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SPONSORED BY
Persona, Celebrity, Publics Research Group (PCP)
School of Communication and Creative Arts
Faculty of Arts and Education
Deakin University

Program design - Spitfire Studios
Welcome!

The concept of public is contentious. It is meant to be a term that is both inclusive in its embodiment of a perceived collective and normative in the constitution of the perceived role of an enlightened citizenry.

This symposium is an interrogation of its contemporary configuration and an analysis of what has emerged as its relatively new plurality. Publics implies different forms of coherence, possibly diverse notions of collectives and their roles, and a transformed and negotiated sense of relations and tensions between these newer formations. We are glad you can join us in this discussion and exploration of publics and investigate the new counterpoints of the private and the intimate as well as the transformed political and spatial culture that our contemporary cultures have spawned into complex publics. The presentations will no doubt be stimulating and we hope that you can advance on some of the ideas developed here further and connect to our own micro-public – the Persona Celebrity Publics Research Group – that has fostered the development of this moment of intellectual exchange and debate.

On behalf of the Organizing Committee of the Persona Celebrity Publics Research Group, (PCP) Deakin University, the School of Communication and Creative Arts, and the Faculty of Arts and Education we hope your experience of the Symposium is both rewarding, stimulating, and maybe, fun.

Kristin Demetrious, Sean Redmond, P. David Marshall, Tamara Heaney, Toija Cinque, Elizabeth Braithwaite, Cassandra Atherton, Glenn D'Cruz, Lienors Torre, Bronwyne Thomason.

A Note about PCP

The Persona, Celebrity, Publics research group is comprised of a dynamic group of inter-disciplinary scholars, creative practitioners, and research students committed to examining the way public and private life is historically and presently constituted. Our aims are to centrally look at the role of persona in political and everyday life, the meaning and significance of celebrity culture, and the way the public is mobilised in the global age. We see connections and discursive relays between these three areas, understanding contemporary life as being predicated on presentations, performances and representations of the self, the real, in a media rich world where famed individuals are highly regarded and carry economic worth.

The Persona, Celebrity, Publics research group is connected to the journal Celebrity Studies, its bi-annual conference, and to similarly constituted research groups in North America, Asia, and Europe. Its membership is comprised of researchers from Deakin University, and from associated members world-wide. We welcome enquiries to join our research group from research students, academics and post-doctoral students interested in studying and working here and encourage further connections and exchanges with groups and individuals who have projects that intersect with our research directions.

Currently, these are the research clusters in PCP:

Celebrity and stardom
Audiences
Persona Studies
Creative Practice
Audience Fans Consumer
Publics

Sean Redmond PCP Director
Conference Information

Transportation
Public: From the city, the simplest way to get to the Burwood campus is via the 75 Tram which can be picked up in the city, either down near Flinders Station or on the road paralleling Southern Cross Station (King). Be aware that this is a long tram ride – over an hour at a minimum. Alternatively, you can take the train to Camberwell and change trains to the Alamein line and get off at the Burwood station, walk down to Toorak Road and pick up the 75 tram much closer to Deakin’s Burwood campus (another 4 kilometers).

By Car
The Burwood Campus of Deakin University is on the Burwood Highway. From either direction of the Monash Freeway, take the Warrigal exit and head north on Warrigal Road. After several kilometers, turn right on to the Burwood Highway and continue to the 2nd gate of Deakin. Parking for the day is in CarPark 6 (check the map!). It is $6 for each day.

Location of the Symposium
Registration and almost the entire Symposium will be held in what is called the Richard Searby Room. The building is called HD and the room number is HD 2.006. From the Deakin tram stop on the Burwood Highway, get on to the campus and walk through the thoroughfare past the library and onto a causeway past Building P. Head right and pass Caffeine’s and head to your left towards and just beyond Sage Restaurant and you will find the room on your left after going through a pair of sliding doors. The only other rooms that will be used are: HE 1.009 and HE1.010 for Session 3 and 4 on Monday and P128 for Session 9 on Tuesday.
Session by Session Guide

DAY 1 - Monday 24 February

Registration 8:30am-9:00am HD2.006 The Richard Searby Room
Welcome and Introduction 9:00am—9:30am
Kristin Demetrious and Toija Cinque

SESSION 1  9:30am-10:30am   Room: HD 2.006
Keynote: John Frow, Sydney University – Introduced and Chaired by Toija Cinque
‘The digital public sphere’

10:30-10:45am COFFEE/TEA BREAK

SESSION 2: 10:45-12pm
Public/Political identity and the digital public sphere
Room: HD 2.006 Chair: Andrew Tolson

a. “When is an elite public not elite?Understanding the character and communications of laurelled elite publics” - Lukasz Swiatek
b. “Pauline Kael and the Diasporic Publics of Cold War America” - Patrick West
c. “Fragmented Publics and the Waning of Cosmopolitanism” - Paul Atkinson and Rebecca Strating
d. “Governing Publics, Representing Citizens, and Monitoring Power” - Andrew Vandenberg and Jacqui Hoepner

SESSION 3:  12 pm-1:15pm
Intimate Publics (1)
Room: HD 1.009 Chair: Sean Redmond

a. “The psychologisation of Facebook: moving beyond pathological public” intimacy – Alex Lambert
b. “‘If I’m going into gory details, I also expect you to tell me some of your gory details’: Legibility and reciprocity when ‘oversharing’” – Jenny Kennedy
c. “Affect and ideation in political speech: rhythmics, poetics, and their publics” – Tom Clark
d. “Public Persona/Private Agony: The Authorial Persona in the Public Spotlight” – Siobhan Lyons
SESSION 4: 12pm-1:15pm

_Intimate Publics (2)_

Room: HE 1.010 Chair: Tania Lewis


c. “Finding the Edge: Online persona creation by fringe artists” (30 min) - Kim Barbour

1:15 - 2pm LUNCH Room: HD 2.006

SESSION 5: 2pm-3:15pm

_Fans/Fandom/Fanworks_

Room: HD 2.006 Chair: Tamara Heaney

a. “Playful publics as ‘game-makers’: Digital media, produsers, and the (r)evolution of board gaming” – Adam Brown and Deb Waterhouse-Watson

b. “Affect Production in Pop Music Memoirs” – Katja Lee

c. “Multilingual Publics and Media Fandom” - Tessa Dwyer

d. “The Revolution will be Personalized: Fanworks, Fan Communities and Neoliberalism” – Robyn Kenealy

SESSION 6: 3:15pm-4:30pm

_Power in Public (spaces)_

Room: HD 2.006 Chair: Glenn D’Cruz


b. “The emergence of open social systems: how to theorise and research global online communities” - Alexia Maddox

c. “Rethinking the Emerging Public Sphere and Caricature in late 19th century Calcutta” - Saswata Bhattacharya

4:30 - 4:45pm COFFEE/TEA BREAK
SESSION 7:  4:45pm - 5:45pm  Room: HD 2.006

Keynote: Tania Lewis – RMIT Introduced and Chaired by Kristin Demetrious

‘Spirited Publics? Post-secularism, spiritualism and civility on Indian television’

6pm DRINKS: Room: Phoenix Gallery

Session 7a. Exhibition and presentation: “Occupy Conversations” – Cameron Bishop

DAY 2 - Tuesday 25 February

SESSION 8:  9:00am-10:15am  Room: HD 2.006

Keynote: Felicity Collins – LaTrobe University  Introduced and Chaired by Cassandra Atherton

“Public Intellectuals, Blackfella Films and the Politics of Radical Hope”

SESSION 9:  10:15am – 10:45 am  Room: P128 Chair: Sean Redmond

“Dancing Dandenong: The Spatial Politics of Community” - Glenn D’Cruz; Dirk de Bruyn; Shaun Mcleod; Steve McIntyre; Soo Yeun You

10:30-10:45am COFFEE/TEA BREAK

SESSION 10:  11am-12:30 pm

Practicing Publics

Room: HD 2.006 Chair: Felicity Collins

a. “‘Fuck off, we’re full’ -The politics of boganism and public relations in contemporary Australia”
   - Kristin Demetrious
b.  “People ‘are’ rhetoric. Get over it!” – Steve Mackey
c.  “Coming in Like a Wrecking Ball: Power and Responsibility in Celebrity Call Out Culture”
   – Allison Maplesden
d.  “Scandal thresholds for sports celebrities as charitable ambassadors” – Sharyn McDonald
SESSION 11: 1:30 pm-2:45 pm

Art, Public Spaces and Public Spectacle

Room: HD 2.006 Chaired by Lienors Torre

- a. Spectacle and Publics – Virginia Murray
- b. Stories of the real and the real story – Benjamin Cittadini
- c. The Microcinema Experience: Film Exhibition as Public Display – Mark Freeman

SESSION 12: 2:45pm-4pm

Privatizing the public/ publicizing the private

Room: HD 2.006 Chaired by John Frow

- a. “Publics of Speech” – Andrew Kenyon
- b. Theorizing Surveillance Publics – Michael Richardson
- c. When the private becomes public: Commodity activism, endorsement and making meaning in a privatized world” P. David Marshall

4:00-4:15pm COFFEE/TEA BREAK

SESSION 13: 4.15-5.15pm Room: HD 2.006

Keynote: Andrew Tolson – de Montfort University Introduced and Chaired by Kristin Demetrious

“Hope springs eternal’: The illusions and disillusions of political celebrity”

7:30pm Drinks - Jimmy Watsons Wine Bar, CARLTON

333 Lygon Street
Carlton, VIC 3053
Telephone: (03) 9347 3985
Abstracts
Arranged in order of Sessions

Session 1
24 February 9:30am Rm: HD 2.006

**KEYNOTE:** John Frow, Sydney University

**‘The digital public sphere’**

‘Publics’ are functions of genres and of the media in which they operate; they have no existence apart from the formal and institutional structures that bring them into being and specify their mode of existence. New mediascapes generate new modes of publicness: new forms of the person, new kinds of interaction, new categories of social being. The star and celebrity systems that evolved with Hollywood and with the recorded music industry gave rise to new legal rights (the American ‘right of publicity’), new modes of commodification of the persona, new practices of ecstatic or detached identification. At a certain point in the not too distant past, the disseminated and commodified persona comes to be autonomous of any actual performance, existing in and helping to form a space of intimacy in which effects of mutual recognition are produced alongside new modes of affect and of ethical obligation. And as the digital world takes shape, distinctive modes of formation and display of the self and distinctive modes of publicness develop through systems of ambient affiliation. In this talk I ask what digital genres there are; how they relate to digital sites, digital formats, software metagenres, and the affordances of hardware and infrastructure; and how, by reducing the transaction costs of disclosure, they facilitate practices of disembodied intimacy that put into circulation a persona at once deeply private and deeply public, and in the process reinvent older forms of care of the self.


Session 2
10:45-12pm Room: HD 2.006

**Public/Political identity and the digital public sphere**

2A “When is an elite public not elite? Understanding the character and communications of laurelled elite publics” - Lukasz Swiatek

This paper expands current understandings of the concept of the ‘elite public’ by positing the existence of a public that is linked to awards and prizes. Elite publics have typically been characterised in academic literature as publics involved in agenda-setting and decision-making, usually at government levels. They have been seen to command society’s resources and to control, or even manipulate, publics-at-large.
Indeed, members of elite publics are usually seen to be political leaders. Chatfield (1997) defines elite publics as groups that occupy decision-making establishments; politicians and public servants are the best example of elite publics in this view. However, more broadly, an elite public can simply be seen as a social group that has “greater access to information and education” (Rejai 2009, p. 9). This second, more comprehensive understanding of the elite public includes industrialists, professionals, cultural entrepreneurs and intellectuals (Eder 2001). However, this classic theoretical framework does not account for the new worldwide elite public of award winners: a public that is both informally constituted and formally organised. Examples of formal social groupings in this public include the Nobel Women’s Initiative, the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates, A Nobel Cause, and the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings: all relating to just one set of prizes.

These types of formal groupings are using multiple communication resources to engage general publics in various humanitarian projects. The paper offers a new, fresh understanding of the elite public, where ‘elite’ is defined in relation to excellence. It argues that this public is elite, but not elitist. ‘Laurelled elite publics’, as they are termed here, are inclusive social aggregations that aim to benefit, and in most cases are drawn from, the grassroots levels of societies. The paper examines the traditional notion of elite publics before offering evidence for the existence of this proposed new type of public. It then critically analyses some of the problems and challenges associated with this public, its activities and communications, focusing on the abovementioned Nobel-related groups as a case study.

**“Pauline Kael and the Diasporic Publics of Cold War America”**

Patrick West

In *Pauline Kael: A Life in the Dark* (2011), Brian Kellow claims that Kael “maintained a neutral, detached attitude toward her own Jewish past.” Be that as it may, her writings seem to reflect the diasporic trajectory of Jewish nationhood and thought in their ceaseless production of multiple, incompatible, even incommensurate publics. Although she was in many ways the most American of her generation of film critics (foreign cinemas didn’t interest her much) Kael evidenced a pointedly distanced relationship to any monolithic notion of an American public. Nowhere is this more evident than in her dismissal of that most “American” of genres, the Western. In the essay “Saddle Sore: El Dorado, The War Wagon, The Way West”, published in August 1967, Kael wrote: “There is a fairly widespread assumption that no matter how bad American movies in general are, the Westerns are still great…. I don’t believe that there ever were the great works in this genre that so many people claim for it.” This attitude, which Kael consistently maintained throughout her career, white-ants the consensus representation of an American cinematic public. In its place, Kael provided, through her reviews, essays and assorted pronouncements, a different idea of promiscuous, relational publics, which bears some resemblance to Lauren Berlant’s concept of the “National Symbolic,” to wit, America as “an assumed relation, an explication of ongoing collective practices, and also an occasion for exploring what it means that national subjects already share not just a history, or a political allegiance, but a set of forms and the affect that makes these forms meaningful.” Kael’s writerly “jouissance” reflects the fact that the relations possible within, and in relation to, her great love—the cinematic form—are almost more than any nation, either of one public or many, could bear. At this juncture, an erotics of cinematic publics emerges, challenging (Jewish and non-Jewish) America with certain diasporic energies.

**“Fragmented Publics and the Waning of Cosmopolitanism”**

Paul Atkinson and Rebecca Strating

Cosmopolitanism requires individuals to imagine themselves not just as members of local and national groups but as part of a global and, to some degree, abstract “community” of strangers. In doing so, it raises questions about how we can communicate with and imagine others beyond the horizon of “face-to-face” or “local” community and beyond the nation state (James 1996). This matter of identity formation requires theoretical mediation in order to explain how affiliation related directly to our psycho-social identity forms the basis for both global awareness and global citizenship. Theorising the formation of cosmopolitan identities requires examining how we engage with, create and reify this community of strangers through global publics—those
public forums and spaces in which this attachment to others is made manifest – and the manner by which they are mediated by technologies of communication.

We investigate specifically the role of networked communication in shaping cosmopolitan publics and argue that it operates according to two divergent principles: firstly a heightened cosmopolitan awareness that is different to classical cosmopolitanism insofar as there is always the capacity to “know” others beyond immediate community and national boundaries, and secondly, the communicative potential to limit engagement and global awareness through individually tailored patterns of consumption. The capacity of individuals to design a communicative context, or have a third party networking organisation such as Google do it on their behalf, will lead to the fragmentation of publics and possibly disengagement from both national and cosmopolitan horizons of engagement.

We will investigate these questions through the application of both networked theories of communication and contemporary theories of cosmopolitanism, in particular those of Martha Nussbaum and Jürgen Habermas.

2D “Governing Publics, Representing Citizens, and Monitoring Power”
Andrew Vandenberg and Jacqui Hoepner

Monitory democracy is a recent proposal for a model of democracy that is more adequate than either mainstream models of pluralist democracy or radical norms of participatory or deliberative democracy (Keane 2009; Schudson 1998). Classic studies (Dohmoff 2010) of elites in the community power structure, leaders in competing political parties, and activists mobilising movements to resist the rule of elites and established parties have addressed questions of who rules, how do democratic procedures protect citizens from bad rule, and how can outsiders challenge the framing of agendas to include the interests of subaltern groups. Monitory democracy focuses instead on how the ruled deploy their rights as citizens to monitor power in the practices of institutions and the decisions of decision-makers. Following famous case studies of local democracy and urban planning in Atlanta (Hunter 1953), New Haven (Dahl 1961), and Aalborg (Flyvbjerg 1998), this paper undertakes a case study of the City of Greater Geelong elections in 2004. The absence of the Labor and Liberal parties in the local council, the extraordinary “Gheri Malop” blog, and the cash-for-councillors’ scandal provide grounds to reflect on the theoretical adequacy of monitory democracy. The paper concludes that monitory democracy needs a stronger sense of history – that includes some sense of both the causes of democratisation and the construction of democratic publics (how, when and why do the ruled act as citizens?), if is to offer a full alternative to both mainstream models of pluralist democracy and radical norms about participatory or deliberative democracy.

Session 3
12 pm-1:15pm Room: HE1.009

Intimate Publics (1)

3A “The psychologisation of Facebook: moving beyond pathological public” intimacy – Alex Lambert

One way of understanding changes in the nature of public and private life is through an investigation of the transformation of intimacy in the age of digital media. Social and mobile media such as Facebook are increasingly encouraging users to live out their lives in public, and are challenging our conception of where intimacy should be practiced. However, much of the popular and academic analyses of how people use Facebook are unfairly critical of ‘public intimacy’. These critiques are symptomatic of the ‘psychologisation’ of Facebook, the reading of
Facebook through the lens of contemporary, psychotherapeutic constructions of intimacy. Although these constructions have cultural significance in their own right, this approach often pathologises users as narcissistic, lacking in self-esteem, going through developmental crises, unable to forge healthy relationships, or suffering from acute loneliness. This prevents a more open, nuanced and less pessimistic account of intimacy. Based on an ethnography of Facebook, I describe an alternative conception of public intimacy. Facebook users intensively negotiate intimacy to produce rewarding, gregarious social spaces in which increasingly mobile friends can sustain their relationships. In understanding this process I draw on historically informed sociological studies of friendship, as well as cultural theories of intimacy which focus on discourse, expertise, governmentality and media.

“‘If I’m going into gory details, I also expect you to tell me some of your gory details’: Legibility and reciprocity when ‘oversharing’” – Jenny Kennedy

Sharing, especially on social media, is a process which holds expectations of an intimate and reciprocal public (Warner, 2002; Berlant, 2008), the imagined audience of the disclosure. This paper explores these expectations, considers what constitutes reciprocity and examines the strategies by which reciprocity is implicitly bounded and enacted in such sharing practices online. Contributing the findings of qualitative work on situated sharing practices in networked culture, this paper also considers the necessity of legibility for sharing. A person may, perhaps unintentionally, enact their performance of sharing in such a way that others cannot understand it. Similarly, a performance that is not intended as sharing may be interpreted as such by another. Often boundaries to disclosures are not easily articulated or substantiated, and moments of overstepping boundaries can be fraught with tension and confusion. For example, Nancy Miller argues that ‘going public with private stories’ (2002, p. 137) is always fretful.

Indeed, one of the phantoms of sharing on social media is the fear of ‘oversharing’. Oversharing can provoke anxiety and discomfort, enduring another’s oversharing can elicit similar responses because it locates people in an uncomfortable predicament where they feel obliged to reciprocate but would rather not because they feel a threshold has been unduly crossed. Reciprocation to performances of oversharing risk endorsing and normalizing that sharing behavior and so reciprocation of oversharing is intended to convey disapproval to the offending party. I focus here on such complexities in the ‘socially-mediated publicness’ (Baym & boyd, 2012) of sharing.

“Affect and ideation in political speech: rhythmics, poetics, and their publics”
Tom Clark

An important aspect of the relationship between political leaders and their publics is rhythm. Rhythm is a performance dynamic that can generate and intensify sympathy between orators and their audience-publics. Affective congruence between the rhythm of a speech and its ideational ‘content’ is one of the main criteria audiences use to gauge a speaker’s plausibility or integrity. After Nicolas Abraham, we might note that the poetics of political speech are heavily invested in an interchangeability of attitudes towards the past and the future, meaning rhythm is a critical enabler for strategies of political rhetoric.

This presentation will explore two speeches performed by Australia’s former prime minister Julia Gillard: her largely improvised ‘Misogyny Speech’ and the largely scripted ‘Men in Blue Ties Speech.’ It will compare the relationship between the speeches, their media reportage, and the online engagement through social media. It will especially consider ways in which Gillard sought to mobilise publics ideationally, through content, and ways in which her publics mobilised themselves affectively, in response to rhythm.
“Public Persona/Private Agony: The Authorial Persona in the Public Spotlight” – Siobhan Lyons

The celebrity culture industry has the notorious ability to construct exaggerated or fabricated identities and personas. What Guy Debord describes as a ‘spectacle’, others, such as Umberto Eco, would describe these personas in terms of the hyperreal. Numerous celebrity authors have expressed a feeling of Romantic agony in response to the way in which their persona has been created and cultivated by their admiring public. Following on from the private angst felt by Lord Byron, and his creation of the Byronic Hero, authors have continuously felt the machinations of the publicity machine as intensely damaging to their identity and sense of self. Richard Schickel furthermore describes this in terms of what he calls an “illusion of intimacy”, in which fans and readers assume an intimate relationship between themselves and the publicised image of their favourite authors. As a result, there is a noticeable, though overlooked trend of celebrity authors who embody this public/private dichotomy, characterised by a famous public image and private angst. Although such exaggerations of an author’s persona have been prevalent since the Romantic era, the mass media of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has invariably heightened the exposure of these authors, from Bret Easton Ellis to Jonathan Franzen. What we can glean from this is how contemporary creations of the public persona are still inevitably tied to Romantic discourse. This paper will focus on how the author has come to be seen in contemporary publics, and how the public persona of celebrity authors is often seen as artistically damaging.

Session 4

12pm-1:15pm Room: HE1.010

Intimate Publics (2)

“Constructing the Intimate Public: Persona Politics and the bifurcation of representation and presentation in contemporary political campaigns”

P. David Marshall

One of the most interesting developments in contemporary political culture and campaigns is the active play with social media as a way to engage the citizenry/electorate. This work can be dated back to Howard Dean’s presidential run in 2003 and 2004, but has clearly accelerated particularly via Obama’s inheritance of these approaches in two further presidential campaigns as well as countless other elections worldwide: what has developed are highly specialised operations in the areas related to the online campaign beyond fundraising and very much related to building affective connection to leaders. The 2013 Federal election campaign in Australia underlines a new developing bifurcation in contemporary campaigns – on the one hand there is ever-increasing focus on party leaders as representing the dimensions of an election. On the other hand, this focus is now including a greater foray into personal forms of connection to the voting public that are partly determined by a changed public which invites quite personal and sometimes intimate details to be thought of as essential to the motivations of political decision and voting. In the parliamentary system, there are no direct votes for the prime minister; one can only vote for the candidates in the particular electorate. There is now a growing gap between the practice of voting for candidates and what they represent in terms of parties, but ultimately in terms of leadership. This presentation, partially through a reading of John Protevi’s understanding of the embodiment flow of political affect and Berlant’s reading of politics and emotion, argues that what is emerging is persona politics. Persona politics relies on quite old systems of legitimation where leaders embody the populace and is augmented in its embodiment through the new technologies of the social that now connect the populace to the leader in an individualised and “intimate” way. The result in the Westminster system is a disconnect from knowledge or
concern about the individual people that are elected and a very personal and intimate connection to the leader that may or may not be elected directly. The paper argues that what we are developing is a new intimate public in our contemporary politics that is exaggerated in election campaigns that are personally connected to the leader and disconnected from the processes of other forms of election of representatives. This new development that relies on social media technologies to move ideas related to the leaders around can be thought of as persona politics in its connection to the personal and in its use of presentational media to reinforce affective connections.

**4B “Wise Guys: The Changing Role of the Public Intellectual in America”**

Cassandra Atherton

My paper will explore the changing definition of the contemporary public intellectual and his/her role and responsibility in the Information Age. My arguments will hinge on my interviews with twelve contemporary American public intellectuals (Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn, Todd Gitlin, Harold Bloom, Camille Paglia, Dana Gioia, Stephen Greenblatt, Alan Lightman, Paul Kane, Kenneth T Jackson, Jim Green and Jim Cullen) and their views on communication in a society experiencing a decline in the publication of print media. Camille Paglia acknowledged this when she stated in my interview, ‘There is too much competition, too much going on—video game culture (especially for young men in America), movies, TV, iPods, the web. The web is a major transformation—people are reading but a different kind of reading.’

The public intellectual, by very definition, aims to reach a large sector of the public; communicating with all generations. This requires proficiency, or at least the capacity to communicate in a variety of forms. As a large proportion of the public, to which the public intellectual appeals, is often an online or cyber public, the importance of blogs and social media in a computer literate public cannot be underestimated. The immediacy of the blog and social media and the way in which an online presence facilitates immediate communication between the public and the public intellectual through the posting of comments online, allows for a broad recognition of the intellectual in the public arena.

Finding a good blog, such as Jim Cullen’s, Michael Berube’s or Daniel Drezner’s, is an exciting and interactive experience. It allows the public to comment almost immediately on what is being posited, rather than having to wait to read a letter to the editor, or a response to an academic article in a journal. The public intellectual’s blog is a dialogue between him/her and the public. Blogs, social media and articles published on the internet make the public intellectual more accessible to the public. In short, ever increasingly, being a public intellectual means appearing in cyberspace as a public identity.

**4C “Finding the Edge: Online persona creation by fringe artists” (30 min)**

Kim Barbour

Self-presentation through the creation of profiles and pages on digitally networked spaces is becoming ever more ubiquitous. In order to develop greater depth of understanding of the place of social media in our self-identification practice, my dissertation investigates the experiences of online persona creation by eight artists. Drawing on sociological and cultural studies approaches to understanding identity as performance, I tie current artists’ presentational and representational practices to historically grounded, socio-culturally constructed discourses of ‘artistness’. Through this connection, I argue that the creation of online persona has not radically changed notions of what it means to be an artist, or how artistness is represented and understood by audiences of fans or followers, but rather that digital technology has allowed for renegotiation of the boundaries of artistness that still draws from historical understandings of the role and persona of the artist. This shifting of boundaries, allowing for more inclusivity within the art world, is demonstrated by my focus on ‘fringe’ artists: those whose creative practice places them outside of the traditional art world and its existing structures of representation, distribution and consumption. The eight fringe artists who participated in this study are drawn from street art, performance poetry, craftivism and tattoo.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis drives the methodological focus on the experiences of the artists. Rather than a consideration of behaviour and habit, or what the artists...
do, this phenomenological approach allowed me to instead focus on what it is like for the artists to create persona, what drives particular types of representational practices. Using unstructured interviews, and online listening as an extension of participant observation, the artists’ narratives of experience are expressed through transcript extracts and screenshots: both are necessary to fully explore the nature of online persona creation.

My analysis of the artists experiences has demonstrated that there are three somewhat distinct registers of performance with which an artist’s persona can engage: the professional register, where one demonstrates ones proficiency, experience, popularity, and professionalism; the personal register, where one connects with wider social and political interests and activities; and the intimate register, where one allows the audience in to one’s private world. These three registers occupy the same performance space, but are implicitly or explicitly for different segments of the digitally networked audience of fans, followers, friends and family. The complexity of the performance and reception of these registers is influenced by the shared nature of the performance space – where previously different roles would be performed for different audiences without reference to one another, the networked nature of online social media influences decisions of how much, and when, to share with whom. Interpreted here using themes of strategy|happenstance, specialisation|diversification, visibility|self-protection, self|others and work|play, the professional, personal and intimate registers of performance enable us to see the consideration and care with which each participant creates their artists persona.

The experiences of performing the self in these three registers, as presented here, provides an insight into the complexities involved in creating online persona, while also demonstrating that this type of presentation of self is, in itself, no different from the types of role play and performance of self that has arguably always occurred in our physical world. Despite focusing on the role and performance of artistness, this dissertation speaks to the creation and performance of online persona more broadly.

Session 5:
2pm-3:15pm Room: HD 2.006

Fans/Fandom/Fanworks

5A “Playful publics as ‘game-makers’: Digital media, producers, and the (r)evolution of board gaming” – Adam Brown and Deb Waterhouse-Watson

A lot of us in the industry were… really nervous, frankly, when the iPad was…. maybe the board games that we all grew up with and know and love might die off. And actually the reverse has happened. Now board game sales are better than ever. — Justin Gary, Stone Blade Entertainment

On first appearance, table top board games would seem to epitomise the ‘traditional’ or ‘old’ media of yesteryear; however, the rise of digital media has seen an already substantial subculture undergo fundamental transformations. The impact of crowdfunding sites like Kickstarter and online forums like those of boardgamegeek on the production, reception, and actual use of games reveals the internet to be at the very centre of the (r)evolution in board game culture. While scholars have with few exceptions neglected board games, this is even more the case in relation to how digital media has impacted on the industry. Stewart Woods’ recent study Eurogames: The Design, Culture and Play of Modern European Board Games (2012) addresses the social aspects of board gaming at length, though no substantial study has examined the implications of the online world for the activities of gamer publics. The proliferation of digital board game adaptations across a number of platforms, discussion board conversations, and the countless ‘unboxing’, ‘review’, ‘demo’, or ‘play through’ user- generated videos, has resulted in complex changes to the way(s) in which people connect with board games and each other.
Contemporary online interactions between ‘game designers’, ‘reviewers’, and ‘consumer-fans’ reveal that the distinctions between these categories seem to be increasingly breaking down. Akin to fan fiction, (prod)user interventions often expand on published games through the creation of alternative rules for gameplay and customised expansions (some of which are officially adopted and printed by game companies). Crowdfunding projects increasingly involve direct appeals from ‘designers’ for contributions from online supporters, reflecting a growing acknowledgement of the ‘democratising’ potential of digital media (and a tension between this and consumer drivers). Through a close analysis of recent board game case studies, including the Xia: Legends of a Drift System Kickstarter project, we examine the industrial logics and intertextualities (re)forming through the intersection of the virtual and the non-virtual, arguing for a need to reconceptualise the ‘game-maker’ public. Our analysis hinges on the intersection of game studies, cultural studies, and new/digital media theory, contributing to the ongoing debate over the relevance of the ‘producer’/‘produser’ distinction, and the broader issue of the democratising potential of digital media culture.

“Affect Production in Pop Music Memoirs” – Katja Lee

As David Marshall and other critics have convincingly argued, the contemporary popular music industry is organized around the production and consumption of affect: not only must the singer seem to genuinely embody the feelings they sing about, but her performance of this must be compelling enough to generate an affective response in the audience. The memoirs of contemporary popular music singers, my research suggests, must do the same; moreover, they must do so in a way that indicates continuity with the affect produced by their musical performances. In this paper, I examine how affect can be produced in popular music memoirs by collapsing the distance between the narrated “I” and the narrating “I.” Using three case studies—Anne Murray, Shania Twain, and Celine Dion—I will demonstrate what happens when a memoir fails to embody and inspire affect (Murray) and what kinds of behaviour (in particular, behaviours that might normally compromise the authority and authenticity of a celebrity’s public image) can be accommodated if the correct affective postures have been assumed (Dion and Twain). These trends suggest that, while discourses of the private life continue to be mobilized to locate the “real” person behind the fame, in the case of popular music celebrity, it is the representation of the celebrity’s private emotional life rather than her private domestic life that carries the burden of legitimizing the celebrity memoir.

“Multilingual Publics and Media Fandom” - Tessa Dwyer

This paper focuses on the language politics of global media, examining publics that arise through experiences of film and television in translation. Through an awareness of screen translation processes and strategies – from dubbing and subtitling to fansubbing and live interpretation – new publics arise. Globally, such publics count, accounting for a major proportion of audiences worldwide. Hence, I argue that screen translation and experiences of translated media can no longer be positioned as peripheral to either screen culture as a whole, or to its scholarship and analysis.

Moreover, as screen media evolves in conjunction with new technologies, trends indicate that it is becoming increasingly multilingual, as Chinese, Spanish and Arabic, for instance, challenge the traditional dominance of English as a global lingua franca. To explore such changes and the key role played by translation in delimiting the availability and accessibility of cultural products in global or transnational contexts, this paper identifies online fansubbing as an area of particular interest.

Fansubbing is a growing DIY phenomenon where avid fans of foreign-language media produce their own amateur subtitles. Usually, they contravene copyright laws in order to do so, making their subs freely available to others through a range of digital and online tools. Originating within anime subculture, fansubbing is fast becoming a paradigmatic mode of media consumption, seeping well beyond the borders of anime and becoming a favoured strategy of political activists and corporate giants alike. Reflecting the growing importance of translation as a participatory mode within global media circuits, fansubbing signals the need to take seriously operations of subtitling and dubbing.
Since the development of social media, members of media fan communities have formed these communities in online space. Members often choose to continue, critique, or comment upon their favored texts in the form of fanworks.

Fan communities are often valued by creators of mainstream texts, because their devotion translates to profitability. However, they are also frequently characterized as “crazy” and “obsessive”. Perhaps in response, dedicated fans have put effort into emphasizing the legitimacy and critical potential of fanworks, noting that they often speak back to heteronormativity and gendered hierarchies in the texts they respond to. Writers such as Constance Penley and Henry Jenkins claim fanworks as radical challenge. But participation in fandom social spaces requires particular social performances, and misperformance can be harshly regulated. As the technology that facilitates online community formation has continued to develop, fan spaces have increasingly demanded a form of total investment, both in speed of response, and commitment to a particular style of challenge: one that can criticize the content of mainstream texts, but not necessarily their overriding ideologies or form. Likewise, emphasis on labeling, tagging and what essentially amounts to rigid “genrefication” of fanworks has meant that fan communities are increasingly factionalized along lines of personal preference.

That fanworks are able to meaningfully challenge a mainstream is an essential part of fandom’s investment in its own respectability, yet the challenge is overwhelmingly mounted through avenues and in manners that support the mainstream it critiques. As such, as I will argue, fan community norms have come to reflect an accelerating neoliberal logic: individual self-gratification as substitute for, but perceived means of, mounting radical challenge.

Session 6

3:15pm-4:30pm Room: HD 2.006

Power in Public (spaces)

This paper examines SBS Independent (SBSi) (1994-2007) as a cultural institution characterised by productive diversity and counter-memory. It examines its cultural policy developments harnessing cultural and linguistic diversity as a national resource and how these shaped the form and function of SBSi. SBSi was a commissioning house for Australia’s multicultural public broadcaster, SBS-TV, and its principle function was to generate locally produced and culturally diverse content from the independent filmmaking sector. This paper uses a creative labour approach to demonstrate how SBSi’s administration of productive diversity was complicit with the broader neoliberal agenda of governing through the market, which shaped the conditions allowing for new pseudo-capitalistic processes in production, distribution and representation to emerge. Principle amongst these processes was the installation of public service broadcasters as the new centre of creative management in the independent production sector. It also provides an overview of content commissioned by SBSi as evidence of how staff manoeuvred within a governmental logic to generate counter-memorial narrative representations challenging white racial hegemony in Australia. It argues that SBSi was exemplary of the Creative Nation moment.
in Australian cultural policy and how a cultural institution has engineered prosperous new spaces for non-assimilative cultural elements to flourish. Moreover, it argues that the way SBSi worked within a governmental logic to advance social welfare provides a template for Creative Australia and how to manoeuvre within this current neoliberal regime.

6B The emergence of open social systems: how to theorise and research global online communities - Alexia Maddox

The Internet has increasingly converged and connected global flows of people, information and objects across mobile and dynamic open social structures. These structures have become difficult to research because of the limits of existing concepts and research methods to encompass their digitally-augmented and global nature. Consequently, new formats of community are arising that require us to rethink how a contemporary public is constituted.

This paper develops the concept of social ecology as an environmental approach to researching open social structures that are global and digitally-mediated. Using the case study of the Herper community, I argue that these contemporary publics are digital communities that express their structural connections episodically and are largely constituted through submerged social networks. Often, scholarly understanding of how contemporary publics function is limited by digital dualism; when research practice and approaches see the online and offline worlds as separate social domains of study. The convergence of technologies and their embedding in everyday life practices has made the conceptual separation of virtual and physical social experiences of limited utility. Particularly when describing social cohesion, participation, reciprocity and interaction within open social structures that integrate these spaces. The social ecology approach views the interlacing of places, organisations and social networks, through which this mediated sociability takes places, as a key to researching these contemporary social forms through which people experience community engagement.

Amongst people with reptile and amphibian interests, this global connectivity has facilitated high social exchange in an environment of low social trust. The case study draws upon findings from mixed-methods research involving participant observation across 14 countries, 90 in person interviews and an online survey across 47 countries and 1593 respondents. For this interest group, organized around foci of activity, social activism and social capital have been augmented and connected through the digitization of strong and weak social ties and the interconnectivity of organisational affiliations across a global social context. Consequently, the collective behavior of the Herper community is less visible to existing research methods and approaches and provides an effective case study through which to develop innovations in our understandings of contemporary forms of community experience that impact the public domain.

6C “Rethinking the Emerging Public Sphere and Caricature in late 19th century Calcutta” - Saswata Bhattacharya

Caricature, as an alternative source of an individual opinion within socially recognized forms of expressions, is well appreciated since its inception. Caricature along with its sister concerns, like satire, irony has often provided, influenced and shaped the voices of many living within a sphere and condition of a possible intellectual exchange over time. This exchanges of opinion in order to form and be identified as a “public” requires a geo-political commonality supported by trends in history and class. Publications, privately circulated or state approved, play a central role towards the accumulation of such a group.

The second half of nineteenth century colonial Calcutta, (now Kolkata) for the first time ever in its history saw an emergence of some “popular” periodicals which aimed to introduce a new trend of alternative literary-journalistic discourse within the emerging “public sphere” through a medium of their visual caricatures/cartoons on contemporary politics and colonial history.

This paper will try to probe the historical dimensions and cultural possibilities of these new visual caricatures, often influenced by the trends in British Punch publications, within the Bengali colonial public sphere; how they were able to measure the nexus between the language of visual medium and the newly “educated” intellectual public groups of the metropolis, initiating and seminally contributing towards the making of an
iconic popular cultural trend during and after the colonial rule in Calcutta, representing counter discursive aporias within the usually accepted, however inadequate, post-colonial binary rhetoric of resistance and critique. The semiotics of a new form of visual culture and/within an emerging public sphere in the early days of the Raj remains the mainstay of the paper. In this process it enables us to trace the continuity of responses through this medium and help us understand contemporary public visual politics of subversion well.

Session 7
4:45pm - 5:45pm Room: HD 2.006

KEYNOTE: Tania Lewis – RMIT

’Spirited Publics? Post-secularism, spiritualism and civility on Indian television’

Channel surfing on morning television in India—a truly bewildering experience given there are now 800 plus channels and rising— Involves navigating a mix of news and sports channels, children’s shows, cookery shows, soaps, nature documentaries, consumer-advice programmes, and the odd reality TV and Western-style breakfast show. In many ways the schedule (aside from its extreme abundance of offerings) appears not that different from morning television in Australia or the UK apart from one significant difference, one of the most prominent genres in the morning slot is religious programming. In this presentation I examine the role of religious and spiritual television, a genre that many households in India engage with on a daily basis, in constituting modern forms of televisual publicity, civility and citizenship.

The paper comes out of findings from a larger comparative study of Asian popular factual television (funded by the Australian Research Council), which uses lifestyle programming, in particular, as a site for examining competing and contested models of modernity, citizenship and civic culture, representing as it does a genre that is centrally concerned with teaching audiences how to manage and negotiate residual and emergent modes of selfhood and sociality. I argue that spiritual programming in India is increasingly positioned in the broader TV market as lifestyle advice television offering blueprints for (late) modern living, with saffron-robed yoga gurus, new age babas and entrepreneurial astrologists increasingly jostling for screen time with celebrity chefs and Bollywood stars. If figures like the hugely popular yoga guru Baba Ramdev and the family-friendly astrologer Astro Uncle, who provides astrologically-based parental advice, are now important guides to life, fate and fortune in today’s India what might this mean for questions of civic responsibility and citizenship in a country significantly shaped by regional, religious and linguistic differences? How does television’s role in India as a kind of privatized electronic shrine enable both a collectivism of sorts and a form of individually tailored neo-spiritualism? What sort of post-secular civility and publicity is enacted through televised spectacles such as Baba Ramdev’s famous mass yoga camps, which are attended by thousands of Indians?

Tania Lewis is an Associate Professor and Vice Chancellor’s Senior Research Fellow in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University. She is the author of Smart Living: Lifestyle Media and Popular Expertise (Peter Lang, New York: 2008), editor of TV Transformations: Revealing the Makeover Show (Routledge, London: 2009), and co-editor of Ethical Consumption: A Critical Introduction (Routledge, 2011). She has published extensively on the area of lifestyle, lifestyle media and ethical consumption and is a chief investigator on two large projects funded by the Australian Research Council, Ethical Consumption: From the Margins to the Mainstream (2013–15) and a comparative study of lifestyle television in Asia. Tania is also a
CI on a project on environmental equity with the Victorian Environment Protection Agency and (with Yolande Strengers) on Inhabiting Buildings: Embedding Sustainability into RMIT Culture, a four-year project that is part of the Victorian Government’s Greener Government Buildings scheme.

Session 7a

6pm Room: Phoenix Gallery (Exhibition)

“Occupy Conversations” – Cameron Bishop Statement supporting exhibition at Phoenix Gallery 25th to 27th of February, 2014

Open space (public and corporate), occupied ultimately by state and corporate forces clashes with my re-imagining of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) as a temporary shelter. It’s a concept ACCA might well support inside its architecture, but outside its shell the concepts art indulges in, its philosophical and material musings, become benign at best and rarely hostile to the neo-liberal conception of space – one which most of us in the western world are a party to whether we like it or not. The global occupy movement, artifacts of which exist in the films inside the Flatpack ACCA, transform public space into a live gallery where performance and real life are conjoined simultaneously in resistance and the spectacle of resistance. In recent work I have explored the idea of the gallery and museum space as a false framework for valuation and Flatpack ACCA and its associated films like Occupy Conversations envisage other, more ethical uses for the space – perhaps as a shelter for the homeless. A quixotic and exaggerated profanation, yes, but validated as the doomsday aesthetic has increasingly become the leitmotif for imaginings of the future. I follow WTJ Mitchell in his assertion that the destiny of the image may well pass back through the animal – for example the bison (the caves of Lascaux) and the kangaroo (at Ubirr Rock in Northern Australia) – as our projected worlds reflect more pressing and present concerns.
DAY 2 – Tuesday 25 February

Session 8

9:00am-10:15am Room: HD 3.009

KEYNOTE: Felicity Collins – LaTrobe University

“Public Intellectuals, Blackfella Films and the Politics of Radical Hope”

Proposing a democratic politics based on a common love of public things currently threatened by neoliberal privatization — from parks and libraries to public broadcasting—Bonnie Honig draws on a range of thinkers, including Arendt and Winnicott to envisage a public realm characterised not by identity and exclusion but by collaboration, relationality, aliveness, authenticity, creativity and resilience. This paper takes up Honig’s proposition that a democratic holding environment enables resilience when it recognises the generative power of public things and allows them to flourish. It asks how public intellectuals (Greer, Langton, Pearson and Sutton) and publicly-funded filmmakers (working under the umbrella of Blackfella Films) have responded with ‘radical hope’ to the failures of this holding environment in the context of the settler-colonial nation.

Associate Professor Felicity Collins works on the politics of subjectivity and spectatorship in the visual culture of modernity. Earlier work looked at nation, gender and genre in Australian cinema. Current project is a comparative study of settler colonial cinemas and anti-colonial ethics. Recent postgraduate completions include doctoral theses on motifs of innocence in the films of Peter Weir, the woman warrior or nuxia in Hong Kong and Malaysian cinema, and the cosmopolitics of magical realism.

Session 9

10:15am – 10:45 am Room: P128

The Spatial Politics of Community

“Dancing Dandenong: The Spatial Politics of Community” - Glenn D’Cruz; Dirk de Bruyn; Shaun Mcleod; Steve McIntryre; Soo Yeun You

This collaborative multi-media performance explores the politics of public space with specific reference to the new civic space in Dandenong. More specifically, it documents and responds to the dispute between the local Indian community and the City of Dandenong (who intend to demolish the ‘little India’ shops to facilitate the new public space). Drawing on various theories about the relationship between community, everyday life and public space (Stevens, Carter, Foucault, Lefebvre) the presentation examines the socio-spatial interventions and effects of a dance improvisation in the areas bordering the new civic space in Dandenong with a particular focus on the transitory social relations facilitated by performance — that is, on those dyadic relationships (self and other, inside and outside, centre and periphery) relevant to human interaction in public space. Combining academic commentary on the politics of public space with video animations, projected documentary footage, and an improvised dance performance, the presentation reveals the politics of everyday movement while exposing tensions between the spaces of public culture — those framed and legitimated by state institutions — and what Michael Warner calls ‘Counter-Publics.’ That is, those oppositional groups who actively seek to use public space in subversive or unauthorized ways.
Session 10
11am-12:30am - Room: HD 2.006

Practicing Publics

10A “‘Fuck off, we’re full’ - The politics of boganism and public relations in contemporary Australia” Kristin Demetrious

What is meant by the term ‘bogan’ and how does its popular usage distinguish a new public occupying a particular class position and social presence in Australian society. Examining a number of media texts, this paper explores the bogan phenomenon and asks if it normatively repositions Marxist ideas of class within the contemporary construct of lifestyle politics and classless capitalism (Beck). Challenging the idea the term is politically benign, the paper argues that the rise ‘boganism’ and its stigmatic associations has implications for public relations. In particular, it argues successful framing techniques designate a group of people occupying social risk positions and that are dis-empowered by eco-discourses and targeted for social control. These marginalised publics lack the sociocultural resources required for participation in the public sphere and as such are malleable and highly receptive to intrinsic and extrinsic forms of public relations.

10B “People ‘are’ rhetoric. Get over it!” – Stephen Mackey

This paper argues that a better understanding of public relations would help us to get an urgently needed better understanding of people. It explains why public relations should be considered the contemporary manifestation of the millennia-old art of rhetoric which in turn should be considered the basis of, at least western culture. This article introduces a thesis that understanding rhetoric properly will lead to the best way of understanding public relations properly. It will critique existing writers about the rhetoric to public relations nexus to suggest that there is a crucial need to more carefully consider the true relevance of massively organised deliberate persuasive discourse. The urgency is because few of these commentators quite capture the extent to which public relations and related activities are creating us. It will explain why we are almost unconscious of this process and it will point out that by contrast ancient sophists and the more accomplished pre-modern rhetoricians have always been aware of this ‘construction of people process’. The approach of this paper is premised on the observation of classicist Werner Jaeger who explains that rhetoric is at the centre of being human. When explaining the use of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic by Greek Enlightenment sophists he writes that: “This educational technique is one of the greatest discoveries which the mind of man has ever made: it was not until it explored these three of its activities that the mind apprehended the hidden law of its own structure.” (Jaeger, 1947:314)

10C “Coming in Like a Wrecking Ball: Power and Responsibility in Celebrity Call Out Culture” – Allison Maplesden

Recent work on contemporary publics has argued that the West is moving towards “recognition culture” (Raisborough 2011) which “draws our own attention to how we present ourselves to others” (Marshall 2013). One of the key ways that the self is produced in this context is through the call to imagine ourselves as needing to take personal “responsibility” and to regard the actions of others through a frame of “responsibilisation” (Raisborough). This paper will argue that, particularly through the spread of social media, celebrities in particular are asked to “take responsibility” for the cultural politics of their work, by being answerable to a networked public. At the other end of this communication
chain, these publics are often guided by highly visible and networked commentators whose personas are heavily invested in an ability to hold celebrities and other public figures to account through the performance of the “call out” (Flavia Dzodan 2011). This paper will explore this dynamic of accountability in terms of both the ways that celebrities are constructed in being positioned as “responsible”, and the way that networked social commentators are constructed in acting as the party holding them to account. Examples will be drawn from criticisms of Miley Cyrus’ VMA performance, as well as from criticism of NZ singer Lorde’s single Royals. These cases will be surveyed in order to examine what kinds of discourses this dynamic will and won’t accommodate, and what is produced in terms of where power is imagined to be held.

10D “Scandal thresholds for sports celebrities as charitable ambassadors”
– Sharyn McDonald

Elite athletes can reach a level of notoriety where media and fans are interested in various aspects of their lives beyond that of their on-field success or failure. By receiving this level of attention, these sporting celebrities attract sponsorships from commercial, fee paying corporates and act as ambassadors for philanthropic, charitable organisations. A win-win outcome can be achieved for all actors; in particular, enhanced visibility can benefit all. In addition, corporates capitalise on the success and profile of the athlete for commercial gain, the athlete gains personal funding and, charitable organisations broaden awareness of their social issue.

This research looks at the ambassador relationship between sport celebrities and charitable organisations. The success and high profile of sport celebrities makes them ideal ambassadors for charitable organisations, who in return, offer another dimension to an athlete’s brand portfolio. Whilst heightened visibility of an issue is desired, the immense stakeholder interest in the life of a successful athlete has a downside if the celebrity transgresses.

Existing literature examines the use of sports celebrities and consumer reactions to celebrity transgressions (Wilson et al., 2008; Zhou & Whitta, 2013) and the media portrayal of sports celebrities (Summers & Morgan, 2008). However, there is limited literature that considers how charitable organisations respond to sport personalities attracting negative publicity. Initial findings suggest that while some organisations sever their association with a scandal, others seize the opportunity. Linked to crisis management literature, the type of scandal, response time and, media used by the accused, are all variables in this analysis.

Session 11

2:15pm-3:30pm - Room: HD 2.006

Art, Public Spaces and Public Spectacle

11A Spectacle and Publics – Virginia Murray

Ava Gardner’s famous line about Melbourne being the right place to film a story about the end of the world was part of the spectacle created by the print media to capitalise on Gardner’s presence in Australia to film, On the Beach in 1959. Gardner’s refusal to appear in public created different responses from the Australian print media the most interesting of which was Melbourne’s The Truth. With the help of a fledgling Australian paparazzi The Truth used Gardner’s non-appearance to create a fictitious image able to be mediated to create extremes of public opinion in order to generate sales. This paper examines The Truth’s response to Gardner in the context of the creation and manipulation of public spectacle.
Stories of the real and the real story – Benjamin Cittadini

This paper will examine the programming of art into public spaces undergoing a process of “urban renewal”. It is often presumed that the role of art in this process is to activate (or validate) these renewed spaces by valorising their (assumed) cultural identity. A common creative outcome within this process is to promote the “real”: images of “real people” with their stories captioned, expediting the unfathomable tides of everyday life for the appearance of reality. These images are only the story of reality, not the real story; they are a projection of the reality they seek to occupy. People and the rhythmic iterations of everyday life produce a story of space - a story written by the small and continual adaptations that individuals make of the dominant realities that precede them; struggling to adjust the world to what one is rather than conforming to the way things appear to be. The poetry of these spaces resides in the phatic exchanges between people and the constantly replenishing palimpsest of their everyday practice. However in the project of urban renewal, art and “cultural capacity building” not only precede the incapacitating of culture by commercial development, but are often used as instruments of their own incapacitation; spectacular vanguards of the inevitable exclusion of the real through the process of gentrification and the implementation of a culture of commodity consumption. This paper will examine creative methods and processes that more closely inhere to the practice of everyday life whilst subverting or antagonising the “renewal” process.

The Microcinema Experience: Film Exhibition as Public Display – Mark Freeman

This paper seeks to identify the influences of the growing microcinema movement. As an exhibition mode that operates in public, communal spaces such as urban rooftops, bars and cafés, the move from very privileged, socially controlled exhibition modes like the picture palace or multiplex welcome and encourage public participation. This is an experience of film-going where the film itself is only one of a number of attractions, with the public interacting with the film along with their location, their peer group and strangers who share the experience. The public nature of the exhibition space facilitates new modes of spectatorship that generate sharing, socially communal experiences. Microcinemas indicate a hardening and securing of proximal, localised bonds between interest communities, who use these exhibition modes as public demonstrations of their allegiance. I will connect the localised microcinema experience with the shifting modes of community under the emergence of the postnational, drawing distinctions between the emphasis on specific location and the microcinema with the development of borderless viewing communities within the online landscape. With specific reference to the Rooftop Cinema in Brooklyn, NY and Cinecult in Northcote, Victoria and the experience of anonymous peer-to-peer communities this paper will identify the move from the exhibition space of the darkened, restrictive conventional cinema, to the less inhibited social integration of film into a public space. Indicative of the shifting concepts of community, the microcinema acts as a point of interactive convergence between film exhibition and specific cinema interest groups, resulting in the transformation of localised public spaces.
“Publics of Speech”
– Andrew Kenyon

This paper considers Michael Warner’s work on mediated publics and analyses of free speech in law. Examining US and European approaches to the role of law in formal democratic states, it is notable that much of the legal literature emphasises free speech as a negative right or bare liberty, as something focused overwhelmingly on what government should refrain from doing. The public that results from this approach is left subject to a host of exclusionary forces, such as those of age, culture, economics, gender, language and more. These have changed but not at all disappeared in contemporary communicative environments. While Warner notes how the creation of any public through speech involves demarcation and exclusion—something which appears central to understanding mediated publics—legal writing can tend to celebrate public speech as being assured by the lack of censorship. It can ignore the exclusions that accompany acts of speech. In doing this, the very cognitive, political and ethical goals said to be served by free speech are undermined. The creation of publics and the role of speech in supporting that process need to be seen as invoking more than the absence of the state. Doing that may offer a way to reframe arguments about the publics, politics and law of speech.

12B Theorizing Surveillance Publics
– Michael Richardson

In May 2013, Edward Snowden leaked to The Guardian details of the National Security Agency electronic surveillance programs known as PRISM, XKeyScore, and Boudnless Informant, as well as details of spying operations on citizens around the world and by the agencies of other governments. But in making public the existence of these program and practices, Snowden did more than prove the breadth and pervasiveness of US intelligence operations. By revealing the extent of such programs, Snowden’s act of making public effectively instantiated a social body defined and constituted by its very monitoring: a surveillance public. This paper examines the formation of particular publics by practices of surveillance, and considers if and how everyday might be altered by them. What are the forces and affects of surveillance? How does surveillance seek to assemble, limit, and control its publics? What does it mean to be a body within a surveillance public? Answering these questions requires breaking with the prevailing surveillance studies conception of “surveillance societies” (Lyon 2007), and instead exploring how surveillance actually produces publics. Drawing on work by Joseph Pugliese (2012) on biometrics and surveilled bodies, as well as affect theory (Massumi 2002) and Deleuzian-inflected conceptions of “surveillant assemblages” (Haggerty & Ericson 2000), this paper theorizes the forces, processes and practices that constitute and perpetuate surveillance publics.
When the private becomes public: Commodity activism, endorsement and making meaning in a privatized world” - P. David Marshall

The divide between the public realm and the private realm is a both a moveable and permeable boundary. One of the reasons for this fluidity as to what constitutes these two realms is driven by different political postures. From a neo-liberal position, the private – be that private industry, the individual self, the engines of the economy – are better able to produce the Benthamite characterization of happiness for the greatest number. In contrast, from a socialist to social democratic position, an expanded public disbursement of commonwealth is seen to produce a more equitable, just and ultimately happy society. Somewhere between these two extremes is a regulated marketplace which more or less describes the organization of most western polities.

This paper investigates a relatively new form of public activism that, in a sense, emerges from a cultural condition of the ascendancy of the privatization of politics and culture. Commodity activism, as it is now called by researchers, begins with a politics of the marketplace and turns it into a normative position or posture related to the public sphere. This kind of politics has emerged from consumer movements that have a long history of turning the private into the domain of the public through boycotts, through forms of usually negative publicity, and through an active engagement at appropriating the key identity of “privatization” which is that of the consumer and repoliticizing it into something akin to a form of active citizen. The paper is a study of this changing of the private into the public and how this process relies on the concept of endorsement – particularly high profile, celebrity figures who have gained their power as individuals in this privatized space and now use that form of power for other purposes - in order to gain attention and circulation in this now privatized public sphere.

“Diverse Publics in Singapore: Aesthetics and consumer identity” - Terry Johal

In Singapore where – as former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong once famously proclaimed – ‘life is not complete without shopping’ a significant proportion of public life is carried out in shopping malls. Zygmunt Bauman has made the point that consumer subjectivity is made out of shopping choices (Bauman, 2007: 14-15). The reaffirmation of identity through shopping choices, however, is also determined by the site of consumption and the qualities and features of the public space in which it is carried out. It is not merely the price and quality of the goods that alerts the consumer to the difference between the chain store and Chanel, but the material surroundings and aesthetics.

This paper will examine ION Orchard – a mall in Orchard Road, Singapore – as a space of diverse publics. Proclaiming itself to be the biggest mall in Singapore and styling itself as the site where art meets commerce, it contains eight levels of shopping space. The crowded subterranean level features noisy hawker stalls, cheap goods and food in a recreation of the traditional Southeast Asian pasar (market) with all its hustle and bustle. In contrast to this are the street level luxury designer stores that are characteristic of a global cosmopolitan public. As consumers ascend through the levels of the mall the use of space and light, the increasingly sedate and genteel atmosphere, and the aesthetic presentation of stores and goods, alerts them to other publics in which identity might be reaffirmed. The material and aesthetic diversity differentiates publics and reassures consumers of their subject positions based on lifestyle, taste, status, class and above all financial means.
Session 13
4:45pm-5:45pm Room: HD 2.006

KEYNOTE: Andrew Tolson, De Montfort University, UK

“Hope springs eternal’: The illusions and disillusions of political celebrity”

This paper investigates the discourse of contemporary political celebrity. It takes as its starting point the extraordinary phenomenon of ‘Cleggmania’, provoked by the performances of Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats, in the televised party leader debates during the 2010 UK general election. Following previous advocates of a ‘cultural turn’ in political communication (and taking issue with some other approaches) it analyses Clegg’s projection of a sympathetic ‘mediated persona’ which both exploited the interactive potential of these debates, and used that to support (authenticate) a rhetoric of novelty, difference and political change. The paper argues that this has become a common feature of political communication, at least in the UK, since the 1990s, and what it produces is a form of political celebrity rooted in a performance of ‘authenticity’ that is inherently unstable. Here ‘hope’ (for political change) may ‘spring eternal’, but disillusion is inevitable when its promises cannot be kept.

Professor Tolson has been Professor of Media and Communication at DeMontfort University. He has a background in English Language and Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham. In the 1970s, when he was a postgraduate student in the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Tolson wrote The Limits of Masculinity, an early contribution to gender studies. In the 1980s, Professor Tolson’s interdisciplinary interests in discourse analysis and media and communication, combined in the study of broadcast talk (spoken discourse on TV and radio). In 1992 Tolson was a founder member of the Ross Priory seminar on broadcast talk, and has continued to work in this field for over twenty years. Professor Tolson’s current projects are mainly focussed on political communication, in particular on the way politics has been performed, analysed, debated and ‘talked about’ on British television since the 1980s. His most recent book is the co-edited volume (with M. Ekstrom) Media Talk and Political Elections in Europe and North America (Palgrave).
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