change group*, *environmental group* and *cycleway supporters*. Other groups to receive the *lobby* group label were: the Taxpayers Union (N=3), Action on Smoking and Health (N=3), Sensible Sentencing Trust (N=2), Family First New Zealand (N=2), Grey Power (N=1), The New Zealand Initiative (N=1) and Federated Farmers (N=1). The next most frequently used label was *think tank*, which was used exclusively in the eight articles about New Zealand Initiative. Interestingly, this is the term the group called itself in its media releases. The description *welfare group* and *charity group* was used 14 percent (N=11) for Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and 5 percent (N=4) for Paw Justice. Again, these are terms the animal protection groups use themselves in their media statements.

The three powerful lobby groups that generated large amounts of media stories during this sample period received few or no descriptors at all. Of the 273 stories that included a mention of farming lobby group Federated Farmers only 1 percent (N=3) included a descriptor: *lobby*, *influential organisation* and *farmer body*. Of the 151 stories on the Chamber of Commerce only 3 percent (N=4) used a label: *voice of business*, *business leaders*, *stakeholder* and *business group*. Of the 130 stories on the SPCA, only 5 percent (N=6) included a descriptor: *charity, welfare,* and *animal activist*.

Interview results

Dr Margaret Hayward first observed New Zealand lobbying in 1967 when it was 'normally a whisky under the arm' and nice 'pally talk' to the party leaders or involved minister, but she recognised that it has become more sophisticated and more centred on the media. Based on her observations, she was not surprised by the results of the content analysis, but was alarmed at the media practice. She said from a public accountability viewpoint it was dangerous for the media to skip over the step of properly identifying a key player in a news story. She estimated most online news consumers would be unaware that these groups were pressure groups, and most citizens were not aware of lobbying occurring in New Zealand:

> The situation is deceitful. I don't think the journalists are deliberately being deceitful, although I have suspicious about the lobbyists, but overall the picture is that people are deceived…. I'm not happy about anonymity. They hide behind the fact most people think these groups are speaking out of goodwill, and not because they want a privileged position or want legislation that will give them a competitive advantage.

Karen Barnsley, director of a public relations company specialising in media management, acknowledged that some organisations might prefer to be able to give media statements without being identified as having a vested interest in an

issue, but she pointed out that this was unfair to organisations on the other side of the controversy or issue. She said if a news article gave conflicting opinions where one side was identified as a lobby group and the other side was not identified as such, it benefitted one side and not the other.

Discussion

This study showed most (90 percent) news articles did not describe lobby groups' agenda in any way, simply using the groups' formal name. Only one-tenth of the 817 news stories used any kind of label to describe the groups' relationship to lobbying. In several cases the labels used by the journalists were simply those provided by the lobby group itself. It is accepted practice for reporters to provide a designation or descriptor for the individuals or organisations they cite in news stories (Hannis, 2014, p. 207), but this sample indicated they are not doing so. It is apparent from the results of the content analysis that lobby groups are able to disseminate their messages without the public aware of their agendas. Without this clear description in news stories, the public are being left in the dark and not being given the information with which to make well-informed decisions. This has an important implication for democracy, as without the full information, the public may not be aware of the motives behind some political decisions.

As example, it appears from the research that an organisation such as the powerful Federated Farmers, which was given a label in only 1 percent of the 273 stories that included a mention of them, can act without the public being aware or reminded of their motivations for commenting on and trying to influence government policy for the commercial benefit of their members. Without this understanding of Federated Farmers' role, the public could easily think they are simply an agriculture-related company. To report only the name of an organisation and no further descriptors means that audiences are left to draw their own conclusions about what the group is about and what its motivations are from the content of the story, or sometimes even from just the organisation's name. As an example, the Taxpayer's Union, which was labelled as a *lobby* group in only three of the 26 stories, has a name that indicates to the public that it represents taxpayers. While this may be the group's intention, without further investigation, or information from the media, the public will be unaware that it is a lobby group for a right wing political movement. One news story descriptor supported this misunderstanding by labelling them a *watchdog* group. Similarly, the Christian moral organisation Family First New Zealand received only three descriptors in the 16 stories written about them. While two of these were *lobby* group, the third descriptor, *kill joys*, was perhaps more in keeping with some people's views of its activities.

It is significant that almost one-third of the articles mentioning the lobby

groups was specifically on the message they wanted to get across to the policy makers. This is using the media as a vehicle to possibly sway decision-making. The concern is that a vast majority of these (82 percent) on-message news articles omitted describing the lobby group as such, thereby possibly camouflaging the commercial interest of the viewpoint.

It is beyond the scope of this study to determine why reporters are failing to provide such basic information in their news reporting. It is possible that some become so familiar with the groups they deal with that they assume the public also knows this. It is also possible that with the commercial pressures and downsizing of newsrooms, as outlined by McChesney (2012), reporters simply do not have the time or the resources to properly investigate the groups they are dealing with, especially if the information is mainly from a media release from the group (Comrie, 1997). It is also concerning to see an almost complete absence of the lobby group label being applied to the influential, big business lobby groups such as Federated Farmers, Business New Zealand and the Chamber of Commerce.

These results mirror the lack of journalism precision and transparency shown in Rupar's 2006 analysis of GE-debate news articles whereby most articles omitted information on the journalists' method of newsgathering (such as the information was sourced from media releases, websites, interviews, or media conferences). Similar to our study, Rupar also found that newsmakers representing big business interests were given less transparent context in the story compared to other groups.

The seasoned Parliamentary observer Dr Margaret Hayward describes the media practice of not identifying lobby groups when giving them publicity as alarming and dangerous from the point of view of an informed public. She likened it to journalists giving lobby groups anonymity. This lack of transparency also affects other groups who are trying to make their viewpoint heard. As pointed out by public relations director Karen Barnsley, it could be unfair when a news story reports conflicting opinions by pressure groups, but only one is identified as a lobbyist and the other group is not.

Conclusion

This study originally set out to explore if the media used *lobbyist* rather than other euphemisms to describe political pressure groups. It was a surprising result to find the media was not using any term to describe them, leaving it up to the readers to make assumptions as to the motives and agenda of those quoted in a news article. The nature of lobbying is such that it is advantageous for them to be able to covertly persuade policy makers—away from the public view and public scrutiny. Tactics such as astroturfing are considered unethical and are specifically to hide the fact that it is lobbyists who are putting pressure on policy makers. By not fully identifying lobby groups', journalists are helping

downplay their agendas, instead of showing their true aim of trying to pressure government for the benefit of specific businesses or industries.

The media often is accused of framing a news story in a certain way by the words and descriptors they use, but in this instance the media is framing-by-omission, which downplays the significance of the lobby groups' motives. This research did not look at the reason behind the lack of descriptors, but the finding that several labels used in news stories were simply those supplied by the pressure groups themselves lead to an assumption a contributing factor is the current trend toward a more commercialised media and the resulting downsizing of newsroom staff. In other words, the journalists have less time to adequately put context into the news articles. The absence of transparency is particularly alarming now that lobbying seems to be played out more through the media rather than directly in Parliament itself. The research in this project indicates that the media are failing to inform their audiences, and, as a result, audiences may be in the dark about which groups are lobbyists and which are not. This has implications for the democratic process whereby citizens may not be aware which lobby groups are trying to influence lawmakers and what laws they want changed.

The intent of this study was to explore how the news media frame lobbying activities in New Zealand. It is apparent from the results that framing-by-omission is in practice and thereby the media is helping lobbyists keep their motives out of the glare of news media spotlight. This study is one of the few research projects on New Zealand media treatment of lobbyists, and clearly indicates that with 90 percent of stories omitting any description of lobby groups, and 97 percent avoiding the word *lobbyist* completely, the news consuming public could feel uninformed. This is particularly significant in New Zealand which, unlike many other Western countries, lacks a legal register or code of ethics for lobbyists. In summary, it appears that inaction by both the media and Parliament allow hired pressure groups to stay camouflaged when trying to influence New Zealand policy makers on behalf of their clients.

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Tanah Papua, Asia-Pacific news blind spots and citizen media

From the 'Act of Free Choice' betrayal to a social media revolution

Abstract: For five decades Tanah Papua, or the West Papua half of the island of New Guinea on the intersection of Asia and the Pacific, has been a critical issue for the region with a majority of the Melanesian population supporting self-determination, and ultimately independence. While being prepared for eventual post-war independence by the Dutch colonial authorities, Indonesian paratroopers and marines invaded the territory in 1962 in an ill-fated military expedition dubbed Operation Trikora ('People's Triple Command'). However, this eventually led to the so-called Act of Free Choice in 1969 under the auspices of the United Nations in a sham referendum dubbed by critics as an 'Act of No Choice' which has been disputed ever since as a legal basis for Indonesian colonialism. A low-level insurgency waged by the OPM (Free West Papua Movement) has also continued and Jakarta maintains its control through the politics of oppression and internal migration. For more than five decades, the legacy media in New Zealand have largely ignored this issue on their doorstep, preferring to give attention to Fiji and a so-called coup culture instead. In the past five years, social media have contributed to a dramatic upsurge of global awareness about West Papua but still the New Zealand legacy media have failed to take heed. This article also briefly introduces other Asia-Pacific political issues—such as Kanaky, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinean university student unrest, the militarisation of the Mariana Islands and the Pacific's Nuclear Zero lawsuit against the nine nuclear powers—ignored by a New Zealand media that has no serious tradition of independent foreign correspondence.

Keywords: citizen media, foreign correspondence, independence, Indonesia, insurgency, media 'blind spots', news media, New Zealand, Papua, postcolonialism, self-determination, social media, West Papua

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Introduction

THIS ESSAY begins with a question? Who has ever heard of Tanah Papua? Or for that matter Irian Barat? How about Papua Barat? An affirmative response comes more rapidly when referring to West Papua, but with a

Figure 1: The 'Morning Star'—the iconic symbol of West Papuan independence.

rather fuzzy concept perhaps? The Dutch-colonised half of the western Pacific island of New Guinea was known as Papua and Irian Jaya. But after a sham plebiscite in 1969 following a paratrooper-led invasion in the region eight years earlier, the half island became largely known by those who supported self-determination and eventual independence as 'West Papua'.

The colonising Indonesians called the province Irian Jaya in 1973—*'jaya'* meaning victorious, in reference to the 'liberation' of the territory from Dutch colonial rule (King, 2004). However, in 2003, Jakarta split the West Papuan region into two provinces—Papua, the largest and more populous province around the capital of Jayapura which shares the border with Papua New Guinea, and Papua Barat with a combined population of 3,612,854 people, two thirds of them Papuan, according to official census figures from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) office (Elmslie, 2017). The indigenous people of West Papua, as this article refers to the *region* (both provinces) from now on, comprise some 250 diverse tribes, all with unique languages and cultures. They are largely Christian, although there are significant Muslim minorities around Manokwari, Fakfak and Sorong.

In the past half century, Indonesia has imposed on the Papuan people a massive social engineering project that has involved transmigration of tens of thousands of largely Muslim Javanese into the region, which from 2010 onwards has been rapidly turning the Indigenous people towards a minority (Elmslie, 2013; Webb-Gannon, 2015). In a more recent paper revisiting West Papuan demographics, West Papua Project convenor Jim Elmslie has indicated that while the Papuan people 'continue to decline, this process varies widely between different regencies' (2017, p. 1). Although transmigration is no longer the official policy, the transformation that it unleashed has happened largely hidden from the Australian and New Zealand news media, even though this has been arguably the most devastating Pacific political

and social story of our times (Papua Merdeka, 2015 [Video]). For a region that is little known in New Zealand, least of all among media news editors or international news directors, many things have been happening in recent times that ought to be raising newsroom antennae.

Surprisingly not so, in spite of two New Zealand media initiatives in 2015 that ought to have stirred curiosity among local media organisations. One was the first visit by a New Zealand television crew in a half century to West Papua—by Māori Television's *Native Affairs* current affairs programme—and the other by Radio New Zealand International. One of the missions (Māori Television) was supported by the Asia New Zealand Foundation, which in itself is salutary because the foundation has found this to be a worthy cause to endorse in spite of the general lack of local media interest and high political sensitivity over the issue.

For more than five decades, the legacy media in New Zealand have largely ignored this issue on their doorstep, preferring to give attention to Fiji and a so-called coup culture instead. In the past five years, social media have contributed to a dramatic upsurge of global awareness about West Papua but still the New Zealand legacy media have failed to take heed. This article also briefly includes other Asia-Pacific political issues—such as Kanaky, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinean university student unrest, the militarisation of the Mariana Islands and

Figure 2: 'West Papua in chains': displaying the Morning Star flag risks 15 years in jail. An Auckland solidarity demonstration.

the Pacific's Nuclear Zero lawsuit against the nine nuclear powers—ignored by a New Zealand media that has no serious tradition of independent foreign correspondence.

'Pre-emptive' mass arrests in West Papua

On the historically significant anniversary date of 1 May 2016, global social media ran hot with updates on massive protests against the rule from Jakarta and more than 2000 arrests were made—4198, according to one comprehensively documented report (MacLeod, et al., 2016, p. 19; Wenda, 2016a; Mass arrests reported, 2016). These protests took place 53 years after a United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) had handed power over to the former Dutch colony in West New Guinea to Jakarta with a mandate to rule until such time as the Papuan people decided on their future in a free vote. Even then a future referendum had been envisaged. Instead, the sham 'Act of Free Choice' was orchestrated in 1969 with a handpicked group of 1050 men and women (out of a population at the time of more than 800,000 people) who were publicly coerced into choosing to be incorporated into the Republic of Indonesia (MacLeod, et al. 2016, p. 11).

Such critical dates as this—and on 1 December 1961, when colonial Ordinances came into force recognising Papuan 'independence' with a Dutch blessing, a Manifesto, a national flag (the strikingly photogenic *Morning Star*, which is banned in Indonesia), and a national anthem ('*Oh My Land Papua'*)—have been observed every year since an Indonesian paratrooper invasion in January 1962.

However, in May 2016 a wave of 'pre-emptive' mass arrests was made, rounding up hundreds of activists, and this demonstrated the compelling popular support among Papuans for self-determination and how this has been steadily growing stronger over the half century, partly fuelled by recent social media campaigns by solidarity groups around the globe (Titifanue et al., 2017a, 2017b, pp. 134-5). A lawyer advocate for the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, Veronica Koman (2016), wrote in *The Jakarta Post*:

> In early May [2016], 2109 Papuan independence protesters were arrested by police—and that number is more than double the 1025 who were press-ganged into legitimising Indonesia's rule of Papua through the 1969 'Act of Free Choice'.
>
> Despite our Indonesian Embassy in the United Kingdom denying in *The Guardian* that the arrests took place, the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute documented them all, and holds the names of every one of the 2109 demonstrators …
>
> This is the historical reality that underpins today's grievances about state violence, environmental degradation and suppression of free speech in Papua. (Koman, 2016)

Until these grievances are addressed, argues Koman, the protests by Papuans will continue and the numbers will continue to add up. She noted that, according to her agency's records, as at mid-May 2016, 'the figure stands at 2282 peaceful demonstrators detained by police'.

Also happening that eventful month was an extraordinary meeting of more than 100 parliamentarians, politicians, civil rights lawyers and activists from some 23 countries who gathered in London to adopt the Westminster Declaration, which branded the 1969 vote as a 'gross violation of the right to self-determination'. It also called for an internationally supervised referendum in Papua.

Danger zone for journalists

As I have commented elsewhere (see Perrottet & Robie, 2011; Robie, 2012, 2014), the reportage of both East Timor/Timor-Leste and West Papua over several decades has been, and still is, a 'highly risky business, as evinced by the killing of six Australian-based journalists—the so-called Balibó Five, and then Roger East who went to East Timor to investigate their deaths—during the invasion by Indonesia in 1975' (immortalised in the 2009 Robert Connolly feature film *Balibó*, www.balibo.com [Video]) (Robie, 2013; Shackleton, 1975).

In 2011, a former postgraduate student with the Pacific Media Centre, Alex Perrottet, now working as a journalist with Radio NZ International (RNZI), and I prepared the first media freedom report on the Asia Pacific region. We concluded at the time in our 'Pacific Media Freedom 2011: A status report' for both *Pacific Journalism Review* and as a *Pacific Journalism Monograph No. 1*:

> By far the most serious case of media freedom violations in the Pacific is in Indonesia-ruled West Papua (now split into two provinces in a 'divide-and-rule' tactic by the authorities in Jakarta). Amid the backdrop of renewed unrest and mass rallies demanding *merdeka*, or freedom, with two bloody ambushes in Abepura on the outskirts of the capital Jayapura in early August 2011, sustained repression has also hit the news media and journalists. In the past year, there have been two killings of journalists, five abductions, or attempted abductions, 18 assaults (including repeated assaults against some journalists), censorship by both the civil and military authorities, and two police arrests (but no charges). (Perrottet & Robie, 2011, p. 148)

To put this into context, the continual harassment and attacks on journalists, along with others in the Papuan population, we need to return to this bloody tragedy back at the border township of Balibó in 1975. As film director Robert Connolly has noted, that because these murders of the Balibó Five were carried out with impunity—neither the Australian nor the New Zealand governments (a Kiwi journalist, Greg Cunningham was among the victims), seriously protested—this failure directly led to the execution of a sixth journalist, Roger East,

a veteran Australian who had stayed in Dili to report on the Indonesian invasion. His fledgling East Timor news agency was trashed on 7 December 1975 and he was dragged out and shot at the main wharf of the city (Coroner finds Balibo Five deliberately killed, 2007; Cronau, n.d.; *Balibó,* 2009 [Video]).

These events were a game-changer. While journalists had previously died in conflict and war zones, the *Balibó* massacre and subsequent execution of Roger East were believed to be the first time journalists had been killed *because* they were journalists. There are close parallels between Timor-Leste—chronicled admirably by Maire Leadbeater (2006) in her *Negligent Neighbour*—and a forthcoming book on West Papua (Leadbeater, 2018), and the terrible brunt borne by journalists as well as ordinary West Papuan citizens.

In July 2014, Green Party MP Catherine Delahunty surprised the New Zealand Parliament with an untabled motion calling on Indonesian President Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo to 'commit to genuine media freedom' in West Papua, 'including the right of local and international journalists to report there without risk of imprisonment or harassment'. Her motion won unanimous cross-party support in the vote (Motions–human rights, 2014; Robie, 2014).

This apparent turning of a new leaf by Widodo led to the first television crew from New Zealand travelling to West Papua in half a century in August 2015—Māori Television's *Native Affairs* reporter Adrian Stevanon with Pacific Media Centre researcher Karen Abplanalp (Abplanalp, 2015; Native Affairs—Inside West Papua, 2015; *Native Affairs* sends first NZ TV crew, 2015)—followed by a Radio New Zealand International team, Johnny Blades and Koroi Hawkins, in October (Blades, 2015, 2016).

While this shed some light on developments in West Papua for a New Zealand audience, Stevanon managed an intriguing report on an aid-funded kumara production project in the Highlands, these were still stage-managed media visits in many respects. A video story produced by one of our student journalists on the postgraduate Asia Pacific Journalism course, *Media 'freedom' in West Papua exposed* (Purdie, 2014 [Video]) gave the lie to claims from Jakarta that Indonesia had adopted a more 'relaxed' policy towards foreign journalists trying to visit West Papua.

A disappointing outcome from the two visits to West Papua officially for the first time by New Zealand journalists in 2015 is that so far these initiatives have not encouraged other media in New Zealand, especially print, to take up the challenge. An Australian investigative journalist of SBS *Dateline,* Mark Davis, has twice visited West Papua as an underground, illegal journalist. He was thus hardly Jakarta's favoured journalist. Yet in May 2014 he also had the opportunity for rare access to the secretive region to find out what is really happening in the struggle over self-determination with Indonesia. The title of his half-hour television report raised the question *West Papua's New Dawn*? Hardly at all. A

major question for journalists is just how much do we offer a figleaf to Jakarta by cooperating with these heavily 'minded' see-no-evil, hear-no-evil visits to the region (Davis, 2014 [Video]). The Indonesian authorities go to extraordinary lengths to gag and silence dissent and discourse about West Papua throughout the republic. This was demonstrated yet again during the four-day UNESCO World Press Freedom Day conference hosted by Indonesia in Jakarta on 1-4 May 2017 when West Papua was marginalised from the programme (Sapiie, 2017). I was invited as one of the keynote speakers at a parallel 'Free West Papua Media' seminar on May 2 attended by journalists, media workers and human rights lawyers (Robie, 2017a, 2017b). It is essential for New Zealand and global journalists to continue to push the boundaries with West Papua, through both 'official' and 'unofficial' visits to both expose the oppression and to report development issues in the twin provinces.

Fact-finding missions record 'intimidation and brutality'

Early in 2016, a Catholic Justice and Peace Commission fact-finding mission from Australia visited West Papua in lieu of the Pacific Islands Forum summit's initiative which had been decided at the Port Moresby summit in September 2015 but blocked by Indonesian authorities. The mission produced a critical report in May 2016 that called for urgent action to support Papuans who were 'living with unrelenting intimidation and brutality' (Catholic Justice & Peace Commission, 2016). The report said:

> The situation in West Papua is fast approaching a tipping point. In less than five years, the position of Papuans in their own land will be worse than precarious. They are already experiencing a demographic tidal wave. Ruthless Indonesian political, economic, social and cultural domination threatens to engulf the proud people who have inhabited the land they call Tanah Papua for thousands of years. (Catholic Justice & Peace Commission, p. 2)

The report was equally damning on issues of freedom of expression and the media, concluding:

> Despite an announcement in May 2015 by President Widodo that journalists would have free access to West Papua, media access is still restricted. There is no freedom of expression. Almost 40 political prisoners are currently in jail [written before the 2000 plus arrests on May 1/2 this year and then a further 1000 plus arrests on June 15], customary land rights are not protected and there is no systemic policy of affirmative action. West Papuan human rights are also not protected. Throughout 2015, the Indonesian security forces have targeted young people in particular, all of whom have been unarmed. (Catholic Justice & Peace Commission p. 11)

The implications for freedom of expression and the press, and safety of journalists, in West Papua is obscured by various global media freedom reports which effectively hide the region (the two provinces of Papua and West Papua) in the body text of their dossiers. According to Reporters Sans Frontières' 2016 World Press Freedom Index, Indonesia was 130th out of 180 nations surveyed and the report noted Widodo's presidency continued to be 'marked by serious media freedom violations, including lack of access to West Papua, a media freedom black hole'. The report continued:

> Journalists and fixers working there are liable to be arrested. The problem is compounded by Indonesia's visa law, which discriminates against foreign journalists. At the same time, many poorly paid journalists accept bribes in return for positive coverage. (RSF, 2016a)

In Freedom House's 2015 World Press Freedom report on Indonesia, the West Papuan situation also faced severe criticism:

> Media coverage of the sensitive issue of Papuan separatism continued to draw special scrutiny and restrictions from the government … Before taking office, President Widodo pledged that he would allow international journalists and organisations access to Papua and West Papua; however, this did not happen by year's end. The Indonesian authorities effectively block foreign media from reporting in the two provinces by restricting access to those with official government approval, which is rarely granted. The few journalists who do gain permission are closely monitored by government agents, who control their movements and access to local residents. (Freedom House, 2015)

I challenge the reference in this statement to the word 'separatist', which is routinely used by Indonesian authorities to brand their Papuan opponents in a negative light and to help justify their repression. In this context, I find this term 'separatist' obscene and yet it is regularly repeated by news agencies and New Zealand media, which should have a better knowledge of our region in the rare times that West Papua even makes the news in this country. Indigenous people cannot be separatists from their own traditional and customary lands. They have a right to self-determination and to express this aspiration.

According to Human Rights Watch, 'the [Indonesian] military has also financed and trained journalists and bloggers, citing alleged foreign interference in the region, including by the US government' (cited by Robie, 2016a, p. 9). Following the mass arrests in early May 2016, RSF issued a communique calling on the Indonesian government to 'stop violating the rights of journalists in West Papua'. It particularly condemned the Jayapura police for preventing reporters from covering a peaceful demonstration in support of the United Liberation

Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) on May 2—ironically, the eve of World Press Freedom Day. The communique said:

> Ardi Bayage, a journalist working for the Suarapapua.com news website, was arrested at the same time as other protesters although he showed his press card to the police. The authorities,who accused him of lying, broke his mobile phone and took him to the mobile brigade's headquarters, where he was held for several hours. (RSF, 2016b)

Benjamin Ismail, then head of RSF's Asia-Pacific desk, said: 'We condemn this violence and censorship of local journalists whose coverage of these demonstrations was in the public interest' (RSF, 2016b). Ismail also cited the ban on *France 24* journalist Cyril Payen, prohibiting him from future visits after he had filed an in-depth television report on West Papua, and a violent attack by police on local *Tabloid Jubi* journalist Abeth You on 8 October 2015 while covering a demonstration in Jayapura by a group called Solidarity for Victims of Human Rights Violations in Papua (RSF, 2016b).

Police also arrested and questioned two fixers working for a French journalist, according to Ismail. This highlights the greater risks faced by local people who collaborate with foreign journalists to provide them with information.

Indonesian diplomacy campaign

While such protests were being aired in international news media, Indonesia had embarked on a blatant diplomacy campaign around the region, especially focusing on the two principal Melanesian Spearhead Group member states and largest economies, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. The MSG is an increasingly important sub-regional group, both part of the Pacific Islands Forum and in some respects a rival to the PIF. It also has status at the United Nations (MacLeod et al., 2016).

Aid largesse was widely distributed and the Indonesian military event went so far as to join the 'adopt-a-school' programme to help repair the devastation in Fiji left by Cyclone Winston. Local NGO groups protested and opposition MPs questioned this development after Indonesian soldiers were seen as part of the reconstruction programme at Queen Victoria School in Suva. One hundred Indonesian soldiers were deployed in Fiji at the time of preparing this article (Sauvakacolo, 2016).

Opposition MP Roko Tupou Draunidalo asked in the Fiji Parliament why the construction contract was given to the Indonesian government which stood accused of genocide in West Papua:

> How much are these 20 pieces of silver help to seal your government's mouth on the issue of genocide in West Papua and why has the government

> not sought assistance from other governments like the British government if it required, or a Commonwealth country to build a school named after Queen Victoria? (quoted in Swami, 2016)

The answer, incidentally, from Education Minister Dr Mahendra Reddy was that the question was totally irrelevant. Just three days later Roko Tupou was suspended from Parliament for the rest of the parliamentary term due to end in 2018. An extraordinary gag.

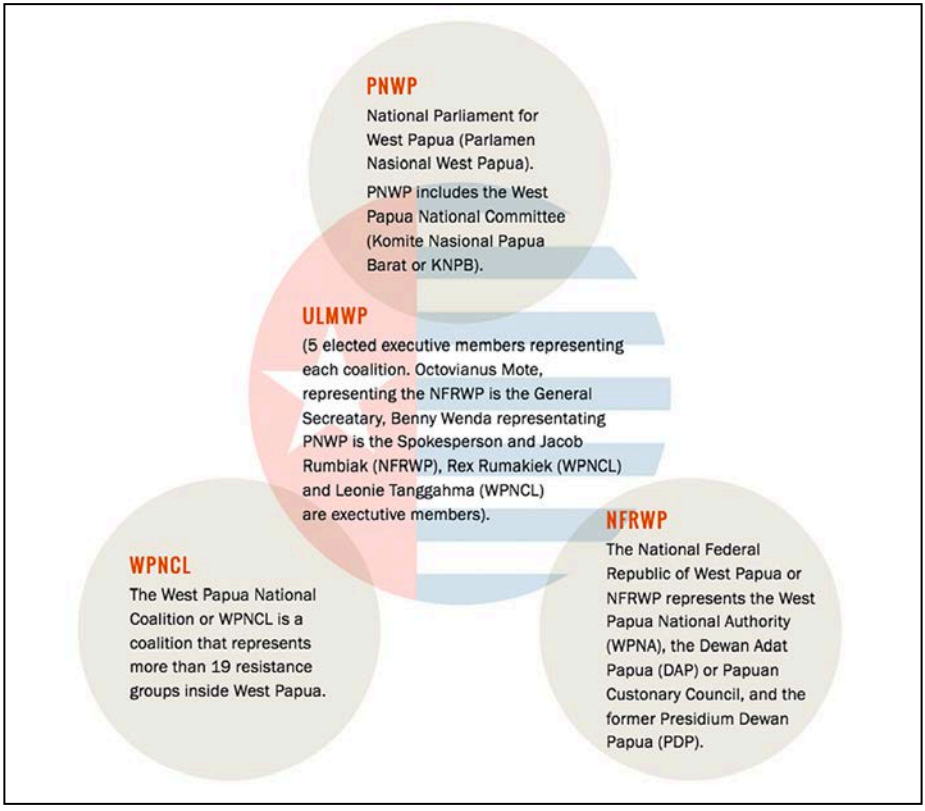
Publicly, Roko Tupou was suspended by a vote of 28 votes to 16 on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Privileges Committee (comprised of four FijiFirst government members) following a cross-floor shouting match when she was accused of calling Education Minister Reddy 'a fool'. In her defence, she claimed that this was in response to a statement by Dr Reddy that implied worse of the Opposition: 'Calling us dumb natives?' (Fiji MP Draunidalo suspended, 2016).

My suspicion is that the real reason for her suspension was to shut down her embarrassing questions about Indonesia and its relationship with the Fiji government. The insults were in effect a smokescreen. Draunidalo made a formal apology on June 10.

Writing in *Asia Pacific Report*, Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, severely criticised the Indonesian diplomacy efforts in the Pacific, particularly in Melanesia, warning that Pacific nations should not be bullied, adding that: 'Indonesia is not Melanesia'. Replying to an Indonesian statement condemning Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, Tara wrote:

> Indonesia has persistently committed human rights violations, including atrocities, against Melanesians in West Papua for over 50 years. That is not a myth. It is the truth. It has been verified and documented by international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and other independent bodies.
>
> For Indonesia to say that it is 'long committed to address human rights issues,' is misleading and an attempt to deflect attention from realities on the ground in West Papua. (Kabutaulaka, 2016)

The most recent evidence of the Indonesian diplomatic offensive in the region was at the 48th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Apia, Samoa, when Jakarta's Ambassador to New Zealand, Samoa and Tonga, Tantowi Yahya, and a Papuan attached to Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Franz Albert Joku 'rubbished' a prominent protest by Pacific trade unionists and human rights activists over violations in West Papua. Yahya added: 'The Pacific community should stick to the main agenda of the conference, which is the Blue Pacific.' (Feagaimaali'i-Luamanu, 2017).



GRAPHIC: MACLEOD ET AL, 2016, p. 13

Figure 3: Power relationships: The United Liberation Movement for West Papua.

Peaceful protests crushed

On 15 June 2016, thousands of West Papuan people rallied in the streets of towns across the nation to call for freedom and for their fundamental right to self-determination to be exercised. They showed their full support for the United Liberation Movement for West Papua's (ULMWP) full membership of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). The Papuan people also rallied to show their support for the proposed Pacific Islands Forum Human Rights Fact-Finding Mission to West Papua, and a rejection of Indonesia's 'false attempts' at establishing an Indonesian-led Fact-Finding Mission. The Papuan people gathered peacefully in a massive display of solidarity to show their true aspirations. Exiled West Papuan leader Benny Wenda stated with optimism:

> I hope that the world will look and see these demonstrations as evidence that we, the people of West Papua, continue to risk our lives by simply calling for our fundamental right to self-determination. (Wenda, 2016a)

Benny Wenda's hopes were shortlived. Instead, the Indonesian police were determined to use brute force to crush the peaceful protests and more than 1000

people were arrested, mostly in Jayapura, and some of the detainees were badly beaten (Wenda, 2016b).

> Such mass arrests and brutality are becoming increasingly common in West Papua and it is estimated that in the last two months, nearly 3000 West Papuan people have been arrested by the Indonesian authorities simply for peacefully demonstrating and calling for our fundamental right of self-determination to be exercised.
>
> My people cannot be silent while our fundamental human rights continue to be published, violated and denied to us by this brutal occupying colonial power. (Wenda, 2016b)

Wenda declared that a Pacific Islands Forum Fact-Finding mission was desperately needed in West Papua to help 'uncover, document and expose' these ongoing human rights violations. He argued that the Indonesian government was trying to claim that there were only 11 human rights abuses that needed to be investigated in 'occupied West Papua'. Wenda has attempted to correct public misinformation about West Papua (Wenda, 2016c).

The Indonesians have also attempted to argue unsuccessfully that Indonesia has five Melanesian provinces, not just the two Papuan provinces on the island of New Guinea (Robie, 2015). After the last Melanesian Spearhead Group Leaders Summit in Honiara in what was generally portrayed as a victory for West Papua by granting observer status to the ULMWP, I took a different view and described the summit as 'the most shameful' for solidarity since the organisation had been founded two decades earlier. I wrote on my blog *Café Pacific*:

> [The MSG] had the opportunity to take a fully principled stand on behalf of the West Papuan people, brutally oppressed by Indonesia after an arguably 'illegal' occupation for more than a half century …
>
> In the end, the MSG failed the test with a betrayal of the people of West Papua by the two largest members [Fiji and Papua New Guinea]. Although ultimately it is a decision by consensus. Instead, the MSG granted Indonesia a 'promotion' to associate member status—to an Asian country, not even Melanesian? (Robie, 2015)

News media 'blind spots'

In my abstract for this article, I wrote about news media blind spots in New Zealand. This was originally going to be a key part of this article. But the West Papuan 'black spot' issue became so urgent that most of the article has referred primarily to West Papua. Nevertheless, I will refer here briefly to some other issues that have been virtually ignored by the legacy media in this country. Why is this so? Primarily because we have no genuine tradition of foreign correspondents and foreign editors in New Zealand, so the specialist and back-

ground knowledge required to make informed judgment calls is seriously lacking. There is also a reluctance to deploy resources to international reporting, in contrast to the leading newspapers in Australia such as *The Age, The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

1980s: The issue of Kanak independence in the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia, New Zealand's closest Pacific neighbour and a major upheaval during the 1980s over independence, threatened to spill over into a civil war. At one stage, arguably the finest contemporary Kanak political leader, the charismatic Jean-Marie Tjibaou and his deputy Yeiweni Yeiweni were assassinated by dissidents within the main FLNKS party. A referendum on possible independence from France is due in 2018 as the Matîgnon Accord expires (Robie, 1989, 2014).

2015/16: In the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, eight community groups have been preparing a lawsuit against the US Department of the Navy and the US Fish and Wildlife Service for failure to comply with the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) (Mariana Islands community groups, 2016). Notice of this lawsuit was received by the US Department of Defense, the US Department of the Interior, the Secretary of the Navy at the Pentagon and the Director of US Fish and Wildlife Service earlier on 25 February 2016 (Frain, 2016, 2017).

2013/16: On 24 April 2014, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) filed applications in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to hold the nine nuclear-armed states accountable for violations of international law over their nuclear disarmament obligations under the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and customary international law (Lawyers Committee, n.d.; The Marshall Islands' Nuclear Zero Cases, 2016). The nine states possessing nuclear arsenals are the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel. However, the ICJ rejected the lawsuit on October 6, saying the court did not have jurisdiction because there was no evidence of a legal dispute that it could adjudicate (Simons, 2016; Summary of Judgment, 2016).

The cases were founded on the unanimous conclusion of the ICJ in a 1996 advisory opinion, that there 'exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leadings to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control'. Dubbed as Nuclear Zero by the legal advisers that have been helping the RMI in this case, this intriguing saga has been given very little coverage in NZ media.

8 June 2016: The Papua New Guinea police fired upon peacefully protesting students at the University of Papua New Guinea with tear gas and live rounds. While the police claimed they were warning shots, there were incorrect initial reports of four deaths and dozens wounded, but these estimates were later downgraded to 23 wounded, four critically who later recovered. The incident followed five weeks of rolling protests and boycotts at the country's four main universities with demands that Prime Minister Peter O'Neill step down and face

an investigation of corruption allegations. (O'Neill was subsequently narrowly re-elected in a closely fought general election in July 2017). New Zealand media virtually ignored these developments (Matasororo, 2016; Robie, 2016c; Somare condemns police, 2016).

Digital revolution

The digital revolution is one of the major contributing factors in even getting this far with global awareness over West Papua and there is optimism that the region will ultimately become full members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group, sooner rather than later. Social media over the past five years has provided an unprecedented impetus to the self-determination and independence struggle with West Papuans challenging the authoritarian ruthlessness of the Indonesian security forces with a constant stream of videos showing torture and mass arrests in response to peaceful protest. The independent West Papua Media alerts agency has played a key role in this social media strategy and there has 'been a rise of the nonviolent movement and ordinary people's support for freedom can be seen by the rise in mass mobilisations' (MacLeod et al., p. 19). According to Jason Titifanue and colleagues at the University of the South Pacific (2017) in a paper on social networking as a political tool in the Pacific, while there is no general consensus on the effectiveness of social media in activism, their findings indicate it has been a 'valuable tool for facilitating and organising activism' in the Free West Papua campaign. They argue that 'with journalists being restricted from entering West Papua, social media have become the only option for West Papuans to share their plight with the rest of the world' (Titifanue et al., p. 275). Harsh atrocities depicted through social media have stirred offline political activism through protests and marches. This has in turn played out with influence on Pacific governments.

Australian digital humanities researcher Camellia Webb-Gannon (2015) has written in her doctoral thesis about 'transformative democratisation, in essence purposeful action' at the grassroots level and international solidarity for West Papua that may ultimately lead to a shift in policy by the Australian and New Zealand governments and in turn an awakening of the New Zealand media to the desperate West Papuan issue. She noted:

> This is expressed in a burgeoning genre of West Papua independence music being created by West Papuans and their Melanesian and Australian supporters and distributed digitally via YouTube, Soundcloud, iTunes, Bluetooth and SD cards through ever expanding digital networks. While evidently the digital revolution has not impacted on all populations equally, it has had the effect of spreading music, foundational to Melanesian cosmology and the life force of West Papua's independence movement widely, and lifting the regional profile of the West Papuan struggle. (Webb-Gannon, 2015)

Jason MacLeod is another Australian, educator, organiser and researcher, who did his own doctoral research on how contemporary Papuans struggling for change 'dream, plan and act in pursuit of self-determination and decolonisation'. In his 2015 book *Merdeka and the Morning Star*, and a later journal article in *Pacific Journalism Review*, he offers a critical update demonstrating how the armed struggle has given way to an extraordinary process of 'civil resistance' and social media mobilisation (MacLeod, 2015, p. ix; 2016).

> Although many Papuans feel intense pride for the guerrillas in the mountains and jungles who continue to wage armed struggle, few Papuans are willing to risk their lives committing to a strategy of guerrilla war that has little prospect of success … Nonviolent action is also more numerous and more regular than politically motivated violent action.
>
> Barely a week, or even a day goes by without some kind of nonviolent protest in the cities and towns of West Papua, over violations of basic rights or demands 'full freedom'. (MacLeod, 2015, p. 14)

Indonesia's top 15 'enemies of the state' in West Papua, according to journalist Alan Nairn (2010), who exposed a list of 'civilian dissidents' from leaked Kopassus military papers, are community leaders, church leaders, students, members of parliament and leaders of the Papuan Customary Council. As a postscript to his book, MacLeod (2015, p. 243; MacLeod, et al., 2016) writes of the extraordinary effort from people inside West Papua campaigning for the ULMWP to gain membership of the MSG. He personally witnessed the unwrapping of five 27kg hessian-wrapped packages in Honiara last June. Each parcel contained two massively thick A4-sized books.

In an age of easy Facebook likes, and the growing importance of social media in the West Papuan struggle, this was no online stunt. This was a petition

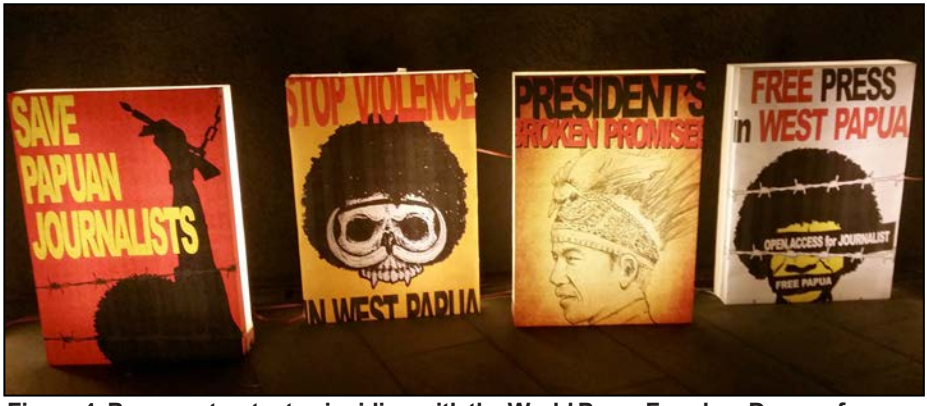


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Figure 4: Papuan street art coinciding with the World Press Freedom Day conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, in May 2017.

painstakingly collected by ULMWP organisers (p. 244) while travelling across the territory of West Papua at great risk of persecution and even death if caught by the security forces—they gathered 55,555 signatures along with names, addresses, signatures and even copied ID cards to prove their authenticity.

While in much of the rest of the world, petitions may be routine and taken for granted, in Indonesian-ruled West Papua it is different. Signing a petition like this, as MacLeod (p. 245) acknowledges, is tantamount to 'sedition'.

Conclusion: The future and a challenge

What does the future hold for West Papua? The optimism remains in spite of the great odds against self-determination. As the Reverend Dr Benny Giay wrote recently on the pages of *Tabloid Jubi*, a genuine resolution for West Papua will only come from Indonesia's willingness to listen and stop the oppression of West Papuans (Giay, 2016).

Meanwhile, environmental destruction and rampant militarism walk hand in hand in West Papua. Papuans are continuously stigmatised as backward, ignorant and poor. This has become a pretext for what Indonesian authorities call 'the acceleration and expansion of development'.

Pressed against waves of Indonesian migration, Papuans are not given any chance at all to develop themselves. They are a minority in their own land, not only in terms of number but also in terms of power. Every protest and negotiation effort by indigenous people is met with brutal responses and security operations.

This article is completed with a challenge to our foreign policy makers. I call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to recommend very strongly to the Republic of Indonesia that it must:

1. Conduct an impartial investigation into the cases of arbitrary arrest in West Papua, as well as other places in the Republic,
2. Guarantee the right to freedom of expression, and freedom of association and assembly for all Papuans,
3. Provide open access to West Papua for the international community, including journalists and NGO advocates,
4. Decide on a date as early as possible for the projected visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and allow other mandate holders to visit West Papua, and
5. Press for a new independent UN 'self-determination' plebiscite for the future of West Papua.

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‘You can’t avoid sex and cigarettes’

How Indonesian Muslim mothers teach their children to read billboards

Abstract: Muslim mothers in Indonesia find many roadside billboards confronting, especially those advertising harmful products such as cigarettes or using sexualised images of women. This unease is exacerbated by the fact that during daily commutes neither they nor their children can avoid seeing these billboards. However, while billboards pose a challenge to Islamic sensibilities, some Muslim mothers use these billboards as sites to educate their children about piety, modesty and tolerance. Such reflexive engagement is informed by an ongoing dialectic between mothers’ interpretations of Islamic teachings and the realities of contemporary Indonesian media culture. This article explores this dialectic through interviews with Muslim mothers in Semarang, Indonesia.

Keywords: advertising, billboards, communication, culture, Indonesia, Islam, Muslim mothers, parenthood, piety, public space, reflexive media engagement, religion

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Introduction

PARENTS everywhere are concerned about the wellbeing of their children and protecting them from detrimental influences. One perennial concern is the influence of mass media, especially with the advent of social media content accessible by handheld devices (Buckingham & Willet, 2013). While there is the potential for parental control over many forms of media, the appropriation of public space by billboards means that exposure is unavoidable (Klein, 2000).

Over the past few decades the combination of new technologies and deregulation have led to an explosion of media in Indonesia (Rakhmani, 2014). For parents, this unprecedented media exposure presents considerable challenges, not least because media often contradict and conflict with cultural and religious values. For

many Muslim Indonesians this challenge is acutely felt because Islamic teachings are often clear and unambiguous concerning matters of morality, decency and harmfulness (Davies, 2011).

This article explores the experience of Muslim mothers in Indonesia striving to raise pious children in an environment where media often presents un-Islamic messages. For the mothers in this study, roadside billboards proved a particular challenge because of their ubiquity and unavoidability (Webster, 2010). However, while mothers found billboards advertising cigarettes and suggestive clothing confronting, they also provided a site to explore and articulate to their children the meaning of piety and what being a good Muslim entails in practice. We examine ways mothers use two different kinds of billboards in their approach to parenting. First, the mothers use cigarette billboards to teach their children that pious Muslims should not undertake activities that harm oneself or others. Second, they use billboards advertising fashionable clothing to discuss ways of presenting oneself in public that conform to Islamic principles of modesty and propriety.

Given that this article centres on piety it is useful to offer some understanding of what we mean by piety. Piety is a concept derived from the Qur'anic concept of *taqwa* (Mahmood, 2005, p. 145). Mahmood (2001, p. 212) elucidates *taqwa* as the condition of being close to God that is attained through 'practices that are both devotional as well as worldly in character.' According to Mahmood (2011, p. 212), piety also involves attention to one's entire self through 'a simultaneous training of the body, emotions, and reason as sites of discipline until the religious virtues acquire the status of embodied habits.' Rinaldo (2008, p. 29) explains that among Muslim women in Indonesia, pious practices are producing a new kind of habitus that distinguishes women by class and approach to religion. In short, piety is the framework by which some Muslim mothers manoeuvre their everyday lives using the Qur'an and *'ahādīt* (words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) as their guides. In contrast to ultra-orthodox Muslim groups such as Salafi (Hasan, 2007) and Tablighi Jamā'at (Amrullah, 2011), participants in this study can be considered as moderate Muslims. Participants are considered pious as they observe Islamic personal practices, such as praying, reading the Qur'an, and wearing conservative clothing (including three wearing *hijāb*, the head veil) as part of their daily attire.

Methods

This article draws on part of a larger study conducted on how Indonesian Muslim mothers engage with media in their daily parenting practices (Hartono, 2017). The larger study collected data through various methods, including 14 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Muslim mothers, participant observation of a range of events, including Islamic seminars, and engagement with a closed Facebook group established specifically for the purpose of the larger

study. These methods, conducted by the first author, allowed participants to reflect on their media engagement in their everyday life. The methodological approach taken for the collection of data and its subsequent analysis followed a post-positivist constructionist position and we specifically followed an interpretive descriptive analytical approach that allowed the thoughts of participants to shape the findings (Thorne, 2016).

For this particular article, the data used was collected during four in-depth, face-to-face interviews conducted in 2015 in Indonesia by the first author. The women were selected through a snowballing method and they responded to a call for research participants disseminated through Facebook. The questions for the interviews focused specifically on how the mothers engaged with public billboards and how they negotiated their content in their everyday lives as mothers. The pseudonyms of the four mothers are: Niar, Vina, Hesti and Dani. These women were all well-educated, worked full-time and regarded themselves as pious (*bertakwa*) Muslims. While data for this article represents the views of just four women, given the wider data collected and our extensive review of literature, it seems likely that the ways they engage with and critique billboards may be typical of pious mothers across Indonesia. At the very least, these findings show that for some Muslim mothers, billboards can be useful pedagogic tools despite the challenges they present.

Mothering

The concept of parenting, and more specifically mothering, relates to practices of raising children with values, beliefs, motivations and attitudes that parents and wider society deem appropriate. 'Parenting' can be thus seen as a historically and socially situated form of childrearing, a product of late 20th century ideological shifts in understandings of kinship, family and social morality (Faircloth, Hoffman & Layne, 2013). In Europe, from around 1800, newly expanded medical and educational institutions gave rise to an interest in investigating and improving the care and learning of children (LeVine, 2007). By 1920, Sigmund Freud had influentially argued that parenting had a significant impact on young children, leading to an increase in public interest in childrearing and on what constituted a 'normal' child. Also around this time missionaries and colonial administrations began exploring concepts of good parenting and child development in cross-cultural contexts (e.g. Junod, 1912).

A number of early anthropological studies focused on parenting, childhood and kinship (Faircloth, 2014, LeVine, 2007). Such studies proved important in showing that parenting is 'crucial to the transmission of culture, the development of enculturated persons, the constitution of kinship, family, and household, and the reproduction of society' (Barlow & Chapin, 2010, p. 324). Early parenting studies include those of Margaret Mead (1928, 1930) and Bronislaw Malinowski

(1929) who both worked in the Asia-Pacific region; although it should be noted that some of Mead's work was later discredited. Such studies showed the diversity of parenting styles and provided material to critique a singular Western world-view. Significantly, much of this anthropological literature showed the important parenting role assumed by fathers (Hewlet, 2008, 2011a, 2011b; Mead 1963) and the various roles taken on by mothers (Bolin, 2006; Konner, 2005, 2007; Liamputtong 2007; Riseman, 1992; Shostak 1981). Much subsequent anthropological work on mothering focused on aspects such as breastfeeding, pregnancy, birth and morality (Hays, 1996; Smyth, 2012; Volk, 2009; Walks, 2011).

Motherhood has played a significant role in the imagination of Indonesia (Danzinger, 1960; Geertz, H. 1961; Khisbiyah, 1992; Subandi, 2011; Swasono, 1998; Zevalkink & Riksen-Walraven, 2001). The Indonesian state frames a woman's duty as primarily raising and educating her children and as soon as a woman marries she is questioned about when she will have children (Nurmilla, 2009). A common assumption is that while fathers can enjoy their children it is up to mothers to discipline them. Mothers are then judged by their children's behaviour and achievements (Mulder, 1992).

The 1974 Indonesian marriage law positions the husband as head of the household and the wife as homemaker. A woman's status is thus tied to her husband and she is expected to be obedient to him (Doorn-Harder 2006; Srimulyani 2012). Women are positioned as the primary supporter of their husband, providing offspring, caring for and rearing their children, being good housekeepers and guardians of community values (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987; Sunidyo, 1996; Sunindyo, 1995; Suryakusuma, 2011). Women must suppress their personal desires and wishes in order to be good mothers (Schleifer, 1986). A woman's natural ability/proclivity (*kodrat*) is said to be directly based on her biology (*fitrah*) (Blackburn 2004; Dewi 2012). As such, women are expected to reinforce the natural order of society (Sullivan, 1991; Davies, 2015). Indonesian media consistently reinforce the roles of women as wives and mothers (Brenner 1999) and although these roles are expanding they remain women's core identity (Blackurn, 2004; Yulindrasari & McGregor, 2011).

Muslim mothers are expected to adhere not only to these national values but also Islamic ones (Ali, 2004; Al-Hashimi, 2000; Al-Joyyousi & Al-Salim, 2014). The importance of a mother's role in Islam is stressed in *hadith* (sayings of the Prophet) such as:

> A man came to the Prophet and said 'Who among the people is the most worthy of my good companionship? The Prophet said: Your mother. The man said, 'Then who?' The Prophet said: Then your mother. The man further asked, 'Then who?' The Prophet said: Then your mother. The man asked again, 'Then who?' The Prophet said: Then your father (Inside Islam, 2012).

The Qur'an acknowledges the sacrifice, compassion and service of mothers and promises rewards in the afterlife (Schleifer, 2007). It also provides advice to mothers, including on such practical matters as how long to breastfeed (Oh, 2010). In striving toward these ideals, mothers participating in this study read parenting books, attended seminars, followed *fatwa* (Islamic rulings/edicts), joined Islamic study circles (*pengajian*) and Facebook discussions, read Muslim parenting websites and discussed parenting practices with husbands and friends. Birth announcements posted on Facebook often met with replies such as: 'Congratulations! Hopefully your child will be pious (*Semoga menjadi anak yang sholeha*).'

Figure 1: 'Qur'anic Parenting: Pious Children are Incredible Assets in the Hereafter'.

Women in this study also attended Qur'anic Parenting seminars (Figure 1). Such seminars began with a video revealing the importance of having good morals and manners (*akhlak*) and of taking care of orphans. Speakers emphasised that mothers should reinforce teachers, especially in terms of Islamic etiquette (*adab*). One example often given was that while school teachers instruct children to eat with the right hand, parents must reinforce this at home and set an example. Seminars emphasised that teachers merely reinforce home teachings and that the primary responsibility for Islamic instruction is held by mothers. Such seminars were open to both parents but fathers rarely attended. At one 2015 seminar attended by 50 participants only eight were fathers. Mothers said they found these seminars enjoyable because they reinforced what they already knew, taught them new things, such as the importance of arising before the early morning prayer, and because they provided them with a sense of comradeship.

Women in this study also used Muslim women's magazines to help them become better mothers. They talked about how these magazines drew on the Qur'an and *hadith* to address topics such as how to breastfeed during the fasting month, how to use the veil to cover up while breastfeeding, and how fathers can assist mothers (see the magazine *Ummi* 2013-2014 passim). Participants also spoke of how important it was that babies receive only breastmilk for their first six months (cf. Blum 1999; Lee 2008). Indeed one participant described how

she would go into the work bathroom and express milk into a water bottle to ensure she could provide her baby with breastmilk.

Over recent decades Indonesia has become increasingly Islamised (Rinaldo, 2013). This increasing Islamisation is a result of various factors. Hefner (1993, p. 13) argues that Islamic revitalisation among middle class Indonesians was sparked by a growing cynicism and resentment towards political elites who unashamedly displayed their wealth and power, and their perceptions of the decline of traditional mores and etiquette. Other authors have framed this move as one of rising Islamic 'consciousness', instead of Islamic 'resurgence' or 'revival' (Brenner 1996). Indeed Brenner suggests that resurgence has the connotation of recapturing the old spirit of embracing Islam as a way of life and thus consciousness is a better work because it connotes embarking upon a new venture, which she argues has been what has happened. After the reformation of 1998, a growing number middle class Indonesians gained access to conservative global Islamic discourses because of the loosening of state censorships on media (Rinaldo, 2011). A key factor in the rise of Islamisation has thus been that during President Suharto's rule (1965-1998), Islam was kept at bay because Suharto worried that a strong Islamic movement would threaten his power. After his forced resignation in 1998, Islamic groups moved to fill much of the power void. As such, Islam is currently driving a moral panic over issues such as sexuality (Davies, 2016).

As a result of this increasing Islamisation, there has been a concomitant rise in the perceived responsibility and obligation of Muslim mothers to raise pious children. In their parenting practices, though, Muslim mothers must also engage with competing demands from the state, secular modernity, Westernisation and the media. While media can help mothers deal with the challenges of contemporary life, media also present challenges to Muslim mothers trying to raise pious children, particularly when media such as billboards cannot be avoided.

Billboards

Billboards have been used as a form of advertising since at least the early 1800s and indeed such was their prevalence that London started regulating billboards in 1837 (Wharton, 2013). While billboard technology has developed significantly with the advent of digital billboards, many remain static (Cronin, 2013) Unlike other media, where there is an element of choice in viewing and for parents some control over their children's access, by merely engaging in urban life people are exposed to images on billboards (Rosewarne, 2007).

Travel in any Indonesian city results in viewing billboards advertising everything from cigarettes to baby formula, scooters to face whitening creams. Billboards compete for space and attention and create what many see as a chaotic streetscape. Such is the resulting visual disorder that some mayors have called for a ban on outdoor advertising (Melanngar Perda 2015). However, billboards

bring advertising money to local governments and hence there is competing pressure to increase the number of billboards. Billboard regulation is constantly undergoing revision in the battle between profit and aesthetics (Leis, 2015). What has eluded discussion at government level in Indonesia, though, is how religious belief intersects with billboards.

Religion plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of and responses to advertising (Bayraktar, 2012; Farah and El Samad, 2014). Perceptions of and responses to advertising often take the form of critical disapproval of the products advertised and/or the way they are advertised. Mothers in this study talked mostly about two types of billboards: those advertising cigarettes and those employing sexualised images of women. Given that censoring viewing is not a realistic option, how do Muslim mothers in Indonesia engage with billboards they feel reflect lifestyles and values incompatible with piety?

Cigarette billboards

Estimates suggest that 68 percent of Indonesian men and four percent of Indonesian women smoke cigarettes (World Development Indicators, 2016). It is also estimated that 32 percent of secondary school students aged 13-15 (mostly boys) smoke cigarettes, with 43 percent of people starting to smoke as young as 13 (WHO, 2014). Smoking rates are also high as cigarettes cost only around US$1.40 a pack.

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Figure 2: Prolific billboards in an Indonesian city.

The Indonesian government is slowly showing concern for these high rates of smoking but corruption, weak government, the power of tobacco companies and a smoking culture make smoking rates hard to reduce (Harsono, 2011). There was a glimmer of hope in 2014 when the Minister of Health urged a ban

on cigarette sponsorship for music and sporting events, but this did not eventuate. Jakarta has regulations banning tobacco advertising but they are rarely enforced (Govenor Ahok signs bill, 2016). Some restaurants and universities have no smoking signs but these too are largely ignored. The World Health Organisation has recommended that Indonesia restrict cigarette advertising but cigarette billboards remain prolific on roads, bridges, in front of schools, in house yards and even at police stations (Figure 2). While billboards must include warnings that smoking kills and that you have to be at least 18 years old to smoke, and some also show horrific images of cancerous mouths, these appear only in small font at the bottom of billboards.

Tobacco companies excel at selling their product. Cigarette billboards suggest that if you smoke you will become cool, brave and macho, images particularly persuasive to teenage boys (Ng, Weinehall & Ohman 2007). Cigarette companies use English to raise desirability and prestige. Local companies selling clove cigarettes (*kretek*) sell the idea that smoking *kretek* preserves a cultural legacy and even that it has health properties (Arnez, 2009; Polzin et al 2007). Cigarette companies sponsor music concerts, such as the 2015 Bon Jovi concert, and give away free cigarettes to audience members (Figure 3). Other popular entertainers, though, such as Kelly Clarkson and Maroon 5, have refused tobacco sponsorship (Siregar, 2010). Tobacco companies have claimed that without their sponsorship music and sports events would collapse (Siregar 2010). Moreover, tobacco companies argue that advertising restrictions violate their constitutional right to advertise legal products (Faizal, 2016).

Tobacco companies are incredibly powerful in Indonesia. Former president Yudhoyono had close links with the Sampoerna tobacco empire which financially supported a national newspaper mouthpiece for Yudhoyono's party (Aditjondro, 2010). Tobacco companies also try to win the hearts and minds of Indonesians by philanthropic works. For instance, Sampoerna has set up a foundation providing scholarships to underprivileged students while Djarum, another tobacco company, has set up a similar foundation to fund health care such as providing free cataract surgery.

In 2009, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued a *fatwa* (religious ruling) that Muslims should not smoke and it classified smoking somewhere between *haram* (forbidden) and

Figure 3: Tobacco companies sponsor music events.

makruh (discouraged) (Hariyadi, 2010). Other countries have made similar rulings. For instance, Malaysia (Ruban, 2016), Saudi Arabia (Husain 2014) and Egypt (Radwan et al., 2003) have declared smoking *haram*. Saudi Arabia even declared Mecca and Medina smoke free zones. There is no specific mention of smoking in the Qur'an (Farah & El Samad, 2014) but MUI issued the *fatwa* on the basis that the Qur'an prohibits Muslims from harming themselves and since smoking harms, Muslims should not smoke (Ghouri, Atcha & Sheikh, 2006). The *fatwa* also drew on Qur'anic injunctions that Muslims should avoid wasting money and should protect others from harm (ibid). Not all Muslim groups in Indonesia agree with MUI's ruling. Nahdlatul Ulama declared smoking as *mubah* (religiously neutral) while Muhammadiyah declared smoking as neither *haram* (prohibited) nor *halal* (permitted). These latter two organisations—Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah—are the two largest Islamic organisations in the country and are generally considered moderate organisations, although there are various differences between the two, including Nahdlatul Ulama's political alignment and more conservative approach compared to Muhammadiyah, the older of the two, which is more moderate and non-political. So how do Muslim mothers react to such billboards when teaching their children about piety? We explore this issue after first discussing the other main billboard mothers talked about.

Sexual content billboards

Another type of billboard that Muslim mothers found confronting was that showing sexual content. Sexual content can be in the form of nudity or revealing dress, showing sexual behaviour such as kissing, or making sexual references using objects or music (Ismail & Melwar, 2014). Culture and religion mediate responses to sexual content (Ford, LaTour & Clarke, 2004). In Malaysia, for instance, the state draws on religion to justify prohibiting displays of intimacy and indecency; even models for shampoo products are often posed wearing a head veil (Ismail & Melewar 2014). In general, though, sexual content is ubiquitous in advertising because sex sells and its use is increasing in Indonesia (Handajani, 2008).

Weddings are big business in Indonesia and billboards advertising wedding services such as florists, hair dressers, cake decorators and entertainers abound in any metropolitan area. Such billboards are also rife with sexual content and thus form a site where commercial and moral imperatives collide. One particular billboard that mothers talked about advertised an upcoming wedding expo entitled 'When East Meets West'. One billboard model appeared in a Western style wedding dress while the other wore a traditional *kebaya* top and *jarik* skirt. The clothing for both models was figure hugging, open at the shoulders and revealed cleavage (Figure 4). Both models were tall and slim with fair skin and European features, all of which are associated with wealth, affluence, success, superiority,

modernity, hygiene and purity (Handajani, 2008; van Leeuwen, 2011). The ideal bride could thus be said to have a *persona barat* (Western charm) combined with notions of East Asian (Korean and Japanese) beauty (Yulianto, 2014). To be other than this, especially on one's wedding day, may bring shame (Prasetyaningsih, 2007; Saraswati, 2013). So how do Muslim mothers react to such billboards when teaching their children about piety?

Figure 4: Wedding expo … Western style and traditional and both revealing.

Muslim mothers and billboards

While children under six are, in Indonesian thinking, often considered immune to the influence of media because they are *durung ngerti* (not yet capable of understanding the world around them), after this age parents worry about children's impressionability. While parents teach children appropriate behaviour and values through setting a good example, the presence of billboards selling cigarettes or using sexualised imagery pose challenges.

For one mother in the study, Niar, cigarette billboards created a sense of unease because of the contradictory messages presented. She noted that billboards frame smoking as a path to creating a smart nation. To this end, one cigarette company, Djarum, advertised that it provided university scholarships to disadvantaged students. Djarum was acting hypocritically in Niar's view because it was profiting from 'selling addiction to the nation's youth.' Rather than creating a smart nation, cigarette smoking created an unhealthy nation. Niar noted that through scholarships Djarum made students feel indebted to the company and thus even when students suffered ill-health they would continue defending the company. Students, who would otherwise be well-placed to agitate against tobacco companies, became activists supporting citizen's rights to smoke. While Niar wanted such billboards banned she finds they provide valuable pedagogic resources to teach her children about the dangers of smoking.

Hesti, another participant, was also concerned about cigarette advertising and its harmful (*mudarat*) impact on her children. She commented that her sons always notice these billboards because they show masculine role models. Hesti drew on the *fatwa* against smoking, and on her own judgement and knowledge of Islam, to teach her children that Muslims are forbidden to harm themselves and as such smoking is forbidden.

Mothers in this study also worried about the harmful influence of immodest billboards. Modesty is at the core of both Indonesian and Muslim notions of womanhood. Moreover, the use of human images is questionable in Islam and thus the Prophet Muhammad is not represented in human form—depictions of the Prophet are forbidden in Sunni Islam and permissible only under certain circumstances in Shi'a Islam. For the mothers in this study, then, to see billboards displaying women in revealing clothing, challenged their notions of modesty and piety.

One mother, Vina, spoke of feeling alarmed at the sexual content of billboards, in particular one wedding billboard that was located in front of her daughter's intermediate school. Vina commented that she spent a lot of time *mbatin* (thinking with the heart instead of the head) about this billboard and how she could teach her children about modesty in the face of such public immodesty. Vina initially found it hard to respond to questions such as 'Why is there a billboard like that, Ma? Why is it being shown? Is it good?' Vina worried that her children would think that because this billboard showed women's *aurat* (intimate parts of the body, in this case cleavage) they would think they too could show their *aurat* in public. After consideration, Vina framed her response to her children in terms of the key Islamic tenets of *aurat* and modesty. She noted that such billboards should be placed in carefully selected positions, not in front of schools. She also told her children that billboards should advertise wedding attire in an attractive way that does not reveal a woman's *aurat*. Vina used this billboard as a site to

provoke questions about propriety, dress and woman's bodies and to teach her children how to be good Muslims.

Dani, another participant, also worried about her children's exposure to sexy images on billboards. Dani talked specifically about one billboard that showed a picture of a beautiful DJ dressed in a tank top and shorts. This billboard was placed opposite the Islamic school her daughter attended. One morning upon arriving at school, Dani's daughter asked, 'Ma, shouldn't a tank-top be underwear? Ma, why doesn't she *dirangkepi* (cover it up)?' Dani then used this billboard as a site of instruction, telling her daughter that according to Islamic belief people should dress decently and cover their *aurat*. She also used this billboard as a site to teach her daughter about tolerance, noting that other people have different beliefs about modesty, but Muslim women should cover up. Dani's daughter then questioned her about not wearing a veil:

> My daughter then said 'Mama, why don't you veil (*berkerudung*)?' I told her that 'although I don't wear *hijāb* (veil), I always dress *sopan* (politely/modestly). *Kak* (older sibling), when I go to your school I always wear long trousers with a loose shirt. So even though I don't wear a veil (*berkerudung*) I am covered. One day I will definitely wear it, *Kak*, but you never see me wear a tank-top. Mama always dresses neatly. I am always covered.'

Despite Dani's frustration over images displaying women's *aurat*, especially those placed close to schools, she uses these billboards as sites to critically reflect what it means to be a pious Muslim. Dani teaches her daughter about modesty through such billboards. Interestingly, Dani referred to her daughter as *Kak* (elder sibling) to reinforce her daughter's position as role model and teacher for her younger siblings in their respective journeys toward piety.

Conclusion

This article explored ways Muslim mothers teach piety and raise good Muslim subjects in a landscape of un-Islamic billboards. We revealed that while billboards often provoke unsettling feelings, mothers frame their engagement using religious understandings of *aurat* and modesty, showing that while media are embedded in everyday life, viewers bring interpretive meaning (Lembo 2000). In particular, mothers in this study used Islamic knowledge to frame billboards in ways instructive for their children, providing them with a way to frame proper Muslim citizenship and sexual morality. Furthermore, discussions created opportunities for mothers to emphasise teachings and explain why certain things are important to them as Muslims. By contrasting religious understanding of *fatwa*, health, *aurat* and modesty with the billboards, mothers legitimated Islamic constructions of health, femininity, propriety, virtue and modernity. By embodying such a persona, mothers created an image for

their children of a morally superior self (cf. Parker 2008). Moreover, billboards motivated mothers to demonstrate proper femininity and sexual morality and supported their ideals about the body, health and propriety. Billboards also provided a site for mothers to discuss with their children the notion that piety is not something you simply possess but rather obtaining it is a lifelong journey.

Mothers in this study demonstrated a capacity to critically reflect on advertising billboards and frame them against their own religious convictions. Their high levels of religious education assisted in this agentic process of reflectivity (Sakai & Fauzia, 2014). Indeed, agency is not a 'synonym for resistance to relations' but can be seen as 'a capacity for action that historically specific relations of subordination enable and create (Mahmood, 2001 p. 203). Muslim mothers thus showed agency in the sense of having a 'capacity to negotiate with power in whatever form—as complicity, compromise, deviance or resistance—and with whatever motivation … intentional or unintentional, voluntary or involuntary, self-expression, self-interest or group interest' (Parker & Dales, 2014, p.165). Muslim mothers in this study were thus able to make meaning and identity from these billboards and develop pragmatic responses in the production of their own and their children's moral subjectivity. Such reflectivity enabled these Muslim mothers to use their ongoing striving for piety to provide moral guidance for their children via-a-vis confronting billboards. This article thus starts the conversation about how Muslim mothers engage with media such as billboards and we look forward to seeing more research that explores the varied ways in which mothers, and indeed fathers and other caregivers, use media as sites for education across Indonesia's diverse geographic and economic spectrum.

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Dr Hanny Savitri (Vitri) Hartono was working on this text as part of her PhD when she died suddenly in February 2017. As her supervisors, Dr Sharyn Graham Davies of Auckland University of Technology and Dr Graeme Macrae of Massey University, have reworked this material for publication, keeping the ethnographic data and much of the literature cited and developing Vitri's argument. While this article differs somewhat from the thesis, we trust it remains faithful to Vitri's intention. Vitri was posthumously awarded her PhD by Massey University in 2017.

‘What are you waiting for, Diggers?’

The ANZAC image in *Commando* comics

Abstract: For generations of Australians and New Zealanders, *Commando* comics have provided a consistent image of their ancestors at war. The image is one of men, who are inevitably tall, bronzed, shirtless, contemptuous of authority and their ability, as warriors such—in memory at least—that their mere presence on the battlefield is enough to have the Germans crying ‘Donner und blitzen!’, and the Italians ‘Sapristi!’ or the Japanese ‘Aieee!’ But how accurate is this depiction of Australians and New Zealanders? How well does a Scottish comic—often employing artists from Argentina and other countries—portray the ANZACS? And how did a Scottish comic come to dominate the image of Australians and New Zealanders at war for so long?

Keywords: ANZAC, Australia, comics, *Commando* comics, graphic novels, New Zealand, Second World War, war comics

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MOST countries have created stories about their servicemen (and sometimes women) as a means of commemorating particular conflicts, of celebrating the achievements of its fighting personnel, or simply for entertainment. One of the most popular ways of doing this has been through monthly magazines and comics.

For a long time, Australia and New Zealand had no locally produced comics which depicted their country at war. This article seeks to explore how this came about and what the consequences were. We will argue that the depiction of Australian and New Zealand servicemen in *Commando* comics, the longest surviving and most successful of British war comics, was often very far from the locally-conceived image and that this was a result of the early globalisation and industrialisation of the comic production process.

While there are obvious arguments to be made about the value of film and

painting as forms of cultural expression, too little attention has been paid to the fact that the history of Australia and New Zealand's part in the century's conflicts, in comics, has been, for most of the time, in somebody else's hands.

For at least two post-war generations of Australians and New Zealanders, the depiction of our soldiers, sailors and airmen was not ours. For a couple of years, while the war raged and imports of American comics were banned, Australians had *Bluey and Curley*, the *Phantom Airman* and *Wanda the War Girl.* Elsewhere in the Dominions, the Canadians had *Canada Jack* and *Nelvana of the North* taking the fight to the Germans, but in Canada, as in Australia, once American comics were imported again the local product began to disappear (Gray, 2017).

There has been much recent research into the role of war comics in society, including work by Laurie (2014), Scott (2011), Clarkson (2008) and Gibson (2008) and Chapman (2011, 2013, 2016). Work on Australian comics and society by Foster (1998, 1999) and masculinities by Laurie (1999) has been complemented by later work by Chapman (2011) and Chapman and Ellen (2012).

War comics tell us a great deal about our expectations of behaviour in times of crisis, what Clarkson (2008) calls 'constructions of ideal masculinity' and, in specific and general terms, they may provide enough information through entertainment to make people want to find out, to use von Ranke's words, how things essentially were.

War comics tell us much about how we see our past, how we idealise or imagine our soldiers behaving, how we conceive of notions such as bravery and resolution, how we moved from seeing every enemy combatant as evil, until the day came when war comics began to admit that in the Second World War, yes, there had been good Germans and good Italians and, shockingly to some readers, even good Japanese. War comics also give us some idea of what the past looked like and—with sometimes less accuracy—how people talked; how they thought, how they reacted; they tell us what they wore and what their equipment was like.

For children who wanted to know more, comics like *Commando* have acted as a teaching source, not only through its use of historical battles and sites in stories, but also through the inclusion of facts on equipment profiles, unit identification patches, badges and rank markers, wartime photos and quizzes. If nothing else, the accuracy of *Commando* comics provided an antidote to the careless way in which most films and television series from the 1960s and 1970s portrayed the Second World War.

As *Commando*'s editor, Calum Laird said:

> Antony Beevor or Max Hastings we ain't, but maybe we're a gateway to their interpretations of historical events. Commando strives to provide an authentic and accurate background to stories of action and adventure. We can, and I hope we do, deliver nuggets of history wrapped up in our

> fictional narratives. That's all we can do. If that leads any of our readers to go on and look at the events we've touched on in more detail, we are delighted. (Laird 2014, personal communication)

Clarkson (2008) suggests the Second World War played a crucial role in popular memory across Europe and America, and indeed, across the rest of the world. This helped create 'a mass audience for war comics which focused on storylines dealing with that conflict'. That mass audience was met in the United States and the United Kingdom by the creation of mass market war comics, a product that dominated and eventually eliminated any localised view that might have arisen in Australia, New Zealand or elsewhere.

New Zealand and Australian comics at war

As producers of cultural artefacts, Australia and New Zealand have always been peripheral. In a classic model of structural imperialism, New Zealand has always been on Australia's periphery and thereafter Australia has always been on the periphery of the British, American and European markets. Thus it is not surprising that like their local film industries, comic production in these countries has long been dominated by imports.

With its small population, there was very little comic production in New Zealand prior to the Second World War; talented artists who might have fostered a local industry such as Maurice Bramley moved across 'the Ditch' to Sydney for better opportunities and wages or, like David Low, moved to London. Similarly, many Australian artists sought employment in the UK or in the United States. (Foster, 1998; Maurice Bramley, 2016). We have been unable to find any evidence of any war comic being produced in New Zealand between 1939-1945. In Australia, for a brief moment during the Second World War, when bans on the importation of non-essentials meant that American comics were not available, there was a so-called 'Golden Age' when local production flourished. Indeed, Chapman (2011) has argued that 'It is generally accepted that if there had not been a war there would never have been an Australian comic book industry'. The local industry survived for a time after the war and enjoyed a wide audience before it was overrun by American imports.

> At its peak, Australia's comic-book industry was enormously successful. One study suggested that 50 million comic books, both reprints and local creations, were sold in Australia in 1951. (Juddery 2013)

The same pattern was repeated in Canada, where there was a sudden opportunity for local artists to find a wartime market, which they filled with locally-made comics that found a ready and appreciative market. Eventually local artists began to produce overtly nationalistic characters such as *Johnny Canuck* (Gray, 2017).[1]

We have been able to identify 13 war comics written and produced in Australia during and after the Second World War. They were:

- *Chesty Bond* (newspaper strip 1938-1964)
- *Wally and the Major* (newspaper strip and annuals, 1940-c1974)
- *Bluey and Curley* (newspaper strip and annuals, 1940-1975)
- *Tightrope Tim* (newspaper strip, 1941-1949)
- *Alec the Airman* (newspaper strip, 1941-1942)
- *Adolf, Hermann and Musso* (newspaper strip, c1941-1945)
- *Schmidt der Shpy* (newspaper strip, c1942-1945)
- *Wanda the War Girl* (newspaper strip, 1943-1951)
- *Tim Valour* (1948-1960s)
- *Skydemons* (1952)
- *Billy Battle* (1952-50s)
- *Avian Tempest* (1953-1950)
- *The Phantom Commando* (1959-c1970)

Single war cartoons were drawn in existing newspapers and magazines, as well as in new publications such as the Australian Army Journal *SALT*, the service

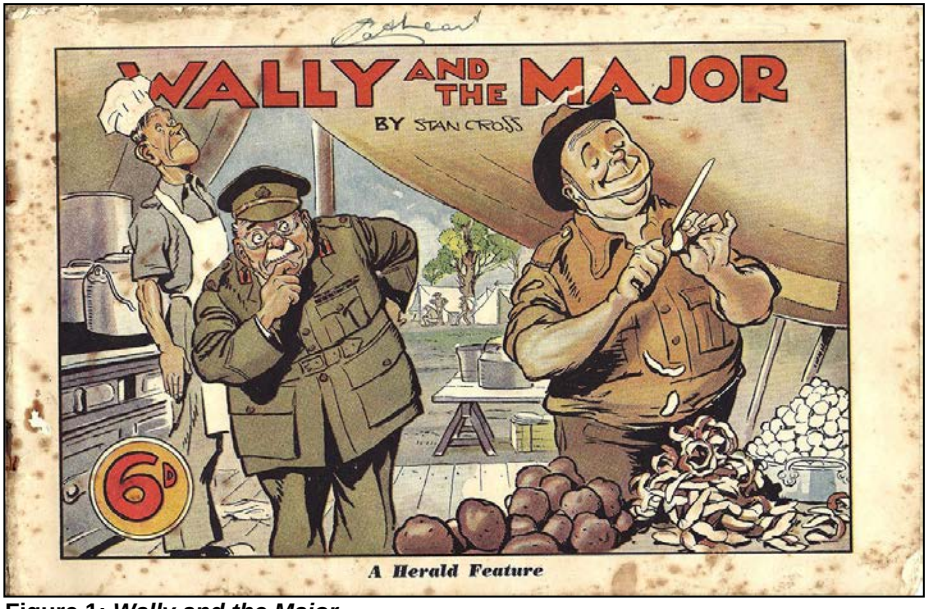

Figure 1: *Wally and the Major*.

personnel's newspaper *Guinea Gold,* or the 14 Australian War Memorial 1941-1945 Series books.

Chesty Bond used a 1938 Bonds clothing advertising character and from 1940, he entered the war to fight the Nazis and to defeat the Japanese hordes,

clad for the occasion in his white, athletic singlet (Berry 2014). *Wally and the Major* (Figure 1) and *Bluey and Curley* (Figure 2) featured characters drawn from the Australian army. Wally Higgins, with Major Winks, a 1st Australian Imperial Force (AIF) veteran, serve together in Australia with the militia. Bluey is also a 1st AIF veteran and Curley is the young, enthusiastic recruit. They serve together in the 2nd AIF (Ryan 1979). Whereas *Bluey and Curley* is set in a fighting unit, *Wally and the Major* is set in Australia, where they are base-wallahs.

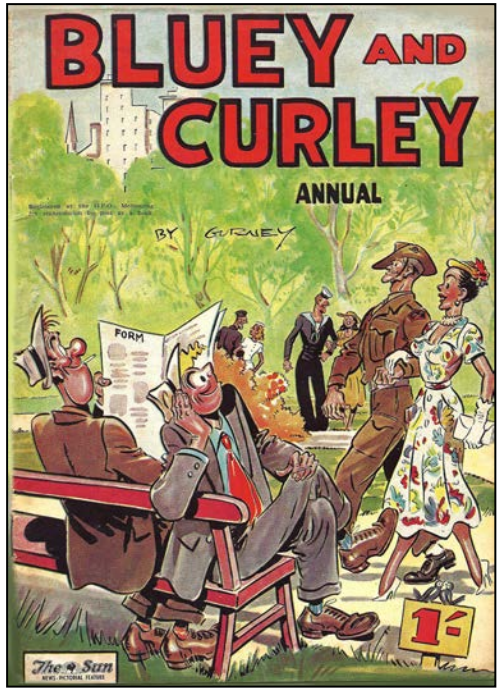

Figure 2: *Bluey and Curley*.

Each strip looked for the funny and the ridiculous aspects of army life, rather than depicting fighting. Both strips were put in collections, which were published in book forms as annuals. *Tightrope Tim* was a comic strip in which the focus was more on wartime espionage than combat. *Alec the Airman* was another strip, but it made fun of life on a Royal Australian Air Force base. Both *Adolf, Hermann and Musso* and *Schmidt der Shpy* were comic strips satirising the Axis. There are unconfirmed reports that, as a result, the strip's cartoonist Jim Russell, was placed on a 'Hitler Black List' (http://thecartoonfactory.com.au/russell.html).

Wanda the War Girl was a full colour comic strip, in which the heroic—but frequently scantily-dressed—Wanda foiled a variety of Axis enemies (Figure 3). An obvious copy of the popular *Jane* comic strip from the *Daily Mirror* in the UK and meant as a wartime pin-up girl, she has nevertheless been described as one of the first comics to portray a female point of view (Chapman, 2011).

Of the wartime Australian comic strips identified, only *Wanda the War Girl*, *Chesty Bond*, *Bluey and Curley* and *Wally and the Major* continued into the 1950s, with their characters drawn in civilian life. For six years after the war, Kath O'Brien's *Wanda the War Girl* continued in the adventure/action comic strip called simply *Wanda,* where she worked as a spy or detective (Ryan 1979). 'Will' Mahoney's *Chesty Bond* continued in his role as the representative of the Bonds brand, with the strips having Chesty turn into a superhero, as soon as he revealed his Bond's white singlet (Digparty, 2016 http://www.digplanet.com/wiki/Chesty_Bond).

Alec Gurney's *Bluey and Curley* were working class characters, often depicted in their post-war lives as labourers. In their civilian guise, Stan Cross's *Wally and the Major* worked in a North Queensland sugar cane mill. The continued existence, for more than 30 years, of *Wally and the Major* and *Bluey and Curley* in peacetime, indicates that their popularity lay in their humorous depictions of the characters rather than in depictions of them as heroic soldiers. Yet it was each comic's wartime depictions that earned them the popularity that allowed them to continue post-war. Lindesay (1970) argued that *Bluey and Curley:*

Figure 3: ***Wanda the War Girl.***

> became an Australian institution, as authentically a part of the popular Australian legend as Ned Kelly, or Phar Lap. They were so representative in looks, attitude, and language as to be perfectly acceptable to the Australian soldier.

Of *Wally and the Major* he wrote that '…physically there was typicality about the corpulent, foolish Pudden, the jovial grey-haired Major, and the undemonstrative, lanky and laconic Wally' (Lindesay, 1970) .

After the war, *The Phantom Commando*, *Avian Tempest, Billy Battle* and *Tim Valour* served as homes for adventure stories with a military (or at least a quasi-military) air. *Skydemons*, which was set during the Korean War, had a short print run. *Billy Battle* began as a part of each *Little Trimmer* comic and soon became the lead story. *Avian Tempest* is sometimes reminiscent of Edgar P. Jacobs' *Blake and Mortimer* stories, with its mixture of chaps with moustaches, science fiction elements and what was then cutting edge aviation technology. *Tim Valour* began as a science-fiction comic, before the lead character became a spy, who flew Sabres during the Korean War. Korea was a boon to Australian war comics, with characters such as *The Crimson Comet* (began 1949) occasionally entering the conflict to fight the Communist menace (Ryan, 1979). *The Phantom Commando* is set in the Second World War and the character flies a variety of aircraft, while based on a mysterious Indian Ocean island. It mirrors

the still popular comic book character *The Phantom*. *The Phantom Commando* is 'significant because it was the last, original Australian comic of the postwar era' (Comicsdownunder, 2007, http://comicsdownunder.blogspot.com.au/2007/09/unmasking-phantom-commando.html). Many of these titles were reprinted during the 1960s and early 1970s, where they became fillers for souvenir bags at annual agricultural shows.

The earlier reintroduction of American comics to New Zealand ended the brief existence of local comics there much sooner.

However, respite came, to Australia, in 1954, in response to a moral panic caused by Dr Fredric Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent: The Influence of Comic Books on Today's Youth*. (Lealand, 2016) American comics were banned again, although this time local artists found they were still competing with English imports.

They also had to contend with home grown moral panics. The publicity surrounding the trial for rape of Australian artist Len Lawson caused distributors Gordon and Gotch to impose censorship on local publications (Coville, J. http://www.psu.edu/dept/inart10_110/inart10/cmbk4cca.html; Finnane, 1998; Ryan, 1979).

Once American comics were allowed to be re-imported, local comics production was slowly, but inexorably, suffocated and Australian comic publishers soon resorted to just reprinting American titles, with US characters as the war heroes.

British war comics

The effective end of Australian war comics production by the early 1960s meant that comic depictions of Australians at war disappeared as well. With no local industry to speak of, depictions of New Zealanders and Australians at war came mainly from British comics. There were very few depictions of Australians in US war comics. What little there was seems to be reprints of Australian material. British war comics were more relevant to Australians and New Zealanders since these covered the period from the beginning of the war in September 1939 to December 6, 1941, before the United States became an active combatant.

There were serious differences in the style and content of the American comics, which were often based on superhero characters such as *Sergeant Rock* or *Sergeant Fury and His Howling Commandos*, *The Losers*, *The Unknown Soldier* or *The Haunted Tank*.[2] American comics were generally—but not always—larger than British comics and in colour, as opposed to the black and white of their British counterparts.

The first British war comics were launched by Amalgamated Press and Fleetway Library Publication. They were pocket-sized (although nobody has ever proven the claim that they were meant to fit inside the pocket of a squaddie's blouse) and consisted of the following titles:

- *War Picture Library* (September 1958 to December 1984)
- *Air Ace Library* (1960 to 1970)
- *Battle Picture Library* (January 1961 to December 1984)
- *War at Sea Picture library* (1962-1963)
- *Action Picture Library* (1969-1970)

In competition, D.C. Thomson launched *Commando War Stories in Pictures.* The official date for the first two issues was 27 June 1961. *Commando* comics were in a class of their own. They looked different and were of a higher quality, perfect bound rather than stapled and with a colour cover that wrapped around to cover half the back page, where there was a summary of the story. In contrast, the Picture Library comics carried advertising on the back page with spot colour, often for cheap jewellery.

Battle Picture Library editor Steve Holland attributed this proliferation of British war comics from 1958-62 to the appearance of a ready and willing post-war market:

> Thanks to the post-war baby boom, the late 1950s and early 1960s were filled with the cries of children, 'What did you do in the war, Dad?' Biographies of war heroes were topping the bestsellers charts and the film industry was quick to catch on with blockbuster movies such as *The Dambusters* and *Reach for the Sky.* (Ogg, 2014)

Rech (2014) describes the depiction of British and Commonwealth servicemen as having becoming the exclusive province of comics like *Commando*, which emphasised the experiences of individuals working inside a platoon, a squad or with a single partner.

> Translated and recycled 'numerous times for new audiences in Europe, Scandinavia' (Conroy, 2009, p. 108) and India (Ribbens, 2010), the medium tapped into and reproduced the ideologically straightforward, 'good big war.' (Rech, 2014) '… Their characters' 'exploits were not more outrageous than the tales the readers might have heard from their [veteran] fathers and grandfathers.' (Conroy, 2009, p. 108)

Launched from between 13 to 17 years after the end of the Second World War, these British comics could employ contributors who were often returned servicemen, thus guaranteeing a degree of accuracy often missing in US war comics of the same period. *Commando* is the only British war comic still in production.

British it might be, but not English, for unlike the Library comics, *Commando* was produced by Scottish publisher, D.C. Thomson and has provided a monthly diet of adventure and derring-do for more than 50 years. Once primarily concerned with the Second World War, *Commando* now tells stories from a variety

of conflicts and feature characters from dozens of nations or time periods, even venturing into science fiction.

Commando comics have had a marked effect on popular culture, especially in the UK, where they provided stylistic inspiration for many punk bands and for major players in the 1980s New Wave of British Heavy Metal, such as Iron Maiden. The cover art for Iron Maiden songs like 'Aces High', 'Tail Gunner' and 'The Trooper' would not look out of place on the cover of a *Commando* comic. Briefly printed in Germany to save costs, sales of *Commando* have fallen from a peak of about 800,000 in the 1980s (Ogg 2014; McBeth 2013).

ANZACs

With a readership throughout the British Commonwealth and across the globe, *Commando* publishes stories featuring non-British characters. If you visit the *Commando* home page you can see stories based on many nationalities. Among them are members of a strange breed called 'ANZACs'. We have not been able to find an 'Anzacland' or 'Anzaclandia' but it appears to be a mythical antipodean realm from which Australians and New Zealanders originate.[3] (www.commandocomics.com/)

Depictions of Australian and New Zealanders in English comics were not entirely new when *Commando* was launched. In 1933, the English comic *Triumph* published a story about the Australians in what was then referred to as the Great War. 'The Fighting Freelance' told the story of Kit Carson, who smuggled himself aboard a troopship bound for Europe after being rejected by the army, declaring: 'Here's the Germans marching on Paris, and yet you turn your noses at a willing volunteer! It's enough to make a cobber sick—square dinkum it is.' Quite why an Australian was named after an American frontiersman and how the expression 'fair dinkum' became so mangled remain a mystery (Riche, 2009).

For *Commando*, the use of ANZACs in a story is highly valued. Former *Commando* editor George Low said in 2007:

> …a struggling script-writer who couldn't get one particular plot right. His idea was just too ordinary and didn't have sparkle. …all seemed lost until, finally, the author brightened up and said, 'What if I made it Aussies? It would seem a lot more exciting then.
>
> …he did have a point. Somehow the inclusion of the word ANZAC fires the imagination and opens up new angles to get the reader turning the page to see what happens next. (Low, 2007)

Indeed, in only its second issue, *They Call Him Coward* featured Australians in New Guinea in 1942. An instant attention-grabber in Australia for this then-new war comic, it prompted interest and promoted future sales.

But how accurate were the *Commando* depictions of Australians and New

Zealanders? While the stories were not that outrageous, the artwork is often problematic. This is because the artwork was mostly outsourced to South American or European artists, who could be employed cheaply. So for the young reader growing up in the Antipodes it is likely that the thrilling tale of daring Australians defeating Rommel single-handedly was published by a Scot, written by an Englishman and drawn by an Argentinian.

Commando editor Calum Laird described the process of creating a *Commando* comic:

> Virtually all *Commando* artwork is done by freelance contributors; the numbers done by in-house artists can be counted on the numbers of one hand. They have been illustrated principally by Spanish-speaking artists in Spain or South America. The artists are given picture descriptions for each scene indicating which characters are in the scene, their expressions, what order they speak in and what action is going on. In addition, character descriptions are given at the beginning of the story to allow the artist to have an image of each character, their build, hair colour, uniform, equipment, etc. (Laird, 2014, personal communication).

So what is the typical *Commando* ANZAC like? We spoke informally to several people who grew up reading *Commando* and other British war comics in Australia and one of the most common observations about the way Australians are depicted was a general impression that they were disrespectful towards officers, especially 'Pommies'; always stuck up for their mates and were often called Bluey or Snowy. They spoke in slang that was no longer in universal usage within Australia, even by the 1960s when *Commando* appeared. They were wild colonial boys and rugby players in tiny shorts; but mostly, they kept losing their shirts.

> Shirts off and Australians. Why do the two always go together? Without fail Australian war picture comic troops are always keen to throw off their kit and show off their chests. The other typical traits of Australians in these stories are their disregard for authority and their fearless fighting ability and spirit. (Pocket War Comics, 2011, http://pocketwarcomics.blogspot.co.nz/2011/07/war-picture-library-135-big-arena.html)

The depictions of Australians in *Commando* is a long way from *Bluey and Curley* or *Wally and the Major*. *Bluey and Curley*, in particular, mirror the lanky larrikin stereotype played so often in films and television by Australian character actor Chips Rafferty (1909-1971). At this distance, *Chesty Bond* looks like a self-referential joke, a character so absurd that it is hard to imagine that he was ever taken as a serious depiction of the Australian fighting man.

We know that not everybody calls everybody else 'cobber'… and not

> every second Aussie is called 'Bluey' or 'Snowy' …..and not every Kiwi is built like a rugby forward … but it makes for part of the fun. (Low, 2007)

It is difficult, of course, to make a direct comparison between Australian wartime comics and *Commando*. Worcester (Chapman et al., 2016) argues that wartime comics and comics about war cannot be regarded as being the same thing because of the different cultural and social settings and expectations. Yet one could argue that the early *Commando* scriptwriters, with their direct experience of the Second World War, were perfectly capable of bringing something very close to an authentic wartime view to their work.

However, the importance assigned to *mentalités*—'questions of opinion, attitude, discourse and mode of thought'—by Chapman et al. (2015) allow us to argue that that they in fact allow the writer to make attitudes and ideas from a certain era tangible. Indeed, Laird argues that the use of archaic Australian slang in Commando comics is a way of invoking the past (Laird, personal communication, 2017).

Unfortunately, *Commando* did not originally give credit to its contributors. While progress has been made in identifying artists and writers from existing records, some details still remain obscure. It is sometimes hard to know who wrote what story, or who drew which pictures, or painted which covers. If one could identify the author of every *Commando* story and know whether they served during the 1939-45 conflict one could argue on a case-by-case basis as to how much of the opinions and attitudes of the war they had made tangible. The difficulty lies with the *Commando* artists. *Commando* used two artists, hired cheaply through agencies, for each comic; one to draw the story and one for the covers and artists. (Low, 2011; Bishop, interview, 2015). It is highly unlikely that the Spanish or South American artists served during the Second World War and their cultural separation from the events and people depicted is often obvious.

Given *Commando*'s reputation for detail it is not surprising that depictions of uniforms and weapons is quite accurate, but backgrounds are sometimes inaccurate and supporting characters occasionally go astray. In *Island of Fear*, for instance, the lead character is dressed in a mix of indigenous regalia from New Guinea, while his followers—supposedly Dayaks from Borneo—can best be described as 'the natives' from central casting (Low, 2006).

In *Killing Zone*, set on the northern coast of New Guinea, the artist appears to have used pictures from East Africa as a guide to the peoples of New Guinea. At least one of them appears to be wearing a Muslim skull cap and the general impression is that they belong more in Mombasa than Madang (Low, 2006).

It is the covers where real problems arise. The Australian soldier on the front of *Jap Killer!* (Figure 4) with his beard, ragged clothes and Lee Enfield looks close enough to how we might imagine the soldier in the background of Figure 2

would look after a few days in the jungle. This is Sergeant 'Snowy' Cutmore. Of whom the back page blurb says:

> The day didn't start right for Snowy unless he'd knocked off a couple of Japs before breakfast. Every Jap sniper knew and feared the giant Sergeant with the matchless jungle craft and killing power.' (*Commando* No. 15)

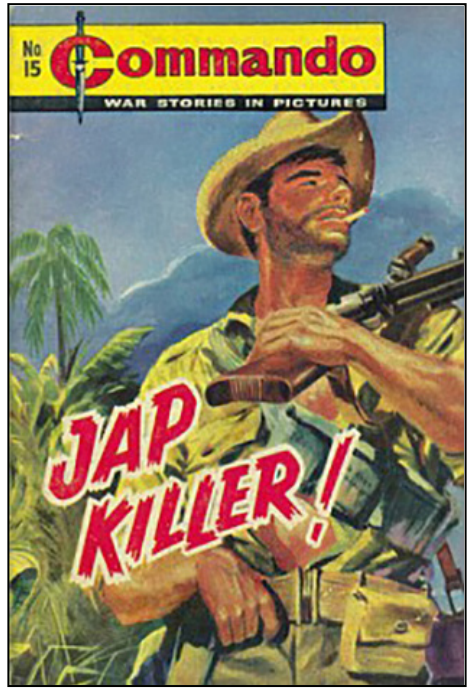

Figure 4: Commando: *Jap Killer!*

Cutmore was back a few months later in *This Man is Dangerous*, having landed in Italy and itching, so we are told, 'to get at Nazi throats with the same cold steel the little yellow men had come to fear so much' (*Commando* No. 36). By now the cover artist has transformed him into a crazed madman trying to tear out a grenade pin with his teeth. Needless to say there were no Australian infantry in Italy.

Even when depicting British troops in the jungle, the use of South American artists led to anomalies. The figure in the foreground of the cover of *The Haunted Jungle* (Figure 5), for instance, looks like he might be at home in the remoter parts of the Amazon or the stews of Marseilles, a villain from Garth or Modesty Blaise, but not a hero from *Commando*.

Figure 5. Commando: *The Haunted Jungle.*

The cover of *They Called Him Coward* (Figure 6) is just wrong; too blonde, too cute, his shorts far too short and he should be carrying an Australian Owen sub-machine gun, not a US Thompson gun.

When we showed the cover of *They Called Him Coward* at the Media, War and Memory conference at Auckland University of Technology it provoked

Figure 6. Commando: *They Called Him Coward!*

an immediate reaction from the audience, the gist of which was that the image was homoerotic. Given the date of *They Called Him Coward's* publication (1961), one might echo the question posed by Janes (2012):

> …is a process of (homo)sexualisation being applied to images which were the product of a more innocent age and which were intended, in fact, to express normative modes of gender performance?

While there has been some research on homoeroticism and gender in comics in general (and superheroes, in particular) there appears to be little on war comics per se and we have been unable to find anything dealing with *Commando* comics.

In its first year of publication, *Commando* published a story dealing with the New Zealand Land Wars, *The Māori Challenge*. The historical background to the story appears to be well researched, the uniforms and incidental details are well done and the story presents the war within the parameters often found in *Commando* comics and one which reflected the then prevalent view of the Land Wars: Māori and Pākehā live in peace, but fight after bad Pākehā stir up trouble, the Pākehā win, Māori and Pākehā are reconciled, learn to live together and their descendants later fight side by side against the Germans.

The story was included in the *Anzacs at War* compilation when it appeared in 2007. A year later, *The New Zealand Herald*, perhaps scenting a controversy, ran a story citing complaints that the comic was racist for describing the Māori as cannibals and quoting an academic as saying it could undermine the Treaty of Waitangi. (Milne, 2008) The story appeared several months before the publication of New Zealand academic Paul Moon's history of cannibalism among the Māori, *This Horrid Practice*, which caused an uproar, and reflects some of the sensitivity around the issue.

In fact, there is just one brief exchange about cannibalism in the comic: 'Luke, I've heard that Māoris eat their enemies.' 'At times—just to show respect.' (Low, 2007) This reflected the view prevalent at the time of the comic's publication that Māori cannibalism was ritualistic rather than gustatory, a partaking of the slain enemy's mana. Moon, on the other hand, argued that in fact cannibalism was widespread and essentially a way of humiliating the dead. Laird was unimpressed by the *Herald* article when we brought it to his attention, declaring:

> A great deal of research and experience does go into each and every Commando story—unlike *The New Zealand Herald* article which seems based on a largely uninformed vox pop. The contributors do not seem to have read any of the material. I would doubt very much if the Māori have ever been referred to as cannibals. *Commando* suffers from the perception that it is racist in its attitudes because many observers 'know' it is. Usually without having read any copies properly. Others who do read the material decide it is racist on the grounds that the one racial group or another may be described by some derogatory epithet. You cannot depict 'bad' people without them saying 'bad' things. Is Stephen Spielberg an anti-semite because some of the characters in *Schindler's List* say anti-semitic things? No matter what portrayal of a colonial war is attempted, it will not satisfy everybody. That's the nature of the human condition; everyone has a different viewpoint and many are irreconcilable with others (Laird, 2014, personal communication).

Since then, *Commando*'s New Zealanders have appeared in stories about 20th century conflicts and as such have been classified as ANZACS, alongside Australians. However, unless the Kiwis are soldiers wearing lemon squeezer hats, readers cannot tell one from the other and so they blend into a subset of rugged and colourful colonials.

After the war

By the early 1990s, with comic collections promoted as an investment strategy, the wide range of comics on open sale disappeared almost overnight. Comics became the exclusive preserve of collectors' comic book stores. *Commando* was still sold in newsagents or other non-specialist shops but to the older, nostalgic comic buyer, who just wanted a quick read and bought it on the way home, rather than going through the 'serious collector' treatment experienced at the small, elitist comic book stores. Unless people were prepared to pay up to A$17 for rare copies of *The Phantom Commando* on e-bay, locally produced war comics remained unobtainable.

Local depictions of Australians at war in comic form (or, in their latest incarnation, graphic novels) did not reappear until the 21st century.

From 2012, Z Beach True Comics in Australia began producing a limited series of graphic novels about Australians during the First and Second World Wars, including *Gallipoli: The Landing* and *Kokoda: That Bloody Track* (Dolan, et al., 2012) and *Reg Saunders: An indigenous War Hero* (Dolan & Threlfall, 2015). Stiffly drawn and overloaded with text, they look like well-intentioned classroom resource, utterly lacking in the vibrancy of *Commando* comics, reminiscent of the 1950s-1960s *Classics Illustrated* that depicted famous novels. Other graphic novels dealing with Australia's wars have included *The Sacrifice* (Mutard, 2008).

As noted earlier, New Zealand cartoonists and comic artists who wanted to make a living mostly emigrated, but activity did not entirely cease. Russell Gore drew the 'It Happened in New Zealand' comic strips during the 1950s for newspapers and appears to have depicted episodes of the Land Wars, in particular, those involving the Prussian soldier-of-fortune Gustav von Tempsky (Lealand, 2016).

Lealand describes the strips as crudely drawn and notes: 'It is also a little ironic that Gore chose to write history using drawing, text and speech bubbles for such a form ['comics'] was not highly valued in New Zealand society in the 1950s.'

Crude though they were, the 'It Happened in New Zealand' strips were popular enough to be gathered together in several volumes.

Apart from the brain drain of artists to Australia and the United Kingdom, former *New Zealand Herald* journalist and editor of the ground-breaking comic *2000AD,* David Bishop, cited economic and cultural constraints as major factors in the slow development of comics in New Zealand and especially the lack of war comics:

> New Zealand had a massive cultural cringe, so depictions of New Zealanders by New Zealanders were few and far between. We had to look overseas. There was no way for comic creators to support themselves in New Zealand. They had to leave the country. Arts council grants didn't apply to low brow culture. (Bishop 2015, interview)

As it did in Australia, Gordon and Gotch had a monopoly on newspaper and magazine distribution. These were the days when New Zealand's heavily protected economy and isolated culture made it look like the East Germany of the South Seas. People had to seek written permission from the New Zealand Postmaster General's office to import a foreign magazine.

Anybody wanting to create a local war comic, after the 1960s, would also have faced an uphill battle, Bishop said, because the Vietnam War had created a hippy anti-war culture. War, he said, became something of which to be ashamed.

Conclusion

While home-grown war comics might have been as elusive as the moa, reading *Commando* comics seems to have been a common experience for a number of New Zealand artists. These included James Davidson, who bought 'piles of Commando comics for next to nothing at the local used bookshop' (Kinnaird, 2013) and film director Vince Ward, who remembers growing up 'with *Mickey Mouse* and *Commando* comics—basically war comics and Disney' (Kinnaird, 2013).

Eventually, however, with the backing of the New Zealand Education Department, earlier this century a small number of graphic novels dealing with the experiences of Kiwis at war appeared. These include *Hautipua Rerarangi/ Born to Fly* (Arahanga 2012) and *Ngarimu Te Tohu Toa/Victory at Point 209* (Burda, 2012). Both are in Te Reo and English and are about the achievements of Māori servicemen. In *Ngarimu Te Tohu Toa*, Māori deities appear over the North African battlefield as the Māori Battalion advances on the German lines.

In 2011, Chris Grosz produced *Kimble Bent: Malcontent,* which told the story of an American sailor washed up in New Zealand, who fights for the Māori during the Land Wars. (Kinnaird, 2013). Published that same year was *A Nice Day for a War* by Chris Slane and Matt Elliott. Significantly, *Commando* played a role to play in its creation—as something they did not want to copy. Elliott said:

> We decided it wasn't going to be a *Commando* comic. It was going to be a reaction to all that sort of thing. We were still going to get some of those spectacular elements in there, but also show the grimness of the soldier's life, the reality of it. (Kinnaird, 2013, pp. 94-95)

The modern graphic novel format allows artists to develop characters and stories in ways that *Commando* cannot. However, given the cost and effort required to

produce comics and the uncertainty of ever making a living from them (and self-publishing is the only option for many New Zealand artists) it appears unlikely that home-grown depictions of Australians and New Zealanders at war will ever appear with any regularity.

Both, however, have their place and are aimed at different parts of the market. Away from specialised comic shops and the rarified world of collectors, *Commando* still holds its place, providing its readers with a gateway to history and giving its readers in however an exaggerated form, a glimpse of the role Australia and New Zealand have played in the world's wars. For the mythological ANZACS, *Commando* comics will continue to be their home.

Notes

1. The state of comic production in the other former Commonwealth Dominions is a matter for further investigation. In South Africa the situation appears to have been complicated by the pro-German stance of much of the Boer population and a fragmented market. There were daily editorial cartoons in newspapers and collections of cartoons in service journals, but there does not appear to have been anything like a war comic as we have described them. After the war, *Commando* and other British war comics were available in South Africa and what was then Rhodesia, just as they were in Australia and New Zealand. However, even when there was a resurgence of South African comics in the 1970s, these appear to have been largely done in the Italian style as *fumetti*, using posed photographs rather than cartoons. There were no stories about the Second or First World Wars, but contemporary combat stories in titles like *Grensvegter*. Commando was available in India and there is now a burgeoning war comic industry where local publishers draw on that country's wars with China and Pakistan for patriotic stories. The authors would welcome any information on war comics produced in India or South Africa during the period described here.
2. The latter crossed over into the supernatural with the frequent appearance of the ghosts of Confederate cavalry leader General Jeb Stuart and Union General Phil Sheridan.
3. The term A.N.Z.A.C. stands for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. It should only apply to the troops serving at Gallipoli, the Greek Islands in 1915, the Western Front in 1916-1917, or in the Greek and Cretan campaign in 1941. The term 'ANZAC' may be a popular label, but is inaccurate. For Australians, 'Digger' is the better term, but it is not a term that has much currency outside Australia.

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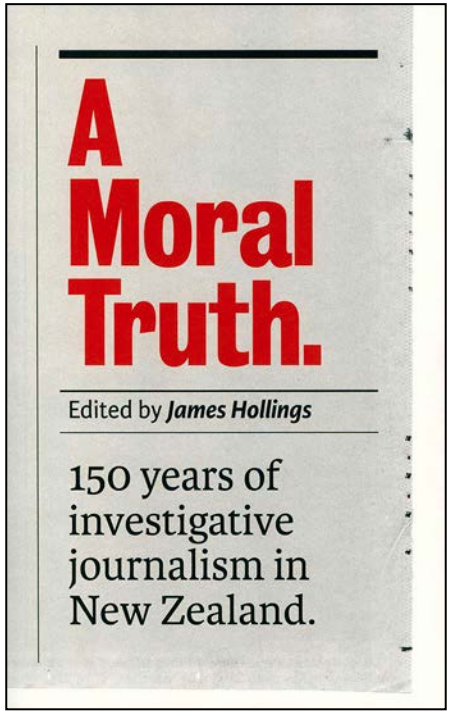
A real inspiration for the next generation of NZ journalists

A Moral Truth: 150 years of Investigative Journalism in New Zealand, edited by James Hollings. Auckland: Massey University Press. 2017. 448 pages. ISBN: 978-0-9941-4158-3



TWO executions 40 years apart; New Zealand's worst aviation disaster; people wrongly imprisoned; the plight of tenants in slum housing; the pollution of our waterways; health scandals resulting in deaths; corporate scandals, sometimes likewise; and so much more.

They are all examples of the investigative journalism to be found in this book, in fact 33 fascinating examples. They start in 1863 with the independent Māori newspaper *Te Hokioi* uncovering government preparations for the invasion of the Waikato, but modern day case studies proliferate too, ending in two widely differing 2016 investigations: one into the tiny New Zealand tax paid by global companies, and the other into revisiting victims of child killers.

Despite initial comments received by editor James Hollings that a compilation of New Zealand investigative journalism would make a 'short book' (p. 9), he has indeed shown there really is no shortage of choice, exemplified by the sheer variety here which also trigger collective memories of many others (which, if room allowed, could have also joined the throng).

And these are textual examples, nearly all from print/online newspapers and magazines or news sites. It does not include the large body of broadcast work through New Zealand's radio and television journalists. (Although this is briefly referred to at the end of the introduction (p. 16), it would have been useful, and fairly simple, to clarify in the subtitle.

After all, it would be possible to include these in the same reflective

exegesis/interview way as had to be done with some of the larger bodies of work in this edition. Perhaps an idea for the next collection.

This is a precious book in many ways, in the purest sense. It captures works a society can be proud of (never mind the journalists, editors and publishers who made them happen), while perhaps feeling the shame of what inspired them, especially when similar stories still appear down the years.

So it was that 'muckraking' *NZ Truth* newspaper campaigned, unsuccessfully, against the hanging of Māori teenager Tahi Kaka in 1911, and then pursued the business of state execution. Summing it up as such though doesn't do justice to the journalist's original copy conveying the sadness and horror involved.

Later in 1945, the same newspaper again attends and covers the hanging of a young man, this time Irishman Albert Black, also at Mt Eden, in its campaign for the abolition of the death penalty. Here the writing is damning through its powerfully sparse style, which also reflects the restrictions by then placed on how hangings could be covered by the press.

As reporter Jack Young wrote in the story at the time:

> Press reporters who have to attend as representatives of the public have been warned that they are expected to be 'restrained' in what they write, and that if they 'sensationalise' reports of executions they may lose the 'privilege' of attending … The government it is understood knew very little about the mechanics of capital punishment when it introduced it. It is doubtful whether its members have much more first hand knowledge now. (p. 97)

The investigation into the plight of rental housing tenants wasn't recent but written in 1903 by *New Zealand Herald* freelance journalist Hilda Rollett who went undercover into the Auckland slums, sometimes finding landlords living alongside in similar penury, and holding the council to account. In 1904, she went undercover as a maid to investigate 'the Domestic Service Problem' (p. 45) with writing as engaging now for readers as it must have been then, even if the subject matter and general views have dated, with a tacit acceptance of the status quo.

Also not recent but as relevant is the investigation into 'dirty dairying' and polluted rivers by Jim Tucker in 1972 for the *Taranaki Herald*, a lyrically and powerfully written piece which pioneered environmental journalism in New Zealand.

But there is no shortage of modern day examples whose subjects are hopefully still well known in the collective psyche, whether the wrongful conviction campaigns, such as those of Arthur Allan Thomas and David Dougherty, to certain events surrounding major disasters, such as the Christchurch Earthquake and the Pike River Mine explosion.

Elsewhere, how long it took for things to be put even partially right —where possible—by authorities in a number of cases suggest some of

the more recent investigations, such as that of Nicky Hager, may also be waiting a while for an outcome. Bruce Ansley's piece on the selling of New Zealand land to foreigners, focusing on the iconic High Country, was in 2002.

Defining 'investigative journalism' has long exercised many, moving past the 'all journalism is investigative' line. An example of a persuasive and useful argument is that of Starkman (2014) whose *The Watchdog That Didn't Bite: The financial crisis and the disappearance of investigative journalism* exposed the failings of the press, particularly financial and business, who missed especially the subprime mortgage scandal.

He theorises dividing journalism into two types: 'accountability' or 'watchdog' journalism which takes no prisoners to produce the 'Great Story' to effect change; and 'access' journalism which relies on relationships journalists have with their regular sources, providing the interviews and material but with the risk that those relationships prevent the necessary revelations (Usher, 2016).

However, here, the title *A Moral Truth* reflects Hollings' decision, with reference to various scholars, to define it more broadly, around uncovering secrets which transgress a central moral value(s) which thus matter to the general public (pp. 12-13). Quite rightly this means that important works can be included, even if they did not manage to effect change at the time.

These stories offer real inspiration and aspiration to the next generations of journalists, students or trainees, and encouragement to any journalists feeling more world weary and battered than usual, at a time when the profession sometimes seems under attack and unsupported.

By their being brought together in this modern collection, they collectively reinforce the impressiveness of such New Zealand journalism. It brings new audiences to older work and who knows what that might trigger? In the case of the oldest pieces, this book perhaps rescues, preserves and breathes new life into that work.

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Maintaining the climate struggle

An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power. directed by Bonni Cohen, John Shenk. 2017. Running time: 98min.

An Inconvenient Sequel picks up a decade after the powerful and passionate *An Inconvenient Truth* introduced us to Al Gore's crusade to make people behave responsibly over climate change.

In this film Gore, once nearly-president of the United States, Nobel laureate and Oscar winner, has emerged as the elder statesman of the climate change movement, inspiring legions of followers across the world and intervening during the Paris climate talks to secure a deal with India.

His speeches and his activism are inspiring, but in many ways this is more of a film about Gore than about climate change.

Perhaps the filmmakers thought that people knew the basic facts and didn't need to be reminded.

This means that people who have not seen the first film, or are new to the climate change issue as many younger viewers may be, may find themselves a little adrift.

The film inadvertently brings in broader issues of global change into focus when a live broadcast is cancelled because of the 2015 terrorist attacks on Paris, but takes the link no further.

However, as the 2016 documentary *Age of Consequences* showed, the links between climate change, globalisation and terrorism, are now becoming clear.

There are also one or two moments in the film—the meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau among them—which do not appear to be entirely, shall we say, spontaneous.

This is not to say that *An Inconvenient Sequel* is a bad film. It's not and it deserves an audience.

At the end of the film, Gore gives an impassioned speech in which he compares the climate change struggle with the civil rights movement. With a savage in the White House, taking inspiration from the beliefs and hopes of the civil rights movement may well be vital to maintaining the struggle to keep climate change under control before it is too late.

Reference

Age of Consequences (2016). Directed by Jared P. Scott [Documentary]. 80min.

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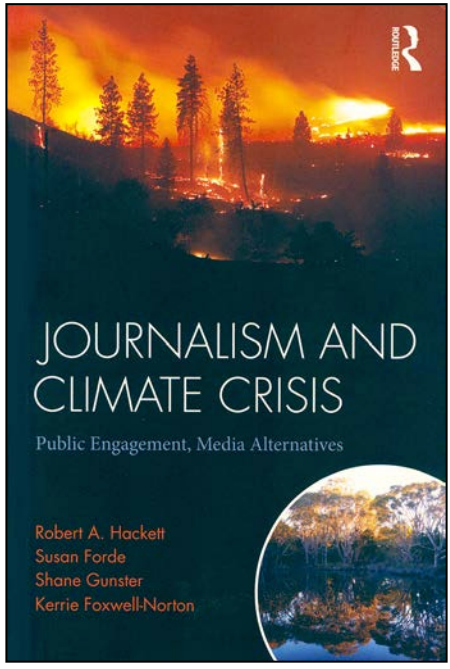
Timely climate media strategy to empower citizens

Journalism and Climate Crisis: Public Engagement, Media Alternatives, edited by Robert A. Hackett, Susan Forde, Shane Gunster and Kerrie Foxwell-Norton. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. 2017. 204 pages. ISBN 978-1-1389-5039-9



AT THE time of reviewing this important and timely book, Hurricane Irma had just ripped a trail of unprecedented destruction from Antigua, Barbuda and Saint Barthélemy in the eastern Caribbean to Florida with at least 81 deaths.

Florida involved one of the largest mass evacuations in US history, with nearly 7 million people being warned to seek shelter elsewhere. Seventy per cent of Miami lost electricity at the height of the storm.

And Irma in turn had followed on the heels of Hurricane Harvey, which devastated a large swathe of Texas. This was the first major hurricane to hit US soil in more than a dozen years.

Seventy-one fatalities and more than US$70 billion in damage. Two wrecking storms of such destructive force hitting the US mainland in less than a fortnight.

Unsurprisingly, President Donald Trump dismissed any link between climate change and the two hurricanes. 'We've had bigger storms than this,' he snorted, even though earlier he had 'marvelled' at their historic size.

The catastrophic category 5 Hurricane Irma sparked an analysis of media responses by Carbon Brief and a forensic examination of the science of climate and Atlantic hurricanes. Citing three climate specialists in particular, the website concluded: 'The strongest hurricanes have gotten stronger because of global warming' (Multiple authors, 2017).

Florida's global warming denier governor Rick Scott weathered criticism after the devastation to his state by still refusing to say—as he has done for seven years since he was first elected in 2010—if he believes man-made climate change is real (Caputo, 2017).

This is all rather ironic given that at the time of completing *Journalism and Climate Crisis: Public Engagement, Media Alternatives*, the co-authors were writing in the context of massive wildfire ravages in the Canadian city of Fort McMurray—epicentre of one of the world's most controversial energy mega-projects, the Alberta tar sands—and, on the other side of the globe, aggressive wildfires were savaging Australia with sharply increasing frequency and intensity.

Just a few years earlier, in 2009, 173 people had perished in the 'Black Saturday' bushfires that engulfed the community of Kinglake in the state of Victoria. Disturbing coral bleaching was also damaging Australia's popular tourist attraction Great Barrier Reef off the Queensland coast.

Noting that the reality of anthropogenic climate challenge can no longer be ignored, this book warns that neither can the 'responsibility of journalism to inform, motivate and empower citizens to engage with the problem' (p. 2)

Journalism and Climate Crisis seeks to disrupt the status quo of the way climate change is reported in much of the world, especially Anglo countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, and to offer strategies for community empowerment, action and hope in the digital age.

While much of the mainstream media, compromised as they are through their declining commercial models, offer little scope for change, the co-authors offer many examples of active communication success, mostly through alternative media.

The four co-authors are uniquely qualified for this collaborative volume. Robert A. Hackett is professor of communication at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, and as a co-founder of NewsWatch Canada, and has been a leading writer on environmental and peace journalism models. He also contributed an issue-defining article in the last edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* on climate change and critical media models.

Susan Forde is director of the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research and associate professor of journalism at Griffith University, Australia, and whose books include *Challenging the News* on alternative media. Shane Gunster is a colleague of Hackett at Simon Fraser University, where he is an associate professor in the School of Communication. Kerrie Foxwell-Norton is senior lecturer in journalism and media studies at Griffith University and a co-author of *Developing Dialogues*.

The book is divided into seven chapters as well as an introduction to journalism models for climate crisis and a conclusion written by the co-authors. The first chapter is on Democracy, Climate Crisis and Journalism, looking at 'normative touchstones', followed by a chapter on Engaging Climate Communication, which examines audiences, frames, values and norms. The third chapter deals with Environmental Protest, Politics and Media Interactions.

Chapter four From Frames to Paradigms offers an in-depth comparative

analysis of civic (or public) journalism, peace journalism and alternative media. This is followed by a British Columbia case study on Contesting Conflict with an examination of advocacy and alternative media in that province.

Chapter six analyses Australian independent news media and climate change in the context of COP21 when the historic Paris Agreement was forged. The final chapter looks at a *Guardian Australia* case study to demonstrate alternative approaches to environmental coverage. The conclusion offers a strategy for 'media reform for climate action'.

Writing about 'ordinary journalism in extraordinary times', the authors argue that the conglomerates that 'increasingly dominate media ownership are maximising short-term profits, stripping assets and disinvesting in news and thus have declining capacity and inclination to face up to the challenges of climate crisis.' Mirroring the arguments of McChesney and Nichols, for example, the authors state:

> Working journalists are faced with tighter deadlines, heavier workloads, multiplatform demands, a 24/7 news hole to fill and a broader palette of topics to report. The result is predictable: fewer beat [rounds] reporters with specialised expertise, less investigative or accountability journalism, more pressure to act like stenographers, reporting competing claims rather than assessing their respective validity (p. 4).

However, the problem does not end there. It goes beyond the 'crisis of journalism's business model—Climate Crisis journalism faces aditional barriers of institutional structure, class power and ideology'. Citing Naomi Klein's argument for taking climate change seriously, they reaffirm the need for a positive role for government, a strengthened public sector and collective action—which is precisely why conservative political forces, especially in North America and Australia, prefer not to take it seriously.

The co-authors argue that journalism needs to rethink its mission to cover urgent political issues such as climate change. The problem is less about the *informed* citizen, and much more about empowering the public to be *engaged*. They are highly critical of how 'elite media' in Australia and the US, for example, have privileged denialist opinion and vested interests, blaming them for widespread misinformation and disengagement. This is contrasted with Western Europe's 'vibrant and pluralistic' media systems.

The co-authors draw from the Christians et al. (2009) model of four normative democratic roles for journalism in their search for answers. While they critique the limited effectiveness of the traditional *monitoring* and the watchdog function of the media (and institutional biases of 'objectivity'), they propose the *facilitative* role seeking to improve the quality of public life and the *radical* role foregrounding social injustice and abuses of power as being more helpful for climate crisis strategies. They give less emphasis to the *collaborative* role 'in support for broader and dominant

social purposes', but this latter category is important in many developing countries, such as in the Pacific.

Their concluding and positive message is that global media reformers and environmentalists have a strong basis for common ground in seeking public support for alternative media and independent journalism as key pillars of democracy and climate communication.

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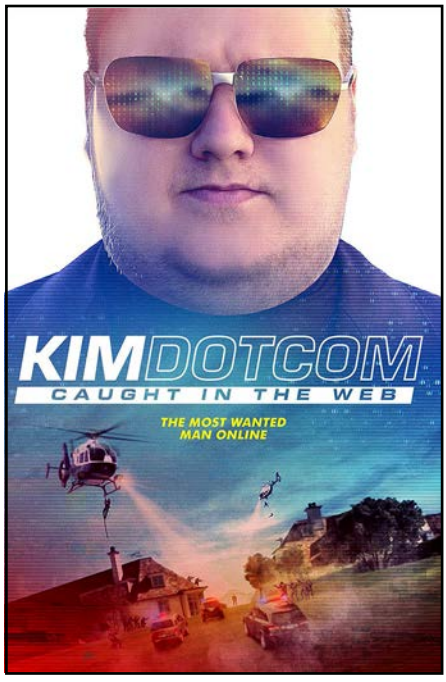
Dr PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.

More than just a naughty boy

Kim Dotcom:Caught in the Web, directed by Annie Goldson. Produced by Alexander Behse. Monsoon Pictures. Documentary. 2017. 107min.



THE QUESTION about Kim Dotcom that nobody seems able to resolve is whether he's just been a bit naughty and the authorities are over-reacting, or whether he has in fact been very bad.

Early in his sojourn in New Zealand, Kim Dotcom perfected the image of a great big German huggy bear with a beautiful wife, who was being persecuted simply for giving people a better internet file sharing system.

The fact that the government appeared to be kowtowing to the demands of the FBI so soon after it grovelled to Warner Brothers over the *Hobbit* films made it easy for New Zealanders' knee-jerk anti-Americanism to kick in and obscure some of the questions that needed to be answered.

Even a cursory search of the internet shows that in different incarnations he has been involved in some very questionable activities.

Annie Goldson's documentary goes a long way to exposing just how badly the New Zealand government acted in its dawn raid on Dotcom's mansion and its acquiescence to the FBI's demands.

It also provides evidence that allowing Dotcom to settle in New Zealand may well have been a trap to place him in a country where a compliant government would arrange for him to be deported and punished as an 'internet pirate'.

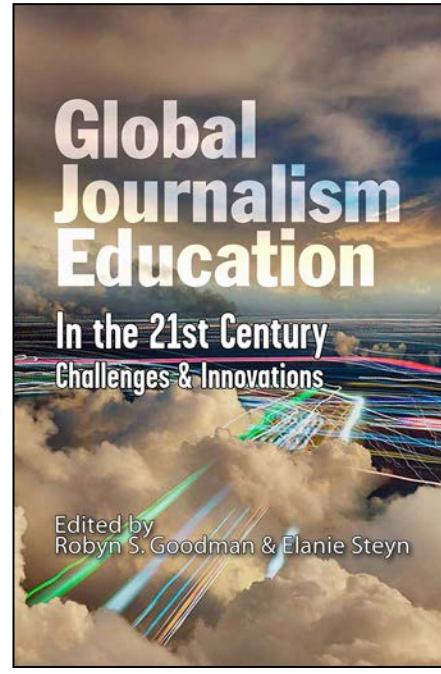
However, in interviews with Dotcom and by using footage from his private video collection, the film also shows a deeply lonely man; a genius who needs to surround himself with famous and glamorous people.

When the film ends, Dotcom's legal troubles are not over; his venture into politics has ended in ignominy and his wife has left him.

The film leaves audiences with a clear impression that Dotcom has been more than just a naughty boy. However, the behaviour of the New Zealand government as depicted in the film will probably mean that people will maintain their sympathy for him, no matter what he has done.

Dr JAMES HOLLINGS is head of journalism at Massey University, Wellington.

Valuable overview of global journalism



Global Journalism Education In the 21st Century: Challenges and Innovations, edited by Robyn S. Goodman and Elanie Steyn. Austin, TX: Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, University of Texas. 2017. 468 pages. ISBN 978-1-58790-388-5

IN THE post-truth, fake news world, journalism education has never been more necessary; not only educators, but journalists and journalism academics are grappling with what to teach, how to teach it, when and where.

This impressive compendium takes on this burning issue and many others, in a roving, eclectic, at times magisterial overview of the development, current state of, and possible future shape of journalism education around the globe.

It is divided into three parts. The first is a series of case studies of journalism education from 10 countries, including not only the dominant players such as the US, UK, but also China, Russia, Egypt, Chile, Israel, India, South Africa and Australia. The second, titled Contextualising Global Journalism Education, has insightful contributions from respected luminaries Ian Richards and Guy Berger, among others, on the role of the classroom, learning outcomes, globalisation, and other broad trends in the global field.

The third, Global Innovations in Journalism Education, dives into the nuts and bolts of journalism teaching, with sections on pop-up newsrooms, educating for the digital age, and journalism entrepreneurship, alternate reality teaching methods and others. In such a rapidly developing field, this section is already looking a little dated, with such trends as 360 degree, or immersive journalism, automation, and the latest developments in analytics and data journalism barely figuring.

In his section on predictions for the future, Joe Foote posits a series of optimistic scenarios, mostly around a growing acceptance of journalism's role in academia:

> After a century of struggling to earn a respected place in the modern university and lessen the gap between the academy and professionals, journalism education has reached a credibility high. Its initial battles have been won. Meanwhile, the turbulence in the industry, incredible pace of technological change, and threats to freedom of expression present new challenges. When the next volume of this saga is written, journalism education's first century expeditionary force will be credited for providing an auspicious launching pad for its future. (p. 446).

In her epilogue, Robyn Goodman also strikes an optimistic note, arguing journalism education has never been as strong, and will have increasing relevance in the post-truth era. Brave words, and ones us educators will cling to as we face the down the challenges of falling student numbers, university administrations bent on leveraging not only ever-higher teaching outputs, but also research and 'engagement', and an industry that is struggling to reconfigure itself, let alone engage with educators.

This book's real strength was, for me, in its summary of where we've been, and of current trends, rather than its predictions. Nonetheless, I would recommend it to all journalism educators not just as a valuable overview of the field, but as a call to arms.

NOTED:

Dr PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.

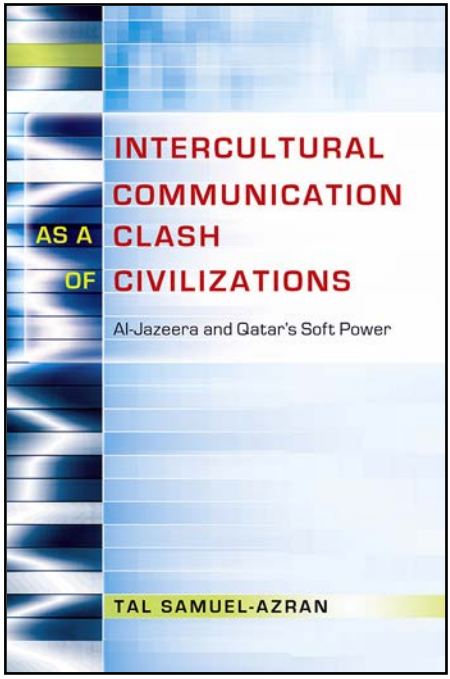
Al Jazeera, a classic example of soft power

Intercultural Communication as a Clash of Civilizations: Al-Jazeera and Qatar's Soft Power, by Tel Samuel-Azran. New York: Peter Lang. 2016. 172 pages. ISBN 978-1-4331-2264-4

WITH the current stand-off between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and their allies, Samuel-Azran's book is extremely timely. Launched in 1996, Al-Jazeera now broadcasts on multiple channels and in four languages at a cost of $650 million a year. It reaches 260 million homes in 130 countries.

Having grown from the ashes of the BBC's Arabic television service, Al Jazeera has long been regarded as a beacon of good journalism in the Middle East. However, it has also been carefully crafted to allow Qatar to project political and diplomatic muscle throughout the region and across the world, a classic example of a small country projecting soft power.

It is this aspect of Al Jazeera's operations that Samuel-Azran investigates and which leads him to be highly critical of the Qatari broadcaster, a stance not entirely common among Western academics. Samuel-Azran argues that



in its coverage of the Arab Spring, Al Jazeera has moved beyond being a tool of soft power and became part of Qatar's deployment of 'smart power'.

He also argues that Al Jazeera has not always been the champion of democracy and civil rights as it is usually portrayed, noting that it stopped reporting anything bad about Saudi Arabia as part of a deal to end a standoff between Riyadh and Doha.

The book is highly critical of Al Jazeera's coverage of the Arab Spring. Samuel-Azran cites Wadah Khanfar, the network's former director-general as saying:

> That was Al-Jazeera's role: liberating the Arab mind. We created the idea in the Arab mind that when you have a right, you should fight for it.

But, Samuel-Azran argues:

> As Qatar immersed itself in the last few years in hard power strategies such as sponsoring violent non-state actors, most notably the sponsorship of the Muslim Brotherhood during the Arab Spring, Al-Jazeera supported Qatar's interests throughout this period by serving as the voice of the Muslim Brotherhood and boosting its legitimacy.

At 172 pages, *Intercultural Communication as a Clash of Civilizations* is a modestly sized volume, but it draws on a wealth of empirical data and reaches into a number of important areas, including arguments about the public sphere and the effect of globalisation on local consumption of international news.

It should be extremely useful to academics, students and journalists alike.

Pacific Journalism Review
PACIFIC MEDIA CENTRE

Vol. 24, No 1, July 2018

Call for articles and commentaries:

Disasters, cyclones and communication

Papers are being sought for a special themed edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* based on disasters, cyclones, extreme weather and political economy of climate change media. The UN convention on Climate Change (COP23) conference in Bonn in November, co-chaired by Fiji, is expected to be a rich resource of research outputs. This edition will be produced in collaboration with *IKAT* research journal of Universitas Gadjah Mada. Papers can include but are not restricted to:

- Climate change communication
- Extreme weather and crisis journalism
- Climate crisis and journalism strategies
- Disaster survivor narratives and storytelling
- Social media and national emergencies
- Disaster communication and normative media
- Climate change refugees and relocation
- Elite media and climate change realities
- Facilitative, collaborative or radical climate journalism alternatives?
- Political economy of climate media in Asia-Pacific
- Teaching climate crisis journalism

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.

Pacific Journalism Review *is the only journalism journal from Australasia indexed by SCOPUS.*

The double blind peer-reviewed journal has five main sections: Research articles, Commentaries, Frontline (journalism-as-research), Forum and Reviews.

The APA-based style guide is at: www.pjreview.info/style-guide

Submissions: All submissions must be uploaded to the Tuwhera Online Journal System (OJS) platform for Pacific Journalism Review: https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review

Managing editor: Professor David Robie david.robie@aut.ac.nz
Articles: up to 6000 words

Submissions deadline: December 20, 2017
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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:* 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:

December 20, 2017. Submissions should be filed through the new submissions website on Tuwhera: **ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/**

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Style: Use *APA (American Psychological Association) Style* for author-date system of referencing. See style guide at **www.pjreview.info**

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