

Impending Media Review

Editorial

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Abstract: In the March 2016 issue papers cover a range of topics that include the UK BBC charter review, film and television being affected by Internet clichés and an interesting look at digital currencies. Two historical articles on the bombing of Darwin and radio telephone surveying provide interesting reading about past telecommunications challenges. In Australia the government appears to be taking concerns raised by media organisations seriously and recent reductions in television licence fees point to the government’s impending media regulation review being more than just window dressing.

In This Issue

In this issue the *Journal* contains a range of topics that focus on media, an interesting look at digital currencies and historical challenges facing telecommunications. This is an election year and it is likely that an early double dissolution election on 2 July will help shape the future for telecommunications, the media and the digital economy for the remainder of the decade.

Cinema and Cyberphobia: Internet Clichés in Film and Television provides a look at recurring themes in portrayals of the Internet, shedding light on the how, and perhaps most importantly why, the fear of technology is so common.

The BBC Charter Review takes a look at the outcomes of the UK Conservative Government’s Green Paper on the *BBC Charter Review, July-October 2015*, which broke new ground in terms of the scope of such an enquiry for its level of institutional criticism. It appears it is not just an Australian phenomenon where, in recent decades, those on the right of politics feel that the national broadcasters are biased to the left.

An ethnography of Bitcoin: Towards a future research agenda discusses trust, anonymity and consumer protection when digital currencies such as bitcoin become a part of our everyday lives and interactions with Bitcoin as a system and culture will shed light on mundane acts of socio-technical disruption.

The Bombing of Darwin: Telecommunications in Times of War describes events that occurred on 19 February 1942 with the first Japanese air raid on Darwin, the capital of Australia's Northern Territory and its gateway to Asia and how the telecommunications infrastructure was affected and rebuilt by the dedicated staff of the Postmaster-General's Department.

Radio Telephone Surveying – The Traditional Way provides a look back at how radio telephone surveying was carried out and highlights the challenges faced by the technical and lines personnel conducting propagation measurements for a radio telephone link from Victoria to Tasmania between 1947 and 1949.

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The Australian Government's recent decision to reduce television licence fees as part of the 2016 Budget goes some way to addressing concerns raised by media companies, but the impending media review may not provide the lifeline that media companies are seeking primarily due to the lack of change within the industry to address outside competition and consumer demands. The rise of Netflix within the Australian industry demonstrates clearly how Australian media organisations dropped the ball by failing to respond to consumer demands and questions must be asked about the local industries viability and whether or not it should be saved.

It would be wrong for a media review to focus on the economics of the media industry when there is a pressing need to regulate the minimum performance and quality for the delivery of broadcast and streaming media. The local television and streaming media companies have been growing the number of low quality broadcast channels and media streams at a time when consumers are demanding higher quality and improved performance. Australian consumers should not be subject to an environment where media organisations are consistently using misleading statements about what is actually being provided to consumers.

Looking Forward

In 2016 a student paper prize will be launched with the winner being offered the chance to be join with Telsoc members and key telecommunication industry executives at the Charles Todd Oration held in Sydney annually.

In June 2016 the theme will be the *National Broadband Network (NBN)* and *human computer interaction for the Internet of Things*. Depending on the outcome of the 2016 election there could be a major impact on the NBN with the technology choice being redirected back towards the original mix of fibre, fixed wireless and satellite. How this will occur will

depend on the election outcome but it is timely that the *Journal* focuses on this vital nation building project.

Papers are invited for upcoming issues and with your contributions the *Journal* will continue to provide the readership with exciting and informative papers covering a range of local and international topics. The Editorial Board values input from our readership so please let us know what themes you would like to see in the coming year.

All papers related to telecommunications and the digital economy are welcome and will be considered for publication after a peer-review process.

Mark A Gregory