

This is the Author's version of the paper published as:

Title: Not all boomers can ski: Australian news media's depiction of baby boomers & "Tree Change"

Author: T. R. Angela

Author Address: aragusa@csu.edu.au

Conference Name: TASA / SAANZ Joint Conference 2007

Title of Conference: TASA / SAANZ Joint Conference 2007

Year of Conference: 2007

Conference Location: Auckland, New Zealand

Publisher: Dept. of Sociology University of Auckland

URL: <http://www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/conferences/index.cfm?P=9518>

Keywords: tree change, media, migration, baby boomer, demography, social change, newspaper

Abstract: Demographic and social change in Australian society is being stimulated by popular interest in the migration patterns of the "Baby Boomer" generation, which constitutes 25% of Australia's population, as they begin to enter retirement. This research presents a qualitative, critical sociological analysis of Australian newspapers depiction of baby boomers in conjunction with the migratory phenomenon "tree change" in corporate industrial news. Findings reveal media stereotypes are inconsistent with Australian Census data and international social research which fails to portray all boomers as a "cashed-up" lot zipping off to their next tree-change destination. Hence, news media are argued to play an active role in reproducing class, gender and ethnic biases about this population.

NOT ALL BOOMERS CAN SKI: AUSTRALIAN NEWS MEDIA'S DEPICTION OF BABY BOOMERS & "TREE CHANGE"

Dr. Angela T. Ragusa¹

1. Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga Australia

a.ragusa@csu.edu.au

Abstract

Demographic and social change in Australian society is being stimulated by popular interest in the migration patterns of the "Baby Boomer" generation, which constitutes 25% of Australia's population, as they begin to enter retirement. This research presents a qualitative, critical sociological analysis of Australian newspapers depiction of baby boomers in conjunction with the migratory phenomenon "tree change" in corporate industrial news. Findings reveal media stereotypes are inconsistent with Australian Census data and international social research which fails to portray all boomers as a "cashed-up" lot zipping off to their next tree-change destination. Hence, news media are argued to play an active role in reproducing class, gender and ethnic biases about this population.

1. Introduction

Today 5.25 million "baby boomers" (BBs), roughly 25% of Australia's population, are aged 45-64 years old (Kelly & Harding, 2007). This generation is of central focus to policy and public debates not only due to sheer magnitude, but moreover because of its perceived wealth and potential to burden the pension system. "2 million baby boomers (many cashed up) are still to seek the lifestyle sea-, tree-or tee-change, investors were told... by Bernard Salt, one of Australia's leading demographers (Media Launch, 2005). This research offers a critical qualitative analysis of BBs' depiction in relation to the migratory phenomena "tree change" (TC) in all Australian corporate and industrial news articles, nationwide, since first making news in February, 2004, to February, 2007. According to Salt, 'Tree changers' are those who swap the city for life in rural Australia (as cited in Larsen, 2007) although 'population turnaround' and 'sea change' also refer to "the movement of Australians from metropolitan cities to non-metropolitan parts of the country" (Burnley & Murphy, 2004, p. ix).

2. Discussion

BBs are said to pose unprecedented future demographic and social changes to Western societies, particularly Australia and North America. According to Takamura, Dean at Columbia University, BBs are the first generation to benefit from significantly improved public health, education and economic systems and will redefine the aging process as they seek meaningful/satisfying existences and reject their parents' lifestyles. "Without a doubt, of any generation the BBs have and will continue to have the single greatest influence on social, economic and health patterns" (Wister, 2005, pp. 155-6). In

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

Canada, BBs' social significance is attributable to their size, as 1/3 of the population, and consumption patterns for education, healthcare and housing (Wister, 2005).

Popular and academic stereotypes exist about BBs' characteristics (Wister, 2005). Brown & Orsborn's (2006, p. 215) book *Boom: marketing to the ultimate power consumer - the baby-boomer women* declares and exemplifies persisting stereotypes, such as the "experience-rich opportunity for marketers to tap into the unprecedented wealth of this surprisingly dynamic generation... to grow your market share of today's most powerful consumer." Although BBs are "often portrayed as monolithic and miscast as homogenous" (Takamura, 2005, p. ix), social research highlights income disparities differentiate BBs, with instances of chronic illnesses higher among racial/ethnic minorities and a linear relationship existing between income and health/healthy lifestyles (Wister, 2005). BBs are a diverse population, varying by culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic, immigrant and urban/rural status, making composite representation impossible (Mellor & Rehr). Hence, BBs' impact on society is not uni-dimensional (Wister, 2005), which is a compliment to most BBs who value individuality and uniqueness (Brown & Orsborn, 2006).

Sociology and political science are the two longest standing disciplinary approaches to media analysis (Cunningham & Turner, 1997). Content and textual analyses are two principle methods for analysing media (Turner, 1997; Cunningham & Flew, 1997) and provide "especially rich opportunities to observe the cultural construction of meaning, locations where we can see the social production of ideas and values happening before our eyes" (Turner, 1997, p. 326). Media analysis permits one to study how culture works. Social constructivists (Gergen, 1985) believe everyday assumptions and knowledge are historical products and social artefacts. Hence, this research assumes media representations construct and reflect ideological and hegemonic norms and values of broader society, while it aims to avoid conspiratorial and deterministic notions of hegemony. Consistent with Reese's articulation, it understands "the ruling group does not simply impose a class ideology on others but rather provides the articulating principle to which diverse ideological elements are unified into a world-view" (1990, p. 394) and sees the media's "reliance on strategic mythologies, rituals, and official sources [as] produc[ing] a rather predictable worldview" (Johnson-Cartee, 2005, p. 145).

The sample was taken from all Australian corporate and industrial news articles containing the keywords "baby boomer" and "tree change" using Factiva's database. This returned 80 pages (N=18) of news articles in nine printed news sources (*BRW, Sunday Times (Perth), The Sydney Morning Herald, the Advertiser, The Western Australian, Lilydale and Yarra Valley Leader, The Bulletin, The Courier-Mail*). Every article was thematically coded for content using Hartley's (1982) recommendations for qualitative news analysis and findings from the theme "stereotypes" are presented.

"It's the newest trend to be tracked, the latest lifestyle change to be labelled. No longer do city slickers head straight for the coast when they want to live a quiet life - some are opting for a tree change instead" (Metcalf, 20/9/04, p. 9). Australian news media have created a variety of sensationalised images of the TC phenomenon and the role BBs play in this migratory event since first news coverage on 29 July 2004. The first article appears in *The Age* and highlights a subsequent trend - appealing to Bernard Salt's expertise as "the lifestyle guru" (Dow, 12/9/04, p. 20) due to his book, *The Big Shift* (2001), and status as Melbourne-based market property trend advisor. This research begins by questioning the legitimacy of some of Salt's claims.

Titled "War of the Generations Looms on X-Y Front," the first article offers ample stereotypes, opening with the news breaking Salt's Q/A: "What is the difference between a retired baby boomer and a leech? Leeches die quicker". Topsisfield (29/7/04, p. 3) reports Salt "predicts a generational war within the next decade between the

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

domineering boomers - born between 1946 and 1961 – and GenXers - born between 1961 and 1976" and quotes Salt's generational analysis and insightful, un-evidenced statements like "the boomers have bullied them and set the agenda and the suckers (GenX) have accepted it" to which Topsfield adds "the boomers are discovering their mortality, as friends of friends drop dead" (29/7/04, p. 3).

It has become de rigueur for news media to appeal to Salt's expertise. Indeed, by 2006 Salt secured regular column space in *The Australian's* finance section where two of the three articles in *The Australian* on TC BBs are authored by Salt. However, empirically-based evidence for the existence and support of "sea-change" and "tree-change" theories are beginning to dwindle. Two articles, both in *The Courier-Mail*, provide academic critique of Salt's extraordinary claims. The first, by Bob Stimson of the University of Queensland, questions Salt's claim that TC is a national phenomenon, stating "what we're talking about here is people going into rural and hinterland areas, and that's been the trend right throughout the post-war period. It's now capturing some attention because of the numbers involved... but the numbers everywhere are getting bigger (Metcalf, 20/9/04, p. 9). Metcalfe sources additional data to question Salt's claims from the Deputy Premier and Urban Development Minister Terry MacKenroth who she reports "says the government has no statistics to back up Salt's claim" (20/9/04, p. 4). Professor Brendan Gleeson at Griffith University provides the second criticism stating, "Our pop demographic debates have led us to possess about a very partial view of the future: one fixed on aging baby boomer legions flocking to sea-change regions... Australians overwhelmingly continue to prefer living in the subregions of our main cities... our future will not be decided by the fortunes of new sea change or "tree-change" regions" (5/10/04, p. 17).

More recently, *The Sydney Morning Herald* published data from Sydney University's Dr. Nicole Gurrans research showing 79% of new coastal residents are less than 50 years old, further dispelling "the sea-change stereotype of the retiring baby boomer" (Macken, 20/1/07, p. 4). Despite this, Larsen reports "The alternative to the ever-increasing popularity of the baby-boomer driven sea-change lifestyle is a tree-change lifestyle, defined as a preference to live in picturesque, forested country... the tree-changers represent a broader demographic than the baby-boomer sea-changers" (15/2/07, p. 4). Perth's *Sunday Times* contributes further to the confusion by stating: "while baby boomers continue to dominate the 'sea change' and 'tree change' trend... 79% of sea-changers are under the age of 50" (21/1/07, p. R15). In this instance, in order for BBs to dominate the trend, a very large percentage of those in their late-40s would have to be migrating, which would refute *The Sydney Morning Herald's* report that affordability, not age, is the main driving factor for Generation X sea-changers.

Nevertheless, as cultural artefacts, these terms continue to pervade popular Australian culture and are widely used to sell a plethora of consumer goods while new terms, such as the emergence of "oasis change" in May 2007, are continuously added. The remaining articles sampled create a relatively cohesive image of BBs as a social group with specific desires and behaviours. In particular, corporate industrial news prioritizes reporting on a distinct class of BBs: middle-class or higher. The socio-cultural images come largely from real estate and market "experts", with the principle image of BBs being a cashed-up lot driven by conspicuous consumption:

- BBs "have often cashed in on large capital gains to fund their retirement" (Machen, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20/1/07, p.4)
- "developers and builders are being forced to rethink their designs to seek cashed up baby boomers with the desire to downsize and a taste for the high life" (Hoyle, *The Advertiser*, 13/10/06, p. U06)
- "cashed-up retirees are a force to be reckoned with," (Girdham, *Sunday Mail*, 20/8/06, p. H01)

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

- "The McMansion - the house with 4 or more bedrooms – is an enduring housing choice, even though the average household size has decreased to 2.6 persons" (McKenzie in Granath, *The West Australian*, 12/8/06, p. 26)
- "never let it be said that baby boomers are not the style fans they purport to be. This has been especially so in the last decade as boomers accumulated real wealth... so prosperous are this generation... but there's still further financial capacity (Salt, *The Australian*, 17/6/06, p. 101).
- "Holiday homeowners - many cashed-up baby boomers from down south - overwhelmingly prefer a sea-change to a tree-change" (Tilbury, *The Courier-Mail*, 16/11/05, p. T04).

Although not evident in news media, there exists the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) version of social reality alongside the "cashed-up" image of BB. Research from 2003-2004 Survey of Income and Housing and 2006 Household Expenditure Survey finds while BB households hold 50.3% of Australia's total wealth and represent 37% of adults, the family house accounts for 42% of BBs' wealth and "there is a wide gulf between the poorest and the richest" (Kelly & Harding, 2007, p. 20). "The poorest one-quarter of baby boomers possess 4.4% of the group's net worth while the wealthiest one-quarter enjoy 60% of the boomers' \$1,648 billion net worth" (Kelly & Harding, 2007, p. 18). Qualitative research reveals a sharp divide between high and low income BBs. The poorer half has "virtually no wealth to fund their retirement years" and expect to work after retirement age because they have to in contrast with rich BBs who plan to work because it is their preference (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2006, p. 8). Data from a survey of 829 BBs further dispels myths of BBs as successful, self-satisfied and unprecedentedly wealthy revealing such stereotypes characterize only a small portion of BBs; the majority of BBs are unable to fund their retirement (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2006). Australia's patterns replicate US data showing only the top 1/5 of BBs will have a financially independent retirement whereas the lowest 1/4, and particularly women, will fall into poverty, as "workers nearing retirement age...will continue to work because they cannot afford not to" (Mellor & Rehr, 2005, p. 84).

The majority of stereotypes presented in Australian news about BBs and TC make global assumptions about this social group having large disposable income. Yet, deconstructing BBs by household type using ABS data creates a different image. Single BBs and sole parent BBs are much more likely to rent, due to inability to buy, their homes (Kelly & Harding, 2007). Considering gender, and controlling for age, 1 in 13 single BB women have HECS debt, in contrast to 1 in 100 single BB men, which is on top of the most common type of debt for all BBs, \$150 billion in credit card debt (Kelly & Harding 2007).

Media-printed researcher statements, such as Simon Kelly's of the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, demonstrate commonly touted stereotypes: "At this point in time that baby boomers (aged late 40s to 60 years) are at their peak earning capacity, both of them are working full time and have reached their peak of where they are going to get in their careers and hopefully the costs of their children shouldn't be as high as when they were 14 and both in private high schools" (in Tilbury, 16/11/05, p. T04). Likely, the richest BBs are currently at the apex of their career and earning potential. Yet, ABS 2003-2004 data shows the difference between after-tax total spending for BBs and under-45 Australians is just \$45 per week. When critically explored, it is compliance with norm of couple-hood that seems to most impact BBs economic standing. BB couples constitute 92% of the richest BB households whereas 41.2% of all single parent BBs are categorized amid the poorest (Kelly & Harding, 2007).

Even when journalists acknowledge the existence of stereotypes, the tendency is to replace one with another. For example, Granath (12/8/06) begins reporting "the stereotype of the baby boomer couple whose children have left home selling up and relocating down south is proving a true for most" yet replaces this with "a host of new

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

studies is showing that rather than flocking to the coast or tiny apartments, empty-nesters are choosing to renovate" (12/8/06, p. 26). Stereotypes of the nuclear family abound, with journalists writing "the postwar generation is entering a new lifestage as children leave home and mum and dad contemplate the future post-work and post-kids", as well as ideals about wealth and desires: "They have more assets and equity than generations before them and have an eye to extending their good lifestyles well into old age (Granath, 12/8/06, p. 26). In contrast with their parents, traditionalists, who are frugal, we are told "baby boomers now have always been a lot better spenders (Kelly in Tilbury, 16/11/05, p. T04).

Surprising in this case is how Granath imparted uncritical generalizations while simultaneously reporting the Victorian government's finding "the sea-change theory... was not a reality for most retirees because they simply could not afford it" (Granath, 12/8/06, p. 26). Interestingly, this "reality" does not appear to impact the creation of later stereotypes, such as "cashed up retirees are a force to be reckoned with" and real estate advertisements noting "those with \$3.55 million should check out..." or "with a lazy \$6.95 million to spend..." (Girdham, 20/8/06, p. H01).

The vast majority of news articles focus on BBs as sufficiently endowed to pursue whatever housing style preferred. Yet, one property analyst presents an alternative picture of BBs' real estate potential. "These days, 40% wind up in debt if they sell their home and assets to buy a smaller city apartment for their retirement" (Matusik in Girdham, 20/8/06, p. H01). Just 60% of BBs fully own new city unit properties (Girdham, 20/8/06). With city housing prices increasing, could affordability be an unspoken driver for some BB non-urban migration choices? Without representative data on the financial assets and future aims of all BB Australians, not just those making large purchases, academic claims about reasons for housing choice remain untenable. If Kaye's statement "much of the evidence surrounding just how active baby boomers are in the property market is anecdotal" (12/7/06, p. 8) in *The Australian* is true, then many deductions and speculations, such as "the baby boomer exodus...is creating a population crisis in coastal growth areas" (Hoy, 15/2/06, p. 8) put forth as social fact are also questionable.

In 2004 Salt stated BBs are supposedly "in with work/life balance, health, relationships and well-being" (Topsfield, 29/7/04, p. 3). However, by 2006 pursuit of these ideals was via consumption as "new consumer trends affected by the baby boomers wealth and their stage in the life cycle have had a powerful effect on Australian business (Salt, 17/6/06, p. 101). According to *Sunday-Mail* reporter Girdham, "Grey nomads have been annoying truckies on roads and worrying their kids to distraction for years. The offspring see their parents "ski-ing" - Spending the Kids Inheritance" (20/8/06, p. H01). So, in this mediated version of social reality, on what are BBs spending their hard earned money?

- "They are spending money on themselves, they were buying rental properties and holiday homes" (Tilbury, 16/11/05, p. T04).
- "Some invested in residential property. Others upgraded their motor cars. Many lashed out on overseas trips. A few even managed to snap up a sea-change or tree-change property for their later retirement. But not all boomers have accumulated sufficient wealth to take up these big-ticket options... where have boomers from middle Australia spent their middle-aged riches? Plasma televisions, pay-TV, home-office set-ups and, essential for legitimate entry into dinner party conversation... extensive renovations...also tapping into boomer wealth and largesse are the generation Y children, who now live at home" (Salt, 17/6/06, p. 101).
- "For baby boomers, residential property is still popular as an investment... They have a great sense of urgency in their desire to fast-track accumulation of assets." Wakelin [property advisor] says baby boomers are typically spending

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

between \$250K and \$550K on compact properties that they can generate passive income from, and eventually retire to" (Kaye, 12/7/06, p. 8).

Along with stereotypes of employment, parenthood, and social class is the pervasive assumption of race. None of the socio-cultural images portrayed in these news articles reflect lifestyle realities of indigenous Australians aged 40-60. Yet, rarely are BB descriptions qualified. The socio-historical story told about TC BBs is "the usual strategy was to use equity in the city house to buy a coastal property, at which they spent holidays until such time as they could retire, sell up entirely in the city and live handsomely off the difference" (Stynes, 7/8/04, p. 8). This progressed from 1998 to 2002 until city and coastal housing prices equalized (Salt, 2004). "In 2002 and 2003, the 'tree-change' began and the boomers... dreamed of tending their own vines" (Salt cited in Stynes, 7/8/04, p. 8). "There's two groups driving this [TC] trend. One is the baby boomers. They are in their late 40s and 50s and they've either made it in business or they haven't but they are people who have nothing left to prove. The kids have grown up and left home, they've paid out the mortgage and maybe their friend drops dead of a heart attack or something so they decide to make a lifestyle change." (Salt cited in Metcalf, 20/9/04, p. 9). The second group, GenX, are "people in their 30s - these are people who saw their parents get chewed up and spat out by the big city and they reject the whole city and corporate life" (Salt cited in Metcalf, 20/9/04, p. 9). Salt was so convinced of BBs' widespread migration, he identified the term "segue" in 2004 to describe the social change. "People are now talking about baby boomers starting to segue. This trend will continue certainly over the next 10 years and probably beyond" (Salt cited in Metcalf, 20/9/04, p. 9). Has the term 'segue' been taken up in the past 3 years? Not in the news articles and academic works analysed for this research.

A fundamental flaw in the socio-cultural image of BBs promulgated by Australian news media is the homogenization of social group by birth cohort. Sociological thinking often aims to identify social patterns which emerge as cohorts travel through life-stages together. Yet, simply being born between 1946 and 1961 should not be the basis to argue "some people become more interested in religion, some buy a Harley-Davidson but sea-change property is a central plank in the new lifestyle" (Salt cited in Stynes, 7/8/04, p. 8). Research by the University of Sydney and the Australian Institute challenges these broad assumptions. Very few BBs plan to move after retirement, are not interested in becoming a grey nomad and none were deliberately 'skiing' (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2006). The residential reality of Australian BBs is more consistent with American counterparts where 89% remain in their long-term home (Vladeck, 2005). While traditionally northern-state Americans migrated south for retirement, as of 1990 the migration trend shifted to states with lower cost-of-living (Mellor & Rehr, 2005). The importance of economics to underscore demographic change is also pivotal in Australian society where economic opportunities are just as important as amenity decisions to sea changers (Burnley & Murphy, 2004).

3. Conclusions

This research has applied the tools of critical theory to the BB TC phenomenon. Overall, the economic interests of business – media, real estate and corporations – appear responsible for creating the stereotypes and sensationalised images in Australian news on the movement of ~2% of the population to coastal or rural retreats. Unfounded claims, such as "demographers predict that, with huge superannuation draw-downs scheduled from age 55, another one million fiftysomethings will be making their sea-change, or tree-change, by the end of this decade" (Hoy, 15/2/06, p. 8) have been largely fuelled by the "expertise" of a single demographer, Bernard Salt, whose background and position create a vested interest in promotion of the social construct TC. As Wister argues, a shortcoming of demographic analyses is the tendency to "select a current social trend that contains significant age-related differences, such as housing

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

prices, sales, type, tenure, or living arrangement, and to predict future patterns by applying population projections" (2005, p. 8). In contrast, "sociological and social demographic studies have established demonstratively the salience of normative and preference structures in affecting a variety of social behaviours" (Wister, 2005, p. 8).

By mid-2006 Salt's interest in BBs was on the decline. In compiling a list of Australian locations earmarked for increased residential demand Salt argued, "three years ago would have been dominated by sea-change and tree-change towns. But not anymore. The sea-change shift, and perhaps its baby-boomer fan base, is moving none too subtly from centre stage to backstage" as working cities replace lifestyle towns on prosperity measures (27/7/06, p. 24). Yet, in November 2005, Kelly found BB spending on rental properties and holiday homes ended with the housing boom (Tilbury, 16/11/05). Such statements should alert sociologists to question what criteria are being used to define social-demographic trends when news media report them rising and disappearing in short proximity. And what retort does the researcher who coined the term 'sea-change' have to say about the short-lived phenomenon? Apparently, "The sea-change isn't dead. It's just sleeping" (Salt, 27/7/06, p. 24).

4. References

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). *Household Expenditure Survey and Survey of Income and Housing - Confidentialised Unit Records Files, Technical Paper, Information Paper* (ABS Cat. Mp. 6540.0.00.001). Canberra: ABS.

Burnley, I. & Murphy, P. (2004). *Sea change: Movement from metropolitan to arcadian Australia*. Sydney, NSW: UNSW Press.

Cunningham, S. & Flew, T. (1997). Media features. In S. Cunningham & G. Turner, (Eds.), *The media in Australia, 2nd Edition* (pp. 395-440). NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Cunningham, S. & Turner, G. (1997). The media in Australia today. In S. Cunningham & G. Turner (Eds.), *The media in Australia, 2nd Edition* (pp. 1-20). NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Dow, S. (2004, September 12). These men can see into your mind and predict the future. *Sun Herald*, p. 20.

Gergen, K. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 266-275.

Girdham, R. (2006, August 20). Boomers blow the kids' inheritance. *Sunday Mail*, p. H01.

Gleeson, B. (2004, October). Prosperity a poor nurturer for young. *The Courier-Mail*, p. 17.

Granath, N. (2006, August 12). Empty nests but full impact. *The West Australian*, p. 26.

Hamilton, M. & Hamilton, C. (2006). *Baby boomers and retirement: Dreams, fears and anxieties*. (Discussion Paper 89). The Australian Institute.

Hartley, J. (1982). *Understanding news*. London: Methuen.

Hoy, A. (2006, February 15). Tarzan, the escape man. *The Bulletin*, p. 8.

Hoyle, R. (2006, October 13). Housing changing rooms. *The Advertiser*, p. U06.

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

- Johnson-Cartee, K. (2005). *News narratives and news framing: Constructing political reality*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Jones, M. & Jones, E. (1999). *Mass media*. London: Macmillan.
- Kaye, T. (2006, July 12). Boomers embrace property market. *The Australian*, p. 8.
- Kelly, S. & Harding, A. (2007). Baby Boomers - doing it for themselves. *AMP: National centre for social and economic modelling property ltd. income & wealth report*, 16 (March), 1-25.
- Larsen, C. (2007, February 15). Time for a tree change. *BRW*, p. 4.
- Machen, L. (2007, January 20). I can see clearly now. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, p. 4.
- McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass communication theory, 2nd Edition*. London: Sage.
- Media Launch (2005, April 20). *2 million baby boomers left to seek sea, tree and tee change*. Retrieved June 5, 2007 from <http://www.medialaunch.com.au/388/>
- Metcalf, F. (2004, September 20). City folk turn over new leaves. *The Courier-Mail*, p. 9.
- Perth Sunday Times* (2007, January 21). More and more cashed-up homeowners are selling up to seek their dream lifestyle, p. R15.
- Ragusa, A.T. (2005). Social change and the corporate construction of gay markets in *The New York Times* Advertising Business News. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27(5), 653-676.
- Reese, S.D. (1990). The news paradigm and the ideology of objectivity: A socialist at the *Wall Street Journal*. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 7, 390-409.
- Salt, B. (2006, June 17). Boomers keen to pass taste test. *The Australian*, p. 101.
- Salt, B. (2006, July 27). Xers marked the spot as hot towns search with jobs growth. *The Australian*, p. 24.
- Stynes, J. (2004). No stopping the sea change. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August: 8
- Takamura, J. 2005. "Forward", pp.ix-xii in *Baby Boomers: can my Eighties be like my Fifties?*. M.J. Mellor & H. Rehr (Eds.). New York: Springer.
- Tilbury, A. (2005, November 16). Home is where the holiday is for boomers. *The Courier-Mail*, p. T04.
- Topsfield, J. (2004, July 29). War of the generations looms on X-Y front. *The Age*, p. 3.
- Turner, G. (1997). Media texts and messages. In S. Cunningham & G. Turner (Eds.), *The media in Australia, 2nd Edition* (pp. 291-348). NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Vladeck, F. (2005). Aging in place: Shaping communities for tomorrow's baby boomers. In M.J. Mellor & H. Rehr (Eds.), *Baby boomers: Can my Eighties be like my Fifties?* (pp. 111-122). New York: Springer.