PAST STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

Kathryn Ames
Audience, ‘Community’, Identity and Place on Regional Radio: A Rockhampton Case Study
Associate Professor Anne Dunn

This PhD explores the construction of audience, community, place and subject within and through regional radio. Specifically, the study interrogates the dialogue, interaction and interpellation that takes place between presenters and listeners on the three main FM stations operating in a rock/pop music format in Rockhampton, Queensland: these are commercial stations Sea FM and Hot FM, and the ABC’s Triple J. At issue are questions of what cultural and political work is being performed by the ideological and economic forces at play in this pervasive ‘old-media’ arena of regional cultural production in a regional context.

Catherine Davies
Curdle: Notes on a Practice and Performance of Induced Lactation
Dr Fiona Giles

Milk Fever is an exploration of historical and contemporary lactation and breastfeeding practices as points of communication, cannibalism and cross-contamination. Milk as text, milk as media, milk as tool, milk as language. Writing in white ink, word made fluid and expressed for ingestion and incorporation. Blasphemous breasts, sacred scriptures, biological kinships and unholy alliances flowing and forged.

This thesis will be presented primarily as a mixture of creative work and exegesis. Aside from the usual published articles and paper presentations, the creative acts will be exhibited in a number of alternative spaces including galleries and performance venues. Milk Fever accesses methodologies and meanings from a variety of disciplines including Media and Communications, Performance Studies and Gender and Cultural Studies to produce an original and challenging thesis interrogating the milky body.

Melissa Deitz
Watch This Space: How Media Activists and Culture Jammers are fighting the post-capitalist culture wars
Prof Catharine Lumby

Christy Dena
Polymorphism through Transmodiology
Professor Gerard Goggin

This thesis investigates the changes to mass entertainment, independent gaming and art in the contemporary context of multiple media platforms.

This contemporary pervasive phenomena, termed polymorphism, is articulated through a proposed methodology of ‘transmodiology’. Transmodiology is the study of phenomena across a variety of instantiations, rhetoric and theory. The insights are presented through ‘schemas’ - which represent approaches shared by creators, audiences and theorists. In short, the dissertation addresses the changes to how media and fictional creations are perceived and conceived in the context of polymorphism.

Theoretical discussions addressed and revised in this context include, but are not limited to, those from narratology (such as transmediality, intermediality, intertextuality and transfictionality), media studies (such as commodity intertexts, remediation, convergence) and ludology (such as ergodics and ubiquitous computing).

Birhanu Olana Dirbaba
Negotiating Identities: The Professional Self-perception of Ethiopian Journalists
Dr Penny O'Donnell

The study raises questions about continuity and change in the professional identity of Ethiopian journalists in the twenty-year period since the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front took power in the early 1990s, promising a free and pluralistic Ethiopian press. Amidst growing interest in post-colonial African journalism cultures, the study uses data from the first multilingual, national survey of Ethiopia’s small cohort of journalists to examine how professional identities are negotiated when journalism practices routinely fail to live up to journalists’ own normative expectations. In so doing, it identifies ways in which Ethiopian journalists could improve their professional practices.
PAST STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

Jack Liu
Content and Role of Chinese Newspapers in Australia
Dr Antonio Castillo

Chinese newspapers have a long history in Australia. The first Chinese newspaper emerged in 1856 in Victoria, which was the earliest bilingual (English/Chinese) newspaper worldwide, and the second earliest Chinese overseas newspaper and Australian diasporic newspaper. Chinese newspapers offer a unique perspective in Australian media arena. Currently, there are 27 Chinese papers in Australia, including five dailies. All dailies are media syndicates, coming from Hong Kong, China or Taiwan. In addition, the Chinese language speakers become the second largest ethnic group only after the English speakers in Australia. This significant ethnicity of Australian Chinese provides an extensive arena for their newspapers. Although Australian Chinese newspapers are a significant topic, only four scholarly papers have addressed these newspapers before 1957. This dissertation scrutinizes Australian Chinese newspapers by media role and political economic communication. Initially, the dissertation examined and classified four stages in the Chinese diaspora in Australia, following a comprehensive review on the four stages in the development of Australian Chinese newspapers. The dissertation shifted its focus to concentrate on the content and role of the contemporary dailies over the period 2006-2008 with a focus on news. Survey, content analysis and case study methods were employed to explore five roles in these dailies (information, bridging, integration, political propaganda and local surveillance roles). Some significant results include that these dailies achieved an information role in all cases and the bridging, integration, and political propaganda roles in some situations, but they achieved a very limited local surveillance role. Additionally, a comparison between these four dailies and the leading Australian and mainland Chinese dailies showed that the insufficient local surveillance role is a salient disadvantage of Australian Chinese dailies. Finally, the dissertation examines the development of Australian Chinese newspapers by political economic communication. The political economic statuses of Australian Chinese and mainland China constituted two major factors on the evolution of Australian Chinese newspapers.

Alana Mann
Setting the Human Rights Agenda: Issue Emergence within Transnational Advocacy Networks
Dr Richard Stanton

‘Transnational advocacy networks’, characterised by voluntary and reciprocal patterns of communication and exchange, are made up of groups united by a centrality of principled ideas or values that motivate their formation. In such networks NGOs work with partners including research and advocacy groups, government bodies, local social movements and the media in bringing transformative and mobilising ideas to the global sphere – ideas that enforce international norms and influence domestic policy in targeted nations. This study will explore the construction and acceptance of specific causes as international issues within transnational advocacy networks. This will be done through an analysis of the origins of campaigns that networks have waged in the area of human rights. Campaigns, as processes of issue construction, strategically link network members, developing explicit ties and mutually recognised roles in pursuit of a common goal, often against a common target. How these goals and targets are agreed upon within ‘mixed actor’ networks is the primary focus of this research, which will also draw conclusions regarding the strategic portrayal of issues for different actors and stakeholders based on selected case studies. Case studies include campaigns conducted by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, UNICEF and Oxfam.

Key questions:

- What roles do individual agents and organisations within transnational advocacy networks play in setting agendas? What power relationships and tensions exist between these actors?
- What issues have achieved salience in the transnational sphere? What are the characteristics of these issues?
- What conditions are required for issues to gain entry to a network’s discursive state, thereby entering the agenda?
- How do networks establish “a common frame of meaning” across global boundaries in relation to these issues?

How do network actors employ information politics to leverage more powerful organisations and governments in setting international agendas?
PAST STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

Kim Mcnamara
On Location: Celebrity and Space
Prof Catharine Lumby

Teodora - Crisia Miroiu
Media and International Conflicts: Official Sources and Consent Formation
Dr Tim Dwyer

My project, “Media and International Conflicts”, focuses on media portrayals of international conflicts and crisis. Such a topic has a great significance as media is the primary and, frequently, public’s only source of information regarding international conflicts.

There are several aspects concerning the way that media covers and represents international conflicts and crisis that need to be analyzed, as the role of media in international conflicts and the purpose and responsibilities of journalists. Professionalism, objectivity and credibility of journalists are essential, as the communicative power media owns can inflame conflicts by circulating negative messages or can support reconciliation by emphasizing positive aspects. While most media consumers take objectivity for granted, objective reporting has not been the historical norm, the concept of objectivity itself being often the focus of debate between numerous journalism professionals and academics. Therefore, I intend to investigate how different-sides coverage respects objectivity as a norm, what are the factors that affect the objectivity of conflict reporting and what are actually its consequences, or, in other words, to which extent media’s representations of the nature of different conflicts and crises, of violent events and protagonists is a selective and partial one. The process of deeming an event newsworthy and the factors that are influencing it will occupy, too, an important as well as the “manipulation” of news coverage during conflicts, and the influence exercised by various institutions and political actors, or even international news outlets, as they are owned by an increasingly concentrated group of corporations with various interests. My research highlights, also, the stress that media puts on reporting casualties, presenting violent scenes and victims, and the smaller concern for offering an adequate political analysis of the conflict, along the little attention paid to peaceful options such as negotiation and other cooperative problem-solving techniques.

Such aspects will be investigated by analyzing and examining various cases of intensely violent international conflicts such as the Gulf War, the Afghanistan War, the Iraq War, the 2008 Georgia-Russia War and others.

Dominic O'Grady
The View from Oxford Street: Journalism from the Sydney Star Observer
Dr Fiona Giles

Established in 1979, the Sydney Star Observer is Australia's longest-running gay and lesbian community newspaper. Throughout its 30 year career, the newspaper’s journalism has chronicled and helped shape the development and mutation of a significant cultural, social and political force. This thesis uses literary journalism to illuminate key moments in the newspaper’s journalism: the creation of gay and lesbian coalition politics, the rise and fall of Mardi Gras, HIV/AIDS, queer challenges, sex, drugs and disco, community and personal identities, privacy, street violence, religion and family.

Hong Feng Qiu
Broadcasting Convergence as a Field in Formation
Associate Professor Anne Dunn

The study will look into transforming broadcasting media industry as a field of cultural production, through which Bourdieu’s theory of cultural field and cultural capital will be employed as the main methodology to map and interpret the interactions within and across the field dealing with telecommunication technology innovations and audience betrayal, on the basis of which the configuration of the field in the next decade might be imagined.

Erin Semon
The Gateway: Private Women, Public World
Antonio Castillo

This body of research aims to examine the role of women’s political networks in aiding women’s entrance into the public sphere. Using the case of Emily’s List as a model, this thesis compares and contrasts the role of Emily’s List in both the United States and Australia in facilitating women entering the public sphere. Using
primary data such as interviews and questionnaires to form an understanding of Emily's List, my thesis will define the context for the success of women's political networks in contemporary Western democracies. Utilising relevant theoretical frameworks including feminist accounts of political representation, public sphere theory instituted by Jurgen Habermas, re-conceptualisations of the public sphere posited by Nancy Fraser (1990), Michael Warner (2002) Lisa McLaughlin (1995, 1993) and others, this thesis will interrogate the position of women in the political public sphere via their participation in women’s political networks such as Emily's List. Two key questions frame this research:

- How does Emily's List facilitate the entrance of women into the public sphere in the United States and Australia, and
- How does Emily's List challenge previous notions of the public sphere?

Damien Spry  
Youth and Mobile Media Policy in Australia and Japan  
Honorary Professor Stephanie Hemelryk Donalson

How are children and young people, in Australia and Japan, affecting, and affected by, the development and popularity of mobile information communications technologies? What are the social and economic impacts on young lives? How have media policy and regulatory environments in Australia and Japan adapted to the changes in children's lives that have been brought about through their adoption of mobile technologies and applications? What implications are there for policy makers, commercial operators, child advocates and others?

Akhteruz Zaman  
The Geography of the Broadcast Newsroom  
Associate Professor Anne Dunn