IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST?

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AND FOURTH ESTATE PHILOSOPHY WITHIN THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS

Heidi Lenffer
Student No. 200223886

DECLARATION
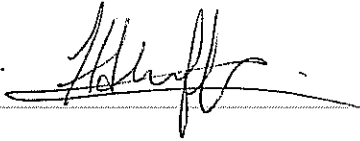
I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief;

i. incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

ii. contain any material previously submitted or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

iii. contain any defamatory material.

Signed.

Date. 21 / 10 / 05

ABSTRACT

The tradition of 'investigative journalism' has come to denote the most lauded qualities of the journalistic profession, and has an impressive history of producing social reform in Australia. However, its grounding in Fourth Estate principles arguably promotes an adversarial, top-down approach to journalism, which has served to position the journalist as a removed 'watchdog' guardian of public interests, rather than as a professional who facilitates the public's expressions of political, social and cultural interest. This thesis uses a case study of the *National Times* newspaper (1971 – 1986) to illustrate the form and effect of a particular manifestation of investigative journalism, and seeks to contextualise the tradition within a historical account of the development of Fourth Estate philosophy within Australia. This thesis aims to contribute to contemporary debates surrounding the role of journalism by situating this research within a broader discussion of the changing nature of relations between the media and the citizenry within the contemporary public sphere.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

It was the September of 1981, and the citizens of New South Wales had just received news of the death of the Honourable Sir Robert Askin, who had been the state Premier from 1965-1975. The longest-serving Premier, second only to Sir Henry Parkes, Askin died on Wednesday the 9th, and his funeral was announced for the following Monday. One day before the state funeral, the *National Times* newspaper went to press with the headline, "Askin: Friend to Organised Crime", in an article that read:

"Sir Robert Askin was an underestimated man. The mark he left on this country was considerable- and has never publicly been discussed. While Sir Robert Askin was in power, organised crime became institutionalised on a large scale in NSW for the first time. Sydney became, and has remained, the crime capital of Australia. Askin was central to this. Information regarding his links with three major crime figures has not been available for the *National Times* to use until Askin's death. Only now that Askin is dead can the recent history of NSW be explored publicly. It is not a time for holding back, despite the distress these revelations may cause Askin's colleagues and family. Such are the laws of defamation in this country, that only a royal commission or parliamentary debate could fully protect public discussion about the Askin years while the man lived" (Hickie 1981 p.1).

The *National Times* existed within a very different era where newspapers dominated the media, television was confined to four channels, and the internet had not yet been conceived. It was one of only two newspapers ventilating national issues for a national audience in a turbulent era that was divided over the maelstrom of Vietnam, and had embraced flower power, the miniskirt, marijuana, and the term 'sexual politics' (Pullan 1986 p.11). Feeding off the scandalous connections between

Sydney's Cabinet ministers and the city's vivid underworld, the *National Times* championed an unforgiving legacy of exposure that arguably came to define one of the high water-marks of investigative journalism (Souter 1991 p.186). This thesis will use the case study of the *National Times* as a lens through which to explore the philosophical framework of the investigative tradition, with specific attention to its ideological roots within the Fourth Estate model of journalism.

As will be further detailed in the literature review, Fourth Estate philosophy conceives of the journalist as the defender of the 'public interest', and is an ideological framework that has given rise to various manifestations of this ideal: namely, 'watchdog' journalism, social responsibility journalism, and investigative journalism (Schultz 1998; Lloyd 2002). It is the contention of this thesis that the *National Times* was representative of the most adversarial formation this Fourth Estate framework. The multi-layered Russian Babushka doll is a useful illustration of the embedded nature of these relations; in which the *National Times* newspaper embodied a particularly aggressive form of reporting that had grown out of the adversarial legacy of the investigative tradition, which was, in turn, situated within the wider framework of Fourth Estate philosophy. The particular manifestation of Fourth Estate ideals within this publication provides a concrete site to examine the strengths and weaknesses of investigative journalism, demonstrating how this approach arguably relies on a set of moral and political judgments and assumptions about what constitutes the 'public interest' (Mencher 1977; Protess, Lomax Cook et al. 1991; Ettema and Glasser 1998; Tapsell and Phillips 2002).

Through a broad survey of historical scholarship on the journalism industry in Australia, this thesis constructs a genealogy of the investigative tradition that reveals how the tenets of the Fourth Estate have been a central ideological influence shaping

the development of the Australian press (Schultz 1998; Lloyd 2002). Fourth Estate philosophy has proved to be malleable within changing social and political contexts; manifesting itself to varying degrees within the full range of publications- colonial newspapers, popular tabloids, and the mainstream media. This thesis traces the transmogrification of Fourth Estate philosophy as it was articulated under differing guises as social responsibility journalism, muck-raking, and 'watchdog' journalism, culminating in the emergence of the impressive investigative journalism amid the social and political upheaval of the 1970s and 1980s (Schultz 1998 p.172). It is the central contention of this thesis that the investigative tradition, as represented by the *National Times* and others within its ilk, defined a particular historical moment within the development of Australian journalism, and portrays an elite model of journalism that is not compatible with pluralistic modes of discourse within the contemporary public sphere (Hartley 1996 p.51). I argue, however, that the investigative tradition has vastly significant cultural and ideological ramifications; seen in the widespread intensification of scrutiny and demands for the accountability of public officials and institutions (Lumby 1999 p.145). This thesis demonstrates that the legacy of scrutiny, as forged by the investigative tradition and derived from Fourth Estate philosophy, is fundamental to contemporary conceptions about the relations between the government and the public (Minchin 2000; Schultz 2002; Bowman and McIlwaine 2004). The currency of these historic ideals among contemporary practitioners, as documented in this thesis, forms the premise of my inquiry into the cultural application of Fourth Estate philosophy within the Australian press (Johnson and Clark 2001; Bowman and McIlwaine 2004; Bacon 2005; Hughes 2005; Masters 2005; Noonan 2005).

Aims:

While much has been written on the tradition of investigative journalism in the United States since the Watergate scandal, there has been little academic research into the manifestation of investigative reporting within Australian publications (Bowman and McIlwaine 2004 p.20). Literature relating to investigative journalism is limited within the categories of generalist historical surveys of the Australian media, reminiscent auto-biographies of media figures, or educational 'how to' books. With this in mind, the intentions of this research project are as follows: Firstly, to extend existing work on investigative journalism and the wider history of Australian journalism by detailing the history of one seminal publication, the *National Times*, and tracing the development of Fourth Estate philosophy within the Australian print media. Secondly, to uncover some of the moral and philosophical assumptions underpinning the notions of 'public interest', and their implications for practice of investigative journalism in contemporary Australia. Finally, to situate this ideological framework within theories about public-media relations in order to assess the viability of the Fourth Estate model within the contemporary public sphere.

Methodology:

This thesis is inter-disciplinary in approach; drawing heavily from primary archival research, ethnographic research, secondary historical studies, as well as cultural studies and media and communications theory. The necessity of this hybrid approach became apparent during initial interviews with various media practitioners associated with the investigative tradition, as each invariably used the *National Times* as a common reference point for investigative journalism. Despite the significance that these prominent journalists attributed to the paper, an extensive

survey of historical and communications literature revealed a startling lack of research into the *National Times*. In order to rectify this imbalance, I spent a number of months trawling through fifteen years of publication on micro-film; gathering a comprehensive historical archive that detailed the nature and content of reporting. The insight of archival research was invaluable for observing the practical application of the Fourth Estate model and its effect upon the rhetoric, the editorial decisions, and the financial management of the paper. A further advantage was the appropriateness of *National Times* circulation period, 1971 – 1986, which arguably encompasses the height of the investigative period (Schultz 1998 p.4). The case study of the *National Times*, as a media text operating within a contained time frame, provided an entry point for a wider analysis of Fourth Estate philosophy, as situated within an extensive literature review (detailed below). There are obviously limitations associated with such defined parameters; this work could be extended by attention to different media formats and sites of investigation during this period, however, a focus on print media was feasible for the scope of this research project. Given the relative absence of historical or cultural research into the subject, it was necessary to conduct a series of interviews with journalists and editors from the *National Times* as well as other leading investigative journalists from the period. This enabled me to ascertain the necessary historical detail and provided access to a crucial personal dimension in which to situate and evaluate the conclusions of my archival research.

This thesis is not intended to be a definitive history of the Australian print media, which would be neither tenable nor necessary for my research purposes, rather this research illustrates the ideological foundations and socio-political context of investigative journalism as a particular manifestation of the Fourth Estate model.

Literature review:

Broadly speaking, the theoretical framework for this thesis is established by an extensive review of media theory and philosophy relating to the history and purpose of journalism. Philosopher Michel Foucault's concept of 'genealogy' provides the basis for a theoretical approach that interrogates assumed notions- such as pre-given fields, knowledge groupings, and discourses- in order to show that these terms of definition are constructed according to naturalised rules and assumptions which deserve scrutiny (Foucault 1972 p.2). The concept of genealogy can be critically applied to the matters of 'public interest' and 'investigation' to uncover their semantic development through changing assumptions about the role of the media within the Australian cultural context.

One of the key areas of scholarship that informs this thesis relates to theories surrounding the 'public sphere'; its historical formation, constitution and subsequent development into the contemporary form. The work of philosopher Jurgen Habermas is crucial in establishing the centrality of public literacy and un-regulated channels of discourse, to the cultivation of a democratic domain of interaction (Habermas 1962 p.14). The positioning of the media as a facilitator of democracy provides a wide berth for discussion about the relational dynamics between the media and the public in terms of their respective roles and capacity to create public discourse. This thesis draws heavily from post-modern and cultural theory to argue that contrary to widespread conceptions of the public as powerless consumers (Habermas 1962; Marx and Engels 1970; Baudrillard 1983; Chomsky and Herman 1988; De Maria 1999) individuals are active agents in the creation and reception of meaning. The scholarship of John Hartley (1992, 1996, and 2000) and Catharine Lumby (1999) in

particular, grounds my conception of the contemporary public sphere as a site of vigorous semantic negotiation between the public and the media. The role of the media within the public sphere has been problematised by contemporary criticisms from both media theorists and practitioners who postulate the demise of citizenship and democracy in the face of growing public disillusionment with the media (Ellul 1973; De Maria 1999; Rosen 1999; Masters 2001).

This concern for the perceived demise of the journalistic profession is reflected within the limited body of academic literature devoted to investigative journalism- most of which have been produced in the last seven years (Schultz 1998; Minchin 2000; Johnson and Clark 2001; Masters 2001; Haxton 2002; Knight 2002; Lloyd 2002; Tanner 2002; Bowman and McIlwaine 2004; Pilger 2004). The reasons behind this trend, which are attributed to various commercial and structural pressures, are not within the realm of my inquiry (Schultz 1999; Rutherford 2000; Haxton 2002; Tanner 2002; Waterford 2002). Of greater interest, rather, are the implicit assumptions within such criticisms about the professional mandate of journalists; their relationship to the arms of government, their obligations to the public, and their function in society.

The work of media theorist Julianne Schultz (1998, 1999, 2002) on the Fourth Estate points to the contemporary currency of notions that view the media as a watchdog, arguing that this informs current views about the media's perceived inadequacies (Schultz 1998; Schultz 1999). Contemporary criticism of the media argues that the defence of 'public interest' has been divorced from its ideological origins, and is misused as a blanket justification for trade practices, rather than the championing the causes of the public (Randall 1996; Iggers 1998; Schultz 1998; Hartley 2000; Pilger 2004). These concerns have seen the emergence of an

alternative model of reporting called 'public journalism', which envisions a two-way relationship between information provider and audience in an effort to better meet the needs of communities (Rosen 1999 p.295). The contentions of public journalism provide access into further inquiries into the transformation of public-media relations due to the proliferation of online media formats which facilitate non-traditional avenues of dialogue via horizontal, peer-to-peer information flows.

Chapter Review:

This research project is divided into three areas of inquiry:

Chapter one spreads the theoretical foundations and boundaries of this thesis through the interrogation of key concepts in journalism such as the 'public sphere', 'Fourth Estate', and 'public interest'. It examines the formation and development of the public sphere alongside theories about the agency and productive capacity of media consumers, in order to establish a relationship between the public's perceived rights and the ethical and professional obligations of journalists. This chapter notes the contrasting conceptions of the nature of public-media relations within Fourth Estate philosophy and theory about the contemporary public sphere; a discrepancy which forms the central departure point for my investigations in this thesis.

Chapter two establishes the historical precedence of the investigative tradition within the Australian media; situating its emergence within a specific cultural era. Pivotal to this task is the discussion of expressions of Fourth Estate philosophy within the development of Australian journalism, in relation to the specific legacies of editorial independence and institutional scrutiny. The primary research material for this chapter will be historical studies looking at the development of the Australian

media as well as general histories about the cultural, social and political development of Australian society.

Chapter three is devoted to a case study of the *National Times*, in which the critical questions raised in the first chapter are used to examine the practical manifestation of Fourth Estate ideals. This chapter utilises extensive archival and ethnographic research to derive the philosophical framework upon which the paper justified its stance against corruption and its claims to servicing the public's needs. The case study allows me to unpack the major themes of my research: the cultural specificity of notions of investigation, the centrality of moral judgments within Fourth Estate philosophy, the influence of media-fuelled scandals, the rise of public scrutiny of those in power, and the inherent notion of public service within the investigative model.

This thesis is situated at the intersection of media theory, archival evidence, and the testimony of insiders, to critically observe the fate of contemporary investigative journalism in Australia.

"...but in the Reporter's Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate, more important than they all." – Edmund Burke, quoted by Thomas Carlyle (Carlyle 1841; McColl 2001 , p.25).

CHAPTER ONE

The public sphere, the Fourth Estate and investigative journalism

The development of the first western-democratic public readership in 18th century England, emerged parallel to a new infrastructure for social communication provided by the press, publishing houses, and libraries, together with an urban culture within theatres, coffeehouses and salons (Habermas 1962; Underwood 2003; Coldiron 2004). The increased social intercourse via expanding communication webs was later theorised by neo-Marxist philosopher Jurgen Habermas in the concept of the 'bourgeois public sphere' which, he argued, was a realm of communal interaction that mediated between society and state and in which "the public organised itself as the bearer of opinion" (Habermas 1962 p.18). Various Renaissance scholars have since argued that energised discourse and commercial printing existed as early as the 1530s (Norbrook 1994; Halasz 1997), however, the history of English censorship gives evidence that the Church and the courts constrained the democratic potential of these interactions within the traditional modes of "deference, secrecy, and privilege" (Patterson 1984; Clegg 1997; Zaret 2000; Loewenstein 2002 p.22). It is clear that Habermas' notion of the public sphere was not concerned with insular aristocratic discussion among the elite political classes, but rather, a fundamental shift in the conditions of public discourse in the 18th century facilitated by the arrival of printing presses to England. The standard

translation of Habermas' conception of 'burgerliche offentlichkeit' to mean the 'public

sphere', fails to convey its literal roots in the verb 'offnen'- meaning 'to open'- in which

'offentlichkeit' denotes a state of availability to scrutiny and intervention (Coldiron 2004

p.28). The central feature of the public sphere, according to Habermas, was the

"opening" of society via a transformed literary system, to a new means of producing,

disseminating and mediating relations independent of the "sites and practices associated

with and sanctioned by the Church and Crown" (Halasz 1997 p.17).

The growth of culture industries and social welfare, and the evolution of large

private interests during the latter-19th century saw radical changes to the public sphere,

as state, industrial conglomerates and the media underwent a process of fusion, and large

newspapers became devoted to commercial interests (Lloyd 2002; Schultz 2002). The

establishment of the industrial capitalist state, according to Habermas, effected the

"deformation" of the public sphere, as the media were transformed from neutral

providers of information and argument, into "manipulative publicity" that "managed

views" and "fostered political theatre" (Habermas 1962 p.31). Habermas advocates a

classically modernist argument about the media as the "gate through which privileged

private interests invaded the public sphere" (Habermas 1962 p.53). This view draws

heavily from the Marxian base-superstructure theory, which proposes an opposition

between superstructure (media, culture, state, family, religion, law) and the economic

base (production and distribution), where the media is necessarily embedded within the

commercial interests of existing economic and political elites (economic base) and is

therefore subject to the manipulations of the dominant social class (Marx and Engels

1970).

13

Sociologist Jean Baudrillard's *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities* (1978), advances a similar argument- albeit from a radically different theoretical position to Habermas- about the failure of the public to engage in rational-critical debate, which he terms the "silent passivities of the masses" (Baudrillard 1983 p.33). Whereas Habermas reflects Marx's notion that the public is somewhat duped by a "false consciousness" of media manipulation, Baudrillard calls this the "naïve logic of mass communication" and argues instead that "the masses" know that all ideologies are "false" and yet choose to consume these media spectacles endlessly as a deliberate act of subversion (Baudrillard 1983 p.29). In the reality of an entertainment age, which other theorists have observed to be characteristically "infantile...empty, nasty, anti–intellectual" (McQuail 1983 p.98) and marked by "incoherence and triviality" (Postman 1985 p.64), Baudrillard argues that all meaning is dispersed and rendered valueless not because the public resists bourgeois ideology but because every message is absorbed indiscriminately (Baudrillard 1983; Underwood 2003). The public understands that the contemporary social system relies on "demand for meaning", and can therefore be abolished by forcing it into an excessive hyper-logic- "you want us to consume, OK, let's consume always more, and anything whatsoever, for any useless and absurd purpose"- which, according to Baudrillard, is equivalent to a "brutal amortisation" (Baudrillard 1983 p.46). The masses are "neither misled nor mystified", and rather than being enveloped by the media they refuse to participate in recommended ideals, thus marking the end of politics as the product of will and representation. Although Baudrillard would portray the masses as "the most radical...contemporary form of the denial of the whole representational system" (Baudrillard 1983 p.52), this is merely agency in the negative sense (resistance) when really their only freedom is to consume. Common to these two visions of the public-

14

brain-washed consumers versus undiscerning semiotic junkies- is their positioning as reactive consumers rather than active producers.

Philosopher Jacques Ellul frames this theory within the greater democratic project, arguing that in a system that compels individuals to participate in political affairs, it is necessary for the media to "shape the individual to suit the needs of social mechanisms" (Ellul 1973 p.61). What Ellul terms the "propaganda of integration", media theorist Noam Chomsky terms "manufacturing consent", to describe how embedded corporate and political interests fix the premises of media discourse and "inculcate" individuals with the codes of behavior that create the illusion of public choice and agency (Chomsky and Herman 1988; Rutherford 2000 p.4). The media's role then, according to Chomsky, is in generating the systematic propaganda that reinforces the perception of public autonomy[i]. This argument is furthered in the 'demos myth' (demos, from the Greek, meaning 'people'), in which some media theorists believe that democracy's promise of real-life choice and personal autonomy is false, as the structural reality of this system necessitates that an executive power rules on behalf of the people (De Maria 1999 p.15). Derived from Kantian philosophy, this theory regards democracy as intrinsically despotic by nature of the fact that "all the citizens may make decisions about (and indeed against) the single individual without his consent...so that the general will is in contradiction with itself thus also with freedom" (Kant 1795 p.76). The dichotomy of idealism versus reality, according to media theorist William De Maria, is most evident in the tradition of whistle blowing, where individuals jeopardise their jobs and reputation to report wrongdoing which they view as a social aberration. This action relies on a certain faith in the existing mechanisms of redress, and an uncharacteristic conviction to interfere on behalf of the public good when, as De Maria argues, in all

15

other respects individuals relate to each other as "anonymous, regulated, efficient producer-consumers" (De Maria 1999 p.15). The re-conception of the individual as consumer rather than citizen echoes the Marxian theory of false consciousness and leaves the individual powerless to enact change; the suppression compounded by the public's collective delusion about their own autonomy.

Poststructuralist cultural and media theorists provide an alternate conception of the contemporary democratic public sphere as a forum that facilitates a more egalitarian relational dynamic between individuals and the media. In *Politics of Pictures* (1992), media theorist John Hartley shifts the emphasis away from the structures of governance, to position the media as both the facilitator and central means for the existence of the contemporary public sphere, wherein the media and individuals are not merely co-constituents, but co-producers of meaning. Hartley reminds us that the 'public', as a vast and abstract group of citizenry, does not exist in any material form, and nor is the 'public sphere' a literal place to be entered, therefore, he argues that the 'reality' of public life is a socio-discursive construction in which tangible images and texts operate in discourse with individuals to create an image of the 'public' (Hartley 1992 p.16). As media consumers, our impression of the reality outside our limited immediate experience is confined within mediated parameters (Ekstrom 2002 p.29); therefore the root function of journalism, according to Hartley's *Popular Reality* (1996), is the business of "sense-making". The journalist uses words or images to invent a plausible depiction of the 'real', through constant and vigilant references to actuality, and the public reads this visualisation of reality, as part of a "social, communal, productive process" (Hartley 1996 p.51). Hartley argues that the heart of media "sense-making" is the co-production of meaning between an addresser (which may be a person, text or

16

institution) and an addressee (person, readership, or public); a process which he claims is "fundamental to (and may even be) popular culture" (Hartley 1996, p.52).

If, as Hartley argues, the media functions as the sole facilitator of relations between individuals at a collective (although physically illusionary) 'public' level, and if it is this dialogic process of relating and producing meaning that actually constitutes the contemporary public sphere, then it should be expected that the productive capacity of individuals expand relative to the strength of the media. This development has been noted by several cultural and media theorists, who argue that the increasingly central role of the media in the contemporary public sphere has been accompanied by an overwhelming democratisation and diversification of our media (Thompson 1990; Hartley 1996; Lumby 1999). Contrary to the Orwellian imaginings of an all-pervasive media that surreptitiously aligns public opinion with the interests of the executive rulers, media theorist Catharine Lumby argues that the media have re-fashioned the public sphere over the past few decades into a "highly diverse and inclusive forum" characterised by the discussion of previously marginalised socio-political issues (Lumby 1999 p.xiii). As the media has expanded to a height of influence in public affairs, politicians have harnessed the campaigning power of the industry to the point that, as Lumby argues, the political arena is comprehensively embedded within the media sphere (Lumby 1999 p.154).

Some theorists argue that this integration has resulted in the media's assumption of punitive capabilities in the disclosure and awareness of social problems. Journalist and commentator Evan Whitton positions the media as crucial to the process of reform, in particular in the acquisition of data concerning dubious activity, and the ventilation of this data. Parliament, Whitton acknowledges, should be the proper forum for this

17

ventilation, due to its privilege of protection from defamation laws as the direct representative of the community, however, parliament has practical limitations, such as infrequent sessions, and a slow turn around for answering questions (Whitton 1986 p.7). Due to the immediacy and pervasiveness of media channels, the media have the resources and capacity to dominate the public agenda in a way that more conventional political resources could not accomplish. In the words of media theorist Rodney Tiffen:

"Full-blown scandals set in train an open-ended, unpredictable process that envelops issues and developments not foreseen at the outset, a political roller coaster the direction and speed of which are beyond any individual's control...and whose immediate resolution becomes the paramount political issues" (Tiffen 1999, p.4).

By default then, the ventilation of issues has been left to an extent to the media, and history demonstrates that persistence by various elements of the Australian media was often the critical factor in the establishment of formal avenues of justice, such as royal commissions, committees of inquiry, and regulatory agencies (Whitton 1986; Haxton 2002).

While the politicisation of the media-centric public sphere might provoke concern over the potential enhancement of political agenda-building capabilities, it also limits the extent to which politicians can control the conditions of reception of messages and the ways in which these messages are interpreted by recipients. Sociologist John Thompson explains that the development of mass communication has:

"...not only created new stages for the carefully managed presentation of leaders and their

18

views; it has also given these leaders a new visibility and vulnerability before audiences which are more extensive and endowed with information and more power (however intermittently expressed) than ever before." (Thompson 1990 p.72)

Thompson's notion of endowing the public with information and power is at the crux of theoretical debates surrounding the social function of journalism. Since the inception of the trade in the 19th century, journalists have made specific claims regarding their duty towards their readership and their position towards the executive powers of the state. Although ideas about what constitutes journalism have changed over time, academic research as well as the testimony of media practitioners point to the Fourth Estate[ii] model as a central reference point for many in the profession.

The earliest usage of the term 'Fourth Estate' can be traced to historian Thomas Carlyle, who attributed the term to Edmund Burke, and defined the journalist's duty in 1852 to "present to his readers not such things as statecraft would wish them to know, but the truth as near as he can attain it" (Carlyle 1841 p.35). This is an explicitly adversarial model of interaction, as it automatically places the 'truth' at odds with what is presented on the official record, and positions the media between the state and the reader as the pro-active arbitrator of truth. At the time of Burke's conception of the Fourth Estate, there was no cultural notion of 'the media' as the multi-faceted, all-pervasive communications machine that reports on and facilitates contemporary western-democratic societies. Rather, the Fourth Estate that Burke and Carlyle described was encompassed solely by the reporter's gallery in the British House of Commons, and this dictum was a reaction to the newly-found power of newspaper reporting- the "man of letters"- in the 19th century (Underwood 2003). The possibilities excited by this new

19

position are documented in Carlyle's writings, where he projects the reporter as a new and powerful branch of government and goes so far as to equate the practice of writing, with democracy, by virtue of its capacity to engage the wider community.

"Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority. It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures: the requisite thing is that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite." (Carlyle 1841 p.350)

Since this time, the Fourth Estate has proved extremely malleable to changing political and economic circumstances over the course of two centuries; expanding and contracting in definition, translating from independent papers to the tabloids to the popular mainstream, and being regarded at various times with respect, condescension, indifference, and enthusiasm. The model has developed over the years to incorporate elements of social responsibility, the drama of exposure and scandal, and the public service of disclosing the abuse of power. During the late-1960s the term 'investigative journalism' came to embody the most impressive qualities of the Fourth Estate principles; "penetrating secrecy in the name of the public's right to know, representing the public interests against the sectional interests and the abuses of officialdom, and ameliorating social ills through the cleansing power of public exposure" (Tiffen 1999 p.207).

The frequently-cited definition of investigative journalism by the American organisation, Investigative Reporters and Editors, states: "It is the reporting, through one's own work product and initiative, of matters of importance which some persons or

organisations wish to keep secret. The three basic elements are that the investigation be the work of the reporter, not a report of an investigation made by someone else; that the subject of the story involves something of reasonable importance to the reader or viewer; and that others are attempting to hide these matters from the public" (IRE 1983 p.vii-viii). Central to this definition is the disclosure of perceived misdemeanor of secrecy and evasion; in the words of *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Gerard Ryle, "the best stories are ones that someone, somewhere, doesn't want told" (Ryle 2005). The reporter's task involves finding undisclosed information relating to government activities or government knowledge, and making a judgment about whether such information might have enough impact, direct or indirect, upon members of the public, to be deemed "of reasonable importance" to report. Journalist Wendy Bacon relates the criteria for deciding whether a potential story is worth investigating; whether it has "some impact on some group of people out there, and a broader impact in terms of what it can tell us about the society, and therefore, a sense that people need to know about this" (Bacon 2005). Journalists Brian Toohey and Marian Wilkinson outline the potential public value of disclosure in *Book of Leaks: Exposés in Defence of the Public Right to Know*, which was released as a collection of investigative articles based upon leaked documents regarding suppressed government activities. The foreword states:

"...this information provides members of the public with a better appreciation of the underlying attitudes, motivations, and activities of politicians and government officials who supposedly act on their behalf. Accountability is enhanced by the transfer of this information from covert agendas to the public domain where it belongs. The resulting opportunity for public scrutiny also increases the chances of some of the ineptitude, moral callousness, and abuses of power here to

21

be avoided in future" (Toohey and Wilkinson 1987 foreword).

According to this analysis, the benefits of investigative journalism are threefold: to inform, to keep the powerful accountable, and to ensure against future abuses of power. Primarily, investigative work informs the electorate of the full scope of activities enacted by the government on their behalf- namely those activities that are deliberately hidden from the public for whatever reasons. However, this information is not merely for the purpose of filling gaps in the public knowledge of government activities, rather, it forces individuals to revise their perception of their representatives, and deduce more accurate appraisals of the motivations underlying the secrecy. It provides the facts and detail that will enable people to make practical judgments about the integrity and capability of their governing bodies. From this point of ever-increasing transparency, the logical outcome would be greater government accountability, thereby reducing the possibility of further official misdemeanours.

Some media theorists hold that the Fourth Estate model, according to which the press acts as a watchdog in a democracy, is inherently negative in that it is motivated by a suspicion of wrong-doing which "distorts the truth as often as it accurately informs" (Randall 1996 p.42). Media theorists Stuart Hall and Robert Johnson challenge the premise that truth is best revealed through an adversarial mode of engagement, arguing that the Fourth Estate ideals over-simplify complex stories into the binary "for and against" scenario and disadvantage alternative views by portraying them as the "other side" (Hall 1978; Johnson and Clark 2001 p.11). However, *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Gerard Noonan argues that a degree of cynicism is the fundamental impulse of any competent journalist. "When you hear an announcement by the government, you

think- well what is behind that? It's this quality of disbelief that I treasure as a journalist- we've had enough experience in life, and in the way governments operate, to know that they'll seek to colour and shape the image of what they do, different to the reality behind it" (Noonan 2005). This does not mean, according to Bacon, that investigative journalists are politically dissident as a rule, but that they have a necessarily critical approach to government and its impact to people's lives. Rather than advocating a 'guilty until proven innocent' approach, journalists advocate a degree of scepticism; in the words of *Sunday* television journalist Ross Coulthart, "I'd rather give public institutions a hard time, sometimes a bit unfairly, but it's better to err this way because it has healthier outcomes" (Coulthart 2005).

The goal of finding and disclosing hidden information is the most concrete objective of the investigative agenda; however it is the extrapolations of motive and purpose that provoke a deluge of interpretations. The most widespread, and yet abstract justification for investigative reporting, is the desire to serve the 'public interest'. Theoretically, the notion of a singular common good, or 'interest' that can be quantified and satisfied, is a fiction as unfeasible as the notion of a cohesive and representational group of individuals called the public. In reality there is a multitude of sectional interests that could constitute multiple publics, whose opinions and needs do not necessarily overlap, and which make for a plethora of 'interests' (Tanner 2002 p.xxi). The defense of 'public interest' is often used fancifully, or, in the words of theorist John Wilson, "asserted more than argued", and in practice, journalists and media organisations have been known to interpret the public interest to mean 'of interest to the public', in justification of borderline publications (Wilson 1996 p.14). However, the ideal of servicing a greater social good has also inspired the noblest intentions within the

23

profession. Closely related to the abstraction of 'public interest' is the 'public's right to know', which is a defensive notion that addresses the violation of official relations of trust between the government and the public. While the public may not be naïve to the probability of clandestine government activity, journalists frequently defer to the unstated, but de facto moral framework under which secrecy is considered a moral aberration, in order to gain legitimacy for their investigations.

The very nature of an enterprise where one party (journalists) is forced to make judgments about what another party (the public) should be informed about, necessarily involves a moral stance. Although journalists typically attempt to dissociate the profession from moral agendas, investigative journalists inevitably apply ethical standards during the process of locating, selecting, and interpreting information, in order to assess the performance of officials and institutions. Media theorists James Ettema and Theodore Glasser argue that the social role of investigation is inherently conservative- in the most fundamental sense of the term- as its practitioners are committed to the conservation of conventional interpretations of right and wrong.

"An investigative story . . . is always a call for the community to affirm that certain conduct is in fact a transgression of the moral order or to affirm through indifference or hostility that the conduct under scrutiny once might have been a transgression but that it no longer is" (Ettema and Glasser 1998 p.82).

Through the observance of a socially agreed moral code, journalists can invoke the rhetoric of 'public rights' in support of their investigations, thus serving to sustain and advance the ethical consensus of society's moral fabric. Various media theorists

have portrayed journalists as "moral gatekeepers" whose duty it is to assume the role of "custodians of the public conscience" and engage the public's sense of right and wrong as part of their "commitment to a just society" (Mencher 1977; Toohey and Wilkinson 1987; Ettema and Glasser 1998; Hartley 2000; Knight 2002; Tapsell and Phillips 2002; Masters 2005). Coulthart reflects this obligation to stimulate social awareness; "it's not rocket science to think of what issues will interest the punters, but you can't avoid the sense of responsibility to deliver stories that the public needs to hear, whether or not they want to" (Couthart 2005). *Four Corners* journalist Chris Masters argues that the exposure of unsavoury elements in communities contributes to the holistic sense of belonging to a society: "In every family we don't want to be just told when our kids have done well in their exams. Even though we mightn't find the prospect of finding out the bad news appealing, of course we need to know" (Masters 2005).

The research findings from a host of media theorists, as well as the testimonies of several media practitioners demonstrate that the vast majority of Australian journalists are eager custodians of Fourth Estate principles (Bacon 2005; Bowman and McIlwaine 2004; Coulthart 2005; Hartley 2000; Hughes 2005; Masters 2005; Noonan 2005; Rosen 1999; Ryle 2005; Schultz 1998; Toohey 2005; Whitton 1986; Wilkinson 1987). Many journalists rationalise their work with reference to these ideals, and the rhetoric is embedded within official industry organisations, for example, the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, which states that: "the practice of disclosure and sceptical questioning by journalists helps us keep our rulers in check and our own complacencies unsettled" (cited in Minchin 2000, p.82).

While Australian journalists theoretically uphold Fourth Estate principles, the research also demonstrates that practitioners lament the impracticality of attaining these

ideals in the face of commercial realities (Schultz 1998 p.12). In addition to this, media theorists note a growing public disillusionment and scepticism about the value of the profession and the accountability of journalists themselves, despite the fact that audiences are consuming media output in larger numbers than ever before (Group 1991; Masters 2001; Haxton 2002; Knight 2002; Coulthart 2005). Coulthart notes the growing discreditation of the profession: "The new vogue is for every viewer to be deeply cynical about journalists....they've all read their Chomsky and they all perceive- falsely- that most investigative journalism is biased and corporate influenced" (Coulthart 2005). Research into American audiences and readerships, reveals a similar trend towards widespread dissatisfaction with news coverage, as seen in a Harwood Group study, *Citizens and Politics: A View from Main Street America*, which demonstrates that factors such as the sensationalism, the concentration on sound bites, and the focus on personalities in politics, led people to feel that the newsmakers' agenda was not their own (Group 1999 p.24).

In an ironic development, it seems the media has undermined its own credibility by increasingly normalising the critique of our most powerful public institutions. By the end of the 20th century, each of our most trusted estates- the judiciary, the police force, the Church, and our education and health systems- have been called into question by major scandals. While the exposure of corruption within public authority prompts necessary reforms, the auxiliary effect is a growing and often indiscriminate scepticism, bordering on public anxiety, about power and how it is wielded by people in positions of trust (Lumby 1999 p.145). Some media commentators have suggested that this has resulted in alternate channels for direct public participation in the media, particularly through television talk shows, in which web-based message forums devoted to shows

26

such as Jerry Springer promote productive and open public discussion about a range of issues (Underwood 2003).

The growing fissure between the public and the media has provoked theories about the correlation between public confidence in the media, and the effectiveness and standards of journalistic practice (Knight 2000; Beckerman 2003). Masters laments that the break-down of communications between the media and the public has resulted in a misaligned understanding of how to cooperate in mutual interest (Masters 2001 p.204). "Part of the disrespect that you feel in the media, is I think born of the defence that the public are somehow let down to some degree by journalism, because we take their stories and we don't add value to them, we sort of rob them" (Masters 2005). Masters argues that the traditional route of investigative, disclosure and advocacy journalism can only be legitimated when it has the confidence of the public. Without this affirmation, journalists relinquish their right to a place in the vanguard of social change as it inhibits the capacity of journalists to make any claims to custodianship of the Fourth Estate. It is inevitable that without the encouragement to practice risky journalism, the quality of journalism is adversely affected, meaning that ultimately "the audience loses as well" (Masters 2001 p.2).

Media commentators increasingly acknowledge that journalists are fundamentally out of touch with the public, and that the root of public disillusionment with the media is primarily due to the media's ineptitude for incorporating the community into the political process (Fallows 1997; Iggers 1998; Rosen 1999; Schultz 1999; Hartley 2000). Rather than discerning the salient public issues, journalists are gradually widening a gap between the community and the news room by asking questions that only their professional colleague's care to know the answer to (Fallows

1997 p.37). Hartley claims that the repetition of opinions emanating from the national political apparatus cannot meet the needs of a range of communities, particularly the local community, and argues that the future of journalism relies on journalists to conduct focused and directed inquiry on issues they judge as in the public interest (Hartley 2000 p.44). The journalist, he argues, is primarily a servant to the public, and his/her duty is to be in-tune with the community in order to effectively judge which issues are in the public interest to report. Similarly, media theorist Julianne Schultz argues for a broadened understanding of 'investigative journalism' that goes beyond the concept of exposing wrongdoing to encompass stories that uncover more ordinary matters of public interest, matters that need public attention and discussion, and matters that arise out of ongoing public events (Schultz 1992 p.29). She urges a cultural change in journalism that places investigation in a context where it is considered not just the province of big news organisations or intrepid specialists, but part of the day-to-day work of all journalists.

The movement towards a community-grounded journalism is encompassed within theoretical developments in the United States in what is known as 'public journalism', which is a new model of practice that aims to cultivate powerful alliances between the media and its communities of influence. Public journalism is premised by a belief in the necessity of strong networks between the media and the public and encourages reporters to rejuvenate their professional persona with a renewed sense of membership to a community. A key advocate of public journalism, media theorist Jay Rosen, argues that this theory emerged out of the short-comings of the investigative watchdog model, which, by defining public service through relentless conflict, "failed to help the citizens cope with the public dimension of their lives" (Rosen 1999, p.56).

28

Building upon Schultz's wider conception of investigative journalism, Rosen argues that public journalism permits the re-imagining of the trade as a participative co-production that "convenes civic activity and sponsors public debate" (Rosen 1999, p.295). Public journalism represents the most appropriate model of journalistic practice in an era where technology facilitates unprecedented levels of communal interaction to the point that, as Baudrillard observed, the media and the public have "become a single process" (Baudrillard 1983 p.44). The prospects for this model with relation to the future of the investigative tradition will be further explored in the conclusion of this thesis.

---

[i] For more on how the media manages public opinion, see Paul Rutherford, Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2000.
[ii] The term refers to the pre-existing estates of governance- namely the executive, the parliament, and the judiciary- to suggest that the news media has the appropriate governing properties to constitute a fourth.

"Australians have every right to know the hidden factors which prompt their governments to act, supposedly on their behalf and in their interests." – Brian Toohey and Marian Wilkinson (Toohey and Wilkinson 1987, foreword)

CHAPTER TWO

Fourth Estate philosophy and the investigative tradition in Australia

The metaphor of 'watchdog journalism', although popularly synonymous with investigative reporting, is not particularly apt, as it is a passive concept connoting sedate disclosure rather than pro-active and tenacious pursuit[i]. This depiction of the media as a watchful guardian captures only one of three elements within Fourth Estate philosophy which comprises, as delineated by media theorist Clem Lloyd, watchdog journalism, social responsibility journalism, and investigative journalism. According to Lloyd, each of these traditions are distinct, but mutually-embedded manifestations of Fourth Estate philosophy that have been reflected at different times in the Australian print media according to their viability within changing social contexts (Lloyd 2002 p.24). The late-1970s and 1980s have come to be widely regarded as encompassing the most vigorous expression of Fourth Estate philosophy within Australian media history, due to the media's development of an adversarial position towards government and public institutions (Coombs 1996; Schultz 1998; McKnight 1999; Minchin 2000; McColl 2001). This era produced some of the best-known outlets for investigative journalism such as the ABC's *Four Corners*, *The Age's* Insight Unit, and Fairfax's *National Times*, whose probing investigations spawned a series of royal commissions, effected the resignation or dismissal of several ministers of the crown, and established the issue of bureaucratic corruption in the public mind as never before. The impressive legacy of the 1980s, however, was not a self-

contained phenomenon, but was forged out of more than a century of ideological development through various forms of muck-raking, watchdog reporting and socially responsible journalism that took root within Australia's independent and tabloid press. Fourth Estate philosophy has traversed the entirety of Australia's print-media history with various degrees of articulation; eliciting public awareness, inciting outrage, and mobilising colonial and contemporary newspapers alike to redress perceived injustices and hold the powerful to account.

Since the emergence of a private press in the mid-1820s, the non-government media manoeuvred to wrest control from the colonial governors, in an autocratic era when newspapers were viewed primarily as a means of distributing executive announcements. The press was unlicensed, uncensored, and distributed post-free, however it was subject to libel laws, which had resulted in the protracted disputes between publishers and colonial administrators, as well as the jailing of two non-compliant editors (Bonwick 1890; Mayer 1964; Walker 1976; Henningham 1993; Schultz 2002). Edward Smith Hall was one such renegade journalist and editor of the Sydney *Monitor*, whose defiant exposures of corrupt officials, and persistent campaigns for the rights of convicts and freed prisoners, earned him multiple convictions for criminal libel (Pilger 2004 p.xvi). His legacy was bolstered by the fallout from the Sudds/Thompson case of 1826, where two soldiers were incarcerated in spiked iron rings for grave misconduct, resulting in the death of Sudds (Clarke 1871 p.10). The illegal actions of the Governor Ralph Darling provoked a furore within the independent print media, with non-government newspapers such as the *Australian*[ii] (1824-48), and the *Morning Chronicle* campaigning for a full investigation. The fierce denunciation of the Governor's actions by such "rascally newspapers" (Clarke 1871, p.2) provoked retaliation from the Tory newspapers; securing the Governor's

resignation five years later, and inciting public outrage to the point that tradesmen "put up their shutters as though in mourning for some national calamity" (Clarke 1871 p.8; Walker 1976). The newspapers were assuming the beginnings of a watchdog function, by attracting and sustaining public awareness, provoking an inquiry and intimidating the government. The strong dynamic between the public and the media against the governing body, established a precedent for morally-driven, crusading journalism within the non-government press at this time (Walker 1976 p.74).

The media's emerging role was further defined with an edge of social consciousness by the work of economics philosopher William Jevons, who wrote a series of provocative articles attacking the public consequence of wealth and poverty in the mid-19th century. His vivid portrayals of the destitution of a Sydney slum, The Rocks, were published widely, and his writing initiated a long tradition of drawing attention to social failure and blighted communities (Inoue 2002). This process of sparking reform by generating community shame was a formula that was developed further in the 20th century in the emergence of muckraking journalism, which was a tradition that mingled social accountability with sensationalism (Lloyd 2002 p.5).

Smith Hall's legacy of objective critique inspired the growth of an independent and vigorous press; by 1861 there were 51 independent newspapers operating in New South Wales alone, and by 1920 the Sydney newspaper scene was bustling with four morning, two afternoon and four Sunday papers producing a "medley of competing voices" (Pullan 1986 p.14; Isaacs and Kirkpatrick 2003). However, these developments in press autonomy ran parallel to a core group of mainstream newspapers strongly committed to the establishment. Leading this pack was the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which was nick-named "granny" by the Legislative Council in the mid-19th century due to its allegiance to an unquestioned conservative bias about what was "right and proper" (Isaacs and Kirkpatrick 2003 p.28). Mainstream

reporting at the turn of the century comprised staid domestic news subjects (eg. politics, farming, court cases), the sparse reporting of sport, and an almost verbatim rendering of Parliamentary speeches, including interjections (Isaacs and Kirkpatrick 2003 p.34). The ideological dualism of conservative mainstream versus progressive independent, despite generalisations, was a formative divide that shaped the development of the investigative tradition well until the 1970s.

The advent of mass printing in the late-19th century had produced an expanded readership and a heightened awareness of the commercial potential of popular content (Lloyd 2002 p.6). Australian newspapers, both in and outside the mainstream, were influenced in the 1900s by trends in the United States and Britain towards a brand of human interest reporting dubbed 'new journalism' (Curthoys 1999 p.31; Lloyd 2002). This journalism was less interested in political arguments, and sought instead to "go beyond the essence of real", as captured by shorthand, to find the "real story behind the account of any event" (Smith 1978 p.9). Despite pretensions towards Fourth Estate ideals, the 'muckraking' style flourished in America and emerged in 20th century Australia to consolidate the popular 'yellow' press, which had previously surfaced in 1826-42, and 1867 (Mayer 1964 p.44). Fourth Estate principles were held lightly as "a form of misplaced knight errantry at odds with commercial priorities", and the press placed a high priority on entertainment; presenting an array of gossip, stories, advertisements, and backgrounders, as a news package (Schultz 1998, p.3).

Within this context, it was the tabloid and alternative newspapers that moved to incorporate a more activist role; scrutinizing the consequences of actions and decisions of ordinary people and consciously representing the interests of the disadvantaged and down-trodden (Schultz 1998 p.23). According to journalist Wendy Bacon, investigation was limited to the personally-driven agenda of dissident journalists working outside the mainstream. Bacon relates: "My introduction to

investigative work began in a squatter's newspaper in Victoria's street (Sydney); myself and another journalist started searching who owned the property's because there was so much violence in the street. So we put out an underground newspaper showing that there was a link between organised crime and the ownership of the property's in King Cross" (Bacon 2005). The stories appearing in publications such as the *Nation*, the *Nation Review*, *Digger*, and *Truth*, were typically expository, inconsistently radical, and consumed by particular events and people, in a style similar to contemporary television current affairs reporting (Bacon 2005). The Sydney *Truth*, formed in 1890 as part of the John Norton empire, came to embody the muckraking genre, with its mixture of social responsibility with an expose tradition deriving as much from Britain and the European continent as from North America (McKnight 1999 p.156). *Truth's* stock in trade was the exposure of injustice or of fraud on the public. The paper was no less sensational and melodramatic than any other tabloid, but unlike the others, it claimed to represent its readers and actually enjoyed a close relationship with them. There was direct dialogue between producers and audience; journalists were transformed into proto-ombudsmen as readers would call, write or visit them with stories of injustice (McKnight 1999 p.158). *Truth* rarely explored broader issues, however many of the major systemic disclosures of the 1970s were represented in its pages as individual plights, e.g. victim of police brutality, rather than corruption in the force (Lloyd 2002 p.7). These stories failed to surface in the conservative mainstream due to entrenched ideas about appropriate topics for publication. As Robert Pullan comments: "The rich, vivid life of the Sydney underworld, with its connections to boardrooms and Cabinet ministers, made teasing appearances in tabloid headlines...but political corruption was not on the agenda" (Pullan 1986 p.11).

It was not until the era of accelerated social change in the 1940s and 1950s that the quality press began engaging with the crusading journalism of the tabloids (McKnight 1999 p.150). Contrary to contemporary imaginings of the 1950s as stable, complacent and prosperous, society was suffering the effects of inflation and shortages until 1955, and were plagued by fears of another depression and the prospects of a full-scale nuclear conflagration (Murphy 2000 p.35). Spurred by the dynamic and contradictory hopes for a 'new order', select mainstream newspapers began engaging in government criticism over significant welfare issues. For example, the *Melbourne Herald* campaigned to address the critical housing shortage, as well as against the appalling facilities for mentally ill children in one particular state institution, the Kew Cottages (Pullan 1986 p.49).

Supplementary to these developments, the push for socially responsible journalism gained was publicised overseas in the United States and in Britain. The Hutchins Committee (a board appointed specifically to scrutinise news practices in the USA), released the *Hutchins Commission* in 1948, which ascribed the media with the central duty to "educate the public on important social, political and economic issues" (Altschull 1984 p.26). In the same lieu, a Royal Commission into the British press in 1949 took the view that the press had a public task and a corresponding public responsibility to ensure that citizens are "sufficiently well-informed about the issues of the day to be able to form the broad judgments required by an election, and to maintain, between elections, the vigilance necessary in those whose governors are their servants and not their masters" (Aubrey 1949, p.64). Directly or indirectly, these sentiments were absorbed into Western thinking about the role of the press; adding further momentum to the re-legitimation of Fourth Estate philosophy (Schultz 1998 p.56).

These key developments in Australian press ideology were occurring alongside an emerging social and political consciousness, which had begun agitating against the status quo during the 1950s and 1960s (Minchin 2000). A growing undercurrent of bohemian rebellion[iii] advocated anarchism and existentialism in rejection of the "conformist philistinism" of 1950s suburbia, and merged with the pluralistic philosophy of activist student movements (Moore 1997). The limitations of a passive and conservative mainstream media became increasingly evident. In the words of Schultz: "Many Australian newspapers had grown moribund; bit players within large media organisations with diversified interests in radio, television, often run by accountants without much feel for the unique public role of journalism" (Schultz 1999, p.270). Bacon details the poor standards of reporting prior to the mid-1960s: "People were being bashed every day in Grafton Prison and no-one would publish it, the media were just that un-critical. So you could definitely say that investigative journalism in the 1970s was working off a very low base" (Bacon 2005). The role discrepancy was asserted publicly in 1965, in a seminal speech by Sir Theodore Bray, editor-in-chief of the *Courier-Mail*, wherein he said, "at the risk of being called precious," he believed that the press was not merely an information conduit, but a "watchdog of civil liberties and a protector against the petty tyranny of bureaucrats and all those clothed with or assuming authority against common man" (Schultz 2002, p.221). Bray's idealism appealed to the growing public agitation for government transparency, and provided fourth estate philosophy with a tentative foothold within the industry agenda.

By the late-1960s, left-wing libertarianism had pervaded the mainstream; provoking widespread rebellion across many sectors of society, and advocating direct political action over issues of abortion, conscription, and race (Coombs 1996 p.53). The context of social upheaval was ideologically conducive to an adversarial form of

36

press inquiry; information on crime and corruption was flowing into the public arena at an unprecedented rate, and previously trusted and unquestioned public institutions were being thrown in to disrepute (Hughes 2005). The muckraking legacy of the popular press- previously associated with the sentiments of fringe radicals- gained a new legitimacy within the mainstream media, as management became conscious of changing audience interests (Souter 1991 p.179; Schultz 1998). Social deviancy had caught the public eye, and the press maximised by piquing public interest for the "story behind the story" (Whitton 1986 p.16). The 1970s was a formative period for Australian newspapers as editors, journalists and managers negotiated the parameters of their new watchdog function. The term 'investigative journalism' had emerged to describe the fledgling enterprise, which later was to develop into the most rigorous expression of Fourth Estate philosophy in the history of the Australian press (Schultz 1998 p.3).

The Age, in 1970, was the first newspaper to devote serious resources to investigative reporting in the form of an 'Insight Unit' comprising a team of self-declared 'investigative journalists' (Minchin 2000; Ryle 2005). The quality of publication and the reputation of editor Creighton Burns lent further credibility to this provocative brand of journalism. In 1971, Fairfax launched a new business paper, the National Times, which grew over the course of the decade to become one of the best outlets for investigative journalism in Australia (Souter 1991 p.181; Bacon 2005). The Bulletin and The Age had initially led the fray with increasingly ambitious investigative pieces, but the National Times soon eclipsed them with its irreverently assertive, far-reaching style of investigative journalism, which garnered much attention for its growing social impact.

While still retaining the sensation of the tabloid scandals, the scale of investigations within the quality press during the 1970s was comparatively much

broader; no longer targeting individual quack doctors, but rather entire health systems (Lloyd 2002, p7). The fallible state of public institutions at this time provided fertile ground for the investigative boom; corruption was rife within the police and governments of all the states, and organised crime had pervaded the most senior bureaucratic levels in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria (Schultz 1998 p.14; Minchin 2000).

The popularisation of investigative journalism throughout the 1970s was bolstered by significant journalistic developments in the United States and in Britain, which enhanced the profile of investigative work, and served to mythologise the heroism of the journalist (Bacon 2005; Coulthart 2005; Hughes 2005; Ryle 2005). The publication of the highly confidential Pentagon Papers (1971) and the drama of the Watergate scandal (1972-74) - events which turned the public opinion against the Vietnam War, and ousted the President, respectively- demonstrated the press' powerful capacity to challenge government policy and effect change. Of equal influence was the example of investigative units established in London *Times* Insight team in the mid-1960s, under the editorial guidance of ex-patriot Phillip Knightley (Lloyd 2002; Toohey 2005; Hughes 2005). The legendary investigative work of the *Sunday Times*, although being somewhat exaggerated, provided an inspiring illustration of editorial freedom and resources. In the words of celebrated British journalist Paul Foot, "this piling fact on fact to present a picture of cock-up or conspiracy was new and exciting" (Foot 1999, p.82) and many Australians working in the United Kingdom returned to emulate the British practice (Toohey 2005).

The dramatic impact of investigative work internationally had a galvanising effect on the investigative momentum in Australia. The prestige attached to this 'hardcore' brand of journalism was bolstered by the fact that it had been tried and tested overseas. Investigative reporting had gained the world's attention as a dynamic

form of journalism that was impressive, and highly marketable, as demonstrated cinematically by the Redford/Hoffman team in the cult classic *All the President's Men* (1976). With accolades and glory endowed upon the Pulitzer-prize winning journalists responsible for the Watergate story, it inevitably became fashionable for editors and papers to be portrayed as 'crusading' in the American style and to be seen to "have the guts to take on the powerful and influential" (Hughes 2005). Journalist Gerard Ryle relates: "There was definitely an image of the journalist as hero...every reporter believed they could take down a government, and many of them tried" (Ryle 2005).

The commercial and political advantages to be gained from advocating public service had helped aid the revival of the Fourth Estate ideal within the Australian press. Publications like the *National Times*, *Nation Review* and *The Age* indicated that there was a buyer's market for quality journalism (albeit not that profitable), and news organisations were keen to exercise the political immunity that institutional status offered (Schultz 1998 p.186). This period witnessed the transition from a compliant news media to an autonomous and equal contender within the political realm. Journalists and editors embraced a more assertive brand of journalism and took industrial action to win charters of editorial independence; mobilising public campaigns in support of their right to determine news content (Coombes 1996; Lloyd 2002). The raised standard of reporting was aided in part by changes in the level of journalistic training, as the first influx of university graduates entered the profession in the 1970s and 1980s, introducing a rigorous method grounded in analysis and research skills (Hughes 2005).

By the 1980s investigative journalism reached broadly across the industry and was earning public respect for the quality and social impact of its disclosures. Social responsibility was a buzz term, and the general media perception was that the public wanted to, and needed to be informed about society's dirty underbelly (Schultz 1998

39

p.189). The prestige attached to investigation meant that media outlets better resourced their journalists; allowing for greater support in terms of finances and an extended word limit. Investigative articles were imbued with the rhetoric of 'public interests and rights', and subject matter was justified using the language of the Fourth Estate. *The Age*, the *Bulletin*, and the *National Times*, were at the fore-front of the field; running comprehensive stories of government corruption and secrecy, highlighting inadequacies in the social welfare system, exposing organised crime links within the judicial system, and revealing violent cultures within state prisons and the police academy (Souter 1991 p.192). The ramifications of these investigations varied substantially; some stories vanished with minimal interest, while others triggered a reformative cascade of public outrage, royal commissions and punitive justice (Whitton 1986 p.17; Souter 1991). The latter cases were instrumental in making investigative reporting so high-profile in the 1980s and at its height of influence, investigative journalism glowed by virtue of its prestige and fresh quality, securing a reputation that would be immortalised in the public mind as the 'golden era'.

---

[i] Noted by Paul Foot (1999) and Clem Lloyd (2002).
[ii] The *Australian* was founded by Robert Wardell and W.C.Wentworth without the permission of the colonial authorities, for the stated purpose of guarding the "interests of self-government against autocracy" (Schultz 2002).
[iii] Notably, the Sydney Push which spanned the late 1940s into the early 1970s; the Melbourne Drift of Barry Humphries and the artist's colony at Monsevaat, and the overlapping Beat, folk, jazz and homosexual based groups based at Kings Cross.

"The *National Times* was a paper which, more than any other, was wallowing in the unfounded innuendoes of that period"- former-prime minister Bob Hawke (Tiffen, 1999, p.210).

CHAPTER THREE

The National Times: A case study

The *National Times* was, in many respects, an unlikely publication. Designed as a quality business weekly, the paper quickly became a progressive alternative to the archaic *Sydney Morning Herald* and came to embody the best of investigative journalism despite struggling with a declining readership for most of its life. The *National Times* entered the Australian mainstream press amid a unique period of heightened social agitation, coinciding with a time when developments overseas popularised an adversarial and heroic brand of journalism under the term 'investigative journalism'. However, to entertain a simplistic linear conception of the impact of overseas on Australian investigative journalism would be to deny the historical seeds within the social-minded muck-raking tradition, as well as the legacy of renegading colonial papers and journalists. The *National Times*' principled stance in the wake of considerable financial and political costs, demonstrated the strength of core democratic tenets that were foundational to the paper's investigative agenda.

The *National Times* was created to meet a gap in the publishing market for either a business weekly or a quality Sunday paper, or some combination of the two (Souter 1991 p.176). Journalist V. J. Carroll first pitched the idea in the late-1960s for a new paper that was one-third business, one-third politics and one-third culture; all of a deeper analytical nature than available elsewhere (Whitton 1981 p.15). It was not until 1971, however, when News Limited's K.R Murdoch and Fairfax general

manager R.P Falkingham perceived the same gap, that the *National Times* was launched as a business broadsheet designed to attract executive readers and national advertising (Whitton 1981 p.16). Sir Warwick Fairfax related his ambitions for the paper in it's first issue, arguing that Australia had achieved a degree of maturity as a nation, and that the *National Times* would provide the appropriate cultural stimulus that would "help Australia advance further" (Fairfax 1971 p.26).

The cultural agenda that was established within the first years of publication was oriented to engage readers with presiding debates on a range of socio-political issues. From the outset the *National Times* embraced a socially-oriented agenda, tapping into cultural movements and debates, in particular it harnessed the momentum of the sexual revolution, which had by this stage entered the mainstream (Coombs 1996 p.45). In a regular section entitled (somewhat ironically), "The Executive's Wife", the paper would canvass the scope of women's issues that elicited debate, and would frequently extol the liberation of women, making claims that, "today's woman equality is more equal than ever" (Green 1971 p.19). It regularly featured stories of women who were deemed to be successful in their sphere of interest; celebrating, for example, the fact that Australia's first and only registered woman winemaker received a full share of praise "for her efforts in the man's world" (Tyler 1971 p.21). A more comprehensive initiative was displayed by journalist (later an author and noted feminist) Anne Summers for a number of series with titles such as "Woman, at war with herself", and "Violence against women", in which a four-page spread was devoted to challenging arguments about the social role women and their treatment, as well as publishing personal responses from readers (Summers 1975 p.34).

The *National Times* was consistent in its attention to social injustices. In between tax heists and corrupt premiers, the *National Times* also uncovered the foul treatment of patients by staff at a major Sydney psychiatric centre (Davies 1980 p.3), and publicly identified the names of pharmacists making illegal tax-free profits (Hickie 1981 p.3). The *National Times* disclosed the administering of banned birth control drugs to Aborigines (Mayman 1981 p.4), and revealed how banks and building societies were making large windfall profits by borrowing money from pensioners and not paying them any interest (Flynn 1981 p.1). This social agenda in often understated by critics of 1980s investigative journalism who claim that while targeting the "Mr Bigs of the drug world", the same scrutiny was rarely applied to areas like social welfare (Minchin 2000). However, this criticism reflects the fact that the high profile exposure stories often over-shadowed the less marketable, and less sensational welfare stories.

Gauging and publishing public opinion was central to the paper's ability to reflect society back at itself, and became the means by which the *National Times* cultivated a voice on behalf of the public. In February 1977 the paper launched a four week series entitled "What's happening in Australian society", and sent "special teams" of reporters to listen to "ordinary" people who were "affected by the great changes currently taking place in the Australian way of life" (Clark 1977 p.8). Rather than taking a socio-economic cross-section, the paper was explicit in targeting the middle-class demographic to garner their opinion on education, taxes, inflation, the sexual revolution, and politics.

The *National Times* would evaluate the efficacy of government policy by demonstrating, often vividly, its effects on the average citizen. In February 1975, a series of articles targeted the consequences of the "disastrous" New South Wales ten-

year public housing plan to demolish thousands of Commission houses due to the failure of the NSW government to provide the Commission with sufficient serviced land (Powis 1975; Ross 1975). The angle was personal, situating the public as central rather than collateral; each article carried an image of a house before and after demolition, with a small story about the fate of the inhabitants under the title "...and the people?" (Ross 1975 p.4). In similarly emotive terms, an article used dramatic anecdotes about "desperate" children and "frantic" mothers to explain that the government's efforts to stymie the mushrooming health budget was having dire effects on the patients (Hickie 1981 p.10).

Even without reference to the large-scale investigative pieces (that would later come to define the paper), it is clear that the *National Times* intentionally set itself up as an advocate for the public good. Its journalists would consistently maintain a strong sense of where the public was positioned within each report, and articles would often adopt a pseudo-didactic function in which the reporter positioned themselves as adviser and consumer ombudsman. The language used in such articles was personal and adversarial; addressing the reader in the singular, and positioning the reader in defence against a potential threat. A front-page article entitled, "Don't be run over by a car salesman," provided a detailed consumer report about the traps of buying a new or used car, and was premised on the claim that most car buyers pay excessively for their vehicle because they do not know the facts about interest rates when talking to a car salesman (Clark 1976 p.1). Expanding on this, further articles warned the reader against fraudulent warranties; informing about the loopholes in car warranties that left the buyer largely unprotected if the vehicle was defective (Walsh 1972 p.13). The paper surveyed the salaries and perks of all echelons of management at hundreds of Australian companies and asked, "if you're curious about what your

boss gets or wonder if you're on a fair thing yourself, read all about it" (Hickie 1980 p.1). Similarly, the *National Times* endeavoured to equip readers with the knowledge and confidence to fight council decisions- "Your guide to territorial defence: If they want to build a motorway through your garden, here's how to stop them" (Maiden 1972 p.24).

The tradition of community-minded reporting and direct-address reporting established the *National Times* firmly within the discourse of public inquiry. Unlike the tabloid crusades of the *Truth* newspaper and the *Daily Telegraph*, which were based on one-off, personal injustices, the *National Times* would focus on broader political and social issues. A number of articles disclosed the illegal activities of corrupt tax insiders; one article mounted an argument against the incomprehensibility of the Tax Act and the inequity of the Australian income tax assessment and collection system (Suich 1978 p.27; Toohey 1982 p.1).

The *National Times* faced a tough struggle for survival in the early months of publication; the first issue sold a mere 80,000 and circulation continued to drift down until it reach 31,700 in September 1971. In an article commemorating the paper's tenth year of publication, *National Times* journalist Evan Whitton wrote: "The paper has never made a profit, and I believe that a company less committed to journalism would have closed down long ago" (Whitton 1981 p.10). Despite all odds, the *National Times* found its stride under the guidance of new editor Max Suich during the approach to the 1972 election that heralded an era of stirring political debate. The thrills and spills of the Whitlam years had a salutary effect on the paper's circulation, reaching 100,000 by early 1974, and the paper honed an increasingly political focus on systemic corruption and the official abuses of power.

The *National Times'* response in the wake of the Granville Train Disaster is

illustrative of the paper's assumed role as an agitator on behalf of the public. The

front page article strongly advocated for an "open and expert" public inquiry into the

administration of the railways and of the Public Transport Commission (PTC), over

serious concerns about how much priority the PTC gave to monitoring its safety

performance (Suich 1977 p.1). The *National Times* considered this as of "primary

importance to the rail commuters of NSW", and published the details of a 1975

memorandum from NSW railways divisional engineers criticising track maintenance

and warning of possible accidents. The paper argued that not enough preventative

action was taken at the time and that spending priorities had been "decided in a

curious manner" (Edwards, Freedman et al. 1977 p.1).

The discovery of clandestine government activities in the mid-1970s

generated rhetoric of disclosure within *National Times* reportage that was

characterised by dramatic language and colourful metaphors; the paper "lifts the

blanket of silence", "exposed" issues "for the first time ever" and "shed light" on

"hushed-up events" (Whitton 1975 p.1; Clark 1976 p.1; Toohey 1981 p.1). The

National Times chief political correspondent at this time, Fred Brenchley disclosed

that Australia was running a covert electronic spying operation out of Singapore,

thereby obliging the Whitlam government to relocate the base in Northern Australia

(Souter 1991 p.188). One article demonstrated indignation over the reports that two

Australian governments had been aware of the "nasty facts" involved in the ruthless

nature of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor and had "either ignored or papered

over in official statements by Canberra" (Clark 1976 p.1).

It was also this period that saw significant breakthroughs regarding

knowledge about Australia's Vietnam policy, when United States correspondent

Adele Horin published documents revealing Australia's deliberations in the war

effort. Whitton relates:

"Adele went down to Washington one weekend and cast her eye over documents that

confirmed that, at a time in January 1965, when President Johnson was having serious second

thoughts about the war, Australia was doing everything it could to put some steel into those

American spines. So the policy, which of course was a disaster, was ours, and for 10 years

we'd been deceived" (Whitton 1981 p.16).

Based upon this information, the *National Times* commissioned the

Department of Foreign Affairs to make a report, authorised by the Prime Minister,

about the Australian entry to the Vietnam War (Whitton 1981 p.17). This was

supplemented by other research and previously unpublished material in the US

archives to produce a thirteen-page analysis examining the background to the war and

the decision-making processes that culminated in the commitment of Australian

combat troops to Vietnam. The justification for the report, as provided in the article,

was simply the matter of lacking public knowledge. In the words of Whitton: "To

date, almost no information has been available to the public on how and why, (and for

that matter, when) this occurred" (Whitton 1975 p.1).

The stance taken by the *National Times* against government secrecy, and the

paper's frustration over restrictions on information was evident in an article entitled,

"Government and Press derelict on freedom of information". Published in 1980,

editor Max Suich asserted that Australian governments had relied on "secrecy, and

worse- the manipulated, partial truth- to defend their policies", and that "the right to

know what the government has done and is doing" was crucial for returning political

power to the electorate and for making bureaucracies and governments more

accountable (Suich 1980 p.26). The philosophical foundations expressed within this article clearly points towards a Fourth Estate understanding of the media's role in society.

The first major institutional corruption uncovered in Australia during the new wave of investigative journalism was regarding the state of the NSW prison system, when it was revealed in the early 1970s that warders engaged in, as a matter of official policy, criminal assaults on persons in the care of the State (Whitton 1986 p.35). Initially, this disclosure was made in Parliament by Labor MP, Wilfred George Petersen, but it was later taken up persistently by Labor lawyers and the *National Times*. From small beginnings, the series of articles in 1976 about conditions in NSW prisons snowballed into a royal commission. As editor throughout the 1970s, Suich described his paper's searching exposes of abuses in NSW prisons as "a newspaper defying its readership"; he never saw any commercial pay-off for the socially valuable investigative work they were doing in prisons (Souter 1991 p.190). Although after six years of probing, the Willis Government instituted a Royal Commission under Justice John Nagle, who recommended vast reforms that were finally implemented over the next four years (Whitton 1986 p.17). The legal system also underwent relatively rapid reform, as did the police force, when the *National Times* and *The Age* provoked a string of inquiries into the alleged criminal activities by judges, and ABC television drew attention to the activities of corrupt magistrates (Souter 1991 p.198).

By the late-1970s and into the 1980s, the weekly *National Times* moved steadily towards an emphatic investigative practice under the leadership of Suich and Whitton; whose combined efforts had earned the paper an unprecedented degree of autonomy to pursue politically daring agendas . One of the most controversial

exposé's ever published in the *National Times* related to allegations against former NSW Premier, the late Sir Robert Askin of his involvement with organised crime (Hickie 1981 p.1). The controversy in the public's eye was not over the content and evidence, but was over the tastelessness of the story's timing, having been published one day before the former Premier's state funeral. In justification, the report explained that previous commissions into organised crime did not deal publicly with Askin's role and that certain information "had not been available" for publication until Askin's death (Hickie 1981 p.1). The *National Times* had previously abandoned an inquiry into the Premier's conduct due to the onset of serious illness, and was adamant that the unfortunate circumstances of death did not constitute "a time for holding back, despite the distress these revelations may cause Askin's colleagues and family" (Hickie 1981 p.1). The furore between editors, management, public commentators and the Fairfax establishment over the debacle served as a pivotal development point for the consolidation of the paper's agenda. Despite the public backlash over the story's timing, Fairfax management supported its staff and turned its main criticism on to the lack of diligence that prevented the story from being released earlier (Souter 1991 p.187). In response to the company's concerns, Suich, as managing editor wrote a memorandum to editor David Marr and his deputy, Brian Toohey which stated: "It should be understood that the board, while embarrassed by the nature and timing of the Askin story, is unanimous in the view that the investigation of such stories is an important part of the work of all Fairfax papers... The *National Times* is to put maximum available resources into following up the story and publishing the facts not only about Sir Askin but the corruption of other politicians and police- particularly those still living and working in Sydney" (Souter 1991 p.187).

During the paper's first ten years it had far outstripped it's cohorts, the

Herald, Sun, and *Sun-Herald* at investigative journalism, and with managerial

backing, the *National Times* pursued ever more complex and sensitive investigations.

Whitton likened the process to a bloodhound improving its scent; "sniffing busily for

fresh spoor and baying with renewed zeal after more formidable quarry" (Whitton

1986, p.41). When Toohey assumed the editorship in 1981, this investigative dynamic

gained momentum. Described as a "short, round, bulldog figure with highly

developed suspicion and great staying power," it was Toohey's ability to channel a

"seemingly endless supply" of leaked documents that allowed for the systematic

exposure of Australia's darkest secrets relating to political corruption and organised

crime (Souter 1991 p.175). Toohey's investigative work into the covert military

practices and espionage of Australia's secret service further refined the shape and

drive of the paper's agenda. In late-1980 Toohey disclosed with indignation that the

Australian government was permitting the US government to intercept and monitor

Australian phone calls, telex messages and computer data, and had invoked the

confidentiality of national security to avoid explaining why (Toohey 1980 p.9).

Toohey accused the government of betrayal in one article; highlighting the

contradictions of government security policy that "deny the most trivial material to

the Australian public, but then accept that we have no secrets from US intelligence

agencies, and even this very fact is kept secret" (Toohey 1980 p.9). The crime was

twofold: primarily it was the withholding of information about government activities

that directly impacted upon the public, i.e. violation of privacy; compounded by the

secondary insult of beneficing a foreign government through access to this

information. The betrayal was expounded upon in January 1981 when Toohey

published extracts from tens of thousands of classified documents, revealing

unequivocally that Australian security policies were embedded in the US Central Intelligence Agency (Toohey 1981 p.1, 10). Months later, the *National Times* boasted the full disclosure of "Australia's own CIA", the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, based upon interviews and unpublished sections of the Hope Royal Commission on Intelligence. The four-page spread relayed a detailed history of Australia's foreign spy force whose existence the government had denied for three decades. The stated object of these articles was "to provide the Australian public with an understanding of government policy-making on foreign intelligence operations over the past 30 years" (Toohey 1981 p.9). However, beyond the history lesson, the article was concerned with informing readers about the government's ties with the CIA under the premise that a citizen should have an informed appreciation of how a nation's democracy works. In reflection on these disclosures, Toohey reiterated the necessity of government transparency: "There's no excuse for organisations like ASIS being secret; the people working there are public servants and need to be accountable, because they are doing things overseas in our name" (Toohey 2005).

From 1980- 1985, the hazardous form of journalism practiced by the *National Times* elicited an average of six defamation claims per year, increasing to eleven in both 1986 and 1987 (Souter 1991 p.188). The paper's circulation had risen from 35,000 in 1971 to 104,000 by 1981, however the *National Times* had consistently lost money at an average rate of about $500,000 a year (Souter 1991 p.189). Bacon relates how the paper was quite isolated in pursing politically controversial stories; with Toohey constantly under extreme pressure to justify himself within the Fairfax Company. "It was a very threatening atmosphere... There was just constant friction at Fairfax between Brian and the managing editor, Max Suich about what we were publishing, and we felt pretty much under siege at that time" (Bacon 2005).

National Times journalist Marian Wilkinson received death threats for reporting that Brussels-based armaments company, Commerce International, was a front for an intelligence-gathering arm of the US Navy called Task Force 157 which had evolved into a highly secretive CIA covert action organisation (Souter 1991 p.191). Meanwhile in 1983, the paper put the government off-side by reporting about US investigations into TNT Transport Company for its association with the Mafia, with knowledge that Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke's best friend, Peter Ables, was the company's head (Bacon 2005). Hawke began to openly campaign for the paper's demise, accusing its journalists of distortion, however, under Toohey, the paper refused to subvert its quality of journalism to such political manipulation (Pilger 2004 p.xvi).

In spite of the risks it took, and the enemies it made, the National Times had been remarkably free of settlements and adverse verdicts[i], although it was not spared the legal costs of six substantial and fourteen lesser settlements, which amounted to $1,692,800 over this period (Souter 1991 p.195). Willing though the board was to persevere until the paper broke into profit; its patience was to be sorely tried for the remainder of the paper's published life. The final word goes to Whitton: "I don't know whether the National Times helped Australia to advance but I think that at least it has helped us understand the country a bit better. The process was a bit like turning over a rock, or stirring a stagnant pool- at any rate you may find what's underneath" (Whitton 1981 p.17).

---

[i] Considering the rigours of defamation law in NSW, it was surprising that between 1980 and 1987 only four of the substantial claims against the paper had succeeded, either in court or by financial settlement out of court.

CONCLUSION

On August 10, 2005, publisher Eric Beecher and editor Misha Kechell of the online alternative news source *Crikey.com*, posed this question to its readers:

'*Does an Australian foreign minister have a conflict of interest if a close member of his family is awarded a prestigious scholarship by a country which uses such scholarships to "contribute to the maintenance of a strong relationship between the countries"?*' (Beecher and Kechell 2005).

The context related to the successful application of Georgina Downer, daughter of Alexander Downer, of a $50,000 Chevening postgraduate scholarship awarded and funded by the British government, despite the fact that she had only received a third-class honours degree from Melbourne University.

The readers' response:

Samuel Ward writes: "*Third-class honours are virtually a fail. How could anyone with this record be awarded a scholarship of any kind at any university – they should not even get an interview!...looks like a very dodgy selection process.*"

Neo-con writes: "*Your latest lot of garbage on Downer's daughter is so petty, so demeaning to the poor girl and to females in general, that it makes you look like the fools that you are. I would expect nothing less from that Left-wing hairy-legged Misha but I certainly expected better from you Eric!*"

Liz Johnston writes: "I feel sorry for Ms Downer, but she should not have taken that

scholarship. It reeks of the sort of politics you expect in Third World countries...and what

about John Howard's own son, Richard, in Washington?" (Beecher and Kechell 2005)

The kind of dialogue represented here by the *Crikey.com* website is being

endlessly replicated within numberless feedback forums, web-logs, and web diary's

on the internet (Gillmor 2004 p.12). The subject matter and arguments expressed in

this particular exchange are immaterial; what is of central interest is the disparateness

of response that arguably defines and sustains these online forums of discussion

(Knight 2000 p.41). Tentative expressions of intellectual engagement are posted

alongside wanton vitriol; 'strands' are vigorous, opinionated, and range effortlessly,

if chaotically, around the full scope of trivialities and matters of importance affecting

the citizenry. The cultural appropriateness of this pluralistic model of communication

is indicative of the heterogenous nature of the public sphere, which this thesis argues

is constituted by an undefinable array of 'publics' each motivated by divergent

concerns (Hartley 1996; Lumby 1999). Undermining traditional lines of authority

and structure, the internet has facilitated the expression of these concerns by

fundamentally transforming modes of producing and consuming information into

forums of discourse that are, as described in the *Crikey.com* blurb, "conversational",

rather than didactic (Beecher and Kechell 2005). The erosion of traditional

distinctions between the amateur and the professional has enabled the average person

be an active participant in creating and communicating news, information and

opinion (Greenwald and Bernt 2000; Gillmor 2004).

This development challenges the historical conception of the journalist as the

arbiter and informant on matters of public interest. This thesis situates this model of

journalism within the ideological bounds of Fourth Estate philosophy, to argue that

the derivative principles of editorial autonomy and the freedom to critique institutions of power have strongly shaped the development of Australian journalism (Schultz 1998; Lloyd 2002). The testimony of historians and media practitioners illuminate the cultural contours of the Fourth Estate, as it was manifested to varying degrees and effect within independent colonial newspapers, populist tabloids, and mainstream publications (Walker 1980; De Maria 1999; McKnight 1999; Inoue 2002; Lloyd 2002; Bacon 2005). Contrary to the traditional association of the principles underlying the notion of the Fourth Estate this research demonstrates that the philosophy was not merely adversarial, as expressed within investigative journalism, but that it also formed the basis of the welfare-oriented 'social responsibility' journalism (Lloyd 2002 p.9). By tracing the metamorphosis of these public service ideals over various political climates, this thesis has presented a broad genealogy of Fourth Estate philosophy within Australia.

The *National Times* in many senses epitomised the most adversarial kind of investigative journalism; becoming a self-appointed moral gate-keeper amid widespread social upheaval and endemic institutional corruption in the 1970s and 1980s (Souter 1991; Bacon 2005; Masters 2005). The *National Times* is an exemplary publication for demonstrating the reformative potential of the investigative tradition, the application of Fourth Estate philosophy, as well as the capacity of the mainstream media to be an effective forum for the ventilation of social ills. Extensive archival research reveals a clear moral stance taken by the journalists and editors: They were categorically condemnatory on matters of government secrecy; adamant that the public should not be cheated on either a domestic or national scale; and championed an egalitarian society in which the public should expect satisfactory government services. Equally evident, was the paper's

dictum of public service; seen in its attempts to represent community concerns by launching inquiries into public misadventures, as well as investigating and advising the public on practical and wide-scale matters that might affect them. In the course of exposing fraudulent behaviour and exerting pressure on the state and federal government to address welfare problems, the *National Times* was instrumental in initiating broader processes of reform towards the eradication of systemic corruption in public institutions, as well as effecting the scrutiny, humiliation, and at times, resignation, of culpable public and corporate officials (Souter 1991 p. 147).

The *National Times* arguably represents an elitist model of journalism wherein a small group of media elites monitor institutions on behalf of the people and self-determine the scope of public interest (Johnson and Clark 2001 p.12). I argue that although this approach was effective within the specific historical context of the 1980s, the transformed modes of communication within the contemporary public sphere are rendering this elitist model obsolete in favour of renewed public participation in the communication of ideas (Hartley 1996; Lumby 1999; Gillmor 2004). It is the contention of this thesis, however, that the adversarial stance of the *National Times* and the broader investigative tradition, served to institutionalise a legacy of scrutiny and accountability that informs contemporary conceptions (ideals and criticisms) of the journalistic profession. By normalising the critique of society's most trusted and powerful public institutions through scandal and scrutiny, the investigative approach has provoked the emergence of official regulatory bodies, such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption in 1988, through which the State, somewhat paradoxically, has adopted a watchdog function (Lumby 1999 p.145).

The expansion and intensification of media formats via the internet, satellite television, and electronic media, has not only increased the breadth of scrutiny within the public gaze, but has also democratised the avenues of accountability; endowing ordinary individuals with the capacity to be scrutineers of those in power (Gillmor 2004 p.8). The online activities of influential amateurs such as Matt Drudge, a citizen blogger who broke the news of presidential bedroom activities that later became the Monica Lewinsky scandal, pose a serious challenge to traditional models of newspaper journalism. Similarly, the political debate stimulated within the forums of Margo Kingston's *Web Diary* and Steve Mayne's *Crikey.com*, point increasingly to a reality where citizens, and not journalists, are "producing the first draft of history" (Gillmor 2004 p.26). The internet, with its rhetoric of 'online communities', constitutes a rich site for research into its potential for revitalising democracy and citizenship. Furthermore, its demonstrated capacity for investigation presents the question of whether the internet's wealth of amateur web-logs might be renewing the Fourth Estate in a fragmented, but democratic fashion. The project of public journalism has already effected a movement towards re-engaging the public readership by encouraging wider participation; however this model could be developed through further inquiry into the sources and means of this participation, with relation to harnessing the productive capabilities of internet users (Rosen 1999).

The death knell for investigative journalism has arguably been sounded prematurely. Perhaps, far from having diminished, the prospects for investigative journalism have gained a new potency within the contemporary sphere of unfettered, chaotic, peer-to-peer relations. "Every citizen is now a reporter", according to Oh Yeon Ho, the founder of South Korea's largest online newspaper, *OhmyNews*; "journalists aren't some exotic species, they're everyone who seeks to take new

developments, put them into writing, and share them with others" (Gillmor 2004 p.17). The mantle of democracy still remains with Edmund Burke's "man of letters", but the modern-day criteria for this position has expanded far beyond the reporter's gallery to encompass the entire public realm. We return now to the wisdom of historian Thomas Carlyle, who projected in 1841 that the new-found literacy would empower the writer with "inalienable weight in all acts of authority" (Carlyle 1841 p.350). Although the blogger of the 21st century was outside the realms of conceivability for Carlyle, his vision for the democratic potential of media communication encapsulates the contemporary condition: "It matters not what rank he has; the requisite thing is that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite" (Carlyle 1841 p.350). In this way, perhaps it could be said that investigative journalism is not dead; it has just changed appearance, and the nature and limitations of this transformation is a subject ripe for further research and debate.

Bibliography: Primary Sources

Bacon, W. (2005). Interview. H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Clark, A. (1976). Timor's tragedy: the hidden war. National Times: 1, 8.

Clark, G. (1976). Don't be run over by a car salesman. National Times: 1.

Clark, G. (1977). What's happening in Australian society. National Times: 1, 8-12.

Coulthart, R. (2005). Interview (email). H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Davies, S. (1980). Staff reveal horrifying practices in State psychiatric hospital. National Times: 3.

Edwards, J., P. Freedman, et al. (1977). Anatomy of disaster. National Times: 1.

Fairfax, W. (1971). Why we are here. National Times: 26.

Flynn, J. (1981). The great granny grab. National Times: 1, 3.

Green, A. (1971). Today's woman equality is more equal than ever. National Times: p19.

Hickie, D. (1980). Who get's what: survey of salaries and perks. National Times: 1.

Hickie, D. (1981). Askin: Friend to Organised Crime. National Times: 1.

Hickie, D. (1981). Favorite fiddles of the crooked chemist. National Times: 3.

Hickie, D. (1981). What the hospital cuts mean in brutal human terms. National Times: 10.

Hickie, D. and M. Wilkinson (1981). Askin's $55 000 Payment from the Bookies. National Times.

Hughes, G. (2005). Interview (email). H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Hurst, J. (1982). The song and dance man's secret war. National Times: 14.

Kelly, P. (1977). Report from middle australia. National Times: 1.

Maiden, T. (1972). Your greatest chance of getting busted is on a winter night: Crime survey discloses carelessness of victims. National Times: 3.

Maiden, T. (1972). Your guide to territorial defence. National Times: 24.

Maiden, T. (1975). Cancer at your dinner table and in your backyard. National Times: 4.

Masters, C. (2005). Interview. H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Mayman, J. (1981). Aborigines given birth control drug banned in US. National Times: 4.

Morita, H. (1971). The woman's place. National Times: 21.

Noonan, G. (2005). Interview. H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Powis, J. (1975). Homes devastated by government housing plan. National Times: 4.

Ross, M. (1971). How to put Japanese guests at ease. National Times: 17.

Ross, M. (1975). NSW public housing policies are a disaster. National Times: 4.

Ross, M. (1975). The Stonehouse affair: it pays to be white and well-off and a British MP. National Times: 2.

Ryle, G. (2005). Interview (email). H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Smith, V. (1971). Robbery, a bad investment. National Times: 10.

Smith, V. (1972). Your guide to territorial defence: If they want to build a motorway through your garden, here's how to stop them. National Times: 24.

Suich, M. (1977). Rail safety: Why key facts will stay secret. National Times, Jan 24-29: 1.

Suich, M. (1978). How two privileged groups of insiders have robbed our tax system. National Times: 1, 27.

Suich, M. (1980). Government and Press derelict on freedom of information. National Times: 26.

Summers, A. (1975). Violence against women. National Times: 26-28.

Summers, A. (1975). Woman, at war with herself. National Times: 34.

Toohey, B. (1980). How Australians are kept in the dark (while the US listens-in). National Times: 9.

Toohey, B. (1981). ASIS: For the first time, the full story of Australia's CIA. National Times: 1, 10.

Toohey, B. (1981). How ASIO betrayed Australia to the Americans. National Times: 4.

Toohey, B. (1982). Tax Heist: how hardened criminals and lawyers are combining to cost all Australian taxpayers millions. National Times: 1.

Toohey, B. (2005). Interview. H. Lenffer. Sydney.

Tyler, M. (1971). Woman in a man's world. National Times: 21.

Walsh, E. (1971). How far should the counterspies look into private lives? National Times: 3.

Walsh, E. (1972). This warranty guarantees you absolutely nothing. National Times: 13.

Whitton, E. (1975). The Battle of Brisbane. National Times: 1.

Whitton, E. (1975). For the first time: The truth about Vietnam. National Times: 1.

Whitton, E. (1981). Ten years at the National Times. National Times: 15-17.

Wilkinson, M. (1983). The Rex Jackson affair: blinkered view leaves story untold. National Times: 5.

Wilkinson, M. (1983). Why Jackson Resigned. National Times: 4.

Wilkinson, M. (1984). Exclusive: New Police Tapes! More information on the bugging scandal that is causing a political storm. National Times: 1, 5.

Wilson, P. (1971). You may be eating the genuine imitation alternative substitute. National Times: 7.

Wilson, P. (1972). That's no accident, that's a crash- or even motor murder. National Times: 5.

Wilson, P. (1972). The battered baby syndrome: don't take it to the doctor. National Times: 24.

Bibliography: Secondary Sources

Altschull, J. H. (1984). Agents of power: the role of the news media in human affairs. New York, Longman.

Aubrey, M. E. B., Neil S.; Bowman, James; Bonham-Carter, Lady Violet; Ensor; Hull; Middleton; Owen; Robinson; Sharp; Vickers; Waters; Wootton, Barbara; Young (1949). Royal Commission on the Press 1947-1949. Sessional papers, British Government: 363.

Baudrillard, J. (1983). In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities. New York City, Semiotext(e).

Beckerman, G. (2003). "Tripping up the big media." Columbia Journalism Review(6: November/December).

Beecher, E. and M. Kechell. (2005, 21/10/05). "Downer's prestigious scholarship." Retrieved 19/10/2005, 2005, from http://www.crikey.com.au/articles/2005/08/10-1658-6905.html.

Bonwick, J. (1890). Early Struggles of the Australian Press. London, Gordon & Gotch.

Bowman, L. and S. McIlwaine (2004). "A structured return to the 'Fourth Estate': interviews and inquiry that challenge entrenched authorities' 'knowledge'." Australian Journalism Review v.26(no.1): 121-131.

Carlyle, T. (1841). "On Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History." Retrieved July 15, 2005, from http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=37265&pageno=9.

Chomsky, N. and E. Herman (1988). Manufacturing Consent: the political economy of the mass media. New York, Pantheon Books.

Clark, M. (1871). "A Leaf from an Old Newspaper."

Clarke, M. (1871). "Governor Ralph Darling's Iron Collar." Old Tales of a Young Country Retrieved 01/08/05, 2005, from http://whitewolf.newcastle.edu.au/words/authors/C/ClarkeMarcus/prose/OldTales/ironcollar.html.

Clegg, C. (1997). Press Censorship in Elizabethan England. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Coldiron, A. E. B. (2004). "Public sphere/contact zone: Habermas, early print, and verse translation." Criticism(Spring): 22-28.

Coombs, A. (1996). Sex and Anarchy: The Life and Death of the Sydney Push. Ringwood, Penguin Books.

Cunningham, S. and G. Turner, Eds. (1993). The media in Australia today. The Media in Australia: Industries, Texts, Audiences. St Leonards, Allen and Unwin.

Cunningham, S. and G. Turner, Eds. (2002). The media and communications in Australia. Crows Nest, Allen and Unwin.

Curthoys, A. (1999). Introduction: Histories of Journalism. Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture. A. Curthoys and J. Schultz. St Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

De Maria, W. (1999). Deadly Disclosures: Whistleblowing and the ethical meltdown of Australia. Kent Town, Wakefield Press.

Deuze, M. (2005). "What is Journalism? Professional Identity and Ideology of Journalists Reconsidered." Journalism Theory Practice & Criticism 6 (4).

Ekstrom, M. (2002). "Epistemologies of television journalism." Journal of Theory, Practice and Criticism 3(3).

Ellul, J. (1973). Propaganda: the formation of men's attitudes. New York, Vintage Books.

Ettema, J. S. and T. L. Glasser (1998). Custodians of Conscience: Investigative Journalism and Public Virtue. New York, Columbia University Press.

Fallows, J. (1997). Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine American Democracy. New York, Vintage Books.

Foot, P. (1999). The slow death of investigative journalism. Secrets of the Press. S. Glover. London, Penguin Press.

Foucault, M. (1972). The Archaeology of Knowledge. New York, Pantheon Books.

Gillmor, D. (2004). We the Media: Grassroots journalism by the people, for the people. New York City, O'Reilly Media.

Greenwald, M. and J. Bernt, Eds. (2000). The Big Chill: Investigative Reporting in the Current Media Environment. Iowa, Iowa State University Press.

Group, T. H. (1999). Citizens and Politics: A View From Main Street America, The Hardwood Institute.

Habermas, J. (1962). The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society. Cambridge, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Halasz, A. (1997). The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Hall, S. (1978). Policing the crisis: Mugging, the state and law and order. London, Macmillan.

Hartley, J. (1992). The Politics of Pictures: the creation of the public in the age of popular media. New York, Routledge.

Hartley, J. (1996). Popular Reality: Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture. London and New York, Hodder Headline.

Hartley, J. (2000). "Communicative democracy in a readactional: The future of journalism studies." Journal of Theory, Practice and Criticism 1(1): 39-47.

Haxton, N. (2002). The Death of Investigative Journalism? Journalism: Investigation and Research. S. Tanner. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia.

Henningham, J. (1993). The Press. The Media in Australia: Industries, Texts, Audiences. S. Cunningham and G. Turner. St Leonards, Allen and Unwin.

Heritage, T. D. o. C. (2002). "Concentration of Ownership in the Media." Retrieved 9/8/05, 2005.

Iggers, J. (1998). Good News, Bad News: Journalism Ethics and the Public Interest. Colo, Westview Press.

Inoue, T. (2002). "William Stanley Jevons: Collected Reviews and Obituaries." The History of Ideas Retrieved 01/08/05, 2005, from http://www.thoemmes.com/economics/jevons_intro.htm.

Isaacs, V. and R. Kirkpatrick. (2003). "Two Hundred Years of Sydney Newspapers: a short history." from http://eprint.uq.edu.au/archive/00000391/01/sydnews.pdf.

Johnson, R. and P. Clark (2001). "Critic critique thyself: the media and self-delusion." Sydney Papers v.13(no. 3): (iv)-14.

Kant, I. (1795). "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch." Retrieved 7/8/05, 2005, from http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm.

Knight, A. (2000). "Online investigative journalism." Australian Journalism Review v.22(no.2): (48)-58.

Knight, A. (2002). "Truth, Politics, and the Limits of Investigative Journalism." Retrieved May 24, 2005, from http://www.econ.usyd.edu.au/drawingboard/digest/0205/knight.html.

Lloyd, C. (2002). The Historical Roots. Journalism: Investigation and Research. S. Tanner. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia.

Loewenstein, J. (2002). The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Lumby, C. (1999). Gotcha: Life in a Tabloid World. Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

Mackay, H. (1997). Generations: Baby Boomers, their Parents and their Children. Sydney, Macmillan.

Marx, K. and F. Engels (1970). The German Ideology. London, Lawrence & Wishart.

Masters, C. (2001). Not For Publication. Sydney, ABC Books.

Mayer, H. (1964). The Press in Australia. Melbourne, Lansdowne Press.

McColl, R. (2001). "Law, politics and the media." Sydney Papers v.13(no.3): 94-108.

McKnight, D. (1999). The Investigative Tradition in Australian Journalism 1945-1965. Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture. A. Curthoys and J. Schultz. St Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

McQuail, D. (1983). Mass communication theory: An introduction. London, Sage.

Mencher, M. (1977). News reporting and writing. Dubuque, WC Brown.

Mill, J. (1825). Liberty of the Press.

Milton, J. (1644). Aereogitica. London.

Minchin, L. (2000). "Digging the Dirt: Australian Investigative Journalism from the 1980s to Today." Australian Screen Education(Is. 23): 78-85.

Miraldi, R. (1990). Muckraking and Objectivity: Journalism's Colliding Traditions. New York, Greenwood Press.

Moore, T. (1997). "Romancing the City: Australia's bohemian tradition." Retrieved May 19, 2005, from http://www.abc.net.au/tv/documentaries/bohemian/rom1.htm.

Murphy, J. (2000). Imagining the Fifties: private sentiment and political culture in Menzies' Australia. Sydney, UNSW press.

Nalangu, W. (1995). Investigative Journalism in Melanesia- Is it Needed? Solomon Islands, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation.

Norbrook, D., Ed. (1994). Areopagitica, Censorship, and the Early Modern Public Sphere. The Administration of Aesthetics: Censorship, Political Criticism, and the Public Sphere. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Northmore, D. (1996). Lifting the Lid: A Guide to Investigative Research. London, Cassell.

Pask, K. (2004). "The bourgeois public sphere and the concept of literature." Criticism(Spring).

Patterson, A. (1984). Censorship And Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press.

Pilger, J. (1989). A secret country. London, Cape.

Pilger, J. (2002). "Journalism in Australia has a courageous history, but Murdochism has turned it into a disgrace." New Statesman Vol. 15(Iss. 695): pg. 17.

Pilger, J. (2004). Tell Me No Lies: Investigative Journalism and its Triumphs. London, Random House.

Postman, N. (1985). Amusing ourselves to death: public discourse in the age of show business. New York, Viking.

Protess, D. L., F. Lomax Cook, et al. (1991). The Journalism of Outrage: Investigative Reporting and Agenda Building in America. New York, The Guilford Press.

Pullan, R. (1986). Four Corners: Twenty-five Years. Sydney, ABC Enterprises.

Pullen, R. (1984). Guilty Secrets. North Ryde, Methuen Australia.

Randall, D. (1996). The Universal Journalist. London, Pluto Press.

Rosen, J. (1999). What are Journalist's For? New York, Vail-Ballou Press.

Rutherford, P. (2000). Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

Salt, B. (2003). The Lucky Country's Luckiest Generation. The Australian.

Schlesinger, P. (1990). Rethinking the Sociology of Journalism: Source Strategies and the limits of media centrism. Public Communication: the new imperatives. M. Ferguson. London, Sage Publications.

Schultz, J. (1992). "Investigative journalism tests journalistic independence." Australian Journalism Review 14(2): 18-30.

Schultz, J. (1998). Reviving the Fourth Estate: Democracy, accountability and the media. Melbourne, Cambridge University Press.

Schultz, J. (1999). The many paradoxes of independence. Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture. A. Curthoys and J. Schultz. St Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Schultz, J. (2002). The press. The media and communications in Australia. S. Cunningham and G. Turner. Crows Nest, Allen and Unwin.

Smith, A. (1978). The politics of information: problems of policy in modern media. London, Macmillan.

Souter, G. (1981). <u>Company of Heralds: A century and a half of Australian publishing by John Fairfax Limited and its predecessors 1831-1981</u>. Melbourne, Melbourne University Press.

Souter, G. (1991). <u>Heralds and Angels: The House of Fairfax 1841-1990</u>. Carlton, Melbourne University Press.

Spark, D. (1999). <u>Investigative Reporting: A Study in Technique</u>. Oxford, Focal Press.

Tanner, S. (2002). <u>Journalism: Investigation and Research</u>. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia.

Tapsell, S. and G. Phillips (2002). Investigative Journalism and Ethics- a Slippery Slide Rule. <u>Journalism: Investigation and Research</u>. S. Tanner. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia.

Thompson, J. (1990). <u>Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication</u>. Cambridge, Polity.

Tiffen, R. (1999). <u>Scandals: Media, politics, and corruption in contemporary Australia</u>. Sydney, UNSW Press.

Toohey, B. and M. Wilkinson (1987). <u>The Book of Leaks: Exposes in Defence of the Public's Right to Know</u>. North Ryde, Angus and Robertson Publishers.

Tuchman, G. (1978). <u>Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality</u>. New York, Free Press.

Underwood, M. (2003, 22/6/03). "The Mass Media as Fourth Estate." Retrieved 25/7/05, 2005, from http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/media/4estate.html.

Walker, R. B. (1976). <u>The Newspaper Press in New South Wales 1803-1920</u>. Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Walker, R. B. (1980). <u>Yesterday's News: A History of the Newspaper Press in New South Wales from 1920 to 1945</u>. Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Waterford, J. (2002). The Editor's Position. <u>Journalism: Investigation and Research</u>. S. Tanner. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia: 34-56.

Whitton, E. (1986). <u>Can of Worms II</u>. Broadway, Fairfax Library.

Wilson, J. (1996). <u>Understanding Journalism: A guide to issues</u>. London, Routledge.

Zaret, D. (2000). <u>Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England</u>. Princeton, Princeton University Press.