

Online Hate Speech In Australia

The Role of News Media
and Pathways for Change

Part One: The Dynamics of Hate Speech Online

 **PURPOSE**

Content Warning

While we have attempted to minimise our reproduction of misinformation, dehumanising hate speech and violent language in this report, we have included a number of examples and descriptions. Our aim is to provide those working towards social cohesion and election integrity with a strong and practical understanding of the challenges that specific online activities pose.

We have placed a ◆ symbol at the top, right hand corner of the relevant pages to indicate where this content appears.

Support Services

The contents of this report may be confronting or distressing for a range of people targeted by hate speech, their families and friends. If you or someone you know is in an emergency and needs assistance now, call triple zero (000).

Service	Focus	Phone Number	Operating hours
Emergency	Emergency assistance	000	24 hours 7 days a week
Beyond Blue	Depression and anxiety support	1300 22 4636	24 hours 7 days a week
Lifeline	Crisis and mental health support with suicide prevention services	13 11 14	24 hours 7 days a week
13YARN	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporters	13 92 76	24 hours 7 days a week
QLife	Free LGBTQ peer support and referral	1800 184 527	3pm to midnight everyday

Media reporting on this research

Our research is intended for stakeholders facing the challenges described in the research. As such, we have included details, links to, and reproduced emotive or pejorative language, hate speech, violent threats, and misinformation in ways that are not suitable for news media reporting, according to industry guidelines.

We request that reporters seriously consider the implications of how they report on this research in consideration of these industry guidelines:

- [MEAA Guidelines on Reporting Hate Speech and Extremism](#)
- [MEAA Guidelines for Reporting on LGBTQIA+ Issues](#)
- [Australian Press Council Advisory Guidelines](#)

Online hate deserves greater coverage in Australia, but missteps that amplify conspiracy, division and false information are easy to make, as shown in the case studies in this report.

- **Consider how reporters are used** by extremists and conspiracy groups to spread disinformation and hate to wider audiences.
- **Don't link to extremists**, hate content or misinformation websites and content in your news articles.
- **Don't reproduce quotes or images**, or if there is overwhelming public interest, include extensive and unmissable context and consider how they may be re-edited and used in disinformation.
- **Flip the story.** There are lots of important, human stories to tell about online threats such as misinformation and hate speech. Reporting can focus on the voices and stories of the people impacted.

We also recommend reporters explore the following resources on reporting extremism, hate and misinformation:

- [Covering extremism: a reading list](#), by Stevie Zhang
- [THE OXYGEN OF AMPLIFICATION: Better Practices for Reporting on Extremists, Antagonists, and Manipulators](#) by Whitney Phillips
- [Reporting on extremism, from those who have done it best](#) by Pete Vernon

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, in particular Gadigal, Wangal and Tharawal peoples, and Wurundjeri of the Kulin Nation, upon whose unceded ancestral lands we live and work. We pay respect to their Elders, past and present, and acknowledge the pivotal role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the Australian community.

About Purpose

Purpose is a global social impact agency that works towards a more open, just and habitable world.

We come to this research with a strong perspective that change is needed to reduce harm and include more people to thrive in our democracies.

Our research work is oriented towards supporting actions at all levels, from individual action, community programs and policy change.

Acknowledgments

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Our use of a symbol system to provide readers with an informed way to interact with traumatic material is drawn from [Building Consentful Tech](#) by Una Lee, Dann Toliver and their colleagues.

Lastly, this project would not have been possible without the efforts of a dedicated team across Purpose. Researching online hate and disinformation can be personally exhausting and demoralising. We would like to acknowledge this difficult and important work to establish and deliver research about online threats.

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Executive Summary

Online hate speech is a particularly visible and toxic element of social division. It fosters the negative targeting of communities, diminishes peoples' wellbeing, erodes social cohesion, and has been linked to violence and knee-jerk and counterproductive policy design.

Within our complex and evolving information ecosystems, news media institutions continue to have enormous power to influence public discussion and catalyse online activity. For this reason, they require special attention and accountability when it comes to online hate. Accordingly, in this study, we explore the roles that news media institutions play in the germination and escalation of online hate speech in Australia. Our aim is to produce practical examples and analysis that will support policy makers, community advocates, news media practitioners, technologists, and other stakeholders working to reduce these harms.

This report is the first in a two-part initiative. Part One explores the roles news media actors play in online hate speech, to spotlight the challenges faced by stakeholders today. *Part Two: Curbing Dehumanising Hate Speech Online*, explores the regulatory and policy landscape around this issue and recommends changes.

While existing research has helped to define the problem, there is a lack of contemporary case studies to illuminate the range of stakeholders, narratives and practices involved and impacted by online hate in Australia. Rich case studies are particularly useful because they provide concrete examples for reflection, debate and the testing of potential interventions.

To incorporate elements of historical context, discourse and technology in our accounts, we took an *information ecosystems* approach. This highlights the relationships, grey areas and flows of information that are practical challenges facing stakeholders. We used a digital ethnography method to observe online activity on the platforms where hate speech was

encountered during the first four months of 2023.

We made two key observations. Firstly, echoing the findings of other researchers, we saw a pattern in how the presence of *deficit discourse* in news media publishing (content that negatively frames and scapegoats a particular group of people) appears to be amplified in the online activity that germinates around it on social media as dehumanising hate speech. This suggests that focusing purely on the worst individual online activity may mean missing a crucial part of the overall system.

Secondly, we observed what appeared to be mutualistic relationships between news media actors and external actors who are producing and amplifying strong deficit discourse or even engaging in hate speech. This pattern highlights that there are incentives for powerful news media actors to encourage this behaviour that may undermine efforts to advance social cohesion.

Based on this, we argue that approaches that consider online hate speech without its relation to a broader sphere of activity, including deficit discourse and the incentives for news media practitioners to amplify it, will miss a crucial element of how online hate manifests. This may, in part, explain why current efforts that take a more narrow focus are failing to curb it. Part Two of this report series looks at how these patterns pose major challenges for existing approaches and outlines pathways for change.

Our observations are illustrated through four case studies that challenge fixed notions of responsibility and highlight practical dilemmas for news media practitioners and other stakeholders.

These case studies are:

- I. online activity surrounding the intense media coverage of police reports of increased violent crime in Mparntwe/Alice Spring over the summer of 2022-23;
- II. a series of articles in the prominent, Chinese-language, WeChat publisher Australian Financial News, that presented highly derogatory and dehumanising content targeting people from Indian backgrounds in Australia;

This suggests that focusing purely on the worst individual online activity may mean missing a crucial part of the overall system.

- III. the ongoing relationship between news media institutions and campaigner Katherine Deves, whose dehumanising online publishing about transgender people has been widely reported; and
- IV. online activity that germinated from reaction to a government immigration policy announcement and, through the interaction between conservative news media and politicians, escalated the negative framing of refugees to increasing audiences.

This is not a comprehensive review of the whole information ecosystem or Australian news media, and there are many more cases and varieties of hate speech which are not covered. News media actors also play roles to counter and de-escalate online hate; however, this is an exploratory study that aims to complement other studies on this subject and to highlight the practical challenges at hand.

There is strong recognition of the problem of online hate in Australia, and there is a firm desire, plus existing laws, policies and programs to counter it. However, its persistence, shown in recent research and the case studies presented in this report, calls the effectiveness of existing measures into question, suggests more needs to be done, and that new approaches are required.

Key Definitions

Key Definitions

Deficit Discourse

Deficit discourse is a durable system of language, story and meaning that positions certain groups as lacking, incompetent, a threat or a problem to be solved (L. P. M. Davis & Museus, 2019; Fforde et al., 2013). Hate speech and dehumanising speech are often a visible and extreme end of a more subtle and pervasive deficit discourse. In this report we note the presence of deficit discourse targeted at a number of different groups, including First Nations people, Indian migrants, transgender people and people who came to Australia as refugees.

In their study of “how narrative framings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are reproduced in policy”, Fogarty et al. provide this description of how deficit discourse works:

“ In certain discursive spaces in Australia, the term “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people” has come to be associated with particular negative tropes, such as being unhealthy, undereducated, unemployed, violent and socially dysfunctional. [...] Such tropes of deficiency reduce and homogenise people, and tell us nothing about their complex lives and socio-economic circumstances. (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, pp. 2–3) ... It is crucial to note that in analysing and mapping discourses of deficit, we do not seek to “problem deflate”. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians face well-documented realities of socio-economic “disadvantage”. Discourses of deficit occur when discussions and policy aimed at alleviating disadvantage become so mired in reductionist narratives of failure and inferiority that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people themselves are seen as the problem. These discussions thus become a continuation of pejorative and patronising race-based discourses in terms of which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have long been represented (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. 30).”

Fogarty et al. note that the “relationship between politicians and the media is also writ large in the deficit discourses reproduced in the media”, and that

these discourses have contributed to shaping health policies and outcomes (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. 5).

In their review of scholarship on “deficit thinking”, Lori Patton Davis and Samuel D. Museus highlight a number of related terms, often used interchangeably, including: deficit thinking, -discourse, -paradigm, -ideology and -assumptions (L. P. M. Davis & Museus, 2019). For this study we have chosen to use “deficit discourse” following publications by the Lowitja Institute and others in the area of First Nations’ health in Australia, which are particularly relevant to our findings (Fforde et al., 2013; Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018; Fogarty, Lovell, et al., 2018).

“Dehumanising Speech” and “Dehumanising Hate Speech”

Dehumanising speech is a related concept to hate speech that outlines some of the particularly harmful tactics used to attack certain groups (Maynard & Benesch, 2016, p. 80). Broadly, it seeks to justify the unequal treatment of targeted peoples by presenting them as lacking humanity.

We consider dehumanising speech to be a useful and descriptive term for what a certain kind of hate speech does. Dehumanising hate speech frequently operates as the extreme and visible edge of a broader, deficit discourse.

Because of the nuance and difficulty involved in identifying hate speech at scale, the Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) has argued that focusing on dehumanising speech can “cut through these challenges and focus on some of the most potent vectors of harm”, based on their research into anti-Muslim content and other forms of online hate. AMAN has published a precise definition of dehumanisation, which is provided in full under [Appendix A](#) (Australian Muslim Advocacy Network, 2023).

Dehumanising hate speech frequently operates as the extreme and visible edge of a broader, deficit discourse.

Hate Speech

“Hate speech” most commonly refers to expressive acts that incite discrimination, hostility or violence towards a person or group because of who they are, or on the basis of their protected characteristics. There is no standardised definition or list of protected characteristics applied across contexts and jurisdictions. In Australia, there are relevant definitions of vilification in federal and state legislation. However, these definitions vary, as do the lists of protected attributes. This patchwork of definitions has been identified as a significant problem in our Part Two report.

Additionally, the term “hate speech” is often used in the heat of arguments about what people are publishing, what motivates them, and how speech should be regulated, and so the definition of the term itself becomes contested (Gagliardone et al., 2014). Mindful of the importance of clear definitions within research and policy, we have chosen to use social media company Meta’s definition of hate speech. This highlights the varied and nuanced nature of hate speech as an attack, and has particular relevance to our research context. Meta defines hate speech as:

“ a direct attack against people – rather than concepts or institutions – on the basis of what we call protected characteristics: race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religious affiliation, caste, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity and serious disease. We define attacks as violent or dehumanising speech, harmful stereotypes, statements of inferiority, expressions of contempt, disgust or dismissal, cursing and calls for exclusion or segregation (Meta, 2023).”

A list of additional resources and definitions of hate speech, particularly from online platforms, is provided under [Appendix B](#).

News Media

“News media” refers to a diverse collection of organisations and individual practitioners who publish news reporting, opinion and debate about current affairs. Traditionally, news media includes printed newspapers and magazines, radio, and broadcast television. As the internet penetration rate continues to increase, news media further encompasses other formats, such as online news articles, online news video, online radio, blogs, podcasts and social media-based reporting.

We refer readers to a recent online review of evidence about Australia’s media ownership and news audiences provided by RMIT ABC Fact Check (RMIT ABC Fact Check, 2021). It presents a large collection of statistics on the demographics and audience sizes of Australian news media across a range of formats.

For those unfamiliar with Australia’s news media landscape, popular outlets are listed in [Appendix C](#).

Social Media

In this report, we use “social media” to refer to the range of social media platforms listed below and also to the broad phenomenon of online social activity on them.

A non-exhaustive list of platforms includes: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, TikTok, Reddit, Telegram, WeChat, BitChute, Gab, Rumble and Odysee.

Introduction

Introduction

Online hate speech is one particularly visible and toxic trait of social division. It fosters the negative targeting of communities, affecting people’s wellbeing. It has been linked to violence and negatively influences the design of government policies and programs. Within our complex and evolving information ecosystems, news media institutions continue to have enormous power to influence public discussion and catalyse online activity.

For this reason, they require special attention and accountability to improve their practice and support constructive regulation. Accordingly, in this study, we explore the roles that news media institutions play in the germination and circulation of online hate speech in Australia. Our aim is to support those working to reduce these harms and advance social cohesion. In this introduction, we establish the focus of our research.

Impacts of Hate Speech

Online hate speech is an unevenly experienced, but pervasive, problem in Australia. In an August 2019 study, the Australian Governments’ eSafety Commissioner estimated that around 14% of the adult population had been the target of online hate speech in the preceding 12 months, most commonly relating to their religion, political views, race, gender or sexuality (Australian Government eSafety Commissioner, 2020). This was primarily occurring on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. LGBTQI and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents reported experiencing online hate at a rate more than twice the average.

Young people were also much more likely to have been targeted. Additionally, a 2018 survey of women internet users in Australia, conducted by Ipsos MORI for Amnesty International, found that almost half of respondents aged 18–24 had experienced online abuse, and that half of these responses related to racism, sexism, homophobia or transphobia (Ipsos MORI & Amnesty International, 2018). These studies suggest that large numbers of

people in Australia are regularly facing hate speech online and that specific groups are disproportionately targeted.

The stakes for curbing online hate speech are high. Firstly, exposure to online hate speech and harassment can severely impact those targeted. Both studies cited above found that people targeted suffered lasting demoralisation and distress. Secondly, for those perpetuating hate speech, exposure to this material within online “echo chambers” may produce escalating effects, increasing the potential for organised action offline. A German-based study in 2020 on the link between anti-refugee posting on Facebook and hate incidents against refugees, including assaults and violent crime, found strong evidence of correlation and even a causal link (Müller & Schwarz, 2020). The analysis revealed that social media activity (on Facebook specifically) played a role as a “propagation mechanism” for hateful sentiment, motivating “collective action” in violent acts and inspiring geographically clustered “copy-cat” incidents. In their report on dangerous speech and ideology, Maynard and Benesch explain that while confidently linking specific speech acts with specific incidents is extremely difficult and highly context dependent, dehumanising speech and hate speech are almost always part of a radicalising trajectory towards, and justification, of violent atrocities (Maynard & Benesch, 2016). The range of the research cited here suggests that online hate speech is highly varied in its content and targets, and that it functions in complex ways and in multiple directions, not only for the people targeted, but also for those perpetrating hate and for those who observe it.

Additionally, hate speech includes, builds on ‘deficit discourse’ (see [Key Definitions](#)), a deeper, more subtle phenomenon that positions targeted groups as lacking or as a threat to an ingroup. A number of studies have shown how sustained exposure to deficit discourse can affect behaviour and decision-making, and how its prevalence can shape government policy and programs (Fforde et al., 2013, p. 168; Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018). Approaches that consider online hate speech without its relation to deficit discourse may be missing a large portion of how it is cultivated and how it impacts society.

For example, a study by the Lowitja Institute on the impact of pervasive deficit discourse about First Nations’ peoples on health policy and outcomes, found that:

“ Deficit discourse is both a product of, and reinforces, the marginalisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s voices, perspectives and world-views It appears likely that deficit discourse impacts on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people in multiple ways. It contributes to forms of external and internalised racism, and shades out solutions that recognise strengths, capabilities and rights (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. xi).”

In their case study on what is known as the Northern Territory Intervention (discussed in Case Study 1 below), the report’s authors wrote:

“ Political discourse of deficit surrounding the Intervention in the Northern Territory directly influenced the development of health policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in ways that contradicted both ethical and best practice guidelines in the delivery of child health checks (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. x).”

The Lowitja report explores deficit discourse and racism in the Australian news media but does not, as we do, look at social media or other online activity. Nevertheless, their work raises important questions about the way that escalating deficit discourse, racism and hate speech online could be exacerbating these challenges for policy makers and practitioners. When thinking about online hate, we need to consider a wide range of stakeholders whose wellbeing and work may be impacted, in addition to the direct targets of abuse.

While online hate persists and continues to propagate, there does appear to be widespread recognition of the problem in Australia and a strong desire to do more to counter it. Australia, like many countries, has introduced laws that address hate speech and vilification, and government agencies and civil society groups are producing research and programs to increase public understanding of online hate in an attempt to curb it. However, although major social media companies have implemented relevant policies and some practical measures, their effectiveness is disputed (Reset Australia, 2022). The eSafety Commissioner’s study found that, in Australia, an “overwhelming majority of people support action to check the spread of online hate speech”, including through legislation and action by those running online platforms (Australian Government eSafety Commissioner, 2020). However, again, the persistence of online hate in the studies cited here and in this report’s case studies, questions the effectiveness of existing measures and suggests more needs to be done.

An “Information Ecosystems” Lens

We explore the question of online hate and the news media’s role in it through what we call an “information ecosystems lens”, which we are developing within our broader program to support “healthy information ecosystems” (Purpose, in production). This approach combines research

innovations (Gherardi, 2019), and social innovation approaches (Irwin et al., 2015), to avoid reducing problematic online activity to being just a technology problem, a regulation problem, or an education problem. Instead, this lens emphasises the relationships and interactions between these elements, the grey areas of complexity, and that multiple perspectives need to be brought together to understand a problem. It opens our minds to a wide range of potential stakeholders and solutions that may be operating at different levels while, at the same time, emphasising the significant power that certain actors have within these systems.

The variations of online hate are catalysed and supported by the design and algorithms of online platforms (Reset Australia, 2022); the trends of prominent online content; long-running discriminatory discourse and cultures; unfolding contemporary events; and the evolving ways that people use social media. This lens offers many possibilities for interventions and contributions from a range of stakeholders, as well as opportunities for further research. This is a practical and grounded approach, showing us what is actually happening day-to-day, and what we might do about it.

One impact of this lens on our research has been for us to look beyond strictly assessing specific speech acts against definitions of hate speech. When we looked at examples of online hate, they were frequently surrounded by other kinds of speech, such as deficit discourse or negative portrayals, as well as sarcasm and irony. This led us to learn about the important research on deficit discourse, and broadened our understanding of how online hate may be affecting communities. While debates over strict definitions are very important at certain moments, particularly when implementing restrictions on speech (Gagliardone et al., 2014), we hold that exploring a problem space requires an openness to nuances and the links between connected phenomena.

The News Media

This report describes how we encountered news media actors when we looked at online hate speech. News media actors are organisations and individual practitioners who publish news reporting, opinion and debate about current affairs (see [Key Definitions](#)). Large news media institutions in particular have, over decades, maintained significant cultural, financial and political power. They have broad influence on contemporary culture and contribute to defining the political space within which government policy is set.

A number of recent studies have noted the outsized role that Australian news

media publishers play in contributing to the circulation of hate speech and misinformation, here as well as globally (All Together Now, 2021b; Iner, 2023; Kennedy, 2020; King et al., 2022; Peucker, 2022). However, there is a limited number of rich, qualitative case studies available for stakeholders to use to develop and test their approaches for interventions.

While it is not our intention to suggest that news media outlets play the most important role in the phenomenon of online hate speech, their significant reach and influence means that the role they do play needs to be recognised and better understood. Accordingly, both the Australian Press Council and the new media practitioners professional body, the Media Arts and Entertainment Alliance (MEAA), have published resources for reporters and editors to help them avoid reporting that vilifies or harms specific groups (Australian Press Council, n.d.-a; Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, 2020). We hope that the case studies and analysis in this report can further aid new media practitioners with the practical challenges they face, including journalists, editors, sub-editors, producers and other contributors.

News media is an expanding category in recent decades, as more and more people are empowered to publish online. Nevertheless, we have primarily focused on the largest, dominant news media institutions in Australia because of the significant power they wield to set the tone of public discourse and reach mass audiences. These larger news media institutions have also been identified as publishing problematic content, such as racism. A study by All Together Now and the University of Technology Sydney, found that, of 124 race-related opinion pieces published by Australia's eight most popular newspapers and current affairs programs between January and July 2017, "62 were potentially in breach of one or more industry codes of conduct, because of racist content" (Ho, 2017).

News media institutions and practitioners have complex, often competing, motivations (Nash, 2016). They report on the contest for ideas and power within Australia, but they also influence and structure those contests. They prioritise certain concerns, ideas and values through their editorial decisions, such as how to frame stories or which sources to include. As the fourth estate, they are expected to play a crucial role in our democracies but, at the same time, they are also competing for business, money, prestige, access, legitimacy and power. Managing these motivations and incentives is a core challenge for news media practitioners. Outside stakeholders and policy makers working to improve or respond to their practices and impact need to consider these complexities.

Introduction

This report focuses on four particular moments of flourishing online hate between January and April 2023, and the news media outlets which appear most frequently in our case studies include Nine, Channel Seven and outlets from News Corp (Sky News, news.com.au and The Daily Telegraph), owned by US-based News Corporation and which is part of the global media network of billionaire Rupert Murdoch. Nine and News Corp are the two companies that dominate Australia's news media landscape, their TV Stations and publications are some of the most successful on social media (RMIT ABC Fact Check, 2021). News Corp's 24-hour news channel, Sky News Australia, in particular, has enormous local and international reach via its YouTube channel which has almost double the number of subscribers as Australia's popular public broadcaster, the ABC. Its videos frequently receive millions of views from local and international audiences.

According to Meta's platform analytics tool, CrowdTangle, News Corp publication news.com.au has more than double the Facebook followers of similar text publishing outlets, like the ABC or the Sydney Morning Herald, and received far more engagement on the platform during our research period (see Figure 1 on next page).

Figure 1: Major Australian news media outlet Facebook Page followers and total post interactions, between January and April 2023.

9 News, News.com.au and 7NEWS Australia have vastly more followers than other outlets, while Sky News Australia's posts stand out in terms of interactions compared to their following.

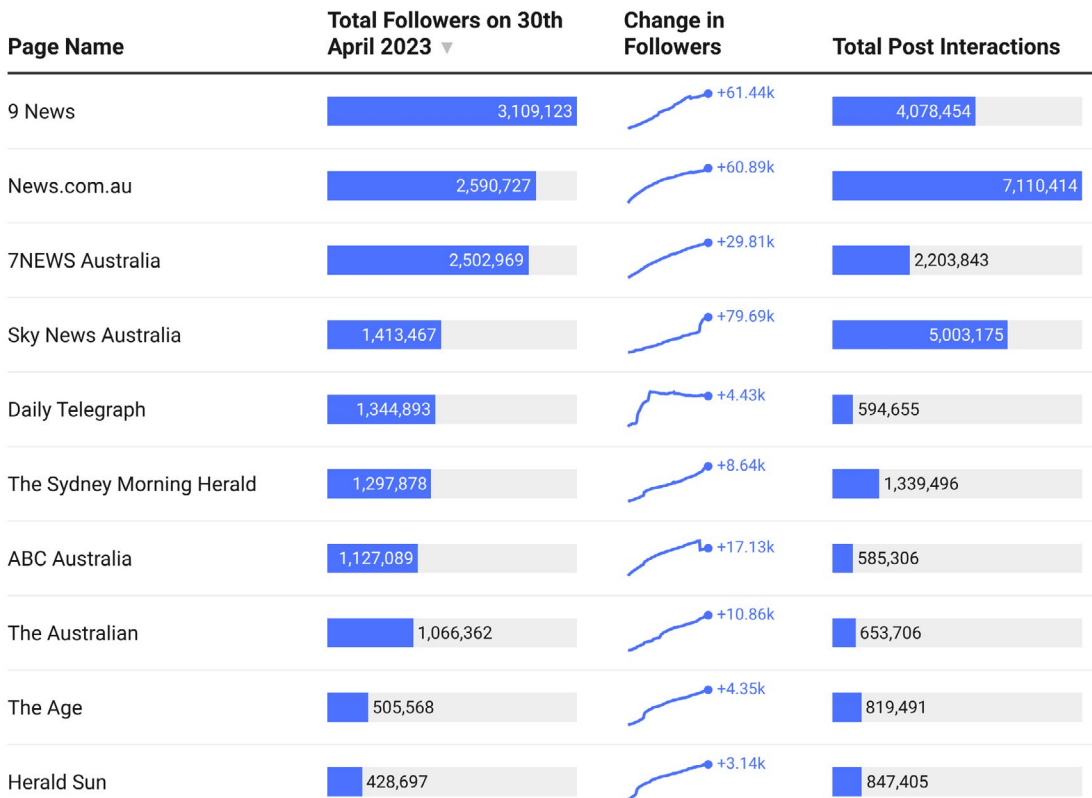


Table: Purpose • Source: CrowdTangle • Created with Datawrapper

News Corp publications have also previously been highlighted for deficit discourse and strong negative portrayals of social groups. All Together Now's 2017 study of negative, racialised portrayals of different social groups across comment pieces in Australian newspapers found that News Corp publications not only published the highest number of opinion pieces with a focus on race, but also that these items overwhelmingly provided a negative portrayal (Ho, 2017).

Figure 2: An analysis of portrayals of Muslim communities by Australian media agencies between April 2018 and June 2020, by All Together Now (2021a).

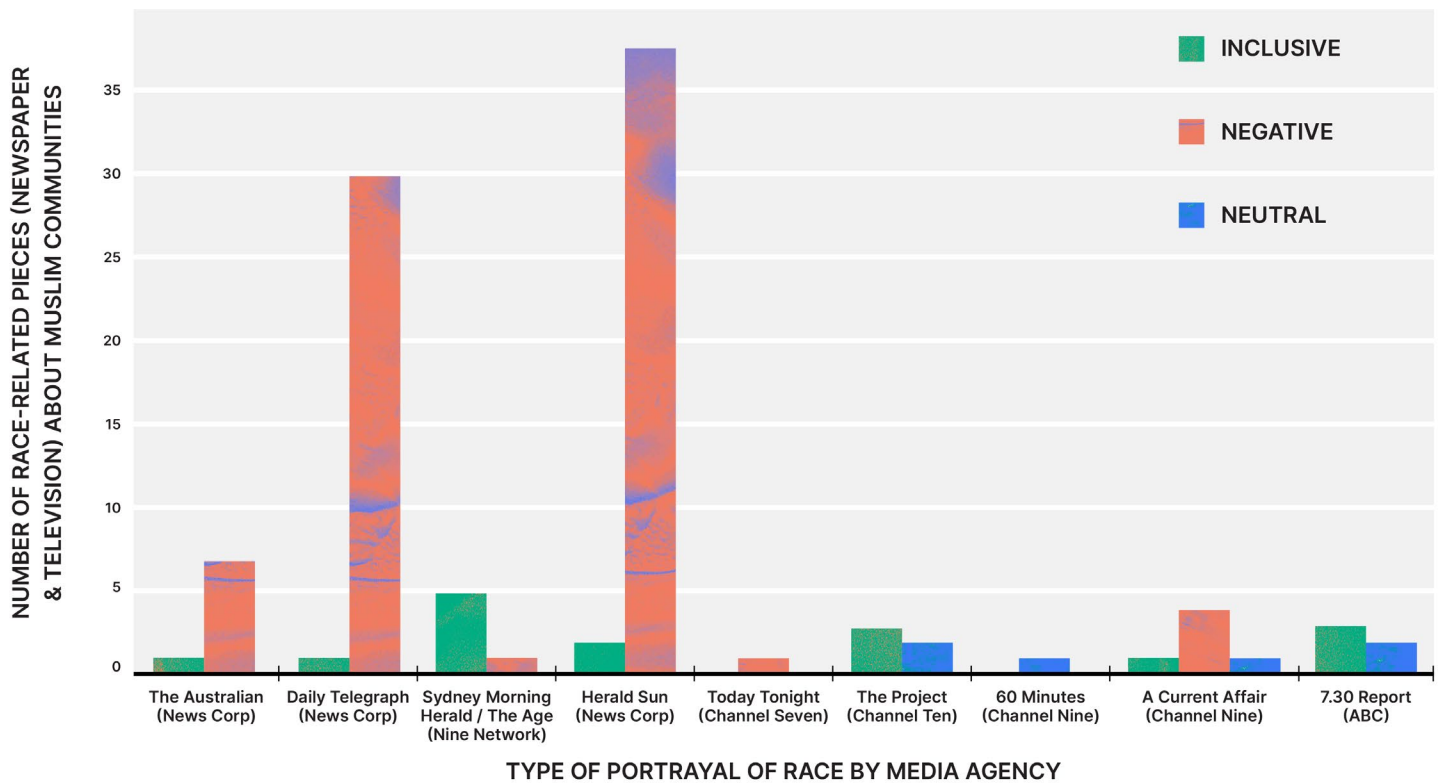


Figure 2: Type of portrayal of Muslim communities by media agencies, excerpted from *Politely Racist: A case study on reader comments on Australian mainstream newspapers* (All Together Now, 2021b, p. 4). Definitions: Inclusive portrayal: “A portrayal that promotes racial equality, condemns racism, defies racial stereotypes, gives a voice to a minority group, or has an equivalent intent”. Negative portrayal: “A portrayal that is reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of people because of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin, or religious intolerance motivated by racist considerations. Neutral portrayal: A portrayal that does not satisfy the negative or inclusive definitions provided above (All Together Now, 2021a, p. 3). Chart by Purpose.

While News Corp-owned publications, such as Sky News, The Australian and The Daily Telegraph, feature in three of our case studies, the patterns and dilemmas presented in our case studies apply to news media practitioners across a wide range of publications. Case Study 2 looks at the Australian Financial News (AFN), which is largely based on WeChat and is predominantly in Mandarin and appears to be significant for Chinese-speaking audiences in Australia. Despite its significance for a large number of people in Australia, AFN is not a member of the Australian Press Council and does not appear to be on the radar of many stakeholders looking at the impact of Australia’s news media. Our intention is that readers recognise the overall importance of News Corp, without losing focus on the broader information ecosystem in which other publications do play very important roles.

The Comments

This report also explores online activity that includes hate speech, and a large portion of our focus has been on social media comments and other social media activity that responds to news media publishing. There is a well-circulated idea that comment sections should be dismissed out of hand or that they are often toxic and should not be taken seriously: “don’t read the comments” (Djinis, 2021). However, reading and otherwise interacting with other users’ posts, is one of the most important types of online engagement across a wide variety of the most popular platforms, from TikTok to Telegram, Facebook and WeChat. They cannot be disregarded.

All Together Now has provided an initial study, looking at the connection between negative, racialised portrayals of groups in opinion pieces and the content of comments on news websites that respond to them (All Together Now, 2021b). They found that these website comment sections “encourage opinion polarisation” and were “a cradle for racist discourse where freely exchanged discriminatory ideas are polite enough in tone to pass moderation, but racist in content” (All Together Now, 2021b, p. 2). Their study establishes a link between the content of news media publishing and the content of online activity that responds to it. Our case-study-based approach complements All Together Now’s quantitative and content-analysis approaches, looking at broader online activity responding to a wide array of news media material.

Some news media practitioners have denied any responsibility for the content of online responses to their work. In response to questions from Guardian Australia for a news report on a large amount of “racist and violent comments” appearing below a Sky News Australia YouTube video about the shooting of a British racial justice campaigner, a spokesperson for the network wrote, “Sky News Australia is not the author of user comments on the YouTube platform. We suggest you direct your inquiries to Google” (Meade, 2021). Nevertheless, researchers have found journalists and publishers to be broadly concerned about the tone of discourse surrounding their work (Meltzer, 2015).

This question of responsibility over comments became an important debate in a recent defamation case in the Australian High Court, in which the court found publishers to be legally responsible for comments posted to their Facebook page and posting content, the outlets had facilitated, encouraged and thereby assisted the publication of comments from third-party Facebook users, and they were, therefore, publishers of those comments” (Byrne, 2021). This decision has applied only to defamation law, and has not been applied to Australia’s regulation of hate speech.

Introduction

We would like to stress that we are not asserting that media publishers are solely, or even the most important, parties responsible for online activity that responds to their publishing. However, the case studies presented here, on top of the research from All Together Now, clearly points to a pattern of certain kinds of online activity germinating around certain kinds of publishing. Whether or not news media are *responsible*, they are certainly stakeholders in the germination and circulation of online hate that surrounds their work, in the sense that they are involved in and potentially affected by it. News media bodies echo this claim in their guidelines on racebased and other reporting that highlights the risks of inciting and amplifying further division and discrimination (Australian Press Council, n.d.-a; Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, 2020).

In the eSafety Commissioner's study cited above, most respondents believed that "everyone has a role in tackling hateful content" (Australian Government eSafety Commissioner, 2020, p. 7). This tells us that people are looking for several different ways to address this problem. We hope that in exploring the significance of one key element of our information ecosystems—the contribution of news media—our research can help regulators, researchers, civil society and grassroots groups to identify gaps and challenges, and support those working to reduce harm and help people thrive online.

Our Approach

This research explores the interplay between news media and social media in the germination and escalation of hate speech online and, with the use of case studies, is designed to provide an empirical basis to support those working to develop policies and programs responding to this challenge.

Our approach to exploring case studies incorporates discourse analysis as a primary method (Gagliardone et al., 2014), combining this with descriptions and analysis of the patterns of activity, or social practice (Gherardi, 2019). We believe this explores historical and political context as well as practical issues relevant to grappling with online hate.

The focus on these case studies means we do not provide a comprehensive overview of the contributions of all news media actors, or of all hate speech experienced by different social groups in Australia. However, this enables us to compare our research with other approaches to provide a fuller picture of our evolving information ecosystem. In particular, we refer to broad societal surveys such as the eSafety Commissioner's work (Australian Government eSafety Commissioner, 2020); community-based research to understand how specific groups are targeted, such as the Islamophobia in Australia series of reports (Iner, 2022, 2023); sector-based research, such as the Lowitja Institutes research about impacts on health policy (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018); and targeted quantitative and qualitative content-analysis, such as All Together Now's research on racism in the Australian news media (All Together Now, 2021b; Ho, 2017).

Our case studies were produced through observing online activity, as well as using tools like Junkipedia, Meltwater and CrowdTangle that allow for otherwise difficult aggregate data collection. These tools collect public social media posts and activity available from the platforms into a system for archiving and analysis.

Our research question, to describe the role of news media in online hate speech in Australia, required that we tracked, archived and analysed:

- a. online communications activity, social media posts and ads in particular;
- b. online news media and/or newspapers.

Our Approach

We used a range of tools and methods to collect this data from different mediums and social media platforms:

Data	Collection method
Social media posts: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, Telegram, Odysee, Rumble, BitChute.	Junkipedia monitoring, Meltwater, CrowdTangle
WeChat Official Account posts	Manual collection
News media articles	Meltwater, Factiva

We monitored activity by building on our existing actor lists and desk research and then analysing discussions and activity across multiple platforms, continually building and refining our monitoring approach.

When we found particularly relevant examples or clusters, we coded our observations to identify the patterns and potential case studies. We then selected case studies that were particularly illustrative of the patterns we were observing, and conducted deeper investigations to capture the dynamics of the patterns observed. We also collected adjacent examples and other, related, historical data to contribute to our understanding of these patterns. We have focused on describing the issues, the participants and the practicalities of how deficit discourse and hate activity functions online, by providing contextual and technical detail in each case study.



**Findings:
Two Dynamic Patterns**

Findings: Two Dynamic Patterns

We selected four case studies from our research period of January to April 2023. We chose them because they captured a significant pattern and also provided a range of dynamics to consider. This range covers different varieties and tactics of dehumanisation and hate, targeted at different social groups, from First Nations people (Case Study 1), people with Indian and South Asian backgrounds (Case Study 2), transgender people from First Nations people (Case Study 1), people with Indian and South Asian backgrounds (Case Study 2), transgender people (Case Study 3) and people coming to Australia as refugees (Case Study 4). A range of kinds of news media actors is also covered. While three of the case studies largely relate to Australia's mainstream corporate media, Case Study 2 covers an important Chinese-language news publisher that operates on WeChat. While four cases can cover only limited ground, this selection points to the wide range of communities and actors that need to be considered. There are many more cases and dynamics that further research could examine.

In our analysis of these cases, we highlight two overarching, and interconnected patterns of activity. Pattern One deals with the relationship between deficit discourse in news media publishing, and dehumanising speech and hate speech in the online activity that germinates around it. Previous quantitative research has found that deficit discourse in publishing tends to be reflected in online activity that responds to it (All Together Now, 2021b). Dehumanising speech and hate speech is the extreme tip of those kinds of negative portrayals. The emergence of this pattern in our analysis led us to focus on deficit discourse across our case studies, as it may be a predictor for the presence of hate speech.

Pattern Two looks at mutualistic relationships between news media actors and external actors who are producing and amplifying strong deficit discourse

targeting certain groups or even engaging in hate speech. As with Pattern One, additional hate speech proliferates around the ongoing online activity. This pattern points to a system of incentives (e.g. social, professional, financial) for escalating deficit discourse and stoking the intensity of online activity.

Pattern One: Dehumanising speech and hate speech germinate around deficit discourse in news publishing

We rarely observed very clear and explicit hate speech itself within the mainstream news media we monitored. However, news media practitioners make choices, such as framing and sourcing, in their construction of their reporting and programs. They do in fact frequently negatively represent groups in more subtle ways, through implication or repetition for example, whether this is consciously intended or not. Our case studies cover situations from our research period in which news reporting was notably negative: coverage of events in Mparntwe/Alice Springs (Case Study 1) was characterised by alleged community failure and dysfunction, while immigration coverage showed Indian arrivals to Australia (Case Study 2), or people seeking safety as refugees (Case Study 4), as a threat or burden to an implied ingroup.

Two important concepts informed the following analysis: Deficit discourse and dehumanisation. Deficit discourse (see [Key Definitions](#)) both presents a group of people as inherently deficient or failing. This draws on attitudes relating to the target group which are already embedded in a collective consciousness. Dehumanising speech (see [Key Definitions](#)) characterises a class of people as threatening, polluting or lacking humanity. Deficit discourse and dehumanising speech were frequently found in articles relating to Mparntwe/Alice Springs and Indian immigration respectively.

Once shared across social media, these reports become the basis for discussion on these issues. News media raise awareness of certain issues and events, and frame them for collective discussion. The deficit discourse and more subtle forms of dehumanisation present in news reporting were reflected and amplified into more explicit and personalised attacks in the comments and other online activity that germinated around them. These frequently incorporated long standing racialised, or other, derogatory tropes or narratives.

Making, reading and otherwise interacting with comments is a central part of

most social media—they are a crucial kind of interaction online today. As such, the dynamic whereby this toxicity occurs in relation to news coverage, which is charged with journalistic principles of accuracy and balance, is an important one. Moreover, the comment sections we observed were more complex than simply toxic. In cases throughout this report, comments play an important role through which misinformation is uncovered and corrected by commenters, and where commenters push back on the hate speech of others.

Finally, we observed a number of instances of problematic journalistic practice which may have contributed to the spread of misinformation, driving divisive responses in the comments sections. In Case Study 1, this amounted to the broadcast of unsubstantiated, sensationalist personal accounts by a source whose credentials were grossly misrepresented to audiences. In Case Study 2, opinion-style articles were published anonymously and without clearly differentiating them from news articles. These kinds of practices run counter to industry standards which ensure news media is a factual and transparent source of information. Misrepresentation and sensationalism have the capacity to impact public discourse in ways that can shape policy decisions and outcomes, which a number of researchers have raised in relation to the issues covered in Case Study 1.

In an information-rich online context where misinformation is so readily mobilised, journalistic standards of accuracy, fairness, transparency and integrity matter. While news media practitioners may not be intentionally seeking to stoke division in their reporting, they should be concerned about the clear pattern of germinating hate speech and other harmful activity around their publishing when it takes a strong negative framing.

Pattern two: Practical mutualisms amplify deficit discourse and hate speech

There are situations where news media institutions appear to have mutually beneficial, practical entanglements with external actors, in ways that amplify the presence of dehumanising speech and hate speech online. At times, news media actors actively platform and promote individuals or groups who produce strong deficit discourse (see Pattern One above), and sometimes even those producing hate speech or dehumanising speech directly. Accordingly, problematic online activity becomes more visible and proliferates.

Case studies 3 and 4 explore two different versions of this pattern of mutualism. In Case Study 3, a person who has been widely reported on as an anti-transgender campaigner, with a recent history of hate speech, has been actively promoted and legitimised by a broadcaster over several years. In Case Study 4, news media and conservative politicians cooperate around a story in escalating the deficit framing of refugees, promoting one another and amplifying their material to their audiences. In both cases, online activity surrounding the material further echoes the deficit framing of targeted groups and boils over into hate speech, as in Pattern One above.

The term “mutualism” has been drawn from biological ecosystems science, where it broadly means “reciprocally beneficial interactions between two species” (Hale & Valdovinos, 2021). Researchers of organisations and online activity have drawn on the terms to apply to interactions within social systems (TeBlunthuis & Hill, 2022). However, actors who have mutualistic interactions are not necessarily allies or even aligned. They may also have other competitive or antagonistic interactions. Additionally, there may be strong risks associated with these interactions, and they might be beneficial in one way, but damaging in another.

In the case of the information ecosystems we researched, mutualistic interactions or relationships played out in ways that may appear totally mundane to experienced political and news media practitioners—they may be quite standard everyday practices. For news media practitioners, the cultivation of insider access, and the promotion of media talent are common activities. For those outside the media trying to promote themselves, make money or create social change, cultivating relationships with news media practitioners can be crucial.

However, when viewed from the perspective of online hate speech that germinates around news publishing, these practical relationships point to a system of incentives that are a challenge for regulators and others working on ways to reduce its prevalence. A careful consideration of these relational patterns and incentives may surface certain risks and opportunities for different kinds of interventions.

Incentives and Mutual Benefits of Platforming

In the information ecosystems we are observing, mutualistic interactions involve an exchange of some capital between news media and other actors. This capital may take different forms: information, legitimation or cultural capital, or even a financial exchange, for example. The fact that there is some mutually beneficial exchange explains the cooperation between news media and others who participate as sources or commentators, despite the risks.

What kinds of benefits do these different participants seek?

News media institutions depend on growing their audiences and holding their attention for their financial models and legitimacy. They need people and organisations to participate in their reporting and commentary, often without financial compensation. These external actors, or sources, bring information, commentary, and/or a historical and human element to stories in ways that make them more newsworthy and keep audiences' attention. The presence of a particular source can be the main element of a story that engages audiences, that makes it sensational or interesting. In particular, when celebrities or other famous people participate as sources, they are able to bring their own large audiences, which news media are particularly keen to access in the age of social media. News media institutions must cultivate and maintain relationships with sources who can make their content engaging.

News media institutions depend on growing their audiences and holding their attention for their financial models and legitimacy.

For people to participate in the news as sources or informants, they need some benefit in turn. In some cases this is financial, but in many cases it is promotion for their ideas, products, or themselves. In other words, they want the news media to provide them a platform to communicate with their audiences. Additionally, being featured in news media content can provide people and organisations with legitimisation—they must be newsworthy or credible in some way to be recruited as a source or featured in the news.

In mutualistic interactions, both these sets of needs are met. News media institutions can get story material and potentially attract new audiences, and external participants can get a platform and legitimisation. These exchanges are a day-to-day part of news media practice.

Our concern is in the cases when these exchanges involve actors or deficit discourse narratives that promote the proliferation of online hate. News media practitioners may have legitimate cause for engaging in these relationships in the course of public interest reporting, however the amplification of online hate as a byproduct presents a dilemma for them to grapple with. This dilemma is highlighted by Australia's news media practitioners professional association, the Media Artist and Entertainment Alliance (MEAA):

“ MEAA Media members should have the right to withhold their labour on the grounds of their obligations under the Code if their

employers are providing a platform for racism or hate speech. ... Consider if it is necessary to report on racist or extremist organisations – do not do so merely for the sake of “balance” or allow your journalism to provide a platform for their views. Our job is to report the truth, not provide false balance” (Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, 2020).”

The incentives described above, the drive to engage large audiences with sensationalist content, may be implicit in the MEAA’s guidelines when they suggest that there can be conflicts between news media staff and their management around the platforming of hate.

Escalation of Dehumanising Speech and Hate Speech

Building on Pattern One, in this pattern of activity we are focused on situations where there appears to be both mutually beneficial interactions and dehumanising speech and hate speech is being amplified. This amplification can happen in a number of ways, for example, as a by-product of the increased prominence of the actor’s wider online activity (Case Study 3), or because of the increased quantity and prominence of posts reproducing deficit discourse (Case Study 4), which in turn germinates further divisive activity in line with Pattern One.

In Case Study 3, Katherine Deves initially appeared to be recruited as a source for discussion and reporting, to contribute an anti-transgender political position to news media content throughout 2021. Then, during the 2022 election, she also became an object of intense scrutiny and sensational reporting, massively increasing the prominence of her own statements ridiculing and vilifying transgender people, and also appearing to increase the proliferation and prominence of other anti-transgender content online. After the election, Deves was embraced as a regular contributor and pundit on a range of issues, particularly by Sky News Australia, providing her with a new legitimisation and access to audiences. Deves capitalised on this to cultivate a bigger online profile for her anti-transgender campaigning. The news media got the benefit of a controversial source to provide sensationalist content and the channel’s promotion among Deves’ own growing following, while Deves got legitimisation, access to large audiences and likely financial compensation when she became a stand-in host for Sky News’s Late Night Debate program for several weeks in 2023. These interactions between Deves and the news media occurred over several years and are ongoing.

Case Study 4, on the other hand, played out over a few days. In this case, there was an intense back-and-forth of conservative media and politicians, appearing to use each other as springboards, to escalate a sense of danger around a change in Australia's humanitarian visa program, to legitimise themselves and their frame, and to reach larger and larger audiences. News media actors recruited politicians as sources for their stories and then the politicians shared the reports to their large social media audiences, and even through paid advertising in one case. Each new iteration of the story became its own platform for dehumanising speech and hate speech by people who responded in the surrounding online activity.

These mutualist exchanges and escalating rhetoric are common across the spectrum in contemporary politics. The point is to energise the audience around campaign messages. Political players benefit from the legitimisation and amplification of their brands, positions and campaigns by the news media. News media's reporting is similarly validated by the ongoing controversy. Building sensation may produce outrage, intense social media interaction, which boosts content in social media platform algorithms to bigger and bigger audiences. Additionally, rolling follow-up stories, based purely on comments from politicians are very cheap for publications to produce, so provide a cost saving benefit.

Political campaigners and news media workers might think the description of this process is banal, but when it centres around deficit framing groups of people, or amplifying xenophobia, it clearly contributes to the amplification of hate online. Further practical research would be highly valuable for a range of stakeholders, to learn more about these mutualist exchanges and how practitioners grapple with the associated risks.



Case Studies

Case Study 1:

Media frenzy around Mparntwe/Alice Springs

In late January 2023, there was a sudden and intense media focus on the central Australian city of Mparntwe/Alice Springs. Just after New Years Day, the Northern Territory Police published statistics stating that offences relating to commercial break-ins, property damage, domestic violence related assault and alcohol related assault had all seen a 40%–60% increase in the city during the 12 months to 30 November 2022 (NT Police Force, 2023).

Researchers have described the news media response as a “frenzy” (Williamson & Doel-Mackaway, 2023), a short-term and intense focus on the statistics, using sensational, loaded labels like “crisis” (Vidler, 2023), “wave” (Pearson, 2023), “war zone” (Pearson, 2023), and “national disgrace” (Sky News, 2023). First Nations leaders at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children’s Ground Central Australia), described the situation:

“ Sensationalism of the events in Mparntwe by the media is placing First Nations young people at risk... We have been made to look like we are turning a blind eye to our children... We have suffered years of heavy policing, and this has not worked. This has been the government’s answer for too many years. It has caused more harm. At the same time our solutions are being ignored” (2023)”.

Many researchers and commentators emphasised the historical context and echo of earlier media and government failures. In 2006, the Northern Territory Government ordered an inquiry into alleged child abuse in the region, following a controversial broadcast by the ABC Lateline program. In the program, an anonymous source, referred to as a “former youth worker”, alleged organised child abuse operating in remote communities. However, this source later turned out to be a senior public servant in the federal government Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (Graham et

al., 2006). In 2007, in response to the release of [the inquiry report, Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle "Little Children are Sacred"](#), the federal government implemented what became known as the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), or the Northern Territory Intervention. Though the policy attracted bipartisan parliamentary support, it was widely criticised as reactionary, paternalistic and discriminatory (Altman, 2007; Calma, 2009; Moreton Robinson, 2009). The policy included measures such as a blanket ban on alcohol, increased police presence, mandatory management of welfare payments and the suspension of the permit system which governed access to Aboriginal communities — measures which targeted 72, primarily Aboriginal, communities.

Australia's news media has been particularly criticised for driving deficit narratives and discrimination against First Nations people around the NTER. The NTER was the subject of a case study in the Lowitja Institute's report on the impact of deficit discourse on First Nations health policies design:

“ These quotes [from former Prime Minister John Howard, reproduced in The Age newspaper] employ deeply racist essentialist descriptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their failure to care for their children, portraying all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as vulnerable and all parents as negligent...In the Prime Minister's discourse, "communities" becomes a synonym for "culture" with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture being held as morally depraved". (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. 24)

On the impact of the amplification of these narratives through the news media, they cite the Child Health Check NTER measure, in which the framing of the NTER as an "emergency" designed to protect vulnerable children led directly to a hastily devised health policy according to a contemporary policy evaluation:

“ In the case of the NTER, we found no evidence of detailed consideration of policy options. The options that had been developed in consultation with communities involved (the recommendations in the Little Children Are Sacred report) were ignored, or perhaps more accurately left behind in the stampede. The Australian Government did not discuss policy implementation issues with DoHA [Department of Health and Ageing], leading to an announcement of policy that was technically and ethically flawed and which created fear among the groups it was designed to protect [Allen & Clarke 2011, p.44 in (Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. 25)]".

The evaluators pointed to a view that First Nations people were “Aboriginal culture as a negative influence on people’s development”, and a broader deficit framing of First Nations peoples, as a key part of the government failing here (Allen & Clarke 2011, p.44 in Fogarty, Bulloch, et al., 2018, p. 25).

In July 2022, 15 years after the NTER was first enacted, many of the programs that had been subsequently extended by the Gillard Government’s 2012 [Stronger Futures Act](#) expired. This included the end of restrictions on alcohol. While the efficacy of alcohol bans is strongly contested (Brown et al., 2023; Collard, 2023a; Knowles & Park, 2023), concerns were raised that instances of harm could increase after withdrawing the bans without consultation or any alternate policy that addressed systemic governmental neglect (Jonscher & Brash, 2022).

This historical context and the increase in reports of crime by the NT Police set the stage for the intensity of media coverage starting in January 2023.

Media coverage in 2023 and deficit narratives

For several weeks, beginning in mid-January, there was intense media focus on the reports of violence in Mparntwe/Alice Springs. In the coverage we observed, news providers made consistent choices about which of the many possible perspectives to lead with, emphasising the “crisis” as a short term escalation requiring a police or even military intervention, and as a threat to businesses and the non-First Nations population in particular.

Widely cited sources included the Alice Springs Mayor, Matt Patterson (Vidler, 2023), and other business owners who were quoted to emphasise the commercial impacts of the events, particularly for non-Indigenous people (Bharadwaj, 2023). A

particular flash moment was around a town meeting that attracted significant coverage, in which roughly 10% of Alice Springs’ population (reportedly over 3000 people) met to air their frustration, and discuss possible legal action against the NT Government (Collard, 2023b). The event and the content around it on social media was reported to have been racially divisive, “hostile” and “tense”, (ABC News, 2023; Collard, 2023b). The commentary around the event further amplified deficit discourse towards First Nations people, that an intervention by non-Indigenous people and institutions was required.

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Throughout January and February, as events unfolded, and were reported and framed by the media, an intense deficit discourse framing of First Nations people was fostered through the wording, choice of imagery and sourcing of news stories.

The comments

Intertwined with the intensity of news media reporting was a growing intensity of dehumanising hate speech online about First Nations peoples. We encountered hate speech in comments sections responding to news reporting across multiple social media platforms, on NT-based Facebook Pages and Groups, and in the extremist publishing of Far-Right influencers.




In many cases, dehumanising speech and hate speech was deployed in direct response to new media reports. A major locus for speech that denigrated, dehumanised or called for forms of violence and discrimination against First Nations people, was in the comments sections of posts in which news articles were shared on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. Importantly, many of the narratives deployed in hateful comments draw on ideas that are also present in the deficit narratives that the news coverage contained or imply, such as the idea of a failing culture, First Nations people as a threat, deploying armed forces and increasing policing.

The following figure shows a small sample of comments from just one Facebook post, which is a video news report by radio network 2GB Sydney which is emblematic of the most common narratives we observed (2GB Sydney, 2023b). The post provides the voice over of a local business owner describing the threat to businesses and staff over footage of First Nations people on the streets and through CCTV footage. The post was also shared on a number of Far-Right and Nationalist Facebook pages, which gained further, aligned comments. The post received over 1500 comments on 2GB's page. We have not quantified the share that denigrated or called for forms of violence, and a number of comments were indicated as deleted, possibly by 2GB moderators.







Assorted, redacted screenshots of comments on the 2GB's Facebook video post described above.




 This is happening all over the country not just Alice ...I.mean everywhere we just travelled the country and it's out of control...and it is one demographic that is doing
Like Reply 13 w   5



 Civil war is coming you can see it
Like Reply 26 w   6



 Lang Hancock had the best solution.
Like Reply 13 w 



 Top fan
The bloody governments won't do anything because of the colour of their skin
Like Reply 13 w  8



 Looks like South Africa. This is what happens when you are politically correct on crime...
Like Reply 26 w  23

 They are being taken care of by the government because this country, not their country, but this country was colonised and then began to prosper but they (Aboriginals) carry on the way they do because WOKE politics says you cannot physically stop them!, no one race owns any country on this planet!
Like Reply 27 w   20

 Take up arms  2

 Kkk  2

 People will start talking things into their own hands
Like Reply 13 w  2

 Round them up take out to desert see how they go
Like Reply 26 w 

Case Studies

They demand respect for their culture, the way I see it is they have no culture, no respect for themselves or anyone. Their lawlessness needs to change before anyone can take them serious.

Like Reply 26 w 18

They wouldn't know culture if it bit them on the ar*e

Like Reply 26 w 7

they definitely know the can't be touched culture. The culture that drinks to much, roams the streets at all hours, causing immeasurable damage to property, people and themselves.

Like Reply 26 w 5

Assorted, redacted screenshots of comments on the 2GB's Facebook video post described above.

Protected species.. 30

Like Reply 27 w

The comment that is replying to has been deleted.

Don't forget to state the cause of those 489 deaths.... otherwise one might think you're pushing a narrative that they're all being murdered in cold blood.

Like Reply 27 w 12

The comment that is replying to has been deleted.

that is Aust wide you bullshitter. And most of those deaths were natural causes or suicides. Put the correct facts up you flog bag instead of sensationalising the issue

Like Reply 26 w 9

God knows..Army need to go and help.A whole restructuring needs doing.From the ground up..

Like Reply 27 w

I think some street justice should do the trick

Like Reply 26 w

If he wasn't indigenous he have had real consequences. This 2 tiered justice system is not doing the indigenous community any favours as it allows the few criminals among them to dominate...

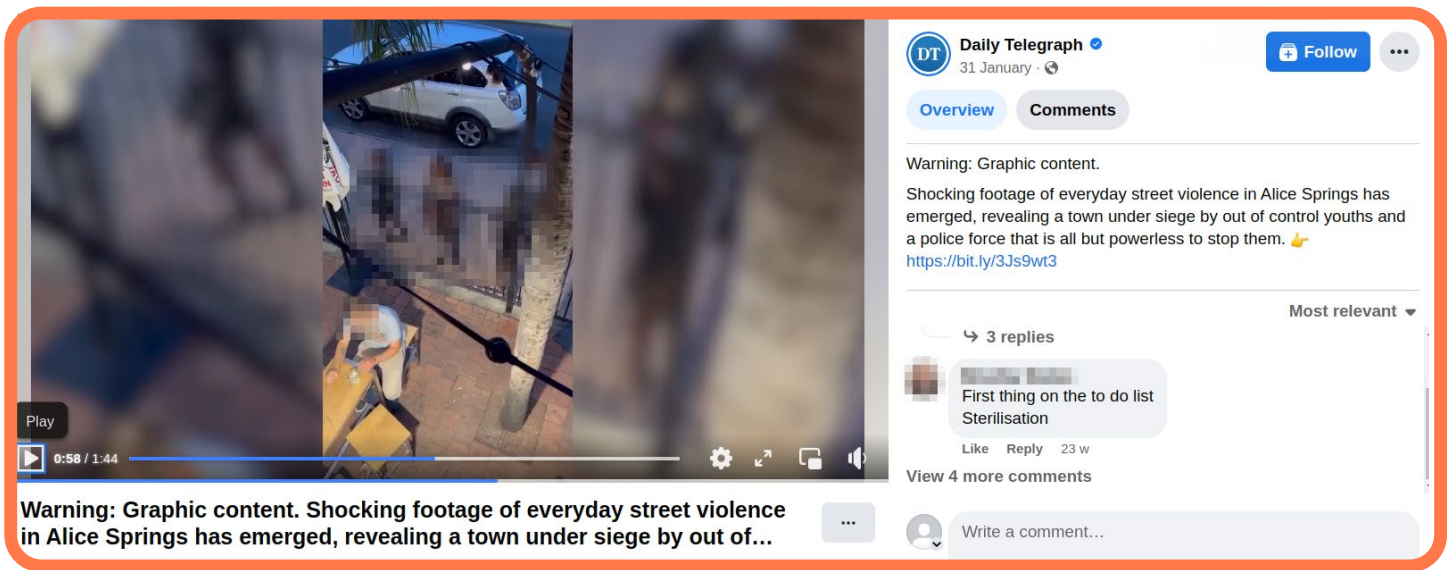
I hope everyone leaves and the degenerates can have the joint , one alpa in town and one fuel pump is all they need

Like Reply 26 w 3

Across the social media activity around news media reports on this story, we frequently encountered comments that called for state violence against First Nations people, explicitly or implicitly. One recurring idea among commenters was to “fence up” the area and for all white people to “abandon” First Nations people in a remote jail. Other commenters egged on vigilante violence, such as “just handle them yourselves” or “I’d like to see them try this in America – Patriots would not stand for this”.

We also noticed a tendency for comments on postings of multimedia content by broadcast media publishers (radio and television) to contain more hate speech and of a greater intensity (including slurs) than was the case for mostly text-based posts and linking by print publications. One hypothesis for this is that the host publications, which have varying ownership and editorial positions, may moderate comments differently. Further research would be required to quantify and investigate this hypothesis.

A second possibility is that video footage frequently reinforces the racialised polarisation identified above. While references in language to the Aboriginal identity of offenders are rare in both print and broadcast reporting—reflecting the Australian Press Council’s prohibition on “gratuitous emphasis on the race...of an individual or group” (Australian Press Council, n.d.-b)—video footage makes these identities explicit. In addition to the 2GB post mentioned above, the activity around a post from the Daily Telegraph supports this trend. The post is a video of highly graphic footage of a fight and yelling on a street, appearing to be between First Nations people and white people inside a fenced venue (Daily Telegraph, 2013). The 40 plus comments on this post contained a higher level of hate speech than other Daily Telegraph articles we surveyed, including calls to violence. One of the two highlighted for users as “Most Relevant” by Facebook’s comment algorithm reads, “First thing on the to do list Sterilisation”.



Screenshot of a Facebook video post by the Daily Telegraph on January 31 that had a high level of hate speech and calls for violence in the comments, including in the comments highlighted by Facebook.

Finally, Facebook's algorithm is well understood to favour video content (Tandoc & Maitra, 2018), thereby delivering this content to a wider audience who may comment. Engagement drives further amplification into more people's Facebook feeds. Additionally, footage of events like those occurring in Alice Springs may be particularly prone to increased engagement due to their strong negative emotional valence (Choi et al., 2021).

Collaging and linking

Some of the most extreme examples that we identified were on less prominent social media platforms such as Odysee and Telegram. More extreme actors are known to seek out these platforms because they are largely unmoderated (@DFRLab, 2022). One particular dynamic that emerged was a video content format in which two or three users collate and re-broadcast news items on a range of issues and provide commentary on these items. In these instances, material produced by news media actors is collaged, or remixed, into new material. Importantly, the hosts selectively agree with certain elements of the news stories while others are critiqued, in the process constructing a Far-Right narrative which interconnects a range of current affairs. We found two immediately relevant videos, though we have seen many others on other topics and this format appears to be common in Far-Right online subculture spaces.

In one video, published by two of Australia's most well-known Far-Right activists on February 2nd 2023 (we have decided not to include their names to prevent further platforming), the pair discuss events in Mparntwe/Alice

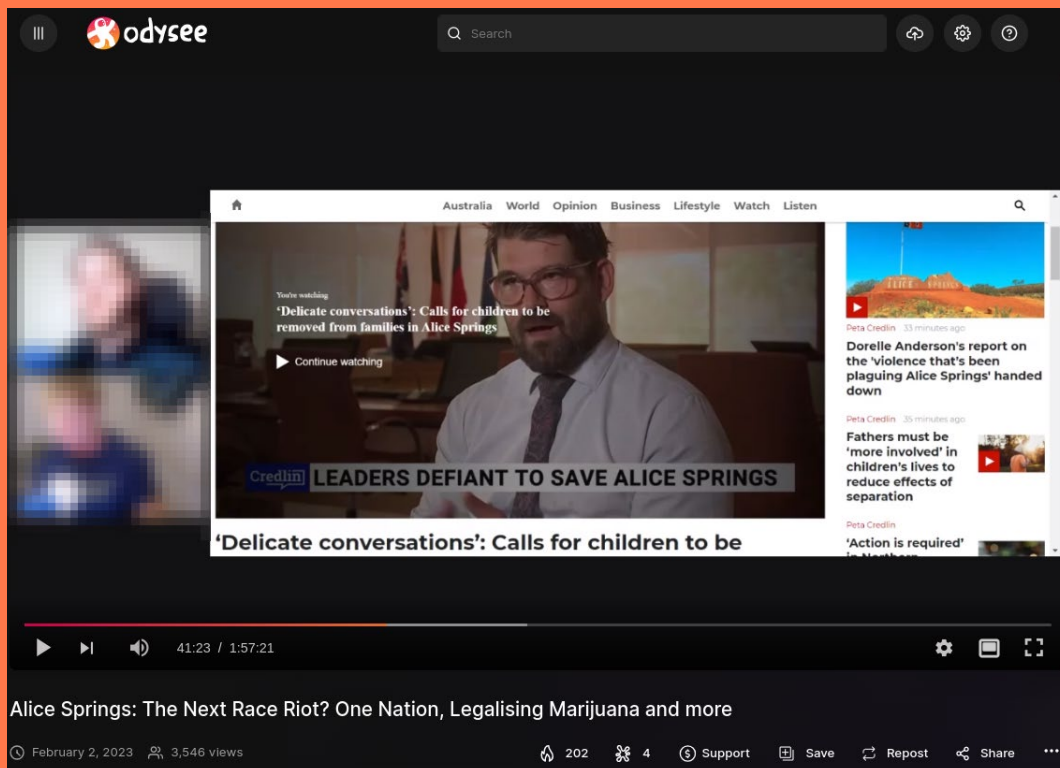


Springs and related issues.

Throughout the video, posted on Odysee, they refer to Aboriginal people as “Abos” and “blacks”. They scroll through news articles and footage from the ABC, Sydney Morning Herald, 9 News, and Sky News programs. In their discussion, they reproduce many of the deficit discourse narratives that were present in the comments described above, often in the most explicit form we encountered.

On the next page, we have provided an extended quote from one section of the video, which remains online, despite the extreme nature of the material, to provide readers a realistic sense of this kind of content. In this case, the news media footage became fodder for hate speech when incorporated into extremist discussion, completely independently of any news media actor.

While this is some of the most explicitly extreme hate content we found related to this case study, it is not uncommon to find content like this responding to news media publishing in Australia within durable Far-Right subculture spaces. This shows how extremists are able to draw on news media product as an object for furthering their own narratives, and deserves further dedicated research.



A screenshot of two extreme Far-Right influencers (blurred here, on the left of the image) discussing news reporting on Mparntwe/ Alice Springs.

[Presenter 1]:

“What do you think about Aboriginal people even living with white people in the first place? Should that even happen? I'm obviously all for racial segregation but why the fuck is the government trying to take Aboriginal kids away from families? I don't care if those kids are being abused by their own families. I don't give a fuck about Aboriginal people. They're not my responsibility. They're not this country's responsibility. They are their own responsibility. Everything this government or we as a society do to try to help them, they take advantage of it, exploit it and then complain that they're not getting enough...They should live amongst themselves if they want to rape and cannibalise each other—I don't give a fuck.”

[Presenter 2]:

“No one is able to just come out and say 'it's the fuckin' Abos'. It doesn't matter how many government programs, doesn't matter if you keep the booze away, Abos are gonna be Abos”.

Regarding what he calls the “myth of the Stolen Generations”, Presenter 2 states: “The reason why the kids were taken off these Aboriginal families, was because the Aboriginal families were alcoholic fucking child rapists. And they still are.”

[Presenter 2]:

“Like, if we, you know—I'm not advocating this, obviously—but if we decided, you know what, we're just gonna kill all the Aboriginals, white people, we're gonna come to a consensus, we could do it!”

Media failures lead to a discredited source further amplifying deficit discourse


Failures in news media practice, echoing the situation in 2007 before the NTER, also served to amplify the deficit discourse narrative around First Nations people in 2023. Rachel Hale was one source widely platformed after Nine News aired Hale's footage of a brawl outside her Alice Springs hotel on 30 January 2023 (Dickerson, 2023). Across a range of media outlets, Hale was platformed and introduced as a local nurse who would be an informed source on the situation, with terms including that she was a "registered nurse", "on the frontline in Aboriginal communities", an "Alice Springs local", and an "Alice Springs nurse ... who has worked as a registered nurse for almost 14 years" (Whelan, 2023; Wilson, 2023). Hale was featured in reports by Channel 9's Today program, 2GB, Sky News, the Daily Mail, news.com.au and 10 News First Sydney, often claiming that local children were on the streets for fear of being sexually abused at home (10 News First, 2023b; Clarke, 2023; Dickerson, 2023; Mahony, 2023; Whelan, 2023).


However, it was revealed by Facebook users commenting on her since-deleted video post that Hale in fact worked as a cosmetic nurse and lived in Darwin, only visiting Alice Springs every two months on business (Chung, 2023). By February 3, Hale had confirmed to The Guardian that she was not a resident of Mparntwe/ Alice Springs, and had "been a full time cosmetic nurse for two years and has never worked as a nurse in remote Indigenous communities, in Alice Springs or elsewhere in the Northern Territory" (Meade, 2023). Hale insists she did not mislead reporters, and that her claims are truthful.

Despite the significant doubts this raised about her authority as a news source, quotes and footage of her interviews continued to be reproduced across the media space for weeks. Finally, on 23 February 2023, Daily Mail Australia reported that Hale had faced court on charges of "forgery and harassment" (Sutton, 2023) further damaging her credibility as a source. In most cases, no retractions or corrections of the stories featuring Hale have been made by news media, and Hale's interviews and the accompanying write-ups remain on the outlets' websites.

Posts of stories featuring Hale on the outlets' social media are also still live. The screenshots below show a sample of comments, including those elevated by platforms algorithms, responding to posts by 2GB Sydney (1.5k comments total), 9 News (83 comments total), Sky News Australia (97 comments total) and 10 Ten News First (43 comments total, locked by page moderators).


Redacted screenshots of comments on a 2GB Sydney Facebook video post January 31 2023, "Harrowing call from former NT nurse" (2GB Sydney, 2023a).



 [Redacted Name]
Yet if they are removed from the parents/ caregivers it classed as another stolen generation,so your damed if you do and damed if you don't ,innocent people are paying the price

Like Reply 27 w  30


  Top fan
[Redacted Name]
And they want respect I don't think so



Like Reply 27 w   8


 [Redacted Name]
And they want a voice..What a joke! Lock them up ,or perhaps they need to have a look 🙄 at this type action..before we white fellow'S as they call us,before we will give them a Voice in anything at all..my opinion..


Like Reply 27 w   7

Most relevant ▾

 [Redacted Name]
Cut off government payments and get a job !!! Send the army in and have curfews

Like Reply 27 w   38

 [Redacted Name]
It's unbelievable that these children are living the most horrendous lives and being abused by their own families! If these were white children they would be removed from their homes! Something urgently needs to be done in this and other communities!... **See more**

Like Reply 27 w   33



The biggest risk to indigenous kids are from the indigenous- Jacinta price has been saying this for many many years- but no one is listening. The horrors she hears of whats happening to babies toddlers and little kids is disgusting and no one is being held accountable for these acts- nothing will change till the perpetrators are held accountable. The govt isn't the ones doing these acts- it's those living with and around them. Accountability and consequences is what is needed and if these kids need removing , then so be it- these kids deserve better. And the " voice" or a treaty or more money will do absolutely NOTHING to fix this.

Like Reply 27 w 20

... Very well said & I remember back in early 2000 a little girl aged 3 was taped by her own uncle & her injuries were so horrific, she underwent surgery to repair the damages... court's gave him a community work order... pathetic... little girl returned to the family...& the uncle lived with them still.. pandering to their culture is disgraceful

Like Reply 27 w 4

it is disgusting that the Aboriginals are allowing it to happen to their children. Why are so many staying silent? How does one be so cruel??

Like Reply 27 w Edited 1

Redacted screenshots of comments on a 9 News Facebook post, sharing their article, "The home life of these children is horrific: Nurse reveals disturbing levels of trauma in Alice Springs", on January 31 2023 (9 News, 2023).

Top fan
Feral
Like Reply 27 w

Typical First Nations, this why they can't be left to manage them selves
Like Reply 27 w 3

Top fan
I saw her on the Today show this morning. It is all just absolutley heart breaking . These children deserve better.
Like Reply 27 w 7

Easy fix give them some lead they won't be missed
Like Reply 27 w

The hate preachers from the Aboriginal establishment have done a great job turning these kids against their own people and society in general. I bet they're all so proud of their achievement..

Like Reply 27 w Edited 6

Redacted screenshots of comments on a Sky News Australia Facebook post, sharing their article, "Filled with hate: Alice Springs residents detail problems with local children", on February 1 2023 (Sky News Australia, 2023).

Just horrific, too emotional to think about for me
So very sorry for the kids that they're community and country doesn't give a stuff about them, because someone might yell racist if we tried to help





Like Reply 27 w 2


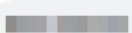

Only they can change themselves or take them somewhere safer or will that be stolen generation take 2




Like Reply 27 w 1



Most relevant ▾

Write a comment...    

 
Stories from this nurse are horrific but we need to here them.
Like Reply 27 w  7




 
This is what it's come to. Children being assaulted and sexually abused. Dear God, where is the answer ? The Govt is only concerned about themselves. ...
Like Reply 27 w  31


  Top fan 
Aboriginal Children have been sexually abused for decades and longer. Authorities have been aware of it and did nothing. Alice Springs is the tip of the iceberg.
Like Reply 27 w  12
↳ 9 replies




  Top fan 
Those abusing children are perverted savages.
Like Reply 27 w





  Top fan 
A flame thrower will help.

Redacted screenshots of comments on a 10 News First Facebook Video post, "Alice Springs Nurse Recounts Crime Wave", on January 31 2023 (10 News First, 2023a)

 
Start with taking back to streets, curfew military enforcement, massive diversion programs , total alcohol ban, the police can't cope according to those who live there the city will be lost to all good people if it's not controlled
Like 27 w  27

 
Sad thing about it doesn't  Matter what you do for them it they will still be the same 
Like 27 w  28

 
People have the lawful right to detain individuals committing crimes like theft, assault, or vandalism. If the police is unable to control the chaos, it's more than reasonable for a community to work together and create a safe and dignified environment in which to live.
Like 27 w  7

 
Someone stand up and lock the little gremlins up. All these blm invasion day protesters have something to do . Get your mob under control.
Do that and u can run the country.
Like 27 w   7

Redacted screenshots of comments on a Sky News Australia Facebook post, sharing their article, "Filled with hate: Alice Springs residents detail problems with local children", on February 1 2023 (Sky News Australia, 2023)

Finally, a narrative, weaker in the other comments sections discussed above, emerges much more prominently around reports featuring Hale: that of an imperative to protect vulnerable children. This is the same rhetoric that was used to motivate the NTER, discussed above: “The intervention program was justified through an urgent need to save Indigenous children from widespread abuse and victimisation identified by the Little Children Are Sacred report” (Macoun, 2011). As in the case of the NTER, sensationalist claims by questionable sources have the potential to mobilise broad swathes of the public around long standing racialised deficit discourse narratives, and influence government policy with far-reaching consequences.

Case Study 2:

Chinese-language News Platform Driving Anti-Indian Content

Australian Financial News (AFN) (see [AFN LinkedIn](#), [AFN website](#), [AFN Facebook](#), [AFN Twitter](#)) is an online, mainly Mandarin-language finance news outlet, reporting on topics such as business, real estate investment, stocks, and government financial policy developments. AFN was ranked as the second most influential Chinese media website outside Mainland China in the first half of 2021 by [China News Service \(中国新闻社\), a state owned Chinese media outlet, and the School of Journalism at Communication University of China \(中国传媒大学新闻学院\)](#). AFN also has an English-language website where they publish less frequently and, notably, with articles that appear to be very different in theme and content from their Mandarin-only publishing.

On their official WeChat account, AFN usually publishes 7–8 articles in Mandarin every weekday and at least four at weekends. WeChat surpassed 1 billion monthly users in 2018 and, according to the Being Chinese in Australia survey published by the Lowy Institute in 2023, 75% of Chinese-Australian respondents use WeChat “often” or “sometimes” for accessing news (Hsu, 2023). This suggests AFN has a sizeable audience within Australia and among Mandarin-speaking people globally. However, the WeChat platform lacks transparency, including audience numbers, making this difficult to confirm.

Accordingly, AFN appears to be an important advertising platform for Australian politicians trying to reach Chinese-speaking Australians on WeChat. During the 2022 Australian Federal Election, then-Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, current Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, then-Minister Paul Fletcher, and Independent candidate Kylea Tink all ran paid advertising on AFN’s WeChat news posts (Echo Hui et al., 2022).

During our monitoring period, AFN published a number of opinion-style articles about Australian Government immigration policies containing racist anti-Indian

sentiment, we looked at AFN's posts under related hashtags—#移民 (immigrants), #澳洲移民 (Australian immigrants), #海外華人 (overseas Chinese) and #印度 (India)—to identify eight further articles. The articles include content ranging from deficit discourse (see Key Definitions) to dehumanisation and hate speech that belittles and seeks to diminish Indian people on a racial basis. Though the articles contain leading rhetorical questions (such as “Where do you think the Delta variants that made NSW and Victoria suffer so much were from? India!”), and therefore conform to the style of an opinion piece, they are not clearly distinguishable from news (via an opinion section heading, for example), which breaches industry standards set out by the Australian Press Council. Additionally, the articles mentioned here only appear in feeds in Mandarin, never in the English-language section, and tend to be published anonymously, or using only a pseudonym, practices which are highly unusual in the Australian media space.

The fundamental framing of these articles is that Indian people are both a threat to Australian society and to the life prospects of Chinese people in Australia, homogenising Indian people as a group marred by a cultural deficit—themes which clearly constitute dehumanising speech (see Key Definitions). Importantly, these ideas are constructed within the articles themselves, through headlines, post content and interactive polls set up at the end of the articles. For example, several headlines contain warnings to readers about the impending migration of Indian people: “Attention: Indian immigrants are about to ‘occupy’ Australia!” (Original: 注意：印度移民即将“占领”澳洲！); and, “A large number of Indians are frantically pouring into Australia!” (Original: 大批印度人，正疯狂涌入澳大利亚！).

The content of the articles includes commentary on competing trade and political relationships between Chinese, Australian and Indian Governments; the relative “value” of Chinese people as opposed to Indian people as migrants to Australia—with Chinese people presented as offering greater economic advantage; assertions that the “great number of Indians overflowing into Australia” are bringing violence, which is “putting the locals off” and that they should “go home”; and claims that poor hygiene and poverty in India produced and worsened the COVID-19 pandemic:

“Where is the Delta virus that NSW and VIC suffer from? India! Because of India, Delta is spreading across the globe, almost ruining global pandemic prevention once again.”

This last claim echoes xenophobic “Chinese virus” slurs that many East Asian people in Australia were targeted with during the pandemic (Zhao, 2020).

Table: 9 articles that include details of the original and translated titles, published dates, link to archived copy and the engagement stats. Notes that engagement stats and comments are only visible through WeChat application, and not through the web views linked here.

Title	Published date	Link	Engagement stats
<p>澳洲下一步，要拿印度取代中国？</p> <p>(Translation: "Australia's next step is to replace China with India?")</p>	2021-08-16	Original , Archive	10.6K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
<p>稀里糊涂成为中国替代者，澳洲大选带给印度的尴尬才刚开始</p> <p>(Translation: "Confused to become a substitute for China, the embarrassment brought to India by the Australian election has just begun")</p>	2022-03-25	Original , Archive	13.4K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
<p>澳洲，要拿印度取代中国？</p> <p>(Translation: "Australia, want to replace China with India?")</p>	2022-04-05	Original , Archive	7.2K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
<p>澳大利亚，将涌入大量印度人！</p> <p>(Translation: "Australia, there will be a large influx of Indians!")</p>	2022-08-26	Original , Archive	13.2K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
<p>注意：印度移民即将“占领”澳洲！澳洲要改国庆日？快听总理怎么说</p> <p>(Translation: "Attention: Indian immigrants are about to 'occupy' Australia! Australia to change the National Day? Listen to what the Prime Minister has to say")</p>	2022-09-03	Original , Archive	1.7K, retrieved on 2023-06-04

Title	Published date	Link	Engagement stats
2023 : 印度人口超过中国 , 澳印关系迅猛升温 (Translation: "2023: India's population exceeds that of China, and Australia-India relations are heating up rapidly!")	2023-01-04	Original , Archive	3.9K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
暴跌近千亿、墨尔本群殴 , 为什么印度惨遭伏击值得每一个澳洲华人关注 ? (Translation : "With a plunge of nearly 100 billion and gang fights in Melbourne, why is the brutal ambush in India worthy of the attention of every Australian Chinese?")	2023-02-01	Original , Archive	14.6K reads, retrieved on 2023-08-08
大批印度人 , 正疯狂涌入澳大利亚 ! (Translation: "A large number of Indians are frantically pouring into Australia!")	2023-02-09	Original , Archive	16.2K views, retrieved on 2023-08-08
澳洲印度关系升级 , 大批印度人涌入澳洲 , 华人处境危急 ! (Translation: "Australia-India relations advancing, a large influx of Indians endangering Chinese situation in Australia")	2023-05-24	Original , Archive	18K view, retrieved on 2023-08-08

The deficit discourse reflected in these articles is picked up in the comment sections in WeChat and often reproduced with more pointed and explicit hate speech. For example, in the article titled, 澳大利亚 , 将涌入大量印度人 (translation: "Australia, there will be a large influx of Indians!"), some of the comments state:

“他们虽然英语好 , 可那是咖喱英语...[他们]缺乏足够的文明礼貌及卫生习惯。这样的人多了 , 将改变澳洲的社会结构 (translation: "They [Indians] speak good English, but that's curry English...[they] lack civilisation and good hygienic habits. If we have more people like

this, this is going to change Australia's social structure.”),

西尼斯坦邦 on the way, 偷窃率和强奸率要上升了 (translation: “Sydney on the way to become another Indian state, theft and rape rate are increasing”).

澳大利亚印度化 , 一个充满咖喱味的大岛... (translation: “Australia is becoming India, a big island with curry smell...”).

离印度人占领澳洲不远了 (translation: “We are not far from being occupied by Indians”).”

These comments both reproduce discourses seen within the article itself (i.e. concerns relating to the volume of Indian immigrants to Australia) and introduce other dehumanising stereotypes to the discussion (e.g. criminality and “curry smell”). While such dehumanising and hateful comments are frequent and prominent on these articles, there are also a number of commenters who pushed back against the deficit frames and the explicit racism. One read: 本文评论很多涉嫌种族歧视 , 而发言人并不自知 (translation: “A lot of comments here are probably racist but people who left the comments don't realise”). The comments sections of these articles are contested spaces in which racist narratives are both amplified and challenged.

The AFN regularly poses a question for readers at the conclusion of each article, asking the readers to leave their comments or participate in a poll. These multiple-choice polls frequently skew discussion towards anti-migrant and anti-Indian narratives. For example, the latest article ends with a poll: “What's your opinion on Indians?”. This positions Indian people as something readers should have an opinion on and frames the discussion in racial terms. Other polls solicit opinions on Indian migration, and “warming” government relations between India and Australia. The predetermined answers generally include an option equating to “I am fine with Indian people”, and then others that disparage Indian people and culture as “un-advanced”, such as: “I think it's not good, incoming Indian immigrants and students' economic situations are too bad”; “I think it's not good, it's unfair for skilled migrants or investment migrants”; and “I think it's very ridiculous. Why would a big agricultural country like India need 50 million college students?”

Screenshots of interactive polls featured on AFN WeChat articles.

 很抱歉，请在手机微信登录投票

对于澳印关系的升温，你的看法是：（单选）

- 我觉得很好，真正的多元文化和自由社会就应该是这样的
- 我觉得不好，印度输入的移民和学生经济条件太差
- 我觉得都行，有利可图才有合作，那不然去进口难民啊？

Interactive Poll

(Translated: "Regarding Australia volunteering to assist India to achieve the strategic goal of 50 million college students, what is your opinion?")

- I think it's very ridiculous. Why would a big agricultural country like India need 50 million college students?
- I think it's pretty good, to help Australia's education and tourism industry get through difficulties, [we] need some special solutions.
- I think it's not good, it's unfair for skilled migrants or investment migrants.
- Would it be easier if I applied for my Australian permanent residency in New Delhi?

 很抱歉，请在手机微信登录投票

对于澳洲自告奋勇协助印度完成5万万大学生战略目标，你的看法更接近：（单选）

- 我觉得挺荒谬的，印度一个农业大国需要5亿大学生干什么？
- 我觉得挺好的，为了让澳洲的教育和旅游产业渡过难关，总得有特殊的办法
- 我觉得这样不好，对于之前靠真本事移民的高技术人才和净高产移民不公平
- 如果我去新德里申请澳洲永居会不会更容易？

Interactive Poll

(Translated: "What's your opinion towards the warming relations between Australia and India?")

- I think it's good, a real multicultural and open society should be like this.
- I think it's not good, incoming Indian immigrants and students' economic situations are too bad.
- I think it's whatever, [we] only collaborate if there's benefit; otherwise, just import refugees.)

Screenshots of interactive polls featured on AFN WeChat articles.



Interactive Poll

Interactive Poll: (Translated: What's your opinion towards the large number of Indians overflowing Australia, suppressing Chinese community?)

- Very helpless, Indians are cooperative but Chinese aren't. Chinese people fight each other and deserve to be bullied.
- Very impressed by Indians capability of living and communicating in Australia. Chinese should learn from them but not forget that we're good too.
- "Ah San" is worth nothing. They only know how to play tricks, compared to Chinese, they're far worse.
- I'm cautious with Indians. They'll become threats to the Chinese. War between Chinese and Indians are unavoidable.

This coverage takes place in a context of long-standing tensions state and economic tensions between China and India. In June 2020, a decades-old border dispute was reopened when a clash between Chinese and Indian troops resulted in 20 Indian casualties (Davidson & Doherty, 2020). Minor conflicts have occurred throughout the border region since. Economically, India is a growing global power "beginning to emerge as a rival to its large neighbour with the kind of economic growth figures that were once the pride of Beijing" (Farrer, 2022). Among citizens of each country, a 2016 Pew Research Centre report cites poor attitudes towards the other, including concerns among Indian people about challenges of economic competition posed by China (Stokes, 2016).

While these complex political and historical factors are part of the story, AFN is also part of the contemporary media ecosystem facing competitive pressure to attract and engage audiences online. As elsewhere, the production of sensationalist clickbait is a popular strategy for driving revenue. With the series of articles analysed here, AFN has been publishing directly dehumanising and fear mongering content. It contributes to a deficit discourse against Indian background people in Australia, and encourages racialised, polarised beliefs through its interactive polls. Readers active in the comment section respond with further divisive hate speech. Despite their significant audience and potential influence, it is not clear if AFN—or other

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important non-English language publishers for that matter—are receiving any attention from regulators or news media industry bodies to avoid the risks of inflaming hate speech online.

Case Study 3:

A “Great Friend of the Show”: Platforming of an anti-transgender campaigner

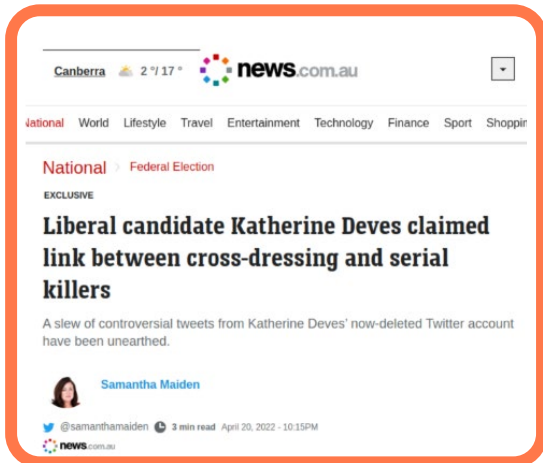
Katherine Deves is an Australian lawyer, unsuccessful political candidate and anti-transgender campaigner (Koziol, 2022; Read & Patrick, 2022), who has frequently engaged in dehumanising and belittling speech towards transgender people online and in the media. Deves has been increasingly platformed by Australian news media institutions and been particularly embraced since 2021 by 24-hour television network, Sky News.

Deves initially came to broad public attention in Australia as the Liberal Party candidate for Sydney electorate Warringah in the Federal Election of May 2022. She was part of a group of Liberal candidates selected at the last minute by party leaders rather than elected by local party members (Patrick, 2022). In 2020 Deves had founded Save Women’s Sport Australasia, an unregistered entity which campaigns online and in the media for the exclusion of trans athletes from women’s sporting events, frequently by pointedly mis-gendering and belittling trans women and gender diverse athletes as [“mediocre men”](#).

Beginning in late 2020, Deves started appearing on podcasts, publishing op-eds and providing interviews to publications including The Australian, Crikey and the Daily Telegraph (Katherine Deves, 2022). During 2021 Deves made at least 10 appearances on Sky News Australia programs. Her rhetoric and arguments frequently included pointed misgendering ([example](#)) (referring to people by former names or pronouns (Transhub, 2021), a practice discouraged by the Australian Press Council (2023)), belittling and demonising trans women ([example](#)), and propagating long-standing false and dehumanising narratives about transgender people and culture being a threat to children ([example](#)). Around this time,

The Australian newspaper, a fellow News Corp outlet that shares many contributors with Sky News, was the focus of an upheld complaint to the Australian Press Council for 45 articles published in 2019 and 2020 featuring slanted coverage of transgender medical care (Australian Press Council, 2021). While her public profile was still small at this time, it seemed that Deves was beginning to become established as an Australian figurehead for an anti-trans editorial position being cultivated by conservative media.

News reports from news.com.au, te ABC, Guardian Australia, Crikey and SBS, reporting on Katherine Deves.



After her preselection as Liberal Party candidate for Warringah, Deves shot to national attention in April 2022 when previous statements of contempt and insult towards trans people by Deves, particularly on Twitter, were widely reported (J. Davis, 2022; Maiden, 2022a; McGowan, 2022a, 2022b; Parkes-Hupton, 2022; Read & Patrick, 2022; Wilson, 2022). These articles reported Deves making a number of extremely derogatory and vilifying statements towards transgender people, including: disparaging trans and non-binary athletes competing in women's sport as a "dumping group [sic] for mediocre and weak men"; characterising children's education about sexuality and gender as "grooming" and claiming there was a link between dressing against dominant gender norms and being a serial killer ("how are we women supposed to tell the difference between the ones who are a threat and the ones who aren't?"); arguing that breastfeeding by trans women should be considered as "child sexual abuse and exploitation"; likening her anti-trans stances to opposing the Nazis; and described trans children as "surgically mutilated and sterilised" (Maiden, 2022a; Wilson, 2022). These reports relied on an online archive of statements from Deves' Twitter account, because the account had been deleted days before her announcement as a candidate (Maiden, 2022b), possibly in anticipation of this scrutiny.

Following the coverage, Deves issued an apology for using "such language"—though continued to frame her arguments as a "fight for the safety of girls and women" (Tamer, 2022). Deves stated that Twitter was not a platform for "reasonable debate" and that she "would not be going back there again" ("Katherine Deves Breaks Her Silence over Controversial Transgender Comments," 2022).

At this point, Deves had reportedly been barred from appearing in the media by the Liberal Party campaign. However, Sky News' Chris Kenny, who had hosted Deves on his program throughout 2021, was able to interview Deves while she was campaigning on a street. In the interview, Deves clarified that her apology was for her use of "ugly" language not for her positions, and then falsely claimed that "mutilation" was the "correct medico-legal term" for gender affirmation surgeries. This claim was quickly corrected by relevant medical experts (RMIT FactLab, 2022) and also by Kenny on his show the following night (*Katherine Deves "One of the Best Known Candidates in Australia,"* 2022).

Over the following weeks, there was a media storm around Deves and the Liberal Party's decision to platform her as a candidate. As in other cases in this report, this spotlighting of an issue through reporting and posting to social media appeared to catalyse further online activity. According to social media statistic tool Meltwater, use of the terms "biological man", "-male",

“-boy”, “-men”, “-woman”, “-women”, “-girls” and “-female” increased 172% among Australian located Twitter accounts in the two weeks following the widespread reporting on Deves starting April 13 2022. US-based hate speech research institute, the Anti-Defamation League, has reported that these terms are almost always used in a derogatory way about transgender people and to “intentionally misgender” them (Anti-Defamation League, 2021).

Deves was not elected by voters in the traditionally safe Liberal electorate and the amplification of her views by news media, and their framing of trans people as an object of discussion during the campaign, has been strongly criticised. More than 50 gender equality and women’s safety groups published a joint statement denouncing the campaign as an “attempt at division”, and reported trans people experiencing emboldened harassment and increased demand for support services (Dhanji, 2022; Fair Agenda, 2022). Reflecting on the election campaign, actor and transgender activist Georgie Stone OAM said, “When our lives and our existences are used as a political football, as part of this kind of culture war to whip up fear and hysteria, it has a really awful impact on trans kids because we do see it [...] I’m still unlearning the shame that I’ve been taught to have” (Stone, 2023).

After the election Deves quickly began building a new online profile. On social media, she removed her Facebook page “Katherine Deves - Liberal Candidate for Warringah” (5,000 followers) and started posting regularly on her personal page, “Katherine Deves” (2,400 followers) where her followers have been steadily increasing month on month. On Twitter, Deves’ most successful platform, she created a new account, @deves_katherine, which has grown to more than 20,000 followers (June 2023), vastly more than the 4,500 on her previous account. She also set up a website, katherinedeves.com.au and an account on the newsletter publishing platform Substack.

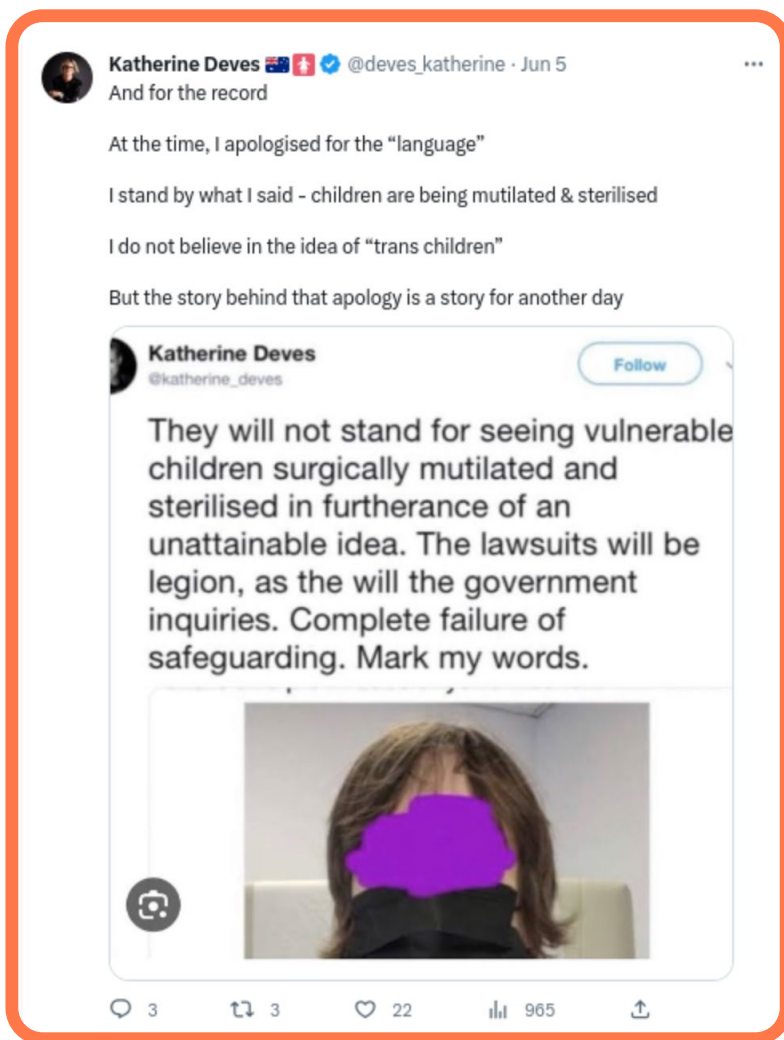


Screenshot of Deves appearance on Sky News' *Outsiders* in March 2023.

Deves has also been embraced anew by Australia's conservative news media outlets, expanding from her core anti-trans campaigning to being drawn on as a pundit across a range of conservative talking points. Deves has become a regular contributor for News Limited's Sky News 24 TV news network and conservative online publication *The Spectator*. According to Sky News' episode records published on IMDB, since the election, Deves has now appeared dozens of times across programs including *Paul Murry Live*, *The Kenny Report* and *Outsiders* (IMDb, n.d.). In October, at the 2022 Conservative Political Action Conference Australia (CPAC Australia), Deves appeared as a panellist for Sky News' *Outsiders* program in a live taping on stage. In an end-of-year Facebook post reflecting on the year, Deves thanked Sky News among her supporters, writing: "to the Sky team for giving me a chance and the fans who cheer us on and tell us to keep going" (Katherine Deves, 2022). After more appearances on panels and as a pundit on Sky in early 2023, in February Deves was recruited as a stand-in host of Sky's *Late Night Debate* program for four shows when a regular host was ill. In March 2023, Deves was welcomed onto Sky News' *Outsiders* program as a "great friend of the show"—the network's YouTube clip of the interview has been viewed almost 60,000 times and attracted more than 1,500 comments ("We Need to 'Say No' to the 'Witch Hunts' of Women's Rights," 2023). In the interview, Deves proceeded to characterise trans women as "men who want to pretend to be women" and as "violent, deranged people who want to get access to women and children", and "trans activism" as a "festering

wound". The show's host Rowan Dean concluded by endorsing Deves, telling audiences there was no doubt she would have won if she had run at the state level in the 2023 NSW election and describing Deves as a reasonable person who the Liberal Party should be listening to.

Since returning to Twitter, Deves has continued to publish and share similar posts and content belittling and denigrating trans people. In one example, she has reposted an image of the Tweet that she had previously apologised for, stating that she stands by her words.



In June 2023, Deves reposted one of her Tweets she was condemned for in 2023.

In 2023, Deves was reaching a larger and more global online audience than ever. In early March 2023, she posted a video to Twitter, showing her challenging a group of trans equality protesters, asking, "What human rights don't you have?" According to Twitter, this received more than 2.7 million views and more than 3,000 shares, including a share from Rebel News correspondent, Avi Yemini who has more than half a million followers and Sky News Australia host, Rita Panahi (Deves, 2023).

Deves' evolving relationship with Sky News shows how news media institutions cultivate sensationalist talent for their current affairs and news programming, even when those people are linked to hate speech and extremely divisive campaigning. Deves started off as a news source, and then as she demonstrated a capacity to generate content, media attention and outrage, was further incorporated as a contributor and host. In this mutualistic exchange, Deves has benefited from further media legitimization for certain audiences, and a platform for her campaigning.

Beyond the platforming of Deves, on the wider contribution of news media around the rights and lives of transgender people in Australia, Georgie Stone OAM recently made the following reflection:

“ The media industry has played a powerful role in creating an insidious culture war, with dehumanising clickbait catchphrases like the “trans debate” or the “gender debate”, as they like to call it, in which trans people, especially kids, are kicked around like footballs. Information about gender-affirming care and support services is distorted and twisted. Hate groups and anti-trans individuals are made out to look like experts, when really they lack any credible experience in working with us, or worse, conduct unethical and biased research that exploits our experiences and identities for their own agendas. Worst of all, people like me are made out to be predators and evil, a harmfully false assertion that endangers my safety and the safety of the trans community.”

- Georgie Stone OAM, 2023

Case Study 4:

Escalating negative framing of refugees after permanent protection visas announced

On February 12 2023, Australian Immigration Minister Andrew Giles announced a change to Australia’s humanitarian visa program: refugees living on 3 or 5 year temporary protection visas could now apply for permanent residency. Over the following days, news media actors and conservative politicians participated in a back and forth to build a sense of threat and deficit discourse (see [Key Definitions](#)) of refugees. The online activity surrounding their reporting and social media posts frequently pushed the framing to a more explicit contempt for migrants as a threat and burden to an “Australian born” in-group. A number of commenters referenced “The Great Replacement”, a racist theory that has “come to dominate the ideology of extreme-right groups” and gained new prominence through its central place in the manifesto of the Christchurch terrorist in 2019 (Ebner & Davey, 2019).

Since 2014, the Australian Government had provided only temporary humanitarian visa options for people who had arrived in Australia by boat and been assessed as refugees (Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law, 2022). There are around 19,000 people, assessed by the Government as refugees, who have been living in the Australian community for over 10 years on these short term visas, the Temporary Protect Visa (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV). According to the Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law, temporary humanitarian visas “can cause a considerable amount of human suffering ... compounded by the restrictions placed on TPV holders for access to accommodation, language training, health care, family reunion and other essential services” (2022).

This policy shift, although long expected after Labor had made it an election promise (SBS News, 2022), was met with alarm by Australia’s dominant conservative media. The announcement was framed as a threat to national



border security and those living in Australia on humanitarian visas were cast as a costly burden to Australian society. Headlines and post titles frequently emphasised the quantity of people on temporary visas as a homogenised statistic, such as “Nearly 20,000 refugees to be eligible for permanent visas” (Sky News Australia, 2023b).

Screenshots of Facebook posts by 7News, Sky News Australia and 9 News Perth sharing their reports on February 13.

7NEWS Sydney 13 February · 🌐

Overview Comments

Thousands of refugees could soon be granted permanent residency in Australia, as Labor looks to make good on an election promise. Around 19,000 refugees will be able to apply for a permanent visa giving them health and social security rights as well... [See more](#)

All comments

Nice to see Australia is a humane country again. Like Reply 16 w 🙌👍👏 6

Can we screen them 1st. Handing out PR like lollies Only offer PR if they going to work and contribute to the country. No free handouts should be allowed Like Reply 16 w 👍 4

Write a comment...

Like Comment Share 🙌👍👏 46 · 40 comments · 1.7K views

Sky News Australia 13 February · 🌐

Nearly 20,000 asylum seekers could soon be granted permanent residency in Australia. Watch the full episode at www.skynews.com.au/flash

First Edition **REFUGEES TO BE GRANTED PERMANENT VISAS**

53

52 comments

9 News Perth 13 February · 🌐

The Albanese government will announce 19,000 people who arrived by sea will be able to apply to permanently reside in Australia. [#9News](#) | WATCH LIVE 6pm

9NEWS.COM.AU

Thousands of refugees eligible for permanent residency

The government said it has briefed Indonesian and Sri Lankan officials amid fears in a resurg...

53

52 comments 3 shares

In a specific guidance on this issue, the Australia Press Council highlights that “The legal status of people who have entered Australia by boat without a visa is complex and potentially confusing [...] great care must be taken to avoid describing people [...] in terms that are likely to be inaccurate or unfair in relation to at least some of them,” (Australian Press Council, n.d.-a). Many headlines and stories about Giles’ announcement did not mention that the people in question had been living in Australia for more than 10 years and had all previously been positively assessed by the Australian Government as refugees. Much of the coverage simply labelled them as “asylum seekers” alongside imagery of people on boats, potentially implying that their protection claims were yet to be assessed.

After the first round of stories, the use of deficit language to build a sense of threat and dysfunction escalated when politicians were recruited as sources. These included prominent conservative politicians Pauline Hanson of the One Nation party, opposition Liberal Party leader, Peter Dutton and his colleague, Shadow Immigration minister Dan Tehan. These reports, posted on social media, were responded to in another round of comments and sharing. Examples included:

- [“Boats will start again’: Coalition hits out at Labor’s visa overhaul”](#) with the post message, “The Liberals have challenged the Prime Minister to come clean to Australians over the consequences of the decision to grant 19,000 permanent visas to refugees” (Sky News);
- [“Opposition accuses Labor of signalling to people smugglers Australia is open for business by allowing refugees who arrived by boat to bring their families to Australia.”](#) with the large text over an image of a boat, “Boats crisis: Claims relaxed rules leave door open to asylum seekers” (Daily Telegraph); and
- [“The opposition has accused Labor of signalling to people smugglers Australia is open for business by allowing refugees who arrived by boat to bring their families to Australia”](#) with the text on the image reading, “Labor ‘leaves door open’ to asylum seekers” (from the Herald Sun).



Screenshots of Facebook posts of follow up stories by 2GB, the Herald Sun and Sky News.

Herald Sun @theheraldsun

The opposition has accused Labor of signalling to people smugglers Australia is open for business by allowing refugees who arrived by boat to bring their families to Australia > bit.ly/3Y1bs5i

Labor 'leaves door open' to asylum seekers



Herald Sun

8:30 AM · Feb 11, 2023 · 23.2K Views

7 Retweets 4 Quotes 35 Likes

Sky News Australia · Follow

22 February · 🌐

The fading political cohesion that comes with mass migration is a serious issue that Labor's vow to give nearly 20,000 refugees a pathway to permanent residency would exacerbate, writes SkyNews.com.au contributor and political commentator Dr. Sherry Sufi.



SKYNEWS.COM.AU

Labor refugee policies will deepen Australia's political divide

The Albanese Government recently announced it would offer nearly 20,000 refugees a pathw...

👍👎🗨️ 45 39 comments 4 shares

Like Comment Share

2GB Sydney

16 February · 🌐

"They're obviously anticipating boats on the waters."



2GB.COM

Dutton hits out at PM risking national security with TPV decision

There's a concern illegal boats could be making their way to Australia following changes to th...

👍👎🗨️ 29 5 comments 1 share

Sky News Australia

13 February · 🌐

The Albanese Government has been accused of "dismantling" Australia's visa system ahead of a decision to offer 19,000 refugees permanent residency. Follow Sky News Australia's continuous coverage of the major stories in Parliament.



SKYNEWS.COM.AU

Parliament Live: Labor slammed for temporary protection visa changes

Follow Sky News Australia for rolling updates on the biggest stories in Canberra.

👍👎🗨️ 98 184 comments 10 shares

Liberal Party and One Nation figures subsequently began sharing designed social media image posts that promoted the news media reports. These posts used clippings of text and images from news reports, which provided a sense of urgency and objectivity. On Facebook for example, Liberal Party leader, Peter Dutton (with over 100,000 followers) [posted](#) a text-based image citing The Australian's report with the title "Visa Deal, 'Brace' For Boats". Other politicians and social media accounts of different conservative party branches also shared and promoted these articles with titles emphasising the alleged threat to Australia's national security and stability, including the [Liberal Party](#) (with over 280,000 followers), Senator [Linda Reynolds](#) (with over 19,000 followers) and Senator [Michaelia Cash](#) (with 33,000 followers). One Nation leader [Pauline Hanson](#) (with 449,000 followers) cited The Australian's article in her text-based image, using a similar title and text. Reynolds additionally [ran paid Facebook advertising](#) to boost her post to more users.

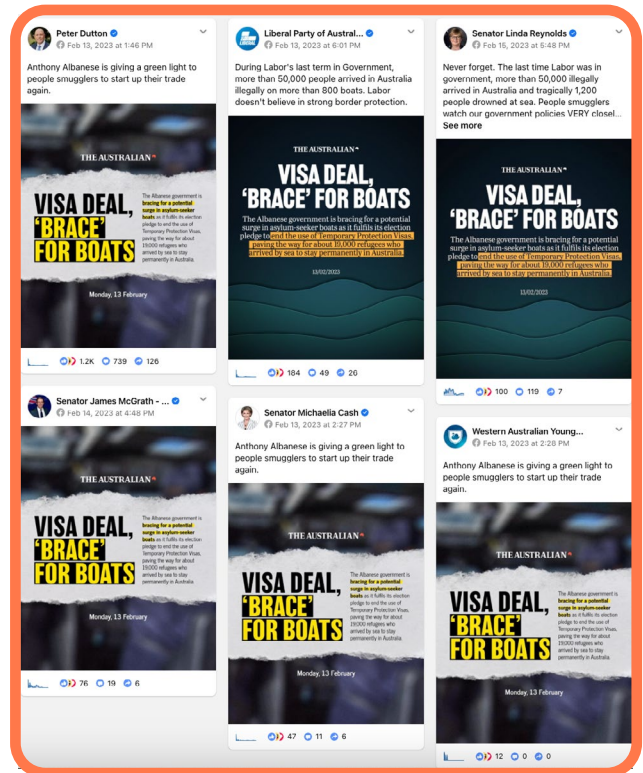
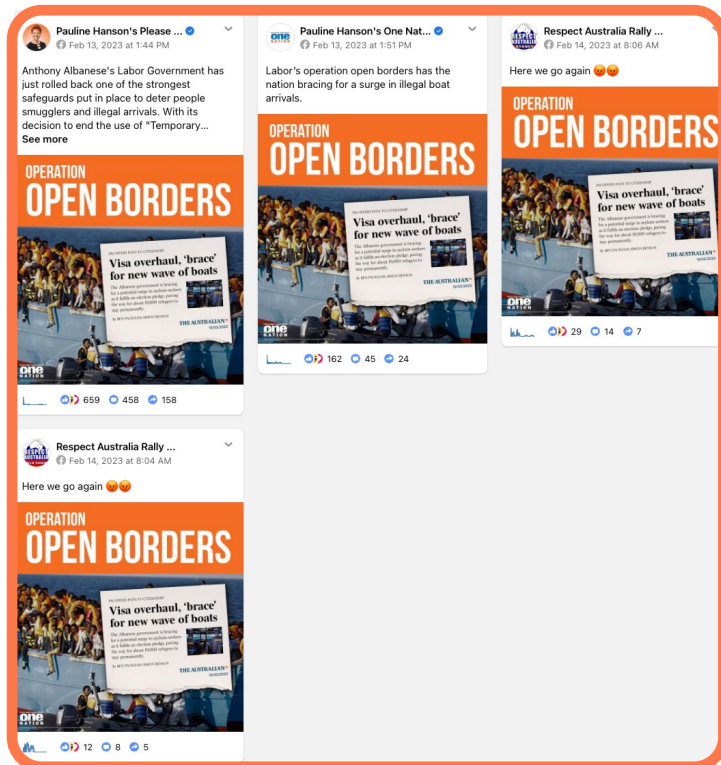
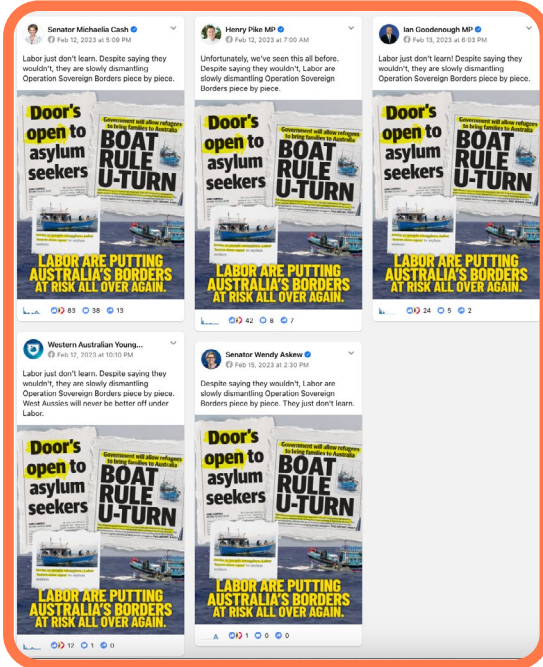
These posts attracted far more online engagement than the original news media reports, some attracting many hundreds of comments. Once again, many comments echoed the posts framing, and there were comments, including ones highlighted by Facebook's algorithm, that included dehumanising hate speech.

On Facebook in particular, the social media posts of the news reports became a platform for people commenting in ways that frequently echoed and escalated their deficit framing, especially the politicians' image posts referencing them. A common theme was that the people (already living in the Australian community) that could apply for permanent visas would be worsening access to housing for "us", the ingroup "Australians". Many included hate speech and misinformation about refugees, including highly dehumanising language such as blanket referring to them as criminals, "illegals", uneducated and "filthy".

Many comments resonated with, and some even directly referenced, the racist Great Replacement theory (Ebner & Davey, 2019). This narrative has previously been highlighted as a common pillar of Islamophobic hate speech and incidents in Australia (Iner, 2022). It was also a central theme in the Christchurch terrorist's manifesto, and the theory was assessed as having the hallmarks of narratives that are used to inspire violent action in a report by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (Ebner & Davey, 2019, pp. 10–14).



Screenshots of similar Facebook posts found using CrowdTangle. Conservative politicians jumped on story, sharing designed images quoting and collaging the news media reporting.



Redacted screenshots of comments on the articles and Facebook posts discussed above.

Top fan
What about housing crisis here in australia but yet you still flood them in ,
Like Reply 1w 73

Look after Australians first
Like Reply 2w 5

Can we screen them 1st. Handing out PR like lollies Only offer PR if they going to work and contribute to the country. No free handouts should be allowed
Like Reply 16w 4

Top fan
The great replacement in full swing.
Like Reply 1w

Keep telling people, the kalergi plan ,look it up
Like Reply 16w

The goal is race mixing, just like Europe, the goal is to destroy your Heritage. This is now a world wide problem
Like Reply 1w 6

Surely Labor is not putting "the sugar back on the table "?.Abit like NT lifting the alcohol ban..
Like Reply 16w 7

Good Job Govt, giving PR to those ppl didnt even spend thousands of dollars to get here whereas international students, having hard time getting PR. And most of the trouble makers here in australia are refugees!


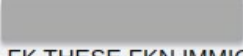
What are the politicians thinking!!! There are so many AUSTRALIA BORN people who are currently living in tents by the beach!!!!!!!
Like Reply 6d



That's 19 thousand PLUS family that are now eligible to reside here too Some of these immigrants have 10+ children. So all up over 150k or more that will take housing, seats in our over populated schools, hospitals, universities. Now watch as the country is also flooded with those from Syria and Turkey after the quakes, plus Ukraine's migration to all points away from Putin's armies. I am starting to believe that we, Australian born citizens are being replaced by immigrants. This is not multicultural immigration, this is forced over population and cancellation culture by this Labor government.
Like Reply 2w 17






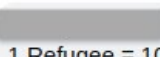
Redacted screenshots of comments on the articles and Facebook posts discussed above.

  🚩 Top fan
Look at the mess Europe incl UK n USA are in with illegal entries


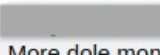
 
FK THESE FKN IMMIGRANTS
LOOK AT THE MESS YOU LOT IN THE CRIMINAL CORPORATION HAVE DONE
FKN SHAMEFUL YOU FILTHY GRUBS ARE NO BODIES WE DONT WANT THE
IMMIGRANTS THAT ARE HERE
FK INDIA

 
Here we go!!! Thanks Albo. WE the people do NOT cede our sovereignty to these invaders. As an indigenous (4th generation born Australian) I will seek reparation for this colonisation by foreigners! Legal migrants accepted, no to these conniving illegals.

Like Reply 16 w   6

 
1 Refugee = 10 family members

Like Reply 16 w

 
More dole money more benefits to pay out more uneducated migrants

 
There are thousands of Shri Lankans and others massing in Indonesia and have been since the defeat of Morrison. This is the Lefts policy now in Australia by the new socialist government matching the socialist's policy in the US (5 + million) and the UK (90,000+) to flood the west and water down the strong western cultures. It will also bring thousands of potential left voters in readiness to ensure victory at the next election, thus power to continue their evil deeds.

Like Reply 16 w  2

In a submission to Federal Parliament, the National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group has described what they believe are some of the material impacts of the escalation and proliferation of deficit discourse by Australian political leaders and news media, and its relation to hate speech in experienced in different settings:

“ The role of political leaders and their messages have an impact on all groups that sought protection in Australia including those arriving through Australia’s humanitarian programs and those who have sought protection through onshore mechanisms. The constant negative media discourse and demoralising messages from political leaders have greatly damaged the morale of the refugee diaspora from social connections to the wider Australian community. The ongoing debates about our community members who have sought asylum via boat as negative have made the entire community feel as scapegoats in the wider social and political spheres. This has created feelings of defenselessness, stereotypes, licensing xenophobia. ... As a result of political scapegoating specific refugee communities, many of our community members find sanctuary within their own circles in isolation leading to more disjointedness. ... The young people in our research described, for example, that they could rarely walk down the street or gather in parks in some suburbs of Adelaide without police coming to question them. These experiences of surveillance result in marginalisation and exclusion of these young people from the broader Australian community.”

Submission to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee Inquiry into Issues Facing Diaspora Communities in Australia, (National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group, 2020).

Appendices

Appendix A: AMAN Definition of Dehumanising Material

1. Dehumanising material is the material produced or published, which an ordinary person would conclude, portrays the class of persons identified on the basis of a protected characteristic (“class of persons”) as not deserving to be treated equally to other humans because they lack qualities intrinsic to humans. Dehumanising material includes portraying the class of persons:
 - a. to be, or have the appearance, qualities, or behaviour of
 - i. an animal, insect, filth, form of disease or bacteria;
 - ii. inanimate or mechanical objects; or
 - iii. a supernatural alien or demon.
 - b. are polluting, despoiling, or debilitating an ingroup or society as a whole;
 - c. have a diminished capacity for human warmth and feeling or to make up their own mind, reason or form their own individual thoughts;
 - d. homogeneously pose a powerful threat or menace to an in-group or society, posing overtly or deceptively;
 - e. are to be held responsible for and deserving of collective punishment for the specific crimes, or alleged crimes of some of their “members”;

Appendix

- f. are inherently criminal, dangerous, violent or evil by nature;
 - g. do not love or care for their children;
 - h. prey upon children, the aged, and the vulnerable;
 - i. was subject as a group to past tragedy or persecution that should now be trivialised, ridiculed, glorified or celebrated;
 - j. are inherently primitive, coarse, savage, intellectually inferior or incapable of achievement on a par with other humans;
 - k. must be categorised and denigrated according to skin colour or concepts of racial purity or blood quantum; or
 - l. must be excised or exiled from public space, neighbourhood or nation.
2. Without limiting how the material in section (1) is presented, forms of presentation may include,
- a. speech or words;
 - b. the curation or packaging of information;
 - c. images; and
 - d. insignia.

(Australian Muslim Advocacy Network, 2023)

Appendix B: Additional definitions of hate speech and related concepts

Further resources and definitions of hate speech, in addition to the definition of Hate Speech above under Key Definitions, include:

- [United Nations hate speech definition](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission racial hatred defined](#)
- [Twitter hateful content definition](#)
- [Meta hate speech definition](#)
- [TikTok hateful behaviour definition](#)
- [Council of Europe definition and policy recommendations](#)
- [Australia Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance \(MEAA\) Guidelines on Reporting Hate Speech and Extremism](#)

Appendix C: List of Australian News Media Outlets

For those unfamiliar with the Australian news media landscape, a non-exhaustive list of popular Australian Media outlets includes:

Television networks: Public televisions: ABC, SBS, NITV; Commercial televisions: Seven Network, Nine Network, Network 10, Sky News Australia, WIN Television.

Newspapers: The Australian Financial Review (national), The Australian (national), Herald Sun, The Canberra Times, Daily Telegraph, Sydney Morning Herald, Northern Territory News, The Courier-Mail, The Adelaide Advertiser, The Mercury, The Age, The West Australian, the Mercury.

News websites: News.com.au, ABC News, nine.com.au, 7news.com, Guardian Australia, Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, Herald Sun, Daily Telegraph, The Australian, Courier Mail, Brisbane Times, Adelaide Advertiser, Perth Now, WA Today, Canberra Times, Australian Financial Review, Daily Mail Australia, Junkee, The Saturday Paper, Sky News, The West, Sydney Today and Crikey.

News radio stations: ABC Radio National, Triple J (National), 2GB (Sydney), 3WA (Melbourne), 6PR (Perth) and 4BC (Brisbane).

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