

ROSEMARY SORENSON:

As I grew up in South Plympton in Adelaide and read *The Advertiser* it was a different rhetoric, a different discourse that I was getting. Now it seems to me that returning to that would be for me a loss of what's actually able to take place in newspapers now, and I think this is the core of what I got from what Paul Kelly is saying and I don't disagree at all with his image, his snap shot of what the world's like now. I feel as pessimistic as he is, however I do disagree that the functions of a newspaper is to return to a previous time when we were able to fix things through the newspaper, because I don't think that's ever really been able to happen. The newspaper that Paul Kelly's talking about would never have fixed the world that I knew being a working class girl in a world where men wrote editorials to fix the world and I'm interested to see today if somebody's going to be talking about the function of the editorial in *The West Australian* or something, some study of editorials. I just think we don't go to editorials any more to get that kind of discourse. I don't think that's where a newspaper positions itself in the modern culture. Where then? I think it's multiple. Actually we don't know yet and I'm actually interested in the new discourses, and I'm sorry to use the word discourse because I know it's probably going to offend some people, but it seem to me to be a useful word that's come out of theoretical studies in the last 20 years. I don't know where it's going to come from and I'm not saying I've got the answers to that.

I just hear what we got then was a very lucid and very meaningful and very concerned picture of the world; what we didn't get was a picture of the newspaper. It seems what I'm saying is that I think we are diverging now. I think the newspaper used to think that it was a snap shot of the world and that was it's job, it was to represent the thinking class. I think the thinking class is now dispersed, I don't think it happens in the same way as it used to. I think, I mean, I always use myself as evidence of that quite frankly, because I wouldn't be up here speaking to you in a world that is I think is reflected in the traditions that Paul Kelly was talking about. So therefore I see that as a positive. I don't know where we take those positives and I do know that there are many more places where that can be happening, Fitting into that, where does the newspaper go? I actually think that it

does become a sort of a service provider. I actually think it's actually now is much more importantly a bridge it's not the ultimate, it's not to the editorial that I will go. It's to a space that will offer lots of different kinds of languages, of rhetoric's, of viewpoints, of something that I don't even know is there yet but I actually think they're exploding, I actually think they're getting bigger spaces than the one that "yes I can imagine yearning for that" because I think it has an authority that I would love to feel is out there. I think we've lost that and I think I'm a little bit more optimistic than, even though I see the viewpoint and I see the picture that he's given, I think I'm a lot more optimistic about the way the newspaper can actually respond to that.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

I think one of the positives about the new media landscape we're in is that there's been a fracturing of the public sphere, that it's no longer one kind of voice, one kind of position of authority that's represented, but there are very much competing voices and competing interests, I think that there are great problems with that of course can become a kind of tower of Babel. On the other hand I think that we are, we have to move away from the position where say the quality media involves a series of experts speaking to people or at people, and move towards both enhancing the quality of the intellectual debate in the media. I'm very much with that, I'll say something on that in one second. But also doing that in a spirit of far greater interactivity, to use the buzzword. I've got a concrete example of this...The Margot Kingston factor I call it. I think Margot's always doing interesting things in the media and right at the moment at the Fairfax Online site Margot has a very interactive column. She's got a column in which she says the things that I think probably wouldn't make it into the main section of *The Herald* these days, but what's more she's actually encouraged readers to write in and make contributions and she's actually grooming some of them as columnists who disagree with her. It's an incredibly pluralistic, quite volatile space; it's very Margot Kingston. I think it's an example of some of the good things, productive things that I think can be done with online and with interactivity. And I particularly would say that as someone who has a lot of contact with younger people, with bright younger people who are the natural

constituency for quality media, you know, they have felt disenfranchised by the media, by the quality media for years. It's not because they've been dumbed down or they're idiots, it's because they are really smart and they don't like to be patronised, and they find of course, commercial current affairs a complete joke, I mean they find it funny, it's that simple. But they also feel really patronised by a paper like the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and they also feel patronised by the ABC who ghettoises things that interest them. You know, I don't know if you've seen the redesigned *Sydney Morning Herald* recently, but you know there's this fabulous split they've made between Spectrum which now looks like *The Times* Literary supplement, so it looks like something you're going to get tested on it over breakfast, it's in really posh type. And they only deal with high culture and they they've taken all this supposedly low culture stuff and shoved it into the metropolitan section and it's full of break-up boxes and bright graphics and colour sections. And yet, you know, there are some really intelligent things that one might say about television or film or popular culture.

So that just lead me to my final point which is Paul raised a fairly important question, you know, how can we I guess bump up the quality of intellectual debate in our quality media? I think that this is a key issue we need to work much harder on bridging the divides between the academy and the quality media. From my perspective as someone who was a journalist for fifteen years, or still works as a journalist, but has always had one foot in the academy, my sense is that there's terrific work going on in the humanities. Fantastic, very engaged work with you know, contemporary politics and ethical issues and cultural issues, but there's this incredible resistance in the mainstream media to those ideas. Now, sometimes academics are not very good at getting their ideas out I understand that, I mean, but I do think that there's also a kind of prejudice or a bias in the mainstream media at the moment which perhaps reflects a "baby boomerish" kind of mentality about post modernism, which half the columnists in newspapers are still trying to beat to death. They haven't noticed that it's been around for 25 years now, you know, a whole generation is growing old on this stuff.

And then finally the response, I guess this is the other thing I'll finish on this point I guess: rather than try to explore in a rather pluristic way these old ideas newspapers, quality newspapers have taken a kind of populists line and they are clogged with the most reactionary columnists, I mean, I have never seen such reactionary times in the quality media. So I think it's very depressing, but I do think that one of the solutions has to be bridging the gap between the universities and our quality media.

CHARLES WARE :

I'm the fraud up here I'm not a journalist, I'm a lawyer and I am a consumer of the output that the content providers provide. I live here in Yeppoon and despite what you might say about the Sydney Morning Herald, Catherine, every Sunday, it takes a day to get up here, I go down to the newsagent and I get Saturday's *Sydney Morning Herald* and Saturday's Age and that's my brain food for the week.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

Heavens, poor thing!

CHARLES WARE:

One of my other roles is in the electricity industry which is undergoing a lot of structural reform and you deal with communities that whether you call it economic rationalism or whatever, the impact of technology, the impact of globalisation, and sorry, it isn't going to change and newspapers are not exempt from it. It's about the organisational context I would have thought, in which newspapers are produced, so The Australian has to fit in somewhere into the global business plan of News Corporation, and if I were a shareholder in News Corporation which I'm not, that is something that I would want to happen. Which really leads to the debate that is not reflected in the media, I don't subscribe to that view by the way, but it's what newspapers can do for the community it's

in and it goes back to what Paul was saying about leadership and being able to tell a story and what is the story saying and we don't have it. I mean, *The Australian* has played around with the impact of economic rationalism or, I'll use that as the broad term to cover all change impacts. We're not leading, we're not engaging in the debate in the community about winners and losers out of that, just as you've had winners and losers in newspaper industry out of the introduction of new technology. That's what's happening in the wider community with the change that we're going through, and it won't stop and we can't go back. So that to me seems to be the great omission in the content at the moment. I mean Nicholas Rothwell, who I read avidly every time he writes and he wrote a series of articles about economic rationalism and I remember he went out to Longreach and I was out there shortly afterwards, and he'd interviewed the Mayor Joan Maloney, and we got talking about it and Nicholas was trying to say well what do we do, and it wasn't until the community out of desperation I suppose, certainly in the Queensland context, discovered Pauline Hanson and came to that lever to bang politicians over the head and that's why 1.5 cents a litre may be a short term cave and not good long term economics, but you can see why it happens.. Because the media, as the bridge, if you want to call it between the government and the citizen, hasn't reached the gulf. Although I would like to give 10 out of 10 to the series on the Murray and emphasis on the environment that I think *The Australian* has engaged in but serious economic journalists like *The Financial Review* still aren't getting to how we transition with winners and losers under the economic transformation that's happening in Australia.

The other thing I'd like to say in a regional context. The topic of the sessions is "Public Culture and Public Intellectuals", it's very hard regionally I was thinking driving down, who we'd call a public intellectual in this part of the world and looking at the Mayor over there. I don't think any of the locals here would qualify. Probably one of the things that tertiary education, tertiary institutions and what Dawkins did in bringing tertiary institutions to regional Australia is that it does provide the platform I suppose for a debate, for the public debate. The only two not being disrespectful, that I could think of in regional Queensland was Henry Reynolds from James Cook University and Liam Ryan while part of the faculty at CQU touched on these broader issues of where we are

going as a nation and a society. And maybe I can look at all the academics here and say you should be taking your role and your position much more seriously in raising those issues because when you go out there, when you go out to the central west people really just can't see a future and they may not have a future but as a society we have to help the transition and we don't have all the answers and the media is not engaging in that debate. So I'll leave it as that before people throw rocks at me.

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

I think some of what Charles Ware's said and certainly some of what Catherine said were interesting points about the world, but I don't think you can really expect the media, or newspapers in particular, to be a cure-all for them. Incidentally, I'm very pleased that Paul did not go anywhere near his actual subject in manufacturing consensus, I was ready with a tirade against the very idea of consensus in politics, but fortunately you're spared that. Paul's suggestion for cures, first the challenge of more and better empirical reporting of politics: I agree with that as a principle, but it's rather a motherhood idea, I think that you've got to remember that in newspapers in particular that, until the advent of television in Australia politics went through a long period where it was reported pretty straight particularly in the broadsheet newspapers. If the Prime Minister made a speech, you got the speech reported and you got the Prime Minister making the speech and you were told of where he made the speech and when he made the speech, but that was about all. Television over a period persuaded newspapers of the need to become more interpretive and....political reporting became when the Prime Minister made a speech there was the background to that speech, what had led up to him making it, there was a bit of interpretive stuff about why he'd made it, to whom he'd made it, it was put in the context of the politics of the time, whether there was an election coming, what there economic situation was and so on and so on. And I think that's important and I don't think that I'd want to drop that I wouldn't want to leave that stuff out and go back to the strictly empirical style we had in the 1950's. I think you can argue to an extent about how opinionated political reporting should be, the Margot Kingston factor if Catherine want's to bring that in, but I think that you could say that it shouldn't have an interpretive

quality about it and that the reporter's own value system should be ignored completely, is both unrealistic and also would be counter productive I mean, people are not going to go back to reading newspaper that are simply journals of record, they want a bit more than that. A very fine editor in the Packer press of all places, Brian Penton, once made the point to Don Whittington and I think made a very good point, that I think reporters should not strive to be objective, you can't be objective, you can't be impartial, a) it's against human and b) it doesn't work if you try. What reporters should strive to be is fair. Put it in the right context and give the other side, and that to me is what empirical reporting is about and I'd like to see more of that certainly, but I don't want to go back to simply recording facts.

The other thing Paul suggests is a more rigorous meeting of the minds, the use of new possibly younger intellectuals as columnists, opinion writers, leader writers, what ever and again on paper that's a pretty good idea, but I would question where you're going to find them. I don't think they necessarily come out of the universities. I mean, the latest find in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, is an academic columnist the young radical meeting of the minds person is one Imre Salusinsky,

(some voices question IMre being young.....)

MUNGO MacCALLUM continues:

Well, no he's not, but he's presented as young, I mean he's presented as a poor man's P. J. O'Rourke, a sort of bankrupt P. J. O'Rourke, if you like, but this is the sort of, this is the approach, this is what happens, and this incidentally when Jonathan Shier of the ABC was talking about finding a right wing Philip Adams, the first name that was mentioned was Salusinsky. Now Salusinsky may be a very jolly little writer in the P. J. O'Rourke style, but he's not an intellectual's arsehole! That's one of the problems that happens and in *The Australian* himse, in Paul's own paper, the new young voice, is Emma Tom.

(interjection saying: she's not an intellectual)

MUNGO MacCALLUM continues:

No, she's not an intellectual, but she pretends to be and in some way, I mean she doesn't always write about her genitals, sometimes she tries to write about her mind. But I mean, this is one of the problems it's all very well to say –fine young intellectuals, who's young intellectuals, I mean, my young intellectuals, your young intellectuals, academic young intellectuals, people from the business world young intellectuals, okay but let's make sure they are journalists first. Let's make sure they have something to say, they are about to say it clearly and logically, they are able to argue a case. There are an awful lot of academics I know who can't do that, or can't do it in coherent prose.

And one more thing and I'll make room for somebody else. I'd just like to comment on Paul's thing about when he started talking about we've got to get past the orthodoxies, we've got to challenge new subjects and challenge what's going on and then you said okay well we've got to talk about the opportunities of globalism, we've got to talk about the need for social justice, we've got to talk about what's going on in the knowledge economy and those were the three examples he gave. Now to me those are the bloody orthodoxies, I mean that's not breaking any new ground at all, I mean that globalism is simply a matter for opportunities is to me a controversial idea in it self but certainly the orthodoxy, the idea that social justice is somehow got to be reinterpreted, well, you know, whether you take the Aden Wridgeway version or the Noel Pearson version of what should happen in aboriginal reconciliation. Against that's an orthodoxy, and the knowledge economy of course is not only an orthodoxy, it's become a cliché. Now, that to me is what's wrong, that we get, that public debate gets settled around these things and what we're looking for is more people to comment perhaps in an original way, but still on the same subjects. We're not trying to think out of the square sufficiently, and I think that's place where newspapers have gone wrong, they've got bogged down. We have "the debate about". ...and The Australian's very much to blame about this and I must say it's more recent development under Paul's editorship, but we have a sort of, we set up a debate on a subject which has been chosen at the editorial conference on Monday or by

whatever, and that becomes an orthodoxy in itself. We're not looking sufficiently for the alternatives, which means that when we talk about politicians, Paul's quite right, I mean politicians think they know what people are thinking, but you've got to limit that, politicians think they know what people are thinking partly because the media are telling people what to think. But politicians also should be aware that people think different things at different times and people think different things about different issues. I mean, it's all very well to say you think you know what people are thinking about the GST on the 25th of December, they may well think that about the GST but they may think something quite different about income tax as a general proposition, or they may think something quite different about the need for progressive tax as opposed against regressive taxes. You have to be very careful with that and on that I think Paul's quite unfair when he says that Beazley and Howard are really close in policies, to me there's a yawning difference which Beazley tries to emphasise, but Howard keeps denying and therefore, the myth, the Howard generated myth that Beazley stands for nothing has become one of the political orthodoxies. And Beazley has made it very clear over the years that he is in favour of more public intervention by governments, that he does not believe that tax cuts are a good thing per se, but he wants to see the public sector and education, health and research reinvigorated and that he is prepared to spend public money to do it. Now this is a very different position from Howard and to pretend that it's the same it's simply not true.

One final remark in case I don't get another chance. To me there have been exactly two times since it's founding in 1964 when The Australian has been the best broadsheet in the country. One was when Adrian Deemer was in control of it from 1967 until 1972, and the other was under Paul Kelly's editorship, and I'd like to put that on record during that time I think the paper was the best broadsheet in the country. Thank you.

PAUL KELLY: ...

We've got to look, we've got to try and look beyond the orthodoxies it seems to me, but when I look at the points Catherine made and I say well, how we make some meaning out

of all of these points? I think two ways we make meaning out of it are through the original prescriptions I put forward. Good contemporary reporting can absorb a lot of the points that she wants to achieve and she argues very much for commentary and for debate involving people from the academy, I mean I think that's enormously important, but this is really one of the things I meant when I talked about a more intellectual approach from our quality media and a greater commitment to a debate about a meeting of the minds.

Now, in relation to Charles's point I do disagree. I don't think that the business model necessarily has to be like this at all. I disagree with the idea that there is a fixed and rigid business model anyway, what's going on with business is changing incredibly rapidly. Some business models are succeeding and others are failing. The point I'm raising is the extent to which there is a business culture which is undermining the editorial culture and undermining the paper, undermining the product, that's the question I'm raising and I think it's an important question.

A separate question which I don't want to get into but which I have very firm views about would be the business strategies themselves. What should be the appropriate business strategy for the Sydney Morning Herald what should be the appropriate business strategy for the West Australian? Are the commercial strategies right or are they wrong? This is a very, very important question.

Now, in relation to Mungo. I don't think I'll say anything about what Mungo said after the compliment that he paid me at the end, which I value enormously and which matters to me an awful lot in terms of my period as Editor in Chief of the paper. But a couple of points on his remarks. Look, when I was talking about reporting I wasn't really talking about reporting so much in the political context. I think reporting out there in the community is what we need and the examples I gave really related to community. When it concerns political reporting, there's too much reporting about tactics, my main criticism about political reporting at the moment is that it is obsessed with tactics and there's not enough focus on issues and people don't care about tactics and I'm very suspicious when

journalists concentrate enormously on tactics, because it's a substitute to doing what they ought to be doing which is tackling the bigger issue.

Mungo and I disagree about Howard and Beazley. I mean, I feel very strongly that we are not getting the right sort of political leadership that we need at the moment. Now, in relation to the examples that I gave, what I'm trying to say here is that there's too much resort to cliché and gesture at the moment. These examples I gave are very complicated issues. What I'm saying is these issues should be explored intellectually and in an appropriate reporting way, rather than being left on the table and being debated at the more superficial level of deference and gesture.

ROSEMARY SORENSON:

I need to ask Paul about numbers, because is commercial interests of the editor the same as how many papers you sell? Because if it is, can Australia afford a small circulation, well I imagine you're calling 'high quality' paper which we haven't been able to do. They keep busting don't they, the reality of it?

PAUL KELLY:

Well, what I'd say about that is this is a very vexed debate. How does the management reward the circulation manager? Is the circulation manager rewarded for maximising the number of newspaper sales or through minimising the number of newspaper return? The newspaper returns for those who don't know are the unsold papers, in other words waste. Now, my experience of circulation managers is their number one objective is not always selling newspapers. They have enormous cost constraints imposed upon them and they've got to ensure that they minimise their returns. And so you get involved in this eternal debate about what sells the newspaper. Does supply sell the newspaper or does demand sell the newspaper? I tried to work out a mathematical formula when I was Editor in Chief in which I could conclusively demonstrate to the management that newspaper circulation was a function of supply. Because supply was enormously

important for a paper like *The Australian*. How many copies of *The Weekend Australian* do they put into Longreach? I don't know. How many newsagencies are there in Longreach? How many newsagents in regional Queensland have sold out of copies of *The Weekend Australian* by 9.30 am? How many on the South Coast of New South Wales are sold out by 8.45 am Saturday morning? Now, I'm just speculating here, this is a completely theoretical discussion, but this question of circulation is a very vexed one and I think it's a very important one. I'd like to think that the objective is to sell papers and the objective was to sell more papers and that therefore means that you need a good print run. You can't sell papers unless you've got a good print run, particularly if you are running a national paper, that's less so with a state paper. But, I've gone off at a tangent there, but I said during my remarks Rosemary, that I think the two prescriptions I put forward would in fact not lead to falls in newspaper circulation, but would lead to increases in newspaper circulation. I mean, I put up a high premium on newspapers being commercially successful. They have no future if they are not commercial successful. I also believe the great challenge, the great challenge for broadsheet papers is the marriage between a quality product and commercial success and I actually think there's a high degree of harmony there.

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

Can I just comment on that as one who has probably worked for more small circulation newspapers than most? The problem we always found with *Nation Review* and with everything else is that there were two problems really, one was distribution it was almost impossible to get the bloody things distributed properly mainly because the big boys, the Fairfax's the Packers and the Murdoch's did everything they could to stop newsagents stocking the mag. made it very hard and the only commercial distributors were at that stage Gordon and Gotch and Packer, were unwilling to take small papers anyway, there wasn't very much in it for them and they got very low priority and when it's made clear to them by the big boys that they didn't want these papers distributed anyway it suddenly became even harder. The other thing was that the smaller newspapers we almost invariably under-capitalised on two levels. The first was that there just wasn't enough

money in the bank to start with and with the newspaper business you've always got at least a ninety day gap before you start getting any returns at all, and this is often a lot longer. And there just wasn't enough residual capital to wear that. I mean, this applied to *The Matilda*, it applied to *The Republic* and this applied to a number of other papers. And even when you've got a very generous benefactor like Gordon Barton was for Nation Review, who's going to cop loss year after year after year for just so long before he won't take them any more. But the second reason that the losses were there all of the time apart from bad distribution was that it's very, very hard to sell advertising to small newspapers particularly when they aim to be national newspapers, because you can't get those niche ads, you can't you know, you cant get the local book shop, the local restaurants, the local record companies, it's not worth their while, local record stores. And also is very hard to get a good advertising manager who's prepared to work on commission and to work bloody hard and get out and sell, to do it. The technology now has made it easier and cheaper to actually produce a small quality newspaper, but producing it is only the beginning, you've got to seel it and you've got to distribute it and I think those are still two very major obstacles and in that sense Paul's quite right. Unless you can make it commercial you know, no you can't run it and you've got to make compromises to make it commercial.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

Well, I think points Paul made about the online sections of newspapers were very important, I mean, you know if you talk to people at *The Herald*, if you look at *F2*, I mean they're losing money hand over fist. The question is how long should they continue to do that for? Or how long do you invest in an open ended future? I mean I can understand from the pressure from shareholders these days who seem to drive the whole thing. On the other hand, when I look at a newspaper, when I look at The Weekend Australian or the Weekend Herald I see a bunch of atoms, you know, huge bundles of atoms that have got to be shifted like big bricks from here to there. It's a pretty inefficient way of getting information and ideas and images around the country these days, but ...

(interjection: It's a nice bunch of atoms though isn't it...)

CATHERINE LUMBY

Well look there's tactility and people are attached to it and you know what I'm saying is I think that this is part of the problem, we're in this terrible bind at the moment and I think that this is probably one of the reasons that I think newspapers are in a kind of crisis, and intellectual crisis, because there's this panic that's taken hold in the past ten year particularly when you look at the Sydney Morning Herald, it's a great example over where to find their audience and who their audience should be.

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

But it's not on the Internet is it, I mean, you mentioned Margot Kingston before, I mean the fact was that when Margot was working in Canberra she was an important and influential journalist read by a great many people now she's working on the Internet, who knows about Margot Kingston instead, accept a small and dedicated clique.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

That's at the moment Mungo, but I think that you've got to look to the future and what kinds of audience she can build. And also the question of the kind of innovative things that you can do, you can do you can do different things in a kind of smaller kind of salon type mode.

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

But are those influential? I mean, that's really what we're getting at. I mean if you are a political journalist and an opinionated one like Margot, you want to be able to get your

view out and you want people to take notice of it and listen to it, I bet she was much more successful at doing that in print than she is on the Internet.

CHARLES WARE:

Look at Fairfax for example, and all the major newspapers have an IT strategy whether that's the right one or the wrong one that gets back to what Paul was saying about different business models, time will tell. If you are in the information market as opposed to the newspaper market you would have covered all the bases so I think you'll see newspapers continuing with the IT strategy and....

CATHERINE LUMBY:

This is where it gets actually quite scary because it seems to me that the people who say what a newspaper should do and what is quality, and I'm all for it, intellectual newspapers of course would be fantastic to have great writing in them, but they're not the people, they're the ones who always can tell me what's wrong with *The Courier Mail* and they don't read it, and secondly, ...

(interjections of inaudible speech, laughter)

CATHERINE LUMBY :

Did you lose your job under him? Secondly, what happens is those people then go to the Internet and read *The New York Times* and they're the ones who have the strongest opinions about what Australian newspapers should and shouldn't do and I find that they're in fact the least interested in the user, the people out there who, you know, not who should be reading it, but who are reading it and I actually think they are the ones we should be listening to. Unfortunately, what they want to read is not what I want to read, it's tough.

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

Yeah, well I mean, that's the thing isn't it, that newspapers by definition have to be fairly pluralistic. I mean on the Internet you can go to exactly to what you want and when it's finished you can turn it off, but when you are buying 48 pages of print, you know it's got to.....

ROSEMARY SORENSON:

But can I just say, this comes back to this whole issue about publics versus the public and I think the fragmenting of the public sphere which is part of this debate. In a sense the Internet becomes a mode for addressing that fragmentation and so maybe.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

Sorry, and the paper is a channel to that which it seems is going to horrify you now and I'm obviously a very new newspaper person and I bow to your experience, but it seems to me what my job is to actually point to a lot of things so I might put a little bit of a fabulous writer who I can't get in the newspaper, but I'll point to it alongside you know, some piece of nonsense that somebody else will get a giggle out of. So it seems to me that what I am is that bridging mechanism and we haven't talked, we don't need to talk so much about writers, but about editors, because the young people are fine but they can't write until we actually nurture them. I mean I think they're great, and they're fresh and they're fabulous, but gee they're stupid. So until I can actually give them some help into and give them some encouragement so the editors.....

MUNGO MacCALLUM:

See that applied to the Internet as a whole, I mean Paul says the Internet's a fabulous research tool, like fuck it is, you know, there is so much rubbish on the Internet and to

plough your way through it when you get to something that purports to be fact it's only something that started in print anyway, you might as well go straight to the library.

MUNGO MacCALLUM: Well, but if I want to look up the Encyclopaedia Britannica I'll do it at the library, I don't need to go the Internet.

Charles Ware :

The Encyclopaedia Britannica is an interesting issue because it folded and was reborn with the impact of technology, so why isn't that going to happen with newspapers, newspapers are about information, and news technology is about this intermediation, so you get rid of the newspaper and you go to the Net.

MUNGO MacCALLUM: No, newspapers aren't only about information, they're about interpretation, they're about record, they are something you can keep and go back to, they are about entertainment they are about all sorts of things which is quite nice to have on hand and something you can refer back to easily, rather than sitting in front of a computer.

Also the attention span factor comes into it, it's much easier to read a large article in print and it is on a screen.

CATHERINE LUMBY:

Depends what you are used to.

ROSEMARY SORENSON:

They are about local community too which I think is the key issue here which is where I see *The Courier Mail* because even though it's a big local community it's still people who can confront me, I'm real and they can actually hear me and the physicality of it is the thing that I think is our advantage over the Internet and always will be.