

The Impact of Social TV and Audience Participation on National Cultural Policy: Co-creating television comedy with #7DaysLater

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Abstract

The democratising promise of increased audience participation (Benkler 2006; Bruns 2008; Jenkins 2006) has in recent times come under scrutiny as scholars suggest the facilitators of collaborative online spaces may reject the political shift of convergence culture (Hay et al. 2011). The apparent (non) shift in power is particularly interesting in the context of public service media (PSM), which fills the role of a cultural infrastructure media organisation and incorporates the voice of its citizens as crucial to its national and cultural building capacities. Under the guise of audience participation, this paper demonstrates how social TV has considerably larger implications beyond back channel communication and co-creation: it is demonstrative of how media acquires its meaning through public discourse. By examining the impact of social TV, that is audience members participating in content through commenting and co-creation, it is also indicative of how public service media policy can be seen as what Brevini (2013) terms *PSB 2.0*. This paper illustrates how social TV and audience participation has been positioned within the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), how it challenges existing governmental practices and nation boundary construction, and strengthens its public service remit by providing voice to those who may otherwise be marginalised.

Public Service Media and Social TV as Convergence

Convergence culture has been explored as a democratising experience in journalism (Bruns 2008), economics (Benkler 2006), organisations (Shirky 2008) and political movements (Hermida 2012). The decentralised, co-creative approach of convergence has flourished in the creative industries where both producer and consumer have adopted new cultural goods production models (Hesmondhalgh 2007). In the context of content production, producers have incorporated the participation of the audience for new production methodologies (Hutchinson 2013a), to reduce the canyon between content production and consumption (Negus 2002). Audience participation also addresses the complications introduced through digital, niche interest audiences by producing content specific to the tastes of fragmenting audiences (McClellan 2011). By incorporating new ideas from those whom the content seeks to entertain or inform into the professional media production framework, the media industry has employed convergence to some degree through commentary and in some instances as content co-creation.

However, convergence has not entirely delivered on its promise of democratising power shifts, where some scholars argue that the democratic activities in the creative industries are 80 per cent speculation (Turner 2011). From this perspective, one can question whether media organisations have adopted the power shift into their governance models, or if convergence is a toothless tiger shaped as an empowering tool for audiences. This question is particularly

important to explore in the context of public service media (PSM), a particular type of media organisation that has been legislated to build and facilitate national and cultural identities (Wilson et al. 2010), particularly through the voice of the citizens it represents (McClellan 2008).

PSM in Australia is unique compared to the rest of the world insofar as it operates within a dual licensing system; the Australian media system is designed to operate with both public and commercial interests in unison. The dual licensing system enables the commercial sector to operate in areas where the market dictates, while PSM is responsible for experimentation and innovation that can be shared with the market as a whole. This phenomenon is described as distinctive innovation (Cunningham 2013) and builds upon the existing Reithian¹ public service broadcasting (PSB) values of distance from vested interests, content maker independence, providing voice to those who are otherwise marginalised and building and facilitating national and cultural spheres (ibid. 2013). The ABC is one of the two public broadcasters within Australia that continues to experiment with convergent culture and technology to fulfil the PSM adage of 'inform, educate and entertain' by experimenting with new ways of producing and delivering content. As part of that experimentation, the ABC has aligned with broader recommendations to evolve in its adaption of Web 2.0 technologies and move towards activities that are beyond its remit of procuring and broadcasting content (Debrett 2010). Indeed, Flew et al. (2008) suggest the role of the ABC as a public service media organisation is to encourage social innovation through user-created content, where 'UCC strategies can make a considerable contribution to its provision of Australian content in news and current affairs, localism and diversity of news and information, particularly through the development of *hyper-local content* that exploits its network of broadcast media outlets throughout Australia and its unique presence in non-metropolitan Australia' (p. 2). In talking about news and current affairs, Flew et al. highlight the potential of including the audience in the production cycle as an advantageous experience for the broadcaster. In other words, PSM experimenting with user-created content and innovative production methodologies is also valuable for the media market as a whole.

There is a body of knowledge that explores the concept of participation as part of the convergence mantle, where researchers now have a more nuanced understanding of how convergence operates within PSM (Hutchinson 2013b). Verstraete (2011) highlights that participation needs to be understood in terms of who is doing what with whom and 'whether something is politically rather than economically productive' (p. 539). The political driving force of participation is particularly interesting to explore through the lens of social TV to understand how audiences use information and communication technologies to bolster their personal standings within the participation process. Audience participation in television programming usually occurs across platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, and is broadly labelled 'social TV' (Harrington et al. 2013). Historically, social TV usually takes the form of user comments appearing within the lower third graphic of the broadcast program, or as a guest answering an audience member's question. However, mediated technologies can marginalise users through network politics (Castells 2009) and the rise of mass self-communication (Wellman 2010). Castells and Wellman both indicate that the flat, heterarchical affordances of networked communication can be construed to benefit the individual for personal gain. This is a phenomenon common to existing social media pillars such as YouTube (views), LinkedIn (professional promotion), Facebook (increased network/popularity) and Twitter (increased status), but is not typically associated with participation in PSM audiences.

To explore the concept of network politics and mass self-communication within the public service media context, the ABC's co-creative *#7DaysLater* program provides a unique social TV example. The ABC's *#7DaysLater* recently extended audience participation through

social TV in television production by ‘...taking comedy to the scary arena of interactive storytelling where the audience gets to write the brief via social media’ (ABC 2013). By drawing on audience participation, each seven-minute program challenged the traditional television production model by testing which users and which types of content are suitable for an ABC-branded television program. Further, *#7DaysLater* highlighted the inconsistencies of non-ABC produced content, which problematised the standards upheld by the network’s editorial policies (ABC 1983), the regulatory framework that the ABC operates within. In these instances, it is the responsibility of the cultural intermediaries (Negus 2002; Hutchinson 2013a; Maguire et al. 2010) to negotiate content inconsistencies between audience expectations and institutional regulatory frameworks, and facilitate the participation process. To understand the impact of social TV on PSM policy, social network analysis highlights how the communication leaders drive the innovative production process of programs such as *#7DaysLater*.

The larger question within this co-creative social media environment is how does participatory activity disrupt or even demolish the national boundaries previously constructed through PSM? Social media are location-agnostic and, by interacting with a global audience, the contributions are constructed from a diverse cultural background that does not necessarily align with the national focus of the PSM organisation. In this case, the constructions of media, media meaning and even the concept of audience and publics are challenged. What was traditionally a locally defined, national audience now needs to be considered a global group of users, which significantly challenges the role of PSM and the core foundations of public service broadcasting. Therefore, new foundational approaches for PSM are required to update existing policy frameworks for national broadcasters.

Using a mixed method research design of social media network analysis (SMNA) and digital ethnography, this paper describes how an advanced academic research methodology, when combined with television production, can assist the future development of PSM and its impact on national cultural policymaking. This research tracked the Twitter conversation for the entire first season of *#7DaysLater*, identified the network influencers and assessed the impacts the production had on existing ABC editorial policies. From an informed understanding of audience participation within PSM regulation in the Australian context, it is possible to address how new media technologies challenge existing communication policies and improve the value of a global public service broadcasting approach. This research contributes to developing PSB 2.0 (Brevini 2013) as a policy framework.

Social Media Network Analysis (SMNA)

The methodology for this research is a mixed method approach, comprised of an emerging social media network analysis (SMNA) model combined with digital ethnography (Dirksen et al. 2010; Bowler 2010; Horst et al. 2012). The combination of qualitative with quantitative research methods enables the research to address new areas that were previously inaccessible. For example, digital ethnography would likely reveal the key actors within a Twitter network who are interacting with a television program to understand how they communicate, the types of languages and norms they use and with whom they are communicating. However, digital ethnography is limited in its ability to reveal the impact of that social media communication and, more significantly, whom that communication has influenced beyond an immediate conversation. An iterative discovery process is possible by combining qualitative research with quantitative methods, where findings that are revealed from the social media network analysis (SMNA) provide useful data that can be incorporated into qualitative research, and vice versa. In the context of *#7DaysLater*, the quantitative research provided useful findings to target the digital ethnography and conduct semi-structured interviews, which were then incorporated into a second round of SMNA.

SMNA builds on earlier network analysis literature (Granovetter 1973; Terranova 2004; Watts 2003) that attempts to understand the relationship between nodes within a network, where ‘a network is nothing more than a collection of objects connected to each other in some fashion’ (Watts 2003, p. 27). SMNA specifically takes two approaches in an attempt to understand who is involved and how information is moved within a social network. In the first instance, SMNA looks at ‘the relationship between *network structure* – the observed set of ties linking the members of a population ... and the corresponding *social structure*, according to which individuals can be differentiated by their membership in socially distinct groups and roles’ Ibid., p. 48). In the second, SMNA incorporates the network ‘viewed as a conduit for the propagation of information or the exertion of influence, and an individual’s place in the overall pattern of relations determines what information that person has access to or, correspondingly, whom he or she is in a position to influence’ (Ibid., p.48). In this respect, SMNA focuses on understanding a network through both network and social structures to specifically determine how individual influence operates within a complex, interwoven collection of networked individuals.

The SMNA research method contained four unique stages to extract the data, visualise and analyse the results. As this research focuses on Twitter conversations associated with the hashtag #7DaysLater, the first process was to access the Twitter public streaming API². In the first instance, the Hootsuite archiving service enabled the data to be scrapped and stored for further analysis. This provided a .csv file that contained all 28 fields of metadata associated with a tweet, for example the text, where it was tweeted, when it was tweeted and from what type of device. For the purposes of this research, the focus is on who is talking with whom and about what, suggesting that we only required the ‘@’ handles (Twitter names) and hashtag topics. To extract this information, Google Refine was used to clean the data and provide a .csv file that could be imported into Gephi, the social media network analysis software.

Within Gephi, the data described above was run through a combination of the Force Atlas 2 and Fruchterman Rheingold spatialisation algorithms to indicate which users and topics were more relevant to the conversation by placing them in the centre of the graph. The nodes were then adjusted by their size according to the amount of outward edges, or how many times they connected to other nodes. Therefore, the most connected nodes were the largest in size, with the most significant located at the centre of the graph. Finally, the data was analysed through a modulation algorithm to detect the communities present within the network. The modularity algorithm, used by Gephi, and as Reichardt and Bornholdt developed, should perform the following:

- a.) reward internal edges between nodes of the same group (in the same spin state) and
- b.) penalize missing edges (non-links) between nodes in the same group. Further, it should
- c.) penalize existing edges between different groups (nodes in the different spin state) and
- d.) reward non-links between different groups (Reichardt and Bornholdt 2006, p. 1).

As a result, similar nodes are attracted to one another; non-related nodes, in terms of the hashtag topic, are repelled from each other. The modularity algorithm produces a betweenness centrality measure. This is useful because it not only signifies how often nodes are referenced, but also their significance within the network, where ‘a point in a communication network is central to the extent that it falls in the shortest path between pairs of other points’ (Freeman 1977, p. 35). In other words, if combinations of other nodes are connected to a given node, that node will have an increased betweenness centrality, indicating that it is a popular user or topic within the network. The final result is a network graph that has the most significant and

connected nodes centrally located on the graph with clusters of communities to represent the communication relationship between users and topics.

Finally, the methodology included digital ethnography in an attempt to understand the quantitative results of the SMNA. Digital ethnography, which has emerged from ‘netnography’ (Bowler 2010), is the practice of ethnography in online environments. The key characteristic of ethnography is participant observation that incorporates a significant amount of time embedded in the research environment to understand the people and structures of the research environment and to reveal any insights that can assist in answering the research question (Atkinson et al. 2005). In this mode, rich detailed data was gathered that was used to explain how the network graph made sense, who the users were, why they were connected and the types of conversations they were having. The rich ethnographic data that was extracted shored up the claims generated by the SMNA and enabled the network users to respond to targeted questions.

Current Australian Media Policy Environment for the ABC

The current political landscape of Australia has seen a return to a conservative government that is consistent in promoting the neoliberal demands of the commercial media sector. Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp has been consistent in attacking the online media efforts of the ABC, which is ‘typically most forcefully expressed by puppet-master Murdoch’s News Corporation Australia who regard the ABC as a threat, particularly their online media outlets, to their commercial operations’ (Dwyer 2014, p. 2). However, the most recent government budget at the time of writing indicated that the ABC would lose significant amounts of operating funds. It has since been revealed that both the ABC and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) will lose up to \$300 million over the next five years, with the ABC to take the biggest loss of \$250 million. This may result in 400 to 500 lost jobs and significant cuts to programming and services (Robin 2014). The ABC faces a conundrum in this highly contested media policy environment: under a conservative government engaging in landmark budget cuts, how might the ABC fulfil its legislated requirements to innovate and engage its audience through participation?

Including convergence culture through audience participation in media discourse is crucial when applied to the remit of public service media (PSM) that incorporates audience participation and co-created media. The benefits of audience participation in PSM have previously been outlined as generative and democratising (Bardoel and Lowe 2007; Hutchinson 2013b; Jackson 2008). However, the current Australian political environment that is aligned with the commercial sector may axe new and experimental production methods to inhibit the social innovation potential of the PSM sector. Further, funding cuts will inhibit experimental efforts to develop distinctive innovations, along with limiting the impact the ABC has in constructing conceptual regional borders for national and cultural identity.

There are examples of innovative production models emerging from within the ABC that incorporate convergence culture, new media technologies and display high levels of efficiency. If the distinctive innovation framework is used here, there is tremendous value in the ABC experimenting with new innovative online media production methodologies that could be shared with the commercial sector. While the ABC has experimented with convergence in recent times through *ABC Pool* and *ABC Open* amongst other user-created content services, it is the efforts emerging from the Television and Entertainment departments that demonstrate a market-valuable use of convergence. Through combining the talents of the in-house supervising producers, up-and-coming popular YouTube producers and content contributed from the audience, *#7DaysLater* has pioneered an innovative PSM production methodology. The production model of *#7DaysLater* challenged the Editorial Policies of the ABC, yet returned a collection of very distinct programs that satisfy distinctive innovation,

are efficient to produce and uphold the core PSB values. In this light, the value of PSM becomes increasingly significant to many elements of the public and private sectors, challenging the logic of the current funding cuts to the Australian PSM sector.

Understanding the Impacts of Social TV: The Case of *#7DaysLater*

The *#7DaysLater* producer's approach was to combine the talents of the in-house ABC staff with that of the emerging online producers from YouTube, along with the input of the audience, to produce comedy television that was ideally suited to the pre-determined demographic. According to Richard Huddleston (2014), the Supervising Executive Producer for Television Entertainment, the goal for *#7DaysLater* was to attract new audiences aged 18 to 24 (a declining demographic for PSM broadly) who are typically digital content consumers, as opposed to terrestrial content viewers. Huddleston also notes a key goal was to 'cut through the digital noise and become a visible media product' (Ibid.) by growing an online, digital audience. They sought to achieve these goals by incorporating the talents of several popular YouTube producers who brought their online audience with them to *#7DaysLater*.

Each week the producers would start with a Google Hangout on Monday and invite anyone to participate and contribute plot ideas, character names or script lines to begin the development process of the show for the following week. On Tuesday, the producer, Daley Pearson, would talk during a slot on the popular morning program *Breakfast with Alex and Tom* on the national ABC youth network, triplej, to build on Monday's pre-production ideas. From there, the production team would begin filming on Wednesday and Thursday, edit the production on Friday, take the program online during the weekend and broadcast on the following Monday. Through each stage of production, the crew utilised social media to continue co-creation with the audience, where Daley could use his network and networks of the YouTube producers to source ideas from the audience. The outcome of *#7DaysLater* was a television series that was comprised of seven weekly, seven-minute episodes that increased the viewing of the ABC's desired demographic: the 18–24 year olds (Huddleston 2014). The program recently won a Digital Emmy, a sign that the production has received recognition from its professional peers.

Figure 1 visualises the *#7DaysLater* network through the '@' usernames and hashtag conversation topics, representing how users are connected to both topics and other users. Node size indicates how many times an item was mentioned, with 172 topics discussed. The larger nodes are more active users or more talked-about topics. Betweenness centrality metrics revealed the network influencers: the green nodes are the most influential users and the pink nodes indicate the most talked-about topics. Betweenness centrality is a useful measure in this analysis, instead of connectivity, as it indicates the importance of the node within the network. Betweenness centrality then indicates not only how many times a topic or user is referred to, but also its significance. The modularity analysis highlighted 48 communities within the network, where colour indicates each community's connectedness.

An example of the connectedness of the network influencers is *@Daley_Pearson*, the *#7DaysLater* director. Not surprisingly, his node is centrally located and has a large purple connected community, with the hashtag *#7DaysLater* strongly connected to his conversation. This indicates he frequently talked to his network about *#7DaysLater*, which was very significant in the conversation. In contrast, the node that represents *@tokyostuntbear*, one of the professional directorial contributors, indicates that while they are centrally located to the *#7DaysLater* conversation, their network is not as extensive as Pearson's nor does it have as

much impact. The brown colour highlights their connectivity within this conversational network.

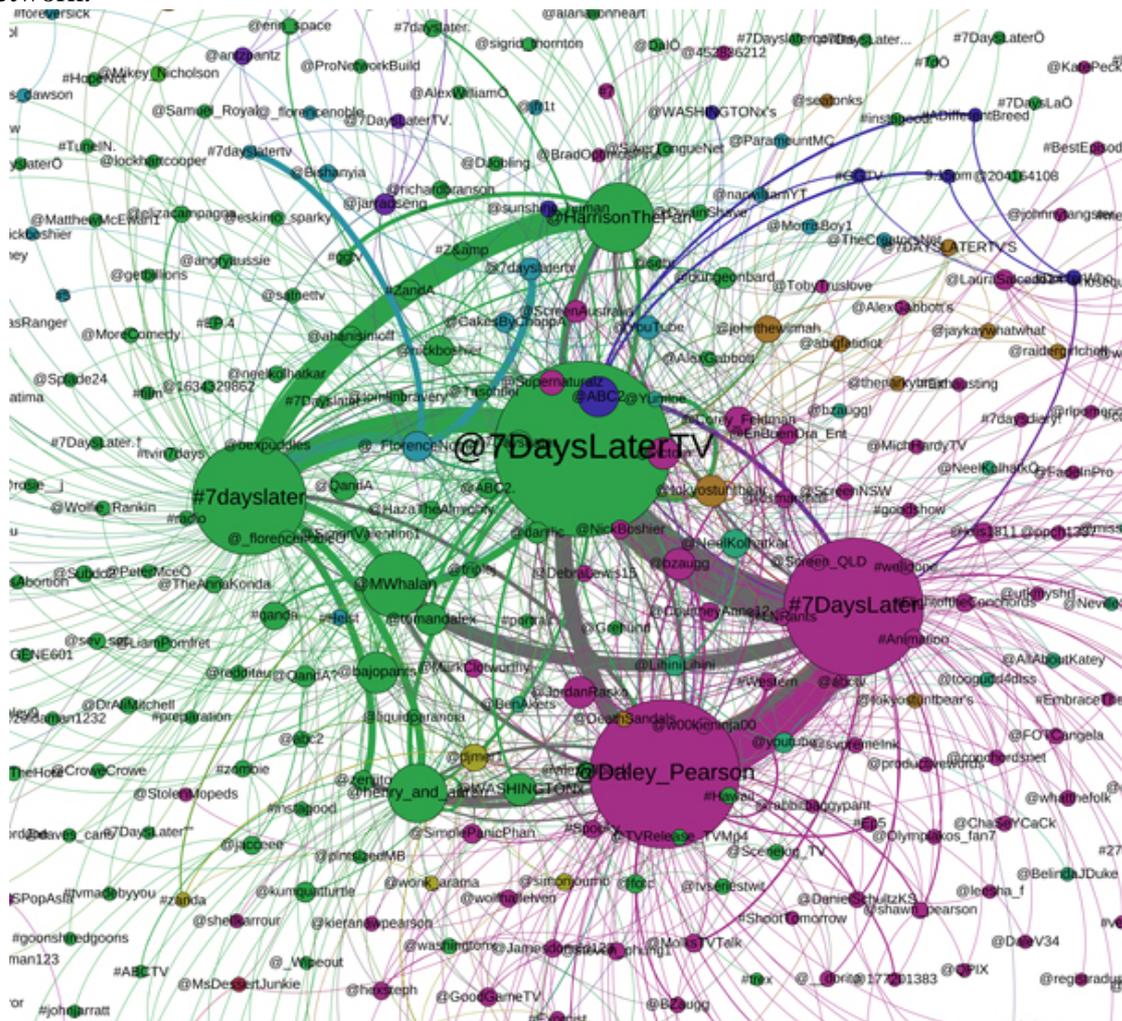


Figure 1: The #7DaysLater Twitter Network and Communication Influencers

The quantitative analysis established the following:

Users	Topics
@7DaysLaterTV	#7DaysLater
@Daley_Pearson	#qanda
@HarrisonTheFan	#ZandA
@MWhalan	#spooky
@henry_and_aaron	#Animation
@bajopants	#FlightoftheConchords
@ABC2	#Western
@WASHINGTONx	#Hawaii
@JordanRasko	#ggtv
@tomandalex	#zombie

If we eliminate the ABC staff Twitter handles (@7DaysLaterTV, @Daley_Pearson, @bajopants, @ABC2, @JordanRasko and @tomandalex) along with celebrities and external production professionals (@henry_and_aaron, and @WASHINGTONx), @HarrisonTheFan and @MWhalan are the top two network influencers. To broaden the investigable sample group, @zenjito, @jarradseng and @Mikey_Nicholson were also included. From the highest

engaged topics, it is also clear that Episode 3, ‘Zombies Flight for Equality’ (#ZandA) and Episode 5, ‘A Bullet with Braille on It’, were the most engaged episodes of the season – a fact confirmed during the interview with Richard Huddleston. This quantitative analysis provides the basis for the qualitative research, which included interviews with the #7DaysLater team and the most influential Twitter contributors.

Through the interview process, it emerged that participants engaged in social TV to learn how to operate in the professional production environment. Users were also interested in understanding if the program was co-creative in its approach and inclusive of the trumpeted ‘audience participation’. @HarrisonTheFan indicates that his participation aligns with what Kuehn and Corrigan (2013) refer to as hope labour:

I eventually want to end up writing and producing for film and television and thought this would be just a good experience to start with. I mainly have a background in writing and directing for theatre and handling social media (as a job), so this was the perfect crossover.

@MWhalan indicates concern with whether this program is indeed collaborative and inclusive of the audience input:

I felt in the early shows the whole 'collaborative' thing was a bit of a fraud, a front for the strongly pre-conceived ideas of the writers and performers on '7DayLater' [sic]. Sort of choosing the tablecloths while the captain steered the ship. I saw many, many suggestions that were never used. Later I noticed a big shift where the '7DaysLater' realised the real power of crowdsourcing, though it rather felt the template of each show had been pre-produced well in advance. Maybe they did throw it all together from scratch but I wonder. I think Daley learnt to throw decisions he normally reserved to himself to the crowd, and often found a vastly improved result. Part of it was having enough critical mass of creative people to make worthwhile responses. I think 7DaysLater learnt the more open they were, the better it got.

Overall, there are indicators that the transfer of knowledge occurs within this innovative production project. While participation in the production process of the program is one aspect of social TV, the exchange of knowledge between the participants is also a very attractive motivation for user participation. @HarrisonTheFan indicates how the skills he learnt from participating in the #7DaysLater project are directly transferable to his developing media career:

I learnt how open some people are to a creating new content and television with some incredible and outlandish ideas. I also learnt how to be a better director from Daley and what it takes to write a good sketch. Also how to interact with different areas of social media, which eventually lead to me creating a calculated effort to making an Australian Horror film go viral on Reddit.

The @MWhalan quote in particular indicates how some input was used while other crowdsourced input was ignored. I have previously argued the case for cultural intermediation as a means of managing audience input against the technical, regulatory and editorial constraints of co-creative production within the ABC (Hutchinson 2013a). The cultural intermediation framework aligns with social TV in that it is a co-creative production methodology that is facilitated by intermediaries that understand both the interests of the

participants *and* the institutional focus of the ABC. The cultural intermediaries of *#7DaysLater* may not have understood the interests of the participants initially, but through interaction with the vocal members, they developed a rapport that enabled interests and concerns to be developed and shared amongst the professional producers and the online participants. The challenge for the cultural intermediaries operating in this capacity is to not only interact with the most vocal participants but to also engage with the marginalised participants. Although a complex undertaking, the combination of rigorous social media network analysis combined with an innovative production methodology may reduce the potential for such fringe voices to be ignored.

The Role of Cultural Intermediation for Developing PSB 2.0

So far, this paper has addressed convergence's impact on PSM, the current PSM environment in Australia, the *#7DaysLater* case study and how cultural intermediation can operate to mitigate the marginalisation of voices. The final area this paper will explore is the meta-level of online governance and the intersection of PSB policymaking. To do this I will build on the framework of Benedetta Brevini, who notes a shift in PSM policymaking towards what could be viewed as PSB 2.0 (2013).

Brevini notes that 'PSB as a policy framework has been based on a socio-democratic set of beliefs that recognize the crucial function of the state in providing the conditions for an effective social, cultural and political participation in a democratic society' (2013, p. 3). Combining this definition with the *#7DaysLater* case study suggests that the emerging production methodology is more than comedy television, but also a vehicle for effective social, cultural and political participation. Further, in a networked communication environment that utilises social media for participation – specifically social TV – national boundary construction becomes obsolete as users participate from all parts of the globe, drawing on their local culture(s) to do so. In this environment, a shift towards a global PSM approach is required, but raises an important question. Who will pay for such a mechanism? If the government and its citizens financially support a nation's PSM organisation, why should its content and services be made available to other nations? For this reason, PSM policy needs to be constructed beyond economic criteria when an update to its policy framework is required.

As a policy framework, PSB 2.0 acts as a way of incorporating online media and their technologies into the global policy arena. Brevini holds that 'PSB 2.0 becomes a media policy instrument (Syversten 1999) based on a set of normative values that aims to fulfil the democratic, social and cultural needs of the society by transferring traditional PSB ethos online' (2013, p. 31). As part of this mechanism, PSB 2.0 contains four normative criteria in citizenship, universality, quality and trust: citizenship for full participation in politics; universality for access and retrievability of content *and* services; quality that requires constant renegotiation 'from the producers with the needs of the viewers' (Ibid., p. 49); and finally, trust in PSM as a source of information within the media cornucopia. The globally networked environment – where local ideals and values are introduced to the policy arena – means that the significance of cultural values is increasing in each of these criteria. Beyond the question of economics, it is problematic to introduce PSB 2.0 through these criteria for reasons including the liberalism/social democracy distinction and the heterogeneity of access/retrievability via differing internet protocols in different countries. In light of these complications, the cultural intermediary becomes more than a mediator between the producers and consumers of cultural products; the intermediary is an agent in the implementation of a developing PSM policy framework.

In the *#7DaysLater* case study, the supervising producer, as a cultural intermediary, was responsible for aligning the contributions to the program with the editorial policies of the

ABC, as legislated in the ABC Act 1983. In this example, the cultural intermediary was specifically responsible for ensuring the brand of the ABC maintained its integrity across multiple social media platforms as contributors participated in content production, most times unaware of the implications of the editorial policies. The cultural intermediaries are certainly building *trust* amongst the audience as they consistently negotiate the *quality* of the content, however the impact that their involvement may play in *citizenship* and *access* is yet undetermined. One could argue that the cultural intermediary is promoting access through the use of numerous online platforms, which ties in to the notion of citizenship. I would argue that cultural intermediation has the potential to facilitate the global perspective of development and implementation of public service media policy frameworks, doing so through increased involvement in citizenship, access and retrievability of content and services.

Discussion

Convergence culture and its technology have dramatically changed how audiences interact with media and disrupted governance models in the process. Although it has been argued that the democratisation capacity of convergence is for the most part speculation, there are now documented accounts of convergence media being operationalised within the PSM sector. Within PSM, it is an unaccepted notion that convergence has disrupted its governance to completely democratise its operation and redefine the societal impact of these organisations. At the same time, various in-house policies have shifted to accommodate increased volumes of user-created content on specific projects and programming. As cultural practice and values shift through new media technologies, the call for a reworked global public service media policy framework is crucial. In this scenario, cultural intermediation plays a significant role in developing the citizenship, access, quality and trust of content production and service distribution as elements of an alternative model to market-driven cultural production. Perhaps without realising, PSM has been developing PSB 2.0 policies through its innovative content production strategies that have more or less overridden nation-state boundaries.

If PSM is responsible for the conceptual construction of regional borders for national and cultural identity, how does audience participation disrupt those borders and their national cultural policies? Social TV is reflective of how digital technologies are ignorant towards geography, and therefore circumvent existing national and cultural boundaries. In this research, users interacting with the production of the television program *#7DaysLater* were primarily based in Australia, but could have easily been located in any part of the world, drawing on their own locative and cultural perspectives to co-create. In this context, the innovative capacity of PSM challenges some of the core understandings of public service broadcasting as a builder of national boundaries and the public sphere; the broadcaster is actually talking with a new, hybrid, global audience. It is in this environment that the construction of new publics and new public service media catering to global perspectives is required. It is crucial, however, that while facilitating these new publics, cultural intermediaries ensure that individuals are not merely pushed to the outside of social networks, and that user interests are continually negotiated to ensure genuine civic and cultural participation.

Keane (2014) suggests that the new global public service media organisation is one that is slightly detached from the core Reithian PSB values in that it is a hybrid form of media beast. Martin (2014) notes that it is difficult to identify where the PSM-ness ends and the private production begins in high quality ABC television drama, where the post-production (and indeed the funding model) resembles a blend of public service and private, commercial entities. This is also true of the impacts of convergence culture on the evolving public service media model. Discerning convergence culture is crucial for not only aligning national public

media institutions with audience participation, but also for the development and implementation of regulatory frameworks that facilitate co-creative media within the commercial sector. The challenge for public service media is to translate the value of these hybrid media systems for *global* hybridised audiences into the policy arena in order to bolster the support for innovative convergent culture participants.

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¹Rethian values refer to the original public service values as described by Sir John Reith, the first General Director of the BBC.

² The Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) enables users to access public streams of information from hashtags and/or users. Although it is ideal for research, it worth noting this is only a portion of the entire conversation, which would otherwise be referred to as the ‘firehose’.

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Jonathon Hutchinson (Ph.D. 2013, ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation, Queensland University of Technology) has recently completed his thesis investigating the role of user-generated content within the ABC. During this time, he trained as an ethnographer in both online and offline environments, and is also skilled at organisational ethnography. Hutchinson has been published in the Australian Journal of Communication, Media International Australia, M/C Journal and Platform, and is the 2013 winner of the Australian and New Zealand Communications Association’s Grant Noble Prize for Best Postgraduate Student Paper Award. He is currently a Lecturer in Online Media and Communication at the University of Sydney.