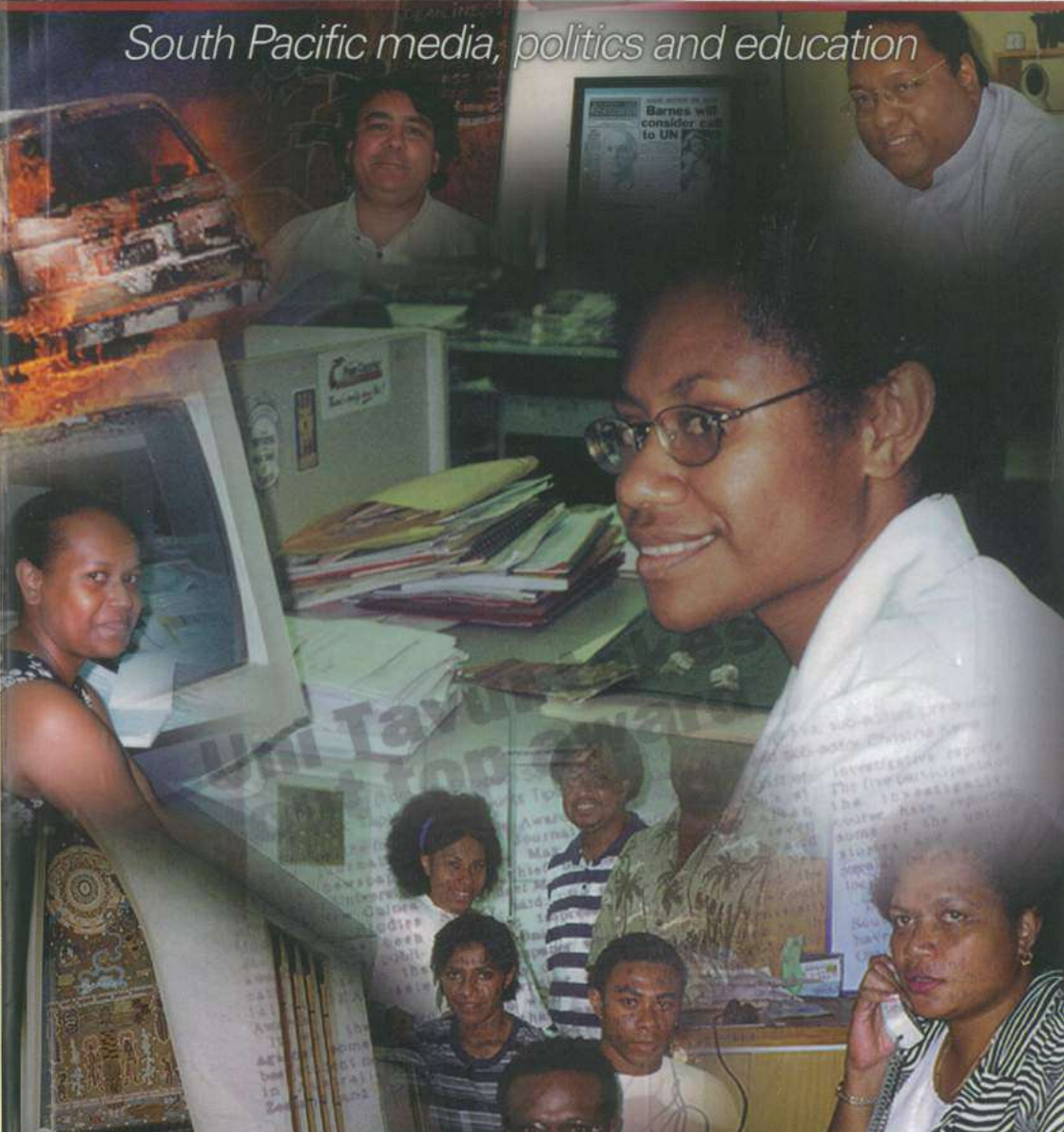
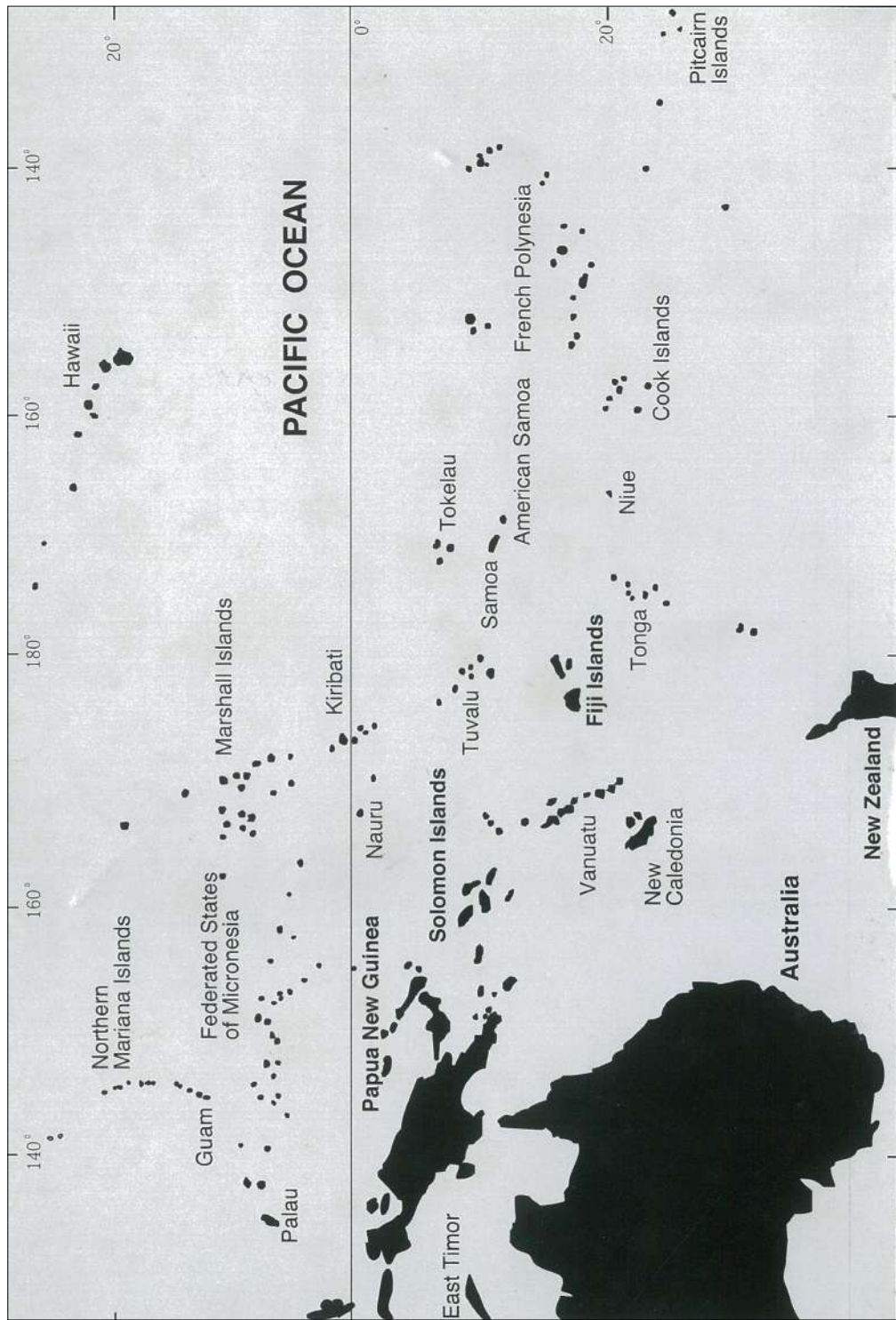


# Mekim Nius

David Robie

*South Pacific media, politics and education*





**MEKIM NIUS**

**Mekim Nius** — Tok Pisin: making news, making journalists

Other books by the author include:

*Eyes of Fire: The Last Voyage of the Rainbow Warrior* (1985)

*Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific* (1989)

*Öch Valden blundar ...* (translated into Swedish by Margareta Eklof, 1989)

*Tu Galala: Social Change in the Pacific* (ed., 1992)

*Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific* (ed., 1995)

*The Pacific Journalist: A Practical Guide* (ed., 2001)

# **MEKIM NIUS:** SOUTH PACIFIC MEDIA, POLITICS AND EDUCATION

**David Robie**



**USP Book Centre**  
Fiji Islands

*For my wife, Del, my parents, Jim and Jean Robie,  
and a lifetime of encouragement, love and support*

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*Kia kaha manawanui.*

**David Robie**  
Auckland, November 2004



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## ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

AIT or AUT	Auckland Institute of Technology, which became the Auckland University of Technology in 2000.
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation (and Radio Australia)
ABU	Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, an association of broadcasting organisations in Asia, Pacific and the Middle East
AFP	Agence France-Presse, a French international news wire service
AM	Amplitude modulation
AMIC	Asia Media Information and Communication Centre, Singapore
AP	Associated Press, a US international wire service
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA)
CCF	Citizens' Constitutional Forum (Fiji Islands)
CBA	Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, an organisation of public broadcasting authorities in Commonwealth nations
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
CI	Communications Institute (Goroka, PNG)
CUSO	Canadian University Service Organisation
development journalism	News that concentrates on national development and nation building issues
DWI or DWU	Divine Word Institute. It became the Divine Word University (PNG) in 1998.
EAJE	English Association of Journalism Education
ESJ	École Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille, France
FBC	Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd (also known as Islands Networks Ltd in the late 1990s)
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, a German foundation providing media and broadcast funding in developing nations. FES supplied funding for PIBA for several years.
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia, including four states — Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap
FIMA	Fiji Islands Media Association
FIT	Fiji Institute of Technology
FJA	Fiji Journalists' Association
FJI	Fiji Journalism Institute
FM	Frequency modulation
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

IAMCR	International Association for Media and Communication Research
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IMSC	Independent Media Standards Committee (Papua New Guinea)
IPDC	International Programme for the Development of Communications, an UNESCO-based source of information about communication development needs and resources
kina	PNG currency
PJA	Pacific Journalists' Association, independent umbrella group of Pacific journalists unions affiliated to the International Federation of Journalists
PACBROAD	Technical assistance arm of the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association
PACJOURN	Pacific Journalism Development and Training Project, UNESCO-assisted scheme
Pacnews	Pacific News Service, news exchange produced in tandem with PIBA's broadcast training scheme PACBROAD
PANPA	Pacific Area Newspaper Publishers' Association
PIBA	Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association, association of public service and commercial broadcasters in the Pacific; office in Suva (merged with PINA in 2004)
PIMA	Pacific Islands Media Association, association of New Zealand-based Pacific journalists and media people; office in Auckland
PINA	Pacific Islands News Association, association of news executives and employees, primarily privately owned print and broadcast media; office in Suva
PMI	Pacific Media Initiative (AusAID)
PNGJA	PNG Journalists' Association, affiliated to the PJA and International Federation of Journalists
PMCF	Pacific Media and Communication Facility (AusAID)
NBC	National Broadcasting Corporation (PNG)
NCTJ	National Council for the Training of Journalists (UK)
NIO	National Intelligence Organisation (PNG)
NZJTO	New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation
OPM	Free Papua Movement
PCRC	Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (Fiji Islands)
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum (formerly South Pacific Forum — SPF), the political body of independent Pacific nations

raskol	A Tok Pisin word literally meaning 'rascal'. It is a term used loosely to describe all criminals or delinquents.
RSF	Reporters Sans Frontières
RSHETP	Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel (UNESCO)
SPCenCIID	South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development (UPNG)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
TVNZ	Television New Zealand
USP	University of the South Pacific
UP	University of the Philippines
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
WACC	World Association of Christian Communication
wantok	A Tok Pisin word meaning literally 'one talk' — people speaking the same language. But it is used more loosely to describe a 'brotherhood', clan or extended family.

## INTRODUCTION

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IN LATE May 2000, masked Fijian gunmen seized a consignment of books from the United States bound for the University of the South Pacific regional journalism programme in Suva. The small cardboard box was stashed in a postal courier mail van hijacked by coup front man George Speight's supporters hoping to find hard cash. Two months later the carton was recovered by police from the ransacked Parliament and handed over to me; torn open but intact. Inside, ironically, were six copies of Betty Medsger's *Winds of Change: Challenges Confronting Journalism Education* for the USP programme and University Library at the Laucala campus, Suva. This was a poignant reminder of the realities facing Pacific media and journalism education. Politics in the region has been increasingly influenced by terrorism, particularly in Melanesia. And with this development comes a growing demand on the region's media and journalists for more training and professionalism. This book examines the impact of education and politics on South Pacific journalism and media.

Since Speight's illegal seizure of Parliament on 19 May 2000, politics in Fiji has been under the threat of terrorism. In Papua New Guinea, politics remains hostage to the Sandline mercenary affair and the Bougainville conflict and their legacy, and corruption. Politics has also been marked by armed conflict and terrorism in New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. While the Speight upheaval cost fifteen lives — all indigenous Fijian — the fear of it happening again, and next time being even bloodier, remains a concern. Fiji politics is still driven by a continuing threat to reinvoke terrorism if governments do not pursue a narrow particular direction, defined as ensuring 'indigenous paramountcy'.<sup>1</sup> Fiji is already a country prone to having coups (three so far) and it risks becoming consigned to a fate of economic, political and legal instability.<sup>2</sup> Respect for the law has diminished but the judiciary has often been fearless.

Although the High Court condemned Speight on 17 February 2002 to death for treason, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by the Prerogative of Mercy Commission. But few believe the masterful media manipulator will serve more than a token symbolic period in 'prison'; he is detained on the tropical isle of Nukulau, off Suva, a former haven for local picnickers. Ten of his co-conspirators pleaded guilty to lesser charges and were given relatively minor jail sentences (none are likely to serve

more than three years), while two — leading journalist Josefa Nata and chiefly politician Ratu Timoci Silatolu — denied the treason charges against them and were sent for trial. They were found guilty on 20 March 2003, but Justice Andrew Wilson postponed sentencing until June to enable the legislators to sort out the treason legislation. Finally, in spite of an apology to the nation by Nata in mitigation, both were sentenced on 27 June 2003 to life imprisonment.<sup>3</sup> (Just over a year later, Vice-President Ratu Jope Seniloli was jailed for four years for taking an illegal oath as the usurper president and four others were imprisoned for participating in the putsch.)

The role of Nata — ‘I was just a public relations consultant’ — drew attention to issues of journalism ethics, integrity, independence and training in Fiji.<sup>4</sup> Nata, one of country’s first journalism graduates,<sup>5</sup> was formerly coordinator of the Fiji Journalism Institute (FJI), a Government-supported training centre established by media industry people. The centre closed in 1999 under a cloud about accountability over donor agency funding.<sup>6</sup> Nata represented the hopes of a generation of media industry people who had sought to establish the institute as a credible and professional journalism training base.

University education for journalists is a relatively recent development in the South Pacific. Although it has existed in Papua New Guinea for a generation, it is only a decade old at degree level in Fiji, and in the independent nations of Polynesia. At the same time, mean age, experience levels and educational qualifications have been steadily rising among journalists in the major Pacific Islands Forum member countries, Australia and New Zealand, as the news media has become more professionalised. While the Papua New Guinea news media has largely depended on journalism education to provide the foundation for its professionalism, Fiji has focused on a system of ad hoc short course training funded by international donors.

The quality and lack of professional formation of journalism practitioners in the region has been a frequent theme of criticism for politicians.<sup>7</sup> Among the harshest critics of the region’s media has been Mahendra Chaudhry, particularly during his year as Fiji’s first Indo-Fijian Prime Minister before being deposed by the coup plotters. Drawing comparisons with the United States and other countries where journalism integrity was perceived to be eroding, Chaudhry remarked in a surprisingly tough speech at the launching of the Fiji Media Council’s Code of Ethics:

There is no doubt that media credibility is dropping. The public is becoming critical of media practices and its self-adopted watchdog role. The industry needs critical self-appraisal and a rethink of whither it is headed.



Fiji is not isolated from these developments. The media in Fiji also needs to take stock of how it is behaving and whether it is facing a crisis of ethics. Since taking office, my Government has had occasion to be extremely disgusted by the antics of some elements in the media who have used the medium of the newspaper and television to further their own personal agendas to discredit the Government.<sup>8</sup>

Part of Chaudhry's speech dealt with general training and professional standards:

Ethics, professionalism, standards and training — these are the key elements of the industry that need serious attention. Failure to address these issues has put the integrity of the entire [Fiji] industry in question. It is the duty of media organisations to ensure local journalists are trained to acceptable standards.<sup>9</sup>

In Papua New Guinea, then Prime Minister Bill Skate told a World Press Freedom Day seminar in Port Moresby in May 1999 that he supported press freedom, but promptly launched into a strong criticism of media standards and training:

When I watch television and I see a person making claims against another person, and the television station plays the story without seeking comments to balance the story, I feel sad for the media of my nation. Perhaps the problem with this style of reporting is lack of training by the companies [that] own our media outlets.

It disappoints me when I see foreign companies, which own media outlets in Papua New Guinea, ignore media and journalism development in our country. These companies earn money from our nation but do not put sufficient money back into training and developing our journalists.<sup>10</sup>

While the majority of journalists in Papua New Guinea do have formal training and qualifications, this is not the case in much of the rest of the Pacific, including Fiji where newsroom staff has traditionally been school-leavers with little or no experience, and no formal training. Many news organisations rely on donor-funded short courses coordinated through bodies such as the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA) and Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Regional Media Centre in association with AusAID, Commonwealth Press Union, UNESCO and others. In October 2004, PINA and PIBA finalised a controversial merger. It is questionable how well such short courses have served the region and whether they have really contributed to the long-term sustainability of journalism professionalism. Some see the aid as 'flawed', 'embarrassing' or 'poorly planned'.<sup>11</sup> Other critics have

the view that some training initiatives are 'symptomatic of a failure of leadership among those in the Pacific, as well as those from donor nations, who lead the stampede to the trough of development aid dollars'.<sup>12</sup> Media educators in the region with strong industry backgrounds stress the need for education. Veteran New Zealand broadcaster Pat Craddock, for example, with some six years of training and education experience in Fiji and who also ran workshops in Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tonga, emphasised the need for more professionalism:

Journalism in the South Pacific has a short history. I recall being in the Solomon Islands a few years ago. The newspaper was a cyclostyled newsheet of several pages that was published about once a week. So many politicians view journalism as workers who can be told what to say. Tonga has an abysmal record of dealing with criticism from within its boundaries ...

Pacific politicians show little respect for the media. If a journalist gets offside with authority — a politician can effectively destroy the work environment for the journalist.<sup>13</sup>

Another Pacific educator and trainer with considerable experience of Fiji and Tonga, Ingrid Leary, said neophyte journalists benefited from

training that teaches trainees news media analysis as well as practical skills. Much emphasis is put on the importance of hands-on training — and no doubt this is imperative. [But] I consider one of the most valuable benefits to come out of organised training is an analysis of the role of the media and its relationship with good governance, freedom of speech, human rights and executive power. For this reason, the courses need to be taught in genuinely non-partisan forums, such as universities and polytechnics, rather than through United Nations or other NGO courses, or government-sponsored courses, which are all open to claims of hidden agendas.<sup>14</sup>

However, some media industry leaders share the view espoused by former *PNG Post-Courier* publisher Tony Yianni, who is now chief executive of *The Fiji Times*:

We are just spoiled by the universities. All the surveys show that we have probably more university graduates working in the media in Papua New Guinea than any other country. And we have to take control of our own destiny. And to do that one media company can't do it [alone]. But collectively we can.

Even though we have been producing newspapers [in PNG] for fifty years, we are still kind of at an infant stage because English is a second language for Papua New Guineans.<sup>15</sup>



**Tony Yianni:** Innovative training at the *Post-Courier* and later at the *Fiji Times*.  
*Photo: David Robie*

During his time at the helm of the *Post-Courier* in the late 1990s, Yianni initiated an innovative in-house training programme by establishing a K100,000 training centre in the newspaper office with a time capsule recording Papua New Guinea's media history and a window overlooking the newsroom. But it was a 'neutral' venue established for training media workers of all Papua New Guinean news organisations. Yianni embarked on a similar innovative approach to training at *The Fiji Times*.

I consider the training room 'foreign territory', or — how can I say it? Not a *Post-Courier* thing. When you come to the media training centre ... it is not just for the *Post-Courier*, it is for everybody.

Tired of his company being a nursery for journalists who move on to greener pastures, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd (FBCL) chief executive Francis Herman also opted for in-house training. But whether such industry promises eventuate remains to be seen.

We have often been used as a training ground for journalists in Fiji. They come in to get their training through the cadet scheme, and then they leave us.<sup>16</sup> We now want to create our own journalists who are moulded in our news format. So we are opting for younger journalists. It's a long process ... And basically an extensive in-house training programme on all facets of society. Not just politics — everything, and then giving them on-the-job training.<sup>17</sup>

Fiji journalist and media commentator Debbie Singh is also cautious. Basing her judgement on past experience and a high staff turnover in newsrooms,

she argues that most Fiji news media organisations believe that on-the-job training or hands-on experience is the quickest, cheapest option.

This 'quick fix' enables daily news delivery in spite of the standard or whether one can understand what is being reported.<sup>18</sup>

Sedition and treason have been growing political and legal problems and also a challenge for journalism educators and trainers. Sedition is the 'political crime *par excellence*, used in the 18th and 19th centuries in direct attempts to silence critics of Government'.<sup>19</sup> Australian-born British human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson, QC, wrote that the crime was broadly defined as 'promoting ill-will between different classes of citizens, raising discontent and disaffection among the people, and bringing the Government or the laws into hatred, ridicule or contempt'.<sup>20</sup> In Britain, it was used in 1764 against John Wilkes and the printers of radical papers. The *Libel Act 1792* removed the power of a judge to decide whether a particular piece of writing was seditious and gave it to juries. This deterred subsequent governments from using this law to stifle political criticism of their policies.

In the South Pacific, the crime of sedition is alive and well more than a century after it ceased to be useful in Britain as a 'weapon against writers and agitators'.<sup>21</sup> Although no editors and journalists have actually been jailed for sedition in the region, many have been threatened under such laws, particularly in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. *Taimi 'o Tonga* publisher Kalafi Moala was the target of such threats. He was jailed for 30 days for alleged contempt of Parliament in October 1996 and his Auckland-based newspaper was banned in February 2003, prompting a constitutional upheaval.<sup>22</sup> Threats were also made against reformist politicians.

In February 2000, three months before Speight's attempted coup in Fiji, Radio Fiji reported that some officials of Fiji's former ruling Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (SVT) of Sitiveni Rabuka, defeated in the 1999 General Election, were being investigated for alleged sedition.<sup>23</sup> The report led to an angry attack by then Opposition Leader Ratu Inoke Kubuabola that was splashed across the front page of the *Fiji Sun* on February 16. Ratu Inoke denied that there was any investigation of officials for allegedly inciting moves to overthrow the Chaudhry Government, adding that the Government was 'fabricating evidence'.<sup>24</sup> However, the following day Home Affairs Minister Joji Uluinakauvadra confirmed the probe.<sup>25</sup> In Papua New Guinea, former military commander Brigadier Jerry Singirok, the man who halted the Sandline mercenaries in 1997 — an act that led to the ousting of the Chan Government — was charged with sedition over a broadcast on national radio. He was cleared seven years later.<sup>26</sup> According to the late Peter Henshall, and David Ingram, former University of Papua New Guinea journalism educators who wrote *The News Manual*:

Sedition is words or actions designed to cause people to act unconstitutionally. It is a good test of any democratic society to see where it draws the line between honest political disagreements and sedition.

Today, laws on sedition often have more to do with promoting racial and social harmony than with protecting the state. Sedition is often defined as the intention to promote feelings of ill will or hatred between different races, classes of religious groups within the country.<sup>27</sup>

The trend in South Pacific countries has been towards establishing self-regulatory mechanisms — such as the industry-funded Papua New Guinea Media Council and the Fiji Media Council, and more recently the Tongan Media Council. But these have at times been severely criticised. Few developments have paralleled the MEAA (Media Alliance-Australian Journalists Association) judiciary committees and industry ombudsman characteristic of other countries in the wider region, or even the independent media watch style programmes such as broadcast by Radio New Zealand, and ABC Television.<sup>28</sup> This has left media councils as the only recourse for individuals complaining of ethical breaches in the print or electronic media in Fiji or Papua New Guinea and who cannot afford lawsuits. But in other Pacific countries, such as Samoa and Tonga, there has been relentless pressure for regulation. Journalism law professor Mark Pearson noted:

Throughout the 1990s there had been a spate of defamation actions brought by political figures against local media outlets, most notably a criminal libel charge over an article about the former Prime Minister published by the *Samoa Observer* newspaper. Other muzzles had been injunctions preventing publication of corruption allegations, the jailing of a journalist for scandalising the court, and the passing of legislation requiring journalists to reveal their sources during defamatory interlocutory proceedings.<sup>29</sup>

‘Journalists, as arch whistleblowers,’ notes Fiji columnist Seona Smiles, are often viewed in the Pacific as ‘troublemakers who stir up situations unnecessarily’.

There are deep-rooted beliefs in South Pacific societies about respect for authority that can translate into a lack of accountability and transparency, coupled with a strongly disapproving attitude towards those who question, probe and publish. The Pacific is littered with instances of publishers and journalists being chastised and chased.<sup>30</sup>

*MEKIM NIUS* seeks to consider the critical influence of tertiary education on how Pacific journalists practise their profession and perceive their political and social role in a developing nation faced with the challenges of globalisation.<sup>31</sup> Secondly, the book analyses the political, economic and legal frameworks in which the media have operated in Fiji and Papua New Guinea since independence. Thirdly, it outlines the development of journalism education in the South Pacific. The book also assesses whether the concept of development journalism, which had its roots in the 1980s debate calling for a 'New World Information Order' (NWIO), has had an influence on a Pacific style of journalism.<sup>32</sup>

It argues within a context where journalists can be considered to be professionals with some degree of autonomy within the confines set by a capitalist and often transnational-owned media and also the constraints by governments.<sup>33</sup> Historical case studies of the region's three main journalism schools — Divine Word University (Madang, Papua New Guinea), the University of Papua New Guinea and the University of the South Pacific, Fiji — are included. Research was conducted using the triangulation method, incorporating interviews with fifty seven editors, media managers, journalists and policy makers; two newsroom staff surveys of news organisations, and library and archives study.<sup>34</sup> I have also drawn heavily from my own personal experience as a New Zealand and Pacific journalist and media educator — including my nine-year stint heading the UPNG and USP journalism programmes (1993–2002).

Chapter One outlines the global context of media and education in the Pacific. Little media research has been done in the South Pacific, and even less based on empirical studies or political economy. Major research has included surveys of the profile and demographics of journalists in Papua New Guinea (Phinney, 1985), the South Pacific region (Masteron, 1989) and a comparison of eight Pacific countries in terms of media freedom (Layton, 1993). Fiji Islanders Lasarus Vusoniwailala (1976) and Makereta Waqavonovono (1981) were concerned with issues such as a free press in a developing multiracial society, and manipulation of Pacific media and 'cultural colonisation'.

Professor Julianne Schultz's survey of Australian journalists as part of a six-nation Media and Democracy project in 1992 — published in *Reviving the Fourth Estate* (1998) — provided a useful benchmark for this study. However, given the small numbers involved in polling South Pacific media, the field has been narrowed by surveying editorial staff of fifteen news media organisations in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. The questionnaire also adapted some examples drawn from other developing country media surveys.<sup>35</sup>

Fiji and Papua New Guinea — the countries hosting all three Pacific university journalism programmes — feature a comparatively greater population of journalists. Reporters and editors in these complex news systems also have more training and are better acquainted with the realities of media freedom and a professional ethos than those working in countries where the media is small and involving mostly government-owned news organisations. Development of industry driven vocational journalism training institutions, such as at the Samoa Polytechnic (founded in 2001) and the Fiji Institute of Technology (2003), was not included.

All news media organisations surveyed publish or broadcast predominantly in English, although some have vernacular editions or sections. The surveyed news media organisations represent virtually the total national news media of both countries. Previous samples in the Pacific were not as comprehensive or as focused on the two major countries where media education is based.

Chapter Two describes how the news media in South Pacific countries, as in many other nations, has faced increasing criticism over professional and ethical standards. Criticism in the region focuses on lack of professional training of journalists, poor education standards, lack of knowledge of the political and social institutions, cultural insensitivities, and what is perceived as a questionable grasp of ethical issues. The media, some argue, is too ‘Western’ and not the ‘Pacific way’. Others, particularly politicians, are keen to introduce regulatory controls to ‘rein in’ the media.

The Papua New Guinea news media is outlined in Chapter Three, including two national daily newspapers, one national weekly newspaper, one provincial newspaper, and three regional editions of a national newspaper, one national television station broadcasting via satellite to the rest of the nation, a national public radio network of nineteen provincial stations, and two FM private radio systems. Chapter Four provides an overview of the Fiji news media and the legal, social and political constraints that impact on it. The media comprises three national daily newspapers, two major radio station groups, one state-backed television station, one community based television channel, a bimonthly business news magazine, one regional news magazine, and one regional news agency. The military coups in 1987 and the putsch in 2000 clearly had a traumatic effect on the news media.

In Chapter Five, it is explained how journalism education and training evolved at UPNG in 1975, when the New Zealand government agreed to fund a one-year undergraduate Diploma in Journalism course for an initial two-year period. The programme expanded and developed into the region’s pioneering journalism school, which founded the Pacific’s first journalism training newspaper, *Uni Tavur*.

Chapter Six profiles Divine Word University's growing contribution to journalism education and training in the region, particularly through the extraordinary and visionary efforts of the late Father Frank Mihalic. Along with evolution of the Communication Arts programme at DWU, publication of *Wantok*, a unique newspaper in the South Pacific, has provided a benchmark of national development and the contribution that good journalism can make to education at grassroots level.

The contribution of the University of the South Pacific's two journalism education programmes — a short-lived certificate course in the 1980s and a separate degree programme established with French aid in the mid-1990s — is outlined in Chapter Seven. The USP programme is the only truly regional media course, but its development has at times been hampered by political pressure — notably during the period after the 1987 military coups, and then again with the May 2000 putsch.

In Chapter Eight, the empirical findings of the book reveal marked differences in the profiles of Fiji and Papua New Guinea journalists, especially in education and professional formation, salaries and in their professional attitudes. The final chapter, the Conclusion, assesses and discusses these findings and presents some recommendations for the future of media in the region.

A major issue facing Pacific journalists is how to improve their educational standards, professionalism and standing in society. Their dilemma was foreshadowed more than two decades earlier by Sean MacBride in his case for a New World Information Order in *Many Voices, One World* (1980). In this he wrote about an 'educational environment' for communication: 'In many countries even today, journalists are not regarded as members of an acknowledged profession and they are treated accordingly'. To overcome this situation, argued MacBride, 'journalism needs to raise its standards and quality for recognition everywhere as a genuine profession.'

Lack of professionalism, pressure and intimidation from government or from rebel or terrorist movements threaten the independence of journalists. So does pressure from powerful media owners. As a Commonwealth study on media freedom, *Speaking Freely*, noted in a section on the Pacific: 'Although journalists may operate in an environment free from government interference, their writings may be dictated by their employers, as is now increasingly common.'<sup>36</sup>

Together, all these issues pose a complicated and unique mosaic of challenges for the media in the South Pacific.



# **PART ONE**

## **THE REGIONAL CONTEXT**



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## The Fourth Estate and education

Of course, freedom of the press does not mean freedom without responsibility. In an emerging nation such as Papua New Guinea, we believed the media had a very important responsibility to report news accurately and to give equal opportunities and facilities for the expression by the citizens of opposing or differing views.

*John Momis,  
Papua New Guinean constitutional architect, 1996*

Training schemes in the media remain largely on the basis of 'on-the-job' experience ... only the larger newspapers can afford new trainees as cadets. This is part of the reason why journalistic careers are, with few exceptions, not very highly regarded by locals, as they not only lack training opportunities but also are poorly paid in comparison with such alternatives as Government positions, which also offer greater security.

*Makereta Waqavonovono  
Fijian law and media scholar, 1981*

WHILE university journalism schools in New Zealand had spawned the establishment of similar programmes in the South Pacific (such as at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1975 and nineteen years later at the University of the South Pacific)<sup>1</sup>, relatively little reliable information was published about these pioneering courses.<sup>2</sup> It was not until University of

Canterbury postgraduate journalism student Kim Newth (1997)<sup>3</sup> embarked on a research project that a serious attempt was made to provide a history of New Zealand journalism schools. Her paper spanned a period of eighty three years, with ‘a primary focus being on the early years leading up to the re-introduction of a diploma course’ at the University of Canterbury in 1969. Newth found it noteworthy that

university journalism training in New Zealand has had a close connection with the wider industry. Times of crisis have tended to occur when the diploma course ceased to meet the needs of media employers, or when communication between universities and the industry was poor.

Since the early 1900s, the consistent goal of both university training and the industry has been to encourage high standards of journalism in New Zealand through an effective recruitment programme.<sup>4</sup>

### The New Zealand perspective

The need for university training in journalism was ‘generally recognised’ by the then Canterbury College as early as 1908. Three years later, the University of New Zealand formally adopted regulations for a graduate Journalism Diploma and noted that ‘the demand for the course came from the newspaper proprietors themselves’.<sup>5</sup> However, over subsequent years support for university education in New Zealand remained patchy. By the mid-1970s, the diploma still failed to attract high numbers of applicants. In 1972, for example, only fourteen students were selected from just twenty four applicants. In 1975, the same year that New Zealand began supporting an undergraduate journalism course at the University of Papua New Guinea, there were again only twenty four applicants for the course, and only one of the 1974 graduates was offered immediate employment by a metropolitan newspaper.<sup>6</sup> However, by 2000 New Zealand’s three main journalism institutions<sup>7</sup> had become universities, ‘reversing a tradition of close relationship with polytechnics’.<sup>8</sup> New Zealand journalism education is not only influenced by the media industry, it also closely follows industry methods.<sup>9</sup>

According to Lealand,<sup>10</sup> who conducted three media industry surveys in 1987, 1994 and 2003,<sup>11</sup> New Zealand journalists are well educated, with nearly two-thirds of those participating in the second survey having ‘gained some tertiary (college) level education’. Also, journalists in New Zealand are predominantly female and young (67 percent of women were aged 35 years or younger, compared with 40 percent of males in the same age group).<sup>12</sup>

More than one third (37 percent) had completed an undergraduate degree in the humanities or social sciences. These figures represent a rise from the numbers reported in the 1987 survey, supporting the claim that the general education level of the profession is on the rise.

In the 1994 survey, seven percent had also completed postgraduate studies, and considerable numbers had participated in a wide variety of educational opportunities ranging from dance and drama to teacher training and management studies.<sup>13</sup>

Two dedicated training courses were established to cater for Pacific Islands and Maori journalists. The Manukau Polytechnic taught Pacific Islands journalists until it closed in 1990. A Waiariki Polytechnic course in Rotorua was geared to the needs of the tangata whenua, the indigenous Maori population, but it was long troubled by lack of funding, staff and resources. However, according to Lealand, who surveyed some fifty Maori journalists in his 1994 survey, the specialist courses have made little impact.

Such courses have not yet made much numerical difference in the ethnic composition of the New Zealand journalistic workforce. In the 1994 survey, there were just over four percent of Maori journalists and less than one percent were from a Pacific Islands background ... few Maori journalists in the 1994 survey occupied senior positions in a profession largely dominated by Pakeha journalists (94 percent) and, many would argue, Pakeha interests and news values.<sup>14</sup>

This is significant given that New Zealand political institutions and society are seeking to honour partnership clauses of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi agreement between Pakeha settlers represented by the British Crown and the tangata whenua.<sup>15</sup> The partnership sanctions the sharing of resources and the use of Maori as the second official national language of New Zealand.

New Zealand journalists were not always 'highly educated'. Traditionally, they trained on the job. They began work as cadets aged about sixteen, and did 'menial tasks around the office' such as collecting the shipping news notes.<sup>16</sup> A feature of early journalism education in New Zealand at universities was an industry bias where for many years newspapers had 'hankered back to the "good old days" and preferred juniors who trained-on-the-job'.<sup>17</sup> Industry regulations provided for training for cadets on newspapers, but according to an old guard editor who was 'founding father' of one major journalism school, young journalists were 'simply not being taught'.<sup>18</sup>

Fear was an important component in any training that was provided in the old-fashioned strictly hierarchical newsroom.

### The Australian perspective

Like New Zealand, Australia has a media culture modelled on Britain, although in the past decade it has become increasingly influenced by the United States.<sup>19</sup> University journalism courses began at Queensland (1921) and three other Australian universities in the 1920s and 1930s: Melbourne, Sydney and Western Australia. But only Queensland survived into the 1970s.<sup>20</sup> However, from then on university journalism courses flourished with twenty two in existence by 2003. An estimated 4,500 journalists work in mainstream news media organisations. This is a low figure of only 250 journalists a million of population compared with 450 in the United States.<sup>21</sup> However, a further 4,500 are employed in non-news media, specialist or entertainment magazines, public broadcasting, or as freelancers. The Australian Journalists Association, an affiliate of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance, numbers about 12,000 members, including cartoonists, photographers and public practitioners. A study of journalists' education in the early 1960s cited by John Henningham<sup>22</sup> found that only five percent of metropolitan newspaper journalists had a degree:

This has changed considerably. By the 1990s, 35 percent of Australian journalists had a degree, while a further four percent had a diploma. A further 16 percent have undertaken some tertiary study. Included in the figures are four percent who have undertaken postgraduate study. In all, some 55 percent of contemporary journalists have studied at a university or equivalent tertiary institution.<sup>23</sup>

Henningham noted that while the proportion of graduates among journalists was much higher than that of the general workforce (14 percent), it was much lower than among professional occupations (60 percent). He added: 'In the trend towards becoming a university educated workforce, journalism in Australia lags well behind the United States, where more than 82 percent of journalists have a degree'.<sup>24</sup>

In her 1992 survey of Australian journalists as part of a 10-nation Media and Democracy project, Julianne Schultz noted that the scale and power of the news media threatened to undermine its continued viability as the Fourth Estate. But, she concluded, the ideal of the Fourth Estate continued to be cherished and nurtured by journalists.<sup>25</sup>

Most of the 286 Australian journalists who responded to the Media and Democracy survey ... were committed to the idea of the news media as the Fourth Estate. The commitment of these journalists to the Fourth Estate is, however, highly idealised; what they do in practice does not always match the theory.

### The European perspective

According to German media scholars Romy Fröhlich and Christina Holtz-Bacha in a comprehensive study of European approaches to media education,<sup>26</sup> national systems of journalism training involve an interplay of three dimensions:

- The role and function that a society ascribes to its journalists,
- The structures in the field of journalism (e.g. legal regulations, unions and journalism councils), and
- The media system. Although similarities between some countries can be found in particular dimensions, differences in others lead to ‘the great inhomogeneity’ of journalism training in Western Europe.

Access to journalism is free throughout Western Europe and there are two different ways of entering the profession: 1. *Direct entry*, or 2. *Training outside the media companies*. Direct entry includes any mode of on-the-job training controlled by a media company. Journalism education outside media companies is either provided in the form of vocational training by ‘stand-alone’ schools of journalism or as journalism studies at the university level with overlapping between these two modes. Against this framework, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha identified four groups of countries:

*Integrated journalism education and training at university level:* Finland, Sweden and Spain. The clearest trend towards ‘an academisation’ of journalism education can be seen in Sweden, where more than half of the journalists come from journalism programmes at the universities.

*Concentration of journalism training at stand-alone schools:* Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, and Norway. In Italy, guidelines for the first journalism school approved by the *Ordine de giornalisti* (Journalists’ Council) were adopted in 1990.

*Mixed system of journalism training outside media companies combining courses at stand-alone schools and universities:* France, Germany, Ireland and Portugal. Compared to other European countries, formal journalism training has a long tradition in France with the first journalism school founded as early as 1899 at the College of Social Sciences in Paris. Currently, four journalism schools and four university programmes in journalism are recognised through collective agreements between the journalist unions and publisher associations. More than 62 percent of French journalists have a university degree (compared to 54 percent of French white-collar workers) and the women tend to be better educated than men, according to a 1988 national survey.<sup>27</sup> The French system is highly influential in New Caledonia and French Polynesia in the South Pacific, overseas territories with comparatively strong news media industries. Also,

the French government funded the first four establishment years of the USP degree journalism course from 1994 to 1997 and a French journalism school, l'École Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille, assisted with the curriculum.

*Countries dominated by an on-the-job training philosophy:* The main representative is Britain, but this category also includes Austria. A 1995 national survey found that there had been a significant rise in educational qualifications among British journalists with almost half (49 percent) having a degree.<sup>28</sup> According to Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha, 'in no other country can we find a formalised vocational training system with such great emphasis on the practical side'.<sup>29</sup> The National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) determines the guidelines for the period of practical training. Founded in 1952, the council comprises representatives of the newspaper publishers and the journalist unions. The British craft emphasis on journalism training traditionally influenced the Australian and New Zealand approach to journalism. This continues today through the New Zealand Journalists' Training Organisation (NZJTO), which regulates standards at the polytechnic course level, although the universities (Auckland University of Technology, Canterbury and Massey) do not sit comfortably with this system. However, in recent years Australia has moved closer to an American model with most journalists being educated at universities.

Changes in recent years concerning the commercialisation and privatisation of the broadcasting market, the introduction of management techniques for the media, the general globalisation of communication and increasing concentration of media ownership worldwide has led to moves towards greater homogeneity in European journalism education. A growing number of Eurojournalism programmes and networks have emerged in several countries. Special courses concentrate on European political, economic, social and cultural institutions and issues, and exchange programmes have also been boosted. According to Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha:

The ways journalists are educated influence their self-perception. Their perception of themselves and their role in society in turn leads to differences in journalistic practice. While this is an obstacle to any move towards the homogenisation of journalism training models in Western Europe, it can also be seen as a chance for extending the scope and quality of training programmes in individual countries through international cooperation.<sup>30</sup>

In a paper addressing the 'redirection of journalism education', Dutch media academic Mark Deuze argued that formal journalism education was a key role player in 'equipping both today's (in terms of further



training) and tomorrow's media professionals with the tools to grapple the social, cultural, professional and economical developments that threaten, challenge but most definitely change the profession of journalism'.<sup>31</sup> Deuze identified the 'true values' or ideals of journalism as:

- Journalists provide a public service;<sup>32</sup>
- Journalists are neutral, objective, fair and (thus) credible;
- Journalists must enjoy editorial autonomy, freedom and independence;
- Journalists have a sense of immediacy, validity and factuality;
- Journalists have a sense of ethics and legitimacy.

However, Deuze warned that all of these key values or ideals in journalism had been changing or would change, and journalism education needed to adapt to survive.<sup>33</sup>

### **The United States perspective**

Unlike countries such as Australia and New Zealand, journalism education at universities in the United States was well established and the norm for most of the 20th century. The number of graduates gaining bachelor's degrees from university journalism schools in various media and communication fields grew dramatically by 1500 percent from 3,131 to 52,799 in the twenty five years from 1966 to 1991, according to a 1995 survey by Ohio State academic Lee B. Becker and graduate student Joseph D. Graf.<sup>34</sup> However, while the proliferation of departmental names accurately represents a field that is both expanding and converging as new media are created and established media find new partnerships — it is also confusing for students seeking careers in the news and for news organisations looking to connect with them. Budget-conscious university administrators, looking for ways to consolidate programmes and save costs, too often looked for a 'convenient way to lump everything from journalism to speech pathology under one roof'. Charles L. Overby, president of the United States media lobby group Freedom Forum, noted:

It is probably counterproductive to fight that trend. But let's not pretend that it is all journalism or that all resources devoted to things besides journalistic core values are helping to prepare future journalists ...

In that regard, the battle over who is hired and promoted to teach journalism — real journalism — seems to have been a losing one for news professionals. I am aware of many situations where editors with distinguished service were turned down in favour of candidates with less distinguished service but with advanced degrees.<sup>35</sup>

The Freedom Forum commissioned Betty Medsger, a journalist and journalism education administrator, and the Roper Centre of the University

of Connecticut to spend a year investigating the ‘winds of change’ affecting journalism education. Roper’s team surveyed by telephone 1,041 print and broadcast journalists from across the nation who had one to eleven years of journalism experience by mid-1995.<sup>36</sup> Also by telephone, Roper surveyed 500 newsroom recruiters and supervisors at print and broadcast media organisations, and 446 university journalism educators by mail. In the 1996 report, *Winds of Change: Challenges Confronting Journalism Education*, Medsger noted that while the winds were strong, there was disagreement among educators and journalists about whether they were ‘fresh winds or destructive winds’.<sup>37</sup> She was critical of the trend to merge journalism education into communication courses ‘designed not to prepare journalists’, which had accelerated because:

- Downsizing and ‘mergermania’ have become as popular on campuses as they are in corporations.
- New technologies compel faculties to learn and teach new skills, especially new research skills.
- Educators and journalists are confused about the shape of journalism, even in the near future.
- It is unclear whether the future of journalism is bright and more exciting, or blurred.

Among some of Medsger’s most important findings were:<sup>38</sup>

- Journalism education is very important to news organisations. (Among those who became journalists between 1984 and 1994 and were employed as journalists in 1995, 71 percent studied journalism at some level.)<sup>39</sup>
- The future of journalism education has been jeopardised by university hiring policies and philosophies of journalism education that have led to a decline in hiring faculty with significant experience and expertise in journalism.<sup>40</sup>
- Journalism educators themselves, including those who have doctoral degrees, do not strongly support the doctorate as a criterion for hiring journalism educators.
- The future of journalism is jeopardised by low salaries that are driving out the next generation of journalists.<sup>41</sup>
- Today’s new journalists — those who have been journalists from one to eleven years — are the most educated in US history. At least 94 percent of them have bachelor’s degrees.

This latter finding contrasts with a 1992 survey of American journalists by David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit of Indiana University, which showed that 82 percent of journalists in the United States had degrees.<sup>42</sup> However, it was consistent with earlier US research in 1971<sup>43</sup> and 1986<sup>44</sup> that showed American educational levels of journalists was steadily rising.

The 1992 survey ‘suggested that the “typical” US journalist was a white Protestant male with a bachelor’s degree from a public college, married, 36 years old, earning about US\$31,000 a year, working in journalism about twelve years, not belonging to a journalism association, and employed by a medium-sized (forty two journalists) group-owned daily newspaper’.<sup>45</sup> ‘Such a picture is inadequate,’ added the authors. Their findings also showed a far more complex mix in 1992: ‘There were substantial numbers of women, non-whites, non-Protestants, single, young and old, and relatively rich and poor journalists working in the US for a wide variety of small and large news media, both groups and singly owned.’ Many of these journalists differed from the ‘typical’ profile:

For example, Black and Asian journalists were more likely to be women than men, not to be married, to have higher incomes (US\$37,000 to US\$42,000) than the typical journalist, to have worked in journalism ten to eleven years, to be members of at least one journalism association, and to work for larger (100 to 150 journalists) daily newspapers.<sup>46</sup>

But overall the prognosis for the future of journalism is rather grim, according to columnist Russell Baker who wrote in a *New York Times* review of five books about the state of health of American media. He argued journalists had ‘discovered that their prime duty is no longer to maintain the republic in well-informed condition — or to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, as the old gospel has it — but to serve the stock market with a good earnings report every three months or, in plainer English, to comfort the comfortable’.<sup>47</sup>

### **Development communication and journalism**

Normative media theories argue that the true relationship between social systems and the press can be understood by examining social beliefs regarding the nature of human beings, knowledge and truth, and relationships between individuals and the state. Normative theories expose the connections between social understandings of truth, the masses and the state on the one hand and press ownership, functions, controls and taboos on the other.<sup>48</sup> Dominant paradigms on development communication have mirrored changes in wider discourses about the nature of development in the many newly independent states that emerged after the Second World War. Mass communication was seen as an instrument for national development.

The role of communication on development seems obvious: when a road is built into a village, things change. First the physical changes: more houses and markets are built. More offices and more stores. More money comes in. More goods are sold and more stores built. Then a factory is built to supply the needs of the local people.

When newspapers, magazines, books and films are brought in through those roads, more things change. People change in the way they think and look at things. Then radio and television come in over the airlines and bring with them new words and ideas. They bring in the speeches of government officials calling for national self-discipline or advising farmers how to produce more rice per hectare or how to kill the mosquitoes.<sup>49</sup>

Gradually, argues Filipino media professor Crispin Maslog, the old order is undermined, tradition breaks down, and change gathers pace — a change hastened by the advent of mass media.<sup>50</sup> The first major study on the role of communication in development was based on six Middle East countries — Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. It was conducted by Columbia University researchers in 1950–51 and led to Daniel Lerner's theory of modernisation.<sup>51</sup> From his study comparing seventy three countries, Lerner found a four-stage pattern in development. First came urbanisation, followed by the development of literacy skills. Then media participation was followed by political participation.

However, structural theorists challenged the basis of the modernisation approach, claiming that reliance on Western-style communication was among factors exacerbating Third World problems. In the 1960s, many Third World nations called for reforms of both international economic and communications systems, with their demands reaching a culmination with the 1980 MacBride report, *Many Voices, One World*. Building upon older critiques of colonialism and imperialism, cultural dependency theorists blamed Western monopolisation and manipulation of the media for perpetuating international and local inequalities and for imposing inappropriate Western values and cultural frames on developing societies. Although the superiority and utility of Western modernity were contested, the mass media was still perceived as a tool that could aid education and encourage national unity.

A third wave of theorists focused on quality of life and human dignity issues. Arguing that the economic development debate obscures the underlying systemic inequalities that prevent true 'human development', they sought new measures as an alternative to economic statistics to evaluate each nation's quality of life and success in meeting human needs.

Some argued that development communication was in fact a 'fifth theory' of the press in addition to the four theories identified by Fred Siebert et al (1956) — authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility and (Soviet) totalitarian.<sup>52</sup> Analysts such as Maslog believe that these are not theories so much as 'types' in a typology of press systems.<sup>53</sup> According to this theory or typology, the basic role of the press in an authoritarian system is to serve the state. The libertarian model, however, is the antithesis of this view. It espouses freedom of the press from government control.

All ideas are given a fair hearing in society, which becomes a 'free marketplace' of ideas. The social responsibility theory is a modification of the libertarian approach to media. It could be characterised thus: 'The power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible'.<sup>54</sup> The totalitarian theory is a variation of authoritarian theory: Whereas authoritarian is 'negative' in nature, aimed at stopping anything against state interests, totalitarian uses its total power in 'positive' control to achieve its objectives. Totalitarian also involves the principle of state ownership. However, Maslog argues that totalitarian is too rooted in the Soviet and Cold War models and would now be better termed 'social centralist' theory instead.<sup>55</sup>

One of the more perceptive writers addressing development journalism issues in the Asia-Pacific region is Malaysian media educator and analyst Eric Loo. He has criticised the stance of Australian, New Zealand and other Western journalists who, in his view, have misrepresented development journalism, arguing that its advocacy role 'conflicted with traditional journalism as they knew it — free and fair'.<sup>56</sup>

To them, development journalism was covert propaganda and positive news reporting. Development journalism in Third World countries was to Western journalists simply journalism that was outrightly supportive of government projects and policies. However, journalists from India and the Philippines who pioneered the practice saw development journalism as more than reporting which was supportive of development projects. It was a way of reporting where journalists and people interacted closely.

The development journalists boast of their identification with the struggles of the communities for improvements in their living conditions, social welfare, political participation and economic equity.<sup>57</sup>

In fact, it could be argued that development journalism — with its emphasis on going beyond 'merely telling the news' and seeking to 're-engage' the public in civic life — has many parallels with the notions of public journalism in Australia, New Zealand and other Western countries.<sup>58</sup>

### **South Pacific media research**

Scholarly interest in the South Pacific media has been fairly limited, and interest in journalism education even rarer. Expatriates have done much of what has been accomplished. American media professor Jim Richstad (1973, 1981, 1984)<sup>59</sup> and also Fiji Islander Lasarus Vusoniwailala (1976),<sup>60</sup> who prepared a case study on Fiji as a 'free press in a developing multi-racial society', did significant early work. So did Anne Walker (1976), who researched the relationship between mass media, community involvement and political participation in Fiji.<sup>61</sup> Makereta Waqavonovono

(1981), writing in *Pacific Perspective*, was concerned with what she considered to be manipulation of the Pacific media and ‘cultural colonisation’.<sup>62</sup> She noted in her study of four countries—Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Tonga — based mostly on qualitative findings that radio broadcasting had become the most influential news media and the ‘only form of “mass communication” in the Pacific’:

One reason for the dramatic impact of radio on island listeners is that any statements broadcasted [sic] tend to be accepted as truth. A Fiji radio announcer, for example, recounted a story of two villages practising ‘bushlaw’, in which news items heard on radio were mutually accepted as the final criteria of truth and the only reliable sources of information.<sup>63</sup>

At the same time, added Waqavonovono, newspapers served a ‘very basic educational function’ as one of the few regular reading materials in the islands. They had a long life span and were ‘often passed from one household to another’.<sup>64</sup> Waqavonovono contrasted the weak state of the vernacular press in Fiji with the ‘significant’ publications in Tonga such as *Kalonikali Tonga*, or *Tonga Chronicle*. On the other hand, Ratu Luke Vuidreketi, editor of the Fijian language newspaper *Nai Lalakai*, noted a somewhat evolving situation: ‘*Nai Lalakai* used to be effectively a Fijian version of *The Fiji Times*; this is no longer true’.

As well as considering the mainstream media, Waqavonovono also analysed the magazine industry in the Pacific, including ‘risque’ publications — as she described them — such as *Playboy* or *Playgirl*;<sup>65</sup> the popularity and long life of comics comparable to the vernacular press;<sup>66</sup> and traditional mass communication such as the ‘coconut wireless’.<sup>67</sup> Waqavonovono also had concerns about the level of foreign ownership and staffing in the media, particularly the newspapers, and over the limited training.

Unlike other government and private enterprises, there is minimal systematic training within the newspaper groups in the four island countries that were studied. (A small beginning was made by the University of the South Pacific in 1981).<sup>68</sup> In any case training programmes would seriously handicap the staff available in Western Samoa, Tonga and Niue, where minimal staff exists for newspapers (one or two journalists in most of these areas) that serve only a small population or a small section of the community. It is not surprising that due to this factor, a scholarship offer for journalist training in the Pacific in 1977 and 1978 was not taken up by any of the newspaper groups. A slight exception to the rule may be the occasional sending of journalists abroad for short foreign-financed courses.<sup>69</sup>

Richard Phinney (1985), a Canadian journalist on attachment as cadet counsellor with Papua New Guinea’s state broadcaster National

Broadcasting Commission (NBC), conducted a survey of forty two PNG journalists in October, 1984<sup>70</sup> (see Table 1). He surveyed non-expatriate journalists at the NBC, *PNG Post-Courier*, *Niugini Nius*, *Times of Papua New Guinea* and *Wantok*. At the time he observed:

The results go some small way towards filling the huge gap in research about journalists in the developing world, but may be of special interest to *Australian Journalism Review* readers since the mass media in Papua New Guinea has its roots in Australian colonial administration and in Australian journalism.<sup>71</sup>

Phinney found that by Papua New Guinea standards, journalists were 'extremely well educated'.<sup>72</sup> In a country with then 35 percent literacy, thirty two (76 percent) respondents had some tertiary education. All but three of this group had passed a one-year diploma course in journalism at the University of Papua New Guinea.

**Table 1: Comparison between Pacific (and one Australian) media survey response rates, 1984–2002**

Survey	Phinney 1984 <sup>1</sup> (PNG)	Masterton 1988 (Pacific)	Layton 1992 (Pacific)	Schultz 1992 <sup>2</sup> (Australia)	Robie (a) 1998/9 (Fiji/PNG)	Robie (b) 2001 (Fiji/PNG)
Total	97	79	164	247 (39)	124	106
Percentage	62%	25%	60%	41% (80%)	66%	70%

<sup>1</sup> Phinney (1984) included PNG radio and print journalists only; Masterton (1988) surveyed news sources and journalists in the USP region; Layton (1992) included eight Pacific countries and territories, American Samoa, Northern Marianas, Fiji, Guam, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Western Samoa (now Samoa); Robie (a. 1998/9) and Robie (b. 2001) both focused on print, online, radio and television journalists in the region's two major media industry countries, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

<sup>2</sup> Schultz (1992) included Australian journalists only, but this was part of a 10-nation Media and Democracy project, which included Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, and the United States. This has been included for comparison. The main Australian sample (247) comprised journalists involved in daily news and current affairs production while being compared with a group of investigative journalists (39).

While Brisbane journalists, for example, lived in an almost purely English-speaking environment, English was a second or third language for most Papua New Guinean journalists.<sup>73</sup> Also, while 42 percent of the participants in the Brisbane study had fathers who were either managers or professionals, 'it is probable that the parents of the majority of Papua New Guinean journalists are small scale farmers who received little formal education. This was certainly the case among NBC journalists'.<sup>74</sup>

Phinney asked the journalists whether they were 'capitalist or socialist': Just one answered capitalist, ten answered socialist, while the balance said neither description matched their political views. Also only nine of the journalists supported a political party. Summarising the political views, Phinney commented:

While a left-of-centre orientation would concur with studies of American and Australian<sup>75</sup> journalists, ideological labels such as 'left wing' and 'right wing' don't have much meaning in Papua New Guinean politics, and weren't readily understood by many journalists I worked with.

Phinney concluded from the survey that Papua New Guinean journalists were prepared to take steps to defend the principle that news media should be free from political control. 'It appears unlikely that the Government will attack this principle in the near future,' he wrote, perhaps unwisely basing this on the fact that the introduction of television was being left completely in the hands of a private Australian company.<sup>76</sup> He believed this indicated that the country's politicians were 'far more concerned with the economics of the mass media than with its manipulation'. However, the controversial 1987 draft *Media Tribunal Bill* (see Chapter Three) and the start of the Bougainville civil war in 1989 swiftly led to greater political pressures on the Papua New Guinea media.

In 1988, New Zealand media academic Dr Murray Masterton, founding coordinator of the University of the South Pacific journalism certificate programme, conducted a survey of newspaper readers, radio listeners and journalists in the ten countries then served by USP. He found that 'universally they believe their news services make too many errors in fact and interpretations, that their stories are incomplete and lacking in background, [and] that they are too often no more than government handouts'.<sup>77</sup>

That island news services are considered sub-standard, even by the islanders, is not surprising. In the ten countries that make up the area served by [USP] remains only one true daily newspaper, *The Fiji Times*. But Fiji's population roughly equals the other nine island nations put together. There is a daily in Rarotonga, thanks to generous Government support, but it prints little of what Australians would call news.<sup>78</sup>

In 1990, LaTrobe scholar Julianne Horsfield in Australia examined the introduction of foreign-owned broadcast television into Papua New Guinea, concluding that the failure of the government to apply some form of control in the so-called 'culture industries' reflected a continued inability to assert its will in policy — 'especially in policy where foreign investment is involved, as was the case with the largely foreign-owned Papua New Guinea press'.<sup>79</sup> Long term communication policy was sacrificed for the immediate demands of electoral strategy.<sup>80</sup> Eight years later, American academic Robert J. Foster gave an even more depressing account of the establishment of television in Papua New Guinea, saying the 'much-touted strength of PNG's indigenous societies to determine their futures appears to be severely



compromised — if not by a weak national state, then by the agents and agencies (both domestic and foreign) of a strong global market'.<sup>81</sup>

Two years after Horsfield, Fiji academic Vanessa Griffen completed a doctoral thesis examining the media legacy left in the British colonial era in the Second World War and during the start of the Cold War years.<sup>82</sup> She considered the control of the press and information with Fiji as a case study. Media manipulation was also a concern for Pramila Devi, who examined the role of the Fiji news media at the time of the 1992 General Election, the first since Rabuka's military coups in 1987.<sup>83</sup> She provided content analysis of coverage. Devi also examined various models of control of the media in Western countries, self-censorship, media propaganda, education, socialisation and the training of journalists. She noted that a 'responsible' press, a term often stressed by politicians of all parties, was one that did not disturb the status quo. Alternatively, it was one that disturbed the status quo the least.

[A] responsible press is one that does not challenge the ideological foundations of the Government of the day. Thus, in the US during the [1991 Gulf War] invasion of Iraq, the responsible press was one that did not pay much attention to the anti-war protests at home or one that did not report from the Iraqi perspective. The basic tenet of the 'responsible press' concept is that the press has assumed the role of safeguarding the central foundations of the status quo.<sup>84</sup>

Devi also highlighted the issue of media ownership as an important factor in the independence of the editorial policy. In 1987, the military authorities closed Fiji's two daily newspapers for a time after they published strong editorials condemning the May 14 coup. They were later allowed to resume publication on condition that they would not publish any news item that would 'incite racial antagonism':

The military regime-established guidelines of so-called 'accurate' and 'responsible' reporting were to be pursued. The international media mogul Rupert Murdoch-owned daily, *The Fiji Times*, agreed to operate under this policy guideline, while the *Fiji Sun*, also under foreign ownership, but with the heavy influence of a local director, Miles Johnson, disagreed. *The Sun* had written a scathing editorial the day after the coup. *The Sun* remained closed. *The Fiji Times* continued operation with caution — engaging in self-censorship. Unlike *The Fiji Times*, the *Fiji Sun*, also owned by foreign nationals — the Auckland-based publisher Philip Harkness and Sally Ah Sian, of the Sing Tao Ltd of Hongkong, refused to operate under extensive censorship, deciding to wind up its operations following the second coup in September 1987.<sup>85</sup>

Instead of informing and educating voters about the real issue — the 1990 Constitution, which had been widely condemned as ‘undemocratic, racist and feudalistic’ — and showing a concern for at least half the country’s population, the press was more concerned with creating ‘political heroes’. According to Devi, the papers ‘created political heroes of those who fitted their vision of political development, and overtly tried to influence the voters to vote for such heroes’.<sup>86</sup>

For the dailies [in Fiji], democracy meant an elected Parliament. It meant nothing more. If the rules meant that half of the country’s population would be under perpetual political domination by the other half, it did not matter. If the rules meant that the commoner and urban Fijians were of no consequence in the nation’s political processes, for the dailies this did not matter either. Democracy was Parliament sitting regularly; how the Parliament [was] constituted was of no consequence.<sup>87</sup>

Australian-based American media academic Suzanna Layton completed probably the most comprehensive survey to date of journalists in the South Pacific in 1992. This involved sampling eight countries and territories in the region and focused on media freedom in the region.<sup>88</sup> She aimed to ‘reach as many journalists as possible’ because the professional population is small and dispersed over a large area, and because of the diversity of the media, its ownership and the cultural context.<sup>89</sup> A total of 164 respondents from the eight countries participated in the survey for a 60 percent response.<sup>90</sup> In her thesis, she claimed the emergence of a ‘Pacific-style’ of journalism, an essentially Western approach to media heavily influenced by local cultural customs such as the ‘wantok’ system in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands: ‘Pacific islands journalists are thus seen to be actively synthesising a “Pacific-style” journalism out of the two traditions [that] shape their identity and give their lives meaning’.<sup>91</sup> Unlike African journalists, Pacific journalists do not espouse a ‘guilt complex’ as a result.<sup>92</sup> The traditional conservatism of the Pacific is acknowledged, as is the reality of accelerating social change.<sup>93</sup>

While Dr Layton was a lecturer at Griffith University, two years after completing her doctoral thesis, she prepared a draft report on media training needs in the Pacific as a consultant in association with AusAID. She attended the 1997 Pacific Islands News Association conference in Port Vila, Vanuatu, and conducted mostly unstructured interviews with an unspecified number of journalists from the region.<sup>94</sup> Among her preliminary observations were:

- Training activity generally appeared to have fallen from levels in the late 1980s and early 1990s.
- This appeared true for both regional and national media sectors. Thus fewer regional organisations were hosting media training, as were fewer national press clubs.<sup>95</sup>

- Broadly speaking, PIBA continues to oversee the most cohesive programme of non-formal training courses, workshops and seminars in conjunction with FES, GTZ and TVNZ. Most activities in 1995/6 have been carried out in-country and address a variety of skill needs levels in the production, technical, management and marketing areas. In 1997, however, the number of training activities planned had lessened, and become more focused on assisting regional broadcasters to cope with the new commercial challenges to their industry.

Layton correctly indicated that throughout the region 'professional mobility remains high, resulting in a continuing need for the most basic levels of training in print and broadcast reporting and production'. She also highlighted some of the findings of her doctoral research:

Research from the early 1990s showed nearly 50 percent of [Pacific] journalists were less than 30 years of age, and that one-quarter (25 percent) had one year or less experience. Forty six percent of males had three years or less experience, as did 58 percent of females. According to evidence presented at the [PINA] meeting and in the post-meeting workshops, these figures continue to reflect the situation in the industry today. One representative comment: 'Sending a cadet to interview the PM — it's an insult!'<sup>96</sup>

While Layton's samples and findings in her doctoral work were a significant and important contribution to Pacific scholarship, she was perhaps too heavily influenced by a small and influential self-interested clique over the industry role. She was challenged over her claims about the genesis of some Pacific publications and over 'territory and politics' in *Australian Studies in Journalism*.<sup>97</sup>

Six years after Layton's work, University of the South Pacific academic Esther Williams completed research into broader issues such as how information and communication plays a significant role in the political life of indigenous Fijians. She addressed several questions, including whether culture and traditions reduce information access and control political participation.<sup>98</sup> Born and raised in Fiji, from the Mataqali Soso, of Vevukana village on Vanuabalavu Island, Dr Williams found herself 'searching for reasons why democracy could not survive in a large number of developing countries, particularly in Fiji'. She wrote it was possible to conclude that lack of information was not the problem for Fijians,

but rather, the difficulty is inherent in a number of factors: the way people perceive information, communication and democracy and their role in all this; the impact of culture including the 'Fijian way of life' on the control of information; the general negative attitudes on information held by leaders in Fiji; and the lack of an organised information communication system. Fijians in both

urban areas and the rural village did not know what exactly information could and could not do for them.<sup>99</sup>

While Williams did not focus specifically on the media in her doctoral work, her later research about the 1999 Fiji general election produced some interesting conclusions on the political role of the media. She found that the 'general lack of interest' people in Fiji took in the radio, newspapers and television political campaign publicity was rather surprising.<sup>100</sup>

A high 33 percent did not listen to the radio or watch television on any political campaign, and 27 percent seldom listened to the radio or watched television... [I]n the newspapers, 21 percent of voters indicated that they read the newspapers every day, 25 percent indicated that they usually did, [and] 23 percent indicated that they never read any items relating to the election campaigns in the daily newspapers.<sup>101</sup>

Fiji academics, such as Robbie Robertson and William Sutherland, and some reporters criticised the youthful inexperience of Fiji journalists as being a factor in the attempted coup by renegade businessman George Speight and his group of silent backers through misrepresentation of policies of the Labour-led Chaudhry Government and the political upheaval.<sup>102</sup> In an unpublished politics dissertation at the University of Canterbury in 2001, Paul O'Connell contrasted the news media of Fiji and Tonga, addressing the question of whether they operated in 'a way that sustains democratic values?'<sup>103</sup> O'Connell acknowledged the low levels of journalism and training in the region and said the media needed to be equipped with the 'necessary intellectual tools' to be able to deal with the 'contentious issues of culture and tradition'.<sup>104</sup> He concluded:

Whether culture is being misused to censor freedom of speech, or whether it has a tacit effect as self-censorship, it must nonetheless be acknowledged as a factor preventing democratic freedom of expression. There is little doubt that culture and tradition cannot be changed to accommodate the media, however the media can learn ways around culture and tradition without compromising the standards of good journalism'.<sup>105</sup>

American anthropologist Robert J. Foster (1997) and colleagues wrote of the critical role of the mass media and their functional control in the shaping of a public sphere discourse in Papua New Guinea in *Nation Making: Emergent Identities in Postcolonial Melanesia*. According to contributor Edward LiPuma,<sup>106</sup> there were two dimensions to the issue: one was the extent to which history was made and portrayed in the mass media so that 'normative positions appear to be the result of political consensus rather than of contestation'. Examples cited included the presence of foreign companies in extractive industries (fishing, forestry and mining) often being portrayed by politicians as an 'uncontested realisation of the nation's will

and interests'. The second dimension was to what degree was the transformation of contestation into consensus an expression of hegemonic power.

Another American academic, Robert A. Hooper, also had concerns about education and training for broadcast journalism in the late 1990s. Assessing the status of sustainable broadcasting, he was particularly pessimistic about the University of Papua New Guinea, describing broadcast journalism there as 'moribund and under threat of closure'.<sup>107</sup> 'Journalism training, including broadcasting, has received decreasing levels of staffing, funding and other support in recent years, in spite of the notable successes of the programme, including award-winning student publications'. However, while Hooper considered that the University of the South Pacific had an excellent media centre, featuring television studios and radio broadcasting facilities, and a large technical staff, he believed the university's potential was neglected.

With millions of dollars invested, the university could serve as a regional broadcast educational centre and producer of quality local television programmes for emerging broadcasters. However, USP rarely appears to view itself in this role. A million dollar TV studio is often left idle except for the simple taping of lectures and events, while state of the art video equipment is routinely rented out for commercial purposes.<sup>108</sup>

Hooper rated the studio facilities as 'technically superior' to those found in many Australian, American and New Zealand universities.<sup>109</sup> However, 'as with the University of Papua New Guinea, the problems at USP involve a chronic lack of institutional leadership and support'.

### **Conclusion**

The need for university training in journalism was recognised early in the 20th century in both Australia and New Zealand but it was not until the 1970s that it became fully established in both countries as a norm. Ironically, this was the same decade that the first university journalism school was established in the South Pacific — at the University of Papua New Guinea as a New Zealand aid project in 1975.

Australian and New Zealand journalists are well educated, with nearly two-thirds of those participating in a 1994 NZ survey having 'gained some tertiary (college) level education'. Also, journalists in New Zealand are predominantly female and young. Research by John Henningham showed that by the 1990s, 35 percent of Australian journalists had a degree, four percent had a diploma and a further 16 percent had undertaken some tertiary study. But both Australia and New Zealand were well below the US figure of 94 percent of journalists with degrees, which, according to Betty Medsger, currently has the most educated ratio of journalists in history.

More than 62 percent of French journalists have a university degree and women tend to be better educated than men. The French system is highly influential in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, overseas territories with comparatively strong news media industries in the South Pacific context. A 1995 national survey found that there had been a significant rise in educational qualifications among British journalists with almost half (49 percent) having a degree.

Although traditionally Australia and New Zealand had followed the British approach to cadetships and craft training in the newsroom, both countries have long since modified their approach: Australian journalism training and education is now dominated by the university journalism schools, similar to the United States. New Zealand has a dual system of polytechnics offering a trade style national diploma in journalism and universities with journalism and communication studies degrees. The system is moderated by an industry regulatory body, the NZ Journalists Training Organisation (NZJTO). Both Australia and New Zealand, which have high levels of university educated journalists, have played important roles in the establishment of journalism schools and training in the South Pacific through donor funding and staff. France, which also has long-established journalism schools and a high-level of university graduates among journalists, was the catalyst in establishing the degree course at the University of the South Pacific.

Development communication and journalism has been offered as a 'fifth theory' of the press in addition to the four theories identified by Fred Siebert (1956). However, the advocacy role sometimes featured in development journalism and more overt community involvement by journalists has often been treated by the media in Australia and New Zealand with suspicion. Yet development journalism is not unlike notions of public journalism finding favour with some media circles in both countries.

Little media research has been done in the South Pacific, and even less based on empirical studies. Most research has been done by expatriate academics. Major research has included surveys of the profile and demographics of journalists in Papua New Guinea (Phinney, 1985), the South Pacific region (Masterton, 1989) and a comparison of eight Pacific countries in terms of media freedom (Layton, 1993). Layton argued in her doctoral thesis that a 'Pacific-style' of journalism was emerging — an essentially Western approach to media heavily influenced by local cultural customs such as the wantok system in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. All three researchers and others noted the youthfulness, lack of experience and lack of qualifications of Pacific journalists (except in Papua New Guinea where Phinney compared educational standards favourably with Australia).

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## Pacific media training, aid donors and ethics

Liberty does not mean licence and is limited by ethical standards, but the Press Council's role was to monitor and it resisted attempts to go further. That is, the council was concerned to ensure that reasonable standards did not become a denial of the right of the public to know, to have opinions and to publish.

*Anna Solomon*  
*The Independent editor, 1996*

In parts of the developing world there is an unwritten pact between aid recipients and aid donors in which both appear to benefit in the short term to the detriment of any measurable progress in sustainable development. In Pacific Island nations this is especially true in the case of local radio and television.

*Robert Hooper*  
*Asia-Pacific media educator, 1998*

NEWS MEDIA in South Pacific countries have faced mounting criticism over professional and ethical standards. Criticism in the region focuses on lack of professional training of journalists, poor education standards, lack of knowledge of the political and social institutions, cultural insensitivities, and a questionable grasp of ethical issues. The media, some argue, is too 'Western' and not the 'Pacific way'. Others, particularly politicians, are keen to introduce regulatory controls to 'rein in' the media.<sup>1</sup> However, the

media industry is quick to defend its integrity and, while acknowledging some shortcomings, including a lack of training, insists self-regulation is best.

Towards the end of 2002, the press in Fiji faced some particularly nasty vitriol. Senator Mitieli Bulanauca branded local journalists as ‘mad crazy loonies and stupid people’ who needed to be ‘trained, guided and directed’.<sup>2</sup> He also described media as ‘Satan’s agents’, arguing that editors, publishers, reporters and announcers were racist and naive amateurs. His brand of nastiness followed another government senator, Reverend Tomasi Kanailagi, a former Methodist Church president, who singled out *The Fiji Times* and Fiji Television as ‘agents of evil’ over an exposé about the practice of tithing and church finances. Although these views had a rather hysterical tone, they echoed rather more measured criticism made a year earlier by media commentators and overseas current affairs programmes of the standard of crime reporting in Fiji at the time of a notorious double murder in which Red Cross executive director John Scott and his partner were hacked to death. Serious ethical dilemmas were also exposed over the coverage of George Speight’s attempted coup in May 2000.<sup>3</sup> While media councils and self-regulation have become a new mantra in the Pacific, questions of credibility remain. Fiji’s self-regulatory body, the Media Council (Fiji) Ltd, was eager to defend the media against attacks such as the senators’ ‘preposterous’ criticisms<sup>4</sup> yet it had remained fairly muted about both the Scott murder case reporting and the Speight political crisis.

In Papua New Guinea, resentment towards news media often echoes that in Fiji, particularly if the news media organisation is perceived to be foreign-owned. Such rhetoric against the PNG press was reflected in a statement by then Opposition Leader Paias Wingti before he became Prime Minister. He expressed the frequent indignation that many PNG politicians share about the main national daily:

The *Post-Courier* newspaper is hell-bent on a dangerous path of partisan reporting, which in the end will threaten the freedom of the press in Papua New Guinea.

It is obvious that the *Post-Courier* has become the captive of powerful foreign sectional groups, whose only interest is in screwing the best deal out of our resources for themselves.

The present Prime Minister, Rabbie Namaliu, is a willing accomplice in this. Namaliu will best be remembered for selling us all down the drain — ably assisted by the foreign-owned and directed *Post-Courier*.<sup>5</sup>



### Aid and Pacific media training

Ironically, a decade after the University of Papua New Guinea Journalism Programme had become well-established in Port Moresby, *Fiji Times* editor Vijendra Kumar lamented the lack of media education or a training kit. He said that 'at present, there is no institution in the region that provides training in journalism and communications'.<sup>6</sup> This demonstrated a tardiness about journalism education in Fiji that contrasted with Papua New Guinea — by then the *second* PNG journalism school, at Divine Word in Madang, had begun the previous year — that persisted into the 21st century. Writing a preface for the publication of a pioneering Pacific reporters' handbook, *Get It Right; Write It Tight*, Kumar also noted:

Whatever training that is currently provided is through a loose system run by newspapers or radio stations themselves. Raw cadets are generally left to sink or swim on their own, with the barest of help or guidance from a small corps of already overworked experienced journalists. There is no organised or formal instruction in the skills of the profession.<sup>7</sup>

Introducing the book, Dr Frederick Yu, of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, made some unflattering comments about the state of education for journalists in the Pacific.<sup>8</sup> 'A reporter must be well-informed and well-educated,' he wrote. This did not necessarily mean many years of formal education — some respected journalists had little more than high school or college education, while some with doctoral training were 'totally useless in the newsroom'. Nevertheless, more and more journalists around the world were expected or required to gain more formal education, as well as informal. Yu noted that increasing numbers of professional specialists, such as lawyers, doctors and PhDs, were entering the media in the United States.

Pacific Island news media set different educational requirements. Some recruit only 'school leavers', some require 'form Four', and some prefer college students or graduates.<sup>9</sup>

The book had its genesis some five years earlier, when a group of Pacific newspaper editors and broadcast news executives met in Honolulu in April 1980 to consider training needs for the region's journalists. In fact, it was probably earlier, from 1974 — just before the UPNG Journalism Programme was founded — when a fledgling network of newspaper editors, publishers and academics elected a working executive headed by *Samoa Times* editor Fata Pito Fa'alogo. Many of the network members were expatriate. Its task was 'spearheading the development' of the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), the industry's major regional lobby group.<sup>10</sup> One member, former *Fiji Times* editor Leonard Usher (later

knighted),<sup>11</sup> drafted his 'no-nonsense' eleven basic principles for new Pacific reporters:

- *Accuracy*: When in doubt, leave out. Check. Re-check.
- *Promptness*: Working to deadlines.
- *Discipline*: keeping to space limits. Inverted pyramid principle.
- *Clarity*: Rule — one thought to a sentence; one sentence, no passive voice.
- *Enterprise*: Keep eyes and ears open constantly for stories. Get around. Look for leads from an initial factual story.
- *Persistence*: Don't be discouraged or put off by obstruction or difficulty in making contacts. Keep at it.
- *Courage*: Don't be influenced by possible unpopularity or disapproval. It is the job of the journalist to get information and publish it.
- *Impartiality*: See both sides of a story.
- *Legality*: Learn thoroughly the provisions of laws governing defamation, contempt of court, sedition, parliamentary privilege and public order.
- *Language mastery*.

Pacific Islands journalists had long realised the region needed a news exchange. In the 1980s, Pacific Islanders often knew far more about what was happening in Auckland, Canberra, London, Paris, Wellington and New York than they did about their neighbours across the ocean.<sup>12</sup> And radio was regarded as a vital player in such a news exchange. As Sorariba observed:

From the outset, governments in many Pacific Island nations saw radio as the medium to reach out into communities. And radio's reaching out reputation has survived over the years. Many island leaders still regard radio stations as messengers of those in authority while reluctantly accepting the increasingly autonomous status of broadcasting stations. Such a mentality and practice prevail out of old habits, but the reality is that some Pacific Island countries' national broadcasting services are being turned into political tools of whoever happens to be in power.<sup>13</sup>

In a Pacific Basin Flow of News Study undertaken by the East-West Centre in 1976, journalism professor Jim Richstad and research associate Tony Nnaemeka found that prevailing news flow patterns in the region (one-way from the former colonial powers) were regarded by many as 'a hindrance to the social and economic development' of the region.<sup>14</sup> The survey pointed to the need for a news agency and the 'development of an Information Region that could lead to more balanced and relevant flow patterns'. The study of a 'constructed week' of foreign news coverage in twenty seven daily and weekly newspapers in the Pacific (fifteen from Pacific islands nations and twelve from Pacific rim countries) confirmed a

one-way news flow pattern as indicated by Johan Galtung's theoretical concepts (1971) over the influence of colonialism. Another significant finding in the Pacific was the notion of 'news from nowhere'.

This concept developed when the data showed that 29.4 percent of all the international news in Island presses did not have an identifiable or stated source. We found through interviews with editors that many of [them] knew where the stories originated.<sup>15</sup>

Although the idea for a news agency, or at least a news exchange, was pushed several times, regional agreement 'could not be reached until several years after broadcasting training cooperation had been under way' under the tutelage of the German NGO Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, which funded the PACBROAD programme. At a PACBROAD editors' workshop in Suva, run by Hendrik Bussiek in September 1987, participants agreed that two news editors would stay in Fiji to start work on the news service. This created a *fait accompli* and ensured Pacnews would continue in spite of the post-Rabuka coups turmoil in Fiji. At the same time, public broadcasters meeting in Tonga decided to create the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA). Pacnews and the new regional body — a professional association of the state-owned radio networks of thirteen independent Pacific Island countries,<sup>16</sup> along with Australia and New Zealand — were formally launched in 1988.<sup>17</sup> The German donor agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) provided funding for fax machines and other technical equipment for Pacnews.

Parallel to the Pacnews and PIBA developments, other initiatives sponsored by UNESCO had important implications for journalism training and education in the region. One was a meeting in Suva in November 1989 when media representatives from twenty Pacific countries met officials from UNESCO, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and several 'once colonial donor agencies' to consider a strategy for the introduction of television to the region. Professor Frank Morgan noted a 'sad irony':

Most ironic were the assurances of support from European, North American and international agencies for the technical, financial and creative resources that would be needed to develop local, culturally indigenous television services [in the Pacific]. The capacity to deliver that support had already been destroyed in the fall of the [Berlin] Wall.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, UNESCO played a crucial role in the television sector over the next decade through its regional office in Apia by encouraging empowerment training workshops and funding of independent video production, particularly with women's programmes and university student

productions.<sup>19</sup> An even more important development for the region came two years earlier. At the 1987 conference of PINA in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, UPNG's Peter Henshall tabled a proposal calling on UNESCO to fund an extra journalism lecturer at PNG's national university on condition that it provide a commitment (equivalent to a full-time person) to 'providing short courses throughout the region, extension courses and other training'.

Henshall considered that in a 'climate of limited resources' in the Pacific, it made sense for journalism education and training at various institutions in the region to complement each other rather than compete. He suggested the 'complementarity' might be geographical, with several institutions each meeting the needs of the countries in a particular part of the Pacific. Or it might be in terms of course content, with one institution concentrating on print with another dealing with broadcasting, or one emphasising practical reporting and another stressing communication theory. He hinted at future closer cooperation between UPNG and USP, which at that stage was offering a Certificate in Journalism course in Suva supported by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC).

We are acutely aware of the lack of dialogue between ourselves and the Journalism Programme at USP, for example. Both institutions must share the blame for this lack of liaison. Looking to the future, it would surely serve the region better if the various programmes offered by UPNG and USP were distinct, so the people could choose the one which best met their needs. This can only come about if those of us offering the programmes talk to each other.<sup>20</sup>

### UPNG hosts regional training

From the early days of journalism training at UPNG, the university had accepted students (often working journalists) from other countries in the region. In 1976, the second year of the programme's existence, two students from the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Commission (SIBC) were studying at UPNG. The pattern had continued, according to Henshall:<sup>21</sup> 'Of the 139 diplomates so far [in 1987], fourteen have come from the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Of the twenty seven students currently registered for the diploma and degree programmes, four are from other Pacific Island states.'

According to Henshall, the PNG Government's policy was to concentrate its resources on 'developing primary industry rather than social services, including education'. Within education, the policy was to shift the emphasis from tertiary to primary education. As a result, UPNG's budget was cut by five percent each year between 1986-88: 'Journalism is under no immediate threat, but the prospects for expansion seem very limited.'<sup>22</sup>

But expand it did, after a fashion. Following Henshall's proposal, UNESCO decided to bite the bullet and for three years funded the Pacific Journalism Development and Training (PACJOURN) project, based at UPNG. After all, the proposal offered advantages to both UNESCO and PINA. It was cheaper to dovetail the project onto the UPNG Journalism Programme rather than fund a separate trainer to be based as an individual elsewhere. UPNG provided office space and secretarial support, and also provided accommodation as the job was given to Henshall. The second advantage for UNESCO and PINA was that while paying for one person, they would be able to call on the expertise of three staff. As Henshall explained:

If we organise ourselves so that all teaching duties within UPNG, currently undertaken by the two lecturers, are shared by all three lecturers, then the new duties which would come with such an arrangement as outlined in this proposal can also be shared. There would in effect not be two UPNG lecturers and one UNESCO lecturer, but a team of three sharing all the work according to their specialisation and experience.<sup>23</sup>

For three years, until 1991, UPNG became the hub for regional industry short-course media training as well as formal journalism education while the university hosted the US\$1 million PACJOURN project. This was a productive and cooperative era (see Chapter Five) for Pacific journalism education with a series of short courses being conducted in the region. The period climaxed with publication of a three-volume journalism handbook, *The News Manual* (Henshall & Ingram, 1992), which became the key training text in the region for a decade. However, the pendulum then swung back to PINA and Suva where an UNESCO-funded Pacific Journalism Training Development Centre was established in Gordon Street, next door to *Islands Business* newsmagazine. From that point on, the donor-funded media industry short-course training and formal journalism education offered by the three main South Pacific universities followed largely separate and divergent paths.<sup>24</sup> This was accentuated with an ill-fated attempt in 1994 to establish a Fiji Journalism Institute (FJI), funded by UNESCO, the same year that a journalism degree course was introduced at USP. Barely six years later, the FJI collapsed under a cloud over funding accountability.

### **FJI officials given marching orders**

In November 2000, the Fiji Journalism Institute was evicted from its office and a scathing *Fiji Times* editorial called for it to 'clean up the mess'. This ended an embarrassing and controversial saga. The office that had housed the six-year-old institute in Ma'afu Street in Suva was taken over by the Fijian Affairs Board with the permission of the Public Service

Commission.<sup>25</sup> According to the Ministry of Information, the institute, run by PINA affiliate Fiji Islands Media Association (FIMA), had not been used for more than a year. Although it was an open secret among the media fraternity that the institute had foundered with serious questions over accountability for its donor funding, the media was reluctant to report the story. *The Fiji Times* editorial, one of the rare articles about the affair, commented:

The people responsible for this shocking state of affairs must be found and taken to task. Journalists have a duty to uncover and highlight misdeeds. It is therefore imperative that their house be put in order first.<sup>26</sup>

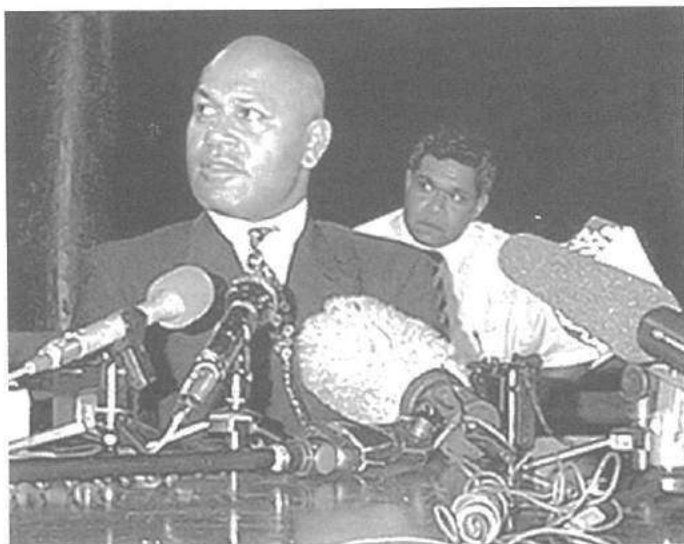
According to an article in *Wansolwara* by final year student journalists Salesh Kumar and Nazreen Bibi (2000):

Funding for the institute has been frozen since 1998 due to failure to provide audited reports. For more than eighteen months, there have been unsuccessful attempts to call a general meeting or provide audited accounts.

Director of Information Eliko Bomani said the ministry was willing to assist the institute, but FIMA needed to come up with a solution to its financial mess. He added that the journalists were quick to point fingers at others but when their own house was under question [then] they aptly 'sweep everything under the carpet'.<sup>27</sup>

Some former executives were reportedly under investigation over alleged mismanagement of donor funds and institute. They included the last training coordinator, Jo Nata, arguably Fiji's finest investigative journalist before his forays into public relations and a coup and also one of the country's two first journalism graduates.<sup>28</sup> Former FIMA president Asaeli Lave, chief photographer of *The Fiji Times*, was quoted by *Wansolwara* as saying there had been 'too much politicising' in the institute. UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) had provided a grant of US\$45,000 for the institute. Following the failure of the institute to properly audit the funds and provide sufficient explanation, UNESCO dispatched a consultant to report on the situation. The report found:

- A relatively high student drop-out rate (from 1996 to 1997).
- Lack of an official qualification (accreditation) for the FJI certificate.
- Need for future support from the media industry.
- Lack of cooperation between FJI and the regional Journalism Programme at USP.



**Audit time:** Jo Nata (right), a former journalism trainer, with George Speight in May 2000. *Pacific Journalism Online (USP)*

This last point was rather surprising given that for about two years (1998–99), one USP lecturer, Ingrid Leary, had kindly devoted some of her spare time to provide guest lectures at the institute, particularly on media law. Also, the USP programme had made some headway with the university's administration in seeking recognition for the FJI certificate as a cross-credit for the foundation course JN101 Introduction to Journalism.

The UNESCO rapporteur never consulted the USP Journalism Programme. UNESCO's regional communications adviser, Tarja Virtanen, told *Wansolwara* a new project had been submitted in 1997, and IPDC approved this in 1998, after it had evaluated implementation of the institute's objectives. However,

the director of IPDC suspended the funds because no viable workplan had been submitted by March 2000, with a special emphasis on the sustainability of the institute. This naturally covers aspects related to the budget and finances.<sup>29</sup>

PINA assisted FIMA in setting up the institute by developing a funding proposal for UNESCO's IPDC. Regional training coordinator Peter Lomas told *Wansolwara*: 'This was designed to help the institute become self-sustainable and organise overseas-based training programmes for the local trainers.' The Media Council advised and assisted FIMA in a bid to get the project back on track. In spite of the financial debacle, an announcement

at a Fiji National Commission for UNESCO seminar on 11 June 2002 confirmed media industry support for Pacific vocational courses, such as the Fiji and Samoan polytechnics, rather than degree courses with critical studies components:

Fiji news media leaders have backed [the] Fiji Institute of Technology becoming the centre for the industry's training in Fiji.

The institute will from early next year begin offering courses in journalism, public relations, advertising/marketing, radio, video, and TV production, photography and multi-media.

[PINA administrator Nina Ratulele] told the symposium PINA and its members are supporting developing such courses at tertiary institutions like the Fiji Institute of Technology and Samoa Polytechnic.

These would complement rather than compete with the journalism degree programmes at Divine Word University (Papua New Guinea), University of Papua New Guinea, and University of the South Pacific (Fiji), she said.<sup>30</sup>

Although, FIT management said the institute was taking over the role and assets of the defunct FJI, little information was made available and it was unclear in early 2004 whether the FIT course had either staff or a curriculum available. In Apia, the administration at Samoa Polytechnic gave a much clearer picture of developments with the graduation of seven (out of ten enrolled) students on the institution's first year-long diploma course.<sup>31</sup> A New Zealand-based Samoan, Priscilla Rasmussen, had been named to head the school, replacing Moneka Knight, the Australian Youth Ambassador who had established the programme as an AusAID project. Participants at the programme tend to be working journalists without qualifications while bright scholarship school leavers making a start in journalism were still enrolling at the University of the South Pacific.

### **Pacific Media Initiative becomes major donor project**

At the twentieth South Pacific Forum at Tarawa, Kiribati, in 1989, then Deputy Prime Minister Akoka Doi of Papua New Guinea initiated a move to improve media relations among member countries. Doi was concerned that the media often presented a 'biased view' when reporting events in Forum countries. He proposed a regional seminar to consider ways of improving media reporting. While the Forum endorsed freedom of the press, it recognised a need for the media to report accurately. The Forum Secretariat was asked to seek financial support for a seminar.<sup>32</sup>

AusAID provided funding for a workshop organised by the Forum Secretariat in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in February 1990. Ten Forum



member governments were represented, along with media representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, PINA and the Pacific Journalists Association.<sup>33</sup> Observers from the University of Queensland, Forum Fisheries Agency, UNESCO and PACBROAD also attended. The preamble of the workshop's final statement, the Rarotonga Media Declaration, declared in part:

A free independent media, reflecting diversity of opinion, is a precondition of pluralist societies and an integral part of national development.

It is noted that most journalists reporting on the region do so responsibly but the activities of some periodically contribute to mistrust and tension in government-media relations.

The 1990 Forum Officials Committee in Vanuatu considered a series of resolutions from the workshop and referred them to member countries for further feedback. Only one government responded and it was left to the Secretariat to 'maintain a liaison and monitoring role on media issues'.<sup>34</sup> Five years later, Australia's Minister for Development Cooperation and Pacific Island Affairs, Gordon Bilney, referred to the 'crucial role the media can play in ensuring that governments operate in the interests of the community' when he addressed the annual meeting of PIBA in Melbourne on 23 August 1995. While noting that an informed and responsible media could help expose abuses of power, and make governments more transparent and accountable, he said that the Pacific news media was often ill-equipped to do the job. Bilney unveiled a new policy for a regional media training and support programme in the Pacific to be funded by Australia. He told PIBA:

We want to have more detailed discussions shortly with island country representatives to help define a realistic and workable programme which is fully responsive to the priority needs of the region. Such a programme needs to go beyond training programmes in Australia, often in inappropriate working environments, which has largely characterised our previous assistance in this field.

Earlier in 1995, the South Pacific Multilateral Section of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade had commissioned a study into the state of media and communications in the region. The report, *Building a Future in the Pacific: Communication and Sustainable Development*, prepared by Dr Helen Molnar, of Swinburne University of Technology, and Judi Cooper, of Radio Australia, identified several important issues facing Australian aid.<sup>35</sup> The issues included the 'convergence of communication needs and information technology in the Pacific, and the need to encourage a pro-active and independent regional press'. A key

concern was for enhanced media training. The Molnar report eventually became a blueprint for Australia's new media aid project, the Pacific Media Initiative (PMI) and she became the project managing contractor three years after it was launched. The PMI was established in January 1996 with an indicative budget of A\$3 million for five years, or about A\$600,000 a year, spread across four components: media in promotion of governance and community development (A\$150,000), management of media and communications (A\$150,000), radio video and television production (A\$200,000), and project management (A\$100,000). The first project was a A\$9000 community publishing project conducted at UPNG in June 1996.

After a series of wide-ranging activities — including courses on business and economic reporting, train-the-trainer in good governance, advanced broadcast journalism, investigative journalism, press councils and press freedom, and women's documentary production — a mid-term review of the project was commissioned in early 1998. While reviewers found that PMI had achieved 'worthwhile results in this initial period and should continue', it found the Project Advisory Group had been 'overly cautious' and

was puzzled by significant departures from the Project Design Document, as in the failure to grant university scholarships or to approve work attachments ... It also recommended that the managing contractor be given a specific brief to identify and develop projects with community and NGO groups ... Similarly, the contractor should be required to pay particular attention to the matter of sustainability of training efforts, verifying that counterpart trainer arrangements are practicable and that subsequent training does, in fact, take place.<sup>36</sup>

**Table 2.1: Initial media project spending by AusAID's PMI, 1995–1998.**

Year	Number of activities	Expenditure (A\$)
1995/96	1	9,150
1996/97	7	113,712
1997/98	10	200,815
Total	18	323,677

*Source:* Pacific Media Initiative (PMI) mid-term review document (AusAID), p 21.

In the first eighteen months of the project, eighteen activities were funded at a total cost of about A\$320,000. Also, a further eight projects were approved for the rest of that year with a total expenditure of A\$494,017. Of the first twenty six activities, Fiji and Vanuatu hosted the most — five

each — with the Cook Islands hosting four. Solomon Islands followed with three activities while Papua New Guinea and Samoa each had two, and FSM, Marshall Islands and Tonga had one. Two regional activities were held and Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu missed out. Although two of the universities were represented on the PAG (UPNG, then DWU, and USP), they were largely sidelined by the project even though they are the major journalism education providers in the region. UPNG journalism strand leader Sorariba Nash outlined frustration with PMI at the start of the project in 1996 when he wrote in *Uni Tavur* that in return for the PACJOURN expertise UPNG had shared with other Pacific countries, it had become ‘an aid pariah’.

Doesn't twenty one years of journalism education expertise in the Pacific count? ... The University of Papua New Guinea has produced more than 150 journalism graduates — many of them in prominent positions in the media around the Pacific today ... This flawed [PMI] document was supposedly compiled after ‘wide-ranging consultation’ with organisations and individuals within Australia and the Pacific region. Although we hear that Papua New Guinea is one of the beneficiaries of this package, none of the individuals or media organisations from this country were consulted.<sup>37</sup>

At the October 2001 PINA convention in Madang, Papua New Guinea, further concerns were raised about some aspects of the PMI project. According to *Islands Business* editor-in-chief Laisa Taga:

Questions were raised why so much of the money from this project was going back to Australia through Australian consultants and training providers, and why Pacific Islanders were not being involved more. The regional news media leaders said Pacific Islands people must be more involved in management, design and implementation of Pacific Islands news media training.<sup>38</sup>

In July 2002, Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Secretary Chris Gallus told an Australian Development Studies Network symposium that the PMI project had ‘trained more than 400 professionals from print, radio and television’. However, a project management report in March 2003 indicated that 696 people had participated in 44 PMI training activities, nine work attachments and seven scholarships. The report said PMI had ‘helped to break down some of the obstacles to communication that have existed between the media, government and NGOs’. Materials produced by the programme included a text on media ethics in PNG, a manual on court reporting in Samoa, a Tongan press laws booklet and a crisis reporting teaching manual. In February 2004, a year after the PMI project was phased out following the spending of A\$2.8 million, tenders were called for a new A\$2.1 million,

three-year AusAID programme named the Pacific Media and Communication Facility (PMCF). This was aimed at a major review of the media in each member country and its relationship with government and NGOs.

Both major beneficiaries from the PMI project, the rival regional media organisations, PINA<sup>39</sup> and PIBA, moved by the end of 2002 to try to reconcile their differences by drafting a merger plan. AusAID hosted a meeting in Canberra in December to help plan the preliminary design of a new phase of PMI where merger proposals were also floated. The proposals led to an agreement between PINA and PIBA in March 2003, which was later endorsed at the PINA convention in Apia four months later. Justifying the merger plan, outgoing PINA president Johnson Honimae, who as general manager of the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) was also a PIBA member, pointed to twin problems of training duplication and a growing shortage of available aid funds for the Pacific.

At the moment some members of PINA are also members of PIBA. There seems to have been some duplication ... Also, over the years, aid donors' funds into funding media projects has [sic] dwindled a bit as priorities of aid donors change and the focus goes to other areas of the world.<sup>40</sup> ... We need to work together so that whatever funding we get, our members get the maximum benefit out of it.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of an eighteen-month delay, the merger began to take shape by August 2004 when the Pacnews staff moved into the PINA office in downtown Suva and absorbed the *PINA Nius* news service. But by then it was also clear the merged organisation's credibility had been affected. New PINA president Faumuina Lance Polu, of Samoa, said the merger would be completed within a few months when PIBA accounts, stretching back some five years, would be audited. He added: 'The delay has actually put a lot of things in question in the view of our funders, our supporters in the past.'<sup>42</sup> A merger signing ceremony between Polu and PIBA chairman Francis Herman and a transfer of assets between the organisations was held in Suva on November 19.

### The 'train-the-trainers' legacy

Trainers, including broadcast trainers, should themselves be Pacific Islanders, according to a popular view in the region.<sup>43</sup> This has long been the objective of UNESCO's PACTRAINER projects, along with other 'train the trainers' courses funded by agencies such as AusAID, the British ODA Governance Fund and several United Nations agencies. However, some view many of these workshops as failures, or at most limited successes, and not really suited to the region.<sup>44</sup> Critics cite the view that while training-the-trainer-workshops have been going on for years, today

‘few indigenous Pacific Islanders serve as trainers anywhere in the Pacific’.<sup>45</sup> According to USP education professor Konai Helu Thaman, follow-up studies have shown that few participants in such workshops have carried out training in subsequent years. At the time of writing, no product of train-the-trainer workshops had become a staff trainer/educator at any of the three Pacific university-based journalism programmes.

The problem lies as much in the initial selection of trainees as in the poorly planned and coordinated workshops themselves. Participants selected without the requisite social status in their communities rarely have the credibility to serve as trainers; their workshops will not be attended in their home communities. For a variety of reasons, Pacific Islanders will not inform aid donors that they are training the wrong candidates; this is left to the aid donors to determine, with disastrous results. Appropriate selection criteria for candidates from Pacific island cultures is the key to successfully producing trainers who will be effective in their communities.<sup>46</sup>

Television producer and former USP media educator Ingrid Leary called for greater media industry transparency over training:

Another challenge is the sheer size of the media industry in the Pacific, which like any small community, is fraught with politics. I believe small powerbrokers within this community have sometimes hijacked funds allocated for training to pursue their own agendas, or have at least made decisions not always based on what will best serve journalism education within that community.

While it is important for the industry to make its own decisions regarding funding allocations, it is critical that in future the systems used have more transparency and that as far as possible, funds are spread across several bodies so that no one industry group effectively holds a ‘balance of power’ when it comes to journalism training decisions. These are issues for well-meaning NGOs, such as AusAID and the UN organisations, to work through if they want their funds to be used in the most effective manner.<sup>47</sup>

### **Contrasting Pacific self-regulation models**

Two countries in the South Pacific — Fiji and Papua New Guinea — have adopted contrasting media council models to self-regulate the media.<sup>48</sup> Other countries such as the Cook Islands, Samoa and Tonga were keen to follow the lead and a Tongan Media Council was established in 2004.<sup>49</sup> Projected as promoting media standards and professionalism and a model

for the region, the realities of the media councils have raised questions about whether such bodies are self-regulatory mechanisms genuinely working in the public interest in the Pacific or merely defending entrenched media and power relationships, some foreign, from pressure by island governments. There are also questions over whether codes of ethics promoted by the councils are effective as self-regulatory tools for the media.

The Fiji news media and police faced harsh criticism over their treatment of the John Scott double murder case in 2001.<sup>50</sup> Fiji Red Cross director John Scott had risen to international prominence a year earlier for his humanitarian work on behalf of the Chaudhry Government hostages following the seizure of Parliament by rogue businessmen George Speight and his gunmen in 2000. The hostages were held for 56 days at gunpoint. Scott and his long-time partner, Greg Scrivener, were found hacked to death at their Princes Road home in Suva on 1 July 2002. After members of Scrivener's family in New Zealand suggested events may have been linked to Scott's humanitarian role and made allegations that the slain men had been tortured, police were remarkably quick to reject speculation over a 'political motive'. They also made several questionable and prejudicial statements about the couple's gay life style while some news coverage was widely condemned as 'sensationalist and homophobic'.<sup>51</sup>

Several international current affairs programmes, including ABC Radio's *Pacific Beat*, and media commentators challenged the ethics and professionalism of both the media and police.<sup>52</sup> Criticism was also levelled over issues such as violations of the legal principles of contempt of court and sub judice. According to James Panichi, 'The coverage has some media observers fearing the relationship between police and reporters has become too close for comfort.' The broadcaster commented that while crime reporters may pride themselves on their close relationship with police sources, 'where should the line be drawn?' *The Fiji Times* admitted in an editorial that the media had gone too far with sensational coverage, adding the family of Scott had appealed to news organisations to show some 'restraint and sensitivity':

The family's desire is understandable and justified. Parts of the media have been insensitive and less than balanced in their desire to beat their rivals in this most competitive of industries. There is little doubt that the Fiji Media Council's code of ethics — drawn up in consultation with the industry — has been breached. Unverified reports, facts sensationalised beyond recognition and pure hearsay have all been seen in the light of day in Fiji's media. We as an industry can and should do better.<sup>53</sup>

News media coverage of the double murder raised serious questions over ethics, training and professionalism in Fiji, just as when some sectors of the media ‘helped to destabilise the Government’ in the run-up to the Speight putsch.<sup>54</sup> The mood among politicians has fluctuated between those who are cynical about the role of the Fiji Media Council, seeking legislation to control the news media, and others who favour revising and consolidating current legislation in the hope that media practices will ‘smarten up’. The reformers seem to be in the ascendancy at present.

### **Draft Fiji media law and foundations of freedom**

Work on a draft new media law had been going on quietly at the Ministry of Information for more than six years (see Chapter Four) and had been dusted off by three governments (originally by the Rabuka Government, followed by Chaudhry’s Coalition and then more recently by Qarase) without actually being enacted. In the Qarase version, the draft law was not completed in time to be tabled at the final parliamentary session in 2002. However, it was made public by Information Minister Simone Kaitani in May 2003 for consultation.

Immediately, the draft *Media Council of Fiji Bill* faced fierce controversy over what the news industry saw as a crude attempt at exerting control. Frequently at the root of government concerns behind the proposed legislation was bureaucratic frustration<sup>55</sup> with the ‘toothless’ Media Council and a perception that it favoured media companies. Thus ministers worked hard towards the establishment of a statutory Media Council with more powers. The council itself defends self-regulation and its self-entrenched position.

A key element of this Bill will be [the] setting up of a Media Council. Mr Speaker Sir, the News [sic] Council as it now exists has become no more than a toothless tiger and does not command the respect [or] faith of the community. Set up by the media organisations, it has now become so close to the media organisations that its independence in adjudicating on disputes is now questionable.<sup>56</sup>

It was claimed by the government that the draft law was largely based on the 1996 Thomson Foundation report, *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of the Fiji Islands* (Morgan & Thomas), with some Cabinet additions. Media industry executives studied the report and generally accepted it, and there was apparently nothing included that curtails press freedom. Rather, it arguably seeks to improve the environment for the media to operate ‘freely’.<sup>57</sup> The Thomson Report noted that while ‘responsible governments and politicians should share a common aim — the best interest of their society — their roles are different’:

In a healthy democratic society, the relationship between politicians and a free press is, quite properly, likely to be wary, questioning and sceptical, rather than close, cosy or adulatory.<sup>58</sup>

Although the Fiji Government has frequently claimed it would not introduce laws infringing media freedom, the public remains sceptical and is also critical about the performance of the journalists and news organisations. According to former *Review* editor and media academic Shailendra Singh, in an article provocatively entitled 'Of croaking toads, liars and ratbags',<sup>59</sup> the media continues to have a credibility problem:

The litany of complaints against the media cannot always be dismissed out of hand. Concerns about unbalanced and unethical reporting, sensationalism, insensitivity, lack of depth and research in articles and a poor understanding of the issues are too frequent and too numerous. Another common complaint is that the media is loath to make retractions or correct mistakes. It has even been accused of bringing down a government or two.

Among reasons cited for poor standards in Fiji and elsewhere in the South Pacific is the fact that journalists in Fiji are often young, inexperienced and poorly trained. However, Singh notes that while there is little argument about this, 'complaints about journalists in Fiji almost mirror those in developed countries where scribes are better trained, more experienced and well paid'. But he argues that there is a broad consensus in Fiji on improving standards because, with the racial and political make-up of Fiji and three coups, an irresponsible media is 'capable of wreaking serious damage'. This was indeed a 'major obstacle' after Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka's military coups in 1987, according to the Thomson Report, with an exodus of senior journalists in the post-coup period. The situation became worse after Speight.

The effects are still felt as a missing half-generation of trained, experienced professionals to fill senior editorial and 'long-stop' sub-editorial posts, to act as role models for younger journalists and to provide on-the-job training for new entrants...

We were satisfied that media errors and misjudgements were much more often the result of inexperience than wilful distortion, but that is of limited consolation to their victims.

We encountered on more than one occasion the argument that, if journalists were ill-equipped professionally to exercise the proper freedom of the media, it was not acceptable for them to 'practise on other people's lives'.<sup>60</sup>



Many have argued that if freedom is to be meaningful in the modern world, 'it must include some notion of access to the mass media'.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps the Fiji law drafters could do well to note the Commonwealth document on the issue, *Statement on Freedom of Expression for the Commonwealth*. Few would argue with its primary declaration:

Freedom of expression means the freedom to receive and impart ideas, opinions and information without interference, hindrance and intimidation. It belongs to all persons and may be exercised through speaking, writing, publishing and broadcasting, or through physical acts.

Freedom of expression is the primary freedom, an essential precondition to the exercise of other freedoms. It is the foundation upon which other rights and freedoms arise.<sup>62</sup>

Freedom of expression, argues the document, demands the recognition of journalist unions: 'Journalists' unions have an essential role to play protecting journalists and advancing professional standards.' Making some specific recommendations useful in a Pacific context, the document refers to journalists as employees, saying:

Freedom of expression does not belong exclusively to employers and managers. Rather, free expression requires that journalists enjoy substantial independence. The terms of employment of journalists should respect and reflect this requirement.<sup>63</sup>

Why then are there no effective journalists' unions in the Pacific today, as in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, the Philippines and elsewhere in the world? Teachers, academics, nurses and many other people have professional unions in the Pacific. So journalists arguably should do the same to enhance professionalism and working conditions.

While the Commonwealth document argues press or media councils are a good idea and need to be strengthened and to encourage a trend towards media self-regulation, it adds: 'The tripartite model, structured around the separate and distinct interests of the public, journalists, and media owners or managers is to be preferred'.<sup>64</sup> No Pacific media council follows the tripartite model. Both the Media Council [Fiji] Ltd and Media Council of PNG contrast in their composition with the Australian and New Zealand models, which include independent journalists (in the case of New Zealand, the journalists union). The fact that the Fiji council is a company rather than a non-profit non-government organisation is significant. Every news media organisation is directly represented and while there is an equal number of lay members, no independent journalists are members. Nor was the USP Journalism Programme, which as both a publisher and educator in ethics and good practice could provide an

independent perspective, included as a member until it was finally admitted in mid-2003. In the case of Papua New Guinea, the council for most of its early existence had no lay members or independent journalists or media academics directly involved, but during 2002 it established an independent media standards committee (IMSC) to consider complaints.

### **'Very good news for everyone'**

The Fiji News Council was formed in 1994 as an independent self-regulating media body and was renamed the [Fiji] Media Council in 1998. Currently it has eight industry members (representing Associated Media Ltd, Communications (Fiji) Ltd, Daily Post Company Ltd, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd, Fiji Times Ltd, Fiji Television Ltd, Islands Business International Ltd and Sun (Fiji) News Ltd),<sup>65</sup> eight public members and an independent chairman, former Sugar Industry tribunal chairman Daryl Tarte. Seven public members named at its general meeting in December 2003 were former UNESCO official Jim Bentley, Fiji Women's Rights Movement coordinator Virisila Buadromo, former USP lecturer Parul Deoki, tourism consultant Peter Erbsleben, Suva businessman Waqa Ledua, former Colonial War Memorial Hospital executive Dr Mary Schramm, Ba businessmen Dijendra Singh, and Telecom Fiji Ltd marketing manager Salote Uluinaceva. The council's objectives, as stated on its website [www.fijimediacouncil.com](http://www.fijimediacouncil.com), are:

- To promote high journalistic standards
- To enhance the media's image
- To safeguard the media's independence
- To uphold freedom of speech and expression
- To promote a Code of Ethics and Practice for Journalists and Media organisations
- To promote an independent and effective Complaints Committee.

Originally the council did not have public members.<sup>66</sup> However, in 1997 the Thomson Foundation report on future media legislation and regulation for Fiji was submitted to the Fiji Government, then headed by Rabuka. The Thomson Report recommendations included establishing a media council with public members and in 1998 the council recruited public members. One of the significant features of the Media Council in Fiji, especially when compared with its PNG counterpart, has been the reasonably active role of the Complaints Committee (especially in the 1998–2000 period before the Speight upheaval). Tarte also chairs the Complaints Committee. The other two members are businessman Tom Raju and community advocate Paula Sotutu. Explaining the committee's role, Tarte wrote:

Some may argue that the Complaints Committee should have more teeth and power to impose fines or other sanctions. However, the council is a voluntary organisation with no legal status. The Complaints Committee judges complaints on the basis of ethics and not law, though these inevitably do overlap. The adjudication takes the form of a reasoned judgement upholding or rejecting the complaints and the media organisations are committed to publishing that adjudication. This is a moral rather than a legal obligation.<sup>67</sup>

During the Speight putsch and a period of tension over the Chaudhry Coalition government in the months leading to the crisis, argues Tarte,<sup>68</sup> the council helped to provide some stability. During such crises, he believes, the media becomes serious about self-regulation, about well-established practices of accuracy and balance. Failure to do so 'could bring the wrath and thuggery of mindless rebels down upon them'.

Throughout the terms of the last Labour government the media was under attack from the Prime Minister and his ministers. I firmly believe that had there not been a strong and respected Media Council in existence, the government would have introduced draconian legislation to impose greater government control over the media. Our strategy was to try and work with [the] government and ensure there was dialogue on controversial issues.<sup>69</sup>

The council's revamped code of ethics, launched by Chaudhry amid controversy and drafted largely from a report drawn up by Thomson Foundation consultant Ken Morgan, was touted as ushering in a new era in Fiji by introducing a basis for complaints. According to Tarte, Chaudhry's ministers 'referred to them constantly and made countless complaints'.

However, a closer examination of council adjudications reveals a more complex picture (see Table 2.2). Of the nineteen adjudications by the council since 1997, eight were declined, seven were upheld and three were partially upheld. Half (nine) of the adjudicated complaints were filed by cabinet ministers, a Government department or civil servants. Just four private individuals filed four complaints: a lawyer, a journalism educator in a test case,<sup>71</sup> and an occasional correspondent for *The Fiji Times* filing similar complaints two years running.<sup>72</sup> Only the correspondent had partial success with his two complaints, the other two private complaints were dismissed. One opposition political party official, one ruling Fiji Labour Party official, a textile industry body, and a college filed the other complaints. Two other complaints, by the police (dismissed) and Republic of Fiji Military forces (upheld) over a sports photograph of Commodore Frank Bainimarama wielding a pistol and a 'don't mess with me' caption published by the *Fiji Sun*, were adjudicated in 2003.

Table 2.2: Adjudications by the Fiji Media Council, 1997–2003

Year	Number of complaints	Settled by mediation	Adjudicated	Complaints upheld	Complaints partially upheld	Complaints dismissed
2003	—	—	2	1	0	1
2002	—	—	21	11	00	10
2001	—	—	1	0	0	1
2000	—	—	5	2	1	2
1999	—	—	6	1	2	3
1998	—	—	3	2	0	1
1997	28	26	1	0	1	0
Total	—	—	19	7	3	8

\* The Fiji News Council changed its name to the Media Council (Fiji) Ltd in 1998. The last published annual report of the council was in December 1997.<sup>70</sup>

Source: Compiled from the [Fiji] Media Council complaints adjudications, web page [www.fijimediacouncil.com](http://www.fijimediacouncil.com) and *Pacific Journalism Online*, (USP) [www.usp.ac.fj/journ/](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/)

Between them, three Labour coalition ministers — National Planning Minister Dr Ganesh Chand (five), Assistant Information Minister Lekh Ram Vayeshnoi (one) and Assistant Housing Minister (one) — filed the most complaints (all in 1999 and 2000 before the attempted coup). Although Dr Chand experienced major frustrations with the council, he won one complaint against *The Fiji Times*, had one partially upheld and lost one against the newspaper, and he also won two against Fiji Television. In one complaint against Fiji TV, Dr Chand complained against lack of balance, saying the station's reporters had claimed he did not respond to written questions. Fiji TV claimed that it had faxed the questions to him, but the council found that the station had sent the fax to a private number with no fax link. The council ruled:

While there may well have been an intent by Fiji TV to question the minister before running the story there is clear evidence of carelessness in not sending the fax questions to the right number. The committee is concerned at the 'thoroughness' of the chief executive's investigation when it was a simple matter to check the telephone book.<sup>73</sup>

The highest number of complaints was six in 1999, followed by five the following year. Ironically, while there has been heated debate for the past four years over ethical and professional issues over the coverage of Speight's attempted coup, the council has adjudicated only four complaints since then, with just one of them related to the political upheaval (and dismissed). *The Fiji Times* faced the most complaints (13), followed by the *Daily Post* (two), Fiji Television (two), *Fiji Sun* (one) and *Islands Business* (one). Five of the complaints involved the failure of newspapers to grant a right of reply for balance, eight were for factual inaccuracy and lack of

balance, three for distortion and one misrepresentation by a photograph. The *Daily Post* failed to respond to the council in both complaints against the paper, and it earned a mild rebuke in the most recent adjudication. The council ruled four breaches of the code of ethics, saying it was

most reluctant to make an adjudication on a complaint when only one party makes a presentation and there is no reply from the other. However, in view of the complete disregard by the *Daily Post* for the Media Council process for dealing with what was a legitimate complaint, it had no option [but] to proceed with a hearing. The committee is concerned at the disrespect shown by the *Daily Post* ...<sup>74</sup>

In another complaint in 1998, the *Daily Post* published an apology over a series of ill-informed, politically inspired articles leaked by a media organisation with an agenda.<sup>75</sup> In a six-page letter two years later to chairman Daryl Tarte, media lawyer Richard Naidu (2001) advised the council to overhaul its approach to prevent defects and breaches of its own processes. Critiquing a test complaint (No 112) by me against *Islands Business* magazine for breaching two clauses of the council's code of ethics in a report about the closure of the USP journalism website under political pressure during the Speight crisis, Naidu found that 'in a nutshell, I very much doubt whether the process followed by the council ... would withstand the most basic scrutiny in terms of fairness or due process'.<sup>76</sup> The council's complaints committee declined to uphold my complaint in breach of its own code of ethics and procedures. The critique also referred to a double standard by the council, saying that while I was 'newsworthy' when I sought to invoke the rights of newsworthy people for redress under council rules, I was told that I am 'a media person who should have settled it [by] a different method!'.<sup>77</sup> In the following year, the council only ruled on one complaint, against the *Daily Post*.<sup>78</sup> Naidu concluded:

If the Media Council process is to be credible it must be sound. In a couple of cases where clients have come to me complaining about their treatment at the hands of the media, I have recommended to them that they use the Media Council procedure because it is supposed to be quicker, to get the real problem and (hopefully) to give the complainants a real solution. If the process [involved in the Robie complaint] is representative of that which the Media Council follows, I would be much slower to counsel my clients that way now.<sup>79</sup>

In the council's revised Code of Ethics (2002), just one sentence (s14) dealt directly with cultural issues, and this stressed chiefly institutions:

While free to report and to comment in the public interest on Fijian chiefly institutions, traditions, affairs and other cultural matters, and on those of other racial or ethnic groups, media

should take particular care to deal with these subjects with sensitivity and appropriate respect.

### **PNG media opens up to public scrutiny**

Towards the end of 1995, when Papua New Guinea's Constitutional Review Commission first mooted possible legislation against press freedom, the *Post-Courier* was among the media that greeted the news with more than a degree of pessimism. In a sombre editorial titled PNG HEADED FOR DICTATORSHIP?, the newspaper warned that the move could be the beginning of a drift towards a 'dictatorship style of government' in Papua New Guinea. Among politicians loyal to the Constitution who were critical of 'unthinking and caring leaders' and those with 'suspicious agendas' was Masket Iangalio, then a shadow Minister for Finance and Planning. He observed:

It is the latter group who see the media as the enemy... Why is it that the media is their enemy? The answer is so very simple. It is because that, imperfect though the media may be, it serves the purpose of exposing to public scrutiny and debate those who do wrong or whose motives are questionable — or those whose egos and obsession with power and image result in bad government.<sup>80</sup>

Papua New Guinea's original Press Council was founded almost a decade earlier, in December 1985, with a former judge, John Kaputin, being appointed chairman. Established and funded by the media organisations for 'achieving a better industry and promoting good relations between the industry and the public',<sup>81</sup> its composition was three industry representatives from the *Niugini Nius* (now closed), *Post-Courier* and Word Publishing; one representative from the PNG Journalists' Association; and two members from the public plus the independent chair. The legislative threat led to the Press Council reinventing itself as the Media Council of PNG, including broadcast members for the first time.

President Peter John Aitsi says most of Papua New Guinea's social indicators are declining. He cites a UNICEF report on Papua New Guinea stating: 'The infant mortality rate for children under one has risen from 67 in every 1000 in 1995 to 79 in every 1000 in 1999.'<sup>82</sup> He points out that in the previous nine years, most of the country's nineteen provincial governments (including Bougainville, ravaged by a decade-long war) have ceased to function effectively, 'some not even functioning at all'. Evidence of this is claimed through the suspension of provincial governments and lack of local level planning and infrastructure work. Living standards have declined sharply.

I believe there is still a greater tragedy and that is the rampant destruction of the Government machinery resulting in its inability to carry out its obligation to our people. It is my belief that over the years since independence there has been a continued decline in the ability of our communities to help themselves because the flow of resources to facilitate community self help, has been controlled and handed out by their member of Parliament. So in some areas we have created virtual 'cargo cult' communities where development is tied to their National Parliament representative.<sup>83</sup>

Aitsi asked what the media could do with this information. The Media Council, through its members, has committed itself to try to get this information into the hands of the communities so they could be empowered to scrutinise the performance of their elected representative. These factors also lie behind the Media Council's high-profile campaign against corruption, in partnership with Transparency International and the Ombudsman's Office.

Although the Media Council of Papua New Guinea has been operating in various forms for almost two decades, the formal complaints structure was only established in 2002, eight years after Fiji. Originally, media companies 'came together as a loosely formed group to discuss problem accounts and other issues' including a move by Communications Minister Martin Thompson to introduce legislation to regulate the media.

This regulation move by the government became a turning point, enabling the Media Council in PNG to unite news media groups. The agreement to work together was reinforced during the 1995 PINA conference in Port Moresby. This event encouraged PNG media to work together to plan, prepare and host other media organisations from around the region. Membership now comprises two national daily newspapers, *PNG Post-Courier* (predominantly owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd) and *The National* (owned by Malaysian timber company Rimbunan Hijau); a weekly national newspaper, *Wantok Niuspepa* (Word Publishing, locally owned ecumenical company); a national free-to-air broadcaster, EMTV (wholly owned by Packer's Channel Nine in Australia); the state-owned National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), which operates a national AM broadcasts and FM broadcasts in some cities; PNGFM, a nationwide FM broadcaster with three stations managed by Communications (Fiji) Ltd; and several smaller broadcasters and publications. Anna Solomon, then acting publisher of the Word Publishing Group and now retired, became president of the Media Council in 1995. Aitsi praises her contribution:

She is a great person and still an inspiration to the young people in our industry. I believe the changing focus of the council can be greatly attributed to Mrs Solomon's leadership.<sup>84</sup>

In 1997, former *Post-Courier* editor Luke Sela was elected president and he continued to strengthen the Media Council's expanding training programme. Three years later, Aitsi was elected president. The same year, the council became formally registered and its constitution was adopted. The council then began drafting a code of ethics by researching other codes and then commissioning a consultant to review the codes for consideration by editors, journalists and media workers. Community groups were also consulted. The lengthy process was followed to ensure that the code had 'credibility in the eyes of users and the community',<sup>85</sup> a sharp contrast with Fiji. The Code of Ethics has now been printed and circulated to all newsrooms as well as being incorporated into the journalism and media studies courses at the University of PNG and Divine Word University.

Attempts made by the PNG government to regulate the media are still a real threat and something that the industry has been actively working against. After two years of consultation, a five-member Independent Media Standards Committee (IMSC) was launched after the 2002 general election. Winifred Kamit, lawyer and president of the PNG Institute of Directors, was appointed inaugural chair. Others appointed were deputy chair Tas Maketu, secretary-general of Caritas PNG/Churches, Anne Kerepia of the National Council of Women, businessman Richard Kassman of Transparency International, and law academic Dr John Luluaki, of the University of Papua New Guinea. Besides introducing the Code of Ethics and the IMSC, the Media Council has continued to plan and implement a domestic and international training calendar for media industry staff.

It is our intention to demonstrate to the public, and particularly to the government, that we are not a 'power unto our own' and that we are open to public scrutiny and comment. This openness, we hope, will work against the threat of any possible future move by governments to regulate or control the media of PNG.<sup>86</sup>

## Conclusion

Journalism education (based at the Pacific universities) and industry short-course training have followed different yet parallel paths in the region. Aid donors have played important roles in both sectors, although often not particularly well coordinated. While journalism education was being established in the region for the first time at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1975, media industry executives met to plan a strategy to boost on-the-job training and to defend themselves from growing pressure from post-colonial governments. The industry established the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), which became the major regional media lobby group. Subsequently, the region's state broadcasters broke away in 1988



to form a rival body, Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA), and to establish the region's first news cooperative, Pacnews.

For a brief three-year period between 1988 and 1991, the university journalism education sector and industry training managed reasonable cooperation under UNESCO's PACJOURN project. During this time, UPNG hosted PACJOURN and its staff of media academics and trainers ran short-courses for the benefit of the media industry. The focus then swung back to Fiji with a new UNESCO funded project leading to the establishment of the PINA Pacific Journalism Training Development Centre. While the UPNG Journalism Programme was funded initially by New Zealand aid, DWU was a private institution funded primarily by the Catholic Church and staffed by volunteers. The degree programme founded at USP in the mid-1990s was funded for four years by the French government.

In 1994, the Fiji media industry established a vocational training centre, the Fiji Journalism Institute (FJI), with UNESCO and other donor funding assistance. The Fiji government also helped and provided office space. Although this venture collapsed after six years under a cloud over financial accountability, both the Fiji Media Council and PINA moved to revive the centre through the Fiji Institute of Technology. The Samoa Polytechnic also established a vocational journalism school in 2002. Fiji was the only Pacific country where the media industry tried to establish a vocational programme competing with an established university-based journalism school.

By the end of the century, AusAID's Pacific Media Initiative had gained ascendancy among regional donors and it sought to achieve greater coordination of the region's media training and aid cooperation between agencies. This also led to proposals for the merger of PINA and PIBA. It is critical future media training aid has more transparency and funds are spread more evenly across several bodies so that no single industry group effectively holds too much power over journalism training policy. Non-government organisations such as AusAID and the UN agencies need to tackle this issue more robustly if they would like their funds to be used more effectively.

Efforts by both the Media Council (Fiji) Ltd and the Media Council of Papua New Guinea have produced mixed results and have contrasted in style. Although the Fiji Media Council has been long established, it closely follows Western models and has adopted a 'top down' code of ethics while excluding representation of independent journalists. In effect, it is arguably more of a 'closed shop' and less independent of the hegemonic power of local media organisations than its counterparts in Australia and New Zealand. The complaints process has also been criticised as flawed and lacking credibility, considering a significant fall off in adjudications.

On the other hand, while the PNG Media Council has been slow to open up the 'club' to lay representation, it has been more innovative in training and with its independent complaints tribunal in an attempt not to be seen as 'power unto our own'. It has also been more culturally responsive to grassroots community concerns and working journalists themselves in drafting a home-grown 'bottom up' code of ethics. Codes that are 'owned' by journalists themselves are more likely to be observed.

Other Pacific nations considering media councils ought to allow more time to compare the merits of the contrasting models. They ought to also consider the tripartite model as suggested for the Commonwealth. Both the Fiji and PNG media council models have been effective in defending press and broadcasting freedom in the face of government pressures, but in terms of a credible cultural and public rights safeguard, the jury is still out.

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## Papua New Guinea news media profile

In 1985, crime in Port Moresby reached a peak. Armed robberies, rapes and pack rapes were the order of the day ... But instead of our leaders screaming blue murder, calling for the downfall of the foreign media and a ban on reporters, they should use their energy to reverse such bad publicity.

*Luke Sela,  
Post-Courier editor, 1990*

Ownership means control. Because media comes in various forms, it can have such a powerful influence and impact on people that our national sovereignty and cultural autonomy are at stake. For this reason, it is now a government policy for Papua New Guineans to have effective control over all types of media at every level, local, regional and national.

*Reverend Oria Gemo  
Assistant Secretary of Information and Communication,  
1994*

PAPUA NEW GUINEA is the eastern half of New Guinea island, a bridge between the South Pacific and Asia. Its territory is 461,691 square kilometres and the country has a population of just over five million,<sup>1</sup> more than the combined populations of all other member nations of the regional political grouping, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). The literacy rate is 66 per cent.

The country has:

- two national daily newspapers;
- one national weekly newspaper (a second closed suddenly in 2003);
- one provincial biweekly newspaper;
- one national television station broadcasting via satellite to the rest of the nation (and twelve other stations from the Asia-Pacific region received through satellite-cable);
- a national public radio network which includes a shortwave service and a network of nineteen provincial stations; and
- two FM private radio systems.

The major print media in the South Pacific in the four key mass communication countries or territories in the region — Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea — have been largely dominated by foreign ownership. Global media magnate Rupert Murdoch has been the best-known player. Less known, but also very powerful and influential, was the late French media baron Robert Hersant. The right-wing publisher was sentenced in 1947 to ten years of ‘national indignity’ for collaboration with Nazi Germany. Owner of the conservative French national daily *Le Figaro* and a chain of eighty French and Belgian French newspapers, Hersant expanded his Socpresse empire into the French overseas territories and departments: in the Caribbean, first with Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guyana, and then into the Pacific with New Caledonia and French Polynesia. Hersant’s California-based Pacifique Presse Communication group owns television and press interests on the US West Coast and all three French-language dailies in the Pacific. The group was also said to have come close to publishing an English-language daily in Fiji after the 1987 military coups when an associated company made a bid for the publishing press and plant abandoned by the original *Fiji Sun*. However, the Hersant media empire began breaking up after the magnate’s death in 1996. The Socpresse group has now been mostly absorbed by the Marcel Dassault aerospace giant, which increased its stake to 82 percent in 2004.<sup>2</sup>

### **Broadcasting — growing diversity**

The state-owned National Broadcasting Corporation in Papua New Guinea has two AM networks, Karai (national) and Kundu (provincial); one FM privatised commercial station, Kalang, and the NBC broadcasts in English, Tok Pisin and other languages. The provincial network normally comprises nineteen stations — one for each province — but NBC has been plagued in recent years by severe lack of funding and administrative problems. Consequently, several of the provincial stations are currently not operating.<sup>3</sup>

Until 1995, the NBC enjoyed a broadcasting monopoly in Papua New Guinea. However, that year a private broadcaster, NauFM, began

broadcasting with an emphasis on a commercial format aimed at younger, upwardly mobile Papua New Guineans. Nau FM, operated by PNG FM Pty Ltd, was originally 80 percent PNG owned with the 20 percent balance held by Communications Fiji Ltd, which now owns the station. In 1997, NauFM was joined by a second vernacular station, the Tok Pisin language YumiFM.

In 2000, the NBC's FM station, Radio Kalang, was taken over by the national communications corporation, Telikom, to pay off outstanding debts, and now operates as a separate broadcaster, Kalang Advertising Pty Ltd. Another departure from the state radio broadcasting monopoly happened the previous year in 1999 with 98.5FM Campus Radio, a community based radio station operating from the University of Papua New Guinea.<sup>4</sup> It has a limited licence to broadcast for a radius of 10 km in the capital of Port Moresby. The station was broadcasting on 98.5 mh, a frequency not being used by the NBC. In May 2003, UPNG announced plans for a \$40,000 digital upgrade for the station.<sup>5</sup>

### **The press — and the 'listening' paper**

No state-ownership of the press exists in Papua New Guinea, apart from a small government monthly publication called *Hiri Nius*, which ceased publication in the mid 1990s. This was replaced by *Gavamani Savarai*. Instead, government news has been carried in a weekly insert in one of the two national daily newspapers, *The National*.

The weekly *Independent* (formerly *The Times of Papua New Guinea*) was PNG-owned through Word Publishing Co Pty Ltd. Media Holdings Pty Ltd wholly owns this in turn (shareholders are the mainstream churches: Roman Catholic, 60 percent; Evangelical Lutheran, 20 percent; United, 10 percent; Anglican, 10 percent). The English-language *Independent* peaked with a circulation of 9000. As its name suggests, it was a vigorously independent publication that had a reputation for investigative journalism and probing behind the news. But in June 2003, Word Publishing suddenly announced closure of the newspaper after 23 years of publication.<sup>6</sup>

Its sister Tok Pisin paper, *Wantok* (with a circulation between 10,000 and 15,000), is regarded as having the best rural penetration in a country where 85 percent of the population live a subsistence lifestyle in villages. It is also said to be 'one of the most listened to newspapers in the world. Those who can read at gatherings' read it to a crowd.<sup>7</sup>

### **News agencies — a need for more information**

Papua New Guinea currently has no national news agency. According to one national news content analysis in 1989, advocating the need for a national news agency, news from all nineteen provinces combined 'accounts for only about one-quarter of all news; the exceptions to this being *Wantok*,

for which about one-half of the news comes from the provinces, and EM TV, for which only six percent of the news comes from the provinces'.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, anything between one-third and one-half of all news originates in the National Capital District. The report cited came to the conclusion that news about the provinces was not being published because it was not available. It argued:

[T]he greatest need to improve Papua New Guinea's news gathering and dissemination network is a comprehensive provincial reporting system. This is the primary justification for the establishment, as soon as possible, of a Papua New Guinea national news agency.<sup>9</sup>

However, since that report was completed, the Government response about setting up a national news agency has been muted. Also, the provincial news-gathering resources of the national print and broadcast media have improved in recent years.

#### **Foreign-owned mass media**

EMTV, or Media Niugini Pty Ltd, is wholly owned by Australia's Channel Nine after minority Papua New Guinea shareholders withdrew some years ago. It has a broadcast footprint from the kingdom of Tonga in the east to the Philippines, broadcasts via Indonesia's B2P satellite and has an estimated audience of up to 500,000.

Papua New Guinea is one country in the Pacific where Australia has established long-term television influence after a period of competition with New Zealand in the mid-1980s. The Nine Network, owned by Kerry Packer's Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd (PBL), consolidated its hold on EMTV while Fiji 'represented the jewel in the crown'<sup>10</sup> of Television New Zealand's Pacific strategy when its joint business plan with the Fiji Development Bank was accepted by the post-coup government of Sitiveni Rabuka in May 1994. TVNZ, one of the largest buyers of English-language programmes in the world because it buys for two channels, had developed its modest Pacific Service operating in six countries by the early 1990s. However, as former Fiji TV chief executive Peter Wilson pointed out, an ongoing rivalry between Australian and New Zealand broadcasters continues for access to markets in the region.

Australian Associated Press is the major supplier of news within the South Pacific and is also the largest 'news gatherer' in the region. Until 1996, the agency maintained two news bureaux in the region — Port Moresby to cover Papua New Guinea, and Suva to cover the rest of the Pacific. However, the Suva office was closed as an economic measure. AAP is a major shareholder in Reuters and provides much Pacific news on a share basis. Most daily newspapers in the South Pacific take a world

newsfeed from AAP. But *The National* in Port Moresby also takes a direct service from Agence France-Presse and has significantly better news coverage of the ASEAN nations than any other newspaper in the region.

Of the two daily newspapers, the *Post-Courier* is the longest-established and once had the largest circulation (it peaked at 41,000 in 1993)<sup>11</sup> in the Pacific. It is owned by global media magnate Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd through a subsidiary, South Pacific Post Pty Ltd, with a majority 62.5 percent shareholding. Papua New Guinean private shareholders — including bodies such as the Public Officers Superannuation Fund (PSF), Public Employees Association (PEA), and Defence Forces Retirement Fund (DFRF) — own 29.3 percent; Australian minority shareholders 7.2 percent. The *Post-Courier* has three regional newspaper editions — the *Highlands Post*, *Mamose Post* and *Islands Posts*, plus a *Bougainville Update* on its website. In its editorial page, the newspaper proudly defends its record as 'the voice of PNG'.

We were there when the nation took its bold steps towards independence. Since that time, we have fearlessly recorded the nation's progress. We unashamedly support the constitutional rights of Papua New Guineans and will fight to the last drop of ink to protect them. We are accountable to the people of Papua New Guinea first and foremost. We support good government by the people who place the national interest ahead of personal interests. We pledge our support to the continuing development of the nation for the common good of all Papua New Guineans.<sup>12</sup>

The rival daily, *The National*, is Malaysian-owned through South Pacific Star Pty Ltd, which is 51 percent owned by Monarch Investments, a subsidiary of the logging company Rimbunan Hijau. It has a circulation of 23,400.<sup>13</sup> It is equally upbeat about being the 'voice' of Papua New Guineans and pioneered the use of news colour and a brighter, more entertaining style of news feature.

The growth of the media means a constant turnover of journalists in Papua New Guinea and also a 'leak' of trained journalists as many move into better paid and less stressful careers. Many experienced journalists, such as *Post-Courier* chief subeditor Peter Sea, are concerned over staff being trained to a certain level and then news organisations are left with a vacuum after people leave. This has a negative impact on the Fourth Estate role of the media:

A lot of people leave the profession for monetary reasons. People in public relations jobs get paid a lot more than journalists. Mining companies pay PR staff much more than senior journalists get, so some journalists get lured away from the profession.



**Peter Sea:** PNG media compares well over watchdog role.

*Photo: David Robie*

As a watchdog on government, I think the media in Papua New Guinea has done exceptionally well. Think it would compare with its counterparts in the United States and Great Britain.<sup>14</sup>

No legal rules and procedures designed to ensure public access to the mass media exist. However, the Papua New Guinea Constitution provides strong safeguards for the principles of free expression and press freedom. Since independence in 1975, there has been a tradition of an open and free press and Opposition politicians are given access to the mass media in the same manner as all sectors of society. No rules concerning foreign exchange control and import licensing affect the freedom of the mass media, as they do elsewhere in the Pacific such as Samoa. The allocation of newsprint does not affect the mass media. The media pay similar duties for imports as other industries in the country and news executives do not report any special problems. The cost of newsprint is around K70 to K80 a tonne.

### **Constitutional protection for the media**

Papua New Guinea has a Constitution that sets out the rights of its citizens and non-citizens who are within the country's boundaries. It was drawn up before independence in 1975 as a result of research and reviews by the Constitutional Planning Commission (CPC) and is thus often dubbed a 'home grown constitution'. Under Section 46 of the Papua New Guinea Constitution, the right of 'freedom of expression' extends to everybody, whether citizen or non-citizen. But this provision clearly states that a law imposing restrictions can limit that right. For example, Section 38 is a general provision permitting restrictions over issues such as public safety



or health. Section 46(1) provides that: 'Every person has the right to freedom of expression and publication except to the extent that the exercise of that right is regulated or restricted by a law ...' Section 46 (2) provides that freedom of expression and publication include:

- (a) Freedom to hold opinions, to receive and communicate ideas and information, whether to the public generally or to a person or class of persons; and
- (b) Freedom of the press and other mass communications media.

According to a National Court judge, Justice Theresa Doherty, no government has arbitrarily breached this section:

To the best of my knowledge there has not been a restriction comparable to the English provision of issuing 'D Notices' which permits the government to issue a form of restriction on publication of particular matters that it considers could be detrimental to the realm. That particular process has been the subject of criticism in European countries. Perhaps the best-known recent case about restricting publication was the *Spy Catcher* trial in Australia when the government of the United Kingdom tried to prevent publication of a book by a former public servant, Peter Wright.<sup>15</sup>

One of the drafters of the Constitution, Bougainville regional Member of Parliament John Momis, explained the background to Papua New Guinea's constitutional freedom of expression rights. He said the CPC had noted that one of the great principles on which democracy rested was the right to differ on any topic of discussion, be it social, economic, political, cultural or religious.<sup>16</sup> People view any issue in different ways, he said. The CPC believed firmly that it should have the right to express its own views, within very broad limits, on any particular matter and that in principle every citizen should be free to criticise the policies of the government of the day. Specifically on the media, he said:

The media has a particular responsibility in this regard, as unless those who wish to express independent opinions are reported in the media, their effectiveness is likely to be much reduced, and the opportunity for meaningful debate on important public issues may be lost. The formation and expression of public opinion is vital to the kind of participatory democracy we believed our people wanted.<sup>17</sup>

In general, the application of the constitutional provision for freedom of expression has been respected. However, there have been several controversial breaches in recent years, mostly involving broadcast media, and also threats of legal intervention. In 1987, then Communications

Minister Gabriel Ramoi tabled a draft *Mass Media Tribunal Bill* 'intended to control the entire operations of all forms of mass media in Papua New Guinea'.<sup>18</sup> When introducing the Bill in Parliament, Ramoi said that 'the Government of Papua New Guinea has inherited a system of mass media that is fragmented, uncoordinated and, very largely, unregulated'. Ramoi then indicated the Bill would include these provisions:

1. All media would need to be licensed in order to operate.
2. Licences would be issued only after proper inquiry, at which the view of the community, the churches, commerce, industry and the unions is heard.
3. All news media would be required to observe the same set of standards in their operations.
4. There would be a code of fairness, guaranteeing citizens fair treatment at the hands of the media, including the right of reply.
5. Licences would have to be renewed after a fixed period but there would be a presumption that a licensee would be entitled to renewal unless there were serious breaches of the standards and/or the law.

A widespread community and media perception that the government would use the proposed law to withdraw licences from news organisations that published or broadcast items it did not like unleashed popular protest and the bill was shelved. The minister himself was later defeated and he served a two-year jail sentence for misappropriating public funds. On 21 October 1992, the East New Britain provincial government premier, angered by media reports regarding the lack of evacuation plans in times of volcanic eruption in his province, threatened to reintroduce the *Mass Media Tribunal Bill* if he won the national seat in Parliament.<sup>19</sup>

At the end of 1996, three new draft media laws which resulted from the Constitutional Review Commission's controversial recommendations also drew strong protests. The proposed laws were seen as thinly disguised measures that would have a draconian effect on freedom of expression. For example, Section 28 of the proposed *National Information and Communication Authority Bill*, read in part: 'Where the authority considers that it would be in the interest of the public to do so, [it] may ... suspend for such period ... or revoke the certificate'.<sup>20</sup> A media owner who operates without a certificate faced possible imprisonment for up to four years.<sup>21</sup>

The *Media Commission Bill* stated in Section 12: 'For the purpose of exercising its powers and functions, the commission may make such orders, give such directions and do such other things as it sees it fit.' This meant that the commission could direct or order a journalist, writer, announcer, compere or presenter to write or say something. Failure to comply with such order or direction could bring a fine up to K2,000. Section 28 made it mandatory for the commission to withdraw a certificate of registration

from a journalist, writer, announcer, compere or presenter whom the commission found to be 'guilty of a serious offence which is detrimental to the interest of the public ...'

Such provisions contradicted the CRC's first recommendation to the National Parliament that 'existing legislation on the media provides sufficient rules in controlling the behaviour of the media industry and the Government should not consider proposing any new restrictive laws'. The CRC's final recommendation was that licensing would be introduced only if self-regulation failed.<sup>22</sup> According to the late journalism academic Peter Henshall, before pressures to curb free media expression over Bougainville and other issues, the Papua New Guinea news media was fairly open, apart from legal restrictions common in other democracies. He said:

The press in Papua New Guinea is not free of the demands of the law on defamation, contempt, blasphemy, obscenity and sedition. It is not free of commercial pressure from advertisers. And it is not free of the bias and prejudice of its various owners, editors and writers. However, I think when we say 'free press' or that there is 'media freedom', we probably mean: free of direct official or Government control and censorship.<sup>23</sup>

The Dorney affair, in September 1984, was among examples involving the silencing of freedom of expression in Papua New Guinea. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation's long-time resident correspondent, Sean Dorney, was expelled from the country by the government in retaliation for an interview with the OPM (Free Papua Movement) leader James Nyaro. But although the interview was carried out on PNG soil, it was done by the investigative programme *Four Corners* independently of Dorney. This state retaliation was made in spite of lack of responsibility for the programme. Dorney, married to a Papua New Guinean, was eventually allowed to return to the country three years later in 1987.<sup>24</sup>

For the first time, in 1992 Papua New Guinea was included in the censorship updates of *Index on Censorship* — over the controversial death of Swedish journalist and filmmaker Per-Ove Carlsson. He was found dead with his throat cut on 29 April 1992 in the township of Kiunga in Western Province. The death was officially reported as suicide, but speculation remained widespread among family and media circles in Sweden and Papua New Guinea that he was murdered to prevent his unfinished film from being shown in public.

On 6 April 1994, the government banned the National Broadcasting Corporation from reporting on a New Guinea Islands Region leaders summit because it believed a debate was likely about possible secession in response to the Bougainville civil war. The NBC chairman, Sir Alkan Tololo, said

he had no choice but to comply with the order from Communications Minister Martin Thompson, and the ban immediately prompted strong protest about 'attempts to interfere with media freedoms'.<sup>25</sup>

The Bougainville conflict frequently figured prominently in restrictions on free expression. The 1990 Amnesty International Report included Papua New Guinea for the first time with reports that sympathisers of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) were detained without charge or trial by the PNG military. Again in the 1991 Amnesty International Report, Papua New Guinea was cited over allegations of torture and extrajudicial executions of nine suspected BRA sympathisers by the PNG Defence Force. Government pressure attempted to discourage reporting. However, some Papua New Guinea journalists saw the Bougainville conflict and crime as examples of 'fly-by-night' international reporting. Among them was veteran journalist Luke Sela, who was editor of the *Post-Courier* for fourteen years:

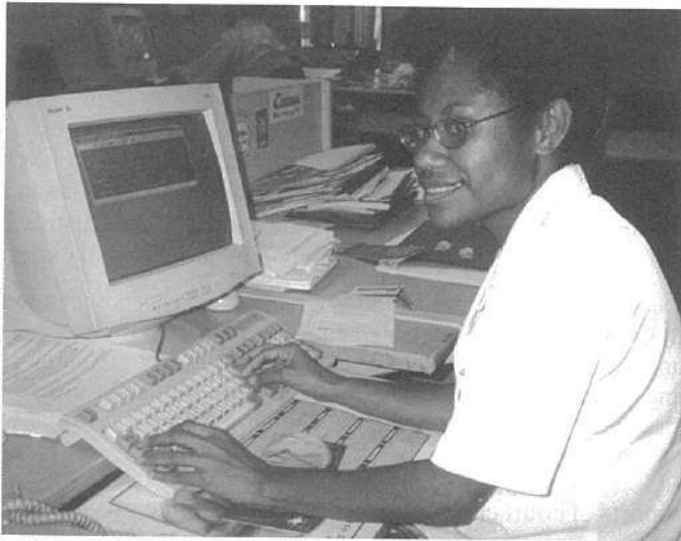
Take the current Bougainville crisis. Many reporters, mainly Australian, have visited the island and reported on the issue. When news of expatriates emerged, one particular reporter wrote that the threats by militants against Australians were because of Australia's donation of four helicopters to the PNG Government. This is a complete nonsense.

In 1985, crime in Port Moresby reached a peak. Armed robberies, rapes and pack rapes were the order of the day. Among the many rape victims were a New Zealand mother and her retarded daughter, as well as two or three Australian women. There were banner headlines in the press and lead stories on radio and television. But the same media outlets failed to report that the criminals did not discriminate when carrying out their hideous and violent crimes. Today Papua New Guinean women are still being raped and armed robberies are still being committed. But as far as the Australian and New Zealand media are concerned they are not worth mentioning.

As a working journalist, I can understand the prominence given to the examples above: the stories are angled for home consumption. But instead of our leaders screaming blue murder, calling for the downfall of the foreign media and a ban on reporters, they should use their energy to reverse such bad publicity.<sup>26</sup>

Echoing Henshall's call for a national news agency, Sela added that one way to start would be for politicians and civil servants to 'encourage and finance their own reporters into starting a news service that must report the facts as they happen here'.<sup>27</sup> In 2002, two prominent journalists, both media graduates of the University of Papua New Guinea, joined the

growing list of media people who have been attacked and threatened by security forces. Heavily armed riot police seized Kevin Pamba, a columnist for *The National* and a lecturer at Divine Word University, and took him to a police station in the north-western town of Madang, where they assaulted him. He had exposed how police had ruthlessly destroyed a squatter settlement. Luke Sela's daughter, investigative reporter Robyn Sela, was assaulted and threatened by a renegade soldier over a Defence Force corruption exposé. The *Post-Courier* briefly hid her in a safe house after the soldier warned her that if she continued her investigation, 'We'll shoot you dead.'<sup>28</sup> Sela tragically died of cancer the following year. During research for this book, she had told me in an interview the essential role of a journalist in Papua New Guinea was to be a 'watchdog ... investigate into corruption. And to educate and raise awareness.'<sup>29</sup>



**Robyn Sela:** Threatened by a soldier over her investigative reporting. *Photo: David Robie*

### **Judicial proceedings and contempt of court**

Under Section 37 (12) and (13) of the Constitution, public hearings of court cases are mandatory unless they conflict with the interests of national security. Section 37 (13) says a law can be passed which provides for the closing of a court if it is for:

- public welfare or in the interests of justice,
- the welfare of people under voting age, or
- the protection of private lives.

A law can also provide for the closing of a court in the interest of defence, public safety or public order. So far this section has never been invoked.

Two pre-independence laws provide for court closure. The *Child Welfare Act* applies to cases involving the affiliation of children of unmarried mothers. It also applies where people under the age of sixteen are charged with a criminal offence, leading them to Children's Court. The *Adoption Act* allows hearings in judges' chambers. There is no legislation in Papua New Guinea similar to that in the United States or New Zealand where courts are closed when the victim of a crime is a young person or where the case deals with the private lives of people.

Papua New Guinea also has no written law allowing the court to be closed if, for example, a young child is the victim of sexual abuse. However, some judges, considering the age of the young people, have closed the court until they finished giving evidence. According to Justice Doherty, concern has been aired on a need to have greater privacy, especially for young people who are crime victims.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, as yet no law prohibits the media from publishing the names and details of people who are victims of certain kinds of crime.

There is no written law or cases about the reporting of court proceedings. However, judicial commentators suggest it is likely that a court might, on occasion, restrict publicity because the court has an inherent power to regulate its own proceedings to ensure justice. Justice Doherty cited two cases of this nature that happened in her personal experience:

One, as a lawyer, when the judge directed the Press not to report the security system of a bank being described in a robbery case and the second, as a judge, when a defendant kept giving more and more intimate defamatory details about his family in an incest case, on the basis that the family had a right too — the right to privacy.<sup>31</sup>

News reports of court cases are protected by absolute privilege, provided they are fair, accurate, and published contemporaneously. Although there is a *Contempt of Court Act*, there are no known cases in Papua New Guinea where the news media have been charged under this law. However, it is clear, based on the experience of neighbouring countries with similar legal systems, that the courts can charge newspaper editors, reporters and owners for contempt. Considering overseas cases, these would fall into the following categories:

- reporting in the media when the court directed there was to be none;
- reporting of cases heard in private;
- misreporting the proceedings in a way 'prejudicial to the course of the trial'.

According to Justice Doherty, writers of contempt laws say any news article that is 'a fair and substantially accurate report if published

contemporaneously and in good faith should not amount to contempt regardless of the risk of prejudice to current or future proceedings'.<sup>32</sup> One reason that no journalist has been cited for contempt is the absence of a jury system, and judges seem to have been lenient. Journalism educator Sorariba Nash warns that a potential for contempt has 'always been a common fault of young reporters'.<sup>33</sup> He adds:

Fortunately, the courts in Papua New Guinea have been lenient about this so far — but they will not always be so. Journalists should learn the basic rules of reporting courts if they want to avoid going into the dock to answer a contempt charge.

Statements made by police about crimes are often in contempt of court. Basic to Papua New Guinea's legal system is the assumption that people are innocent until proven guilty. However, following an arrest police often tell journalists that the person is guilty. The Papua New Guinean laws do not recognise any sort of legal privilege for journalists, such as so-called shield laws, or provisions for journalists who are called as witnesses in judicial proceedings. So far, there have been no court cases where reporters have been ordered to reveal their sources of information and were cited for contempt when they refused to do so.<sup>34</sup>

Section 44 of the Constitution provides freedom from arbitrary search and entry, which applies to everybody, including news media and their newsrooms. Thus nobody shall be subjected to search of personal property or home except when the exercise of that right is regulated or restricted by law. The *Search Act* is the relevant law under this section. It includes a unique provision for a search of a village and makes it clear that there cannot be arbitrary search of a person's house or a workplace without a warrant or some form of court-sanctioned permission. This provision is common to most countries that enjoy freedom from arbitrary search.

However, there has been strong criticism of police actions that have breached this constitutional right and the courts have seen increasing numbers of claims for compensation against the state under Section 57 over police raids on villages. In the Highlands, for example, it has sometimes been a police tactic to attack and burn villages with a tribal or clan link to suspected criminals.

Since the June 1997 general election, EMTV has broadcast live parliamentary debates. Previously, sittings of the legislature had been broadcast live by the NBC when issues were of national interest. By law, fair and accurate reports of Parliament are protected by qualified privilege. This includes reports on the contents of official Parliamentary papers and reports, as well as debates in the chamber. In addition, other types of reports protected by qualified privilege are fair and accurate reports of

- court cases which are not published contemporaneously;
- public inquiries; and
- meetings of local authorities and trustees of boards if discussions are a matter of public concern.

### State security issues

The news media in Papua New Guinea have come under increasing scrutiny over security issues. According to civil rights lawyer and a former journalist, Powes Parkop, this issue became particularly obvious after the start of the Bougainville civil war in 1988.<sup>35</sup> He observed:

The declaration of the State of Emergency in 1988 to 1990 restricted freedom of the press to move and report on the situation in Bougainville. Since the illegal blockade in 1990, the press has been almost silent or otherwise controlled. The only 'legal' journalists who were allowed into Bougainville were those who accompanied the security forces on patrol either on land, sea or in the air. Some were even required to wear uniforms, as in the case of Abby Yadi of the *Post-Courier*.<sup>36</sup>

The Pacific's first 'embedded' journalists perhaps? In the context of the Bougainville conflict, an *Internal Security Act* was rushed through Parliament by the Government in mid-1993. This law sought to define and provide for the crime and punishment of 'terrorism' and related offences. Regarded as being targeted at the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) guerrillas, there was also widespread speculation that the law could be invoked against non-government organisation activists or even journalists interviewing and publishing statements by proscribed groups or individuals. Penalties under the Act ranged from severe fines and long-term jail sentences to what can be best described as an imposition of 'internal exile'. Among disturbing aspects of the Act that Parkop identified were:

1. *A shift of emphasis from crimes of commission to crimes of status:* The law criminalises not the commission of the act but the status of the person, whether or not he or she belongs to or supports a certain organisation. Thus the Act signifies a departure from social control towards overt political control.
2. *A shift in power from the judiciary and the normal process of criminal justice to executive power:* Some judicial powers are invested in the National Executive Council [NEC, as the cabinet is known] rather than the judiciary where they would normally belong. It is the NEC, for example, which can declare an organisation to be a terrorist group. Right of appeal is not to the judiciary but to the NEC whose decision can only be overturned by an absolute majority in Parliament. The Act thus gives wide powers to



the government which could be used against political opponents and legitimate critics.

3. *A wide definition of terrorism* which includes not just the actual use of violence for political purposes, as in the case of the BRA, but also the use or potential use, likely use, or suspected use of violence against public safety. Such provisions enable the NEC to use the Act against almost anybody or group — including the so-called *raskols*.<sup>37</sup> The law can be enforced against foreigners whom the government regards as involved in or likely to be involved in ‘terrorist’ activities.<sup>38</sup>

The *Internal Security Act 1993* represented a growing trend in legislation designed to eliminate the law and order problem in Papua New Guinea through the normalisation of emergency powers. However, as Parkop argued, while the Act was not intended to directly restrict the freedom of the press, there were several ways in which the law did this. For example, it specifically restricted certain rights and freedoms in the Constitution that were ‘fundamental to a free and independent press’. In particular, it provided for restriction of:

- freedom of expression;
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- freedom of movement;
- freedom of assembly and association;
- right of privacy;
- freedom from arbitrary search; and
- freedom of information.

The Act provided several mechanisms that directly or indirectly restricted such rights and freedom and thus the rights and independence of the press. It also made provisions under which journalists could find themselves committing offences. For example, under Section 6, journalists could breach the Act if they attended meetings of proscribed organisations, or interviewed their members.

However, after widespread national and international condemnation the government became reluctant to invoke its provisions, especially against the news media. On one occasion in early 1996, protesters against human rights violations in Indonesia demonstrated outside the Indonesian Embassy in Port Moresby. A group of protesters was reportedly arrested under the Act. News media and prominent community leaders strongly condemned the legislation and there is little evidence that news organisations have applied self-censorship over these issues. A charge of criminal defamation under this law can be brought against a journalist if ‘the words, pictures or gestures he uses provoke riots, mob violence or other breaches of the public peace’.

Under the *Criminal Code*, sedition in Papua New Guinea is defined as an intention 'to bring the Queen or Head of State into hatred or contempt, or to excite disaffection against the Queen and Head of State, the National Government or the Constitution, the Parliament or the administration of justice'.<sup>39</sup> It is also defined as the intention to 'excite the inhabitants of Papua New Guinea to attempt to procure the alteration of any matter in PNG as by law established otherwise than by lawful means; raise discontent or disaffection among the inhabitants of PNG'.

In other words, sedition is defined as words or actions calculated to cause people to act unconstitutionally. Today, it is not so much the content of the argument, which constitutes sedition as the way it is presented. The law in Papua New Guinea would probably not act against a 'genuinely held opinion, as long as it is expressed in moderate language'.<sup>40</sup>

In continuing fallout from the Sandline mercenary crisis in early 1997, the former commander of the PNG Defence Force, Brigadier-General Jerry Singirok, was prosecuted for sedition over a live broadcast he made in Radio Kalang's studio denouncing the government plan to hire mercenaries to intervene in the Bougainville civil war. His speech led to widespread protests and eventually to the ousting of the Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan, and several Cabinet ministers in the June general election. It took Singirok seven years to clear his name.<sup>41</sup> Whether any journalists or editors could have faced sedition for widely reporting Singirok's words remained an unanswered question for the news media.

Reporting about bodies such as the National Intelligence Organisation (NIO) is vigorous and journalists enjoy a fairly wide-ranging freedom to report security operations, as was clear during the reporting of the Sandline affair. The aborted action planned against rebels on the secessionist copper mine island of Bougainville was known as Operation Oyster. It was foiled by Operation Rausim Kwik, ordered by Singirok.

Before independence in Papua New Guinea, the *Commonwealth Crimes Act* made it illegal for public servants to reveal official secrets. But this legislation was limited when compared to the *Official Secrets Act* of 1911 in Britain, which regulates publication in that country. Papua New Guinea passed an amendment to the *Criminal Code* in 1989, which made it an offence against the administration of law, justice and public authority to disclose 'secrets'. But again, this is fairly limited legislation, as it only criminalises the revelation of information acquired officially about fortifications, defences and so on.<sup>42</sup>

A Freedom of Information Committee was established in 1997, with the support of Transparency International, to draft a *Freedom of Information Act* which would incorporate some 'official secrets' measures and

whistleblowers legislation. Section 86 of the *Criminal Code* makes it a crime for a person employed by the Public Service to publish facts that come into his knowledge by virtue of his or her office if there is a duty to keep them secret. The definition of a person employed by the Public Service is very wide and would include members of Parliament, members of a provincial assembly and employees of the State Services.

### Journalists as employees

Two laws provide for the rights of trade unions in Papua New Guinea — the *Industrial Relations Act* and the *Industrial Organisations Act*. The former law:

- provides for the formation of effective, accountable unions as well as effective and accountable employer organisations;
- stipulates procedures for the orderly conduct of relations between the workers and employer; and
- provides a framework for unions, and the right for workers to negotiate collective agreements with employers.

The *Industrial Organisations Act* provides for the effective organisation of unions. There are seventy two registered trade unions in Papua New Guinea, of which twenty five are public sector unions and forty seven in the private sector. The total estimated figure for national union membership is about 100,000 in an estimated labour force of 1.54 million. Trade unions mainly negotiate for better pay and improvements in working conditions and terms of employment, and they take up industrial disputes or grievances with employers. Unions can negotiate directly with the employer on terms and conditions, pay, or even industrial disputes, and they can lodge claims that may eventually become awards or agreements.

If claims are not settled with the employer, they can be taken to the Arbitration Tribunal for a ruling. The main ways for settling disputes are:

- direct negotiations between employer and union,
- through the Public Service Commission,
- through the Arbitration Tribunal, and
- through the courts.

In spite of the general conditions and protections for unions in Papua New Guinea, journalists and news media employees have been relatively poorly served. In fact, wrote former PNG Journalists' Association president Frank Senge Kolma — who was also the first local editor of *The National* — and secretary Ambie Bulum, 'media people (journalists, photographers and artists) in Papua New Guinea, particularly the private sector mainstream, for a long time have been denied industrial rights — proper terms and conditions of employment and better pay'.<sup>43</sup> They added:

There are and have been threats from the employers as well as political threats to the profession and industry. So far, there has been very little or nothing done to address these issues. However, most of the concerned have toiled for the love of the job, to gain experience and knowledge. A few hang onto their jobs because they might not seek employment elsewhere.<sup>44</sup>

According to Bulum and Kolma, the main industrial issues affecting media people include:

*Terms and conditions for employment:* Terms and conditions are largely the prerogative of their employers. Mostly, the terms and conditions of employment are unsatisfactory, frustrating or 'do not assist media people at all'. This contributes to a high level of mobility between news organisations and a drain of journalists away from the profession. Freelance journalists have no specific terms and conditions of employment within Papua New Guinea. It is the prerogative of the media organisation to decide the terms on which journalism, photographs or artwork are bought, and the level of pay they command.

*Salary classification/grading system:* There is a lack of a uniform grading or classification of salary system for journalists and other media workers. Generally media people in the private sector are classified equivalent to a range, from clerk class four (about K5,155 to K5,560 a year) to clerk class ten (K13,005 to K13,470 a year). Staff within these ranges often must wait for a long time before getting a pay rise, and the raises are often little. There is also little in the way of social benefits such as medical, superannuation or pension schemes. Media personnel in the mining and petroleum sector are well paid and have better accommodation. Journalists in the public service are generally paid from clerk class six to clerk class ten (about K7,000 to K14,000 a year).

*Employment rights:* There have been suspensions or layoffs of journalists and media staff 'without due regard to the principle of natural justice'. Staff are sacked any time it suits the employer — particularly in the private sector. Anomalies in salary/wages and working conditions are common.

*Disciplinary procedures:* There are no standard disciplinary procedures. The private sector news media employers discipline staff at their own discretion. Bulum and Kolma stated:

Denial of rights of media persons to join and/or organise union activities and denial of these personnel to participate in union activities — collective bargaining and so on is evident in the Papua New Guinea media industry. These people can hardly get time off to attend to union activities ... Sometimes there are threats to terminate employees if involved in union activities.<sup>45</sup>

*Working hours:* There are no standard working hours. Private sector media employers operate from 8 am to 5 pm, while the public sector hours are 7.45 am to 4.06 pm. Private sector employees frequently do not get paid overtime for work after 5pm, while public employees do receive overtime pay.

The Papua New Guinea Journalists' Association (PNGJA) was reformed after a media freedom conference, funded by the International Federation of Journalists, was held in Port Moresby in 1989. But, as organisers admitted, 'the idea was remote because for the most part the development of the media in Papua New Guinea has been quite smooth'.<sup>46</sup> Organising a trade union to protect professional and industrial rights was not a high priority at the time. Bulum and Kolma wrote:

The media has never really suffered the repression that media in less fortunate countries have. Papua New Guinea media and media practices have developed vibrant, active, aggressive and responsible standards with the normal market force and cultural restrictions.<sup>47</sup>

The PNGJA has had a chequered history; it has been briefly revived at times of major threats to media freedom and journalists. For example, a new executive was formed at a meeting on 9 November 1996 in response to the draft Micah legislation curbing the news media. Prominent *Post-Courier* journalist Neville Togarewa was elected president.<sup>48</sup> However, this effort also failed and then in early 2001 a group of journalists on *The National* headed by Colin Taimbari once more tried to revive the PNGJA.

### **Social values and groups**

Section 55 of the Constitution, which addresses the equality of citizens, clearly states that all citizens have the same rights, privileges, obligations and duties, irrespective of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, religion or sex. Subsection 2 permits the making of laws encouraging special advancement of women, children and young people, and people from under-privileged or less advanced groups or residents of less-advanced areas. A Human Rights Commission is in the process of being set up. But there is no legislation specifically dealing with hate propaganda.

Papua New Guinea has a diverse linguistic base with 867 languages and there are three major language groups: Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu and English. Only one mainstream newspaper, *Wantok Niuspepa* (Tok Pisin), is published in a vernacular language, although there is considerable vernacular radio broadcasting on the NBC network and YumiFM (Tok Pisin). No legislation restricts public or private use of languages.

### Pornography and obscenity

There is growing sensitivity towards pornography and obscenity issues, but no specific law against pornography. The Censorship Board sets policy and has banned some news programmes. *60 Minutes* was banned for a short period after EMTV broadcast an interview with Madonna in 1992 that the board regarded as obscene. According to Justice Doherty:

No doubt the time will come when we may be faced with the situation recently ruled on in the United States courts where an attempt to pass legislation to restrict pornographic and other information about children on the internet which could be misused by paedophiles was held to be contrary to their constitutional right of freedom of expression and was not passed.<sup>49</sup>

The *Criminal Code's* sections 228 and 229 deal specifically with obscenity. However, apart from stating the circumstances under which obscenity becomes an offence, the code offers little guidance on what makes a publication obscene, except that it 'tends to corrupt morals'. Unlike defamation, anyone can initiate a prosecution for obscenity.

Papua New Guinea is predominantly a Christian country, but many people, especially in rural areas, follow traditional religions. Under Papua New Guinean common law (as derived from English common law), blasphemy is a crime. It is defined under the *Defamation Act* as any statement or writing that 'denies the truth of the Christian religion or of the Bible, or the Book of Common Prayer, or the existence of God'. No journalist in Papua New Guinea has been prosecuted under this provision.

### Private rights

The *Defamation Act 1973* defines and regulates civil and criminal defamation in Papua New Guinea. It gives the following definition for 'defamatory matter':

- (1) An imputation concerning a person, or a member of his family, whether living or dead, by which:
  - (a) the reputation of that person is likely to be injured; or
  - (b) he is likely to be injured in his profession or trade; or
  - (c) other persons are likely to be induced to shun, avoid, ridicule or despise him, is a defamatory imputation.
- (2) An imputation may be expressed directly or by insinuation or irony.
- (3) The question whether any matter is or is not defamatory, or is or is not capable of bearing a defamatory meaning, is a question of law.

Truth is a defence, providing that the publication is in the public interest. Other defences are fair comment, and a qualified defence of excuse, providing the published or broadcast material is in good faith. Gagging writs (or injunctions) can also be used to silence news media or journalists communicating on controversial issues. As in many other Commonwealth countries, absolute protection is granted for Parliament and official reports, and qualified protection covers reporting of the courts, public meetings, local authorities or statutory boards and inquiries. Relatively few defamation cases involve the news media in Papua New Guinea, and until 1995 no judge had awarded more than K10,000 in damages. However, in recent years there have been some cases involving large sums of money.

In 1993, the Malaysian logging company Rimbunan Hijau sued popular Radio Kalang talkback host Roger Hau'ofa for alleging on air that the company had been behind death threats against Forests Minister Tim Neville. The case was settled out-of-court when the NBC agreed to publish full-page apologies in the national press.<sup>50</sup> In February 1995, an American missionary couple sued two national politicians, a reporter, a national daily newspaper and the state seeking damages totalling K320,000. The case stemmed from a newspaper article quoting sex allegations by a minister and an MP over deportation moves made against the couple. The following month, then Commerce and Industry Minister David Mai sued *The National*, seeking K1 million in damages over allegations about a housing scandal.<sup>51</sup>

Section 49 of the Constitution creates a right of privacy regarding private and family life, communications and personal papers, except to the extent regulated by law. 'There is no law specially implementing this particular right, although income tax legislation does give a wider power to the Income Tax Commissioner to demand papers and statements'.<sup>52</sup> Also, leaders are subject to the Leadership Code and must give information to the Ombudsman. This section is similar to Article 8 of the European Convention.

### **Public accountability**

The original Press Council of Papua New Guinea was founded in December 1975 by John Kaputin, a former National Court judge, who was appointed chairman. At the time, the council's main purposes were described as dealing with 'complaints against newspapers and periodicals published in Papua New Guinea, and resisting encroachment on the freedom of the press'.<sup>53</sup> In a paper about its activities, the council explained that it set about serving these purposes in two ways:

- It is a guardian of the freedom of the press, an essential element of democracy.
- It is a forum to which anyone may take complaints against the press.<sup>54</sup>

In the first category, the council helps the press to protect the basic right of the people to know, reflecting the liberty of publication won in centuries of struggle against governments and groups wishing to deny such rights. These rights include the right of an editor to publish or not to publish, to publish without fear or favour, to comment freely, and, if necessary, strongly and with conviction, in editorial or leader columns.

In the second category, the council also seeks the maintenance of ethical standards by the press, as set out in the Statement of Principles:

Liberty does not mean licence, and it is limited by ethical standards, but the council monitors and resists attempts to go further; reasonable standards must not become denial of the right to know, to have opinions and to publish.<sup>55</sup>

The Press Council's authority rested solely on the willingness of publishers and editors to respect the council's views, to adhere voluntarily to ethical standards, and to admit mistakes publicly. The council seeks no other authority. Although over the years, there were many complaints about the press from politicians, and a handful from the public, formal complaints were not really directed to the Press Council and no adjudications were carried out.

After a 'Media at the Crossroads' accountability seminar in February 1996, organised by news media organisations in an attempt to thwart planned legislation, the Press Council was revived. But it merged with an electronic news organisation 'media board' that had been established to monitor the advertising industry to form the Media Council of Papua New Guinea. This new body redrafted its constitution and established a new media accountability and complaints process. But its core values are based on the old Press Council constitution. Membership of the council comprises people appointed by the constituent bodies (such as associations of journalists, of which there is one member, and publishers, of which there are at least three); nominees, appointed on the nomination of the chairperson to represent the public; and the chairperson.

The new complaints procedure was adopted with the establishment of the Independent Media Standards Committee (IMSC) in April 2003. At the launching in Port Moresby, Australian Press Council chairman Ken McKinnon, said the press in PNG had continued to be 'thorough, sceptical, careful but nevertheless fearless' in trying to fulfil its fundamental responsibilities to readers. While the media had frequently come under criticism from the public, the establishment of the IMSC signalled the determination of the media to achieve balance, to 'get it right'.<sup>56</sup> Under the earlier Press Council system, the council provided a brochure with information about its complaints procedure and the daily and weekly press



published information about where to lodge a complaint. Traditionally, complaints have been treated as 'being against publications, not against persons'.<sup>57</sup> Complainants have been expected to 'explain and support the complaint', and answer questions about its background. It has not been essential, as with some other press councils, to complain first to the publication, but this step was recommended as it often led to early resolutions. In potential legal situations:

The council may decline to proceed with a complaint if its nature or the way in which it is presented are such that it should not be considered. If it appears from the facts of a complaint that the complainant may have a legal remedy, the council may require the complainant to waive his or her legal rights in a form acceptable to the council before proceeding further. This is because the council does not wish to compete with the courts, and because parties cannot be expected to provide the information and cooperation on which the council depends if this may prejudice their position in legal proceedings. A complainant unwilling to waive legal rights may arrange for council consideration after legal proceedings are completed.<sup>58</sup>

Adjudications are communicated to the parties and are usually distributed to the press for general publication, unless the council considers that the circumstances require more limited distribution. Leading Papua New Guinean journalists such as Anna Solomon, publisher of the now closed *Independent*, regard the council's public accountability procedures as vitally important to restoring media credibility in the face of growing political pressures.

Once upon a time a journalist was seen with respect. But these days questions are being asked about journalists. You hear about people pushing their agenda. Certain journalists here in Papua New Guinea are unofficially attached to, or pushing, one political party. When one party wants to put out a political statement then they would run to this particular media organisation because they know a person who is very sympathetic to their cause. This is very dangerous. We need to make sure we have a credible media organisation.<sup>59</sup>

Two major sets of rules of conduct govern the professional activities of journalists in Papua New Guinea. One is the Journalists' Association of Papua New Guinea eight-point *Code of Ethics* and the other is a *Code of Conduct* adopted by the publishers which was incorporated by the Press Council's constitution. The old council's statement of principles developed to help both the public and press included the following code:



*Anna Solomon: Restoring media credibility under political pressure. Photo: Uni Taur*

THE FREEDOM of the press to publish is the freedom of the people to be informed.

THIS IS THE justification for upholding press freedom as an essential feature of democratic society.

THAT FREEDOM is more fundamentally important because of the obligations it entails towards the people, rather than because of the rights it gives to the press.

RECOGNISING that, the Press Council of Papua New Guinea, in dealing with complaints that newspapers have failed to observe proper standards of journalism, will treat the public interest as the first and dominant consideration.

WITH NO wish to attempt the task of reducing to a precise and exhaustive formula the principles by which newspapers must govern themselves if they are faithfully to discharge their responsibilities to the people, the council states that its consideration of complaints will take into account the following general propositions:

1. Readers of a newspaper are entitled to have both news and comment present to them with complete good faith, and therefore — with scrupulous honesty and fairness in both statement and omission; and with due respect for private rights and sensibilities.

2. Accordingly, a newspaper is under a strong obligation to take all steps reasonably available to it to ensure the truth and exactness of its statements.
3. Rumour and unconfirmed reports, if published at all, should be identified as such, and they should not be published if it is unfair to do so.
4. News obtained by dishonest or unfair means, or the publication of which would involve a breach of confidence, should not be published.
5. A newspaper is justified in strongly advocating its own views on controversial topics provided that in doing so it treats its readers fairly by:
  - Making fact and opinion clearly distinguishable.
  - Not misstating or suppressing facts relevant to conclusions it encourages readers to accept.
  - Not distorting or unfairly colouring news, either in text or headlines.
  - Making clear whose are any opinions expressed.
6. Billboards and posters advertising a newspaper must not mislead the public.
7. A newspaper has a wide discretion in matters of taste, but that does not justify lapses of taste so gross as to bring the freedom of the press into disrepute.
8. The publication in a newspaper of matter disparaging or belittling persons or groups in the community by reference to their sex, race, nationality, religion, colour or country of origin is a serious breach of ethical standards.
9. A newspaper should not, in headlines or otherwise, state the race, nationality or religious or political views of a person suspected of a crime, or arrested, charged or convicted, unless the fact is relevant.
10. If matter detrimental to the reputation or interests of an individual, corporation, organisation or group or class of people is published, opportunity for prompt and appropriately prominent reply at reasonable length should be given by the newspaper concerned, wherever fairness so requires.
11. Published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate should be made the subject of such prompt and appropriately prominent retraction, correction or explanation (and in proper cases apology) as will neutralise so far as possible the impression created by the inaccurate matter.
12. The council approves and draws special attention to the PNG Journalists' [Association] Code of Ethics.

The PNG Journalists' Association code was established at independence from Australia in 1975, at a time when expatriate journalists dominated

the media industry. It is closely based on the Australian Journalists Association Code of Ethics in 1944, which has been substantially amended twice since then (in 1984 and 1999). In the two decades since the PNG code was adopted, there has been little debate on whether improvements or changes are needed. The PNG Journalists' Association Code of Ethics (at least until 2002) described a reporter's responsibilities as follows:

1. To report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
2. Not to suppress essential fact, and not to distort the truth by omission or wrongful emphasis.
3. To respect confidences in all circumstances.
4. To observe at all times the fraternity of their profession, and never to take unfair advantage of fellow journalists.
5. Never to accept any form of bribe, nor to permit personal interest to influence their sense of justice.
6. To use only honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
7. To reveal their identity as representatives of the press, or of radio or television services before obtaining personal interview for publication.
8. Always to maintain, through their conduct, full public confidence in their integrity and dignity of their calling.

### **The Ombudsman — monitoring 'fundamental rights'**

No news media organisation has in-house ombudsmen to monitor fairness or public complaints. However, there is a healthy relationship between the news media and the Ombudsman Commission, which monitors integrity in national politics and public affairs. The commission was established at independence in 1975 to 'protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people and to ensure the quality of leadership',<sup>60</sup> as is indicated in the following extract from its 1987 annual report:

The rationale for establishing the commission was indicated in the opening chapter on underlying principles governing the Papua New Guinea Constitution:

Papua New Guinea must be a free society. Our recommendations include a new Charter of Human Rights.

We have tried to achieve, both in this chapter and throughout our proposals, a careful balance between the rights of the individual and the interest of the community. Apart from basic political and economic rights we have paid particular attention, for example, to the necessity to ensure effective and equal access to the service provided by the government, including those institutions associated with the judicial process; and we have provided for an Ombudsman Commission to deal with unfair administrative practices.<sup>61</sup>

Discussing the relationship between the commission and the news media of Papua New Guinea, Chief Ombudsman Simon Pentanu said:

At a time when the Constitutional Review Commission's media legislation was being tossed around ... we saw some excellent reporting and analysis on the pitfalls of the legislation on media restrictions. If all of the debate on the media legislation at the time can be summed up in one sentence, it might be: that a democratic society cannot allow the government of the day to determine who should be a journalist or who should not be a journalist, through a licensing scheme.<sup>62</sup>

Pentanu cited two major examples of the cooperation between the commission and the media. In the case of a report into a major foreign business controversy in 1996 over the privatised water supply to the national capital of Port Moresby, the commission took the leading role in exposing malpractices. But when the report was released, the media played a vital role in disseminating the findings. In the case of the Sandline mercenary crisis in 1997, the 'media went in first, writing, rewriting, printing and reprinting a story that was unfolding in a new way every day'.<sup>63</sup>

As elsewhere in the world, there is growing debate about the role of internet and the media and information in Papua New Guinea. Although the country was the first in the South Pacific to adopt a National Policy on Information and Communication,<sup>64</sup> this has largely been shelved and there were no guidelines developed for the internet and the media. While the news media have been quick to recognise the 'need for investment in telecommunications and information technology in the South Pacific',<sup>65</sup> there are strong community moves to introduce regulation or some form of censorship:

The first and foremost issue of the country is to legislate on electronic information, especially information transmitted across international borders. ['Harmful' effects of the internet] can only be minimised and controlled if, in the first place, the government has passed laws to control the making and the use of electronic information.<sup>66</sup>

In May 1997, Telikom of Papua New Guinea launched the Tiare internet portal, but both Papua New Guinea's national daily newspapers had already created newspaper websites during 1996. *The National* was the first to introduce a news website in August 1996 [www.thenational.com.pg](http://www.thenational.com.pg) followed by the *Post-Courier* in December [www.postcourier.com.pg](http://www.postcourier.com.pg). *The National* was the early leader in new media technology in the South Pacific:

The web site, the first daily news one in the region, was the innovative brainchild of the general manager, S. F. Yong. A cyberspace buff, and enthused by the lively website of his old

paper in Malaysia, *The Star*, he was convinced it could be done in Papua New Guinea too.<sup>67</sup>

Both the *Post-Courier* and *The National* have developed strong online and digital strategies as part of their news operations. The *Post-Courier*, for example, uses email for picture and story delivery in every bureau office in Lae, Mt Hagen and Rabaul. As a result, this paper's regional offices had doubled their staff by 2001. However, former *Post-Courier* publisher Tony Yianni is not satisfied that the PNG media is making sufficient use of the internet:

We haven't been using the internet enough. We should be interacting with our readers a lot more on a daily basis. The internet is not a threat to newspapers.

All I can do is give an example: if a story broke at lunchtime today that the Prime Minister was assassinated, it would be on our website that minute. It is just part of the newspaper...

At the end of the day, if you want to know the facts, you either go to the *Post-Courier* or *The National* website, or buy the paper. People don't believe it unless they can hold it up in their hands and read it. It's like a contract.<sup>68</sup>

In early 2004, Yianni realised his goal of establishing a website at the Pacific's largest daily newspaper, *The Fiji Times*, [www.fijitimes.com](http://www.fijitimes.com)

## Conclusion

Papua New Guinea's energetic print media is dominated by foreign ownership with both daily newspapers owned from abroad — the *Post-Courier* by Murdoch's News Corporation interests and *The National* by Rimbunan Hijau of Malaysia, but with significant Papua New Guinean minority shareholdings. Broadcast media is also foreign-dominated with Australia's Channel Nine wholly owning the country's sole television station, EMTV, and Communications Fiji Ltd controlling the PNGFM Pty Ltd private radio group. However, an independent publishing group, Word Publishing, owned by a consortium of churches, publishes *Wantok* and provides a significant alternative local voice, particularly on educational, environmental and social justice issues.

Under Section 46, Papua New Guinea's 1975 'home grown' Constitution guarantees freedom of expression to everybody, whether citizen or non-citizen. But this provision also states that the right can be limited by a law imposing restrictions. In spite of frequent threats against news media by politicians and parliamentarians, however, this right has never been breached by the equivalent of Britain's 'D Notices' for example. The news media has generally enjoyed vigorous freedom of expression

with robust and outspoken letters to the editor columns. Public criticism has blunted attempts to enact draft legislation aimed at gagging the media such as the *Mass Media Tribunal Bill 1987* that provided draconian measures against publishers and journalists.

Absolute protection is granted for Parliament and official reports, and qualified protection covers reporting of the courts, public meetings, local authorities or statutory boards, and inquiries. In defamation cases, the defences of fair comment and truth, along with qualified defences of excuse and good faith, apply. But there have been relatively few defamation cases involving the news media in Papua New Guinea, and until 1995 no judge had awarded more than K10,000 in damages. Since then, there have been higher damages cases.

After the start of the 10-year Bougainville civil war in 1988, the news media in Papua New Guinea came under increasing scrutiny over security issues. The declaration of the State of Emergency between 1988 and 1990 restricted freedom of the press to move and report on the situation in Bougainville. The only 'legal' journalists who were allowed into Bougainville were 'embedded' — those who accompanied security forces on patrol and some were required to wear uniforms.

While no news media organisation has in-house ombudsmen to monitor fairness or public complaints, there is a healthy relationship between the news media and the Ombudsman Commission, which monitors integrity in national politics and public affairs. The Papua New Guinea Media Council has also taken an increasingly important role in monitoring press freedom and the public accountability and responsibility of news organisations. In 2002, it launched a media campaign against corruption.

Papua New Guinea has played a leading innovative role in initiatives using the internet for news media publication in the Pacific. The development was given a boost at the time of the Sandline mercenary crisis in 1997. There has also been a growing debate about the role of internet and the media and information in Papua New Guinea. Although the country was the first in the South Pacific to adopt a National Policy on Information and Communication, this has largely been shelved and no guidelines were developed for the internet and the media.





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## Fiji Islands news media profile

There is a whole lot of [political] pressure. For instance, in this newspaper we believe in plurality, we believe in equal access for everyone in what Fiji has to offer. Recently our editorials have been along those lines — and then we had the [politicians] calling us and asking who is the Indian who wrote that editorial.

*Wainikiti Waqa-Bogidrau*  
*Fiji Sun editor, 2001*

While responsible governments and politicians and a responsible press should share a common aim — the best interests of their society — their roles are different. In a healthy democratic society, the relationship between politicians and a free press is, quite properly, likely to be wary, questioning and sceptical, rather than close, cosy and adulatory.

*Thomson Report on Future Media  
Legislation for Fiji, 1996*

THE FIJI ISLANDS are at the cultural crossroads of the South Pacific where the Polynesian and Melanesian peoples and way of life have blended into a merged identity. The archipelago in the South-West Pacific has 322 islands and atolls with only about a third actually populated. The largest pair, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, make up 87 percent of the total land area of 18,330 square kilometres. The literacy rate is 93.7 percent. Fiji's population of 840,000<sup>1</sup> comprises a complex mix of indigenous Fijians (51 percent) and Indo-Fijian (44 percent) — mostly descendants of Indian indentured labourers brought into the country by British colonial authorities

in the late 19th century to work sugar plantations. Other cultures, including Rotuman and other Polynesians, European and Chinese, make up the balance. The population of the capital, Suva, and where most of the country's news media is located, is more than 183,000.<sup>2</sup> It is a vital member of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and hosts the Forum's secretariat and a number of United Nations and other international agencies. Fiji has:

- three national daily newspapers (including Sunday editions);
- one national bimonthly newspaper;
- one regional monthly news magazine;
- one national television station broadcasting one free-to-air channel and three pay subscription channels;
- a national public radio network which includes AM and FM services and a station broadcasting in English, Fijian and Hindi; and
- a private radio network which operates FM stations broadcasting in English, Fijian and Hindi;
- two vernacular weekly newspapers;
- a community television broadcaster (based near Nadi) and several Christian broadcasters; and
- a regional news agency, previously based in Vanuatu.

#### **The press — 'first in the world today'**

Fiji has a highly developed media industry compared with most other Pacific countries. The largest of the three daily newspapers, *The Fiji Times* — until recently displaying the slogan 'the first newspaper published in the world today' — was founded at Levuka in 1869. Almost two decades later it became part of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation group when the *Melbourne Herald* and *Weekly Times* group was taken over in 1987. *The Fiji Times* provides wide coverage of Fiji affairs and several pages of regional and international news. Its circulation was reportedly up to 55,000 during the 2000 political crisis, but is usually around 32,000 week days. Like *The Fiji Times*, the two daily rivals, *Daily Post* and the *Fiji Sun*, publish in tabloid format. Both newspapers were once regarded as being editorially more sympathetic to the Indo-Fijian community than the conservative *Fiji Times*. The Fiji government has a controlling 44 percent interest in the struggling *Daily Post*, although some of its editors and journalists have maintained an independent editorial policy.<sup>3</sup> Minority corporate shareholders Colonial Fiji Ltd and Unit Trusts of Fiji were negotiating to divert their combined 45 percent stake to an undisclosed Australian businessman late in 2004. A consortium of Indo-Fijian importers, C. J. Patel and Co Ltd and Vinod Patel and Co Ltd, and the flagship company of Fiji's indigenous government, Fijian Holdings Ltd, own the *Sun*. This paper was launched in September 1999. Both dailies do not have independently audited sales, but the *Sun* is believed to sell around 10,000 copies a day and has overtaken the *Daily Post*.<sup>4</sup> As with newspapers

in Papua New Guinea, the Fiji daily press publishes 'substantial political coverage, news and comment and carry vigorous editorials, usually on national or regional matters. They encourage — and, healthily, devote much space to — readers' letters on current local issues, frequently political, so providing a forum for useful political debate'.<sup>5</sup>

Fiji also has two major monthly or bimonthly newsmagazine groups, *Islands Business*, which covers local and regional business, political, social and economic issues, and *The Review*, a wide-ranging political news, technology and business magazine. During the post-Speight economic slump, *The Review* was relaunched in February 2003 with a bimonthly newspaper format. Two newspapers published in Hindi (*Shanti Dut*) and Fijian (*Nai Lalakai*) are produced by *The Fiji Times* and recycle some of that paper's coverage with translations. The *Fiji Sun* has introduced a daily Fijian language insert called *Siga Vou* (New Day). *The Daily Post* and *Review* newsmagazine share a website, [fijilive.com](http://fijilive.com), while *The Fiji Times* launched its website in 2004, [www.fijitimes.com](http://www.fijitimes.com). *The Sun* also publishes a website at [www.sun.com.fj](http://www.sun.com.fj).

### **Radio — the most extensive media**

Radio has the widest network of Fiji news media, with extensive broadcast coverage reaching almost all of the population, even in the mountainous highlands and most remote islands. Its audiences are 'highly news-conscious' making it an 'extraordinarily powerful resource'.<sup>6</sup> The deregulated commercial market is strong and there has been a growing tendency towards niche marketing in both programming and advertising. Radio broadcasters are the state-owned Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), which operates Radio Fiji, and the private Communications Fiji Ltd (FM96) radio group. Faced with tough commercial competition, the corporation faced a financial crisis in the mid-1990s and was relaunched in 1997 as an independent state-owned commercial entity, Island Networks. However, it later reverted to a state-owned corporation. The government has paid out an annual F\$600,000 grant to the corporation to boost its advertising revenue. FBC operates six radio stations, notably Radio Fiji, Bula FM, and Fijian language and Hindi language stations.

In 1982, the Alliance Government passed legislation opening the door to competition from commercial broadcasting, enabling Communications Fiji Ltd to enter the field. The company now also has broadcasting interests in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.<sup>7</sup> Locally, the broadcaster appeals to a younger and more hip multiracial and broad-based audience, operating 24-hour stations FM96 (English), Navtarang (Hindi) and Viti FM (Fijian). As Robert Seward described it: 'There is nothing eclectic, just lots of local emphasis, and the station [FM96] is widely popular'.<sup>8</sup> During 2002, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation appointed a local

staff correspondent for its Radio Australia service, Mika Loga, who is based at the FBC in Suva. In November 2003, Communications Fiji Ltd stunned the state broadcaster when the government awarded it a \$450,000 contract for Hindi public broadcasting.<sup>9</sup> The FBC immediately launched an appeal.

### Television — emerging from rugby

Fiji's television history is more topsy-turvy than with radio. Television was introduced into the country on the back of an insatiable demand for rugby union coverage at the time of the 1991 World Cup in Britain:

In the 1980s, the Australian Channel Nine was granted the first television broadcasting licence but withdrew after the 1987 coup without going on-air. In 1988, a government-owned service was proposed, with support from New Zealand, but this failed to materialise because of funding difficulties. A year later, an invitation to tender for a jointly owned but government-controlled service was issued; but again the project was never realised.<sup>10</sup>

In 1991, Television New Zealand offered a temporary service to provide coverage during the five-week Rugby World Cup championship, along with a handful of extra programmes. The service was a hit with the Fiji public and the government provided a subsidy to enable it to continue broadcasting as *Fiji One*. An offer for a joint venture failed to find any satisfactory tender. In May the following year, the government forged a provisional agreement with TVNZ to provide management support for a state television service. However, this deal was not ratified by the incoming Rabuka government elected that year. In 1993, a new invitation to tender again failed to lead to an acceptable contract. Finally, the government opted to develop a full service based on the pioneering success of *Fiji One*. Fiji Television Ltd was initially owned with a majority 51 percent stake held by the Fiji Development Bank. (The Fiji government later consolidated its stakeholding by transferring the 51 percent share to Yasana Holdings with all fourteen provincial administrations becoming beneficiaries). The rest of the shareholding has now been shared between the public (30 percent), Telecom Fiji (14 percent) and TVNZ (5 percent). According to former Fiji TV chief executive Peter Wilson when addressing a Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) conference in Gibraltar:

Over half of the population are subsistence farmers or fishers. The major islands are ruggedly hilly and heavily vegetated. Transmission over mountain, sea and rainforest is expensive, yet *Fiji One*, our predominantly English-language free-to-air channel, covers about 80 percent of the population. We also operate a two-channel VHF subscription TV service, Sky Fiji.<sup>11</sup>

Fiji Television now operates four channels *Fiji One* (free) and three pay channels: Sky Plus, Sky Entertainment and ESPN with plans for three more. As part of major proposals for the company in 2003, Fiji Television pledged in its blueprint document *Television for all the People of Fiji* that it planned to cover the country's remaining 15 percent of households still without television. But University of the South Pacific broadcast lecturer Steve Sharp commented: 'The politics of culture will dictate broadcast television policy for years to come.'<sup>12</sup> In February 2004, Fiji Television's chief executive Ken Clark announced at a CBA conference in Nadi that the company planned to invest F\$6 million in extending satellite coverage to the outer islands and neighbouring countries.<sup>13</sup> The transmission was planned to beam free-to-air *Fiji One* and six pay TV channels. In April, the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation flagged a proposal to establish a Fijian language television station that would carry programmes in the Rotuman and Rabi languages as well as Fijian. Explained chief executive Francis Herman: 'Fiji is unique in the world in terms of its culture. If most of the other Pacific Island countries have it, why can't we?'<sup>14</sup> He was referring to Samoa, Tonga and the Maori Television Service in New Zealand.

#### **Pacnews — an island-hopping news agency**

Pacnews, the news agency operated by the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA), until recently distributed its region-wide service bulletins three times a day, five days a week by email and fax from an office established in a suburban house in Ma'afu Street, Suva. This setting was a long way from when the news cooperative was first set up in a former deputy prime minister's house in Richards Road in 1988. This was the 'first time that contemporaneous, region-wide news had been available to any news organisation in the Pacific'.<sup>15</sup> The post-coup political situation in Fiji deteriorated and two German officials of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) PACBROAD project supporting Pacnews were expelled in May 1990.<sup>16</sup> Pacnews and PIBA took refuge in New Zealand, in an office in the Auckland suburb of Takapuna. Later that year, Pacnews was moved to Honiara, Solomon Islands, while the PIBA and PACBROAD offices were established in Port Vila, Vanuatu. In early 1994, Pacnews also moved to Port Vila before finally shifting back to Suva in 1999. In August 2004, Pacnews moved into rented Gordon Street offices of PINA where it was competing with *PINA Nius*. Questions were still being asked about the slow progress of the PIBA merger with PINA.

#### **Coups and the political context**

On 15 May 1987, one day after the country's first coup d'état, Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka's régime ordered *The Fiji Times* and the original *Fiji Sun* to stop publishing indefinitely while armed troops and police occupied the two offices. Among soldiers who removed *Fiji Times* editor

Vijendra Kumar at gunpoint was Eroni Volavolala, a fulltime sports journalist employed by the paper at the time. Volavolala was also a part time (reservist) soldier. The next day, May 16, became the first time in more than a century (apart from once during a cyclone in January 1986) that *The Fiji Times* was not published. The military régime began a purge of political critics and opponents by arresting them without charge.<sup>17</sup> The original *Fiji Sun*, jointly owned by the Hongkong-based Sally Aw Sian publishing empire and New Zealand publisher Philip Harkness, eventually closed rather than publish under self-censorship restrictions.<sup>18</sup> Several of Fiji's best journalists left Fiji in an exodus of talent.<sup>19</sup>

Thirteen years later, on 19 May 2000, an attempted coup led by rogue businessman George Speight and six renegade members of the élite 1st Meridian Squadron special forces engulfed the Fiji Islands in turmoil for the next three months. Speight and his armed co-conspirators stormed Parliament and held the Labour-led Mahendra Chaudhry government hostage for 56 days. On Chaudhry's release from captivity, he partly blamed the media for the overthrow of his government. Some sectors of the media were accused of waging a bitter campaign against the Fiji Labour Party-led administration and its rollback of privatisation.<sup>20</sup> In the early weeks of the insurrection, the media enjoyed an unusually close relationship with Speight, who displayed bizarre and charismatic charm, and the hostage-takers, raising ethical questions.<sup>21</sup> Dilemmas faced by Fiji and foreign journalists were more complex than during the 1987 military coups. Editorials by the country's three daily newspapers were arguably critical in disseminating misperceptions about the Speight putsch.

Absence of informed analysis strengthened the belief that legislation [was] easily changed on the whim of a prime minister when this [was] not the reality. This reinforce[d] the perception that an Indo-Fijian prime minister [was] a 'dangerous situation' for Fijians.<sup>22</sup>

Even though it was essentially a struggle for power within the indigenous Fijian community and traditional confederacies, and a conflict between tradition and modernity, the inevitable polarisation of races undermined notions of objectivity. It was apparent to *Daily Post* editor Jale Moala that many local reporters had become 'swept away by the euphoria of the moment and the tension and the emotion that charged the event'.<sup>23</sup> This, he recalled, was true of both indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian reporters.

Fear may have also played a role. As a result, the perpetrators of the terrorist action, led by George Speight, received publicity that at the time seemed to legitimise their actions and their existence. Some argued that the situation might not have deteriorated as quickly as it did if the media had played a more responsible role.

But therein lies one of the dilemmas of Pacific Islands political journalism: the extended family system, the tribal and chiefly system and customary obligations may blur the view of the journalist, especially if he or she is indigenous.<sup>24</sup>

For Moala, lack of leadership in some newsrooms was a significant factor. Another prominent journalist, a New Zealander who was the longest serving international news agency reporter covering the crisis, Michael Field, of Agence France-Presse, cited examples of how the credibility of the press 'faded' because reporters were perceived to be too close to the terrorists.<sup>25</sup> He also contrasted the relaxed approach by local authorities to the hostage-takers and the media with other countries when defending a constitutional government.

Speight's role is not entirely clear — he was probably not the coup leader — [but] he quickly became the spokesman for it. This was where all the rules began to fall apart. It was not a 'normal' hostage situation because the media had ready access to the bizarre world of Speight and his gang, which included a veteran if misguided [Fijian] reporter (who at the Pacific Islands Media Association AGM in 1990 complained there were too many women in journalism). In New Zealand, police control all access in hostage situations; in Fiji they just took names and let people come and go ...

At Speight's parliamentary madhouse many of the reporters virtually moved in with the hostage-takers — eating and sleeping there. Quickly their judgement disappeared in a self-inflicted Stockholm syndrome effect; one New Zealand reporter took to stealing bullets from hostage-takers' guns. Other reporters



**Samisoni Pareti:** 'The rebels were actually looking for journalists and that's why they trashed Fiji Television.' *Photo: David Robie*

quickly established a first-name tie with Speight, as though they were good buddies.<sup>26</sup>

For *Islands Business* writer and former Radio Fiji journalist Samisoni Pareti, the Fiji media is quite well respected. But after Speight's attempted coup, he was rather stunned at the turnaround when the rebels became angry with some journalists who retained their independence.

We were not very popular with a number of the rebels and George Speight supporters and that's why a number of journalists were attacked. This was a big development and change from 1987 when hardly any journalists were attacked by rebel supporters. We only heard of overseas journalists striking trouble.

For the first time, the rebels were actually looking for journalists and that's why they came out and trashed Fiji Television on May 29. They were just disappointed that not all reporters were siding with them.<sup>27</sup>

However, for some Pacific academics such as USP humanities professor Konai Helu Thaman, the problem was journalists themselves, both foreign and some local, and their alleged 'distortions' and lack of cultural sensitivity. She complained at a conference in Budapest, Hungary:

The selective way in which both foreign and local media organisations dealt with issues which they considered important under the guise of 'media freedom' was a cause of frustration for some of us who live in Fiji and who understood the complexity of the situation. For example, it was clear to me, watching many newscasts about Fiji in both local and overseas television, that most foreign reporters, and a few local ones, did not realise, let alone understand, that notions of democracy, human rights, freedom of expression or even the law itself, remain empty words among people whose world views were and continue to be framed by a different theory of personhood.<sup>28</sup>

This does not strike a chord with seasoned journalists such as the *Daily Post's* Josephine Prasad, who was in Parliament the day the Chaudhry Government was taken hostage — along with Matelita Ragogo (*Fiji Times*) and John Kamea (*Fiji Sun*). She has a strong commitment to the Fourth Estate role and paid a price for her ideals. After giving evidence in the treason trial against Vice-President Ratu Jope Seniloli in mid-2004, she and her family faced harassment and threats by supporters of Speight.

It's very hard trying to be a watchdog and the Fourth Estate — people are always trying to shut you up. But I think it is probably the most important part of journalism. I think that since democracy is a principle, we have a responsibility to see that it is upheld. In





**Josephine Prasad:** 'It's hard trying to be a watchdog in Fiji — people are always trying to shut you up.' *Photo: David Robie*

Fiji's case, I don't see the media fighting for democracy, they have all been taking different angles.<sup>29</sup>

### **The move towards media reform**

Since the mid-1990s, three Fiji governments (led by Rabuka, Chaudhry and then Qarase) have all pledged media reforms, including the introduction of Freedom of Information legislation. Although proposed legislation has been drafted and revised at various stages, no government has actually delivered on the promises. Within the media industry there has been some justifiable concern on the part of executives that any legislation may introduce some attempt at control, particularly as politicians have often hinted at licensing. But there has been little debate on cross-ownership issues. Shortly before the arrival of Thomson Foundation consultants Kenneth Morgan and John Prescott Thomas in Fiji on 15 September 1996 for a two-week visit to research the republic's legislation that had an impact on the media, the report of the Fiji Constitution Review Commission, *Towards a United Future*, was published.<sup>30</sup> Morgan and Thomas noted:

This wise and well-written document was of inestimable value to us. [A]lthough we appreciate that some of its recommendations are controversial — and that is not within either our terms of reference or our competence to comment on such matters — it nevertheless set both a political context and, more importantly, a positive spirit for our own inquiries.<sup>31</sup>

Morgan and Thomas concluded that they had approached their mission with 'genuinely open minds' and with no plan to impose 'inappropriate

foreign solutions' to Fiji's problems. Certain, unspecified, aspects of media legislation in Britain were discarded, as were practices in some South-East Asian countries that were 'sometimes suggested to us as models [but] seemed incompatible with Fiji's Constitution and with stated government policy'.<sup>32</sup> They were convinced from the outset that systems and mechanisms were needed expressly designed for Fiji circumstances. And this is what they say they proposed in the report.<sup>33</sup>

The consultants were surprised at the limited range of local television programming in Fiji (no more than 10 percent), contrasting with Television New Zealand, which has about 50 percent. They argued those local programmes — particularly if studio-based — could be produced to a high standard very cost-effectively — and could attract big commercial audiences even against tough competition.<sup>34</sup>

In a system where there is no competition at all for television audiences — and in a society as concerned with its identity as is Fiji's — we should expect local programmes to be a success story commercially. But we have to say that Fiji TV's business plan was absolutely clear and specific as to the nature of the programme mix it would provide; and it was on that explicit basis that the government chose to award them their licence.<sup>35</sup>

### Licensing for the media?

Terms of reference for the Thomson Foundation report were to investigate the 'advisability — and the desirability — of licensing printing operations and requiring all print media publishers to have a government permit'. Closely related to this issue was a requirement for the consultants to review the *Newspaper Registration Act*.<sup>36</sup> Described as a law to 'regulate the printing and publishing of newspapers', its provisions, reported Morgan and Thomas, in fact did rather less than that.

It requires only that any person who 'desires to publish any newspaper' should register that intention by an affidavit by the proprietors, publisher and printer of the proposed paper, giving their names and addresses. It requires these particulars to be kept up to date by the filing of subsequent affidavits when changes occur and requires them to be printed in the newspaper, identifying where the paper is printed. A register of the affidavits must be open for public inspection without charge.

Failure to register, or printing the newspaper without publishing these particulars, are offences punishable by a fine; proceedings may be taken only in the name of the Director of Public Prosecutions.<sup>37</sup>

Indeed, in some other countries there are similar provisions, such as in Britain's *Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1881*. But, as Morgan

and Thomas pointed out, such provisions have rarely been invoked. The registration procedure applies only to newspapers that are not owned by a company incorporated under the *Companies Act*, which in any case requires such companies to file annual returns. The consultants added:

We found no evidence of concern, neither from newspaper and other publishing companies, nor from politicians or others we consulted that the simple registration required under the *Fiji [Companies] Act*<sup>38</sup> created any difficulty or inhibited freedom of the press. In our view, such registration is a reasonable provision. It is a right that members of the public should be able to identify those who own a newspaper and those responsible for its publication — if only to know, for example, whom they can sue if a paper defames them, or to whom they should look for redress if its content or conduct damages them in any way.<sup>39</sup>

Morgan and Thomas stated that a simple requirement to *register* a newspaper did not interfere with freedom of the press. They argued that this was quite different from an obligation to obtain a *licence* (their emphasis), from the state or any other authority, to publish a newspaper. But they also sounded a warning:

In our discussions, much concern was expressed that a review of the *Newspapers Registration Act* might lead to its becoming, in effect, a licensing provision. There had apparently been suggestions in recent years, from members of the government among others, that the Act should be amended to require not only initial registration, and subsequent registration of significant changes in ownership or publishing and printing arrangements, but also an annual review of registration. To do this would, in our view, be tantamount to the licensing of the press.<sup>40</sup>

This would, argued the consultants, be out of step with democratic practice elsewhere and against the spirit of the proposals to defend freedom of expression made by the Constitution Review Commission. Morgan and Thomas added that registration should be a right as well as a duty: 'It should be a one-off exercise, not refusible at the discretion of government, ministers or officials and not subject to periodic renewal'.<sup>41</sup> The Thomson Report recommended that the *Newspapers Registration Act* be retained but with a clause added that specified registration could not be denied or withdrawn.<sup>42</sup> It also recommended that Fiji should not introduce licensing measures for the print media, but should instead rely on self-regulatory means.<sup>43</sup>

[W]e encountered overwhelming resistance to the idea, from many different sources (including politicians), and heard no convincing arguments in its favour. In most democratic societies,

the licensing of printing presses disappeared more than two hundred years ago. The only purpose of granting such licences appears to have the concomitant power to revoke them — and so keep the media compliant and subdued.<sup>44</sup>

However, in the case of broadcast media, the consultants took a contrasting view. Noting that the international allocation of broadcasting frequencies was determined by worldwide agreements among governments, they said it was ‘reasonable, even essential’, for governments to control domestic allocation.

While, in principle, any citizen may have access to a printing press, access to the airwaves requires a ‘gatekeeper’ — at least in the present state of broadcast technology ... Though digital compression and other developments will soon make a vast multiplicity of outlets technically possible, it appears to us that the frequency spectrum is likely to remain for some time a ‘scarce resource’ in Fiji.<sup>45</sup>

The Thomson Report recommended that television licences be awarded on the basis of competitive tendering with the tender making ‘proper demands’ on the applicant (including realistic fees).<sup>46</sup> It also urged that the licence be awarded on the judgement of an ad hoc committee comprising a member from each party represented in Parliament and with the final terms of the contract being made explicit in the licence and enforceable through it.<sup>47</sup> The terms ought to be expected to include at least the following:

- Commercial ownership
- Frequencies allocated
- Coverage to be achieved
- Technical standards
- Maximum hours of transmission
- Maximum minutes of advertising content an hour
- Minimum percentage of local programming
- Adherence to the Fiji Media Code of Practice

The exclusive licence ‘honeymoon’ came to an end in 2004.

The Thomson Report also commented on the standard of journalism in Fiji, saying that issues of training and quality were a ‘major obstacle’ to freedom of the media. Morgan and Thomas noted that both politicians and community spokespeople cited examples of ‘poorly researched or insensitive reporting’, adding that ‘we ourselves remarked on some examples of unbalanced writing’.<sup>48</sup>

Media managers admitted there were ‘shortcomings in the qualifications and experience’ of some of their staff. They found that all media outlets also appeared ‘commendably willing’ to carry retrospective corrections

and to 'encourage the right of reply through their letters pages, but that does not address the fundamental problem either'.<sup>49</sup> The consultants concluded that there was a 'sharp need for improved and more readily available education and training' of journalists, both in practical journalism skills and in ethics. In Fiji, 'awareness of and a sensitivity to the cultures of its different communities' was needed along with an understanding of international professional norms and standards.

Part of the difficulty in providing structured education and training in journalism stems from the absence of a correspondingly structured career path. In any society, career advancement in journalism tends to be bound by pyramid structures in each newspaper or broadcasting organisation, with a broad base for recruitment but sharply narrowing promotion opportunities to climb towards the apex. In Fiji, there are simply not enough pyramids — newspapers, periodicals, radio and television stations — to create a general career pattern.<sup>50</sup>

Morgan and Thomas carried out their interviews and research for their report before the first graduates emerged from the University of the South Pacific's journalism degree programme. It was also at a time when the Fiji Islands Media Association (FIMA) and Fiji Journalism Institute (FJI) entry-level course had been going barely two years. They noted: 'It is too early to evaluate either but clearly they should be encouraged and supported'. Some publishers — including those from *The Fiji Times*, the *Daily Post* and *The Review* — were 'proud of the in-house training they told us they give their own journalists'. Morgan and Thomas added:

Such a commitment is welcome and valuable. It cannot alone, however, expose entrants and other young journalists to the desirable experience and interplay of ideas about professional ethics and responsibility, which [a] more broadly based education may give.<sup>51</sup>

The Thomson Report recommended cooperation between media industry employers, FIMA, PINA, Fiji Journalists Association, USP and the FJI under the umbrella of the Fiji Media Council to develop an integrated approach to structured on-the-job in-house training, backed by part-time or block release courses.<sup>52</sup> The report also recommended that the interested groups should also cooperate in funding and promoting seminars, lectures, workshops and publications to advance professionalism among working journalists and editors. Some editors shared this view as several media executives seemed to discover a renewed commitment to training as the decade ended. Jale Moala, editor of the *Daily Post* at the time of the Speight putsch and the Fiji journalist with perhaps the widest editing experience in the country,<sup>53</sup> regarded funding and competition between training bodies as serious obstacles facing the Fiji media:

Funding is the greatest problem. Even the two universities, UPNG and USP, rely on funding for the existence of their journalism programmes. Outside of these universities, most of the funding comes from UNESCO and AusAID and organisations like PINA have to compete for this funding. The governments of Britain, United States, Germany and New Zealand also provide funding for journalism training. Some private organisations, mainly the Murdoch-owned *Fiji Times* and *Post-Courier* newspapers, can afford their own training programmes and do run in-house training seriously.

In some cases training programmes have tended to compete against each other instead of working as a team. The best example of this was in Fiji where the USP programme and the PINA programme worked apart rather than together. Both programmes would have achieved more if there was cohesion and consultation. In my view, USP should have been providing the main training programme with its certificate, diploma and degree courses. PINA should have been focusing on further training in the workplace. Yet it didn't seem to acknowledge the role played by USP in journalism training in the region, a fact underscored by its part in a move to set up a diploma course at the Fiji National Training Council, an obvious duplication of training offered at USP.<sup>54</sup>

Francis Herman, chief executive of the FBC, emphasised that his organisation had decided to opt for younger journalists who could be 'moulded in our format of news'. For too long, the FBC had been 'used as a training ground' for journalists in Fiji and then the industry newcomers would leave.



**Francis Herman:** 'We are moving towards getting more specialists on board instead of generalists.' *Photo: David Robie*

It's a long process. If you look at our current news team, there is a bias towards the younger generation. Simply because the older ones come in with very bad habits — the experienced journalists, I am talking about. They think they know everything. It is very difficult for them to adapt to our style that we are developing. And basically [there is] an extensive in-house training programme on all facets of society, not just politics, but everything, and then giving them on-the-job training. [It is a matter of] getting them exposed to professional, specialised, or niche areas, like investigative journalism, or specialising in the environment. What we are moving towards is getting more specialists on board, instead of generalists.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast, the *Sun* consulting editor Wainikiti Waqa-Bogidrau, the highest-educated journalist in Fiji who won the USP Vice-Chancellor's and Social Sciences gold medals in 2000, lamented the lack of commitment to education shown by some news organisations. Recalling how Radio Fiji had traditionally been committed to training and education — especially to make their staff voices 'presentable' — she said the environment was very different at *The Fiji Times*.

At the *Times*, I found a totally different attitude. They did not encourage education as such. They believe experience counts more than any training, or degree...

I know, with the benefit of hindsight, that it is good to get trained journalists rather than people fresh out of high school, or just off the street. The advantages of trained journalists is that they are aware of the issues, ethical and otherwise. They have a good understanding of what journalism is all about.



**Wainikiti Waqa-Bogidrau: 'Trained journalists are aware of issues.'**

*Photo: David Robie*

I have noticed this with some of the graduates, especially from USP — it is easier to talk to them. I mean it is easier giving them an outline of a story than with those who haven't had training, or education. You don't need a lot of supervision with the graduates. They grasp the ideas quite easily.<sup>56</sup>

Fiji Television political journalist Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, one of Fiji's best political reporters and presenters, started his media career as a radio journalist before joining the TV station about a month after the official launch in 1995. He wanted a job as a newsreader but was offered a reporter's job instead as his 'eyes were crossed'. He regards education as really important, something he and many of his colleagues had missed out on. After embarking on a course at USP, he joined the brain drain in mid-2004 and became a senior reporter on *Asia Down Under* for Television NZ.

In Fiji, to a great extent over the years we relied on people learning on the job. I remember I started off like that. I didn't have too [much] of the basics of journalism, and I started off learning from others. But education and training is important because you can only learn a certain amount from others who have started off the same way as you have. You reach a certain level and you need the exposure, the international exposure...

Journalism like any other profession is an ever evolving and changing thing. It is not stagnant. And we need to brush up on our skills. You can't really just do that by learning off others when they are in the same position as you are. You have to have ongoing training.<sup>57</sup>

### Television and local programming

Another issue raised by the Thomson Report was 'disquiet at the level of "imported" programming' on television. The report noted that while Fiji Television was 'adhering scrupulously' to the terms of its licence, the government was faced with a dilemma: 'It is bound by a legal contract which limits its possible courses of action, yet it is aware of a strong appetite for local programming which is at present unsatisfied'.<sup>58</sup> The report also observed that local programmes, 'particularly if studio-based, can be produced to a high standard very cost effectively — and can attract big commercial audiences even against stiff competition'.

In a system where there is no competition at all for television audiences — and in a society as concerned with its identity as is Fiji's — we should expect local programming to be a success story commercially.<sup>59</sup>



Former Fiji Television chief executive Peter Wilson argued for the benefits of 'monopoly purchasing power' in buying commercial programmes.<sup>60</sup> As an example, he pointed to Fiji TV being fortunate in being able to 'piggyback' on the programme purchasing arrangements of Television New Zealand, one of the larger buyers of English language programming.<sup>61</sup> Fiji TV also takes advantage of any free programming that is available, either from unencrypted satellite feeds or from various donor agencies. This is especially suitable for off-peak broadcasting. *Fiji One* has a daytime slot called *eTV* (educational television) based primarily on this material. Wilson noted that 'local production was 'crucial to local relevance, quality of the schedule and commercial success'. But local production was limited by its relatively high cost.

It should be remembered that English is a second or third language to most of the Fiji audience. The *Fiji One* audience loves to relax in the evening with *Shortland Street*, a New Zealand prime-time soap with Pacific Island characters and even an occasional Fiji sub-plot. They enjoy the fantasy adventure of *Hercules* [and *Xena*] and the creepy thrills of *X Files*. But they are also avid news watchers, keeping *Fiji One News* and BBC World at the top of the ratings. They like international current affairs such as *60 Minutes*, and are interested in *Quantum*, a popular science programme.

They are interested in locally produced chat and magazine shows. They want programming in their native language. They enjoy local documentaries, and a significant minority watch international documentaries. And they adore sport, particularly rugby.<sup>62</sup>

Fiji Television's size is based on its transmission activities and news department. All of Fiji TV's in-house local production comes from spare capacity within this resource 'shell'. Fiji TV has fifty five staff working primarily on *Fiji One* with about twenty working on Sky TV.<sup>63</sup> In-house local production for *Fiji One*, according to Wilson, included a live half-hour daily national news bulletin, a weekday children's show, a three times weekly chat show, a weekly music chart show, a weekly indigenous Fijian language chat and magazine show, and outside broadcast coverage of sporting events, civil occasions and major entertainment events. Other local production comprises a magazine programme from a government video production unit, and 'social development programmes' produced by local independent production houses and funded by development agencies.

However, many of the independent filmmakers and producers are unhappy with what they see as a selective approach by Fiji Television to local production. Award-winning documentary maker, academic and Labour politician Senator 'Atu Emberson-Bain has had most of her groundbreaking programmes rejected.<sup>64</sup> After Fiji Television refused to show her

documentary *In the Name of Growth*, exposing the exploitation of indigenous women workers by an indigenous owned Pafco (Pacific Fishing Company) tuna canning plant on Ovalau Island, she wrote:

So much for the free (television) media in this country — the debate always focuses on freedom from government interference. What about freedom from the big (private sector) boys on the block with their vested interests?<sup>65</sup>

While Fiji Television turned down Emberson-Bain's programme on grounds that it was 'not balanced', SBS Television in Australia bought exclusive rights to the programme for four years. The programme was also nominated in the best documentary category at the 21st Hawai'i International Film Festival.

Fiji Television's exclusive licence, which expired in May 2000 — the month of Speight's attempted coup — was not renewed by the Commerce Commission (two years of the new twelve-year period had already lapsed).<sup>66</sup> However, Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase indicated he was not happy with the decision, saying his government would have final say. Commission chairman Thomas Raju made the decision public on 15 April 2003 after wide consultation, saying there was 'no justification' to reintroduce the exclusive licence. Qarase told a press conference that there needed to be special reasons for Fiji Television to be given an exclusive licence. While he did not elaborate, he was apparently referring to his government's blueprint aimed at increasing indigenous Fijian participation in business. The licence decision appeared to open the door for the non-profit Nadi-based Community Television to broadcast to Suva.

### **The Monasavu affair — warpaint and harmony**

In July 1998, Fiji Television was put under pressure from politicians and even its own board over coverage of the Monasavu land rights protests in the highlands of Viti Levu.<sup>67</sup> The Monasavu Dam and catchment fed a generator supplying 80 percent of the country's electricity yet at the time the landowners' village had no power. A 10-year-old grievance spilled over into the public domain with a demand by the landowners for F\$35 million in compensation for the national exploitation of the resource. At one stage during the protests on the road access to the dam, a group of landowners 'daubed themselves in warpaint and threatened to "kill" for their rights in a rather theatrical gesture'.<sup>68</sup> A revival of the grievance during the attempted coup in 2000 saw the power supply to the country sharply reduced or turned off over five weeks. Catchment area compensation for the landowners had been overlooked at the time of the original state purchase and left unresolved.

Government politicians, however, took the broadcast incident very seriously, prompting Fiji Television's managing director Walter Thompson to protest to the chairman, Laisenia Qarase. He cited a reaction from Senator Irene Jai Narayan's family against the coverage, saying he was sure such comment was 'not an isolated case':

The images of warriors in warpaint, armed with bamboo spears, with statements of people being injured or killed is not a balanced presentation of the situation. Progress has been made, albeit painfully slowly, which is in sharp contrast to the impression being conveyed in TV news reports. I believe this borders on being irresponsible and inflammatory.

We are now entering a particularly sensitive time, with the new Constitution coming into force on 27 July 1998 and the General Elections due early in 1999. I believe the reporting policy and practice of Fiji TV must be modified to avoid aggravating situations, which can have a serious impact on the peace, harmony and good governance of our country.<sup>69</sup>

In a thirty-page defence of Fiji Television's editorial policies in general, and coverage of the Monasavu protest in particular, Wilson wrote: 'The issues raised by Mr Thompson are central to the operation of a free and independent media in a democratic society. They raise important and ethical issues of journalism'.<sup>70</sup> He added that key questions included 'what is news?' and 'should challenging stories be suppressed in the interests of "harmony"?'

Wilson provided a content analysis comparing Fiji Television's news coverage with similar news services in Australia and New Zealand (Table 4). The analysis demonstrated that *Fiji One News* had a higher 'neutral' and 'good' news content (92 percent) than *One Network News* (NZ; 85 percent) and Channel Nine News (Australia; 78 percent). He also listed typical news values of a libertarian media model such as *impact, proximity, prominence, timeliness, conflict, currency* and the *unusual*. He quoted from John Hurst and Sally White (1994): 'To erase conflict from news would be to rip out its guts'. Then he continued:

The Monasavu story fitted virtually all of the above criteria of newsworthiness. I have consulted with the head of the journalism school at the University of the South Pacific, the director of the New Zealand School of Broadcasting and the current Television New Zealand managing editor of news and current affairs. They were unanimously of the view that the story had to be carried if *Fiji One News* had any credibility as a news source. The government and the bureaucracy generally adopted the policy of trying to limit the story by ignoring the media. The army and police were generally more forthcoming. The protesters showed

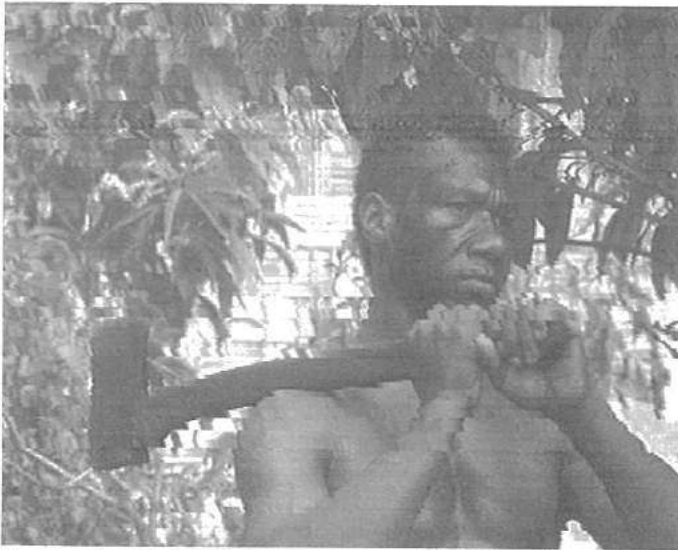
quite sophisticated use of political theatre and at times wished to engage the media to communicate their side of the story. Government criticised coverage of the story by all media.

The key concern apparently being expressed by critics of the television coverage is that they were upset by the images of conflict inherent in the 'traditional warriors' threatening to kill anyone who came against them. As well as being personally upsetting to some, they considered it could incite other people to threats or acts of violence.

Another concern that has been expressed is that television coverage gave the protesters a platform to express their grievances which, in the opinion of the critics, they should not have been allowed to do.

Virtually every news professional in the free world would argue that such a story should be carried. The reasons lie in the role of the media previously described.

The loss of Monasavu would affect virtually everyone on Viti Levu. The conflict was serious. The issues of land rights and compensation are key matters of ongoing public interest for Fiji. As the story [unfolded], it [appeared] that the landowners had some legitimate concerns.<sup>71</sup>



**Monasavu 'warrior':** A clip from the controversial 1998 footage.  
*Fiji Television*



Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum: Monasavu reporter — one of Fiji's best political journalists. *Fiji Television*

**Table 4: Content analysis of Fiji, New Zealand and Australian national news bulletins: Survey of news items, 30 July to 26 August 1998.**

Stories	Fiji One News		One Network News (NZ)		Channel Nine News (Australia)	
	No.	% (of local news)	No.	% (of local news)	No	% (of local news)
'Good news'	21	8%	17	4%	4	1%
Crime	228	6%	33	14%	145	18%
Protest	11	1%	44	1%	2	4%
Neutral local	249	84%	114	81%	169	77%
Overseas news	3	-	39	-	8	-
Sports	163	-	76	-	72	-
Neutral and good	-	92%	-	85%	-	78%

*Source:* Appendix 2, 'News policy and practice', Fiji TV board paper, 31 August 1998.

This is a typical example of the continual pressure that political and bureaucrats impose on Fiji Television. But staff have resisted the pressure. Ironically, the Monasavu landowners came to prominence again when they seized the access road to the dam and electricity-generating plant in the wake of George Speight's attempted coup in May 2000. Nine days later a mob of Speight supporters marched on the Fiji Television offices and ransacked the premises in protest over a *Close-Up* current affairs

programme featuring media personalities highly critical of the rebellion. Fiji Television was unable to broadcast again for almost 48 hours. A student journalist at the University of the South Pacific transcribed the controversial programme shortly before martial law was declared.<sup>72</sup>

### **Non-statutory regulation of the media**

Among other recommendations by the Thomson Report<sup>73</sup> was the formation of a Fiji Media Council wholly funded by media industry members. This was expected to be fashioned out of the News Council that had been established due to the 'apparent ineffectiveness' of the former Press Council. The report also recommended that the council include a matching number (to media industry members) of lay people 'broadly representative of the wider community in terms of ethnic and religious identity, age, gender, geographical representation and occupational, educational and social background'.<sup>74</sup>

In our experience, such 'consumer panels' are invaluable as a sounding board for public opinion, as constructive critics and as advocates for the media in the real world outside the newsroom and the studio. Nor — again in our experience — when there has been disagreement has it ever expressed itself as a straight divide between 'the media and the rest'. We believe that such a body would do much to demonstrate the media's readiness to consider and to reflect a wide variety of opinions and to make them answerable in a more open forum than at present.<sup>75</sup>

Perhaps one of the most important recommendations of this sector of the report was a call for the core content for Fiji's various codes of ethics and programme standards to be combined into a single code to which all members could subscribe.<sup>76</sup> In January 1998, the Thomson Report recommendations were accepted in principle and the Media Council embarked on developing a General Media Code of Ethics and Practice. The report also praised the work of Media Council chairman Daryl Tarte, who 'is universally respected for his integrity', and his two fellow Complaints Committee lay members, Commerce Commission chairman Thomas Raju and social policy advocate Paula Sotutu. However, as already argued in Chapter Two, there were some flaws over the activities of the Media Council and the complaints process had appeared to have lost some credibility.<sup>77</sup>

In a series of speeches outlining a critique of the Fiji media, then Assistant Information Minister Lekh Ram Vayeshnoi argued for a 'responsible' news industry. One speech, in particular, articulated the view of the Labour-led Coalition government that some media organisations had made 'little effort to rise above their political agendas'. He highlighted what he claimed to be a 'few myths' commonly held by the media:<sup>78</sup>

*Myth one:* That the media is an entity that is above all else in society and has the duty — no, the right — to pass judgement on those it feels inclined to. No one component of society can be given such all-encompassing powers. Why then does the media think they are above everyone else? They are becoming nothing more than practicers [sic] of autocracy and despotism.

*Myth two:* That the media is beyond reproach and censure. A media organisation that believes this will soon find it has placed itself beyond the reach of the population it purports to serve — rather like the previous [Rabuka] government.

*Myth three:* That the media knows what is best for everyone else. Again, this is an autocratic view and does not sit well in a pluralistic society.

*Myth four:* That the media represents the society and that they are therefore the forums for the dissemination of public policy and information. If the media truly believes this, may I ask them how many of their organisations, particularly the news departments, are a true reflection of our society. Are the decision-makers in these departments an accurate reflection of the ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and political diversity that exists in our society?

*Myth five:* That the media has the mandate from the public to be their mouthpiece. But I don't know how the media can take this view. Even contributions to their open columns — which should be the voice of their readership — are doctored, censored and in some cases ignored altogether.

*Myth six:* That the prerogative rests with the media — and the media alone — [over] not only what is covered, but the manner in which it is covered. The term editorial prerogative is used to excuse the media from having to explain their decisions and choice of news, or how they cover it.<sup>79</sup>

Vayeshnoi added that the media had a responsibility to ensure that a 'high degree of professionalism' was employed in ensuring that the public was accurately informed and had a right of reply. Jale Moala summed up a hostile industry reply to Vayeshnoi in an unprecedented editorial headed RUBBISH! Moala added in one paragraph that it was not worth any other response and he left the rest of the editorial column blank.<sup>80</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by politicians over the next few years, leading to the extreme views of two government senators who accused the media in 2002 of being 'agents of evil' and 'mad, crazy loonies'.<sup>81</sup> Daryl Tarte gave a Media Council perspective on these attacks in an interview with Bernadette Hussain of *The Fiji Times*, saying such vitriolic criticism was an abuse of parliamentary privilege:

I don't know whether [they are] referring to only Fiji Television and *The Fiji Times*, or the media in general, but [it] is still very sad that they should speak like that. Nobody, no member of civil society, can accept that kind of statement from anybody. Now, if these senators have some genuine complaint against the media, they've got various methods of recourse.<sup>82</sup>

The senators, Tarte suggested as an example, could take legal action against a media organisation and test their allegations. Or they could make their statements outside the House — 'if they had the courage and evidence to do so' — and perhaps the media organisation would sue them. Or they could file a complaint with the Media Council 'if it was genuine'.

Except for *The Fiji Times*, all the media organisations are locally owned. All the editors and journalists are Fiji citizens and there are only three expatriates in the media industry, so we have a largely local media...

I am not for the moment saying that the media is perfect. In fact, it will always be an imperfect kind of organisation. Some media organisations do very well, others don't and a lot of it is due to the quality of journalists. I think a lot of media organisations will accept that their quality of journalists could be much better. We've lost a lot of good journalists over the years but there are various training institutions in Fiji now, such as the University of the South Pacific.<sup>83</sup>

*The Review* publisher Yashwant Gaunder also laments the loss of journalists. He blames this on a harsher economic climate in Fiji and the fact that money rather than 'passion for journalism' drives today's journalists.

About two or three years ago *The Review* was renowned for investigative journalism. We did quite a bit of it. But again it comes down to economics and we don't have the money. We had some good journalists, but they have left. And we just can't afford it at the moment...

Media, I believe, have to take a lot of the blame for [conflict situations] because the media perpetuates it and reports some of the politicians saying the wrong thing. People always say they believe what they read in the newspapers. They may not believe what they hear on the radio, or see on TV. I don't know if this is true in the rest of the world, but in Fiji I have found that everybody believes in the power of the printed word. This is one reason why *The Fiji Times* is quite powerful — as Mahendra Chaudhry found out to his disadvantage.<sup>84</sup>



Over time, argued former *Review* editor Shailendra Singh, who is now a journalism educator, in an article profiling the state of the news media reform, allegations of misconduct damaged the media's integrity and credibility in the eyes of the public.<sup>85</sup> By not taking heed of the grievances about standards, the media in Fiji could 'become its own worst enemy'.

One area government is clearly sceptical about is self-regulation through the Fiji Media Council, as recommended by the [Thomson] report. Even the authors admitted that a system allowing the media to be judge and jury at its own trial was far from perfect.

[The report] was, however, strongly against government regulation, seeing this as the greater evil. The authors had hoped that the Fiji Media Council, with a matching membership of lay people and media owners, and with a common code of practice, would help raise standards. In its nearly seven years of existence, the council ... has attended to more than 120 complaints. But whether it has lived up to the expectations of the Thomson Report is a point of contention.

The media feels the council is doing a fine enough job. The government is in disagreement.<sup>86</sup>

The media's shortcomings, added Singh, only strengthened the cause of those calling for censorship, including the government.

### **Foreshadowing a new media system**

The Thomson Report also recommended that a new *Media Act* be passed, incorporating the principles of self-regulation based on the Media Council and its code, and overhauling archaic and redundant legislation.<sup>87</sup> For example, the colonial era *Press Correction Act 1949* had only been invoked once and the case was unsuccessful. According to the consultants, 'it differs from such Acts in many other countries in that it appears to apply not to any complainant against publication by the press of a significant inaccuracy but only to what appear as false or distorted statements *in the opinion of the Minister of Information* [their italics]'.<sup>88</sup> The consultants recommended repeal.

While the *Defamation Act* in principle provides justice in defamation and libel cases in Fiji, in reality such cases can take 'an unconscionable time to come to court' and often 'reopen old wounds'. The consultants believed that in many cases the Media Council and the complaints procedure could provide swift redress, but recommended the law be left in place as a last resort.

Another law with similar effect for media is the *Fair Trading Decree 1992*, which prescribes standards for the dissemination of news, information and comment. This is essentially a law for the protection of consumers and for protecting businesses against unfair practices. As the consultants explained the implications of this post-coup decree:

It would apparently give redress to a company whose business was damaged by unfair comment in the media; it would give consumer redress against misleading advertising; and it would, in certain circumstances, protect the publisher of a misleading advertisement which was carried in good faith ... It provides, in a sense, the same recourse to law for commercial damage as does the *Defamation Act* for libel.<sup>89</sup>

The Thomson Report recommended that this decree remain in force but be considered further when the other recommendations were 'in place and proven'. The consultants had little patience for the *Official Secrets Act*, which they described as 'arguably one of the least enviable gifts of the British colonial legacy'. In fact, they pointed out, the law was in the British *Official Secrets Act 1911* and applied to Fiji as an imperial Act.

In the United Kingdom, the Act remained in force basically unamended until 1989 — frequently criticised, largely discredited and a byword for the folly of overriding parliamentary checks by hustling measures through in an atmosphere of panic.<sup>90</sup>

Nemani Delabaitiki, a former editor of the original *Fiji Sun* who later became a journalist in New Zealand, ran foul of Fiji's *Official Secrets Act* by becoming the first (and so far only) journalist to be charged under this law. He was prosecuted in 1986 over an exposé about the Fiji military, but he was acquitted. The chief magistrate 'ruled that the prosecution had failed to prove Delaibatiki knew when receiving a leaked confidential report that it was in contravention of the Act'.<sup>91</sup> Delaibatiki later made strong criticism of the law.

The Thomson Report pointed to the findings of the Fiji Constitution Review Commission that stated the underlying policy 'assumes that official information is government property, which should not be given to anyone without specific reason and authorisation'.<sup>92</sup> Until then, noted the consultants, any official information remained an 'official secret'. Criminal or disciplinary sanctions applied over any information 'wrongfully' communicated. The consultants said they agreed with the Constitution Review Commission's conclusion that there were compelling reasons for reversing the thrust of present laws away from the protection of official secrets and towards providing access for official information.<sup>93</sup> The Thomson Report recommended that the *Official Secrets Act* be replaced

by an *Official Information Act* similar to one proposed by the Constitutional Review Commission after consultation with the public and the media. By 1998, a draft *Freedom of Information Bill* was being circulated for public submissions that endorsed the principle that official information 'should be made available unless there is good reason for withholding it'. Although there has been some debate about whether Fiji journalists should have a 'shield' law protecting them from being forced to disclose confidential sources of information, the report recommended no change in this respect to the *Commissions of Inquiry Act*.

Journalism educator Shailendra Singh asked about the fate of the draft media legislation in his Fourth Estate column in *Wansolwara* in November 2002, noting that work on the draft *Fiji Media Bill* and *Freedom of Information Bill* had been 'going on quietly but fervently' for some time at the Information Ministry.

The race is on to have it ready in time for the February [2003] session. The Bill could change the way the media operates in Fiji — for better or for worse. The Bill, we are told, will be largely based on the Thomson Report [which] has been seen and fully endorsed by the media.

There is nothing in its recommendations that impinges on media freedom. On the contrary, it seeks to improve the conditions for the media to function freely.

Government, on its part, has given repeated assurances that it will not bring in laws that will curtail the media's freedom. However, the media and the government have a different view of what constitutes media freedom, or even news for that matter.<sup>94</sup>

But most media critics were proven wrong. In a World Press Freedom Day workshop in Suva on 3 May 2003, Information Minister Simione Kaitani made public a controversial *Media Council of Fiji Bill* that immediately drew widespread condemnation from the news industry and civil society groups as 'draconian' and 'unconstitutional'.<sup>95</sup> Lawyer and media commentator Richard Naidu said the Bill was 'not so much sinister as plain amateurish' without achieving any real control over the media.<sup>96</sup> University of the South Pacific journalism coordinator Dev Nadkarni described the Bill as stirring 'a veritable hornet's nest', saying the Government should drop it if it did not want to face a 'public relations nightmare'. He added:

Ever since the draft of the proposed Bill was made public in early May, the Fiji media has left no stone unturned in campaigning against the Bill condemning it to be draconian, un-libertarian and a thinly disguised bid by the government to gain control over the basic freedom of expression.

Editorials, news reports, letters to the editor, radio broadcasts, sound-bites from opinion leaders and television news spots have been chock-a-block with anti-Bill views on a daily basis.<sup>97</sup>

Many stakeholders consulted by the Information Ministry strongly opposed the Bill. Among reasons cited were the haste to introduce the draft legislation in Parliament with less than a month allowed for public submissions, and a claim that the Bill was based on the Thomson Report. The government was forced to withdraw this embarrassing claim. Almost two-thirds of the fifty six public submissions were opposed to the Bill.<sup>98</sup> In a submission, *The Fiji Times* said control and regulation were 'inappropriate' for Fiji, adding that the newspaper was committed to improving training and journalism standards as a way forward. 'If government is prepared to drop this draft entirely, it does not mean the media of Fiji is the only winner. Everyone wins,' the paper said.<sup>99</sup>

Although community dissatisfaction with media standards was marked, this was overridden by a public desire to have a free media.<sup>100</sup> Among important public concerns were the draft Bill empowering the government to select all council members, provision for an appeal process, and a provision for fines of up to F\$2,000 for people failing to reveal information to the council. This was seen as potentially compromising journalists' traditional relationship with sources. However, the Attorney-General, Qoriniasi Bale, bitterly condemned the Fiji media, accusing it of working against the government by 'playing along with the prophets of doom' in spreading negative news about the country. Brushing aside speculation that the Bill would be shelved, Bale claimed that the government would persist with enacting the legislation. This contrasted with Kaitani who said he would recommend discarding the Bill, although he preferred an 'independent' Media Council comprising people outside the media industry: 'Right now this organisation is a fully funded, self-serving institution that would not really help in keeping the media in line'.<sup>101</sup>

However, in June 2004 a Tebbutt Research survey commissioned on behalf of the Fiji Media Council surprisingly gave public perceptions of the news media a relatively clean bill of health. The UNDP-funded survey found that television was considered 'most accurate but could be more detailed and timely'.<sup>102</sup> It also noted 'cultural sensitivity' as an issue, the quality of news reporting was 'considered to be high' for all media and there was some concern about the independence of some newspapers. Delighted with the results, the Media Council commented in a news release that the survey

effectively debunks the view, held by some, that the media is unfair, biased, inaccurate and lazy ... This is particularly encouraging as we have a genuine view from [the] 'grassroots'.<sup>103</sup>

The statement also noted that media members often conducted their own audience research to improve news coverage and this survey would be a benchmark for similar research in future. The following month, British consultant John Prescott Thomas returned to Fiji along with Toby Mandel, of Canada, this time to review public broadcasting and draft a comprehensive new broadcasting law to replace the existing *Broadcasting Commission Act* and post-coup *Television Decree 1992*.

### Conclusion

Fiji has a highly developed media industry compared with most other South Pacific countries with one of the region's largest and most influential newspapers, *The Fiji Times*, among its three dailies. It also has a strong radio broadcasting industry and a vibrant television company, Fiji Television Ltd. Long criticised for its lack of support for local production, Fiji TV lost its exclusive licence in 2003, preparing the way for competition. The region's main cooperative news agency, Pacnews, is also based in Suva after being forced to leave the country two years after Sitiveni Rabuka's military coups. The political coups and upheaval in 1987 and again in 2000 had a traumatic impact on the media industry with a loss of skilled journalists and dilemmas over professional independence and ethics. Although essentially it was a struggle for power within the indigenous Fijian community along with a conflict between tradition and modernity, an inevitable polarisation of races undermined notions of objectivity and professionalism.

Several editors and senior practitioners in the media industry are concerned at a lack of commitment for training and education while a debate continues over better public accountability models for the news organisations. The self-regulatory Fiji Media Council is now well established in spite of moves by the government to impose some form of statutory regulation. The landmark Thomson Report in 1996 made a series of far-reaching recommendations for legislative reform for the news industry, notably a proposed *Fiji Media Act*, to overhaul the country's ad hoc laws that impact on media organisations, and a *Freedom of Information Act*. The report also called for stronger commitment to journalism education and training. However, three governments — led by Sitiveni Rabuka, Mahendra Chaudhry and Laisenia Qarase — failed to deliver. For six years, draft media legislation never quite made it to Parliament, fuelling industry scepticism about the real intention of the reforms. When a draft bill was made public in May 2003, it was bitterly opposed by the media industry and much of the public as 'draconian'.



# **PART TWO**

## **THE JOURNALISM SCHOOLS**





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## A 'Melanesian style of media'

The intervention by the New Zealand government to host the Journalism Programme at UPNG laid the foundation for future work [in the Pacific] that is continuing. It started with one man and with New Zealand seed money. Now . . . people who are in high places at the university don't think that journalism is important.

*Joseph Sukwianomb,  
former Vice-Chancellor of UPNG, 2001*

Ross Stevens had considerable charisma, as well as having considerable integrity. He made a huge impact on everybody ... He just had a kind of naturally authoritative and diplomatic manner. I have got absolutely no doubt that one of the reasons things moved with such momentum was that he had absolutely the right set of qualities for doing that job.

*Michael King, NZ historian and  
former UPNG lecturer, 2001*

WHEN a pilot training project for Papua New Guinean journalists in New Zealand ended as a failure, or even 'disaster', on the eve of PNG independence, the NZ government responded to its local advisers and came up with an alternative plan.<sup>1</sup> According to the late British journalism educator Peter Henshall, an experiment of sending twelve PNG journalists

to New Zealand's Wellington Polytechnic in 1974 had the odds stacked against it anyway:

It proved too difficult for the students to make the necessary adjustments to the very difficult culture and climate, and at the same time cope with the demands of a course designed for people for whom English is not their first language.<sup>2</sup>

Following this disappointment, a decision was made to bring a journalism trainer to Papua New Guinea, 'so that students could learn in the environment in which they would eventually make their living'.<sup>3</sup> Journalism education and training was introduced at the University of Papua New Guinea at the beginning of 1975, when the New Zealand government agreed to fund a one-year Diploma in Journalism course for an initial two-year period. New Zealand also provided the founding lecturer, journalist Ross Stevens,<sup>4</sup> who later became one of Television New Zealand's leading investigative journalists.

### **Ross Stevens — bringing journalism alive**

At the time, most journalists in Papua New Guinea were still expatriates. Training was a haphazard affair, with a handful of local reporters being trained in-house by the two principal employers of the period — the Office of Information and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). Approaching independence and the rapid expansion worldwide of the communications sector meant that PNG 'faced a serious shortfall in media personnel, in both quantity and quality'.<sup>5</sup> Stevens was based at UPNG as this was regarded as the only institution in the country capable of supplying necessary academic and training facilities to support the new journalism programme. Another early lecturer was New Zealand historian Michael King, who believed that the idealism of the era stirred remarkable commitment about the potential for journalism to contribute to participatory democracy, 'and that's really why everyone was aiming as high as they were'.<sup>6</sup> Former Vice-Chancellor Joseph Sukwianomb, a student leader at the time, recalls the heady independence days as a period when a weekly radio programme, *University on Air*, and a newspaper, *Uni Tavur*, were launched by Stevens, and 'journalism really came alive'.<sup>7</sup>

Ross Stevens moved things, he organised programmes and set things up ... Ross is remembered now by many journalists working in media organisations, including John Somare, Joshua Kalinoe; these were initial students who were also my friends. I remember the years 1975, 1976, 1977 ... these were very productive when journalism really came alive. Every Friday we were huddled around the radio [on NBC] to listen to a programme that was put together by the students.<sup>8</sup>

Initially, the course ran for longer than the academic year, 'spilling over into the Lahara sessions at either side of Christmas'.<sup>9</sup> Student journalists were given

basic training in the techniques of recognising, finding and writing news, reinforced with short attachments with media organisations while most of their fellow students were on holiday.<sup>10</sup>

The approach was regarded as having worked 'reasonably well', although from the start there was recognition that this programme was not enough. Although successful students emerged after a year able to carry out the basic functions required of a journalist, they were still 'immature and largely unskilled in any of the more advanced areas of journalism', such as specialist and feature writing, subediting and radio news production.<sup>11</sup> For some time, the media industry lobbied to try to persuade the PNG government and the university that better training was worth supporting and paying for. The New Zealand government extended funding for the scheme by one year, until 1978, and then the PNG government took over financial responsibility through its budgetary grant to UPNG. In the first three years of the school, forty four journalists undertook the course, several of whom had been in the profession for some time but who had had no formal training. Dr Michael King taught some twenty two journalism students in the first Lahara session at the start of 1976. He described them as 'bright and energetic' and wrote back to his family:

I get up sixish in the mornings, coolest part of the day, to do the bulk of my preparation and marking. Classes begin at 8 am. Everybody dresses casually (shorts, T-shirts and jandals) which is a relief. The teaching day runs through to 4 pm. We're giving the group lectures on the principles of journalism, followed by immediate relevant exercises which we sub, correct, grade and get back to the class as quickly as possible. We also get them to report any functions that turn out to be on around the university or in town, and we invite people into the class for interviews and press conferences. This week there was an assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches with over 100 delegates from all over the region. We generated some good work on the back of this and I brought Bishop Finau from Tonga into the class.<sup>12</sup>

Sorariba Nash, a gifted PNG short story author and current leader of the journalism strand at UPNG, was one of the original students. He looks back with pride on the school's achievements. Sorariba recalled that the school laid a foundation for journalism training, not only in Papua New Guinea, but also throughout the South Pacific.

I am very proud of the school. In 1975, the New Zealand government established it as the pioneering journalism school in the Pacific. Not only did the school bring together Papua New Guineans, but all sorts of people from the rest of the region. I remember there was somebody from Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, many of our colleagues out there now working

in big positions in government and the private sector — they all benefited from this school. I see it as an independence gift. It was the best gift because the school has survived all these years and produced so many journalists.<sup>13</sup>

But the task was not easy. Stevens and his colleagues encountered ‘a surprising amount of racism’ among the old expats, mostly Australian, including some journalists, and needed to work around that without provoking them.<sup>14</sup> They also needed to deal with prejudice against journalism education at a university. At the time, New Zealand had only one journalism course based at a university, the University of Canterbury postgraduate journalism programme, and this was regarded with some scepticism in many media industry circles. Even in Australia, university journalism education was still in its relative infancy.

The whole idea of putting journalism into the context of university education still ran counter to the perceptions of the New Zealand journalism industry at that stage that you best learn about the job on the job. And I would have thought probably among the network of existing working journalists in Papua New Guinea at the time, too. But I’m not really sure about that. I can remember we got a bit of scoffing from the journos at the *Post-Courier* and the NBC, and these tended to be expatriates, and almost all Australians, and they weren’t especially complimentary about:

- training journalists in a university context, and
- about the idea of training indigenous journalists in a university context.<sup>15</sup>

Sorariba was among many PNG journalists of the era who were grateful for the pioneering efforts by Ross Stevens. To them, the whole concept of journalism when they entered the school was new. ‘We didn’t know that you had to go to Parliament and face parliamentarians,’ recalled Sorariba. ‘You had to go to court. You even had to argue with taxi drivers’. Stevens and his practical style that involved a lot of off-campus work, doing interviews, left a lasting impression.

I think it was his character, the leadership that he demonstrated what a journalist should do, that provided a model. It was quite new to us. We come from a cultural background where we are shy, we don’t shout at people, we don’t talk a lot. The way Ross Stevens took us around Port Moresby during training, during practical work, set the pace, gave us that example as a journalist — and the courage.

Ross ... was more or less our role model, for those of us who attended the school — the first lot. We wanted to be like him. He played a very important role and I am grateful for his presence.<sup>16</sup>



**Ross Stevens:** *Uni Tavor* founder c. 1976.  
*Photo: Uni Tavor*

Michael King shared the impressions of Sorariba and many others about the vital role that Stevens played in establishing the programme.

Ross Stevens had considerable charisma, as well as having considerable integrity. He made a huge impact on everybody — the students in one direction, but also all the people he had to deal with in officialdom, either in the Office of Information, the NBC, or the university. He just had a kind of naturally authoritative and diplomatic manner. I have got absolutely no doubt that one of the reasons things moved with such momentum was that he had absolutely the right set of qualities for doing that job.<sup>17</sup>

King regarded ‘Ross’s stature, commitment and expertise’ as an ‘enormous factor in the whole thing working’.<sup>18</sup> He noted that by the time he arrived in Port Moresby after a year, Stevens was already speaking Tok Pisin and some Motu.

The fact that he had made that effort too was an indication of how committed he was to the job. It actually gave him a facility to talk to indigenous people across the cultures because of Tok

Pisin being the lingua franca, whereas anybody else in his position would have had to reply to an interpreter.<sup>19</sup>

There were also high and idealistic expectations over the media in this emerging nation. 'Founding father' Sir Michael Somare, Papua New Guinea's first Prime Minister and himself a former radio journalist, told a seminar on the mass media and human development a month before independence that the role of news organisations was vital in building the nation.

The mass media aims to reflect human development, but its role goes far beyond that. All reporting through the media, however, impartial, is selective. Because it is selective it influences our development, in particular directions ... Many Papua New Guineans have developed a liking for fast cars and tailor-made cigarettes. It is the media of films and advertising which has helped us to develop this liking.<sup>20</sup>

Drawing on his broadcasting background, Somare warned about the damage that could be caused by media not offering a 'correct balance' for the nation.

It is my fear that radio advertising will destroy the balance that will allow human development in Papua New Guinea to be that of future comfort and happiness. I believe that advertising on radio, because it reaches into so many homes, will increase the materialist cult in Papua New Guinea and by its methods destroy many of our spiritual supports.<sup>21</sup>

### **Uni Tavur — an independent newspaper tradition**

The training publication *Uni Tavur*, which played an important role in the formation of journalists over the next two decades, was founded during the Stevens era. *Tavur* means 'conch shell' in the Tolai language of the Gazelle Peninsula, East New Britain. The shell was the paper's masthead logo. Journalism student Robert Elowo, who died in a tragic car accident in 1976 while working for NBC's Radio Kundiawa, designed the original version. *Uni* is derived from the university.<sup>22</sup> *Uni Tavur* was launched on 24 July 1975.<sup>23</sup> The first newsroom was set up in 'the dungeon' — as the students dubbed the bunker style classroom near the Michael Somare Library. The first edition carried news items, including social and sports events. It consisted of four A4 size pages and had a circulation of 200 copies. Student reporters were assigned to rounds with a brief to cover anything of news value for their readers. Recalled Sukwianomb:

*Uni Tavur* came ... to play a significant role in the university scene in terms of changing ideas ... generally about that period from independence ... the campus was very vibrant, very active. The students were well aware of what was happening. This was



“a source close to *Uni Tavour*” etc ... Your anonymous source is like a man whose wife has run away from him, and who then asks someone else to go and beat up his wife because he’s afraid she might bite. He’s a “rubbish man”, and you’ll find his opinions or statements — even if they sound important — are worthless, and of lesser news value too’.<sup>26</sup>

In 1978, there were reports about Papua New Guinea moving to support the ‘Kanak Liberation Movement’ fighting for independence for New Caledonia from France. During the same year, an arts student said that marijuana should be legalised in Papua New Guinea because it was ‘not as bad as beer’. In 1979, a second-year student in social work said he had found a frog’s head in his plate of food. When the mess manager was asked about it, he reportedly said it was ‘an oyster’. In 1981, Student Representative Council (SRC) president Gabriel Ramoi criticised the lecturers’ manner of dressing, while a commerce student alleged the government had wasted millions of kina by recruiting overseas specialists to improve accounting systems.

The following year the library display on smoking caused a smoky nightmare for smokers. The headlines read: YOU CAN’T SCRUB THE SMOKERS ... TRY SOME, SMOKERS TAKE IT REGULARLY ... HAPPY BIRTHDAY SMOKERS and, to top it off, KISSING A SMOKER IS LIKE KISSING AN OLD ASHTRAY. During the same year, in March 1982, UPNG students paid tribute to the late Gabriel Gris, the first Papua New Guinean Vice-Chancellor, who died suddenly. At the time of its twentieth ‘birthday’, in 1994, *Uni Tavour* was reporting about the Bougainville conflict and corruption. According to Waibauru:

Twenty years this week sees a different *Uni Tavour* with modern equipment to facilitate the production. The newspaper has improved, not only in size, but also the quality of the reports. There has been a significant change because of desktop publishing. The content has also changed dramatically. It now has advertisements.<sup>27</sup>

Ross Stevens was among many who sent messages of congratulations to *Uni Tavour* to mark its ‘two decades old’ special issue. His message arrived late so it was published in the edition of 19 August 1994. He appealed to the Papua New Guinean news media to continue valuing a good tertiary education for the ‘most important profession of all. The one that “keeps the bastards honest”’:

[Is] *Uni Tavour* twenty years old? Is it that long since I arrived in Port Moresby? Long since I first felt that hot blast of the Port Moresby noon on my pale Southland cheeks? Twenty years since I met Olive Tau carrying a typewriter on her Hanuabada head; Tabo Epita beside her showing Kavieng air is just as good as



carrying an Olympus portable? Does anyone now — in the age of Apple — remember what an Olympus portable is?

And is it really twenty years since I asked Geoff Heard, then carrying the odd title of 'cadet counsellor' to the NBC newsroom, whether he wanted me to teach news writing and news style in a 'Melanesian Way'? (The answer incidentally was No!).<sup>28</sup>

Another message came from Vice-Chancellor Joseph Sukwianomb, who described two decades of publishing *Uni Tavur* as a 'remarkable feat' for a small newspaper and university.

When the first copy of the first edition of *Uni Tavur* ran off the press, the pioneers of that historical epoch perhaps did not think that there would be many more copies, and twenty years to live on ... Survival of a project such as *Uni Tavur* has also symbolised the growth of specialist training for journalists in this country.<sup>29</sup>

The following year — the real anniversary — saw *Uni Tavur* go tabloid, boost its circulation to 2,000, begin printing fortnightly editions on newsprint with the *Post-Courier*, and introduce a liftout investigative reporting section called 'Insight'. The paper went on to win the 1995 Ossie Award from Australia's Journalism Education Association (JEA) for the best regular publication in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.<sup>30</sup> The judge, Max Suich, editor-in-chief of Sydney's *The Independent Monthly*, said: 'By far the most impressive was the University of PNG newspaper, which had a level of maturity in its writing, and a concern with national issues, that made it stand head and shoulders above the others.'<sup>31</sup> In 1997, the newspaper's student journalists covered the Sandline mercenary crisis.

### **The Henshall and Ingram era — 'exciting innovation'**

In the four years after UPNG took over responsibility for the journalism programme from the New Zealand government in 1979, the media industry lobbied for expanded courses. In particular, the NBC was keen for broadcast journalism to be included in the programme. Also, student journalists themselves wanted more university level education. An agreement was reached to expand the programme and an effort was made to seek overseas funding. This attempt failed, however, and in 1983/4 UPNG undertook internal reorganisation to make it possible to employ a second lecturer in journalism and advertised the position. Two innovative lecturers from Britain were recruited, lanky Peter Henshall, who became an icon of PNG and Pacific journalism education, and David Ingram, who later moved to Sydney to become training manager for SBS Radio. According to Ingram, the university sacrificed a teaching post in the Language Department to fund a new two-year Diploma in Media Studies and a four-year Bachelor of Journalism degree. The new courses had their first intakes in 1985 and 1986 respectively.<sup>32</sup> Both programmes

contained 'exciting innovations' in journalism training for PNG and the Pacific. Ingram remarked in a paper at a national media and development seminar in Port Moresby:

We now offer a full three-point course called Media and the Law in PNG, which we hope prepares our students for the complicated demands the law makes on working journalists. We may have shocked some in the university by offering a three-point, year-long course in shorthand, but employers have long recognised the need for journalists to be able to make fast and accurate notes of what people say. We now send our second-year students out on a semester-long attachment to one of the national media organisations, where their basic skills are tempered in the fires of experience.<sup>33</sup>

And to round off the student journalists' abilities, each student chose a six-point advanced course in either Radio Production and Print Media Production, to prepare them for specialist demands within those two media. Television had not yet arrived in Papua New Guinea. The new diploma and degree programmes had slightly different aims to satisfy a number of expressed needs of employers. The diploma course was still primarily to train good 'hard news' journalists who could report competently and effectively on day-to-day events. The degree course aimed to give a smaller number of journalism students a greater depth of education and heightened awareness of their role in society so that they could write more analytically in specialist areas, particularly in such fields as economics, law, politics and science. The degree course also attracted interest from working journalists who had already completed a journalism diploma and wanted to expand their education and improve their journalistic skills. The innovative new programme was not without some opposition. Noted Ingram:

All of this is once again under attack, as the government and the university quite naturally assess the kina-effectiveness of individual courses and their priority in the manpower needs of the country. By those two criteria alone, journalism training must come high on this nation's list for safeguarding both development and democracy.<sup>34</sup>

The decade since independence saw impressive strides taken in expanding the media in Papua New Guinea. A National Newspaper Committee was appointed by the government in 1978 to report on the idea of a new daily newspaper to be published by the government.<sup>35</sup> In spite of 'having no funding at all', the committee produced its report two years later, concluding that the country needed 'more and better training for journalists' and an 'improvement of news collection networks and access to information'.<sup>36</sup> Seven years later, the Kalo Report<sup>37</sup> recommended that television be

introduced 'on the basis of two commercial channels followed as soon as practicable by the public service channel'.<sup>38</sup>

In 1978, Luke Sela was appointed first indigenous editor of the *Post-Courier*. He played a key role in paving the way for the UPNG journalism school. By the mid-1980s, Papua New Guineans were in most senior positions in the three English-language and one vernacular national newspapers at the time and the entire news and current affairs division of the NBC had been localised. Many national and provincial government press offices were staffed entirely by Papua New Guineans.

Even in the fledgling public relations industry, locals were making inroads. Despite the advances, many of the more technical jobs in journalism, such as production, layout and subediting, were still mainly filled by expatriates. And political and industry leaders still sought foreign professionals to head their public relations campaigns. Ingram warned about the dangers of local head hunting in a young industry:

In the field of journalism generally, there is still a serious manpower shortage, with employers chasing a limited number of trained Papua New Guinean journalists, attracting them with increased salaries, allowances and perks like private cars. That in itself would be no bad thing, except that in PNG the targets of such 'head hunting' are often very inexperienced young journalists who are being pushed into positions of seniority long before they are ready. They find themselves struggling to fill the shoes of a departed expatriate (who may have been in the profession for twenty or more years) and unable to advance in the manner in which they would like because they have no one upon whom to model themselves. And herein lies the danger. We are putting one of the strongest tools for the fashioning of nationhood and democracy into the hands of young people only partly trained to use it.<sup>39</sup>

### **Media, language and 'PiNGLISH'**

This situation highlighted and strengthened the need for journalism education in Papua New Guinea. With illiteracy still a major problem in the country, the role of the NBC in educating and informing citizens was clear. The transistor radio could reach into almost every home in the country, speaking in the vernacular over Kundu Radio and in English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu over the Kalang and Karai services. And although most readers of the three national English language newspapers lived in urban areas, the value of the press to the rural population was also important. The importance of the Tok Pisin weekly newspaper *Wantok* was even clearer. According to its church publishers, 'by the light of the kerosene lamps all over PNG, it is the most listened-to paper in the country'.<sup>40</sup>

The success of the provincial radio, *Wantok* and vernacular newsletters raised questions about assumptions on how to communicate with grassroots people. There are three main languages in Papua New Guinea — English, Tok Pisin and Motu. Of these, English is by far the least spoken on read, but it is the main language of the media. Henshall and Ingram questioned the extent to which the media ‘still adheres slavishly’ to journalism models from Australia, Britain, New Zealand and the United States. In the context of media education, they also raised the issue of language, noting that

people are now taking more seriously the concept of ‘PiNGLISH’ — PNG English, a form of English which is adapting all the time to the ways in which Papua New Guineans naturally speak. Although PiNGLISH has its critics, especially in the media, its development is little different to the way in which English has been adapted by North Americans or Australians.<sup>41</sup>

Teaching journalism at UPNG, lecturers needed to bear in mind these issues of language when assessing student journalists’ work. Often there was a narrow line between what might be seen in some countries as bad grammar and what had become part of ‘PNG English’. However, according to a British journalism lecturer, Christopher Moore, ‘the most formidable problem facing the teacher and student of journalism in PNG is the poor level of fluency in written and spoken English’.<sup>42</sup> He questioned whether ‘Correct English’ was the best language to be teaching journalism in the country: ‘Papua New Guineans will never speak English ‘correctly’. Why should they? It is not their language.’<sup>43</sup> Moore believed that PiNGLISH, heavily influenced by Tok Pisin and Motu forms, would prevail, in the same way that Indian-English had emerged in India to become a respectable medium for journalism.

One development seen in the 1980s as being potentially able to help Papua New Guinea break away from its dependence on Western news values and styles was the establishment of a national news agency. Such an agency, along the lines of the Press Association in Britain, Australian Associated Press in Australia, and NZ Press Association in New Zealand, would provide news for all media organisations in PNG. It was even touted as a possible model for the Pacific.<sup>44</sup> Henshall was commissioned by UNESCO to prepare a report on the desirability of a news agency being established in Papua New Guinea. He visited Malaysia to study the operation of Bernama news agency, concluding in his 1989 report:

It is clear that the greatest need to improve Papua New Guinea’s news gathering and dissemination network is a comprehensive provincial reporting system. This is the primary justification for the establishment, as soon as possible, of a Papua New Guinea national news agency.<sup>45</sup>

For Henshall, the immediate advantages of such a network of news reporters included:

- Bringing all rural area and provincial urban areas 'out of the shadows' to foster greater development;
- Fostering national unity, by increasing mutual knowledge and understanding between communities;
- Introducing balance into provincial reporting, in place of the claim and counter-claim characterising politicians' press releases;
- Increasing the content of news media which would be relevant to people living in the provinces.

Although there was a great deal of sympathy for the proposal, undoubtedly cost would have been a reason for leaving the report to gather dust. Successive governments did not see it as financially viable. But certainly in the mid-1980s there was considerable awareness of the UPNG journalism programme's role in helping develop a unique style of PNG journalism. Explained Ingram:

We hope that UPNG is playing its part in this process of attempting to develop a Melanesian style of media. We are



October 5, 1992 Volume 18, No. 2

## Secretariat will help union to serve students

By KAREEMEN ABUALYO

# Christian controversy

By PHILLIP BOYKA

The activities of student organisations are causing concern in the Unipak campus.

In the past three weeks, "Evangelical Christians" have mounted an intensive campaign to bring people to Christ, beginning with a crusade held at the home of the Trinity Student Christian Fellowship with the theme "Lord, Don't Let Me Go".

Some of their methods have been causing controversy.

An Evangelical student complained that students from the TSCF were too noisy and started late at night with their singing of the hymn "Rock of Ages" in the St John's Union building.

"I disagree with them," he said.

Other students complained of abusive arguments. Many argued that there should be a focus on spiritual activities, and have students issued by the campus administration.

With a student which is major evangelist activities, it seems the administration are becoming more and more fearful.

On Monday night last week, members of all religious churches gathered at the home for a discussion on the impact of being "Back Again" - coming in to Unipak, Port Moresby and back home.

A speaker introduced that the focus concerned the activities of the TSCF going to campus.

He mentioned about a "crusade" performed the previous Friday by students, and said lectures should be provided only by religious ministers.

Another student described those who speak to "crusade" as "evangelists" and asked, "Do they come to be pointed by a sign, how come they do not speak in my language or the I can understand them?"

It would be noted in Port Moresby because most of the campus and government offices, were closed down.

Mr Mwangi added that the NUS constitution provided for a secretariat.

"NUS government can include students," he said. "They do not have enough time to fully prepare and then conduct work. With the establishment of a secretariat it will be easier for the NUS to function fully and to serve students."

He said that the secretariat would have a full time executive officer, secretary and legal.

Because the NUS did not have enough money to run the office, approval for funds have been made in trade union, the public, private sector and the government.

Mr Mwangi added that office could be given to the NUS by the Department of Youth and Home Affairs, but the bid was to be considered.

Meanwhile, a CPNG student, has been appointed to the secretariat post at the NUS.

Matthew Pangi, a former year Public Student, has been appointed Vice-President National.

NUS president Wilton Pasi received that Mwangi as general secretary. Mr Mwangi is a student at the University of Technology.

Mr Pasi also appointed Neil Loken of French as secretary of the NUS.

**We're sorry we're late**

To our valued readers:  
Uni Tavur apologises for the delay in keeping you in touch with campus news. This has been caused by inconveniences beyond our control. We hope you enjoy this issue as it may be our last for this year. Good luck with your exams!

Uni Tavur, October 5, 1992

Yellow look: *Uni Tavur* in its 'yellow journalism' phase in 1992.

currently embarking on a programme of localising journalism training, bearing in mind both the academic demands of the university and the professional demands of the industry.<sup>46</sup>

However, Ingram warned that this might take some time because there were 'few people in PNG yet with the right combination of academic qualifications and working experience to take over'. But they would emerge. Henshall was contracted by UNESCO to run the PACJOURN programme for four years, based at UPNG. This programme ran a series of pioneering short courses for Pacific Islands journalists around the region, a role later adopted by the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) for its members. The Henshall and Ingram era at UPNG reached a climax in 1992 with the publication of *The News Manual*, a three-part training text with illustrations by popular *Grasruts* cartoon strip creator Bob Browne. This became the core text for newsrooms and university courses for the next decade. Also in 1992, *Uni Tavur* flirted with 'yellow journalism' – printing on canary-coloured paper stock.

### **Both high achiever and 'Cinderella'**

In spite of its achievements, the UPNG Journalism Programme continued often to be treated as a 'Cinderella by the university for perplexing reasons'.<sup>47</sup> The programme appeared to make progress in cycles, but remained under-resourced for its needs. Even in its formative years, it had not been well resourced. Recalled Dr Michael King about his teaching spell in the second year of the course:

Basically, we had classrooms, and it was chalk and talk. The NBC provided radio equipment ... to do radio things, and tape recorders on loan. The *Post-Courier* provided complimentary copies of the paper every day. And that was all we really had.

There was certainly nothing in the way of facilities that one would have expected later, like video and film, or anything of that sort ... I think you could say that we were not conspicuously well resourced at the time, but we didn't particularly notice because it was a very low-tech operation.<sup>48</sup>

Broadcast lecturer Christopher Moore returned to Britain in 1991 and New Zealander Maurice Kneebone, who had been teaching Practical Reporting and Print Media, left with his family for Australia in September 1992 in the wake of a machete attack and harassment by raskols. 'People from other countries see your country as a place full of criminals,' Kneebone said at his farewell luncheon. 'But you are the most wonderful, peace-loving, easygoing and generous people I have ever come across'.<sup>49</sup> The departures left a crippling staff shortage that was partially filled by *Post-Courier* acting news editor Leigh Martin, who was committed to training and several times helped out the programme.

For Vice-Chancellor Joseph Sukwianomb, the shortage of resources involved a lack of appreciation by the university administration of the importance of media and journalism education in a democracy 'in terms of allocation of resources'.<sup>50</sup> As a New Zealand journalist having specialised in South Pacific political and social reporting for more than fifteen years, I was appointed by UPNG. This was the next period of notable advances in the journalism programme. One of the founding students, Sorariba Nash, who had returned to UPNG after a journalism career, mostly with the NBC, also taught with me. In 1991, two years before I arrived at UPNG, Sorariba became the first indigenous journalism lecturer at a university in the South Pacific. A creative author who had written two collections of short stories, he later also gained a masters degree in media studies at Cardiff University. In our time the programme sorely needed professional newsrooms, computers, recording studios (a Japanese-funded broadcast studio donated in the 1980s had fallen into disrepair), editing suites, and basic equipment such as a fax machine, tape recorders, video cameras and even telephones. I recalled four years later:

When I first arrived at UPNG at the beginning of 1993, although the programme was then eighteen years old, students were writing in longhand with an abandoned pile of rusting typewriters. The students had not even been provided with a newsroom or a telephone [for newsgathering]. How could they be educated in how to become a journalist when they were not provided with the basic tools? How would physics fare without physics laboratories? Or chemistry?<sup>51</sup>

When journalism students petitioned the UPNG administration in 1995 over the lack of a broadcast newsroom and facilities, two decades after the founding of the programme, Acting Vice-Chancellor Nick Kuman replied to staff:

With regard to the funding of the journalism programme, you'll recall that it started off as a temporary course funded externally. While budgetary provisions have been made, it is up to the government to provide funding for the development of journalism according to its own priorities. I am fully in support to build up the South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development (especially journalism) as a 'centre of excellence' in the region but we have to be mindful of the fact that we need government support for this.<sup>52</sup>

In spite of the lack of facilities, the journalism programme peaked at more than seventy students in 1993–4 with the highest number of degree graduates (see Table 5). Attempts were made to reduce this to a more manageable number in following years. Over the next five years, the UPNG journalism programme succeeded in gaining funding that totalled more

than K71,000 to upgrade facilities, including a Macintosh desktop publishing newsroom, the establishment of a radio station and the first newspaper website in the South Pacific (established for *Uni Tavur* in 1995). Donors included the New Zealand High Commission, Canada Fund, *Post-Courier*, and the Communication Assistance Foundation (CAF) of the Netherlands. The *Post-Courier* introduced an annual subsidy of K5,000, initially for equipment such as computers, and later a printing credit for *Uni Tavur*. The daily newspaper also offered similar assistance to Divine Word's *Liklik Diwai* in Madang.

**Table 5: Journalism graduates at UPNG by qualification and year**

Year (1975)	DJRN <sup>1</sup> (1986)	DIMS <sup>2</sup> (1986)	BJRN <sup>2</sup> (1999)	BSC (Jrn) (1995)	CertIJ <sup>3</sup> (1995)	CertPR <sup>3</sup>
1976	15	—	—	—	—	—
1977	16	—	—	—	—	—
1978	11	—	—	—	—	—
1979	12	—	—	—	—	—
1980	5	—	—	—	—	—
1981	10	—	—	—	—	—
1982	2	—	—	—	—	—
1983	1	—	—	—	—	—
1984	6	—	—	—	—	—
1986	—	—	—	—	—	—
1987	—	9	—	—	—	—
1988	—	7	—	—	—	—
1989	—	3	4	—	—	—
1990	—	4	1	—	—	—
1991	—	2	4	—	—	—
1992	—	2	4	—	—	—
1993	—	12	11	—	—	—
1994	—	7	5	—	—	—
1995	—	—	—	—	2	2
1996	—	3	6	—	—	—
1997	—	3	7	—	—	—
Total	80	52	42	—	2	2

Source: UPNG Academic Office 1998.

<sup>1</sup> The original Diploma in Journalism was a one-year qualification introduced in 1975 with the first graduates in 1976. All of the participants on the course were working journalists.

<sup>2</sup> In 1986, the programme changed to introduce a two-year Diploma in Media Studies and four-year BA Journalism degree.

<sup>3</sup> In 1995, a one-semester graduate Certificate in Investigative Journalism and graduate Certificate in Public Relations were introduced.

In 1994, as print media lecturer I embarked on a three-pronged plan to turn *Uni Tavur* into a 'highly competitive and professional publication' along the 'community newspaper' model — in other words, selling



advertising space to cover printing and production costs, and distributing the paper free.<sup>53</sup> With the printing support from the *Post-Courier* and given that the paper only needed to cover expenses, this lifted some of the financial pressure.

After establishing a newsroom multi workstation set-up with a graduated access to the desktop system for reporters, subeditors and editors, work began on a design revamp to turn *Uni Tavor* from an A4 newsletter into a tabloid newspaper. In February 1995, the first news tabloid edition with four-colour news pictures on the front page rolled off the *Post-Courier* press. The South Pacific Post Pty Ltd's administrative manager, Luke Sela, launched the new-look *Uni Tavor*. In terms of accountability and guidelines, *Uni Tavor* was at the time the only newspaper in the South Pacific to have an "editorial charter", an option used increasingly in many countries to seek editorial quality and independence. The paper also observed the Charter of Student Press Rights in accordance with the spirit of the United



The Uni Tavor team (from left) Elizabeth Solomon, SPCCentRID head Rhonda Eva, sub-editors Lawrence Fong and Eric Tapaku, Editor Nikants Tiptip, Lecturer David Robie and sub-editor Christina Kews

*UNI TAVOR* the fortnightly journalist training newspaper produced by University of Papua New Guinea Journalism Studies students has been awarded the best publication prize in the latest JEA Ossie Awards.

It won the award against some of the best student newspapers in Australia, New Zealand and the Pa-

JEA Ossie Awards for Student Journalism. The judge, Max Smith, editor-in-chief of the *Independent Monthly* in Sydney, said: "By far the most impressive was the University of PNG newspaper which had a level of maturity in its writing and a concern with national issues that made it stand head and shoulders above the others."

Academic staff of journalism schools at 22 Australian universities, seven universities and polytechnics in New Zealand, and of the University of the South Pacific and University of PNG belong to the Journalism Education Association (JEA).

It is the second time since *Uni Tavor* was relaunched as a tabloid in February 1995 that it

investigative reports. The five participants of the investigative course have reported some of the untold stories and controversial issues such as logging.

This is the time South Pacific entrants have won a prize in the Ossie Awards.

Queensland University of Technology's Afternoon Report radio

JEA award: *Post-Courier* report on the 1995 win by *Uni Tavor* of the JEA, Ossie Award for Best Student Publication of any medium. 3 May 1996.

Nations Convention of Freedom of Information. The newspaper's slogan was 'A conch shell ... the voice of truth and independence'.

In June 1995, *Uni Tavor* won an award for the best community/student newspaper in the PINA Pacific Media Awards in Port Moresby. The paper also won the 1995 Ossie Award for best regular student publication. The programme's regional Pacific profile was enhanced. Courses were also revamped and consolidated, including the establishment of two new specialist advanced programmes, a graduate Certificate in Investigative Journalism and Certificate in Public Relations. The first batch of about a dozen public relations graduates joined mining companies and other corporate entities at the end of 1995.

Meanwhile, an upheaval within the UPNG administration developed late in 1994, spilling into 1995, which had negative consequences for the journalism programme. Vice-Chancellor Sukwianomb faced growing pressure from the University Council over his leadership style and



Bank raid: *Uni Tavor* front page reporting a bank raid on the Waigani campus at the University of Papua New Guinea, 16 May 1997 edition. The masthead conch shell was a revival of the design by Robert Elowo.

management decisions. This led to him being ousted as vice-chancellor and he waged a bitter legal conflict with the council. Earlier, at the end of 1994, the journalism programme had been restructured. Whereas previously it had been part of the Language and Literature Department, it became merged with the Library Studies Department to form a new body with a mouthful of a title, the South Pacific Centre for Information in Development (SPCenCIID).

A subcommittee of the university drafted a report making wide-ranging allegations against Sukwianomb, notably over large financial losses blamed on 'ineffective leadership' and his plans for a postgraduate school. On 5 December 1994, a University Council meeting resolved to ask him to resign, or face being 'terminated'.<sup>54</sup> There was widespread belief among staff that Sukwianomb was unfairly made a scapegoat for administrative problems at the university, which had accumulated over several years. Sukwianomb filed a rebuttal report and supporting papers which he claimed

clearly demonstrate that the management problems are the accumulative effects of past negligence, if not reluctance to change the structure, policies, processes and procedures [that were] not my creation.<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, Sukwianomb was dismissed and he unsuccessfully sought legal redress and K350,000 in damages for wrongful dismissal. The significance of these events for the journalism programme soon became apparent. After a period during 1995 when Deputy Vice-Chancellor Nick Kuman acted as chief executive of the university, Sukwianomb, who had been a strong supporter of journalism from the period when Stevens founded the programme, was replaced by an expatriate Australian who had a distaste for the media. Dr Rodney Hills, a onetime Australian High Commissioner in Tonga and former head of the AusAID Pacific training school in Sydney, became Vice-Chancellor in early 1996. As UPNG headed towards major restructuring and cutting of programmes, Hills made it clear to staff that he believed journalism had no place in a university. Moreover, a major news event on campus, known as the Topul Rali affair, steered him on a collision course with the journalism programme.

### **The Topul Rali affair**

In December 1995, one of UPNG's most prominent academics, Dr Topul Rali, at that time acting Dean of Science, was implicated in a protest against the university administration over the murder of an anthropology lecturer on campus by intruders. At the time, many UPNG staff were frustrated over the lack of security on campus. The protest was an expression of this frustration. Rali was well-known in some Australian and international circles as the first Papua New Guinean to gain a chemistry doctorate and for claims that he had discovered a cure for HIV/AIDS.

The dead woman, Janet Kisau, was the second lecturer to be murdered at the university in less than seven months. In addition, two students were murdered during 1995 (one slain by soldiers on campus). None of the murders were fully investigated at the time and nobody was charged.<sup>56</sup> The protesters caused an estimated K10,000 worth of damage during the raid and an administration staff member was injured.

The affair was hushed up by the administration, but the incoming Vice-Chancellor, Dr Hills, instituted an inquiry into the raid in February 1996.<sup>57</sup> Allegations of a media cover-up were published in an anonymous letter in *The National*, one of PNG's two national dailies, which said:

The UPNG community was so terrified that it shut down for the day, and many women did not return to work the next day. Later that afternoon, the drunken 'academic' threatened the lives of the head of the Extension Studies Department and his wife, causing them to leave Papua New Guinea, and the United States Embassy put out a warning on the danger of visiting PNG.

The name of the man who perpetrated these crimes and blighted the name of PNG is known to all at PNG, but it has been kept secret by the media (campus reporters are said to be his drinking mates). The man has a record of violence and intimidation on campus.<sup>58</sup>

In March, the University Council voted in an extraordinary meeting to dismiss Rali from his position.<sup>59</sup> No public statement was ever issued by the administration about the affair and the University Council meeting was conducted in secrecy. *Uni Tavur* vigorously gathered information about the case and published reports, just as it had done on issues affecting the university over the previous two decades. These reports included a full-page background article and a front-page news story about the sacking of Rali.<sup>60</sup> The university administration pressured the newspaper over the stories but was reluctant to do so in public. Also, a campaign of vilification against the newspaper was conducted in some academic quarters. Hills demanded that the newspaper reveal its council sources who had leaked information. *Uni Tavur* refused, citing editorial ethical obligations to protect sources. The public response to publication of the stories was overwhelmingly favourable. Rali defended his actions in an article in the Sydney-based *Campus Review* about the implications of his case for higher education in PNG, saying:

I have always been frontal [sic] in nationalist issues and I happen to be a victim of bad publicity and reversal of the University of PNG staff development programme.<sup>61</sup>

Dr Rali said he wanted to speak out because of reports in *Campus Review* 'implying that I am a criminal, so my academic and intellectual friends throughout Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the United States will

know the full details'.<sup>62</sup> After the next edition of *Uni Tavur* was published with an editorial 'declaring such a major incident should not be masked by secrecy ... the public has the right to know' was published, the university administration was reluctant to speak to reporters.<sup>63</sup> I wrote at the time:

The issues involved in this affair are important, particularly as they coincided with a major debate on freedom of information and the news media in Papua New Guinea. The government of then Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan sought to bring in legislation to curb the national media. *Uni Tavur* was the only independent newspaper outside the two national dailies, two national weeklies and the provincial fortnightly *Eastern Star*. Its continuing freedom is essential for diversity and plurality of the news media in the country.<sup>64</sup>

Freedom of the press was invoked and also the university and the wider public had a right to be informed on an issue involving a senior academic with a high national and international profile. Academic freedom was at issue too. Journalism staff considered that they should be free to conduct the journalism education and training in a manner that was keeping within professional standards, and independent of editorial interference by the university administration. But from this point on, the Rali affair was to impact on the journalism programme as the university sought courses, departments, and even a faculty, to close down in an attempt to meet its cost-cutting targets. Deputy registrar (academic) Benjamin Naing saw this as a catalyst 'for how Dr Hills viewed the journalism programme: He did not like people to contradict him.'<sup>65</sup>

### From 'closure' to reprieve

In the second semester of 1997, *Uni Tavur* suspended publication as funds were frozen and restructuring plans for the university began to take greater priority. In the final October edition of the year, students who had petitioned Hills over a shortage of lecturers and equipment went public with their appeal. Having gathered more than 1,500 signatures for their petition, Journalism Students Society's president Jean Yapog warned in an open letter that the students' studies were being jeopardised by lack of staff and facilities. She said:

Journalism in Papua New Guinea is a growing profession. Unlike the pre-independence years, journalism skills were on-the-job training [sic]. However, today journalism is a university undergraduate course. Like the science courses, it needs necessary facilities for hands-on-knowledge before one enters the mainstream... The number of lecturers has gone down from three in the [late] 1980s to two. However, currently David Robie is the only full-time lecturer, with Sorariba Nash on study leave and a part-time tutor who is helping us out. Compared to the

Library and Information Studies, which is also under SPCenCIID, they currently have five full-time lecturers, plus two on leave and forty seven students.<sup>66</sup>

Hills did not respond to the students, but he did acknowledge a separate appeal by the Papua New Guinea Media Council, replying in a letter with a challenge:

The only way journalism can have such a specialist staff to teach ... would be if the journalism profession and its related companies were to come forward and agree to fund them from sources external to the university.<sup>67</sup>

Replying from Cardiff University where he was at the time studying for a masters degree in journalism, Sorariba responded by saying that the Hills challenge was hypocritical:

The programme is some two decades old, and for the Vice-Chancellor to say that is just like saying, 'We don't want them'... When the New Zealand government funded the programme [in 1975], they [UPNG] should have said then they couldn't afford to fund it and given it to the industry to sustain both funding and the programme.<sup>68</sup>

There were widespread appeals from journalism schools abroad and media freedom groups too.<sup>69</sup> The university administration appeared intransigent and it seemed only a matter of time before the axe would fall on journalism. But Joseph Sukwianomb, who later became chair of the Higher Education Commission, did not believe there was political pressure at the time:

I think it was administrative ignorance on the part of senior management of the university. It had to do with allocation of resources — they decide who gets what. I think it also had to do with a bit of jealousy within the rank and file of staff at the university. The journalism department was doing very well, and getting the support of the media industry, and also with business houses donating equipment and prizes and so on ...

It had nothing to do with government influence from outside. It had everything to do with the influence of top management, from the vice-chancellor down, who did not see the importance of journalism training.<sup>70</sup>

In early 1998, rumours reached the *Uni Tavur* newsroom about the future of the programme following three unsuccessful petitions to the administration the previous year. It became clear the university administration planned to close some departments, and possibly even a faculty. After five years at UPNG, I accepted an appointment as coordinator of the University of the South Pacific journalism programme and left Port Moresby in March. Sorariba vowed: 'We'll fight on'.

The University Council claimed the closures were part of cost-cutting measures following severe budget cuts to UPNG. But the action led to academic staff at UPNG criticising what they described as a 'rush decision to axe facilities'.<sup>71</sup> The PNG Media Council also expressed alarm over the strategy adopted by the university to cope with funding crises. Council president Luke Sela said in a statement that the cutting of courses, whether for intending first-year students, or in midstream, would

bleed future generations of the most valuable asset — knowledge ... The closure of the journalism course is a direct attack on media freedom.<sup>72</sup>

*The National* also expressed concern over the planned closure of the programme. In an editorial, the paper highlighted that many of the country's working journalists in its newsroom were UPNG graduates. Opposition Leader Bernard Narokobi made a bid to save the programme. He appealed to Dr Hills not to close journalism, but to look for other alternatives. The justification for the closure was that the programme was seen as a 'duplication' of the Divine Word University communication arts courses, even though DWU's diploma course was in fact smaller, it had started seven years after the UPNG programme, and there was no developed degree programme, which had been in force at UPNG for more than a decade. According to Benjamin Naing, who was involved in the University Council at the time:

It was seen that there might be an overlap between UPNG and DWU and there was no need for two journalism schools to exist in Papua New Guinea. This was due to a misunderstanding on the part of the politicians and bureaucrats of the differences between the two programmes and why they both needed to exist.<sup>73</sup>

Yet just why UPNG journalism was seen as a duplication of DWU, and not the other way around, remained a mystery. The key factor was probably the conviction held by Hills that journalism education did not belong in a 'traditional' university while DWU did not then have the status of a full national university. It would have a more natural home there, according to Hills. Recalled Naing:

It was a matter of the budget and economics. The university had to make budget cuts and the Central Executive looked for programmes that it could abolish and make savings. There were also personalities involved. [Dr Hills] looked particularly at areas where he did not have a good relationship. This was done on an ad hoc basis.<sup>74</sup>

Benjamin Naing was disappointed by the way journalism and creative arts appeared to be unfairly targeted.

I did not appreciate the way council was being misled over the reasons for the cutting out of Creative Arts, Journalism and Library and Information Studies. I asked for justifications in council. I argued that these were all needed as part of the country's human resources development. Unfortunately, council did not look at issues objectively; it looked at them subjectively.<sup>75</sup>

Naing was also concerned at the way standing orders and procedures were apparently 'sidestepped' when it suited. For example, he argued that Hills

was very persuasive before council. English was his mother tongue and he could make his proposals sound very constructive. For example, he argued that cutting out the journalism programme would save costs by leaving future journalism education to the Department of Communication Arts at Divine Word. It was never said openly about the personal reasons involved and he failed to justify his arguments.<sup>76</sup>

Joseph Sukwianomb also thought there was no justification. He said the decision had been taken by the 'power brokers' at UPNG with council simply approving it. Journalism 'did not have a strong voice in the faculty board, and from faculty to academic board'. He added:

Certainly the decision initially to close the UPNG programme ... was taken based on wrong information, or information that was twisted, or for the convenience of those who make those decisions ...<sup>77</sup>



**Newsroom:** UPNG's journalism strand leader Sorariba Nash with student journalists in the *Uni Tavur* newsroom. Photo: David Robie



For Sorariba Nash, who was left with a struggle to keep the programme going, 1999 was a long, depressing year. From the moment that the University Council decided on January 25 to 'abolish Journalism Studies at UPNG and transfer the students to Divine Word University', he thought the programme's days were numbered. He recalled:

There was a silence when a lot of us involved in this cost-cutting exercise were throwing back and forth arguments: Could you consider this restructure package? ... We're cutting this, how about taking us back? ... Leave us alone sort of thing.<sup>78</sup>

Associate Professor Frank Morgan, chair of Communication and Media Arts at the University of Newcastle, Australia, and president of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), joined in the chorus of voices defending the programme with an article published two weeks later in *The National*, saying:

AusAID's recent report on Australian aid to PNG calls for the reduction of poverty through sustainable development. That objective is clear and readily agreed. The question, however, is how? And virtually every conceivable answer argues for maintaining UPNG's world-renowned journalism programme, not scrapping it ...<sup>79</sup>

Morgan added:

UPNG may well, as *The National* observed [January 27], 'simply be following worldwide practice by choosing the easiest options'. It may also be falling for the confidence trick of economic rationalism that cost reduction improves cost-benefit



**Melanie Vari-Turia:** 'Somebody who has been trained at one of the universities does a better job.' *Photo: David Robie*

ratios by reducing them. Nothing, however, is for nothing. Ultimately, zero cost leads to zero benefit and zero divided by zero divided by zero soars to infinity.<sup>80</sup>

The cloud over the future of the Journalism Studies programme had a serious impact on students who had chosen a media career and wanted to pursue this at UPNG. One journalist who had her studies disrupted was Melanie Vari-Turia, a business reporter with *The National*. She recalled:

I always wanted to be a journalist because my mum has been in the information industry for the past thirty two years. I actually signed up in 1998 [after studying music at UPNG] to do a Diploma in Media Studies. And then in 1999 we were told that the journalism school would be closing. So I decided to take on board all the subjects for print and electronic media. In 2000 I was awarded a diploma as well as a BA degree in journalism ...

I think journalism education is very important. If you just pick someone from high school and bring that person into the newsroom then it's going to take some time for that person to catch up with what is going on and how to report it. Somebody who has already been trained at one of the universities ... [does] a better job.<sup>81</sup>

The long wait over the future of the journalism programme went on all year, including protests by the campus students. Eventually Hills resigned in May 1999 and departed for Dubai. Finally, the University Council resolved in early 2000 to reverse the earlier decision and the journalism programme and other retrenched university courses were allowed to remain, 'as long as [journalism] was restructured as part of the general cost-cutting'.<sup>82</sup> Sorariba was sceptical over the role of Divine Word, even when it offered to take displaced UPNG students — an offer that not as many as expected took up.

Now a lot of people are talking about Divine Word. But Divine Word just came in yesterday. UPNG is the school that trained the journalists, and set the pace for the media industry.<sup>83</sup>

Sorariba has sought to restore UPNG's leading role in the region and regards the cut-backs as not too serious, pointing to the fact that his university had the largest number of journalism degree graduates in the March 2001 graduation — fifteen. While UPNG lost the Diploma in Media Studies, founded in the Henshall era, the programme has been left with the degree, now known as a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Media Studies) instead of the previous Bachelor of Journalism. The programme also still retains two specialist semester-long courses for experienced media practitioners, Certificate in Public Relations and Certificate in Investigative Journalism. The need for the journalism school is just as strong almost

three decades after independence, if not greater now. Sorariba regards lack of funding and ethics as a major challenge for journalism education.

That is what I am afraid of — the corruption culture that is starting to grip Papua New Guinea slowly can even take a lot of young journalists into the pockets of very influential people. This is a challenge we really have to watch out for and work at.<sup>84</sup>

### Conclusion

The University of Papua New Guinea played a crucial pioneering role in the development of journalism education and training, not only for Papua New Guineans but throughout the region. For many years it was the benchmark for tertiary journalism qualifications and reflection on media industry standards. The initiative by the New Zealand government to set up a journalism school at UPNG in 1975, after a pilot training project for Papua New Guinean journalists in Wellington ended in failure, was a move years ahead of its time. Much of the early success of the programme was due to the inspiration and dedication of the founding lecturer provided by the aid project. Ross Stevens had just the 'kind of naturally authoritative and diplomatic manner' needed to make the school work.

Although the programme lacked facilities and resources and was sometimes treated as a 'Cinderella by the university for perplexing reasons', it was innovative and vigorous and established an international reputation. Among its achievements were a high profile and award-winning training newspaper, *Uni Tavur*. This became the first student journalism publication in the Pacific to gain an international award. The paper was relaunched as a tabloid printed by the *Post-Courier* in 1995. Success appeared to come in cycles and this was directly related to periods when highly committed staff joined the university. Such periods included Peter Henshall and David Ingram's tenure in the late 1980s and my own contract at UPNG with Sorariba Nash in the mid-1990s. By the end of 1997, when UPNG began restructuring its courses and Journalism Studies programme ceased to have its long-established autonomy, some 174 journalists had graduated with journalism degrees or diplomas, a remarkable feat. This contribution was then, and remains until today, by far the largest share of qualified journalists produced by any institution in the South Pacific.

However, a period of drastic budget cost-cutting in the late 1990s was disastrous for journalism education in Papua New Guinea. The UPNG administration sought sectors of the university that could be closed down. Ironically, it was never substantiated that journalism was a cost to the university, especially as it was a programme that had successfully attracted funding grants from outside donors. Vice-Chancellor Dr Rodney Hills concluded that UPNG 'duplicated' Divine Word in spite of the fact that UPNG was clearly the pioneering university in journalism education. He

encouraged Divine Word to take UPNG students. But the decision to close Journalism Studies (as part of the SPCenCIID umbrella) appeared in 1998 to stem more from administrative and political discontent over the independence of the student journalists and staff than finances. Although, UPNG reinstated the journalism strand in 2001 after Hills' departure from UPNG, the damage had been done. Journalism education at UPNG had lost some of its credibility and the initiative then moved to Divine Word and the University of the South Pacific. Yet the need for the UPNG journalism school remained just as important as ever.

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## A Tok Pisin newspaper and values

Father Mihalic was a simple and humble man, yet a workaholic. He was visionary and believed that keeping the little people informed about issues affecting their lives was important to gaining their understanding and support for development throughout the country.

*Post-Courier editorial,  
12 December 2001*

Father Mihalic constantly stressed that journalists must never forget ordinary people. They should always focus on development issues [that] affected ordinary people and not just report for the élite.

*Johnson Honimae,  
president of PINA, 2001*

CATHOLIC missionary Father Frank Mihalic died on 9 December 2001 in California at the age of eighty five from complications of pneumonia, far from his beloved Papua New Guinea. Variousy a newspaper editor, linguist, educator and compiler of the first *Tok Pisin Dictionary*, Mihalic was a 'champion of the grassroots media'.<sup>1</sup> He believed in the right of ordinary people in his adopted country to have access to news and information — 'so essential in the country's journey towards nationhood'.<sup>2</sup> Mihalic put his words into action and ensured that Papua New Guineans

would be provided with a newspaper in a language they could read and understand. *Wantok Niuspepa* was the legacy he left behind when he returned to his homeland, the United States. From humble beginnings at Wirui in Wewak, *Wantok* grew into a national newspaper with wide recognition and acceptance by grassroots people who could not read English. But Mihalic also played a vital role in journalism education.

He believed that the Church had a particularly important role in ensuring the flow of essential information to the grassroots people and vice-versa. Father Mihalic worked hard to ensure the training of young Papua New Guineans in the media and played a pivotal role in their development over many years.

The journalism training programme at the Divine Word University in Madang is the legacy of his vision for training young Papua New Guineans in the ethics of professional and responsible journalism based on strong Christian principles.<sup>3</sup>

In an editorial eulogy to Mihalic, the *Post-Courier* noted that the missionary's death should not be a time of mourning, but rather a time for celebration. It said that all who had come to know him should 'celebrate the great contribution he has made not only to the life of the Catholic Church but the development of the media, literacy, training and human development' in Papua New Guinea. Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) president Johnson Honimae said Father Mihalic 'inspired not just Papua New Guinean journalists but those from throughout Melanesia'.<sup>4</sup> Just five years earlier, at the age of eighty, he had bowed out of education by telling his last group of students: 'This is where my teaching career ends. It is much too much for me now. I've been teaching for fifty two years and I can't do it anymore.'<sup>5</sup>

### **Divine Word — human, social and religious values**

Divine Word University began life as a humble secondary school in Madang in 1967.<sup>6</sup> But the groundwork for the educational project really began eleven years earlier when two Society of the Divine Word (SVD)<sup>7</sup> missionaries, Archbishop Adolf Noser and Father Paul McVinney, wanted to spread the society's traditional tertiary educational involvement into Papua New Guinea.<sup>8</sup> In 1964, a 99-year lease was taken out with an old rubber plantation on the outskirts of Madang and negotiations for funding began with the Government. However, the negotiations were unsuccessful and the SVD planners were instead forced to establish a Catholic co-educational high school on the plantation. Father Kenneth Feehan, SVD, became project director then founding headmaster of the Divine Word Secondary School, a position he held for the next fourteen years. During this establishment period with a roll of up to 600 students, Feehan shaped the development and philosophy, emphasising 'academic excellence and

self-reliance' and the school 'consistently ranked in the top 10 percent' of Papua New Guinean high schools.<sup>9</sup> The motto guiding the institution was *Sic currite ut comprehendatis* — 'Run to win', not in a 'ruthless competitive way, but as an honest effort to achieve one's full potential'. Feehan noted in the Silver Jubilee edition of the institution's newsletter *Diwai*:

Divine Word Secondary School was the birthplace, so to speak, of a service established by the Society of the Divine Word in 1968 in response to a need — a new missionary activity. In the late 1970s, the 'signs of the time' called for a change and thus evolved Divine Word Institute.<sup>10</sup>

The society undertook a feasibility study in 1977 to consider picking up its original plan for tertiary education. Gradually the institute phased out of a secondary school and evolved into a university. Two years later, students began enrolling in a four-year diploma programme in Business and Communication. Divine Word Institute was incorporated by the Divine Word Institute Act 1980. The first batch of pioneering tertiary students graduated in 1982, but it was the following year when Father Mihalic took charge of the Communication Arts Department that the journalism school really started to develop. The institute expanded its academic base by introducing several new programmes over the next seventeen years. Religious commitment was expected from the beginning. As the institute's President, Father Jurgen Ommerborn, SVD, expressed the philosophy in 1993:

Christian members of Divine Word Institute are expected to have a love for the Divine Word, Jesus Christ, which shows itself in their desire to grow in their dedication and commitment to the Divine Word and to let themselves be guided in their private as well as professional life by the Divine Word.

Men and women who belong to other religions or to no religion at all are expected to show respect for the way of life, which flows from the school's commitment to the Divine Word.

Commitment to a life lived in the spirit of the Divine Word does mean to render committed service to God and to one's fellow human beings; it includes necessarily the willingness to renounce and sacrifice one's good for the sake of the good of the larger society.

That the graduates of DWI will be men and women who follow this way of life is expected by those who have given their moral and financial support to the institute over the years: Catholic and Protestant church organisations as well as the National Government.<sup>11</sup>

Donor organisation support for the fledgling institute was reflected in a letter from a representative of the Dutch inter-church organisation ICCO to former President, Father Kees van der Geest, saying:

The whole Papua New Guinea society will benefit from the quality education you offer at DWI. As you know, I have a keen interest in the attitude building that takes place during students' stay at DWI. We have full confidence on that point and we hope to be kept informed on that aspect of education.<sup>12</sup>

### Father Mihalic — 'do things before boasting'

Of Croatian descent, Father Frank Mihalic was born on 24 November 1916 as the eldest child in a family of ten children in the township of Renova, Pennsylvania, USA. He grew up in the countryside and later entered an SVD seminary in Techney, becoming ordained as a Catholic priest on 15 August 1944. He first arrived in Papua New Guinea after World War Two to work in the East Sepik as a first aid and community health worker. In a profile of his life eight years before he retired, *The Independent* editor Faye Duega, then a student journalist at DWI, wrote: 'He is a pragmatist. Practicality and simplicity count. "Do things before boasting," says he.'<sup>13</sup>

Mihalic's first posting in Papua New Guinea was at Marienberg on the Sepik. Within months, he was transferred to Kairiru Island with instructions to establish Saint Xavier's Catechist Training School, which eventually became Saint Xavier's High School. In late 1953, he contracted tuberculosis and was sent back to the United States where he was confined to bed for about eighteen months. During this time, he wrote the first *Tok Pisin Dictionary*, which was published four years after he returned to Papua New Guinea and became a parish priest in Enga Province. In 1960, Mihalic was sent to Nemi, Italy, where he became the co-founder and administrative director of the SVD tertiate. Seven years later, the Catholic Bishops Conference asked him to return to Papua New Guinea to publish a Catholic newspaper in Tok Pisin. Without any experience in journalism, he took up the challenge. As Duega described it:

Under the professional eye of Kiwi journalist Ray Goodey, the newspaper called *Wantok* appeared on 5 August 1970 in Wewak. The *Wantok* organisation [Word Publishing] transferred to Port Moresby at the end of 1976. Within four years Father Mihalic localised his position to Anna Solomon. As he often says, 'A missionary is successful only when he puts himself out of a job'.<sup>14</sup>

*Wantok* continued as an ecumenical Christian paper with a circulation peaking at 15,000, becoming 'one of the most influential and unique newspaper publishing operations in the Pacific'.<sup>15</sup> Mihalic's *Wantok*



Publications was developed into Word Publishing Pty Ltd by Father Kevin Walcot, and then run by the late Father Jim Franks. According to media academic Father Diosnel Centurion, the company, which started as an SVD project, became an ecumenical consortium owned by the Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and United churches.<sup>16</sup> It published several papers: *Wantok*, *The Times of PNG* (later relaunched as *The Independent*), *Business Monthly*, *Sports* and *Rugby League*. The gutsy and educational journalism style then nurtured by Mihalic still plays a major development role in Papua New Guinea. Mihalic revealed some of his insights before he retired to student journalist Chris Bola:

The only thing that would influence a good reporter is the story. If there are lies, it is your job as reporters to highlight them. Reporting in Papua New Guinea and many other countries of the world is a lovely, painful — and usually thankless — area of journalism.<sup>17</sup>

Describing Mihalic as a ‘self-confessed workaholic’, Bola also summed up his commitment:

- Even after ending my teaching career, I still have got to do something. My greatest satisfaction is working with people. I have an obligation to use my talents to make life better for others.<sup>18</sup>

The Diploma in Communication Arts was awarded for the first time on 3 October 1982 to five graduates — Maureen Mopio, David Susame, Benny Bogg, Joy Sahumlal and Martha Waradin.<sup>19</sup> Father Frank Mihalic, at the time roving reporter for Word Publishing, covered the ceremony. Shortly after, Father Kees van der Geest appointed Mihalic head of the Communication Arts Department. It was supposed to be a ‘temporary’ appointment, Mihalic recalled eleven years later:

George Bernard Shaw once philosophised that ‘those who can do, those who can’t, teach’. I always like that saying because it fits me. When I came to DWI, I possessed no academic qualifications in journalism or its related fields. All I had was twelve years of experience in newspaper editing, news gathering and reporting, proofreading, typesetting, page layout, advertising, distributing [sic], photography and translation.<sup>20</sup>

Reporting for *Wantok*, *The Times* and *New Nation*, Mihalic met the newly appointed DWI President, Father Van der Geest, a Belgian, over a cup of coffee at Wirui.

Out of the blue he asked me whether I would be willing to come to Madang and take over the Communication Arts Department temporarily because he was having a staffing problem. I told him that might endanger DWI’s reputation. I had no degrees, so how could I give them to others? But he took the gamble.



**Faye Duega:** A DWU graduate who became editor of *The Independent*.  
*Photo: David Robie*

At Word Publishing I had by that time localised all my positions and so I was leaving no gap. In January 1983, I moved to Madang to act as a temporary stopgap. I stayed on 'temporarily' for eight years. By the end of 1990, DWI had accumulated properly degreed [sic] and academically fine-tuned professors for my department, so I yielded to them and retired to Kairiru Island, just off Wewak.<sup>21</sup>

Mihalic quickly set about restructuring the course, designing a new curriculum that stressed journalism for Print Media and Radio. Making Basic News Writing the core subject, he added Feature Writing, Layout, Scripting for Radio and Advertising. Translation, Photojournalism and Video were added later. Emphasising hands-on training, Mihalic arranged with Sister Mary Hudson, director of the Communication Institute in Goroka, for students to go there for a month-long workshop on Radio Scripting and Broadcasting. A six-week work experience attachment with news organisations such as the *Post-Courier*, Word Publishing and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) became a requirement for admission into the second year.

One of the incidents I remember from my DWI days was the time I tried to start off a scholastic year the way writer Sinclair Lewis had done when he was asked to teach journalism at Columbia University in New York City. He began his first class by asking seventy students, 'How many of you want to become writers?' About forty shot up their hands. He told them, 'Go home and start writing; that is the only way to learn. I'll teach the rest'.

When I said those same words, no one believed me. Everyone stayed; so I still had a class to teach.<sup>22</sup>

A television producer from San Francisco, United States, ran the first video technique course in September 1985 at the institute in Goroka. She returned the following year and this time conducted the course on the DWI campus. In 1987, Word Publishing publisher Rowan Callick recruited Father Mihalic to design and implement in-service training for on-the-job journalists in Port Moresby.<sup>23</sup> Brother Dan Kelly, SVD, who had trained at Loyola University, Chicago, and had joined the Communication Arts Department in 1986, was appointed to fill Mihalic's post as head the following year. However, Kelly died of a heart attack in November that year. Father Mihalic was recalled to take over the department again.

Over the years at DWI all my instructions in news reporting, feature writing, photography and page layout were strictly hands-on. Pupils learned by doing ... or else. By nature, I am a pragmatist and that is the way I have always operated. Because I believe one learns by doing. I insisted on six weeks of work experience for my certificate students during their Christmas vacation. And it paid off. In my day all serious graduates in Communication Arts held a certificate in one [hand] and the promise of a job in the other.<sup>24</sup>

Another pet project that Mihalic tried to encourage was teaching all his student journalists translation technique. However, he claimed incorrectly that UPNG and other tertiary institutions in Papua New Guinea did not do that.<sup>25</sup> It was in fact compulsory at that time for student journalists at UPNG to do literary and practical courses in either Tok Pisin or Hiri Motu — and this included translation techniques. Mihalic argued:

The NBC, the advertising world, all government departments, to say nothing of newspapers and magazines, need bilingual writers. Unfortunately even educated people do not realise that one may be able to speak two languages fluently and still not be able to translate, especially from script to script. Translation requires special training. Does anyone else out there believe that? To date I have found no evidence of it.<sup>26</sup>

Mihalic also warned against student journalists being seduced by an apparently glamorous career with opportunities to travel and meet important people. 'The glitter soon rubs off,' he wrote. 'Professionals learn to be criticised and maligned, to work under deadline pressure, and to live with their eyes and ears always open for the makings of a human interest story'.<sup>27</sup> He believed that students who could master the discipline of news reporting could later successfully turn to any other field of writing. 'A writer who automatically answers our Who, What, When, Where, Why and How, has a healthy respect for the nuances of verbs, and is stingy

with adjectives — that writer will go places.' In Mihalic's view, the bottom line in professional journalism was that writing meant 'rewriting four, five, or six times' For example, he explained, 'I have rewritten this story five times'.<sup>28</sup>

After years of hard work, Mihalic gained wide recognition, including an honorary Doctor of Philosophy in linguistics from the University of Papua New Guinea. For his contributions in Tok Pisin, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II decorated him as an Officer of the British Empire (OBE).

### **Divine Word's road to university status**

A crash ten-month certificate programme, arranged by the Geneva-based World Association for Christian Communication, was designed for busy people such as health, teachers, youth, women and other workers of the churches and government. The course was arranged in workshops to allow on-the-job applicants to attend only those which they needed. The name Certificate in Applied Communication was adopted from a brochure of the University of the Philippines, Los Banos, although the actual course had been adapted to suit Papua New Guinea needs. In 1989, a 'Communication cottage', partly funded by the WACC, was completed and then funding was sought for a mini-radio lab. The studio was completed in 1990.

When Father Diosnel Centurion, an SVD missionary and media research academic from Paraguay, joined the Communication Arts staff in 1989, he lobbied for the introduction of a Bachelor degree in Development Communication. He had completed studies and research at UP, Los Banos, Philippines, and worked closely with Dr Crispin Maslog, who had been funded by WACC for a two-week visit to Papua New Guinea to report on the country's communications and its needs. DWI's academic director Bob deBrouwere (on the staff from CUSO, the Canadian University Service Organisation), finalised the proposed curriculum with Centurion and Sister Vangie, head of department. Although it was approved and launched in 1990, it was abandoned after the first two graduates in 1993.<sup>29</sup>

Centurion became head of Communication Arts in 1991 but left for Sydney on a doctorate study programme in 1995. Father Trevor Cullen, an experienced radio journalist with the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), BBC World Service and Vatican Radio, took over the job. He had switched to newspapers in 1991 and graduated from City University, London, in 1993 with a Masters degree in International Journalism. In 1994 he moved to Rome to begin work at the Vatican radio and the international news agency, Catholic News Service (CNS) which provides a daily wire service for 170 newspapers in the United States and Europe.

Cullen arrived in Port Moresby on 31 October 1995 to begin a two-year contract as press officer for the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and to teach communications at Bomana Major Seminary. Previously, he had been working at the Vatican in both the press and radio departments.

During my first week in PNG, I received a phone call from the President of Divine Word Institute, Father Jan Czuba, asking if I could help at DWI since they were short of teachers in the Communications Arts department. I contacted the head of CBC and he said he had no problems with this request and my transfer to Madang. In fact, he thought there was a greater need at DWI than at the seminary.<sup>30</sup>

So Cullen moved to DWI in December 1995 and began the task of modernising the Communication Arts programme. He signed a two-year contract and started teaching the following month. However, he still also continued to work as press officer for the CBC. By April 1996, Cullen was appointed head of the Communications Arts, replacing Father Mihalic who was keen to reduce his workload. The department offered a two-year diploma course and the staff comprised Mihalic and Cullen who taught all the journalism and communication courses. Other teachers taught English literature, English language, politics and economics as a way to 'broaden the knowledge of the students'.<sup>31</sup> There were two classes: year one and year two with roughly fifteen to twenty in the first year and ten to twelve in the second. Some problems were apparent to Cullen:

English was a second or third language for the students. As a result, a number of students struggled to achieve even a basic standard of written English and teaching journalism was frequently reduced to instructing students about how to write simple, clear and grammatically correct sentences. In consultation with the Dean of Studies and other staff members, it was decided to raise the grade for English in the CA department from C grade to B. This came into operation at the end of 1996 and there was no immediate or noticeable fall in applications for the course. I was unable to monitor in a proper and scientific manner whether or not this change helped raise the standard of written English.

Many students were too young or undecided about a career in journalism. I suggested early on (but without support) that journalism should be a post-graduate degree where the students come with a higher level of maturity, knowledge and motivation. There will, however, always be a place for young journalists who decide to leave after receiving their diploma. However there should be available resources to help those who want to achieve higher journalistic qualifications.<sup>32</sup>

Towards the end of 1997, Cullen argued during an academic staff meeting that the name of the department — Communication Arts — should be changed to Journalism since the main aim and thrust of the course was to educate and train journalists for the media industry. The President shelved the idea, saying that the change of name would happen at a later stage. At the end of 1997, Cullen left for the University of Queensland at St Lucia, Brisbane, to pursue doctorate research on media coverage of HIV/AIDS in the Pacific. A British volunteer, Joe Weber succeeded Cullen as head of department in late 1998.

In November 1995, when Father Jan Czuba, a Polish priest became President of the institute, he immediately began a push to gain university status. This was achieved less than a year later.<sup>33</sup> At celebrations on 10 August 1996, marking a century of Divine Word missionaries on the mainland of Papua New Guinea, Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan announced that DWI would be recognised as one of six universities. This was part of an educational restructuring aimed at breaking the dominance of the country's two main universities, UPNG and the University of Technology in Lae.<sup>34</sup> Chan said Divine Word University would be required to continually update and improve its programmes and the teaching staff needed to be able to respond to changing needs of Papua New Guinean society. While pledging to assist the university's vision of promoting integral human development through education, the Prime Minister challenged the institute to maintain student discipline. Czuba said that elevating the institution's status would improve finances and help upgrade programmes, but emphasis would be given to 'character formation'. However, some staff and other academics remained sceptical about the rapid rise to university level. Recalled Cullen:

The quality of teaching at DWU was a problem. This was mainly due to the fact that many teachers were volunteers who offered their services for two to three years for meager financial returns. Therefore it proved difficult to criticise, let alone reprimand, a volunteer who failed to meet academic standards. In fact, there was no credible complaints procedure. Interestingly, the academic qualifications of the teachers were never published during my time at the university. I expect one reason for this was that many of them were probably poorly qualified. This may have changed since my departure. However, as far I know, DWU still relies heavily on volunteer teachers.<sup>35</sup>

When Father Czuba became President, he analysed the state of Divine Word to design a new strategy for the development of the university. At a time when the national university, UPNG, was being starved of government funds and being restructured, Czuba decided an important element of his strategy would be to establish an 'alliance' with the state universities.

After two years, I found out that the PNG government was trying to monitor media. What they did to the University of Papua New Guinea was not acceptable . . . when they closed three departments, one of them the very important journalism department. I was alarmed at that time so I called a special meeting of our university so that we could look at the budget and the resources we had. We drew up a new plan for the development of Communication Arts at Divine Word University and increased the allowance for students for the diploma and for the degree.<sup>36</sup>

### **The future — one or two journalism schools?**

From thirty students in the Communication Arts programme, DWI introduced two streams and increased the role to ninety students. The university 'invested a lot of money and new equipment' in the programme.<sup>37</sup> According to Czuba, the aim is to grow to more than 100 to 120 students in the department and to establish formal relationships with other universities overseas. Czuba also looked at UPNG's troubles to establish how his university could help strengthen journalism education in the country.

I believe that for the country to maintain democracy and freedom, the only way is with a free media. And we have to prove that. Divine Word increased resources [at the beginning of 1998 when journalism at UPNG] was shrinking smaller and smaller. Finally, the government took the opportunity to close it. In a developing country, one person can make a difference with the shortage of leadership skills. At that moment, when you left the country, things went wrong at UPNG.<sup>38</sup>

When the Papua New Guinea Government made the decision to endorse closure of the journalism programme at UPNG, Czuba had an urgent meeting with his staff and also DWU's University Council to consider how they could fill the gap. The university invested K100,000 in terms of equipment and computers. It also built additional student accommodation costing K320,000. Four extra lecturers were also hired. 'Altogether we invested K600,000 or K700,000,' said Czuba.

At the same time we extended an invitation to students of UPNG to say that they can come to DWU to continue their studies. We designed a special course for them so that they could continue their education because, as you know, courses at UPNG were run in a slightly different way than ours. That makes sense not to have exactly the same courses.<sup>1</sup>

When DWU enrolled students from UPNG, it 'put quite a lot of effort to meet the demands of the students and not disturb their education so we designed courses to follow on to your courses'. Altogether about sixteen or seventeen students enrolled from UPNG, according to Czuba. One

graduated in 1999 with a newly introduced degree and two the following year. Three degree graduates in 2001 included the first two from Divine Word, and another former UPNG student. Why had the previous Bachelor's degree in Communication Media been dropped?

The previous head of the Communications Arts Department [Father Diosnel Centurion] introduced the bachelor's programme and it was communication and not so much to do with media. And there was no market for such people. My guess is that somebody adopted courses, which were taught at one of the other universities in the Philippines where Divine Word has connections, and they were not needed in the Papua New Guinea context.

# Kerosene victims look to the future after birth of baby

By Peter Mabin

After a year of burning lamp explosions that made eggs white and their children dead... a 34-year-old woman, as well as her partner, a 30-year-old man, who lost a leg in the explosion...



Prud pruden, Mary and her baby with grandmothers.

Kerosene is widely used as a primary source of fuel in villages. Mary suffered severe burns to her chest and, because she was seven months pregnant at the time of the blast, she was hospitalized in Madang in search of the obstetrician of her husband's...

Anthony suffered third degree burns from his leg to his legs when the lamp he was lighting in the house suddenly exploded. He pulled the lamp into the house but unfortunately exploded before he could...

Anthony had thought the explosion of the lamp was a blessing for his day. Mary was in Madang for two weeks, while Anthony was there for the weeks...

The couple are now back at Madang Hospital and grateful for the care and treatment they were given. Mary said: "I am very happy to see my new baby. She is healthy. There are no complications when it came for..."

He said: "We are very happy with the doctors and nurses, particularly in Madang."

He was well looked after. The nurses and doctors washed us, gave us good food and drinks, provided good beds, we had a TV and radio in the ward and they provided essential medical checks. I am happy that we were able to see the doctor who had been in Australia. They told me to take the baby to the Madang hospital and they are happy that they will be discharged from hospital this week, and are looking forward to returning home.

Anthony is originally from Papua, Tumbuk. Captain Charles (Diosnel) Centurion provided for his lives at Madang, near Madang, the wife's village.

Over the years, the couple have spent time in good preparation for the last few years. This will allow me to have better health insurance from their savings.

Mary and Anthony are now expecting to be in contact with their family members. Anthony said: "We have a family to support but don't see heavy physical work. Therefore, we were just a student in..."

He said: "I am very happy with the doctors and nurses, particularly in Madang."

**"The nurse asked us, if the baby was a girl, that she be named after her"**



Mary and Anthony looking forward to the future in Madang four weeks ago.

Liklik Diwai: An aftermath story about a kerosene lamp tragedy in *Liklik Diwai*, the DWU students' weekly newsletter, 6 April 2001.



Once you left Port Moresby, the leadership collapsed at UPNG, and there was such an urgent need for well-qualified Papua New Guineans before we entered this bachelor's degree. We are still developing the degree because right now we are focusing very strongly on print media.<sup>2</sup>

Divine Word has been investing in more equipment for electronic media, television and radio training. Czuba believes that the new systems would be better able to cope with political pressure.

I believe that PNG politicians are not comfortable with the media in Papua New Guinea, which exposes their activities, such as corruption. What PNG politicians wanted to do to allow them to monitor the media was to restrict qualified journalists. So what the politicians did was look at the University of PNG, which is fully sponsored by government, and they basically refused to allow any money for journalism studies. The simple solution was because the department cannot produce qualified journalists, then it would only be a matter of time when the journalists would die. And 'we would be safe' was most probably the thinking of the politicians of that time.

And because Divine Word is private, and we increased the number of students. I think that's what the politicians wanted to do. And I myself was against the closing of the departments of Journalism, and Library Studies and Creative Arts at UPNG. But I was only a single voice. And I wasn't the one providing funds for UPNG.

I don't know whether it was because of wantokism or what, but I found it very strange that some of the academic staff at UPNG supported some of the politicians in wanting to 'get rid of unnecessary expenses'. It was alarming to find educated Papua New Guineans thinking that way.<sup>3</sup>

Twenty of the sixty National Scholarships allocated to UPNG for Diploma journalism students, at K2,700 per student a year, were re-allocated by the government to DWU. But the rejuvenated DWU still could not satisfy the demand for journalists in Papua New Guinea. And now that the UPNG programme has been re-allocated, Father Czuba has reaffirmed the need for two journalism schools in Papua New Guinea. 'There is a need for two, definitely, because one is committed to quality,' he said. 'The other is marginal, but would still help satisfy the market for journalists. Within our programme it is basically impossible to address all the needs that our media in Papua New Guinea currently have.' Czuba held brainstorming sessions with local news organisation heads while designing courses that would meet the needs of the PNG media.



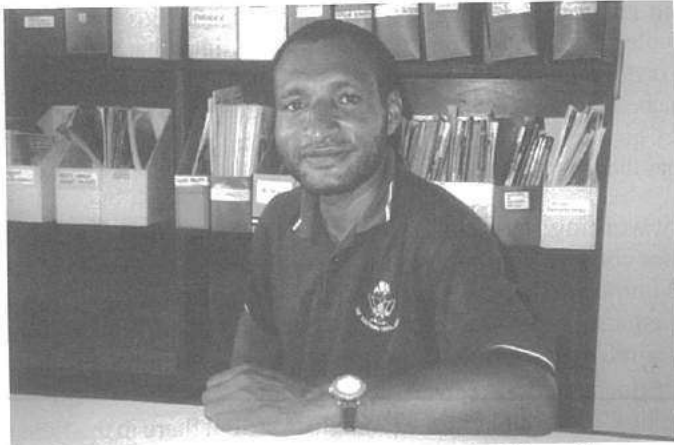
**Divine Word journalists:** Back at school ... from left: Patrick Matbob (*Post-Courier*), Peter Maime (*Wantok*), Stalin Sawa (Radio Bougainville) and Pius Ikuma (National Broadcasting Corporation). *Photo: David Robie*

We don't have enough well qualified people to work in the media. The other thing is that Papua New Guinea is at quite a difficult stage of development. People working for different media face difficulties — they don't have basic living quarters, and they don't have easy means to get to work and so on. So there are a lot of factors contributing to a situation where media do not attract well-qualified people. Their salaries are too low, they don't have the houses, if they want land they cannot afford it, and media have to see that because there is a danger. It is not enough to have qualified people. It is not enough to meet the media needs. The media has to create the environment to attract people to go there to work.

The Papua New Guinea media should offer more attractive packages like salary and accommodation to encourage people to work. I cannot imagine people with a degree working for K180 to K220 [a fortnight] and then they cannot afford to rent a flat. Journalists are dedicated and are committed, and they are trained. But is the media ready to employ these people? If so, what are their conditions of employment? And that is what I am a little bit frustrated about. Some of the heads of the media don't see that. Not everyone has wantoks in Port Moresby.<sup>4</sup>

Kevin Pamba, a former UPNG graduate, columnist on *The National* and now on the academic staff of DWU, supports the need for two journalism schools in Papua New Guinea. He believes the schools are needed to cater for the rapid growth in the national and provincial media industry.

Yes, there is room for two journalism schools. The media in this country is growing, developing. And the population is growing as well. There is room for two schools to cater for that growth. In 1993 [when you arrived], there was only one daily newspaper,



**Kevin Pamba:** A growing need for people trained in the PNG media.

*Photo: David Robie*

there was only one commercial radio station, which was state-owned, and the state-owned radio network, NBC, and Channel Nine-owned EMTV. Since then it has rapidly changed. Towards the end of 1993, *The National* newspaper started up. And that opened up opportunities for the media in this country. Then the following year the PNGFM group came on, with the commercial radio station NauFM. Since then there has been a string of commercial radio stations in Port Moresby, Lae, and there is a Christian radio in Mt Hagen. The Seventh Day Adventist Church has recently won a licence for a television station. That just goes to show the need for more people to be trained for the media.<sup>5</sup>

According to Joe Weber, then head of Communication Arts, university education is particularly important for Papua New Guinean journalists, and throughout the Pacific. The education system generally is 'not one that encourages analytical thinking, not one that encourages people to be critical in any way, which are skills that a journalist needs'.<sup>6</sup> So the universities need to address this shortfall in the education system. Weber also notes a major problem in the PNG news media industry's ability to retain educated journalists because of the lack of a structured career path and journalists seeing their job as a 'stepping stone to somewhere else'.

Somewhere at the back of my mind, I wonder whether the universities are contributing to this problem in that they are producing increasing numbers of graduates with these skills. And there is a limited number of jobs in the media. Although the media is growing and although there are more jobs than previously, it is still a relatively limited number.

And is the fact that we are providing a continuous stream of people with skills helping to reinforce the idea that there will always be journalists? We don't need to pay these people too much. We don't need to worry about retaining them because if they go there are always more people coming out. I don't know what the answer is to that.<sup>7</sup>

For many working journalists studying at Divine Word interviewed by me, a major concern was poor working conditions and salaries. According to Peter Maime, of *Wantok*, the salaries of journalists made a mockery of a code of ethics: 'If [media companies] cannot look after their journalists and their employment conditions, then they should forget about the code because it doesn't make sense'.<sup>8</sup> Pius Ikuma, formerly of the National Broadcasting Corporation, said: 'Journalists are out there in the field risking their lives, gathering information about sensitive issues and covering stories. Considering these factors, their salaries and conditions should be lifted like any other professions around the world.'<sup>9</sup> A new magazine aimed at men, *New@geman* won the occasional publication category and the Dr Charles Stuart Prize at the 2002 Ossie Awards in Sydney. The magazine pledged frank views: 'Some men are now taking a stand against beating their wives. Others are less positive, but we believe in showing the truth.'

### Conclusion

The Papua New Guinean media scene has changed dramatically from the day Father Mihalic launched *Wantok*. Divine Word, particularly through the extraordinary and visionary efforts of the late Father Mihalic, has made a major contribution to a growing sense in the country of the vital role of journalism and skilled communication in developing a sense of nationhood and national identity. Along with evolution of the Communications Art programme, publication of *Wantok*, a unique newspaper in the South Pacific, has become a benchmark of national development and the contribution that good journalism can make to education at grassroots level.

Although journalism at Divine Word had relatively humble beginnings, compared with the national University of Papua New Guinea, the institution has made considerable headway in media training and education. The university also moved decisively at a critical time to protect the future of journalism education.

# 7

## In the shadow of Fiji's coups

The [Journalism] Programme 'publications'—*Wansolwara* and the website [*Pacific Journalism Online*] — can be justified on one purpose only: to support a training function. That is, they provide a trial medium for practical skills training and for simulation work. They should not be regarded as a media outlet for students.

*Vice-Chancellor Esekia Solofa of USP, 2000*

The past six months have seen a major upheaval in Fiji, twice in fact, and of such stuff are the dreams of journalists made. What an opportunity to practise the theory and exercise the training from the classroom! You students will no doubt have stories of what you did during the crisis, and that was perhaps the best training possible.

*New Zealand High Commissioner to Fiji  
Tia Barrett, 2000*

'GOOD MORNING, Fiji!' rings out the cheery voice on the University of the South Pacific's student Radio Pasifik, FM88.8. And, as a correspondent for *The Chronicle for Higher Education* notes, the playlist 'begins all soft and pittery-pattery, almost calypso-like, as befits a part of the world studded with bone-white beaches, azure seas, and gently swaying palms'.<sup>1</sup> But then

the Samoan ensemble on the disk player kicks into life with a swirl of aboriginal chants and tribal plainsong, backed with some drum rolls hot enough to rival the late-morning sun beating down outside the studio door at this lush campus in Fiji's capital. 'I love playing these kinds of songs for the locals,' grins Victoria Lepou, the DJ, nodding her head in time to the tune while she searches for the next item on her playlist. Ms Lepou is hunting through the station's small but impressive music library — here some old vinyl recordings and cassettes in worn covers, there a stack of well-thumbed compact disks — its mix of offerings as ethnically varied as the institution's students.<sup>2</sup>

According to New Zealand-based journalist David Cohen, Radio Pasifik 'enjoys a reputation as a musical smorgasbord. To be sure, it's a soulful advertisement, waylit by music, interviews, and commentary, for one of the region's more culturally kaleidoscopic institutions of higher learning'.<sup>3</sup> Although the station is nominally owned by the USP Students Association, and may be used by any member of the student body, it has tended to be 'mainly the plaything of journalism students' looking to brush up on their presentation skills, including becoming comfortable in front of a microphone and learning to read scripts in newscaster style.

Reflecting the eclectic style of the radio station, the Journalism Programme at USP has also had something of a topsy-turvy life. Unlike its Papua New Guinea counterpart, the genesis of journalism at the regional university developed in two stages, quite distinctly if sharing similar problems. The first period was during the late 1980s with the establishment of an extension study and vocational based Certificate in Journalism programme sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC). The later period, when a double major degree programme was established, began in 1994 and was founded with French government aid funds and a coordinator from France.

### **The Murray Masterton era**

Founding lecturer Dr Murray Masterton, a New Zealander and co-author of *Now the News in Detail*, almost stumbled into the USP challenge by chance. In early 1984, while he was still teaching at Hartley College of Advanced Education in Adelaide but about to join Deakin University in Geelong, Victoria, Masterton was asked by the Commonwealth Journalists Association if he would deliver two short in-house programmes for broadcast journalists in Apia, Samoa, and Bikinebeu, Kiribati. He agreed and ran the courses in August that year, after he had moved to Deakin and thanks to that university's support.<sup>4</sup> During his time in Samoa, he received a telegram asking if he could stop off for a couple of days before he moved on to the Kiribati course to 'have talks with the USP about a journalism course'. Masterton agreed and juggled his travel arrangements.

I changed my timetable to do this because it sounded more interesting, but there was a bit of a snag. There was no message for me at Nadi, so I phoned Sir Len Usher,<sup>5</sup> who had originated the whole thing, and flew on to Nausori. He met me but said he had received no message to say I was coming, so nothing had been arranged at the Uni. Nevertheless, we met Marjorie Crocombe, and a couple of others whose names I can't remember, and spoke for a morning about what was needed to get an initial certificate course under way.<sup>6</sup>

Masterton travelled on to Kiribati expecting nothing to happen in a hurry, if at all. But he was wrong.

Less than two years later [1986], while at my desk in Deakin, I was told a woman outside wanted to see me. It was Penelope Schoeffel with an offer I very much hoped to accept. Would I come to Suva for a period of about six weeks and write a journalism programme, or at least the first part of one? This was really where it all began.<sup>7</sup>

The CFTC agreed to fund a programme for two years, extended to three, but to be reconsidered at the end of that period. And the plan was for the founding lecturer, or perhaps his successor, to 'train an indigenous person, or persons, or find them from the local media and prepare them to take over the course'. However, Masterton was given no help or encouragement by anyone at USP to achieve this latter objective. Masterton and his wife, Rona, arrived in Suva in June 1986 for an 'interesting six weeks' during which he wrote the introductory course for the proposed Certificate in Journalism course. It was to be offered under the Literature and Language Department of the School of Humanities, then headed by Professor Andrew Horn.

We got on well enough personally, since Andrew had a most engaging personality. I'm not so sure our professional association was as well oiled. I wanted to do it my way, which was not always what Andrew thought it ought to be.<sup>8</sup>

At the end of six weeks, Masterton had written the Introductory course for both print and broadcast journalists. Even before he left Suva he was invited back to USP at the end of the year to take the next step in writing the programme, a sequential course to be conducted in two areas: print and broadcast. Again, Masterton and Rona spent six weeks in Suva and this time he produced a second book for broadcast journalism and a reader. During this visit, Masterton was encouraged to apply to be the inaugural teacher of the course. He was eventually appointed.

After a short delay arranging leave from Deakin University, where he had been inaugurating a broadcast journalism course, Masterton and his wife were again on their way to Suva. By then, Fiji's third-ranked military

officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka, had already staged his first military coup in Fiji the previous month, on 14 May 1987. There was a brief period of uncertainty about the future of the journalism course.

Rabuka had already done his coup stuff and CFTC, always the gentlemen, gave me the opportunity to back down on the grounds that Fiji was too unstable, maybe risky. We decided to go anyway, so my term began there on 4 July 1987.<sup>9</sup>

As Masterton recalled later in an article for *Australian Journalism Review*, 'apathy throughout the Pacific about press freedom in Fiji was shaken up by the Rabuka coup'.<sup>10</sup>

Like most of the Australian journalists who were rushed like firemen to Suva to report on the coup and its aftermath, I thought I knew enough about Fiji to know what would happen in the two years to come. Unlike most of the journalists, I had visited Fiji several times and in the previous year I had made two stays of [six] weeks, each while writing the introductory course for the certificate programme I was about to teach. There seemed no need to decline [the job]. Fiji would soon settle down.

Again, like most of the visiting journalists, I was wrong. Fiji did not settle down — or to be more exact, it did, then it didn't, and lately it has become worse instead of better. So it was an interesting and challenging two years to be there.<sup>11</sup>

Funding for the course at USP was entirely from CFTC, involving joint input from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The choice of whom would become the CFTC staff member was left to USP, but with CFTC approval. In his first semester teaching the Introductory course — designed to cover both print and broadcast journalism — Masterton also had another task. He was to rewrite the print partner to the sequential broadcast journalism course already written, but fortunately not printed.

This proved to be a problem for me, since I quickly learned that my approach did not match the Pacific style of students as well as it should. So I began by re-writing the broadcasting course, even if only changing style and approach, not content. Then I started on the print course.<sup>12</sup>

Difficulties in teaching the course were divided between those within the university and those imposed from outside. The course was something new for students, all of whom were already working as journalists — about half of them involved in some sector of government publicity or information.

They had to come to terms with the fact that lectures took place at a given time and place, and that there was no flexibility of either. I had to come to terms with the fact that employers



occasionally (and family matters frequently) kept students from their fixed time lectures, whether at USP (the classes were in teaching rooms in the then Literature and Language wing, where I had my own office) or by radio extension. Radio extension provided problems of its own. The equipment was not always as reliable as it might have been, and was subject to weather and sunspot conditions, over which no one had any control.<sup>13</sup>

Masterton also faced a 'never-ending computer problem'.

I had one in my office and bought one of my own. At the beginning of the course no student had a couter, although there were computers in use at *The Fiji Times* and in the radio stations. Copy for use or for assessment arrived in all forms.<sup>14</sup>

There was also an internal problem at USP for Masterton, although 'not a serious one'. Staff members did not consider journalism a worthwhile addition to the curriculum. 'They felt the money could have been better spent elsewhere and didn't hesitate to say so.'<sup>15</sup> In spite of the generous support from CFTC, which paid Masterton's salary and some costs, there was limited funding for travel. This restricted the founding lecturer's ability to visit students and media in other island nations. Masterton used Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) conferences plus what travel funds USP could offer to go the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu, but he was unable to visit the Melanesian states, Solomon Islands or Vanuatu.

### In the shadow of Rabuka's coups

Masterton found the post-coup régime in Fiji something of a problem. It became apparent very early in his stay at USP that 'every word of every journalism programme' leaving the campus regional satellite broadcast studio was being monitored by Rabuka's people.

I had several tips, smilingly delivered and apparently without rancour, that I had better be careful [about] what I said. The university had already warned me to sidestep any questions from other islands about what was happening in Fiji, but these warnings from others meant more: that I should tread carefully, in speaking about freedom of the press, for instance.<sup>16</sup>

After he left Fiji, Masterton wrote about his experiences and some media freedom dilemmas in *Australian Journalism Review*, concluding that 'across the Pacific there was apathy towards press freedom as we know it long before Fiji's military took away what freedom there was in their country'. He lamented the departure of Fiji's 'most able and probing' journalists, people such as the *Fiji Sun's* Nemani Delaibatiki who left Suva to join New Zealand's *Waikato Times*.<sup>17</sup>

The newspapers and radio battled on, always claiming publicly that they were not censored, yet even at USP I had evidence to the contrary. Everyone's satellite broadcasts were monitored by the military, but they took particular interest in mine because they were about journalism, and they made no secret about that interest. To be fair, the military government never interfered with my teaching, even when it was on sensitive subjects. But then I was a Commonwealth appointee. Indian lecturers were not so secure.

By chance, the first journalism satellite broadcast after the second coup was on freedom of the press — a broadcast from a nation where the press was militarily closed and the radio strictly censored. The broadcast went ahead as scheduled, but it was the one time I was truly nervous about being arrested at the microphone.<sup>18</sup>

Evidence of covert censorship came later, recalled Masterton. Students attending a three-week practical workshop in Suva had prepared a publication called *South Pacific Magazine*, about to be printed by *The Fiji Times* for distribution in the students' home countries. After delivering the paste-up production pages personally, Masterton was recalled by managing editor Geoff Hussey a few hours later. Hussey asked him to delete a paragraph in a front-page story about Fiji's strict Methodist Sunday observance laws. A direct quote from Rabuka's book *No Other Way*<sup>19</sup> about his desire to 'Christianise the Fiji Indians' had *The Fiji Times* worried that troops might raid the newspaper's printing press.

By Western standards press freedom in Fiji was comatose and is still little revived, although there are now plenty of voices clamouring in its favour. Even if revival is miraculous it will not match what we call a free press for many years to come, if ever, because of the different attitude to the press in Fiji, and in all the islands.<sup>20</sup>

The Journalism Programme received help from Australia, although this was not official. Masterton asked the Pacific Area Newspaper Publishing Association (PANPA) in Sydney for help with paste-up equipment needed for class work and publication preparation.

They sent up a waxer (which cost a bit) and a good supply of wax, steel rules and matt knives. This was before the days of electronic page make-up, so it was state of the art for those times — but not for long.<sup>21</sup>

At the end of each year, the print students tried their hand at preparing a real publication. The radio students, with the help of recording and editing equipment from the German-funded PACBROAD project and its head Hendrik Bussiek, enjoyed the chance of making something in the way of taped programmes for use in their home broadcasting systems.

We had nothing, although the students used basic recorder units to get the hang of making material sound worthwhile on tape.<sup>22</sup>

The print students typeset their copy on computers, printed it out — headlines and all, and then cut and paste onto 'page dummies wheedled out of *The Fiji Times*'. The *Times* printed the publications for the students, at least enough copies 'so that everyone involved got a copy with plenty to give away to anyone interested'. Masterton believed the university was charged for the printing, 'but it was certainly less than the *Times*' cost'. The publications were eight pages broadsheet — pink one year and yellow the next.

### A matter of ethics

In his time at USP, Masterton was 'always intrigued' by the approach to ethics among many Pacific journalists.

There was no code of ethics existing on any island and the attitude of students, many of whom were actually working journalists, although with little experience, was that ethics would be a nuisance. They said so in class.<sup>23</sup>

In keeping with what he thought an academic should do, Masterton tried doing some original research into what Islanders thought of their media — print or broadcast — and also into a code of ethics: did the Pacific want or need one? He presented a paper at a PINA conference in Nuku'alofa in 1988, which set out the question: should there be a code of ethics for Islander journalists? Later published by *PINA Nius* newsletter, the article raised different cultural and religious beliefs as a possible barrier to a regional code.<sup>24</sup> It said:

There have been questions about possible codes of ethics included in the examination papers for the USP's Introduction to Applied Journalism and Applied Journalism 1 courses. Responses from students, almost all already practising journalists or government information officers, showed that all thought such a code necessary, although there were reservations.

Three out of five considered that because of the small numbers involved in each country that the code should be regional for the whole English-speaking South Pacific area. The other two-fifths, although favouring a code, considered that regional culture differences might be great enough to make a regional code impractical and so favoured individual codes for the journalists of each island nation.<sup>25</sup>

When the Tonga meeting of PINA asked Masterton to take the issue further, he circulated a four-page information folder to all those working as journalists or employing journalists so that they would be familiar with

the issues. The final sheet was a questionnaire respondents could fill and return, 'but so few did that it seemed hardly worth the effort'.<sup>26</sup>

After he left Fiji, Masterton paid his own way to the PINA conference in Honiara in 1989 to try to see the issue through. Information sheets were distributed so that participants had plenty of time to consider the issues before an ethics discussion on the final day.

When the matter went to discussion ... it became a shambles. Not because the Islanders didn't have opinions to express (as I found out later, they certainly did), but because all the visitors from Australia and the United States (not Europe, I must admit) spoke up as if they were experts on what should be in a code of ethics and argued for a code that copied their own. The Islanders were too 'polite' to speak against this, even though it totally contradicted the Pacific way of doing things.<sup>27</sup>

Masterton entered the debate at one stage to ask the 'visitors' to keep their own counsel for a while and listen to what the Pacific journalists had to say. However, he was challenged by an American visitor who claimed that Masterton was 'not a recognised expert on ethics' and that all Masterton wanted to do was 'see the Islanders adopt a code I wanted to write'.<sup>28</sup> Masterton recalls that the visitor later apologised for his misrepresentations, but that was after the ethics discussion had ended, 'so it was too late to undo any damage. The whole gathering had failed'.<sup>29</sup> Not long after the PINA convention in Honiara, Masterton was back at Deakin University conscious of the 'ethics mess' and also of continuing criticism in Fiji and Australia about the reporting of the coup by 'foreign' journalists.<sup>30</sup>

In other research, a 1988 regional survey on the status of media coordinated from USP, Masterton concluded that 'Islanders in the English-speaking South Pacific don't think much of the quality of their newspapers and radio news services, nor of the journalists who provide those services'.<sup>31</sup> The news outlets were considered to

make too many errors in fact and interpretation, that their stories are incomplete and lacking in background, that they are too often no more than government handouts. Island newspapers are without exception seen as worse to much worse than those published in Pacific rim countries, and the professional abilities of island journalists are considered low.<sup>32</sup>

Murray Masterton was quite forthright in pressing for what was needed for the journalism programme, even to the extent of perhaps being considered rather 'pushy for journalism'. Some people in the Department of Literature and Language and in the School of Humanities were uncomfortable with this dynamic energy. But Masterton believed he was acting in the best interests of the developing programme.

I was quite unreserved in pushing for what the university undertook to make available, and protested when they didn't. I know I got a reputation for being pushy for journalism. In my last brush with the newly appointed Head of School, he told me: 'Quit complaining. Just pack up and go home. We don't need your type of journalism here, anyway.'<sup>33</sup>

Foundation coordinator Murray Masterton was followed by the next CFTC contract staff person, Trine Østlyngen, a Norwegian journalist and journalism educator. She consulted closely with Masterton while taking up the post and during her term at USP. However, in the end this period was not entirely successful even though Østlyngen was regarded as an excellent teacher. She did not remain long, serving less than a year. Some consider, given the cultural conservatism of Fiji, especially during that post-coup era in 1989 that it was too early to have a young woman coordinating the programme.

Bob Bartlett replaced Østlyngen. He too left on a rather disgruntled note after just a year as coordinator, rightly signalling that a programme of this kind encounters four major obstacles on which it could founder — inappropriate textbooks; lack of continuity of journalism coordinators; lack of proper direction of CFTC experts by the university administration; and problems with satellite teaching.<sup>34</sup> He was also disappointed by the 'diminishing returns' because of an unwillingness by some USP staff to take the programme seriously and also because of the media industry's tendency to increasingly 'pay it only lip service' on the basis of a claim that it did not meet practical training needs. He singled out PINA for particular criticism. In his final report to the CFTC donors, he concluded:

The returns have also been diminished, in this expert's opinion, by a perception among some USP staff that the Journalism Programme is a vaguely amusing anomaly, a diverting experiment somehow grafted onto the body academic of the School of Humanities.

The two parties — industry [PINA] and the USP — have been steadily drifting apart, witness Radio FM96's importation of a Canadian broadcaster to conduct in-house training (an exercise which has largely failed) and witness a similar move by *The Fiji Times* in which computer experts were imported to train staff in the use of their new equipment ...

This paucity of commitment to the programme becomes remarkable when it is remembered that PINA was instrumental in the establishment of the programme and that the greatest need for practical journalism training is most often demonstrated in the small island nations such as Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu.<sup>35</sup>

In his final analysis:

As is often the case in journalism education, the USP Journalism Programme faces the conundrum: shall we provide fodder for the industry, or shall we provide an academic tour around the subject of journalism? <sup>36</sup>

After Bartlett's departure, the Certificate in Journalism programme wound down although the last of an estimated twenty one people to gain the certificate was Media Centre audio technician Maraia Lesuma in 1993 (see Table 7.1). Eventually the certificate was replaced by a totally different double major BA degree in journalism four years later. But the separate new programme would again be an integral part of the Department of Literature and Language.

### The French connection

Professor Andrew Horn, then still Head of Literature and Language, played a key role in the next phase of journalism development in the Pacific by securing French government funding to establish a degree programme. An engaging personality and something of a Francophile, Horn had a long-standing desire to teach at the Sorbonne. At one stage, he ran a summer school course there. Horn paved the way for French assistance. He helped negotiate a deal with France and the *École Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille* (ESJ), a leading French college of journalism that offers postgraduate courses. At that time the French government had for a while 'sponsored a very low-intensity French language programme at the off-campus Fiji Centre [in Raiwaqa, Suva], with a young French volunteer who had no contact with any teaching department'.<sup>37</sup> Horn recalled:

When the Commonwealth, and especially Australia and NZ, suspended projects in Fiji after Rabuka's first coup, France saw the opportunity to develop greater contacts in the Anglophone Pacific and, thus, greatly increased its Fiji activity. Indeed, French PM Pierre Rocard even landed in Nadi to award Rabuka the Legion d'Honneur. It was made known to the university that new French aid for selected projects would be considered. Both USP and the French saw advantage in supporting media education in the region. From this eventually emerged the Journalism diploma and degree.<sup>38</sup>

Another issue at the time was how to restructure the department to accommodate both the French language course and journalism.

The USP Senate agreed — quite soundly and belatedly, and much to the distress of then extension director Marjorie Crocombe — that all academic programmes had to come under teaching departments. This brought both the rudimentary journalism offerings and the even more rudimentary French courses within

a newly defined Department of Literature and Language (formerly English) and a newly defined School of Humanities (my much-resisted recommendation to replace the misnomer of the earlier School of Education).<sup>39</sup>

By 1992, France agreed to fund the first three years of the journalism programme with substantial development seed funding of F\$200,000.<sup>40</sup> This included funding for the founding coordinator of the programme, François Turmel, a journalist who had spent many years based in London with the BBC World Service. Two years later France also partially funded a second lecturer from Australia, print specialist Philip Cass. Finally, it funded a third part-time lecturer, radio specialist Sophie Dutertre, a Melbourne-based French national who had worked for Radio Australia's Pacific Service. Turmel, who took early retirement from the BBC to establish the degree journalism programme at USP, had been editor of the BBC's French Service and also London correspondent for Radio France Internationale. A holder of the Chevalier de l'Ordre du Merite, Turmel took up his new appointment as senior lecturer at USP in 1993. He toured widely in the South Pacific while writing the initial course curriculum, an eight-course sequential journalism major that gave strong and equal emphasis to all media specialities, print, radio and television. This became a unique characteristic of the USP Journalism Programme, especially when online journalism was added as a fourth speciality five years later.

Philip Cass, an Australian born in Wewak, Papua New Guinea, who had extensive journalism experience in the Pacific, including a stint as chief subeditor of *The Independent* in Port Moresby, joined USP from the Central Queensland University in 1995. He recalled how he was ill from an 'unpleasant tropical bug' at the time the job was offered to him.

My son actually accepted on my behalf. And I flew off [to Suva] in February. I guess I walked into the thing a bit blind. François Turmel had been there [two years] before to get things under way. I was brought in basically to add the more academic subjects.<sup>41</sup>

Cass endured stressful moments on the programme over funding for both Turmel and himself, and also for the journalism activities. There were uncertainties over the funding that arrived by a 'circuitous route' at USP through the French Embassy and also questions over whether the allocated funds were used strictly as a budget for the Journalism Programme.

Certainly my experience was that some months after I was there I was called in [to the Bursary] and informed sorrowfully that all the money that had been allocated for my expenses had been used up and they weren't sure when they would actually be able to pay me. Which was unsettling to say the least, but I was

# WANSOLWARA

"One Ocean - One People"

Wansolwara is a student journal programme produced by journalism students at USP, November 1996

## Honiara plans marine centre

**USPSA PRODUCE TV NEWS**

**a Party**

The Honiara, capital of the Solomon Islands, is a tropical island nation of 200,000 people. It is a member of the USP. The Honiara government is planning to build a marine centre in Honiara. The centre will be a multi-purpose facility that will provide a range of services to the marine industry. The centre will also provide a range of services to the marine industry. The centre will also provide a range of services to the marine industry.

The Honiara government is planning to build a marine centre in Honiara. The centre will be a multi-purpose facility that will provide a range of services to the marine industry. The centre will also provide a range of services to the marine industry. The centre will also provide a range of services to the marine industry.



**USP Indian week a success**

## Treasurer's report is rejected

The USP's Treasurer's report for the year ending 31st October 1996 has been rejected by the USP's Council. The Council has decided to reject the report because it does not provide a clear picture of the USP's financial position. The Council has also decided to reject the report because it does not provide a clear picture of the USP's financial position.

## Dictionary for Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea

The USP's Dictionary for Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea is a comprehensive reference work that provides information on the languages and cultures of these three countries. The dictionary is a comprehensive reference work that provides information on the languages and cultures of these three countries.

## Support co-ed dorms

The USP's support for co-ed dorms is a key part of its commitment to providing a high-quality education for all students. The USP's support for co-ed dorms is a key part of its commitment to providing a high-quality education for all students.

**First edition:** The inaugural issue of *Wansolwara*, Vol 1 No 1, November 1996.

cheerfully informed that they would simply take money from another aid programme to pay me. I know that François had enormous difficulties with funding, trying to get reimbursement for his expenses — he had enormous difficulties getting people to actually sign off on documents. François used to get quite frustrated. Being the gentleman, he never quite blew his top, but I know that he was quite angry about it.<sup>42</sup>

France carried on funding the programme, and actually extended its grants régime until the end of 1997. It also provided a further F\$40,000 aid package for five PowerMac computers and photo imaging and desktop publishing software. But the funding crises continued, which were 'very unsettling' for the staff.

[It was] largely due to François' tenacity and his willingness to put his own money into the project continually that kept things going in spite of the financial crises caused by this peculiar system



of French payment. I was strongly suspicious that the first two editions of *Wansolwara* came out of François' pocket.<sup>43</sup>

*Wansolwara* newspaper was created at USP with the encouragement of Philip Cass because there was 'no real outlet for journalism students' work or any way for them to show what they could do, short of actually working for the media or finding a rare work experience slot'.<sup>44</sup> He had started *Felix Culpa*, a successful journalism student newspaper at Central Queensland University in Australia, and he thought that his students could also publish at USP.

Now, common sense would have dictated that I start the paper with a second or third year group of students who were familiar with desktop publishing, but I felt that what was needed was a group of students who would stay with the paper for a few years and grow with it. I therefore decided that I would give the project to what was then the first year class. They were, thankfully,

One Ocean  
 One  
 People  
**WANSOLWARA**  
 Vol 2, No 1, April 1997



437th cadetmate Shukela from the Cook Islands performs a traditional dance during the festivities that marked the commencement of the first semester year at USP's Lautoka campus.

## USP hikes fees for private students

USP students will be asked to pay more for their education from next semester. The university has announced that it will increase the fees for private students by 10 per cent. This decision was made at a meeting of the Senate on Monday 11 of this month. The increase will affect all private students who are not members of the Fiji Education Trust.

The increase in fees is a result of the rising costs of running the university. The Senate also decided to increase the fees for private students who are not members of the Fiji Education Trust. This decision was made at a meeting of the Senate on Monday 11 of this month.

The increase in fees is a result of the rising costs of running the university. The Senate also decided to increase the fees for private students who are not members of the Fiji Education Trust. This decision was made at a meeting of the Senate on Monday 11 of this month.



USP Deputy Vice-Chancellor Asof Shukela says private students will have to pay more for their education.

**Brawl at ISA social**  
 A brawl broke out at the ISA social on Monday 11. The students were celebrating the start of the semester. The brawl was between two groups of students. The police were called to the scene and the students were taken to the hospital.

**Baba: Bed not in danger**  
 The Bed not in danger campaign is still going strong. The students are protesting against the government's plan to build a new bed for the Bed not in danger campaign.

**Dining hall management apologises**  
 The dining hall management has apologised for the poor service provided during the semester. The management has promised to improve the service in the future.

enthusiastic about the idea and ... François gave his blessing to the project and persuaded the French Embassy to fund us.

We didn't actually have a name for the paper and the suggestion that we call it the *Stanley Weekly* was not met with complete enthusiasm by [founding editor Stanley] Simpson. However, it occurred to me that an expression I had heard in Papua New Guinea might be appropriate — *Wansolwara*. 'Wansolwara' expresses the idea that all of us who are born in or live in the Pacific are bound together by the ocean, whether our home is Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tahiti, the Marianas — or even Australia and New Zealand! USP is home to students and staff from all over the great ocean, so *Wansolwara* seemed a perfect name.<sup>45</sup>

Cass found that publishing the first edition was not easy. The students were being thrown in at the deep end with everything — writing the stories, taking photos, scanning images, selling ads and organising the printing. However, the students were enthusiastic and determined to get the paper out with the first edition being published in November 1996.

In the end, the first edition came out late, we didn't have many ads and some of the scanned photos produced people who were two inches wide and twelve feet high, but the important thing was that the students had proved that they could do it.

When the paper finally appeared, the reaction was extremely favourable. Our aim had been to strike a balance between campus news and a broader range of stories about issues affecting everybody in the Pacific. In the first issue, for instance, we had a piece on the highly questionable use of skin lightening creams.<sup>46</sup>

François Turmel gave his 'unqualified support', as did several staff at the USP Media Centre — such as Pat Craddock, a former Radio New Zealand International senior current affairs producer who also played a key role in teaching the radio students and with the student-run Radio Pasifik, and Mara Fulmer who 'put up with us living under their feet'. Without their tolerance and support, Cass believes, the students would not have got through the post-production phase.

By 1997 we were in a stronger financial footing, although as usual with newspapers, the advertising [payments] were a long time coming in. We had a better handle on the technology and had begun to tackle some big issues such as the civil war on Bougainville, the role of *fa'fine* in Samoa and the rise in the number of suicides in Fiji.

We had also begun to be noticed by the student community. Our coverage of some very questionable goings on at student functions and financial irregularities in the USP Students Association led to one of our student staff, Mithleshni Gurdayal,

being threatened — always a sign that our reporting was not only true, but causing embarrassment.<sup>47</sup>

By the time Cass prepared to leave for England towards the end of 1997, broadcaster Sophie Dutertre had joined USP and was also drafted into the production team.

### Media skirmishes with the campus

In November 1997, the USP Journalism Programme sailed into a storm when I was appointed journalism coordinator and senior lecturer to succeed François Turmel. There was strong opposition to my appointment from a small group of journalists lobbying in support of the Pacific Islands News Association secretariat in Suva, which was opposed to me joining USP. A whispering campaign began along with a series of unsigned articles purporting to be ‘news stories’ planted by PINA officials in the *Daily Post*. The editor at the time was Laisa Taga, a former treasurer of PINA and the confidante of *Islands Business* editor-in-chief Peter Lomas. The main objections against me seemed to be that I:

- was a critic of the Rabuka coups in my book *Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the Pacific* (1989);
- had been involved in efforts on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) through the Pacific Journalists Association (PJA) to establish ‘leftwing’ journalist unions in the Pacific;
- had been an outspoken critic of PINA on past occasions, and
- was an expatriate New Zealander.<sup>48</sup>

There was also apparent insecurity on the part of this particular faction over the prospect that the USP Journalism Programme might rival PINA’s UNESCO Pacific Journalism Development Centre with both an independent public perspective on the profession and practice of journalism in the Pacific, and as a perceived competitor for donor funding.

Several people publicly protested at the smear campaign in the *Daily Post*. Among them was Josefa Nata, coordinator of the Fiji Journalism Institute, who wrote a complaint to the Fiji News Council appealing for an inquiry into ‘what many in the industry believe that the campaign is being engineered by the Islands Business International who [sic] has had a long standing feud with Robie’.<sup>49</sup> His points in the letter included:

More frighteningly [sic] is the insidious manner in which the campaigners against Robie are advocating against freedom of expression in Fiji. This is the sum total of their campaign. It is clear from the tone of the articles that the Fiji government should intervene and prevent the appointment of Robie by highlighting his opposition to the military coup [in 1987]. Are they are saying that any journalist, or anyone for that matter, who opposed the coup should not be allowed to work in Fiji? <sup>50</sup>

While Fiji News Council chairperson Daryl Tarte conceded that the articles were ‘slanted against Mr Robie’, he declined to accept Nata’s complaint before the council’s adjudication process.<sup>51</sup> Tarte added: ‘I understand the USP have [sic] now made the appointment and will no doubt be applying to the Fiji government for a work permit’.

I am sure that both the USP and the government are fully aware of Mr Robie’s background and his considerable strengths as a journalist and these will [be] fairly assessed in terms of the government’s criteria for granting work permits.<sup>52</sup>

In fact, after taking up my position as the new journalism coordinator at USP in March 1998, I did file a letter of complaint to the Fiji News Council.<sup>53</sup> The council avoided taking the issue to the full Complaints Committee where an adjudication would have been required, but after mediation the new *Daily Post* editor, Jale Moala, published a public apology seven months later — and he admitted to me privately that the newspaper should never have published the articles.<sup>54</sup>

Journalism students petitioned the Fiji government in support of the appointment of both Ingrid Leary, another New Zealand lecturer who had been news director at Fiji Television and who had an honours law degree as well as journalism qualifications, and me. Ironically, the programme had doubled in size with our appointment — thirty two new enrolments for 1998. The suspense over the future of the programme was captured in a Fiji *Sunday Times* article by Earnest Heatley two weeks after the start of the semester and a report about the smear campaign:

The University of the South Pacific prides itself in its unified, regional status and often shies away from outside politics. Yet often, as in recent weeks, its normal academic functions have been disrupted by influences outside the campus. The delay in the issuing of work permits to Ingrid Leary and David Robie, the two expatriate New Zealanders offered lecturing positions at the USP journalism department, has kept the fraternity in a state of uncertainty.

The two were appointed at the end of last year for the USP Journalism Studies unit, Robie as course coordinator and Leary [as lecturer]. Both are still awaiting the Fiji Immigration Department’s verdict, which might even cripple the newly formed department, just into the first semester and trying to gather momentum ...

The recent appointments were followed by pressure from the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) to grant the position[s] to locals despite the USP Selection Board having already made its choice ... Both Mr Robie and Ms Leary are adamant that the delay in issuing of their permits is a direct result of politicisation from outside bodies.<sup>55</sup>

Once the work permit issue was resolved (at least for the time being), Ingrid Leary and I immediately set about consolidating the Journalism Programme and laying the foundations for its development over the next few years. The second semester course Introduction to Journalism II was redesigned as a dedicated Media Law and Ethics course, taught by Ingrid. I also introduced six-week fulltime professional attachments with news media organisations for the first time in Fiji along with a redesigned final semester Journalism Production course. By the end of 1997, before our arrival, the programme had produced six graduates. Over the next seven years it turned out a further seventy five graduates around the region, eleven of them with a new industry based Diploma in Pacific Journalism with ten course credits (see Tables 7.1, 7.2). But the opponents of the programme remained in the background, biding their time, and two other political controversies blew up over journalism education in the next three years.

The rapid developments in the Journalism Programme, and also the problems and political sensitivities faced, were acknowledged in an external review of the Department of Literature and Language in 1998/9 by Professor Andrew Pawley of the Australian National University. He noted:

The Journalism Programme was in crisis in 1997. After the initial four years' funding from the French government had ended there was no core funding allocated to replace the foundation staff. Funds were then found from School [of Humanities] savings for two appointments. With the arrival early in 1998 of two experienced and accomplished journalists, David Robie (coordinator) and Ingrid Leary, the programme has been salvaged and reinvigorated.<sup>56</sup>

Observing a sudden surge in first-year enrolments with an intake in 1998 of thirty two new students while a ceiling of just twenty had been set, Pawley remarked: 'This is very high, given that courses are essentially restricted to intending majors and that for technical reasons classes must be kept small.'<sup>57</sup> He pressed for a third fulltime staff member and argued in favour of a postgraduate Diploma in Journalism. About the political climate, he commented:

There are certain political tensions inherent in the programme. Journalism is by its very nature a discipline with a high public profile; both lecturers are themselves practising journalists and students in the process of learning their craft are themselves likely to become involved in media debates. Given the sensitive political environment in Fiji, and the programme's dependence on good relations with the Fiji media, both staff and students need to play a fairly cool hand if this extremely important enterprise is to run smoothly.<sup>58</sup>

**Table 7.1: Journalism graduates at USP by qualification and year, 1987–2004**

Year	CIJ <sup>1</sup> (1987)	BA <sup>2</sup> (1994)	DPJ <sup>3</sup> (1997)	GDPMS <sup>4</sup> (2000)	Masters <sup>4</sup> (2000)
1987	7	—	—	—	—
1988	7	—	—	—	—
1989	2	—	—	—	—
1990	3	—	—	—	—
1991	1	—	—	—	—
1992	0	—	—	—	—
1993	1	—	—	—	—
1994	—	—	—	—	—
1995	—	—	—	—	—
1996	—	3	—	—	—
1997	—	3	—	—	—
1998	—	11	2	—	—
1999	—	5	4	—	—
2000	—	14	1	0	0
2001	—	11	3	0	0
2002	—	10	1	0	0
2003	—	8	0	0	0
2004	—	4	1	1	0
Total	21	69	12	1	0

<sup>1</sup> The one-year Certificate in Journalism was introduced in 1987. But there is uncertainty over the actual number who gained the certificate. The above figures are estimated.

<sup>2</sup> The original BA with a double major including journalism (20 course credits) was introduced in 1994 with the first three graduates in 1996.

<sup>3</sup> In 1997, the programme introduced a two-year Diploma in Pacific Journalism with 10 course credits for the benefit of working journalists.

<sup>4</sup> In 2000, Postgraduate Diploma in Pacific Media Studies and Masters in Pacific Media Studies programmes were introduced, but they were hindered by the George Speight-led attempted coup and a staff shortage.

Source: USP Academic Office

Although the Journalism Programme quickly established strong links with individual news media organisations, especially with its attachment programme, the ties were developed mainly with the *Daily Post*, which had a controlling government interest while retaining editorial independence, Fiji Television, and to some degree with the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation and Communications Fiji Ltd.<sup>59</sup> But some elements of the media remained a ‘closed shop’, particularly the Fiji Media Council which was dominated by the influence of the *Islands Business* group and *The Fiji Times*. Both were negative towards tertiary education and graduate journalists, although *Islands Business* had in fact employed graduates from USP while failing to keep them.

**Table 7.2: Degree, certificate and diploma journalism graduates at USP by qualification and country, 1987–2004**

Country	CIJ (1987)	BA (1994)	DPJ (1997)	GDPMS (2000)	Masters (2000)
Fiji	18	43	8	1	—
FSM	—	2	—	—	—
Kiribati	—	1	—	—	—
Maldives	—	1	—	—	—
PNG	—	—	1	—	—
Samoa	1	8	—	—	—
Solomon Is	1	6	—	—	—
Tahiti	—	1	—	—	—
Tonga	1	1	1	—	—
Tuvalu	—	2	—	—	—
USA	—	—	1	—	—
Vanuatu	—	4	1	—	—
Total	21	69	12	1	—

Source: USP Academic Office

*The Fiji Times* was caught up in a second work permit controversy in August 1998 through the ‘captive’ reporting by one of its controversial, but influential, reporters, Margaret Wise.<sup>60</sup> According to Wise, the Fiji government had launched an ‘investigation’ into complaints that both Leary and I were breaching our work permit conditions.<sup>61</sup> The inquiry was said to be directed towards revoking our work permits.<sup>62</sup> It apparently focused on a report on my independent *Café Pacific* website, a media and politics commentary and current affairs netzine, [www.asiapac.org.fj](http://www.asiapac.org.fj).<sup>63</sup> The article provided an overview of South Pacific news media and criticised the Fiji government plans to legislate for a statutory Media Council to replace the independent and self-regulated council already in place. Complaints were also said to be against Ingrid Leary over her weekly ‘Media Watch’ column in the *Daily Post* and tutorials conducted at the Fiji Journalism Institute. *The Fiji Times*’ report claimed that we were ‘using [our] positions at the USP to lend authority to [our] work outside it’. The following day, Wise again reported similar vague and unsubstantiated claims against us. This time her report also quoted the Home Affairs Ministry’s Permanent Secretary, Emitai Boladuadua, as saying the government ‘would withdraw [our] work permits if [we] were found to have breached the terms under which they were given’.<sup>64</sup> Wise never reported our side of the story. The same day an official statement was issued by the USP Registrar, Sarojini Pillay, stating that we were not in breach of our work permits.<sup>65</sup> She added that our activities were within the normal roles of research and publication carried out by academics.

Jone Dakuvula, a former press secretary to Prime Minister Rabuka and now research director for the Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF), stressed in a letter to *The Sunday Times* that under the Fiji Constitution [Section 30(1)]:

Every person has the right to freedom of expression, including: freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas; and freedom of the press and other media.

He added:

Reading from your report, it appears to me that some local news media employees or journalists were involved in these complaints, which seem to be based mainly on these persons' disagreements with either the views of David Robie and Ingrid Leary, or the fact that they have been lawfully employed by USP.

Our new Constitution has been in force for barely one month and here we have some news media people attempting to suppress two well-qualified journalists' freedom of expression, perhaps



**Jale Moala:** 'The saddest thing is the deafening silence.'

*Photo: David Robie*



in the hope that they could be expelled from this country for the 'crime' of writing, publishing and teaching journalism.

Where is the Fiji journalists' much vaunted Code of Ethics? <sup>66</sup>

A *Daily Post* editorial commended the Journalism Programme and us personally for the improvements we had made in a short time. The newspaper's editor, Jale Moala, wrote that in the past, when the USP Journalism Programme had been established with French government aid funding, 'it was never as good as it should have been':

However, since the appointment of Mr Robie and Ms Leary, things have changed. There is now realistic practical work being done, and students, for the first time, are on attachment to our newsrooms. Now the students are more involved in technological developments, especially with the internet. These things are possible because Mr Robie and Ms Leary bring into the programme a wide mix of practical and theoretical experiences. Mr Robie is one of the region's most outstanding journalists, who, apart from having written several books, has covered issues in most Pacific Islands. Ms Leary is an experienced newspaper and television journalist. Her forte, however, is law, an area crucial to journalism in a developing country like Fiji. <sup>67</sup>

The editorial added:

The saddest thing is the deafening silence from the Pacific Islands News Association and the Fiji Media Council. By failing to support the rights of journalists, like Mr Robie and Ms Leary, whether they be teachers, students or whatever, these organisations are helping to destroy the very freedom of expression they have so often said they protect.

International reaction criticising the pressure on us flowed with news services and newspapers abroad running news stories on the issue. <sup>68</sup> The Paris-based media freedom group Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) wrote to Information Minister Senator Filipe Bole, protesting against the harassment and asking for us to be allowed to work freely without fear of pressure, as the 1997 Constitution allowed. <sup>69</sup> The Pacific Islands News Association clarified its stand after the criticism in the *Daily Post* editorial, confirming that some of its 'members' had complained to the Fiji government about the work permits. In spite of the international condemnation and the USP rejection of the claim, PINA president William Parkinson again alleged in a statement distributed to editors around the region that many of the 'complaints relate to breaches of their work permit conditions with regards to outside work for local media organisations'. <sup>70</sup> Parkinson also questioned whether the website content of *Café Pacific* would cover stories in a 'fair and balanced manner'. Finally, Senator Bole made it clear on September

8 that there was no foundation to the allegations when he told reporters no investigation was being carried out.<sup>71</sup> The trumped-up issue was dropped after two weeks of a heated media issue debated even in the Senate.

### The post-coup website closure

After restructuring the undergraduate Journalism Programme, an additional ninth course, Special Topics in Journalism, was added as an elective to the eight compulsory core courses. The programme also embarked on a postgraduate offering, with both a Postgraduate Diploma in Pacific Media Studies and a Masters degree in Pacific Media Studies being introduced in 2000. The concept, particularly for the postgraduate qualification, was for 'professional degrees' as offered at some Australian, New Zealand and United States universities. As the programme explained in its course brochure:

An emphasis in this new programme is practical, analytical, critical and professional studies in Asia-Pacific Journalism, Advanced Media Law and Ethics, Online Policy, Research and Publishing, and Special Topics in Journalism — including subjects such as Media Management, Investigative Journalism and Business Journalism. The programme also makes extensive use of USNet satellite technology and the internet in association with the UNESCO-supported training website *Pacific Journalism Online* and publications *Wansohwara* and *Spicol Daily*.<sup>72</sup>

However, just as when the original certificate course began in Murray Masterton's era, the postgraduate programme was in the shadow of an attempted coup. Media industry critics continued to snipe at the programme with *Islands Business* publisher Robert Keith-Reid devoting an entire editorial column in his magazine criticising the USP postgraduate plans. He claimed that 'the trouble with today's academic training for journalists, as the USP effort is starting to show, is that it can produce not journalists but academic anaemics, far removed from the real world'.<sup>73</sup>

[USP] is talking of a full post-graduate programme towards a 'specialist Pacific masters degree in media' and of there being 'a crucial need for more research' into the region's media. The new course will have 'emphasis on investigative journalism, resource development journalism, and advanced economic and political reporting'. By gum, all this for kids who may not be able to competently report the fact of one cat sitting on one mat.<sup>74</sup>

The ill-informed editorial was so full of misrepresentations and factual errors that Pat Craddock<sup>75</sup> and I wrote an open letter to the Fiji media, pointing out that Keith-Reid had never visited the USP programme in the previous three years:

Many of our journalism graduates, which *Islands Business* classifies as 'academic anaemics', are doing outstanding work for reputable organisations both in Fiji and around the South Pacific region. Almost all graduates have jobs in the region's news media and some have been promoted rapidly.

Among the graduates are a radio station director and several reporters with the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation; the special projects editor with *The Review* business news magazine; the business editor with *Fiji's Daily Post*; a feature writer with the *Fiji Sun*; a media officer with the Fiji Human Rights Commission; a senior journalist with the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation; a TV reporter with the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation; a senior reporter on V6AH Radio in the Federated States of Micronesia; and the publications officer for a Fiji-based regional non-government organisation, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre.

One student graduating this year writes a popular film review column for the *Fiji Times* and hosts a daily radio show on FM96 in her spare time from studies. Even the two staff writers listed by *Islands Business* on its imprint page are USP journalism graduates.<sup>76</sup>

On Friday, 19 May 2000, almost to the day of the first military coup in 1987, George Speight, a bankrupt businessman, tore off his balaclava to reveal his identity after seizing Parliament and the elected government at gunpoint. Within minutes of the news of the hostage taking being flashed on Radio Fiji news' 11am bulletin — scooped by one of the USP final-year students on attachment [Tamani Nair] — Professor Subramani came into my office and blurted: 'There's been another coup'.

After quick phone calls to confirm the facts, sketchy as they were at that stage, I met our senior student editors to decide on what we would do. At that stage, it was felt the crisis would be over in a few days and we decided to go all out to cover the events — but with a campus perspective. The rear of the university grounds is close to Parliament. Three months later, the USP student journalists were still covering the crisis.

*Wansolwara* already had a team of reporters that morning down at a protest march in downtown Suva (which later erupted into rioting); the news editors set up radio and television monitors; reporters were dispatched to Parliament; the television class was cancelled and a crew sent downtown to Suva where they filmed footage of the riots and arson in the capital. As reporters came back with their stories and digital pictures, most of their work was posted on the journalism website, *Pacific Journalism Online*, [www.usp.ac.fj/journ/](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/).<sup>77</sup> By the time martial law was declared ten days later, on May 29, the Journalism Programme staff and students had posted

109 stories, dozens of soundbites and scores of digital photographs.<sup>78</sup> Student online editor Christine Gounder wrote about it at the time:

Student journalists chose to be on the job. But it hasn't been easy. They survived threats, bureaucratic attempts to gag their website and newspaper, and a shutdown of the university to deliver the news. Grabbing the opportunity to hone their skills, the young journalists didn't waste any time rushing to be on the spot at Parliament on May 19 and the looting and arson sites, around the capital, Suva.<sup>79</sup>

On Sunday, May 28, hours after a mob attacked Fiji Television and cut transmission for almost 48 hours, the university pulled the plug on the website, fearing a similar raid on the sprawling Laucala campus.<sup>80</sup> Undaunted, the students were offered an alternative site hosted by the Department of Social Communication and Journalism at the University of Technology, Sydney, and carried on.<sup>81</sup> The Australian Centre for Independent Journalism director at UTS, Associate Professor Chris Nash, said: 'The suggestion that journalism staff and students, and indeed any academics, might somehow desist from reporting, commenting and publishing on the current situation is akin to suggesting that doctors and nurses should turn their backs on wounded people in a conflict. It's unconscionable'.<sup>82</sup>

At a meeting three days after the shutdown of the website, sought by the Journalism Programme with the Vice-Chancellor, Esekia Solofa, senior university officials said they wanted 'self-censorship' and asked for the newspaper *Wansolwara* to be 'postponed'. When told that *Wansolwara* had already gone to press, the authorities wanted distribution of the paper stopped and for the paper to be inspected with a view to removing articles. This was declined by the programme staff. An American graphics designer, Mara Fulmer, who worked with the Media Centre at USP in the mid-1990s, independently hosted the students' gagged newspaper *Wansolwara Online* at her *Looking Glass* website in the US.<sup>83</sup> 'I consider it an honour and privilege to do this for freedom of the press,' said Fulmer. 'The students have worked so hard on this. They have truly earned their journo stripes'.<sup>84</sup>

After a series of letters of protest to the university administration from groups and organisations as diverse as Reporters Sans Frontières in Paris, the Commonwealth Journalists' Association, the NZ Journalism Education Association, Queensland University's Journalism Department, PEN New Zealand and the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York, Vice-Chancellor Solofa sent me a letter — after *Wansolwara* had been distributed in defiance of the attempt to ban it. Solofa wrote:



Coup special: The Speight attempted coup edition of *Wansolwara*, Vol 5 No 2, June 2000.

The decision I had taken to close down the Journalism Programme website was a straight-forward decision based entirely on one consideration: the safety and security of the property of the university and of the lives of the people engaged in it...

Let me make an important observation, which should cover the criticisms you and others have raised over the closure of the website ...

The USP Journalism Programme is not a media agency, neither is it a news/information outlet. The USP Journalism Programme is an education and training facility for future journalists and others who need journalism knowledge and skills in their work... The current closure of the journalism website has clearly illustrated that our students do not need it to publicise or publish their pieces if that is what their true intention is.<sup>85</sup>

Three senior academic staff immediately protested and the president of the Association of USP Staff (AUSPS), Dr Biman Prasad, called for the letter to be withdrawn, saying it was unjustified and he condemned 'self-

ensorship'. Prasad added: 'Academic freedom is always fundamental to the survival and operation of a university, even more so when there is a crisis and threats to academic freedom'.<sup>86</sup> Prasad later described the incident in a paper about the 'crisis of conscience' for USP academic staff when addressing the annual conference of the New Zealand Association of University Staff (NZAUS) in Wellington:

The staff association was vigilant and took a firm stand on issues that we felt were designed to promote self-censorship. For example, soon after the May 19 coup, the university administration in panic and unilaterally decided to close the journalism programme website. The journalism students were provided with a fabulous opportunity to practise skills in the real life situation what they were learning in theory. Their reporting on the crisis was appreciated around the world.

The administration's drastic move to shut the website down was rather regrettable from the point of view of both staff and students of journalism. The Association of USP Staff protested vigorously against the closure and it was allowed to continue.<sup>87</sup>

On June 28, the website was allowed to reopen (to enable students to access its resources and *Online Classroom*), providing no further news was posted about the Fiji coup. Almost a month later, on July 25, the forty academic staff of the School of Humanities' Board of Studies passed an unanimous resolution criticising the shutdown of the website. Two letters dealing with the political crisis and the role of the university were later forwarded to the Academic Committee. One of the important justifications



**Award winners:** *Wansolwara* student journalists involved in the Speight Fiji coup coverage that won the 2000 Journalism Education Association (JEA) Ossie Award for best overall publication. Editor Reggie Dutt (second from left) with Losana McGowan, Joe Yaya and Peter Emberson.

*Photo: Pacific Journalism Online (USP)*

that the academics gave was that the existence of the journalism website provided important information for staff security during the coup period. The letter defending the website, signed by the acting head of school, Dr Desma Hughes, said:

We believe [the closure of the journalism website on May 29] was unsound pedagogically ...

It has been stated that the purpose of the journalism programme's productions and publications are as training grounds for prospective journalists from around the region. We consider that the journalism website provided outstanding and excellent training for the journalism students in that it involved reporting and commenting on real issues.

The situation that evolved during the time of the coup can hardly be simulated for the purposes of teaching.

The coup gave our students an ideal opportunity to practise their journalism skills under the supervision of one of the school's professional staff members, especially in the area of investigative journalism. We therefore find it difficult to understand the rationale behind the decision to suspend the website that deprived our students.<sup>88</sup>

The board's letter said that being informed was a crucial element of personal security. While the university's security needs were understood, the Journalism Programme's 'unique contribution' to the distribution of reliable and objective news and commentary to Pacific people and the world should have been carefully considered.<sup>89</sup>

An ironic footnote to the affair came during the annual Ossie Awards for the best in student journalism in Australia on December 6. Student journalists of USP dominated the awards for their reporting of the Fiji coup.<sup>90</sup> Publication category judge, deputy editor Mike van Niekerk of *The Age Online*, said the student journalists working on *Pacific Journalism Online* 'rose to the challenge of providing high quality reports of a dramatic international news event on their doorstep.'

They did so in challenging circumstances and by providing these reports on the internet they were one of the few sources of information at critical times of the events taking place. As such, the quality of the writing is of a high standard for students. Taken as a body of work it is very impressive.<sup>91</sup>

At the USP journalism awards held the previous month, the chief guest, New Zealand High Commissioner Tia Barrett, unwittingly initiated a diplomatic row. He took a modest swipe at the slowness of bringing the coup perpetrators to justice.<sup>92</sup> Barrett also made an important statement about indigenous issues and journalism that riled the military-installed régime:

What is difficult to accept in this dialogue on indigenous rights is the underlying assumption that those rights are pre-eminent over other more fundamental human rights. This just cannot be so, not in today's world ... Nowhere is it written in any holy scripture that because you are indigenous you have first rights over others in their daily rights. You should be respected and highly regarded as an indigenous person, but respect is earned not obtained on demand.<sup>93</sup>

In the end, said Barrett, information would make the difference in the process of cultural change for Pacific Islanders in the face of globalisation to improve people's lives. This is where the journalist played an important role. He appealed to the coup surviving graduates to always bear in mind the needs of their people and their thirst for knowledge.

### **The press and the putsch**

A sequel followed at the Journalism Education Association (JEA) conference at Mooloolaba, Queensland, in early December after I presented a paper analysing Fiji (and international) media coverage of the Chaudhry government's year in office and the Speight coup period.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps rather provocatively entitled, 'Coup coup land: The press and the putsch in Fiji', my paper concluded:

When Chaudhry was released from captivity on July 14, he partly blamed the media for the overthrow of his government. Some sectors of the media were alleged to have waged a bitter campaign against the Coalition government and its roll-back of privatisation in the year after the Fiji Labour Party-led Coalition had been elected in a landslide victory in May 1999. In the early weeks of the insurrection, the media enjoyed an unusually close relationship with Speight and the hostage-takers, raising ethical questions.<sup>95</sup>

I also highlighted the perceived role of the country's largest news organisation, the Murdoch-owned *Fiji Times*:

Critics regard *The Fiji Times*, in particular, as having had a hostile editorial stance towards the Chaudhry government. In spite of claims that it has treated all governments similarly, the newspaper is viewed by critics as antagonist and arrogant. The focus of news media coverage after the election was to play up conflict. Politics were portrayed as an arena of conflict between the new multiracial reformist government and the conservative indigenous opposition. Coverage did not improve after the Qarase régime consolidated its hold on power. In contrast with media coverage after the 1987 coups, democratic values were not so vigorously defended.



While the news media was fairly diligent, and at times courageous when reporting hard news developments, and the views of prominent politicians and political parties, during the conflict, it was not so effective at covering civil society's perspectives. Fiji lacks enough critically thinking journalists who can provide in-depth, perceptive and balanced articles and commentaries. Most serious commentaries and analysis during the crisis were provided by non-journalists.<sup>96</sup>

After this paper was presented at Mooloolaba, a *PINA Nius Online* email misrepresenting it was distributed to Pacific newspapers five days later, stirring a media and political storm.<sup>97</sup> A campaign of bitter personal attacks against me followed on the JEAnet and Penang Commonwealth editors email listservers over the next two weeks. A two-page article in *Pacific magazine*<sup>98</sup> presented the furore as a 12-round boxing match fought out on the internet, heavily slanted in favour of *The Fiji Times* and PINA. The magazine's unsigned article cited claims by the newspaper's expatriate

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ONE OCEAN - ONE PEOPLE

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INSIDE:  
What future for 'hell in the Pacific'?

**Message from militants turned students:  
'Give up the gun'  
plea to comrades**

**Journalism plans \$250,000 building**

**History Politics**

Solomons cover: A *Wansolwara* front page in Vol 7 No 1, April 2002.

publisher, Alan Robinson, and editor-in-chief, Russell Hunter, also an expatriate, alleging manufactured evidence to establish an erroneous conclusion. This was rejected by the university.<sup>99</sup> The magazine did not interview me or seek a copy of the actual paper, nor did it canvas views of other media commentators supporting the analysis.

I replied to the attacks in an interview with journalist Myra Mortensen, broadcast on Radio Australia's *Pacific Beat*, saying it was an irony that news organisations claiming to support media freedom were trying to gag a journalism academic.<sup>100</sup> *New Zealand Herald* columnist Gordon McLauchlan wrote that the university had courageously upheld academic freedom and firmly opposed this deplorable attempt at censorship by journalists.

On the anniversary of the attempted coup, Fiji newspapers were reluctant to debate the shortcomings of crisis coverage. In the only article published examining the media and the coup, *The Sun's* Samisoni Pareti cited two diplomats as supporting the view that coverage had not been 'that bad'. However, Mary-Louise O'Callaghan, writing in *The Australian*, had earlier questioned whether the local press should bear some of the responsibility for the political turmoil that had engulfed the South Pacific.<sup>101</sup> Michael Field remarked in *The Fiji Times*: 'The problem is that in Fiji there are more and more politicians, supported by a cabal in the local media that makes war on other reporters, who say they are not part of this world and wish to be left alone.'<sup>102</sup>

In March 2001, a new Vice-Chancellor, Savenaca Siwatibau, a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of Fiji and previously chairman of the University Council, took over at the helm of USP. This was marked by a more committed and positive approach to journalism education by the university, particularly with the support Siwatibau and the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rajesh Chandra. In previous years, Chandra had also strongly encouraged journalism education. Throughout 2001 and 2002, the USP Journalism Programme continued to grow and it relaunched its news website on *Pacific Journalism Online* as *Wansolwara Online* [www.usp.ac.fj/journ/](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/)<sup>103</sup>

More than thirty students were involved in an intensive five-week exercise covering the Fiji general election during August in both online and print editions.<sup>104</sup> On 18 October 2001, I had a meeting with Siwatibau, Chandra and head of literature and language Pio Manoa, in which a pledge was made to upgrade staff and facilities for the Journalism Programme, including agreement in principle to a new \$250,000 building extension to provide offices and news production labs for journalism.<sup>105</sup> In March 2002, two new staff were recruited — broadcast lecturer Steve Sharp, who was doing a doctorate in conflict reporting at Griffith University, Queensland,

and who had extensive background in community radio and in radio training in Indonesia; and lecturer Shailendra Singh, former editor of *The Review* news magazine in Fiji who had been on an MBA scholarship with AusAID's Pacific Media Initiative (PMI) project. After almost a decade as a journalism educator in the South Pacific and more than five years in Fiji, I decided it was time to rejoin my wife, Del, in New Zealand and so I departed in June. Del had left Fiji before the Speight coup and remained in Auckland. Steve Sharp and Shailendra Singh were joined in February 2003 by my successor as coordinator, Dev Nadkarni, an Indian journalist from Bombay with some eighteen years' experience in online media, news management and journalism education. However, he also departed for New Zealand for family reasons after working for USP for barely a year.

Professor Mark Pearson, head of journalism and director of the Centre for New Media Research and Education at Bond University, Queensland, conducted an external review of the USP programme in April 2002. Along with specific recommendations for the addition of two courses to boost first-year EFTS and facilities, he concluded:

It is clear that the USP Journalism Programme has come of age in so many ways. It has an excellent curriculum, high calibre staff, a developing research profile, and a local media industry interested in developing the relationship. It has also of late had a very supportive administration at the university, which has recognised the kudos it has brought to the institution and values the impact of having journalism alumni in the regional media. But the programme seems to have reached an important crossroads. It has the potential to blossom now that it is firmly established. However, the lack of space and resources and a sometimes problematic relationship with industry stand to hamper its growth. It is hoped that the university is willing to commit to a resource allocation, which matches the rhetoric of journalism being an 'area of strength' in the university. An appropriate injection of resources at this crucial time should help journalism move to a much stronger fiscal position in coming years. At the same time it is hoped the programme itself is willing to build new bridges with industry so that the regional media can further benefit from its success.<sup>106</sup>

## Conclusion

From its beginnings in 1987, the USP Journalism Programme, first as an extension studies based certificate course and later as a separate degree course, has had a chequered history. A number of high calibre staff have been employed on the programme through its various stages. But they have at times been frustrated in their efforts by a variety of problems concerning donor consistency and continuity over policies, and also a seeming reluctance by the University of the South Pacific administration

to fully commit to journalism as a university discipline. A serious shortage of funding, professional facilities and even staff have at times hindered development of journalism education at the regional university over the past seventeen years.

The second phase of development funded by the French government in the mid-1990s to establish the degree programme was separate from the earlier Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation period, but it was positioned in the same department (Literature and Language) and no doubt benefited from the earlier experience. However, it is questionable whether the department has been able to capitalise on the earlier development and to learn from mistakes.

Although political issues at times, especially in the wake of Fiji's first two coups, clouded the journalism programme in the CFTC period, they did not become critical until the degree programme was established. Many staff members of the degree journalism programme faced political pressure generated by one sector of the media industry that appeared threatened by the development of vigorous and influential university-based journalism education. At times, this political pressure became strongly overt with demands to review or revoke work permits, attempts to censure the programme, and even demands for the sacking of prominent journalism education staff. Key players in this campaign were personalities in the Suva secretariat of Pacific Islands News Association, such as former training coordinator Peter Lomas, who had a vested interest in trying to project an image that they were the region's only 'educators'. Nevertheless, in March 2001 the new Vice-Chancellor, Savenaca Siwatibau, and his colleagues ushered in more committed support in terms of facilities and funding for journalism. In spite of political pressure and harassment from some sectors of the media industry, the programme continued to develop and mature, and by 2004 had produced some eighty one degree (and diploma) graduates for the Pacific media industry. Many of the graduates have already become established and influential journalists in Fiji and the South Pacific.

# **PART THREE**

**AN INDUSTRY PROFILE**



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## The campus and the newsroom

The main role of a newspaper will have to be a watchdog ... We will concentrate on an investigative role ... One of the things we need is specialist writers. We don't have them.

*The National editor Yehiura Hriehwazi, 2001*

I believe there are two views of journalists: those who hate them, and those who think the world of them. There are those out there who think what we write is the gospel truth, and those who are more sceptical of what we say.

*Fiji Sun editor Wainikiti Waqa-Bogidrau, 2001*

THIS PACIFIC newsroom research grew out of questions about an apparent difference in attitude and recruitment policies between the media industries in both Papua New Guinea and Fiji media over journalism education and training. Both nations have a similar sized news media industry in terms of staff numbers and news outlets, but in Papua New Guinea newsroom attachments for journalism students had been established for almost twenty five years. The future of this system was jeopardised with the planned closure during 1999 of the University of Papua New Guinea Journalism Programme, which had pioneered journalism education in the South Pacific. However, in early 2000 the UPNG programme was given a reprieve. In Madang, Divine Word University's Department of Communication Arts

expanded its courses to absorb an expected overflow of journalism students from UPNG. But, being remote from the centre of national news media, it had a less developed industry attachment or internship scheme.

### The pilot survey, 1998/9

A preliminary newsroom training survey was conducted between 14 December 1998 and 28 February 1999 based on total daily news organisation populations. I made personal visits to newsrooms with self-administered questionnaires. Twelve news organisations (six in each country) were surveyed in this way with a thirteenth company declining to participate.<sup>1</sup> Participating companies in Fiji were *The Fiji Times* group (including *Pacific Islands Monthly* and the Fijian language weekly *Nai Lalakai*); the government-owned *Daily Post*; Communications Fiji Ltd private broadcast group (FM96); Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd (known as Island Networks at the time); Associated Media group (*FijiLive* website and *The Review* news magazine); and Fiji Television Ltd. In Papua New Guinea, the groups were the *Post-Courier*; *The National*; Word Publishing (the church-based group publishing both national weekly newspapers *The Independent* and *Wantok*); the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC); private broadcaster PNG FM Pty (NauFM and YumiFM); and EMTV.

For the pilot survey in 1998/9, the response rate ranged between a low of 42 percent at one newspaper in Fiji (*The Fiji Times*) and 100 percent at a radio broadcaster in Papua New Guinea (PNGFM). Overall, the participation rate in this survey was far higher in Papua New Guinea (76 percent of total staff) than in Fiji (57 percent). But the final number of 124 journalists out of the total mainstream daily news and current affairs media staff with completed questionnaires was comparable, comprising 59 respondents from Fiji and 65 from Papua New Guinea (Table 8.1). Total editorial staff was 103 and 85 respectively. The 12-point questionnaire asked basic questions on media demographics and educational qualifications, questioned respondents on the most preferred form of journalism training, and about perceptions of the 'most crucial role of a news media organisation's relationship with the public and power elite' in a developing Pacific country. It also included qualitative questions about journalism education and training, and the role of the media.

The Fiji and Papua New Guinea journalism respondents were balanced in gender (Table 8.2): 51 percent men and 49 percent women in Fiji, while Papua New Guinea, surprisingly, had a slight majority of women (52 percent) over men (48 percent). This compared with journalism student balances at the University of Papua New Guinea, where two-thirds were women at the time, and the University of the South Pacific, where the balance was 35 women and 28 men.<sup>2</sup>



**Table 8.1: Comparison of responses between Fiji, PNG news media organisations, 1998/9**

Media Group <sup>1</sup>	Edit. staff	Fiji resp.	%	Edit. staff	PNG resp.	%
1. Associated Media Group ( <i>The Review</i> )	10	8	80%	—	—	—
2. Communications Fiji Ltd	15	10	67%	—	—	—
3. <i>Daily Post</i>	16	11	69%	—	—	—
4. Fiji Broadcasting Corp	18	9	50%	—	—	—
5. Fiji Television Ltd	6	5	83%	—	—	—
6. <i>Fiji Times</i>	38	16	42%	—	—	—
7. Media Niugini Ltd (EMTV)	—	—	—	6	4	67%
8. National Broadcasting Corp	—	—	—	17	11	65%
9. PNGFM Ltd	—	—	—	9	9	100%
10. <i>Post-Courier</i>	—	—	—	21	17	81%
11. <i>The National</i>	—	—	—	19	14	74%
12. Word Publishing	—	—	—	13	10	77%
Total	103	59	57%	85	65	76%

<sup>1</sup>The new *Fiji Sun* had not begun publishing when this survey was conducted; Islands Business International, with approximately five journalists on its staff, declined to participate.

The mean age of journalists in the Fiji survey was 22, ranging between the youngest at 18 and the oldest at 50. There was also a large bulge in the 21–25 age group. In Papua New Guinea, the mean age was 29, ranging between 20 and 50. Also, the ages of PNG journalists were spread more evenly across the range.

**Table 8.2: Comparison of gender and mean age between Fiji, PNG media organisations, 1998/9**

Gender	Fiji n=59	%	PNG n=65	%	Total n=124	%
Male	30	51%	31	48%	61	49%
Female	29	49%	34	52%	63	51%
Mean age	22		29		25.5	

Papua New Guinean journalists were found to be the most qualified with 73 percent having completed formal tertiary qualifications (Table 8.3), contrasting with 14 percent in Fiji. The Fiji figure represented a fall since the previous survey seven years earlier, in 1992, when Suzanna Layton found 16 percent.<sup>3</sup> The new journalism course at the University of the South Pacific began providing graduates for the media workforce in 1996 (28 region-wide, including nine at the end of 1999, and a further 15 the

following year). There was also a growing tendency of Fiji journalists to gain degrees abroad. However, these trends were not reflected in this survey's statistics. The Papua New Guinea figure was an increase over the 68 percent of tertiary qualified journalists recorded by Layton in her 1992 survey.<sup>4</sup> But Richard Phinney's earlier survey in 1984, which focused on the National Broadcasting Commission,<sup>5</sup> showed the figure had been even higher in Papua New Guinea, at 76 percent.<sup>6</sup> However, the later statistics included a higher proportion of degrees to undergraduate diplomas, than had previously been the case.

When breaking down the tertiary qualifications into actual degrees, Papua New Guinea and Fiji both had one master's degree in the survey; 14 percent in PNG had degrees (five percent in Fiji) and 57 percent in PNG had at least undergraduate diplomas (seven percent in Fiji).

**Table 8.3: Educational and training qualifications, and mean experience of Fiji, PNG journalists, 1998/9**

Tertiary qualifications	Fiji n=59	%	PNG n=65	%	Total n=124	%
1. Postgraduate degree or diploma	1	2%	1	2%	2	2%
2. Undergraduate degree	3	5%	9	14%	12	10%
3. Undergraduate diploma	4	7%	37	57%	41	33%
<b>Total (1, 2 and 3):</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>45%</b>
4. Polytechnic or media industry certificates <sup>1</sup>	8	14%	0	0%	8	6%
5. Professional short courses <sup>2</sup>	15	25%	10	15%	25	20%
No qualification	28	47%	8	12%	36	29%
Mean experience (in years)	2.5		5.2		3.9	

<sup>1</sup> e.g. FIMA/FIJ certificate, 32-week polytechnic certificates etc.

<sup>2</sup> Such as organised by PIBA, PINA or their affiliates.

Fiji's strength was shown in industry certificates (14 percent) whereas Papua New Guinea had none in this category. Also, 25 percent of journalists in Fiji had completed non-formal short courses while only 15 percent of journalists in Papua New Guinea had done so. However, while almost half of Fiji's journalists in the sample (47 percent) had no qualifications at all, barely 12 percent of PNG journalists fell into this category.

On attitudes to education and training, journalists in Fiji (80 percent) and Papua New Guinea (89 percent) were reasonably matched as desiring a combination of both tertiary journalism programmes and in-house cadetships (Table 8.4). However, while a larger group of journalists in Papua New Guinea favoured tertiary programmes alone (nine percent) as against five percent in Fiji, it was the reverse in Fiji with 15 percent supporting an in-house cadetship compared with just two percent in PNG.

**Table 8.4: Fiji, PNG journalists' opinions about their type of education and training, 1998/9**

Preferred choice <sup>1</sup>	Fijin =59	%	PNGn =65	%	Total =124	%
1. Tertiary journalism school	3	5%	6	9%	9	7%
2. In-house cadetship scheme	9	15%	1	2%	10	8%
3. Combination of both	47	80%	58	89%	105	85%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *8. How should journalists be trained? a. In a recognised tertiary journalism programme with a period of compulsory industry attachment with media organisations? b. With an in-house cadetship training scheme? c. A combination of both?*

Qualitative comments indicated a high level of hostility among some journalists in Fiji towards university journalism courses. On the basis of the questionnaires, none of the respondents with such views actually had tertiary qualifications themselves, and none at that stage appeared to have attended any university course or programme. One young newspaper journalist said prospective journalists should do a degree in something else other than journalism, such as economics.<sup>7</sup> Another said, 'journalism is a profession that cannot be taught in a classroom'. A third added: 'I think these days graduates just think if they have the qualifications, that's it — they are journalists'. A 32-year-old editor said graduates had 'attitudes which cannot be changed [and] this affects other staff', but he was not more specific. He urged: 'Scrap all university journalism courses!' But some journalists differ. One young staffer at *The Fiji Times* said:

Our journalists are too generalised — they misreport, misquote people, [and are] unbalanced, [give] wrong spellings, and other basic reporting skills are lacking. If we had a combination of [in-house and university] training, maybe the standard of journalism would improve (FT).<sup>8</sup>

The negative attitudes appeared to reflect an insecurity towards graduates as they joined the media workforce and in some cases were promoted rapidly or gained relatively high-paying jobs. One graduate in early 1999 became a features editor, then business editor, of a daily newspaper within three months of graduating. Another graduate repeated the feat at the same newspaper in 2001. One 20-year-old graduate was recruited as a publications officer for a non-government organisation on a salary band of around F\$30,000 — or roughly four times more than the average starting salary for a journalist on a Fiji media organisation.

The major education institution represented by journalists with qualifications was the University of Papua New Guinea with 32 graduates in the news media workplace, including several editors, followed by 18 graduates from Divine Word University in Madang, PNG. In Fiji, just four

USP graduates were recorded although a new batch of a dozen graduates in the region at the end of 1998 was not reflected in this survey.

Journalists were questioned on their perceptions of their media role to test their understanding of notions of news values in contrast to definitions widely used by politicians, particularly those stressing the need for 'development journalism'.<sup>9</sup> A selection of four key words or phrases, drawn from 'four worlds news theories' models widely taught in the Pacific,<sup>10</sup> were used as core options along with further open selections.<sup>11</sup> The keywords or phrases were *watchdog*, *agent of empowerment*, *nation building*, or *defender of truth*. Journalists in Fiji had a far different view than their counterparts from Papua New Guinea on their perceived media role in the community (Table 8.5). Significantly more journalists in Fiji (63 percent) than in PNG (46 percent) favoured the Western 'watchdog' model as the preferred role. However, it was clear that Papua New Guinea journalists had a more complex view of their role, which generally included watchdog along with other variations that involved a greater sense of community. More than double the number of journalists in Papua New Guinea (37 percent) than in Fiji (15 percent), for example, saw the role of the news media as the 'defender of truth'.

**Table 8.5: How Fiji, PNG journalists view their professional media role, 1998/9**

Perceived role <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=59	%	PNG n=65	%	Total n=124	%
1. Watchdog	37	63%	30	46%	67	54%
2. Agent of empowerment	4	7%	8	12%	12	10%
3. Nation building	10	17%	16	25%	26	21%
4. Defender of the truth	9	15%	24	37%	33	27%
5. Other roles	3	5%	5	8%	8	6%
6. No opinion	7	12%	1	2%	8	6%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: 11. *What do you perceive as the most crucial role of a news organisation's relationship with the general public and the power élite in a developing country such as Fiji, or Papua New Guinea?* One choice asked for, but some gave more than one choice. Thus percentages may not tally.

Also, 12 percent of PNG journalists saw the public 'empowerment' model as important, compared with just seven percent in Fiji. Journalists in PNG (25 percent) were also more likely to see the media as a 'nation builder' than in Fiji (17 percent).

### Comparison with Indonesia

The findings compared interestingly with a 1998 survey in Indonesia,<sup>12</sup> which shares a common frontier with Papua New Guinea through its disputed province of Papua (formerly Irian Jaya). This contrasted notions of 'watchdogs and *Pancasila* pussycats', or variations of the development journalism philosophy based on Indonesia's *Pancasila* press model. In

Angela Romano's survey, 51 percent of the sample regarded the watchdog notion as most important, even though this term may not have been used as a preferred description. This was significantly lower than in Fiji, but higher than in the Papua New Guinea survey. However, 22 percent in the Indonesian sample saw the media's chief role as an agent of empowerment — double the percentage in Papua New Guinea and triple that of Fiji. In terms of nation building, Papua New Guineans were more likely to see this as their role (25 percent) than in Indonesia (19 percent) and Fiji (17 percent). But the number of Fiji Islanders (15 percent) choosing the notion of defender of the truth was almost double that in Indonesia (eight percent). Both contrasted with PNG (37 percent). Romano's survey had an additional category not contained in the two-nation Pacific survey — 'entertainment'. But of the overall seven percent who nominated 'other roles', none included entertainment as an option, surprisingly as all Fiji and Papua New Guinea newspapers strongly feature entertainment and lifestyle coverage.

In the qualitative findings, there were marked differences between the Papua New Guinea and Fiji samples. A far higher percentage of Fiji respondents did not provide answers (12 percent), whereas only two percent of PNG journalists did not respond. The Fiji non-responses apparently had a correlation with those journalists who had no formal journalism education. Many Papua New Guinea respondents saw a direct relationship between the watchdog and nation-building roles, and this was most marked with journalists working for the national broadcaster NBC. According to one journalist:

Especially in a developing nation, while we act as a watchdog we must also be mindful of our responsibility in nation building. Exposing the truth and investigating the stories must be done without any bias. This is part of nation building, leading a country to be more accountable to its people (NBC).<sup>13</sup>

And another:

One of the most crucial roles of a news media organisation is in nation building. Through many economic and social development stories encouraging people in their country to be self-reliant and productive, the media encourage them to be self-reliant and productive. They encourage them to start grassroots small business activities to improve the country's economy and the standard of living and they support and promote people to love, respect and become responsible citizens of their respective countries. It is through these and many other efforts of the organisation [that] nation building is encouraged to develop a nation (NBC).

But such views were not restricted to the state-run radio. According to a journalist on one of the two leading daily newspapers, the Murdoch-owned *Post-Courier*:

News media organisations in PNG seem to be focused on being watchdogs, reporting on what is happening. But I believe [they] have a wider role and that is to be an agent for change. Papua New Guinea is a developing country which does not have the financial resources needed for development such as health programmes etc, but established media, including radio, can be used to bring vital information to people to reinforce positive changes (PC).

One journalist on the Malaysian-owned *The National*, one of the few in Papua New Guinea to have a postgraduate qualification, said:

As opposed to the 'gutter press', PNG journalism is centred around the philosophy of development journalism, meaning that what is reported must have significance to growth, development and the aspiration of PNG as a sovereign state and its citizens. The powerful elite is right sometimes, so are the people at other times. PNG takes the middle [road] to promote/defend the truth for the betterment and advancement of all. In so doing, PNG media will truly serve its purpose as a defender of truth, a watchdog and an agent of development (N).

Some journalists were acutely aware of the personal responsibility they carried, one saying her role was 'challenging — and we actually make or break the nation [because of] whether we are accurate or not'. Another said: 'I am the teller of the story of life with the elemental things that are important to men and women. I give the information which my audience most needs to get along in their daily existence ... The message I bring is often the glue which holds society together.'

Respondents in Fiji appeared to be less philosophical about their roles. In fact, many, especially those who had no formal foundation in journalism theory, seemed unclear about the alternative notions presented. But many still had a robust view of their role. Said one television journalist:

Corruption tends to be rife in Pacific countries like Fiji and Papua New Guinea. As a watchdog, the role is clearly defined but resources or training, or lack of them, limit the inroads we can make into corruption and the strides needed to be a watchdog in other areas in the public spotlight (FTV).

A national broadcast journalist said:

We best serve the community by disclosing the truth and the mysteries, which are normally kept hidden away. With well-researched written reports, this will foster a more pro-active community, able to contribute more effectively to national development (FBC).

Some journalists in Fiji did share the common concern felt in Papua New Guinea about the wider roles in relation to the watchdog. As another state broadcast journalist said: 'In fact, nation building and watchdog would be the two roles I believe suit the work we do. We can't be just watchdogs of society if we cannot promote prosperity and harmony in society. Negative reporting is not always healthy.' According to a senior reporter on a business magazine renowned for its ferret-like investigations:

Being a watchdog will also mean being a good journalist — one that is willing to take risks in digging things out but this could also mean having good contacts in the upper echelon of any government. I guess being a watchdog will subsequently make a person or an organisation an agent of empowerment and so playing a crucial role in nation building. A watchdog for me personally is a person or organisation which takes on the responsibility of ensuring that the government as a whole, or any individual, or even a non-government organisation, does not abuse public funds, is not corrupt in any way ... and takes on the role of exposing them to ensure justice (R).

Many respondents felt that while they were monitoring the government and the leaders, they should not forget to be the 'eyes and ears of the people they serve'. It was important that media helped 'weed out incidents which bring hardship to the people'. It was, after all, the media that brought 'culprits to justice'.

### **The second survey, April/May 2001**

A further, more substantive education and training survey of Fiji and Papua New Guinea was conducted between 20 April and 20 May 2001. This was again based on total daily news organisation populations and I made personal visits to newsrooms with self-administered questionnaires. In addition to the survey, focus and individual interviews were conducted with a wide range of 57 journalists, editors, news organisation managers and media advisers or analysts. Thirteen news organisations — six in Papua New Guinea and seven in Fiji (one partially) were surveyed in this way with a fourteenth company declining to participate as political and professional pressures played a far more restrictive role than the earlier survey.<sup>14</sup> Participating companies in Fiji this time were the new daily newspaper, *The Sun*; the government-owned *Daily Post*; Communications Fiji Ltd private broadcast group (FM96); Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (partial only); the regional news service Pacnews;<sup>15</sup> the Associated Media group (*FijiLive* website and *The Review* news magazine); and Fiji Television Ltd. In Papua New Guinea, the *Post-Courier*; *The National*; Word Publishing (*The Independent* and *Wantok*);<sup>16</sup> National Broadcasting Corporation (partially); private broadcaster PNG FM Pty (NauFM and YumiFM); FM100 Radio Kalang;<sup>17</sup> and EMTV took part.

The second survey was more comprehensive than the first with a 45-point questionnaire with questions arranged in three main categories: A: Background and demographic profiles (19 questions), B: Attraction to journalism (12 questions), and C: Freedom of the press (12 questions). The questions were based to a degree on the original survey, but were expanded to reflect some of the issues raised. However, this second survey also drew on some aspects of the questionnaire used for a survey of Australian journalists (Table 1) conducted under the auspices of the international Media and Democracy project supervised in Australia by Professor Julianne Schultz in 1992.<sup>18</sup> This survey was also administered in five other countries, in 'one of the most ambitious cross-national studies of journalists ever undertaken'.<sup>19</sup> Just as Schultz added 35 questions to the Australian survey to ensure that it adequately addressed issues central to her research on democracy, accountability and the media in Australia, my survey included questions specifically adapted from the Schultz survey and also from the Romano survey examining normative theories of development journalism in Indonesia,<sup>20</sup> and the Weaver survey of global journalists (1998).<sup>21</sup>

**Table 8.6: Comparison of responses between Fiji, PNG news media organisations, 2001**

Media Group <sup>1</sup>	Edit.staff	Fiji	%	Edit.staff	PNG	%
1. Associated Media Group ( <i>The Review</i> )	4	4	100%	—	—	—
2. Communications Fiji Ltd	12	3	25%	—	—	—
3. <i>Daily Post</i>	15	11	73%	—	—	—
4. Fiji Broadcasting Corp	15	2	13%	—	—	—
5. Fiji Television Ltd	8	7	88%	—	—	—
6. Pacnews	2	2	100%	—	—	—
7. <i>The Sun</i>	16	14	88%	—	—	—
8. Media Niugini Ltd (EMTV)	—	—	—	8	8	100%
9. PNGFM Ltd	—	—	—	10	10	100%
10. <i>Post-Courier</i>	—	—	—	24	15	63%
11. Radio Kalang FM100	—	—	—	5	4	80%
12. <i>The National</i>	—	—	—	21	14	67%
13. Word Publishing	—	—	—	12	12	100%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79%</b>

<sup>1</sup> The new *Sun* was included in this survey for the first time, as was Pacnews in Fiji; the *Fiji Times* management declined to participate; the news director of FBC declined to allow her staff to participate, although two staff members still completed questionnaires; and participation by PNG's NBC was blocked because of a political crisis affecting the corporation.



## Responses

While no Fiji news organisation provided a 100 percent response rate for the first survey in 1998/9; this time two media groups provided responses from all staff members — Associated Media and Pacnews (Table 8.6).<sup>22</sup> Two other organisations, Fiji Television and *The Sun*, had more than 88 percent responses. The lowest response in Fiji was from Fiji Broadcasting Corporation with just two responses, completed in spite of the news director discouraging her staff from participating. In contrast to *The Fiji Times*, which did not participate, both the other two national daily newspapers, *Daily Post* (73 percent) and *The Sun* (88 percent) responded strongly. Three Papua New Guinean news organisations provided 100 percent response rates — EMTV; PNGFM Pty Ltd, whose sister Communications Fiji group in Suva provided a low return; and Word Publishing. The lowest response rate in Papua New Guinea was from the two daily newspapers, the *National* (67 percent) and *Post-Courier* (63 percent).

The breakdown of the sample by media organisation type (Table 8.7) was fairly similar with more than half the respondents in both Papua New Guinea (57 percent) and Fiji (58 percent) working on newspapers. The next largest group was radio in Papua New Guinea, which at 22 percent was almost double the Fiji sample (12 percent). Television journalists were evenly matched with 16 percent in Fiji and 13 percent in PNG. Predictably, Fiji had more magazine employees (five percent) than PNG (two percent). Surprisingly, given Port Moresby's more active two daily newspaper websites, *Post-Courier* and the *National*, Fiji also had more online journalists (nine percent) than in the PNG (six percent) sample.

**Table 8.7: Fiji, PNG journalists by type of news organisation, 2001**

Media type <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Radio	5	12%	14	22%	19	18%
2. Television	7	16%	8	13%	15	14%
3. Newspaper	25	58%	36	57%	61	58%
4. Magazine	2	5%	1	2%	3	3%
5. Online	4	9%	4	6%	8	8%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked to identify their news organisation type in question: A6. *Do you work for one of the following type of news organisations?* This table reflects a lower than actual proportion of radio journalists because of the absence of NBC responses in PNG and limited response from FBC in Fiji. Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

When asked what category best described the journalists' current tasks, print reporters headed the list in both Fiji (44 percent) and PNG (33 percent). The next largest group those who identified themselves as subeditors or news producers with 21 percent in PNG and 14 percent in

Fiji. Television reporters ranked third with more in PNG (17 percent) than in Fiji (12 percent). Fiji (12 percent) had more executive editors or editorial managers than PNG (five percent). Editors or broadcast news directors came next and were evenly matched with nine percent in both Fiji and PNG. More in PNG (six percent) identified themselves as online journalists than radio (three percent), which means several reporters considered themselves 'news producers' on air. However, it was the reverse in Fiji where seven percent were radio reporters and just two percent (one) was an online journalist. Five percent of the PNG sample were photographers, but no photographer completed the Fiji survey. No editorial cartoonist from either country was identified.

### Gender and civil status

Remarkably, given that there were several major changes between the 1998/9 and 2001 samples for the two countries, the gender balance was almost identical between the two surveys (Tables 8.3 and 8.8). The 2001 survey confirmed the majority of woman journalists in the Papua New Guinea news media with a 52:48 percentage ratio. This also supported a widely held belief among journalists and media executives that women were a majority of the editorial staff. Fiji again posted a slight male advantage 51:49 in the percentage ratio, the same as in the earlier response. The survey also showed that slightly more than half of both Fiji and PNG journalists were single. This was not studied in the 1998/9 survey.

**Table 8.8: Comparison of gender and civil status between Fiji, PNG news media organisations, 2001**

Gender	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
Male	22	51%	30	48%	52	49%
Female	21	49%	33	52%	54	51%
<b>Civil status</b>						
Married/de facto	18	42%	29	46%	47	44%
Single	25	58%	34	54%	59	56%

### Age

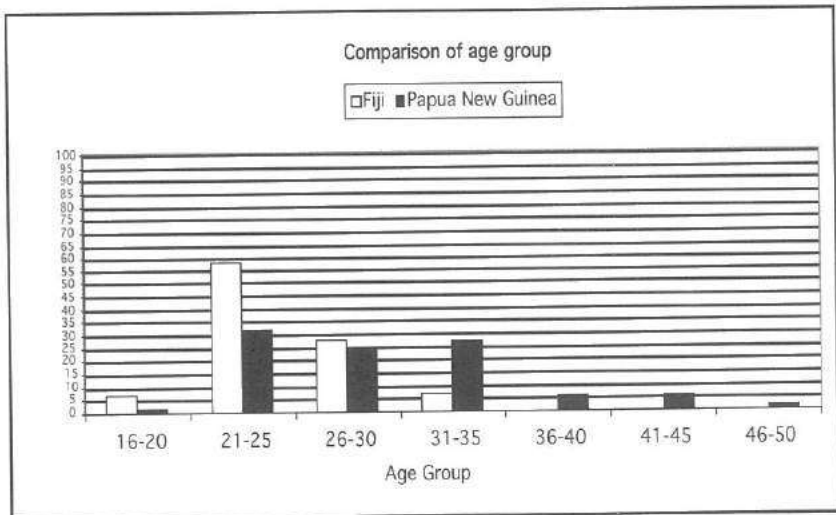
As in 1998/9, the later survey reaffirmed a younger journalist population in Fiji with a mean age of 24.7 compared with 28.9 in Papua New Guinea (Table 8.9). While the mean age in PNG remained static, the Fiji figure had climbed to almost 25 from 22 in the earlier survey. But this higher figure probably did not fully reflect the actual youth of journalists in Fiji, which had a large bulge with 58 percent in the 21 to 25 age bands (Graph 8.1). *The Fiji Times*, the largest employer in Fiji, declined to participate in the 2001 survey and in the earlier sample, of the 16 respondents, ten were

in the 21–25 age range. Together with seven percent of 20-year-olds or younger in the 2001 survey, the combined under 25 age group of 65 percent was roughly double that proportion in Papua New Guinea. Twenty seven percent of PNG journalists more than triple the number in Fiji—were in the 31–35 age band, and 14 percent were older than 36.

**Table 8.9: Age comparison between Fiji, PNG journalists, 2001**

Age group	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
16–20	3	7%	1	2%	4	4%
21–25	25	58%	20	32%	45	42%
26–30	12	28%	16	25%	28	26%
31–35	3	7%	17	27%	20	19%
36–40	0	0%	4	6%	4	4%
41–45	0	0%	4	6%	4	4%
46–50	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Over 51	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Mean age	24.7		28.9		26.6	

**Graph 8.1: Comparison of age group between Fiji, PNG journalists, 2001**



## Cultural identity

Fijian and Indo-Fijian journalists were split in the survey sample in Fiji, (42 percent each), with seven percent Rotuman and the rest being other races. In Papua New Guinea, the cultural identity was assessed on provincial ties and was fairly evenly balanced. The largest group (13 percent) came from Central Province around the national capital of Port Moresby. East New Britain, East Sepik and Madang provinces all had representative groups of nine percent, while at the other end of the scale was Enga (the most populous province) and Oro with two percent each. Both West New Britain and NCD were not represented.

## Language

Of the Fiji respondents, mother tongues of the journalists (Table 8.10) were evenly matched between Fijian (40 percent) and Hindi (37 percent), while 19 percent identified English as their first language (the balance of five percent spoke Rotuman), Surprisingly, nobody identified the Muslim language Urdu as a birth language. Unsurprisingly, in Papua New Guinea just 16 percent identified English as their mother tongue. Tok Pisin had 41 percent speakers and Motu six percent with 37 percent speaking other provincial languages. However, when it came to the newsroom language that journalists worked with (Table 8.11), the profile was very different. Ninety five percent of the surveyed journalists in Fiji and 84 percent in Papua New Guinea worked in English with an overall percentage of 89 percent. The balance (16 percent) in PNG worked in Tok Pisin, largely because of the national vernacular weekly newspaper *Wantok*. In Fiji, the balance was evenly matched between Fijian and Hindi journalists surveyed who identified themselves as working in vernacular publications or broadcast stations, although the real life percentage total is probably a little higher.

**Table 8.10: Comparison of first language of journalists in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

First language <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. English	8	19%	10	16%	18	17%
2. Tok Pisin	0	0%	26	41%	26	25%
3. Motu	0	0%	4	6%	4	4%
4. Fijian	17	40%	0	0	17	16%
5. Hindi	16	37%	0	0	16	15%
6. Rotuman	2	5%	0	0	2	2%
7. Other	0	0%	23	37%	23	22%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were the question: A15. *What is your first language?* Urdu (the main language of the Islamic community in Fiji) was included in the options, but nobody chose this. Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

Table 8.11: Comparison of news language of journalists in Fiji, PNG, 2001

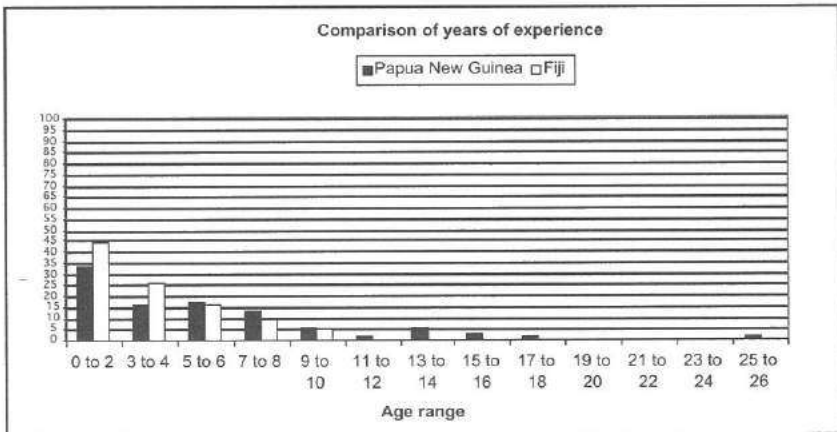
Media language <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. English	41	95%	53	84%	94	89%
2. Tok Pisin	0	0%	10	16%	10	9%
3. Motu	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
4. Fijian	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
5. Hindi	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *A16. What news media language do you work in?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

### Experience

The most experienced journalists in the Fiji sample were those in the 9 to 10-year band (five percent), but this was well short of Papua New Guinea, which had one person in the 25 to 26 - year band and a total of 21 percent with more than nine years' experience (Table 8.12). Papua New Guinea also had six percent of the survey journalists in the 13 to 14 year band (Fiji had an equivalent of zero percent). But for both countries the bulk of the journalists (Graph 8.2) had less than two years' experience (Fiji, 44 percent; PNG, 33 percent). Taken overall, 70 percent of the journalists employed in Fiji had less than four years' experience, far more than PNG (49 percent). The mean experience of 5.5 years for Papua New Guinean journalists was marginally higher in 2001 than in 1998-99 (5.2 years) with Fiji also showing a rise to 3.5 years from the 2.5 years in the earlier pilot survey.

Graph 8.2: Comparison of journalists' years of experience, Fiji, PNG, 2001



**Table 8.12: Fiji, PNG journalists' experience in news media, 2001**

Number of years <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
0-2	19	44%	21	33%	40	38%
3-4	11	26%	10	16%	21	20%
5-6	7	16%	11	17%	18	17%
7-8	4	9%	8	13%	12	11%
9-10	2	5%	4	6%	6	6%
11-12	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
13-14	0	0%	4	6%	4	4%
15-16	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%
17-18	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
19-20	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
21-22	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
23-24	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
25-26	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
More than 27	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Mean experience</b>	<b>3.5 years</b>		<b>5.5 years</b>		<b>4.5 years</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: 'A8. Total number of years working in news media organisations (excluding corporate public relations officer, government information officer etc)? Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

### Education and training

It was in the area of educational qualifications and training (Table 8.13) that significant statistical differences between the two countries were reflected. As in 1998/9, Papua New Guinean journalists were found to be more highly qualified than their Fiji counterparts. The proportion of PNG journalists with degrees and diplomas climbed from 73 percent to 81 percent, almost threefold higher than in Fiji. Yet there had also been some changes in Fiji. While in 1998/9 just 14 percent of Fiji journalists had a degree or diploma, by 2001 the number had almost doubled. This reflected the growing number of graduate journalists entering the workplace from the University of the South Pacific. Conversely the proportion of journalists without basic training or qualifications climbed slightly in both countries to almost half of all journalists in Fiji (49 percent) and 14 percent in Papua New Guinea. However, almost one in four of the Fiji survey respondents indicated they had completed professional and industry short courses such as those offered by PINA, PIBA and AusAID's Pacific Media Initiative (PMI), while just five percent of Papua New Guinean respondents had benefited from such training. Just five percent of journalists in Fiji indicated that they had completed media industry or polytechnic courses (Graphs 8.3, 8.4, 8.5), such as the 32-week certificate programme run by the now defunct Fiji Journalism Institute, while none of the surveyed PNG journalists had done something similar. They relied on the university journalism schools.

**Table 8.13: Educational and training qualifications of Fiji, PNG journalists, 2001**

Tertiary qualifications	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Postgraduate degree or diploma	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
2. Undergraduate degree	9	21%	19	30%	28	26%
3. Undergraduate diploma	2	5%	32	51%	34	32%
Subtotal (1, 2 and 3):	11	26%	51	81%	62	58%
4. Polytechnic or media industry certificates <sup>1</sup>	2	5%	0	0%	2	2%
5. Professional/industry short courses <sup>2</sup>	9	21%	3	5%	12	11%
6. No qualification or training	21	49%	9	14%	30	28%
7. No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

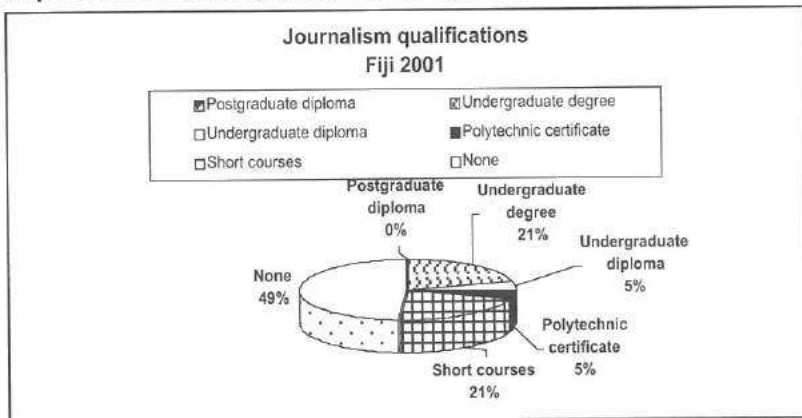
Question: A11: What kind of journalism qualification do you have?

<sup>1</sup> e.g. FIMA/FIJ certificate, 32-week polytechnic certificates etc.

<sup>2</sup> Such as organised by PIBA, PINA or their affiliates.

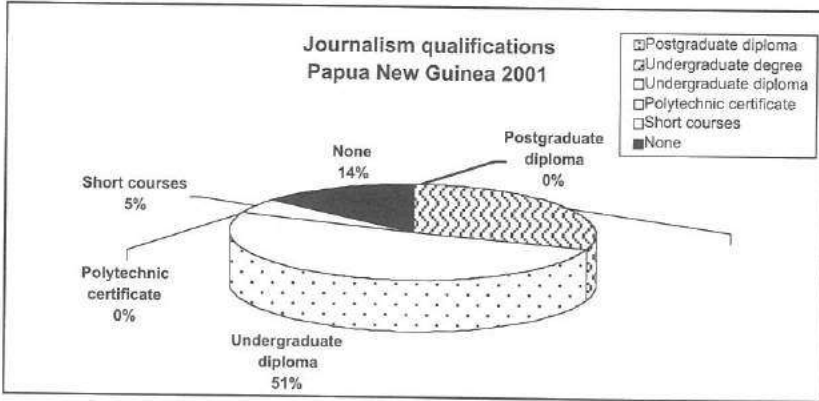
Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Graph 8.3: Journalism qualifications in Fiji, 2001**

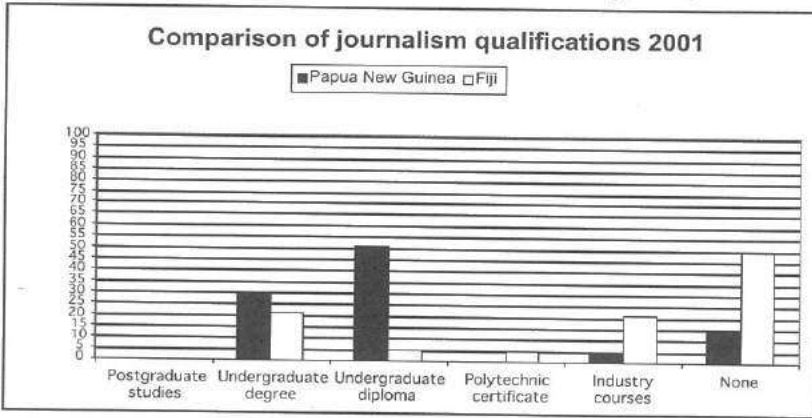


In Fiji, 26 percent of journalists 'majored' in journalism while 53 percent gave no response.<sup>23</sup> Seventy percent of Papua New Guinea journalists gained a journalism major with just 17 percent not responding. Of those who listed other disciplines as a major in Fiji, they were evenly spread (two percent each) between history/politics, literature/language, economics, tourism and business/management. The spread of degrees and diplomas was dominated by the University of Papua New Guinea with 49 percent of journalists as graduates, or 29 percent overall, almost double the number of graduates from USP (Graph 8.6). However, 35 percent of journalists surveyed in Fiji had a USP degree or diploma. Twenty nine percent of

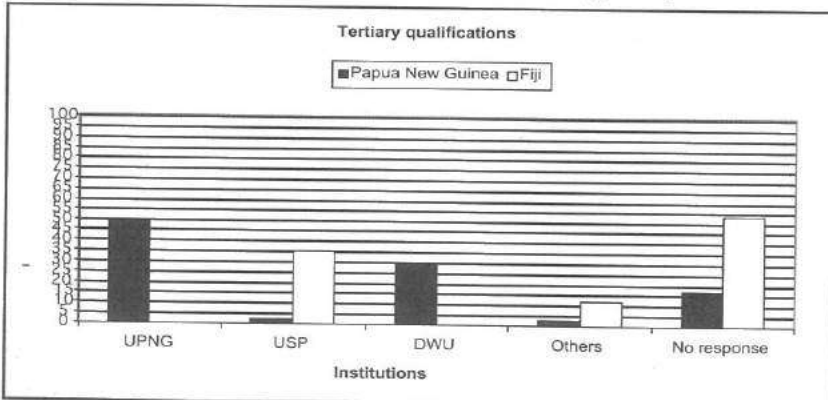
Graph 8.4: Journalism qualifications in PNG, 2001



Graph 8.5: Comparison of journalism qualifications in Fiji, PNG, 2001



Graph 8.6: Comparison of journalism institutions in Fiji, PNG, 2001





journalists in PNG had graduated from Divine Word University. Twelve percent of Fiji journalists had a tertiary qualification from outside Fiji, while just three percent in PNG had an outside degree or diploma.

Almost two thirds of Papua New Guinean journalists (62 percent) favoured starting their career with gaining a journalism degree or diploma with a media organisation attachment (Table 8.14). This was almost double the number in Fiji (33 percent) while most Fiji journalists (53 percent) preferred a combination of a cadetship and university education. Some school leaver journalists in Fiji supported training on the job (nine percent), but no journalist in Papua New Guinea supported this approach to recruitment and training.

**Table 8.14: Fiji, PNG journalists' opinions on how they view education and training, 2001**

Preferred choice <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%
1. Recruited as school leavers	4	9%	0	0
2. University journalism education (no media attachment)	1	2%	2	3%
3. University journalism education (with media attachment)	14	33%	39	62%
4. Combination of cadetship and university education	23	53%	20	32%
5. No response	1	2%	2	3%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *A18. In your opinion, how should journalists be prepared for their career?* 1. Recruited as a school leavers and trained on the job, 2. Educated at university on a journalism school programme with no media organisation attachment, 3. Educated at university on a journalism school programme with no media organisation attachment, 4. Combination of cadetship and university training? Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

In Fiji, industry support — as perceived by the respondents — was strongly in favour (30 percent) of school leavers training in the newsrooms (Table 8.15). But in Papua New Guinea almost half of the media employers (46 percent) looked to the university journalism schools with a media attachment as the best way to recruit journalists, while the next biggest group (37 percent) supported a combination of cadetship and university education. Only 14 percent saw Fiji media organisations as supporting journalism school with media attachments. These mixed attitudes were reflected in the fact that one major Fiji news media organisation had never employed a journalism graduate from USP while preferring to hire school leavers.

**Table 8.15: Fiji, PNG journalists' opinions on how their news organisations view education and training, 2001**

Preferred choice <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%
1. Recruited as school leavers	13	30%	4	6%
2. University journalism education (no media attachment)	1	2%	0	0%
3. University journalism education (with media attachment)	6	14%	29	46%
4. Combination of cadetship and university education	20	47%	23	37%
5. No response	3	7%	7	11%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *A19. In your opinion, how does your news organisation believe journalists should be prepared for their career? 1. Recruited as a school leaver and trained on the job, 2. Educated at university on a journalism school programme with no media organisation attachment, 3. Educated at university on a journalism school programme with no media organisation attachment, 4. Combination of cadetship and university training?*

A surprisingly significant group from both Papua New Guinea (11 per cent) and Fiji (seven per cent) were uncertain of the views of media organisations on education and training.

### Attraction to journalism

One of the new questions in the 2001 survey was adapted from a category on 'attraction to journalism' used in 1994 research with Latin American journalists in Chile, Ecuador and Mexico by Jurgen Wilke.<sup>24</sup> In Wilke's research, he found that journalists in Mexico were 'more likely to be attracted to journalism than those in Chile by possible political influence, although the direct influence on political decisions plays a lesser role in both countries'. He also found that journalists in Mexico were more engaged for values and ideals than in Chile. In the Pacific sample (Table 8.16), journalists (65 percent) were most likely to want to take up a media career for 'communicating knowledge to the people'. This view was more significant in Papua New Guinea where almost three out of four journalists chose this among three nominated factors.

**Table 8.16: Factors that contribute to making journalism an appealing career for Fiji, PNG journalists, 2001**

Factors <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Possibility to write	10	23%	15	24%	25	24%
2. Engage yourself for ideals and values	8	19%	10	16%	18	17%
3. Little routine	2	5%	1	2%	3	3%
4. Exposing abuses of power, corruption	16	37%	28	44%	44	42%
5. Varied and exciting work	19	44%	16	25%	35	33%
6. Communicating knowledge to the community	23	53%	46	73%	69	65%
7. Getting to know a variety of people	6	14%	7	11%	13	12%
8. Professional freedom of being able to decide tasks, topics	4	9%	10	16%	14	13%
9. Being one of the first people to know what is happening	11	26%	6	10%	17	16%
10. Seeing your name and work in print, or broadcast	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
11. Working with interesting colleagues	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%
12. Influencing political decisions	11	26%	15	24%	26	25%
13. Working under deadline pressure	4	9%	8	13%	12	11
14. Good future prospects	3	7%	2	3%	5	5
15. Good earning prospects	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
16. Prestige of journalism	8	19%	6	10%	14	13%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B20. Which of these factors do you find the most attractive about journalism?* Multiple choices (three). Percentages calculated in each category.

In Fiji, just over half the participating journalists chose this option. The next most likely reason to become a journalist was ‘exposing abuses of power and corruption’ with 44 percent of PNG journalists choosing this factor, slightly ahead of Fiji (37 percent). Overall, 42 percent of the journalists wanted to tackle corruption. The third most popular choice (33 percent) was ‘varied and exciting work’ with almost twice as many journalists (44 percent) in Fiji opting for this compared with just 25 percent in Papua New Guinea. With the fourth choice, ‘influencing political decisions’, journalists in Fiji (26 percent) and PNG (24 percent) were fairly evenly matched. At the other end of the scale, journalists in Fiji (two percent) ranked ‘good earning prospects’ and PNG journalists (one percent) ranked seeing their bylines in print very low.

### Values and professionalism

When asked 'where do you expect to work in five years' time?' (Table 8.17), more than half of the sample journalists in both Fiji and PNG (58 percent overall) chose journalism. However, while 60 percent of PNG journalists saw themselves staying in journalism, significantly more journalists in Fiji (21 percent) than in PNG nominated public relations as their second choice.

**Table 8.17: Where Fiji and PNG journalists expect to work in five years, 2001**

Preferred career <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Journalism	23	53%	38	60%	61	58%
2. Politics	2	5%	1	2%	3	3%
3. Public service	2	5%	0	0%	2	2%
4. Small business	0	0	3	5%	3	3%
5. Other response	2	5%	2	3%	4	4%
6. Public relations	9	21%	8	13%	17	16%
7. Other	3	7%	9	14%	12	11%
8. No response	2	5%	2	3%	4	4%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B21. Where do you expect to work in five years' time?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

In Papua New Guinea, only 13 percent of journalists chose this option, just behind 'other' choices. On the experience of the first survey, respondents in 2001 were given a wider range of choices (Tables 8.6 and 8.18) in the question dealing with how they perceived the role of the news media (12 options instead of six) as a more insightful comparison with the Romano and Schultz surveys. Also, multiple choices (three) were asked for. In contrast with the earlier survey, about three out of every four respondents in both Fiji (74 percent) and Papua New Guinea (73 percent) regarded the media as the 'watchdog of democracy'. This level of support was more than double for any other category, and much higher than in Romano's Indonesia survey (50.8 percent). Although this question in the pilot survey had been based on the equivalent Romano question, for this survey it was expanded to draw on a question from Wilke.<sup>25</sup> Fiji and Papua New Guinea were also evenly matched with about one-third support for both 'nation builder' and 'defender of the truth'. However, Papua New Guinean journalists showed a greater acceptance of a more active role for media in development reflected in their support for media as an 'agent of empowerment' for citizens (30 percent, almost double that of Fiji and higher than Indonesia's 21.5 percent), 'educator' (52 percent), the people's 'voice'/mouthpiece (30 percent), and communicator of new

ideas (six percent). Journalists in Fiji were more likely to see the media as a 'neutral, uninvolved reporter of the facts' (30 percent against PNG's 25 percent). In both countries there was modest support for entertainment (12 percent for Fiji, eight percent for PNG), which was still significantly higher than in Indonesia (1.5 percent).

Asked whether the phrases 'Fourth Estate' and/or 'watchdog' applied to the media in Fiji and Papua New Guinea, 70 percent agreed in both countries. Papua New Guinea journalists were the most 'uncertain' (11 percent) while almost a quarter of journalists in Fiji failed to answer the question. When asked about the phrase 'development journalism', a significantly larger group (49 percent) in Papua New Guinea than in Fiji (37 percent) agreed. Fiji journalists were also more likely to be uncertain in their response (23 percent) or could not reply (35 percent), indicating a lack of understanding of the phrase. In qualitative responses, several Fiji journalists thought development journalism was related to the training and resourcing of journalists:

Developing skills of journalists (FM96).

Empowering journalists to fulfill their tasks competently through provision of training, resources and motivation, including remuneration that is fair (R).

When journalists are trained to be better at their jobs and particular skills are honed with the help of the media organisation (FTV).

**Table 8.18: How Fiji, PNG journalists view their professional media role, 2001**

Perceived role <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Watchdog of democracy	32	74%	46	73%	78	74%
2. Agent of empowerment	8	19%	19	30%	27	25%
3. Nation builder	15	35%	21	33%	36	34%
4. Defender of the truth	17	40%	22	35%	39	37%
5. Neutral, uninvolved reporter of facts	13	30%	16	25%	29	27%
6. An entertainer	5	12%	5	8%	10	9%
7. A critic of abuses	9	21%	4	6%	13	12%
8. An educator	18	42%	33	52%	51	48%
9. Communicator of new ideas	2	5%	4	6%	6	6%
10. The people's 'voice'/ mouthpiece	14	33%	19	30%	33	31%
11. Politicians using other means	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
12. No response	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B22. How as a journalist do you see the media's role?* Multiple choices (three) asked for. Percentages calculated in each category.

Papua New Guinean journalists seemed to have a clearer grasp of the concept of development journalism:

Nation building — reporting on developments that take place. Informing people of important aspects of development in PNG (FM100).

To bring about development — social, political, economic improvements through reporting of issues (WP).

Using journalism as a tool in nation building. Reporting on new developments and its effects on the people and the society (NFM).

Bringing about positive changes for the good of ordinary citizens (N).

Development journalism is aggressive — creative (N).

**Table 8.19: How well informed news media audiences are, 2001**

Perception <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Well-informed	14	33%	18	29%	32	30%
2. Critical	5	12%	4	6%	9	8%
3. Open	2	5%	7	11%	9	8%
4. Progressive	9	21%	13	21%	22	21%
5. Tolerant	3	7%	4	6%	7	7%
6. Easily influenced	6	14%	10	16%	16	15%
7. Ignorant	1	2%	5	8%	6	6%
8. No response	3	7%	2	3%	5	5%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B27. How well informed are news media audiences?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

Responding to a question about how well informed media audiences were (Table 8.19), almost a third in both countries indicated 'well informed'. A further 21 percent in both countries thought audiences were 'progressive' while 16 per cent in PNG and 14 percent in Fiji believed audiences were 'easily influenced'. Only two percent of Fiji journalists considered audiences 'ignorant', but eight percent of PNG journalists found audiences ignorant.

### Public perceptions and influence

Most sample journalists (Table 8.20) considered public perceptions of them and their professionalism in the Pacific to be at least satisfactory (32 per cent). But there were significant differences between Fiji and Papua New Guinea. While 29 per cent of PNG journalists believed they had a 'very good' image, only seven per cent of their Fiji colleagues shared this view. In the 'satisfactory' category, the roles were reversed; 49 per cent of Fiji Islanders were satisfied — more than double the proportion of PNG journalists (21 per cent). Asked did journalists and the media influence

public opinion (Table 8.21), 40 percent overall concluded 'considerable influence' with more journalists in Fiji (42 percent) than in Papua New Guinea (38 percent) sharing this view. A further third regarded the media as having 'major influence' with far more PNG journalists (38 percent) having this view than in Fiji (23 percent). When faced with the question 'how important' was the influence (Table 8.22), both Fiji and PNG were evenly matched (40 percent) in responding 'considerable importance'. However, again more Papua New Guineans (41 percent) than Fiji Islanders (30 percent) considered it of 'major importance'.

**Table 8.20: How the general public perceives Fiji, PNG journalists, 2001**

Perception <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Very good	3	7%	18	29%	21	20%
2. Good	11	26%	24	38%	35	33%
3. Satisfactory	21	49%	13	21%	34	32%
4. Not particularly good	3	7%	2	3%	5	5%
5. Bad	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. No opinion	5	12%	6	10%	11	10%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B28. How are journalists perceived by the public?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Table 8.21: How journalists/media are perceived to influence public opinion in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Influence <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. No influence	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
2. Some influence	8	19%	11	17%	19	18%
3. Moderate influence	6	14%	1	2%	7	7%
4. Considerable influence	18	42%	24	38%	42	40%
5. Major influence	10	23%	24	38%	34	32%
6. No response	1	2%	2	3%	3	3%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B29. Do you believe journalists/media influence public opinion?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Table 8.22: The importance of media influence in forming public opinion in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Importance <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. No importance	0	0	1	2%	1	1%
2. Some importance	7	16%	5	8%	12	11%
3. Moderate importance	4	9%	4	6%	8	8%
4. Considerable importance	17	40%	25	40%	42	40%
5. Major importance	13	30%	26	41%	39	37%
6. No response	2	5%	2	3%	4	4%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B30. How important is media influence in forming public opinion?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

### Wages and job satisfaction

One of the ironies indicated from the survey (Table 8.23; Graph 8.7) is that although Papua New Guinean journalists were generally better educated and with a higher mean experience, they were far more poorly paid than in Fiji. More than two-thirds of PNG journalists (68 percent) were in the lowest paid band of between K5,000 and K10,000.<sup>26</sup> Almost half of the Fiji journalists (47 per cent), were in the lowest range. Significantly more Fiji journalists were also in the two next highest scales of \$10,000 to \$15,000 (23 percent) and \$15,000 to \$20,000 (21 percent). In both categories, PNG fared at 14 percent and six percent respectively. Fiji also had a slightly higher percentage (five percent) in the top band of \$20,000 to \$25,000. Overall in both countries, more than almost four out of five journalists were being paid less than \$15,000, which is a starting salary for some professions such as secondary teaching and the law.<sup>27</sup> Mean wages in Fiji (\$13,000) were about \$2,000 a year higher than in Papua New Guinea (K11,000) with an overall mean in both countries of \$12,000.

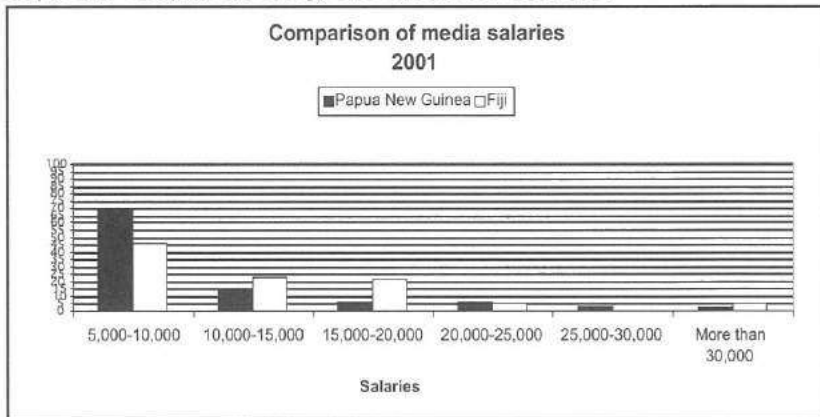
**Table 8.23: Fiji, PNG journalists' wage range, 2001**

Dollar equivalent <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
\$5 000 - \$10 000	20	47%	43	68%	63	59%
\$10 000 - \$15 000	10	23%	9	14%	19	18%
\$15 000 - \$20 000	9	21%	4	6%	13	12%
\$20 000 - \$25 000	2	5%	4	6%	6	6%
\$25 000 - \$30 000	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%
More than \$30 000	2	5%	1	2%	3	3%
<b>Mean wage</b>	<b>\$13,000</b>		<b>\$11,000</b>		<b>\$12,000</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *B31. What wage range are you paid per year?* They gave answers based on Fiji dollar, or PNG kina bands. Percentages may not total exactly due to rounding off.



Graph 8.7: Comparison of Fiji, PNG media salaries, 2001



Wages and working conditions stirred many strong and bitter comments from respondents. One Fiji respondent argued reporters who had gone through journalism school should be paid more than those who did not with a starting wage in the newsroom.

Otherwise what is the point of spending three years in a journalism school when one can just go straight to a news organisation and still receive the same salary as a graduate? The graduate is more equipped [sic] and passionate about the job than a person straight out of high school. You don't need to be trained again in the newsroom (FTV).

Recalling his earlier hardships as a cadet, one Fiji news executive wrote:

Reporters work long hours for little pay. In fact, [starting] pay at *The Fiji Times* is still the same for cadet reporters as twelve years ago when I joined — \$5,500. No wonder staff turnover is so high in the industry. The enthusiasm evaporates very quickly because of the low pay and long hours (R).

In Papua New Guinea, one journalist respondent wrote:

One of the problems facing the profession is the salary/wage. I am of the view that journalists in Papua New Guinea are underpaid. It is frustrating to get paid lower than what is expected after you put in a lot of effort into your career. I personally have already decided to take up a job elsewhere. I want the media companies to improve the salaries of its reporters.

Another respondent, who had no formal journalism training:

Journos who come out with a diploma or degree from UPNG and DWU are really in for big bugs [sic] instead of working their way up from a cadetship. Others who are trained while on-the-job are often criticised by diploma and degree holders (WP).

Some general comments in Papua New Guinea where salaries were lowest included:

Journalists in the Pacific are badly paid. Salary and welfare conditions should be looked into.. Newspaper companies are focused on making money. They have no set guidelines for training journalists or financing projects like investigative reporting (PC).

Journalists in PNG are underpaid. Lifestyle and economic hardship force journalists to move away from the integrity of their profession (WP).

Fiji journalists were considerably more satisfied (60 percent) with their media career than their colleagues in Papua New Guinea (49 percent) (Table 8.24). Overall, more than half of surveyed journalists in both countries (54 percent) were happy with their job. However, more journalists in Fiji were not satisfied (23 percent) with their career than in Papua New Guinea (21 percent). One in five PNG journalists were uncertain.

**Table 8.24: Media career satisfaction in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Job satisfaction <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Satisfied	26	60%	31	49%	57	54%
2. Not satisfied	10	23%	13	21%	23	22%
3. Uncertain	6	14%	16	25%	22	21%
4. No response	1	2%	3	5%	4	4%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: B32. *Are you satisfied with your career as a journalist?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

### Freedom of the press

Journalists in both countries overwhelmingly (81 percent) supported the ideal of the media being a watchdog (Table 8.25) rather than 'just another business'.<sup>28</sup> The proportion was higher in Fiji where two-thirds of journalists supported the view than in Papua New Guinea (44 percent). More journalists in Papua New Guinea were not so sure, opting for 'maybe' a watchdog. However, when the question centred on the 'actual situation' in both countries (Table 8.26), both Fiji and PNG journalists became more hesitant. While overall, 81 percent supported the notion of a watchdog, a quarter of this would only go so far as to say 'maybe' and only 21 percent 'strongly agreed'. Significantly though, the balance swung in PNG's favour with more than twice as many journalists (27 percent) strongly agreeing that the PNG media was a watchdog than in Fiji (12 percent).

**Table 8.25: The media as a watchdog or just another business in Fiji, PNG — as perceived by journalists, 2001**

Watchdog — perceived <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Strongly agree watchdog	28	65%	28	44%	56	53%
2. Agree watchdog	9	21%	21	33%	30	28%
3. Maybe watchdog	0	0%	6	10%	6	6%
4. Neither	0	0%	3	5%	3	3%
5. Maybe another business	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
6. Just another business	2	5%	1	2%	3	3%
7. Strongly agree just another business	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
8. No response	3	7%	4	6%	7	7%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C33. Do you favour the media as a watchdog, or should it be thought of as just another business?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Table 8.26: The media as a watchdog or just another business in Fiji, PNG — actual situation, 2001**

Watchdog — actual <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Strongly agree watchdog	5	12%	17	27%	22	21%
2. Agree watchdog	17	40%	25	40%	42	40%
3. Maybe watchdog	13	30%	8	13%	21	20%
4. Neither	0	0%	3	5%	3	3%
5. Maybe another business	4	9%	3	5%	7	7%
6. Just another business	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
7. Strongly agree just another business	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
8. No response	4	9%	6	10%	10	9%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C34. What do you think is the actual situation in Fiji/PNG?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

Most surveyed journalists in Fiji and Papua New Guinea (80 percent) favoured free expression for the media rather than free expression for the public (Table 8.27).<sup>29</sup> Journalists seemed to believe that the media should largely mediate public free expression. Almost half of all PNG journalists strongly favoured media free expression, a higher level than in Fiji (44 percent) while significantly more Fiji journalists (37 percent) simply favoured free expression than in PNG (27 percent). Conversely, PNG (11 percent) also had a higher proportion supporting free expression for interest groups (the public) than in Fiji (seven percent).

**Table 8.27: Free expression for the media or for interest groups in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Free expression <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Strongly favour free expression for media	19	44%	31	49%	50	47%
2. Favour free expression for media	16	37%	17	27%	33	31%
3. Maybe favour free expression for media	1	2%	1	2%	2	2%
4. Uncertain	0	0%	3	5%	3	3%
5. Maybe favour free expression for interest groups	3	7%	0	0	3	3%
6. Favour free expression for interest groups	1	2%	2	3%	3	3%
7. Strongly favour free expression for interest groups	3	7%	7	11	10	9%
8. No response	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C35. Is free expression for the media or free expression for interest groups closer to your own view of freedom of the press?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

### Investigative journalism

Almost four out of five surveyed journalists in Fiji and Papua New Guinea (86 percent) regard investigative journalism as a 'very important' measure of the media's commitment to its watchdog role (Table 8.28). This view was a little stronger in Papua New Guinea (89 percent) than in Fiji (81 percent). A further eight percent of journalists overall considered investigative journalism important. But when it came to how much news organisations encouraged journalists to actually do investigative journalism (Table 8.29), little more than half of the journalists (58 percent) agreed that this was actually happening. More Fiji journalists (70 percent) thought they were being encouraged than in Papua New Guinea (49 percent). However, 19 percent overall said no and a fifth of the journalists were uncertain. When asked how encouragement was actually given, some 37 percent could not think of a reason (Table 8.30). Twice as many from Papua New Guinea (46 percent) did not respond than in Fiji (23 percent).

**Table 8.28: How important investigative journalism is seen as a commitment to its watchdog role in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Investigative journalism <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Very important	35	81%	56	89%	91	86%
2. Important	5	12%	3	5%	8	8%
3. Maybe important	0	0%	0	0%	0	0
4. Uncertain	0	0%	0	0%	0	0
5. Maybe unimportant	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%
6. Unimportant	0	0%	0	0%	0	0
7. Very unimportant	0	0%	0	0%	0	0
8. No response	3	7%	2	3%	5	5%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C36. How important is investigative journalism as a measure of the media's commitment to its watchdog role?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Table 8.29: Industry encouragement for investigative journalism in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Industry approach <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Encouraged	30	70%	31	49%	61	58%
2. Not encouraged	5	12%	15	24%	20	19%
3. Uncertain	7	16%	14	22%	21	20%
4. No response	1	2%	3	5%	4	4%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C37. Are journalists in your news organisation encouraged to do investigative journalism?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

**Table 8.30: How industry encouragement is given for investigative journalism in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Manner of support <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Ethos of the organisation	7	16%	9	14%	16	15%
2. Freeing staff from other duties	10	23%	9	14%	19	18%
3. Providing economic and staff support	6	14%	3	5%	9	8%
4. Providing supportive and experienced editors	10	23%	5	8%	15	14%
5. Other, please specify	0	0%	8	13%	8	8%
6. No response	10	23%	29	46%	39	37%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C38. If yes, how is encouragement given for investigative journalism?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

The most common example of encouragement was freeing up staff (18 percent) from other duties to carry out investigative journalism. Significantly more Fiji journalists (23 percent) thought this than in PNG (14 percent).

The second factor was the ethos of the organisation (15 percent overall) and this was evenly supported in both countries. Fourteen percent overall considered they were being given support from experienced editors. Only eight percent thought they were provided with economic and staff support.

The major problems for investigative journalism (Table 8.31) were seen as insufficient resources (29 percent) such as lack of staff, money and time. These problems were regarded more seriously in Papua New Guinea (35 percent) than in Fiji (21 percent). Concern about commercial pressures (11 percent overall) was also important. This factor was seen as twice as serious (16 percent) in Fiji as in Papua New Guinea (eight percent). Not being the ethos of the news organisation was regarded as the least concern (two percent). However, there was a remarkably high non response from 45 percent of the surveyed journalists.

**Table 8.31: How industry does not give encouragement for investigative journalism in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

No encouragement factors <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Not the ethos of the organisation	2	5%	0	0	2	2%
2. Concern about political pressure	4	9%	0	0	4	4%
3. Concern about commercial pressure	7	16%	5	8%	12	11%
4. Irrelevant to role of journalism and media	0	0%	0	0	0	0
5. Insufficient resources (staff, money, time)	9	21%	22	35%	31	29%
6. Inadequate skills of journalists and editors	3	7%	3	5%	6	6%
7. Other, please specify	0	0%	3	5%	3	3%
8. No response	18	42%	30	48%	48	45%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C.39. If no, what are the problems?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

Feelings were mixed about resources for computer-assisted reporting (CAR) (Table 8.32). Half of the journalists thought their news organisation was either very well resourced or was moderately resourced. The highest group in Fiji (28 percent) thought they were moderately resourced while almost as many (26 percent) thought their resources were poor. Sixteen percent of surveyed Papua New Guinean journalists thought they were poorly resourced. Almost two-thirds of the journalists (61 percent) considered culture to be a very important or important obstacle to the investigative role of the media (Table 8.33). More Papua New Guinean journalists (33 percent) thought culture was a very important obstacle than in Fiji (26 percent).

**Table 8.32: How industry provides for computer-assisted reporting in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

CAR resources <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Very well resourced	9	21%	16	25%	25	24%
2. Moderately well resourced	12	28%	16	25%	28	26%
3. Neutral	4	9%	6	10%	10	9%
4. Partially resourced	6	14%	11	17%	17	16%
5. Poorly resourced	11	26%	10	16%	21	20%
6. No response	1	2%	4	6%	5	5%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C39. Of no, what are the problems?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

However, more than double the number of Fiji journalists (47 percent) than in PNG (21 percent) regarded it as important. Also, more journalists in Fiji (12 percent) considered it unimportant than in Papua New Guinea (10 percent).

Among qualitative comments, several Fiji journalists said 'Pacific culture has too many norms and taboos' (DP) or Fijian journalists were 'bound by traditions, especially when they are interviewing authority figures' (FTV). Among other comments:

There are things male reporters can do and be accepted, but not female reporters (DP).

Fear of offending and being accused of not knowing (R).

The 'vanua' and 'kai' situation in Fiji limits the reporter's ability to be more critical and unbiased (DP).

Relationships make reporters hesitant to interview high-ranking chiefs of their province (FTV).

**Table 8.33: Culture as a major obstacle to investigative journalism in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Major obstacle <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Very important	11	26%	21	33%	32	30%
2. Important	20	47%	13	21%	33	31%
3. Maybe important	3	7%	10	16%	13	12%
4. Uncertain	3	7%	8	13%	11	10%
5. Maybe unimportant	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
6. Unimportant	5	12%	6	10%	11	10%
7. Very unimportant	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
8. No response	1	2%	4	6%	5	5%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C41. Do you believe culture is a major obstacle to the investigative role of the news media?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

The chiefly system has to be respected. Society doesn't accept media questioning of the leader/chief: Example: when camera shots are taken of the late President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. The cameraman cannot stand and film. He must be kneeling down to take the shots. If the cameraman is standing in front of him, it means disrespect (FTV).

Cultural ostracism is something journalists are wary of. Criticism of the Fiji President, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, is seen as an insult by western division Fijians as he is their paramount chief (R).

But for more than one Fiji journalist, the issue was one of 'working around' the cultural barrier:

It really depends on how a journalist tackles this issue. If one allows culture or the excuse of culture to rule them, then they are bound to face obstacles. Working around it is a different story. At the end of the day one has to get the facts of the story — culture or no culture (FTV).

In Papua New Guinea, even though culture was said to be less of a problem than in Fiji, qualitative comments showed that the 'wantok' and 'bigman' systems<sup>30</sup> and tribalism could still influence a reporter. Some views:

Wantok/nepotism is the one obstacle (NFM).

[Our] place of origin (village, province, ethnic group) plays an important factor in gaining trust (NFM).

Unable to report the wrongdoings of relatives or wantoks for fear of losing his birthright (WP).

It depends on the issue, but the wantok system stops one from investigating another (N).

Cultural practices of a journalist's origin influence his or her perceptions (WP).

There's a 'code of silence': You ask questions to a certain point — beyond that is taboo (PC).

Responses over religion as an obstacle for investigative journalism were more evenly spread (Table 8.34). The largest group, almost a third overall was uncertain. A further third thought it was important or maybe important while 23 percent thought it was unimportant. Religion seemed to be less of a problem in Papua New Guinea where 27 percent thought it unimportant while a further 35 percent were uncertain. However, in Fiji 21 percent thought it was important and the same again were unsure. Among qualitative comments:



**Table 8.34: Religion as a major obstacle to investigative journalism in Fiji, PNG, 2001**

Major obstacle <sup>1</sup>	Fiji n=43	%	PNG n=63	%	Total n=106	%
1. Very important	3	7%	0	0	3	3%
2. Important	9	21%	7	11%	16	15%
3. Maybe important	6	14%	10	16%	16	15%
4. Uncertain	9	21%	22	35%	31	29%
5. Maybe unimportant	0	0%	2	3%	2	2%
6. Unimportant	7	16%	17	27%	24	23%
7. Very unimportant	4	9%	4	6%	8	8%
8. No response	5	12%	1	2%	6	6%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked the question: *C43. Do you believe religion is a major obstacle to the investigative role of the news media?* Percentages may not total precisely due to rounding off.

In Fiji, religion plays an important role in society. Given [that] the church leaders are getting themselves into politics, their influence has spread. In Fijian traditional set-ups, whatever the church pastor says is taken to be true, thus the [clergy's] power and influence is strong (P).

Some conservative Christian reporters, when reporting on religious events or political agitation by religious groups [self-censor]. For example, the reporter referring to a pastor as a 'man of God' rather than simply using the person's name (FM96). The poor style with the Methodist Church is never reported, let alone the sexual prowess of some clergy (DP).

## Conclusion

Marked differences were found in the profiles of Fiji and Papua New Guinea journalists, especially in education and professional formation, salaries and in the professional attitudes. In general, Papua New Guinea journalists were better educated, older, more experienced, but more poorly paid. While there were similarities in the core values of journalism between the two countries, Papua New Guinea journalists appeared to have more sophisticated values in their relationship and role within the community, which is likely to be attributed to tertiary education.

**Fiji profile:** The 'typical' Fiji journalist<sup>31</sup> is more likely to be male (very marginally), single, under the age of 25, with less than four years experience, a native Fijian speaker but working for English-language media and a school leaver with no formal training or higher education. He probably believes that a combination of a media cadetship and university education is the best way to be trained as a journalist, although unlikely to have had

the opportunity to do so. He probably entered journalism keen to communicate knowledge to the community, attracted to varied and exciting work or expecting to expose abuses of power and corruption (order of preference). The Fiji journalist is more likely to be satisfied with his journalism career, expects to maybe still be in journalism in five years, or perhaps go into public relations. He believes his professional role primarily to be a watchdog on democracy, but also to be an educator and 'defender of the truth' (order of preference). He believes that free expression is about freedom for the media rather than the public. He believes the Fiji media perform a watchdog on democracy role, but is uncertain about what development journalism means. While he probably strongly supports the notion of investigative journalism as a measure of commitment to being a watchdog on democracy, he is likely to regard culture and religion as major obstacles. Also, he thinks the public has a satisfactory perception of journalists and is probably paid about F\$13,000 a year.

**Papua New Guinea profile:** A 'typical' Papua New Guinea journalist is more likely to be female (very marginally), single, under the age of 29, with about five years experience, a Tok Pisin speaker but working on English-language media and to have a university diploma or degree in journalism from either the University of Papua New Guinea or Divine Word University. She believes that journalists should receive a university education with a media organisation attachment. She probably entered journalism to communicate knowledge to the community, expose abuses of power and corruption, and varied and exciting work (order of preference). The Papua New Guinea journalist may be unsatisfied or uncertain with her media career, but expects to stay in journalism in five years' time. She may go into public relations, but is less likely to do so than in Fiji. She probably believes her professional role is to be the watchdog of democracy, an educator and defender of the truth (order of preference). While she believes that free expression is important for the media, she is more likely to also recognise the importance for the public. Although she probably more strongly believes in the watchdog role of media than in Fiji, she also has an understanding of the role of development journalism and considers that it has relevance to Papua New Guinea. She is strongly committed to the notion of investigative journalism as a measure of media commitment to being a watchdog on democracy, but is less likely to see culture and religion as obstacles than in Fiji. Also, she thinks the public has a very good or good perception of journalists, and she is probably earning about K11,000 a year, or about half of what a Fiji journalist earns in real terms when currencies are compared.

It was in the area of educational qualifications and training that significant statistical differences between the two countries were reflected. Papua New Guinean journalists were found to be more highly qualified

than their Fiji counterparts. Between 1998-99 and 2001, the proportion of PNG journalists had climbed from 73 percent in the early survey to 81 percent, almost threefold higher than in Fiji. However, in the same three-year period the number of Fiji journalists with a degree or diploma rose by more than a third from 14 percent to 26 percent. This reflected the growing number of graduate journalists entering the workplace from the University of the South Pacific. Conversely, the proportion of journalists without basic training or qualifications climbed slightly in both countries to almost half of all journalists in Fiji (49 percent) and 14 percent in Papua New Guinea. However, almost one in four Fiji journalists of the survey respondents indicated they had done professional and industry short courses run by regional or donor organisations. Papua New Guinea was less reliant on donor organisations because the country's media organisations were more integrated with the university journalism schools.

One of the ironies of the newsroom survey is that although Papua New Guinean journalists were generally better educated and with a higher mean experience, they were far more poorly paid than in Fiji. Papua New Guinean journalists have a mean salary of K11,000 a year. Although the Fijian mean salary is F\$13,000 a year, the PNG journalist would be paid about half of what a Fiji journalist earns in real terms when their salaries are compared. More than two-thirds of PNG journalists (68 per cent) were in the lowest paid bracket of between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Almost half of the Fiji journalists (47 percent) were in the lowest range. It is uncertain to what extent non-participation by *The Fiji Times* journalists could have distorted the findings in this category, but probably not by much. The company is the largest employer of journalists in the country and anecdotal evidence in the pilot survey and in the qualitative interviews points to a large proportion of lowly paid staff. It was also the most consistently criticised newspaper in interviews over its recruitment policies. Also, at the time of completing this book it was understood that the company had employed no graduate journalists with journalism qualifications.

While many of the demographic and professional values such as support for the 'watchdog' ideal were comparable between the two countries, Papua New Guinean journalists often exhibited more positive views on the capacity of the media for 'nation-building' and as an educator 'empowering' citizens than in Fiji. For example, while almost twice as many journalists in Fiji than in PNG were attracted to the 'prestige' of a media career, almost three out of every four PNG journalists regarded 'communicating knowledge to the community' as a crucial factor in taking up a media career. One major problem for Fiji indicated in the interviews is the issue of self-censorship, as outlined by *Review* publisher Yashwant Gaunder:

I think [Fiji] is a free media. But there is a lot of self-censorship by Fiji journalists. It comes back to personal choices. So I think maybe there is some self-censorship in editorial decisions because of the particular view of some media organisations. But in my personal experience, I've not had any pressure from government. Even if they criticised us, we went ahead anyway and did what we needed to do. And then there was no action against us. We have been pretty bold in the last ten years.<sup>32</sup>

Papua New Guinean journalists were also more like to choose 'exposing abuses of power and corruption' as a reason to embark on a journalism career. More Papua New Guinean journalists regarded investigative journalism (89 percent) as a measure of the media's commitment to its watchdog role, but saw culture and religion as less of an obstacle than in Fiji. Nevertheless qualitative comments showed that the 'wantok' and 'bigman' systems and tribalism could still influence a PNG reporter. As one journalist explained, 'There's a 'code of silence': You ask questions to a certain point — beyond that is taboo.' Cultural relationships make reporters hesitant to interview high-ranking chiefs of their province in Fiji. The chiefly system needs to be respected. Society is reluctant to accept media questioning of the chief, whereas more vigorous questioning of leaders in Papua New Guinea (who are not hereditary) is acceptable. Reasons for the differences between the two countries as found in the newsroom surveys are explored in the concluding chapter.

## Pacific media education and the future

THE CHALLENGES facing South Pacific media education involve the development of quality educated journalists who have the capacity to understand and interact with their political and social institutions in a rapidly changing globalised world. Traditionally, with the exception of Papua New Guinea, journalism training in the South Pacific has largely concentrated on either 'on the job' learning in the newsroom or through short-term skills-oriented vocational courses funded by foreign donors.

It is vital that journalists have a good analysis of the role of media and its relationship with good governance, freedom of speech, human rights and executive power. Only a 'genuine understanding of what is at stake can give journalists the will and wisdom not to bow to the considerable pressures' on South Pacific media freedom by governments, business and corporate power, and by non-government organisations.<sup>1</sup> Non-partisan forums such as universities rather than sponsored courses that are open to claims of hidden agendas offer young journalists the confidence to pursue their stories in the face of social, cultural, political and religious pressures.

In Papua New Guinea, the University of PNG played a crucial pioneering role in the development of journalism education and training, not only for Papua New Guineans but throughout the region. As shown in Chapter Five, UPNG for many years was the benchmark for tertiary journalism qualifications and analysis of media industry standards. The initiative by the New Zealand government to set up a journalism school at UPNG in 1975, after a pilot training project for Papua New Guinean journalists in Wellington had ended in failure, was a move years ahead of

its time. Much of the early success of the programme was due to the inspiration and dedication of the founding lecturer provided by the aid project, Ross Stevens — he had just the ‘kind of naturally authoritative and diplomatic manner’ needed to make the school work.

Although the Journalism Studies Programme lacked sufficient facilities and resources — and was sometimes treated as a ‘Cinderella by the university for perplexing reasons’ — it was innovative and vigorous and established an international reputation. Among its achievements was a high profile and award-winning training newspaper, *Uni Tavur*. This became the first student journalism publication in the South Pacific to gain an international award in 1995.

By the end of 1997, when UPNG began restructuring its courses and Journalism Studies ceased to have its traditional autonomy, some 174 journalists from Papua New Guinea had graduated with journalism degrees or diplomas, a remarkable feat. This contribution was then, and remains even today, by far the largest share of qualified journalists produced by any institution in the South Pacific. However, the cost-cutting era of Rodney Hills as Vice-Chancellor of UPNG at the end of the 1990s was perceived as disastrous for journalism education in Papua New Guinea. It was an irony that Dr Hills regarded UPNG journalism as a ‘duplication’ of the smaller and more recent Communication Arts programme at Divine Word University. It did not matter that UPNG had led the way in Pacific journalism education for more than two decades and it had an international reputation. The university administration prepared to scuttle the UPNG course. A key factor was probably a conviction held by the vice-chancellor that journalism education did not belong in a ‘traditional’ university while DWU at the time did not have the status of a full national university.

The Papua New Guinean media scene has changed dramatically from the day Father Frank Mihalic launched *Wantok Niuspepa*. Chapter Six analysed DWU’s contribution to a growing sense of the vital role of journalism and skilled communication in developing a sense of nationhood and national identity in PNG — particularly through the extraordinary and visionary efforts of the late Father Mihalic. Along with the evolution of the Communication Arts programme, publication of *Wantok Niuspepa*, a unique newspaper in the South Pacific as a Tok Pisin national weekly, has become an icon of national development and the contribution that good journalism can make to education at a grassroots level. Divine Word also moved decisively at a critical time to protect the future of journalism education.

From its early beginnings in 1987, the USP Journalism Programme, first as an extension study based certificate course and later as a separate degree course, has had a chequered history, as Chapter Seven shows. Several high calibre staff have been employed on the programme through

its various stages. But at times they have been frustrated in their efforts by a variety of problems concerning donor consistency and continuity over policies. Also, the USP administration was reluctant, at least in the formative stages, to fully commit to journalism as a university discipline. A serious shortage of funding, professional facilities and even staff hindered development of journalism education at the regional university over much of the past seventeen years.

Nevertheless a second phase of development funded by the French government in the mid-1990s to establish the degree programme provided the impetus to establish a credible and dynamic regional journalism degree and diploma programme that produced eighty one graduates by 2004. Many of the graduates have already become established and influential journalists in Fiji and the South Pacific. However, many have also moved into better paid and influential media jobs in non-government organisations or elsewhere.

### **Political pressures and vested interests**

Political pressures that have dogged USP journalism education, especially in the wake of Fiji's first two coups, became more critical after the degree programme was established and thus became a genuine alternative to school leaver media cadets. Most staff members of the degree programme faced political pressure generated by one sector of the media industry that appeared threatened by the development of a vigorous and influential university-based journalism education. At times, the university and the government were pressured by demands to review or revoke work permits, attempts to censure the programme, and even calls for the sacking of prominent journalism education staff. Some former staff in the Suva-based secretariat of Pacific Islands News Association were implicated in these misguided attempts to protect vested training interests.

In the two media industry surveys outlined in this book, marked differences were found in the profiles of Fiji and Papua New Guinea journalists — especially in education and professional formation, salaries and in the professional attitudes. In fact, rather than a 'Pacific-style journalism' as flagged by earlier researchers such as Layton (1993) and Wakavonovono (1981), distinctive Fiji and PNG journalism profiles and approaches have been emerging. In general, Papua New Guinea journalists have been better educated, older, more experienced, but also more poorly paid. While there are similarities over the core values of journalism between the two countries, Papua New Guinean journalists appear to possess more sophisticated values in their relationship and role with the community, which can be attributed to tertiary education.

It is in the area of educational qualifications and training that significant statistical differences between the two countries are reflected. Surveyed Papua New Guinean journalists have been found to be more highly qualified than their Fiji counterparts. Between 1998/9 and 2001, the proportion of PNG journalists with degrees or diplomas climbed from 73 percent in the earlier pilot survey to 81 percent, almost threefold higher than in Fiji. However, in the same three-year period the number of Fiji journalists with a degree or diploma almost doubled from 14 percent to 26 percent. This reflects the growing number of graduate journalists entering the workplace from the University of the South Pacific. Conversely, the proportion of journalists *without* basic training or qualifications also climbed slightly in both countries to almost half of all journalists in Fiji (49 percent) and 14 percent in Papua New Guinea. However, almost one in four Fiji journalists of the survey respondents indicated they had completed professional and industry short courses run by regional or donor organisations. Papua New Guinea was less reliant on donor organisations because the country's media organisations were more integrated with the university journalism schools.

Chapter Eight demonstrates, just as Romy Fröhlich and Christina Holtz-Bacha found in their survey of European media training, that how journalists in the South Pacific have been educated influences their global view and self-perception. The typical Fiji journalist is most likely to be male (marginally), single and under the age of twenty five, with less than four years' experience and a native Fijian speaker. He works for English-language media and is a school leaver with no formal training or higher education. On the other hand, a typical Papua New Guinean journalist is most likely to be female (also marginally), single, under the age of twenty nine, with about five years experience, and a Tok Pisin speaker. She is working on English-language media and most likely she has a university diploma or degree in journalism from either the University of Papua New Guinea or Divine Word University.

The Fiji journalist usually believes that a combination of a media cadetship and university education is the best way to be trained as a journalist, although he is unlikely to have had the opportunity to do so. While he strongly supports the notion of investigative journalism as a measure of commitment to being a watchdog on democracy, he will probably regard culture and religion as major obstacles. Also, he thinks the public has a 'satisfactory' perception of journalists.

However, the Papua New Guinean journalist most likely believes that journalists should receive a university education with a media organisation attachment or internship. She probably entered journalism to communicate knowledge to the community, and to expose abuses of power and corruption. She may go into public relations, but is less likely to do so



than in Fiji. She also has an understanding of the role of development journalism and considers it relevant to Papua New Guinea. She is also less likely to see culture and religion as obstacles such as in Fiji. Also, she thinks the public has a 'very good' or 'good' perception of journalists.

### **Watchdog role and development journalism**

Other highlights of the main 2001 newsroom survey include:

- Most graduate journalists in Fiji and Papua New Guinea have been produced from the University of PNG (49 percent in PNG and 29 percent overall for both countries), followed by Divine Word University (17 percent overall) and USP (15 percent). However, USP graduates are spread throughout other Pacific countries not surveyed in this research.
- An even larger gulf between the countries was demonstrated in the earlier pilot survey of 1998/9. Fiji journalists then had a mean age of twenty two, seven years younger than in Papua New Guinea (29) while mean experience in Fiji was two-and-a-half years, contrasting with PNG journalists having more than double the experience at just over five years. The improvement in Fiji is attributed to the increasing numbers of older and educated journalism graduates from USP joining the industry.
- Main factors contributing to making journalism an appealing career in Papua New Guinea are communicating knowledge to the community (73 percent), exposing corruption (44 percent), and varied and exciting work (25 percent). In Fiji, factors are communicating knowledge to the community (53 percent), exciting work (44 percent) and exposing corruption (37 percent).<sup>2</sup>
- Sixty percent of Fiji journalists are satisfied with their journalism career in contrast to just 49 per cent in PNG. The number who said they were dissatisfied was about the same in both countries (23 percent in Fiji; 21 percent in PNG).
- Yet Fiji journalists are more likely to leave journalism, mostly to public relations. Sixty percent of Papua New Guinean journalists expect to stay within journalism in five years' time, while just over half of Fiji journalists surveyed (53 percent) see themselves remaining in the profession.
- Journalists in both Fiji (74 percent) and PNG (73 percent) regard their main professional role as a watchdog on democracy. Papua New Guinean journalists also regard the educator role (52 percent) as important, followed by defender of the truth (35 percent) and nation-builder (33 percent). Less than half of Fiji journalists (42 percent) see the educator role as important, followed by defender of the truth (40 percent) and nation-builder (35 percent).

- Forty-nine per cent of PNG journalists regard the phrase ‘development journalism’ as applicable to their media — in contrast to Fiji where only 39 percent shared this view. Also, Fiji journalists recorded high uncertain (23 percent) and no response (35 percent) categories. This was borne out by the high proportion of Fiji journalists whose qualitative question responses demonstrated a lack of understanding of the term, probably a reflection of the higher level of journalism education in Papua New Guinea.
- Insufficient resources such as lack of staff, money and time are regarded as major problems for investigative journalism in the Pacific. These problems are seen as more serious in Papua New Guinea (35 percent) than in Fiji (21 percent).
- Commercial pressures are twice as likely to be seen as a serious barrier for investigative journalism in Fiji (16 percent) than in Papua New Guinea (eight percent).

### **Low wages a serious threat to autonomy**

Across the board in Fiji and Papua New Guinea — and even more so elsewhere in the Pacific — salary structures are ‘pretty appalling’, as one prominent PNG journalist described it. She echoed the views of more than two-thirds of the fifty seven journalists and media executives or policy makers interviewed for this book. One of the ironies is that although Papua New Guinean journalists are generally better educated and with a higher mean experience, they are far more poorly paid than in Fiji. According to the 2001 survey, the mean salary scale for Fiji journalists is F\$13,000 a year while the median for PNG journalists is a mere K11,000 a year.<sup>3</sup> One Fiji editor criticised the ‘revolving door problem’:

Salaries for journalists are woeful to say the least. Raw ‘journalists’ are hired straight out of school and in turn paid extremely low wages for the hours they work. This in turn, leads to sub-standard journalism, which in turn leads to a misinformed, frustrated public. Media organisations jump on the bandwagon and offer inconsequential salary increases to lure staff who have had a trickle of experience from other media organisations, leading to staff swapping and the proverbial revolving door syndrome so common to newsrooms in Fiji.<sup>4</sup>

This state of affairs raises concerns about how independent the media really is with such low wage structures, or how exposed the media may be to the influence of so-called ‘envelope journalism’<sup>5</sup> inducements by unscrupulous politicians, as in Indonesia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea or the Solomon Islands.<sup>6</sup> Ingrid Leary notes: ‘Pay rates are very poor. That’s the number one problem for journalism in the Pacific, and

could ultimately spell the end for freedom of expression and human rights in the region'.<sup>7</sup> According to former leading Fiji newspaper editor Jale Moala, 'pay is the greatest obstacle to developing journalism in the region'.<sup>8</sup> One senior PNG journalist summed up the views of many about the lure of paid influence:

If you're working for an absolutely meagre wage that's not going to get you through much, your opinions are going to be able to be changed or swayed with a bit of influence. Somebody is going to be able to persuade you basically, with a bit of cash or some sort of incentive ...

Processes are not followed by public servants because somebody has a bigger need and will take a shortcut. And I don't think we can exclude journalists. In the case of the Skate Tapes<sup>9</sup> revelation about journalists being allegedly paid, we had the opportunity of one incident being taped. I think it would be pretty embarrassing if other incidents were taped. I think it is rife.

Along with journalists and the media industry, growing corruption is also causing unease among the educators. 'Lack of funding is a real problem. And ethics,' argues University of Papua New Guinea's media academic Sorariba Nash. 'I am starting to sense this massive corruption coming' into society.<sup>10</sup> He believes there has been a dramatic rise in junkets and freebies being used as inducements to win over journalists.

Further research is needed to explore this issue. Certainly the main newsroom survey for this book confirmed an appalling state of salaries for journalists. More than two-thirds of PNG journalists (68 percent) were in the lowest paid band of between \$5,000 and \$10,000. 'I was staggered to find how poorly paid a lot of them were,' noted the ABC's former correspondent in Port Moresby, Richard Dinnen. 'I [found] people doing jobs that in Australia would earn A\$80,000 to A\$100,000 a year were getting less than K20,000 a year in Papua New Guinea to exercise exceptionally high responsibility'.<sup>11</sup> Journalism lecturer and *National* columnist Kevin Pamba noted there was no structure in salary and working conditions for journalists at most PNG news organisations. Relating an experience at one media organisation over a job offer when he graduated in 1995,

I asked them about health cover, accommodation and other things. The next thing I got was that they told me that I could always get out of the newsroom — so I did [and joined a rival daily newspaper].<sup>12</sup>

In Fiji, less than half of the journalists (47 percent) were in the lowest range, according to the survey. Yet it is uncertain to what extent non-participation by *Fiji Times* journalists could have distorted findings in this category. The company is the largest employer of journalists in the country and anecdotal evidence points to a large proportion of lowly paid staff. But Moala believes there is a career path for those who work hard. 'Salaries are comparable to the civil service,' he said, 'which may not really be a good gauge for comparison because the workload, and now increasingly also qualifications, are not the same.'<sup>13</sup>

### Engaging the Fourth Estate ideal

While many of the demographic and professional values such as support for the 'watchdog' ideal were comparable between the two countries, Papua New Guinean journalists often volunteered more positive views on the capacity of the media for 'nation-building' and as an 'educator' empowering citizens than in Fiji. For example, while almost twice as many journalists in Fiji than in PNG were attracted to the 'prestige' of a media career, almost three out of every four PNG journalists regarded 'communicating knowledge to the community' as a crucial factor in taking up a media career. Papua New Guinean journalists were also more likely to choose 'exposing abuses of power and corruption' as a reason to embark on a journalism career. More Papua New Guinean journalists regarded investigative journalism (89 percent) as a measure of the media's commitment to its watchdog role, but saw culture and religion as less of an obstacle than in Fiji. Constitutional researcher Jone Dakuvula is concerned about this gap in Fiji:

We do not have investigative journalists in Fiji. This is vital if we are to enhance the watchdog role. Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF) has tried to contribute to this role through [researched] articles, letters and press statements that contain information [the media] has not known or challenges the present government's version of certain events.<sup>14</sup>

However, too often the information is drafted into a 'report' by a journalist under his or her byline, or simply not published at all. Journalist and author Kunda Dixit notes that while there is a vibrant and successful alternative press in most Western countries critically examining globalisation and its impact on societies, communities and institutions, it is less evident in developing countries such as in the South Pacific.<sup>15</sup> He does not see development journalism as an answer. 'In a final analysis,' he argues, 'there can be only two kinds of journalism: good journalism and bad journalism.'

And in a sense, all journalism is (or should be) about 'development'. By qualifying this new journalism with an adjective like 'alternative', we run the risk of consigning it to marginality. Nor are labels like 'counter-journalism', 'new journalism', 'advocacy', 'civic', 'public' or 'people-centred journalism' any use. Let's not call it anything, let's just do it well.<sup>16</sup>

The philosophy of print journalism and broadcasting and ethical issues such as independence, fairness, and coverage of difficult issues such as political corruption were at times beyond the comprehension of some Pacific journalists surveyed during this research, especially among journalists in Fiji who have had little or no tertiary education. Many are solely concerned with practical skills and a job at the end of the day. They give little thought to the wider social responsibilities of media in a developing society. Few journalists adequately background or research stories, or provide the context that is needed to make sense of a news or current affairs development. Investigative journalism is rare. During the Speight attempted coup in 2000, for example, there was little in-depth reporting of the Fiji state-owned mahogany harvesting issue, although this was a critical factor in the political upheaval in Fiji. What was published in Fiji was largely republication or rehashing of reports compiled by investigative journalists in foreign media.

A major change is needed to alter the mind-set among some news media organisations that are reluctant to invest in human resource development and to recognise the importance of education. At a Fiji seminar in mid-2004 on industry self-regulation, prominent publicist and Samba Ltd director Matt Wilson called for the establishment of a media wages council and better investment in training. Saying the majority of working journalists in Fiji had little or no training at all, the former 1960s *Fiji Times* journalist added: 'I can see standards slipping inexorably — I can see no improvements.'<sup>17</sup> Perhaps, too, the public needs to take a more demanding and critical role about media standards and the need for education: 'The public should take part in the training of journalists,' suggests Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) coordinator and publisher Stanley Simpson. 'We have journalism education institutions, we have in-house training, but we cannot just rely on this alone because we need an active public to respond to the media'.<sup>18</sup>

According to Julianne Schultz, the central paradox of the news media as a political institution that measures its success by the criteria of profit and audience numbers is 'highlighted by the five elements central to the rhetorical and philosophical justification of the Fourth Estate'.<sup>19</sup> She identified the elements as political purpose and independence; commercial priorities; the importance of public opinion; the diversity of information

and viewpoints presented; and the degree of accountability. South Pacific news media managements need a fundamental rethink on their approach to journalism education and training. While developed countries in the region are arguably addressing the central democratic paradox identified by Schultz, many Pacific news organisations are instead turning back the clock and adopting in-house vocational 'training' rather than supporting formal journalism education.

Media managements, particularly in Fiji where they could emulate Papua New Guinea, need to shed their haphazard attitude and adopt real commitment to professional journalism education provided by the Pacific universities. Less political in-fighting in the media industry and an end to 'closed shop' attitudes are crucial. Journalists with a quality all-round tertiary education with strong exposure to disciplines such as business, economics, geography, government, history/politics, human rights, language (English for mainstream media) and literature, and sociology would be a sound investment. Too many newsrooms have general reporters without the skills to do specialised coverage. A problem solving ability along with critical and analytical skills — strong characteristics of the university journalism courses — is also important. As well as having a 'nose for news', a good journalist needs to be inquisitive and questioning, be able to analyse situations and read between the lines. A healthy interest in public administration, community affairs and the environment is also valuable.

Development journalism is not well understood in the South Pacific, even though most media often adopt such an approach without acknowledging it. This means a form of journalism contributing to the progress of a country — economic and social development, education and cultural. Journalists need to identify key issues and explore their relationship to the poor, middle class and rich sectors of the nation. It also means a lot more community reporting in the villages — far from the faxed and emailed press releases of the Pacific urban newsrooms. University education has the capacity to provide the analytical skills to successfully report real development. It could be argued that the case for development journalism is especially urgent in the face of the rapid changes now taking place as a consequence of globalisation and what might be called 'the new regionalism'.

There is an urgent need for more journalists who can make sense of the new Australian, New Zealand and international engagement with the Pacific that is broadly shaping regional trends: proposals involving intensified cooperation such as plans for a regional panel of judges, a common list of Pacific prosecutors, a regional shipping registry, a regional financial unit, and stepped-up regional training in good governance. Undoubtedly, the grand Pacific plan could lead to closer economic integration and free trade deals and — eventually — a common currency and some form of political

integration. As Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downing noted in a speech about his country's dramatic 'new engagement' with the South Pacific:

Australia led the successful regional intervention in the Solomon Islands. An Australian has, for the first time, been elected as Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, with a mandate to reform and invigorate the Secretariat. Australia has agreed to requests from Fiji and Nauru to provide police commissioners. The Pacific Islands Forum agreed to Australia's proposal for a study on how pooling countries' resources could improve transport links in the region. Australia is working with Nauru and Papua New Guinea to provide a significant number of Australian officials to help improve capacity in law and order, financial management and other areas.<sup>20</sup>

Governments increasingly focus on the risks to security and economic growth from transnational threats, such as terrorism and organised crime, and also failures of governance such as corruption. The universities face an increasing challenge in identifying and addressing the media industry's real needs and equipping a new generation of journalists with a sound education needed for development journalism. Pacific journalists need to be provided with the philosophy, socio-political, historical and contextual knowledge to match the technical skills of being effective communicators and political mediators in their developing societies. And managements must develop fair and equitable salary structures for career journalists if they hope to keep staff with the vital training and skills.

Pressures and dilemmas for the news media continue to gain momentum in the South Pacific, often from a cultural as well as a political dimension. While the media in some countries is refreshingly outspoken and courageous, in others there is a worrying trend towards self-censorship. Some media industry observers argue that reclaiming Pacific images and 'envisioning a future without coups, conflicts and contraband' is now more urgent than ever.<sup>21</sup> This is due to a perception that the dominant news media in the Pacific is 'Western', with Eurocentric and north-based conceptual models paramount. However, these models have failed to seriously take Pacific and indigenous cultures and their world views into account. Yet Pacific news media has played a crucial role in exposing corruption and abuse of political power or office, and in some cases leading to redress. It is vital that no political or social institution has absolute authority over the media. Also, the hegemony of news media organisations themselves is at stake.

From one perspective, while the shortcomings of professional expertise of some Pacific media and journalists are acknowledged, the solution is too often seen as self-regulation and more donor-funded training. In fact, there is little evidence that more than two decades of short course training funded by donor agencies has made as significant a contribution to raising journalism standards in the region as the university education sector. Some powerbrokers in the media industry have at times hijacked training funds for their own agendas. The contrasting perspective, supported by the research in this book, argues that self-regulation has manifestly failed. Education for journalists and a professional ethos are a vital part of empowering the public in a democracy. Educated journalists are more likely to offer fresh and sustainable solutions. It is no longer acceptable for the media to be 'judge and jury at their own trial'.<sup>22</sup>



## NOTES

### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> See Brij V. Lal with Michael Pretes (eds.) (2001), *Coup: Reflections on the Political Crisis in Fiji*. Canberra: Pandanus Books, p 7; Robbie Robertson and William Sutherland (2001), *Government by the Gun: The Unfinished Business of Fiji's 2000 Coup*. Sydney: Pluto Press, pp xvii-xix; and Satendra Prasad et al (2002), *Economic Development, Democracy and Ethnic Conflict in the Fiji Islands*. London: Minority Rights and Development, p 10.

<sup>2</sup> Two coups by Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka took place on 14 May 1987 and 25 September 1987. The attempted coup by rogue businessman George Speight was staged on 19 May 2000.

<sup>3</sup> The judge ruled that Ratu Timoci Silatolu must serve a minimum of nine years in prison before being released and Jo Nata seven years.

<sup>4</sup> I was just a PR consultant: Nata. (2002, February 20). *Fiji Daily Post*.

<sup>5</sup> University of Technology, Sydney (UTS).

<sup>6</sup> Salesh Kumar and Nazreen Bibi (2000, November). Fiji in limbo over 'financial mess'. *Wansohwara*, p 8.

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Mahendra Chaudhry (1999); Masterton (1989); Millett (1996); Naidu (2003); O'Connell (2001); Robie (2001a, 1999f); Vayeshnoi, (1999a, 1999b); Weber (1999).

<sup>8</sup> Mahendra Chaudhry (1999), address at the launching of the [Fiji] Media Council General Media Code of Ethics and Practice. Suva, October 26.

<sup>9</sup> Chaudhry (1999).

<sup>10</sup> PNG premier backs press freedom (1999, June). *Commonwealth Press Union News*, p 9.

<sup>11</sup> Sorariba Nash (1996, May 10), Viewpoint: An embarrassing bias over aid. *Uni Tavur*, p4.; Robert Hooper (1998), Challenges of Sustainable Broadcasting Training in Contemporary Pacific. *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, July-December, Issue 5, pp 4-22; Konai Thaman (2001), Reclaiming Pacific images: A View of Communication and Peace, paper presented at IAMCR, Budapest, September 6-10.

<sup>12</sup> Hooper (1998), p 13.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Pat Craddock, 11 March 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Ingrid Leary, 12 January 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Tony Yianni, 28 April 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Several news organisations claim to be operating cadet schemes, yet anecdotal evidence from working journalists in their newsrooms suggests that they do not really exist. Certainly, there are no formal cadet schemes with grading systems as has been the norm in Australia and New Zealand, for example.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Francis Herman, 17 May 2001.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Debbie Singh, 25 January 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Robertson (1989), *Freedom, the Individual and the Law*. London: Pelican Books.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p 174.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p 175.

<sup>22</sup> Kalafi Moala (2002), *Island Kingdom Strikes Back*. Auckland: Pacmedia Publishers; (1996), We didn't get a fair trial. *Pacific Journalism Review*, 3(2): 13–14; see also *Pacific Media Watch* for constitutional and legal developments on this controversial banning: [www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/tongadraftmediares.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/tongadraftmediares.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>23</sup> David Robie (ed.) (2001b), *The Pacific Journalist: A Practical Guide*. Suva: USP Book Centre, p 99.

<sup>24</sup> *Fiji Sun* (2000, February 17).

<sup>25</sup> Uluinakauvadra confirms probe (2000, February 8). *Fiji Sun*.

<sup>26</sup> Singirok cleared of sedition charge (2004, March 2). ABC PM Report.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in David Robie, *op. cit.*, 2001b, p 99.

<sup>28</sup> Mark Pearson (1997), *The Journalists's Guide to Media Law*. Sydney, Allen & Unwin.

<sup>29</sup> Pearson (2000), Reflective Practice in Action: Preparing Samoan Journalists to Cover Court Cases. *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, January-June, Issue 8, p 23.

<sup>30</sup> Seona Smiles (2001), Foreword, in David Robie (ed.), *The Pacific Journalist*. Suva: USP Book Centre, pp ix–xii).

<sup>31</sup> See Robbie Robertson (2003). *The Three Waves of Globalisation: A History of a Developing Global Consciousness*. London: Zed Books.

<sup>32</sup> See Paulo Friere (1970), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum, p177; Albert L. Hester and Wai Lan J. To (1987), *Handbook for Third World Journalists*. Athens, Georgia: Center For International Media Training and Research, University of Georgia; Eric Loo (1994), Teaching development journalism in the reporting of cultural diversity. *Australian Journalism Review*, 16(2): 1–10; Sean MacBride (1980), *Many Voices, One World*. Report by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems. Paris: UNESCO; Crispin C. Maslog (1992), *Communication, Values and Society*. Quezon City, Philippines: Philippine Association of Communication Educators; Jim Richstad and Tony Nnaemaka (1981); News from Nowhere: Sources of International News in the Pacific Islands. *Pacific Islands Communication Journal*, 10(2); Richstad (1984). News Flow Factors in the Pacific Islands Press. *Pacific Islands Communication Journal*, 13(1): 95–122; Fred Siebert et al (1956), *Four Theories of the Press*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

<sup>33</sup> Herbert J. Gans (1979), *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*. New York: Pantheon; Gaye Tuchman (1978), *Making News: A Study of Construction in Reality*, New York: Free Press, p 65; Colin Sparks (1991), cited in Mark Deuze (2001), p 10.

<sup>34</sup> See full transcripts of interviews, methodology and research survey findings in David Robie (2003), Journalism Education in the South Pacific, 1975–2003: Politics, Policy and Practice, PhD thesis. Suva: The University of the South Pacific.

<sup>35</sup> Cited in David Weaver (1998), *The Global Journalist: News People Around the World*. Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

<sup>36</sup> Derek Ingram (1999), Press Freedom in Commonwealth countries. In Robert Martin (ed), *Speaking Freely: Expression and the Law in the Commonwealth*. Toronto: Irwin Law, p 16.

## Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> The UPNG course was founded in 1975 by New Zealander Ross Stevens with NZ aid. The original certificate course at USP was founded by Australia-based New Zealand media academic Dr Murray Masterton in 1987 and although the successor, a degree programme at USP, was founded by French government aid with inaugural coordinator François Turmel, the second coordinator, David Robie (1998–2002), was also from New Zealand. Several

NZ staff also contributed to the USP programme, including Pat Craddock and Ingrid Leary.

<sup>2</sup> Kim Newth (1997) refers to a journalist in *The Australian* (Early journalism courses in New Zealand, 7 October 1991) who cited *The Australasian Journal* as a source to research the topic, 'but could find no other source in Australia'.

<sup>3</sup> Kim Newth (1997), Tertiary training: A history of university journalism courses in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journalism Review*, Vol 5, (Spring), pp 45–53.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p 45.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p 46.

<sup>6</sup> Brian Priestley (1980). Journalism training at the University of Canterbury: A Discussion Document, p 2, cited by Newth (1997).

<sup>7</sup> Besides the University of Canterbury's long-established postgraduate journalism programme, the Auckland Institute of Technology became Auckland University of Technology in 2000 and the Wellington Polytechnic journalism school was absorbed into Massey University's School of Mass Communication and Journalism.

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Thomas (2000). Training standards under threat with new universities. *Noted*, November/December, p 1.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas (2001). Moving from the traditional: Introducing self-regulating learning into the teaching of news writing. *Australian Journalism Review*, July, 23(1), p 156.

<sup>10</sup> Geoff Lealand (1998). Journalists in New Zealand. In David Weaver H (ed), *The Global Journalist: News People Around the World*. Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, p 113.

<sup>11</sup> Commissioned by the NZ Journalists' Training Organisation (NZJTO); see Lealand Geoff (1988). Young, trained, female: a survey of New Zealand journalists, *Australian Journalism Review*, 10: 93–99, for the 1987 survey and *Pacific Journalism Review* 10(2): 173–196 (forthcoming) for the 2003 survey.

<sup>12</sup> Lealand (1998), *op. cit.*, p 112.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p 113.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p 112.

<sup>15</sup> Lealand also points out that Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, also has 'the largest Pacific Island population of any place in the world'.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas (2000), *op. cit.*, p 1.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas (1999), p 45.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas (1999) cited now retired Geoff Black, a former editor of *The Auckland Star's Eight O'Clock*, who was founding tutor of the then Auckland Institute of Technology (later Auckland University of Technology) journalism course in the 1970s.

<sup>19</sup> John Henningham (1998a). Australian Journalists, in Weaver. *The Global Journalist*, *op. cit.*, p 91.

<sup>20</sup> Rod Kirkpatrick (1996). Diploma to degree: 75 years of tertiary journalism studies. *Australian Studies in Journalism*, No 5, p 257.

<sup>21</sup> John Henningham (1998b). The Australian Journalist, in Myles Breen (ed), *Journalism Theory and Practice*. Cresskill, Sydney: Macleay Press, p 334.

<sup>22</sup> John Henningham, foundation chair in journalism at the University of Queensland and founding editor of the *Australian Journalism Review*, was the first Australian journalist to gain a PhD in journalism. He was also the first journalism professor.

<sup>23</sup> Henningham (1998b), p 336.

<sup>24</sup> This figure of 82 percent is cited from the 1992 Weaver and Wilmoit (Weaver, 1998: 404) survey for American journalists with degrees; however, Medsger (1996: 8) put the figure in her 1996 survey at 94 percent of 'new journalists' — those with between one and 11 years' experience.

<sup>25</sup> Julianne Schultz (1998). *Reviving the Fourth Estate: Democracy, Accountability and the Media*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, p 233.

<sup>26</sup> Romy Fröhlich and Christina Holtz-Bacha (1993). Innovation in Journalism Training: A European Perspective. *European Journalism Review*, No 1, p 13.

<sup>27</sup> Aralyn Abare McMane (1998). The French Journalist. In Weaver, *The Global Journalist*, *op. cit.*, p 196.

<sup>28</sup> John Henningham and Anthony Delano (1998). British Journalists, in Weaver, *The Global Journalist*, *op. cit.*, p 149.

<sup>29</sup> Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (1998), p 20.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p 24.

<sup>31</sup> Mark Deuze (2000), Redirecting education, Considering theory and changes in contemporary journalism, p 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p 3.

<sup>34</sup> Lee B. Becker and Joseph D. Graf, cited by Felix Gutiérrez (1996). Communication courses proliferate while journalism education gets harder to find. In Betty Medsger, *Winds of Change: Challenges Confronting Journalism Education*. Arlington, Virginia: The Freedom Forum, p vi.

<sup>35</sup> Charles Overby, in Medsger, *op. cit.*, p v.

<sup>36</sup> Medsger Report (1996):

The reasoning was that it was considered that a journalist would need at least a year in the profession to judge the usefulness of his or her educational preparation. The 11-year cut-off ensured that contemporary journalism education was being evaluated (p 1).

<sup>37</sup> Medsger, *op. cit.*, p 5.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–8.

<sup>39</sup> This figure included 47 percent who majored in journalism at the undergraduate level and nine percent who have masters degrees in journalism (Medsger, 1996: 7).

<sup>40</sup> Increasingly, noted Medsger, the essential requirement for being hired to teach journalism is a doctoral degree, without regard for the quality or length of experience as a journalist: 'In fact, 17 percent of journalism educators never worked as journalists and an additional 47 percent have less than 10 years' experience as journalists' (p 7).

<sup>41</sup> 'Among new journalists aged 25 and under, 57 percent earn less than US\$20,000 a year, including 22 percent who earn less than US\$15,000 a year' (Medsger, 1996: 8).

<sup>42</sup> David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit (1996). *The American Journalist in the 1990s: U.S. News People at the End of an Era*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>43</sup> John W. C. Johnstone et al (1976). *The News People: A Sociological Portrait of American Journalists and their Work*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

<sup>44</sup> David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit (1986). *The American Journalist: A Portrait of U. S. News People and their Work*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>45</sup> Weaver and Wilhoit (1996), *op. cit.*, p 396.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p 398.

<sup>47</sup> Russell Baker (2002, July 18). American journalism in peril: What else is news? *New York Times Review of Books*, Vol XLIX, No 12, pp 4–8.

<sup>48</sup> See Dennis McQuail (1991). *Mass Communication Theory*. London: Sage; Crispin C. Maslog (1992). *Communication, Values and Society*. Quezon City: Philippine Association of Communication Educators; Angela Romano (1998), Normative theories of development journalism: State versus practitioner perspectives in Indonesia. *Australian Journalism Review*, 20(23), pp 60–61; Rodney Tiffen (1989). *News and Power*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, pp 28–29; Keith Windschuttle (1988). *The Media: A New Analysis of the Press, Television, Radio and Advertising in Australia*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books.

<sup>49</sup> Maslog, *op. cit.* p 41.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Daniel Lerner (1958), *The Passing of Traditional Society*, New York: Free Press.

<sup>52</sup> Fred Siebert, Wilbur Schramm and Theodore Peterson (1956). *Four Theories of the Press*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

<sup>53</sup> Maslog, *op. cit.*, p 43.

<sup>54</sup> Siebert et al, *op. cit.*, p 3.

<sup>55</sup> There is a dialectical relationship between the theories. (Maslog, 1992: 48): 'From an authoritarian thesis there developed a libertarian antithesis. The synthesis of these two resulted in the Soviet totalitarian model during the early years of the 20th century.'

<sup>56</sup> Eric Loo (1994). Teaching development journalism in the reporting of cultural diversity, *Australian Journalism Review*, 16(2); 1–10.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p 2–3.

<sup>58</sup> See Mark Deuze (2001). Journalism Education and Multiculturalism: Enhancing the Curriculum, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, No 10, January-June, pp 127–147; David Venables (2001). *City Voice: A Community Newspaper does Public Journalism*. December, 23(2): 21–38.; John C. Merrill (1996). *Existential Journalism*. Ames, Iowa: State University Press; D. Merritt (1996). Beyond telling the news. *National Civic Review*, 85(1), 22–25.

<sup>59</sup> Jim Richstad (1984). News Flow Factors in the Pacific Islands Press. *Pacific Islands Communication Journal*, 13(1): 95–122; (1981). News from Nowhere. *Pacific Islands Communication Journal*, 10(2); (1973). *The Pacific Islands Press: A Directory*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i.

<sup>60</sup> Lasarusu Vuisoniwailala (1976). The free press in a developing multiracial society: Fiji — a case study. *Journal of Pacific Studies*, 2:41–56.

<sup>61</sup> Anne S. Walker (1976). A Study of Relationships between Mass Media, Community Involvement and political Participation in Fiji, unpublished PhD thesis. Bloomington: Indiana University.

<sup>62</sup> Makereta Waqavonovono (1981). Who manipulates Pacific Media?: Influences on Newspapers and Television, *Pacific Perspective*, 10(1): 13–36.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p 15.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p 16.

<sup>65</sup> According to Waqavonovono:

*Playboy* and *Playgirl* were the only two magazines of this type then allowed to be sold in Fiji as the Crown Solicitor's Office banned the sale of others. In Tonga, according to one official, 'Tongans don't go hot over *Playboy*', nor generally do they have access to it, as it is not sold in the bookshops. In Niue, a curious situation existed, where the bookshop owned by the Ekalesia Niue (the main Protestant church, deriving from the London Missionary Society), sold these magazines under the counter to 'responsible citizens' (p 18).

<sup>66</sup> Waqavonovono (1981):

Comics are widely read by people of all ages throughout the central Pacific. Those not literate in English can usually follow the story from the pictures. The first of a locally owned vernacular comic, a Fijian version of the popular *Phantom* series — *Bera na Liva* — hit the market in Suva in late 1978. It made popular reading for the non-English speaking population. Like the vernacular newspapers, the lifespan of comics is usually long and one can easily spot tattered comics still circulating from one household to another (p 18).

<sup>67</sup> Waqavonovono (1981):

Of all the traditional means of communication and information transfer — the lali or the beat or wooden drums, the blowing of the conch shells, heralds or 'talking chiefs' — the word-of-mouth medium, or what is more generally known as 'coconut wireless', plays the most significant role in contemporary smaller island societies, or rural communities within the larger islands. The extent to which it may contradict, supercede [sic] or oversee the formalised media would make an interesting study (p 19).

<sup>68</sup> The writer demonstrated a customary unawareness of the developments in journalism education in Papua New Guinea during this period by comparison. At that stage, the University of Papua New Guinea journalism programme had been turning out graduates for five years.

<sup>69</sup> Waqavonovono, p 22.

<sup>70</sup> Richard Phinney (1985). A profile of journalists in Papua New Guinea, *Australian Journalism Review*, 7:40–48.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* p 40.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p 42.

<sup>73</sup> According to Phinney (1985): 'In the home village, the local language is spoken, and in the towns the most common languages are Tok Pisin and Motu. Despite its official status, English is still very much a foreign language in Papua New Guinea, its use largely limited to schools and the work place.'

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p 42.

<sup>75</sup> Cited by Phinney (1985): John Henningham (1981). The television journalist: A profile, *Media Information Australia*, November, No 2: pp 3–7.

<sup>76</sup> At the time, it was NBN Ltd. However, the Australian company that did eventually introduce television in Papua New Guinea was Channel Nine through Media Niugini Ltd (EM TV).

<sup>77</sup> Murray Masterton (1989a). 'Mass' Media in the South Pacific, *Media Information Australia*, Issue 52, p 46.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Julianne Horsfield (1990). The Introduction of Broadcast Television into Papua New Guinea: A Case Study in the Sociology of Mass Communication, unpublished MA thesis, Melbourne: La Trobe University, p 168.

<sup>80</sup> Robert Foster (ed.) (1998). TV talk in PNG: A search for policy in a weak state, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 5(1), p 75.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p 76.

<sup>82</sup> Vanessa Griffen (1992). Control of the press and information in the British colonies 1939–1955: with a case study of Fiji, unpublished doctoral thesis. Sydney: University of Sydney.

<sup>83</sup> Pramila Devi (1992). *Print Media in Fiji: Fostering Democracy or Ethnocracy?* Suva: Fiji Institute of Applied Studies, Research Report No 2, University of the South Pacific.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p 5.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p 8.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p 29.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p 2.

<sup>88</sup> Layton (1992). *The Contemporary Pacific Islands Press*. St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland; (1993). Media Freedom in the Pacific Islands: A Comparative Analysis of Eight Nations and Territories. Unpublished PhD thesis. St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland; (1995a). The demographics of diversity: profile of Pacific Island journalists, *Australian Studies in Journalism*, No 4, pp 292–96.

<sup>89</sup> Layton (1995a), p 125.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p 127.

<sup>91</sup> Layton (1993), p 404.

<sup>92</sup> P. Golding and P. Elliot (1979). *Making the News*. London: Longman.

<sup>93</sup> Layton (1993), p 404.

<sup>94</sup> Layton, Suzanna (1997). Media training needs in the Pacific. First findings. Unpublished draft report. August 8. Nathan, Queensland: Griffith University. At the PINA convention, she also met representatives from PINA, PIBA, GTZ, AIBD, the UNESCO Regional Communications Office (Apia), UNDP, the Cox Centre, the International Centre for Journalists, the Australian Embassy (Fiji), the Fiji Journalism Training Institute, the Fiji Islands Media Association (FIMA), the Journalism Association of Western Samoa, Pres Klab Bilong Vanuatu and the Cook Islands Media Association as well as journalists and media managers.

<sup>95</sup> According to Layton (1997):

The reasons are complex and not fully researched to date, but initial impressions centre on the reduced US activity in the region (the US Embassy in Suva, the Asia Foundation, and the Peace Corps were all formerly active in the media sector), the

reduction (and possible cessation) of German and French funding for media training, the reduction of SPC Regional Media Centre funding, reduced activity of the part of international NGOs... In the case of the contractor's project, the lack of proposal writing skills on the part of media organisations themselves has hindered delivery of training initiatives to date.

<sup>96</sup> Layton (1997), p 3.

<sup>97</sup> Robie (1996b). Responses to Layton. *Australian Studies in Journalism*, No 5, p 369; Peter Cronau (1996). Responses to Layton. *Australian Studies in Journalism*, No 5, 371; Layton (1995b), Review — Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific, *Australian Studies in Journalism*, No 4, pp 292–96.

<sup>98</sup> Esther Wininamaori Batiri Williams (1998). *The Politics of Information: Information, Communication and Democracy in Fiji*, unpublished PhD thesis. St Lucia, Qld, University of Queensland, p xv.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p 317.

<sup>100</sup> Willams (1999). *Labour's Victory: Electoral Behaviour and Opinion in Fiji*. Suva: University of the South Pacific, p 81.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Robertson & Sutherland, 2001: 7; Lal, 4; Parkinson, 2000; Robie, 2001a; Revington; 2000; O'Callaghan, 2000; Woodley, 2000.

<sup>103</sup> Paul O'Connell (2001). An examination of the freedom of the media in Fiji and Tonga, unpublished postgraduate research paper. Christchurch: University of Canterbury.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p 26.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> Edward LiPuma (1997). The Formation of Nation-States and National Cultures in Oceania, in Robert J. Foster (ed). *Nation Making: Emergent Identities in Postcolonial Melanesia*. Rochester: University of Michigan Press, p 51.

<sup>107</sup> Robert A. Hooper (1998). Challenges of Sustainable Broadcasting Training in Contemporary Pacific, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, July-December, No 5, 4–22.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p 17.

<sup>109</sup> At the time Hooper's paper was written, he was an executive producer for KPBS-TV Public Broadcasting, San Diego, USA, and a visiting associate professor of Communication at the University of California, San Diego. He had served as a Fulbright Scholar in Malaysia and Fiji and had conducted television training in American Samoa, Fiji, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Western Samoa.

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> See Simone Kaitani (2003); David Robie (1998a, 1999b); Masket Iangalio (1996); Shailendra Singh (2002); Lekh Ram Vayeshnoi (1999b).

<sup>2</sup> Shailendra Singh (2002). Of croaking toads, liars and ratbags, *Wansolwara*, 7(4): 6; Fiji journalists are 'mad, crazy loonies', (2002, August 29), *Wansolwara Online*.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Cass (2002b). Baptism of fire: How USP journalism students covered the Speight coup, *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Relations*, September, 366: 559–74; Michael Field (2002). Pacific Journalism: Reflections from a Journalist in the Field. In Judy McGregor and Margie Comrie, *What's News?: Reclaiming Journalism in New Zealand* (pp 233–43). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press; Jale Moala (2001). Political reporting and editorial balance. In David Robie (ed), *The Pacific Journalist*. Suva: USP Journalism Programme, pp 127–33; Tom Parkinson (2000, June 3). Pens ready, Speight's army shoots to thrill, *The Age*; David Robie (2001a). Coup Coup Land: The Press and the Putsch in Fiji, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, January-June, No 10, 150–156; Brian Woodley (2000, May 27). Courage under fire, *The Weekend Australian*.

<sup>4</sup> Daryl Tarte (2002, September 19), [Fiji] Media Council Statement. *Media Council Online*; Bernadette Hussain (2002, September 2), Abuse of House privilege, *Fiji Times*, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Malcolm Philpott (1992). Pacific Media Walking the Cultural Sensitivity Tightrope: A view from the edge. In *New Views on News*, Journalism Education Association (JEA) conference, Newcastle, NSW, p 333.

<sup>6</sup> Vijendra Kumar (1985). Preface, in Frederick T C Yu (ed), *Get it Right: Write it Tight: The Beginning Reporter's Handbook*. Honolulu, Hawai'i: PINA, p ix.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Frederick Yu, *op. cit.*: p 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> In fact, this was a follow-up meeting to the first Pacific Islands editors' conference held in Suva, Fiji Islands, in 1972. For an account of the history of PINA and its work, refer to Nina Ratulele (1999). Pacific Islands News Association Working in the Pacific Islands. *AsiaPacific Media Educator*, January-June, No 6, pp 121-126. PINA's three main objectives are:

- To promote and defend freedom of information and expression in the Pacific Islands.
- To promote and develop Pacific Islands news media professional standards through training and education.
- To promote professional fellowship and cooperation throughout the Pacific Islands news media.

<sup>11</sup> See Stewart Firth and Daryl Tarte (2001). *20th Century Fiji: People who shaped this nation*. Suva: USP Solutions, The University of the South Pacific, p 155; Usher, Len (1987). *Mainly About Fiji: A Collection of Writings, Broadcasts and Speeches*. Suva, Fiji Islands: Fiji Times Ltd. Usher died aged 96 on 26 August 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Henshall (1989). *A News Agency for Papua New Guinea*. Published MA thesis. Port Moresby: UPNG Press and UNESCO; Robert Seward (1999). *Radio Happy Isles: Media and Politics at Play in the Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, p 76; Sorariba Nash (1995). National Radio and Development. In David Robie (ed.), *Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific*. Port Moresby: UPNG Press, p 39.

<sup>13</sup> Sorariba, *ibid.*, p 41.

<sup>14</sup> Richstad & Nnaemeka (1981). News from Nowhere: Sources of International News in the Pacific Islands. *Pacific Islands Communications Journal*, 10(2): 119.

<sup>15</sup> According to the Richstad and Nnaemeka survey, a related 'source' category was 'own correspondent', which in the Island press accounted for 24.6 percent of all foreign news stories.

<sup>16</sup> The 13 countries were: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

<sup>17</sup> The most comprehensive account of PIBA's history is recounted in Seward (1999), *op. cit.*. For a history of Pacnews and the political pressure it faced, forcing the news exchange service to move from Fiji to Auckland, New Zealand, Honiara, Solomon Islands, Port Vila, Vanuatu; and finally back to Suva, see Seward's chapter, Fax in Exile, pp 67-101.

<sup>18</sup> Frank Morgan (ed.) (1999). *New Views on News*. Newcastle: University of Newcastle, p 215.

<sup>19</sup> Many of the productions were done in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Regional Media Centre in Suva and the monthly regional video magazine *Pacific Way* was developed. On the university side, UNESCO assisted a special series of 'news spots' on *Pacific Sustainability* (1999) and *The Culture of Peace* (2001) with the USP Journalism Programme and SPC.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Henshall (1988). Journalism Education and Training at the University of Papua New Guinea. In *Pacific Islands Communication Journal*, 15(2) 38.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.



<sup>24</sup> Several Pacific media educators (i.e. Bartlett, 1990; Cass, 1998; Craddock, 2001; Robie, 2001a, 2000a) have written about an uncooperative, even hostile, attitude towards media education at the universities, particularly USP. According to Bartlett:

As is often the case in journalism education, the USP Journalism Programme faces the conundrum: Shall we provide fodder for the industry or shall we provide an academic tour around the subject of journalism? Many programmes attempt to provide a bit of both, but the most successful ones undoubtedly are those which place the 'fodder' consideration above the academic one, the reason being that if nothing else, the 'fodder' approach compounds a relationship with the industry. It creates a dialogue, often sparked during inquiries from papers and radio stations about likely students for recruiting, and so long as there is a dialogue there can be dynamism.

<sup>25</sup> Salesh Kumar and Nazreen Bibi (2000, November). FJI in limbo over 'financial mess'. *Wansolwara*, p 8.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Josefa Nata and former Ministry of Information journalist Laisa Taga were the first Fiji journalism graduates, gaining media BA degrees at the University of Technology, Sydney, in 1988. Nata was detained on Nukulau Island in Suva harbour after George Speight's attempted coup in May 2000. He was charged with treason and tried along with former politician Timoci Silatolu in November 2002. They were both found guilty on 20 March 2003 and were sentenced in July to life imprisonment. Agence France-Presse's Michael Field reported on March 30:

Twenty-four hours before arrest at Kalabo School, Jo Nata was on the telephone to a reporter from a leading Indian daily delivering a torrent of sexually explicit invitations to her. Strutting around Mussolini-like, Nata, pumped up on the aphrodisiacal qualities of imagined power, he thought the world was his. His defusion was complete last week when he and Timoci Silatolu stood in a bare wooden dock to hear their treason convictions. No family, no girlfriends, no partners and no admiring supporters were there. At most there were 34 people in court: 10 of them policemen. Not one of them was an associate of the two accused; the visionaries of The Cause stood abandoned.

<sup>29</sup> Kumar & Bibi, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> Fiji media back Fiji Institute of Technology as national training centre (2002, June 12). *Pina Nius Online*. [www.pacificislands.cc/pm62002/pinadefault.cfm?pinaid=4723](http://www.pacificislands.cc/pm62002/pinadefault.cfm?pinaid=4723) (Retrieved 16 January 2003).

<sup>31</sup> Samoan to head Samoa Polytechnic J-school (2002, December 9) *Pacific Media Watch*. [www.asiapac.org.fj/cafe/pacific/resources/aspac/samoa3872.html](http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafe/pacific/resources/aspac/samoa3872.html) (Retrieved 16 January 2003).

<sup>32</sup> Pacific Media Initiative (PMI) (1996). Project Design Document. Canberra: Ausaid, p 2.

<sup>33</sup> The Pacific Journalists' Association (PJA) was an independent organisation active between 1989 and 1993 while it received seed funding from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). It held its first biannual conference in Port Moresby in 1989, followed by Port Vila (1991) and Suva (1993). PJA represented working journalists, artists and photographers in radio, television and the print media. It was established to promote vocational training, media freedom and the formation of professional and industrial networks of media workers throughout the Pacific and published a newsletter, *Spik Isi*.

<sup>34</sup> Cited by PMI, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> Helen Molnar and Judi Cooper (1995). Building a future in the Pacific. Canberra: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<sup>36</sup> PMI (1998), Mid-Term Review of the Project, Canberra: AusAID, p 1.

<sup>37</sup> Sorariba Nash (1996, May 10). Viewpoint: An embarrassing bias over aid, *Uni Tavur*, p 4.

<sup>38</sup> Laisa Taga (2003, January). More Questions About All Those Expatriates, *Islands Business/Pacific Islands Online*.

<sup>39</sup> Privately, some journalists cynically referred to PMI as the 'PINA project'.

<sup>40</sup> Acting chairman of the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA), Francis Herman, of the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, had a similar view:

We've consulted the executives of PIBA, the elected executives, and I think for a long time a few of us have been wanting a merger between the two major media organisations and that's a logical transition. For a long time, as far back as I can remember — the last decade at least — donor agencies, governments have been saying, 'Why don't you guys merge?' It's become very difficult for [funding] two organisations. So the merger will augur well for us — for Pacific Islands' media in terms of funding' (Dorney, 2002).

<sup>41</sup> Sean Dorney (2002, December 11). Pacific media bodies to merge, ABC's *Pacific Beat*.

<sup>42</sup> Pacific media organisation PINA will need to be rebuilt after protracted merger (2004, August 17). Radio New Zealand International Online. [www.rnz.co.nz/pages/news.php?op=read&id=11601](http://www.rnz.co.nz/pages/news.php?op=read&id=11601) (Retrieved 21 August 2004).

<sup>43</sup> Robert Hooper (1998). Challenges of Sustainable Broadcasting Training in Contemporary Pacific, *AsiaPacific Media Educator*, July-December, Issue 5, p 16.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: Interview with Ingrid Leary (12 January 2003); Konai Thaman (1996), address at a meeting of the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR) Conference, Sydney, August 20.

<sup>45</sup> Hooper, *op. cit.* p 17.

<sup>46</sup> Thaman, *op. cit.*

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Leary, *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> See Robie (2003, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c).

<sup>49</sup> Lance Polu (2001); Kalafi Moala (2000: p 62).

<sup>50</sup> See James Panichi, (2001); 'Ana Tapueluelu (2001); Rebecca Singh (2003).

<sup>51</sup> 'Anna Tapueluelu (2001), Reporters and the police — too close? *Pacific Journalism Review*, 7(1): p 161.

<sup>52</sup> *Fiji Murders*, a television documentary made by Rebecca Singh, a former Fiji Television news reader, broadcast on Television New Zealand's TV2 programme, *Queer Nation*, on 22 May 2003 gave an analytical insight into the issues.

<sup>53</sup> Editorial in *The Fiji Times* (2001, July 28), cited by Tapueluelu, (2001).

<sup>54</sup> See Michael Field (2001, 2002); Robie (2001a: p 151).

<sup>55</sup> Lekh Ram Vayeshnoi (1999a). Address to Fiji government media liaison officers training workshop, Labasa, June 1.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Shailendra Singh (2002). Of croaking toads, liars and ratbags, *Wansolwara*, 7(4): p 6.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> The quote is cited in John Hurst and Sally White's *Ethics and the Australian Media* (1994) and is attributed to 18th century English political journalist William Corbett who likened reporters to a parcel of toads that, when disturbed by a brickbat, 'turned upon their backs ... showing their nasty white bellies, and all croaking out their alarm, emitting their poisonous matter'.

<sup>60</sup> Morgan & Thomas (2006), p 12.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Martin (ed) (1999). *Speaking Freely: Expression and the Law in the Commonwealth*. Toronto: Commonwealth Association for Education in Journalism and Communication, and Irwin Law, p xi.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p 685.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p 690

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p 692.

<sup>65</sup> In May 2003, the USP Journalism Programme became a member of the Fiji Media Council. See Mosmi Bhim (2003, June 3). USP Journalism becomes Fiji Media Council member. *USP Beat*, p 3.

<sup>66</sup> David Robie (2003, 1999d), p 14.

<sup>67</sup> Daryl Tarte (1997), Fiji News Council: Annual Report No 2, December 31, p 4.

<sup>68</sup> Tarte (2001), Media councils in an unstable political climate, Sydney, October 1–2.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Fiji News Council (1997). Complaints in 1997. In *Fiji News Council Annual Report No 2*, December 31.

<sup>71</sup> Complaint No 112 Adjudication — David Robie v *Islands Business* (1998). Fiji Media Council, October 9.

<sup>72</sup> See Fiji Media Council complaints and decisions (2002). University of the South Pacific Journalism Programme's *Online Classroom*.

[www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/ethics/fjmc.html](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/ethics/fjmc.html) (Retrieved 7 January 2003).

<sup>73</sup> Complaint No 99 Adjudication (1999).

<sup>74</sup> Complaint No 118 Adjudication — Public Service Commission v *The Daily Post* (2002). Fiji Media Council, February 18, p3.

<sup>75</sup> Apology [to David Robie] (1998, November 30). *Fiji's Daily Post*, p 6. However, the council did not address part of the complaint dealing with the two named senior editors responsible.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Naidu (2001). Communication to chairman of Media Council [Fiji] Ltd, November 13.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p 4.

<sup>78</sup> Complaint No 118.

<sup>79</sup> Naidu (2001), p 6.

<sup>80</sup> Masket Iangalio (1996). The Media through the Eyes of Politicians. In John Millett (1996), *Freedom at the Crossroads: The Media and the Constitution*. Port Moresby, PNG: INA.

<sup>81</sup> Anna Solomon (1996). The Past and Present Role of the Papua New Guinea Media Council. In Millett (*op. cit.*), pp 102–105.

<sup>82</sup> For a comprehensive contemporary account of the state of government in Papua New Guinea, see Susan Windybank and Mike Manning (2003), PNG on the Brink, *Issue Analysis*. Sydney: The Centre for Independent Studies, No 30, March 12.

[www.cis.org.au/IssueAnalysis/ia30/ia30.pdf](http://www.cis.org.au/IssueAnalysis/ia30/ia30.pdf) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>83</sup> Peter John Aitsi (2002). Media and Politics in PNG, paper presented at the Foundation for Development Cooperation's Pacific Development Research Symposium, Brisbane, 22–24 July 2002.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

### Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> 5,028,000. Source: Population and Development Indicators for Asia and the Pacific, 2002. United Nations Population Division (2002). *World Population Prospects: The 2000 Revision*. (UN publication). [www.unescap.org/pop/data\\_sheet/2002/tab1.htm](http://www.unescap.org/pop/data_sheet/2002/tab1.htm) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Cass (2004, September). Media ownership in the Pacific: Inherited colonial commercial model but remarkably diverse, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 10(2): 82–110.

<sup>3</sup> Sorariba Nash (1995). National Radio and Development, in David Robie (ed.), *Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific* (pp 35–46), Port Moresby: University of PNG Press.

<sup>4</sup> Campus radio to go on air. (1999, May 27). *The National*.

<sup>5</sup> Digital upgrade for UPNG's campus radio. (2003, May 11). *Pacific Media Watch*. [www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4048.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4048.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>6</sup> The Independent weekly to close after 23 years. (2003, June 2). *Pacific Media Watch*. [www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4074.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4074.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003)

<sup>7</sup> Ambie Bulum and Frank Senge Kolma (1992), Media unionism in Papua New Guinea, *Pacific Eyes 2: Media in the South Pacific*, Port Moresby and Sydney: Pacific Journalists Association/International Federation of Journalists, p 15.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Henshall (1989), *A News Agency for Papua New Guinea*, published MA thesis, Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea Press and UNESCO, p 57.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p 59.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Wilson (1999), Fiji Television's struggle for a good service, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 5(1): 41–47.

<sup>11</sup> Australia's Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) figures, July–December 1993. The circulation is smaller since the publication of *The National*, but is still more than 30,000.

<sup>12</sup> Excerpt from the corporate imprint on the editorial page of the *Post-Courier*, which also states:

The [Australian] Audit Bureau of Circulations, which is internationally recognised and accredited as the only true measure of paid newspaper circulations, audits [the] *Post-Courier*. *Post-Courier's* current Mon-Fri average circulation is 26,836 sold per day (ABC July-Dec 2000) which is higher than all other PNG newspapers combined and the *Post-Courier's* circulation is 31.5 percent higher than the other daily [*The National*]. *Papua New Guinea Magazine* is also audited with a 23,874 average gross per month. (ABC Jul–Dec 2000).

<sup>13</sup> David Robie (ed.) (1995b), The South Pacific media: Politics, Ownership and Control, *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 27(1) p 31; The National alone records gain (1997, August 22). *The National*, p 1.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Peter Sea, 2 May 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Theresa Doherty (1996), Basic rights — The Courts and the Media, in John Millett (ed.) *Freedom at the Crossroads: The Media and the Constitution*, Port Moresby: Discussion Monograph No 66, Institute of National Affairs, August, p 33.

<sup>16</sup> Momis, 1996: pp 61–62.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p 62.

<sup>18</sup> Robie (1995a), p 80; Sorariba, (1996), p 103.

<sup>19</sup> Sorariba (1996), p 100.

<sup>20</sup> John Millett (1996, December 6) Media Bill linked to sword of Damocles, *Post-Courier*; cited on *Pacific Media Watch* website [www.pactok.net.au/docs/pmw/](http://www.pactok.net.au/docs/pmw/) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>21</sup> For contextual background on these legal moves, see the video broadcast on EM TV and Fiji Television by the author (1996d), *Fri Pres: Media Freedom in the Pacific*, Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Sorariba, *op. cit.*, p 102.

<sup>24</sup> See Sean Dorney (1999a), Outwitting repression of the media in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Journalism Review*, 5 (1): 99–106, and (1998), *The Sandline Affair: Politics and mercenaries and the Bougainville crisis*, Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

<sup>25</sup> NBC barred from reporting summit. (1994, April 7). *Post-Courier*.

<sup>26</sup> Sela (1990), p 30.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Attacks on the Press in 2002: Papua New Guinea (2002). Committee to Protect Journalists.

[www.cpj.org/attacks02/papua.html](http://www.cpj.org/attacks02/papua.html) (Retrieved 10 August 2004).

- <sup>29</sup> Interview with Robyn Sela, 2 May 2001.
- <sup>30</sup> Doherty (1996), p 28.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p 29.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> Sorariba (1996), p 76.
- <sup>34</sup> Doherty: p 33.
- <sup>35</sup> Powes Parkop (1995), The Internal Security Act and Crime, in David Robie (ed.) *Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific*, Port Moresby, University of Papua New Guinea Press, p 133
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 133–134; brief accounts of PNG Defence Force and military police harassment of Abby Yadi while on assignment in Rabaul and on a military aircraft were published in *Attacks on the Press 1992: A Comprehensive Worldwide Survey*, New York: Committee to Protect Journalists, pp 162–163.
- <sup>37</sup> *Raskols* is a Tok Pisin word literally meaning ‘rascals’ and is the term used loosely to describe all criminals or delinquents.
- <sup>38</sup> Parkop, pp 134–35.
- <sup>39</sup> Sorariba, pp 71–2.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> Singirok cleared of sedition charge (2004, March 2). ABC PM Report.
- <sup>42</sup> Doherty, p 33.
- <sup>43</sup> Bulum & Kolma (1992), p 12.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p 15.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> Robie (1998a), p 119.
- <sup>49</sup> Doherty, p 33.
- <sup>50</sup> Robie (1999e), p 510,
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>52</sup> Doherty.
- <sup>53</sup> Press Council of PNG (1985), p 3.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>56</sup> Denys Iorere (2003, April 29). Independent Media Standards Committee launched. *Pacific Media Watch*. [www.asiapac.org.fj/cafe/pacific/resources/aspac/png4035.html](http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafe/pacific/resources/aspac/png4035.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> Interview with Anna Solomon, 4 May 2001.
- <sup>60</sup> Anna Solomon (1997). Public perception of the Ombudsman Commission’ Paper presented at the Accountability and Transparency seminar organised by the Ombudsman Commission, May.
- <sup>61</sup> Ombudsman Commission (1987), *Annual Report*.
- <sup>62</sup> Simon Pentanu (1997), Introduction, presented at an Accountability and Transparency seminar organised by the PNG Ombudsman Commission, May, p 2.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p 3
- <sup>64</sup> Martin Thompson (1994), *National Policy on Information and Communication*.
- <sup>65</sup> Robie (1996d).
- <sup>66</sup> Nathan Kwasam (1997), The Internet as an Information Source for Papua New Guinea: Benefits and Issues. Port Moresby: South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development, University of Papua New Guinea.

<sup>67</sup> David Robie (1997d), Hotwired media: How PNG news organisations are facing the challenge of cyberspace, paper presented at the Waigani Seminar Information and the Nation, August 27–29, 1997. *Pacific Journalism Review*, November, 4(1): 61–70.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Tony Yianni, 28 April 2001.

## Chapter Four

<sup>1</sup> 840,000. Source: Population and Development Indicators for Asia and the Pacific, 2002. United Nations Population Division (2002). *World Population Prospects: The 2000 Revision*. (UN publication). [www.unescap.org/pop/data\\_sheet/2002/tab1.htm](http://www.unescap.org/pop/data_sheet/2002/tab1.htm) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Source: *The World Gazetteer* 2004 [www.world-gazetteer.com](http://www.world-gazetteer.com)

The capital's population is considerably greater when the densely populated Nausori corridor between the city and Nausori International Airport is taken into account.

<sup>3</sup> According to Kenneth Morgan and John Prescott Thomas (1996), *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of the Fiji Islands*, Cardiff: Thomson Foundation, p 6: 'Among many with whom we spoke there was a perception that the *Daily Post* is, editorially, a pro-government newspaper. That is in our view a mis-reading. We found that both papers [*The Fiji Times* and *Daily Post*] offered us daily evidence of a robust independence'.

<sup>4</sup> *The Fiji Times* is the only newspaper in Fiji to have its circulation audited by the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) in Australia.

<sup>5</sup> Morgan & Thomas, 1996: p 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Communications Fiji Ltd owns PNGFM Pty Ltd in Port Moresby, which operates Nau FM and Yumi FM stations. According to a *Pacific Media Watch* dispatch on 16 November 1997, William Parkinson was managing director of PNGFM Pty Ltd. Quoting PNG's *The Independent*, it stated that a second private FM station had been set up in the Solomon Islands — Star FM Ltd.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Seward (1999), *Radio Happy Isles: Media and Politics at Play in the Pacific*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, p 15.

<sup>9</sup> Fiji broadcaster plays down Hindi contract dispute (2004, March 29). *Asia Media Online*.

[www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=9540](http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=9540) (Retrieved 23 August 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Morgan & Thomas: p 8.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Wilson (1999), Fiji TV's struggle for good service, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 5(1), p 43.

<sup>12</sup> Steve Sharp (2003, April), USP – a hub of creative industries? *Wansolwara*, p 13.

<sup>13</sup> Tara Chetty (2004, February 19). Fiji TV spends \$6m to extend satellite coverage, *Wansolwara Online*.

[www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/news/wansolnews/2004/feb/wansol1902041.html](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/news/wansolnews/2004/feb/wansol1902041.html) (Retrieved 23 August 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Indigenous language TV station mooted (2004, April 6). *Asia Media Online*. [www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=9852](http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=9852) (Retrieved 23 August 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Seward: p 81.

<sup>16</sup> The 'two Hendriks', Hendrik Bussiek, representative of FES, and Hendrik Kettner, PACBROAD technical coordinator, were served expulsion orders by the Fiji post-coup authorities and forced to abandon PIBA House (Seward, 1999: p 89).

<sup>17</sup> See Arlene Griffen (1997), *With Heart and Nerve and Sinew: Post-coup Writing from Fiji*, Suva: Christmas Club; Errol Hodge (1995), *Radio Wars: Truth, Propaganda and the Struggle for Radio Australia*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press; Johnson, 1997; Robbie Robertson and Akosita Tamanisau (1988), *Fiji: Shattered Coups*, Sydney: Pluto Press; David Robie (ed.) (1992), *Tu Galala: Social Change in the Pacific*, Wellington:

Bridget Williams Books; Robie (1989), *Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific*, London: Zed Books.

<sup>18</sup> The *Fiji Sun* published in 1987 had no connection with the *Sun* launched in 1999, although several of the staff had worked with the earlier title.

<sup>19</sup> See Suzanna Layton (1993), *Media Freedom in the Pacific Islands: A Comparative Analysis of Eight Nations and Territories*. Unpublished PhD thesis, St Lucia: University of Queensland, p 401; Murray Masterton (1989b), *Politics, PINA and the freedom of the press in the Pacific*, *Australian Journalism Review*, 11, p 121; David Robie, (1989), *op. cit.*, pp 240–241.

<sup>20</sup> See Michael Field (2002), *Pacific Journalism: Reflections from a Journalist in the Field*, in Judy McGregor and Margie Comrie, *What's News? Reclaiming Journalism in New Zealand* (pp 233–243), Palmerston North: Dunmore Press; Bernadette Hussain (2000, September), *The Coalition's vision*, *Wansolwara*, p 9; Brij V. Lal with Michael Pretes (eds) (2001), *Coup: Reflections on the Political Crisis in Fiji*, Canberra: Pandanus Books; Robertson & Sutherland, 2001, *op. cit.*; David Robie (2001a), *Coup Coup Land: The Press and the Putsch in Fiji*, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, January–June, No 10, pp 148–162.

<sup>21</sup> *Crisis and Coverage: Fiji coup, Solomons and PNG edition* (2001), *Pacific Journalism Review*, September 7(1): 5–96.

<sup>22</sup> Lynda Duncan (2002), *Coup editorial content: Analysis of the Fiji 2000 political crisis*, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 8(1), p 25.

<sup>23</sup> Jale Moala (2001), *Political reporting and editorial balance*, in David Robie (ed.), *The Pacific Journalist: A Practical Guide*. Suva: University of the South Pacific, p 125

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 125–126.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Field (2001), *The bure newsroom*, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 7(1), p 22.

<sup>26</sup> Field (2002), *op. cit.*, p 235.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Samisoni Pareti, 17 May 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Konai Helu Thaman (2001), *Reclaiming Pacific images*, paper presented at an IAMCR conference, Budapest, September 6–10, p 6.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Josephine Prasad, 17 May 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Kenneth Morgan and John Thomas (1996: 5) claimed to have been ‘among the first in the Islands to have read [the constitutional report] from cover to cover’. They noted that they had submitted their own report in the spirit of the Constitutional Review.

<sup>31</sup> Morgan & Thomas, 1996, p 5.

<sup>32</sup> Both Morgan and Thomas were concerned about the state of the relationship between the Fiji news media and government. This concern was reflected in this comment about the political context:

In his memoirs *As It Seemed to Me*, John Cole, former political editor at the BBC, wrote thus of the relationship between British politicians and the media in the mid-nineties: ‘Politicians and the media seemed to be on a course of mutual injury, if not destruction. ... Institutionally all was not well. In the words of matrimonial law, here was a relationship in danger of having “irretrievably broken down”’. At the outset, we rather feared that this might be our experience in Fiji.

However, they found a ‘good deal of common ground, pragmatic flexibility and goodwill’.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> In his book, *Radio Happy Isles* (1999: 15), Robert Seward pointed to the New Zealand model and how its Broadcasting Act ‘mandates that minority interests be provided for’. He explained: ‘This includes the interests of women, ethnic minorities, the disabled, and the Maori community. A ministerial directive requires that at least six percent of the money administered by the public funding agency NZ on Air goes to Maori broadcasting; NZ on Air provides an even greater percentage.’

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p 10.

<sup>36</sup> Originally enacted on 1 June 1895, this law was amended in 1931, 1966 and 1971.

<sup>37</sup> Morgan & Thomas, p 14.

<sup>38</sup> This refers to the (Fiji) *Newspaper Registration Act 1895*.

<sup>39</sup> Morgan & Thomas, p 14.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p 15.

<sup>42</sup> Recommendation 4.2.10.

<sup>43</sup> Recommendation 4.3.4.

<sup>44</sup> Morgan & Thomas, p 15.

<sup>45</sup> The two reasons given for this (Morgan & Thomas, 1996: 15): 'Because the economy is unlikely to sustain deregulated commercial competition on a very large scale — certainly if there is to be any concern for quality — and because the [Fiji] government has in any case chosen to establish a television monopoly for twelve years.'

<sup>46</sup> Recommendation 4.4.3.4.

<sup>47</sup> Morgan & Thomas, p 16.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p 11.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p 12.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p 24.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Recommendation 4.12.6.

<sup>53</sup> Jale Moala was at various times editor of *The Fiji Times*, *Islands Business*, *Pacific Islands Monthly* and the *Daily Post* before migrating to New Zealand in 2000.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Jale Moala, 9 April 2003.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Francis Herman, 17 May 2001.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Wainikiti Waqa-Bogidrau, 17 May 2001.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, 16 May 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Morgan & Thomas, p 25.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p 9.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Wilson, 1999, p 45.

<sup>61</sup> Television New Zealand established a small unit called the Pacific Service, which bought dubs and redistributed programmes on behalf of several Pacific nations. Fiji TV, for example, commissions TVNZ's Pacific Service to purchase programmes on its behalf. While TVNZ takes a commission, the economy of scale means that the cost of programmes delivered to Fiji TV are considerably less than if the network bought programmes directly.

<sup>62</sup> Wilson, p 42.

<sup>63</sup> According to figures provided by former Fiji Television chief executive Wilson, 1999, p 45.

<sup>64</sup> See Robie, 2002a p 150.

<sup>65</sup> 'Atu Emberson-Bain, personal communication with the author, 26 September 2001.

<sup>66</sup> Fiji TV boss quiet over rejection of exclusivity licence (2003, April 16). *Wansolwara Online*.

<sup>67</sup> Monasavu Warriors (1998, July 1). *Fiji One News*.

<sup>68</sup> David Robie (1999c), Fairness, balance and the Pacific media's cultural imperative, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 21(3), p 30.

<sup>69</sup> Letter of complaint by Walter Thompson to Fiji Television chairman Laisenia Qarase, 16 July 1998.

<sup>70</sup> Paper to the Fiji Television board, 'News policy and practice,' by chief executive Peter Wilson, 31 August 1998.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> See Controversial Close-Up (2001), *Pacific Journalism Review*, 7(1): 39–45. Compiled by Alison Ofotalau. Fiji Television's *Close-Up* programme on 28 May 2000 featured an outspoken media analysis of the insurrection. This is a transcript of the discussion chaired by reporter Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and featuring political columnist Jone Dakuvula and Communications Fiji Ltd managing director William Parkinson.



[www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/fiji\\_coup/0529FijiTVDestroyed.html](http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/fiji_coup/0529FijiTVDestroyed.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>73</sup> Recommendation 4.6.1.

<sup>74</sup> Recommendation 4.6.5.

<sup>75</sup> Morgan & Thomas, *op. cit.*, p 18.

<sup>76</sup> Recommendation 4.7.2. Such disparate codes included the News Council Code of Ethics, the Fiji Islands Media Association (FIMA) Code of Ethics, Fiji Television's more detailed Code of Programme Standards, and guidelines used by other media outlets and professional organisations.

<sup>77</sup> Richard Naidu (2001), communication to chairman of Media Council of Fiji Ltd, November 13; Lekh Ram Vayeshnoi (1999b), parliamentary address by the [Fiji] Assistant Information Minister on the state of the media. Suva, June 21.

<sup>78</sup> Vayeshnoi, *op. cit.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 3–5.

<sup>80</sup> Rubbish! (1999, June 23). Editorial in *Fiji's Daily Post*, p 8.

<sup>81</sup> Senators Rev Tomasi Kainalagi and Mitieli Bulanauca.

<sup>82</sup> Bernadette Hussain (2002, September 2), Abuse of House privilege, *Fiji Times*, p 7.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Yashwant Gaunder, 15 May 2001.

<sup>85</sup> Shailendra Singh (2002), Of croaking toads, liars and ratbags, *Wansolwara*, 7(4), p 6.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Recommendation 4.9.1.

<sup>88</sup> Morgan & Thomas, *op. cit.*, p 20.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p 21.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Robie (1989), p 240;

<sup>92</sup> Section 15.209.

<sup>93</sup> Section 15.211.

<sup>94</sup> Singh, *op. cit.*

<sup>95</sup> For an index of responses and submissions on the draft Bill, see *Pacific Media Watch*: [www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/fjidadraftmediasubs.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/fjidadraftmediasubs.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>96</sup> Richard Naidu (2003, June). Not so much sinister as plain amateurish. *Pacific Journalism Review*, September, 9(1), p 156.

<sup>97</sup> Dev Nadkarni (2003, June). Proposed Media Bill Stirring Hornet's Nest. *Islands Business*.

[www.pacificislands.cc/pm62003/pmdefault.php?urlarticleid=0043](http://www.pacificislands.cc/pm62003/pmdefault.php?urlarticleid=0043) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>98</sup> Many oppose media bill (2003, August 2). *Fiji Times Online*.

[www.fjitime.com/story.aspx?id=6132](http://www.fjitime.com/story.aspx?id=6132) (Retrieved 2 August 2004).

<sup>99</sup> Fiji Times urges Government to drop media bill. (2003, June 1). *Pacific Media Watch*. [www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/fiji4071.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/fiji4071.html) (Retrieved 30 June 2003).

<sup>100</sup> David Robie and Shailendra Singh (2004), From campus to newsroom in the South Pacific: Governance and the Quest for a Professional Journalism Ethos, *Fijian Studies*, 2(2): 245–268.

<sup>101</sup> Kaitani to dump media bill (2004, January 1), *The Fiji Times*, p 5.

<sup>102</sup> Tebbutt Research (2004). Public Perceptions of the Media Industry in Fiji: Full results Workshop for the Fiji Media Council, June 24.

<sup>103</sup> Media Council of Fiji Ltd (n.d.), Media Proprietors Response to UNDP/Tebbutt Survey on the Public Perception of the Media in Fiji.

## Chapter Five

<sup>1</sup> Peter Henshall (1997), The origins of journalism education at UPNG, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 4(1), p 97; interview with Michael King, 23 June 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Henshall, *op. cit.* According to New Zealand historian Michael King (interview), who taught the students: 'It was pretty disastrous for two reasons, as I remember:

- Some of the students had very poor English language skills, which meant that they weren't even able to take in the content of the lectures, let alone get started on exercises and stories in English.
- The other problem arose out of being relocated without any sort of preparation. They had huge problems just dealing with day-to-day problems and some of them got into quite serious difficulties. One of the girls got pregnant, and a lot of the boys got into fights.'

<sup>3</sup> David Ingram (1986), Training for journalism. Paper presented at a Mass Media and National Development seminar organised by the Hans Seidel Foundation, Port Moresby, April 7–8.: p 3

<sup>4</sup> Ross Stevens died from cancer, aged 50, in July 1997 at the peak of his career with the TVNZ current affairs programme *Assignment*. Ironically, another leading journalism educator UPNG, Peter Henshall, a key figure in the mid and late 1980s, died shortly after leaving Papua New Guinea. He collapsed on a British tennis court at the age of 42. Michael King and his wife, Maria Jungowska, died in a tragic car accident in March 2004.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Interview with King, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Joseph Sukwianomb, interview with author, 3 May 2001.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Ingram, *op. cit.*, p 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Interview with King.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Sorariba Nash, 4 May 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with King.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Sorariba.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with King.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Sir Michael Somare (1975), Mass media and human development, a paper presented at the Mass Media and Human Development in the South Pacific Context conference, Bomana, Port Moresby, August, p 4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p 5.

<sup>22</sup> See Jessie Waibauru (1994). Frog's heads, old ashtrays and politics. *Uni Tavur*, July 22, pp 10–11.

<sup>23</sup> Due to an editorial mix-up during one year over volume numbers, the editions of *Uni Tavur* lost their sequence. Thus the newspaper celebrated two decades of publishing a year early in 1994 (Waibauru, 1994, p 88). The paper was published every year until 2000 when there was uncertainty over the future of the UPNG Journalism Programme.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Sukwianomb.

<sup>25</sup> Waibauru (1994), p 88.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p 90.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p 91.

<sup>28</sup> Ross Stevens (1994, August 19). Tales of Olympus days to Apple. *Uni Tavur*, p 9.

<sup>29</sup> Joseph Sukwianomb (1994, July 22). Training journalists pays big dividends for PNG. *Uni Tavur*, p 17.

- <sup>30</sup> *Uni Tavor* takes out top award (1996, May 3). *Post-Courier*.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup> Ingram (1986), *op. cit.*
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p 3.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> Report of the National Newspaper Committee (PNG Office of Information), September 1980.
- <sup>36</sup> Cited in Henshall (1989), *op. cit.*, p 51.
- <sup>37</sup> The Report of the Board of Inquiry into Broadcasting (including Television) in Papua New Guinea (chairman Sir Kwamalo Kalo, MBE), 1987.
- <sup>38</sup> Henshall, p 50.
- <sup>39</sup> Ingram., p 1.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p 4.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup> Christopher Moore (1995), Journalism as a foreign language, in David Robie (ed.), *Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific*, Port Moresby, University of PNG Press, p 66.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p 73.
- <sup>44</sup> Ironically, this idea for PNG coincided with the Pacnews radio news cooperative being launched in Fiji. See Seward, Robert (1999), *Radio Happy Isles: Media and Politics at Play in the Pacific*. Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press). Pacnews, operated by the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA), was begun three years later after a PACBROAD editors' workshop at Suva, 14–18 September 1987.
- <sup>45</sup> Peter Henshall (1989), *A News Agency for Papua New Guinea*, published MA thesis, Port Moresby, University of PNG Press and UNESCO, p 59.
- <sup>46</sup> Ingram, *op. cit.*, p 5.
- <sup>47</sup> David Robie (1997c), Media and the message, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 4(1), p 100.
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with King.
- <sup>49</sup> Judah Iparam and Brian Tobia (1992, October 5). Journalism school loses lecturer. *Uni Tavor*, p 2.
- <sup>50</sup> Interview with Sukwianomb.
- <sup>51</sup> Robie (1997c), *op. cit.*, p 100.
- <sup>52</sup> Nick Kuman (1995), memorandum to UPNG journalism lecturers, August 14.
- <sup>53</sup> See David Robie (1997a), Electronic student newspaper: Uni Tavor and Pedagogy of Experience, *Asia-Pacific Media Educator*, January-June, Issue 2, pp 121–125; (1995c), Uni Tavor: the evolution of a student press, *Australian Journalism Review*, 17(2): 95–101.
- <sup>54</sup> Joseph Sukwianomb (1995), Rebuttals against Allegations levelled at the Vice-Chancellor, Port Moresby, University of Papua New Guinea, p iii.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p iv.
- <sup>56</sup> Michael Miise (1996, February 23), The tragedy of Janet, *Uni Tavor*, p 8
- <sup>57</sup> Academic suspended over office raid (1996, April 26), *Uni Tavor*, p 1.
- <sup>58</sup> News media cover-up alleged (1996, February 23), Letter to the editor, *The National*.
- <sup>59</sup> Council votes to sack Rali (1996, March 22), *Uni Tavor*, p 1.
- <sup>60</sup> See Miise (1996), *op. cit.*, p. 8; Chris Johnston (1996, January 18–24), Security crisis at PNG uni, *Campus Review*, p 1; Topul Rali (1996, June 5), Sacked UPNG academic speaks, *Campus Review*, pp 7–8; Robie (1998b), The Rali Affair: A case study for a free press, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 5(1): 114–124.
- <sup>61</sup> Rali, *op. cit.*, pp 7–8.
- <sup>62</sup> After the departure of Vice-Chancellor Dr Rodney Hills from UPNG, Dr Topul Rali was again employed by the university in 2001.
- <sup>63</sup> A free student press and its responsibility' (1996, April 26), Editorial, *Uni Tavor*, p. 4.
- <sup>64</sup> Robie (1998b), *op. cit.*, p 121.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Benjamin Naing, 28 April 2001.

<sup>66</sup> Jean Nuia (1997, October 17), Insight Report: Paper still under a cloud, *Uni Tauru*, p 5.

<sup>67</sup> Cited by Nuia.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Appeals included Professor John Henningham, Department of Journalism, University of Queensland, who wrote 'The case for a strong and independent media has as its corollary the existence of strong and independent journalism schools' (*Uni Tauru*, 17 October 1997, p 6).

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Sukwianomb.

<sup>71</sup> Cited by Nuia, p 5.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Naing.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Sukwianomb.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Sorariba.

<sup>79</sup> Frank Morgan (1999, February 9), The need for journalism course, *The National*.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Melanie Vari-Turia, 30 April 2001.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Sorariba.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter Six

<sup>1</sup> Life lessons from Father Mihalic (2001, December 12), Editorial, *Post-Courier*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Johnson Honimae (2001, December 11), Pioneering journalism educator, Tok Pisin editor Father Mihalic dies, *PINA Nius Online*.

<sup>5</sup> Chris Bola (1997, September-November), Fr Mihalic ends teaching career, *Diwai*, p 1.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Feehan (1993), Thanksgiving and accolade, *Diwai*, 1968-93, Silver Jubilee edition, p 5.

<sup>7</sup> The Society of the Divine Word (SVD) was founded by Blessed Arnold Janssen in 1875.

<sup>8</sup> Divine Word University (2001), *Calendar*, p 6.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Feehan, *op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Jurgem Ommerborn (1993), Dear reader, *Diwai*, Silver Jubilee edition, p 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p 3.

<sup>13</sup> Faye Duega (1989, September), Father Frank Mihalic: Do things before boasting, *Diwai*, p 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Diosnel Centurion (1995), Religion: The Church and Communication, in David Robie (ed.), *Nius Bilong Pasifik: Mass Media in the Pacific*, Port Moresby, University of Papua New Guinea, p 108.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Bola, *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Diwai* (1993), Silver Jubilee edition, p 20.

<sup>20</sup> Father Frank Mihalic, (1993), Silver jubilee edition, p 30.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Diwai* (1993), Silver Jubilee edition, p 21.

<sup>24</sup> Mihalic, *op. cit.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p 31.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> David Robie (1997b), *Conmen and the campus: The challenge of Pacific journalism education*, paper presented at the Journalism Education Association (JEA) conference, Nepean Shores, Penrith, NSW, December 1–3, p 6.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Trevor Cullen, 31 January 2002.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> However, it was not fully enacted until three years later, *Divine Word University Act 1999*.

<sup>34</sup> The six universities are Divine Word University, Goroka University, Seventh Day Adventist University (Port Moresby), Vudal University, University of Papua New Guinea (Port Moresby), and University of Technology (Lae).

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Cullen.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Father Jan Czuba, 28 April 2001.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Kevin Pamba, 27 April 2001.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Joe Weber, 29 April 2001.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter Seven

<sup>1</sup> David Cohen (2002, January 25). Good Morning, Fiji, *The Chronicle for Higher Education*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Murray Masterton, 27 January 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Len Usher, a former editor of *The Fiji Times* and a founder of PINA, was running his own media consultancy business. He died, aged 96, on 26 August 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Masterton.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Murray Masterton (1989b), *Politics, PINA and the freedom of the press in the Pacific*, *Australian Journalism Review*, 11: p 116.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Masterton.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Masterton (1989b), *op. cit.*, p 121.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p 120.

<sup>19</sup> Dean & Ritova (1988).

<sup>20</sup> Masterton (1989b), *op. cit.*, p 121

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Masterton.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Murray Masterton (1988a), A question of ethics, *PINA Nius*, November.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Masterton.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> According to Masterton: 'About the only [foreign journalist] not criticised was Jim Shrimpton, then the staff man for AAP-Reuters in Suva and [who was] covering the South Pacific. His reports were never questioned by anyone and he deserves that it be known.'

<sup>31</sup> The survey sample was 79 journalists, media managers, government officials, clerical workers and professionals — all respondents from the Cook Islands (3), Fiji (14), Kiribati (12), Solomon Islands (18), Tonga (8), Tuvalu (10), Vanuatu (3) and Western Samoa (11). See Masterton, Murray (1989a), 'Mass' Media in the South Pacific. *Media Information Australia*, May, No 52, 46–49.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Masterton.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Bartlett (1990), Journalism at the University of the South Pacific: Final Report 1990, Suva, Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, p 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p 3.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Professor Andrew Horn, 6 March 2002.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Figure cited in a memorandum from Head of Department Professor Andrew Horn to then Vice-Chancellor Esekia Solofa, 15 May 1992,

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Philip Cass, 19 July 2001.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Philip Cass (1999). The origins of *Wansolwara*: A personal note, July 31. *Pacific Journalism Online* website. [www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/taveta/cass.html](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/docs/taveta/cass.html) (Retrieved 13 July 2001).

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Cass.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Another factor in the background was a long-standing feud between *Islands Business* magazine and the author, which stretched back to the coup year in 1987. It became a more public vendetta on the part of the Islands Business International magazine group in 1989 after the author wrote a critical article, 'The muzzling of the Pacific media', published in *New Zealand Monthly Review*, April 1989. See Harry Stoner (1989). Robie target of vendetta, *New Zealand Journalist*, April; NZ journalist sues magazine for defamation, *Fiji Times*, 24 May 1989; The art of balance: a press perspective, editorial in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, March 1989, p 7. See also A compromised media, in Robie, David (1989). *Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the Pacific* (pp 239–241), London: Zed Books.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from Jo Nata, coordinator of the Fiji Journalism Institute, to Daryl Tarte, chair of the Fiji News Council, 18 December 1997.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Letter by the Fiji News Council chairperson, Daryl Tarte, to Jo Nata, coordinator of the Fiji Journalism Institute, on 12 January 1998.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Letter of complaint to the Fiji Media Council sent by USP journalism coordinator David Robie, 30 April 1998.

<sup>54</sup> Apology (1998, November 30). Editorial page. *Fiji's Daily Post*.

<sup>55</sup> Earnest Heatley (1998, March 1), Journalism in disarray: Lecturers denied permits to teach at USP, *The [Fiji] Sunday Times*, p 14–15; David Robie (1998). Target of a smear campaign, *The Sunday Times*, March 1, p 15.

<sup>56</sup> Professor Andrew Pawley (1999), External Advisor's Report on Visit to USP Campuses at Laucala and Port Vila, October 1998. pp 1–21.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p 8.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p 9.

<sup>59</sup> Particularly through the cooperation of FM96's then news director Samantha Magick.

<sup>60</sup> Margaret Wise had an affair with Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka and was widely regarded as a reporter close to Soqosoqo Ni Vakavulewa Ni Taukei (SVT) party and its policies. Later, while acting chief-of-staff of *The Fiji Times*, she brought a paternity action against Rabuka (see 'Skirt journalism' allegations, *Pacific Media Watch*, 12 February 2002, [www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/resources/aspac/fiji3519.html](http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/resources/aspac/fiji3519.html) (Retrieved 20 December 2002)). Wise was eventually dismissed from *The Fiji Times* over an unrelated issue in September 2002.

<sup>61</sup> Margaret Wise (1998, August 27). Lecturers' work permits queried. *The Fiji Times*, p 3.

<sup>62</sup> See David Robie (2003b), Cyberspace Democracy: Freedom of Speech Dilemmas in Pacific Journalism Education, *Fijian Studies*, 1(1): 29–49.

<sup>63</sup> The *Café Pacific* website [www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/](http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/) is on a New Zealand server, PlaNet, but has a Fiji domain. It is also known as Asia-Pacific Network. The article cited in this controversy, Pacific press freedom on the rocks, 9 August 1998, was also published in *Reportage* media magazine at the University of Technology, Sydney: [www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/resources/aspac/pacmedia.html](http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/resources/aspac/pacmedia.html)

<sup>64</sup> Margaret Wise (1998, August 28). Work permits under probe. *The Fiji Times*, p 3.

<sup>65</sup> University of the South Pacific Information Office (1998). Media statement, August 28.

<sup>66</sup> Jone Dakuvula (1998), Letter to the editor, *The Sunday Times*, August 30; *Daily Post*, August 31.

<sup>67</sup> Attack on journalists. (1998, September 1). Editorial, *Daily Post*. At the time, editor Jale Moala was an MBA candidate at USP and he believed strongly in better education for journalists.

<sup>68</sup> See Robie (2003b), *op. cit.*, p 38.

<sup>69</sup> Letter to Senator Filipe Bole by RSF secretary-general Robert Ménard, 31 August 1998.

<sup>70</sup> William Parkinson (1998), statement by the PINA president, September 1.

<sup>71</sup> Bole denies query into foreign journals (1998, September 9). *Daily Post*.

<sup>72</sup> David Robie (2000b), Spicol Daily: A Pacific Media Partnership Case Study, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, January-June, Issue 8, pp 34–41.

<sup>73</sup> Robert Keith-Reid (2000, March). 'We say' editorial: 'The trouble with today's academic training for journalists, as the USP effort is starting to show, is that it can produce not journalists but academic anaemics, far removed from the real world,' *Islands Business*, p 10.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Craddock was highly critical of what he saw as USP management's failure to publicly defend the programme's integrity in the face of increasingly strident attacks from PINA and *Islands Business*. On 9 April 2000, he wrote to the Registrar: 'It is my view that the

USP should be defending its own staff and the integrity of the USP. I interpret this indifference as showing a lack of principle. I am shocked that the administration [has] failed to publicly answer the inaccurate and pointed criticism of the USP Journalism Programme.'

<sup>76</sup> USP journalism programme innovative (2000), open letter from USP Journalism Programme, published on *Pacific Islands Report* website, East-West Centre, University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

<sup>77</sup> *Pacific Journalism Online* coup web archive:  
[www.usp.ac.fj/jour/docs/news/usp35awards01.html](http://www.usp.ac.fj/jour/docs/news/usp35awards01.html)  
 Department of Social Communication and Journalism (hosted USP Fiji coup archive):  
[www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/coup.html](http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/coup.html)  
 Looking Glass Design website (in the US, hosting the special *Wansolwara* coup edition):  
[www.lookingglassdesign.com/wansolwara/wansol.html](http://www.lookingglassdesign.com/wansolwara/wansol.html)

<sup>78</sup> See David Robie (2001c), Frontline Reporters: A students' internet coup, *Pacific Journalism Review*, 7(1): p 50; Philip Cass, (2002b), Baptism of fire: How USP journalism students covered the Speight coup, *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Relations*, September, 366: pp 559–574.

<sup>79</sup> Christine Gounder (2000, August). Taking a coup in your stride. *CPU News*, London: Commonwealth Press Union, p 7.

<sup>80</sup> See David Robie (2000c), Taukei takeover: The media anatomy of a coup, *Australian Journalism Review*, December 22(2): 1–16.

<sup>81</sup> Department of Social Communication and Journalism (hosted USP Fiji coup archive):  
[www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/coup.html](http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/coup.html) (Retrieved 12 May 2002).

<sup>82</sup> Letter by the ACIJ director, Associate Professor Chris Nash, to the USP Vice-Chancellor (2000, June 13).

<sup>83</sup> Looking Glass Design website (in the US, hosting the special *Wansolwara* coup edition):  
[www.lookingglassdesign.com/wansolwara/wansol.html](http://www.lookingglassdesign.com/wansolwara/wansol.html) (Retrieved 12 May 2002).

<sup>84</sup> Media ban defied. (2000, September). *Noted*. Wellington: NZ Journalists Training Organisation (NZJTO).

<sup>85</sup> Esekia Solofa (2000). Letter to the Journalism Coordinator, June 22.

<sup>86</sup> Biman Prasad (2000). Letter to the USP Vice-Chancellor, July 27.

<sup>87</sup> Biman Prasad (2000), USP, democracy and human rights in the South Pacific: Lessons from the political crisis, address to the annual conference of the NZ Association of University Staff (AUSPS), Wellington, December 4–5.

<sup>88</sup> Desma Hughes (2000). Letter to USP Academic Committee, September 11.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> The annual Ossie Awards for student journalism are organised by the Australian-based Journalism Education Association (JEA). In 2000, all awards presented to USP Journalism awards were for its coup coverage. USP Journalism won the Dr Charles Stuart Prize for best overall publication, *Pacific Journalism Online*, while *Wansolwara* won the newspaper category. Three students won highly commended awards for print news, radio news and television. See Mark Pearson (2001), Ossies recognise promising talent of the future, *PANPA Bulletin*, February, p 19.

<sup>91</sup> Pearson, *op. cit.*

<sup>92</sup> Tia Barrett (2000), Journalism and Indigenous Issues, address by NZ High Commissioner at the USP Journalism Awards, Suva: University of the South Pacific, November 24.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> David Robie (2001a), Coup Coup Land: The Press and the Putsch in Fiji, *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, January–June, No 10, pp 148–162.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*,



<sup>98</sup> NZ academic stirs up Pacific storm (2001, February), *Pacific* magazine, pp 42–43.

<sup>99</sup> Vice-Chancellor Esekia Solofa (2000, December 20), letter to *The Fiji Times* publisher.

<sup>100</sup> Radio Australia (2000, December 21), Myra Mortensen's *Pacific Beat* interview with David Robie

<sup>101</sup> Mary-Louise O'Callaghan (2000, December 7), Paradise exposed, in *The Australian's* Media supplement, pp 6–8.

<sup>102</sup> Michael Field (2001, May 19). Return to coup coup land. *The Fiji Times*, May 19, p 33.

<sup>103</sup> David Robie and Shailendra Singh (2004), From Campus to Newsroom in the South Pacific: Governance and the Quest for a Professional Journalism Ethos, *Fijian Studies*, 2(2): 245–268.

<sup>104</sup> David Robie (2002c), Cyberspace News On Campus: The South Pacific Experience, *AsiaPacific MediaEducator*, January-June, No 10, pp 148–162.

<sup>105</sup> Vice-Chancellor Savenaca Siwatibau died from lung cancer in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 3 October 2003.

<sup>106</sup> Mark Pearson (2002), Review of the University of the South Pacific Journalism Programme, April 4, p 14.

## Chapter Eight

<sup>1</sup> Islands Business International, Suva-based publishers of the *Islands Business* news magazine group declined to participate. This company, which had about five editorial staff at the time, was thus also excluded from the second survey.

<sup>2</sup> David Robie (1999f), Pacific newsrooms and the campus: some comparisons between Fiji and Papua New Guinea, *Australian Studies in Journalism*, Issue 8, p 181.

<sup>3</sup> Suzanna Layton (1993), Media Freedom in the Pacific Islands: A Comparative Analysis of Eight Nations and Territories. Unpublished PhD thesis. St Lucia, Queensland: Department of Journalism, University of Queensland, p 151.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Richard Phinney (1985), A profile of journalists in Papua New Guinea. *Australian Journalism Review*, 7: 40–48.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p 42.

<sup>7</sup> See Robie, *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> See Sean MacBride (1980); Hester & Wai, (1987); Loo, (1994), pp 1–10; Romano, (1998), pp 60–87.

<sup>10</sup> This includes 'fourth world', or indigenous minority news values, as typified by Bougainville within the Papua New Guinea state, Guadalcanal dissidents within the Solomon Islands; and Kanak radio stations within New Caledonia.

<sup>11</sup> See Hester (1987a), pp 5–12; (1987b), pp 57–66; Lule (1987), pp 23–46; Robie (1995a), pp 5–15; Romano (1998), pp 74–78.

<sup>12</sup> Angela Romano (1998), Normative theories of development journalism: State versus practitioner perspectives in Indonesia, *Australian Journalism Review*, 20 (23), p 75.

<sup>13</sup> Robie (1999f), *op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> *The Fiji Times*. A total of fifteen companies were surveyed over both surveys.

<sup>15</sup> The regional news cooperative operated by the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (Pacnews) had moved from Port Vila and established its office in Suva since the previous survey, and its staff was primarily Fiji Islander journalists.

<sup>16</sup> Since this survey was completed and analysed, Word Publishing announced the closure of *The Independent* in mid-2003; The Independent weekly to close after 23 years. (2003, June 2). *The National*.

[www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4074.html](http://www.pmw.c2o.org/2003/png4074.html) (Retrieved 16 June 2003).

<sup>17</sup> Previously a subsidiary of the NBC and now owned and operated by Telikom PNG.

<sup>18</sup> See Julianne Schultz (1998), *Reviving the Fourth Estate: Democracy, Accountability and the Media*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. Besides Australia, the five other countries that participated in the international survey were Britain, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the United States.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> See Romano (1998), *op. cit.*, p 60.

<sup>21</sup> David H Weaver (1998). *The Global Journalist: News People Around the World*. Cresskill, New Jersey: International Association for Media and Communication Research, Hampton Press.

<sup>22</sup> Pacnews moved from Port Vila, Vanuatu, to Suva during 1999. As most of the staff were Fiji journalists, it was included in the second survey.

<sup>23</sup> Most of these surveyed journalists did not respond because they did not study journalism.

<sup>24</sup> Jurgen Wilke (1998). Journalists in Chile, Ecuador and Mexico. In David H. Weaver, *The Global Journalist: News People Around the World*. Cresskill, New Jersey: (International Association for Media and Communication Research), Hampton Press, p 439.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p 440. Role conceptions of journalists (Table 22.2) question in Wilke: 'In your opinion, how should a journalist conceive his task. As what should one see oneself as a journalist?' Categories listed were: critics of abuses, communicator of new ideas, watchdog of democracy, population's mouthpiece, someone who helps people, neutral reporter, lawyer of the underprivileged, someone who should entertain, politicians with other means, and educator.

<sup>26</sup> Respondents gave the answers based on Fiji dollar, or PNG kina bands. The salaries were not converted into a common scale. Thus PNG salaries, when compared with Fiji, are even lower when considering the currency exchange rate. The exchange rate was 1FID = 1,95 PGK. Universal Currency Converter, 26 April 2003. [www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi](http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi):

<sup>27</sup> See Joe Yaya (2002, June). News sells — but jourmos face 'poverty', p 13. According to this Wansolwara survey, starting pay for Fiji teachers (primary graduates) was \$11,000 a year, while secondary teachers with degree qualifications and teacher training earned \$16,618, or \$14,988 (without training). The starting salary for bank tellers was \$12,000, while graduate nurses were paid \$10,900. Yaya's survey also showed that 'cadet' reporters at *The Fiji Times* were paid \$4,800 a year on three months' probation, then \$5,600.

<sup>28</sup> This question (C33: *Do you favour the media as a watchdog, or should it be thought of as just another business?*) was adapted from Schultz (1998), D19, p 257. The expression acknowledging the special role of news media in democracy comes from her earlier book (1994), *Not Just Another Business: Journalists, Citizens and the Media*. Sydney: Pluto Press.

<sup>29</sup> This question (C35: *Is free expression for the media or free expression for interest groups closer to your own view of freedom of the press?*) was adapted from Schultz (1998), D21, p. 257.

<sup>30</sup> 'Wantok', literally Tok Pisin for 'one talk', or one language. This refers to kinship and loyalty to fellow clan members. 'Bigmen', usually chiefs or leaders, were often protected and encouraged by the Australian colonial authorities and later became very powerful or wealthy. See Bernard Narokobi *The Melanesian Way* (1980), pp 13–14.

<sup>31</sup> While 'typical' profiles drawn from survey data averages are a common technique, some researchers, notably Murray Goot, seriously question this approach. In an *Australian Journalism Review* article (2001), Goot challenged what he described as 'The identikit fallacy' (pp 121–122).

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Yashwant Gaunder, 15 May 2001.

## Chapter 9: Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Ingrid Leary, 12 January 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Multiple choices so the percentages do not necessarily balance.

<sup>3</sup> Although such a comparison can be misleading, it is interesting to note that the mean salary for a PNG journalist is less than half what a Fiji journalist earns in real terms (F\$5,900) when currencies are compared. Converted by Universal Currency Converter, 26 April 2003. [www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi](http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi): 11 000.00 PGK = 5881.53 FJD.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shailendra Singh, 31 March 2003.

<sup>5</sup> The 'envelope journalism' culture, a play on the notion of development journalism, is one in which sources offer money or other gifts to journalists. It involves a complex web of social, economic and institutional conditions that perpetuate the cultures of gift-giving, bribery and graft in some countries. This culture is explored comprehensively in Angela Romano (2000), *Bribes, gifts and graft in Indonesian journalism*, *Media International Australia*, No 94, pp 157–171. There are some parallels with the South Pacific.

<sup>6</sup> See Angiki (2002); Fernandez (1992) p 173–185; Philemon (1999) pp 72–73; Romano (2000), pp 157–171; Tanner & McCarthy (2001), pp 112–128; Togolo (1999), pp 108–111

<sup>7</sup> Leary interview.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Jale Moala, 9 April 2003.

<sup>9</sup> See Oseah Philemon (1999). *Media ethics and responsibility*. In *A Fragile Freedom: Challenges facing the Media in Papua New Guinea* (pp 72–73). Madang: Divine Word University Press: On 28 November 1997, a *Post-Courier* front-page headline read: SKATE DENIES BRIBES CLAIM. The news story referred to the infamous Mujo Sefa tapes, which were broadcast by the ABC, detailing alleged bribery and corruption claims against then Prime Minister Bill Skate by his former adviser Mujo Sefa. The story included allegations that Skate had authorised K27, 000 in bribes to be paid to four of his ministers and twelve backbenchers, and to 'pay off collaborators in the media'.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Sorariba Nash, 4 May 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Richard Dinnen, 26 April 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Kevin Pamba, 27 April 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Moala interview.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Jone Dakuvula, 12 January 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Kunda Dixit (1997), p 163.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Media self-regulation under criticism (2004, May 5). *Wansolwara Online*. [www.usp.ac.fj/journ/wansolnews/2004/may/wansol0505041.html](http://www.usp.ac.fj/journ/wansolnews/2004/may/wansol0505041.html) (Retrieved 10 August 2004).

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Stanley Simpson, 19 May 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Schultz (1998), p 98.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Downer (2004, June 29). Commentary: Australia's growing obligations in the Pacific, *Pacific Islands Report*. <http://archives.pireport.org/archive/2004/june/06%2D29%2Dcom.htm> (Retrieved 26 August 2004).

<sup>21</sup> Thaman, (2001), p 8.

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# Mekim Nius: South Pacific media, politics and education



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**S**ome of the most interesting news stories to read in the Pacific region today are those that come from the South Pacific. The region is a hotbed of political and social change, and the news from the region is often full of drama and excitement. The region is also a hotbed of corruption and the news from the region is often full of drama and excitement. The region is also a hotbed of corruption and the news from the region is often full of drama and excitement.

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The news media is the watchdog of democracy. But in the South Pacific today the Fourth Estate role is under threat from governments seeking statutory regulation, diminished media credibility, dilemmas over ethics and uncertainty over professionalism and training.

Traditionally – with the exception of Papua New Guinea where university education has been the norm – the region's journalists have mostly learned on the job in the newsroom or through vocational short courses funded by foreign donors.

However, today's Pacific journalists now more than ever need an education to contend with the complex cultural, development, environmental, historical, legal, political and sociological challenges faced in an era of globalisation.

From the establishment of the region's first journalism school at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1975 with New Zealand aid, *Mekim Nius* traces three decades of South Pacific media education history.

Dr David Robie profiles journalism at UPNG, Divine Word University and the University of the South Pacific in Fiji with Australian, Commonwealth, French, NZ and UNESCO aid. He also examines the impact of the region's politics on the media in the two major economies, Fiji and Papua New Guinea — from the Bougainville conflict and Sandline mercenary crisis to Fiji's coups.

The book draws on interviews, research, two news industry surveys, and the author's personal experience as a Pacific media educator for almost a decade.

*Mekim Nius* argues journalists need to be provided with critical studies, ethical and contextual knowledge matching technical skills to be effective communicators and political mediators with the Pacific's 'new regionalism'.

**DAVID ROBIE** is a New Zealand journalist and media educator who has worked in the South Pacific for more than two decades. For nine years he headed the journalism programmes at both the University of Papua New Guinea and University of the South Pacific, where he was programme coordinator. He won Qantas and NZ Media Peace Prize awards for Pacific journalism and was the 1999 Australian Press Council Fellow. Dr Robie is senior lecturer in journalism and diversity and publications coordinator with Auckland University of Technology's School of Communication Studies. He is editor of *Pacific Journalism Review* and his books include *Eyes of Fire, Blood on their Banner, Nius Bilong Pasifik* and *The Pacific Journalist*.

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