Bridging Gaps:

National Identity in Persona, Branding and Activism

December 8-10, 2017
University of Western Australia
Perth, Australia

Conference Program

Conference Chairs: Dr. Jackie Raphael and Dr. Celia Lam

Special thanks to Dr Samita Nandy for helping with the conference organisation. Thanks to committee members Dr Kirsty Fairclough, Dr Bertha Chin and Bethan Jones for supporting the conference. Thanks to Nick Wright from Perth Creative Industries (http://www.pcilasercuttingengraving.com.au) for designing the best paper award. Thank you Perth Convention Bureau and Tourism Western Australia for their support also. Thank you to Frances Andrijich and the Ledger family for allowing us to use a photo of Heath Ledger.

Bridging Gaps: National Identity in Persona, Branding and Activism

With the rise of Web 2.0, people brand themselves through social media as a singular person. The online visibility of their brand often takes precedence over social contributions. Their **online presentation**, however, is a reflection of how they want to be perceived in a collective setting. How does this kind of branding differ to a local business service or an international celebrity who also brands themselves online? What impact is **persona branding** having on society and the way people view themselves?

A focus on the **persona of activists** shows the particular impact of branding in society. An activist's voice, like that of a political leader, is often heard if they have a strong brand. Yet, the perception is often specific to their national contexts. How are socialist actions in North Korea viewed in the Western world? How does having a female political leader change the perception of a country? How are immigrants seen around the world? What role does media play in creating these **constructed views in national and transnational contexts**?

We encourage scholars and industry practitioners to question, explore, and problematize the notion of national identity in persona, branding, and activism. We ask: **how is a country reflected through its celebrities, popular history, stereotypes and myths?** Often one individual can have global fame, which can result in branding a nation or city and develop a country's cause as well. Their persona becomes the basis of how a place is perceived internationally. For example, American born icon Elvis Presley is used to represent Las Vegas and Memphis, while George Clooney has attached himself to Darfur through his activism. Similarly, Steve Irwin became a symbol of Australian culture through his philanthropy and his fame as "The Crocodile Hunter." A decade since his death people still create the association between him and the nation's identity, while overlooking how race, gender and class affect one's overall brand identity. **Myths surrounding national identity** are also evident in beauty pageants and the Olympics. How do these stereotypes affect our understanding of culture?

Celebrity Chat

Celebrity Chat is a series on the CMCS YouTube channel, which is based on scholarly discussions on celebrity culture. We will be screening the winning Celebrity Chat video at the conference. The top video will win a $100 CMCS screen award. There will also be an opportunity for delegates to record their own Celebrity Chat videos while at the conference. For further details on Celebrity Chat please read here - http://cmc-centre.com/celebritychat/

DAY 1: Friday 8th of December, 2017	
5:00pm – 5:30pm	Registration and Welcome Drinks at the Art Gallery of Western Australia
5:30pm – 7:00pm	Special Exhibition Tour of Heath Ledger: A Life in Pictures

DAY 2: Saturday 9th of December, 2017	
8:45am – 9:00am	Welcome by Chairs – Jackie Raphael and Celia Lam
	Session Chair: Jackie Raphael
9:00am – 9:45am	Keynote Speaker - Sean Redmond *David Bowie: Starring in Cameo* In this talk I will explore the way David Bowie performs in and through the role of the film and television fiction cameo. I will suggest that he brings the complexity of his shifting star image to each cameo performance, drawing on competing artistic traditions as he does so. I will make use of the parameters of posing and mimicry, self-reflexivity and cultish subversion, and the shifting ground of modernism and postmodernism to show how Bowie's cameo performances are not singular or consistent but refer to the specificities of the text in question, the other authors and actors involved, and to the multi-grain nature of his star self. When Bowie embodies a cameo role, a series of intersecting performance registers are in play that suggest he is always in cameo. The three texts that I have chosen to talk through are, Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me (Lynch, 1992), Zoolander (Stiller, 2001), and Extras (the 'David Bowie' episode, 2006, Gervais). These texts occur across film and television, artistic and commercial streams, and take place over a 20-year performance period, allowing one to see how Bowie embodies and breaks-down the very constituents of the cameo role. I will be predominately using those texts where David Bowie appears as David Bowie, the exception being Twin Peaks where he takes on the 'disappearing' role of FBI Agent Phillip Jeffries. The questions that will frame my reading of these cameo performances are, which David Bowie is being brought into view? How is the text using him, and why? How does David Bowie starring in cameo help us better understand stardom and celebrity more generally?

9:45am – 10:00am	Q+A
10:00am – 10:15am	**Tea Break**
	Session Chair: Katja Lee
10:15am – 10:30am	Louise St Guillaume *Alternative Australian Panel: Stan Grant* Indigenous broadcaster Stan Grant garnered media attention as a result of two recent speeches on the issue of Indigenous rights. The speeches were powerful, moving, and passionate; and on one occasion completely unscripted. Grant's on-stage presence evoked great orators and human rights activists the likes of Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela; and in light of his personal connection to the issue as an Indigenous Australian, seemed to similarly position him as a respected authority on Indigenous rights. Mainstream media interest has, as recently 2015, focused on his private life. This interest aligns Grant with other mainstream media personalities whose high profile warrants tabloid interest. Yet it tends to inconsistently address his Indigenous identity, at times highlighting and at others ignoring, his heritage. At the same time, Grant's choice of employment shapes him as a broadcaster. His public and vocal support for Indigenous rights constructs him as an advocate for Indigenous rights. Grant's persona is thus twofold: the media personality and Professional journalist; and Indigenous rights advocate. The personas are at once complementary and contradictory. In order to be accepted as a mainstream media personality, Grant's Indigenous identity is often subsumed into a broader generalised 'television host' persona. To legitimise his voice and justify his ability to speak to Indigenous rights, this aspect of his identity is emphasised.
10:30am – 10:45am	Ellen Finlay *Alternative Australian Panel: Adam Hills* Adam Hills is an Australian celebrity, comedian and compere currently working in both Australian and United Kingdom (UK) media contexts. Hills' early comedic work foregrounded an Australian 'larrikin' character as his primary subject of humour, using this persona to establish his professional comedic career. Seeking to avoid being labelled the 'one-legged comedian' and thus not engaging or publicly embracing his disability in his early comedic

	work, Hills, who was born with one foot, once described being a monoped as 'dull' and does not identify as a person with disability. More recently however, particularly in content produced in the UK, Hills has prioritised both his 'Australianness' as well as the subject of his physical impairment, and disability more broadly. Screen Australia recently published figures on the extent of diversity in Australian television, finding that "the percentage of Australians with disabilities is more than four times the percentage of characters with disabilities on TV" (Screen Australia, 2016). Through an analysis of media representations, published pieces by Hills and his comedic and compere work, this paper questions whether Hills, a white, heterosexual, middle-class, male, who does not identify as a person with disability, has the capacity to challenge the dominance of the 'normative body' in the Australian media. Of particular focus is whether Hills is limited in his engagement with disability in the Australian media landscape since establishing his professional persona as an 'Aussie Comic', particularly to Australian audiences. This is important in assessing to what extent diversity is possible in the Australian media context and representations of the Australian national identity, given Hills' own uncertainty about representing 'disability' as a non-disability identifying individual with a physical impairment.
10:45am – 11:00am	Celia Lam *Alternative Australian Panel: Dami Im* For the past few years (2014-2017) Australia has had a presence on the Eurovision stage, first as guest performer, then as wild card entrant, and most recently as official competitor. The three contestants all emerged from Reality TV singing competitions and hail from non-European Australian backgrounds. A common media observation concerning representation on Australian television is the overwhelming diversity on reality television compared to scripted drama. Until recently, the majority of scripted dramas followed an 'white' template that featured Anglo-European faces and storylines. The dissonance between the political narrative of multiculturalism, and the representation of majority Anglo-European faces onscreen is an ongoing criticism of Australian media. On the surface the three contestant's role as Australian representatives would seem to correct this imbalance.

	However, their – and Eurovision's – association with the Special Broadcasting Service (viewed as the 'ethnic' channel) casts them within an 'ethnic' and minority narrative rather than the 'mainstream' one. Adopting discourse analysis, this paper explores Australian mainstream media's representation of the most successful Australian entrant, Dami Im, before, during and after her Eurovision appearance to highlight how she is portrayed. Of particular focus is the media's presentation of her 'Australian-ness' and her place within the overall narrative of Australian identity. This paper argues that Im's identity as non-European is tolerated insofar as she fits within an accepted 'successful immigrant' narrative. Concurrently, her religious affiliations (Christian), domestic situation (married), and display of femininity (as a fashionista), all reinforce hegemonic norms that construct her as a 'safe' alternative within the mainstream.
11:00am – 11:15am	Q+A
	Session Chair: Debbie Rodan
11:15am – 11:30am	Renee Middlemost *'Serving Activist Realness': The new Drag Superstars and Activism under Trump* Activism has always played a central role in drag culture. Drag is more visible in mainstream consciousness than ever before, and the huge popularity of the reality television program Ru Paul's Drag Race, has ensured widespread fandom and exposure for the contestants. Subsequently, New York based winners of Seasons 8 and 9, Bob the Drag Queen, and Sasha Velour, have been outspoken about their intent to use their public profile as 'America's next drag superstar' to highlight the importance of drag as activism. Drag personas have long been used to comment on, and motivate political action, particularly on issues facing the LGBTQIA community at large. Bob and Velour reference this tradition in the causes they champion, particularly marriage equality, and fundraising for the Brooklyn LGBTQIA community. New York has a long history as one of the front lines of resistance and intervention, leading calls for changes in policy and acceptance, from Stonewall, to recent demonstrations calling for marriage equality. This paper

	will examine how celebrity drag personalities such as Bob and Velour use drag as a form of activism, and how this persona intersects with politics and national identity. Historically, the intersection between drag and national identity has been heightened at moments when the LGBTQIA community has been threatened with erasure in matters of policy and debate. In the current American political climate, I will argue that satirical drag performance is a vital way of drawing attention to the reversal of legal rights facing the LGBTQIA community under Trump.
11:30am – 11:45am	Joanna McIntyre *Laverne and Caitlyn: Transgender Celebrities, Transnational Activism and US Universalism* This paper explores the powers and problematics of a nascent mode of international transgender celebrity. In a society obsessed with celebrity, transgender celebrities are at the forefront of media engagement with transgender subjectivities. Although divergent in many ways, US transgender celebrities Laverne Cox and Caitlyn Jenner both exemplify a unique type of public persona whose celebrity brand is bound to their transgender identity; they are entertainers as well as activists, bringing visibility to the marginalisation of transgender people while functioning as a dynamic facet of mainstream celebrity culture. The international reach of US media and the globalised nature of social media mean these US transgender celebrities' activism is transnational. Not dissimilarly to gay and queer rights movements, transgender issues and activism are often understood to transcend national boundaries. However, I argue transgender rights are now a social cause for which these US celebrities have become 'universal' spokespeople. This paper acknowledges Cox's and Jenner's popularity and celebrity power mean they are compelling advocates for the rights and social acceptance of transgender people, but critiques that the US transgender celebrity subject has – in the global West – recently come to be positioned as the universal transgender subject. Examining media constructions of Cox's and Jenner's celebrity brands, I firstly argue the celebrification of certain transgender subjectivities can model and perpetuate transnormativity (a structural ideology that enables only particular transgender subjectivities to be deemed culturally

	intelligible, while consequently subjugating others). Secondly, this paper extends current definitions of transnormativity to identify alignments between transnormativity and US universalism.
11:45am – 12:00pm	Lucy Watson *I would kind of expect that from [Kylie Minogue]": LGBT Australians respond to marriage equality activism* This paper will explore the ways in which celebrities become known as 'influential' to particular social groups, and the expectations that stem from this influence. In particular, this paper will draw on responses to a broader study of how LGBT Australians respond to celebrity media, to consider the specific reactions from this community on marriage equality activism in Australia. Marriage equality, while long lambasted by some queer scholars (Warner, 1999), is an issue that is debated regularly in Australia, where many are critical of the government's inaction on the topic as the country lags behind the rest of the English speaking Western world in legislating on the subject. Marriage equality debates are a daily reality for LGBT Australians. Celebrity pervades our everyday lives, whether we want it to or not. The influence of celebrity – on practices of consumption, the success of capitalism, moral behavioural standards, and representation, to name a few – has long been held by celebrity scholars. This paper will consider the influence of celebrity on the subject of marriage equality for LGBT Australians, considering the views of respondents on social responsibility of both LGBT and ally celebrities, and the response to action in this particular area by celebrities. The paper will particularly follow the Australian case, to examine the ways in which political activism tie into national identity, and the ways in which national legislation directly impacts feelings of social inclusion for LGBT Australians.
12:00pm – 12:15pm	Q+A
12:15pm – 1:00pm	**Lunch Break**
	Session Chair: Jane Mummery
1:00pm – 1:15pm	Jo Coghlan *The Political Persona of Michelle Obama:* *Rebranding American womanhood and national identity*

	Michelle Obama rebranded American womanhood and framed a powerful narrative about the ideals of the American nation under the Presidency of Barrack Obama. She did this via fashion. The Obama's rise coincided with the emergence of social media meaning every aspect of their identity and fashion was chronicled in unprecedented ways. Appearances matters in social media. Visual images are powerful. Rather than rally against social media, the Obama's embraced it, none more so than Michelle Obama. Intuitively and actively she embraced the visual medium to rebrand American womanhood and to frame a hopeful and inclusive version of American national identity at home and internationally. This paper explores how the political persona of Michelle Obama rebranded American womanhood and American national identity via her "strategic identity" (Marshall & Henderson 2016: 1) evident in her dressed body. It posits that in two distinct ways Michelle Obama's fashioned body rebranded the problematic notion of the first lady as the idealisation of American womanhood (Kahl 2009: 316) while her "sartorial diplomacy" (Friedman 2017, online) rebranded American foreign relations away from its immediate hegemonic and imperialist past to one of global consensus and cooperation. As Totman and Hardy note "the persona of all political figures [is] fabricated and contrived for political gain" (2016: 81). The political gains may have been the election of Barrack Obama but arguably the gains were also in repositioning hope and change as worthy American and international ideals.
1:15pm – 1:30pm	Melanie Piper *History, Identity, Beauty: Jackie as a character study of the American myth* Like all biopics, Jackie (Pablo Larraín, 2016) re-creates the persona of a public figure from indelible pieces of cultural memory to supplement a historical narrative with a personal one. The historical narrative of Jackie, however — the days following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy — is closely aligned with the fractured, grieving memory of its protagonist. Binding this fractured subjectivity together is a conscious awareness of the need to produce history, legacy, and national identity. The resulting film is not quite what we have come to expect from the life narrative

	format of the biopic. While Jackie does comment on its subject's place in history, it does so through a limited temporal and narrative focus, positioning the viewer in the private realms of its protagonist's memory. Thus the biopic becomes a character study of one American icon's conscious construction of public selves: her own, her husband's, and her nation's. This paper approaches Jackie as a character study of Jacqueline Kennedy at this pivotal moment in not only her life, but her life in American history. By looking at the film in terms of how the character of Jackie Kennedy negotiates the realms of public and private persona, I aim to demonstrate how the fictionalisation of public figures can articulate self-reflexive narratives about the consciously crafted nature of persona and national identity. In doing so, I propose a character-focused methodology for examining the biopic that can potentially shed light on how popular cinematic discourse depicts the construction of public persona.
1:30pm – 1:45pm	Julie Siedses *Ingrid Bergman's Star Persona in Stromboli* *Stromboli (1950)* was the first film Ingrid Bergman made with Roberto Rossellini, and it was both widely panned by critics and a commercial failure. Since its release, critics have debated how the most widely lauded Italian neorealist film director and the most popular star in Hollywood at the time, could make such an unsuccessful film. Stromboli's value has been appreciated in scholarly circles retrospectively, therefore it is pertinent to interrogate the textual and contextual characteristics that affected its poor initial reception. While there are wide opinions as to why the film was a failure: from Rossellini turning his back on his neorealist sensibilities, to fall-out from the Bergman-Rossellini affair; there has been little analysis on how the Hollywood-created star persona of Bergman interacted within the film. This work explores Rossellini's presentation of Ingrid Bergman in Stromboli and how her star persona differs from that presentation. Rossellini said himself that that his films were autobiographical, and there are some scholars who see *Stromboli, Europa '51* (1952) and *Voyage to Italy* (1954) as representing the stages of the Bergman/Rossellini marriage. However, this presentation will explore with how Bergman's star persona, the characters she played, and her real life were manipulated within Hollywood, and how, by changing the

	public's perception of all three of these characteristics, Rossellini and Bergman threatened both their careers and the film they both worked so hard on realising.
1:45pm – 2:00pm	Q+A
	Session Chair: Charlotte Allen
2:00pm – 2:15pm	Emily Rauber Rodriguez *Better Than Selfies: Guillermo del Toro's curation of persona via Twitter recommendations* Twitter offers celebrities a unique way to connect with their fans, whether through subtly Photoshopped selfies, paid product endorsements, or stream-of-consciousness rants. In September 2015, Mexican-born film director Guillermo del Toro began tweeting from his new account, @RealGDT. Del Toro used the forum to tweet recommendations of books, artists, and films from the "dark fiction" genre—often surreal, fantastical images and tales of ghosts, witches, and vampires. In doing so, del Toro positioned his own works within this lineage that included both high and low culture, while the seemingly endless stream of recommendations further emphasized his persona foremost as the "geek auteur" (Thornton, 2014). Unlike fellow cultural magpies like Tarantino or Burton though, del Toro's recommendations also served to define the narrative surrounding his own (trans)nationality—and his industry's perspective on it. Tweeting in both English and Spanish, and providing works from a range of global sources, del Toro subverted Hollywood's assumption that "foreign" film forms a distinct genre; through his tweets, he showed that borders are fluid, and that practitioners of dark fiction can come from anywhere in the world. Building off both Goffman's concept of the front stage/back stage and Naficy's accented cinema, I examine how del Toro used his tweets to emphasize the importance of personal national diversity within mass global culture, while also privileging the output of the individual director auteur.

2:15pm – 2:30pm	Steve Elers and Phoebe Elers *#Activism: An analysis of a Māori activist's Twitter messages from prison* On 15 October 2007, the New Zealand Police conducted armed raids in the township of Rūātoki, among other locations, under the Terrorism Suppression Act. Tāme Iti, a well-known Māori rights activist, was arrested during the raids. The raids dominated news headlines in Aotearoa New Zealand as it played into the stereotypical narrative of the criminally-minded Māori activist. As the Solicitor-General ruled that charges could not be laid under the Terrorism Suppression Act, Iti was instead convicted for minor firearms offences and was sentenced to two and half years in prison on 24 May 2012. During his incarceration, Iti's whānau [family] established a Twitter account on his behalf. Iti telephoned his whānau from prison daily, and gave them short messages to post on his Twitter account; his messages were also disseminated via Facebook. Our paper is focused on Iti's use of Twitter while he was in prison as a means of mass communication – a way of giving voice to the powerless. Our research is grounded in kaupapa Māori: a critical, anti-oppressive, emancipatory and decolonising indigenous research approach. This is the first known study concerning the use of social media by an imprisoned campaigner of indigenous rights.
2:30pm – 2:45pm	Olivia Efthimiou and Madison Magladry *"#EverydayHero": Re-imagining the self through heroic identity, branding and activism* Heroic overtones have always accompanied social movements – the explicit use of heroism as both a vehicle of social change and object of in-depth scholarly study, however, is a unique phenomenon (Efthimiou and Allison, 2017). This marks the beginnings of a global movement (Allison, 2015; Franco et al., 2017) driven by the vision of the 'banality of everyday heroism' (Franco and Zimbardo, 2006). It is accompanied by a wave of 'collaborative heroism' (Klisanin, 2016) and novel heroic narratives in the Internet and blogosphere. Specifically, it involves the use of heroism by not-for-profits as a purposeful, meaningful and authentic branding/educational tool for healthy social disruption

	and community building. This is giving rise to a distinct brand culture and online presence through heroic storytelling and transformative practice to maximise social impact. This paper employs a twofold methodology to identify the contours of the heroism movement through: (a) contextualising the phenomenon in social movement theories, in particular ones that place emotions and embodied experience at the forefront of analysis; and, (b) a social media case study of Twitter activity of key hashtags over a defined period. It argues that this nascent form of online participation and heroic persona branding enhances our embodied engagement with the experience of heroism as active participants in its consumption and reading, and as contributors to its knowledge-making process. Importantly, it is an expression of: new social, cultural and political mythologies which transgress national, gender and other boundaries; the reshaping of subjectivity and identity in the everyday; and the (re)construction of our understandings of the 'heroic' in contemporary settings.
2:45pm – 3:00pm	Q+A
3:00pm – 3:15pm	**Tea Break**
	Session Chair: Melanie Piper
3:15pm – 3:30pm	Nancy Liu *City Branding under the Theme of Intellectuals: Specifications and implementations* With the development of innumerable metropolitans, cities make all means to brand themselves in order to stand out for the benefit of socio-economic improvement. By definition, an intellectual can be manifold in terms of critical thinking and research. They are usually the persona who reflect about society and propose solutions for its problems. The southern city of Ningbo in China is quite famous in historical heritage and modern intellectuals. In history, the ancient library called Tianyige or One Sky Pavilion, was the most ancient private library in China, which used to boast a collection of 70,000 volumes of antique books. Contemporarily, the number of academics born in Ningbo elected to the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering is 108, which ranks first in the country. Therefore, it is justifiable that the city branding of Ningbo focuses on the three themes: the City of Intellectual, the City of Music and the City of Films, by putting intellectual in a conspicuous position. What about the branding strategy in effect?

	This research will carry out interviews from a bottom-up level by letting the ordinary people tell their own stories concerning how the city should be branded. So far we have interviewed some people who were born in Ningbo and some expatriates who work here. These interviewees are all well-educated and who consider themselves as intellectuals. They tell their experiences and expectations through oral history. It is expected to conclude that the authority needs to develop more specific contents under the slogan. Also more integration of higher education institutions with local culture is called for in the implementation of the branding strategy. Upon completion of the project, the findings will be fed to the policy-makers. Also it may add to the broader scholarship of city branding research.
3:30pm – 3:45pm	Sonjah Stanley Niaah *Consuming The Nation: 'Brand Jamaica' and the case of the state as 'celebrity'* This paper is part of a larger project on the international significance of a small island, which punches above its proverbial weight category in global pop culture. Liminal by virtue of its contradictory location between postcolonial, anti-imperial, modern, and peripheral, with one love-laced infectious rhythms and a dash of hate lyrics, Jamaica is consumed and imitated without recourse to lawsuits in many ways globally. This paper establishes a correlation between the consumption of reggae in the form of festivals and events, and the Brand, which is 'Jamaica'. I argue that the contradictions, challenges and celebratory dimensions of pilgrimage, the consumption and commodification of reggae and Jamaica more broadly, can be seen as a sort of 'Jamaicapolitanism' in both a diasporic and global sense. It therefore develops on cosmopolitanism as a theory, extending it beyond engagement of the reggae product, to the consumption of Jamaica as nation. Importantly, Jamaica's cultural and creative industries and the articulation of brand Jamaica has to take account of the global reggae economy around events, consumers and producers. The movement of music, people, and philosophies needs to be understood in all its dimensions because it is a crucial fulcrum around which Jamaica's cultural and creative industries hinge. This paper also makes an assessment of visual, performance, philosophical and cultural products, and clashes over them, in marijuana use, human rights, and use of Jamaican symbols, for

	example, to advance conceptualisation of the Jamaican state in a dynamic, borderless production of its brand. I argue that Jamaica's reach and importance render its particular form of statehood as a sort of 'celebrity'. Therefore, through detailed view of reggae festivals and the inherent movement of patrons, music and their ideas about living, statements are made about the politics of musical pilgrimage, and the politics and significance of the global consumption of Jamaican popular culture specifically.
3:45pm – 4:00pm	Louise Fowler-Tutt *Chinese Culture and Disney Imagineering* This paper will discuss how Chinese national identity is represented through the newly opened Shanghai Disney theme park. Shanghai Disney Resort is the 12th Disney theme park to be opened globally. The Disney company opened Shanghai Disney Resort in June of 2016, with a catchy marketing slogan of "Authentically Disney and Distinctly Chinese" This short sentence summarises the overall artistic direction and vision which has been adopted and implemented throughout the park. Through a discussion of the park's constructed visual identity, created by the Walt Disney Imagineering department, this essay will examine how Disney has shrewdly blended the iconic Disney style with Chinese culture.
4:00pm – 4:15pm	Q+A
4:15pm – 4:30pm	Jackie Raphael and Celia Lam Closing Remarks

DAY 3: Sunday 10th of December, 2017	
9:00am – 9:15am	Welcome by Chairs – Jackie Raphael and Celia Lam
	Session Chair: Celia Lam
9:15am – 9:45am	Heath Ledger Panel with special guests – Allison Holland (curator of Heath Ledger: A Life in Pictures), Sean Redmond (Keynote Speaker) and Jackie Raphael (Conference Chair).
9:45am – 10:00am	Q+A

	Session Chair: Renee Middlemost
10:00am – 10:15am	Lisa Hacket *Women's Sizes go Pear-Shaped: Alternative fashion bodies in Australia and the UK* The body size of female celebrities is a prevalent preoccupation in the media. Clothing sizes are a visceral way that women can measure themselves against celebrities. Australian clothing sizes are largely drawn from the now defunct Australian Standard AS1344:1997 which were developed from measurements taken in the 1920s and 1940s. The Standard was problematic from the start and was never updated to reflect changes in body sizes and shapes since its original conception in the 1950s. In response to changing body shapes alongside the rise of social media, alternative approaches such as Australian Model Stefania Ferrario's "Drop the Plus" campaign and Magda Szubanski's challenge to the "Fat is Funny" trope are given as examples. Stefania Ferrario is known within the fashion industry as a "plus size model", yet at a healthy size 12, her body is more representative of the average normal Australian woman. She campaigns for more inclusive body sizes, shapes and ages to be represented by the fashion industry. Magda Szubanski faced backlash from some sections of the community when she embarked on her weight loss journey, gaining, loosing, and then regaining a position as Jenny Craig's weight loss ambassador as her diet succeeded, failed then succeeded again.
10:15am – 10:30am	Denise N. Rall *First Ladies Fight Back: The two Democrats Hillary Rodham Clinton and Michelle Obama* The fashion of the American First Lady is widely scrutinised when they come into office as new political celebrities. Designers seek to dress American first ladies and large sections of society are consumed by their appearance and style. This presentation examines the everyday clothing and high-end fashion of the last two Democratic first ladies, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama. It is timely to consider how the dressed body of these contemporary First Ladies have changed the definition of what it means to be a First Lady under today's media scrutiny. The venom around Hillary Clinton's pantsuits may have contributed to her failure to win the 2016 presidential election. It is also timely at the end of the Obama

	presidency to conceptualise how the first African American first lady Michelle Obama, via how she dressed, reimagined the role of the first lady in the public imagination.
10:30am – 10:45am	Jo Coghlan *The Pussy Hat Project: American women march on Washington D.C. to take on Donald Trump* The widespread media reportage on President-elect Donald's 'and when you're a star they let you do it . . . Grab 'em by the pussy. You can do anything.' (from a New York Times leak of a recorded conversation between Donald Trump and Billy Bush during a George W. Bush campaign trip in 2005). This comment evoked a firestorm of commentary by the media, which culminated in the formal organisation of The Pussy Hat Project, an online forum that supports craftivism (craft+activism) to knit or crochet pink 'pussy hats' and distributed them to the almost 2 million women (and men) that marched on Washington D.C. on 21 January 2017 to protest Trump's public statements about women as sexual objects. This was later embraced by the designer Angela Missoni during the 2017 Milan Fashion Week on 27 February.
10:45am – 11:00am	Q+A
11:00am – 11:15am	**Tea Break**
	Session Chair: Julie Siedses
11:15am – 11:30am	Debbie Rodan and Jane Mummery *How do you brand Australians as caring and compassionate? An investigation into Animals Australia's livestock campaigns.* Most Australians think that livestock animals deserve the same protections as companion animals and nine out of ten say the wellbeing of farmed animals is important (Animal Tracker Australia Report, 2014). In addition, it is arguably the case that consumer pressure is driving changes in policy in the retail sector regarding improved livestock welfare. And yet, not only do many industry standards lag behind such public expectations regarding livestock welfare, but only 1.5% of Australian households are themselves vegetarian or vegan (Animal Tracker Australia Report, 2014). So how do Australian animal activist organisations construct their brand to connote Australians as really caring about livestock welfare? In Animals Australia's campaigns addressing factory

	farming and live export, Australians are interpellated as being essentially compassionate and caring even if regrettably ignorant of the 'real' situation of animals in factory farming. Campaign content intimates that Australian consumers do not know of the "terrible price" paid by animals in their consumer demands for cheap animal products, as not knowing that this demand has culminated in an "animal welfare disaster of a magnitude this planet has never known" (Animals Australia, 2012). But what strategies do activist organisations use to effectively communicate their brand and brand their consumers? In this paper we probe Animals Australia's strategy of anthropomorphising and personifying livestock animals – namely the 'flying pig' and 'lady chickens'. We assess how effective the branding is in progressing three actions: 1) supermarket changes in policy; 2) mobilising consumer feedback; and 3) constructing the caring Australian.
11:30am – 11:45am	Angelique Nairn and Frances Nelson *Labouring the racist point? Heavy irony for good intentions: A thematic analysis of audience responses to the "Give nothing to racism campaign"* In 2017, *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* director, Taika Waiti was named New Zealander of the year (stuff.co.nz, 2017). Since then he has lent his celebrity brand to the creation and dissemination of the Human Rights Campaign "Give nothing to racism" (Grant, 2017; Roy, 2017; Warhurst, 2017). It is not uncommon for celebrities to engage in advocacy: their public personas can "crystallise issues" (Marshall, 2013, p. 370) and move audiences to action (Marshall, 2013; O'Regan, 2014). In essence, celebrities function as a site of identification (Noland, Goodale, Marshall, & Schlecht, 2009), because people form attachments with the mediated images of those they admire and to whom they perceive a commonality (Burke, 1969; Kelman, 1958). Such identification can encourage individuals to emulate the behaviours of celebrities (Fraser & Brown, 2002). Therefore, by being authentic and credible in their advocacy, celebrities can persuade ordinary people to do the extra-ordinary and help in solving society's problems (Goodman & Barnes, 2011; Jackson, 2008). However, there is much conjecture over celebrities 'true' influence in social issues and whether they can positively impact audiences (O'Regan, 2014). Furthermore, their support of issues can be considered tokenistic and superficial

	(Noland, et al., 2009). The purpose of this research, then, is to use thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to examine the online, and particularly social media responses of New Zealanders, firstly in relation to the campaign "Give nothing to racism" and secondly, to Taika Waiti's involvement. We seek to determine the attitudes of audiences to the issue of race and whether they believe Waiti's inclusion and approach to the issue were appropriate.
11:45am – 12:00pm	Phoebe Elers and Steve Elers *Iconic Promotion: The endorsement of unsafe health products* Sir Colin Meads (1936-2017) was considered an 'icon' and 'legend' in New Zealand. The recent death of the former All Blacks' rugby captain made headlines across the country's major news outlets in August 2017, with many articles referring to him as the greatest All Black of the 20th century. However, in the months before his death, the media reported on Sir Colin's use of Te Kiri Gold in his fight against cancer. Te Kiri Gold is a liquid product developed by a farmer, Vernon Coxhead, who has claimed that the product changes the molecular structure of the immune system to penetrate cancer cells. According to scientists, Te Kiri Gold is essentially diluted bleach and unsafe for human consumption. The product was supplied to Sir Colin without charge, but it has the earning potential of $500,000 if 300 people take the recommended course. Sir Colin featured in news articles claiming that the controversial product was working, and Google analytical data shows that search queries for the product increased when Sir Colin spoke about it in the news media. We argue that Sir Colin's iconic status helped to promote and legitimise Te Kiri Gold and that this practice has dangerous consequences. This case study highlights the potential effects of celebrity endorsements pertaining to unproven health remedies.
12:00pm – 12:15pm	Q+A
	Session Chair: Franklin T. Wilson
12:15pm – 12:30pm	Jeonghyun Jaylyn Oh *The Voice Isolated: Activists in North Korea on social media* Social media has undoubtedly lowered the entry barrier to activism for anyone with access to the Internet all over the world. People in North Korea are no exception. Some of the residents in North Korea with the privilege to the Internet have voluntarily engaged

	themselves in promoting the country via social media, which have not yet been the interest of pundits. This study sheds light on this somewhat counterintuitive action of the activists from the world's most isolated nation. Mostly working as photographers, language teachers, or travel agents, they have garnered followers on their social media accounts with the pictures and videos that have different appeals from what is portrayed in traditional media. Focusing on Instagram, an efficacious tool for transnational communication among the users of different languages, this study examines visual and textual contents on selected accounts. Their voice to the outside world, albeit modest in the frequency of mutual interactions, holds significance as a representation of how people living in the world's least desired destination want the country to be viewed, and how it is perceived.
12:30pm – 12:45pm	Vincent Larkin Shifting Identities Within Internet Memes The meme as an idea began with Richard Dawkins' media-gene metaphor. Within today's colloquial understanding of 'Internet memes,' one important aspect relating to Dawkins' original metaphor is still relevant. The Internet meme as a unit of cultural exchange, in order to survive, has to reproduce and mutate. With this in mind I will present examples of memes that function and spread primarily through a process of image-media led mutation. This is a contemporary, intuitively anxious process that has drawn association with Soviet Film-maker Dziga Vertov's 'visual bond' concept of media led social bonding. Enquiring primarily into the origins and journeys of recuperated illustrated content within Internet memes, my paper will explore ways in which meaning is informed and organised towards audiences far beyond the localised intention of the original illustrated material. Operating through a combination of regurgitated imagery and text, I will position the meme as a device with the power to visually bond and avow divergent groups and national identities. Specifically, in the presentation, I will examine occasions in which images are reused and re–contextualised within contrasting individual, group and national identities.

12:45pm – 1:00pm	Kerstin Hacker *Fostering Visual Self-Governance in Zambia* Zambia is presented to a Western audience through the prevailing visual narrative of Africa: population growth, epidemics and poverty. Everyday life as experienced by its growing affluent class in the urban centres could not be further from these preconceived visual narratives. This photographic project aims to document the changing urban experience in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, by producing a set of images that examine and question the media-filtered visual experience of Africa. Through these images (access via my website) I hope to contribute to the wider discussion of visual representation of Africa and develop a renewed visual engagement with the continent that will allow viewers to question their preconceived knowledge. These photographs of an emerging middle class question why this aspect of African life is rarely discussed in the West. This project presents an alternative vision of a different, twenty first century African life. Past visual representations were often shaped by the UK's colonial past and old narratives were kept static. Now there is a demand for images less laden with colonial and post-colonial references, but for images that are shaking off the burden of representation and become images free from colonial and post-colonial ties and develop an independent narrative. As a documentary photographer and photographic educator, I am interested in how this project can contribute to discussion on if and how photography can contribute to a new, more dynamic (self-) understanding of Zambia.
1:00pm – 1:15pm	Q+A
1:15pm – 2:00pm	**Lunch Break**
	Session Chair: Sonjah Stanley Niaah
2:00pm – 2:15pm	Jackie Raphael and Celia Lam *Chris Hemsworth: Helping and Hindering the Australian Identity* Chris Hemsworth represents Australia both when home and away. Through his portrayal of Thor in the Marvel Cinematic Universe films, Hemsworth is one of many Australians to have become a Hollywood A-lister. Externally, Hemsworth is viewed as a representation of Australia and the Australian identity, a notion

	reinforced through his selection as the 2016 Australian tourism ambassador. Hemsworth is often represented in media as a rugged and strong persona, a surfer who possesses the typical traits of larrikinism commonly associated with Australian stereotypes. This stereotype also tends towards representations of white Australia as the norm, and is influenced in no small part by the white washing of our domestic and international media productions. Thus, while Australians are exposed to a narrative of multiculturalism internally, globally a white image of Australian identity persists. Additionally, the cultural emphasis on a larrikin persona perpetuates a male-dominated image. From Paul Hogan to Steve Irwin to Hugh Jackman and now Chris Hemsworth Australian identity is often associated with the hyper-masculine. Footage from the tourism campaign featuring Hemsworth, re-imagines Australia as a serene and relaxed environment, compared to the rough outback previously portrayed. However, Hemsworth's image reinforces many pre-existing stereotypes. This paper explores the ways in which Hemsworth both develops the Australian identity and hinders it through stereotypes. Semiotic analysis of Tourism Australia's website reveals how Hemsworth's persona is constructed and functions within a tourism campaign for Australia.
2:15pm – 2:30pm	Belinda Glynn *Transgression and Recuperation: Cary Grant, national identity and male stardom* Tall, dark and handsome, Cary Grant personifies classical Hollywood's perfect romantic hero. As one of Hollywood's most enduring stars, Grant's image in popular culture is so consistently represented as charming, elegant and romantic that it has almost become monosemic; however, this popular understanding of Grant misrepresents the complexities and transgressions associated with his star text. In this paper, I contend that Grant's early star persona disrupted dominant definitions of acceptable masculinity, bringing a playfulness and ambiguity to the films in which he starred and his star text more generally. Using archival research, I demonstrate how when Grant first achieved stardom in the late 1930s as an actor in screwball comedies, he was more closely aligned with non-traditional masculinity than elegance and sophistication. This gender

	difference was also evident in the relationship between Grant and the concepts of beauty, spectacle and the gaze in his films, with him frequently being positioned in the same way as his female co-stars. However, despite the ability of his star text to play with gender norms, he avoided being feminised or punished for being transgressive. I argue that this was possible because the transgressiveness associated with non-traditional masculinity was recuperated through the constant association of Grant with American national identity. Through the narrative of being an immigrant who rose from poverty to wealth due to hard work and business acumen, Grant became a symbol of the American Dream. The alignment Grant with a Horatio Alger-like myth of the classical American success story coexisted with his gender ambiguity, resulting in a unique classical Hollywood star and a fascinating star text.
2:30pm – 2:45pm	Charlotte Allen *Idris Elba: Renaissance man for the 21st Century* The British actor Idris Elba is most well- known for his performances in *The Wire*, *Luther* and many Hollywood films; with *The Dark Tower* being released this year adapted from the highly acclaimed Stephen King series of books. Elba is of Sierra Leonean – Ghanaian descent and has branched into many different facets of artistic production in recent years including music, film production and direction, competitive kick- boxing and clothes designer. Notably Elba has turned his attention to the issue of diversity as represented by British film and television. He has addressed British parliament to express his concerns in detail and suggest possible solutions. To this end he took over programming for a week in 2017 on BBC3 and attempted to present a more diverse selection of programmes representing what he sees as the more authentic cultural space of Great Britain. This paper will discuss how Elba's branding as a man of the people ready to turn his time and energy towards a wide range of artistic endeavours has enabled him to use this everyman quality to promote what he sees as gaps and voids in British funded television and films. It will discuss the manner in which he employs this popularity as a figurehead by working behind the scenes to ensure government funding is utilised in a manner that benefits more diversity and range, reflecting the authentic Britain he is a part of.

2:45pm – 3:00pm	Joyleen Christensen *Andy Lau's Performed Authenticity* This case study of Hong Kong superstar, Andy Lau, unravels the complex mechanics of the entertainer's continued celebrity over the past 35 years. This process largely depends upon reading Lau as a cultural text and determining the foundations of his popular appeal by examining a variety of approaches through which we may understand Lau as star, commodity, entrepreneur, and national icon. Having a greater understanding of the foundations of Lau's popular appeal – and the range of sites through which his celebrity operates – provides insight into the multiplicity of his interactions with fans and mass media and allows for a better articulation of the unique functioning of Lau's stardom. Specifically, this analysis helps identify common themes in the way Lau's brand is produced and received, which suggest the longevity of his stardom may be attributed to the fact that he is an individual who is able to effectively balance the tensions of performing authenticity. Upon close examination, Lau reveals himself to be a canny star whose self-conscious recreation of the foundations of his celebrity – in particular his humble origins, a hard-working ethos, and a strong sense of his Chinese heritage – allows him a surprising degree of control over public responses to the constructed star personae.
3:00pm – 3:15pm	Q+A
	Session Chair: Joyleen Christensen
3:15pm – 3:30pm	Katja Lee *Troubling the Amer-centric Constructions of Celebrity and Celebrity Studies* Last year, at the 2016 Celebrity Studies conference in Amsterdam, 50 (of 172) delegates from 26 different countries presented papers on celebrity in specific regions or nations beyond the US. In their presentations, it was clear that scholars are becoming increasingly critical of the field's hitherto emphasis on transnational, American, and British forms of celebrity. In this paper, I seek to continue that critical work by troubling the Amer-centric constructions of celebrity that devalue forms of celebrity that remain within the nation they are produced in, that do not circulate through American industries or transnational markets, or that do not conform to the models of celebrity that structure the American market. We must rethink the

	presumed universality of celebrity culture—that is, that celebrity operates and creates meaning the same way regardless of the language, culture, and nation—and we must guard against treating the study of specific national phenomena as a "speciality" and therefor tangential to the study of celebrity in general. Using examples from both the Australian and Canadian celebrity industries, I propose to demonstrate the value and power of celebrity that circulates within particular national publics, and to explore how critical and popular apprehensions about whether this is "really" celebrity (see, for example Byers 2012) are structured by Amer-centric constructions of celebrity. We must, I contend, trouble such constructions if we are to productively make sense of how celebrity works in Canada, Australia, and other nations operating in the competitive English-language market, but also, importantly, how celebrity works in non-English language nations where the adoption of American models of celebrity culture may have grave neo-colonial implications.
3:30pm – 3:45pm	Franklin T. Wilson and Tena Novak *Utilizing Fame to Escape Eternity: Henry Lee Lucas and the exploitation of hope* This study examines the case of American serial killer Henry Lee Lucas and how he utilized his celebrity to delay his execution and ultimately have his death sentence commuted to life in prison by then Texas Governor George W. Bush. While Governor Bush oversaw 153 executions in his five-year tenure, more executions than any governor had in Texas history, Henry Lee Lucas was the only person whose sentence was commuted. The decision to commute Lucas's sentence was largely due to his claim of killing over 3,000 individuals and the subsequent hopes of law enforcement and victims' families associated with cold cases throughout the United States. This study specifically examines how Lucas created a persona that would brand him as the great hope for solving thousands of cold cases in the United States.
3:45pm – 4:00pm	Crystal Abidin *Reclaiming liminal (micro)celebrity: MunahHirziOfficial, parody politics, and micro-minority representation*

	Microcelebrities on the internet, especially those on YouTube, often produce covers and parodies of international celebrities' songs to demonstrate their musical prowess or signify their political stance on current affairs. Many microcelebrities who go on to pursue social media vocationally also become cross- platform Influencers. In this paper, I focus on one such instance to look at the work of YouTube Influencers MunahHirziOfficial, a Malay man and Arab woman duo from Singapore. I examine MunahHirziOfficial's body of minah (a subculture of low brow feminine crassness) music parody videos to demonstrate how as prolific Influencers on social media, they partake in socio-political discourses on race, sexuality, and citizenship via popular culture, and propagate local awareness on micro-minority politics in Singapore. As racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities in Singapore as well as in the local industry of Influencers, MunahHirziOfficial's parody videos are prominent for their overt political messages cloaked in drag, camp, and crass humour. I discuss how this activism has been effectively embedded in their aesthetic while maintaining the viability of their advertorials and self-branding as Influencers for whom such creative content is the source of their income. By embedding their socio-political courses of micro- minority representation within the vehicles of crass parodic humour, MunahHirziOfficial role model the potential for liminal celebrities to take ownership over and self-brand their multiple marginalities towards productive ends.
4:00pm – 4:15pm	Rheinhard Sirait *Online Khilafah and Micro-Celebrity* The emergence of web 2.0 has facilitated ordinary people seeking fame to become a new form of celebrity in the online space. This article proposes to investigate the rise of online micro-celebrity by the name of Felix Siauw who has used the online space to create a new Islamic identity, which challenges mainstream religious institutions and politics in Indonesia. Siauw is an online micro-celebrity who comes from an ethnic and religious minority background. He is a young Indonesian Chinese who converted from Catholicism to Islam in 2002 and has now become an ustadz or Islamic teacher. He is a member of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, which is a hardline Islamic group that has been banned by the government. It rejects democracy and advocates for the establishment of a khilafah (caliphate) in Indonesia. Siauw strategically constructs his persona by using his "double minority" background to gain micro-

	celebrity status, to date Siauw has gained more than 4 million followers on his Facebook fans page, 2.3 million followers on Twitter and 1.2 million followers on Instagram. This article will analyze the ways in which Siauw builds his online following through various social media platforms and the interconnection between his propagation of ideology, identity and commercialism.
4:15pm – 4:30pm	Q+A
4:30pm – 4:45pm	**Tea Break**
4:45pm – 5:15pm	Jackie Raphael and Celia Lam Celebrity Chat Screening, Awards and Closing Remarks

What's next?

Selected papers will be invited to adapt their presentation into a book chapter. Further details will be emailed out in the coming months. Those not selected for the book can also submit their papers to the CrossBridge Journal (http://www.waterhillpublishing.com/periodical.html).

You could also turn your presentation topics into Celebrity Chat videos. For more information on this and other Centre for Media and Celebrity Studies projects, please check out our website cmc-centre.com or email us at celeb.studies@gmail.com

Please keep the conference conversation happening through #CMCS17 @celeb_studies on Twitter. We will be sharing an archive of the event on Twitter soon.

Authors

Angelique Nairn
Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Belinda Glynn
Monash University, Australia

Celia Lam
University of Nottingham Ningbo China, China

Charlotte Allen
University of Wollongong, Australia

Crystal Abidin
Curtin University and Jönköping University, Sweden

Debbie Rodan
Edith Cowan University, Australia

Denise N. Rall
Southern Cross University, Australia

Ellen Finlay
University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney), Australia

Emily Rauber Rodriguez
University of Southern California, USA

Frances Nelson
Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Franklin T. Wilson
Indiana State University, USA

Jackie Raphael
Curtin University, Australia

Jane Mummery
Federation University Australia, Australia

Jeonghyun Jaylyn Oh
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Jo Coghlan
University of New England, Australia

Joanna McIntyre
University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Joyleen Christensen
University of Newcastle, Australia

Julie Siedses
Monash University, Australia

Katja Lee
University of Western Australia, Australia

Kerstin Hacker
Anglia Ruskin University, England

Lisa Hacket
University of New England, Australia

Louise Fowler-Tutt
Curtin University, Australia

Louise st Guillaume
University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney), Australia

Lucy Watson
University of Sydney, Australia

Madison Magladry
Curtin University, Australia

Melanie Piper
University of Queensland, Australia

Nancy Liu
University of Nottingham Ningbo China, China

Olivia Efthimiou
Murdoch University, Australia

Phoebe Elers
Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Renee Middlemost
University of Wollongong, Australia

Rheinhard Sirait
University of Western Australia, Australia

Sonjah Stanley Niaah
University of the West Indies, Mona Campus

Steve Elers
Massey University, New Zealand

Tena Novak
Indiana State University, USA

Vincent Larkin
Arts University of Bournemouth, England