

# The Dutch ethnic press in Australia

## Abstract

This study focuses on the role of the Dutch ethnic press in Australian society and seeks to make a theoretical contribution to Nancy Fraser's revision of Jürgen Habermas's treatise, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Part of the study is a series of ten interviews with current and former representatives of the Dutch ethnic press as well as with community leaders. Despite being the largest non-English-speaking immigrant group for several decades, migrants from the Netherlands have never appeared to show much interest in either creating or supporting their own media. Findings from this study indicate that migrants from the Netherlands have generally not wished to be identified as newcomers. Instead, they have felt a strong desire to live up to their long-standing image of 'invisible migrants', and have actively avoided a designated public sphere.

---

**Niels Kraaier**  
Griffith University

## Introduction

Beyond the dominion of the big newspapers lies a media landscape unseen to most Australians. It's called the ethnic press and it comprises more than 200 foreign-language publications that represent over 40 different migrant communities. The ethnic press is thriving; in particular, Asian newspapers, which cater to the massive influx of migrants from China and India (Bacchetti 2008: 1).

The history of the ethnic press in Australia originates in 1848, when German settlers in Adelaide initiated the bi-lingual *Deutsche Post*. The newspaper could be regarded as the forerunner of countless other publications that appeared with the wave of immigrants from mainland Europe in the years after the Second World War. Despite being the largest non-English-speaking immigrant group for some time, migrants from the Netherlands have not appeared to show much interest in either creating or supporting their own media. Findings from a series of ten qualitative, semi-structured interviews with current and former representatives of the Dutch ethnic press as well as with several community leaders suggest that migrants from the Netherlands have generally not wished to be identified as newcomers. Instead, they have strongly desired to live up to their long-standing image of being 'invisible migrants'; they have joined the mainstream, and actively avoided a designated public sphere.

The first migrants from the Netherlands arrived at a time when the Australian government believed that rapid population growth was essential to meet the country's demand for labour and to repel a possible military invasion from Asia. Migration was a relatively new concept for the Dutch. For centuries, they had navigated the oceans and conquered the world, but abandoning the empire was not something many people aspired to. However, five years of Nazi occupation and the loss of their colonies in the West Indies dramatically changed their attitudes. The economy was in tatters and the population found itself in 'a state of social anomy' (Duyker 1987: 100). Facing an ostensibly hopeless situation, the Dutch government launched a massive emigration program, providing financial support for those willing to leave. By 1955, over 50,000 Dutch citizens had moved to Australia, making them the second-largest non-British migrant groups after the Italians.

The Dutch 'willingly accepted Anglo-Saxon supremacy, learned English quickly and unquestioningly took on the Australian way of life' (Jupp 2006: 261). They were seen as 'model assimilators', and soon got the reputation of being 'invisible migrants' (Markus 1994: 157; Jupp 1998: 102). When, by the end of the 1960s, the Dutch economy again flourished, and the interest in

migration diminished, the Dutch community in Australia had swelled into the hundreds of thousands (Jupp 2006: 259). However, while other migrant groups, such as the Italians and Greeks, developed an impressive ethnic press, boasting multiple daily newspapers, apart from a number of community newsletters and church bulletins, initially there was only one Dutch-language publication of significance: the *Dutch Weekly*. The newspaper was founded in 1951 but closed down in early 2005, after the editor concluded that it was no longer economically viable (Duyker, 1987: 145). Today, the Dutch ethnic press is limited to a monthly newspaper and a bi-monthly magazine, the *Dutch Weekly*'s old rival, *The Dutch Courier*, and *Holland Focus* (established in 2006), respectively. For several years, an online presence has also emerged, with Xpdite.net becoming a popular virtual meeting point for Dutch migrants in Australia and prospective migrants who still live in the Netherlands. Although some may argue Xpdite.net isn't a form of ethnic press in the traditional sense of the word, its apparent popularity led to the decision to include Xpdite.net in this study.

### Theoretical framework

The ethnic press could be seen as a form of alternative media, as opposed to the mainstream media. Avison and Meadows (2000: 344) observe that alternative media offers a 'communal voice', contributing to 'a sense of community identity for the people that they serve by meeting the specific information needs of the community'. Avison and Meadows argue that, rather than adopting the idea of a single, all-encompassing public sphere, 'we need to think in terms of a series of parallel and overlapping public spheres-spaces where participants with similar cultural backgrounds engage in activities concerning issues and interests of importance to them'. In this way, Avison and Meadows explain, 'they articulate their own discursive styles and formulate their own positions on issues that are then brought to a wider public sphere where they are able to interact across lines of cultural diversity' (2000: 344). Avison and Meadows build their argument on Nancy Fraser's revision of Jürgen Habermas's treatise, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, in which she challenges his earlier conception of the public sphere as a single entity. In Habermas's definition, the public sphere is open and accessible to all. Fraser remonstrates that, while the idea of open access is one of the central meanings of the norm of publicity, the claim to full accessibility was never fully realised (Fraser 1991: 63). Instead of the public sphere as a single entity, she proposes the existence and operation of multiple public spheres where members of society who are subordinated or ignored – whom Fraser describes as 'subaltern counterpublics' – are able to deliberate

among themselves (Fraser 1991: 67). Fraser's critique gives meaning to the popularity of the ethnic press in Australia, yet the case of the Dutch ethnic press may suggest that overlapping memberships of multiple public spheres and interaction across lines of cultural diversity is not necessarily the result of marginalisation or oppression. If the Dutch regard themselves part of the mainstream, how likely is it they feel misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media? Is the ethnic press a necessity for them, or merely a complement to other media? As members of both a Dutch public sphere in Australia and a broader Australian public sphere, it appears evident that the Dutch community have easily crossed 'lines of cultural diversity' as identified by Avison and Meadows (2000). If the Dutch are indeed not as voiceless as some other migrant groups, it could be that the ethnic press is less vital to them, and thus it plays a different role in their lives.

### Field work

Among the people interviewed for this study were the Webmaster of Xpdite.net, the editors of *Holland Focus* and *The Dutch Courier*, and the last editor of the discontinued *Dutch Weekly*. Further interviews were conducted with several 'community leaders' and other members of the Dutch community who, by virtue of their positions, had had dealings with the Dutch ethnic press. Because each interviewee had migrated from the Netherlands to Australia at varying stages of their lives, they were able to speak in multiple capacities: not just as experts on the Dutch ethnic press or the Dutch community, but also as individuals who had undergone the process of migration, settlement and assimilation or integration themselves. Interviews lasted approximately one hour each and were, depending on their preferences, conducted either at the home or the workplace of the participants. The conversations were recorded with their consent and transcribed for further analysis. In addition to the interviews, over a period of three months, forum discussions on Xpdite.net were followed in order to gain an understanding of the challenges migrants face as well as of their reasons for leaving the Netherlands. Moreover, this offered an opportunity to observe the interaction between prospective migrants and those who had already moved to Australia, either recently or years ago.

The interviewees' migrant experiences varied greatly, as did their motives for coming to Australia. Some have never considered themselves as migrants; in particular, those who already had employment upon arrival tended to avoid this designation. They rather appeared to see their migration as an intercontinental relocation or a temporary stay that had become permanent.

When asked why they had left the Netherlands, the interviewees' answers fell into roughly three different areas. Some simply wanted to make a new start and were prepared to give up everything to realise their dream. Others came for work or travel and never left. Finally, there were those who came to Australia during the heyday of Dutch settlement, shortly after the Second World War. They described themselves as 'typical migrants': arriving on a one-way ticket, knowing it would be forever whether they liked it or not. Most interviewees claimed they had experienced few difficulties in the settlement process, and all indicated they felt 'comfortable' among the Australian people. Yet, most admitted they still felt a certain connection with their country of origin. At 85, Lenie was one of the most senior migrants interviewed. She arrived to Australia in the early 1950s, when she was just 21 years of age. Lenie started her new life as a nurse in Brisbane, and worked her way up to a senior management position until she eventually retired in 1990.

The first Dutch language newspaper in Australia, the *Dutch Weekly*, was established around the time of Lenie's arrival. While Lenie was among its first subscribers, she said she did not consider the publication as a necessity. 'The *Dutch Weekly* wasn't so much a news source for me. It was more some kind of a celebration of my cultural heritage,' Lenie said. 'I continued to have a strong interest in my country but I did not have any inclination to mingle with other Dutch people,' she said. Lenie would remain loyal to the *Dutch Weekly* until it eventually ceased publication in 2005. According to its final editor, the decline in first-generation Dutch migrants and the fact that many second-generation Dutch people did not speak Dutch meant that this publication was no longer viable. Lenie found a substitute in the form of *The Dutch Courier*, a monthly newspaper that has been published since 1970 on behalf of the Associated Netherlands Societies (ANS) in Victoria.

Co-editor of *The Dutch Courier* since 2005, Cor migrated to Australia together with his parents in 1963. He runs the paper entirely by himself without much interference from the ANS. At the time of the interview, Cor observed that his readership had begun to decline. Initially, *The Dutch Courier* was aimed at first-generation migrants, but the paper suffers from the same demographic trends that previously caused the demise of the *Dutch Weekly*. The original purpose of *The Dutch Courier* was to serve as a communication platform for members of the ANS in Victoria. But after the *Dutch Weekly* was discontinued, the organisation decided to fill the gap and distribute *The Dutch Courier* nationwide. Cor said this decision marked a significant increase in sales figures. He claimed *The Dutch Courier* has a monthly circulation of 6,000 copies. Cor said *The Dutch Courier* was 'nowadays less about news, and more about community information'. While

advertisements make up an important source of income for *The Dutch Courier*, Cor maintained they were not essential, since the ANS provides financial support in the case of a negative cash flow.

Since 2006, *Holland Focus* has been a competitor of *The Dutch Courier*. Before they established *Holland Focus*, editor Iet and her husband Freek ran *The Dutch Courier*. After a difference of opinion with the ANS about the future strategy of the paper, they decided to establish their own publication in the form of *Holland Focus*. While Cor seemed to regard his involvement with the paper as 'a job that has to be done' and consequently showed limited emotional involvement, Iet appeared to be quite the opposite. 'It is a passion,' she said. *Holland Focus* appears five times a year, with one published approximately every two months. According to the editor, 10,000 copies are printed for each edition. Although advertisements make up an important source of income for *Holland Focus* too, the fact that it is a magazine rather than a newspaper means that it has a completely different look and feel than *The Dutch Courier*.

Wabe, the last editor of the former *Dutch Weekly*, shared his account of the events that led to the demise of the once successful, and for some time only, major Dutch publication. According to Wabe, the owners of the *Dutch Weekly* indicated as early as 1990 that they intended to remove their paper from the market. Its time-honoured readership of first-generation migrants was declining while the second generation showed little interest in their Dutch heritage. Many did not even speak the language of their parents. Even the *Dutch Weekly*'s move to reduce their publication frequency from weekly to fortnightly but did not prevent the paper from becoming a loss-making operation. Wabe took over what he described as 'a newspaper in a state of suspended animation', and decided to do things radically differently. He reduced the number of editorial staff from five to just two people, shifted the focus of the paper from news and current affairs to community information and entertainment, and even hired cheerleaders to promote the paper during cultural events. Initially, this bold approach seemed to work. From its takeover in 1991 until the turn of the century, circulation figures skyrocketed from a mere 1,500 to over 10,000 copies fortnightly, Wabe claimed. After 2000, his success quickly faded. Five years later, the financial situation of the *Dutch Weekly* had deteriorated to such a degree that he was left with no other option but to cease operating. During the interview, Wabe initially blamed the demise of the paper on two major developments: the introduction of Dutch-language satellite television in Australia and the quick advance of the Internet. However, as the interview progressed, he identified another contributing factor: the Dutch appear to pride their reputation of 'invisible

migrants' and hold a certain resentment of expressions that could potentially brand them as second-class citizens.

Wabe said their lack of interest in the ethnic press was, among other things, due to the Dutch national character, which he typified as 'arrogant and individualistic'; it made it nearly impossible for him to maintain a long-term viable business. 'The Dutch have always been arrogant folks,' Wabe said. 'The Dutch – including those who migrated to Australia – think they know it all. They often blame the Germans for being arrogant. Well, I guarantee you that if the Netherlands had the same population as Germany, we would probably be worse.' Wabe said the Dutch weren't interested in being seen as part of a group. 'We are independent, democratic thinkers, after all. That explains why, throughout the history of Dutch settlement in Australia, less than 10 percent subscribed to Dutch-language publications or united in clubs and associations. That is less than any other migrant group. They simply did not have any interest – those who had were the exception.' Most other interviewees, including the current editors, echoed this view. It was, for example, only after her retirement in the early 1990s that Lenie actively started to socialise with other Dutch migrants. Interestingly, 35-year-old Eline, who moved to Australia in 2008 after she completed a PhD in the Netherlands to take up a position as a biological researcher, did not seem to be much different from her fellow Dutchwoman who arrived two generations ago. Eline said she loved to socialise but not necessarily with her compatriots. The Dutch ethnic press was largely unknown to her; 'I have never read any of those publications and I don't think I will ever do [so],' Eline said.

Business owner Peter (aged 52) moved to Australia in the early 1980s to marry his Australian partner, and never showed particular interest in the Dutch community either. He said he was 'too busy building his new life'. Only recently has he started to renew his roots. He took up a subscription to *Holland Focus*, which he said was 'a nice magazine', but added that he could 'perfectly live without it'. 'It is how we are. We are hard workers. It doesn't matter where we are – we roll up our sleeves and make the most of it.' 'Kasper' (aged 63) has also lived in Australia since the early 1980s. He said throughout the years he has served as the Honorary Consul of the Netherlands in Queensland, he has heard countless stories of compatriots whose migration to Australia turned out to be a bitter disappointment. His impression was that this specific minority within the Dutch community made up an important part of the readership of the Dutch ethnic press. 'It is a tragedy', Kasper said; 'A lot of these people would never have migrated to Australia if the post-war reconstruction of the Netherlands had begun earlier. They have been fooled by the propaganda.'

Yvonne (aged 53) migrated to Australia with her parents in 1961, but, after struggling for several years, they decided to move back to the Netherlands. 'Once we were back, my father said, "What on earth have we done?" and he wanted to migrate to Australia again,' Yvonne said. 'So in 1974 they tried once more and this time they stayed.' Yvonne said she felt neither Australian nor Dutch, yet she had a strong interest in the Dutch community in Australia. From the mid-1990s until early 2012, she worked as the editor of the Dutch radio section of SBS Australia, through which she familiarised herself with the Dutch–Australian community. 'The first generation did everything to assimilate, fearing they would otherwise miss out', Yvonne reported. 'Most did not educate their children bilingually so many of the second generation don't speak Dutch.' Yvonne said the second generation often doesn't have very fond memories of their childhood because, in many migrant families, life was a struggle.

The third generation is different. They grew up in prosperity and regard their origin as a status symbol. It is nowadays quite cool to say your grandparents were from the Netherlands. For people like my parents, the Dutch ethnic press was important. The second generation isn't particularly interested. The third generation may be interested but doesn't necessarily speak Dutch. New migrants don't need the ethnic press. They get their information online.

Louw confirmed Yvonne's point. The 37-year-old webmaster of Xpdite.net started his website in 2004 when he was still living in the Netherlands. Seven years later, the number of unique users of Xpdite.net had grown to approximately 50,000 a month, with a combined number of visits of around 120,000. 'Xpdite.net was primarily aimed at people who were planning to migrate to Australia, but I have noticed that also those who have already made the move are increasingly active on the website,' Louw said. 'It looks like they take great joy in advising the rookies on their future endeavours. Some of them were already a member of the website previous to their migration. It is interesting to see how past and prospective migrants interact.' Louw said he did not consider Xpdite.net a competitor of the Dutch ethnic press. 'Their target audience is different. They are for the seniors. Most users of Xpdite.net are of a younger generation. And many haven't even migrated yet.'

During the three-month period that the forum discussions on Xpdite.net were followed, it emerged that the majority of visitors were made up of Dutch citizens who were either considering or planning to migrate to Australia, but still lived in the Netherlands. Most of them seemed to use the forum as a place to share plans for the future and exchange 'tips' and 'tricks'. However,

some seized the opportunity to vent their frustrations about Dutch society, which they claimed had been negatively affected by immigration. In one thread, they strongly condemned the alleged lack of willingness of migrants from non-Western backgrounds to integrate into Dutch society, claiming that they would be better at integrating in their new country. Indeed, more than once they referred to the perceived achievements of ‘invisible’ Dutch migrants in Australia. Most participants in the forum discussions who had already arrived – either recently or long ago – did not raise any objections and seemed to wholeheartedly agree with the criticism.

### Discussion

Nearly 60,000 Dutch citizens call Australia home, while 335,500 Australian citizens claim Dutch ancestry. As Wabe facetiously said, whether they arrived yesterday or half a century ago, they all appear to cherish their reputation of ‘invisible migrants’, and hold a certain resentment towards expressions that could potentially brand them as second-class citizens. With the first-generation Dutch migrants now in rapid decline and the second generation often unable to read the Dutch language, the handful of publications that remain face an uncertain future. The only exception appears to be Xpdite.net. The website continues to attract thousands of visitors and does something print media are unable to: Xpdite.net offers an online discussion forum to both Dutch migrants in Australia and potential Dutch migrants who still reside in the Netherlands, and blends two different spheres unhindered by traditional limitations of time and space.

Questions this study sought to address were why the Dutch community in Australia – despite its magnitude – historically showed little interest in their own press, and what the possible implications are for Nancy Fraser’s revision of Habermas’s treatise on the structural transformation of the public sphere. It should be noted that, for several reasons, the word ‘community’ is problematic. First of all, since many members of the Dutch community in Australia will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, it might be more appropriate to speak of an “imagined community” (Anderson, 1991). Secondly, there are at least two Dutch communities in Australia: those who largely ignored the ethnic press and disappeared into the mainstream, and the few who did subscribe to Dutch-language publications or joined clubs and associations. The latter formed a minority within a minority.

Through the interviews it became apparent that the first generation of Dutch migrants went to great lengths to live up to their image of the invisible migrant. They were expected to assimilate quickly into the mainstream, not only by the Australian public but also by the Dutch government. Two interviewees independently recalled a brochure issued among prospective migrants in which the Dutch authorities emphasised the importance of speaking English at home. According to these interviewees, prospective migrants were encouraged to replace their Dutch identity with an Australian surrogate. It may explain why, for example, quite a few migrants of the first generation anglicised their surnames and why most did not educate their children bilingually. The first generation is now in decline, while the second – raised in an environment where assimilation was considered to be of primary importance – does not speak the language of their parents, and feels little connection with their cultural heritage. For the Dutch ethnic press, they seem of little value. However, the third generation appears to be radically different. Several interviewees pointed out how the grandchildren of those who arrived in the years following the Second World War predominantly regard their cultural heritage as a status symbol. Growing up in a multicultural society that has long rejected the concept of assimilation, they don’t feel the pressure their grandparents and parents once felt. They are as Australian as anyone else, but have the freedom to enjoy their heritage whenever they see fit.

As previously noted, Wabe estimated that ‘throughout the history of Dutch settlement in Australia, less than 10 percent subscribed to Dutch-language publications or united in clubs and associations’. They were the ones for whom living in Australia turned out to be a lot less idyllic than the propaganda had led them to believe. If correct, Wabe’s estimate points to the fact that 90 percent of the Dutch community in Australia assimilated. His description of the Dutch national character as ‘arrogant and individualistic’, and that Dutch people are independent, democratic thinkers who hold a certain resentment of anything that could potentially brand them as second-class citizens, is a prevalent attitude seen in Dutch migrants today. Peter, for example, said he believed the Dutch ‘integrate quite well’, and did not regard his association with other Dutch people a necessity. Eline said she did not feel the need to be part of the Dutch community at all. A snapshot of a forum discussion on Xpdite.net indicates similar attitudes among those who are still living in the Netherlands but are preparing for their migration. Although they seem to enjoy virtual interaction, only a few appear to be interested in meeting one other in real life.

Where does this animosity against Dutch community life come from? Why did, and apparently still do, the Dutch blend so easily with the Australian mainstream? Peters (2006: 215) provides a possible explanation by describing the Dutch national character as a pluralist and cosmopolitan ethnicity:

their ethnic identity, securely entrenched in its sense of Dutchness, is permeated with a global and transcultural consciousness. Nor has it been transnational in the contemporary sense because the links with the Netherlands have been mostly through family. As a consequence, their instincts are firmly counterpoised to varieties of ethno-nationalism or ethno-centrism as distinct from ethnic pride and cultural loyalty.

Peters (2006: 215) refers to Hofstede (1987) who stated that the Dutch play eight roles in society. Van Ruler (2003: 503) explains these roles as follows:

the first role is that of ‘the Dutch uncle’, knowing what is best. The second is that of ‘the housewife’ (applicable also to men) with a more than normal aim at caring for personal and social environment. The third role is of ‘the nurse’ (also applicable to men). The fourth is that of ‘the innkeeper’, always welcoming but never totally altruistic. The fifth role is that of ‘the traveller’, which is less chauvinistic and rather internationally oriented. The sixth role is ‘the merchant’, the no-nonsense, hardworking nature.

Peters (2006: 216) argues that the roles of the traveller and the merchant have led to a strong internationalist orientation, which may explain their perceived talent to adapt.

## Conclusion

In analysing the role of the Dutch ethnic press in Australian society, historical, cultural and political factors cannot be ignored. The Second World War and the subsequent collapse of the Dutch empire was a highly traumatising event that left a deep scar on Dutch national consciousness. The current political climate in the Netherlands could easily give the impression that up until now, the populace has struggled to accept the fact their country is no longer a world power. At the same time, there is growing resentment towards migrants who have chosen to live in the Netherlands, as illustrated

by some of the forum discussions on Xpdite.net. While the Dutch may have been more welcoming in the past, as Hofstede explains when he discusses the role of the innkeeper, there seems to have always been a degree of contempt for migrants. This may explain why those Dutch citizens who become migrants themselves do not wish to be identified as such. As Wabe said, they hold a certain resentment of anything that could potentially brand them as second-class citizens. They may not necessarily feel ashamed of their migrant status, but certainly intuit the limitations that come with it. Hence, they do whatever they are able to in order to blend in; they use invisibility as a survival tactic.

Where does this leave Fraser’s revision of Habermas’s treatise, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*? Findings suggest that the formation of counter public spheres does not solely rely on whether members of a particular group feel marginalised, underrepresented in the mainstream, or lack a sense of connection; it may also rely on important factors, such as culture and upbringing. Did the Dutch really assimilate that well or did they simply ‘keep their heads down’, hoping for the best? Although Fraser’s revision allows for overlapping memberships of multiple public spheres, a considerable cohort of Dutch migrants in Australia appear to have chosen not to do so. The fact that the Dutch never appeared to show much interest in either creating or supporting their own media may not necessarily mean they did not need it. Rather, they might have suppressed their desire because they felt they wouldn’t benefit from it – or worse, feared that it would hamper their efforts to succeed in Australian society. In terms of Fraser’s notion of counter public spheres, this suggests that the formation of counter public spheres may be subtler than it seems.

## References

- Anderson, Benedict. (1991). *Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Avison, Shannon and Meadows, Michael. (2000). ‘Speaking and Hearing: Aboriginal Newspapers and the Public Sphere in Canada and Australia.’ *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 25 (7): 347–66.
- Bacchetti, Elizabeth. (2010). ‘Melbourne’s Ethnic Press in the New Media Age.’ <http://www.upstart.net.au/2010/05/10/melbournes-ethnic-press-in-the-new-media-age/>, accessed on 14 November 2013.
- Duyker, Edward. (1987). *The Dutch in Australia*. Melbourne: AE Press.

Fraser, Nancy (1992). Rethinking The Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, pp.109–142.

Fraser, Nancy. (1993). 'Rethinking The Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. In B. Robbins (Ed.), *The Phantom Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.1–32.

Habermas, Jürgen. (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Jupp, James. (1998). *Immigration*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Markus, Andrew. (1994). *Australian Race Relations 1788-1993*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Meadows et al. (2007). 'Framing the study.' In *Community Media Matters: An Audience Study of the Australian Community Broadcasting Sector*. Brisbane: Griffith University, pp. 10–16.

Van Ruler, Betteke. (2003). 'Public Relations in the Polder: The Case of The Netherlands.' In *The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

---

Niels Kraaier is a doctoral candidate with the School of Humanities at Griffith University in Brisbane. His study involves a political and cultural analysis of public relations in government communication in Australia and the Netherlands. Niels has nearly 20 years experience in media and communication. He started his career as a journalist for a daily paper and worked as a speechwriter for several consecutive government ministers in the Netherlands before relocating to Australia in 2008