

Radical holdings? Student newspaper collections in Australian university libraries and archives

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Abstract

University student newspapers have a long history across Australian university campuses of engaging with contemporary social and political issues, often reflecting a sentiment not represented in mainstream media publications. Student newspapers have a demonstrated engagement with radical thinking, dissent and political activism and are an important published record of historical discourses, contributing to a critically informed understanding of the society that produced them. This paper reports on a pilot survey of Australian university holdings of their student newspapers. Findings inform current and future student newspaper collection practices by university libraries and archives, including building ongoing relationships with editorial teams, and recommended improvements for access to this primary source material for future researchers.

Keywords: student newspapers; student publications; digital collections; special collections; archives; student politics; college newspapers

Introduction

University student newspapers have a long history across Australian university campuses of engaging with contemporary social and political issues, often reflecting a sentiment not represented in mainstream media publications (Wood, 2017). Student newspapers have a demonstrated engagement with radical thinking, dissent and political activism and are an important published record of historical discourses, contributing to a critically informed understanding of their social context. (See for example Barcan, 2011; Crane & Leshner, 2018; Rodgers, 2010)

While many universities in Australia hold collections of their student newspapers, there is little to no consistency in how these publications are held or accessed. This paper highlights the value of the student press produced on university campuses in contributing to Australia's socio-political history, and reports on a pilot survey of Australian university holdings of these important collections. Given the importance of these publications in both pushing socio-cultural boundaries and shifting the laws of the nation state (and being seen as a threat to a neoliberal government), they are significant artefacts of time and place, and we argue, should be actively collected by major collecting institutions (in this case, the university) and made accessible.

Background

Student newspapers in Australia have been known to push boundaries and influence change - whether at a macro or campus level or on a national stage. In this section we give background to university student publishing over time, from a historical and socio-political perspective. We present a number of nationally significant cases in Australian student media publishing history

which contextualise the importance of these non-mainstream publications in understanding the historical past in the nation's memory, and build a critique of current activities.

National and global politics played a large role in the establishment and ongoing production of student newspapers globally; Wood argues that student newspapers were developed in part with the aim of reporting on and engaging with local and national issues post World War I (2017, p. 34). What is of particular note here is that these newspapers represent the voice of the students, not the institutions, and often reflect emerging and resistant views to dominant paradigms. This motivation for a publication for students voices is demonstrated even in the early 20th century in the Editorial written by the *Adelaide University Magazine's* founding Editor MP Hardy in 1918 as (on the establishment of the magazine) "It has long been felt among the University students that a university magazines is sorely needed as a means of self-expression and as a bond of union among the students" (Marie, 2019).

In North America students newspapers have also created relationships and contexts between campus life and wider society. Crane and Leshar looked at American college newspapers between the 1920s-1940s and found that while off-campus coverage (national and international events) did not overshadow campus coverage, it was "reflective of the interwar period and of what was published in community and city newspapers." (2018, p. 101), and that in fact the national and global dialogues are what gave meaning at times to campus life (2018, p. 106). Edmonson & Perry argue that 1940s American student newspapers documented and are themselves primary source documents of the modern civil rights movement; they trace the desegregation debate in Missouri through the pages of the college newspaper (Edmondson & Perry, 2010).

Newspapers published by an independent student body in Australia date back to the early 20th

century – the University of Melbourne’s *Farrago* was first published in 1925, and by the mid-1930s most universities had their own student newspaper. Nearly all university student newspapers in Australia are still in print today under the same name as their original version; this genre of news publications demonstrates a significant body of ongoing news publications in Australia.

By the 1960s student publications in Australia were more adventurous in what they published and promoted, motivated by what Wood calls a “growing impatience with the status quo” (2017, p. 35). This can be seen in more active engagement with topical and political issues impacting students outside of the university setting, such as conscription for the Vietnam War, censorship and abortion.

These significant moments in Australian university student publishing history are memorable usually because of the interaction with the law or judicial system and censorship and public ideologies. Student newspaper editors have used their roles to publish material that they either knew would be breaking the law, or would push the boundaries of, and raise public awareness of, the stringency of Australia’s censorship laws (and in one case, the role of corporations in enforcing the law).

It is important to note that these publications are not publications of the university, rather they are publications of the student representative body, which is most commonly known as the student union. Student unions have been governed through various university, state and Federal acts over time, and funded through student membership fees. Over the past 30 years these have proven to be hostile grounds for the federal government and student bodies. Most recently, the Australian *Higher Education Support Act (2003)* was amended to outlaw compulsory fees, and limiting what the fees collected can be spent on, literally enacting

Foucauldian governmentality, or the control of the state on free speech and publishing

Pushing boundaries and challenging the mainstream: case studies in student newspapers

The following case studies are examples of how student newspapers and their editors have worked to challenge laws and mainstream norms, expectations and traditions, through both legal and social dialogues.

Tharunka's Literary Supplement of Works that Cannot be Published

In 1970 the editors of the UNSW student newspaper *Tharunka* Wendy Bacon and John Cox published a series of “would be or had been ‘banned or interfered with by Australian censorship legislation’” (Bacon, 2011, p. 17) in a special issue edited by Frank Moorhouse (now OAM). This publication, and numerous others published in their editorial roles, had them charged and tried multiple times through the early 1970s for what were then criminal acts of publishing obscene material. The editors made headline news in the mainstream media across the country as they took the stand during their numerous trials, and served time in prison as a result of their actions. These efforts were impressive and by 1973 censorship rules and systems in Australia were “in disarray” (Bacon, 2011, p. 19).

The Art of Shoplifting in Rabelais

More recently, in July 1995 the editors of the La Trobe University student newspaper *Rabelais* published an article called ‘The art of shoplifting’, which, as the title suggests, was a guide on how to shoplift. Following publication of the shoplifting article, the Retail Traders' Association of Victoria applied to have classification of the July 1995 edition refused (ie to have the issue

censored) - they claimed it was “irresponsible and reprehensible” (*Brown v Members of the Classification Review Board of the Office of Film and Literature Classification* (1998)).

The chief censor decided to refuse classification of that edition on the grounds that it instructed in matters of shoplifting and associated fraud. The editors were threatened with prosecution but in the end the major outcome was that the issue was censored, and it still remains illegal to read or distribute the article in some states of Australia.

Challenging norms at the University of Sydney

The student newspaper of the University of Sydney, *Honi Soit* has a long history of controversy and public engagement. For example, in 1958 the Editors published an article calling for the end of ANZAC Day (Havers, 1958), which caused great outrage and public dialogue. In his discussion of student activism at the University of Sydney through the 1960s, Alan Barcan presents a detailed history of the editorships of *Honi Soit*; the list of Editors and their controversial acts of publishing is peppered with names of (mostly men) who are now significant figures in Australia’s political and media landscapes, including for example Richard Walsh, Laurie Oakes, Bob Ellis, Hall Greenland and Keith Windschuttle. It is clear that student newspapers were and continue to be fertile grounds for developing engaged and often outspoken public figures in Australia.

The controversies that *Honi Soit* generated throughout the 1960s continues into the current day: an *Honi Soit* cover in 2013 was pulled from distribution for its failure to completely censor photographs of 18 vulvas (Ryan et al., 2013); the cover was published uncensored by *The Guardian* in response, extending the readership of the images to an international audience and engaging with the key feminist concerns that motivated the cover initially.

Changing times: Voluntary student unionism

Universities in Australia and their student newspapers have had unique and over time, complicated relationships, often governed not at a local level (ie by the university) but at a Federal level. It can be argued that this tense relationship culminated in the introduction of voluntary student unionism (VSU) in the early 2000s: Rochford states that the “perception of politicisation of student unionism that [is] manifested in VSU legislation is arguably a relic of university student activism during the 1960s and 1970s” (2014, p. 493), and as seen in the case studies above, it was often the student newspaper that was the face of this activism. The ‘massification’ and commodification of the modern university has lead both the government and the universities themselves to seek to ‘control the uncontrollable’ aspects of the university, including staff and student organisations, which Rochford argues can ‘threaten the marketable image of the university corporation and its relationship with government’ (2014, p. 485) This has resulted in what McMahon calls a ‘new depiction of the university as just another commodity or service provider’ (McMahon, 2001).

This shift in the delivery of higher education and campus life, along with the introduction of VSU, had an impact on student organisations across the country in the early 21st century. Changing student population demographics coincides with the changes of the university not as a “community of scholars” but as a “service-provider” (Rochford, 2006, pp. 164–165). Students no longer come from a “traditional student cohort” (middle-to higher socio-economic, not working, living on campus); but rather are more likely to be first in the family to attend university, and be from a lower socio-economic background. This is also reflected in a number of studies into campus and university experience, including *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: findings from two decades, 1994-2014*, which found that students in

2014 were “less socially engaged in the university community, spent less time on campus, and more students tended to keep to themselves” (Baik et al., 2015, p. 1). This change in engagement with wider national and global issues was measured by Wood, who found a significant disengagement with politics by students on campus represented through student newspapers (Wood, 2017, p. 247).

Student newspapers, traditionally the stalwart of the student voice on campus, have been under threat for the past decade; there is a risk their longevity and ongoing presence may dwindle as the neoliberal university continues to boom.

Finding primary source material

In this paper we propose that student newspapers are a significant primary resource for scholars in the humanities and social sciences, including historians, social researchers, legal studies and cultural studies scholars (Hoskin, 2009). Given the significance of these collections in representing opinions, views and dialogue outside the mainstream media, we argue that there should be clear and easy pathways to finding this material; that what Yakel and Torres name as ‘archival intelligence’ (2003) for researchers is also addressed at the information retrieval design phase of student newspaper collection management.

The search strategies of historians and other humanities researchers in libraries and archives for primary source material is a well-documented field of study (Duff & Johnson, 2002). Of note is that these scholars prefer more informal and familiar search strategies, relying less on systematic searches and tools (which includes reference librarians) and more on their own past experience, specialist librarians, citations searching and browsing (Duff & Johnson, 2002, pp. 474–477). This creates challenges for librarians and archivists, and reinforces the

importance of user-focused design of systems and structures of organising. To support an argument for an archival intelligence embodied by LIS practitioners as well as the researchers themselves, Carini posits:

few people understand the principles on which their physician arrives at a diagnosis, and the medical profession little expects that patients will have or need this knowledge. In the case of archives and special collections, an understanding of archival principles and practices is essential for people to access information. (2016, p. 195)

As demonstrated in the case studies above, student newspapers from Australian universities provide rich primary source material for scholars to explore, understand and explain the socio-political history of the nation. The ability to easily and reliably access this material is crucial to the ongoing development of knowledge in the humanities and social sciences.

Methodology

Having argued for the significance of student newspapers, the aim of this research project is to identify where, and how, student newspapers are being collected, preserved and made accessible by their host institutions, and implications from these findings for collection managers. In this project we consider only the publicly available information at each university through online searches, acknowledging that this often represents the initial stages of searching for scholars. Future research will address more in-depth search strategies and interview researchers and collection managers (librarians, archivists and student representatives).

In answering these questions we also identified key challenges for university collection development, and propose a set of recommendations for practice.

Selection

Twenty Australian universities and their corresponding student publications were selected for this initial survey. This number represents half of the total number of universities in Australia, and provided a base for the development of the research methodology and process. Future research will consider the whole of the Australian university environment.

The selection process focused first on the type of institution, ensuring representation from the range of university groupings in Australia¹, and from each of the eight states and territories. Where states had more than one university, the institution with the earliest date of attaining university status was selected.

The next task was to identify the specific student publications at each of the chosen institutions. Institutions often had several student newspapers published at different times throughout the university's history, and for the purposes of this project the most recent, or last published, student publication was chosen. Table 1 presents the 20 universities and their student newspaper. Several student publications are well-known, particularly those published by Group of Eight universities such as *Tharunka*, *Woroni*, and *Honi Soit*.

¹ Group of Eight (Go8), Australian Technology Network(ATN), Innovative Research Universities (IRU), Regional Universities Network (RUN), plus private institutions.

Table 1: List of surveyed universities

Institution	State (Main Campus)	Student newspaper title
Australian National University	Australian Capital Territory	<i>Woroni</i>
Charles Darwin University	Northern Territory	<i>FlyCatcher</i>
Charles Sturt University	New South Wales	<i>Hungappa</i>
Flinders University	South Australia	<i>Empire Times</i>
Griffith University	Queensland	<i>Getamungstit</i>
James Cook University	Queensland	<i>The Bullsheet</i>
La Trobe University	Victoria	<i>Rabelais</i>
Monash University	Victoria	<i>Lot's Wife</i>
Murdoch University	Western Australia	<i>Metior</i>
University of Adelaide	South Australia	<i>On Dit</i>
University of Melbourne	Victoria	<i>Farrago</i>
University of New England	New South Wales	<i>Nucleus</i>
University of New South Wales	New South Wales	<i>Tharunka</i>
University of Newcastle	New South Wales	<i>Opus</i>
University of Notre Dame	Western Australia	<i>Quasi</i>
University of Queensland	Queensland	<i>Semper Floreat</i>
University of South Australia	South Australia	<i>Verse</i>
University of Sydney	New South Wales	<i>Honi Soit</i>
University of Tasmania	Tasmania	<i>Togatus</i>
University of Western Australia	Western Australia	<i>Pelican</i>

Locating the student newspaper collections

The holdings of each selected student newspaper were identified at each of their host universities. Given the nature of the student newspapers as both published materials and possibly university records², the search strategy was designed to look across both library catalogues and archival holdings.

Each student newspaper title was searched for in its host institution's library catalogue. Of note here is that this task was complicated by university library catalogues having both original library catalogues plus federated searches, such as *SuperSearch*, which could sometimes only be accessed by those within the campus network. Where possible, both catalogues were searched to find results, although we note that some federated searches are accessible to internal users only.

Once a student newspaper holding was located in the library catalogue, the entry was analysed for the holding representation: physical and/or digital holdings, depth of description (including subject headings) and any notes or other details, and this data recorded in a spreadsheet.

The process was repeated in each university's archival listing, noting that some Australian universities do not list their archives online, or their holdings are not searchable. Once an institution's archive was found and if searchable, the student publication was searched for and the results, whether successful or not, were recorded into a spreadsheet.

² Whether a student union publication is a university record will vary over time and jurisdiction as governance arrangements change. Generally however the student body has remained at an arm's length distance from the university itself.

Along with the location and repository type, a pathway for each publication was mapped, and sketched in desktop publishing software. These pathways reflected the multiple entry points to repositories and physical collections.

Findings

The following section outlines the key findings from the data collection.

Where are student newspapers held?

Of the twenty university libraries and archives surveyed, nineteen listed their student newspaper collections in their library catalogue, with three listed in both the library and the archives catalogues. Only one institution has their university publications listed solely in their archive. This table does not reflect the completeness of the holdings, or the distribution through the university collections. Most holdings are incomplete, and many are either duplicated or distributed in different repositories. While all universities in the sample held collections of their student newspaper, the publications were held inconsistently in libraries and archives, and over half provided access to digitised versions of their student newspaper collections.

Table 2: Location of student newspaper holdings

Student newspaper university holdings public access	Count
Both Library and Archive	3
Library only	16
Archive only	1
Total	20

As the majority of institutions held their student publications in the library, or the majority of the collection was held there, the scope of the library catalogue entry’s description of each student newspaper was classified by the depth of description (see Table 3). In just over half of the records the description was limited to bibliographic data only, with no further context to publication. The other half varied from an acknowledgement that the publication was produced by the student body of the university (“*Getamungstit*: GUGC Student Union newspaper”), through to detailed contextualising descriptions resulting from previous digitisation projects on the newspapers (Hoskin, 2009):

On Dit, the second oldest student newspaper in Australia, aims to truly represent and record student opinion, activity and social life. Taking its title from the French expression roughly translated as “we say”, it was the official organ of the Adelaide University Students' Union, and, as such, a unique chronicle of University of Adelaide history and community, but also assuming a political aspect.
Has occasional special issues and political protest editions.³

Table 3: Description depth of catalogue entries

Classification	Description	Count
Limited	Item is not explicitly noted as a student newspaper	10
Average	Item noted as student newspaper	7
Detailed	Item noted as student newspaper, alongside additional contextual information	2
N/A	No record	1

³ <https://adelaide.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/k1i7is/ALMA21128578690001811>

Once the holdings were identified, it was noted if they were physical, digital or both, and where they were held. This revealed a relationship between some university libraries and archives: in at least one case the library catalogue refers to the university archives for access to the physical holdings. In the two cases where the holdings were in both the library and the archive they held overlapping but not duplicated sets of the print newspapers.

Table 4: Location of physical holdings of student newspapers

Physical location of student publications	Count
Archive	1
Library	15
Library and Archive	2
Unspecified	2

Over half of the catalogue entries linked through to digitised copies of the student newspaper, representing a commitment to digitising and making accessible the holdings. Digital holdings were also identified through their respective archives listings.

Table 5: University libraries/archives with online/digital access to student newspaper collections

Online access to student publications	Count
Yes	13
No	7
Total	20

The repositories that held these digitised newspapers however were varied and represented different levels of collection management oversight, ranging from purpose-built institutional repositories through to proprietary external software platforms such as Issuu. The catalogue

entries also often linked directly to the current publication website as ‘online access’, which was not captured here as it wasn’t considered a collection space.

Table 6: Digital repository infrastructure

Repository	Ownership	Count
Issuu	Private	6
Ex Libris: Alma	Private	2
recollect	Private	2
Trove	Public (National Library of Australia)	2
Dspace	Open source software	1
Figshare	Private, Open access	1
Internally branded repository	University	1
Omeka	Open source software	1

Mapping pathways

Each student newspaper’s access pathway through university library and archive catalogues was mapped, noting both analogue and digital copies of the publications. The two examples presented here illustrate a simple pathway to the holdings and a complicated, multi-entry, multi-repository pathway.

The University of Sydney

The University of Sydney has delineated digital and physical holdings of *Honi Soit*: the digital holdings include a full text searchable digital archive of all issues published from 1929 (Vol.1 Iss.1) through to 1989. The library catalogue also links through to the current *Honi Soit* website which has a recent archive (2006-2019) plus digital (PDF) copies of issues from 1929-1931.

The coverage of the newspaper is still incomplete, with physical holdings seeming to end in 2018, and the period between 1990-2006 not available in a digitised form.

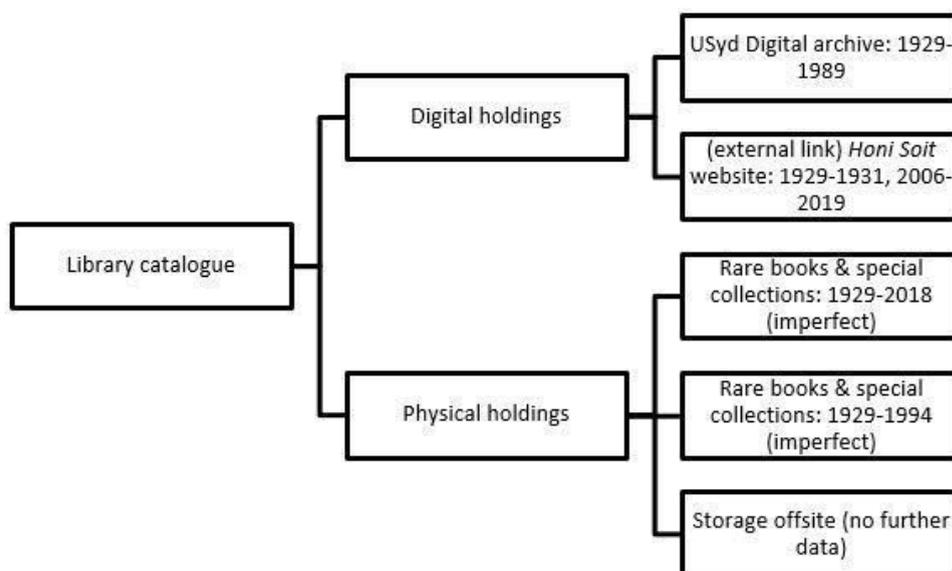


Figure 1: Search pathways to Honi Soit holdings

The Australian National University

At ANU the pathways are more complicated, and demonstrate the impact of different information seeking interfaces and entry points on what resources a researcher may have access to.

Searching through the ANU *SuperSearch* returns **only digital** holdings of the newspaper with links to digitised issues from 1950-2007 hosted by the National Library of Australia (NLA) on Trove, and 2007 onwards on Issuu (via the *Woroni* website). Searching through the ANU Catalogue returns physical holdings at the ANU Archives (1954-2011) and digitised issues (1950-2007) on Trove.

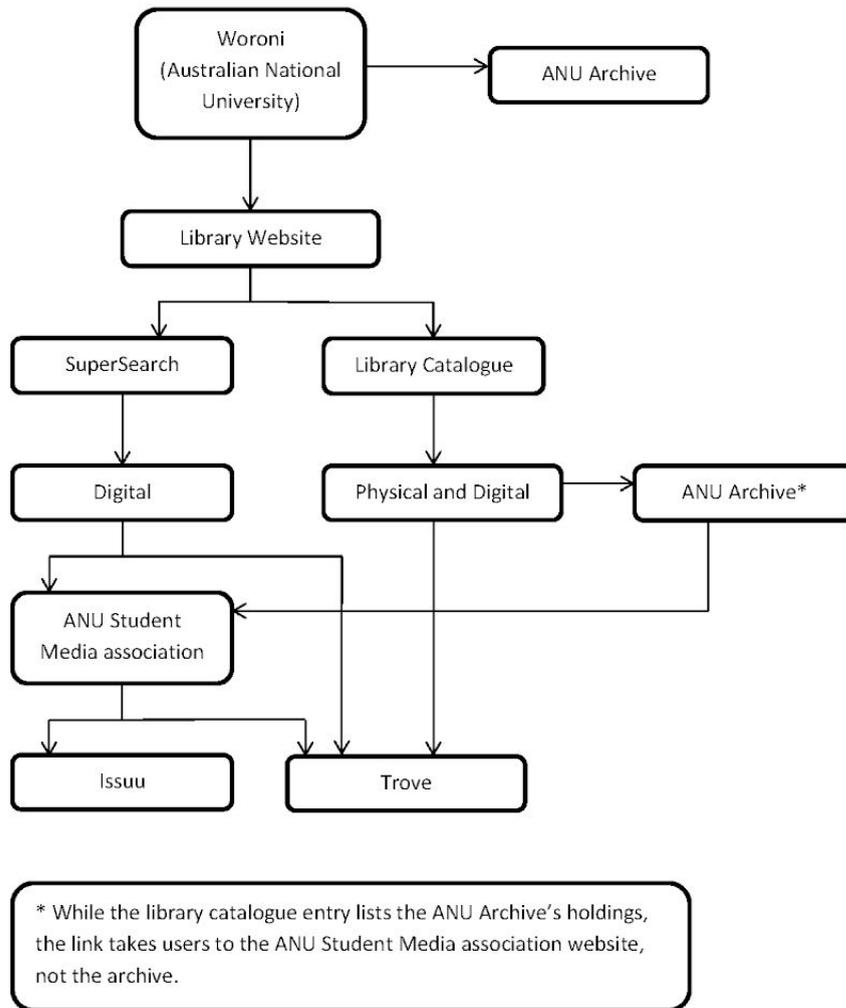


Figure 2: Search pathways to Woroni holdings

These three different repositories (ANU Archives, Issuu, Trove) reflect the different temporalities of the newspaper – current, past and further past. To further complicate the relationship between the University, the Students Association and the newspaper, it is noted that from 2011 *Woroni* is published by ANU Student Media, an independent association funded primarily through Student Services and Amenities fees from students at ANU. This separation between a student association and the student newspaper is the first of its kind in the current legislative environment, and its impact is seen in how the newspaper is being collected and past issues made accessible to researchers.

Discussion

This section presents key findings from the data collection and analysis, and makes recommendations for future practice.

University collections of student newspapers are hard to find

All universities surveyed had their student newspaper holdings locatable through the library and/or archive catalogues. The institutions have demonstrated a collection development practice which recognises the value of the material, yet there are still issues in how the holdings are found.

The mapping exercise in the survey was a complex and detailed process which revealed numerous examples of complex information retrieval processes for student newspaper holdings, with incomplete holdings identified in every case. Both researchers have background in humanities and social sciences research along with training in information studies, and at times were still perplexed at the multiple and often conflicting entry points to the resources.

Despite these difficulties, there are also cases where student newspapers have been clearly prioritised through digitisation programs and curated exhibitions presented online - for example UNSW's *Tharunka* and the University of Sydney's *Honi Soit*. These curated exhibitions make the collections more accessible and raise awareness of the historical issues explored, and the availability of the collections for primary source research. In the current sample it was more likely to be well-funded and long established universities with digitised student newspaper collections, reflecting both library resource budgets (*CAUL Statistics Institutional Data*, 2020) and overarching institutional strategies. For example, when the digital archive of

Honi Soit was launched in 2016 it was promoted through a media release as an achievement for the university (*Infamous student newspaper preserved for the ages*, n.d.).

Student newspapers pose a challenge to collection development

The complex relationships *over time* between each university and its student union, student association, or other publishing body also complicate the collection, preservation and digitisation of these significant primary source materials. As outlined in the background to this paper, successive Federal governments have, in response to the perceived threat of independent publishing by university students (Barcan, 2011) shifted the funding sources, responsibility and accountability for this media, in turn changed governance structures. These changes increase the complexity of a complete holding of any student newspaper, and is reflected in the holdings surveyed in this research.

Acquisition

As noted, all universities surveyed held their student newspapers in the university library or archives, although once digitised they were often stored in a larger university repository (for example Dspace), or published to Trove. In some cases the library and archives both held incomplete series of the newspaper, and rarely cross referenced the other. There seemed to be a disparate relationship in many instances between the library or archive collection and the active/current publication, and very few had a clear acquisition statement. The University of NSW Library presents the following statements about their collection strategy for *Tharunka*, including a current issue embargo and a call for missing issues.

Tharunka is available online in the Library collection with the latest volume available the following year.

Archived newspaper articles of *Tharunka* from 1953 - 2010 are fully searchable on Trove, making this historical social archive easily accessible.

Note: Volumes may not contain all issues. If you have missing issues that can be digitised, please contact the Library.

A key recommendation from this research is that university libraries and archives develop ongoing relationships with their student representative body to ensure a standing deposit arrangement for student newspapers. This may also include digital deposit of issues as more student newspapers are published online.

Description

Most university library catalogues listed their student newspapers as a serial, or journal, with a single entry and coverage period. One university listed each issue of the student newspaper as a separate publication in the library catalogue, without an overall collection. Where the newspaper was listed in the university archives they were usually listed individually and as part of a series. The depth of descriptive content in turn impacts on the findability of the publications and cross referencing to the university.

Digitisation

The survey revealed that many of the current student newspapers are published as digital copies to proprietary digital publishing platforms such as Issuu, which lack long term preservation strategies. In a number of cases the library catalogue linked through to 'archives' of recent volumes of the newspaper hosted on the newspaper's own website, or on these digital publishing platforms. In one case the catalogue entry referred to the physical holdings, but the online link was to the current publication site. This becomes a preservation and access issue due both to issues with turnover of editorial positions in student newspapers (and hence

a consistent approach to web and archive management) and the external hosting of archival material.

The depth of description on catalogue entries for the student newspapers reflected the institutions' commitment to digitisation of the collection: a digitisation program such as discussed by Hoskin (2009) led to an improvement in catalogue entries and findability of the collection at The University of Adelaide. All of the universities whose catalogue descriptions were classified as 'detailed' in our survey linked through to digital copies of the newspaper. This highlights the importance and benefit of ongoing digitisation programs within university libraries, and we propose that where university libraries are looking for standalone or pilot projects, student newspaper collections offer great opportunities for digitisation projects.

These challenges in collection development can be extended past student newspapers to other works produced within a university that don't fit a clear collections policy, such as student election ephemera, and student assessments (Nichol, 2019), and it is recommended that university libraries address student publications specifically in their collection policies.

Content warnings

The move to digitise these significant collections of student newspapers also raises issues of content access and mediation. The radical and controversial histories of these publications and student activism in Australia over time gives rise to possibly sensitive, libellous or offensive materials. As an example, in issues of many student newspapers read during the survey there were student accounts of, whether on or off campus, harassment, sexual assault, and rape. These accounts provide essential primary source insight into the lived experience of life on campus and issues that universities still grapple with.

Very few collections surveyed warned readers of the possible content; the University of Sydney notes on each digital volume:

Please be advised that these issues of *Honi Soit* have been made available due to their historical and research importance. They may contain explicit language and images that reflect attitudes of the era in which the material was originally published.

In her discussion of working with historical language in records of care, Wright details the development of a policy statement outlining how the web resource Find and Connect uses metadata fields to reflect the challenges of 'language historically used to describe people who were in care' (Wright, 2019, p. 342). In the case of student newspapers it is often the content of the object that may be considered 'offensive, derogatory and inappropriate today' (Wright, 2019, p. 342), but there are still opportunities to warn readers and researchers of the possibility. As Wright argues, 'it is not the role of the archivist to redact or otherwise limit access to records because of concerns about historical viewpoints' (Wright, 2019, p. 344), rather it is the responsibility of those managing collections to provide context to the collection. This context could be in the form of, for example, Editor profiles, curatorial statements and socio-historical summaries of each era.

Conclusion

Despite the attempt to dismantle student activism by successive Federal governments, including the introduction of voluntary student unionism, it is clear that student media and student newspapers still exist in various forms across the nation. Given their significance as primary source material providing insight into issues and discussions not covered by mainstream media, university libraries need to continue to collect and make accessible these student publications into the future. The challenge for university libraries and archives is in

acquisition and access. These require strong and ongoing relationships to be developed between the publishers and/or editors, and for care to be taken in describing and contextualising past and future editions.

The next steps for this project are to continue to collect the survey data about holdings, and to develop a further project to interview the library/archive collection managers and current and former editors about their perceptions of collections. From anecdotal conversations about our project so far these interviews will reveal many more complications and intricacies about the collection and access of student newspapers.

At the moment, we are a long way from a consistent collection development approach to Australian student newspapers. In this paper we have argued for the significance of these collections, and for university libraries to continue to develop their collections, and acknowledging the important contributions these publications can make to providing perspectives on the nation's memory and history.

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