

Hi there

She's not alright.



Ever heard the saying 'if nothing changes, nothing changes', that's a lie. Where inequalities exist, if nothing changes, or worse still, if there is a crisis that creates winners and losers, inequalities grow wider.

Things are [not alright in Australia](#). In the CMT's role dissecting, and hopefully improving, the changing media landscape we need to draw attention to existing, and emerging, gender inequalities. Below, Sacha Molitorisz discusses insights from two very different pieces of research. The

crisis of jobs in journalism, and the unequal power between individuals and platforms when it comes to privacy, bring particular issues for women, based on existing patriarchal structures. It's worth noting too, that despite the fact that more females than males enrol in journalism courses around the country, the inequalities when they step foot into industry begin to compound.

Meanwhile, Jacqui Park points our attention to a second wave of #metoo across Asia bolstered by growth in feminist media and [a historic defamation case](#), involving a female journalist and her editor-turned-politician, where the judge found 'A right to reputation cannot be protected at the cost of a right to dignity'.

Australian journalists have a complex but clear task ahead of them reporting truths about the spectrum of patriarchy.

I won't wish you happy reading; I'll wish you angry reading.

Chrisanthi Giotis
CMT Post Doctoral Fellow



Speaking truths small and large

Over 20 years ago, in the same year I started my journalism degree, Margaret Simons published her controversial exposé *Fit to Print* describing the inner workings of the Canberra press gallery. Simons wrote: 'It is a place where if you refuse to blend the lines between the personal and the professional, then your effectiveness is reduced'. While this was a critique of the political culture which the press gallery went along with, the message to a young journalist was clear. You had to socialise.



Fine, no big deal, right? Except networking events for women are fraught places where patriarchy often finds ways to re-assert its dominance. It could be the older white male journalist at a dinner event, making the not only sexist, but racial stereotyping comment to a younger colleague about cooking noodles (true example) or worse, much worse.

Speaking at the March 4 Justice protest in Hobart, Australian of the Year Grace Tame, a child sexual abuse survivor, [reminded us](#) 'corrupt behaviour always has been and always will be the enemy'. All forms of corruption thrive in the dark and so, like other forms of inequality and injustice, what is needed is people seeing something wrong, and [speaking up about it](#).

Watchdog journalism has a particular, and particularly difficult, role to play in exposing the corruption inherent in patriarchy. There are fears that Attorney General Christian Porter's defamation action against the ABC and Four Corners journalist Louise Milligan will lead to [a chilling effect](#), hamstringing efforts to continue investigations.

Of course, the Attorney General's supporters have suggested he has been a victim of trial by media but trial by media works both ways. The character of his accuser has also been subject to trial by media. Until we no longer live in a patriarchal society where sex is used as a form of domination this will be the price paid. The media must play their part in bringing to light the corruption in gender inequality, even if this role is imperfect.



Chrisanthi Giotis
CMT Post Doctoral Fellow

Pulling focus on gender in CMT research



It's often said that there's a crisis in Australian journalism, given all the rolling layoffs and news media closures, particularly since COVID-19. It turns out one particularly worrying aspect of the crisis is that it is worsening gender inequity in the industry.

In [research just published](#) in the academic journal *Journalism*, [Nik Dawson](#), [Marian-Andrei Rizoiu](#), [Peter Fray](#) and I conducted a longitudinal study of journalism jobs in Australia from 2012 to 2020. At first glance,

our findings were encouraging: the ratio of female employed journalists increased relative to male journalists. In 2014 seven women were employed for every 10 men, by 2018 that statistic had more than doubled, with 18 women employed for every 10 men. However, that shift masked a deeper inequity. Between 2014 and 2018, annual salaries for female journalists increased by only \$3,000, whereas annual salaries for men increased by more than \$30,000. And the age of the average male journalist was two years older in 2018 than in 2014, whereas the age of average female journalist was four years younger in 2018 than in 2014. By 2018, the average age for a male journalist was 42, but for a female journalist it was 34.

One possible explanation is that senior positions were increasingly being filled by men, who were likely responsible for major editorial decisions, whereas younger and worse-paid women were being employed in great numbers to fill junior roles.

Meanwhile, in [separate Centre for Media Transition research](#), [James Meese](#) and I were confronted by yet more worrying gender-related findings. Across six focus groups, 26 Australians told us about their attitudes to consent, smartphones and privacy. And Uma (not her real name) from Coffs Harbour was articulate and passionate about why better privacy protections are needed. 'I left domestic violence and went into hiding and cut off contact with absolutely everyone,' she said. Unfortunately, her violent ex-partner tracked her down through the social media posts of friends and family, forcing her to relocate with her children a second time. 'That's why it's so important. That's why privacy needs to be followed up. When people say we've got this privacy policy, they've got to keep it.'



Sacha Molitorisz

UTS Lecturer in Law/FASS

Women are the story



In our newsletter, [The Story](#), Laxmi Murthy and I have been telling the stories of how people are building new media across Asia Pacific.

One of the key insights: often, the demographics for the gap in the market you need are right in front of you - like for half the population! The growth of voices for (and of) women that were too often poorly served by 20th century media is one of the most exciting media developments.

Proudly feminist media are building those needed voices for women and they're finding that plenty of men are eager to follow on. We wrote about the exciting model of [Khabar Lahariya](#) in northern Indian villages last year. And this month we've looked at how new media like [Magdalene](#) in Indonesia, [SheThePeople.TV](#) in India and [Villainesse](#) in New Zealand are speaking the language of popular feminism to shape conversations around gender, putting women out front as a constituency that matters. The story is in two parts: [first looking at the big picture](#) - how do women find the gap? What inspires them to try to fill it with an openly feminist voice that speaks to their community? In the [second part](#) we poked under the hood of feminist start-ups to look at how they actually make it work and the lessons we can share, looking at the journalism, the products and the business model.

Click here to subscribe to [The Story](#).



Jacqui Park

Head, Network Strategy and Innovation, IPI Media and CMT Senior Fellow.

Survey of Pacific journalists in age of disinfo

First Draft has launched a survey for journalists in the Pacific about how prepared they feel to report in an age of misinformation and disinformation.

Our earlier surveys in Australia and in New Zealand overwhelmingly showed journalists need more ongoing support and training as the tools and techniques used to spread misinformation and disinformation evolve.

We'd like to know how our Pacific counterparts are feeling, so please ask your journalist contacts in the Pacific to [complete this](#)



[multiple choice survey](#). It should only take 7 minutes, and all survey participants will receive an extensive toolkit of First Draft resources, including verification training.

The survey has been approved by the [UTS Ethics Committee](#). Please direct any questions to anne@firstdraftnews.com



Anne Kruger
First Draft APAC Director

Upcoming events



Funded by the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP) ANZ, two academics set out to learn what Australians think about consent, privacy and smartphones. The research yielded a report, [The Consent Trap](#) to be launched by Zoom webinar on Tuesday, 23 March at 5.30pm.

Please join UTS CMT's Sacha Molitorisz and RMIT's James Meese as they share the findings of their research and engage in a panel discussion, alongside Galantree Head of Legal and Mills Oakley Lawyer Amanda Khoo and FTI Consulting Senior Director Technology Tim de Sousa.

Sign up via the IAPP website [here](#).

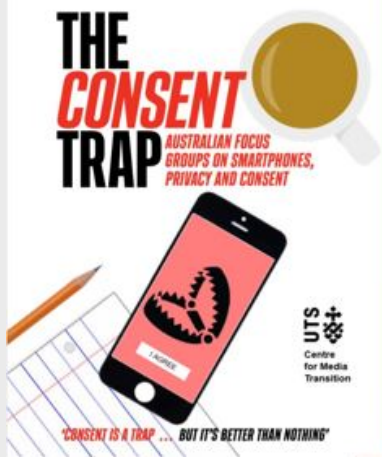


Register for the free Conference of the **Platform Governance Research Network** on 24 -26 March. The program is [now live](#), and offers 50 presentations on platform regulation from a global perspective, platform labour, radical platform theorising, and much more.

On 25 March at 11pm AEST (we promise it's worth it!), CMT's Sacha Molitorisz and Derek Wilding and UTS Karen Lee are on the comparative platform regulation panel sharing *the view from Australia: lessons in how to regulate digital platforms*. Moderated by USYD Terry Flew.

Register [here](#).

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We pay respect to the Elders both past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these places.



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