

❖ Issue 1, Volume 1: 2007

Editorial: Beyond Global Media

We see the *Global Media Journal - Australian Edition (GMJ/AU)* as a forum for research and scholarship with an interest in specifically Australian articulations of the local/global nexus. We also see **GMJ/AU** as a space for the discussion of Australian media issues relating to a wide range of topics from media policy formation and media practices to Australian-based media events, for example, this week's APEC event with the "global focus" of the media world on Sydney. Digital media, in line with developments in convergence, networking and digitisation have created new media ecologies in the many interfaces of global and local media communities. Media scholarship researches these forces of social and cultural change towards understanding multiple communities of interest in the context of globalisation. Early orientations of media study engaged with the material, production, and nature of communications as well as with media distribution (the authors, producers and broadcasters). Some of the earlier models of media anticipated convergence and globalisation in interesting ways, however contemporary Internet media has thoroughly transformed the relationships between production, distribution and consumption of media and has usurped its traditional forms.

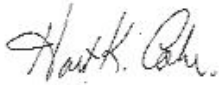
As an electronic journal, we see the importance of tracking examples of globally networked media organisations (e.g., OURMedia), and new ways of accessing and using convergent media (e.g., Web 2.0 - YouTube, Facebook). **GMJ/AU** intends to showcase multiple perspectives on contemporary media. Beyond global media lie a myriad of new communication practices and new communities of interest re-forming and re-setting the media compass.

With these interests in mind, I am pleased to commend to you the first issue of the **Global Media Journal, Australian Edition (GMJ/AU)**. From the early days of contact in late 2006 with Yahya R. Kamalipour, founder of GMJ in the US, we have come quite far. We can boast an outstanding Advisory Board with national and international representation across many media fields. We have also established a strong Editorial Committee based in the School of Communication Arts, University of Western Sydney. Volume 1 Issue 1 and Issue 2 (due in the latter part of this year) are both based on a conference, OURMedia 6 co-hosted by UWS and convened in large part by Dr. Juan Salazar, also a member of the **GMJ/AU** Editorial Committee. We are very grateful for those presenters who have agreed to place their work with the first issues of this journal. Dr. Juan Salazar, as guest editor for these two issues, has written the editorial for this issue.

I would like to thank Dr. Antonio Castillo for his contribution to the production of this issue and specifically for the excellent book review section that he has edited. Thanks also to Rachel Morley who has managed communication with our authors and reviewers with great efficiency. Thanks to Myra Gurney for subbing this issue and to Dr. Tim Dwyer for developing the Australian media links section. Thanks to Dr. Ray Archee for supporting the website development and to Roman Goik for our website design and management. A number of colleagues in the School of Communication Arts refereed articles and reviewed books. These were indispensable to the realisation of this issue and to them I am very grateful.

We will, in time, develop a feedback facility on the website, however until then, I encourage feedback to this issue to be forwarded to myself at h.cohen@uws.edu.au or to Rachel Morley at r.morley@uws.edu.au.

Hart Cohen
For the Editorial Committee
GMJ/AU



The launch of Global Media Journal - Australian Edition coincides with a very important moment in the short history of the OURMedia Network / Red Nuestros Medios, a collective founded in 2001 which today has over 500 academics, activists, media makers and communication specialists from over 50 countries.

In April of 2007 the network organized its sixth international conference in Sydney, Australia under the theme Sustainable Futures: Roles and Challenges for Community, Alternative and Citizens' Media in the 21st Century. The theme was broad enough to attract over two hundred speakers and participants from 35 countries representing universities, non-government organizations, community organizations as well as media and policy activists and artists.

The conference demonstrated the potential for transdisciplinary and cross cultural projects and the critical importance of participatory communication processes in an age of increased media convergence. It also demonstrated how a collective of individuals working together can create a forum for the debate of ideas and for bridging the the practices of academics and non-academics working towards similar goals. The scope of the conference was summarized in a position paper titled Letter from Sydney which was written and approved collectively during the conference.

It is really a great opportunity for OURMedia to be able to have the first two issues of GMJ Australia dedicated to some of the papers that were presented during the 5-day event in Sydney, with a particular focus on current projects being undertaken in Australia.

In our opening article, John Downing offers his insight into what the main priorities for grassroots media might be for the years ahead. Downing is one of the founders of the OURMedia network and with his renown eloquence outlines what he sees as the main problems faced by Social Justice Media Activists. Stuart Allan offers a original perspective on the digital citizen, and the profound impact that citizen reporting is having on the forms, practices and epistemologies of mainstream journalism, from the international level through to the local, by focusing particularly on the alternative coverage of the London bombings of July 2005.

The following three articles showcase some of the work being conducted in Australia. Saba ElGhul-Bebawi concentrates on outlining possible philanthropic linkages that could provide a breathing space for struggling community radio projects in different parts of the world, while Michael Meadows et.al offer preliminary outcomes of a pioneering research into Australian community broadcasting audiences. In our following section, Leo Berkeley stresses the potential of fictional screen narratives to powerfully and imaginatively explore human experience in relation to issues of cultural diversity, social equity and community change and criticizes the absence of drama on Australian community television.

I wish to thank those contributors that have agreed to have their papers shared in this first two volumes of the Journal as well as the editors and colleagues that have worked so hard to put this project together in what looks as a very exciting opportunity to debate ideas surrounding the challenges in decades ahead for alternative media research and practice.

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