

---

# Editorial The Challenges

---

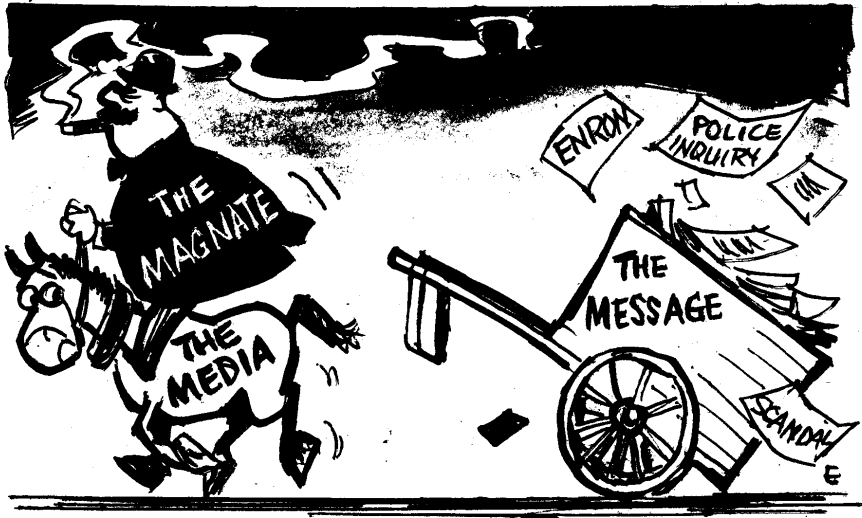
**W**ELCOME to this edition of *Pacific Journalism Review*, which gives a taste of what was on offer at the recent Journalism Education Association of NZ (JEANZ) conference, hosted by Massey University's Department of Communication, Journalism and Marketing in Wellington on 10-12 December 2007.

The theme of the conference was: 'The future for the mainstream—the changing demands on journalists and the challenge for journalism educators.' We asked a range of eminent speakers to give their views on the topic, including politicians, journalists, editors and legal experts. Our three keynote speakers' addresses are all contained in this volume.

Prime Minister **Helen Clark**'s speech offered a thought-provoking challenge to journalists and educators. Although acknowledging the importance of journalism to the functioning of a strong democracy, Clark found much to fault in New Zealand journalism. Her speech was not without controversy, with two later speakers disputing some of what she said. Their rejoinders are presented at the end of her paper.

The collapse of giant US energy company Enron in 2001 is one of the great financial scandals of modern times. The company's shady dealings and eventual bankruptcy saw thousands lose their jobs, the imprisonment of many of Enron's top executives, and the end of Enron's accounting firm Arthur Andersen. *Fortune* magazine journalist **Bethany McLean** played a pivotal role in breaking the Enron story and then following the saga. In her address she describes how she found the story, looks at the highlights of the tale, and explains why corporate America has learned little from Enron. She also challenges the conventional wisdom that journalists should simply do more to warn investors about dodgy companies.

With the convergence of digital media technologies—audio, video, internet, mobile, television—journalism is today facing one of the greatest technological revolutions in its history. Probably no part of the news media is feeling the heat more keenly nor has more to gain from the changes than the newspapers. With Wellington's daily newspaper, *The Dominion Post*, celebrating its centenary in 2007, the conference was an ideal opportunity to



MALCOLM EVANS

hear editor **Tim Pankhurst** describe how his paper is meeting the technological challenge. He offers a frank view on the innovations his paper has embraced, as well as reminding us about what must never change at newspapers.

The conference attracted more than 100 delegates from New Zealand, Australia and further afield. A number presented papers at the conference, and a selection of those papers are also given in this issue. What is perhaps most striking is the range of approaches to journalism research they represent.

Based on a series of in-depth interviews, **Denise Mackay and Margie Comrie**'s article describes the uneasy relationship between the news media and the military. Although the New Zealand media fiercely defends its editorial independence, it often relies heavily on the army in order to cover conflict, and therein lies the problem.

In the field of media law, the quaint term 'scandalising the court' may conjure up the image of an easily shocked bewigged judge. But **Mark Pearson** reviews a variety of recent court cases to demonstrate how this old legal device is being used today to rein in the Australasian media.

Although much is heard about freelance journalists, little research is conducted into the freelance market. **Grant Hannis** presents a statistical profile of the New Zealand freelance market, finding that, although a large segment of the freelance workforce publishes little and receives a meagre income,

there is a small group of freelancers who publish a great deal and earn a good income from their endeavours.

**Elsbeth Tilley and John Cokley's** article uses discourse analysis to discuss the public discourse on citizen journalism. They debunk some of the romantic notions of citizen journalism, concluding that it would be naive to assume such journalism is either entirely independent or entirely raw and unreliable.

**Stephen Tanner's** article presents an exploratory content analysis on how the Australian political media hunted in a pack when covering the struggle for the leadership of the Liberal party. His focus on the mentality of the political news media is particularly timely given the recent Australian general election and the upcoming New Zealand one.

I would like to thank all of the contributors to this issue, the referees who gave their time to review papers, the Massey conference team, and all the conference speakers and delegates. I am also grateful to *Pacific Journalism Review* managing editor **David Robie** for offering us the opportunity to publish these conference papers.

A special word of thanks must go to the conference sponsors, without whom the event could not have been staged: Fairfax; APN; *The Dominion Post*; *The National Business Review*; NZ Journalists' Training Organisation; NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants; Broadcasting Standards Authority; Statistics NZ; the Securities Commission; the New Zealand Centre for Women and Leadership; Massey's Department of Communication, Journalism and Marketing; Massey's School of Accountancy; and Massey's College of Business. It was gratifying to have such a range of journalism organisations, government agencies and academic institutions united in helping journalists and journalism educators meet the challenges of tomorrow.

**Grant Hannis**

*Head of Journalism*

*Department of Communication, Journalism and Marketing*

*Massey University*

*Wellington*

*g.d.hannis@massey.ac.nz*