

2003 Vol 3 Issue No. 02 — New Media Technologies

> EDITORIAL



Change, or transformation, is the natural order of the world, even when it is slow and over such a long period of time that it is imperceptible to short-lived and impatient human beings. We, of course, are constantly engaged in a process of change, just by living, but also by the exertion of our will and in particular, the imposition of our inventions, our cultures and our economies on the world.

In this issue of *Transformations* we have focussed on some changes that are occurring in the media, especially on the production of news. During the past decade, the growth of digital technology has led to the burgeoning of on-line and mobile communication technologies. There has also been an associated reduction in the cost and size of equipment available to the media while its capacity and capability has also improved. Moves to dismantle the boundaries between traditional news production areas because of the use of new technologies have begun to transform the way news is produced, received, accessed and interpreted. Traditional definitions of news are challenged by these new and emerging

technologies, especially those that demand faster responses or reconstitute traditional work values, practices and processes.

There are many issues to contemplate and assess in relation to this subject, but here we provide a small but effective contribution to the debate on how new technologies are transforming the news media, and how the media then affects us all, wherever we are.

The contributing authors explore the impact of the transforming tendency of new technologies on news content and news practices and discuss the implications of the introduction of specific new technologies.

The article, *News Connections: Regional newspapers and the Web*, raises some salient points concerning the slow uptake of the Web by Queensland regional newspapers. Its author, **Jacqui Ewart**, suggests ways in which newspaper websites might be used to enhance relationships with local communities. Regional newspaper editors and publishers could benefit from her suggestions. In *Weblogs, warblogs, the public sphere, and bubbles* **Gary Thompson** explores the idea of the web, and, in particular, weblogs as a democratising agent. He raises the important point that weblogs do not always facilitate wide-ranging, multi-view point discussion. The new and emerging field of mobile news media is the focus of **Collette Snowden's** article, *What's Happening? Mobile Communication Technology and the Surveillance Function of News*. This article explores the relationship of mobile technologies to people's interest in news and examines the potential impact of mobile communication technologies on the production of news and information. In the article, *New Media Technologies and the Making of the New Global Reporter*, **Geoff Craig** explores the changing identity of journalists as a consequence of the introduction of news technologies. His suggestion that technologies influence the production of a journalistic self should interest journalism educators, especially those using such technologies within their courses. The last two articles take a related, but slightly different approach to the theme of this issue of the journal. In *The Backyard Blitz Syndrome: the emerging student culture in Australian Higher Education*, **Judith Langridge** looks at the complex relationship between patterns of disengagement in the Australian Higher Education system and media representations of transformation. Her discussion of the transformation of student attitudes towards higher education will strike a chord with those readers of the journal who lecture or tutor at universities. In a slightly different approach to the theme of the journal, the application of technology to the production of music is examined in a cross-cultural context in *The Technology, Aesthetics and Cultural Politics of a Collaborative, Transnational Music Recording Project: Veiga, Veiga and the Itinerant Overdubs* by **Denis Crowdy and Karl Neuenfeldt**. It is included here because it is a fine case study of how the use of technologies can transform media practices and processes

Collette Snowden and Jacqui Ewart
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