

INFORMING SPATIAL REALITIES:
AUDIENCES AND TELEVISION NEWS IN AUSTRALIA

TANYA LOUISE MUSCAT

BA (Politics); MA, MIntRel

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Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet the requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. The thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is provided.

Ethics committee approval has been obtained for the research in this thesis.

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Tanya Louise Muscat

Date:

Table of Contents

List of tables and figures.....	vi
List of abbreviations	ix
Acknowledgements.....	xi
Abstract.....	xiii
Introduction.....	1
SPATIALISING NEWS	6
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS.....	8
Chapter 1: Mediating the Nation: Space, Power, and Identity	11
1.1 SPACE, PLACE, AND HEGEMONY: THE SPATIAL TURN IN GRAMSCIAN RESEARCH	12
1.2 DISCOURSE THEORY, HEGEMONY, IDENTITY, AND RADICAL PLURALIST DEMOCRACY	18
1.3 RELATIONAL SPACE.....	26
1.4 NEWS MEDIA: SIGNIFYING IDENTITY AND SOCIO-POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS.....	31
1.5 CONCLUSION	39
Chapter 2: The Australian Context: Space, Migration, and Television News.....	42
2.1 MIGRATION NATION: MAINTAINING SOVEREIGN BORDERS THROUGHOUT HISTORY	43
2.2 TELEVISION IN SYDNEY: ASSOCIATING MIGRATION WITH BROADCASTING	49
2.3 ANALYSING NEWS AND IDENTITY: PRODUCTION, CONTENT, AND RECEPTION	51
2.3.1 <i>Genre-based analyses of news media</i>	52
2.3.2 <i>Identity-based analyses of news media</i>	57
2.4 THE PARTICIPATION PARADIGM	64
2.5 CONCLUSION	69
Chapter 3: Research Methods	71
3.1 INVESTIGATING THE AUDIENCE	71
3.1.1 <i>Interview research</i>	72
3.1.2 <i>Recruitment and interviewing</i>	75
3.2 CONNECTING AUDIENCES AND TELEVISION NEWS	81
3.3 ANALYSING TELEVISION NEWS REPORTS	85
3.3.1 <i>Content Analysis</i>	86
3.3.2 <i>Multimodal Discourse Analysis</i>	88
3.4 CONCLUSION	91
Chapter 4: Producing Space: Structuring the coverage of asylum and migration	93
4.1 SOURCING INFORMATION	94
4.1.1 <i>Locating credible sources of information</i>	95
4.1.2 <i>Producing visual footage</i>	107
4.1.3 <i>Drawing on other media sources</i>	115
4.2 GENERATING SEMIOTIC REPRESENTATIONS	119
4.2.1 <i>Visualising special effects</i>	119
4.2.2 <i>Flagging the nation</i>	122
4.2.3 <i>Mapping space</i>	127
4.2.4 <i>Emblematic markers</i>	131

4.3 STRUCTURING AURAL SOURCES	133
4.3.1 <i>Featuring foreign languages</i>	134
4.3.2 <i>Deploying subtitles and captions</i>	137
4.3.3 <i>Aural effects</i>	139
4.4 FORMING THEMATIC CONNECTIONS	142
4.4.1 <i>Identifying dominant thematic issues</i>	142
4.4.2 <i>Concentrating upon primary and secondary themes</i>	148
4.4.3 <i>Demarcating the bounds of identity</i>	153
4.5 CONCLUSION	163
Chapter 5: Evoking a Nation: Multimodal Discursive Constructions of Space/Power/Identity	165
5.1 CONSTRUCTING CONFLICT	166
5.1.1 <i>Monitoring ‘illegal’ movements</i>	169
5.1.2 <i>Animating a sense of action</i>	174
5.1.3 <i>Simulating surveillance</i>	180
5.2 CONVEYING BOUNDARIES	185
5.2.1 <i>Charting territory</i>	185
5.2.2 <i>Flagging identity</i>	189
5.2.3 <i>Documenting sovereignty</i>	194
5.3 NURTURING AUTHORITY	199
5.3.1 <i>Picturing a crisis</i>	200
5.3.2 <i>Counting the costs</i>	205
5.3.3 <i>Gazing at difference</i>	209
5.4 CONCLUSION	215
Chapter 6: Spatialising Viewership: Reasserting the Role of Commercial Television News in Everyday Life	217
6.1 PLACE, SPACE, AND SCALE: THE RELATIONAL FORMATIONS OF VIEWERSHIP	218
6.1.1 <i>Place</i>	219
6.1.2 <i>Space</i>	224
6.1.3 <i>Scale</i>	228
6.2 MEDIATING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE	230
6.2.1 <i>Nurturing communities</i>	231
6.2.2 <i>Direct experiences of space and place</i>	235
6.2.3 <i>Producing political and commercial agendas</i>	240
6.3 PARTICIPATING IN EVERYDAY NEWS-TALK	244
6.3.1 <i>Engaging in face-to-face discussions</i>	245
6.3.2 <i>Utilising online platforms to participate in political discussions</i>	250
6.4 LOCATING MEDIATED INDIFFERENCE	254
6.4.1 <i>Situating television news viewership</i>	255
6.4.2 <i>De-politicising the social role everyday news</i>	258
6.4.3 <i>Leaving it to the experts</i>	261
6.5 CONCLUSION	263
Chapter 7: The Politics of Place: Imagining the Nation through Television News	265
7.1 PRIVILEGING THE POLITICAL	266
7.1.1 <i>The federal election and the Labor Party leadership spill</i>	267
7.1.2 <i>Environmental policy</i>	271
7.1.3 <i>Same-sex marriage legislation</i>	274
7.1.4 <i>Immigration policy and asylum</i>	277
7.2 ENGAGING WITH JOURNALISTIC CONVENTIONS	279
7.2.1 <i>Documenting proper process through discourses of illegality</i>	281
7.2.2 <i>Using social statistics</i>	286

7.2.3 <i>Employing economic frameworks</i>	289
7.2.4 <i>Official rhetoric and the sources of significance</i>	292
7.3 MULTICULTURALISM AND DIFFERENCE	296
7.3.1 <i>Situating dehumanisation</i>	298
7.3.2 <i>Replicating the domestication of terror</i>	299
7.3.3 <i>Racialising crime</i>	304
7.3.4 <i>Pluralised conceptions of the nation-state?</i>	307
7.4 CONCLUSION	314
Conclusion	316
SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND ARGUMENT	316
<i>Reinforcing the role of television news programmes</i>	318
<i>Appealing to patterned ways of ‘feeling’</i>	318
<i>Hegemonic Openings</i>	319
<i>Beyond the frameworks of contesting-acceding to televisual news discourses</i>	320
FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH	321
Bibliography	324
Appendix 1: Topic/Interview guide for interviews.....	343
Appendix 2: Quantitative analysis coding framework	344
Appendix 3: List of topics discussed in interviews	349
Appendix 4: Inter-coder reliability statistics	357
Appendix 5: Summary of 160 <i>9 News</i> and 7 <i>News</i> reports	361
Appendix 6: Final Approval Ethics Application	370

List of tables and figures

Table 1: Individual interviews	79
Table 2: Group interviews	80
Table 3: Sources of information	99
Table 4: Sources of visual footage.....	108
Table 5: Cross-media references	116
Table 6: CGI/special effects	120
Table 7: Visually representing flags in <i>9 News</i>	123
Table 8: Visually representing flags in <i>7 News</i>	124
Table 9: Types of flags in news reports.....	125
Table 10: Labelling maps	127
Table 11: Visually representing maps	128
Table 12: Placenames across news reports	129
Table 13: Emblems and official logos	133
Table 14: Languages other than English	135
Table 15: Dubbing languages other than English.....	135
Table 16: Subtitles and captions	138
Table 17: Aural effects	140
Table 18: Thematic issues included in the coverage of asylum and migration	144
Table 19: Frequency of multiple thematic issues per report by month	148
Table 20: Primary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration	149
Table 21: Secondary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration	152
Table 22: Identity referents.....	157
Table 23: Identity referents in relation to the primary focus of news reports	162

Figure 1: ‘Some of the “propaganda” material published by the Million Farms Campaign Committee’, 1901-1939 (National Archives of Australia 2015)	48
Figure 2: ‘Ringed with menace!’ 1942 (Australian War Memorial 2015).....	48
Figure 3: You Won’t Be Settled In Australia (<i>9 News</i> 20-07-2013)	48
Figure 4: Sources of Information.....	100
Figure 5: National political sources of information.....	101
Figure 6: Regional political sources of information	102
Figure 7: Sources of visual footage	109
Figure 8: <i>7 News</i> 09-06-2013	113
Figure 9: Department of Defence Archives 22-12-2009 (Department of Defence 2015).....	113
Figure 10: Total cross-media references.....	115
Figure 11: Cross-media references by medium	116
Figure 12: News reports employing more than one CGI/special effect	120
Figure 13: Frequency of CGI/special effects by type of effect	122
Figure 14: Total frequency of CGI/special effects in news reports	122
Figure 15: <i>7 News</i> 29-07-2013 [10].....	124
Figure 16: Types of flags in <i>7 News</i>	126
Figure 17: Types of flags in <i>9 News</i>	126
Figure 18: Map placenames in <i>9 News</i>	129
Figure 19: Map placenames in <i>7 News</i>	130
Figure 20: Emblems and official logos.....	133
Figure 21: Languages other than English in news reports.....	135
Figure 22: Dubbing of languages other than English	135
Figure 23: Subtitles and captions.....	138
Figure 24: Aural effects	141

Figure 25: Thematic issues included in the coverage of asylum and migration.....	145
Figure 26: Primary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration.....	150
Figure 27: Time spent covering each primary thematic issue <i>7 News</i>	150
Figure 28: Time spent covering each primary thematic issue <i>9 News</i>	150
Figure 29: Secondary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration.....	153
Figure 30: Referencing identity	156
Figure 31: Categories of Identity Referents.....	156
Figure 32: Identity referents in the coverage of asylum and migration.....	158
Figure 33: Identity referents in relation to the primary focus of news reports	161
Figure 34: <i>9 News</i> 25-07-2013 [3]	169
Figure 35: <i>9 News</i> 25-07-2013 [2]	169
Figure 36: <i>9 News</i> 03-09-2013.....	169
Figure 37: <i>A Current Affair</i> 11-10-2013	169
Figure 38: 'The dimensions of visual space' (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006 [1996], 197) ..	180
Figure 39: Proxemic distance	184
Figure 40: <i>7 News</i> 15-06-2013 [7]	203
Figure 41: <i>7 News</i> 15-06-2013 [7]	203

List of abbreviations

7 News: Channel 7 Evening News (Sydney)

9 News: Channel 9 Evening News (Sydney)

ABA: Australian Broadcasting Authority

ABC: Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACMA: Australian Communications and Media Authority

ACT: Australian Capital Territory

AFP: Australian Federal Police

AWU: Australian Workers Union

CGI: Computer-generated imagery

DIBP: Department of Immigration and Border Protection

HSS: Hegemony and Socialist Strategy

MP: Member of Parliament

NSW: New South Wales

OMA: Office for Multicultural Affairs (1987-1995)

SBS: Special Broadcasting Service

SPN: Selections from the Prison Notebooks

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Publications that arose from the study:

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which commercial television news programmes contribute to everyday social knowledge on space, politics, and identity. In the Australian context, popular and political discourses continue to concentrate on issues of migration and identity. These discourses culminate in the mediated concerns over national borders. By employing an approach that focuses on participation, this study investigates how audiences view and draw meaning from the two most popular commercial television news programmes in Sydney. It argues that audiences mobilise relational space/power/identity formations to explain how local commercial television news viewership fits in with broader mediated networks of information. Through an examination of the audiences' discussions of commercial television news programmes, this study elucidates that respondents' use news in both a spatial and political manner. An analysis of the coverage of issues relating to asylum and migration in *9 News* and *7 News* is contextualised in the audiences' discursive focus on asylum and migration reports. A qualitative and quantitative analysis of commercial television news content establishes that news reports construct relational space/power/identity formations across the local, national, and global scales. While the emphasis remains on the nation-state scale, commercial television news programmes provide pivotal hegemonic openings for alternative frameworks of understanding migration across the local and global contexts. By combining audience analysis with both quantitative content analysis and qualitative multimodal analysis, this thesis demonstrates the ways in which commercial television news programmes mediate knowledge of space/power/identity formations among Australians.

Introduction

On the 5th April 2010, the then Opposition Leader of the Coalition,¹ Tony Abbott appeared on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation [ABC] current affairs programme *Q&A*. Abbott responded to a range of questions throughout the episode from the programme host Tony Jones, the in-studio audience, and at home viewers who sent in questions. One individual in the audience questioned the negative discourses regarding asylum arrivals, suggesting the political rhetoric could be more positive toward asylum seekers. A second audience member asked Abbott to reconcile his Christian faith with his refugee policy, given that the asylum arrivals often attempted to escape ethnic or religious persecution. A third at-home viewer sent in a question via the internet asking ‘when it comes to asylum seekers, what would Jesus do?’ A fourth audience member subsequently connected the issue of asylum to multiculturalism. This individual posited that the Australian multicultural nation facilitated a place where asylum seekers could seek refuge and contribute something new to the rest of Australian society. In summary, Tony Abbott’s response was:

[W]e have a great tradition in this country of welcoming people but we also have a tradition of wanting to say who the people are that come ... and the trouble with unauthorised arrivals is that they are self-selected ... we have a duty to Australians ... yes, we have a duty to people from other countries, but our prime duty is to the Australian people who elect us, and I think the Australian people expect us to control the borders. I think they expect us to maintain control over the people who do come to this country ... Jesus knew there was a place for everything and it is not necessarily everyone’s place to come to Australia ... I am in favour of the notion of Australia as an immigrant society. I mean just about everyone in this audience tonight, including Tony and I, are either immigrants or the descendants of immigrants, so of course we are an immigrant society and that’s great and long may that continue, and I think that immigration adds a richness, an idealism to our society which I value, but that doesn’t mean that everyone has a right to claim permanent residency in Australia and if the principle

¹ The Coalition refers to political allegiance between the Liberal Party of Australia, the National Party of Australia, the Liberal National Party in Queensland, and the Country Liberal Party in the Northern Territory. This thesis uses the term ‘Coalition’, except where specific reference is made to the Liberal Party.

is ever asserted that if you get here you can stay here if you've got here from a horrible country, I think we are putting our sovereignty – certainly sovereignty as we've traditionally understood it in this country – at some risk (Q&A 2010).

In answering the audience questions, Abbott's extended excerpt elucidates the ongoing anxieties in Australian society between space, power, and identity. In the Australian context, these concerns manifest predominantly in debates on migration, multiculturalism, and asylum. While 'asylum' and 'migration' refer to different processes of movement,² the terms have become conflated in political and popular discourses, as evidenced in the excerpt. In this thesis, the two terms of 'asylum' and 'migration' are employed as interconnected, to reflect the ways in which the two issues are conflated as one. Using the two terms as interconnected does not essentialise the terms; rather it attempts to capture the complexity of separately investigating issues related to 'asylum' and 'migration' in the Australian context. As part of the national public service broadcasting, ABC news programmes play an important role in mediating these politicised discourses in an impartial and non-partisan manner. However, ABC news programmes are but one facet of the broader Australian news media environment.

The contemporary media landscape in Australia consists of both traditional and digital platforms that provide a range of news services. Digital platforms expand the ways audiences can consume news information via the online websites or applications of traditional media (newspapers, television, and radio) or through social networks (Facebook, Reddit, and

² At the outset, it is evident how 'migration' and 'asylum' become interconnected in Australia regarding the discussion of borders, identity, and governmental control. However, these two terms are distinctive. An asylum seeker is an individual forced to leave their country, and has sought protection and refugee status but has not yet received an outcome. The claim has to be made in the territory of the nation-state where the individual seeks protection. The process is complicated in the Asia-Pacific region where there are a number of nation-states that are not signatories to the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (UNHCR 2015b), nor its protocol. The process of seeking asylum is further complicated by the Australian government decision to excise all offshore territories from the migration zone under the *Migration Amendment (Excision from Migration Zone) (Consequential Provisions) Act 2001*. Refugees are individuals found to be in need of protection and permitted to remain within a country. Yet, there are a number of migrants who choose to move about without a well-founded fear of persecution. The UNHCR (2015a) identifies that while migrants and refugees are different groups they travel together, and uses the term 'mixed migration'. 'Asylum' and 'migration' refers to the relationship between asylum seekers, the movements of asylum seekers, asylum seeker policy, and the resettlement of refugees in Australia. The terms include the overlapping dimensions of the movement of asylum seekers, the ways these forced migratory movements are represented, and the politicised attempts to deal with the issue of asylum on a local and national scale.

Twitter). Within Australia, the availability of digital news has shifted the ways in which audiences stay informed. The *Digital News Report: Australia 2016* indicated that 60.8% of respondents used online news in the week before the survey, through news websites or news applications (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 25).³ 55.9% of respondents used social media for news, including Facebook, Twitter, and blogs (ibid.). The figures for radio (41.0%) and print newspapers/ magazines (39.1%) pointed to the traditional media environment in decline. Television was the most used medium for news by 67.1% of the respondents.⁴ The primary source of news for 37.6% of respondents was television, followed by online media at 27.4%, social media at 18.5%, radio at 8.4%, and newspapers at 8.2% (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 26). Although the figures on digital news use suggest a changing Australian media environment, the traditional platform of television news remains popular among the Australian audience.

The audiences' preference for television news needs to be further contextualised in relation to the specificities of the broadcasting system. Free-to-air broadcast television in Australia includes two public broadcasters (ABC and SBS) and three commercial television networks (7, 9, and 10). While both of the public broadcasters provide national news services, the commercial networks produce state-based localised news programmes aimed at the major metropolitan audiences.⁵ Audience ratings across the free-to-air channels consistently demonstrate that the 7 and 9 networks have the most viewed news programmes (OzTAM

³ The *Digital News Report: Australia 2016* produced by the News and Media Research Centre at Canberra University in Australia is part of a larger global project in collaboration with the University of Oxford Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Both reports, Reuters Institute *Digital News Report 2016* (Newman *et al.* 2016) and *Digital News Report: Australia 2016* (Watkins *et al.* 2016), are part of the same research project. The *Digital News Report 2016* is a global survey of digital news use across 26 countries undertaken by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. However, the report by Newman *et al.* (2016) provides a snapshot of Australian news use in relation to other countries. The *Digital News Report: Australia 2016* makes detailed data available on Australian news use (Watkins *et al.* 2016). It also must be noted here that based on the methodological approach, the report is skewed towards the members or the population who access digital media. The report acknowledges the under-representation in the survey of 'those who are not online news users, typically older and/or less affluent people' based on the methodological design of the study (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 3).

⁴ Either by watching television news programmes or a 24-hour television news channel.

⁵ The 7 Network produces state-based localised news programmes for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Regional Queensland, and Gold Coast. The 9 Network produces state-based localised news programmes for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide Perth, Gold Coast, and Darwin. The 10 Network produces news programmes for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth. Outside the metropolitan cities, regionalised television news programmes are provided through GWN7 News, NBN News, Prime 7 News, Southern Cross News, and WIN News.

2016).⁶ The popularity of commercial television news programmes is reinforced by the findings from the *Digital News Report: Australia 2016*. Channel 7 (40.9%), Channel 9 (38.6%), and ABC (38.4%) were the most used news brands in the week prior to the survey across both traditional and digital platforms (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 27). In a media landscape where audiences can access a wide variety of sources, the ongoing popularity of television news raises a number of questions. Why are local commercial television news programmes viewed by audiences? How do audiences use commercial television news programmes for information in relation to the broader media environment? In what ways do audiences draw upon commercial television news programmes for everyday knowledge about space, power, and identity? Similarly, another question arises regarding the use of online and social media by news audiences. Watkins *et al.* address whether the high use of online and social media relates to a level of online audience participation (2016, 11).⁷ Online and social media platforms can facilitate greater levels of participation in the news cycle by enabling sharing, facilitating discussions, and supporting the production of news content by the average individual. However, the report found that the most common participatory behaviour undertaken by 38.9% of the respondents was discussing news reports via face-to-face conversations with friends or colleagues (*ibid.*). In the context of the popularity of online and social news media, the preference for participating in offline discussions raises further questions. How do audiences participate in discussing news as part of their everyday lives?

⁶ When the ratings are considered for the week beginning 5th April 2010 in which the *Q&A* episode aired, the commercial news programs were found to be far more popular than the public service news and current affairs programmes. The OzTAM Consolidated Metropolitan Top 20 Programs 5 City Ranking Report lists *7 News*, *7 News* (Sunday), *7 News* (Saturday), and the 7 Network's former weekday current affairs program *Today Tonight*. There is no inclusion of news and current affairs programmes from the ABC Network, SBS Network, Ten Network, nor Nine Network for this week. While these ratings only include *7 News* programmes, the ratings more typically feature both the news programmes from the Seven and Nine Networks in the week's most popular 20 programs (OzTAM 2010). See also n.47 for the academic criticisms regarding the use of OzTAM ratings.

⁷ In the report, participation was investigated in relation to a range of online and offline behaviours. The categories used to analyse participation included: 'sharing a news story on a social network', 'sharing a news story by email', 'rate/like/favourite a news story', 'commenting on a news story on a social network', 'commenting on a news story on a news website', 'writing a blog on news / a political issue', 'posting or sending a news-related picture/video to a social network website', 'posting or sending a picture/ video to a news website/news organisation', 'voting in an online poll on a news site or social network', 'taking part in a campaign or group based around a news subject', 'talking online with friends/colleagues about a news story (email, social media, instant messenger)', 'talking with friends/colleagues face-to-face about a news story', or 'none of the above' (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 11).

Do audiences have preferences between discussing news issues in face-to-face contexts, or online? Why do these preferences exist? Do audiences access a range of perspectives when participating in online/offline discussions? How do audiences mobilise or contest dominant news discourses in their online /offline discussions? This thesis will address all the above questions when investigating how audiences make everyday use of commercial television news programmes for social knowledge about space, power, and identity.

In the field of media studies, the Gramscian theory of hegemony is one of the approaches used to research the relationship between news, space, power, and identity. Although the concept of hegemony has often been employed in Media Studies, Stuart Allan (2010, 119) notes that there needs to be greater theorisation:

[O]n how news conditions what counts as ‘truth’ in a given instance, and who has the right to define that truth. At the same time though, equal attention needs to be given to discerning the openings for different audience groups or ‘interpretive communities’ to potentially recast the terms by which ‘truth’ is defined in relation to their lived experiences of injustice and inequalities.

When conceptualising hegemony in relation to television news it is not only important to examine news texts, but also to investigate how audiences draw upon or contest news discourses in the context of their everyday lives. Applying Allan’s notion of hegemonic ‘openings’ (ibid.), this thesis investigates the moments where news programmes facilitate alternative perspectives in content.⁸ At the same time, attention is paid to the audiences and the ways in which they draw upon a range of news media and everyday experiences to contest discourses in television news programmes. Such an approach will illuminate how audiences navigate the contemporary media landscape to inform their day-to-day knowledge on space, power, and identity.

⁸ The phrasing that Allan employs here, ‘openings’, is particularly important as it allows for an account of the ways in which news producers facilitate moments where alternative perspectives outside the dominant discourses can be included. The use of the terms hegemonic and counter-hegemonic suggests that there are separate dominant and alternative discourses. The term ‘hegemonic openings’ is significant as it permits an account of the smaller shifts of contestation that occur within dominant hegemonic discourses.

Spatialising News

Any theoretical or empirical investigation of commercial television news and audiences needs to engage with the notion of space. At the outset, it is necessary to delineate how space is employed in this thesis when examining the relationship between audiences and television news. This thesis draws upon the work of geographer Doreen Massey to understand the intersections between space, power, identity, and scale. Massey asserts:

‘The spatial’ then...can be seen as constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales, from the global reach of finance and telecommunications, through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations in the town, the settlement, the household, and the workplace. It is a way of thinking of the ever-shifting geometry of social/power relations, and it forces into view the real multiplicities of space-time (1994, 4).

Analysing how audiences use local television news programmes must also be contextualised in relation to the various interrelated local, national, and global spatial scales.⁹ Simultaneously, an investigation of the discourses in news programmes must account for these local, national, and global scales. This thesis appropriates Massey’s conceptualisation of the intersecting ‘space/power/identity’ formation (1995, 285), where the three dimensions of space, power, and identity are inextricably linked.¹⁰ Space cannot be understood in isolation of the power relations involved in the constitution of that space, nor the identity claims that are made about that space.

The empirical analysis of television news and space/power/identity discourses occurs in two parts. The first part of the empirical analysis deals with the manner in which commercial television news programmes construct space/power/identity discourses. The second part of the empirical analysis investigates how audiences draw meaning from

⁹ For terminological clarification, in this thesis local is used to broadly and analytically refer to the concept of the town or city (Sydney), regional to specific blocs (Asia-Pacific, European region), and global to the wider international environment. See n. 13 and n.26 for how these terms are employed throughout the thesis.

¹⁰ See Chapter 1, section 1.3 for the theoretical scaffolding regarding the approach to space, power, identity, and time.

commercial television news programmes among broader media and social processes. While the first and second parts appear as different stages in the processes of mediating knowledge on space/power/identity, they are interrelated. Both audiences and news content are constantly engaged in the political process of discursive ‘disarticulation-rearticulation’ (Mouffe 1979, 197). Commercial television programmes convey space/power/identity discourses in content when appealing to local audiences, and audiences simultaneously disarticulate-rearticulate space/power/identity discourses when choosing to use those particular news programmes over other news media sources.

The thesis anchors the empirical analysis of television news to the audiences’ discussions of ‘asylum’ and ‘migration’. This connects the first and second parts of the empirical analysis together. The first part of the analysis engages with the content in commercial television news reports and the structure of space/power/identity discourses (Chapters 4 and 5). This part of the thesis investigates which sources define the discourses and what video footage is used to visualise the issue of asylum and migration. The analysis questions whether computer generated imagery [hereafter CGI] and special effects extend upon or modify these discourses in news content. Additionally, the first part of the analysis examines the range of themes in news reports to elaborate on the ways in which the issue of asylum and migration connects to broader discourses. To answer these questions, the methodological approach accommodates a broad and deep account of television news content through a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative multimodal discourse analysis. By using multiple methods of analysis, the first part addresses how television news reports constitute space/power/identity discourses across a range of textual variables.

The second part of the analysis concentrates on how audiences employ these discourses when discussing commercial television news (Chapters 6 and 7). Through in-depth interviews, the second part engages with the ways in which audiences view television news in relation to their wider media use. The analysis questions how audiences participate in

discussions related to the content they view on commercial television news programmes, through online or offline face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, the second part of the analysis investigates the ways in which audiences mobilise their everyday lived experiences when discussing commercial television news reports. This part of the analysis spatialises the audiences' television news use in relation to their social experiences and their wider media engagement. The audience analysis links back to the textual analysis by elucidating the contemporary relevance of local commercial television news programmes in relation to the everyday lives of the audiences.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 reviews the theoretical approaches to the concept of hegemony from the disciplinary perspectives of Political Science, Cultural Studies, and Media Studies. By examining how 'space' has been conceptualised in connection to power relations, this chapter problematises the theorisation of hegemony. The chapter draws upon Doreen Massey's work in cultural geography to theorise hegemony in relation to space. The chapter advocates a more nuanced approach to theorising hegemony, where hegemonic power relations are investigated as being inextricably intertwined with the concepts of identity and space. This theoretical approach enables the thesis to grapple with the co-constitutive formation of space/power/identity discourses across the local, national, and global spatial scales.

Chapter 2 anchors the theoretical chapter to the Australian context. The chapter undertakes a historical overview of both migration and media policy. By providing an account of the developments in migration and media policy, the chapter demonstrates how changing patterns in migration have impacted upon the legislation of broadcasting in Australia. The relationship between media and migration also influences the trajectory of academic research, and a number of key Australian studies have investigated identity and media content. The chapter reviews key academic literature in the field of Media Studies to elaborate how

identity, media, and migration have thus far been researched. Chapter 2 proposes that situating an analysis of identity, media, and migration in the ‘participation paradigm’ can provide a more thorough account of how audiences actually make use of television news programmes for space/power/identity knowledge (Livingstone 2013, 24).

Chapter 3 presents the methodological approaches that equip the study to analyse the relationship between television news and audiences. The chapter argues that a range of research methods must be employed to adequately address the different dimensions of the study. By reviewing a range of research methods, this chapter discusses the advantages and disadvantages of audience interview-based research, qualitative multimodal discourse analysis, and quantitative content analysis. Chapter 3 details how the data collection occurred, in relation to both the 40 audience interviews and the sampling of 160 commercial television news reports across *7 News* and *9 News*. The chapter also outlines the ways in which the three methodological approaches have connected to each other throughout the study. The audience interviews influenced the direction of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of television news reports. The findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses of news reports link back to the audiences, by contributing to an understanding of the ways in which certain space/power/identity discourses are mobilised over others.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the empirical analysis of commercial television news reports. Chapter 4 is a quantitative analysis of a six-month sample of 160 news reports across *7 News* and *9 News*. Chapter 5 builds upon the quantitative analysis and provides a close qualitative multimodal discourse analysis of the news reports. Drawing upon the audiences’ discussions in Chapters 6 and 7, the quantitative and qualitative analyses of news reports concentrate on the coverage of asylum and migration. Chapters 4 and 5 argue that *7 News* and *9 News* do not represent news on asylum and migration in a monolithic manner. Rather, the news programmes mobilise a range of space/power/identity discourses in content across the local, national, and global scales. Although the national scale remains the focus of the commercial

coverage on asylum and migration, there are deviations that create hegemonic openings for alternative sources and perspectives. Chapter 5 extends the arguments made in Chapter 4 by evaluating how aural, visual, and verbal textual elements come together in an attempt to generate emotive discourses.

Chapters 6 and 7 encompass the empirical analysis conducted with commercial television news audiences. Both chapters evaluate the ways in which viewers engage with content on commercial television news programmes in relation to their wider media use and social interactions. Chapter 6 investigates how audiences engage in 'spatialising' their viewership of news programmes. By demonstrating that audiences connect commercial television news programmes to the local Sydney space/power/identity formation, this chapter elucidates the enduring importance of local television news in the audiences' everyday lives. Chapter 7 expands upon the arguments presented in Chapter 6 when examining the ways in which respondents discuss news reports of interest to them. This chapter outlines how respondents mobilise the national space/power/identity formation when they recall television news reports. However, the respondents also create hegemonic openings, using their everyday social experiences to negotiate the discourses in news. Together, Chapters 6 and 7 develop the argument that the audiences participate in disarticulating-rearticulating the social significance of local commercial television news programmes in their everyday lives.

The concluding chapter draws together the findings and addresses the contributions of this thesis to the field of Media Studies. The 'conclusion' underscores the significance of investigating audiences and television news in relation to space, as television news programmes are able to assert their local significance to the everyday viewing audiences. The chapter details the limitations of the research project and points to future directions for further research.

Chapter 1: Mediating the Nation: Space, Power, and Identity

In the disciplines of Media and Cultural Studies, the Gramscian concept of hegemony has often been employed to theorise the relationship between media, power, and identity. The hegemonic approach to media has traditionally focused on the role of news in reproducing ‘common sense’ knowledge about society in ways that align with the dominant group’s definition of reality (Allan 1998, 109). Allan (2010, 119) calls upon scholars to investigate ‘lived experiences’ in order to ascertain the hegemonic openings where dominant discourses are challenged. This chapter reviews key theoretical scholarship on hegemony through an interdisciplinary approach across Political Science, Cultural Studies, and Media Studies. The chapter builds upon the theorisation of hegemony by arguing that any analysis of television news and the audiences lived experiences needs to account for the spatial dimension of power relations.

Understanding space as a relationship between geographic place, society, and culture is important in the multicultural Australian context. Gramsci theorises the ‘nation-state’ as a continually evolving political space in the context of external and internal power relationships (1971, 1985). In Australia, the process of migration results in movement between these internal and external forces, where the politics of the nation-state is situated among a local space that is increasingly globalised. While Gramsci’s theorisation of hegemony concentrates on class politics, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe transcend the economic focus to account for the discursive nature of power relations (2001 [1985]). Laclau and Mouffe delineate the production of hegemony through discourse, as a function of social relationships. By appropriating Derrida’s notion of ‘*différance*’ and the constitutive outside, Laclau and Mouffe underscore how politics and identity must be formed in relation to an ‘other’ in a co-constitutive formation (ibid.). Laclau and Mouffe’s discursive approach deepens the theoretical account of hegemony: yet they also overlook the spatial dimension to political relationships. Doreen Massey’s work is useful in theoretically conceptualising the ways in

which power relations are simultaneously constructed across local, national, and global spaces (1991, 1995, 2005). Massey advocates that any relational conceptualisation of identity and politics must also accommodate a co-constitutive notion of space. The final part of the chapter addresses the role of news institutions in mediating co-constitutive knowledge on space, power, and identity. By reviewing Stuart Hall's theoretical contributions to the field of Cultural Studies, this chapter emphasises the need for an ongoing analysis into the ways that television news conveys everyday social knowledge on space, power, and identity. In the context of the contemporary media environment, this chapter revisits Hall's theoretical work (1977, 1979, 1982, 1989, 2001). Audiences have the potential to interact with a range of media sources and discourses outside the bounds of the national space in the current media landscape through the online platform.¹¹ Theorising the spatial dimensions to hegemony remains crucial when investigating the importance of local television news in a globalised media landscape.

1.1 Space, place, and hegemony: the spatial turn in Gramscian research

Many writers in the fields of Media Studies and Cultural Studies focus on the formation of hegemony through media institutions, whereby media maintain power relations within the nation-state structure. Seminal empirical studies elaborate that audiences can negotiate televisual media content and develop counter-hegemonic understandings (Hall 1980, Morley 1980). Since these empirical studies, the media landscape has changed and it is necessary to revisit the theorisation of hegemony. The ability to engage with online and social media through mobile technologies increasingly embeds media processes in the audiences' everyday lives. The media environment is characterised by a 'double articulation' (Livingstone 2007, Silverstone 1994). New and old media technologies are 'material objects located in particular spatio-temporal settings' and are also the carriers of 'symbolic messages located within the

¹¹ See the 'Introduction' for an account of traditional and online news media use among the Australian audiences.

flows of particular socio-cultural discourses' (Silverstone 1994, 13). Audiences also have the ability to 'produce meanings by negotiating the mutual interface of text and reader ... [and] produce social relations by negotiating the material/social determinations that structure their everyday contexts of action' (Livingstone and Das 2013, 105). This double articulation of audiences and media technologies draws attention to the need to situate a theorisation of hegemony in relation to space. Space shapes how audiences interact with media, and space influences the discourses within media. Theorising hegemony in relation to space enables an investigation of the audiences' location in specific contexts that influence their everyday use of certain media technologies over others. In order to lay the foundations for a spatial account of hegemony, the concept must first be explored in Antonio Gramsci's writings (1971, 1985). This section employs recent scholarship to argue that Gramsci's theorisation of hegemony, even if primarily focused on class-relations, contains a distinct awareness of space.

Gramsci's fragmented writings develop the concept of hegemony in relation to space when accounting for the ideological and cultural leadership of the North over the South in the context of Italy (1971, 1985). Gramsci addresses the importance of institutions in maintaining power relationships through cultural hegemony by departing from previous Marxist thought that privileged economic structures. In *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* [hereafter *SPN*], Gramsci encapsulates cultural hegemony as:

The 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function within the world of production (Gramsci 1971, 12).

Hegemony enables the dominant class in a given society to orchestrate consent to its overarching 'common sense' political worldview through the cultural institutions of

education, mass media, and religion. Historical conditions and spatial contexts shape hegemonic relations; however, power relations are by no means static:

Common sense is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life (Gramsci 1971, 326).

Maintaining ‘common sense’ knowledge is thus open to a process of deconstruction and reconstruction. Theorising the ways in which the nation-state acquires meaning through relational processes is particularly significant in the context of nation-states whose population is influenced by migration, such as Australia.¹² Hegemonic power formations must be historicised, as power relations adapt to the ongoing interactions between local, national, and global spaces.

Although nation-states control migration through a variety of measures, historical circumstances nonetheless affect power and identity relations within migration nation-states when blurring the global and local. Gramsci’s assertions ‘that history is always “world history” and that particular histories exist only within the frame of world history’ draws attention to an embedded sense of power relations (1985, 181). National power relations are an ongoing product of global historical forces and power formations. Gramsci (1971) stresses that the unit of the nation-state is situated among internal and external power relationships. These power formations influence the formation of hegemony in nation-states, making the nation-state power structure contingent on local and global forces.¹³ In *SPN*, Gramsci stresses that:

¹² See section 2.1 for an account of the ways in which the legislation of migration has shaped the Australian nation.

¹³ Here, the phrase local and global are used, and are subsequently used throughout the thesis. Drawing upon the work of Doreen Massey, elaborated in Chapter 1 section 1.3, these terms are intertwined processes. They are not used in a simplistic or an essentialised manner to refer to the physical and bounded spaces. Rather they are situated in a discursive framework which sees spaces and places as articulated in relation to each other and never completely distinctive nor bounded. Local, national, and global are thus used to refer to articulated moments, as they are the best terms to represent the different scalar power relationships.

[I]nternational relations intertwine with these internal relations of nation-states, creating new, unique and historically concrete combination ... This relation between international forces and national forces is further complicated by the existence within every State of several structurally diverse territorial sectors, with diverse relations of force at all levels (Gramsci 1971, 182).

Acknowledging the simultaneous impact of internal and external factors upon the nation-state power formation is significant, as national hegemonic power relations are connected to other spaces. In nation-states based upon migration this relationship is further complicated as the external/international becomes internalised in the local spaces. When underscoring the importance of geography to Gramsci's conceptualisation of hegemony, the varying manifestations of space and place need to be further explored.

The actual geographies mentioned in Gramsci's works include the international environment and the North-South relationship. However, his background in linguistics results in the use of a number of spatial metaphors, which elaborate on the conditions of hegemony. Across Gramsci's writings, metaphorical language bridges the relationship between power and space (Said 2001).¹⁴ Although Gramsci is not a geographic theorist, his political writings indicate an underlying spatial awareness. Said asserts that Gramsci employs spatial metaphors to conceptualise 'society and culture as productive activities occurring territorially' (2001, 467). Territoriality is not a bounded space, but rather a consequence of the intertwined relationship geography and society.¹⁵ Said states that:

¹⁴ In particular, Gramsci reveals spatial awareness in his elaboration of metaphoric language including 'hegemony, social territory, ensembles of relationship, intellectuals, civil and political society, emergent and traditional classes, territories, regions, domains, historical blocs' (Said 2001, 467). Similarly, Jessop (2005, 423) outlines more of the spatial metaphors in Gramsci to include the: 'East /West morphology of the state; North/South popular cosmology; war of position; war of manoeuvre; base and superstructure; historical bloc; hegemonic bloc; molecular transformation; passive revolution; united front; vanguard; trenches, fortifications, bulwarks, outer perimeter'.

¹⁵ See Chapter 1, section 1.3 for the relational construction of geographic territory, as intertwined with the dimensions of power and identity.

[A]ll ideas, all texts, all writings are embedded in actual geographic situations that make them possible, and that in turn make them extend institutionally and temporally. History therefore derives from a discontinuous geography (2001, 466).

Spatial metaphors appeal to the actual conditions that influence the constitution of power and identity formations. Jessop (2005, 421) also acknowledges the importance of spatial metaphors by drawing attention to the ‘less obvious, but more significant analyses of the inherent spatiality as well as temporality of social relations’. Yet, this separation of spatial metaphors from actual geography and space in Gramsci’s work is not without criticism. Morton (2013, 48) asserts that such a distinction creates:

[A]n artificial binary line between *spatial metaphors* ... and the *actuality* of space, place, and scale of relations when addressing the geographical conditions of Gramsci’s interest in state power (original emphasis).

Gramsci’s particular approach to language makes it difficult to draw a clear distinction between the real geographic conditions and spatial metaphors (Morton 2013). Metaphors are constitutive of the actual spatial power relations, as Morton contends that ‘the spatiality of passive revolution was ... constitutive of the actuality of spatial social relations and practices of state power in Italy’ (2013, 48). Aside from the criticism, Jessop (2005, 2008) contributes important insights to understanding how geography is integrated into Gramsci’s theory of hegemony.

As Gramsci’s writings are fragmented, geography and space are a pre-theorised concept. Jessop draws out the notions of space, place, and scale that arise in Gramsci’s account of power relations. Place is the ‘more or less bounded site of face-to-face relationships ... closely tied to everyday life, has temporal depth, and is bound up with

collective memory and social identity' (Jessop 2005, 424).¹⁶ He cites the Southern Question, Gramsci's 'struggle for control over places (factories, buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, etc.)', different cities, the countryside, and the 'links [of places] to memory, identity, and temporality' (ibid.). Space does not exist 'in itself, independently of social relations that construct it, reproduce it, and occur within it' (ibid., 425). Rather, space is 'the socially produced grids and horizons of social life ... [a] series of strategically selective possibilities to develop social relations that stretch over space and time' (ibid.). Jessop refers to Gramsci's division of labour between the city and country, 'local linguistic usages and particularisms, territorial unity and fragmentation, and external influences on national language' (ibid.). This highlights that Gramsci was not geographically deterministic, particularly when understanding space as a relational concept. Lastly, Jessop identifies scale in Gramsci's writing as 'the nested (and sometimes not so nested) hierarchy of bounded spaces of differing size, e.g., local, regional, national, continental and global' (ibid.). Scale is particularly significant as:

Gramsci was extremely sensitive to issues of scale, scalar hierarchies of economic, political, intellectual, and moral power, and their territorial and non-territorial expressions. He was not a 'methodological nationalist' who took the national scale for granted but typically analysed any particular scale in terms of its connection with others scales (ibid.).

All political and spatial elements are situated in a scale of interaction, through which geopolitical hegemony is forged. While all spatialities on the scale exist simultaneously, hegemony functions when one or more of the scales comes to prominence. A scale can achieve 'socio-political significance' in relation to the 'division of labour within and across different fields of social practice' (Jessop 2008, 106). Although the nation-state was not the domain of social-political significance when Gramsci was writing, it is the current political

¹⁶ Perhaps these cannot be considered as strictly bounded, particularly in the context of Massey's work in Chapter 1, section 1.3.

scale of relevance based upon its importance in organising and controlling labour and capital relationships.

The dominant forces in the nation-state constitute and maintain hegemony amid a complex and tangled nest of scalar relationships.¹⁷ However, identity is also geo-politically situated in a scalar and relational approach. Jessop (2008) outlines how identity intertwines with politics and space in Gramsci's discussion of the Italian writer Pirandello. Pirandello only became a 'national' writer through a process of 'de-provincialisation', which enabled him to become 'European' (Jessop 2008, 108). Identity is constituted as a relational formation through the interactions between the local, national, and global scales.¹⁸ Jessop's outline of 'identity' in Gramscian work appears to be similar to Laclau and Mouffe's stance, yet he distances his political approach from Laclau and Mouffe's discursive emphasis (2008, 246, n.2).¹⁹ The next section investigates Laclau and Mouffe's (2001 [1985]) discourse theory approach to hegemony, which facilitates an account of the ways that space/power/identity relations are produced and reproduced in day-to-day life.

1.2 Discourse theory, hegemony, identity, and radical pluralist democracy

The political theory of hegemony developed in Laclau and Mouffe's (2001 [1985]) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* [hereafter *HSS*] seeks to establish the discursive location of power relations. They acknowledge the importance of 'the post-structural field' in formulating a post-Marxist account of hegemony that moves beyond economic essentialism (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], xi). Notably, their theoretical conceptualisation of hegemony is influenced by Foucault's 'discursive formation' (ibid., 105). They also draw upon Derrida's notion of deconstruction to assert an 'impossibility of an ultimate fixity of meaning that

¹⁷ Jessop later argues that Gramsci's 'analyses of struggles for national hegemony were not confined to the national but closely examined the articulation and, indeed, interpenetration of the local, regional, national, and supranational scales' (2008, 107).

¹⁸ The scalar-relational approach has relevance to the contemporary context of Australia, particularly with the history of migration and the presence of ethnic diversity as identity formations cross scales and draw upon multiplicitous connections.

¹⁹ Chapter 1, section 1.2 elaborates Laclau and Mouffe's 'Discourse Theory' approach.

implies that there have to be partial fixations' (ibid., 112). Laclau and Mouffe term these partial discursive fixations as '*nodal points*' by simultaneously appropriating Lacan's '*points de capiton* ... of privileged signifiers that fix the meaning of a signifying chain' (original emphasis, ibid.). In this section, the works of Smith (1998), Howarth *et al.* (2000), Carpentier and De Cleen (2007), Carpentier and Spinoy (2008), and Carpentier (2011a) are used to further elaborate Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory approach.²⁰ The discourse theory approach can be understood 'as a social ontology, as a political identity theory, and as a radical pluralist democratic politics' (Carpentier and Spinoy 2008, 4). A brief account of the different theoretical levels is provided here, as it is not possible to go into the conceptual depth required to thoroughly explore the philosophical roots of all of Laclau and Mouffe's concepts. As this study investigates the mediation of space/power/identity relationships, a theoretical overview is considered sufficient to address Laclau and Mouffe's development of a hegemonic discourse theory.

Laclau and Mouffe build upon the theoretical conceptualisation of hegemony by establishing the centrality of discourse. Discourse is defined by Laclau as 'a structure in which meaning is constantly negotiated and constructed' (1988, 254). Additionally, Laclau and Mouffe (2001 [1985], 96) state that 'a discursive structure ... is an articulatory practice which constitutes and organises social relations'. Laclau and Mouffe's social ontology situates all social phenomena and objects as constituted through discursive power relationships (Carpentier and Spinoy 2008). By asserting the discursive constitution of all social phenomena, Laclau and Mouffe attempt to move away from what they identify as class essentialism in Gramsci's work (2001 [1985], 69). They argue:

There is no sutured space peculiar to 'society', since the social itself has no essence ... a conception which denies any essentialist approach to social relations, must also state the

²⁰ Dahlgren (2013) also explores the importance of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory to the concept of participation and also media studies. He employs a version of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in *The Political Web* (2013, 26 and 69) to examine the mediated coverage of the Occupy Wall Street movement in September 2011.

precarious character of every identity and the impossibility of fixing the sense of the 'elements' in any ultimate literality ... outside any discursive structure, it is obviously not possible to speak of fragmentation, nor even to specify elements (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], 96).

Yet, Laclau and Mouffe's notion of the discursive differs from linguistic based discourse theory approaches. Laclau and Mouffe (1987, 82) state that their discourse approach does not entail '*a combination of speech and writing, but rather that speech and writing are themselves but internal components of discursive totalities*' (original emphasis). Laclau and Mouffe's 'macrotextual and macrocontextual' approach is 'discourse-as-representation' rather than being a structuralist discourse analysis or 'discourse-as-language' (Carpentier and Spinoy 2008, 5).²¹ These social ontological foundations subsequently influence Laclau and Mouffe's political identity theory.

HSS also contains the foundations of a political identity theory, which can situate an understanding of national identity amongst other identity formations. The Gramscian concept of hegemony is particularly influential in the way Laclau and Mouffe envisage the construction of identity in a field of social conflict. However, they stress that they differentiate themselves from Gramsci as there 'is the inner essentialist core which continues to be present in Gramsci's thought, setting a limit to the deconstructive logic of hegemony' (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], 69). Laclau and Mouffe borrow a social constructivist approach from Gramsci. They argue 'that for Gramsci such a popular identity is no longer something simply given, but has to be constructed — hence the articulatory logic of hegemony' (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], 137). The discursive location of identity is thus contingent on other identities, and every relation is situated in formations. The political articulation of hegemony occurs through relationships with a range of identity formations rather than on a purely economic basis. Laclau and Mouffe (2001 [1985], 85-86) contend that:

²¹ See also Philips and Jeirgensen (2002, 62) from who Carpentier and Spinoy originally take the 'discourse-as-language' phrase from.

Unfixity has become the condition of every social identity ... insofar as the task has ceased to have any *necessary* link with a class, its identity is given to it solely by its articulation within a hegemonic formation.

In a field of unfixity, Laclau and Mouffe situate their specific delineation of ‘hegemony’ as:

[A] political type of relation, a form, if one so wishes, of politics; but not a determinable location within a topography of the social. In a given social formation, there can be a variety of hegemonic nodal points (2001 [1985], 139).

The unfixed nature of the social space and the co-constitutional relational approach is core to the formation of hegemonic relationship. Hegemony relies ‘upon the fact that the meaning of each element in a social system is not definitely fixed’ which leaves it open to political transformation (Laclau 1988, 254). In terms of identity, hegemonic relations ‘attempt to destabilise the “other” identity but desperately need that very “other” as a constitutive outside to stabilise their proper identity’ (Carpentier and De Cleen 2007, 269). Furthermore:

A social and political space relatively unified through the instituting of nodal points and the constitution of *tendentially* relational identities, is what Gramsci called a *historical bloc* ... Insofar as we consider the historical bloc from the point of view of the antagonistic terrain in which it is constituted, we will call it *hegemonic formation* (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], 136).

In Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory approach, the political articulation of hegemony ‘involves linking together different identities into a common project’ (Howarth 1998, 279). On the national scale, the relational constitution of space/power/identity involves the multiplicitous and overlapping processes of internal and external differentiation. Any communication of identity thus involves the political positioning of the national amid the local and global formations. The conceptualisation of political identity connects to the third

element of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory approach, their elaboration of a radical pluralist democratic politics.

The final level that Carpentier and Spinoy (2008) identify in Laclau and Mouffe's work is the theorisation of radical pluralist democratic politics. As the concept of radical pluralist democracy is expansive, a brief account is provided here in relation to hegemony and identity. Radical pluralist democracy envisages that in order to move beyond class-reductionism, democratic demands across a range of social relations need to be joined together in order to overcome hegemony.²² While participation is not often discussed in *HSS*, it is raised in relation to radical pluralist democracy when providing a 'critique on the "anti-democratic offensive" ... in neo-conservative discourses' (Carpentier 2011a, 37). In an environment where there is a lack of radical pluralist democracy, neo-conservative discourses:

[R]edefine the notion of democracy itself in such a way as to restrict its field of application and limit political participation to an ever narrower area ... Although the democratic ideal is not openly attacked, an attempt is made to empty it of all substance and to propose a new definition of democracy which in fact would serve to legitimise a regime in which political participation might be virtually non-existent (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985], 173).

Radical pluralist democratic politics is crucial to understanding how hegemonic formations become embedded in society. By reducing the scope of political participation, the dominant political bloc is able to entrench their notion of 'common sense' further in society.

During periods of crisis, the hegemonic power relations that limit radical pluralist democratic politics become heightened. Drawing on Laclau, Smith argues that:

[C]ompeting political forces will attempt to 'hegemonize' the social: they will attempt to offer their specific 'systems of narration' as a compensatory framework, and they will represent that framework as the only one that can resolve the identity crisis (1998, 165).

²² For example, linking anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-capitalist, and anti-homophobic groups.

In the Australian context, the ongoing changes to migration operate as a ‘crisis’ that challenges the traditional understandings of nation and identity.²³ The crisis leads to a perceived disruption of social, economic, and political stability that needs to be addressed by the established political parties. In these times of crisis, the dominant political forces are able to reassert their discourses as the only ones that will stabilise the social environment. Smith clarifies that:

Authoritarian hegemony aims to achieve a maximum disciplining of difference; even as it pretends to endorse pluralism, it can only promote a pseudo-multiculturalism that is entirely compatible with institutional racism (1998, 181).

These political discourses are subsequently conveyed in the production of news. Journalism has an important role in mediating these political discourses and facilitating a radical pluralist democracy. While neither Laclau and Mouffe nor Smith directly address media, the notion of radical pluralist democracy also extends to news as a key cultural institution. Authoritarian hegemonic forces can work to reduce the number of radically pluralistic definitions of news ‘truths’ available to audiences across media platforms.²⁴ This can limit the potential for audiences to access radical pluralist democratic perspectives across media.

Authoritarian hegemony functions through the suppression of difference; but it also requires strategies of disengagement whereby political participation is discouraged. In order

²³ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for greater elaboration of migration fluctuations and the connections to policy in the Australian context. Here, both asylum and normal migration pose a continual challenge to the space, identity, and political frameworks in Australia.

²⁴ Furthermore, the apparent pluralism also applies to the range of individuals who have the professional means to define that very ‘truth’. Thus, the online and social media sphere can be seen to be an extension of the traditional journalistic sphere. The professionalisation of journalism works to delimit the plurality of ‘viable’ alternative perspectives available, as professional credibility or reliability can be called into question. The credibility of the citizen-journalist or blogger is positioned against the professional expertise of the trained mainstream journalist. In terms of the space/power/identity relationship, global sources of news become locked into a power-geometry (see Massey 1991 in Chapter 1 section 1.3) whereby certain actors have more power in the journalistic scale. The preference amongst Australians is Australian news sources which would be likely to cover the most pertinent day-to-day coverage (see Chapter 6 for viewership preferences). However, when engaging with broader sources of news information across the international scale, news preferences could be subject to the same power-geometries. Even in a contemporary era where the time and space divide is diminished, there are certain news sources which comparatively have more mobility and power. For example, the power-geometry relations mean that some audiences are more likely to engage and trust the British Broadcasting Corporation compared to Chinese Central Television.

to maintain authoritarian hegemony, political forces must appear to represent the democratic majority. Smith argues that:

Often hegemonic politics only requires the construction of a minority of enthusiastic followers who can be synecdochically positioned as an imaginary majority, instead of actual popular mobilizations. This synecdochical substitution and the populist façade depend in turn on the demobilization of key sectors of the populace through blatant disenfranchisement tactics. In some cases, hegemonic forces drag the political centre so far to the right that more and more people have no reason to participate in the political system (ibid., 180).

Here, Hall's work on Thatcherism (1988) provides an empirical example of an authoritarian hegemonic project. Hall demonstrates how the Thatcherite regime represented itself as 'the expression of popular will' through the 'disorganisation of the potential opposition and a minimal degree of mobilisation' (Smith 1998, 180-181).²⁵ In multicultural societies, media have an important role in conveying the imaginary majority. Commercial television news programmes and the political discourses in content must appeal to the metropolitan imaginary majority, in order to attract the largest audience share. While producers know the numbers of viewers per night, the real and everyday circumstances in which audiences watch and respond remain imagined. These presumptions function figuratively to position the 'popular' audience and exclude the minority sectors of society when constituting the imaginary majority.

A number of political and spatial scholars have challenged the lack of geographic awareness in Laclau and Mouffe's theorisation of hegemony. These scholars contend that hegemony in *HSS* is only ever conceptualised within the space of the nation-state (Featherstone 2008, 2013; Sparke 2005). Laclau and Mouffe's work 'accords the nation-state an unthinking centrality as the privileged arena for the construction of hegemonic and counterhegemonic politics' (Featherstone 2013, 66). Ultimately, this theorisation of

²⁵ Smith (1998, 163) outlines that critics including Jessop *et al.* (1998), Hirst (1989), and Crewe (1988) have shown that there was not popular support for the Thatcherite regime, as many voted for her despite disagreeing with her policies. Smith argues that it is this very feature that shows how the Thatcherite project operated in terms of an authoritarian hegemony.

hegemony means that Laclau and Mouffe are fundamentally dismissive of the ways in which Gramsci positioned power and identity in spatial relationships (Featherstone 2013, 69; Sparke 2005, 181). In *HSS*, Laclau and Mouffe situate their definition of hegemony outside geographic and spatial relationships. As outlined in the previous section they delineate hegemony as ‘a *political type of relation* ... not a determinable location in a topography of the social’ (2001 [1985], 139). Notably, Laclau and Mouffe largely ignore Gramsci’s exploration of the geo-political relationship between the Italian North and South in ‘The Southern Question’ (Sparke 2005). Sparke maintains that Laclau and Mouffe undertake a ‘radical decontextualisation of Gramsci’s own geographical sensitivities’, which results in their assertions ‘that hegemony has no particular place’ (2005, 180). The discourse theory in *HSS* is unable to engage with the geographic conditions in which hegemony is constituted across the multiple scales of the local, national, and global.²⁶ Laclau and Mouffe thus privilege the domain of the nation-state as the ‘location’ for all power relationships. Sparke stresses there is an:

[A]utomatization of the state [which] seems [to be] only ever imagined ... in national, territorial ways ... [t]his strangely structuralist account ... also reveals a tellingly singular conception of the state and its conventional national ‘logics’ such as ‘the economy’ (2005, 183).

Given that Laclau and Mouffe’s theoretical approach aims for an anti-essentialist account of power relationships, the lack of spatial awareness is problematic. Attempts to move beyond the nation-state unit are tokenistic, and the actual consideration of hegemonic politics remains bound to the domain of the ‘nation’ (Sparke 2005). When Laclau and Mouffe examine:

²⁶ However, it is necessary to avoid reductionism, and the scales are not linear nor simply global, national, local, but may involve a multitude of different geographic spatialities connected to power (city-based, neighbourhood-based, provinces or states, regional blocs like the EU, global.). See also n. 13 for the way in which local, national, and global are used analytically to represent complex processes, rather than correlating to bounded physical demarcations.

[A]ctual hegemonic struggles ... [t]hey do not refer to them as nation-states, preferring the less encumbered term 'societies'. But the references are always to singular societies that could otherwise be labelled as nation-states. This problem of renaming is important to note because it seems to point to a real ambivalence between Laclau and Mouffe's antiessentialist commitment to problematizing bounded concepts ... and their genealogical commitment to re-examining the pre-existing examples and arguments that they have inherited along with the concept of hegemony (Sparke 2005, 184).

Coming to terms with the spatial conditions of hegemony in Laclau and Mouffe's work is limited through the omission of a theoretical account of space. The discursive approach to hegemony that Laclau and Mouffe advocate is useful for understanding political identity and radical pluralist democratic politics. In order to address the lack of spatial theorisation in Laclau and Mouffe, the next section draws upon further spatial scholarship to argue for a discursively situated awareness of geo-political relationships.

1.3 Relational space

This section explores the work of geographer Doreen Massey (1991, 1995, 2005), who extends upon Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory approach and provides a more comprehensive account of space/power/identity relationships. In this relational or co-constitutive approach, any space discursively attains meaning in relation to other spatial formations. Any account of a local space/power/identity formation must be simultaneously constituted either in relation to other local formations or in connection to national or global space/power/identity formations. This section further builds upon Massey's approach to consider the role of television news in maintaining relational space/power/identity formations. Here, the 'double articulation' of the audiences is significant (Livingstone and Das 2013). Audiences can negotiate content that conveys certain space/power/identity discourses of the local amongst the national and global. However, audiences also produce these social relations by being materially situated in the local and choosing to view local commercial television

news in the context of the wider media environment. Both media discourses and audiences use of media occur in a relational formation. Local media content and audiences' use of media must be contextualised in the overlapping geo-political relationships of the local, national, regional, and global scales.

The spatial dimension can be included in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory particularly in terms of their ontological approach. While Sparke (2005) and Featherstone (2008, 2013) criticise the distinct lack of spatial awareness in the discourse theory approach, Massey addresses these limitations. She stresses the significance of Laclau and Mouffe's approach for geographers by highlighting how space is inherently implicated with power relations. Massey identifies four key areas in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory approach that can contribute to a better understanding of geo-political relationships (1995, 283). Drawing from Laclau and Mouffe's identity theory, she pinpoints the 'processual constitution ... through interrelations' and 'the constant remaking' of social meaning (ibid.). Furthermore, 'power is not an external relation ... between already preconstituted identities ... it is part and parcel of the constitution' (ibid.). Lastly, Massey stresses the 'insistence on the constitutive outside and the necessary presence of the other within' (ibid.). By using a co-constitutive approach to geography, Massey provides the foundations for a discursive theorisation of space/power/identity relations. While the theoretical premise is at odds with Jessop's stance,²⁷ it bears similarities to his understanding of geography in nested scales. Analysing space in the same framework of identity provides a more complex approach to understanding power relationships. The local provides meaning to other localities, but also to the national, regional, and global. Yet, there is a gap in understanding how hegemonic space/power/ identity relations are maintained through media.

²⁷ Particularly as Jessop is against the recourse to discursive framework without considering the extra-discursive materiality.

Locating space in a co-constitutive discursive field addresses the essentialism in Laclau and Mouffe's work and their implied focus on the nation-state. Massey (1995, 285) argues that 'space/power/identity' do not only occur in the domain of the nation, but are also formed in other spatialised constructions. These include the "exclusive" suburbs, of gangland territories within urban areas, of no-go time-spaces within housing estates' (ibid.).²⁸ Hegemonic relations are spatially co-constitutive in that they require simultaneous scales of operation, through which differentiated power relations are addressed. Spaces are never a homogenously unified political constituency, but rather have a 'multiplicity of constituencies' and overlapping power relations, which can be joined even if the political forces are in conflict (Massey 1995, 285). The relational discursive field is particularly influential on Massey's conception of contingent space. Massey's later work, *For Space*, presents the argument that 'space/place' is a co-constitutive relation:

Space does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations ... identities/entities, the relations 'between' them, and the spatiality which is part of them, are all constitutive ... specifically spatial identities (places, nations) can equally be reconceptualised in relational terms ... if no space/place is a coherent seamless authenticity then one issue which is raised is the question of its internal negotiation (2005, 10).

By taking a post-structural approach to geography, Massey is able to assert the concurrent existence of a multiplicity of spaces (2005, 9). The co-constitutive spatial approach is important when theorising the role of media. Television news programmes mediate a plurality

²⁸ The importance of 'exclusive' suburbs in relation to the Western Sydney region is considered among the respondents. Chapter 6, subsection 6.1.2 includes comments made by Galvyn on the way this influences the naming of places in television news. Anne and Elizabeth elaborate this in the group interview regarding their perceptions about the spatial divisions in news content and amongst their discussions with the wider Sydney population. Anne stated that 'but there can't be no [*sic*] trouble in the North Shore, and it's true you really don't hear a lot about it, but they do a lot on Western Sydney and the Southern suburbs'. Elizabeth further elaborated 'I work in North Sydney, and you know they're like "Oh, the West!", and they must think there's thugs walking up and down the street'. Furthermore, the way that 'exclusive suburbs' are seen to permeate understandings of space/power/identity was also present in Karl and Marcia's understanding of the way that audiences engage with news content (see Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.2). They created divisions between their socio-economic positions in North Sydney with those in Western Sydney to elaborate that it provided them with greater criticality. They connect their wealth and location in a relatively 'exclusive' suburban area to education and socio-cultural experiences which equipped them to be more critical of news content than those in less 'exclusive' suburbs, for example Penrith.

of space/power/identity discourses, which interconnect across the geographic scales. News has a role in disarticulating and rearticulating these discourses when constituting dominant hegemonic understandings across multiple spatialities. The current media landscape is structured by new media technologies that result in the dilation of time-space relations, a context that is quite different from the era in which Gramsci wrote the *Prison Notebooks* (1971) and *Cultural Writings* (1985). The implications relate to the ways in which television news can draw upon a variety of visual and aural resources to construct information (Bivens 2014, 2015). News production can use new technology with greater ease to include a myriad of social actors (ibid.), located across different spatial, power, identity, and time scales. The role of journalism in mediating space/power/identity across the multiple scales needs to be investigated in the contexts of the everyday lives of viewers to understand how audiences draw upon news reportage to inform their understandings of asylum and migration.

Indeed, recent work by Mouffe accommodates the geographic dimension, emphasising Massey's impact on the theorisation of hegemony. Mouffe (2013, 22) acknowledges the earlier limitations to the discourse theory approach and its inability to conceptualise space. Mouffe (2013, 25) draws upon Massey to assert that power and spaces is co-constitutive as:

[S]pace is always striated because it is a product of relations and struggles ... we need a local politics that thinks beyond the local, acknowledging that the local is globally produced and the global locally produced.

The nation-state is only able to gain prominence in an already striated social space, as an ongoing product of co-constitutive relations. The striation of space aptly addresses the Gramscian scalar power relationships identified in the previous section.²⁹ Gramsci's work contains a relational concept of geography and an already striated notion of space as

²⁹ It is important to stress that Mouffe's use of striated space remains fundamentally different to the way Deleuze and Guattari (2004 [1980], 385) use striation. Specifically, Deleuze and Guattari see the state as responsible for striating relationships into hierarchical formations. This privileges a more state-centric approach when according the nation-state the responsibility for spatial striation.

‘international relations intertwine with these internal relations of nation-states’ (1971, 182). The hegemonic field can thus be located in terms of relational space (Mouffe 2013). Here, Massey’s (1991) concept of ‘power-geometries’ is relevant. ‘Power-geometries’ refers to the ‘time-space compression’, which affects individuals and social groups in varying circumstances through ‘differentiated mobility’ (Massey 1991, 25-26). Within these flows some individuals, based upon their location and power, have greater ability to move about and have more control of the process. Others cannot take charge and remain more passive (for example refugee movements), and there are those that ‘are effectively imprisoned by it’ (ibid.). Drawing upon Massey’s concept of ‘power-geometries’, Mouffe argues:

‘[P]ower-geometries’ brings to the fore the spatial character of hegemonic articulations which constitute the nodal points around which a given hegemony is established. The globalised space appears as always striated, with a diversity of sites where the relations of power are articulated in specific local, regional and national configurations (2013, 28).

Mouffe relates space to the ‘war of position’, through which the battle for hegemony has to take place across different places and social formations. The nation-state is part of spatially situated hegemonic formation, linking together socio-political dynamics at the local, regional, national, and global scales. These connections to other spaces simultaneously provide meaning to the national power bloc. Hegemony is asserted in relation to the variety of spatial positions, which provide processes of differentiation and consolidation.

The everyday processes of reproducing the relational space/power/identity discourses across the scales needs to be further elucidated. The following section explores the role of news programmes as part of the discursive hegemonic relationship. It engages with the conceptualisation of hegemony in Cultural Studies and Media Studies. By drawing upon the theoretical work of Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams, the following section provides an account of news media’s role as a cultural institution in managing political hegemony.

1.4 News media: signifying identity and socio-political relationships

In the field of Cultural Studies and Media Studies, the works of Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams are pivotal to understanding the role of media institutions in maintaining power relations. Hall's work is integral in theorising Gramscian hegemony in relation to the everyday media audience. Rather than focusing on Hall's empirical contributions to the field of audience studies, this section concentrates on his theoretical arguments. Hall acknowledges the structural importance of economics and historical materialism (1977), but he develops a more discursive and relational approach to power relations (1996, 2001). Hall's (1996, 2001) approach to power and identity, as a product of discursive relations, draws parallels to the ways in which Laclau and Mouffe conceptualise hegemony. The concepts of space, power, and identity need to be revisited in Hall's work given the differences in the current communications environment, which disrupts the role of traditional news media institutions in maintaining 'common sense' space/power/identity knowledge.

In Cultural Studies, the concept of hegemony draws on Gramsci's political theory. Hegemony is a complex theoretical process by which consent is co-ordinated across society to a broader political way of life. Williams (1977, 110) builds upon the work of Gramsci to establish 'hegemony' as the:

[L]ived system of meanings and values — constitutive and constituting — which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives.

Hall (1977) echoes the approach when theorising hegemony in a manner that avoids the traps of economic reductionism. Hall asserts that Gramsci is able to depart from traditional Marxist thought to arrive at a theoretically '*enlarged*' concept of class power and of ideology ... elaborating a "regional" theory ... of the superstructural and ideological complexes of

capitalist societies' (1977, 334, original emphasis). Hall's early work on theorising hegemony concentrates on the historical and material dimensions to power relations.³⁰ However, Hall's later work adopts a more 'post-Marxist view and [he] rejects the conception that the political is determined by the economic base' (Smith 1998, 102). The theoretical shift in Hall's work provides the grounds for understanding hegemony as a discursive product of co-constitutive relations, with the media embedded in managing these power formations.

The Gramscian theorisation of hegemony most notably influences Hall's analysis of the everyday role of news. The 'common sense' coverage of events draws upon 'historically-elaborated discourses ... a reservoir of themes', which provide meaning to 'new and troubling events' (1982, 73). The televisual medium most readily lends itself to establishing 'common sense' hegemonic discourses. Hall employs semiological theory to stress the mass media's role as the 'dominant means of social signification in modern societies' (1982, 83).³¹ Through its visual nature, television news has the ability to 'appear to reproduce the actual trace of reality in the images they transmit' (Hall 1982, 76). Hall states:

This is the first of the great cultural functions of the modern media: the provision and the selective construction of *social knowledge*, of social imagery, through which we perceive the 'worlds', the 'lived realities' of others, and imaginarily reconstruct their lives and ours into some intelligible 'world-of-the-whole', some 'lived totality' (1977, 340-341).

Extending Marx's argument, Hall argues that the media are ideologically significant, particularly in terms of television news. The visuals in television news seem to involve little production, due to their presence in everyday culture. Televisual news discourses become cemented as 'common sense' approaches to the world, legitimating the function of hegemony

³⁰ Hall distances himself from the post-Marxist discursive framework employed by Laclau and Mouffe, stating that the 'dissolution of everything into discourse ... mars the later volume, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, despite its many insights' (1988, 157). Yet, Jessop *et al.* (1984) also criticise Hall for his discursive focus. In a response to Jessop *et al.* (1984), Hall (1985) defends his historical material position evident in his analysis of Thatcherite politics.

³¹ In particular, Hall utilises the work of Valentin Volisnov, Umberto Eco, Roland Barthes, and Ferdinand de Saussure to consider how the sign reproduces socio-political discourse in television news.

in society (Hall 1977). In the new preface to *The Whole World is Watching*, Gitlin argues that in the current media environment viewers are increasingly aware that news is a produced ‘reality’ and that it is not necessarily the sole perspective (2003 [1980], xx-xxi). The availability of a wide variety of news discourses across traditional and new media platforms undermines the ideological significance of television, as audiences can readily access a range of perspectives. The permeability of digital media in everyday life challenges the function of television news in the contemporary media environment and its ability to reinforce ‘common sense’ knowledge on space/power/identity.³² While Gitlin argues that hegemony is theoretically ‘cumbersome’ (xvii), a more robust conceptualisation of hegemony can grapple with the modern mediated environment.³³ By situating an analysis of television news in the context of the wider media environment and the audiences lived experiences, academic research can establish a more complex account of the ways in which television news and audiences disarticulate-rearticulate hegemonic discourses.

Television news reinforces ‘common sense’ understandings of reality, yet it also reinscribes the ‘common sense’ approaches within a spatial relationship. News content produces ‘worlds’, establishing ‘the “rules” of each domain, actively ruling in and ruling out certain realities, offering the maps and codes which mark out territories’ (Hall 1977, 341). The role of television news is to construct the ‘explanatory’ frameworks, mentioned in the previous paragraph, which enable viewers to feel connected to the space/power/identity formations within which they exist. The space/power/identity discourses within television news must appeal to the actual and real conditions of hegemony in order to be rearticulated. The intertwined relationship between space/power/identity is particularly notable in Hall’s

³² See the Introductory Chapter for an account of media use in Australia. In Australia, there is a high internet penetration rate of 93% of the population (Newman *et al.* 2016, 78).

³³ Although the original edition employs a hegemonic framework, the updated forward in *The Whole World is Watching* criticises the hegemonic approach. Gitlin states that hegemony ‘is not a concept radical enough to touch the problem of how people live now. It does not grasp what is strange and essential about our time: the texture of life in the presence of media. Today, what strikes me as the decisive fact and limit of media, deeply problematic for all movements (or indeed any politics at all), is dependency on media in the first place’ (2003 [1980], xvii).

analysis of the rise of Thatcherism (1988). Hall argues that in terms of the ideological divide in the city of London:

The 'North' is not just a geographical entity: it is also a state of mind ... the 'new' working class in the geographical 'South' now identify and vote in a majority for Thatcherism. They no longer identify themselves with Labour's traditional working class Labour voter (1988, 264-265).

Geography connects to socio-political identity, but also to the construction of hegemonic ideological formations across space. Hegemony mobilises the 'lived' identifications that occur at a local London level in conjunction with national Thatcherite politics.³⁴ Drawing on Hall's analysis of the North-South relations in Thatcherite London, the hegemonic discourses in Sydney can be understood in relation to wider power formations across the national and global spaces. The identities of the East-West spaces in Sydney are linked to historical and material factors, but also to geo-political and economic formations that result in a greater number of globally 'ethnic' individuals residing in the Western Sydney area.³⁵ Everyday television news programmes function to connect the local to the national and international scales when constructing hegemonic formations and creating a 'popular' social bloc.

Hall draws upon Gramsci's notion of the social block when conceptualising the formation of hegemony in democratic societies. In relation to electoral democratic politics, Hall establishes that 'elections are won or lost not just on so-called "real" majorities, but on (equally real) "symbolic majorities"' (1988, 262).³⁶ This symbolic constitution of a majority

³⁴ Not to mention the global political and economic forces that also impacted upon the rise of Thatcherism within the United Kingdom.

³⁵ See Galvyn's comments in Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.2 for a greater elaboration on the spatial distribution of ethnicities in the Sydney region. Drawing upon Hall, I would also argue that within Sydney, the West is no longer the bastion of 'working class' Labour politics, but has increasingly become the battleground for elections and conservative Coalition politics. Furthermore, it is important in terms of the increased multicultural constituency of the Sydney Western suburbs which would suggest that they would have diversified and differentiated experiences of the 'nation' based upon their movements and positioning in the local, national, international scale.

³⁶ See section 1.2 of this chapter for a discussion on authoritarian hegemony and Hall's analysis of Thatcherite politics (1988).

occurs through the ‘imagined’ majorities that are constructed in media through the representation of popular politics.³⁷ Hall’s discussion of the symbolic majority creates parallels to Laclau and Mouffe’s theorisation of hegemony. Laclau and Mouffe theorise hegemony as a function of discursive relationships and through the assertion of a relational constitutive outside. Hall states that ‘building a new social bloc means not only “symbolically” including as many different groups as you can in your project, but also symbolically excluding the enemy’ (1988, 263). This ‘enemy’ can be constituted across a number of identifications, through alternative political parties, migrants or ethnic groups, and sexuality. Exclusion on the basis of cultural difference is pertinent, as the term ‘immigrant’ becomes mobilised as ‘a catch-all category, combining ethnic and class criteria’, applying indiscriminately to ‘foreigners ... though not *all* foreigners and *not only* foreigners’ (Balibar 1991 [1988], 221, original emphasis). When articulating differential identity based on culture, the term ‘*immigrant*’ becomes a chief characteristic that replaces *race* in a racist typology’ (Georgiou 2005, 489, original emphasis). In nations built upon migration, such as Australia, the symbolic exclusion of an ‘enemy’ has to go beyond the term immigrant. Hegemonic discourses can only achieve success through the creation of a symbolic majority, or a social bloc, by processes of exclusion and the assertion of a constitutive outside. The hegemonic formation of a symbolic majority must occur through mediated politics, where news discourses are crucial in building these social blocs and excluding enemies. Within Australia, the historical and ongoing circumstances of migration result in an internalisation of global identities. The hegemonic struggle to create a symbolic majority has to move beyond the category of cultural difference in order to unify individuals from a range of different backgrounds into a new social bloc.

³⁷ Hall importantly argues against Benedict Anderson to state that history is not comprised of “‘empty, homogenous time’, but of processes with different time-scales and trajectories ... [t]he histories and time-scales of Thatcherism and of new times have certainly overlapped. Nevertheless, they may belong to different temporalities’ (1989, 126). The argument regarding Thatcherism is important in regards to the conceptualisation of time and space, which deepens a relational understanding of power relationships.

The co-constitutive and relational approach to identity becomes more obvious in Hall's later work. In his writings on identity, the particular connections between space/power/identity are located in a discursive field. The influence of Laclau (1990) upon Hall's conceptualisation of relational identity is evident in the introduction to *Questions of Cultural Identity* (1996). Hall questions:

[T]he mechanisms ... by which individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the 'positions' to which they are summoned; as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and 'perform' these positions, and why they never do so completely ... or are in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves (1996, 13-14).

Identities are constantly renegotiated in the context of shifts in the global and local environments. Hall acknowledges the ongoing relational space/power/identity struggle in *The Multicultural Question* (2001, 216) by drawing upon Derrida's notion of '*différance*'. The influence of Derrida upon Hall (2001) and Laclau and Mouffe (2001 [1985]) results in similarities in their conceptualisation of the discursive production of power relations. Hall maintains:

every concept [or meaning] is inscribed in a chain or system within which it refers to the other ... [m]eaning here has no origin or final destination, cannot be finally fixed, is always *in process*, 'positional' along a spectrum. Its political value cannot be essentialised, but only relationally determined (ibid., original emphasis).

Hall (1997) also directly addresses the relationship between space, scale, and identity by exploring the historical material conditions of English identity. While identity formation is bound to territory, internal and external mechanisms of differentiation also influence the process. The connection between local and global scales is integral to constituting 'English' identity in the context of the English experiences with colonialism. The period of globalisation and internationalisation of nation-states allowed the Thatcherite project to

cement a narrower and more entrenched definition of English identity (Hall 1977). However, crucial differences exist between the analysis of Thatcherite identity politics and the Australian context. Comparatively, ‘English’ identity has been constituted as part of a longer historical process of differentiation. The relational constitution of Australian identity remains tied to a short historical material past, by which the settler colonial beginnings of the nation have quickly had to accommodate multicultural migration.³⁸ Hegemonic forces within Australia are thus forced to incorporate a range of relational space/power/identity formations to create a symbolic majority that accommodates the migrant population.

The process of globalisation, with the increased movement of both people and capital, brings space to the fore of Hall’s work. Space/power/identity formations are discussed as nested, but anchored to the dominance of the nation-state formation and the concept of citizenship. Hall and Held state that:

Everywhere, the nation[-]state itself – the entity to which the language of political citizenship refers – is eroded and challenged. The processes of economic, political, military and ecological interdependence are beginning to undermine it as a sovereign, self-contained entity from above. The rise of regional and local ‘nationalisms’ are beginning to erode it from below (1989, 183).

In the same volume, Hall deepens the relational approach to identity and politics in an increasingly globalised environment. Here, the space/power/identity connections between internal and external geo-political forces are more obvious:

[T]he new times seem to have gone ‘global’ and ‘local’ at the same moment ... ethnicity reminds us that everybody comes from some place – even if it is only an ‘imagined community’ – and needs some sense of identification and belonging (Hall 1989, 133).

³⁸ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for a historical account of migration policy in Australia from federation to the present day.

Hall (1997) conceptualises space as a multiplicity, where the weakening of the nation-state structure is connected clearly to globalisation. Hall stresses the simultaneous response that ‘goes above the nation-state and it goes below it ... global and local in the same moment’ (1997, 26-27). However, the nation-state is not necessarily ‘eroded’. Rather, the increased interconnection between the local and global only heightens the importance of the nation-state scale. Hall acknowledges that there are:

[T]wo forms of globalization still struggling with one another: an older, corporate, enclosed, increasingly defensive one which has to go back to nationalism and national cultural identity in a highly defensive way, and to try to build barriers around it before it is eroded. And then this other form of the global post-modern which is trying to live with, and at the same moment, overcome, sublate, get hold of, and incorporate difference (1997, 33).

Gramsci’s work on the North and South in ‘The Southern Question’ in *SPN* (1971) sheds further light on the importance of a relational conception of space and identity. He makes the case that the national structure was the dominant domain of politics in France, but that for Italy the local and regional scales were of greater importance. Not only does Gramsci’s work on the North and South addresses the multiplicity of space/power/identity experiences, but it also emphasises that certain spatial scales can attain prominence under different conditions. Globalisation does not erode all nation-state structures uniformly. The interplay between internal and external forces leads to a ‘disarticulation and rearticulation’ of the national space/power/identity formation based upon the various spatial and political contexts (Mouffe 1979, 197).³⁹ Furthermore, the increased flow between the different spatial scales creates new challenges in terms of the political foundations of identity.

The nation-state becomes the site where a re-articulated national identity is managed in the context of the global and local formations. The plurality of overlapping

³⁹ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for the Australian government’s position on the nation-state borders. Here, the boundary of the nation-state and the duties of the Australian Customs and Border Protection are defined as extending across the external and internal dimensions of the national ‘border’.

space/power/identity formations in migration societies presents a challenge to any articulation of the 'nation'. Spatial mobility contests the underlying political foundations of the nation-state, as:

The modern nation[-]state is increasingly composed of groups with different ethnic and cultural identities. Many of these groups belong to other histories, cultures and traditions very different from those of the indigenous people. These cultural differences are crucial to their sense of identity, identification and 'belongingness' ... These differences present new challenges to, and produce new tensions within ... the 'universalising' thrust in the idea of citizenship (Hall and Held 1989, 187).

The processes of migration create an overlapping plurality of space/power/identity formations. Migration challenges the notion of 'homogenous' nation-states, as external methods of space/power/identity differentiation are internalised. The ongoing process of migration in Australia raises a number of questions regarding the role of television news in reproducing 'common sense' hegemonic discourses on space/power/identity. How do local commercial television news programmes construct discourses of space/power/identity in the context of the local, national, and global scales? How do television news programmes manage intersecting geo-political scales on a daily basis? Do they identify, sublate, or incorporate local and global difference in the production of space/power/identity discourses? Do audiences engage with a range of alternative space/power/identity discourses by accessing news through online platforms? A greater understanding is needed of the manner by which television news functions among social and digital media forms to perpetuate 'common sense' knowledge on space/power/identity formations.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the theorisation of the concept of hegemony across different disciplines. In doing so, the chapter has drawn attention to the various ways in which the theory of hegemony has been mobilised to explain power relations. The chapter provided an

account of Gramscian hegemony, examining the notion of space. The spatial turn in political theory emphasises the manner in which space and place feature in Gramsci's writings. Gramsci's works theorise hegemony as a continual political process, orchestrated in relation to internal and external forces. Following on from the Gramscian theorisation of hegemony, this chapter discussed how Laclau and Mouffe develop a discursive theory in which they situate their understanding of hegemony. As per Laclau and Mouffe's theorisation of hegemony, both politics and identity formations must be investigated as being relational. However, the discursive and co-constitutive conditions that influence identity and power also extend to space. Massey's theorisation of intertwined space/power/identity relationships enables an account of hegemony as constituted over a range of overlapping and simultaneous spaces, moving beyond geographic essentialism. The final section of the chapter engaged with the theorisation of hegemony in the works of Stuart Hall. While Hall's work incorporates the role of television news in reproducing hegemonic 'common sense' knowledge (1977), it also raises a number of questions on the role of television news in the contemporary traditional and new media environment.

The chapter has argued that hegemony must be understood as a product of discursive relations. It has identified the need to incorporate space into the theorisation of power/identity relations. It has stressed that the notion of a constitutive outside is required to understand how hegemony is constructed in relational terms. Theorising hegemony in these parameters is particularly important when analysing the Australian context. In the context of migration, Australia contains overlapping space/power/identity formations that cross the local, national, and global scales. The embeddedness of digital technologies in everyday life presents a challenge to the way television news programmes function to reproduce hegemonic relationships. In order to come to terms with the ways in which television news programmes mediate knowledge on space/power/identity relations, the next chapter provides a review of media research and points to new ways of investigating news discourses. In the context the

theoretical dimensions to space/power/identity relations elaborated in this chapter, the next chapter provides an account of the legislative evolution of the Australian media environment and the Australian context of migration policy.

Chapter 2: The Australian Context: Space, Migration, and Television News

This chapter is devoted to detailing the legislative evolution of the Australian media environment and the Australian context of migration policy. This provides the context for the analysis of commercial television news discourses on ‘asylum’ and ‘migration’ that follows. The first section of this chapter historicises the contemporary political discourses on migration. An account of migration policy from federation to the present day is attempted, to delineate the ways in which contemporary understandings of space/power/identity are connected to an extended history of migration legislation. This chapter also historicises the contemporary television broadcasting structures in Sydney, Australia. Following on from the account of migration policy, the second section also provides a historical overview of broadcasting legislation. By engaging with a legislative history of both television broadcasting and migration, this chapter will draw out the relationship between media and space/power/identity. Subsequently, the remaining sections of the chapter will review academic research on television news and the representations of identity.

The genre of news has been the subject of academic attention across a range of disciplines. In the field of Media Studies, news research consists of a range of approaches that investigate audiences, news texts, and production environments. The third section of the chapter reviews key academic literature to ascertain the ways in which media research has investigated how television news texts structure space/power/identity discourses in content. The literature review also allows for a grounded theory approach by examining media research that investigates how audiences actually make use of these discourses. The review of Australian and international research on television news demonstrates that the changing media environment necessitates new approaches to researching the audience-media relationship. Livingstone asserts that audience research has shifted to a ‘participation paradigm’, which increasingly concentrates on individual participation ‘in culture or community or civil society

or democracy’ (2013, 24). The fourth section of this chapter concludes by outlining how the ‘participation paradigm’ can facilitate an analysis of television news as part of the audiences everyday lived experiences.

2.1 Migration nation: maintaining sovereign borders throughout history

In Australia, the governmental regulation of migration continues to have a significant impact upon the development of the demographic population and cultural identity. The British settlement of indigenous inhabited territory marks the origins of the Australian political nation, which has evolved to encompass a culturally heterogeneous multiethnic migrant population. The ongoing processes of migration result in the continual shifting of the social-cultural demographic in Australia. This generates a sense of instability regarding identity discourses, resulting in the ongoing ‘disarticulation-rearticulation’ of national identity (Mouffe 1979, 197). Building on Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory approach (2001 [1985]), national identity is always constructed in relation to local and global scales of difference. The impacts of migration further manifest in relation to broadcasting and communications in Australia. The provision of news services across the Australian free-to-air television networks (ABC, SBS, 7, 9, and 10) has hence to be contextualised in relation to migration and the changing needs of the Australian populace. An account of migration policy provides the foundation for understanding the ways that television broadcasting in Sydney, which is focused upon in this study, addresses different identity groups.

Upon federation, the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* and the *Contract Immigrants Act 1905* enacted the legislative framework for what is popularly been known as the ‘White Australia Policy’. In the global context, British relations with the colonies influenced the legislation, which could not be blatantly racial (Vrachnas *et al.* 2005, 10). Until the *Migration Act 1958*, Australian government officials were able to engineer the racial basis of the population through a literacy

and dictation test in any European language. The Australian situation is unique as cultural identity has been:

[P]lanned and engineered to a greater extent than is true for almost anywhere else ... despite the relaxation of the White Australia policy in the 1960s ... there was little or no assistance for non-Europeans ... essentially, assisted passages were a form of social-engineering designed to keep Australia British (Jupp 2002, 17-18).

The subsequent dismantling of the 'White Australia' policy removed the governmental ability to direct the racial selection of migration (Department of Immigration and Border Protection [DIBP] 2015a). Yet, a historical comparison of migration figures demonstrates that Britain was still the major 'national' contributor to immigration every year until 1996 (Jupp 2002, 12). The historical migration patterns continue to influence the ethno-cultural dynamic in Australia and the greater Sydney region [hereafter Sydney].⁴⁰ In Sydney, only 36.2% of people have both parents born in Australia, while 63.8% have one or more parents born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2013a). Furthermore, 58.1% of individuals in Sydney are born in Australia, with the rest being born overseas (ibid.). Despite the opening up of migration, the predominant ancestry groups in Sydney are of Anglo, Celtic, and Australian backgrounds (ibid.).⁴¹ However, recent changes in migration mean that the ethno-cultural heritage in Sydney is diversifying. Even though the predominant ancestry groups are of Anglo-Celtic and Australian background, the largest percentage of overseas births comes from China at 3.7% (ibid.).⁴² While the trends indicate a shifting cultural dynamic, there are still mechanisms favouring migration from certain nation-states over others. Massey's (1991) notion of 'power-geometries' is useful here, as there are some 'identities' that continue to have greater mobility and control in the process of migratory flows. These individuals by

⁴⁰ The Sydney region encompasses a geographical area (12,367.7 square kilometres) that stretches from the central business district to Penrith and encompasses suburbs north and south of the city centre.

⁴¹ The 2011 Census (ABS 2013a) identifies that the largest ancestry group in Sydney is 19.4% English, followed by 19.3% Australian, 6.4% Irish, 7.0% Chinese, 4.8% and Scottish.

⁴² These figures exclude the Special Administrative Regions and Taiwan. China is followed by England (3.3%), India (2.2%), New Zealand (2.0%), and Vietnam (1.7%) (ABS 2013a).

circumstance of their location and position in society, tend to meet the criteria that favour skilled migrants and those with pre-existing family networks located in Australia. Comparatively, even if other individuals such as refugees are mobile, they are in less control of the process. Migration and border protection policies are contemporary attempts to control the national space/power/identity formation in the context of the free-market economy.

Although the current migration policy is not based upon race or ethnicity, legislation enables the government to maintain control over who enters and remains in Australia. The process of entry for most individuals must occur under a range of visas addressing work or family categories, but the *Migration Act 1958* also stipulates the legislative provisions for the irregular movement of asylum seekers and refugees. *Migration Regulations 1994*, a subsequent legislative act made under the *Migration Act 1958* modifies the original legislative framework to grant political discretion when regulating irregular movement. Vrachnas *et al.* state that the *Migration Regulations 1994* ‘provide the procedural mechanism for how that power is to be administered and ... are relatively easy to amend in response to new policy developments or judicial interpretation’ (2005, 20). *Migrations Regulations 1994* allows migration and refugee policy to be amended in relation to the political climate. Asylum seeker and refugee policies are thus subject to popular politics, and are often issues in electoral campaigning. The political importance of migration is such that the federal department responsible for managing migration often has name changes to reflect the ideological shifts.⁴³ *Migration Act 1958* and *Migration Regulations 1994* shape the current governmental policy, which allows migration to occur in two streams. One permits migration under the category of skilled and family migrants, while the other is a humanitarian programme dedicated to

⁴³ Even the change of names used to identify the department responsible for immigration has reflected political changes: The Department of Immigration (1945-1974), Department of Labor and Immigration (1974-1975), Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1975-1987), Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (1987-1993), Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1993-1996), Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (1996-2001), Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (2001-2006), Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006-07), Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007-2013), and Department of Immigration and Border Protection (2013-present).

resettling refugees and asylum seekers (DIBP 2015b). The legislative changes that removed racial criteria as a basis for migration do not necessarily influence the political rhetoric, which continues to communicate that the movement of some people is far more desirable than others.⁴⁴

The maritime borders are of symbolic importance when representing the national space/power/identity formation throughout Australian history. Historicising the current political discourses regarding ‘border control’ allows an account of the long-term ‘identity’ anxieties connected to the maritime boundary. Both special interest groups (figure 1) and the Australian government (figure 2) historically connect identity and power to space. The 2013 Labor-led government advertisement ‘You won’t be settled in Australia’ is a contemporary manifestation of historicised border concerns (figure 3). The three figures span very different periods in Australian history, yet there is a visual continuity emphasising the need to protect maritime borders. Although the 2013 Labor advertisement appears to address the external non-Australian community, it targets those within the nation. Different platforms conveyed the advertisements across Australian radio, print newspapers, posters, through an online website, and Australian television news programmes reported on the campaign (*7 News* and *9 News* 20-07-2013).⁴⁵ A departmental spokesperson confirmed that the campaign targeted the ‘ethnic communities in Australia which are the main boat people source ... [including] Afghans, Iranians, Sri Lankans, and more recently Vietnamese people...’ (Jabour 2013). The 2013 governmental campaign is pertinent, as it demonstrates how the threat to the borders is no longer from the outside, but also from within Australian communities. This is particularly heightened within the city of Sydney, where 49.1% of individuals were born outside Australia

⁴⁴ There are still those who, because they are citizens of certain nations, have greater mobility and power to move about. They are more likely to be able to leave their countries of origin and to arrive in Australia without issue (as part of temporary or more permanent migration movements). Yet, asylum seekers and refugees tend not to have the same power, despite being able to move about. See Massey (1991, 26) for the way that power-geometries affects the movement of different social groups. Additionally, asylum seekers and refugees tend to come from the global regions associated not only with conflict but also with ‘terrorism’, which complicates further their ability to move about.

⁴⁵ See sections 4.1.3 and 4.3.1 for an analysis of this advertisement in commercial television news reports during the period of this study.

(ABS 2013a). The political and mediatised discourses on migration need to be continually contextualised in relation to the historical and ongoing concerns regarding national borders.

Mythologising the maritime borders is an important part of the ‘Australian’ political imaginary, and shapes the perception of a distinctive ability to manage space and identity. Current media discourse on the Islamic State attacks in Paris point to the ‘unique’ Australian ability to control maritime borders, which act as a natural barrier unlike the porous European land borders (Wroe 2015). The movement of displaced people, as a result of ongoing conflict in the Middle East, has placed increased pressures on borders across the globe resulting in the rise of right-wing political parties in Europe (Adler 2016). While there is a popular focus on the maritime borders in Australia, the official governmental discourses go beyond the notion of a fixed physical border. The Australian Customs and Border Protection 2012-2013 Annual Report identifies its role:

The border is a strategic national asset – it is fundamental both to our national security and to our economic prosperity. In today’s world, the border can no longer be considered a purely physical barrier that separates nation[-]states. The border is a complex continuum that enables and controls the flow of people and the movement of goods through dynamic supply chains. The continuum stretches onshore and offshore and includes the overseas, maritime, physical border and domestic dimensions of the border, referred to as the border continuum ... By working effectively across each dimension of the continuum, we are able to control who and what has the right to enter or exit and under what conditions (DIBP 2015c, 2).

In the context of Chapter 1 section 1.3, the official definition of the Australian border is particularly relevant. The traditional notion of a national space/power/identity border is widened by engaging with the ‘domestic dimensions’ as well as the global ‘overseas’ context (ibid.). As space/power/identity cannot be thought of in purely ‘national’ terms without simultaneously invoking the local and global spaces, the media and communications environment in Australia needs to be contextualised in relation to the history of migration and the changing ‘flow of people’ that have altered the socio-cultural demographic of the nation.

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Figure 1: ‘Some of the “propaganda” material published by the Million Farms Campaign Committee’, 1901-1939 (National Archives of Australia 2015)

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Figure 3: You Won’t Be Settled In Australia
(*9 News* 20-07-2013)

Figure 2: ‘Ringed with menace!’ 1942
(Australian War Memorial 2015)

2.2 Television in Sydney: associating migration with broadcasting

Communications and media legislation have historically evolved in Australia to adapt to the changing needs of an increasingly culturally diverse population. The *Broadcasting and Television Act 1942* contains the legislative framework for television broadcasting in Australia. The original mixed-model approach provides both a public service government funded network (ABC) and commercial networks. The introduction of television in Australia in 1956 began with the National Television Network (Nine Network), the Australian Television Network (Seven Network), and the ABC. The growing demands of the population allowed for a third commercial network, and Network Ten was established in Sydney in 1965. The Fraser government amended the *Broadcasting and Television Act 1942* to provide legislation for the Special Broadcasting Services [SBS], which officially came into force in 1978. Initially, the SBS supplied pre-recorded governmental information in a variety of migrant languages. Full-time transmission commenced in 1980, and the channel has evolved to include a range of televisual programming with a global or multiethnic focus.⁴⁶ These five networks comprise free-to-air television in Sydney, in addition to paid cable subscription services.⁴⁷ The legislative structures that shape television broadcasting in Sydney anchor the ways in which the networks address different audiences.

The evolution of television broadcasting in Australia directly relates to demographic changes, and the networks produce content for a range of audiences across the local and national spaces. News programmes on ABC and SBS target national audiences, with the ABC

⁴⁶ As of 2012, National Indigenous Television is also part of the SBS Network. Currently SBS News services provides access to foreign language news programming in terms of *Arabic News*, *Armenian News*, *Cantonese News*, *Croatian News*, *Czech News*, *Dutch News*, *Filipino News*, *French News First Edition*, *French News Second Edition*, *German News*, *Greek News from Cyprus*, *Hindi News*, *Hong Kong News*, *Hungarian News*, *Indonesian News*, *Japanese News*, *Korean News*, *Latin American News*, *Macedonian News*, *Maltese News*, *Mandarin News*, *PBS Newshour*, *Polish News*, *Portuguese News*, *Romanian News*, *Russian News*, *Serbian News*, *Somali News*, *Spanish News*, *Sri Lankan Sinhalese News*, *Turkish News*, *Ukrainian News*, and *Urdu News*. This is in addition to the SBS produced news programmes *Dateline*, *Insight*, and *World News Australia*, *Living Black*, *The Feed*, *The Observer Effect*.

⁴⁷ These include Al Jazeera English, A-PAC, BBC World News, Bloomberg Television, Channel News Asia, China Central Television, CNBC Australia, CNN International, EuroNews, Fox News, HLN, NDTV 24x7, NHK World, RT, and Sky News Australia (including the Sky News Business and Weather Channel).

providing more regional news and the SBS greater international coverage. Comparatively, commercial networks compete for local audiences with the Seven Network and the Nine Network traditionally dominating the ratings (OzTAM 2016).⁴⁸ The evening programmes are of particular significance, as they tend to be the most popularly viewed news programmes.⁴⁹ The attempt to grab ratings among the commercial channels results in the appeal to localised audiences and identity in a popular manner. Jakubowicz *et al.* (1994, 14) argue that ‘the rhetoric of cultural pluralism for ethnic communities at SBS has allowed the television industry in general to remain largely unaffected by the cultural changes wrought by migration’. Furthermore, the representations of ethnic identity in commercial news and current affairs programmes often occur in a sensationalised and negative manner (Muscat 2015; Phillips 2009, 2011; Phillips and Tapsall 2007). Although content on Australian television tends to grapple with identity discourses across programming formats, the discourses in news programmes are particularly pertinent given the political nature of the news genre.

The politicised focus on migration means that popular national space/power/identity discourses link to the local and global dimensions of culture, ethnicity, race, and religion. These discourses are spatial and relational, integrating both internal and external pressures in any invocation of the nation-state. While these discourses are not inherently new, there is a heightened attention upon intra-national and extra-national geographical boundaries. In the post-September 11 environment, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism draws out questions of local cultural integration and border protection against external threat. The ongoing concerns over the longstanding impacts of migration, cultural diversity, and assimilation upon the nation-state manifest across both public and commercial television programmes. Documentary series programmes on the ABC and SBS are currently concerned with

⁴⁸ While there are a number of problems with OzTAM and this has been highlighted in academic research and within the industry, it is the only mechanism of measuring commercial ratings within Australia and as such has to be used by networks and to support the argument here (Lawe Davies and Sternberg 2007, Young 2009).

⁴⁹ See n. 82 in Chapter 3, section 3.3 for an account of the ratings.

investigating social relations between different cultural groups and the cultural frictions in Australian society.⁵⁰ The excerpt from Tony Abbott's response on *Q&A* contained in the 'Introduction' chapter, are a barometer of the tone of the political rhetoric on migration over the past few years. That television news and current affairs concentrate on the 'official' and political sources results in a mediated focus on the space/power/identity boundaries of the Australian nation. The ongoing political concerns regarding migration and multiculturalism have generated a range of Australian studies investigating the representation of identity in media. The following section undertakes a review of media scholarship to examine how the relationship between identity, television news, and audiences has so far been dealt with.

2.3 Analysing news and identity: production, content, and reception

The historical circumstances of migration have also influenced Australian media research. A number of studies arose in the early 1990s investigating the representation of identity (Bell 1992, Coupe *et al.* 1992, Goodall *et al.* 1990, Jakubowicz *et al.* 1994). These studies explored the representation of multicultural Australia in media and, with the exception of Jakubowicz *et al.* (1994), these reports were produced for then Office of Multicultural Affairs [OMA] under Labor-led governments of Australia.⁵¹ By investigating representation in media content, these studies place an explicit focus on identity and the processes of cultural inclusion. However, other research also engages specifically with the television news genre (Putnis 1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b; Harrington 2013), or its ability to meet professional journalistic standards in constantly changing communications environments (Pearson *et al.* 2001). Research on television news is often subsumed in larger projects aimed at providing broad overviews of the media industry (ACMA 2011, Nielsen and Schröder 2014, Newman *et al.*

⁵⁰ SBS and ABC have aired a number of television series in the past few years addressing this including *First Contact* (SBS 2014), *Go Back to Where You Came From* (SBS 2011-2012), *Once Upon a Time in Cabramatta* (SBS 2012), *Redfern Now* (ABC 2012-2013), and *Living With the Enemy* (SBS 2014).

⁵¹ Bob Hawke was the Labor Prime Minister of Australia from 1983 to 1991, and Paul Keating the Labor Prime Minister of Australia from 1991 to 1996. The Hawke government established the OMA, and it continued while Paul Keating was Prime Minister of Australia. Upon election, the Coalition government led by John Howard disbanded the OMA.

2016, Papathanassopoulous *et al.* 2013, Pearson *et al.* 2001, Watkins *et al.* 2016). There are a number of diverse approaches to understanding television news content, through both broad and specific studies. The literature review identifies a gap in media research analysis of commercial television news approaches, to understand how audiences draw from television news programmes in their everyday lives to build space/power/identity knowledge.

2.3.1 Genre-based analyses of news media

Research analysing the production of television news often occurs in relation to the professional ideals of the news genre.⁵² These news genre-based studies generate an understanding of the ways news information is produced, mediated, and subsequently used by audiences. Although these studies are not explicitly concerned with the representation of identity or space, they are still relevant as news content is inevitably bound by space/power/identity formations. Much of the research on television news also includes a pre-theorised notion of space by addressing the nation, and the internal-external relationships that shape the production and reception of content.

Production-based analyses in Australian media research are inextricably connected to the construction of news content. Seminal early studies on the television news production environments contribute to knowledge on the relationship between economics and space. Putnis' (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b) ethnographic observation of television newsrooms sheds light on the economic and structural limitations of commercial television news production. When investigating the production of international news, Putnis finds that there is a heavy reliance on international news feeds across *7 News* and *10 News* (1995, 1996a, 1996b). Coverage is often skewed to focus on the nation-states that have stronger relations with Australia. It is presumed that this would be of great interest to the wider Australian population

⁵² As an analysis of the news production environment is outside the purview of the study, a comprehensive literature review on both Australian and international news production research is not included in this thesis. Rather, select studies on commercial television news production are included in the review. These studies contextualise news production research in Australia. The research reviewed here lays the foundations for understanding how the Australian news environment has changed, and how this might alter the ways that space/power/identity discourses are produced.

and ensure wide viewership. These economic structural limitations also apply to the local domestic context when considering the use of visual material (Putnis 1994). In a study of Channel 2, 7, 9, and 10 news reports in Brisbane, Putnis found 50% of reports use recycled file tape (*ibid.*). The heavy reliance on recycled tape has semiotic implications. Visual materials can be taken out of context and reframed with new information, perpetuating stereotypical knowledge about certain issues. Yet, since Putnis' research (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b), the communications environment has altered. The traditional limitations of news production are reduced through technological developments that provide the ability to rapidly disseminate visual footage through online and satellite networks (Bivens 2014, 2015). Whether visual materials in television news programmes are produced in the same spatial-economic constraints can be elucidated by considering how report content incorporates video footage from a range of sources.

Recent media research on the televisual news format also engages with approaches of production and reception as part of a wider change in the news genre. The news genre has increasingly adapted to the audience by blending the provision of political information with entertainment (Harrington 2013). Harrington argues that the news environment has responded with the creation of news programmes that construct 'the public sphere in new, more complex ways' when moving beyond the dichotomy of tabloid and serious news (2013, 149). In-depth interviews with viewers and with industry professionals lead to the findings that these new 'news' programmes are used in an inherently political manner. Yet, Harrington is unable to shed light on the way in which hybridised news and entertainment shows 'generate real interpersonal political talk' (*ibid.*, 153). In order to analyse how audiences engage in political talk, Harrington advocates an ethnographic immersion by the researcher into the 'daily practices and the social worlds of the people studied' (Sputnik 1993, 298 in Harrington 2013, 153). The ethnographic approach would accommodate "thick descriptions" of lived experiences, and not simply audience voices alone' (Harrington 2013, 153). When pointing to

future directions for ethnographic audience research, Harrington draws upon the calls made by Morley to:

[R]ecognize the relationship between viewers and the television set as they are mediated by the determinances of everyday life – and by the audience’s daily involvement with all the other technologies in play in the conduct of mediated quotidian communication (1992, 197).

However, Morley directly addresses the benefits of interviews over ethnographic observation. He raises attention to the possibilities that ‘observing behaviour always leaves open the question of interpretation’, and that researchers must inevitably ask audiences about their ‘television viewing’ to understand processes of mediation (Morley 1992, 172). The interview method is beneficial in providing:

[A]ccess ... to the respondent’s conscious opinions and statements but also for the access to the linguistic terms and categories ... through which respondents construct their world and own understandings of their activities (Morley 1992, 181).

Ethnographic participant observation may not elaborate any more clearly than interviews the ways in which ‘TV news [programmes] are really “used” by their audiences’ (2013, 155), particularly in the current media environment. Social and online media platforms are increasingly integrated into individuals’ everyday lives. The immersion creates new challenges for the methodological use of ethnographic observation to explain audience behaviours, as it is difficult to observe all points of media use and political talk across these platforms. A range of Australian and international studies investigate the relationship between television news and other media platforms through interviews and focus group research.

Pearson *et al.* (2001) map the production and reception of television news as part of their study for the ABA researching the Australian news media environment. The study on news and current affairs includes a quantitative large-scale survey of the attitudes of both news producers and news consumers across all traditional news platforms (Pearson *et al* 2001,

315).⁵³ The use of focus groups also allows for methodological balance, including six groups (a total of fifty-six people) across Brisbane, Sydney, Dubbo, and Kingaroy (ibid., 320). The audience findings demonstrate that there are widespread concerns regarding the tabloidisation and the quality of reporting in commercial television news programmes (ibid., 353-4). While the study engages with audiences across a range of places, it neglects the sub-local formations contained in the cities. The two Sydney focus groups feature a range of different socio-economic classes, occupations, and age groups across the nineteen individuals (ibid., 322). However, individuals from the Southern and Western suburban region of Sydney are absent from the study (ibid., 314).⁵⁴ The exclusion impacts upon the results when the space/power/identity dimensions in the Sydney region are further considered. The data is skewed towards those less likely to watch commercial television news programmes. Based upon the economic model, commercial television news programmes must be aimed at the regions in Sydney with the highest populations or audience shares (the South-West and West) to maximise economic gains and ratings.⁵⁵ Audiences are more likely to view commercial television news programmes in the South-Western and Western Sydney regions, as content targets these individuals.⁵⁶ Different spatial contexts afford individuals with alternative social

⁵³ Notably, the large-scale quantitative audience analysis is undertaken through the random sample of 1620 individuals in structured interview surveys (Pearson *et al* 2001, 315).

⁵⁴ The exception to this is the inclusion of one individual from Burwood Heights (Inner West), Carlingford/Telopea (North-West), and Miranda (South) (Pearson *et al.* 2001, 314).

⁵⁵ As of 2011, the population of the Greater Western Sydney region is 1,923,698 and the total population of Sydney is 4,391,674 (ABS 2013j). The Greater Western Sydney region is comprised of both the West and South-West City Council areas of Auburn, Blue Mountains, Bankstown, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Camden, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Hills, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith, and Wollondilly.

⁵⁶ The South-Western and Western Sydney markets are the largest audiences in the Sydney region, and are the people who would most probably be likely to tune into their programmes. The target market is most notable when the 2013 promotional material for the evening *7 News* programme is considered, as it emphasises a 'local' approach to news coverage. One of the news advertisements includes the naming of Sydney suburbs in the following order: Liverpool, Blacktown, Castle Hill, Campbelltown, Hornsby, Cabramatta, South Wentworthville, Chatswood, Mona Vale, Parramatta, Cronulla, Bankstown, Strathfield, and Mt. Colah. The emphasis on locality is also brought to the fore with the voiceover stating 'We don't just work in Sydney', followed by the evening news anchor Chris Bath affirming 'We live here, I grew up here [South Wentworthville] and went to school right here'. The news advertisement concludes with the tagline '7 News First for Sydney'. The *7 News* promotional advertisements draw particular attention to the Western Suburbs of Sydney as they are more frequently included, and are featured higher in the list of suburbs. In contrast, the *9 News* 2013 promotional advertisements draw upon the historical popularity of the news programme. In one of the advertisements the voiceover states '[i]n news experience counts ... [a range of soundbites are spliced together from reporters in a range of Australian and global contexts] experience is why you see it first on 9 News'. The advertisement concludes with the tagline 'See it First, 9 News, Sydney's No.1'.

experiences. The exclusion of individuals from the West and South-West of Sydney is a gap in Australian audience research, and it is necessary to consider news media use in the sub-local spatial formations.⁵⁷ Other research also investigates the continued importance of television news among wider media platforms.

A number of studies consider how Australian audiences access news in the contemporary media environment (ACMA 2011, Newman *et al.* 2016, Papathanassopoulous *et al.* 2013, Watkins *et al.* 2016). In Australia, the availability of digital media in everyday life is marked by a high internet penetration rate of 93% (Newman *et al.* 2016, 78). Comparing news use across platforms, the ACMA (2011, 39) found that Australians continue to use television news programmes as their main source of everyday news information, followed by online and newspaper sources. Additionally, the commercial television news programmes were the most favoured source of television news (*ibid.*). Papathanassopoulous *et al.* (2013) further contextualise Australian news consumption in relation to a range of other countries in their eleven-country comparison of news access.⁵⁸ Although individuals are more likely to use online sources of information across the nation-states included in their research, they find that television news is the consistently preferred source of news use across all age groups in Australia. The results underscore the importance of television, as:

[D]espite the vast universe of alternatives, TV remains the most popular choice for news ...

That would seem to contradict the idea of a 'rapidly changing media' ... the fact is that audiences within the TV news remain stable (Papathanassopoulous *et al.* 2013, 701).

The televisual platform continues to dominate news preferences in Australia. As outlined in the 'Introduction' of this thesis, the recent *Digital News Report: Australia 2016* reaffirms

⁵⁷ Research cannot automatically equate the experiences of individuals living within Sydney with those living in Melbourne. Similarly, it is not possible to conflate the everyday experiences of people from Western Sydney with individuals living in the Eastern suburbs. There are variations within even short distances based upon the demographic and housing market in Sydney. For example, Mt. Druitt and Castle Hill are not that proximately far from each other but have a considerably different demographic and corresponding outlook.

⁵⁸ These eleven countries include Australia, Canada, Colombia, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Norway, South Korea, United Kingdom, and United States (Papathanassopoulous *et al.* 2013).

these trends. Television news is the main source of news for respondents, and commercial television news programmes are the most used news brands (Watkins *et al.* 2016, 26-27). Nielsen and Schröder's (2014) eight-country comparison of social media and news consumption further contextualises audiences' news use.⁵⁹ While the study excludes Australia, it nonetheless provides important findings on the international news audiences and social media. Nielsen and Schröder state that across all countries in the study television is the most popular and widely used platform for news (2014, 479-480). Social media has limited role as a news source, but rather it functions as a gateway to finding news information on other online websites (*ibid.*, 473). Situating an analysis of commercial television news audiences among their broader online and offline media facilitates a greater understanding of the ways in which space/power/identity discourses are mobilised or contested.

2.3.2 Identity-based analyses of news media

There have been a number of studies in the Australian context that investigate the relationship between power and identity through the lens of ethnicity (Bell 1992; Coupe *et al.* 1992; Dreher 2000a, 2000b; Goodall *et al.* 1990; Jakubowicz *et al.* 1994; Phillips 2011, 2009; Phillips and Tapsall, 2007; Poynting *et al.* 2004). While these studies lay the groundwork for considering space/power/identity formations, further research is required to establish how audiences draw upon television news discourses on ethnicity as part of their everyday lived experiences. This subsection highlights the importance of investigating audiences' use of mediated discourses on ethnicity within the participation paradigm, situating television news as part of a range of information sources and social interactions.

Early research on the representation of identity in television news in the early 1990s was shaped by the need to analyse multiculturalism in media content. These studies empirically address the representation of ethnic communities in relation to the dominant

⁵⁹ The analysis is of developed democracies with different media systems and includes Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Nielsen and Schröder 2014).

Anglo-Australian national culture. The report by Goodall *et al.* (1990) for the then OMA provides a broad overview of the representation of multiculturalism in Australia across a range of different platforms. News and current affairs content is a sub-set of the wider media environment, rather than the focus of a genre-specific analysis. Through a qualitative methodological approach, the findings establish that news and current affairs content frame ethnicity in exclusionary perspectives and in terms of social conflict (1990, 38). Additionally, there are connotations between the negative features of the 'Third World' nation-states that are associated with the representation of certain ethnic groups in Australia (*ibid.*). In contrast, Anglo-Australian cultural identity is included in media content as the 'real' or 'traditional' culture of the Australian nation-state (*ibid.*, 52). While not explicitly drawing upon active audience theory, their work is nonetheless informed by the work of Morley (1980) and the wider context of international media research at the time. Audiences are theorised as being involved in processes of negotiating ideological meaning in textual content; however, it is also noted that:

For adults, the media are one of many sources of opinion and information, though on social issues outside the direct experience of the individual, they play an extremely important role in agenda-setting identifying issues and how they might be understood (Goodall *et al.* 1990, 13).

By acknowledging the relationship between direct experiences and media content, Goodall *et al.* find that media tend to set the frameworks of understanding for audiences. These observations are reinforced by Dreher's (2000a, 2000b) work on the relationship between audiences' experiences with television, identity, and 'belonging' in the South-Western Sydney suburb of Cabramatta. Dreher (2000a, 2000b) argues that although the Cabramatta residents challenge the negative media representations, they also express the feeling that television creates a sense of exclusionary 'national identity' to which they do not belong. The Cabramatta audiences' interactions with individuals from other regions and cultural groups in Sydney suggest that mediated representations can indeed shape knowledge of both space and

identity formations. Any investigation of the mediated representations of identity also needs to come to terms with space, connecting local power-identity formations in Sydney to the broader global context.

A number of other core studies follow Goodall *et al.*'s report on media and multiculturalism. Bell's (1992) report for the then OMA also provides a broad quantitative analysis of the representation of multicultural Australia across traditional media platforms. By reviewing content across a range of media platforms, Bell addresses the ways in which televisual news production differs from news on other platforms. Television news production 'is dependent on visual news resources and more directly dependent on events rather than issues' (1992, 50). The analysis of news topics establishes that international conflict as linked to local ethnic relations is more likely to be covered than 'abstract' issues such as immigration debates. Bell (1992) also finds that the commercial news programmes frame multiculturalism differently to the public broadcast news programmes. Commercial networks represent ethnicity in relation to crime, celebrities, law and order, and politics. In addition, commercial news is more negative in their reporting of ethnicity and multiculturalism but they also provided greater coverage on the issues compared to the ABC (1992, 54). The report is able to quantitatively show that ethnic labelling most often occurred in the context of crime and immigration reports (*ibid.*). The specific ethnic labels directly link to the demographic changes in Australian society. Bell states that:

'Chinese' ('Asian') and 'Italians' were the most stereotyped. 'Arabs' and 'Muslims' had dropped off the agenda only a few months after the excesses of the media coverage of the Gulf War (1992, xi).

These findings are in contrast to the recent representations of ethnic identity, which tends to excessively focus on Middle Eastern or Muslim stereotypes (Phillips 2011, 2009; Phillips and

Tapsall, 2007).⁶⁰ The shifts in the stereotyped representations of different ethnic groups are indicative of the shifts in the Australian demographic as a consequence of changes in migration patterns. Bell's report also finds that the negative coverage of ethnicity connected to policy and economic frameworks:

Multiculturalism as such was not seen as an issue by the media except when linked to immigration policy (or more crudely, numbers) and hence to economics. The media tend to report policy and politics in narrow economic terms, and immigration is frequently linked to speculative (even quite ridiculously naïve) economic arguments by commentators in the media or commentators whom the media quotes as experts (1992, 80).

This politicisation of identity in relation to spatial concerns and economic rationalism is still relevant in the current media climate. While Bell's (1992) research is quantitative, other studies also contribute to a qualitative understanding of the representation of ethnic identity in Australia.

Research on media production and audience reception also reinforces the findings that Australian media content convey exclusionary representations of ethnic identity (Coupe *et al.* 1992, Jakubowicz *et al.* 1994). Jakubowicz *et al.* (1994) incorporate interviews with both media producers and audiences. Coupe *et al.* (1992) conduct a number of focus groups based on different cultural identities, with each group comprising diverse ethnic representation. The focus groups expressed concerns regarding the stereotyped and negative representation of ethnic individuals (Coupe *et al.* 1992, 48-50), and emphasised the tendency of media to represent a monocultural Anglo-Australia (ibid., 17-19). Poynting *et al.* (2004) also replicate the methodological structure of investigating the representation of ethnicity across a broad range of Australian media content. They canvas radio, print, and broadcast television news material to argue that Arab ethnicity is constructed within frameworks of fear and anxiety to

⁶⁰ For terminological clarification, throughout the thesis Muslim is used to refer to individuals (Muslim integration, Muslim refugee); whereas Islam/Islamic refers to the specific faith or religious beliefs.

create a situation of ‘paranoid nationalism’ (Hage 2002 in Poynting *et al.* 2004, 78). Through interviews with members of local communities in South-Western Sydney, they establish:

[C]rime and criminal gangs have been ideologically reconstituted as an ‘ethnic problem’, that is, as a non-Anglo-Celtic phenomenon in Sydney despite crime statistics and histories to the contrary (2004, 218).

The combination of cross-media textual analysis and focus group research in the studies is particularly useful in understanding community attitudes to Australian media content. The studies elucidate the connections between media content and audience concerns with regard to representations of cultural diversity, particularly negative representations. Yet, such wide-ranging analyses of media content are unable to shed light on the specific ways that commercial television news programmes produce space/power/identity discourses. Considering Bell’s observations on the visual specificities of the television news genre, a gap exists in understanding the representation and reception of ‘identity’ discourses across the televisual medium.⁶¹ However, recent research on the mediated representations of ethnic identity has begun to address the specificities of the televisual medium.

The continued analytical focus on the representation of multicultural Australia in news content underscores the ongoing importance of researching ‘identity’. Notably, the *Reporting Diversity* project was conducted by Phillips (2009, 2011) and Phillips and Tapsall (2007) for the then Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and also the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. By employing both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of ethnic inclusion across television journalism, the *Reporting Diversity* study finds the continued stereotyping of the non-dominant ethnic groups in relation to Anglo-Australia. The project establishes that the specificities of the televisual medium contribute to the negative tone of ethnic minority inclusion:

⁶¹ While these studies incorporate text and audience based analysis, recent research has increasingly focused on analysing how different cultural groups and ‘diasporic’ audiences actually use media sources. In particular, see Poynting *et al.* (2004) and Dreher (2003).

[I]n Australia's domestic news the convention of television news storytelling underscores this sense of 'otherness' through both visual and verbal presentation techniques (Phillips and Tapsall 2007, 30).

Phillips and Tapsall maintain that these constructions of otherness must be contextualised in the 'political climate of 2005' in order to understand the overwhelming focus on Muslim identity in a post-September 11 moral panic of cultural identity and terrorism (ibid., 31). The statement has particular gravity in the context of the findings that ethnic minority inclusion is most likely to occur in relation to crime reporting, perpetuating discourses of the deviant 'other'. While Phillips' (2009) subsequent research finds a decline in the negative frames, ethnic identity continues to be constructed in relation to Anglo-Australia. The structure of television news reports also demonstrates that ethnic minorities are rarely provided the opportunity to speak when they are included in content (Phillips 2009, 27). These patterns in coverage also extend to the analysis of current affairs programmes. Commercial networks avoid 'outright racial vilification', but they employ 'racial hierarchies' and engage in 'racial profiling' in content (Phillips 2011, 30). In comparison, ethnic inclusion on ABC current affairs content is more inclusive and 'diversity appears more normalised' (ibid., 26). Phillips quotes Cottle to underscore the political role of television news and current affairs:

[T]hrough its presentational formats, TV news literally mediates the surrounding play of social and cultural power and, potentially, plays a vital role in serving to enact, and thereby enhance and deepen, cultural citizenship (Cottle 2001, 75 in Phillips 2011, 24).

While television news programmes do have a role in mediating knowledge, this process cannot be understood through textual analysis alone. The relationship between audiences' use of television news, the constructions in the news programmes, and the wider media practices and social engagement needs to be simultaneously investigated. The lack of research calls for

an in-depth study on the ways in which Australian audiences appropriate television news content to shape their knowledge of space/power/identity relationships.

A number of Australian studies also research the representation of identity in media outside television news (Couldry and Dreher 2007, Dreher 2003, Hopkins 2011, Klocker and Dunn 2008, Nunn 2010, Pickering 2001, Salazar 2010, Saxton 2003). The studies are included here as they conceptualise either mediated identity or audiences' participation in generating alternative content. The overwhelming tendency for ethnicity to be constructed in negative frames also applies to the representation of asylum seekers. Print media discourses perpetuate the negative coverage of asylum seekers through criminalised representations focusing on the constructions of 'deviancy' (Pickering 2001). While there are hegemonic openings in print media content that deviate from governmental discourse, there is ultimately a reliance on 'official' sources (Klocker and Dunn 2003, 85).⁶² Furthermore, Klocker and Dunn find that 'a lack of contextualising information' leads to negative portrayals of asylum seekers (ibid.). Saxton's (2003) analysis of the Australian print media echoes these findings when investigating the negative representation of asylum seekers. However, the coverage is not only negative but also constructed in relation to an exclusionary nationalist discourse (ibid., 118). The tendency of mainstream media to perpetuate negative representations has resulted in the creation of alternative community media content. Both participatory film media and community-based radio programmes are domains that enable positive representations of refugees, perspectives which are absent from mainstream media content (Couldry and Dreher 2007, Salazar 2010). News media interventions at a community level also enable 'othered' groups to challenge the dominant stereotyped representations by producing their own content (Dreher 2003). In the absence of positive mainstream media representations, alternative and new media projects are useful spaces for self-representation in refugee communities (Nunn 2010). By using focus groups, Hopkins (2011) investigates how Turkish, Muslim, and

⁶² See the 'Introduction' for the definition of 'hegemonic openings'.

Australian identity discourses are mobilised in relation to new media. Hopkins' (2011) analysis of the everyday lived practices finds that:

[D]espite being surrounded by media production practices which continuously simplify complexity, through carefully managed reading and viewing, individuals are able to negotiate and deconstruct such practices to produce more subtle, nuanced and meaningful social identities (2011, 127-128).

Not only does this shift the theoretical focus to the audiences, but the concentration on alternative media highlights the everyday processes through which audiences appropriate or contest mediated knowledge on identity across wider communication networks. Such an approach is useful in conceptualising methods for investigating the ways audiences' employ news media in their everyday lives.

Research on the representation of identity often subsumes an analysis of television news into the broader print, radio, television media environment. This obfuscates the ways by which the specific televisual medium and the news genre impacts upon the representation of identity and space. By analysing Australian media research, this section furthers the argument that it is necessary to investigate the role of commercial television news programmes as part of the audiences' everyday lives. A review of international media research is attempted below to provide a broader understanding of the relationship between audiences and television news programmes in developing an account of the 'participation paradigm' (Livingstone 2013, 24).

2.4 The participation paradigm

In international media research, the theoretical relationship between media content and the audience has been at the core of the research agenda. Conceptualisations of audience behaviour have been divided into active and passive approaches, which have co-existed throughout the history of media research. By providing an account of the active and passive approaches in audience research, this section argues that the 'participation paradigm'

facilitates a greater analytical account of audience behaviours across a range of social interactions.

Employing the terminology of active and passive to analyse audience behaviour is problematic, as it does not sufficiently address how contemporary audiences integrate media content into their everyday lives. In a historical review of audience studies as far back as the 1940s, Curran (1990) demonstrates that many of the arguments that were made during the phase of ‘active’ audience research had been effectively established long before by the ‘media effects’ researchers (146-147).⁶³ An extended account may seem extraneous, but it is necessary as it problematises the entrenched nature of the active-passive approach in audience research. Carpentier reinforces this position when asserting that the active-passive dimension ‘often takes an idealist position by emphasising the active role of the viewer in processes of signification’ (2011b, 192). The active-passive approach neglects the materialist and participatory aspects of audiences’ news practices (ibid., Livingstone 2013). An account of seminal audience studies from an active approach lays the foundations to argue for understanding audience behaviour in a ‘participation paradigm’.

Research on the representation of politics, ideology, and identity in media content manifests across a number of works (Fiske 1987, 1989; Hall 1980; Morley 1980). One of the landmark projects was Hall’s (1980) definitive work on the audience, which impacted upon the trajectory of Cultural Studies and Media Studies research of audience agency. The encoding-decoding model draws upon the works of Marx, Eco, Althusser, and Volisinov to stress the aspects of social semiotic coding and decoding (Hall 1980). Viewers could subsequently construct and draw upon their social context to negotiate the dominant hegemonic meaning in content. Similarly, Fiske’s (1987, 1989) concept of resistive reading

⁶³ Curran (1990) draws particular attention to two early studies. The first is Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet’s 1944 study investigating how people seek out content that reinforces their beliefs and avoid content that challenges their thoughts (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944 in Curran 1990, 148). The second is Levine and Murphy’s (1949) study on pro and anti-communist groups, which found that individuals tended to remember information that correlated with their existing beliefs and forget content that did not fit their worldview (Levine and Murphy 1949 in Curran 1990, 149).

emphasises audience 'activity'. The notion of resistive reading affords audiences polysemic agency in interpreting texts and changing the textually encoded meaning at the point of reception based upon their social contexts (ibid.). The active audience approach provides the audience with the ability to contest knowledge and apply alternative understandings to the dominant political message in content. In particular, Hall's encoding-decoding model is employed by Morley (1980) in his *Nationwide* study. Different social groups are investigated in relation to their reception of the television programme *Nationwide*. Their differing social contexts enable them to deconstruct the textual meanings differently (ibid.). However, Morley (1980, 140) also notes that:

[T]he recognition of 'preferring' mechanisms is widespread in the groups and combines with either acceptance or rejection of the encoded preferred reading; the awareness of the construction by no means entails the rejection of what is constructed

That the audiences have an awareness of the construction, and the processes of production, but do not necessarily reject the dominant meaning is significant as it draws attention to the issues of understanding audience 'activity'.

The limitations of the active-passive dichotomy in audience research manifests in other critiques of traditional audience reception studies. Both Ang (1985) and Liebes and Katz (1990) researched the reception of *Dallas* in divergent cultural settings, demonstrating the different ways of reading and retelling content is connected to cultural background. In reviewing their arguments, Silverstone (1994) points to the limitations of semantic engagement with the textual content as their findings:

[D]o not necessarily involve challenging the basic referentiality of the text or its ideological force. Viewers can be critical but still accept the basic, dominant, or structural meanings offered by the text ... it acknowledges the limits of the power of audience 'critique' ... it undermines the whole notion of critique as [being] in some sense liberatory (1994, 149-150).

An analytical reconsideration of the 1980s landmark studies on encoding-decoding reinforces these issues with concept of structural polysemy. Philo (2008) reviews the works of Hall (1980) and Morley (1980) to argue that subsequent ‘active’ audience research is problematic in the assumption that texts could produce different and new readings to a variety of people and groups. Drawing on research by the Glasgow University Media Group, Philo (2008) compares the reception of news relating to the 1984-85 British miners’ strike in terms of class relations. He establishes:

(1) Viewers do not typically construct new meaning with each encounter with a news text but rather, people can share an understanding of what is being presented and differ in their responses to it (acceptance or rejection), and (2) viewers do not necessarily occupy their own ‘sealed off’ cultural space, unaware of the values and definitions offered by others (Philo 2008, 538).

Philo further highlights the limitations of Morley’s (1980) work by stressing that even if audiences were able to ‘deconstruct’ the content, it did not lead to a rejection of ‘the view that was being promoted’ (ibid.). There are further problems in investigating the audience as ‘active’ in relation to the audiences’ understanding of different media genres. Audiences bring certain notions of what the news genre should do, which inherently restricts the diversity of meanings that audiences draw from the content.

With the focus on polysemic textual interpretations, audience research has also overemphasised the nature of oppositional decoding. An oppositional decoding is not, in itself, a manifestation of a political process or political power in any specific sense (Jensen 1990). Audiences do not necessarily challenge the ritualised uses of television news even if they hold a different understanding of news content. Rather, ‘viewer-citizens’ remain constrained in their use of news through the dominant social definitions of what ‘news’ should be and its perceived role in covering politics (ibid., 72-73). The semiotic processes of creating oppositional understandings do not materialise as audiences do not necessarily

transfer the opposition to the dominant meanings into actual political activity (ibid., 58). Instead of conceptualising audience behaviour as active or passive, the notion of audience ‘engagement’ might better address how audiences make use of media texts (Silverstone 1994, 169-170). In Australian media research, the actual ways in which texts are used to inform political knowledge and influence identity relationships remains unclear. Through a concentration on the semiotic processes of contesting textual ‘representations’, Australian audience studies have tended to neglect the more material processes of everyday participation. As such, moving beyond traditional audience reception and textual content analysis requires an analysis of the processes of ‘engagement’ and ‘participation’.

One of the approaches to transcending the active-passive dichotomy in media research is through the mediational perspective (Madianou 2005, Martin-Barbero 1993, Silverstone 1999, Thompson 1995). The mediational approach conceptualises media as a process, a ‘circulation of meaning’ across the production, textual, and reception contexts (Silverstone 1999, 13).⁶⁴ A mediational approach addresses the identity-media relationship by allowing a more complex theorisation of audiences and media content (Madianou 2005). Madianou’s empirical study moves beyond a top-down approach emphasising the media effects model, and the bottom-up approach that stresses powerful audience activity in resisting media effects (2005). Instead of top-down and bottom-up approaches, she argues that the concepts of mediation and performance are integral to analysing identity as a lived and dynamic phenomenon (ibid.). When constructing mediated identity discourses, individuals often oscillate between essentialist and critical positions (Madianou 2005, 136). Madianou asserts that ultimately, ‘the media/identity relationship emerges as a multifaceted process that depends on context’ (ibid.). The limits of Madianou’s study mean that it focuses upon the level of national identity, which cannot examine the ways that ‘citizenship’ extends beyond the nation. Notions of ‘citizenship’ have changed, in the post-national era where membership

⁶⁴ See also Chapter 1, section 1.1 for the concept of ‘double articulation’ for an account of the relational nature of the mediational approach.

and belonging are constituted across the bounds of the nation-state (ibid., 140). Madianou establishes that audience studies needs to engage in a:

[W]ider political project extending beyond the confines of the nation[-]state, while recognising the interconnections and cultural change that are already taking place at a transnational level (Madianou 2005, 140).

These calls to address the different spatial scales are important in the context of this thesis. Although the appeal to a post-national era may be overstated, as addressed in the previous chapter, there is a theoretical and empirical necessity to connect the simultaneous spatial scales with an analysis of mediated identity and power. Georgiou (2010, 22) argues that ‘a multi-spatial approach’ can come to terms with the complexity of media use among diaspora groups. By examining the Greek Cypriot diasporic use of media across New York and London, Georgiou (2006) engages with the transnational contexts of identity and processes of mediation. However, diaspora groups are not the only formation where mediated identity discourses can be analysed in relation to space. Rather, audiences’ media use needs to be explored in relation to a multiplicity of cultural identities and migratory positions. Investigating how viewers participate and engage with commercial television news content in their everyday lives facilitates an account of the audience that transcends the active-passive dichotomy and the spatial confines of the ‘national’ media.

2.5 Conclusion

In Australia, ongoing migration diversifies the population and intensifies the global-local identity connections. Historical changes to migration policy have continuing impacts upon the Australian population. Migration has led to a cultural diversification of the Australian population, which is particularly evident in metropolitan cities, such as Sydney. These shifts in migration and the emergence of a culturally diverse population have directed the evolution of the broadcasting infrastructure. The changes in migration patterns have also led to changes

in political discourses of the nation. In the demise of the 'White Australia' policy, discourses on space/power/identity could no longer be constituted through racial or cultural difference. The intertwined notions of space/power/identity are now constructed through 'border protection' debates and by invoking discourses of legality/illegality. The emphasis on proper process for entering a nation-state heightens the role of the national political powers and their ability to maintain the geographic territoriality and manage the identities within the nation-state space.

This chapter has provided an account of the ways in which news media, audience reception, identity, and migration have been the subject of research in both Australian and international academic scholarship. The changing nature of the media and communications environment necessitates a more comprehensive account of how audiences make use of television news discourses among wider networks of information. These theoretical challenges need to be met with a multifaceted methodological approach. The following chapter details the methodological approaches that are used to analyse television news content and audiences. This enables the subsequent analysis to address the complex manner by which audiences draw upon commercial television news programmes for space/power/identity knowledge.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The previous chapters established the importance of investigating the concepts of space, identity, and power as a co-constitutive discursive formation in relation to the ‘participation paradigm’ of audience research. This study examines the ways in which audiences use commercial television news to mediate their knowledge on space/power/identity relationships. A close analysis of two popular commercial television news programmes *7 Evening News* (*7 News*) and *9 Evening News* (*9 News*) is undertaken to explore the hegemonic openings where dominant discourses are challenged in news content. To account for the different facets of these research aims, the study employs a triangulated methodological approach when addressing both audiences and television news content. Through qualitative audience interview research, the study throws light on how audiences use television news discourses to inform their everyday knowledge on space/power/identity. The quantitative content analysis and the qualitative multimodal discourse analysis elaborate on the structure and types of space/power/identity discourses that are conveyed in television news reports.

3.1 Investigating the audience

The prevalence of media and communication technologies in individuals’ everyday life provides audiences access to mediated information at any point.⁶⁵ This media environment creates complexities when analysing how audiences use commercial television news programmes for space/power/identity knowledge. Any study that investigates television news in isolation, indifferent to the wider media networks, cannot comprehensively address the ways in which audiences negotiate and make use of news information. While participant observation has been popular in the field of audience research, it cannot account for the continuous presence of mediated information in individuals’ everyday lives. This section explores approaches to researching audiences, establishing that the interview method is best

⁶⁵ The internet penetration rate in Australia is 93% (Newman *et al.* 2016, 78). See also the introductory chapter for an account the ways Australians access news across traditional and online platforms.

suitied to investigating how audiences view television news programmes as part of broader media networks and social interactions.

3.1.1 Interview research

A combination of interviewing methods enables this study to investigate how audiences employ television news for space/power/identity knowledge. Individual and group interviews allow the researcher to explore different social contexts of viewing. Individual interviews afford the researcher greater flexibility in navigating individual responses, creating an unencumbered environment where interviewees can more freely express their thoughts. In a qualitative sense, ‘the one-to-one situation also enables the researcher to ask much more detailed questions that may be tailored to the specific circumstances divulged by the informant’ (Schröder *et al.* 2003, 153). Group interviews provide an environment where individuals with pre-existing social connections are interviewed in the same session by the researcher (Gamson 1992, see ‘household discussion’ in Harrington 2013, Liebes and Katz 1990, Neuman *et al.* 1992, Madianou 2005, and Sasson 1995). The benefits of this approach are that the respondents are already familiar with each other and might be more at ease in discussing opinions among friends and family. Group interviews are fundamentally different to the focus group research method. Focus groups assemble a number of individuals who have not had prior exposure to each other, which may limit the depth and openness of discussion (Hansen *et al.* 1998).

Participant observation has been commonly employed in Media and Cultural Studies. However, the approach does not allow for an understanding of the ways in which mediated information is employed in everyday life. Interviewing has benefits that participant observation can obscure, as Morley (1992, 172) states:

[O]bserving behaviour always leaves open the question of interpretation ... should you wish to understand what I am doing, it would probably be as well to ask me ... without these clues my television viewing (or other behaviour) will necessarily remain the more opaque.

Simply asking audiences to describe their patterns of commercial viewership amid their wider interactions provides an account of the individual online and offline media contexts of media use. The interview process also allows the researcher to understand how respondents consciously ‘construct their world and own understandings of their activities’ (Morley 1992, 181). Schröder *et al.* maintain that interviewing allows the researcher to explore:

The meaning repertoire of any individual informant is a product of their lifelong immersion in multiple social discourses, which they bring with them into the reception interview, and which permeates and anchors anything they say about the media product and their use of it (2003, 152).

While semi-structured individual interviews are the primary method used for analysing audiences ($n=29$), semi-structured group interviews have been employed to collect data that complement data collected from the individual interviews ($n=11$). Yet, the group interview method is not without criticisms. Schröder argues that group interviews, which include families or households, cannot thoroughly investigate the ‘role of broadcast news and its social signifying processes’ (1994, 341-342). Group interviews fail to ‘capture the multiplicitous interpersonal discourses through which people make sense of the news’ (*ibid.*). Schröder advocates that individual interviews be held in a household setting, as it allows the researcher to explore the multiplicitous discourses in a comfortable environment (*ibid.*). In the context of this study, which aims to shed light on the ways that viewers discuss commercial television news in their everyday social contexts, household or family-based group interviews are ideal. Group interviews facilitate an analysis of the natural formations in which audiences view news as part of a communal practice, and in this study, they have concentrated on members of the same household, primarily spouses. Where there are multiple individuals from the same household with different television news viewing habits, the individuals have

been interviewed separately as the group interview does not appropriately reflect their everyday social contexts.

Group research traditionally draws on marketing research methods and is often conceptualised in relation to focus groups. Researchers assemble focus groups for the purposes of exploring and discussing a particular issue, with six to twelve participants (Morgan, 1988). The social dynamics of focus groups create the possibility that ‘less vocal and less confident participants will be marginalised’ (Hansen *et al.* 1998, 270). Comparatively, group interviews include fewer participants, allowing all individuals the space to contribute to the discussion. In this study, group interviews included no more than three people and replicated natural household social connections.⁶⁶ Group interviews differ from focus groups in that they utilise ‘pre-existing groups – people who already lived, worked or socialised together’ (Kitzinger 1993, 272). Drawing together a group with pre-existing connections can create a more relaxed atmosphere, as a level of social comfort is already established between the individuals. The group interview scenario can facilitate an environment where individuals are more likely to engage in discussion of sensitive topics than they would not discuss with unfamiliar participants. Group interviews in this study followed the semi-structured approach undertaken in the individual interviews (see Appendix 1). Following a similar approach to both individual and group interviews made the data more readily comparable. As the groups were consciously kept small, the semi-structured interview design guided the discussion, yet allowed for flexibility for interviewees to deviate and explore a range of different issues.

⁶⁶ Only one group interview of three individuals occurs, and all others are in groups of two individuals (see Tables 1 and 2). The group interview of three consisted of a family group that were also neighbours. Anne, Elizabeth’s mother and Galvyn’s mother-in-law, would very frequently spend the evening watching television or eating dinner with both Elizabeth and Galvyn.

3.1.2 Recruitment and interviewing

Individuals were recruited using a purposive and snowball sampling, through the researcher's existing social networks and professional contacts. In purposive sampling, the researcher only includes individuals that meet the requirements and aims of the research project. Purposive sampling does not require quota representativeness, nor does it include all individuals as a convenience sample would (Bailey 1994, 96). In order to include a range of perspectives, the purposive sampling addressed different age ranges across divided into four groups: 18-30 ($n=10$), 31-45 ($n=10$), 46-60 ($n=10$), and 61-80 ($n=10$). Additionally, the purposive sample ensured that both females ($n=20$) and males ($n=20$) were equally represented in the data set.⁶⁷ A cross-section of commercial television news audiences was included, from the heavy viewers to those that had more fragmented patterns of viewing.⁶⁸ Efforts were made to achieve cultural diversity across the individuals interviewed. The study included members of various diaspora backgrounds; however, no effort was made to represent every diaspora group in Sydney.⁶⁹ In some instances, the snowball sampling method meant that the researcher was already familiar with the cultural backgrounds of some of the respondents. In other instances, the respondents brought up migration and their specific cultural identities during the interview while discussing news content. As the snowball recruitment method meant that certain groups were outside the researcher's extended professional and social networks, it cannot be argued that the sample represents a range of cultural perspectives.⁷⁰ The study however included

⁶⁷ Five females and five males were interviewed in each age group, resulting in a total of forty interviews.

⁶⁸ Unlike the purposive sampling of age range and gender, there were no strict numerical quotas for the purposive sampling of a range of viewing patterns. Rather, the purposive sample ensured that there were a range of different viewers included in the study, and it excluded any viewers that did not watch commercial television news programmes at all.

⁶⁹ Vicky's family was originally from China and she had family in the United States of America, Pratima indicated she was from India, Adam migrated from Croatia, Jennifer's cultural background was Lebanese, Altan was from Turkey, and Emma migrated from the United Kingdom. Barbara's cultural background was Maltese, Galvyn's family migrated to Australia from Ireland when he was a child, Elizabeth and Anne were from a Maltese Canadian background, Susan was from a Chinese Canadian background, Nick, Bill, and Anita were from a Greek background. Salman migrated from Egypt, Rob migrated from Turkey, and Priya was from a Fijian Indian cultural background. Azar indicated that she had some family in New Zealand, and Greg stated that he had family in the United Kingdom.

⁷⁰ Individuals from Indigenous backgrounds were not interviewed, nor those from Islander or South American backgrounds. In addition, African individuals remain under represented, with the exception of one Egyptian interviewee.

individuals who lived in different spatial regions of Sydney across the city, Inner-West, Northern, Western, and Southern Sydney suburbs. The majority of interviews took place in the Western suburbs of Sydney, which is reflective of the researcher's social context. As such, the study contributes knowledge on the under-researched regions of the Western and South-Western suburbs of Sydney. While the categories of educational background and occupation are included in the interview schedule, these did not contribute to the sampling criteria. The data on individuals' education and occupation only provides an indication of the different social backgrounds of each of the interviewees.

The snowball technique involves making contact with those in the researcher's existing social network, and these people pass on the information and are able to identify others who are suited to the research project (Bailey 1994, 96; Schröder *et al.* 2003, 162). For the purposes of this study, an email or an information statement was circulated to individuals in the researcher's social network. These individuals then passed on the information to others in their social networks. When a potential participant indicated their interest in being interviewed, initial contact was made via email or phone depending upon the individual's preference. A face-to-face interview was arranged following the initial call or email only if the person met the research criteria (age, gender, and commercial television news viewership). If the person indicated they had family members who watched the same television news programmes, then the other family member(s) were contacted. A group interview was arranged if family members met the criteria and agreed to be interviewed as a group (2-3 people, and predominantly spouses). Efforts were made to conduct the interviews in a relaxed setting, such as in the home or a local café. Due to the schedules of a few participants, some interviews were held in workplaces. In these cases, the formality was countered by attempting to keep the atmosphere conversational and informal. The period of recruitment and interviewing was from July 2013 through to April 2014. The majority of interviews were conducted from July 2013 through to December 2013 ($n=32$). A smaller number of interviews

took place between February and April 2014 ($n=8$), as the Christmas and New Year holiday period caused difficulties in recruiting and conducting interviews.⁷¹

The individuals and groups participated in tape-recorded semi-structured interviews, ranging in duration from 20 minutes to 80 minutes. Interviews were conducted until they had achieved the purpose of addressing the research questions, guided by the semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix 1). The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed in entirety, totalling 456 pages. The semi-structured and open nature of the interviews generated a wide range of discussion on news reports, including reports recently viewed to those that had aired on television decades earlier. All of the issues discussed by interviewees in news reports are available for cross-reference in Appendix 3. News reports from commercial television news broadcast were often discussed in the context of public broadcast television news, international news programmes, and news across other media formats (newspaper, radio, online) or mobile platforms (*BBC*, *7 News*, *Sydney Morning Herald*). This provided context on wider media use, and enabled the study to address how commercial television news programmes were employed along with other sources of information to mediate space/power/identity knowledge. Tables 1 and 2 provide a list of the interviewees, and the names have been changed to ensure the anonymity of the individuals. A brief account must be made of the typographical formatting of group interviews that follows in the thesis. Table 2 lists all individuals that participated in group interviews and in this thesis the group interviews are formatted with no line spacing between each person. As the group interviews involved individuals that were familiar with each other, the conversation often moved quickly between respondents.⁷² Superfluous conversation was edited out, which at times means that there is a temporal jump in the interview. In these cases, an ellipsis (...) is used before the individual's

⁷¹ The eight interviews that took place in 2014 provided a useful comparison to those interviews conducted during the 2013 federal election campaign period.

⁷² An example where this is included is Karl and Marcia's discussion in Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.2. Couples often finished each other's sentences, or jumped in with alternative knowledge as in Gary and Azar's exchange in Chapter 7, subsection 7.2.3.

name to represent that dialogue between the respondents has been edited out. All other individual interviews are represented with greater spacing between each interviewee.

Table 1. Individual interviews

Individual Interviews					
<i>N=29</i> <i>M= 15,</i> <i>F= 14</i>	Name	Gender	Occupational Status	Level of Education	Age Range
	Anita	F	Finance	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	18-30
	Aiko	F	Apprentice Chef	Some Secondary	18-30
	Pratima	F	Manager Community Health Centre	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	46-60
	Bob	M	HR Manager	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	61-80
	Kate	F	Web Content Co-ordinator	Post-graduate Qualification	31-45
	Lesley	F	Teacher's Aid	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	46-60
	Bill	M	Finance	TAFE/Trade Certificate	18-30
	Mike	M	Secondary School Teacher	Post-graduate Qualification	31-45
	Tom	M	General Assistant	TAFE/Trade Certificate	61-80
	Jane	F	Retired	Some Secondary	46-60
	Jenny	F	Executive Assistant	Completed Secondary	46-60
	Barbara	F	Retired	Some Secondary	61-80
	Altan	M	IT	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	31-45
	Ellen	F	Clerk	Completed Secondary	61-80
	Susan	F	Librarian	Post-graduate Qualification	31-45
	Emma	F	Nurse	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	31-45
	James	M	Secondary School Teacher	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	31-45
	Nick	M	Part-time Teacher/Part-time Barman	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	18-30
	Salman	M	Social Worker	Post-graduate Qualification	61-80
	Stuart	M	Business Development	TAFE/Trade Certificate	46-60
	Rob	M	Café Manager	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	46-60
	Andrew	M	Tradesperson	Completed Secondary	18-30
	Greg	M	Part Time Teacher/Part Time	Post-graduate Qualification	18-30

			Student		
	Albert	M	Auditor	TAFE/Trade Certificate	46-60
	Priya	F	Special Education Teacher	Post-graduate Qualification	18-30
	Todd	M	Manager	Post-graduate Qualification	46-60
	Vicky	F	Emergency Room Doctor	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	18-30
	Lisa	F	Chef	TAFE/Trade Certificate	31-45
	Jim	M	Engineer	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	31-45

Table 2: Group interviews

Group Interviews						
	Group Number	Name	Gender	Occupational Status	Level of Education	Age Range
<i>N=11</i> <i>M=5,</i> <i>F=6</i>	1	Galvyn	M	Tradesperson	Completed Secondary	18-30
		Elizabeth	F	Hairdresser	TAFE/Trade Certificate	18-30
		Anne	F	Retired	Some Secondary	61-80
	2	Adam	M	IT Manager	Post-graduate Qualification	31-45
		Jennifer	F	Lawyer	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	31-45
	3	Darrin	M	Retired	Completed Secondary	61-80
		Dianne	F	Teacher's Aid	TAFE/Trade Certificate	61-80
	4	Marcia	F	Health Practitioner	University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma	61-80
		Karl	M	Health Practitioner	Post-graduate Qualification	61-80
	5	Gary	M	IT	TAFE/Trade Certificate	46-60
		Azar	F	School Counsellor	Post-graduate Qualification	46-60

3.2 Connecting audiences and television news

A multifaceted methodological approach was needed to investigate the ways in which audiences draw upon televisual news discourses to inform their understanding of space/power/identity. The study integrated audience interview research with both a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative multimodal discourse analysis of 160 commercial television news reports. Across all three methodological approaches, all data was stored and analysed in NVivo, which allowed each stage of the analysis to remain linked. First, interviews were conducted, then transcribed and thematically coded in NVivo. Second, the major themes in the audiences' discussions of news content were used to identify a sample of 160 news reports for quantitative and qualitative textual analysis. Third, the findings from the qualitative and quantitative textual analysis directed the analysis of the audience research when considering how audiences draw upon televisual news discourses. While the methodological trajectory appears to be linear, it was a more complex and recursive process. This section details how the different elements of audience and textual analysis informed each other. The section also highlights some of the unforeseen developments that arose across the period of research.

Once the audience interviews were transcribed in NVivo, they were coded in relation to a number of variables. The thematic coding analysed the discussion of issues, the patterns of using commercial television news in everyday life, the use of wider media sources, and the participation in online/offline discussions. A range of topics and news reports were discussed, and these are presented in detail in Appendix 3.⁷³ The issues broadly relate to the thematic categories of ecological disasters, international conflicts or disasters, celebrity or

⁷³ The broad range of reports also demonstrated how respondents drew upon an extended period of news viewership to frame their discussions. The discussed news reports included Azaria Chamberlain which was covered in the early 1980s, Daniel Morcombe reported in 2003 and Schapelle Corby who has been in the news since 2005. Migration was also discussed in relation to past policy or events. Although these reports originated in different time periods, it is worth noting that the news media often reiterate past news events in new contexts. Unfortunately, it was not possible to engage with television news reports across this extended time period in this study. However, the audiences' recall of past events sheds light on the long period of acculturation by which audiences employ mediated knowledge across an extended period of exposure to make sense of news reports.

entertainment news, migration, race/culture, sports, crime, and lastly Australian politics.⁷⁴ The issues of the greatest significance to the participants were politics, migration,⁷⁵ and race/culture.⁷⁶ By concentrating on the issues of greatest significance to the respondents, the study addresses how audiences actually use television news to inform their everyday lives. The major discursive theme of ‘asylum’ and ‘migration’ in the audience interview research directed both the quantitative and qualitative analysis of television news reports.

In order to elucidate how audiences draw upon televisual news discourses, it was necessary to analyse the precise televisual news discourses on migration and asylum. The quantitative content analysis provided a broad perspective of the patterns in reporting on migration and asylum. Yet, it could not account for the ways in which the visual, verbal, and aural modes of communication convey discursive hegemonic openings in news content. The qualitative multimodal discourse analysis examined the ways in which different textual elements were mobilised to emphasise certain discursive perspectives over others. These television news reports were recorded during the period in which audiences were interviewed, and six-months of data was captured from 1st May 2013 to 31st October 2013. This yielded 2505 news reports from *9 News*, and 2261 news reports from *7 News* (including weather and sports reports). Brief summaries were entered into NVivo for each news report and, following the analysis of the audience interviews, the news reports were sampled to identify coverage on migration and asylum (*7 News* $n=81$, *9 News* $n=79$).⁷⁷ Migration and asylum coverage

⁷⁴ Interestingly, the audiences incorporated discussion on the Coalition and Labor parties among other topics. Audiences also evaluated how accurately news programmes covered events in relation to their knowledge of Coalition/Labor politics. Audiences were politically polarised as to the programmes that were more informative and they often understood bias in terms of a political referent (i.e. supporting Labor or Coalition in their presentation of what should have been factual unbiased information).

⁷⁵ Migration was referred to either in terms of migrants that had already settled in Australia, or current migratory flows. The discussions on migratory flows concentrated on asylum seekers, refugees, and ‘illegal’ arrivals.

⁷⁶ Issues of race/culture explored the integration of Muslims, Asians, or continental Europeans into Australian society. Interestingly, the next most discussed topic after politics, migration, and race/culture was the sports coverage.

⁷⁷ The analysis of migration and asylum encompassed a broad range of reports across the areas of policy, crime, feel-good local community stories, and international conflicts or disasters. By investigating the coverage of asylum across a wide range of issues, one could consider how space/power/identity discourses are invoked within different ‘themes’.

constituted 3.56% of all news reporting across the data set, and Appendix 5 provides a full list of the 160 news reports.⁷⁸

All quantitative analysis coding sheets (see Appendix 2) for the news reports were entered and coded in NVivo, which allowed all empirical material to be maintained in the one software package. The choice of NVivo was made based on the requirement for a simple statistical analysis. The content analysis provided an account of the ways in which migration and asylum was structured in relation to visual, verbal, and aural sources. It also quantified the major themes in news reports. Following on from the content analysis, the qualitative multimodal analysis examined precisely what visual, verbal, and aural discourses were conveyed in news. These 160 news reports were also transcribed in NVivo using a multimodal approach to transcription.

Multimodal transcription engages with the social semiotic resources in textual content such as action, visual image, movement/gesture, space, and meaning (Baldry and Thibault 2006, 5).⁷⁹ The transcription of television news texts in NVivo broke down each news report into shots with details of the timespan of each shot, dialogue, source/social actor, sound effects, CGI and notable special effects (such as zoom-in or pixilation) which facilitated some account of movement. The original video footage was linked to the transcription, enabling a visual connection to the transcript and to enable the researcher to access smaller video segments of each news report. Additionally, the transcriptions included details regarding the date the report aired, the news programme from which it was sourced, the position in the overall broadcast, the overall time length, and also a title to the news report. NVivo was particularly useful as some respondents referred to specific details in news reports. NVivo

⁷⁸Throughout the analysis, these reports are referred to by the date only, for example *7 News* 13-07-2013. However, where there are multiple reports that are analysed on the same day, the news report's position in the broadcast is also used to differentiate it from the other reports, for example *7 News* 15-06-2013 [6] and *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7].

⁷⁹ For the purposes of this study, the transcription of news texts remains at a basic level, with the multimodal discourse analysis conducted with ongoing reference to the original video footage rather than an overall reliance upon the transcripts.

enabled a cross-reference from the interview transcripts to the detailed multimodal analysis when investigating how audiences employed news discourses. When the multimodal aspects of reports are discussed in this study an ellipsis (*) is used between dialogue to represent the insertion of sound effects, and a forward slash (/) is used to represent a change of visuals.⁸⁰

It also must be noted that this project was undertaken during a period when the commercial television news environment underwent several formatting changes. Throughout the period of data collection, there were a number of special broadcasts in which *7 News* and *9 News* provided extended hour-long coverage. These concern events such as the Labor leadership spill (26-06-2013) and the Sydney bushfires, which commenced on the 17th October 2013. Additionally, both commercial networks altered their Saturday evening bulletins on the 12th October 2013 to switch to an hour-long format. During the period of interviewing, the Nine Network changed its evening news bulletin format from a thirty-minute broadcast to an extended one-hour time slot. On the 3rd February 2014, Seven Network stopped screening the current affairs programme *Today Tonight* in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. The current affairs programme was replaced by an hour-long *7 News* evening bulletin. In the 160 news report data set, these formatting changes that influence the news report position in regard to the wider bulletin only relate to three reports (*7 News* 19-10-2013; *9 News* 19-10-2013, 21-10-2013). Similarly, the Australian political environment was relatively unstable further influencing the trajectory of the study.

John Howard headed a Coalition government from 11th March 1996 through to 3rd December 2007. A tumultuous period has marked the following years. There were four different prime ministers in Australia across a space of less than two years and three months.⁸¹

⁸⁰ The following is an example of the transcription format in the thesis: ‘The boat was first [*] sighted by Australian Air Force on Wednesday North-West [*] of Christmas Island, the plane identified more than fifty people on board and [/] a navy vessel’ (*9 News* 09-06-2013).

⁸¹ Julia Gillard was a Labor Prime Minister from 24th June 2010 until 27th June 2013. Kevin Rudd was the Labor Prime Minister from 27th June until 18th September 2013. Tony Abbott was elected as the Coalition Prime Minister from 18th September 2013 until 15th September 2015. Malcolm Turnbull became the Coalition Prime Minister on the 15th September 2015 and is the incumbent Prime Minister.

Across the six-month period of data collection, there were three different prime ministers. One change occurred through a Labor Party leadership spill (26-06-2013) and the other through the Federal election (07-09-2013). The unstable political environment resulted in an extended period of television news coverage intently focused on national politics.

3.3 Analysing television news reports

In Australia, the evening news bulletins on the commercial networks are the most popularly viewed news programmes.⁸² Chapter 2, section 2.2 provided an account of television broadcasting in Sydney, delineating the localised focus of commercial television news reports. As the study investigates audiences in the Sydney region, the analysis of commercial television news content also concentrates on the metropolitan Sydney region. The evening news programmes from the Seven and Nine Networks were selected for a six-month period of data capture from 1st May 2013 to 31st October 2013, as these were the most watched news programmes with a consistent viewership.⁸³ *9 News Sunday*, *7 News Sunday*, and the weekday *7 News* and *9 News* programmes regularly feature in the top twenty most-viewed television programmes on Australian free-to-air networks.⁸⁴

The analysis of news content across two main commercial networks is of further significance, as it enables the study to draw out different approaches to reporting across commercial television news. In comparison to the commercial networks, ABC and SBS have

⁸² The commercial evening news programmes are the most popularly viewed. Morning, afternoon, and late night broadcasts are less popular and do not feature in the top twenty most viewed programmes on Australian television. As a snapshot, the week of 28-04-2013 through until 04-05-2013 only features the *7 News* and *9 News* evening programmes, and the Nine Network Sunday current affairs programme *60 Minutes* in the top twenty most viewed programmes in Sydney and Australia (OzTAM 2013).

⁸³ Both academic studies on the Australian news audience and OzTAM audience ratings demonstrate the popularity of *7 News* and *9 News* in comparison to other news programmes and outlets. See n.6. and n.84.

⁸⁴ *9 News Sunday*, *7 News Sunday*, and the weekday *7 News* and *9 News* programmes were in the top twenty most viewed programmes for the week commencing 28th April 2013 through until 4th May 2013. While this is just a one-week snapshot, it is indicative of the wider viewership trends which consistently place commercial television news programmes as more popularly viewed than the ABC or SBS counterparts that often are not in these top twenty programmes. For the week from 28th April 2013 through until 4th May 2013 the Sydney-based viewership for *9 News Sunday* was 448, 000 viewers; *7 News Sunday* had 347, 000 viewers; *7 News* weekday had 272, 000; and *9 News weekday* attracted 367, 000 viewers (OzTAM 2013). The commercial Channel 10 evening news bulletin has experimented with programme formats and does not seem to be in popular contention with *9 News* and *7 News*. The respondents' comments echoed these observations with Channel 10 News and *The Project* being criticised in a number of interviews across the age groups.

different ownership structures that bring in different pressures to the processes of news production. ABC and SBS do not appeal to the localised news audiences, and are produced for a national audience.⁸⁵ In addition, *7 News* and *9 News* have a shorter timeslot to appeal to the audience *en masse* and to communicate complex issues, such as national politics. The six-month period of data capture from 1st May 2013 until 31st October 2013 coincided with the period in which the federal election took place. This facilitated an account of reporting during and outside the election period, and an analysis of whether there were any changes in the coverage of migration and asylum.

3.3.1 Content Analysis

As detailed earlier, quantitative content analysis allows for a wider analytical perspective. Descriptive statistics elucidate the broader patterns through which news reports structure discourses on space/power/identity. A coding schema quantified report construction (sources, visual footage, and aural effects) and report issues (thematic focus and references to ethnic identity). The initial framework of the coding schema drew from Madianou (2002),⁸⁶ and was expanded to suit the purposes of this investigation. The coding schema facilitated both evaluative and observational coding, and was applied to the data set of 160 news reports drawn through a purposive sample.⁸⁷ As a primary coder, the researcher coded all 160 news reports (totalling 4 hours, 51 min, 20 sec, 8 ms). A second coder performed a reliability test on 31.25% of the data set or 50 news reports. Neuendorf (2002, 159) stresses that the reliability sub-sample ‘should probably never be smaller than 50’. As the news reports ranged

⁸⁵ See n. 82 for an overview of the trends regarding viewership. ABC and SBS news and current affairs programmes are regularly absent from the top twenty most viewed programmes per week.

⁸⁶ Madianou’s (2002) coding framework pertains to news reports on the 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo, and the codes address the idiosyncrasies of the coverage. Her analysis includes a range of evaluative codes analysing the media framing of the bombing. This study is concerned with the ways in which news reports structure space/power/identity formations in content. As such, this study makes a more limited use of evaluative coding and focuses upon observational coding. This facilitates a quantitative analysis of the textual composition of news reports, to elucidate how different elements are mobilised to communicate space/power/identity formations.

⁸⁷ Observational coding would be those categories where minimal judgement is required, such as identifying sources or noting whether flags are included. Evaluative coding categories require the coder to make some sort of subjective analytical or interpretive judgement about the content, for example the different thematic discourses included in news reports.

in duration (from 0 min: 14sec: 1ms through to 4min: 35sec: 9ms), a sub-sample of 50 allowed for a greater test of reliability across a range of content. The second coder was provided with a basic coding guide, and some initial general guidance regarding the evaluative coding. However, the second coder had to use some interpretive judgement when coding evaluative categories in news content.

The use of a basic percentage agreement was sufficient to calculate the intercoder reliability and accuracy (Neuendorf 2002, 149). The simple agreement formula is $PA_O = A/N$ where PA_O is the observed proportion of agreement, A is the number of agreements between two coders, and N is the total number of units the two coders have coded for the test.⁸⁸ The resulting statistical co-efficient can range from 0.00 where no agreement is observed to 1.00 where there is complete or 'perfect agreement' (ibid.). In terms of the acceptable level of agreement, there is some debate about the appropriate level of reliability in relation to the value of PA_O (Berger 2000; Macnamara 2005, 12; Neuendorf 2002, 143; Wimmer and Dominick 2010, 174). Wimmer and Dominick (2010) suggest that the acceptable level of intercoder reliability percentages is reliant on the type of information coded. Observational coding necessitates a high degree of reliability, and a lower reliability co-efficient is acceptable for evaluative coding.⁸⁹ Neuendorf (2002, 143) indicates that reliability coefficients of 0.90 would generally be acceptable in all situations, 0.80 and higher is acceptable in most cases, and lower co-efficients suggest that there is disagreement. Appendix 4 lists the reliability percentages for each category. Evaluative categories such as CGI (0.82) and primary and secondary focus categories (0.80) have the lowest levels of reliability based upon the interpretive judgement as to the discursive themes included in news reports. The evaluative nature of CGI relates to the interpretive coding required to identify how computerised graphics were incorporated into 'real' footage, and among other visual/aural

⁸⁸ Formulae that are more complex calculate intercoder reliability to remove the presence of chance agreement. For the purposes of this thesis, a formula for simple agreement is sufficient for establishing intercoder reliability.

⁸⁹ See n. 87 for the definition of 'observational' and 'evaluative' coding. As observational coding requires no interpretive judgement, the degree of reliability should be close to perfect.

effects. The primary coder identified the use of animated graphics, graphic stills, and the use of CGI more than the second coder who at times did not classify CGI data as ‘computerised graphics’.⁹⁰ The inter-coder reliability across all 149 variables was 0.98 or 98.5%, which was a satisfactory level of overall reliability.⁹¹

3.3.2 Multimodal Discourse Analysis

A range of studies consider the institutional, economic, and political factors that influence the production of television news and the structure of report content (Altheide 1976; Epstein 2000 [1973]; Gans 1979; Glasgow University Media Group 1976, 1980; Golding and Elliott 1979; Tuchman 1978; and Schlesinger 1978). Such studies analyse news as a visual text, aspects of production, or also the quantitative structure of news reports. Yet, televisual news production has altered in the contemporary media environment. Increased digitisation of news production allows for the integration of synthetically produced visual or aural information, also making wider pools of data and imagery more accessible (Bivens 2014, 2015). Social semiotics or multimodal discourse analysis can enhance an understanding of the ways television news content contains non-linguistic discourses. While the social semiotic approach was popular in the 1980s and 1990s, it tends to be eclipsed in contemporary media research by the popularity of participant observation. Social semiotics needs to be revived in the context of the increased digitisation of news production, which allows complex discourses to be conveyed across movement, aural, visual, and verbal elements. Kress *et al.* (1997, 258) state:

Discourse analysis has, on the whole, focused on the linguistically realised text. In the multimodal approach the attempt is to understand all the representational modes which are in play in the text, in the same degree of detail and with the same methodological precision as discourse analysis is able to do with linguistic text.

⁹⁰ Pertinently, CGI was an observational code. The complex nature of the visuals meant that the second coder did not observe the CGI simulated interfaces as animated CGI graphics (see figure 34 in Chapter 5, section 1 for a visual representation). See Chapters 5 and 6 for greater elaboration of the militarised CGI interfaces that feature in both *7 News* and *9 News*.

⁹¹ The overall high level of reliability relates to the types of coding. As the quantitative analysis predominantly included observational coding, few coding categories required subjective judgement.

Multimodal analysis has come under criticism for not achieving ‘a genuine, or completed, innovation of either discourse or visual media analysis’ (Schröder 2002, 115). Schröder also raises the notion of the ‘commonsensical’ nature of social semiotics, and the ‘occasionally simplistic assumptions regarding the resulting discursive transfer of ideology to audiences’ (2002, 116). The analysis of news texts may appear to be ‘commonsensical’ in the descriptive work to relay information, but multimodal analysis does not presume the simplistic transfer of meaning. Hodge and Kress (1988, 12) argue that:

[M]eaning is always negotiated in the semiotic process, never simply imposed inexorably from above by an omnipotent author through an absolute code ... social semiotics cannot assume that texts produce exactly the meanings and effects that their authors hope for: it is precisely the struggles and their uncertain outcomes that must be studied at the level of social action, and their effects in the production of meaning.

Rather than making assumptions about the audience, multimodal discourse analysis analyses how prominence is accorded to certain discourses over others. Triangulating the qualitative multimodal discourse with quantitative content analysis and audience interview research allows for a reflexive account of the processes of mediation. The multifaceted methodological approach enables critical engagement with the ways in which audiences draw upon news discourses for space/power/identity knowledge.

Multimodal discourse analysis goes beyond visual discourse analysis in that it considers how different elements work simultaneously to communicate varying discursive functions. In their development of social semiotic analysis, Kress and Van Leeuwen utilise Halliday’s (1985) linguistic social semiotic analysis as a foundation to extend social semiotic analysis into other communicative modes. Halliday and Hasan (1985, 11) stress that a text is a process as it works as ‘an interactive event, a social exchange of meanings’. Kress and Van Leeuwen draw upon this:

To use Halliday's terms, every semiotic fulfils both an 'ideational' function, a function of representing 'the world around and inside us' and an 'interpersonal' function, a function of enacting social interactions as social relations. All message entities – texts – also attempt to present a coherent 'world of the text', what Halliday calls the 'textual' function – a world in which all the elements of the text cohere internally, and which itself coheres with its relevant environment (2006 [1996], 15).

These functions are realised not only within linguistic elements, but also in a variety of non-verbal textual mechanisms. Multimodal discourse analysis can investigate how non-linguistic textual mechanisms construct discourses on space/power/identity in news reports. The approach is also well suited to elaborating how news reports discursively construct the different scales of global, national, and local. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001, 2) indicate that their attempts at multimodal analysis shifts:

[F]rom the idea that different modes in multimodal texts have strictly bounded and framed specialist tasks, as in film where images may provide the action, sync sounds a sense of realism, music a layer of emotion, and so on, with the editing process supplying the 'integration' code, the means for synchronising the elements through a common rhythm. Instead we move towards a view of multimodality in which common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes, and in which it is therefore quite possible for music to encode action, or images to encode emotion.

The different angles, gaze, proxemics,⁹² colour, typography movement, framing and layout, and sound can be analysed in relation to the construction of certain space/power/identity discourses (Machin 2012 [2007]). Each of these categories can be further investigated through a range of compositional aspects. Non-linguistic sound can be explored through pitch, loudness, tempo, and duration of sounds (Van Leeuwen 2005). Typography can be analysed through the features of weight, expansion, slope, curvature, connectivity, orientation, regularity, and flourishes (Machin 2012 [2007], 93-104; Van Leeuwen 2006.) The use of

⁹² Proxemics refers to the study of spatial distance and the significations of 'space' Hall (1964). See Chapter 5, subsection 5.1.3 for a greater elaboration and analysis of proxemics in television news reports.

colours can be investigated through the compositional aspects of value, saturation, purity, modulation, differentiation, and hue (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006 [1996], 233-235). The overall textual layouts can also be examined in terms of framing through segregation, separation, integration, overlap, rhyme, and contrast (Van Leeuwen 2005, 13). Rather than elaborating each element in the methodological approach, Chapter 6 defines the multimodal elements in relation to the analytical arguments made. It is clear that by evaluating the compositional aspects of qualitative discourses in television news reports, textual analysis can engage with the ‘smaller-level shifts in power’ in news content (Hodge and Kress 1988, 7). Such an analysis complements the quantitative analysis to illustrate how space/power/identity formations are communicated through varying approaches in commercial television news content. The quantitative content analysis establishes who and what is represented in the news reports, while the qualitative multimodal analysis reveals the ways in which the discursive structures in texts add further depth to space/power/identity formations.

3.4 Conclusion

As the theoretical approach to the study concentrates on the role of television news in mediating audiences’ knowledge of space/power/identity formations, the methodology needs to engage with the multiple dimensions of this process. Methodological triangulation is thus necessary to analyse the structure of commercial television news content, and the audiences’ use of those televisual news discourses for everyday space/power/identity knowledge. Employing a quantitative and qualitative approach together enables broad and deep observations relating to the structure of commercial television news content. Anchoring the analysis of television news content in the audiences’ exploration of commercial television news content allows for analyses of different facets of the mediation process presented in the subsequent chapters. Quantitative research facilitates an account of the relationship between space/power/identity formations and the structure of news reports. However, the quantitative analysis cannot begin to explore how these patterns of structuring information communicate

complex discourses. Thus, qualitative multimodal discourse analysis is resorted to in order to deepen the research on commercial television news content. Multimodal discourse analysis enables investigation of the multiplicitous and overlapping constructions of discourses across movement, visual, verbal, and aural textual elements. As television news content operates beyond the 'linguistic' framework, multimodal discourse analysis facilitates a greater understanding of the non-verbal aspects of televisual communication. Audience analysis provides a qualitative account of the complex manner by which individuals use commercial television news for information in the broader media environment. By focusing on the respondents' discussions of reporting on asylum and migration, the study evaluates the ways in which audiences draw upon news content to shape their understanding of local, national, and global space/power/identity formations.

Chapter 4: Producing Space: Structuring the coverage of asylum and migration

The relationship between television news production and space traditionally focuses on the role of the journalist, and the local or national markets in which news professionals operate. Smith (1973) argues that ‘without its central *national* professional discipline, news becomes a different genre altogether ... The whole idea of news is that it is beyond a “plurality of viewpoints”’. Ultimately, journalism is bound by the local or national space/power/identity formations when producing news. Journalists:

[T]ranslate that information into news, they frame it in a national context, and thereby bring a nation into being ... journalists help impose unity on what is otherwise a congeries of individuals and groups acting inside a set of geographic and political boundaries (Gans 1979, 278)

Although Gans’ claim was made over thirty-five years ago, it is useful for conceptualising the modern role of journalists. Journalists have the implicit role of balancing the scales of the local, national, and global when rendering information as salient to the viewers’ everyday social knowledge. However, the geographic and political boundaries of the state are increasingly blurred in the current era, which could alter the journalistic approach to the production of space. When producing news, journalists have to appeal to audiences that have greater connections to the global space. The increasing diversification of newsroom journalists (across race, class, age) can also result in a pluralistic and ‘multiperspectival’ approach to content in the production environment (Gans 2003). Gans (2011) revisits the concept of multiperspectival news in the current journalistic environment to stress that although news perspectives have widened, there still is a focus on public officials and electoral politics in news content. Hegemonic ‘common sense’ approaches to news production continue to centre on frameworks of governmentality and policy, necessitating an analysis of ‘plurality’ in news.

This chapter presents the quantitative findings across 160 news reports related to asylum and migration. The chapter analyses how *7 News* and *9 News* reports structure space/power/identity formations across different production mechanisms. While the nation-state is the dominant frame of reference for asylum and migration reporting, there are hegemonic openings that allow the global and local scales to be explored in news content. The predominant inclusion of national news sources and visual footage connects to wider debates on the limitations of commercial journalism, where the institutional and economic frameworks restrict the inclusion of diverse viewpoints in news. However, the emphasis on the national scale is also ensured through the use of computer-generated visuals, which work to further draw out the dominant space/power/identity formation in content. Aural structures broaden the communication of space/power/identity formations through the inclusion of languages other than English in news content. The selective use of dubbing and subtitling in news reports also highlights how notions of spatial-cultural distance can be heightened. The multimodal discourses that draw out the different space/power/identity formations are reinforced through the verbal identifications made by journalists, news anchors, and featured sources of information. This chapter argues that commercial television news structures information on asylum and migration by privileging the national space/power/identity formation as embedded among wider local-global scales. By analysing the relationship between identity markers and the primary focus of news reports, this chapter investigates the relationship between the themes of news and the space/power/identity scales that are invoked.

4.1 Sourcing information

A range of studies highlight the ways in which journalists rely on official governmental sources to provide news information, as linked to the economic and organisational institutional frameworks constraining the daily production of news (Clarke 2014, Fishman 1980, Gans 1980 [1979], Hall, 1982, Herman and Chomsky 1994 [1988], Schlesinger 1978, Schudson 2003, Sigal 1973). Historically, the production of television news was encumbered

by technological constraints. The non-visual nature of radio and newspaper report construction allowed sources to be obtained more easily through telephone interviewing (Epstein 2000 [1973], 133). However, technological developments have enabled televisual news production to easily and efficiently access a wider range of information sources and visual footage. Bivens points out that the cost of transmitting information has reduced, with a wider range of technological options to provide immediate information including ‘Skype ... and social media like Twitter and Facebook’ (2014; 2015, 198). These developments have particular salience in the Australian environment, where the costs of producing global news are far higher than in other regions given the geographic isolation. Whether the availability of wider networks of information translates to a broader inclusion of different space/power/identity relationships in news content in Australia needs to be explored. This section investigates the inclusion of sources, visual footage, and other media sources to argue that technological availability does not necessarily widen the space/power/identity formations presented in news content.

4.1.1 Locating credible sources of information

Journalists rely on ‘common sense’ approaches to produce news on asylum and migration through the selection of sources. The high frequency of using national politicians as sources places an emphasis on the ability of the government to manage the national space/power/identity formation. Apart from the required inclusion of journalists and news anchors who present the news content, national politicians are the predominant source of information in news reports (see figure 4 and table 3). By relying on information supplied by Australian national politicians, the news presents the view that the nation-state unit is the primary space/power/identity formation in which the movement of asylum seekers is regulated.

The overwhelming inclusion of national politicians as a key source of information necessitated a supplementary analysis to examine the plurality of political viewpoints (see

figure 5). There is a limited political plurality in news content, with 65.63% of news reports communicating information on asylum and migration through the binary of the Coalition-Labor perspectives. Electoral politics in Australia tends to converge on the battle between the Coalition and the Labor Parties and their constituent politicians. The spread of soundbites across the Coalition-Labor perspectives further points to the internal political instability. Audiences are encouraged to be familiarised with key faces in the Coalition who provide similar statements, and a clear political message.⁹³ Across the data set, 30 different Labor politicians contribute 174 soundbites.⁹⁴ Comparatively, 16 different Coalition politicians, three of who are former ministers or party leaders, provide 163 soundbites. In comparison to the Labor Party, the smaller range of political figures creates a sense of a more consolidated Coalition approach with greater internal cohesion. The Coalition-Labor approach to representing asylum and migration provides the illusion of plurality, but works to restrict the radically plural democratic approaches to understanding the issue.⁹⁵ The limited diversity of perspectives is heightened when considering how alternative political perspectives are structured into news reports.

The nominal inclusion of an alternative national political perspective occurs through the occasional feature of a representative from the Australian Greens Party [hereafter the Greens] (see figure 5). Representatives from the Greens Party are positioned providing a response to the Coalition or Labor government approach, usually one of opposition, rather than exploring the political potential of their own alternatives. The Greens' approach to refugees differs greatly from the major political parties in that the Greens demand the closure

⁹³ Clearly, the decision to feature different ministers cannot be controlled by the commercial television news programmes and is an outcome of the Coalition/ Labor Party approaches. The inclusion of certain ministers nonetheless shapes how information is conveyed in the coverage of asylum and migration and impacts upon the sense of Labor political instability.

⁹⁴ Invariably, these figures are influenced by the June 2013 Labor Party Spill, in which Kevin Rudd took over the leadership of the Labor Party. Even when factoring in the replacement of key ministers, the Labor Party still includes a greater range of politicians across a range of policy areas.

⁹⁵ Furthermore, the Coalition and Labor policies on asylum, and wider politics, tend to be somewhat similar. The Labor Party, while left of the political centre, is nonetheless conservative in its asylum seeker policy. The Labor Party supports the popular approach in Australia to asylum that includes the offshore detention and resettlement of refugees, a stance at odds with a more politically 'left' approach. In comparison, the Australian Greens Party represents a more typically 'leftist' approach to asylum and other social and political issues.

of all offshore mandatory detention, and advocate greater regional investment to speed up UNHCR processing of asylum claims in nation-states including Indonesia or Malaysia (The Australian Greens 2015). Additionally, the Green's Party platform focuses on increasing the Australian humanitarian intake of refugees to 30,000 (ibid.). In the varying Coalition and Labor leaderships the humanitarian intake figures have been historically limited to the range of about 12,000 to 13,000 people, with the exception of the intake of 20,019 refugees in the 2012-2013 calendar year under the Labor government (Phillips 2015b).⁹⁶ The Greens Party features as an alternative political viewpoint and the positioning of Greens politicians is always in oppositional terms.⁹⁷ The inclusion of nominal alternative perspectives on the national scale also manifests in relation to the local and state power formations.

Asylum and migration is mediated as a national political issue, which is emphasised through the restricted use of local (such as Sydney or Melbourne) and state (such as New South Wales or Victoria) sources of information. There is only one instance of a local politician providing information in relation to asylum and migration policy (see table 3).⁹⁸ Any other inclusion of state politicians does not engage with the issue of asylum and migration. Rather, state politicians address disability policy and same-sex marriage legislation

⁹⁶The time-period these historical figures refer to are the humanitarian intakes for each year from 1984 (Phillips, 2015b). With the exception of the intake of 20,019 in 2012-2013 calendar year, the only other year with a larger than normal humanitarian intake was the 1995-1996 calendar year when 16,252 refugees were granted asylum. Interestingly, the 1995-1996 increase also occurred in a Labor-led government under Paul Keating. John Howard's Coalition government was elected into power in March 1996. The correlations between the increased figures and the subsequent election of Tony Abbott's Coalition government in September 2013 highlight the relationship between electoral politics and popular concerns over border control.

⁹⁷ In the 07-07-2013 *9 News* report the soundbite from 'Sarah Hanson-Young, Greens Senator' is framed in response to Coalition-Labor Party politics. Hanson-Young states, 'It is as if the Labor government has surrendered to Tony Abbott's fear mongering'. *9 News* 24-09-2013 includes 'Sarah Hanson-Young, Greens Senator' making the comment that 'Tony Abbott's policy is all about hiding the facts and hiding the boats'. In response to the Papua New Guinea agreement under the Rudd government, Hanson-Young asserts that 'Tony Abbott has had to come out and back the plan, because it is so Right wing he had nothing, he had nowhere else to go' (*7 News* 20-07-2013). The feature of 'Christine Milne, Greens Leader' or 'Sarah Hanson-Young, Greens Senator' throughout the reports occurs in a reactionary manner, where the Greens statements are in opposition to the approaches of the dominant Australian Parties.

⁹⁸ Local politician Dianne Hiles, the Greens candidate for Sydney, provides information on local protests to immigration policy (*7 News* 24-08-2013).

within the larger report.⁹⁹ By providing comments on other political issues, the inclusion of these state politicians has two effects. First, the state politicians dilute the focus in each of the reports by referring to a number of policy areas. Second, the state-based politicians connect the issue of asylum to a range of other policy areas in a political chain that re-inscribes asylum with a policy relationship. Ultimately, this replicates the aforementioned appearance of plurality across the local and state formations, which reinforce limited perspectives on asylum and migration. Apart from the inclusion of the Greens political candidate from Sydney, news reports overwhelmingly draw upon the national space/power formation when reporting on asylum.

⁹⁹ The Australian Capital Territory [ACT] Chief Minister Katy Gallagher provides comments on same-sex marriage legislation (*9 News* 11-10-2013), and the then Premier of Victoria Denis Napthine comments on disability policy (*9 News* 04-05-2013).

Table 3: Sources of information

Source	9 News n=79 f	9 News n=79 %	7 News n=81 f	7 News n=81 %	Total n=160 f	Total n=160 %
News Anchor	79	100%	81	100%	160	100%
Journalist (s)	66	83.54%	67	82.72%	133	83.13%
National Politicians	63	79.75%	59	72.84%	122	76.25%
State Politicians	2	2.53%	0	0%	2	1.25%
Local Politicians/councillors	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
International Politicians	7	8.86%	5	6.17%	12	7.5%
Diplomats	2	2.53%	1	1.23%	3	1.88%
United Nations representatives	0	0%	2	2.47%	2	1.25%
Academics	0	0%	3	3.70%	3	1.88%
Non-academic experts and analysts	2	2.53%	3	3.70%	5	3.13%
Government Officials	2	2.53%	1	1.23%	3	1.88%
Australian Armed Forces	5	6.33%	4	4.94%	9	5.63%
International Armed Forces	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Australian police	0	0%	4	4.94%	4	2.5%
International police	1	1.27%	2	2.47%	3	1.88%
Advocacy and Special Interest groups	2	2.53%	12	14.81%	14	8.75%
Refugee/Asylum Seeker	1	1.27%	5	6.17%	6	3.75%
‘Australian’ Person/People	11	13.92%	17	20.99%	28	17.5%
‘International’ Person/People	2	2.53%	5	6.17%	7	4.38%
Other	1	1.27%	4	4.94%	5	3.13%
Total	246	-	277	-	523	-

Figure 4: Sources of Information

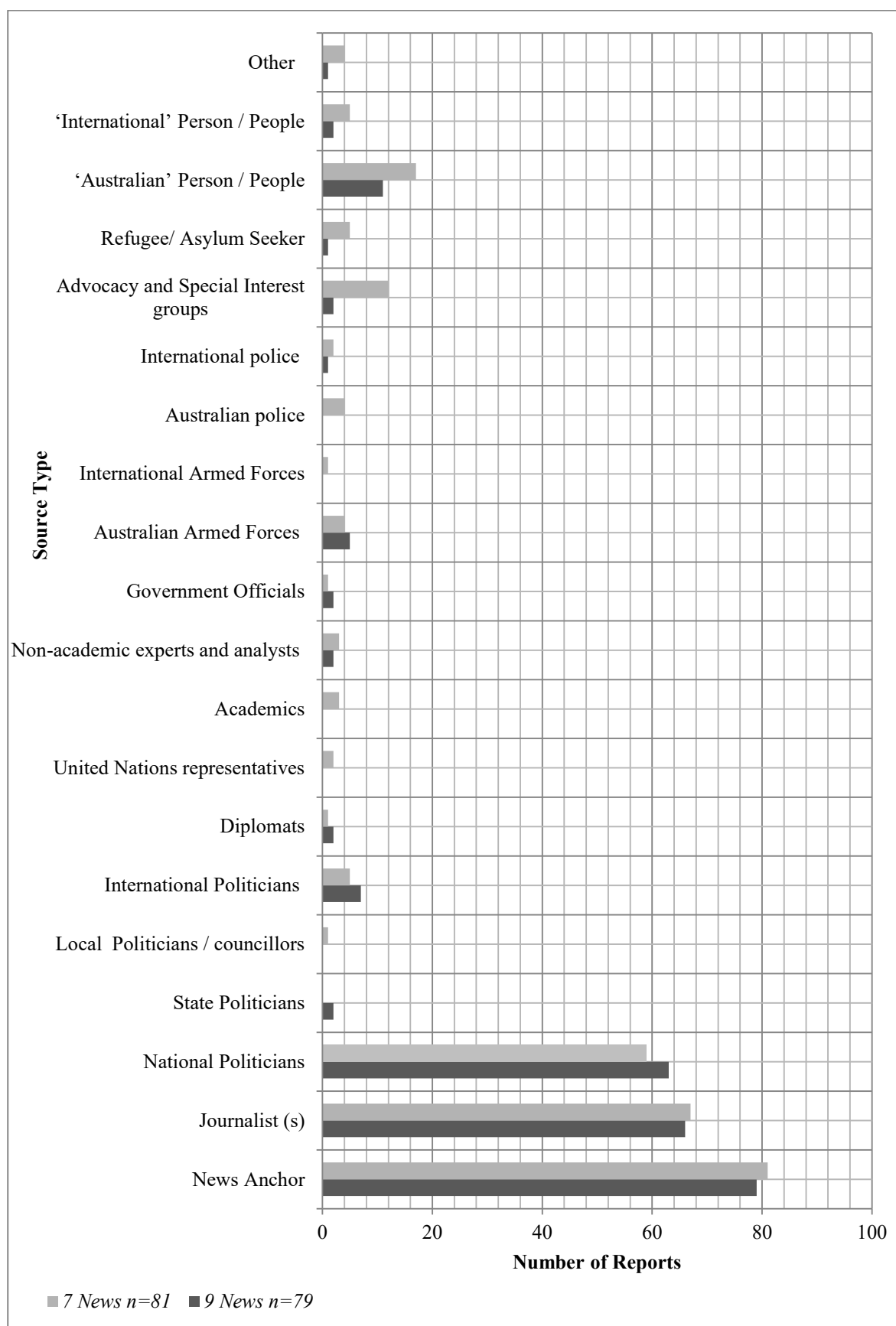
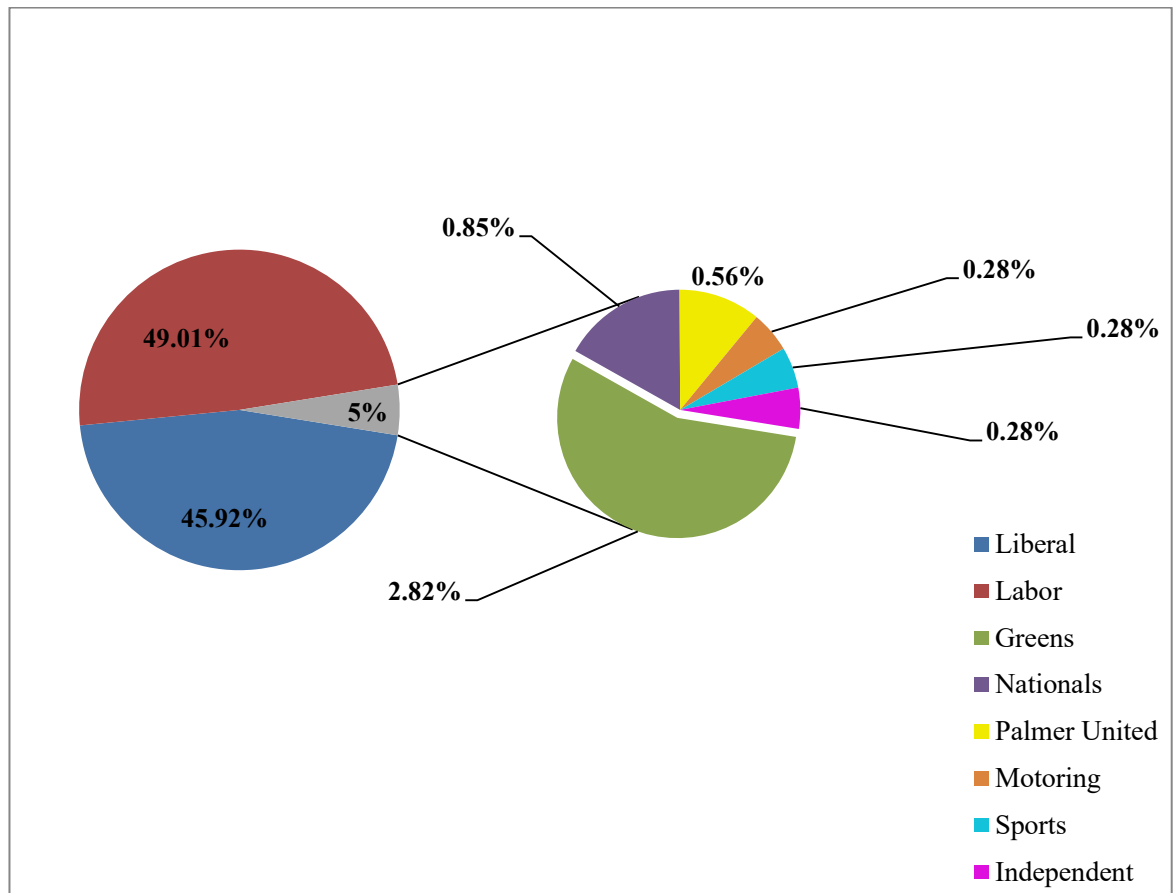


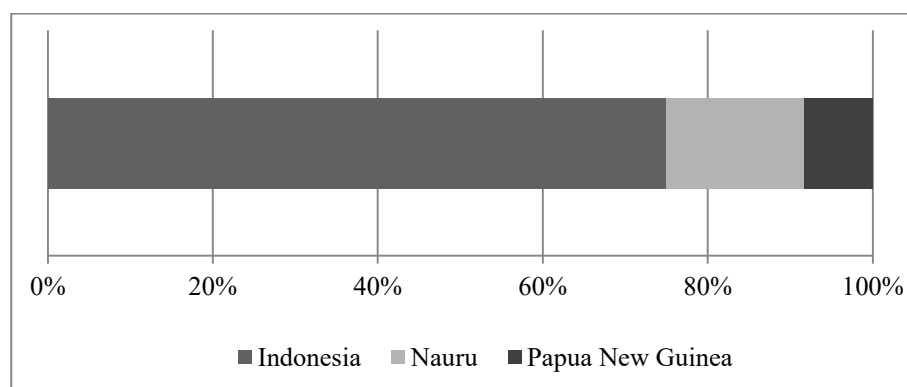
Figure 5: National political sources of information



National-global dynamics influence ‘common sense’ approaches to including international political sources, which result in a concentration on the Asia-Pacific Region (see figure 6). Of these neighbouring nation-states, the political importance of the Indonesian-Australian relationship is evident from the higher frequency of Indonesian political sources.¹⁰⁰ The plurality of perspectives these sources contribute is however limited, as they are structurally included in the news reports in relation to national Coalition or Labor politicians. In news, the relational co-constitution of space/power/identity formations manifests in the constant positioning of the global in connection to the Australian nation-state.

¹⁰⁰ Across the reports statements are included from then Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (7 *News* 05-07-2013 [1]; 9 *News* 01-10-2013, 05-07-2013, 08-10-2013), the Indonesian Member of Parliament Tantowi Yahya (7 *News* 19-09-2013, 30-09-2013; 9 *News* 19-09-2013, 30-09-2013), and the Indonesian Defence Minister (9 *News* 26-07-2013).

Figure 6: Regional political sources of information



Differences in the ways commercial news programmes report on asylum and migration are most evident in the use of international sources. These international sources diversify the information when allowing for regional, international, and supranational perspectives.¹⁰¹ However, inclusion of international individuals as sources of information is still limited (see Table 3). Golding and Elliott (1971, 161) argue that the greater the geographic and cultural distance, the greater the reliance upon ‘one or two major figures’ to portray political affairs. In addition to the economic costs of incorporating a range of international sources, audiences’ perceived interest and their inability to identify with a wide range of geographically and culturally distant non-elites are limiting factors. While *9 News* reports overwhelmingly structure international information through political elites, *7 News* reports challenge these ‘source’ structural power hierarchies. There are greater hegemonic openings provided in *7 News*, which gives voice to the bottom-up and supranational perspectives.¹⁰² The alternative perspectives from asylum seekers and UNHCR representatives are included in equal frequency to the number of international politicians

¹⁰¹ International sources in the global scale include international politicians, international armed forces, international police, refugees and asylum seekers, international people, and United Nations representatives.

¹⁰² Supranational refers to overarching institutions and here it is used to denote the presence of United Nations spokespersons.

featured.¹⁰³ Notably, these variations in *7 News* and *9 News* content begins to elucidate some of the different approaches in the commercial production of news.

While the *9 News* reports structure information in a more conservative or ‘common sense’ approach privileging national political elites, *7 News* reports allows for greater connections across spatial formations. The Sydney audiences are thus able to access the voices of ordinary individuals located in geographically and culturally distant regions, enabling them to challenge the predominant structures that focus upon the culturally and geographically distant political elite. In particular, the *7 News* reports on the Syrian conflict dedicate multi-day coverage on the movement of Syrians to Jordan, the individuals in the Za’atari Refugee Camp, and on the injured Syrian rebels fighting the Assad government.¹⁰⁴ By replicating this bottom-up approach in its coverage of asylum seekers in Indonesia,¹⁰⁵ *7 News* engages with a greater range of relational space/power/identity formations. Asylum and migration is contextualised in terms of the global and Asia-Pacific regional dimensions, with an emphasis on the ‘locals’ in these spaces. *7 News* also provides a crucial bottom-up perspective to the issue of asylum in Sydney. One local Sydney news report investigates a Western Sydney school and its support programs for refugee students.¹⁰⁶ These reports challenge the dominant space/power/identity formations that direct the inclusion of sources. However, other structural factors work to limit the salience of information provided in these reports. Reports featuring non-political elites appear towards the end of the *7 News* broadcasts, which detracts attention from the overall significance of the information. Golding and Elliott (1979, 140) observe that ‘the linear packaging of a [television news] bulletin

¹⁰³ *7 News* reports engage in coverage from a number of global locations including Indonesia (*7 News* 23-07-2013 [5], reuse of same footage on *7 News* 24-07-2013 [11] and *7 News* 05-08-2013 [9]), Pakistan (*7 News* 12-06-2013), Papua New Guinea (*7 News* 22-07-2013), New Zealand (*7 News* 22-10-2013) and Syria (*7 News* 10-07-2013, 11-07-2013, 12-07-2013). There is limited content produced by *9 News* across the news reports, from Indonesia (*9 News* 08-05-2013) and Mexico (*9 News* 15-06-2013).

¹⁰⁴ In these three reports alternative perspectives are facilitated by the inclusion of local Syrian people, local armed forces, UNHCR representatives, Australians working with the UNHCR, and refugees and asylum seekers (*7 News* 10-07-2013, 11-07-2013, 12-07-2013).

¹⁰⁵ *7 News* presents perspectives of the local police force and the asylum seekers awaiting processing and resettlement.

¹⁰⁶ The counter perspective centres on a young Muslim Iranian girl, her journey and experiences as a refugee, and her new life in Australia (*7 News* 14-07-2013 [10]).

[provides] a temporal metaphor for newspaper conventions'. The scalar relationship between space/power/identity formations subsequently influences the overall structure of television news programmes. Reports from a national perspective and national political sources feature at the beginning, whereas reports from a more local or global perspective are included in the middle or the end of the programme.

Where alternative or bottom-up perspectives are included in news reports, the ways in which individuals are included in relation to other sources potentially limits the impact of alternative information. The category of 'Australian person/people' has a high frequency of coding, yet the information ordinary people provide varies (see table 3, figure 4). Average Australians provide soundbite opinions to camera, individuals make passing comments, or footage includes crowds of Australian protesters shouting in unison on camera.¹⁰⁷ These individuals are often included along with political sources in news content, and their contributions consist of fleeting opinions on a given issue. Similarly, the source category of 'advocacy and special interest groups' covers a wide range of opinions often including those outside the issue of asylum and migration. In the *7 News* report on 27-06-2013 a range of advocacy representatives are featured including Matthew Wright from Zero Emissions Australia,¹⁰⁸ John Brogden from the Financial Services Council, Peter Anderson from the Australian Chamber of Commerce, Yolanda Vega from the Australian Women Chamber of Commerce, and Ian Rintoul from the Refugee Action Coalition.¹⁰⁹ While this provides a seeming plurality of perspectives, the range of alternative perspectives de-contextualises the coverage of asylum and migration which binds the issue to wider national policy debates. The inclusion of alternative social actors achieves a mere tokenistic plurality, as the statements

¹⁰⁷ For example, it incorporates a number of people protesting in Balmain over the Labor government's policies shouting 'Kevin Rudd, you racist coward, we don't need another Howard' (*7 News* 22-07-2013).

¹⁰⁸ Zero Emissions Australia is a not-for-profit research think-tank that focuses on climate change. Research is dedicated to encouraging the implementation of a renewable energy economy from a fuel based emissions economy (Beyond Zero, 2015). Apart from the Refugee Action Coalition, all other advocacy groups represent Australian business interests.

¹⁰⁹ The Refugee Action Coalition is a Sydney-based organisation, and Ian Rintoul is the spokesperson. However, in the news reports no mention is made of the 'local' base of the refugee advocacy organisation, and in news content it is unclear whether it is a national or local group.

across a wide range of policy areas are brief. Ian Rintoul most frequently appears across four news reports as the alternative perspective.¹¹⁰ That Paul Howe from the Australian Workers Union is included in three news reports,¹¹¹ underscores how information on asylum is embedded among other political issues. The relational co-constitutive approach to space/power/identity knowledge requires a greater exploration of the ways in which advocacy and special interest groups are incorporated in news reports.

Advocacy and special interest groups present alternative information to the dominant national Coalition-Labor perspectives. Hall (1982, 81) states that not only do alternative information sources ‘struggle over access’ but that when they are afforded space in news programmes they ‘had to perform with the established terms of the problematic in place’. Cottle (2001, 65) identifies that the conventional television news format facilitates ‘limited forms of access and opportunities for discursive contestation’. When alternative voices are able to present an opinion, the processes of framing limit the contributions they can make.¹¹² When refugee advocacy spokespeople are afforded space to provide information in news, they reinforce the representation of asylum and migration as part of the national space/power/identity formation (7 News 27-06-2013, 31-08-2013 [10]).¹¹³ The spokespersons of advocacy groups replicate the dominant discourses that centre on electoral politics by raising concern over governmental policy.¹¹⁴ Advocacy and special interest group representatives in the local Sydney region also perpetuate these relational discursive

¹¹⁰ 7 News 10-06-2013, 27-06-2013, 31-08-2013 [10]; 9 News 10-06-2013. As outlined in Chapter 3, where there are multiple news reports in the same broadcast, the position in the broadcast is also used to identify the report, for example: 7 News 31-08-2013 [1], 7 News 31-08-2013 [10], 7 News 31-08-2013 [11].

¹¹¹ 7 News 19-09-2013, 22-07-2013; 9 News 20-06-2013.

¹¹² However, Cottle (2001, 71) also finds that in rare instances alternative social actors are able to take editorial control in producing news, which enables different perspectives to be presented in news content.

¹¹³ Rintoul provides brief soundbites stating ‘[t]here is no alternative but to put refugees first in this election’ (7 News 31-08-2013 [10]), and ‘Kevin Rudd did say that he wouldn’t move to the right on refugees uh but, we’ve got serious worries’ (7 News 27-06-2013).

¹¹⁴ Rintoul’s other two soundbites feature his reaction to a boat accident resulting in the drowning of a number of asylum seekers (7 News 10-06-2013, 9 News 10-06-2013).

constructions (7 News 15-06-2013 [7]).¹¹⁵ The economic and numerical frameworks of understanding asylum are mobilised through a focus on the percentage of arrivals and the governmental ability to provide services. The governmental ability to provide support further connects to notions of citizenship and political entitlement, as non-citizens will also have to be afforded access to services that normally support the existent Sydney population. In Chapter 9, the respondents perpetuate these news discourses when discussing asylum arrivals, the governmental ability to facilitate integration, and the provision of social welfare resources.

7 News content also misrepresents space/power/identity dynamics through the selective labelling of sources. Paul Finch is identified as a 'resident' of Nauru (7 News 20-07-2013), and he comments on the Nauru riots that resulted in the complete destruction of detention centres.¹¹⁶ Yet, his personal interests are obfuscated in the report. As the owner of Central Meridian Construction (Lateline 2012), he is contracted, at the time of reporting, with the Australian government to provide construction and repairs work to offshore processing centres on Nauru worth \$680,000 from 1st July 2012 until 30th June 2014 (DIBP 2014b, DIBP 2014c). The labelling of the source as a 'resident' is thus problematic. The news report omits the economic interests of Finch concerning his affiliations with detention centre construction for the Australian government. The reliance on bottom-up perspectives affiliated with the Australian government and its interests in overseas territories limits the diversity in news content. Subsequently, the particular exclusion of not identifying the source's broader space/power/identity relationships also manifests in relation to the visual footage used in news content.

¹¹⁵ Statements from the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre representative, Kamalle Dabboussy, are included in a report that investigates the local impact of asylum seekers and refugees on suburban Sydney communities (7 News 15-06-2013 [7]). Dabboussy's contributions outline that '[t]he increase of numbers has meant that there's a pressure on all the services that are available to the area'. Later on in the report Dabboussy elaborates that '[t]rauma is a difficult exercise and there are some people that take more than 6 months or 12 months to actually be able to deal with that trauma'.

¹¹⁶ The news report details the damage done by asylum seekers to a Nauru detention centre. The burning down of the accommodation facilities and the riots caused an estimated \$60 million worth of damage.

4.1.2 Producing visual footage

Television news programmes have the ability to incorporate a wide range of visual footage when producing discourses on asylum and migration. The traditional economic and technological limitations of sourcing news video can be overcome in the current digital environment, which enables greater freedom in accessing and transmitting visual footage (Bivens 2014, 2015). In terms of commercial television news production, economic rationalisation leads to a focus on events that are reliable and likely to fill the news bulletin (Epstein 2000 [1973], 134). News programmes thus tend to cover ‘pseudo-events’, which are press conferences that simulate an event but are only staged for media coverage (Boorstin 1992 [1961]). Reporting on the issue of asylum relies on footage from Australian sources (see table 4 and figure 7). The visual footage predominantly includes the coverage of governmental press conferences, which again heighten the importance of the Australian space/power/identity formation. While the use of ‘live’ footage is higher across *7 News* reports, they are found to be dramatised attempts at ensuring immediacy. Here, live footage is identified by *7 News* as a visual cut to a journalist who addresses the camera in front of an official building while relaying live information. The lack of live visual footage in reporting on asylum is connected to the wider frameworks used to organise news, which focus on providing information on the Australian governmental position as opposed to the broader factors influencing asylum movements.

The visual production of asylum in news programmes is also structurally limited. The economic constraints on producing news, and potential issues of accessing Australian national politicians are noted in the replay of mediatised political commentary.¹¹⁷ Commercial news programmes reproduce visual footage from news programmes across cable networks, public service, and other commercial networks (see table 4 and figure 7). The structural limitations

¹¹⁷ The economic constraints on commercial television news production in Australia are noted by Putnis (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). However, Putnis’ ethnographic study of newsroom production environments is dated and further research needs to be conducted in order to understand how popular commercial television news programmes produce visual footage in the current media environment.

also extend to the global scale, where public service news programme footage includes information from international politicians,¹¹⁸ and from asylum seekers located in Indonesia.¹¹⁹ *7 News* and *9 News* only allocate resources to directly sourcing comments from international politicians when the event has particular significance to Australian viewers. In this data set, both news programmes filmed on location from Indonesia for Tony Abbott's first official Prime Ministerial visit to the country (30-09-2013).¹²⁰ The limited inclusion of visual footage from international governments or international news reinforces the importance of the national space/power/identity formation when reporting on asylum.

Table 4: Sources of visual footage

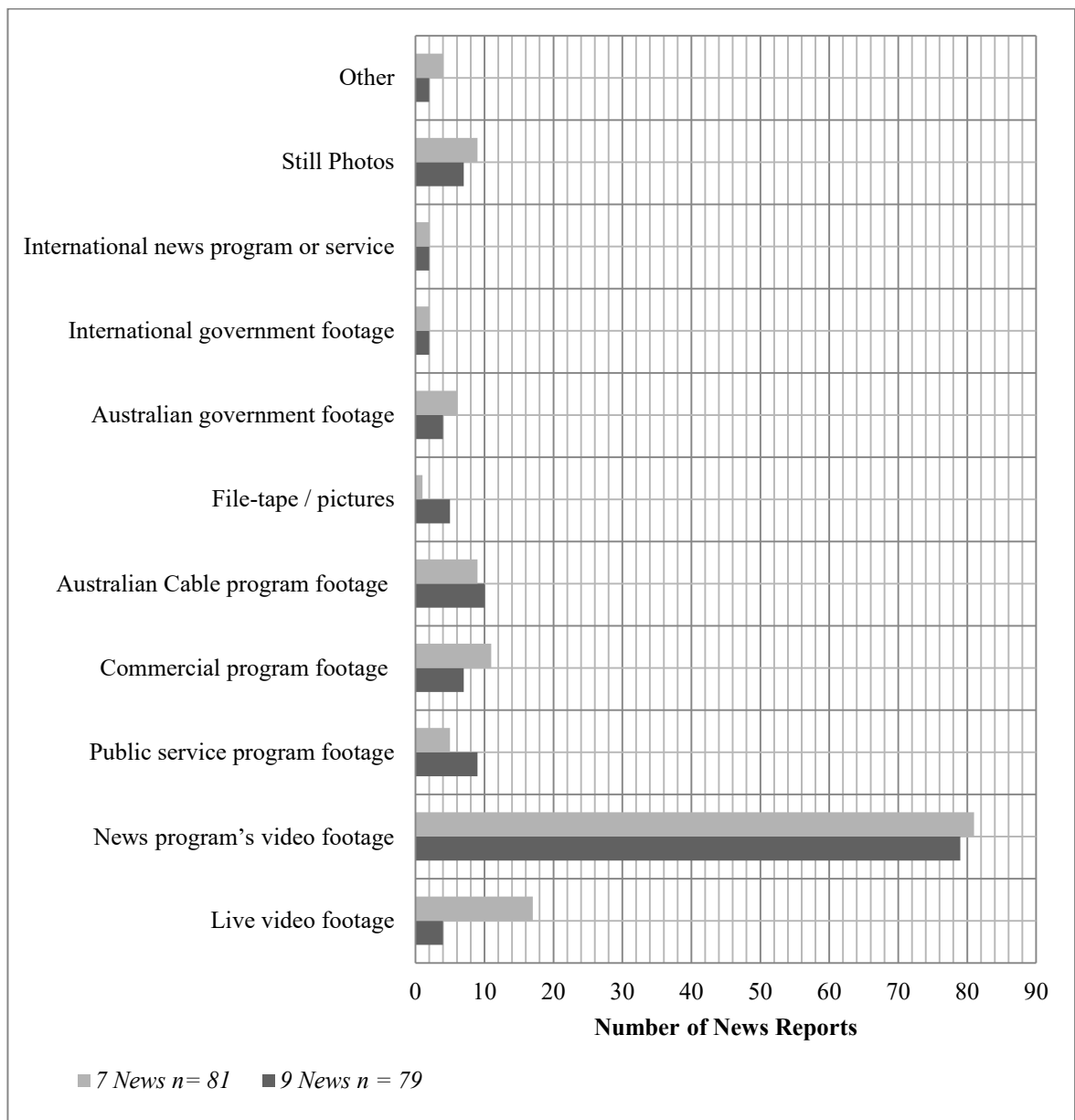
Visual Source	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=79</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=79</i> <i>%</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=81</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=81</i> <i>%</i>	Total <i>n=160</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=160</i> <i>%</i>
'Live' video footage	4	5.06%	17	20.99%	21	13.13%
News programme's video footage	79	100%	81	100%	160	100%
Public service programme footage	9	11.39%	5	6.17%	14	8.75%
Commercial programme footage	7	8.86%	11	13.58%	18	11.25%
Australian Cable programme footage	10	12.66%	9	11.11%	19	11.88%
File-tape/pictures	5	6.33%	1	1.23%	6	3.75%
Australian government footage	4	5.06%	6	7.41%	10	6.25%
International government footage	2	2.53%	2	2.47%	4	2.5%
International news programme or service	2	2.53%	2	2.47%	4	2.5%
Still Photos	7	8.86%	9	11.11%	16	10%
Other	2	2.53%	4	4.94%	6	3.75%
Total	130	-	146	-	276	-

¹¹⁸ An example is the inclusion of the footage of Indonesian MP Tantowi Yahya tagged as 'ABC Lateline' (*7 News* and *9 News* 19-09-2013).

¹¹⁹ *9 News* and *7 News* 29-09-2013 reproduce footage from 'ABC News'.

¹²⁰ The only other reports Tantowi Yahya features in are across both *7 News* and *9 News* 30-09-2013. Both news programmes have identical visual footage and the same soundbite. The video is also untaged indicating that it is original footage.

Figure 7: Sources of visual footage



The inclusion of visual footage that is supplied by an international government body (such as the Italian coast guard) or an international news programme (for example *Rahmat Semesta Alam* on Indonesian Metro TV) only occurs with the representation of geographically and politically distant events.¹²¹ Observing the reproduction of international footage in news

¹²¹ Those reports dealing with event-based coverage include incidents such as accidents or the sinking of different asylum boats. However, political frameworks do not focus on the reporting of immediate incidents but rather explore national and bi-lateral policies to migration.

programmes is only possible through visual tags acknowledging the original source.¹²² In these news reports, geographic and political distance makes it unviable for commercial television news programmes to provide first-hand coverage. International governmental footage is only used to visualise the Mediterranean response to African asylum seeker boat accidents.¹²³ The relational nature of space/power/identity formations becomes clear when the coverage of asylum in the Mediterranean and the reportage of asylum in Syria or Indonesia are compared.

The heightened importance of the Asia-Pacific space/power/identity dynamics means that news reports are more likely to include visual footage from international news programmes. All sources of international news footage are from Indonesian TVOne,¹²⁴ or MetroTV.¹²⁵ In two instances, the visual tag of a news programme is also included to illustrate that footage is sourced from *Rahmat Semesta Alam*,¹²⁶ and *Indonesia Memilih*.¹²⁷ Using footage from these television networks is significant, as they follow a tabloid television format.¹²⁸ In the context of an asylum boat accident off the coast of Indonesia, the Indonesian response is visually reproduced through TVOne video footage. Young children and women are featured in medical centres or hospitals on intravenous drips receiving medical assistance (7 News 29-09-2013). In the same report, unacknowledged local Indonesian footage also shows workers moving deceased asylum seekers in yellow body bags. Similar footage is shown on 9 News 29-09-2013, but with different individuals providing and receiving medical

¹²² It must be noted here that as the study employs a textual analysis, it is only possible to evaluate this based upon the way commercial news programmes visually tag their use of global footage. It is not possible here to provide commentary on the relationship between commercial news content and international news feeds which may supply un-tagged visual content. Commercial news programmes have an extended history of using international news feeds for visual footage, as this is economically efficient in producing coverage across global issues (Putnis 1995).

¹²³ 7 News 04-10-2013, 12-10-2013; 9 News 05-10-2013 [9], 12-10-2013 [6]. All reports include a visual tag to reference the footage. However, in 9 News 05-10-2013 the news anchor also verbally acknowledges the footage is from the Italian coast guard in addition to the 'Vigili del Fuoco' logo (National Fire Corps 2009).

¹²⁴ 7 News 29-09-2013; 9 News 08-05-2013, 28-09-2013.

¹²⁵ 7 News 25-07-2013, 9 News 28-09-2013.

¹²⁶ *Rahmat Semesta Alam* airs on MetroTV and 7 News 25-07-2013 tags the programme in the report.

¹²⁷ *Indonesia Memilih* airs on MetroTV and 9 News 28-09-2013 tags the programme in the report.

¹²⁸ Personal communication with Twediana Budi Hapsari, Macquarie University PhD Candidate/Lecturer from the Islamic Communication Department at the University of Muhammadiyah, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Discussions occurred over several months from February 2014 to August 2014.

assistance. The footage from *9 News* 29-09-2013 does not have visual tags and it remains unclear whether it is from the Indonesian government, an Indonesian television news programme, or both.¹²⁹ The geographic and cultural distance of the individuals featured in the Indonesian television news footage invites comparisons to the Australian media environment. The cultural distance raises the question of whether the footage would have aired in the same manner if Australians were the subjects of the news report.¹³⁰ The reproduction of footage without proper visual reference also functions to de-contextualise the content, further omitting the circumstances of production.

When reporting on asylum and migration, unacknowledged reproduction of file tape has pertinent ramifications. Unacknowledged reproduction rearticulates certain aspects of a visual reality, but in a manner devoid of their original context. The subsequent re-articulations lead to the perpetuation of particular discourses, such as defence, across new textual formations. The most apparent appropriation of unacknowledged footage in the reporting of asylum originates from an incident occurring on the 12th October 2009, and uploaded to the Australian Department of Defence Archives on the 22-12-2009 (see figures 8 and 9; *7 News* 09-06-2013, Department of Defence 2015).¹³¹ While section 103B of the *Copyright Act 1968*

¹²⁹ The lack of identifying features on the *9 News* 29-09-2013 draws attention to the methodological issues in identifying the reproduction of visual footage. Lack of visual tags was noted across a range of coverage regarding Indonesia including the depiction of courts, meetings between Australian and Indonesian heads of state, and the mentioned asylum seeker accidents. Ultimately, the use of international news program or international government footage could be far higher. Additionally, the extent of the news programmes' reliance on subscription international news feeds for visual footage cannot be known. Ethnographic observation of commercial television news production would shed light on the contemporary context of unacknowledged visual reproduction.

¹³⁰ Gary and Azar also raise the same point when discussing the video footage aired by *7 News* regarding a bus accident in China. Gary stated 'this is the on-board cameras in the bus showing, motion-by-motion what was happening as the driver was taken out the front window and passengers being thrown around this bus, that haven't had their seat belts on, and then they go and play it another three times ... you're watching people being injured and possibly killed and we go replay that and it's as if we're just watching a movie'. Azar followed with the thought 'You know my question would be if that was in Australia, would that be shown? Or would we be more sensitive and be like oh we can't show it. But because it's China ... it's less personal, and it doesn't matter as much. So that worried me, because I'm not sure that if there was something similar that happened in Australia, and if they did show that there would be a greater reaction showing that it's inappropriate'.

¹³¹ The original footage is from Department of Defence 2015 and is reproduced in *7 News* 04-05-2013, 09-06-2013, 05-07-2013 [1], 17-07-2013, 19-07-2013, 22-09-2013; *9 News* 23-09-2013, 24-09-2013. The reproduction drew from different angles and stages of the military boarding an asylum seeker boat from Indonesia. For example, the *7 News* 05-07-2013 [1] report uses two different angles aired seven seconds apart. Furthermore, the editing of the original footage only focuses on the moment of boarding. The excluded original video footage further visualises the naval officers providing shelter to the asylum seekers on board the boat.

permits the reproduction of audio-visual footage for the purposes of news reporting, the continued unacknowledged reproduction of footage has a number of implications.¹³² First, it invites audiences to perpetuate any understanding of asylum and migration in relation to the national space/power/identity formation. Second, it entrenches the representation of defence, based upon the nature of the footage – military personnel boarding an asylum vessel. Third, the unacknowledged repetition disconnects it from the real, and blurs the actual space-time boundaries of the event in a hyper-real militarised formation (Baudrillard 1994 [1981]). The repetition of footage also points to the potentially limited access afforded to commercial television news programmes to record and report on current asylum events.¹³³ Nevertheless, the decision to reproduce defence-based video footage as against footage from humanitarian perspectives underscores the importance of the border discourses and the national space/power/identity formation.

¹³² There was notable reuse of footage across the sample, as previously indicated in the n.131. However, there is also a prolonged period of using this particular video excerpt. The video excerpt appears in a *Seven Nightly News* Melbourne report on 28-03-2010 (*Seven Nightly News* 2010b), and an *ABC News* Sydney report on 13-01-2010 where it is acknowledged as file tape (*ABC News* 2010). The Informit TVNews database provided access to archival news reports, which meant that it was only possible to make comparisons among news programmes stored in the database. The Informit TVNews database only had records for the Sydney editions of *7 News* and *9 News* from the start date of April 2013, whereas the archives of Melbourne editions of news reports were from August 2007 - April 2013. Similarly, *ABC News* Sydney archival records extended back to May 2008. To differentiate between the two local news programmes, *7 News* Melbourne is referred to as *Seven Nightly News* and *9 News* Melbourne as *Nine Nightly News* (as titled on the Informit TVNews database).

¹³³ Here, 'asylum' events refer to the ongoing movement of boats, boat accidents, and boat arrivals.

Figure 8: *7 News* 09-06-2013

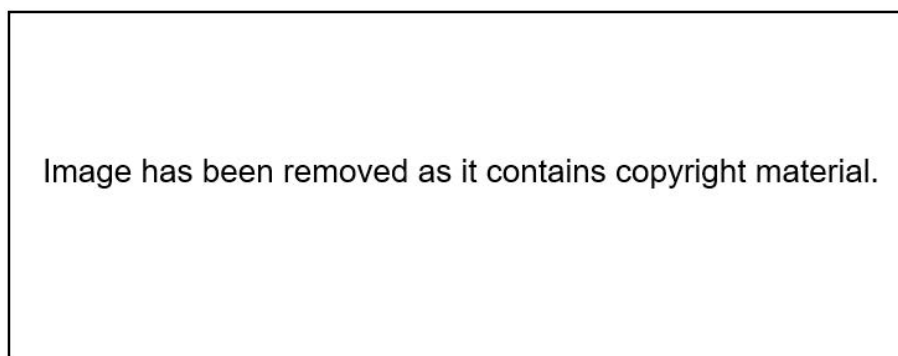
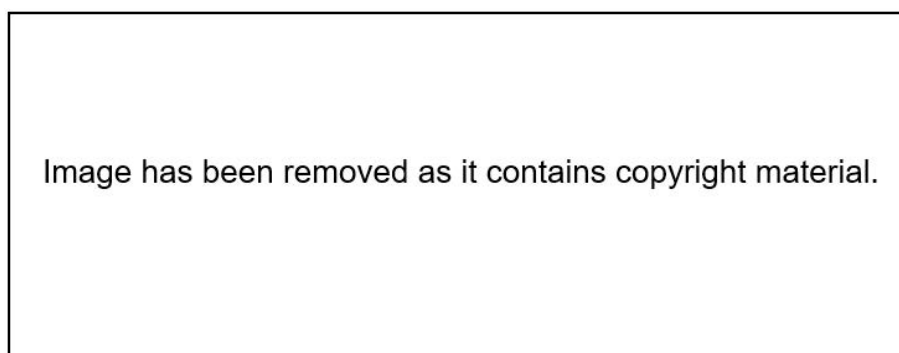


Figure 9: Department of Defence Archives 22-12-2009 (Department of Defence 2015)



The analysis of other visual representations underscores the attempts to emphasise the significant role that defence plays in the issue. On two other occasions, *7 News* uses the same video of a naval display monitoring the movement of a fishing boat (05-07-2013 [1], 19-07-2013). This is a seemingly limited re-use of video footage, yet online archival news content establishes the prolonged process of repetitively reproducing this particular visual

representation across public and commercial television news.¹³⁴ The prolonged period of repetitive visual framing occurs across both public and commercial television news production; however, the tagging of ‘file vision’ is important as it flags the production processes of re-articulating the video in new discursive formations. 7 News 22-09-2013 reproduces footage of the 2010 Christmas Island asylum seeker boat accident without directly acknowledging file vision.¹³⁵ 7 News 09-06-2013 also uses video footage of a boat being blown up, devoid of both contextualisation and proper acknowledgement. Online archival television news content reveals that the footage originally aired on 25-01-2010 as part of a report announcing the official inquest into an asylum seeker boat accident, with the visual acknowledgement ‘Off Ashmore Island, Last April’ (*Seven Nightly News* 2010a).¹³⁶ While 9 News also has instances where footage appears to be from another unacknowledged source,¹³⁷ they have a higher frequency of identifying the use of ‘file’ footage or pictures in their construction of news (see table 4). Although video footage is replicated outside of the real circumstances, the visual reference of reproduction clearly demarcates processes of hegemonic ‘disarticulation-rearticulation’ (Mouffe 1979, 197).

¹³⁴ The same video clip is incorporated into a *National Nine News* Melbourne report on 22-04-2009 and a *Seven Nightly News* Melbourne report on 18-04-2009 (*National Nine News* 2009, *Seven Nightly News* 2009). An *ABC News* Sydney report on 03-12-2008 also uses the visual footage with the additional information in the naval display showing the date of 08-10-05, but acknowledges the video as ‘file vision’ (*ABC News* 2008). Again, the extent to which this could be observed was limited through the depth of the Informit TVNews database (see n. 132).

¹³⁵ 7 News on the 22-09-2013 used two video clips without providing the wider context of the footage (see figures 19 and 20). In the news report, the information focuses on the new national Immigration Minister, Scott Morrison’s announcement that weekly briefings would be provided on asylum boat arrivals. The use of video footage in figures 19 and 20 accompanied by the reporter’s speech ‘but the opposition’s demanding to know what happens if a boat sinks and people drown’ are clearly used to provide visual account of an asylum boat sinking. There is no context as to the origin of these visuals, which were from the accident of an asylum seeker vessel in 2010 off the coast of Christmas Island. The lack of contextualisation reinforces the visual re-articulation of problems that the Australian government and people have to deal with. In not providing information of any kind that the crashed boat was from an event three years earlier, the visuals potentially create fear in the viewer. This particular repetition of footage rather than any other visual representation of the crashed boat functions to dehumanise the abstract enemy, as opportunities to see the individuals that were involved in the incident are limited.

¹³⁶ The report aired on *Seven Nightly News*, which is the local Melbourne broadcast. In addition to the written delineation that the video was taken ‘Off Ashmore Island last April’ the reporter’s speech also informs that the vision is from an Australian Navy patrol boat taken at the moment the asylum seeker vessel caught fire. Information is also given as to the source of the video, which had been presented at the start of an inquest into whether the Australian Navy could have taken measures to prevent the explosion. Figure 24 also appears in the original news report from January 2010.

¹³⁷ For example, the 9 News 23-09-2013, 24-09-2013 repetition of the 2009 Department of Defence footage (Department of Defence 2015).

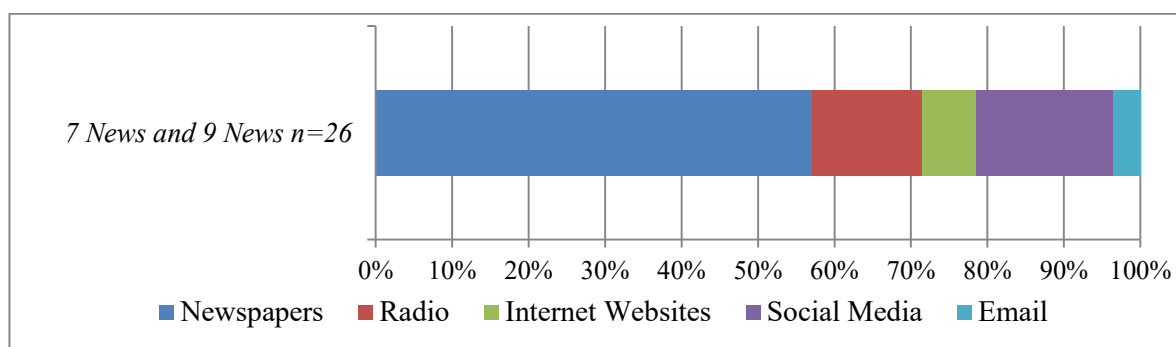
4.1.3 Drawing on other media sources

Other media sources are not frequently referred to in reports on *7 News* and *9 News* (see table 5; figures 10 and 11). The higher frequency of using information from traditional media platforms relates to the broader attitudes of news producers. Pearson *et al.* (2001, 8-10) outline that:

[N]ewspapers, news wires and public radio were seen by news producers as significantly more influential on the news products of other media ... newspapers serve as key reference material for other media ... [and] can find its way into stories on other media.

The reliance on city and Australian national print publications deepens the mechanisms of representing the dominant nation-state formation, with limited international newspapers included in news content.¹³⁸ When international newspaper sources are referenced, the regional space/power/identity dynamics influence the inclusion of Asia-Pacific print media.¹³⁹ This heightens the observations noted in subsection 4.1.1 of this chapter, where international sources are most often restricted to Indonesia, Nauru, or Papua New Guinea.

Figure 10: Total cross-media references



¹³⁸ 61.11% are Australian based, 16.67% are unidentified but appear Australian based, and 22.22% are international newspapers.

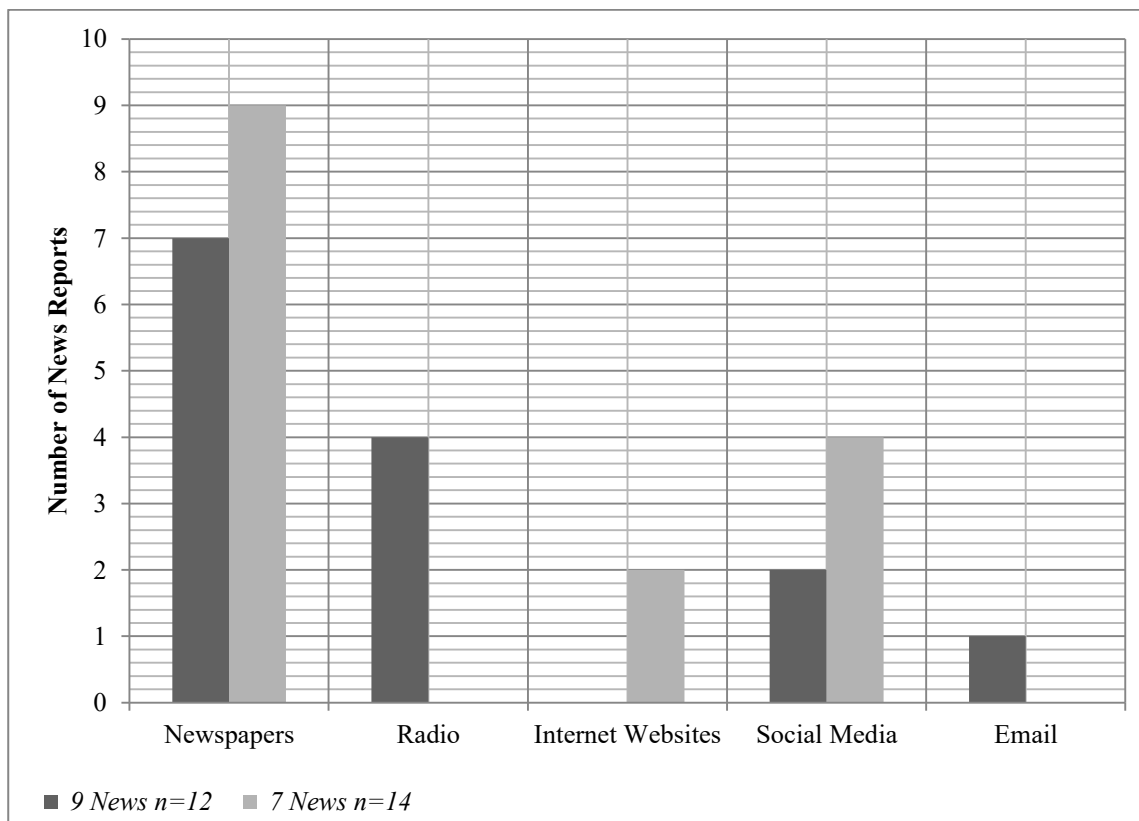
¹³⁹ International cross-media references include the *Jakarta Globe* (*7 News* and *9 News* 30-09-2013), *Jakarta Post* (*9 News* 01-10-2013), and *PNG Post Courier* (*7 News* 22-07-2013).

Table 5: Cross-media references

Cross-media Sources	9 News <i>n</i>=12 <i>f</i>	9 News <i>n</i>=12 %	7 News <i>n</i>=14 <i>f</i>	7 News <i>n</i>=14 %	Total <i>n</i>=26 <i>f</i>	Total of all reports <i>n</i>=160
Newspapers	7	50%	9	64.28%	16	10%
Radio	4	28.57%	0	0%	4	2.5%
Internet Websites	0	0%	2	14.29%	2	1.25%
Social Media	2	14.29%	3	21.43%	5	3.13%
Email	1	7.14%	0	0%	1	0.63%
Total	14*	-	14	-	28	-

* 9 News 17-06-2013 and 9 News 27-06-2013 have two cross-media references.

Figure 11: Cross-media references by medium



When including cross-media references to print media, news draws upon local Sydney-based space/power/identity formations to visualise content that is of relevance to the

viewing audience.¹⁴⁰ Print media provides visual representations of the broader national political environment. The Australian government advertisement ‘You Won’t Be Settled Here’ is included in four instances, three of which do not identify the newspaper (7 News 01-08-2013 [5], 05-08-2013 [9]; 9 News 20-07-2013.), and once in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (7 News 20-07-2013). All other newspaper references provide political information, such as polling statistics, or mediatised commentary on the national government. Additionally, radio excerpts feature in news reports to represent popular and political discourses. Visual footage of politicians talking ‘on air’ in radio stations reinforces the mediatised inclusion of political discourses.¹⁴¹ The inclusion of radio excerpts also facilitates a bottom-up perspective in news content by providing a popular voice to ordinary Australians. In this report, the issue of asylum is intertwined with reporting the then Prime Minister Julia Gillard’s appearance in the *Australian Women’s Weekly* magazine (9 News 25-06-2013).¹⁴² While the average Australians’ comments on talkback radio do not address the issue of asylum and migration, it provides a barometer for the public opinion on Gillard’s actions as they voice discontent with her decision to be featured in the magazine. The wider political context at the time was marked by public dissatisfaction over the Gillard leadership and a number of policy decisions, including those regarding asylum.¹⁴³ The tendency to utilise the dominant national space/power/identity formation extends beyond traditional media platforms, influencing the inclusion of online and social media sources.

¹⁴⁰ Sydney-based press includes the *Sydney Morning Herald* (7 News 04-06-2013, 20-07-2013; 9 News 03-08-2013, 11-05-2013), and its weekend equivalent the *Sun Herald* (9 News 22-09-2013). National newspapers feature through *The Australian* (7 News 04-06-2013, 05-09-2013 [4]), and its weekend counterpart *Weekend Australian* (9 News 11-05-2013, 7 News 21-09-2013). While the local Sydney framework is predominantly drawn upon for cross-media newspaper references, there are two instances where the Melbourne press are visually represented through *The Herald Sun* (7 News 04-06-2013) and *The Age* (9 News 17-06-2013). This extends the frameworks of the local to draw upon press from Australia’s next most populous city, Melbourne.

¹⁴¹ 9 News 17-06-2013 pictures David Bradbury, Assistant Treasurer, ‘on air’ at an ABC radio station; 9 News 27-06-2013 includes Penny Wong, Finance Minister, ‘on air’ on ABC Radio National; and 9 News 27-06-2013 also includes Bill Shorten, Employment Minister, ‘on air’ at 2UE.

¹⁴² In the wider context, Gillard is pictured knitting a kangaroo for Prince William’s unborn child, and the featured public opinion was unfavourable of the photoshoot.

¹⁴³ In particular, the ‘Carbon-tax’ a carbon-pricing scheme was introduced on the 1st July 2012 by the Gillard government in an attempt to reduce carbon emissions. The ‘Malaysian Solution’ was also an unpopular policy. The Gillard government introduced this planned ‘people swap’ in 2011, whereby 800 asylum seekers would be sent to Australia in exchange for 4,000 processed refugees who were still in Malaysia. The High Court subsequently found the planned ‘Malaysia Solution’ to be unlawful.

Social media sources provide the potential to include a wide range of alternative perspectives. However, social media sources are included in news reports to visualise the social media presence of Australian national politicians.¹⁴⁴ Facebook excerpts are also incorporated to provide a visual representation of the broader ‘popular’ public opinion in a manner analogous to the use of radio excerpts. *7 News* 02-07-2013 covers the decision made by the Labor MP for Chieffly, Ed Husic, to be sworn in as the parliamentary secretary on a Quran. After including a number of national political sources across the Coalition and the Labor Party voicing their support, the report shows the abusive comments on Husic's Facebook page by ‘ordinary Australians’. The comments are particularly significant as they visually represent the wider socio-cultural tensions in Australian society regarding Muslim integration. The only other inclusion of online media outside the dominant Coalition and Labor perspectives is through the video footage of the independent fact checking group PolitiFact Australia (*7 News* 27-07-2013).¹⁴⁵ Despite the brief footage of the website, the accompanying PolitiFact spokesperson provides an alternative perspective when voicing that the government’s claims regarding people smuggling are incorrect. The inclusion of other sources across traditional and online platforms replicates the focus on the Australian political arena. Rather than challenging the entrenched space/power/identity relationships that impact upon the construction of news,¹⁴⁶ other media sources deepen the visual and aural representations of the political nation-state.

¹⁴⁴ Social media screens are simulated to illustrate information from Scott Morrison’s twitter comments to an event involving asylum seekers (*9 News* 13-07-2013) and Kevin Rudd’s Instagram on his shaving mishaps (*9 News* 11-07-2013). Actual video footage is used to display Tony Abbott’s twitter account comments on the Australian Football League (*7 News* 28-09-2013), and also the Young Liberals pre-emptive Facebook post declaring Tony Abbott the 28th Prime Minister of Australia (*7 News* 12-08-2013).

¹⁴⁵ PolitiFact Australia only supplies factual political information in the lead up to federal elections (*7 News* 27-07-2013). The only two other instances where video footage incorporates online media is through the visual representation of Coalition or Labor Party information. Video footage of a Labor email visualises the election announcement with the subject line ‘It’s on’ (*9 News* 04-08-2013). In terms of websites, video footage features Kevin Baker for Liberal’s webpage (*7 News* 20-08-2013).

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for sources of information and subsection 4.1.2 for visual footage.

4.2 Generating semiotic representations

Television news programmes have the ability to embed additional layers of visual and aural information through CGI and special effects. The use of CGI and special effects functions to draw visual and aural attention to salient information in news reports. Computerised effects enable news programmes to present information in an entertaining way; and they also contribute a sense of immediacy. This section demonstrates that the inclusion of CGI and special effects is influenced by the broader differences between the two commercial news programmes and their approaches to mediating space/power/identity formations.

4.2.1 Visualising special effects

CGI and special effects are frequently incorporated in news reports, across 64.38 % the data set (see table 6). The prevalence of CGI and special effects in news reports necessitates a supplementary analysis to determine the extent to which news reports feature multiple special effects (see figure 12). By including a number of CGI and special effects in each report, *7 News* constructs a sense of additional drama on screen, visually and aurally attempting to engage the viewer. Chapter 5 will argue that *9 News* also creates this tone through the multimodal discourses in CGI. Other variations between the news programmes' inclusion of computerised graphics pertain to the different types of effects that are incorporated (see figure 13). *7 News* incorporates computerised effects throughout the entire news report, including the in-studio introductory segment. Only still graphics feature alongside the anchor in the introductory segment of *7 News* reports.¹⁴⁷ These graphics encourage the audience to consider certain discursive frameworks before reporting has commenced through immediate

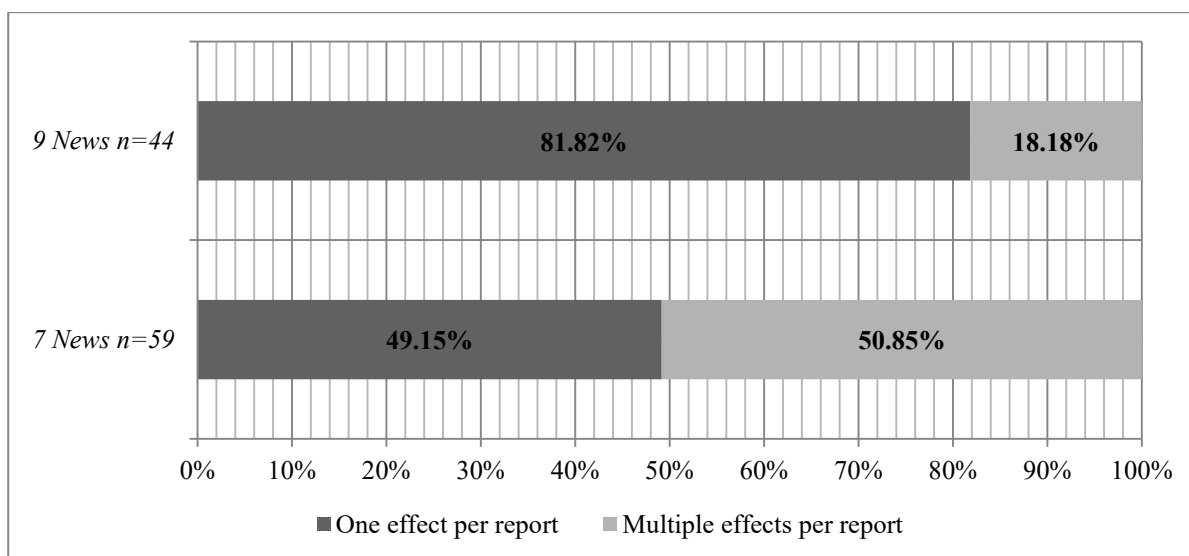
¹⁴⁷ Here, attention must be paid to the differences between the categories of animated and still CGI. Where there is no or minimal animation involved in the display of CGI it is coded as 'still graphics'. There are some instances in *7 News* reports where the feature of still CGI and photos are accompanied by the 'title' of the news report which moves on camera from the left of the screen. These are coded as 'still graphics' as the overall computerised display remains still for the time the visual information is on screen, and once the writing appears there are no additional animated movements which would require it to be coded as 'animated graphics'. Coding of 'animated graphics' pertains to those computerised displays where both the pictorial elements and the written components incorporate movement.

computerised displays.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the news programmes also have similar approaches to incorporating computerised information through the pixilation of visual data and the representation of statistical data.

Table 6: CGI/special effects

CGI/Special Effects	9 News <i>n</i>=44 <i>f</i>	9 News <i>n</i>=44 %	7 News <i>n</i>=59 <i>f</i>	7 News <i>n</i>=59 %	Total <i>n</i>=103 <i>f</i>	Total <i>n</i>=103 %	Total of all reports <i>n</i>=160
Animated Graphics	30	61.18%	28	47.46%	58	56.31%	36.25%
Still Graphics	3	6.81%	39	66.10%	42	40.77%	26.25%
Pixilation/Blurring of footage	17	38.64%	17	28.81%	34	33.01%	21.25%
Statistics, figures, or tables	4	9.09%	14	23.73%	8	7.76%	5%

Figure 12: News reports employing more than one CGI/special effect



In the production of television news content, pixilation involves the digital modification of images or video footage to de-identify visual features. Throughout the coverage of asylum across 7 News and 9 News, there are identical frequencies of pixilating visual footage (see figure 14). These similarities indicate that news networks may be using governmental footage that is already pixilated or that they have the same legal requirements to

¹⁴⁸ Chapter 5, subsection 5.2.2 analyses how these introductory graphics create space/power/identity discourses that ‘flag’ the nation-state formation (Billig 2011 [1995]).

blur the identifying features of asylum seekers. While the image quality is of a lower resolution in figure 9, comparisons to figure 8 demonstrate that both have pixilated visuals. It must be noted that the Department of Defence provides the footage to television networks in a manner where the individuals are de-identified (Department of Defence 2015). Hence, *7 News* perforce shows blurred footage of the asylum seekers. Even if pixilation is a legal or safety requirement, it prompts the audiences to consider the visual appearance of asylum in connection to criminalised frameworks that also pixilates footage of individuals. The criminalised frameworks are heightened through the presentation of data in statistics, figures, and tables. Social statistics reduce the broader complex dimensions of society to the numerical quantification of trends that can be easily communicated in television news reports, such as the changing patterns of numbers of individuals in detention.¹⁴⁹ Computerised graphics in this category feature in news reports to create a visual emphasis on the reporter's dialogue, such as the visual representation of '1062 IN DETENTION' (original emphasis) (*9 News* 04-05-2013). Both *7 News* and *9 News* predominantly include statistics, figures, and tables in the coverage of electoral politics. They draw attention to aspects of national policy or highlight the results of polling statistics as a barometer of political popularity. The similarities indicate that computerised effects fulfil a routine function of creating extra visual drama and emphasising report information in news content.

¹⁴⁹ Statistics are also incorporated across a range of news reports to represent economic expenditure, polling popularity in election periods, and demographic composition and changes.

Figure 13: Frequency of CGI/special effects by type of effect

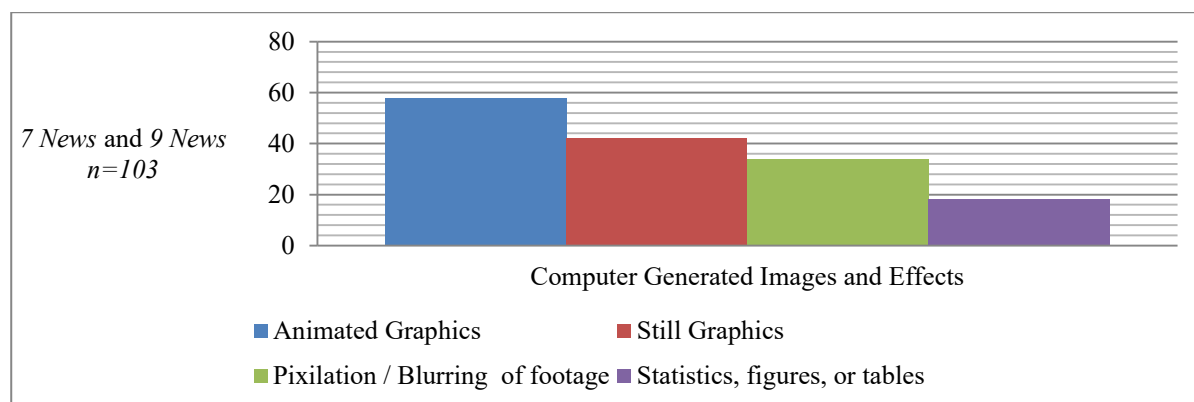
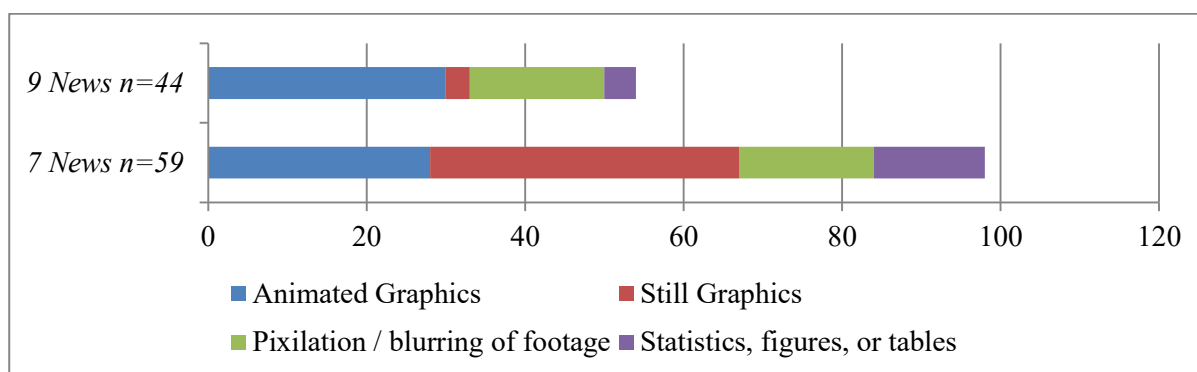


Figure 14: Total frequency of CGI/special effects in news reports



4.2.2 Flagging the nation

Billig (2011 [1995]) underscores that banal nationalism functions to call the nation into being through every day routinised reproduction. The inclusion of flags as visual representations of space/power/identity formations occurs through two different visual formats; either through video footage or through CGI and special effects (see tables 7 and 8). *7 News* undertakes a more active production of flagging the nation-state space/power/identity formation, with 26.67% of flags in the in-studio introductory segment. The use of flags in the introductory segment primes the audiences to consider the relationship between the space/power/identity formation of the nation-state and the subsequent reporting on asylum. These significations are deepened when the flags are analysed in relation to other still graphics that feature alongside in an integrated graphic display (see figure 15, *7 News* 29-07-2013 [10]). While the Nauru

flag is subtly blended into the background, the overlay of barbed wire and boats prompt the audiences to consider the national framework, the ability of the government to control territorial sovereignty, and the criminalised representation of maritime asylum seeker arrivals. *9 News* in-studio visuals do not display any visual or written information, but visually represent the local context through the footage of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney skyline. In the main body of a news report, *9 News* features one CGI Sri Lankan flag, included as part of an animated CGI display. The variations in the inclusion of flags between the formats of CGI and video footage relate to the types of reporting. Chapter 4, subsection 4.4.1 elucidates that asylum reporting is often embedded among a wider context of national policy issues. In these circumstances, flags are most often included through video footage of governmental buildings, and press conferences where flags function as banal signifiers of the nation-state power. There are four exceptions where the news programme production includes video footage focusing on a flag in the main body of a news report.¹⁵⁰ Further differences pertain to the types of space/power/identity formations that are highlighted across the news reports.

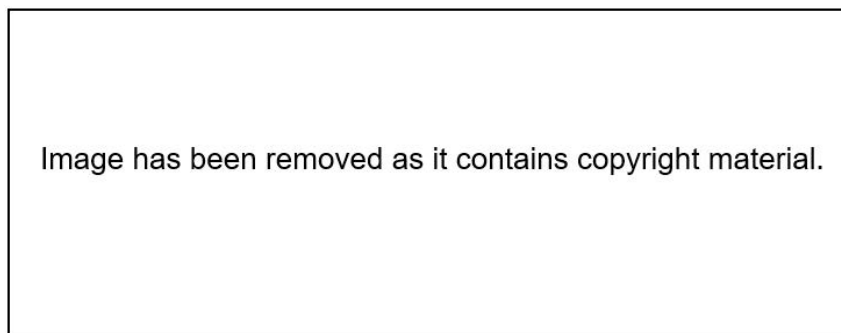
Table 7: Visually representing flags in *9 News*

9 News n=42					
		Placement in the report			Total
		Main Body	Main Body and Introduction	Introduction	
Type of Visual	CGI or Special Effects	1	0	0	1
	CGI or Special Effects and Video Footage	0	0	0	0
	Video Footage	41	0	0	41
Total		42	0	0	42

¹⁵⁰ *9 News* 15-06-2013 features a Mexican flag, *9 News* 27-09-2013 an Indonesian flag (outside the embassy of Indonesia but without any direct interview or reporter presence), *7 News* 04-05-2013 visualises a ripped Malaysian flag, and *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7] depicts a Liverpool City Council Flag.

Table 8: Visually representing flags in *7 News*

7 News n=45					
		Placement in the report			Total
		Main Body	Main Body and Introduction	Introduction	
Type of Visual	CGI or Special Effects	1	0	6	7
	CGI or Special Effects and Video Footage	4	6	0	10
	Video Footage	28	0	0	28
	Total	33	6	6	45

Figure 15: *7 News* 29-07-2013 [10]

The different commercial approaches to reporting on asylum and migration are evident in the types of flags featured (table 9; figures 16 and 17). *9 News* includes one instance of a flag that was not from a nation-state, consisting of a multitude of nation-state and supranational flags at a United Nations assembly meeting (*9 News* 24-09-2013). In comparison, *7 News* reports include a number of different flags that appeal to varying types of space/power/identity formations. The plurality is achieved in relation to the overall report focus, where local and global perspectives are included more often in *7 News* coverage. International ‘flagging’ occurs through a Free Syrian Army Flag (12-07-2013), local ‘flagging’ through the Liverpool City Council Flag (15-06-2013 [7]) and institutional ‘flagging’ through the feature of an Australian Federal Police [hereafter AFP] flag (29-08-2013). However, these alternative formations comprise a small minority of flags. Both news programmes predominantly ‘flag’ the nation-state unit, concentrating on Australia and key neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region (see figures 16 and 17). When Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander flags are included, they are shown as displayed on official governmental buildings and offices. It may be noted that government offices are required to display all three official Australian flags. Both *7 News* and *9 News* further entrench the visual representation of the national space/power/identity formation in content. However, *7 News* facilitates greater hegemonic openings for alternative visual perspectives.

Table 9: Types of flags in news reports

Flag Type	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=42</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=42</i> %	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=45</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=45</i> %	Total <i>n=87</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=87</i> %
Aboriginal	4	9.52%	4	8.89%	8	9.20%
Australian	33	78.57%	35	77.78%	68	78.16%
Canada	1	2.38%	0	0%	1	1.15%
Christmas Island	0	0%	1	2.22%	1	1.15%
Indonesian	10	23.81%	11	24.44%	21	24.14%
Malaysian	1	2.38%	1	2.22%	2	2.30%
Mexico	1	2.38%	0	0%	1	1.15%
Nauru	1	2.38%	3	6.67%	4	4.60%
Papua New Guinea	10	23.81%	5	11.11%	15	17.24%
Sri Lanka	1	2.38%	0	0%	1	1.15%
Torres Strait Island	4	9.52%	4	8.89%	8	9.20%
United States of America	2	4.76%	1	2.22%	3	3.45%
Other	1	2.38%	4	8.89%	5	5.75%
(Free Syrian Army)	(0)	(0%)	(1)	(25%)	(1)	(20%)
(Australian Federal Police)	(0)	(0%)	(1)	(25%)	(1)	(20%)
(Liverpool City Council)	(0)	(0%)	(1)	(25%)	(1)	(20%)
(Multitude of Flags at United Nations)	(1)	(100%)	(1)	(25%)	(2)	(40%)
Total	69	-	69	-	138	-

Figure 16: Types of flags in 7 News

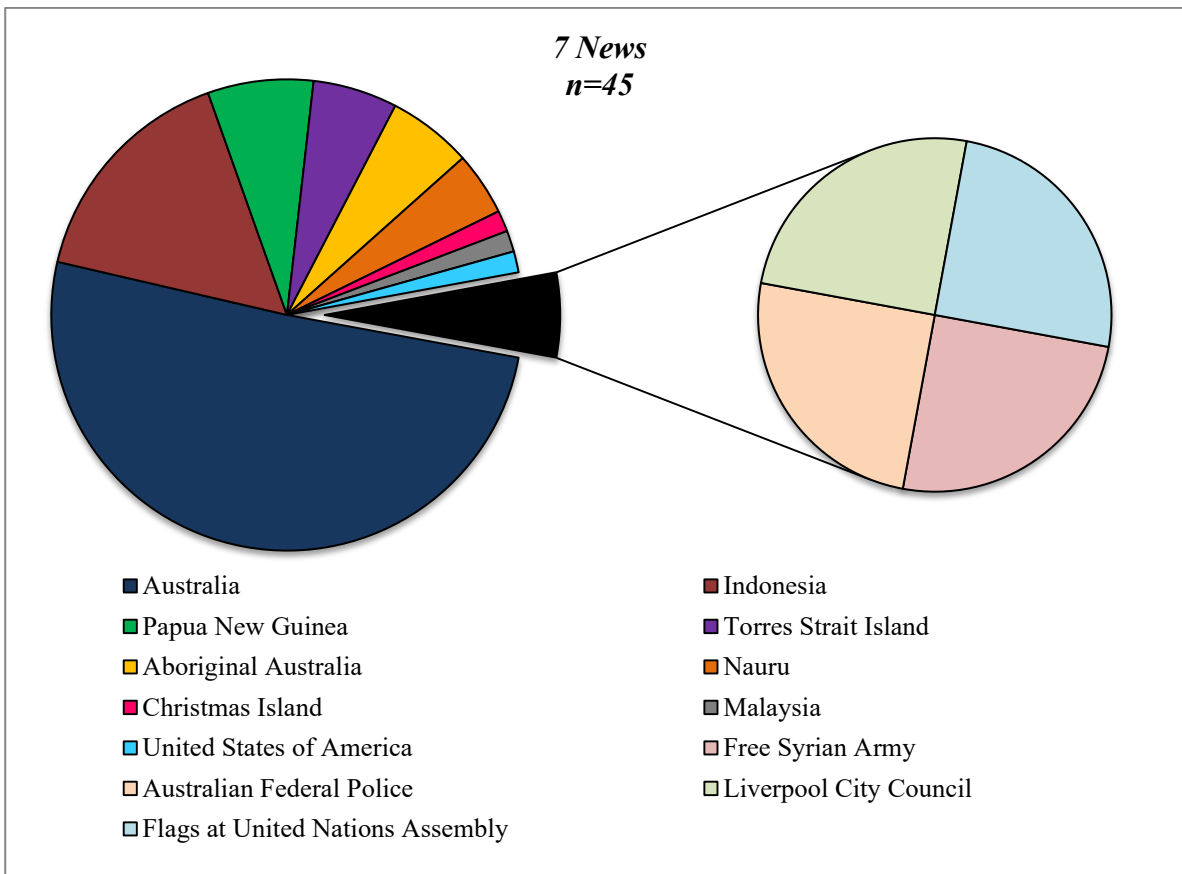
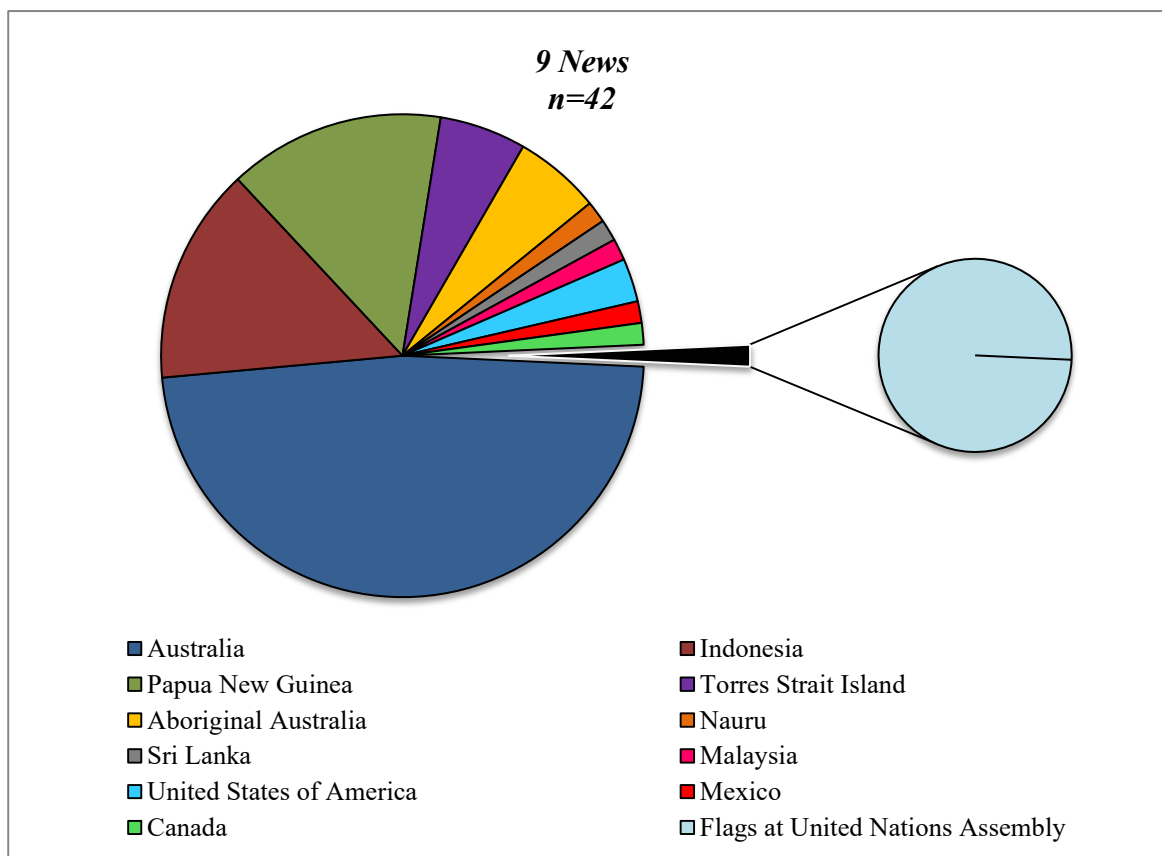


Figure 17: Types of flags in 9 News



4.2.3 Mapping space

The visual representation of geo-political space in reporting on asylum occurs through the process of mapping salient information. ‘Mapping’ report information across both television news programmes is primarily achieved through CGI (see table 11). Variations in *7 News* and *9 News* when visually including ‘maps’ connect to the wider patterns of reporting asylum. *9 News* includes video footage more often of a ‘pseudo-event’, which are press conferences on the Abbott governments’ ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’.¹⁵¹ The *9 News* emphasis on the national space/power/identity formation results in these maps being shown at a higher frequency when compared to *7 News*.¹⁵² The varied news approaches to ‘mapping’ the representation of asylum further influences the labelling of map information (see tables 10 and 12).

Table 10: Labelling maps

Information Provided	9 News n=13 f	9 News n=13 %	7 News n=20 f	7 News n=20 %	Total n=33 f	Total n=33 %
Event/Report Information Only	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Event/Report Information and Place Names	4	30.77%	11	55%	15	45.45%
Places Names	6	46.15%	6	30%	12	36.36%
No Information	3	23.08%	3	15%	6	18.18%
Total	13	-	20	-	33	-

¹⁵¹ The staged military briefing features the new Immigration Minister Scott Morrison outlining the difficulties of the task to three-star General Angus Campbell. At the centre of the conference table is a simple map of Australia and neighbouring Indonesia. The television news cameras subsequently zoom-in on the map, concentrating on the space between the Indonesian islands and the north of Australia.

¹⁵² The variations between commercial reporting on asylum between *7 News* and *9 News* are further analysed in subsection 4.4.2 of this chapter.

Table 11: Visually representing maps

Type of Visual Source	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=13</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=13</i> <i>%</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=20</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=20</i> <i>%</i>	Total <i>n=33</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=33</i> <i>%</i>
CGI or Special Effects	8	61.54%	16	80%	24	72.73%
CGI or Special Effects and Video Footage	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Video Footage	5	38.46%	4	20%	9	27.27
Total	13	-	20	-	33	-

The labelling information on maps reveals the distinctive approaches undertaken by *7 News* and *9 News* when reporting on asylum. *7 News* covers asylum with greater attention to local and global perspectives, which manifests in the representation and labelling of maps (see figures 18 and 19).¹⁵³ Analysing the inclusion of toponyms (place names) across *9 News* content demonstrates an overwhelming focus on the geo-political unit of the nation-state with the exception of the island of Java (figure 18). This encourages audiences to situate their knowledge of asylum in a regional framework, with an emphasis on the geographic and political borders of nation-states. Contrastingly, the coverage of asylum in *7 News* goes beyond the regional framework to identify a greater range of toponyms and foster wider space/power/identity connections (see table 12 and figure 19). Furthermore, the inclusion of internal local geo-political references deepens the information provided to audiences.¹⁵⁴ These toponymic identifiers and maps are significant as *7 News* reports allow the audiences to connect asylum and migration across space/power/identity scales, from the international through to the local Sydney context. *7 News* reports that include the global and local mapping of asylum tend to feature lower in the evening broadcast; nonetheless they contribute to

¹⁵³ Subsections 4.1.1 and 4.2.2 of this chapter provide an account of *7 News*' production of local and global space/power/identity scales.

¹⁵⁴ The local space/power/identity formations across *7 News* content includes Australian cities, global cities, the Javanese island, and a Syrian refugee camp.

broadening the audiences' knowledge on the dimensions of asylum.¹⁵⁵ While maps and flags are employed differently by the two commercial news channels to report on asylum, emblematic markers are employed very similarly.

Table 12: Placenames across news reports

		<i>9 News</i> <i>n=42</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=42</i> <i>%</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=42</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=42</i> <i>%</i>	Total <i>n=84</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=84</i> <i>%</i>
Nation							
	Indonesia	7	16.67%	7	16.67%	14	16.67%
	Christmas Island	4	9.52%	8	19.05%	12	14.29%
	Nauru	1	2.38%	1	2.38%	2	2.38%
	Solomon Islands	1	2.38%	0	0%	1	1.19%
	Syria	0	0%	3	7.14%	3	3.57%
	Jordan	0	0%	3	7.14%	3	3.57%
	Pakistan	0	0%	3	7.14%	3	3.57%
	India	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Iran	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Afghanistan	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Thailand	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Malaysia	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	TOTAL	13	30.95%	30	71.43%	43	51.19%
Island							
	Java	1	2.38%	3	7.14%	4	4.76%
	TOTAL	1	2.38%	3	7.14%	4	4.76%
City							
	Puncak	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Jakarta	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Peshawar	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Damascus	0	0%	3	7.14%	3	3.57%
	Amman	0	0%	3	7.14%	3	3.57%
	Sydney	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	Parramatta	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	TOTAL	0	0%	11	26.19%	11	13.10%
Refugee Camp							
	Za'atari	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
	TOTAL	0	0%	1	2.38%	1	1.19%
OVERALL TOTAL		14	-	45	-	59	-

¹⁵⁵ In the *7 News* coverage of asylum, the reports that map the regional context feature earlier in the evening broadcast. The relationship to the broader context of the news reports is that these regional maps tend to be produced in relation to reportage of Australian national politics, allocating them greater overall prominence when compared to the reporting on the Syrian war or refugee resettlement in the Sydney region.

Figure 18: Map placenames in 9 News

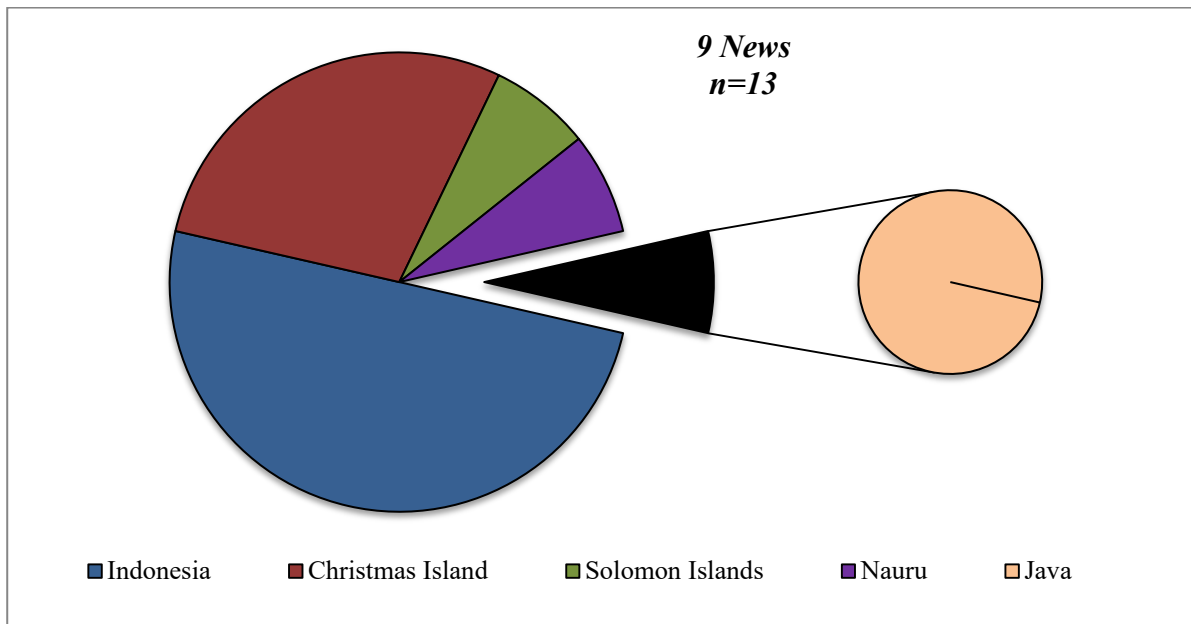
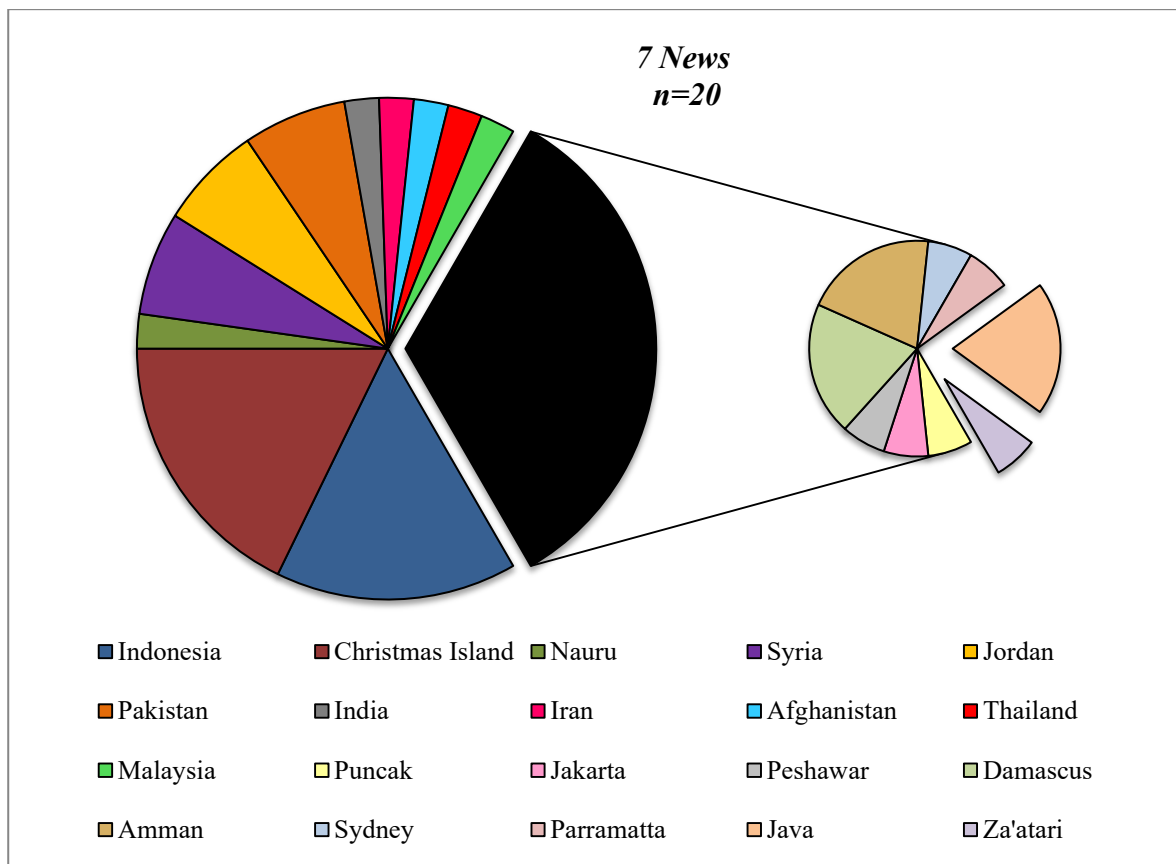


Figure 19: Map placenames in 7 News



4.2.4 Emblematic markers

Both the news programmes deploy national emblems and official logos in the binary of Coalition-Labor politics when reporting on asylum and migration (see table 13 and figure 20).¹⁵⁶ Subsections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.3 of this chapter established that *7 News* communicates a broader range of space/power/identity formations in news content on asylum. Yet, the visual representation of CGI emblems and official logos in *7 News* reports contribute to underlining the authority of the Australian nation-state. When CGI official logos or emblems are used to denote reference to another nation-state, it visually ‘tags’ the inclusion of footage outside the news programmes’ production.¹⁵⁷ In terms of the local context, *7 News* employs a NSW police force emblem to accompany a quote regarding the arrival of refugees in Sydney (15-06-2013 [7]). The broader context of spatial-power formations is further represented in *9 News* reporting when a UNHCR emblem is featured (26-07-2013). The larger report information covers the Rudd government announcement of a policy to send all maritime asylum seekers to Manus Island, which would also prevent genuine refugees from ever resettling in Australia if they travelled via boat. The emblem accompanies quotes from the UNHCR raising concerns about the ‘absence of adequate protection standards’, ‘poor physical conditions’, which can be ‘harmful to physical and psychological well-being’ (*9 News* 26-07-2013). These visual representations undermine the policies of the new Rudd government and locate the Australian response in a relational construction to the wider spatial-power formations of the supra-national frameworks of accountability. The limited engagement with local or global emblems across both *7 News* and *9 News* emphasises the relevance of the national space/power/identity formation when reporting on asylum.

¹⁵⁶ See subsection 4.1.1 of this chapter for the two-party approach to representing Australian national politics.

¹⁵⁷ Logos and emblems from other nation-states include the Guardia Costiera logo (*7 News* 04-10-2013), the Armed Forces of Malta logo and the Vigili del Fuoco logo (*7 News* 12-10-2013 [6]) (Guardia Costiera 2015; Dipartimento dei Vigili del Fuoco 2009; Government of Malta 2015). *9 News* also includes the Vigili del Fuoco logo (05-10-2013 [9]) and the Armed Forces of Malta logo (12-10-2013 [6]).

It is noted that the commercial television news programmes report on asylum while covering the Australian federal election. *7 News* and *9 News* content mainly include Coalition and Labor Party logos in relation to polling statistics.¹⁵⁸ In the context of reporting party policies, *7 News* incorporates the Liberal Party and National Party logos to accompany information on workplace laws and the budget announcement (09-05-2013, 05-09-2013 [4]). *7 News* also utilises the Labor logo in the body of a news report to create a visual acknowledgement when screening a television electoral advertisement from the Rudd government (*7 News* 07-07-2013).¹⁵⁹ The format of including computerised visual data alongside the news anchor meant that *7 News* included political logos in the introductory segment of news reports (see figure 15 for the visual layout). Yet, these *7 News* reports only reference the Labor Party logo which is featured along with the title of each report. The Labor Party logos connote a sense of political instability.¹⁶⁰ The use of more complex animated graphics in *9 News* reports also impacts upon the ways in which official logos and emblems are featured. In one report, an Australian government emblem accompanies photographs of key ministers and their new portfolios (*9 News* 16-09-2013). Another report on the drowning of an asylum boat includes the Australian Government Australian Maritime Safety Authority and the AFP emblems (*9 News* 13-07-2013). A *9 News* report covering a new Coalition asylum policy incorporates an Australian Army emblem followed by a number of official governmental, police, and defence force emblems (*9 News* 25-07-2013 [3]). The *9 News* reports on 13-07-2013 and 25-07-2013 [3] are particularly important as the content addresses asylum and the emblems signify the Australian government and its ability to police geographical borders. The particular visual appeal of defensive emblems extends the overall

¹⁵⁸ *7 News* features the political logos of both major parties in connection with polling statistics from ReachTel (15-07-2013, 19-07-2013, 23-07-2013 [4], and 11-10-2013), Galaxy poll statistics (28-07-2013), and polling statistics from *The Financial Review* (31-08-2013 [1]). *9 News* also deploys CGI emblems and logos in relation to the two dominant political parties through polling statistics from Neilsen (*9 News* 15-07-2013, 17-06-2013), Fairfax Neilsen (*9 News* 23-08-2013), Newspoll (*9 News* 23-07-2013), and Galaxy/News Ltd. (*9 News* 28-07-2013).

¹⁵⁹ However, the corresponding *9 News* report does not include the Labor logo in the same manner.

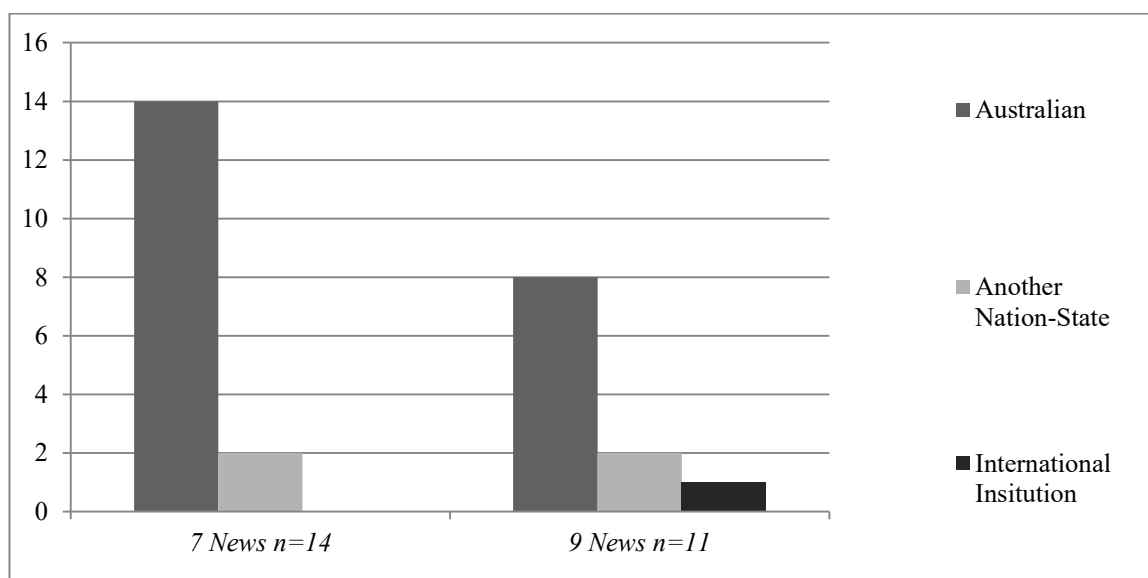
¹⁶⁰ *7 News* 'Bad to Worse' 04-06-2013, 'Restoring Authority' 19-06-2013, 'Honeymoon Over?' 23-07-2013 [4].

tendency of *9 News* to situate coverage of asylum in relation to criminalised frameworks, which emphasises the necessity of a national scale response.

Table 13: Emblems and official logos

Emblem/Logo Type	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=11</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=11</i> %	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=14</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=14</i> %	Total <i>n=25</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=25</i> %
Australian	8	72.73%	14	100%	22	88%
Another Nation-State	2	18.18%	2	14.29%	4	16%
International Institution	1	9.09%	0	0%	1	4%
Total	11	-	16	-	27	-

Figure 20: Emblems and official logos



4.3 Structuring aural sources

In media research, there is a predominant focus on analysing the visual and verbal structures of television news reports.¹⁶¹ This section develops the quantitative analysis to consider the ‘aural’ representation of wider space/power/identity formations in news reports. An analysis of the inclusion of languages other than English (hereafter LOTE) across news reports reveals that aural structures relate to the wider contexts of representing asylum across different

¹⁶¹ Madianou’s (2002) doctoral thesis incorporates a quantitative analysis of music in relation to news reports; however, her subsequently published book *Mediating the Nation* (2005) does not include this.

space/power/identity formations. The use of selective dubbing and subtitles can further enhance or reduce spatial and cultural proximity for viewers. By analysing the feature of sound effects and music, this section demonstrates that these aural elements are predominantly mobilised by commercial television news programmes to signify journalistic immediacy rather than appeal to space/power/identity formations.

4.3.1 Featuring foreign languages

The inclusion of LOTE in *7 News* and *9 News* reports is particularly low, with foreign language excerpts featuring in a total of twelve reports (see table 14 and figure 21). Both television channels employ dubbing of LOTE in the same manner (see table 15 and figure 22). These similarities extend, as there are three dates with identical footage of LOTE across *7 News* and *9 News*.¹⁶² However, the other six reports highlight the different approaches to reporting on asylum. In the other three reports on *7 News* the coverage of asylum occurs across the global scale, which includes foreign language excerpts from asylum seekers filmed outside Australia (*7 News* 12-06-2013, 23-07-2013 [5], 24-07-2013 [11]).¹⁶³ In these reports, the sources speak in their native language which is dubbed into English. The dubbing reduces the socio-cultural distance by rendering the ‘aural’ information comprehensible for the average Australian viewer.¹⁶⁴ Across the other three *9 News* reports the LOTE excerpts are from official and political figures (*9 News* 15-06-2013, 01-10-2013, 15-07-2013). In one report covering the international context of ‘illegal immigration’ from Mexico to America, a Mexican police officer’s voice is dubbed into English (*9 News* 15-06-2013). The former Indonesian President Yudhoyono is included in report content, and dubbed into English (01-

¹⁶² *7 News* 03-07-2013, 05-07-2013 [1], 20-07-2013. *9 News* 03-07-2013, 05-07-2013, 20-07-2013.

¹⁶³ The footage shown on the 24-07-2013 [11] is an identical reproduction of the footage in the 23-07-2013 [5] report. Yet, the reproduction is significant as it serves to re-articulate the importance of the global scale and provide further airtime to the interviewed asylum seeker.

¹⁶⁴ The 2011 Census demonstrates that 76.8% of the Australian population speak only English at home. Across Australia, the most popular languages other than English are Mandarin at 1.6%, Arabic at 1.3%, Cantonese at 1.2%, and Greek at 1.2%, and Vietnamese at 1.1%. In contrast, in the Sydney region there are only 59.7% of the population that speak only English at home. In Sydney, Arabic is spoken by 4.4% of the population, Mandarin by 3.3%, Cantonese by 3.3%, Vietnamese by 2.1%, and Greek by 2.0% (ABS 2013a). A media release on the 2011 Census further indicates that across Australia only 11.5% of recent migrants that have arrived since 2006, cannot speak English well or at all (ABS 2012).

10-2013). Additionally, the former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd is featured speaking in a local dialect in Papua New Guinea (15-07-2013). However, Rudd's excerpt is not dubbed into English for the audience, which suggests that the information is not salient enough to warrant translation. These variations also manifest in relation to wider relationship of dubbing political elites across *7 News* and *9 News* reports.

Table 14: Languages other than English

Languages Other than English (LOTE)	9 News <i>n</i>=79 <i>f</i>	9 News <i>n</i>=79 %	7 News <i>n</i>=81 <i>f</i>	7 News <i>n</i>=81 %	Total <i>n</i>=160 <i>f</i>	Total <i>n</i>=160 %
Reports without LOTE	73	92.41%	75	92.59%	148	92.50%
Reports with LOTE	6	7.59%	6	7.41%	12	7.50%
Total	79	-	81	-	160	-

Table 15: Dubbing languages other than English

Dubbing	9 News <i>n</i>=6 <i>f</i>	9 News <i>n</i>=6 %	7 News <i>n</i>=6 <i>f</i>	7 News <i>n</i>=6 %	Total <i>n</i>=12 <i>f</i>	Total <i>n</i>=12 %
Dubbing in English	3	50%	4	66.67%	7	58.33%
No Dubbing	3	50%	2	33.33%	5	41.67%
Total	6	-	6	-	12	-

Figure 21: Languages other than English in news reports

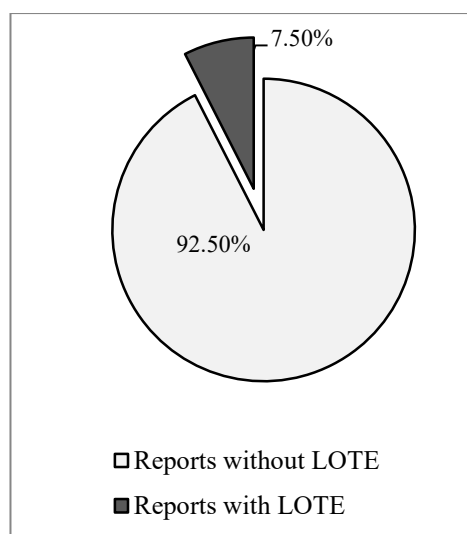
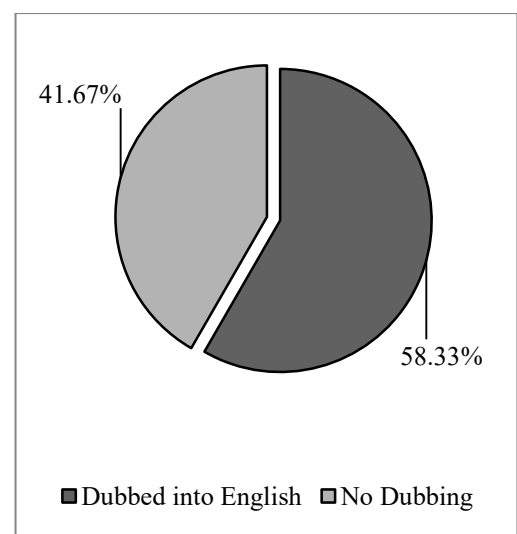


Figure 22: Dubbing of languages other than English



While all ‘ordinary’ individuals speaking LOTE are dubbed into English, there are greater variations in the dubbing of political elites. Yudhoyono is consistently dubbed into English, which demonstrates the relevance of the LOTE soundbite when making the information accessible for viewers (*7 News* 05-07-2013 [1]; *9 News* 05-07-2013, 01-10-2013). Across *7 News* and *9 News*, LOTE are not dubbed when they are in connection to Labor Party information or representatives, perhaps because of the lack of salience.¹⁶⁵ The lack of dubbing constructs an aural space between the presumed language capacities of the average Australian viewer and the information in the news report.¹⁶⁶ The ‘aural space’ is particularly notable in the only other instance of reporting which includes LOTE without dubbing into English (*7 News* and *9 News* 20-07-2013). Both *7 News* and *9 News* depict the Labor government advertisement, ‘If you come here by boat without a visa, you won’t be settled in Australia’. The footage of the advertisement is spoken in a number of LOTE, and is aimed at informing people within Australia and throughout the Asia-Pacific and Middle-Eastern regions on the new Labor migration policy.¹⁶⁷ In addition to creating an aural space, the excerpts appeal to the wider space/power/identity formations of the global and local scales. The LOTE creates a division between those in Sydney who are unable to understand the information and those who, as a consequence of migration, are able to comprehend the information targeted at individuals from the same cultural-linguistic group.¹⁶⁸ The mechanisms of creating divisions in the local space between different identities further manifests in the use of subtitles or captions.

¹⁶⁵ Rudd’s use of foreign language remains un-dubbed across both news programmes (*7 News* 03-07-2013; *9 News* 03-07-2013, 15-07-2013). The Labor Party advertisement ‘If you come here by boat without a visa, you won’t be settled in Australia’ also is un-dubbed (*7 News* and *9 News* 20-07-2013).

¹⁶⁶ See n.189 for details on the foreign language statistics in both the Sydney region and the broader Australian context.

¹⁶⁷ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for the contextualisation of this government advertisement.

¹⁶⁸ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for an account of the ways in which this advertisement targets the migrant communities within Australia (Jabour 2013).

4.3.2 Deploying subtitles and captions

7 News and *9 News* feature subtitles and captions when sources are from different cultural backgrounds and speak accented English (see Table 16 and figure 23).¹⁶⁹ Across *7 News* reports four out of the five subtitles summarise English dialogue (01-08-2013 [4], 05-08-2013 [9], 05-09-2013 [5], and 29-09-2013). By using subtitles on accented English excerpts, the news appeals to an idealised aural ‘national’ identity which is outside the bounds of these ‘accents’. The only other inclusion of subtitles is in connection with the replay of an audio alert from Australia’s Rescue Co-ordination Centre (*7 News* 28-09-2013). However, *9 News* subtitles are used in a slightly different manner to equally visualise the speech of native and non-native English speakers. In two instances subtitles are used to clarify the speech of non-accented English speakers, a journalist asking a rushed question to Prime Minister Abbott (*9 News* 28-09-2013), and Tony Abbott commenting on his sleeping patterns at a busy conference (*9 News* 01-10-2013). The other two reports allocate subtitles to individuals who provide an accented English soundbite. One report provides subtitles to the accented English dubbing of a LOTE soundbite from former Indonesian President Yudhoyono (*9 News* 05-07-2013). The other provides a written representation of the statements made by a jailed smuggler speaking accented English (*9 News* 08-05-2013). These two reports extend the appeals to an idealised aural ‘national’ identity in the presumption that the average viewer will not be able to comprehend the information in each excerpt. While there is limited use of traditional captions and subtitles, captions more typically provide a visual representation of an off screen quote from a source.

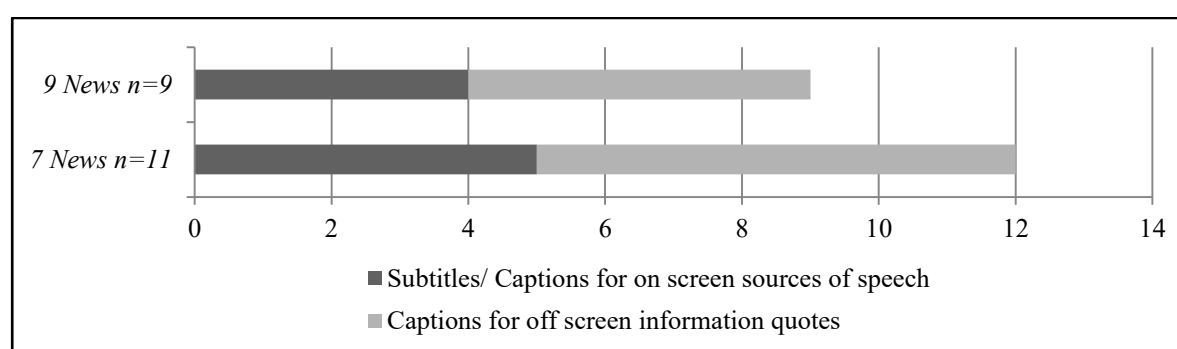
¹⁶⁹ While the individuals speak accented English, it is comprehensible enough to negate the use of subtitles.

Table 16: Subtitles and captions

Subtitles/Captions	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=9</i> <i>f</i>	<i>9 News</i> <i>n=9</i> <i>%</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=11</i> <i>f</i>	<i>7 News</i> <i>n=11</i> <i>%</i>	Total <i>n=20</i> <i>f</i>	Total <i>n=20</i> <i>%</i>
Subtitles/Captions for on screen sources of speech	4	44.44%	5	45.45%	9	45%
Captions for off screen information quotes	5	66.66%	7	63.64%	12	60%
Total	9	-	12*	-	21	-

*7 News 21-09-2013 contains two different captions for off screen quotes by the then Immigration Minister Scott Morrison, and the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

Figure 23: Subtitles and captions



Commercial television news programmes employ captions to visualise off screen quotes in relation to the national political elite, thus appealing to the space/power/identity formation of the Australian nation-state. These written quotes give the reporter's dialogue greater visual prominence when quoting official sources that are not aurally included in the footage. *7 News* visualises the off screen quotes of Laurie Ferguson 'Labor MP' (04-05-2013) and both Scott Morrison 'Immigration Minister' and Tony Abbott 'Prime Minister' (21-09-2013). *7 News* also incorporates frameworks of defence through an off screen quote from General David Hurley 'Chief of Defence' on the Rudd governments' 'Operation Resolute' (*7 News* 25-07-2013).¹⁷⁰ Across both news programmes, the inquest findings of Mr Michael Barnes 'Queensland Coroner' identify the Rudd governments' role in the deaths of four men as a consequence of the Labor government home insulation scheme (*7 News* and *9 News* 04-

¹⁷⁰ Operation Resolute was the precursor to Operation Sovereign Borders. Like Operation Sovereign Borders it consisted of a multiagency approach led by Rear Admiral David Johnston.

07-2013). As *9 News* tends to draw more heavily on the nation-state formation when reporting asylum, it more frequently includes off screen national political quotes. There is also greater visual complexity as seen from the use of CGI that simulates different social media platforms, but only when quoting Australian politicians. An Instagram display frames the off screen quote by Rudd on a shaving mishap (*9 News* 11-07-2013), a Twitter display surrounds an off screen quote by Morrison on an asylum accident (*9 News* 13-07-2013), and an animated militarised CGI display provides a quote by Morrison regarding ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’ (*9 News* 22-09-2013). Rather than including a diverse array of information, particularly from sources where there is difficult access, the on screen written quotes works to entrench the dominant ‘common sense’ national frameworks. There are instances where the local and the global scales are represented by the inclusion of off screen quotes; but these scales remain linked to Australian national politics. In the coverage of the Rudd governments’ policy to transfer and resettle all maritime arrivals in offshore territories,¹⁷¹ the supranational authority of the UNHCR is emphasised by the visual depiction of the official quote (*9 News* 26-07-2013). When reporting on the increase in refugee resettlement in Sydney’s South-Western region, a visual representation of an off screen statement from the NSW police comments on the lack of communication between the national political scale and the local police force (*7 News* 15-06-2013 [7]). Consequently, the inclusion of captions to visually represent the off screen quotes of official information works to emphasise the importance of both the source and the authority of the information.

4.3.3 Aural effects

Across *7 News* and *9 News* reports, sound effects and music are included to synthesise immediacy and drama (see table 17, figure 24). Postman (2005 [1985]) draws attention to the aurally produced nature of news reports, ‘punctuated with music ... to create a mood and

¹⁷¹ See subsection 4.2.4 of this chapter for an account of the decision to send maritime asylum seekers to Manus Island.

provide a leitmotif for the entertainment’. Only one report across the entire data set features mood music incorporated into the reporting and the particular report follows a ‘current affairs’ style of reporting (7 News 22-10-2013). These stylistic differences relate to the longer length of this news report and the wider range of visual and aural elements that are used to construct an overly emotive emphasis, a feature that usually accompanies the tabloid current affairs format.¹⁷² Additionally, the overall broadcast within which this news report is situated is a special edition of the evening news, providing extended bushfire coverage through an hour-long bulletin.¹⁷³ 7 News reporting employs mood music to evoke emotive connections when providing information on an Australian woman’s yearly journey to New Zealand to ensure her Iraqi refugee rapist is not granted parole (22-10-2013). Apart from this instance, music does not feature in news reports, as it is not conventional in everyday news coverage. Both 7 News and 9 News regularly feature a range of sound effects across a variety of reporting contexts.

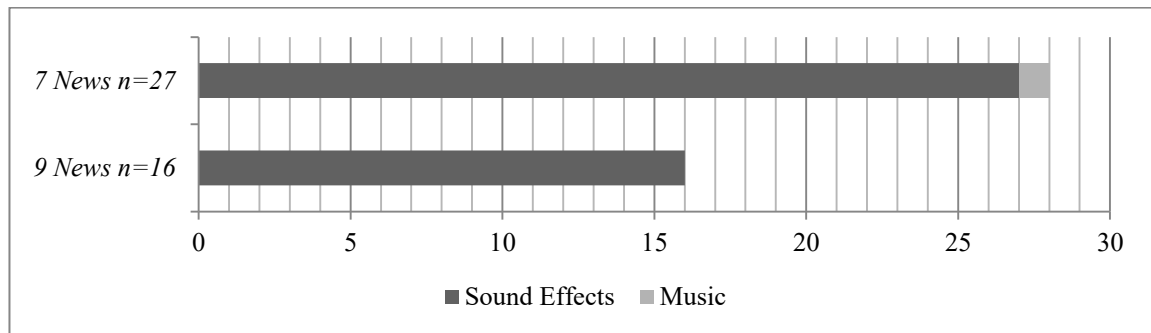
Table 17: Aural effects

Aural Effects	9 News n=16 f	9 News n=16 %	7 News n=27 f	7 News n=27 %	Total n=43 f	Total n=43 %
Sound Effects	16	100%	26	96.30%	42	97.67%
Music	0	0%	1	3.70%	1	2.33%
Total	16	-	27	-	43	-

¹⁷² On the 3rd February 2014, the Seven Network axed the current affairs programme *Today Tonight* in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane when moving to an hour-long evening news bulletin. The inclusion of music in this report appears to be an outlier when compared to the formatting of news reports across the wider data set. It appears that the report is included in the programme to fill airtime during the special hour-long bushfire coverage, and it follows a current affairs genre production style (particularly the format of *Today Tonight* reports). The particular report uses the tabloidised stylistic features associated with commercial current affairs production (close ups, sound effects, mood music, dramatic language). The report also appears 22nd in the news bulletin, which suggests that it is lower on the production hierarchy of serious news reports. Further research would help to establish whether the hour-long broadcast has meant that the evening news bulletin incorporates more current affairs style reports.

¹⁷³ Hour-long news programmes ensue when there are mitigating circumstances that require extended coverage, such as the bushfires in Sydney, the federal election (07-09-2013), or the Labor Leadership spill (26-06-2013). In relation to the 160 news report data set on asylum and migration reports, there are only three reports that are part of hour-long broadcasts which followed bushfires in Sydney (7 News 19-10-2013; 9 News 19-10-2013, 21-10-2013).

Figure 24: Aural effects



The inclusion of sound effects in news reports communicates the immediacy and importance of the surrounding information. Golding and Elliott (1979, 140) stress that salience relates to a report's position in a news bulletin. However, aural structures within reports also flag the significance of certain information over others. Both *7 News* and *9 News* employ sound effects to mark the switch to live reporting, which suggests that it is a standardised news production technique. As subsection 4.1.2 of this chapter argues, live footage most often includes a cross over to a reporter speaking to the camera in front of a governmental building. Here sound effects generate a sense of immediacy and an aural dramatisation aimed at drawing audiences' attention to the upcoming 'serious' information. The significance is often flagged in conjunction with animated graphics in both news programmes. In *7 News* 12-06-2013 animation is used to reveal the name 'Seven Investigation', which appears as two separate words that come together to the accompaniment of a clanging sound. In *9 News*, a stamping sound is used to bring together the separate words in the graphic 'Election 2013' (04-08-2013). A 'swoosh' accompanies the '*9 News*' graphic as it flies towards the viewer before presenting information on asylum policy changes (*9 News* 07-05-2013). A 'swoosh' is also used to bring together the graphic 'First on *9 News*' (*9 News* 08-05-2013), and for the 'Breaking News' graphics (*9 News* 25-07-2013 [4]). Sound effects

also attempt to generate an emotive or dramatic atmosphere.¹⁷⁴ These vary from gameshow sound effects (7 *News* 27-07-2013, 29-07-2013), to the simulation of a camera shutter taking photos (9 *News* 18-09-2013, 19-06-2013), and include digitalised sounds to add depth to animated CGI graphics (9 *News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013). A quantitative evaluation of the thematic issues used in connection to asylum and migration coverage is provided below in order to set the context for the multimodal discourse analysis of news.

4.4 Forming thematic connections

News reports draw upon a range of thematic issues to connect asylum to different politicised formations. By identifying the relationship between asylum and a range of thematic connections, this section demonstrates how reporting centres on issues that appeal to the nation-state space/power/identity formation and the ‘conventional national “logics” such as “the economy”’ (Sparke 2005, 183). The nation-state formation is the predominant framework of reference; however, news content employs a co-constitutional positioning of the global and local to emphasise the relevance of the national scale. While a wide range of issues may be included in coverage on asylum, the inclusion does not equate to the presence of a radical plurality of perspectives. Rather, the frameworks used to present asylum remain limited. This approach applies to the representation of identity in news content as well.

4.4.1 Identifying dominant thematic issues

Both news programmes predominantly cover asylum and migration in the frame of national politics (see table 18, figure 25).¹⁷⁵ As a result of the Australian federal election on the 7th September 2013, asylum and migration are most often reported in relation to the thematic

¹⁷⁴The connections between emotive or dramatic sound effects and CGI animated graphic displays are subsequently analysed in Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.2 with greater elaboration on the ways in which sound effects contribute to multimodal discourses.

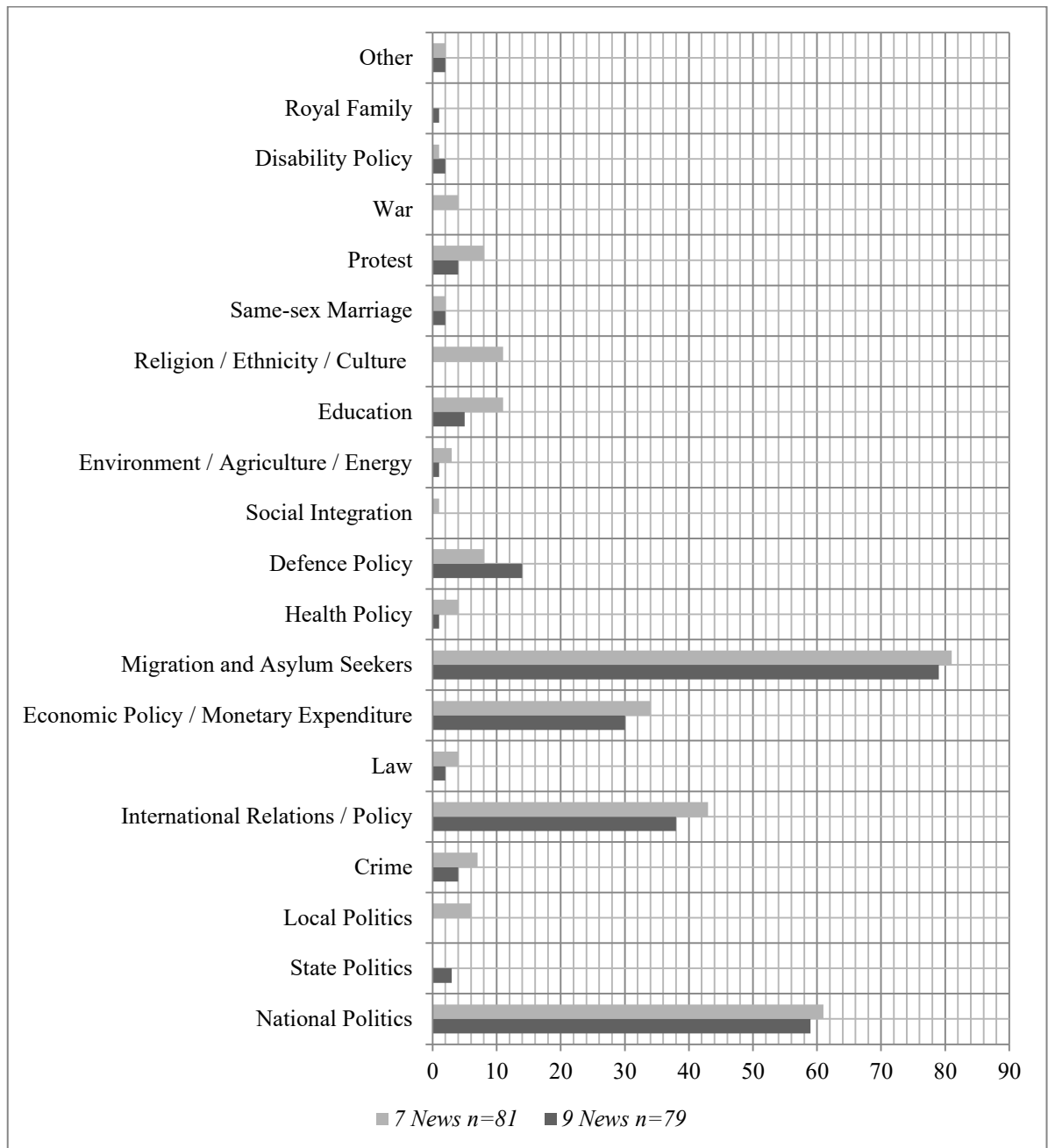
¹⁷⁵ The table only includes a list of the codes that are used in the quantitative data analysis, for a complete list of available codes see Appendix 2. All reports are coded for ‘migration/asylum’, as the methodological approach and purposive sample only included reports that covered the thematic issue of asylum. All reports must be coded with the theme of ‘migration/ asylum’ because of the sampling process.

issues of national politics, international relations/policy, and economic policy/monetary expenditure. The coding of 'economics policy/monetary expenditure' relates to the management of the nation-state, which reproduces a 'common sense' logic regarding the role of the nation-state in overseeing territorial economic resources. On the national scale asylum is connected to governmental expenditures across a range of policy issues, particularly in the context of budgetary management. The policy connections between asylum and economics within the nation-state detract from alternative global-local perspectives. These connections emphasising the nation-state are replicated when considering the global scale. On the global scale, the relational construction of space/power/identity relations in commercial news reports posits the issue of asylum in relation to 'international relations/international relations policy'. On the global scale, the focus is on the Australian government's relationship with neighbouring nation-states in the Asia-Pacific region. By fostering connections between asylum and 'international relations', the reporting highlights the Australian nation-state in the global domain rather than the actions of other global power formations such as the UNHCR. The links between 'asylum', 'national politics', 'international relations', and 'economics' are important as they mobilise different space/power/identity scales but simultaneously give prominence to the role of the nation-state. While these are the most frequently coded thematic issues, there are a number of other categories which demonstrate that a wide range of social information is canvassed when reporting on asylum and migration.

Table 18: Thematic issues included in the coverage of asylum and migration

Thematic Issue	9 News n=79 f	9 News n=79 %	7 News n=81 f	7 News n=81 %	Total n=160 f	Total n=160 %
National Politics	59	74.68%	61	75.31%	120	75%
State Politics	3	3.80%	0	0%	3	1.88%
Local Politics	0	0%	6	7.41%	6	3.75%
Crime	4	5.06%	7	8.64%	11	6.88%
International Relations/Policy	38	48.10%	43	53.09%	81	50.63%
Law	2	2.53%	4	4.94%	6	3.33%
Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	30	37.97%	34	41.98%	64	40%
Migration and Asylum Seekers	79	100%	81	100%	160	100%
Health Policy	1	1.27%	4	4.94%	5	3.13%
Defence Policy	14	17.72%	8	9.88%	22	13.75%
Social Integration	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Environment/Agriculture/ Energy	1	1.27%	3	3.70%	4	2.5%
Education	5	6.33%	11	13.58%	16	10%
Religion/Ethnicity/Culture	0	0%	11	13.58%	11	6.88%
Same-sex Marriage	2	2.53%	2	2.47%	4	2.5%
Protests	4	5.06%	8	9.88%	12	7.5%
War	0	0%	4	4.94%	4	2.5%
Disability Policy	2	2.53%	1	1.23%	3	1.88%
Royal Family	1	1.27%	0	0%	1	0.63%
Other	2	2.53%	2	2.47%	4	2.5%
Total	247	-	291	-	538	-

Figure 25: Thematic issues included in the coverage of asylum and migration



The focus on three core categories in the coverage of migration and asylum means that all other thematic issues feature in a more dispersed manner (see table 18, figure 25). *9 News* covers asylum within a much closer and restricted framework (figure 25). Reporting of asylum connects more frequently to ‘defence’ themes, which mobilise the national space/power/identity formation. In contrast, *7 News* includes a wider range of themes and issues across the data set. The diversity in the production of news content across *7 News* connects the thematic issue of asylum and migration to the local (Sydney) and global space/power/identity formations (see religion, protest, local politics, and education). Yet, *7 News* also associates the issue asylum with ‘crime’ more frequently than *9 News*. Although *7 News* includes a wider range of thematic issues, these do not always contribute to widening the range of discourses used to discuss asylum, particularly when the category of ‘crime’ is considered. Additionally, the inclusion of a wide range of themes encourages the viewer to situate their knowledge of asylum among a range of other policy areas and social issues. This perpetuates a relational discursive association where asylum is located in a political chain of issues to be dealt with in the national framework. However, these relational discursive formations are driven by broader political discourses that peak during periods of crisis.

Commercial television news also tends to cover multiple thematic issues within the space of one report, which creates a sense that the diverse topics are interrelated. While the inclusion of many thematic issues in one news report may be seen as diversifying information through ‘multiperspectival’ news (Gans 1979, 313-314), this is rarely the case across the study. News reports that tend to include a chain of thematic issues are those that report on the Australian national political framework. In order to achieve meaningful pluralism in television news, Gans stresses the importance of a longer report format that focuses less on novelty and ‘immediacy’ (ibid.). The average length of these ‘national politics’ reports do not facilitate enough time to provide depth on the numerous political issues included in the news

content.¹⁷⁶ Table 19 provides an account of the frequencies in which commercial news programmes cover multiple issues in one report through a month-by-month analysis.¹⁷⁷ Ultimately, the inclusion of many themes in a news report does not present pluralised perspectives, but occurs in relation to the national political dynamics. News coverage of many political issues in news content relates both to the Labor Party Spill (26-06-2013) and the election campaigning prior to the September federal election (07-09-2013). Rather than having a pluralising function in content, the inclusion of many political issues narrows the diversity and concentrates information within the binary of the two-party political perspectives. The limited range of frameworks used to cover asylum also influences the relationship between the primary and secondary themes in news reports.

¹⁷⁶ The average time of reports with a 'national politics' focus is 2min 17sec 47ms for *9 News* and 2 min 9sec 315ms for *7 News*.

¹⁷⁷ There is a higher frequency of reporting three, four, or five issues around the July period, but this is proportionate to the overall higher number of news reports included across the month of July.

Table 19: Frequency of multiple thematic issues per report by month

		Number of Thematic Issues Coded per Report							
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Total number of reports
News Programme and Month	9 News May n=8	3	0	3	2	0	0	0	8
	7 News May n=6	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	6
	Total n=14	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
	9 News June n=14	5	2	5	1	0	0	1	14
	7 News June n=12	3	2	4	1	2	0	0	12
	Total n=26	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>26</u>
	9 News July n=24	1	2	10	7	4	0	0	24
	7 News July n=30	0	4	10	7	7	2	0	30
	Total n=54	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>54</u>
	9 News August n=9	1	2	3	2	1	0	0	9
	7 News August n=15	0	2	0	5	3	3	2	15
	Total n=24	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>24</u>
	9 News September n=15	0	3	5	6	1	0	0	15
	7 News September n=13	0	2	4	5	1	1	0	13
	Total n=28	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>28</u>
	9 News October n=9	2	1	1	2	2	0	1	9
	7 News October n=5	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	5
	Total n=14	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>14</u>
	Overall Total n=160	19	21	49	40	21	6	4	160

4.4.2 Concentrating upon primary and secondary themes

Although there is a wide dispersion of issues featured in news reports, the primary and secondary foci centre on the most frequently coded themes (see table 20 and figure 26). Commercial television news programmes provide predominant attention to ‘asylum/migration’,¹⁷⁸ and also to ‘national politics’. Despite frequent inclusions in news, ‘international relations’ and ‘economics’ are only the primary foci in a small number of

¹⁷⁸ Reports with the primary thematic focus of ‘asylum /migration’ are those reports covering asylum and migration events only, including boat arrivals or detention centre incidents. Where other issues are the primary focus of the news report, then ‘asylum/migration’ assumes a secondary focus. For example, reports on national politics tend to have the primary issue coded as ‘national politics’ and ‘asylum/migration’ as a secondary issue.

reports. They are more often included in relation to other ‘primary’ thematic issues such as ‘national politics’. The importance of ‘national politics’ and ‘asylum/migration’ is further elucidated by considering the relationship between the primary focus and the cumulative length of the news reports in relation to the overall data set (figures 27 and 28). Across 9 *News* reports, the greatest time is allocated to reporting within the three main frameworks of ‘national politics’, ‘asylum/migration’, and ‘international relations’. While 7 *News* devotes more time to covering the issues of ‘national politics’ and ‘asylum/migration’, it more evenly covers a range of different thematic issues.¹⁷⁹ The tendency of 9 *News* to report on a narrow range of thematic issues is exemplified when the secondary focus of news reports are analysed.

Table 20: Primary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration

Thematic Issue	9 News n=79 f	9 News n=79 %	7 News n=81 f	7 News n=81 %	Total n=160 f	Total n=160 %
National Politics	33	41.77%	27	33.33%	60	37.50%
Crime	2	2.53%	4	4.94%	6	3.75%
International Relations/Policy	11	13.92%	6	7.41%	17	10.63%
Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	5	6.33%	5	6.17%	10	6.25%
Migration and Asylum Seekers	27	34.18%	36	44.44%	63	35%
Defence Policy	1	1.27%	0	0%	1	0.63%
War	0	0%	3	3.70%	3	1.88%
Total	79	-	81	-	160	-

¹⁷⁹ The 7 *News* report 22-10-2013 follows an elongated current affairs format (see Chapter 4, subsection 4.3.3 for further explanation) and the primary focus of this report is ‘crime’. Even when re-considering the category of crime in the analysis of 7 *News* reports, all values remain similarly dispersed with only a small reduction noted in the average time allocated to the primary issue of crime.

Figure 26: Primary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration

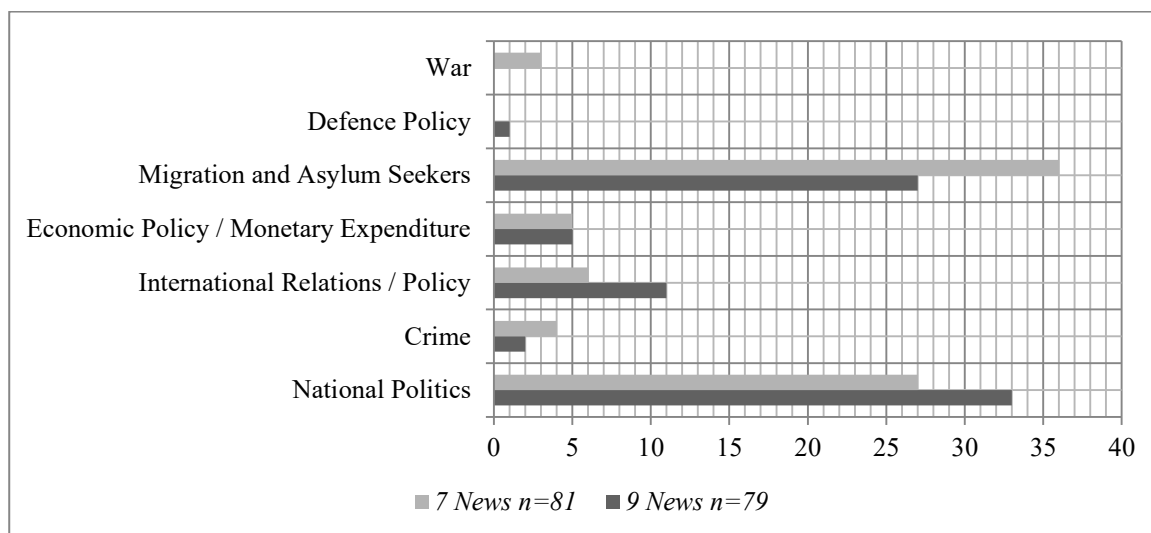


Figure 27: Time spent covering each primary thematic issue 7 News

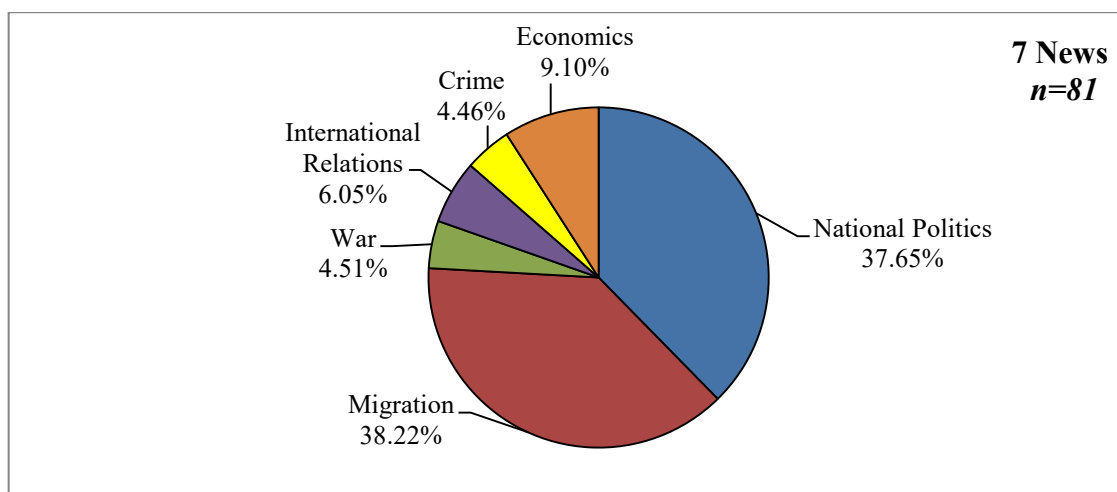
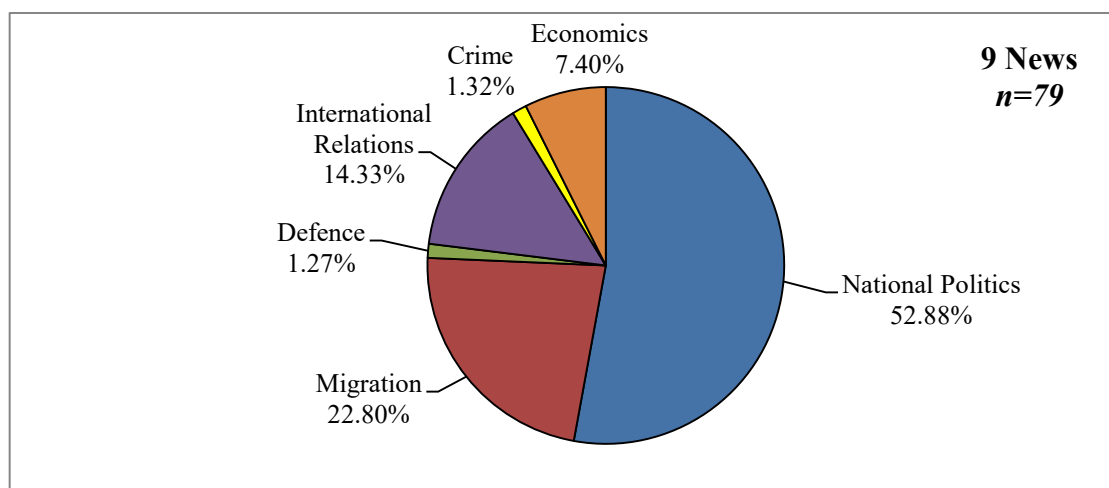


Figure 28: Time spent covering each primary thematic issue 9 News



The differences in the channels' approach to covering asylum further manifests in the secondary focus in report content. While the primary focus of news reports converge on seven thematic issues, there is a greater inclusion of diverse issues as the secondary focus (see table 21 and figure 29). However, there are still strong correlations between the primary/secondary focus relationships where 'asylum/migration' is connected to 'national politics'. Reports with a primary focus on 'national politics' often have the secondary focus as 'asylum/migration', and reports with a primary focus on 'asylum/migration' include 'national politics' as the secondary focus. In *7 News* content the inclusion of diverse issues tends to take a range of local and global space/power/identity dimensions. *9 News* continues to structure the secondary focus in terms of nation-state governmentality. These patterns need to be discussed in relation to the wider commercial television news broadcasting context in Sydney.

Although both *7 News* and *9 News* are popularly viewed, *9 News* has had a historical dominance in the ratings (OzTAM 2016), indicating its influence on the audiences' news attitudes.¹⁸⁰ *9 News* was also previously titled *National Nine News* from 1970-1976 and 1980-2008, which might explain the 'national' focus of the current Sydney programme. It is thus clear that the production of content at *9 News* does not have to divert into a range of novel representations to attract audiences. Owing to its leadership in news viewership, the coverage can continue to utilise the frameworks of governmentality and the nation-state unit. However, *7 News* accommodates the reporting of a wider range of novel perspectives that deviate from the nation-state to consider the local and global scales. The *7 News* inclusion of the local perspective also correlates to promotions at the time, which drew attention to their engagement with the local Sydney region.¹⁸¹ While textual analysis can lead to conjectures, it

¹⁸⁰ See Chapter 6, subsection 6.1.1 for greater elaboration of the longitudinal factors of news audiences' preferences.

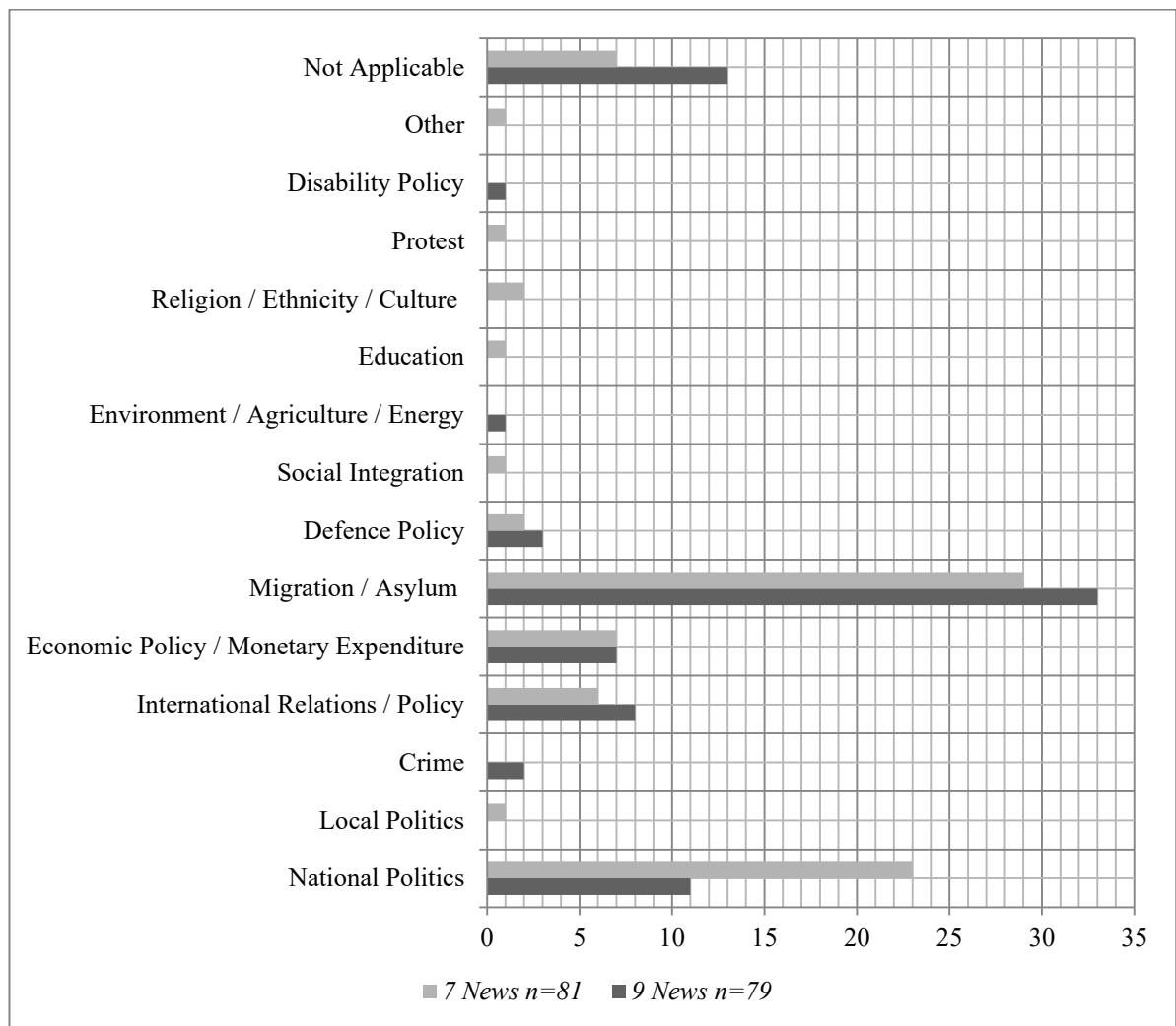
¹⁸¹ See n. 56 in Chapter 2, subsection 2.3.1 for greater elaboration of the ways by which of *7 News* and *9 News* advertise their news programmes as targeting different regions in Sydney. *7 News* places a greater emphasis on the local frameworks, whereas *9 News* draws attention to its long-term popularity and experience.

does not allow for clear identification of the different journalistic or editorial priorities. The latter require production-based analysis.

Table 21: Secondary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration

Thematic Issue	9 News n=79 f	9 News n=79 %	7 News n=81 f	7 News n=81 %	Total n=160 f	Total n=160 %
National Politics	11	13.92%	23	28.40%	34	21.25%
Local Politics	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Crime	2	2.53%	0	0%	2	1.25%
International Relations/Policy	8	10.13%	6	7.41%	14	8.75%
Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	7	8.86%	7	8.64%	14	8.75%
Migration/Asylum	33	41.77%	29	35.80%	62	38.75%
Defence Policy	3	3.80%	2	2.47%	5	3.125%
Social Integration	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Environment/Agriculture/Energy	1	1.27%	0	0%	1	0.63%
Education	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Religion/Ethnicity/Culture	0	0%	2	2.47%	2	1.25%
Protests	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Disability Policy	1	1.27%	0	0%	1	0.63%
Other	0	0%	1	1.23%	1	0.63%
Not Applicable	13	16.46%	7	8.64%	20	12.5%
Total	79	100%	81	100%	160	100%

Figure 29: Secondary focus in the coverage of asylum and migration



4.4.3 Demarcating the bounds of identity

Throughout the data set, *7 News* and *9 News* include a variety of linguistic references to identity when reporting on asylum and migration (see figure 30). Demarcating identity in news content is prevalent to the extent that news reports often deploy multiple identity referents (see table 22).¹⁸² The reference to ethnic or racial and religious identities provides nominal differentiation to the categorisation of individuals. While there is some variation in the categories employed to identify individuals in news, identities are most often spatialised constructions that refer to the nation-state unit (see figure 31). The broader differences

¹⁸² As the quantitative analysis coding sheet required the specification of all identity references, it is possible to further assess how patterns in naming ‘identity’ fits in with the wider trends in structuring news reports. Table 22 and figure 32 quantify the varied identity referents and the frequencies of occurrence across reports; however, it does not record the multiple utterances of the same identity in each report (i.e. three mentions of ‘Australian’).

between the channels' approaches to reporting asylum relate to the inclusion of identity references. The *7 News* coverage of asylum on the global and local scales influences the range of identity referents, with a wider variety of references to non-political elites.¹⁸³ In comparison, *9 News* makes fewer references to the identities of asylum seekers and refugees but identifies the nationalities of political elites (heads of state, diplomats or ambassadors, and key ministers). The space/power/identity relationship between the national formation in the Asia-Pacific regional context also impacts upon the 'identities' with the highest frequency (Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea). These frequencies link to the types of sources that are included in news reports.¹⁸⁴ When identifying the source for the audiences, journalists not only supply names but also indicate the space/power/identity relationships that accord the source enough eminence to provide commentary on a situation.¹⁸⁵ News reports also employ space/power/identity markers to refer to wider and more abstract notions of nationhood.

Coverage on asylum and migration invokes abstract geographic and power relationships in a manner that further entrenches the reliance on the nation-state unit. News content achieves this by invoking a relationship of 'belonging' between abstract objects and corresponding identities. The claims of 'belonging' are constructed in relation to both terrestrial and maritime spaces.¹⁸⁶ Thus, identity is linked to the nation-state's ability to police the borders and thus maintain the space/power/identity claims to that territory. While most abstract identity referents occur in relation to space, there are also temporal invocations drawing upon broader historical knowledge. The journalistic reference to the 'French Revolution' in the context of the Gillard government encourages the audience to make a

¹⁸³ *7 News* also uses identity referents at a greater frequency in the Australian national context, such as '18 Vietnamese men' that escaped a Darwin detention centre (*7 News* 11-05-2013) and also the 'boat carrying asylum seekers from Iran and Sri Lanka' (*7 News* 24-07-2013 [11]).

¹⁸⁴ See subsection 4.1.1 of this chapter for the quantitative analysis on sources of information. Although the space/power/identity relationships are not specified for Australian politicians (as it is assumed knowledge), the nationalities of all other international politicians are identified.

¹⁸⁵ 'David Adeang, Nauru Justice Minister' (*7 News* 29-07-2013 [10]) and 'Baron Waqa, Nauru President' (*7 News* 30-07-2013).

¹⁸⁶ 'Australian waters' (*9 News* 21-09-2013) and 'Indonesian coast' (*7 News* 24-07-2013 [3]).

connection between the current Australian political situation and the tumultuous period in French history (9 News 25-06-2013).¹⁸⁷ The identity-object connection of ‘the German chair’ in the reporting of Syrian torture invokes reference to a bygone German context.¹⁸⁸ In other instances, political sources refer to identities to appeal to a wider ‘nationalist’ sentiment. Tony Burke states ‘[t]he Australian people have a right to know when a boat arrives how many people arrive’ (9 News 21-09-2013). In addition to referring to nationhood by employing the term the ‘Australian’ people, the identity referent creates a power relationship that confers ordinary Australians with the right to know when their territory is breached.¹⁸⁹ Finally, identity referents are used to create politicised relationships between the representative national ‘Australian government’ and bi-lateral political formations, such as ‘a Papua New Guinea deal’ (9 News 21-07-2013). Although both news channels produce asylum and migration reports with a frequent invocation of the identities of Australian and neighbouring nation-states within the Asia-Pacific region, there are noticeable variations when analysing the use of identity referents in relation to the focus of news reports.

¹⁸⁷ More specifically Laurie Oakes outlines how Julie Bishop compares Prime Minister Julia Gillard to the Charles Dickens’ character Madame Defarge ‘who knitted while watching victims beheaded by the guillotine in the French Revolution’.

¹⁸⁸ Other media reports explain the naming of the ‘German chair’ and further detail its use in Syria. The torture device includes bending the detainee backwards on a chair until it feels as though the spine will snap. This torture device is named the ‘German chair’ because it is claimed that its use originated with the Stasi, the East-German secret police (Miller 2011).

¹⁸⁹ When further extended, the identity referent links to the ‘power’ of the national government as an elected representative of the people to control these territorial and geographic breaches, and if the government is unable to do so it raises questions regarding its ability to manage the ‘nation’ as situated in a space/power/identity formation.

Figure 30: Referencing identity

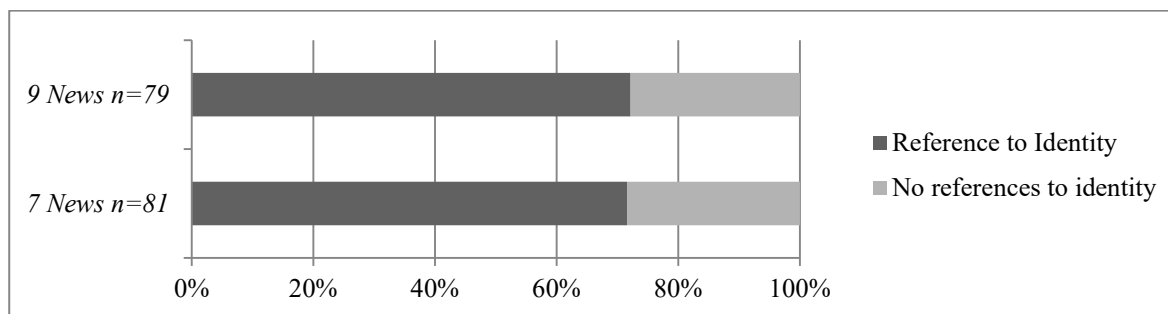


Figure 31: Categories of Identity Referents

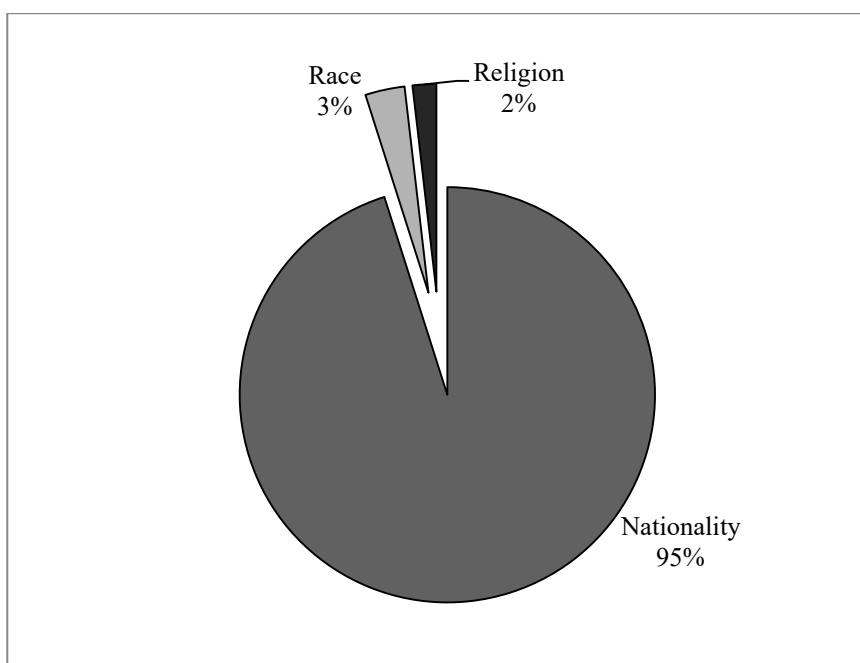
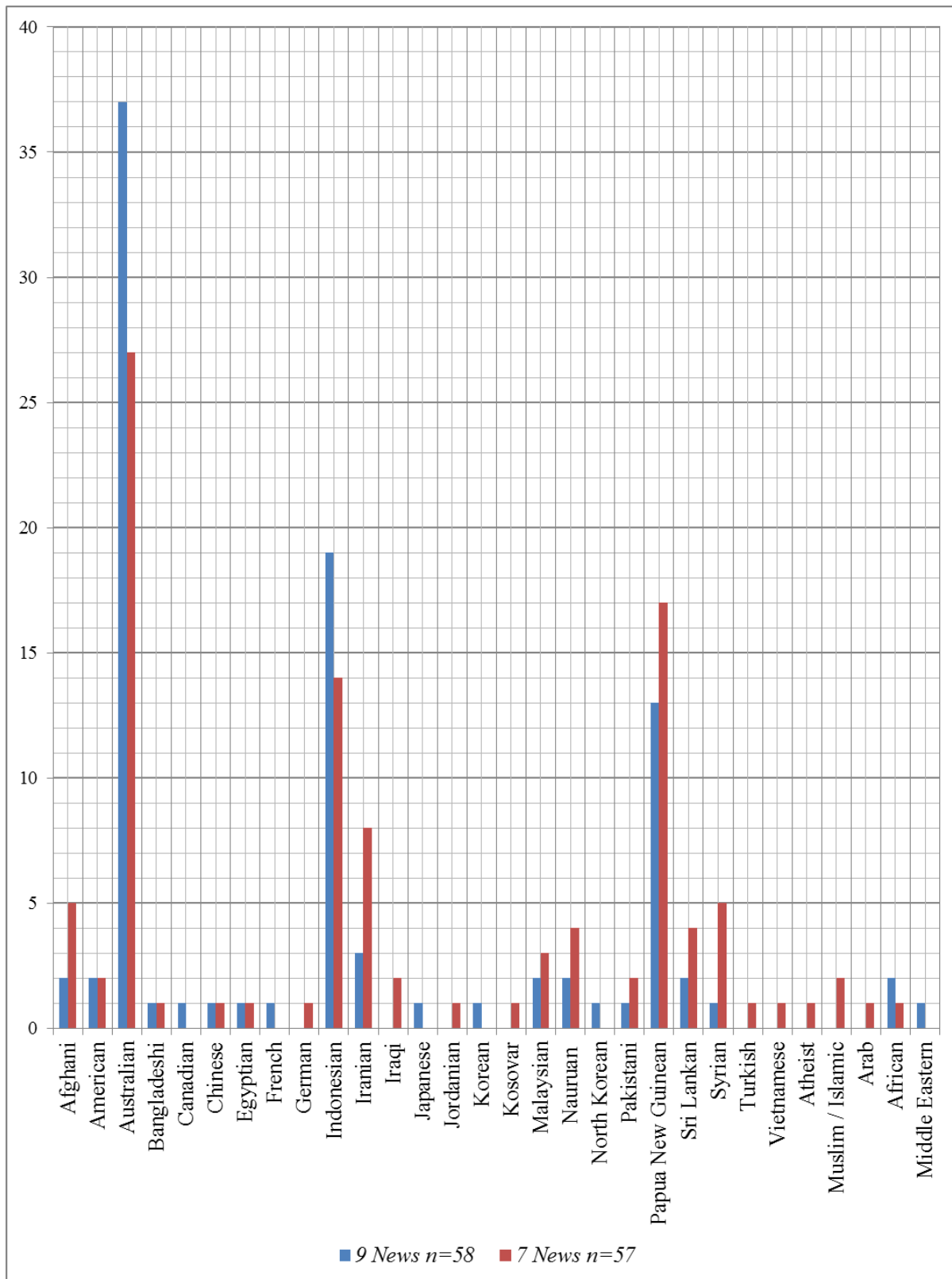


Table 22: Identity referents

	Identity Reference	9 News n=58 f	9 News n=58 %	7 News n=57 f	7 News n=57 %	Total n=115 f	Total n=115 %
Nationality							
	Afghani	2	3.45%	5	8.77%	7	6.09%
	American	2	3.45%	2	3.51%	4	3.48%
	Australian	37	63.79%	27	47.37%	64	55.65%
	Bangladeshi	1	1.72%	1	1.75%	2	1.74%
	Canadian	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	Chinese	1	1.72%	1	1.75%	2	1.74%
	Egyptian	1	1.72%	1	1.75%	2	1.74%
	French	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	German	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	Indonesian	19	32.76%	14	24.56%	33	28.70%
	Iranian	3	5.17%	8	14.04%	11	6.88%
	Iraqi	0	0%	2	3.51%	2	1.74%
	Japanese	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	Jordanian	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	Korean	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	Kosovar	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	Malaysian	2	3.45%	3	5.26%	5	4.35%
	Nauruan	2	3.45%	4	7.02%	6	5.22%
	North Korean	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	Pakistani	1	1.72%	2	3.51%	3	2.61%
	Papua New Guinean	13	22.41%	17	29.82%	30	26.09%
	Sri Lankan	2	3.45%	4	7.02%	6	5.22%
	Syrian	1	1.72%	5	8.77%	6	5.22%
	Turkish	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	Vietnamese	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	TOTAL	92	-	101	-	193	-
Religious							
	Atheist	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	Muslim/Islamic	0	0%	2	3.51%	2	1.74%
	TOTAL	0	-	3	-	3	-
Racial							
	Arab	0	0%	1	1.75%	1	0.87%
	African	2	3.45%	1	1.75%	3	2.61%
	Middle Eastern	1	1.72%	0	0%	1	0.87%
	TOTAL	3	-	2	-	5	-
OVERALL TOTAL		95	-	106	-	201	-

Figure 32: Identity referents in the coverage of asylum and migration



7 *News* and 9 *News* cover asylum by identifying space/power/identity formations in different frameworks. The patterns between the primary focus of news reports and the identity referents quantify the thematic associations (see table 23 and figure 33). The data demonstrates criminalised associations between the flagging of Middle Eastern and South East Asian identities. In Australian news, there is the tendency to use racialised frameworks when reporting on crime with a particular focus on Middle Eastern identities (Phillips 2011, 2009; Phillips and Tapsall, 2007; Poynting *et al.* 2004). In this study, the Middle East is connected to the global issue of ‘war’, through reportage on the nation-states of Syria and Jordan. Interestingly, Muslim identity is only mentioned in relation to the framework of ‘national politics’. Coverage of Ed Husic’s decision to take the Parliamentary Oath on a Quran includes reference to his Islamic faith (7 *News* 02-07-2013).¹⁹⁰ In one other report, the then leader of the opposition Tony Abbott comments on the burqa as linked to religion (7 *News* 31-08-2013 [1]). Nation-states that do not contribute to asylum flows are most often referred to in the framework of ‘international relations/international relations policy’, by naming the nationalities and positions of political elites and diplomats. Reports with the primary thematic focus upon migration tend to be those reports covering events only, including boat arrivals and detention centre incidents.¹⁹¹ The identities that are referred to in the framework of ‘asylum/migration’ are the non-political elites from global spaces,¹⁹² which are also evoked in the reports with a primary focus on ‘crime’.¹⁹³ With the exception of the report contextualising the situation of the Iranian atheist (7 *News* 23-07-2013 [5]), identity referents in news reports essentialise the processes which lead to the movement of asylum seekers.¹⁹⁴ While references to national identity are provided, the space/power/identity

¹⁹⁰ Federal Labor politician for Chifley, the Western-Sydney federal electoral region of Blacktown.

¹⁹¹ See n. 133 in Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.2 for greater elaboration on the coding of ‘asylum/migration’ events.

¹⁹² Atheist, African, Arab, Middle Eastern, Iranian, Egyptian, Vietnamese, Turkish, Pakistani, Afghani, and Sri Lankan all feature in relation to the primary issue of ‘asylum/migration’.

¹⁹³ Bangladeshi, Iranian, Pakistani, Australian, and Afghani are reported in connection to the primary focus on ‘crime’.

¹⁹⁴ For example, Jason Clare states ‘the passengers on the boat are from Iran, from Afghanistan and from Sri Lanka’ (7 *News* 13-07-2013).

dynamics within nation-states are not explored in news content. These internal reasons for movement can include the overlapping variables of ethnic, religious, class, and gender factors. Furthermore, the trans-national space/power/identity dynamics that influence asylum movements are also not presented in news reports.¹⁹⁵ Ultimately, identity references in news reports simplify the complex and relational space/power/identity formations to concentrate on the nation-state scale.

¹⁹⁵ Such as nation-state signatories to the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (UNHCR 2015b), for greater analysis from a multimodal discursive perspective see Chapter 5, subsection 5.2.1.

Figure 33: Identity referents in relation to the primary focus of news reports

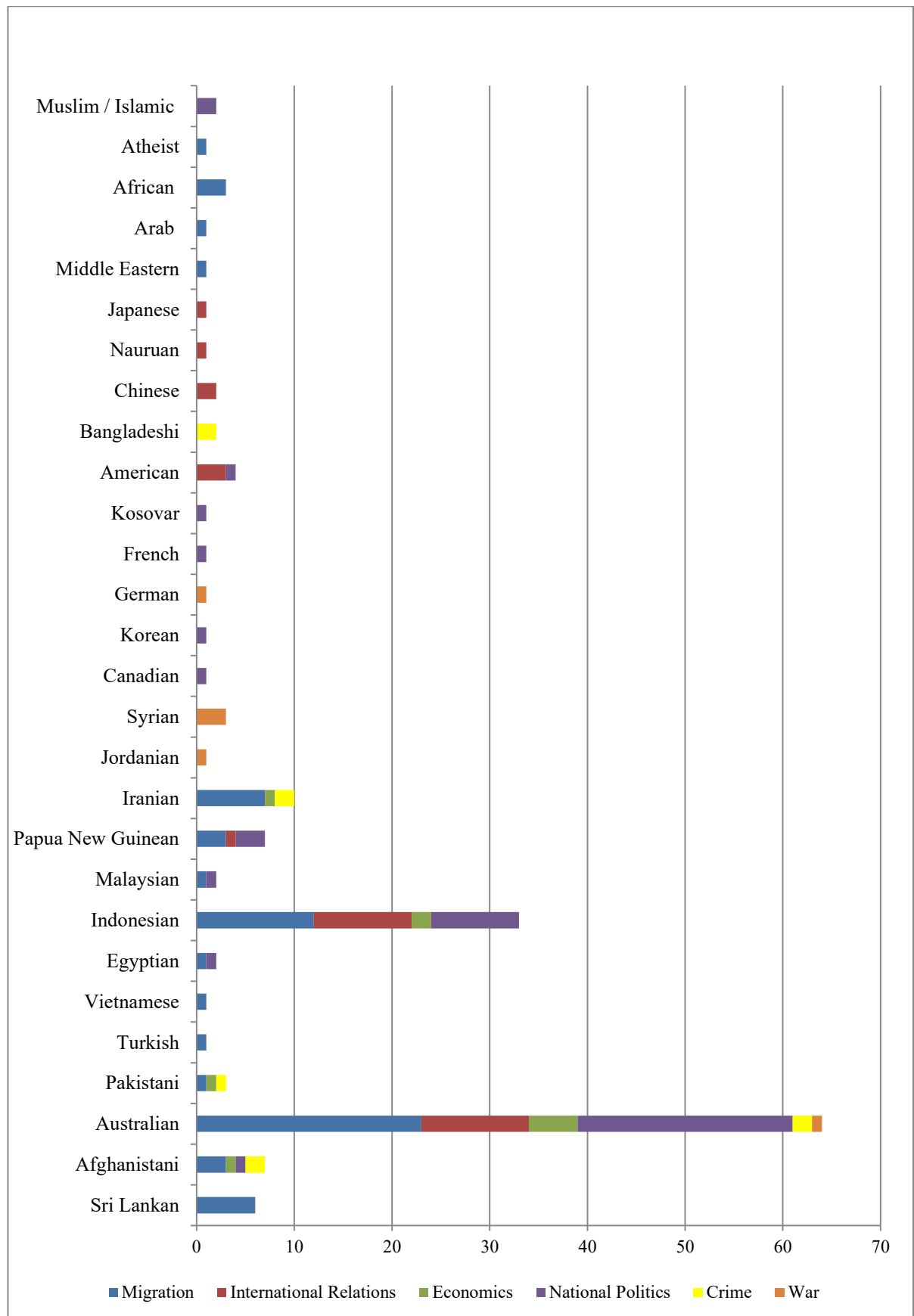


Table 23: Identity referents in relation to the primary focus of news reports

		Primary Focus of News Report						
		Migration	International Relations	Economics	National Politics	Crime	War	Total <i>n=160</i>
Nationality								
Identity Referent	Afghani	3	0	1	1	2	0	7
	American	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
	Australian	23	11	5	22	2	1	64
	Bangladeshi	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	Canadian	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Chinese	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Egyptian	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
	French	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	German	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Indonesian	12	10	2	9	0	0	33
	Iranian	7	1	1	0	2	0	11
	Iraqi	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
	Japanese	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Jordanian	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Korean	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Kosovar	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Malaysian	3	0	0	2	0	0	5
	Nauruan	2	1	1	2	0	0	6
	North Korean	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Pakistani	1	0	1	0	1	0	3
	Papua New Guinean	11	3	3	13	0	0	30
	Sri Lankan	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Syrian	1	2	0	0	0	3	6
	Turkish	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Vietnamese	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	73	35	14	55	10	6	193
Race								
Identity Referent	African	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Arab	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Middle Eastern	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Religion								
Identity Referent	Atheist	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Muslim/ Islamic	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
	TOTAL	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
OVERALL TOTAL		79	35	14	57	10	6	201

4.5 Conclusion

There are key differences in the ways that *7 News* and *9 News* refer to space/power/identity formations when reporting on asylum and migration. Yet, there are also similarities in their approaches. Both *7 News* and *9 News* emphasise the national space/power/identity formation across the structure of news reports. The relevance of the national formation is conveyed through the allocation of news report time and the position in the overall news bulletin. A concentration of journalistic sources, predominantly Australian national politicians, limits plurality of perspectives on asylum and migration. While news programmes facilitate hegemonic openings through the inclusion of global and local sources in reports, these perspectives that eventuate from hegemonic openings are not frequently included in news. This chapter established the ways in which CGI and special effects are employed to signify the importance of the nation-state unit and the two-party political system. By connecting asylum and migration to wider policy areas, reports replicate the mechanisms of de-contextualisation. First, news reports connect asylum and migration to a wider political chain potentially generating concern for adequate policy and regulation. Second, news reports re-articulate the asylum issue in a manner that also re-spatialises it, devoid of the global-local (such as the local conditions in Afghanistan), regional (Middle-Eastern), global, and supranational power relationships. The occurrences where these space/power/identity relationships are overturned in *7 News* allows everyday global-local and supranational people to present information.

Aural effects are not frequently included in news reports and are mainly used in the ‘live’ coverage of national politics. Indeed, the importance of the national space/power/identity frame is evident through the ways in which news programmes cover asylum and migration in relation to key political issues. Additionally, the prominence of international relations and economics as highly coded thematic issues illustrates how

space/power/identity relationships revolve around traditional notions of the nation-state and its social role. The concentrated foci of news reports show the limited plurality of perspectives, and that information tends to be communicated in narrow spatial-power relationships. While *7 News* broadens the space/power/identity frameworks, the high frequency coding amongst the dominant themes suggests that the global and local are not invoked in news reports often enough to present counter-hegemonic perspectives. This chapter has quantified the varying production structures in news reports. The next chapter will further analyse these patterns in relation to the multimodal discourses employed in the commercial television news coverage of asylum and migration.

Chapter 5: Evoking a Nation: Multimodal Discursive Constructions of Space/Power/Identity

Commercial television news programmes provide everyday information to audiences regarding the local, national, and global spaces. The previous chapter established that ‘common sense’ space/power/identity formations were mobilised when reporting on asylum and migration. Yet, in order for these space/power/identity formations to have discursive salience, they must be communicated through emotive connections. Audiences make use of television news programmes to fulfil social needs, such as connecting to others in society (Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch 1973). This chapter deepens the analysis by elaborating how news reports construct space/power/identity discourses in order to appeal to the audiences’ emotions. Gitlin states that:

[I]n most contemporary societies most of the time, most thought ... is, for most people, relatively superficial ... the deeper currents of media operate not on patterned ideas but on feeling ... People attach to the media for their emotional texture, for the experience that takes place in the presence of media, rewarded above all *by* that experience even as they expect that confirmation that the world feels right ... images slip beneath the façade of where our ideas live; they ‘hit us where we live’ (2003 [1980], xvi-xvii, original emphasis).

Television news programmes communicate emotional texture via images and a range of multimodal elements. Textual discourses are realised not only through the verbal linguistic categories, but also through the visual and non-linguistic aural forms (Van Leeuwen 2004, 98). Multimodal discourse analysis enables an investigation of the ways by which news fulfils the ideational function of representing the world to viewers. It also facilitates an analysis of the ways in which news discourses enact social relationships and generate emotive feeling, through the interpersonal function.

The chapter undertakes a close textual analysis of reports across *7 News* and *9 News*, to interrogate the hegemonic openings or what Hodge and Kress term the ‘smaller-level shifts in power’ (1988, 7). Multimodal discourse analysis is particularly useful in the contemporary media context, where television news production integrates the use of CGI and visual effects to convey discursive content.¹⁹⁶ The evaluation of multimodal elements draws upon the social semiotics tradition, facilitating an investigation of hegemonic openings in news. The first section analyses the ways in which news programmes employ CGI and special effects to construct discourses regarding space/power/identity. News reports orchestrate a simulated war by creating a state of conflict, related to the Australian political environment. Here, the electoral two-party internal political struggle is linked to the movements of asylum outside the nation-state to reassert national boundaries. The second section demonstrates how the overlapping spatial formations are incorporated in news content through traditional signifiers of maps, flags, and official emblems. While multiple space/power/identity formations are included, they are ultimately used to emphasise the national space/power/identity formation. The final section investigates how news programmes nurture discourses of authority across multimodal elements, particularly in terms of the positioning of different social actors. At times the coverage of asylum in *7 News* and *9 News* deviates from the traditional discursive frames to generate hegemonic openings. While the relational constructions of national space and power become naturalised and replicated in content, there are important moments where the predominant discursive framework of national political authority is contested in news content.

5.1 Constructing conflict

Both *7 News* and *9 News* employ simulated militarised interfaces when featuring CGI and special effects in the coverage of asylum and migration. Philo *et al.*’s (2013) study of the UK

¹⁹⁶ See Chapter 3, subsection 3.3.2 for an argument on the need to revive social semiotics or multimodal discourse analysis in the contemporary analysis of television news texts.

mass media finds that reportage of asylum is placed within a framework of threat or fear. Televisual asylum coverage is structured through the repetitive use of “security” images’, including those involving immigration officials in uniforms, ‘prison-like images of fences’, and of ‘asylum-seekers being frisked by officials’ (Philo *et al.* 2013, 111). The use of CGI and special effects in *7 News* and *9 News* content intensifies these emotions through visual representations which are termed ‘simulated interfaces’.¹⁹⁷ The synthetic and dramatised representation of information in the CGI simulated interfaces represents a departure from prior notions of producing news objectivity, which underscores the importance of producing visual footage that appear natural or real (Tuchman 1978).¹⁹⁸

A brief account of the ways in which simulated interfaces feature in other news and current affairs reports contextualises the use of CGI in covering asylum among the broader commercial television production context.¹⁹⁹ The use of a simulated interface when reporting on asylum in *9 News* 25-07-2013[3] (see figure 34), creates a visual connection to the preceding ‘Bomb Alert’ news report in the same bulletin (see figure 35). ‘Bomb Alert’ covers the police’s search for an individual who left explosives outside Campsie police station, and the ongoing investigations into the individual’s possible links to Sydney’s Muslim riots.²⁰⁰ In

¹⁹⁷ These simulated interfaces create a visual representation of the heads-up display that features in military computer games (often in common gaming parlance known as HUD). The HUD immerses the individual in virtual reality through a transparent display visualising vital data, which allows individuals to maintain their focus on the events in the game (i.e. to see the original landscapes). The HUD in video gaming replicates the military displays, and as such, they represent broader technological and military discourses. *7 News* includes simulated interfaces on 13-07-2013, 17-07-2013. *9 News* includes simulated interfaces on 09-06-2013, 07-07-2013, 13-07-2013, 20-07-2013, 25-07-2013 [3], 28-07-2013, 03-09-2013, 22-09-2013, 11-10-2013.

¹⁹⁸ For example, a traditional convention of ‘production’ objectivity involves filming individuals at a social distance with the camera positioned in a head-on angle enabling the individual to gaze through the camera, unless emotive connection is required (Tuchman 1978). See Chapter 5, subsection 5.1.3 for in-depth definitions; also see Chapter 5, section 5.3 for the ways in which contemporary journalism challenges these traditional notions of constructing news.

¹⁹⁹ The following examples are taken from the data collection during the six-month period of viewing news and current affairs content across the Seven and Nine Network. Further research is required to establish how the simulated interfaces are integrated into a wide range of report types, and the visual discourses that the simulated interfaces lead to. While this overview indicates that these simulated interfaces are not unique to the coverage of asylum, additional research on the use of CGI in commercial television news and public service news broadcasts will help in understanding the ways in which news production has changed with development of technologies.

²⁰⁰ On 15 September 2012, there was a protest against the anti-Islamic film *Innocence of Muslims* in Sydney. The protest took part in various places in Town Hall, George Street, Martin Place, and Hyde Park. Recent reporting has connected individuals involved in the Hyde Park rally to the Islamic State movement (Chambers 2015).

the *9 News* 25-07-2013 news bulletin the simulated interface encourages a visual connection between a local crime report and the national response to border protection. However, the simulated interfaces are also employed across a wide range of thematic issues, including economic reporting as noted in *9 News* 03-09-2013 'Interest Rates on hold 2.5%' (see figure 36). The simulated interface is also included in current affairs reporting, in the Nine Network programme *A Current Affair*. Here, the simulated interface features in the 11-10-2013 report 'Menopause Diet' (see figure 37).²⁰¹ While the simulated interfaces are mobilised in a range of reporting scenarios, they attempt to generate certain 'feelings' when used in connection to crime or asylum coverage.

²⁰¹ 'Menopause Diet' details Dr Amanda Salies' research on how to control what she terms the 'Famine Reaction' for effective weight loss.

Figure 34: *9 News* 25-07-2013 [3]

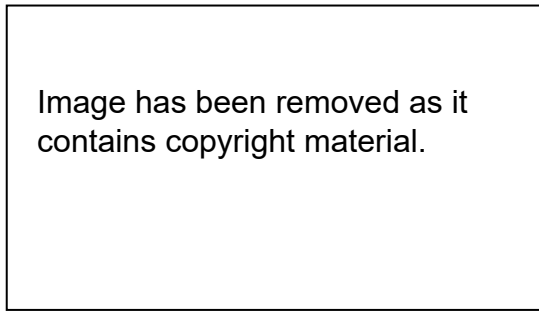


Figure 35: *9 News* 25-07-2013 [2]

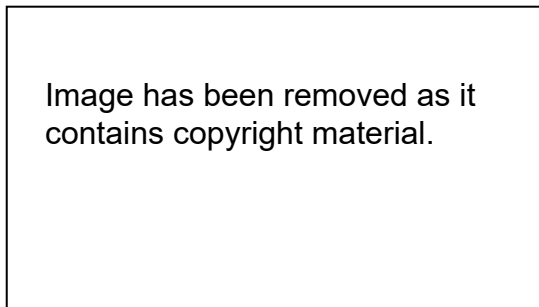


Figure 36: *9 News* 03-09-2013

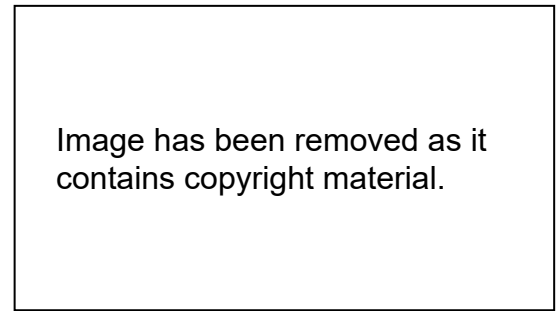
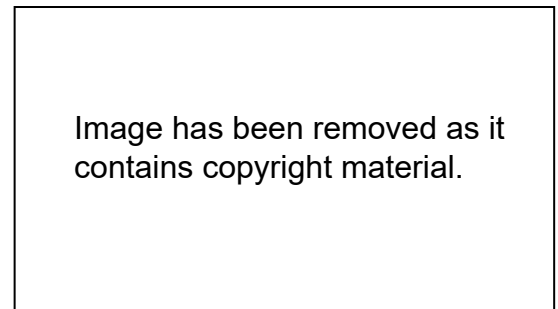


Figure 37: *A Current Affair* 11-10-2013



5.1.1 Monitoring ‘illegal’ movements

Simulated interfaces create a multimodal extension of space/power/identity formations that are present in the structure of asylum coverage. The predominant reliance on the national space/power/identity framework in *9 News* reports results in the construction of defensive discourses emphasising national security. This section evaluates how the background elements of simulated displays create a militarised foundation, upon which subsequent CGI information is incorporated. The multimodal layout of simulated interfaces in *9 News* content simultaneously draw upon the aspects of segregation, overlap, and rhyme. Segregation involves the use of frames to create different visual spaces (Machin 2012 [2007] 138). Overlap entails ‘placing elements in front of others’ (ibid.). Rhyme includes the use of a common quality such as ‘shape, colour, posture’ (ibid., 155). *9 News*’ simulated displays convey militarised discourses through the integration of a dark blue or dark navy hue on top of video footage, which just allows the footage underneath to be seen (see figures 34 and 36

for examples of the hues).²⁰² In comparison, simulated interfaces in *7 News* reports contain a superimposed hue of green or blue. The greater luminosity and transparency of *7 News* hues allows for more of the original footage to command visual attention.²⁰³ *9 News*' use of more opaque colour detracts focus from the original footage, which is maintained through the wider mechanisms of framing and composition.

All *9 News* reports with simulated interfaces incorporate focus icons located in the corners of the screen in white. The focus icons function as a frame, but also produce visual discourse of surveillance simulating a target that is focused upon (see figure 34). Simulated interfaces in the *9 News* reports accommodate both segregation and rhyme thus generating a more technological visual representation. The interfaces incorporate fast movement when white visual boxes and files are outlined on top of the blue-hued video footage. Both the colour and the representation of physical boundaries combine to segregate the information in each component, while the blue hues in the file generate a visual rhyme. Here, the contrast between the blue and the white draws visual salience to the file information in relation to the video footage shown in the background.²⁰⁴ *7 News* simulated interfaces have a far simpler compositional layout, which communicates that the discrete elements occupy the same visual space. The background footage in *7 News* interfaces features a military vessel travelling at sea (13-07-2013), and a series of maritime surveillance photographs that are zoomed into (17-07-2013). All textual information is superimposed and integrated with the footage, rather than

²⁰² A blue hue occurs on video content in *9 News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013, 20-07-2013, and 28-07-2013. A navy hue is in video footage in the simulated interfaces on *9 News* 07-07-2013, 25-07-2013[3], 03-09-2013, 22-09-2013, 11-10-2013. Additionally, further faint 'information' overlap the blue and navy hued backgrounds. *9 News* interfaces also have very faint, barely visible white gridlines over the background footage which works in tandem with the other elements to simulate a scientific or militarised computer screen (*9 News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013, 28-07-2013, 11-10-2013, 03-09-2013, 22-09-2013, 25-07-2013 [3]). *9 News* 20-07-2013 does not have gridlines but has horizontal lines throughout thus replicating video screens. *9 News* 07-07-2013 does not include these gridlines or any faint line mark-up. These markings are important as they create a visual margin and make broader appeals to both 'technological' and 'militarised' discourses.

²⁰³ *7 News* includes an integrated green hue on 13-07-2013 and an integrated blue hue on 17-07-2013. In terms of the overlapping 'information', *7 News* has a simplistic layout in comparison to the *9 News* displays. The blue interface has faint horizontal lines marked out which replicate video monitoring, whereas the green interface has no faint markings.

²⁰⁴ Written information and pictorial information is coloured in a contrasting green, white, or red which stands out in contrast to the muted blues. The exception is the inclusion of official emblems or logos such as the AFP, where the original visual representation is maintained (*9 News* 13-07-2013).

segregated into files. In both *7 News* simulated interfaces, all written information appears in a contrasting colour to the superimposed hues on the video footage. Across all *7 News* and *9 News* simulated interfaces, written information is presented in a contrasting colour to the background hue. Intensely saturated white, red, or ‘digital’ green colours display written data in contrast to the green or blue hued background footage.²⁰⁵ In terms of the layout, *7 News* simulated interfaces place all written information towards the margins as opposed to the centre (see figure 38 for layout). *7 News* 17-07-2013 also incorporates darkened or shadowed borders around the margins to further emphasise the visual frame.²⁰⁶ The particular layout draws attention to the original video footage and photographs, rather than emphasising the written data. Simulated interfaces in the *9 News* reports compositionally centre the synthesised information, which detracts attention from the original video footage (see figure 34). When referring to defensive national discourses in *9 News*, the emphasis on the continually updated synthesised data creates a visual representation of sophisticated military surveillance.

Other background elements in the simulated interfaces also contribute to the multimodal discourse on national defence. In the analysis of the layout of the simulated interfaces, the inclusion of video footage was mentioned as the foundation upon which subsequent information is integrated. Here, the video footage is ‘disarticulated-rearticulated’ when separated from the original context and placed in a new discursive formation (Mouffe 1979, 197). Background footage in the *9 News* simulated interfaces consist of a number of

²⁰⁵ The term ‘digital green’ is employed throughout the chapter, referring to the particular green colour that is associated with the text on early computer interfaces.

²⁰⁶ Darkened margins are also used to create a visual frame across other types of reporting. The announcement of the Rudd government policy to send all maritime arrivals to Papua New Guinea is covered by both commercial news outlets, and the reports include visual footage of the Australian government’s newspaper advertisements ‘You Won’t Be Settled in Australia’ (*7 News* and *9 News* 20-07-2013). Darkened borders around the margin of the screen generate visual drama, drawing attention to the visually bright newspapers. *9 News* 20-07-2013 also incorporates a visual ‘zoom-in’ to intensify the dramatic visual presentation.

video clips, which continually change the visual representations in each display.²⁰⁷ The discursive implications are of a reassurance of constant border control and defensive protection. This is indicated through the footage of military or asylum vessels that dominate the coverage. Changes of the video footage in the background of simulated interfaces allow the discourses to generate a sense of action through the different stages of border protection. The use of multiple militarised video excerpts constructs a hyper-real visual war against asylum (Baudrillard 1994 [1981]). Interestingly, it has been noticed that the highest frequency of changes in background footage occurs in the reportage of crime. In the report, the alleged sexual assault on an underage girl, committed by an asylum seeker living in Doonside (suburban Western Sydney) while on a bridging visa features seven different militarised video clips in the simulated interface (*9 News* 03-09-2013).²⁰⁸ The local is heavily emphasised through the inclusion of local resident opinions along with the footage filmed in Doonside and Blacktown.²⁰⁹ The background footage of asylum vessels and the bridge of a military vessel enact an interpersonal function, producing a connection between local crime and the global movement of asylum seekers.²¹⁰ The high number of changes in background footage in this particular interface heightens the visual sense of updated national surveillance. By creating a relational space/power/identity connection across the local-global, the visual drama allocates prominence to the national scale and its ability to control the borders.

²⁰⁷ The reports include *9 News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013, 20-07-2013, 03-09-2013, 11-10-2013. *7 News* 13-07-2013 includes one video clip from different angles; whereas 17-07-2013 includes changes to the video footage in the simulated interface.

²⁰⁸ In 2013, in Australia asylum seekers were permitted to live in the community while their claims for refugee protection were assessed under Bridging Visa E (Australian Human Rights Commission 2013).

²⁰⁹ In particular, the report includes footage of a local kindergarten. The danger to small children is further exacerbated by the reporters' statement that the asylum seekers' house is on a quiet street '...full of young families, with numerous schools nearby'. The local resident subsequently comments 'I have my daughter growing up in this area as well, I don't wanna [*sic*] see that stuff happen around here'. Later in one of the reports, the reporter reinforces the danger to the local community when informing that the asylum seeker 'met his victim through a church group that took him in. It's then claimed that he sexually assaulted the fifteen year old in the early hours of the morning...'. That the audience is first shown visual information of kindergarten schools, and not told about the victim's age until the final 13 seconds of the 1min 27 sec long report further heightens the atmosphere of fear and panic. The visuals, dialogue, and militarised simulated interfaces work together to connect the global to the local suburban formation.

²¹⁰ See Chapter 3, subsection 3.3.2 for an account of the interpersonal, ideational, and textual function.

Multimodal discourses of defence and surveillance are also realised through the compositional element of kinetic typography in the background of simulated interfaces. Kinetic typography refers to the relationship between animated movement and the visual elements of typographic font. Across *9 News* and *7 News* simulated interfaces, kinetic typography builds upon the discourses of national surveillance in the context of global movement. Van Leeuwen (2006, 144) elaborates that kinetic typographic can function ideationally (or illustratively), ‘stretching out the word “*long*” in the phrase “*a long wait*”’ (original emphasis). Kinetic typography can also generate an interpersonal function, ‘by creating visual equivalents of intonation and speech rhythm’ (ibid.). *9 News* interfaces include dull small white coloured numbers and letters that run vertically alongside the margins at the left and right of the screen (see figure 34).²¹¹ Here, kinetic typography operates interpersonally, generating a visual rhythm of digitally sifting through letters and numbers. The kinetic typography at the margins deepens the surveillance discourses by creating a feeling that the nation-state is able to constantly decode information and update co-ordinates. In the *7 News* simulated display, the horizontal upper left section includes the written information ‘Location Lock’ in a digital green hue (17-07-2013). At the outset, the particular typeface operates ideationally when using angular letters and numbers to illustrate a computerised font. The ‘Lon’ and ‘Lat’ (longitude and latitude) co-ordinates in the top left hand section of the screen beneath the capitalised phrase ‘LOCATION LOCK’ also provides interpersonal visual renditions of the process of militarised monitoring (original emphasis). The constant movement of letters and numbers in the same digital green colour just below ‘Location Lock’ performs the interpersonal function of generating a feeling of surveillance. The similarities in the multimodal composition of the background of *7 News* and *9 News* simulated interfaces emphasise the national formation as responsible for monitoring asylum.

²¹¹ *9 News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013, 25-07-2013 [3], 28-07-2013, 03-09-2013, 11-10-2013 visually represents kinetic typography at the margins.

The interpersonal discourses of militarised defence are deepened through additional animated graphics in the background of *9 News* simulated interfaces (09-06-2013, 13-07-2013). On the horizontal bottom of the display, a digital green outline of a horizontal rectangular box contains markings at regular intervals. Kinetic or animated movement is incorporated as a green rectangular light that moves from left to right, and then appears again at the left repeating the same movements. On the vertical left axis of the interface, there is a vertical green line that runs at regular intervals while a bright red digital marker moves up and down the line. The movement at the margins builds upon the multimodal discourses of regulated monitoring by representing the constant reception of data. When combined, the background elements of the simulated interfaces construct the multimodal discursive foundations of national defence being the predominant factor responsible for regulating and monitoring asylum.

5.1.2 Animating a sense of action

Data superimposed on the background of simulated interfaces contributes the most salient information and is brought to the fore through the element of movement or animation. The visual layout of overlap is employed in *7 News* reports to position a clock and written text on the background footage (13-07-2013).²¹² Here, the background footage is a video clip of a military vessel. The inclusion of the clock, which animates when changing the time, fulfils the ideational function. The animated clock creates a multimodal discursive construction of the key points in a military operation. The animated clock also attempts to generate interpersonal meaning by appealing to the audiences' knowledge of the military's ability to respond quickly to spatial breaches. The ability of the Australian nation-state to act and enforce borders is

²¹² *7 News* 17-07-2013 does not incorporate pictorial representations, but rather includes kinetic typography, which is discussed in the latter part of this subsection.

realised through discourses of governmental power.²¹³ In *9 News* simulated interfaces, movement integrates both pictorial and written data onto the background display. These elements build upon the multimodal discourses of surveillance to create a sense of official action.

The multimodal inclusion of pictorial radars builds discourses of national surveillance and action. The animated radars synthesise elaborate visual renditions of information. In *9 News* reports, radars feature on CGI maps to pinpoint the location of asylum seeker vessels near Australian or Indonesian territories.²¹⁴ A saturated red marker denotes the original position of an asylum vessel attempting to reach Australian territory in *9 News* 09-06-2013. Animation makes the pinpoint radiate out from the centre while the centre pinpoint turns to a saturated green. A circle with a radial arm simultaneously appears with Christmas Island at the centre. The radial arm and circle move to demarcate the physical relationship between Christmas Island and the original position of the vessel, and the red radar circles continually radiate out from the centre when marking spatial relationships to nation-state territories. Here, the movements of the radar operate on an ideational level to represent the actual conditions of the event and the known spatial positioning. In connection with these visuals,²¹⁵ the reporter establishes:

The boat was first [*] sighted by Australian air force on Wednesday North-West [*] of Christmas Island, the plane identified more than fifty people on board and [/] a navy vessel [*] was tasked to intercept but when it arrived at the location less than twelve hours [*] later there was no sign of the boat, the next authorities saw [/] of it was on Friday [*] it had

²¹³ The kinetic typographic elements directly to the right of the clock extend these discourses to convey national surveillance. Different stages of the operation appear in white capital letters, and movement is used to glide out the statement letter by letter. Kinetic typography in commercial news coverage of asylum is subsequently analysed in greater depth in the later part of this subsection 5.1.2.

²¹⁴ *9 News* reports on the 13-07-2013, 09-06-2013, and 11-10-2013 incorporate radars.

²¹⁵ See Chapter 3, section 3.2 for an account of the multimodal transcription employed in this thesis.

capsized and [/] in the last twenty four hours [*] a number of bodies have been discovered in the ocean (9 News 09-06-2013).²¹⁶

Accompanying the dialogue ‘of it was on Friday’, the main-screen flips down and up again when shifting the position of the radar and map.²¹⁷ Here, multimodal discourses perform the interpersonal function when constructing the more complex dimensions of the rescue. While the aforementioned radar colour was red, the new radar is dull white-grey when demarcating the new position of the boat. In these visual representations, other compositional aspects also perform the interpersonal function. The change of colour from red to white on the radiating circles is significant as it evokes different stages of the rescue. Red relays the imminent threat and the uncertainties of the HMAS Warramunga taking action in the mission to find the vessel. The white indicates resolve and military success in finding the boat hull and the bodies in the ocean. Audiences are not explicitly told of the final movements and the positioning of the boat. The resolve is signified through changes in the radar colour which potentially lead the viewer to understand that the vessel has been located when drifting further away from Christmas Island. Sound effects provide further salience to the multimodal discourses of action in addition to the colour-movement relationship.

Kinetic typography is also employed in the foreground of simulated interfaces in conjunction with sound effects to discursively construct a sense of action. Both ideational and interpersonal functions are evoked when providing visual representations of digitised information. First, kinetic typography at the centre layout of the interface represents the digital decryption of information in 9 News 25-07-2013 [3]. The news report outlines the Coalition’s plan for ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’. Random letters of the alphabet are sifted

²¹⁶ In this excerpt ‘*’ is used when sound effects are incorporated, in this case a low digital clicking sound effect behind the preceding word. Also the use of ‘/’ indicates that there is a change of visual information in the simulated interface while the dialogue continues. The continual use of punctuated sound effects simulates the digital reception of information, which further extends the multimodal rhetoric of national action. .

²¹⁷ The original saturated green radius and radar circle is larger and is placed to the left of the written information ‘65 NATUICAL MILES’ (original emphasis).

through to accompanying sound effects in order to get to the final written message ‘EXPAND PROCESS CENTRES’ (original emphasis). This connotes military decryption where garbled letters/numbers are decoded to become meaningful messages. Second, written information is typed out letter by letter to accompanying sound effects, either at a medium or fast typing pace.²¹⁸ These visual and aural combinations attempt to draw the audiences’ attention and emphasise the presentation of new information in the same visual framework. *7 News* includes data being typed out letter by letter at a medium pace, to the accompaniment of a high-pitched electronic tone. The sound effects function at the ideational level, replicating the synthetic digitised processing of information. The sound effects correlate to electronic data, as it does not mimic a natural computer keyboard typing sound and rhythm. These sound effects combine with the kinetic typography to create interpersonal visual and aural discourses of the military’s surveillance. In comparison, all *9 News* reports employ a faster typing pace so that information appears to glide quickly on screen, signifying that information is being received quickly.²¹⁹ *9 News* 09-06-2013 incorporates a lower digitalised pitch in conjunction with the movement of writing across the screen. Sound effects are also used to electronically ‘swipe’ visual information off screen (*9 News* 13-07-2013). In this report, a synthesised electronic sound creates an aural mark when the main visual screen changes in the simulated interface. Although kinetic typography and aural effects generate a sense of governmental action, the combination of multimodal elements is specific to the non-policy aspects of asylum coverage.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Kinetic typography to simulate typing features in *7 News* 17-07-2013, *9 News* 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013, 11-10-2013. Sound effects build upon the visual representation in all reports, with the exception of *9 News* 11-10-2013.

²¹⁹ The *9 News* reports on the 09-06-2013, 13-07-2013 and 11-10-2013 display the information in digital green with all letters capitalised.

²²⁰ These events necessitate action on behalf of the national government and the military or police force. *9 News* 09-06-2013 and 13-07-2013 relate to boats arriving in Australian waters and the subsequent search and rescue. *9 News* 11-10-2013 presents the information that asylum seekers were stopped prior to departing Indonesia and key ‘people smugglers’ were arrested.

Kinetic typography is used in a less sensational manner and without sound effects when reporting on policy related issues (9 News 22-09-2013).²²¹ The multimodal construction conveys a lack of immediate threat to the Australian people and the borders of the nation. As such, there is no imminent need for action, which interpersonally manifests in the multimodal discourses. Kinetic typography functions ideationally to simulated computerised typing at a medium pace.²²² The less dramatic visual representation is also achieved through the use of written text in lower case white letters, with the exception of the labelling of Immigration Minister Scott Morrison which appears capitalised. The multimodal discourses of this report communicate a measured and less active representation, evoking a government in control of the national space/power/identity formation. Yet, kinetic typography also features in commercial television news reports to produce multimodal discourses of local-global crisis.

In the reportage of crime, kinetic typography fulfils an interpersonal function by attempting to generate an emotive connection (9 News 03-09-2013).²²³ Here, kinetic typography is the most dramatic, with written statements ‘flown’ onto the screen and ‘stamped’ onto their final position.²²⁴ The movements are a visual stress, occurring in a staccato fashion and interpersonally yelling information out to the viewer.²²⁵ The use of the ‘flying in’ movement is visually far more sudden than other movements previously analysed, including radiating, sifting/sorting, or typing out. The same movements are used to flag a national crisis when reporting on the number of maritime asylum arrivals under the Rudd

²²¹ The larger report information details the decision of the Immigration Department to issue a weekly press release on the arrival of asylum boats (the reporter’s dialogue specifically states ‘the Immigration Minister will hold weekly briefings on arrivals’ which perpetuates the militarised frame of Operation Sovereign Borders).


²²² The simulated interface relays the written information ‘IMMIGRATION MINISTER SCOTT MORRISON’ (original emphasis) and Scott Morrison’s quote is typed out at a medium pace: ‘Taking control of how information is released denies people smugglers the change to exploit such information’ (9 News 22-09-2013).

²²³ See subsection 5.1.1 of this chapter for an overview of the report whereby coverage investigates an asylum seeker charged with sexually assaulting an underage individual. In this report, the news information employs both the global and local space/power/identity formations when situating the criminal activity within the framework of asylum movements.

²²⁴ Here the use of ‘flown’ refers to the specific fast movement of text and images. Power Point presentations provide a range of animation options, allowing users to create movement of pictures or text in presentations. The term ‘fly in’ represents the animated movements that follow the Power Point presentation ‘fly in’ option.

²²⁵ This is compounded by the use of capitalised letters for each letter throughout each statement: ‘August 2012 arrived by boat’, ‘within months given a bridging visa’, ‘then located to Doonside’, ‘August 2013 alleged offences took place’.

government (9 News 28-07-2013). A file photo of Kevin Rudd is flown on screen.²²⁶ It is accompanied by the written information ‘40+ BOATS ARRIVE’, ‘4000 ON BOARD’ (original emphasis).²²⁷ The simulated interface appears again later in the report, and the photographs of Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott fly on screen. Concurrently, the statistics ‘Labor 40%’ and ‘Coalition 38%’ flies on screen. These provide visual and written representations of the Galaxy Poll outcome on who is best equipped to tackle the asylum seeker issue. The dramatic movements create a sense of urgency and indicate inaction under the Rudd government. The dramatic movements combined with the information fulfil the broader textual function of raising doubts relating to the effectiveness of the Papua New Guinea Solution to address the issue of the arrival of asylum seekers.²²⁸ Only one other 9 News report incorporates the movement of ‘flying’ information on screen in the representation of ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’ (25-07-2013 [3]) The photograph of Tony Abbott is flown on screen in a file, and to the right an Australian emblem fades out of screen. Subsequently, the words ‘OPERATION’, ‘SOVEREIGN’, ‘BORDERS’ fly on screen one at a time and build the visual drama (original emphasis).²²⁹ The multimodal discourses suggest a sense of political action on a national scale, which is further developed in the compositional layout of foreground information.

²²⁶ The use of file here is necessary as the visual replicates the graphic representation of a document, a dog-eared file that is somewhat similar to the icon .

²²⁷ The report features a sound bite from Abbot. Then two clips of asylum seeker arrivals (with a voice over by the reporter), a sound bite from Opposition Shadow Immigration Minister, then a clip of asylum seekers being loaded into vans (with accompanying reporter dialogue) follow. Subsequently, the report returns to the simulated interface.

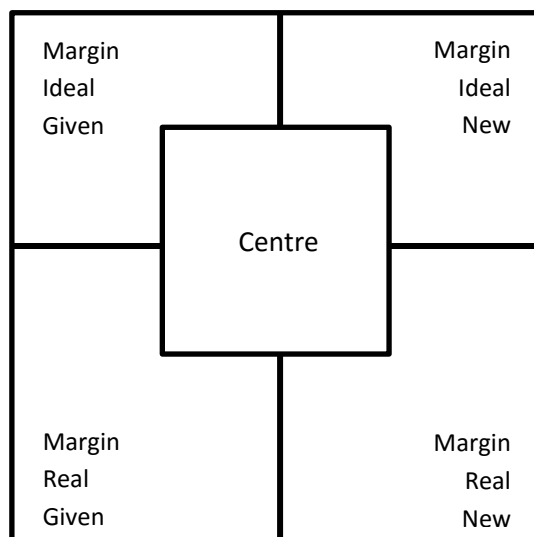
²²⁸ See Chapter 3, subsection 3.3.2 for an explanation of textual function. This is compounded by the soundbites that precede the simulated interface. First, Rudd is featured stating ‘We’d need to see the implementation of this policy over a period of time and its effect over many months’. The statement is followed by Scott Morrison commenting ‘This is the bloke [*sic*] who now holds the biggest monthly record for arrivals of any Prime Minister in our history’. The Papua New Guinea Solution was a regional resettlement agreement announced under the Rudd government on 19 July 2013. The policy established that any asylum seeker travelling to Australia by boat without a visa would not be resettled in Australia even if found to be a legitimate refugee. Instead, Papua New Guinea would settle any legitimate refugees arriving by boat. Any asylum claims that were unfounded would result in repatriation where safe, resettlement in a country other than Australia, or indefinite detention.

²²⁹ The written information is not only in capitalised letters, but is coloured in white that contrasts with the background navy colour of the simulated interface.

5.1.3 *Simulating surveillance*

Visual files function to segregate different data in the simulated interfaces, as analysed in subsection 5.1.1 of this chapter. However, the files also convey discourses of surveillance and the multimodal techniques used to realise these discourses need to be further elaborated. In language, ‘given’ and ‘new’ structures are organising principles (Halliday 1985, 277). Speech begins with the process of relaying information the recipient is assumed to know, and then progresses to provide new information. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006 [1996],) connect the ‘given-new’ structure of speech to visual analysis. They argue that the left side of a visual layout tends to contain elements that ‘the reader is assumed to know already, as part of the culture’, whereas the right side tends to command attention for its potential to impart new information (ibid., 180; see figure 38).²³⁰ The ‘given-new’ structure is mobilised in connection to the discourse of surveillance, visually separating the information that audiences are assumed to know with the new information imparted by the report.

Figure 38: ‘The dimensions of visual space’ (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006 [1996], 197)



²³⁰ See subsection 5.2.3 of this chapter for an analysis of the ‘Ideal-Real’ structure.

In *9 News* 09-06-2013, a number of visual files are drawn and the information in each file is continually updated to provide visual representations of the reporter's voice-over.²³¹ The main box at the left of the simulated interface display contains the known information. This box presents a map and radar monitoring the last-known position of the asylum boat.²³² The file at the right of the main information contains the new information. The data '55 PEOPLE' appears along with the symbolic depiction of people. The non-statistical representation of people includes the icons of five adult males and five adult females in a dull white-grey colour. While this imparts new information, the standardised icons create a visual distance as it de-personalises the representation of asylum seekers. The human icons in the file enact interpersonal discourses of the governmental ability to monitor identity in relation to the borders. The final pictorial file on the simulated interface overlaps the main display box containing the map. The file has greater salience as it is visually brighter than the file to the right with the human icons. 'HMAS WARRAMUNGA' is spelled out letter by letter, accompanied by a pictorial warhead (original emphasis). Locating the warhead in the given structure to the centre-left of the screen conforms to the wider popular politicised discourses. The audience is assumed to know that asylum relates to frameworks of militarised defence. Although the map fulfils the ideational function of representing the spatial relationships, the warhead performs an interpersonal function. The warhead assumes the audiences' existing knowledge when reinscribing the legitimacy of Australian military action. Subsequently, the warhead and writing fade out. The statement glides on letter-by-letter 'NO BOAT FOUND' in a highly saturated digital red (original emphasis).²³³ Here, the use of the red hue signifies an imminent warning or danger, requiring the urgent action of the Australian government.

²³¹ See subsection 5.1.2 of this chapter for the multimodal transcription of the excerpt.

²³² The previous subsection 5.1.2 discusses the colour and movement elements of the radar in detail.

²³³ A swipe moves the information bar at the top of the display off the screen to the right, and the main-screen map concurrently flips down and up with new visual information. The green circle with radial arm position alters along with the overall position of the map, which is also a dull white-grey colour. The information '65 NAUTICAL MILES' is visualised in a dull digital green, and the radar commences radiating movements in a dull white-grey tone. Simultaneously the file in the top half is again drawn out and filled in the same manner with new operation task information. To the right of the main screen a file is drawn and the information 'BODIES FOUND' is drawn in with a bright white hue, and the iconic symbolised bodies concurrently appear.

Later in the simulated interface, the file to the right includes updated information in a capitalised white font 'BODIES FOUND', with the ten adult icons below the statement. The pictorial representation is updated, with the use of a red hue for five of the adult icons. The use of colour and the icons operate at both the ideational and interpersonal level. Ideationally, the icon creates a visual representation of the individuals in pictorial form. Interpersonally, the red hue connotes the bodies being located by the military and that a number of individuals are deceased. The different discrete elements work together to create a broader textual function across the news text, communicating surveillance and governmental action (9 News 09-06-2013). Multimodal discourses throughout the interfaces signify Australian political and military space/power/identity formation. The 'given-new' structure communicates spatial/power/identity relationships in regards to the inclusion of pictorial files; however, these structures also apply to the representation of individuals in the simulated interfaces.

Pictorial files are used to frame the information and add power dimensions to the simulated interface, particularly when representing political figures.²³⁴ The layout of the photographic files adheres to these conventions. In each case, the political figure is placed to the left of the frame. All the written information occurs to the right of the frame and imparts information regarding boat arrivals, governmental policy, or planned 'operations'. Rhyme creates a sense of cohesiveness in the visual presentation.²³⁵ All photographs included in pictorial files have colour modifications to match the background navy hue of the simulated interface. The photographs all have low colour differentiation, only using the monochromatic navy, which renders them as less real and more militarised (see figure 34). The particular hue, navy as opposed to say a warmer colour like yellow, operates to represent computerised

²³⁴ 9 News simulated interfaces on the 25-07-2013 [3], 28-07-2013, and 22-09-2013 include the photographic representation of political figures. The only other 9 News report to use file photographs in the simulated interface is the 03-09-2013 covering the alleged sexual assault committed by a Sri Lankan asylum seeker. It follows the same pattern layout, with the photograph placed to the left in monochromatic but fully modulated navy. While the individual is not known to the public, it appears as given information and the monochromatic presentation depersonalises the individual to give the sense that they are just another criminal.

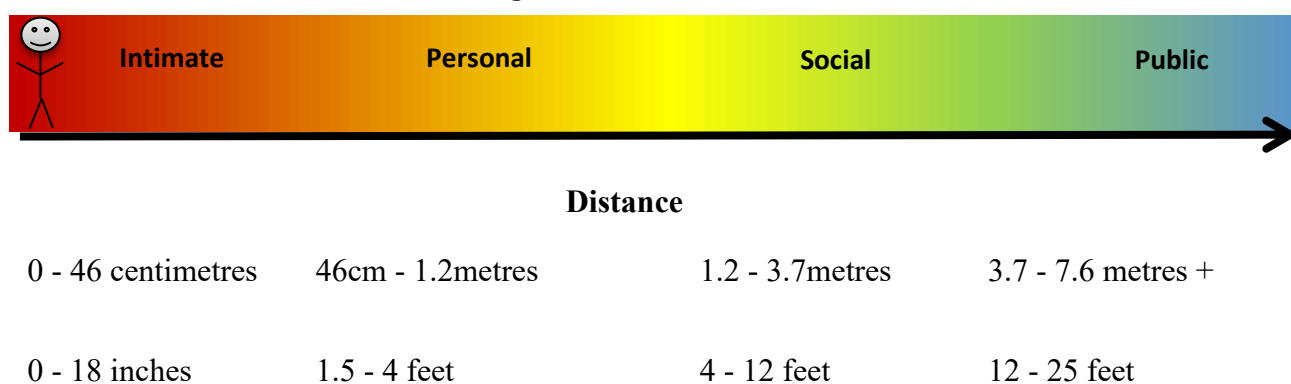
²³⁵ See subsection 5.1.1 of this chapter, which examines the elements of compositional framing, including the layout of rhyme.

objectivity and militarised presentation. However, the monochromatic navy is not flat and is modulated to show the highlights and the lowlights, which allows the facial expressions to be readily seen. Exaggerated colour modulation, through more intense highlights and lowlights, intensifies the militarised discourses (*9 News* 25-07-2013 [3]). In the simulated interface, the file of Tony Abbott features to the left of ‘OPERATION SOVEREIGN BORDERS’ and the Australian Army logo (original emphasis). The colour modulation enables the visual representation of Abbott to appear more militaristic and stern, enhanced by his gaze and proximity to the camera (see figure 34). The multimodal elements of gaze and proxemics further contribute to the militarised discourses of surveillance in *9 News* reports on asylum.

Across *7 News* and *9 News* coverage of asylum, the multimodal aspects of proxemics and gaze intensify the discourses of the nation-state space/power/identity formation. While proxemics refers to the spatial distance between the subject and the camera, gaze relates to the ways in which the subjects look toward the camera. Using proxemics (Hall 1964), multimodal discourse analysis investigates the different meanings attached to spatial distance (Hodge and Kress 1988, 52-3; Machin 2012 [2007] on camera shots; Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006 [1996], 124-5). Tuchman (1978) also uses the work of Hall (1964) to investigate news production in relation to intimate space, personal space, social space, and public space (see figure 39). Each spatial category is further divided into close and far phases. Tuchman concludes that the news genre tends to avoid close-up footage, as it is ‘not seen as neutral’ but rather provides visual drama and emotions (1978, 118). Politicians and reporters tend to be filmed in the close social distance to far social distance range as this enhances the objective display of figures of authority (see figure 39). Across the simulated interfaces, the photographic files of individuals appear in the close proxemic range of personal space. In *9 News* 03-09-2013 a medium close up depicts the accused individual, and medium close ups are used to visualise Kevin Rudd (*9 News* 28-07-2013) and Scott Morrison (*9 News* 22-09-2013). Yet, gaze attributes different agencies to the individuals, enabling the visuals to

‘demand’ or ‘offer’. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006 [1996], 116-119) draw upon the work of Halliday (1985) to argue that visual images either offer or demand attention. Social actors who are visually represented gazing directly down the camera ‘demand’ attention from the viewer, which operates as ‘a visual form of direct address’ (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006 [1996], 117). Whereas ‘offer’ indirectly addresses the viewer by presenting the ‘represented participants to the viewer as items of information, as objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case’ (ibid., 119). Kevin Rudd, Tony Abbott, and Scott Morrison are afforded agency in their photographic files, to demand attention by gazing directly to the viewer. In contrast, the accused individual looks off camera and over his shoulder, which turns him into an object for the audience to evaluate (*9 News* 03-09-2013).²³⁶ In the wider context of the news report, both the accused individual and his criminal actions are offered to the viewers for their judgment. The photographic files of Abbott (*9 News* 25-07-2013 [3] and 28-07-2017) appear to demand the most attention, not just because of the direct gaze (see figure 34). However, Abbott is also depicted at an intimate distance, or in the close-up range. The distance provides a sense of intimacy with the viewer, but it also allows his stern and fierce facial expressions to be seen more readily. Consequently, the textual elements extend upon the salience of national space/power/identity discourses by attributing greater power to political actors.

Figure 39: Proxemic distance



²³⁶ See subsection 5.1.1 of this chapter for an account of the *9 News* 03-09-2013 report.

5.2 Conveying boundaries

By exploring how the space/power/identity formations are conveyed across textual elements, this section expands upon the argument that the nation-state formation is responsible for controlling asylum and migration. In commercial television news reports, the mediated attempts to regain control of the borders fits into wider global discourses regarding concerns over border control. Philo *et al.*'s analysis of 'refugee' coverage in the UK highlights the connections made by the Shadow Immigration Minister between internal political dynamics and the loss of border control (2013, 78). In the Australian context, news reports feature the then opposition Coalition representatives making the same claims by positioning asylum in a two-party power battle. The then Shadow Immigration Minister Scott Morrison explicitly states that '[w]hen you lose control of your borders the way this [Labor] government has, the inevitable consequence is children get on boats with their mothers and in family groups' (9 News 04-05-2013). While no other direct claims are made in 7 News and 9 News regarding the loss of border control, the then leader of the opposition Tony Abbott alludes to it on a number of instances.²³⁷ The multimodal construction of asylum in news reports intensifies these verbal discourses. The particular inclusion of maps, flags, and official insignia conveys national discourses as situated among broader space/power/identity formations.

5.2.1 Charting territory

Across the news reports, the space/power/identity breaches to the Australian nation-state are emphasised with Google Earth Maps. 7 News and 9 News integrate CGI maps into news reports to chart the relationship between the movement of asylum vessels and the Australian land mass. The use of standardised Google Earth Maps across the news programmes creates consistent multimodal discourses whereby the maps fulfil an ideational function. The topographic maps emulate the natural features and shapes of the land and water, including

²³⁷ Notably, Abbott remarks in one report that '[t]he crisis on our borders has become a national emergency' (9 News 25-07-2013 [3]).

visual details such as mountain formations or deserts.²³⁸ In simulated interfaces, more simplistic maps are used as only dark navy represents the sea and white-grey the landmasses. The simulated interface maps include no topographic variations that would replicate the natural geographic features. The Google Earth Maps include landmarks labelled in a white font, with font design variations providing salience to some labels over others. In *9 News* (05-07-2013), 'INDONESIA' is labelled in a more transparent white and 'JAVA' in a more saturated colour, which has the potential to draw the viewers' attention (original emphasis). Other labelling elements are employed in this report, including 'BOAT IN DISTRESS', written in a blue font within a white caption bubble (original emphasis). The caption bubble points to the centre of a yellow circle outline, which demarcates the position of the boat. Similarly, *7 News* (05-07-2013 [1]) labels 'Java, Indonesia' in white lettering over the landmass using both upper and lower case letters. However, the location of the asylum vessel is marked with a red dot, with a red caption bubble containing white font 'ASYLUM BOAT IN DISTRESS' (original emphasis). The multimodal elements employed in the *7 News* labelling of the Google Earth maps emphatically focus attention on the asylum vessel (05-07-2013 [1]). An interpersonal visual warning is evoked through the capitalised letters and the use of a red hue, which both enact a sense of danger. In the context of the space/power/identity relationships, the threat pertains to the specific breach of Australian territory and the potential loss of lives of individuals aboard the asylum vessel. Additional differences in *7 News* and *9 News* coverage of asylum pertain to the ways in which the multimodal element of movement is incorporated in news content.

Although both *7 News* (05-07-2013 [1]) and *9 News* (05-07-2013) include movement to animate the maps, the commercial news programmes also highlight various space/power/identity formations through framing. Through the process of framing, news

²³⁸ *7 News* 05-07-2013 [1] and *9 News* 05-07-2013 both use varying shades of blue to illustrate the water, indicative of depth and the formations below the sea. Varied shades of deep green depict vegetation on the Indonesian landmasses, but a yellowy-brown with some light green around the edges represents Australia when clearly visualising the arid terrestrial environment.

programmes ‘select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text’ (Entman 1993, 52). Framing also applies to multimodal discourses as news production is able to encourage audiences to interpret content within a certain accepted framework. *9 News* 05-07-2013 commences with a Google Earth Map visually focusing upon Indonesia, but also displaying the North-West corner of mainland Australia in the initial frame. A visual zoom-in on Indonesia allows the labels mentioned in the previous paragraph to be superimposed on the map. In comparison, the *7 News* report begins with a Google Earth Map at a distance presumed to be outer space (05-07-2013 [1]).²³⁹ In this opening frame, the Australian continent occupies the centre of the layout, which anchors any further information to the Australian space/power/identity formation. Movement is integrated by spinning the globe and zooming in upon Indonesia. Here, the toponymic label ‘Java, Indonesia’ and the event label ‘ASYLUM BOAT IN DISTRESS’ demarcates the spatial relationship between the vessel and the closest nation-state land mass (original emphasis). Movement operates interpersonally to enact the regional space/power/identity relationships between Australia and neighbouring Indonesia. While almost all Google Earth Maps are used in a natural mode to emulate real terrain and geographic conditions, some are modified with CGI to add further layers of meaning.

7 News incorporates additional multimodal elements to Google Earth Maps, modifying the visual representation to chart asylum movements across terrain. Although only one report in the data set undertakes this visual modification, the map is especially significant in relation to the information it communicates. *7 News* 14-07-2013 [10] broadens the frameworks of reporting on asylum by engaging with global and local perspectives.²⁴⁰ The news report provides the opportunity for a Liverpool (Western Sydney) student Parvin, an Iranian refugee, to discuss her asylum journey and her integration in Sydney. A Google Earth

²³⁹ The contours of the globe can be seen with thick black frames on the left and right of the globe.

²⁴⁰ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for greater elaboration on the *7 News* 14-07-2013 [10] report.

Map creates a visual representation of the journey. Saturated markers overlap the map and fill each nation-state territory completely, with toponymic labels identifying each nation-state in the journey. A slight zoom-in draws visual focus to the geographic region that encompasses parts of the Middle East and South-East Asia. Significantly, the visual representation of Australia is excluded from the picture with the exception of the slight top of Australia. While this may be indicative of the distance between Iran (in the top left corner) and Australia (bottom right corner), it importantly removes Australia from the final destination, despite Parvin settling in Sydney. The demarcations on the map draw visual attention to Iran, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Each nation-state territory is outlined in red and filled with a highly saturated pure yellow. Red and yellow hues often function as a visual warning, or danger, and they draw the eye to the vast terrain covered. The territories that were flown over remain unmarked and unlabelled. Additionally, all countries that are coloured are also labelled in bright white upper and lower case lettering. Accompanying the toponymic labels are strong white curved lines, marking each leg of the journey. A flashing broken line demarcates the leg between Malaysia and Indonesia, representing maritime transport. The composition of this map is relevant in regards to the wider cultural discourses in Australia regarding the asylum process. One of the commonly raised issues in the asylum debate is why the asylum seekers do not seek asylum in countries that they stop in or fly over in order to get to their final destination, otherwise referred to as ‘country shopping’ (RCOA 2015). The reporter does not address the relationship between transit countries and destination countries, allowing ambiguity and thus leaving it to the viewer to perhaps discursively negate the otherwise positive tone of the report. Of all the nation-states listed in the visually annotated map, only Iran is a signatory to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol (UNHCR 2015b). Effectively, the nation-state Parvin is fleeing from is the only nation-state on the map committed to recognising an individual’s right to asylum.²⁴¹ The transit countries are not

²⁴¹ Although Iran is a signatory, it does not have a regular refugee resettlement program nor does it tend to

signatories and do not have the same international obligations to consider asylum claims. These circumstances mean that the Australian government has enacted bi-lateral agreements with different transit nation-states in the region in an attempt to stem the movement of asylum seekers.²⁴² The frames employed in the report highlights the number of nation-states that are passed through to reach Australia while remaining silent on the reasons for journeying to Australia. Even when *7 News* might provide the opportunities for global and local perspectives as outlined in Chapter 4, the multimodal discursive frames serve to emphasise the national formation and perpetuate popular misconceptions regarding asylum movements.

5.2.2 Flagging identity

One of the ways by which the boundaries of the national space/power/identity formation are communicated in news content is through the inclusion of flags. Flags provide banal visual representations of ‘nationalist’ discourse (Billig 2011 [1995]).²⁴³ In news reports, flags are included either through video footage or through CGI and special effects. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006 [1996], 229) state that flags realise an ideational function, using certain colours and illustrative features which denote states and the associated people and places that accompany that nation-state unit. However, flags can also fulfil interpersonal functions by attempting to enact ‘nationalist’ sentiments in relation to other space/power/identity formations. Flags are represented in relation to other elements in news reports, which also appeal to broader space/power/identity formations. Australian flags are predominantly featured in video footages across the data set in an ‘official’ capacity. Australian flags are

resettle refugees (UNHCR 2015c). Iran is predominantly a host and contributor nation. In 2013 Pakistan was the largest host nation with 1.6 million refugees, and the Islamic Republic of Iran was the second largest host country with 857,400 refugees and almost all of these were Afghans (UNHCR 2014, 14). While Iran hosts a large refugee population, it is also regularly listed in the top ten contributing countries of origin for asylum seekers (UNHCR 2015c, 49 and 51).

²⁴² The Australian government’s attempts to address the issue of asylum in a regional framework involve bi-lateral agreements with both transit (Malaysia) and non-transit countries (Nauru or Manus Island). Under varying leaderships some of the agreements have included the Malaysia Solution under the Gillard Government, the Papua New Guinea Solution under the Rudd Government, and the Pacific Solution under the Howard Government.

²⁴³ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.2.2 for the quantitative analysis of flags in commercial television news.

seen behind national politicians and governmental officials at press conferences, creating a visual reference to the spatial-power relationship but also the identity of the Australian people. On a few occasions, news reports include a video clip of a flag of another nation-state. *7 News* incorporates footage of ripped Malaysian flags in front of what is presumed to be a detention centre sign (04-05-2013).²⁴⁴ The subsequent footage is filmed at a public distance (see figure 39), depicting a crowd of male asylum seekers behind a barbed wire fence. The visual representation depersonalises the individuals, but the lack of direct gaze turns the individuals into objects in the visual frame. The ripped Malaysian flag, followed by the overcrowded and criminalised appearance of the detention centre, creates a run-down appearance. The subsequent soundbite from the then Opposition Immigration Minister Scott Morrison states that '[t]he Malaysian people swap would be overwhelmed in a week' (*7 News* 04-05-2013). The multimodal elements combine to fulfil a wider textual function communicating the dysfunction of the Australian Labor government. The elements simultaneously address the inadequacies of the Labor government in regards to the national scale and position the national in terms of its global interactions. Here, the flags create relational space/power/identity formations across the global and national scales. Flags are further incorporated in the reportage to emphasise the discursive construction of individual identity.

On one occasion, a flag represents the boundaries of space/power/identity in the production of a simulated interface (*9 News* 03-09-2013).²⁴⁵ The flag discursively heightens the other compositional elements addressing space/power/identity boundaries. CGI shows the

²⁴⁴ The combination of the two segments of video footage draws attention to the suggestion to swap eight hundred asylum seekers for four thousand refugees in Malaysia. The larger report outlines the inability of the Labor government, under the leadership of Julia Gillard, to address the ongoing asylum seeker arrivals. In the report Gillard appeals to the opposition Coalition to support the 'Malaysia Solution'. On 25th July 2011 the Australian government signed a deal with the Malaysian government to send 800 unprocessed asylum seekers to Malaysia, whereby Australia would accept 4,000 refugees already processed by the United Nations in Malaysia. The Malaysia Solution was stopped by the High Court of Australia through a temporary injunction on the 7th August 2011, and the High Court ruled the proposed asylum swap as unlawful on the 31st August 2011.

²⁴⁵ The report investigating the alleged sexual assault committed by an asylum seeker is analysed in subsection 5.1.1 of this chapter (*9 News* 03-09-2013).

Sri Lankan flag beneath the file photo of the asylum seeker. The depiction of the flag in its original colours fulfils the ideational function, directly addressing the geo-political boundaries between the asylum seeker and the presumed Australian viewers. Attention is also drawn through highly saturated and bright colours that contrast to the navy monochrome background. The flag is labelled in bright white capitalised text ‘SRI LANKA’ (original emphasis). Apart from the statement in a red hue ‘alleged offences took place’, the flag is the only element with colour in the interface. While the flag interpersonally creates a space/power/identity relationship that places the asylum seeker outside the bounds of Australian society, the flag also requires further elaboration to enact this function. The written label denoting the nation-state name suggests that the news producers may be well aware that its ideational and interpersonal function will not be fulfilled unless further context is provided. The label underscores that the presumed viewing masses are disconnected from Sri Lanka and need guidance in creating the global links. Furthermore, the red hued statement ‘ALLEGED OFFENCES TOOK PLACE’ operates on an interpersonal level to signal danger (original emphasis). When combined with the photograph and the labelled flag, the written statement intensifies the discursive representation of national space/power/identity boundaries. News reports employ flags to communicate the boundaries of nation-state identity, but flags also feature to frame subsequent report information.

The flagging of space/power/identity formations also functions to frame news information for audiences.²⁴⁶ Flags are included by *7 News* in the introductory segment of news reports, creating a frame that encourages the audience to draw upon the nation-state space/power/identity formation.²⁴⁷ While *7 News* makes use of CGI graphics in the introductory visuals, *9 News* does not incorporate pictorial representations in the opening

²⁴⁶ Subsection 5.2.1 of this chapter explored how news programmes incorporate maps to frame information in relation to geographic representations. See this subsection for an account of multimodal discursive ‘framing’.

²⁴⁷ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.2.2 for a quantitative account of the number of flags in the introductory segment of *7 News* reports.

sequence.²⁴⁸ The layout of the *7 News* reports that include CGI flags in the introductory segments can be analysed through the ‘given-new’ structure (see figure 38). *7 News* layouts always include the CGI images and the title of the upcoming report in the left side of the screen. The news anchor, Chris Bath or Mark Ferguson, is positioned to the right of the screen (see figure 15).²⁴⁹ Following the ‘given-new’ structure, the graphics create visual representations of pre-existing and culturally situated knowledge. The news anchor on the right announces the new information, or what the report investigates. On 17-07-2013 the *7 News* report includes the Christmas Island flag. Superimposed on the flag are images of an asylum vessel and a piece of barbed wire seen at the bottom of the screen. The report title ‘DEADLY VOYAGE’ comes onto the bottom of the screen, moving from left to right (original emphasis). As there are no labels connected to the flag, it is assumed that the audiences are able to understand the ideational function of the Christmas Island flag. Labels are not used to identify any of flags in the *7 News* introductory segments, and the types of flags interpersonally enact the regional Asia-Pacific space/power/identity frameworks to asylum.

Bi-lateral relationships are flagged through the feature of either one, or multiple nation-state flags. *7 News* 27-09-2013 includes visual representations of an asylum vessel, accompanied by the Indonesian and Australian flags which form a cross at the flagpoles. When viewed in connection with the report title, ‘ROW BREWING’, the multimodal discourses point to international tensions with Australia’s neighbouring nation-state (original emphasis). In figure 15, the opening sequence includes a visual representation of the Nauruan flag to the left of the screen (*7 News* 29-07-2013 [10]). Other pictorial elements accompanying the flag include an asylum vessel and particular salience is given to the barbed

²⁴⁸ Rather, the visual background behind the anchor on *9 News* depicts the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the local scale. See Chapter 4, subsection 4.2.2 for an analysis on the different introductory segment layouts between *7 News* and *9 News* reports.

²⁴⁹ All other news reports that do not include the split screen with CGI information displayed on the left side are structured in a different orientation. All other *7 News* reports position the anchor in the centre of the screen. The *9 News* introductory segments of news reports always position Peter Overton at the visual centre of the screen.

wire by its positioning in the foreground. The title ‘COUNTING THE COST’ crawls at a medium pace from the left of the screen, unaccompanied by any background sound effects (original emphasis). The pictorial elements and the title construct multimodal discourses that emphasise the nation-state space/power/identity formation. Criminalised and economic frameworks are facilitated through the image of the barbed wire and the title, which stress the role of nation-state’s bi-lateral relations in managing the spatial borders. When reporting on asylum, *7 News* reports also include visual representations of the Australian flag in introductory segments to anchor the information to a national framework.

Throughout *7 News* reports, the importance of the Australian political unit is signified through the inclusion of Australian flags. Here, the Australian flag performs an interpersonal function when rearticulating the discourses that locate asylum in relation to national policy. On 23-09-2013, *7 News* includes the Australian flag in the top left corner integrated into the sky above an image of an asylum vessel travelling in the sea. The title ‘QUICK TURNAROUND’ appears at the bottom of the screen, with movement from left to right (original emphasis). The subsequent information in the report presents the success of the elected Coalition government in turning back asylum vessels through ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’. The Australian flag is pictured in the report to provide a visual representation of the ability to control the space/power/identity boundaries of the Australian nation-state.²⁵⁰ The Australian national political formation further manifests in the flagging of the two-party political framework. *7 News* 23-07-2013 [4] includes the title ‘HONEYMOON OVER’, the Labor Party logo, and Kevin Rudd’s upper half superimposed in front of a very faint depiction of Parliament House in Canberra (original emphasis). The report that follows outlines the Rudd government’s decision to send all asylum boat arrivals to Papua New Guinea, and

²⁵⁰ While the asylum vessel is given salience in this report, other reports draw attention to political figures. *7 News* incorporates an Australian flag, an asylum vessel, and an image of Scott Morrison in the introductory segment (22-09-2013). The then Immigration Minister Scott Morrison draws visual attention as the most prominent image in the foreground. The multimodal discourses between the different elements frame the information in an Australian political framework, by combining the flag with the photograph of Scott Morrison.

provides the electoral polling statistics. The specific construction of multimodal discourses emphasises the nation-state formation in relation to the internal Coalition-Labor national politics, compared to the bi-lateral formations that could have been signified through the Papua New Guinean flag. The multimodal prominence afforded to the nation-state framework is noted in one other *7 News* report on 15-06-2013 [7] titled ‘SYDNEY’S REFUGEES’ (original emphasis). While the report investigates the impacts of refugees on the local, the opening shot clearly attempts to prompt the viewer to adopt a national frame. The graphics in the introductory segment include an asylum seeker vessel in the background, a computerised representation of an Australian flag on a pole, and the pictorial outline of the North-Eastern tip of Australia. Despite concentrating on the local framework of refugee resettlement, the opening sequence frames the issue of asylum in connection to the Australian nation-state and the control of borders. It must be noted that the flags are only pictured to create relational constructions which connect the global and local scales to the domain of the nation-state.

5.2.3 Documenting sovereignty

The multimodal discursive emphasis on the nation-state scale is continued through the visual representation of sovereign authority. Although the coverage of asylum only includes official logos and emblems across 15.63% of news reports, the pictorial representations intensify space/power/identity discourses.²⁵¹ The particular layout of simulated interfaces draws attention to discourses of sovereign authority through the visual emphasis on official emblems (*9 News* 13-07-2013). In the simulated interface, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority logo is used in the opening visual (*9 News* 13-07-2013). Movement is incorporated by swiping the logo on screen to the visual centre of the display, replicating the left to right pattern of the ‘given-new’ structure. The layout of the logo includes the pictorial emblem on the left, and the label ‘Australian Government Australian Maritime Safety Authority’ to the right. The feature of the official emblem functions to frame the subsequent information in

²⁵¹ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.2.4 for the quantitative analysis of official logos and emblems.

relation to the Australian national space/power/identity formation. Later in the simulated interface, the visual representation of nation-state authority continues through the feature of an AFP logo. However, the AFP logo commands greater visual prominence as the logo is both larger and superimposed on a white background. The emblem featured on both the AFP logo and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority is the official Australian emblem.²⁵² The logos appear as unaltered, and thus fulfil both an ideational and interpersonal function. Ideationally, the emblem represents the Australian identity and nation-state through the iconic visual representation of native fauna, the kangaroo, and emu. The emblems perform an interpersonal function as they enact the associated official Australian space/power/identity formation in connection to the coverage on asylum. The repeated use of emblems across *9 News* content ingrains the reliance of communicating asylum and migration in relation to discourses of nation-state sovereignty.

The multimodal construction of sovereignty continues across *9 News* simulated interfaces, emphasising the space/power/identity formation of the nation-state in relation to asylum and migration. In the *9 News* report on the 25-07-2013 [3], a range of emblematic markers are employed to represent the sovereign authority of the Australian government. However, in this report the emblematic markers are rearticulated in historical discourses which emphasise the governmental ability to manage racial identity.²⁵³ In the simulated interface, an initial file outline is drawn on the screen, kinetic typography incorporates the words ‘three star commander’ through the process of sorting through letters, and the pictorial

²⁵² The Commonwealth Coat of Arms operates as a visual representation of the Commonwealth of Australia. It functions as an official symbol to signify the authority of the national space/power/identity formation. The coat of arms cannot be used by private citizens or organisations, with the exception of some instances in the field of sport and education (Commonwealth of Australia 2014). The Australian coat of arms provides a visual representation of the six states (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania) in a shield held together by native Australian fauna (a red kangaroo to the left and an emu to the right). Above the shield the seven-pointed commonwealth star also represents the six states and the seventh point pertains to the Australian territories. The background of the emblem includes the visual representation of Golden Wattle, which is the national floral emblem (Commonwealth of Australia 2015a).

²⁵³ See Chapter 3, section 3.1 for an account of migration policy in Australia.

representation of three stars simultaneously fades on screen.²⁵⁴ The militarised discourses are extended, as lines connect this file with one for the ‘immigration minister’ and ‘defence chief’. Simultaneously, a visual zoom out is employed as Australian logos and emblems appear. These movements shift the visual emphasis from the files to the sovereignty of the Australian nation-state. The distance allows for an overwhelming array of governmental logos to be included, highlighting the allocation of numerous national resources to deal with the conflict on the borders. The distance also renders the emblems mostly unrecognisable, unless the viewer is familiar with the visual representation of the emblems. The only emblems that are readily identifiable are those associated with defence including the AFP, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, and the Australian Army logo.²⁵⁵ Surrounding these emblems and files, the outline of a boat’s hull is drawn. The operational information ‘100 DAYS’ flips down in the centre of the boat in a white font (original emphasis). Even as the outline of the boat hull is filled in a navy-blue monochromatic hue, the upper section of the boat and the sails appear. The particular outline of the ship provides a pictorial representation of a Singapore or Hong Kong junk boat (Blackburn 2003); however, these boats are not used to transport asylum seekers.²⁵⁶ Movement is incorporated as the boat sails off to the right of the screen, while the statement ‘TURN BACK BOATS’ quickly appears from the right and makes contact with the boat in knocking it to the left off the screen (original emphasis). The movements create a visual representation of the Coalition’s asylum plan. The movements fulfil an interpersonal representation that if elected, the Abbott government will stop the arrival of asylum vessels. The asylum vessel draws upon broader racial frameworks to realise

²⁵⁴ See subsection 5.1.2 of this chapter for the particular analysis of kinetic typography.

²⁵⁵ The AFP logo features the official Australian emblem situated in a seven-pointed commonwealth star. The star is topped by the pictorial representation of St. Edward’s Crown, which denotes a relationship between the crown and the Commonwealth. A wreath surrounds the entire badge, symbolising victory (Commonwealth of Australia 2015b). The AFP logo also includes the written information ‘AFP’ to the right of the visual logo. The Australian Security Intelligence organisation logo is readily identifiable as it features the official Australian emblem to the left of the layout, and the name of the organisation ‘Australian Security Intelligence Organisation’ in the right. The Australian Army logo is gold coloured rising sun, with the pictorial representation of St. Edward’s Crown.

²⁵⁶ Typically, Indonesian fishing boats transport asylum seekers.

both interpersonal and ideational functions. The boat is an ideational (illustrative) representation of a junk boat, and it operates interpersonally to enact the nation-state's ability to stop the unwanted movement of people from Asian region, particularly South-East Asia or China.²⁵⁷ The particular boat appeals to broader racial frameworks when forming space/power/identity discourses regarding the nation-state ability to protect borders and manage the identities within Australian borders. Subsequently, other pictorial elements are also used to communicate the Australian sovereignty and the attempts to both control the borders and manage the identities of the population within.

Although emblems and official logos are predominantly employed in news reports to represent the nation-state's ability to control borders, the pictorial representation of a passport also relates to Australian sovereignty. In a *9 News* 07-07-2013 simulated interface, the inclusion of a passport draws upon wider socio-cultural discourses of governmental processing.²⁵⁸ In the simulated interface, the information 'NEW REFUGEE TEST' flips down (original emphasis). Here, the ambiguities regarding the 'new refugee test' can potentially lead audiences to draw comparisons with the Australian citizenship test.²⁵⁹ The layout of information in the simulated interface replicates the idea-real structure of information (Van Leeuwen 2005, 205; see figure 38). The idealised or generalised information appears in the top half, while the bottom half tends to contain the real and the specific details (maps,

²⁵⁷ A number of pictorial boat outlines could have been used to communicate the arrival of asylum boats. Chapter 5, subsection 5.2.2 discussed the visual inclusion of asylum boats, typically Indonesian fishing boats, in the opening sequences of *7 News* reports, which all have a distinctively different visual shape (also see *7 News* 02-06-2013, 09-06-2013, 05-07-2013 [1], 14-07-2013 [3], and 19-07-2013). The Hong Kong or Singapore junk boat that is used makes specific visual reference to an 'Asian' boat.

²⁵⁸ Preceding the simulated interface is video footage of an African male asylum seeker being frisked by Customs and Border Protection on a pier, filmed at public distance. Behind him sit a number of males, most appear to be African. This anchors the simulated interface to the visual representation that the borders are overwhelmed with arrivals.

²⁵⁹ The Australian Citizenship test was introduced on the 1st October 2007 to ensure that individuals who applied for citizenship had an understanding of the social, political, and cultural context. The Department of Border Protection website states that the test is to ensure that applicants 'have a basic knowledge of the English language, and an adequate knowledge of Australia and the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship' (DIBP 2015d).

statistics, or written information).²⁶⁰ In the top half, the ambiguous ‘new refugee test’ is visually represented. In the bottom half, the pictorial inclusion of a passport provides the specific details. The passport breaks in half, and in a red hue ‘NOT VALID’ is simultaneously stamped in position over the broken passport (original emphasis). The multimodal elements elaborate both the details of the refugee test and the governmental attempts to manage borders. The reporter states that in the event that asylum seekers do not have passports they will be sent to the ‘BACK OF THE QUEUE’ (original emphasis). To the right of the passport, a file is drawn and filled with symbolic pictures of a man, woman, and a toddler on all fours. The information ‘FREED WHENEVER POSSIBLE’ flips down underneath the visual representation in tandem with the reporter’s speech (original emphasis). The multimodal elements detail the specificities of the new refugee test; however, they also function to disarticulate-rearticulate hegemonic discourses regarding asylum movements and the ability of nation-states to detain asylum seekers (Mouffe 1979, 197). The multimodal discourses in the ‘new refugee test’ simulated interface further connect to criminalised frameworks.

In the *9 News* report on the 07-07-2013, the spatial-power formation of the nation-state is connected to the government’s sovereign ability to manage identity and movement. The passport itself is one of the visual elements that reference this relationship, and the ripping up of the passport creates visual drama but it also has criminalised associations. The *Australian Passports Act* Section 34 makes it an offence to damage or destroy an Australian travel document (a passport) with a penalty of up to ten years’ imprisonment.²⁶¹ The movement of ripping the passport performs an interpersonal function. The movement enacts a social relationship where the Australian nation-state can manage spatial-identity formations,

²⁶⁰ It is important to note that Van Leeuwen states that the ideal-real is not necessarily fixed as the absolute top and bottom, and provides examples of how newspapers integrate ideal-real and ideal-real by splitting the page into four vertical vectors.

²⁶¹ Subsection 2 of the *Australian Passports Act* states that subsection 1 does not apply if the person has a reasonable excuse (which would be presumed to be relating to seeking asylum). There is a note to subsection 2 of the *Australian Passports Act* Section 34 cross-referencing subsection 13.3(3) of the *Criminal Code*. The note states that ‘the defendant bears an evidential burden in relation to the matter’.

but it also appeals to the criminality involved in disguising or destroying identity. The feature of the family symbol along with the writing ‘freed whenever possible’ builds upon the criminalised multimodal discourses, which stress the governmental ability to incarcerate individuals who attempt to enter an Australian territory without an identity.²⁶² The pictorial inclusion of a family symbol has the potential to create an emotional distance by denying any realistic visual portrayal of incarcerated families. Furthermore, the news report concentrates on outlining the governmental policy rather than engaging with the global perspectives of asylum movement. When attempting to flee and seek asylum in another nation-state, individuals have to conceal or fake identities in order to be able to move freely (RCOA 2015). The emphasis in the news reports is on the discourses of management as the multimodal elements rearticulate dominant misconceptions regarding the process of seeking asylum. These discourses of management are further perpetuated through other multimodal elements that attempt to nurture the authority of the Australian space/power/identity formation.

5.3 Nurturing authority

Commercial television news reports tend to structure content around key sources, which in the case of asylum and migration reportage tend to be national politicians.²⁶³ While hegemonic openings are provided for a plurality of social actors from the local and global scales, the specific ways sources are visually represented contribute to the wider textual discourses. The process of featuring soundbites from individuals across different space/power/identity formations does not immediately broaden the coverage of asylum. By analysing the visual and aural elements of news production, this section elaborates on ‘who has agency, who has the ability to act upon the world’ through multimodal significations (Machin 2012 [2007], 109).

²⁶² The *Migration Act* (1958) facilitated discretionary detention of unauthorised arrivals. Since the 1990s, under the Keating government, there has been a policy to detain any unauthorised maritime arrival even if the individual is claiming asylum. Individuals are detained indefinitely in immigration detention centres. During the period of this study, the Rudd government introduced the policy that any unauthorised maritime arrival would not be able to settle in Australia even if granted refugee status.

²⁶³ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for the quantitative analysis of news sources when covering asylum and migration.

The global and local formations are included in news content to predominantly co-constitute the authority of the nation-state unit. The asylum crisis is relegated to the national space/power/identity boundaries, but it is also reflective of the internal political context. Although the dominant representations of asylum occur in the nation-state framework, there are ‘smaller-level shifts in power’ across the multimodal elements that enable the representation of counter-hegemonic discourses (Hodge and Kress 1988, 7). Both political elites and asylum seekers are incorporated in news content in a manner that counters the traditional approaches to producing news content.

5.3.1 Picturing a crisis

Throughout the coverage of asylum, different space/power/identity formations are mobilised to represent a crisis. On the local scale, the crisis is connected to the likely impacts of the ‘waves’ of refugees on the Sydney community (7 News 15-06-2013 [7]). In the wider context of the 7 News report, the refugee resettlement in the South-Western Sydney suburb of Liverpool is contextualised in relation to the lack of communication between the Gillard government and the local police force. Multimodal elements are employed to draw the audiences’ attention to the negative aspects of refugee resettlement through the simulation of tag clouds. Tag clouds provide visual representations of the quantitative frequencies of tagged items. The most frequent appear in a larger, bolder and in a more saturated bright hue font. The less frequent items are in a smaller and less saturated dull font. Based upon the differences in the typeface the more frequent items appear to have greater visual prominence. In the news report, the tag clouds are incorporated by superimposing the text on top of the faded out background footage. The phrases appear on screen one by one in the following order: ‘LARGE SETTLEMENT ISSUES’, ‘SPLIT FAMILIES’, ‘POVERTY’, ‘VILIFICATION’, and ‘HEALTH’ (original emphasis). All words are in a white capitalised font yet, the typeface design varies across each statement. Here, typography can be further

analysed in relation to weight, expansion, slope, curvature, connectivity, orientation, regularity, and flourishes (Machin 2012 [2007]). The phrase ‘large settlement issues’ is formatted so that ‘large’ and ‘issues’ are larger in size. While the bold weighting of the text is consistent, the size difference draws visual attention to ‘large ... issues’. The multimodal design enacts an interpersonal function, connoting an emphatic concern. The interpersonal function is continued with the word ‘poverty,’ which appears in an even more heavily weighted font, and has the widest expanse (the individual letters take up the most visual width). The words ‘vilification’ and ‘health’ appear last and are more lightly weighted which reduces the visual attention. Additionally, the lack of connectivity (the distance between each letter) on vilification is the greatest. The disconnection not only detracts attention but also constructs implications of fragmentation, or that something is unsafe (Machin 2012 [2007], 100-101).²⁶⁴ The local crisis is further emphasised through a subsequent tag cloud. Although the faded footage remains the same, a black semi-transparent shade is superimposed on top, potentially signifying the darker issues to come. Different typeface designs are employed in this shot, and the writing flies on screen from different chaotic directions in the following order: ‘LANGUAGE BARRIERS’, ‘HOMELESSNESS’, ‘UNEMPLOYMENT’, and ‘GANGS’ (original emphasis). The information continues with the textual rhyme, in that white capitalised letters are used throughout. However, in this screen the visual prominence is provided to ‘gangs’ and ‘barriers’ through the expansion and weight of the written text. The progression of localised impacts from ‘large settlement issues’ through to ‘gangs’ interpersonally enacts that there is a lack of control and criminality, which ultimately impacts upon local communities. These multimodal representations thus stress the inability of the

²⁶⁴ Between the two ‘tag clouds’, *7 News* includes a visual cut to footage of Kamalle Dabboussy from the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre. While Kamalle Dabboussy is shot at close social distance, gazing at the reporter, his verbal information replicates the dominant frameworks of discussing refugees (see Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1). The information he provides does not counter the negative ‘tone’ of the tag clouds, but reinforces the difficulties in acculturation when trauma is involved. Similarly, the rest of the report focuses on the local police force and the national government, which functions to create a sense of authority.

Gillard government to control borders, assert authority, and manage the integration of culturally different refugees into the Australian community.²⁶⁵

The visual construction of a national crisis is deepened through the tendency to re-use the same video footage across a number of news reports. The re-use of video footage allows news programmes to perform a hegemonic ‘disarticulation-rearticulation’ in content by removing the footage from the original context of capture (Mouffe 1979, 197). These rearticulations are included in news reports, where the reproduction of asylum boat footage creates an abstract enemy.²⁶⁶ Yet, repetition of video footage also occurs within the same news report to perpetuate an atmosphere of cultural crisis. In the *7 News* report covering the resettlement of refugees in Liverpool, the visual representation of women in hijab is reproduced throughout the coverage (15-06-2013 [7]). The previous paragraph argued that typographic elements linked migration issues with local cultural integration, and to the Gillard government’s inability to manage the national space/power/identity formation. The issues of cultural integration are also synthesised on the local scale through the re-use of footage of two women, filmed from a different camera angle and perspective (see figures 40 and 41).²⁶⁷ Later in the report cultural difference is connected to the global scale through visual footage of a woman in a hijab, seated in a refugee camp. Although no explicit mention is made to religious difference, the visual repetition in figures 40 and 41 amplifies the local-global cultural threat. The repetitions in this report are particularly significant, as they simultaneously employ the local and global space/power/identity formations to constitute the importance of the nation-state unit. By analysing how the repetition of footage enacts a crisis under the Gillard-led

²⁶⁵ See Chapter 7, subsection 7.3.4 for an analysis of the ways respondents perpetuate these frameworks. For example, Adam and Jennifer make particular mention of the inability of the government to achieve adequate cultural integration of refugees into Australian society.

²⁶⁶ The use of criminalised frames is also noted in relation to the ways that asylum seekers tend to be visually represented. Repeated visual representations across news reports films asylum seekers at a distance, lined up on a pier, and being searched by Australian Customs and Border Protection. Also, see Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.2 for a quantitative analysis of the repetition (especially figures 8 and 9).

²⁶⁷ This was particularly obvious as one of the women had a distinctive green patterned skirt and studded or patterned bag, while the other woman carrying a canvas bag was holding the hand of a little girl with her hair in a number of ties and a pink dress or coat.

government, it is then possible to compare the ways by which the re-use of footage nurtures a sense of authoritative control under the Abbott-led government.

Figure 40: *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7]

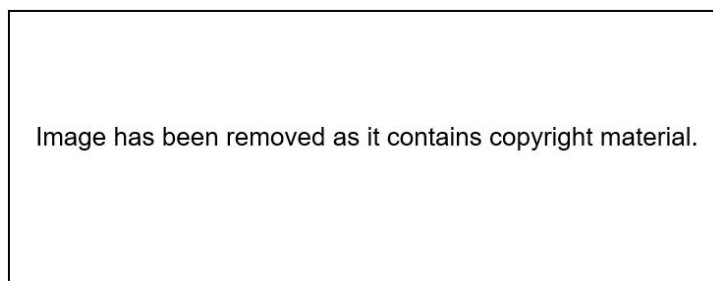
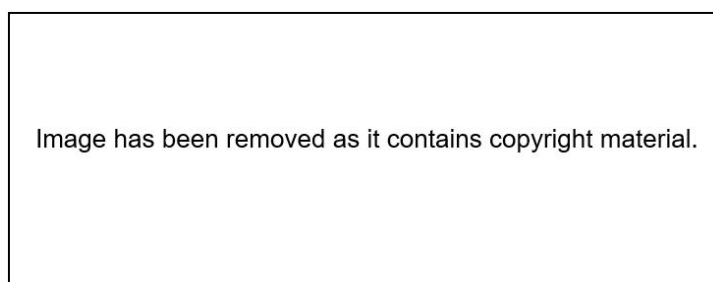


Figure 41: *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7]



The Abbott-led government implemented the asylum policy ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’ in an attempt to control the crisis at the Australian borders. Both news programmes aired the original press conference in which the new asylum operation was announced (*7 News* and *9 News* 19-09-2013).²⁶⁸ However, *7 News* and *9 News* reproduced the video footage

²⁶⁸ The identical footage is also included as the opening reports on ABC and SBS evening news programmes on the 19-09-2013 (*ABC News* 2013, *World News Australia* 2013).

on a number of occasions which re-articulates the militarised discourses in new contexts.²⁶⁹

The 19-09-2013 press conference includes the then Immigration Minister Scott Morrison addressing the three-star Commander General Angus Campbell, along with three other military officials. The military officials sit at a table, with a map of Australia including the top of Indonesia, and Scott Morrison opposite them. The Immigration Minister provides the military officials with details about the tough mission, creating a sense that the government is taking control of the asylum issue and the Australian borders. The visual salience of the map requires special mention, as it is evidently part of the discourse of authoritative control. The map does not strictly fill the ideational function, as the colours of all the land mass formations are a non-naturalistic simple yellow with no topographic features. The yellow is prominent and when coupled with a visual zoom-in on the Australian territory, it draws attention to the spatial boundaries of the Australian continent. Additionally, the operation briefing is filmed with more than one camera in a manner that defies traditional conventions in news production. Tuchman outlines how footage of press conferences tend to be produced from public distance and a head-on angle, avoiding birds-eye (high angle looking down) or worm-eye (low angle looking up) perspectives which turn the officials into objects (Tuchman 1978, 114-119). In the operation briefing, different perspectives are employed when filming from behind the Immigration Minister, side-on, and from slightly birds-eye angles. The footage also includes a number of video and photographic camera crew in the frame. In the 'Operation

²⁶⁹ The video footage is re-used in *7 News* 21-09-2013, 22-09-2013, and 29-09-2013; *9 News* 21-09-2013, 22-09-2013, 23-09-2013, and 24-09-2013. Compared to the Labor government, the Coalition government engaged in a more militaristic visual presentation of the 'press conferences' which relates to the broader militarisation of the Department under the Coalition government. The Labor government press conferences had a simple navy blue background. *7 News* and *9 News* are the only reports that position the then Home Affairs Minister, Jason Clare, in front of a Customs Watch background. With the exception of the military briefing press conference, other press conference statements on asylum issues under the Coalition-led government are conducted in a more official manner. The visual layout of the press conferences includes one or two lectern podiums in front of one or two 'Operation Sovereign Borders' pull-up banners, and flanked by two Australian flags. At the lecterns, the then Immigration Minister Scott Morrison is sometimes accompanied by Commander General Angus Campbell (whereby a second lectern and banner is included). The pull-up banners include the Australian emblem, 'Operation Sovereign Borders', and the visual representation of all the government agencies involved in the operation. These visual differences are important as they signal the beginning of the militarisation of the Department of Immigration since the Coalition re-election. The militarisation of the Department of Immigration continues, with reports that the Department of Immigration has spent more than the Department of Defence on medals for its staff (Gartrell 2016).

Sovereign Borders’ briefing, the viewer is positioned over the meeting, watching over the military operation which shifts the power dynamics to turn the political and military figures into somewhat passive objects.²⁷⁰ Gitlin states, that ‘scepticism and knowingness prevail today... [i]t’s commonly understood today that news is not “the way it is” but a version of reality, and that a version is not the last word’ (2003 [1980], xx-xxi). As audiences are aware of the constructed nature of news, the filming of press conferences can engage in more entertaining and non-conventional production techniques which shift the multimodal power dimensions.²⁷¹ By filming from a range of non-conventional angles, the audience is turned into an active observer of the governmental operation. The subsequent repetition of the footage fosters a sense that under the Abbott government the nation-state is in complete control of the asylum movements.

5.3.2 *Counting the costs*

Across the news reports, the differences in covering asylum under the periods of Labor and Coalition leadership also manifest in numerical and economic frameworks. Kinetic typography is further employed to symbolically ‘stamp’ official data in news reports, either appealing to a sense of national crisis or control. The primary focus of *7 News* 23-09-2013 is the Coalition government announcement that it has increased the detention centre capacities

²⁷⁰ Subsection 5.3.3 develops the argument that commercial television news production defies traditional journalistic conventions by analysing the how gaze, angles, and distance are employed in the coverage of asylum.

²⁷¹ There are other instances where different perspectives, angles, and gazes are used to incorporate a range of other national politicians across contexts. In one instance, Kevin Rudd is shot from a worm-eye perspective, with the camera appearing to be located on the ground (*7 News* 02-07-2013). In the shot Rudd asks ‘How are you?’, followed by the reporter stating ‘Into the lion’s den, Kevin ...’. The visual footage changes to a head-on perspective with the reporter finishing the sentence ‘... Rudd makes an unofficial Prime Ministerial visit to the press gallery’. *9 News* also films Rudd from a low angle and clearly includes surrounds to establish that the location is at the National Press Club (11-07-2013). As part of a story on the Liberal Party campaign ahead of the federal election, both former Prime Minister John Howard and then Liberal Party leader Tony Abbott are filmed at a Liberal Party rally (*9 News* 29-06-2013). While both are shot at a social distance, the footage also includes Abbott at an intimate distance with a close up of his face. Furthermore, in most of the news coverage involving Australian political actors, the politicians do not have a ‘direct’ gaze into the camera to the audience. The lack of ‘direct’ gaze was observed in connection to a number of filming contexts, from one-on-one interviews through to press conferences. Alternative perspectives and close up shots in and of themselves do not create drama and emotion but they need to be connected to the wider narrative structure of the news report for the visuals to ‘emote’. When used in political reporting the alternative filming perspectives are a form of visual entertainment in that they diversify the mechanisms of representation. See subsection 5.3.3 of this chapter for greater analysis on the mechanisms of representation in relation to asylum seekers.

on both Manus Island and Nauru to cope with the arrival of asylum seekers.²⁷² First, ‘MANUS ISLAND 1230’ is stamped in a heavily weighted bold and saturated red typeface which emulates a stencil font stamp (original emphasis). ‘Manus Island’ and ‘1230’ appear on separate lines, allowing the data to occupy a greater proportion of the screen when commanding visual prominence. The information is superimposed on footage of an immigration detention centre, with asylum seekers pixilated to de-identify the individuals. There is a fade out as there is a change in the background footage to a van, with the kinetic typography of ‘NAURU 2000’ replicating the design and movement of the Manus Island graphics (original emphasis). While red capitalised text might normally be understood as an interpersonal function signalling danger, here it combines with other elements to create a notion of action. The data on the increased capacity is followed by a cross to the then Immigration Minister Scott Morrison and Commander General Angus Campbell behind two lecterns at a press conference.²⁷³ Although the *9 News* report incorporates kinetic typography to demonstrate the action taken by the Coalition government to exert control of the national space/power/identity formation, the data stamps also illustrate the weakening of the national formation under the Labor leadership.

Both *7 News* and *9 News* employ kinetic typography to emphasise the inability of the Gillard-led government to manage the nation-state space/power/identity formation (04-05-2013). These reports highlight the inadequacies of the Labor government in addressing the protection of Australian borders from the ongoing arrival of asylum vessels, resulting in the increased numbers of maritime asylum seekers.²⁷⁴ In the *9 News* report, footage of the

²⁷² Under the Howard government the Pacific Solution policy transported asylum seekers attempting to reach Australian territory to detention centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. The Pacific Solution was dismantled in 2008 by the Rudd government. In August 2012, Gillard reintroduced elements of the Pacific Solution by reopening the detention centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. The re-opening of detention centres on Nauru and Papua New Guinea followed the failure of the Gillard government’s Malaysian Solution (Gartrell 2012).

²⁷³ See n. 269 for the visual layout of the press conference, which constructs a sense of militarised authority and sovereign control.

²⁷⁴ These concerns stem from the previous 2012-2013 calendar year where the humanitarian migration intake jumped to 20,019. See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for an account of the increases of the humanitarian intake in a two-party political framework.

Christmas Island detention centre is used, whereby the superimposed data on the numbers of children in detention are ‘flown’ on screen. The vivid white capitalised text ‘1062 IN DETENTION’ is bordered by a saturated bright red frame to both segregate and integrate the data with the background footage (original emphasis). The figure ‘1062 in’ appears on the first line, with ‘detention’ on the second line and in a smaller font. The subsequent stamp of ‘946 IN COMMUNITY ACCOMODATION’ uses the same visual format (original emphasis). In this stamp, ‘946 in’ appears in the largest font on the first line, ‘community’ in a slightly smaller font on the second line, and ‘accommodation’ in an even smaller font on the third line. The layout of the kinetic typography draws attention to the numerical dimensions of the government’s inability to control the spatial borders. The stamps also fulfil an interpersonal function, as the numbers, letters, and border of the stamp gradually disintegrate once appearing on screen. The movements generate a visual relationship of the decrepit state of the Labor Party, by employing visuals that decay before the audiences’ eyes. These interpersonal associations are also noticeable across the *7 News* multimodal discourses which centre on the Gillard government’s failure to control the nation-state unit (04-05-2013). The news report incorporates a blue-hued screen with a photographic representation of an asylum boat in the bottom left corner, and underneath the vessel in small upper and lower case text is the statement ‘Source: Australian Government’. The inclusion of details of the source creates a visual link to the official status of the following information. The title ‘ASYLUM SEEKER ARRIVALS’ underlined in a thin red line stays on screen, with the statistics fading in and out (original emphasis). The month ‘May’ fades in and is followed by the data ‘645 (so far)’. As the information fades out, ‘April’ simultaneously fades in. The statistics of ‘3369’ fade on screen, accompanied by the reporter announcing the ‘record’ numbers of ‘almost three thousand four hundred’ arrivals in April. Although the kinetic typography is less dramatic in comparison to the *9 News* data, the focus on higher statistics in *7 News* reports generate a sense of panic regarding the ineffective Labor leadership. Consequently, the multimodal

discourses that concentrate on a lack of national authority heighten following the Labor leadership spill on the 26th June 2013.

The discursive construction of Australian political instability peaks in the aftermath of the Labor leadership spill when Kevin Rudd took over as the new Prime Minister of Australia. During this period, *9 News* 28-07-2013 uses the greatest visual exaggeration of statistical information through the simulated interface design. The photographic file of Kevin Rudd is accompanied by written information, ‘40+ BOATS ARRIVE’ and ‘4000 ON BOARD’ (original emphasis). The typographic capitalisation generates a wider textual function, enacting political instability through the presentation of the phenomenal number of asylum arrivals since Rudd gained control of the Australian nation-state. The ambiguities of ‘40+ boats arrive’ suggests a lack of confidence in pinpointing official numbers, but also represents that it is a rolling crisis with more expected. Kinetic typography is further employed to emphasise the ineffective Labor Party in relation to the Home Affairs Minister Jason Clare. The *7 News* report on 27-07-2013 includes excerpts of the Labor Home Affairs Minister Jason Clare speech stating that people smugglers ‘make a million dollars a boat’.²⁷⁵ Clare’s claims are investigated by *7 News*, and refuted through the independent fact-checking group ‘PolitiFact’.²⁷⁶ A blue-hued background is used to fade ‘70 people per boat’, ‘\$5000 a ticket’, ‘TOTAL: \$350,000’ on screen (original emphasis). Each piece of information is on a different line and all in white text; however, the numerical figures are formatted similarly in a larger font size than the written text. The different typographic sizes provide the economic statistics with visual salience, which potentially draws the audiences’ attention.²⁷⁷ A PolitiFact expert

²⁷⁵ The *7 News* report on the 24-07-2013 [11] reported this very figure only three days before finding the Minister’s claims inaccurate. Paul Kadak stated: ‘We’re also told the people smugglers have been offering passage to Christmas Island for around four and a half thousand to five thousand US dollars. Now if that is what was being paid per person by the people on the boat yesterday, that’s approaching a million dollars for that boatload. That is the big business that authorities are up against’.

²⁷⁶ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.3 for further information on the PolitiFact group.

²⁷⁷ Indeed, the numerical figures were of greater salience and stuck in Azar and Gary’s mind. They discussed the report on *7 News* 27-07-2013, recalling the economic statistics. See Chapter 7, subsection 7.2.3 for the analysis of the ways audience perpetuate economic frameworks.

counters this claim, followed by footage of the Home Affairs Minister with a graphic overlapping the bottom centre of the screen in the form of a ‘TRUTH-O-METER’ (original emphasis). The ‘truth-o-meter’ font is segregated from the footage by a saturated blue frame on which the capitalised white writing appears. A pictorial scale that appears to be a barometer is included to the right of the ‘truth-o-meter’ label. The graphic is accompanied by the sound effect of a game-show style horn, ideationally conveying an erroneous answer as the barometer’s arrow moves to the red section of the gauge. Simultaneously, the label ‘TRUTH-O-METER’ rotates horizontally backwards out of sight, as ‘MOSTLY FALSE’ is typed out in a rapid pace in the same space (original emphasis). While this is occurring, the red sector swells and radiates outside the frame of the barometer scale. The multimodal elements construct a discourse that undermines the sense of national governmental authority. The elements produce a visual and aural comedic drama where the Labor government has again failed management of the nation-state. The discourses perform an interpersonal function, referring to the broader popular dissatisfaction with the Labor Party to emphasise the inability of key ministers to sustain knowledge regarding the issue of asylum. The variations in the multimodal construction of authority are also evident in regards to the visual representation of different social actors.

5.3.3 Gazing at difference

In news reports, the overlapping space/power/identity formations influence how different social actors are represented in content. Social actors can be represented as individuals or groups in news footage, and potentially through processes of categorisation or non-representation (Machin 2012 [2007], 118). Categorisation or stereotyped representation occurs through the processes of symbolic presentation (Tuchman 1978, 122), and appeals to cultural, racial, biological, and socio-economic categories (Machin 2012 [2007], 118). Throughout the data set, the shorter length news reports completely exclude both the

representation of asylum seekers and political actors based upon the brevity of information.²⁷⁸

Across the news reports, there is also the tendency to employ stereotyped mechanisms of categorisation when reporting on asylum. The visual and verbal mechanisms of categorisation enact an interpersonal relationship by appealing to criminalised frameworks. Throughout the data set, asylum seekers are depicted as predominantly male and of Asian or Middle Eastern 'appearance'.²⁷⁹ The term is most used by reporters when categorising asylum seekers, and this perpetuates wider stereotypes regarding the ethnic backgrounds of asylum seekers when flattening out differences between identity groups. While women and children are sometimes represented in content, the women are often in hijab, which contributes to the visual categorisation of asylum seekers as being of Middle Eastern appearance.²⁸⁰ The footage of asylum seekers tends to be filmed at a public distance, depicting individuals being frisked by Customs and Border protection officials. These multimodal discursive categorisations are exacerbated when filming from the closer social distance range by only picturing non-

²⁷⁸ 7 News 08-06-2013 includes only a news anchor and a CGI map with the following dialogue 'A search is underway near Christmas Island following reports an asylum seeker vessel may have sunk. Australian navy and customs officers have been sent to the region to investigate, the search is focused about 120km north-west of the Island. No mayday call has been made'.

²⁷⁹ While the identification of asylum seekers as mostly male and Middle Eastern or Asian corresponds to the actual arrival figures, the manner of depiction and identification criminalises the individuals. In the 2012-2013 year, 85% of maritime asylum arrivals were male and 66% of all maritime asylum seekers were between the ages of 0-30 (DIBP 2013, 25). The countries of citizenship for maritime arrivals requesting asylum in 2012-2013 were Sri Lanka at 27%, Iran at 24%, Afghanistan at 20%, 9% of individuals were stateless, 7% from Pakistan, 6% from Iraq, and 7% other (ibid., 24). Of the maritime asylum seeker requests for refugee protection, 78.6% of Afghani claims were granted, 69.7% of Iranian, 76.2% of Pakistani, 87.9% of Stateless individual claims were granted, 19.1% of Sri Lankan claims granted, and 68.6% of Iraqi claims were granted (ibid. 27). The demographic details available in the 2012-2013 Asylum Seeker Trends Annual Report including gender and age groups are not available for following years as this was the final year this particular report appears to have been released. The 2013-2014 Department of Immigration Annual Report provides details on maritime asylum seekers. The introduction of the Papua New Guinea Solution has meant that asylum seekers are transferred and resettled in offshore territories. There is a significant reduction in the refugee protection visas lodged by maritime asylum seekers when the 2012-2013 year is compared to the 2013-2014 year. In the 2012-2013 year 8,443 maritime asylum seekers applied for refugee status, whereas in 2013-2014 there were 978 maritime asylum seekers claiming protection (DIBP 2014a, 113). Of these requests, an overall 59.15% were granted in the 2012-2013 year, and 55.73% in the 2013-2014 year (ibid.).

²⁸⁰ While the hijab is associated with Muslims, it is a broader signifier for individuals from the Middle Eastern region as part of the conflation between monolithic Middle Eastern/Muslim identities. The hijab, niqab, and burqa feature to visually identify religious beliefs, and have drawn attention in Australian in connection to debates on wider cultural integration. In September and October 2014 there were wider debates on the decision to ban the niqab in Australia (7.30 2014). The report indicates that the clothing is often incorrectly referred to as the burqa. Based upon the definition in the 7.30 report (2014), a hijab leaves the whole face uncovered. The niqab covers all of the face with the exception of the eyes. In the 7 News and 9 News reports in this study, women are most often in hijab. See also Chapter 4 subsection 4.4.3 for the news report in the data set, which details Abbott's comments on the 'burqa'.

identifying features, such as the visual representation of many male legs. Yet, the process of stereotyping has wider ramifications by appealing to discourses that stretch across the different space/power/identity formations.

During periods of political instability under the Labor government, there is a greater representation of actors from the global and local formations. The overwhelming tendency to frame political perspectives in a Coalition-Labor framework results in either non-representation or stereotypical representation of alternative political groups. On the local scale, news reports film from a public distance when covering the protest movements that oppose the Australian government's asylum policies. Through camera angles, the proxemic relationship presents the protesters as objects within reports, offered up for the viewers' contemplation. In *7 News* reports these representations occur predominantly throughout the Rudd and Gillard leadership, contributing to a sense of political instability.²⁸¹ The visual focus on banners from the Greens Party or the Socialist Alliance creates a connection to the categorisation of the political left as anti-establishment protest parties. While *7 News* includes local protests, *9 News* does not represent these groups as there is no coverage of local protests. However, both news programmes heighten the inclusion of global social actors during the period of Labor government thus undermining a sense of national authority.

The stereotypical representation of asylum seekers further challenges the discourses of nation-state sovereignty under the Labor-led government. Both *7 News* and *9 News* report on a police operation in Bali that resulted in the interception and stopping of an asylum vessel headed to Australia (12-05-2013). Although the mechanisms of representing social actors are different across the news programmes, they both evoke feelings of lack of control. The *9 News* report includes a birds-eye perspective and footage filmed from a social distance. In the birds-eye shot the visual representation includes a number of Middle Eastern males, pictured

²⁸¹ The representation of protests to governmental policy features in *7 News* 24-08-2013, 29-09-2013, 28-07-2013, 27-07-2013.

sitting casually on the boat and all are dressed in Western sportswear with jeans. The angle and distance turns the males into objects, masses of individuals lacking agency to command the audiences' attention. Additionally, the visual representation calls on multiple overlapping space/power/identity formations. The footage gives them a relaxed and laid-back appearance which counters the discourse that they are 'authentic' asylum seekers from areas of conflict. The visuals build upon broader media discourses and political rhetoric that tend to represent refugees through 'the contradictory but interrelated images of helpless, hapless victims and conniving, opportunistic "illegal" migrants' (Nunn 2010, 186). Socio-economic and cultural categorisations intersect in the footage as the visual representations do not distinguish the males as appearing any different from young Middle Eastern men who wear sportswear and live in the Sydney region. The cut to video footage filmed at a social distance of a Middle Eastern girl in an Adidas baseball cap furthers this visual categorisation. The footage of the asylum seekers wearing branded Western clothing counters the common assumptions of tattered individuals escaping persecution.²⁸² Yet, the footage connects to the broader space/power/identity discourses in the Sydney region relating to the socio-economic and cultural aspects that influence individuals' clothing preferences. It draws upon the socio-economic divide between the less affluent ethnic minority individuals from the South-West Sydney region that would be likely to wear branded clothing, and connects this on a global scale. These relational constructions of space/power/identity undermine the visual representation of the asylum seekers as authentic and ties into wider socio-cultural discourses in Australia regarding 'economic refugees'. Popular misconceptions in Australia regarding asylum tend to revolve around frameworks of legitimacy where asylum seekers are often viewed as 'economic migrants' if they are middle class or can afford to pay a people smuggler to travel to Australia (RCOA 2015). The *7 News* report on 12-05-2013 also perpetuates

²⁸² Even in the instance that the branded 'Western' clothing is a fake, it creates a visual representation that draws upon stereotypical assumptions regarding the appearance of 'genuine' refugees and those that are 'economic' asylum seekers without legitimate asylum claims.

discourses of illegitimacy which communicate the lack of governmental authority in managing the Australian nation-state. The *7 News* report includes footage of a young male asylum seeker gazing directly at the audience and filmed at an intimate distance, presumably by another asylum seeker aboard the vessel.²⁸³ The individual grins at the camera while holding a cigarette and is questioned by the person capturing the footage on where he is going. He states 'Australia', because 'I'm looking for refugee freedom'. The response is followed by off-camera laughter, interpersonally generating a sense of mockery. The mechanisms of representation would afford the individual greater agency by nature of the gaze and the distance; however, in this instance the elements contribute to the stereotypical portrayal of asylum seekers as taking advantage of the system.²⁸⁴ Across both news reports, overlapping cultural and socio-economic categorisations are employed to ideationally represent the illegitimacy of the 'economic' Middle Eastern asylum seekers.

While there are a number of stereotypical representations of asylum seekers and refugees, there are also a number of hegemonic openings. These hegemonic openings allow asylum seekers and refugees to be filmed as having greater agency, shifting the power dynamics of conventional representations. In the production of news, there is a tendency for political actors to be filmed to convey the visual function of demand, whereas non-political actors often tend to become objects offered to the viewer. In the framework of Cultural Studies, Hartley (1978) demonstrates how politicians and news workers are able to gaze down the camera at the viewer, whereas trade union officials do not have this ability to command

²⁸³ It is not made clear whether it is camera phone footage or filmed via another device; however, the individual asking questions of the 'subject' has the same accent. The news anchor does identify that 'the passengers from Turkey confirmed they were trying to get to Australia', which further contributes to the multimodal discourses of illegitimacy (*7 News* 12-05-2013).

²⁸⁴ Chapter 7, subsection 7.2.1 analyses the ways these discourses are replicated or contested by audiences. Albert makes particular mention of maritime asylum seekers 'shonking (*sic*) the system'.

attention.²⁸⁵ However, there are a number of instances where these dominant news production conventions are challenged by facilitating the perspectives of ordinary asylum seekers in the local and global spaces. The *7 News* report ‘A New Start’ (14-07-2013 [10]) includes Parvin, a Muslim refugee, filmed in both social and intimate distances of the camera. There is a close-up of her face in the opening shot, and other shots in the news report picture her in the intimate distance smiling amongst classmates. The mechanisms of representation accord Parvin agency, when the head-on angle that she is filmed from allows her to gaze at the reporter located off screen and not directly at the camera.²⁸⁶ The representations enable Parvin to ‘demand’ the attention of the viewer when relaying her experiences as an asylum seeker. The mechanisms of representation are maintained across the *7 News* approach to filming asylum seekers, which can potentially enact an interpersonal function by creating emotive connections that reduce the apparent social distance between the viewer and the asylum seeker (23-07-2013 [5] and 24-07-2013 [11]). A father and his daughter Asal are pictured in intimate distance, and she gazes in the direction of the camera while the reporter informs viewers that ‘[h]is daughter Asal tells him boats are too dangerous’. A change in the visual footage portrays the father and daughter at a further distance. A visual zoom toward them occurs with the reporter’s statement, ‘[h]e says he cries at the choice but isn’t deterred’. The report also informs the audience that he is an atheist fleeing Iran. The discursive constructions challenge the pattern of portraying asylum seekers in the framework of mass categorisation, represented as indiscriminate masses, when providing the specificities of the father’s context. The repetition of the footage on the following night continues to picture asylum seekers in a

²⁸⁵ In this study, regardless of the capacity all ‘officials’ and ‘representatives’ are afforded the same agency. Across the local, ‘national’, and global scales, different authority figures are filmed through equivalent mechanisms of representation. The same angles, perspective, and gaze visually represent Scott Weber, Police Association (*7 News* 15-06-2013 [7]) and Indonesian Police Chief Bakhti (*7 News* 05-08-2013 [9]). Both appear in the social distance range, filmed head-on, and gazing off camera at the reporter. The structures of representation are replicated when including the then Opposition Immigration Minister Scott Morrison and Kamalle Dabboussy from the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre in the report on 15-06-2013 [7].

²⁸⁶ As outlined in the previous paragraph, subjects do not often gaze directly down the camera at the viewer. The direct gaze is usually reserved for the anchor, reporter, and political figures. The range of interviewees filmed in this manner range from Scott Morrison, Scott Weber, Indonesian Police Chief Bakhti, to Refugee Action Coalition Advocate Ian Rintoul. The direct gaze effectively affords Parvin and the asylum seekers filmed on 23-07-2013 [5] with the same visual agency as more powerful social actors.

personalised visual framework. These mechanisms of representation enact interpersonal functions by attempting to create emotive representations of the global and local asylum seekers and refugees.

Although a range of social actors can be filmed through alternative mechanisms of representation, the specific multimodal discourses also need to be connected to the wider textual function in order to lead audiences to ‘emote’ and contribute interpersonal meaning. In comparison to the reports analysed in the previous paragraph, *9 News* does not create the same spaces for asylum seekers in news content. However, alternative mechanisms of representation are employed when reporting on Australia’s attempts to extradite the people smuggler Sayyed Abbas from Indonesia (*9 News* 08-05-2013). Sayyed is filmed in his prison cell and the Indonesian courts from social and intimate distances, gazing off camera at the reporter when being interviewed. While this presents an alternative visual perspective, it does not allow for a hegemonic opening that challenges the dominant frameworks. Rather, the alternative mechanisms of representation reinforce the multimodal discourses of the ‘illegitimacy’ of asylum seekers and the need for greater control of spatial borders.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the construction of multimodal discourses across camera angles, movement, gaze, proxemics, colour, kinetic typography, framing or layout, and sound. The multimodal elements communicate complex discourses about space/power/identity formations in news content. While traditional news reporting conventions establish that visual and aural elements are produced to enhance the appearance of objective realities, reportage on asylum also attempts to generate emotions. Through multimodal discourses, television news fulfils ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. By performing the ideational function, news reports attempt to communicate objective representations of the local, national, and global spaces around audiences. However, ideational meanings also combine with

interpersonal functions in their attempt to enact a social relationship with the audience. Multimodal discourses expand on the information in news reports and appeal to ‘common sense’ patterns of understanding, which emphasises the nation-state’s ability to maintain space/power/identity boundaries.

Across the data set, it is found that multimodal discourses attempt to appeal to the dominant hegemonic national scale situated as it was in the complex nest of local and global relations. Reports construct multimodal discourses of conflict in a manner that simulates objectivity and technological sophistication. However, the discourses also appeal to a sense of chaos, a loss of control, and a need for governmental action. The discourses attempt to evoke a sense of panic regarding spatial scales and the corresponding power formations that are supposed to manage these spaces. When reporting on asylum, multimodal elements construct the boundaries of the nation-state unit as co-constituted in relation to the local and global points of difference. Commercial news coverage of asylum attempts to create the feeling of an imaginary ‘we’, deploying an interpersonal multimodal invocation of Anderson’s (2006 [1983]) imagined community. Co-constitutive relationships are mapped, flagged, and are emblematically signified in the attempts to rearticulate hegemonic power relationships. Both news programmes engage with political and identity issues across the local, national, and global scales. News content represents things as they are, but also raises concern for the local communities while conveying frustration regarding ineffective national leadership. The coverage of asylum induces a sense that the world is not right, as the normative understandings of national space/power/identity are challenged from the global and local scales. Commercial news programmes convey hegemonic rearticulations by emphasising discourses of governmentality and defence, which enables audiences to draw upon frameworks reaffirming ‘that the world feels right’ (Gitlin 2003 [1980], xvii). In the next chapter, the ways in which audiences draw upon or contest these discourses are detailed.

Chapter 6: Spatialising Viewership: Reasserting the Role of Commercial Television News in Everyday Life

In an age of multiple media sources, the Australian news audience has the potential to engage with a plethora of information that crosses spatial scales. Commercial television news programmes are but one possibility for audiences to interact with social, political, and cultural knowledge. The embedded nature of media networks in everyday life means that individuals can enjoy a greater participatory role in the news information cycle, with the opportunity to draw upon and share diverse networks of socio-political information. New media networks create horizontal patterns of communication, connecting individuals within and across the local and the global scales (Rosen 2006; Castells 2009, 65). Online platforms disrupt geographically bound patterns of accessing news, augmenting the availability of spatially embedded networks of information. Benkler (2006) argues that the participatory and interactive attributes of the internet have the potential to radically change the practice of democracy. Citizens can subsequently alter their relationship to the public sphere becoming creators and primary subjects engaged in social production (Benkler 2006). Even when Australian audiences engage with wider media platforms, it has been found that they prefer television for everyday news (ACMA 2011, Papathanassopoulous *et al.* 2013). Employing the ‘participation paradigm’, this chapter investigates the ways in which audiences draw upon space/power/identity knowledge in relation to the discourses on commercial television news.

An analysis of the audiences’ engagement in ritualised patterns of news viewership demonstrates how spatial/power/identity frameworks influence the selection of news sources. Audiences employ news programmes and wider social media sources to nurture connections to different and at times overlapping communities. Commercial television news programmes are important sources of everyday information that allows audiences to develop social, cultural, and political knowledge. By examining the relationship between media use and everyday social experiences, this chapter demonstrates that audiences deploy mediated

knowledge when negotiating information outside their immediate contexts. The role of news programmes in providing everyday information becomes significant when analysing how audiences engage in political discussions across online and offline environments. Despite demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of media production and the institutional frameworks that shape news information, some respondents articulate discourses of indifference to wider networks of knowledge. Even when audiences are aware of the constructed nature of news and that it is only one version of reality, they engage in processes of disarticulating-rearticulating the power of commercial television news programmes in their everyday lives.

6.1 Place, space, and scale: the relational formations of viewership

News media have an important function in reinforcing communal bonds in the everyday lives of individuals. Both the disciplines of Media Studies and Political Science address the significance of mediatised rituals in maintaining communal identity. Anderson (1983) relates the rise of the nation-state to the development of print capitalism. News binds the audience through readily accessible media content, cultivating a sense of collective identity through shared experience (Anderson 1983). Media networks uphold communities by enabling individuals to take part in a collective ritual, where news is ‘the maintenance of society in time ... the representation of shared beliefs’ (Carey 1989, 18). News programmes also rearticulate identity formations on an everyday basis. Guibernau stresses that national identity ‘needs to be upheld and reaffirmed at regular intervals. Ritual plays a crucial role here’ (1996, 73). While media and communication research demonstrates that news rituals are important in maintaining communities, commercial television news programmes bind people into communities in three specific ways. Audiences view news programmes in relation to the concepts of place, space, and scale (Jessop 2005).²⁸⁷ The three dimensions exemplify Özkirimili’s (2010) assertion that nationalist discourse is distinctive when compared to other

²⁸⁷ See Chapter 1, section 1.1 for an account of the ways hegemony is constituted over spatial scales.

discursive formations. National discourse is unique in that it draws upon divisions between ‘us’ and ‘them’; it has temporal claims and a historical lineage, and it makes spatial claims through the fixation upon a social and physical territory (2010, 208-210). This section lays the foundations for understanding the role commercial television news has in mediating everyday knowledge by investigating how audiences discuss their viewership in a relational space/power/identity formation.

6.1.1 Place

Place influenced how audiences discussed their viewership of commercial television news programmes. Place refers to the ‘more or less bounded site of face-to-face relationships ... closely tied to everyday life, has temporal depth, and is bound up with collective memory and social identity’ (Jessop 2005, 424). When drawing on this notion of place, the importance of the domestic setting was flagged in relationship to the viewership of news. The physical routines of the domestic environment meant that television news more easily fit in with the respondents’ evening schedules. News programmes were associated by respondents with the rituals of returning from work, being at home with family members, and also the processes of preparing or eating dinner.

Anita: I do watch it quite a bit, cause [*sic*] my dad’s got it on anyway.

Azar: Usually 7 ... maybe it’s actually just the timeslot you know? Because we’re cooking dinner, so it’s a good time to have it on. So I mean that’s one thing ... I guess it’s okay for local news...but for international news it’s a bit poor.

Priya: I tend to watch the six o’clock news and after that *The Project* at six-thirty onwards till seven ... Yeah, majority we view Channel 7 ... usually say six o’clock is when we have dinner, so we have the news on and we’ll sit and watch the news and have our dinner.

However, the respondents also outlined the differences between the varying television news programmes across the free-to-air Australian networks. Commercial television news programmes were a better fit when compared to programmes on the ABC or SBS due to a number of factors. First, face-to-face demands of everyday life impacted upon the amount of time that respondents were able to dedicate to viewing news. It was also stated that while the news programmes on SBS and ABC may go into greater depth, the general overview provided by the commercial networks was sufficient for everyday knowledge.

James: Time factor is definitely, like for example I'll go home tonight and I'll only have half an hour ...

Bill: If you just wanted an idea of what's happening in the news then a 30 second or 1 minute broadcast is just as informative as a five minute one on SBS ... I'm not going to sit there and watch five minutes of the same thing when I can watch a minute of it on Channel 7 and work out to be exactly the same thing.

Second, the process of watching news programmes in the domestic environment required that information was readily accessible. When viewed in the respondents' homes, any television news programme must ideally be intelligible while respondents were occupied with other activities. Commercial television news programmes presented information in a manner that was more accessible and easier for audiences to come to terms with.

Dianne: You know you don't want to have the serious stuff all the time ... [it's] definitely more accessible I think.

Greg: ABC often does more niche stories ... often the people they have on ... are at times they might use language ... you're more likely to get an academic being interviewed on the ABC, and he's going to be using big words that not everyone might get, even I've had to go Google them ... Whereas with commercial, with commercial it's rough and ready to go,

people are having dinner, people are getting ready to go to work, so they need to dumb it down so you can get it while you're busy and don't have the brain space to dedicate to it.

While 92.5% of respondents were physically in their homes during the time the evening news programmes are scheduled, some had different work routines and were located away from their television.²⁸⁸ The concept of place still impacted upon discussions of television news viewership among the three respondents (Kate, Aiko, and Lisa) who did not associate television news programmes with the evening domestic routines. Despite the technological availability to record and replay news programmes, it was not utilised. Rather, watching news was discussed as a bounded physical process that was dependent on coming home and seeing what was available on television.

Lisa: I work as a chef, I sort of have a different schedule of a lot of people ... we don't have any television at work so I'll work till generally about 9 o'clock at night and then I'll come home and catch the *Ten Late News* because all the other news is over, and then sometimes watch *The Project* because they have a replay at 11 o'clock.

For Kate, Lisa, and Aiko, news viewership remained associated with the domestic place. However, the patterns of viewing occurred in a shifted manner to accommodate work schedules. The permanence of television news viewership as part of domestic environment further connected to familial structures and individual histories. Respondents drew upon extended patterns of familial viewing, where the temporal depth of place formed part of a habitual memory for respondents. In particular, Greg combined his contemporary news rituals with a historical reflection.

Greg: I choose 9 over 7 because I generally just like 9 News, and it sort of fits on the dinner. It's something I grew up with, so it's sort of a routine thing.

²⁸⁸ Kate, Aiko, and Lisa were the only individuals with working schedules that meant they were not able to view commercial television evening news programmes when broadcast. For Kate, the changed work schedule was a recent development, which meant she was unable to view *The Project* with regularity.

Aiko: When I was younger and still living at home I watched the six o'clock news, it was always on and after I moved out of home I didn't watch the news that much. I don't really have a preference for Channel 10 ... it's just the one I grew up watching, it's kind of habit.²⁸⁹

The respondents' current patterns of news viewership were connected to childhood patterns, with 12.5% individuals discursively articulating they had grown up with the news programmes (Jim, James, Aiko, Greg, and Andrew). Young audiences often develop long-term news viewing patterns as part of familial structures (Gauntlett and Hill 1999, 69-70). Commercial television news was associated by these five respondents as being a historically located familial 'place' that was ritually revisited. The significance of historicised viewership and place further manifested in the audiences' familiarity with popular journalists.

Respondents drew upon the concept of place when elucidating that they had developed a connection with certain news personalities. Throughout the study, 20% of respondents linked their contemporary commercial television news viewership to their familiarity with trusted faces from the past (Jim, Salman, Karl, Marcia, James, Tom, Ellen, and Stuart). The eight respondents were all aged 31 and over, and referred to their memories of Brian Henderson from the Nine Network as impacting upon their current news rituals.²⁹⁰

James: I guess it's just an old fashioned allegiance ... mum and dad always preferred *9 News* with Brian Henderson ... I go for St. George, my family go for St. George ... it's just one of those ingrained things in your personality.

²⁸⁹ Aiko discussed her personal situation where she had spent time being homeless. She discussed how this meant that she was without a television. After getting housing, she resumed watching television news (when she again had the technology of a television). At the time of interviewing she had broken up with her partner who had taken the television, which meant that she was without a television for a few weeks.

²⁹⁰ While the viewers also talked about preferring Peter Overton to other anchors, they did not discursively situate this preference in extended viewing patterns. Rather, Overton was compared to other current anchors. It would be interesting to analyse longitudinal trends to assess whether audiences eventually relate Overton to *9 News* in the same ways in which they recall Henderson.

Tom: I guess I've been a Channel 9 watcher for, I dunno how many years now, lost track, ever since Brian was there. So, uh, thirty odd years I spose [*sic*] I've watched Channel 9.

Ellen: Well I used to watch Brian Henderson all the time, he was Channel 9 and it's just carried on from there. I like the people who were, who were doing it on Channel 9, so that's who I stick with.

Stuart: Probably watch Channel 7 News more than any other station. I used to watch 9 for some reason ... I think it was probably um [*sic*] Brian Henderson. When Brian Henderson left they went through a period where they tried to find someone to fit into that seat ... it was probably around that time that I switched over to 7 after watching 9 for twenty years plus.

Jim: Of the commercial ones, I'd probably watch Channel 9 more ... that's sort of out of habit in the past ... oh like in the past when Brian Henderson was the anchor, you know he was the one everyone switched to at six o'clock to watch the news.

All respondents who used place to frame their viewership recalled positive or neutral connections with either family or history. However, television news viewership in the family context was also linked to hierarchical power structures. Lull stresses the importance of taking 'into account the often competing interests and agendas of individuals in families ... [as] families do not act as complete and harmonious groups in most of their television viewing' (1988, 247). Similarly, Morley (1988, 30) outlines that in family units, members can partake in 'enforced viewing'²⁹¹ in which fathers are most often in control of television programme decisions. Of all the respondents, Nick found that the domestic power structures in his family home constrained his everyday viewing.

Nick: When I was living at home 7, 9 and 10 were watched not by choice, mum and dad loved that type of stuff ... I only moved out two and a half months ago ... I was watching it every day for dinner, I'd just be watching Tracy Grimshaw ... it wasn't me watching it

²⁹¹ Lull also touches on the concept of enforced viewing (1982, 802).

because I wanted to, it was more like a white noise, so I was focusing on some of the key points.

Nick constructed his previous place of watching television news as bound by hierarchies and ritualised viewing, but had recently moved out of his family home.²⁹² When discussing the new place where he viewed television news, he mobilised emancipatory discourses to stress the ability to choose what he really wanted to watch. Nick linked the ability to watch ABC and SBS news programmes to developing a more independent and adult identity. These discursive constructions of place were complemented by the ways in which respondents used news reports to maintain connections to different spaces. The respondents elucidated that viewing commercial television news bound them to broader spatial formations outside face-to-face places.

6.1.2 *Space*

Respondents appealed to the importance of different spatial formations and the associated territorial identities when deploying discourses of space. Jessop delineates that space cannot exist ‘independently of social relations that construct it, reproduce it and occur within it’, it occurs as a ‘series of strategically selective possibilities to develop social relations that stretch over space and time’ (2005, 425). It was found the respondents connected the act of watching news to sustaining a number of social relationships. Discourses of space were both multiplicitous and overlapping, as respondents related commercial television news to both the local and national communities. Two respondents drew upon the relevance of the commercial television news and the discursive construction of the national Australian space. The particular commercial news focus excluded in-depth overseas information, unless it aligned with national interests.

²⁹² Nick had only recently moved out of home three months prior to the interview.

Bill: Australians want to know what's going to happen in Australia and aren't really fussed on what's going to happen overseas in most cases ... most people want to know what's going to happen in their backyard ... how we will be affected.

Nick: I found that a lot of the time with 7, 9, and 10 they wouldn't really talk about overseas affairs ... unless it was really based on like an American issue, or even sometimes it might be an English issue.

Although Bill and Nick touched upon the role that commercial news programmes played in maintaining the national space, all respondents indicated an awareness of the local relevance of commercial news.²⁹³ Commercial televisual news discourses provided a means of interacting with the local space and developing the respondents' knowledge of Sydney. Yet, to emphasise the importance of the local space, respondents engaged in the production of relational formations. First, the local space was positioned in a scalar relation to the national Australian space. Second, co-constitutive relational formations were used to compare Sydney to other Australian cities. Darrin, Dianne, and Priya outlined that the Melbourne audiences were a distinct community with different news requirements.

Dianne: They're quite parochial, because Sydney siders are watching them and that's what they pitch to they say if there's news in Sydney you'll see it here first and that sort of thing.

Priya: Watching the Melbourne news ... they don't talk about Australia as the whole or the nation ... the same happens in Sydney ... we hear about what's happening out in Parramatta or the city or so forth.

Respondents also employed co-constitutive relational discourses to connect commercial television news to internal spaces within the Sydney region. Priya, Vicky, and Ellen

²⁹³ The demarcations are not strictly bounded and Bill discussed the role of commercial television news as both national and local. Additionally, respondents alluded to the ways in which commercial television news programmes connected to the 'spaces' either by discussing only local news reports, or through explicit assertions that commercial news programmes were understood as addressing the local community.

highlighted the ability of commercial television news programmes to cover the different suburban spaces when producing content. Furthermore, Ellen also mobilised relational discourses to explain how news was able to address cultural diversity within Sydney.

Vicky: Channel 7 tries to be a lot more community based, in the promotions they say well we're from Campbelltown ... they name suburbs in Sydney that make you feel like you're relevant.

Ellen: Well if there's something happening in the bush that they'll report on that, if there's something happening in the city they'll report on that ... if there's something happening in say Cabramatta which is um [*sic*] very much Vietnamese people out there now they report on that so, they go all over.²⁹⁴

In addition to the socio-cultural spaces, the respondents also drew upon the knowledge of relational economic or class-based formations within the Sydney region. While Vicky and Ellen felt that commercial television news programmes covered the varied social spaces in a positive manner, others highlighted how news furthered divisions. In particular, respondents outlined social divisions between the Outer-West and South-Western suburban areas in comparison to the East, North, Inner West and City regions of Sydney. The tendency to homogenise Sydney suburban formations into a monolithic South-West and West was disparagingly noted by some of the respondents located in the Western regions of Sydney (Priya, Galvyn, Elizabeth, Anne, and Lesley).

Galvyn: When something happens out in the western suburbs or South-West Sydney they love to say its South-West Sydney ... when something happens up in the North Shore, they'll only go to the exact suburb.

²⁹⁴ Ellen's comments related to the ethnic diversity in the suburb of Cabramatta. The 2011 Census data identifies that out of the Cabramatta population of 24,605, the percentage of individuals born overseas was 68.2% (2013b). Within Cabramatta, 44.5% of individuals were born in the South East Asian region.

Lesley: Personally, I think that the West has quite a bad image. I think it's presented through television as a bad place you know that there are more criminals, which is, as we all know not factual.

Commercial television news programmes were responsible for perpetuating the spatial-economic divisions within Sydney. Gramsci suggests that the hegemonic relationship between the 'city' and 'country' is a consequence of economics and the division of labour (2000, 281). However, the divisions must also be mediated and reinforced on an everyday basis through television news. Furthermore, the news programmes created local 'us' and 'them' discursive formations (Özkirimili 2010, 208-210), which contrasted the Western Sydney 'identity' with other regions.²⁹⁵ That news addressed the varied spatial and socio-economic communities in Sydney impacted upon the viewership preferences of respondents. While Galvyn and Lesley were both situated in the Western suburban region of Sydney, Kate and Susan resided in the Inner-West.²⁹⁶

Kate: Yeah, *The Project*, it's all about snobbery isn't it? Class and privilege, I am what I am ... I'm a privileged, educated, white Australian, and I don't want to read *The Telegraph* and watch *A Current Affair*. I'll watch *The Project*, and is it any better?

Susan: When I first arrived I was recommended to never watch Channel 9 ... I didn't even realise what the different Channels meant 7, 9, 10 ... you kind of learn through interactions with your peers, like what kind of things they tend to watch, and I'll watch that as well.

Kate and Susan drew upon their socio-economic context to discursively articulate the importance of class divisions in relation to viewership. The news programmes on the Seven

²⁹⁵ Anne, Elizabeth, and Galvyn highlighted the socio-economic divisions between the Blacktown and North Sydney region. The 2011 Census statistics for the Blacktown region indicate that it consists of 327,792 people with an average income of \$49,761 (2013e). Comparatively, the North-Sydney and Hornsby region contain 407,055 people with a median income of \$82,502 (2013f). Other socio-economic divisions were also highlighted by Karl, Marcia, and Emma in subsection 6.2.2 of this chapter.

²⁹⁶ Susan and Kate participated in separate interviews; even though they are a couple, they had vastly different viewing habits and everyday routines. All other couples with similar or identical viewership patterns and preferences participated in a group interview.

Network (*7 News* and *Today Tonight*) and Nine Network (*9 News* and *A Current Affair*) were contrasted with those on the ABC, SBS, and also Network Ten. *The Project* was understood to be more informative than the other commercial programmes due to its engaging and alternative format. However, the socio-economic binary that Kate and Susan discussed was not as rigid as they perceived. The aforementioned respondents from the Western suburbs indicated their viewership encompassed SBS and ABC news programmes, and also *The Project*. Respondents articulated that the ritualised viewership of different news programmes did not relate to the socio-economic divisions within Sydney. Rather, watching a range of news programmes across commercial and public broadcast was connected to the discourses of scale.

6.1.3 Scale

Across the interviews, the respondents employed co-constitutive relational discourses of scale to emphasise the use of varied news programmes in their lives. The differences between commercial and public broadcast news programmes were intertwined with ‘scalar hierarchies of economic, political, intellectual, and moral power’ (Jessop 2005, 425). Scalar hierarchies were an important factor in shaping viewing preferences, as commercial television news related to the immediate and everyday local context.

Elizabeth: I’d rather Channel 7 ... I dunno [*sic*] because sometimes I want to see what’s happening here they [ABC and SBS] show what’s happening overseas!

Mike: Someone like a Channel 9 has a commercial interest in their rugby league stories ... if there’s a particular rugby league story that I want to watch I’m more likely to watch them ... I don’t watch a lot of SBS ... a lot of their sporting content tends to be, I guess, from my cultural background not sports that I heavily engage with ... the only time I watch a lot of SBS is during the Tour de France where I watch the cycling.

Vicky: My ears always perk up when I hear about shootings in the Inner-West because of course that directly applies and or someone's broken out of Sydney jail that's of direct consequence to me, whereas you know things happening in Istanbul are a bit further away but still relevant.

Dianne: The commercial stations will have better coverage than ABC or SBS... that's what appeals to their audience, the local Sydney content ... ABC and SBS ... either aim for a state-wide type of content or a nation-wide type of content.

Bill: Channel 7 ... has to cater to the vast majority of people ... has to cater to everybody to get their attention ... SBS and ABC cater to a certain niche market ... their news is done in a specific way that whoever is going to watch it is going to watch it for a specific reason.

Respondents constructed nested hierarchies, where commercial news programme coverage of local news was more pertinent to their everyday existence. Commercial news programmes enacted the feeling of being connected to the local Sydney context. The concept of scale also overlapped with notions of place and space. Bill outlined time and face-to-face routines as impacting upon his decision to watch commercial television news,²⁹⁷ and he connected viewership to the space of the Australian community.²⁹⁸ Bill's relational construction of commercial television news as local and SBS as global linked the factors of place and space with scale. As the audiences' time was limited, commercial news programmes were the most salient. Bill used ABC and SBS news programmes for knowledge only when considerable information was required outside the local scale. With the exception of respondents who were migrants or who had family members living overseas (Vicky, Rob, Salman, Greg, Susan, Jennifer, and Adam), the respondents' discussions tended to concentrate upon the importance of national and local scales of social knowledge.²⁹⁹ The scalar relationship was elaborated in

²⁹⁷ See subsection 6.1.1 of this chapter for Bill's discussion of place.

²⁹⁸ See subsection 6.2.2 of this chapter for Bill's discussion of space.

²⁹⁹ Even so, Vicky, Greg, and Jennifer predominantly discussed local content in the exploration of television news programmes.

connection to the five Australian television networks, across both public and commercial broadcasters. Respondents outlined the perception that different institutional agendas impacted upon the production focus. In terms of a hierarchical scale, commercial news programmes were used for local coverage. In contrast, ABC news programmes were used for state or nation-wide content whereas SBS was utilised for nation-wide or global information.

James: They present different. I mean SBS you get more world news. You know Channel 2 you get more sort of Australian news, and Channel 9 and Channel 10 you sort of get more Sydney based news.

Azar: I guess it's [Channel 10's *The Project*] okay for local news ... but for international news it's a bit poor ... ABC is a little better, and then if you really want international news you have to watch SBS really.

Albert: Say the ABC covers a story on rural Australia ... the commercial network won't do that.

The different scales further connected to the local spaces in Sydney, as news programmes targeted different cultural sectors of the community. Mike's discussion of the sporting content on SBS highlighted the perception that the content on SBS was aligned with an ethnic rather than Anglo-Australian audience. He pertinently drew upon the knowledge that commercial television news programmes attempted to cultivate a mass Australian identity by producing popular content. The respondents' perceptions were that SBS and ABC cultivated marginal identities that were not relevant unless, as Bill said, audiences were part of the 'niche market'.

6.2 Mediating social connections and knowledge

By exploring how viewers drew upon their contexts of place and space, this section establishes that commercial television news programmes are used to mediate social, political, and cultural knowledge. Respondents framed their knowledge of the media industry and

subsequently evaluated the role of news media in Australian society by drawing upon media content and direct social experiences. At the first level, respondents used commercial television news programmes to develop knowledge about local and national communities. Second, respondents employed their direct experiences to help form judgements about the ways that media accurately represented different places and spaces in content. Third, the respondents discussed how media provide political knowledge and considered the wider structural and institutional frameworks that impacted upon the production of content. By analysing how respondents used commercial television news programmes to frame their social, political, and cultural knowledge, this section highlights the ways in which commercial news becomes part of the everyday mediated ritual.

6.2.1 Nurturing communities

Audiences used commercial television news programmes to mediate social bonds with others in the local community through two approaches. First, audiences expressed that commercial television news supplied them with knowledge about other individuals in the community. Second, news provided a common experience that they could deploy in their day-to-day interactions to foster social connections. While people draw upon news programmes to mediate social bonds, it was situated in the significance of the local spatial scale. Migrants (Susan), Anglo-Australians (Lisa), and non-Anglo Australians (Vicky),³⁰⁰ established that commercial news viewership was important for learning about the diverse social and cultural groups outside immediate face-to-face encounters.

Lisa: It's always good to stay connected ... keeping a common interest with people ... [I] learn about stuff on current affairs shows that I haven't known about ... certain family situations.

³⁰⁰ Susan was Chinese-Canadian, and a recent migrant from Canada to Australia. Lisa was Anglo-Australian with some family in the United Kingdom. Vicky was Chinese-Australian, with family in China and the United States.

Susan: I actually like those programmes. I think it informs you more about popular culture in Australia.

Commercial television news programmes provided mediated knowledge that built upon respondents' understanding of the immediate places they were situated in. For Lisa, commercial television news content generated the feeling of being 'connected' to the local and national community. Respondents also used commercial television news programmes to structure their knowledge about the local and the global spaces and scales. Commercial television news programmes were able to provide information about an increasingly globalised local environment. Vicky discussed local religious difference when outlining the impact a news report had on her perceptions of the Islamic faith.³⁰¹

Vicky: They'll get the Bankstown leader of this religion to comment ... saying that this was absolutely not an act of love to anyone who believes in this god ... I would have thought, oh is this really part of believing in the Quran, is it accepted? But it helps clarify other religions which I'm not familiar with.³⁰²

Darrin: We as a nation have a much better understanding of other countries' politics, cultures, happenings [*sic*] than other countries have of us.

Vicky drew upon the hegemonic opening provided in commercial television news content to challenge her lack of understanding of Islam when recalling a *7 News* report. These hegemonic openings for alternative frameworks of knowledge were also apparent in Darrin's comments. He highlighted the role the Australian broadcasting system has in nurturing a

³⁰¹ In the Sydney region the predominant religious groups are 28.4% Catholic, 17.6% no religion, 15.0% Anglican, 5.1% Islamic, and 4.5% Eastern Orthodox (ABS 2013a). Across Australia individuals identify as 25.3% Catholic, 22.3% no religion, 17.1% Anglican, 2.2% Islamic, and 2.6% Eastern Orthodox (ABS 2013a). The percentage of individuals that are Muslims are low when compared to the Christian denominations that form 43.4% of the Sydney population. Consequently, the statistical numbers suggest that audiences rely on mediated representations for everyday knowledge about the Muslim community without face-to-face contact with individuals from the different religious backgrounds.

³⁰² Vicky participated in an interview on 16-06-2013. She recalled a *7 News* report from 14-06-2013 where a man received a two-year jail sentence for whipping a Muslim convert. The man whipped the Muslim convert 40 times for drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

nation, but also in providing comparative knowledge of other national systems. Commercial television news programmes mediated respondents' social and cultural knowledge, but also fostered disparate connections to the local and global scales. Dahlgren (2009, 146) posits that the televisual form has a role in exposing audiences to a range of social 'elements' that they would not ordinarily encounter. Indeed, news is used by respondents to cultivate dimensions of social and cultural knowledge outside the bounded context of everyday interactions. However, the role of commercial television news programmes in mediating social connections also occurred in negative terms. Although Altan disliked commercial television news programmes he still viewed them on a habitual basis. The paradox was explained through Altan's ability to use commercial news to contribute to his real world social connections.

Altan: I still do watch it because I still do want to get those ten second headlines ... because it gives me a great opinion on what the 60% of people that I'm going to meet the next day have an opinion on.

Throughout the interview, Altan asserted that commercial television news provided an everyday framework of knowledge. Commercial television news programmes allowed him to anticipate what colleagues would discuss in the workplace environment, and enabled him to bond with them where connections might not otherwise exist. While Altan used commercial news to inform his interactions with colleagues, he also expressed the perception that the content did not support the diverse local communities. Other respondents reinforced the sentiment that commercial television news programmes had a public responsibility to cater to local communities.

The idealised role of the media in nurturing social connections and mediating cultural knowledge was drawn upon by respondents to deliberate on what commercial television news programmes *should* be doing. Respondents evaluated the tensions between the public-service

role of news and the need to attract and entertain audiences. They acknowledged the different agendas of commercial and public broadcast news programmes, but also deployed idealised conceptualisations of the role of commercial news as to unify the population. Respondents employed different discursive scales to elaborate the ways in which commercial television news programmes could build communities at the local Sydney and national Australian level. The viewers that utilised discourses of public interest identified that the commercial television news programmes on Networks 7, 9, and 10 had a social responsibility in providing knowledge to the audience en-masse.

Kate: Ways of building communities rather than talking about the ways community is failing or is fearful or is excluding because there are amazing things happening.

Aiko: They should try and focus more on the good things that are happening for Australia, what we're doing to make our country better, not what's making it worse.

Across the data set, 40% of respondents felt that the commercial television news programmes did not realise their potential in nurturing the local Sydney community or the national Australian community. Aiko and Greg both drew attention to the issue of homelessness when discussing the local scale. Commercial television news and current affairs programmes were perceived as capable of providing knowledge on where to get social support, or how others could assist with the social problem. For other respondents, commercial television news programmes fulfilled the social responsibility role in the local community (Bill, Andrew, and Anita). In particular, Andrew stressed that his viewership of commercial current affairs programmes across Channels 7 and 9 enabled him to contribute to the local community.

Andrew: The other thing is Channel 9 they also seek out ways to help as well they inform people and inform people of how to help as well and Channel 9 and Channel 7 and Channel 10 do that pretty well. So yeah, me, as a viewer was also interested in that and how I could help if there was anything that I could do and that stuff really interested me.

Bill: You watch Channel 7 and Channel 9 and *A Current Affairs* ... you know they might do a goodwill [local] story for example. You won't see that on SBS, it's more formal news ... what happened overseas.

The specific focus of SBS and ABC news programmes on the international and national scales led to an inadequate provision of local community stories. Commercial television news and current affairs programmes equipped Bill and Andrew with the knowledge on how to act in order to support others in the Sydney region. The role of commercial television news programmes in mediating local social connections was further elaborated in regards to respondents' direct face-to-face experiences.

6.2.2 Direct experiences of space and place

While respondents acknowledged the importance of commercial television news in mediating social knowledge, the previous section dealt with perceptions that commercial television did not fulfil its social responsibility role. Respondents also felt that commercial television news had negative impacts upon society, particularly in regards to racial and cultural content. In order to discursively contest the mediatised representations, respondents drew upon their own socio-cultural context to reflect on inaccuracies in news. Different spaces of Sydney were conveyed in relational discursive formations in news, thus mobilising identity and power relationships. Text-based research in Australia establishes the presence of racial hierarchies in commercial evening news and current affairs programmes (Phillips and Tapsall 2007; Phillips 2009, 2011). Analysis of media also demonstrates how 'crime ... [has] been ideologically reconstituted as an "ethnic problem", that is, as a non-Anglo-Celtic phenomenon in Sydney' (Poynting *et al.* 2004, 218). The respondents reflected on the media's ritualistic role in perpetuating these hegemonic discourses, analysing the historically situated divisions between

Anglo-Australia and other ethnic groups. Here, identity was not only tied to power relationships but also to the different places and spaces in Sydney.

Nick: They're always talking about the Aussie battler! ... You never see an immigrant battler going through way worse. Because it doesn't sell, no one wants to hear about the Vietnamese person that came from a war torn country...

Priya: If there's an offence or a crime's occurred in Granville ... we know Middle Eastern man allegedly did this ... You don't ever hear an Anglo-Australian, you know, crashed into a car.

Galvyn: There is [*sic*] a lot more ethnic people out in the Western suburbs and I honestly think it's a racially motivated thing ... there's a lot of Arabs and different Asians, where [the] North Shore it's more white Anglo-Saxon³⁰³

Nick reflected on an idealised Anglo-Australian identity when employing wider popular discourses to evaluate the construction of national identity where being Australian was disconnected from place or citizenship. 'Australian' related to a certain type of Anglo cultural identity, with no hegemonic openings for alternative. From the respondents' reflections, it can be concluded that the space of Western Sydney was understood through the dynamics of ethnic identity relations and the economic power structures across different suburban spaces. The sentiment also manifested in Lesley's response, when she outlined that commercial television news reports represented that 'people in the West have low um [*sic*] socio-economic backgrounds, that because of this, it can lead them to crime'. Subsequently, respondents engaged critically with the ways in which commercial television news could foster socio-cultural exclusion. As commercial television news programmes were aimed at mass audiences, the respondents felt that the content did not allow for hegemonic openings of alternative frames of knowledge. Although respondents elaborated how commercial television

³⁰³ Galvyn was Irish, and his family migrated to Australia when he was a child.

news programmes were important in providing social and cultural bonds, they also engaged with alternative sources of social knowledge to contest media content.

Direct social experiences allowed audiences to negotiate the space/power/identity formations presented in commercial television reports, and these face-to-face experiences form the basis of analytical engagement with news. Respondents without direct experiences relied more on mediated knowledge when articulating an understanding of other sub-local space/power/identity formations in Sydney. Emma, Karl, and Marcia all employed mediated knowledge of spatial-identity relationships when constructing stereotypical understandings of Western Sydney.³⁰⁴

Emma: They highlight a lot of social problems within Australia ... quite often they show problems in lower economic areas ... I think this place in Campbelltown is really bad.

Karl: So I think age, experience, our background, our cultural background, you know education level. You know where we live, uh gives us a different you know perhaps say a more defined view of what we're listening to and how we see it and how we react to it ... I mean I think, without putting too fine a point on it, we're living a fairly, a fairly pleasant life sitting here in the

Marcia: It would be different if you were out in Penrith³⁰⁵

Karl: The housos [*sic*]

Marcia: Or Campbelltown³⁰⁶

Karl: You get a different perspective of it there and I mean, our retail shop, over twenty odd years, you get a reasonable cross selection of people ... you know even though someone's dressed like an Arab they're not necessarily a. [Karl left the sentence unfinished]

³⁰⁴ Karl and Marcia are from the Sydney region of Ryde-Hunters Hill. The area contains a population of 130,964 individuals with an average income of \$61,893 (ABS 2013g). Emma was working in the Ryde-Hunters Hill region and was a migrant from the United Kingdom, but did not indicate where she resided in Sydney.

³⁰⁵ The Penrith region consists of 133,240 people with an average income of \$51,556 (ABS 2013h).

³⁰⁶ The Campbelltown region has a population of 155,821 with a median income of \$47,830 (ABS 2013i).

Karl and Marcia connected their education, culture, and economics as associated with residing in a more affluent area of Sydney, which enabled them to analytically engage with stereotyped and sensationalised content in media.³⁰⁷ Even if Karl and Marcia mobilised the experiences of interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, they still relied on media stereotypes to construct knowledge of Western Sydney communities. For other respondents, the dominant portrayals of the Western Sydney space were challenged by respondents' immediate experiences of identity and place.³⁰⁸

Priya: I don't feel intimidated in going to a place like Mt. Druitt or Hurstville, places that are heavily populated with negative media attention.

Jane: I've had some great dealings with Muslims. I used to actually live across from the Mosque ... the media talks about them very negatively ... you never hear the good side of the stories ... what they're doing in the communities.

Pratima: We have an Aboriginal worker, only after she started we came to know a lot of Aboriginal stories ... But the TV, the media doesn't portray all those things ... only if its Aboriginal they drink and they don't go to work ... but it is not like that, they're also people ... she comes from that society and she's lovely, hardworking.

Priya, Jane, and Pratima were only able to disarticulate the dominant mediated portrayals because of their everyday experiences of space and place. These immediate encounters enabled them to access hegemonic openings where they developed alternative perspectives. Nick also echoed Pratima's particular reflection on the indigenous community, that

³⁰⁷ Respondents from the less socio-economically affluent areas were just as critical of the mediated representations, pointing to the racial hierarchies in news that stereotyped Middle Eastern identity.

³⁰⁸ In regards to indigeneity, only 1.1% of individuals in the Sydney region identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ABS 2013a). The percentage in Sydney is less than half the statistical rate for Australia, where 2.5% of individuals identify as being from indigenous backgrounds (ABS 2013a). That Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up such a small percentage of the Sydney population limits the everyday interactions that individuals outside the culture could have, which can result in audiences drawing on mediated knowledge to structure their understanding of Aboriginal culture. See n. 301 in subsection 6.1.2 of this chapter for the statistical percentage of Muslims in the Sydney region.

indigenous issues were not adequately represented in commercial television news. His experiences working in the educational sector heightened his awareness of indigenous issues in the Sydney region. While direct experiences are an important part of negotiating mediated knowledge on the local scale, they also shape the ways in which respondents approached the global scale. Some respondents from migrant backgrounds had the perception that ‘Australians’ used news programmes in a different manner to mediate their knowledge of the global context (Rob, Salman, and Adam).³⁰⁹ The three respondents thought that the apparent disconnection of ‘Australians’ from the global context resulted in a disinterest in foreign affairs. Adam differentiated his spatial-identity relationship to other stereotypical ‘Australians’ when comparing how media content was used to inform their knowledge of other nation-states.

Adam: Generally speaking my interactions with Australian-born ... when there are various conflicts overseas they don’t really know what’s happening, they just hear yeah a bomb went off, yeah it’s been going on forever, leave them be type of stuff ... only I find that the ones that have, you know, travelled overseas or lived overseas they may take greater interest because then they’ve kinda [*sic*] been there, you know they can associate with it a bit better.

As Goodall *et al.* argue, media play an important role in agenda-setting and framing knowledge ‘outside the direct experience of the individual’ (1990, 13). Understanding the role of news programmes in mediating space/power/identity knowledge does not essentialise the processes of viewership. Rather, it acknowledges the interconnected and complex frameworks of space, power, and identity that individuals must grapple with on an everyday basis. Habitually accessing knowledge outside the media routines is difficult given the everyday professional and social pressures that consume the audiences’ time. As such, respondents draw upon mediated frameworks of knowledge when they lack direct experience with the

³⁰⁹ Here, the respondents were referring to an idealised and popular ‘Anglo-Australian’ identity. Rob and Salman made this more explicitly clear, whereas Adam referred to ‘Australian-born’.

places or spaces that are outside their everyday situated context. Furthermore, as ordinary Australians, the respondents tend not to have direct experiences with the national political arena as part of their everyday lives. By analysing how respondents draw upon political content, the following subsection demonstrates how mediated political knowledge is employed in a different manner to space and identity.

6.2.3 Producing political and commercial agendas

Understanding respondents' engagement with mediated space/power/identity formations, necessitates analysis of their perceptions of political content as it relates to the broader notion of relational and plural perspectives. Across the data set, 35% of respondents articulated the feeling that political agendas impact upon the production of content in commercial and public broadcast news programmes. By recalling specific reports, respondents outlined where they felt political leanings influenced accuracy in reporting.³¹⁰ Gary, Albert, Greg, and Lisa identified that all programmes had different political alignments. The ABC and SBS news programmes were found to be left-leaning, whereas the commercial networks presented information in a stance that was more politically right-leaning. The political influences were also noted among wider media networks when respondents compared the varying political leanings of different news outlets across platforms. Here, the respondents elaborated that the range of news across varying media platforms represented a plurality of political perspectives.

Gary: When it comes to federal politics, you can obviously see which stations lean more to one party or the other. Cause [*sic*] you can see the bias ... ABC I would say ... is more Labor ... Whereas 7 News I would say, likes to think it's a fence sitter, but it leans more towards Liberal.³¹¹

³¹⁰ These reports are further elaborated in relation to three case studies in Chapter 7, section 7.1.

³¹¹ It needs to be noted here that all respondents referred to the Coalition as the Liberal Party. See n.1 for an account of the Coalition in Australia.

Albert: Sometimes I've got the *Sydney Morning Herald*, but then again I've gotta [*sic*] take into account, the right-hand leaning ... I sometimes click on the *ABC News Online*, but then again I have to take into account they're left.

Greg: You don't get a great range of opinion on some of the big issues of the day on commercial television, you do across mediums. And even then it's in the editorial section where you often get the conflicting opinions, you know? The editorial section of the Australian newspaper, there are a lot of things that are very conservative very ardently so. Fairfax media that's more socially progressive left wing line, but again, but they also look at it from different perspectives.

Yet, it was found that the range of plural viewpoints that respondents draw upon is limited within mediated discourses which constructed politics in the binaries of the Coalition and Labor Parties. The respondents' discussions mirrored the journalistic focus on Coalition and Labor approaches to policy issues, with almost no discussion of The Greens Party or alternative political perspectives. Respondents perpetuated the mediatised frames of considering political plurality in relation to the two primary political groups, the Coalition and the Labor Parties (with the exception of Altan and Kate).³¹² The nominal conception of political plurality is further limited as the dominant parties often have similar approaches to policy. Even in the instances where respondents were aware of the overall political leanings of certain media outlets, they still deployed their own personal political outlooks to evaluate the perceived accuracy and bias in news. Albert was distinctly aware of the different political sources of information, yet he drew on his own political views to evaluate whether the news programmes were fulfilling the function of the Fourth Estate. The view of the media as the Fourth Estate ideally envisages that the media should 'act as a check on the powerful, by reporting, analysing and criticising their actions on behalf of the public, which lacks direct access to information or power' (Schultz 1998, 51-2). However, respondents felt that certain

³¹² See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for the analysis of political plurality in commercial television news coverage of asylum and migration.

programmes were politically biased as they held only one political party to accountability. The respondents drew upon their perceived notions of journalistic objectivity to explain their particular preference for news programmes that appeared to align strongly with their political leanings. Subsequently, the news programmes that aligned with the political perspective of the respondent were judged as being objective while those that were produced from an alternative perspective were not viable sources of ‘true’ knowledge.

Tom: There’s a little bit of bias in a couple of the other channels from time to time, a little more so than what there is perhaps in Channel 9 ... the ABC componentry these days has been a little bit I think one sided and I prefer a balanced ... I tend to favour a news programme that’s not sort of biased one way or the other.

Rob: In the commercial channels ... they’re discussing some very important issues like Kevin Rudd ... or Julia Gillard did that bad ... but none of them are telling the positive things, to me. Like eh [*sic*] like Julia Gillard she did a lot of good things, she did a lot of good reforms, but nobody is talking about that.

Albert: That’s why I don’t trust the *ABC News* cause [*sic*] they like to put their spin on it more than Channel 9 ... Channel 9 I trust that they’re just reporting to me what’s happening whereas with the ABC ... they’re reporting what’s happening but they’re putting their left wing spin on it.

Stuart: It was a very biased opinion; it may have been a political piece ... I think it was about the Labor Party ... I just felt that the piece Channel 9 presented at the time was very inaccurate. So I just rang up and said listen you guys are really giving some false information here, you’re not telling it the way it is.

The tendency of the respondents to trust the television news programmes they chose to watch underscores the importance of political viewing. Online news research by Newman *et al.* (2015) considers how online Australians evaluate media. Only 39% of the individuals in their

study stated that they had a general trust in the broader media environment, while 53% trusted particular news sources (2015, 57). That respondents engaged with news sources that they felt to be more politically aligned with their worldview highlights the significance of processes of mediating knowledge. The manner in which respondents drew upon politically aligned media sources was not only pertinent to the televisual interactions, but also extended to the broader media environment. Mike directly acknowledged that he would access and select news that fit his political perspective.

Mike: Do you then read sources that reinforce your own bias? And I would say yes, I probably am guilty of that ... if it's somebody that I disagree with I might read the headline, read the first couple of paragraphs, but if I don't engage with that then I won't read it so uh I'm probably just as guilty as the other side.

One approach to conceptualising the disengagement from alternative forms of political knowledge is to consider how Laclau and Mouffe develop the notion of radical plural democracy in relation to Gramscian hegemony. Drawing upon Brzezinski, Laclau and Mouffe state that neo-conservative discourses work to 'redefine the notion of democracy itself in such a way as to restrict its field of application and limit political participation to an even narrower area' (1985, 173). Smith also analyses Laclau and Mouffe's work to discuss the relationship between multiculturalism and 'authoritarian hegemony', which works through 'a maximum disciplining of difference, even as it pretends to endorse pluralism' (1998, 181). The radical plural democratic framework is pertinent to the wider systems of political knowledge that the respondents employ to evaluate news. The respondents drew upon the broader social framework of Australian national politics to shape their notions of political plurality in news. Ultimately, the respondents mobilised a restrictive notion of political pluralism, where there were a limited number of radically different political perspectives in both media content and the respondents' everyday mediated knowledge. The following section contextualises the

respondents' mediated knowledge in relation to wider social interactions through participation in everyday political talk.

6.3 Participating in everyday news-talk

The concept of participation can be widely applied, particularly when analysing how audiences' make use of news. Livingstone (2013, 24) argues that participation consists of the social activities in taking part or action 'in culture or community or civil society or democracy' with the purposes of advancing certain interests. Carpentier's (2011a) outline of media-related participation is more directly connected to power relations. Carpentier advocates that media-related participation is different to 'access to the media or interaction with the media'. Participation 'refers to influence or (even) equal power relations in decision-making processes' (Carpentier 2011a, 69). However, participation is also connected to both engagement and indifference. Dahlgren (2009, 81) defines engagement as a 'mobilized, focus attention on some object', whereas participation requires a connection to empowerment which can transform engagement into activity. In this context indifference refers to:

[A] disinterest in politics ... an 'alienation' that can ... treat politics as irrelevant, at least in its representations in the media. It becomes a topic or activity on par with, say 'sports,' 'music,' or other forms of free-time pursuit, with nothing that gives it any more compelling quality; that is citizenship implicitly becomes reduced to one of many possible lifestyle choices (Dahlgren 2009, 82).

While political action can take many forms, the political emerges in everyday interactions through mediated politics that directs discussions. At the most basic level, political participation emerges in everyday talk through a range of face-to-face or online discussions. 'Political-talk' counts as a form of participation in that 'it is the enactment of the public sphere, where opinion can take shape' (Dahlgren 2013, 19). While participatory activity potentially can go much further, 'much participation does not go beyond the phase of

expressing and developing an opinion' (ibid.). Hence, considering the ways in which audiences participate in news discussions is significant, as political participation connects to the perpetuation of wider hegemonic formations. In particular, Smith refers to Laclau and Mouffe to differentiate between radical pluralist democracy and 'authoritarian hegemony' (1998, 181).³¹³ She elaborates that 'in some cases, hegemonic forces drag the political centre so far to the right that more and more people have no reason to participate in the political system' (1998, 180). If political-talk is considered as a fundamental and everyday enactment of political participation, then disengagement from accessing plural perspectives can be seen as reinforcing wider hegemonic forces.

6.3.1 Engaging in face-to-face discussions

The respondents' participation in face-to-face discussions is bound to a physical sense of place. These types of discussions occur in the individual's immediate contexts and require that respondents be part of certain spaces. Respondents linked participation in political-talk to a range of physical and spatial domains including the domestic space, the workplace environment, or across social settings.³¹⁴ To a great extent, the respondents' participation in political-talk remained bound to the immediate social contexts they operated in and the individuals that they routinely encountered.³¹⁵ The range of social contexts and the preferences of each individual respondent meant that there was a range of variations to participating in face-to-face discussions, particularly in comparison with online or social media discussions. The first approach employed by respondents was the outright avoidance of participation in political-talk. James expressed an aversion to any discussion, and it was explained through the desire to avoid social conflict. James elaborated that discussing political

³¹³ See Chapter 1, section 1.2 where the concept of authoritarian hegemony is theoretically discussed in greater depth.

³¹⁴ Such as having dinner with friends or spending time at a bar with friends.

³¹⁵ See Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.2 for Pratima's comments about engaging with individuals from indigenous backgrounds in her workplace environment. She asserted that she had no previous encounters with indigenous Australians and drew upon mediated knowledge. It perhaps was only by chance that an indigenous woman started working at her place of employment, which subsequently expanded her face-to-face discussions with individuals from different backgrounds.

beliefs was likely to result in conflict, as individuals attach to politics in a manner akin to religion. He felt that politics should be personal, as people tended to evaluate the notion of 'truth' against their own political preferences.

James: I won't debate ... I don't see the point of arguing about politics I just think it's like religion you know just go believe in something and keep it to yourself, don't go around indoctrinating everyone.

James' avoidance of political conversations extended to all places where discussions would occur. He cited avoidance with family, friends, and professional peers. While James was the only respondent who actively chose to avoid any political discussion, other respondents indicated they would participate in political-talk in the domestic space. The domestic political-talk discussions are an extension of the ritual of family viewing (Lull 1988). The respondents' ritualistic discussions were contingent on family members being habitually present during the viewing, and political-talk was part of the familial socialising around the dinner/television news routine.

Anita: If we're sitting there and watching together then I'll discuss it, but otherwise I don't really discuss it.

Andrew: Family, actually not a lot, because we sort of watch together. So there are no new opinions, it's all the same sort of thing. My friends they generally have different opinions on different things. So the recent election, I was talking to my friends, Labor versus Liberal. Why Labor's better, why Liberal's better, or why other Parties are better.

As Andrew felt comfortable in his social network of friends, he indicated that he would seek out alternative political perspectives by participating in political discussions. The process of filtering enabled respondents to participate in political-talk where they accessed alternative information through comfortable networks such as family or friends. Filtering also had

negative connotations, particularly in relation to familial structures. Karl and Marcia felt that when they participated in political-talk in a family group, their children would filter discussions so as not to cause tension. Drawing upon Morley's (1980, 30) 'enforced viewing', there are evident domestic power hierarchies in political-talk. Nick expressed that he would watch *A Current Affair* in the background despite hating it because it was a show his parents viewed (subsection 6.1.1). As parents, Karl and Marcia felt disenfranchised in familial political discussions; they could only participate in political discussions as equals with friends.

Karl: I think we also have to know our place, I mean frequently if we're all sitting around the table we're relegated to the grandparent ... have the grandkid sit over there while we discuss the real important things.

... **Marcia:** Yes, friends you can sit and discuss it all and have an opinion and even if you don't agree it's fine. And I mean even if we gave our opinion our son wouldn't ... he would say yes we've got different opinions, whereas with friends you can sit and have a robust discussion then agree to disagree.

Karl: I mean you don't know what they [their children] say afterwards ... I presume our kids are the same and they'll think oh man we don't agree with that but we won't say anything.

The process of filtering political-talk was most evident in respondents' participation in safe conversations in professional and social contexts. Respondents would only engage in political-talk where there were no perceived differences of opinion and no alternative viewpoints. Eliasoph's (1998) ethnographic research of civic groups' political-talk finds that politics was avoided for fear of social alienation. The 'spiral of silence' suggests that people will remain silent when they feel that their views are in opposition to the majority on a subject (Noelle-Neumann 1974). The respondents' filtering went beyond the fear of social alienation, and was influenced by power relations. Nick and Albert expressed an avoidance of political

discussions in a professional context. Both stressed the potential ramifications of airing antagonistic political viewpoints in workplace on job security. Nick elaborates:

If it's a colleague on an equal level don't really care, but if I know if it's going to offend someone that might be of a higher rank, you don't want to jeopardise your job because of a belief.

Albert outlined similar issues with his workplace, but further noted that there was a natural limitation to the plurality of perspectives that he could access in his workplace in any case. He found that most colleagues were from a similar demographic which resulted in them sharing similar opinions on political issues.

Albert: We all pretty much tend to watch the same thing ... with my work I mix a lot with men of my own age and a lot of them are blue collar ... yeah I've found that middle-aged men of the same age, you know we all have pretty much the same, thing yeah. I think it's a generational, gender type thing. Whereas we go nah friggen [*sic*] boat people, friggen [*sic*] climate change, it's all crap, you know?

However, Vicky, Adam, and Jennifer practised professional filtering in a different manner. The workplace discussions centred on non-antagonistic general issues (Adam and Jennifer), or those that were related to the professional context (Vicky and Jennifer). Vicky's discussions of news in the professional environment centred on what she termed 'medical breakthroughs'. Based upon the professional training and the place where discussions took place, her colleagues were able to be 'a bit more critical about what they report' when medical coverage was the subject. Although Jennifer and Vicky employed filtering to ensure that news discussions were related to professional expertise, all other respondents filtered with the desire to avoid conflict in everyday social settings.

Susan: There's a number of other people I wouldn't talk about issues because I know what their stance would be, possibly more conservative than mine ... I just sort of know that it's going to be causing conflict.

Bob: With friends who I'm aware their strong political leanings ... [but] I'm not going to ask that subject, not knowing your bloody politics ... I'm not going to ruin a dinner by talking politics.

However, the desire to avoid conflict does not indicate a lack of critical engagement. Madianou argues that while there tends to be an absence of political discussions in workplace environments, viewers still have critical engagement with news (2010, 433).³¹⁶ She finds that the people she interviewed and observed preferred to talk about politics or controversial issues in domestic contexts in order to avoid conflict. Wyatt, Katz, and Kim find that the domestic sphere is where 'ordinary political conversation takes place most frequently' and political discussions across home and workplace environments are 'mostly with people whom they agree' (2000, 89). While the domestic context can operate as a space where individuals access alternative opinions, the frameworks that relate to domestic political discussions are inherently complex. The domestic environment also provided a space where there was often a natural cohesion of like-minded political views. Yet, participating in discussions was avoided in order to maintain familial relationships particularly when there are differences in political opinion. Respondents situated their aversion to discussing politics in the domestic context on the basis that different family members had alternative political perspectives. Engaging in political talk could thus lead to long-term and unwanted conflict (Tom, Kate, Mike, Jim, and James). At times, the aversion had to do with power structures in family environments where

³¹⁶ Madianou (2010) also stresses the importance of triangulating a range of research methods in relation to this. Her ethnographic observation of workplace environments demonstrates that respondents tend not to participate in political discussions, but she was able to discover the ways in which viewers critically engaged with news content through interviews.

children were deferential to parental figures (Kate and James).³¹⁷ Only three respondents indicated that they would participate in discussions and political-talk in order to access different perspectives (Lesley, Jim, and Barbara). By engaging with counter-perspectives the respondents asserted that they could contest other individuals' frameworks of knowledge or challenge their own assumptions. The importance of avoiding strong conflict was still present and respondents indicated that they would halt participation in antagonistic discussions.

Barbara: It's just always interesting to get someone else's perspective on it you know? ...

Yeah normally you talk about it and if they disagree strongly you change the subject.

Jim: People in your life you sort of know their viewpoints on a thing and ... oh sometimes you want to stir them up! ... You know if someone's got a different viewpoint to your own that's where you can get some really interesting debate.

Participation in face-to-face interactions varied based upon the processes of filtering, with place and space affecting the parameters of discussion. Face-to-face discussions were far more diverse when compared with the behaviour of respondents in the online sphere. The online and social media platforms produced similar responses among all the respondents, as they employed the same understandings of the 'online' place, space, and scale.

6.3.2 Utilising online platforms to participate in political discussions

Respondents conceived of the online and social media space as an arena to participate in one-way flows of information. Here, the respondents only discussed the mass features of social media and did not explore the use of private messaging or the posting of anonymous

³¹⁷ See also Karl and Marcia in this subsection of the chapter for the parental perspective.

comments in online forums.³¹⁸ Respondents in the age groups of 46-80 did not use online and social media platforms for discussions, which was exemplified by Dianne's assertion 'that's [just] another generational thing'. In the 18-30 year-old age group, there were some exceptions, as two respondents said that they had engaged in online discussions in an interactive and participatory manner.

Andrew: More Facebook, yeah through an article on *9 News*; sometimes I'll respond and ask why you think this? Or why I think you're wrong. Or sometimes through chat websites someone might talk about something like this, or forum discussions, something like that.

Elizabeth: I only did it once, I said something about something I'd seen on the news and people kept coming back with different opinions they had on it.

However, Elizabeth found the experience to be negative and did not continue to use Facebook to discuss news. Other respondents who used online or social media sphere stated that the intention was not necessarily to participate in two-way communication flows; nor was it to encounter a plurality of perspectives – political, social, or cultural. Rather, social media was used to disseminate political and social information among friend networks and as a form of social or political advocacy (Mike, Altan, Susan, Andrew, Adam, Lisa, Vicky, and Rob). Vicky referred to her professional expertise to explain how she would share information online as an extension of her occupation.

Vicky: I wasn't looking for feedback it was more to share the news ... educate people about the truth behind vaccination.

Mike: Without comment ... I don't do that to validate my worldview to them.

³¹⁸ Respondents situated this disengagement from online media forums (for example the comment spaces on prominent newspaper websites) in relation to discourses of indifference. This followed a pattern of contextualising the time needed and the overall lack of interest in commenting, and then highlighting the ineffectiveness of the process of commenting online. This was connected to the respondents being unable to know the individuals providing the comments in these spaces, and the feeling that they would not be able to engage in any meaningful dialogic exchange.

Lisa: Facebook is interesting it's a very good way of sharing information ... if they've posted something it'll come up on my wall ... so I'll go check it out ... very occasionally I'll add a comment if it's something that either a) I've had personal experience with or b) you know find it interesting enough to actually write.

Adam: I do find the content sharing sometimes gives me access to articles or interview that I wouldn't normally come across ... I've kinda [*sic*] got business associates that have befriended me on Facebook globally ... it's kind of all tied in, uh I kinda [*sic*] follow what I'm interested in, whether it be history or technology.

Rob: Facebook I usually do, but Facebook is nothing to do with the Australian news ... I use it just for what's happening in Turkey basically.

Respondents used the social media space for informational purposes, and in a manner that replicated their normal social networks. Lisa's engagement with Facebook directly extended her social space into the online realm. Facebook allowed her to sustain connections with individuals with whom she once had regular face-to-face interactions. Significantly, Lisa outlined that these individuals often posted news that was peripheral to her everyday life. Subsequently, the lack of content relevance meant that she was unlikely to engage in online or social media discussions. That social media networks tended to build upon the real workplace and social interactions was also noted in relation to Adam. His particular engagement with Facebook discussions with people from around the world was directly related to his profession, which transcended the traditional bounded workplace and meant he had business associates across borders. Similarly, Rob's use of social media networks to access alternative news information was directly connected to his context of space and scale. When using Facebook, he explained, 'we don't discuss much about Australia' and that the focus was on discussing Turkish information. The social media sphere helped to mediate his connections

with his country of origin, which allowed him to maintain the relationship he once had to a place and space in Turkey. The respondents' patterns of participating, or non-participation, in discussions are related to their conceptions of the function of the online and social media spaces. By using the conceptual framework of the mediated quasi-interaction (Thompson 1995), the online and social media sphere was understood as an unbound mass media platform. Any participation in online discussions or political-talk was removed from the space and place constraints that naturally limited face-to-face discussions. Mike and Stuart expressly acknowledged the importance of viewing online spaces as de-contextualised public domains.

Mike: Yeah I don't get drawn into a discussion ... I'd be willing to do that one on one with them, on an online forum it's so public and you know it just sort of degenerates fairly quickly in my opinion.

Stuart: I don't particularly like Facebook I find its, uh lack of privacy can lead to a lot of issues, you know?

Additionally, the concerns that content could be seen by a mass audience as de-contextualised from space and place resulted in the modification of online behaviours. Nick and Greg discussed their past practice of engaging in online discussions and revealed the negative encounters. The desire to conflict thus meant that Nick and Greg approached Facebook as a public space.

Nick: It changed the way people started talking to you ... you might offend someone unintentionally or you might bring up a different argument.

Greg: I've learnt not to comment ... I've learnt that it's very dangerous to comment on Facebook.

The ramifications of sharing information and posting political information to unknown masses also had a flow-on effect to real-world social interactions for Nick. He explained that ‘no one will comment on it for example’, but he was confronted in his workplace and ‘it ended up causing a lot of little attacks on each other’. The respondents’ reluctance to use online social media to participate in political-talk must be understood in relation to wider hegemonic processes. The limitations to participating in politically plural discussions in face-to-face and online environments relates to the ways in which respondents fail to tap the potential of online media to provide plural political perspectives. The discussions are an extension of the respondents’ approach to media networks, where accessing politically different opinions is seen as a negative encounter. By self-disciplining themselves against engaging with pluralistic political perspectives, the respondents rearticulate the hegemonic shift towards the right which in turn constricts the definition of participation. The lack of participatory engagement with a plurality of political perspectives in everyday discussions subsequently connects to the respondents’ wider use of information sources.

6.4 Locating mediated indifference

The online platform allows viewers to alter their conventional patterns of media use by accessing news that transcends traditional notions of time, place, and space. By further engaging with the ways in which news was viewed in spatial contexts, this section analyses how respondents discussed their use of wider networks of information. This section demonstrates that the respondents’ critical awareness of frameworks which impacted upon the production of content does not directly relate to patterns of wider engagement. Respondents draw upon discourses of indifference, as linked to wider structural and material factors restricting their ability to engage with plural perspectives. When pointing to the limited role of news in everyday life, the respondents disarticulated and rearticulated the political function of commercial television news. The disarticulation and rearticulation relates to the respondents’

knowledge of the professionalisation of news production, which legitimises the boundaries between the journalist and the citizen. Respondents reinscribed power hierarchies, where journalists function as experts in providing relevant social and political information which can be drawn upon by viewers to make fundamental political decisions. Consequently, respondents utilised space/power/identity formations to explain media use, placing importance on both the local and national scales of knowledge.

6.4.1 Situating television news viewership

Respondents outlined that commercial television news programmes were viewed among other Australian media sources, international media sources, and also non-traditional information sources (through social networking or blogs). When accessing alternative content, respondents concentrated on the traditional Australian mass media platforms of print, television, and radio, in addition to their online equivalents.

Anita: Radio a lot and newspapers yeah ... I might log onto my computer and ninemsn is on there so it comes up, but I won't purposely go on Facebook or anything to see anything.

Priya: I don't physically read the newspaper ... you know it's at my fingertips so there's no such like I'm not physically holding the print media as I'm reading it but it's accessible to me on my phone.

Albert: Yeah I used to read the newspaper every day, because it's digital now and I haven't paid the money ... so I only get a snippet, so when I find I look up *The Telegraph* ... sometimes I've got the *Sydney Morning Herald* ... I sometimes click on the *ABC News Online*.

Jennifer: I tend to listen to the AM channels ... you've got Alan Jones ... and there's Andrew Bolt in the afternoon and evenings ... I also read the paper at work ... *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Fin* (sic.) *Review*.

Investigating how respondents integrated television news programmes among wider mass media networks enables a spatial understanding of the role of television news. The immediate contexts of time, place and space connect to the disengagement from wider sources of media information. The respondents articulated the news value of proximity in relation to scale (global versus local) and time (the information source being part of the everyday immediate routine).

Aiko: I'm happy to just go through life without knowing what's going on in the world, I know what's going on around me and with the people around me, I mean that's enough for me.

James: Whatever came along and was presented back to me ... it's just a matter of whether I'm plonked in front of the TV or not ... I just find that when you're given the information you're flooded and overwhelmed by it anyway.

Lisa: Mainly I do my job in the kitchen you know live my life, I'm not overly concerned with what's happening in the world ... you're not going to find a lot of views through commercial media or even ABC or SBS which are government channels because they all have to have, there are certain things they can't say ... they have to react to their customer base that's watching that's why I think they can't really ever, you're not going to have 100% accurate views on any of these channels.

James, Aiko, and Lisa articulated space/power/identity formations when outlining that news information had a limited relevance to their day-to-day lives. Even where Lisa demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the wider institutional and material factors impacting upon news, she did not necessarily make use of wider media sources. Respondents connected the disengagement from the broader media to their day-to-day personal contexts, as they emphasised the importance of time and motivation. The lack of time and the inability to see an incentive in further exploring alternative information ultimately constricted the

respondents' engagement with a wider number and range of news information sources. The habitualised pattern of viewing television news was further related to the everyday social and professional demands.

Vicky: I'm just so busy, I barely have time for recreational readings so often no, [laughs] I don't really chase up and I guess my say 30 minutes of commercial news is how I keep in touch with current affairs, and I have a very superficial interest in that.

Todd: No I don't usually have time. I just go with what I see on the news.

Ellen: I don't read the newspapers ... don't listen to much radio ... no, no I don't go into it that deeply, no ... couldn't be bothered [laughs] got other things to do ... I listen to the news and I take it in and I think oh okay that's a good day or that's a bad day or whatever and um [sic], yeah move on.

Jenny: No I don't have time ... it's not that it's not important but you need, you work full time you got a family you sort of, you don't have time to be sitting there, you know I think if you're a single person on your own I think you have that time.

The disengagement can be analysed in relation to the wider structural and material frameworks which limit reception (Clarke 2014). Respondents from a range of socio-economic backgrounds across different regions of Sydney touched upon the importance of work as limiting their engagement with more information sources. Although Jenny raised the thought that single individuals without family demands might be more likely to 'chase' alternative information, it was not necessarily the case. Vicky made mention of her long hours working in the emergency room which limited her time and motivation to access other sources of information. Commercial television news programmes provided enough information in thirty minutes to draw knowledge on the local, national, and global scales. The

importance of time was reinforced throughout the interviewing period when the *7 News* and *9 News* programmes switched from a thirty-minute broadcast to an hour long format.

Tom: I've got my daughter living with me so we tend to sit down and have a bottle of wine over tea [laughs], that's more entertaining than watching *A Current Affair* mostly ... I probably prefer the half hour because it tends to drag things out a little bit more, and they reiterate over the same headlines.

Stuart: I used to like the half hour slice, it was good. It worked in with my nightly life in that we have dinner at six thirty ... Plus an hour of news is probably not something I want to dedicate to, I'll give them half an hour of a night and that's it.

The time restrictions impacting upon the respondents' motivation to engage with wider media sources were also associated with their immediate viewership choices. Furthermore, the importance of place in ritualistic television news viewership connects to time, where domestic routines and relationships have a higher priority in the everyday lives of viewers. The constraints of accessing broader networks of information related to the respondents' disarticulation-rearticulation of discourses of de-politicisation.

6.4.2 De-politicising the social role everyday news

The respondents further connected the limitations of time and motivations to the role of television news in their everyday lives. Despite demonstrating a sophisticated awareness of the institutional structures and political frameworks that impacted upon the production of news, individuals articulated indifference toward both everyday news and politics. The indifference connects to a de-politicisation of the role of everyday news in the lives of the respondents (Dahlgren 2009, 81). While the respondents felt that there may be alternative information out there, the irrelevance to the immediate everyday context was stressed.

Ellen: There's probably stuff out there that we should know ... But I'm not that interested in anything else really, you know it's just the general day-to-day news coverage.

Andrew: I'm not intrigued by a lot and sports is something I'm intrigued by, and daily news and stuff it's something that I find informative but again there's not anything ... that I feel I'm passionate about or is necessary to me.

Tom: It's just something that you listen to and try and keep informed, but you know full well you're never going to be able to get all the information ... it's a lot of trouble to try and find the truth ... and I'm not just that political, that motivated to do that sort of thing.

Furthermore, the importance of time and motivation was related to discourses of indifference. Tom highlighted the structural limitations, that 'you'd have to go through freedom of information, accesses, all that sort of stuff' in order to reach alternative information. Yet, the limitations cannot be understood as a disengagement with the political, or an indifference to political news. Respondents talked about balancing the political information presented in commercial television news by habitually accessing other mediated political perspectives (Tom, Darrin, Stuart, Albert, Bob, and Jenny). Accessing other media content was structured into daily routines, either through checking newspapers in the work lunch break (Jenny and Bob), viewing online news websites (Stuart and Albert), or as part of domestic media rituals (Tom and Darrin). With the exception of Altan and Kate, 95% of respondents' alternative perspectives drew upon Australian media sources that reproduced the two-party perspective framework.³¹⁹ The perpetuation of the Coalition-Labour political binary raises the argument that there was simultaneously a restricted notion of political plurality, and that discourses of indifference were connected to a wider political disengagement that relates to a broader separation between the social and the political. Three respondents discussed disengagement in relation to participating in political action (Stuart, Mike, and Albert). Disengagement led to an

³¹⁹ The respondents used the two-party political framework to structure the notion of political plurality, which ultimately perpetuated the mediated frameworks of representing political information in a dichotomised Coalition-Labor formation. See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for the structure of political sources in the Australian context, and subsection 6.2.3 of this chapter for the respondents' use of political perspectives.

indifference to accessing wider media networks, political perspectives, or engaging in political or communicative activity. Additionally, the disengagement from the political transferred to the avoidance of participating in further mediated and non-mediated political activity.

Stuart: When I was twenty two years old I was interested more in more news and detail, and I was probably more well informed but I probably had better sources of information to get it from ... that had more relevance to me back then, whereas nowadays I've probably got more going on in my life and I don't have as much time to get as in depth in the stories as I used to.

Mike: Probably ten years ago, I would write to politicians and espouse views, but I guess I'm older ... I can't see that doing that actually changed anybody's opinion ... why am I gonna [*sic*] sit down ... for zero result.

Albert: Like 99 % of most people in the metropolitan area we live in a suburban bubble ... We don't want to think of what's outside that comfort zone ... I'm in my nice four bedroom house and everything's alright I'm in here watching the news ... as I've gotten older in life ... I have turned more, more conservative ... you become embedded into modern society and you have to fit into the system.

By drawing attention to their inability to change or impact the system, the respondents simultaneously connected and de-politicised the role of television news in their everyday lives. The attitudes rearticulate neo-conservative forces, which restrict and limit political participation. As the respondents delineated an inability to see material results from their prior engagement with the media and political spheres, they inherently disconnected from participating.³²⁰ The detachment is particularly relevant, as respondents treated politics and news in the same realm as "sports" (Dahlgren 2009, 82). For James and Andrew in particular,

³²⁰ See also Laclau and Mouffe's (2001 [1985], 173) comments on the neo-conservative redefinition of democracy, '[a]lthough the democratic ideal is not openly attacked, an attempt is made to empty it of all substance and to propose a new definition of democracy which in fact would serve to legitimize a regime in which political participation might be virtually non-existent'.

politics and the broader category of news were actually topics of less relevance than sports in their everyday life. The disengagement from habitually accessing alternative sources of information is reinforced through the articulation of professional boundaries that separate journalists and citizens.

6.4.3 Leaving it to the experts

The significance of the disconnection from broader media sources is heightened in the context of the institutional and commercial frameworks that govern journalism. Respondents expressed the feeling that all news was created in varying socio-political frameworks, which inevitably resulted in some bias in news reports. By acknowledging that time and place impacted upon the production of news, Stuart and Elizabeth expressed an understanding that journalists were unable to be everywhere at all times which affected the accuracy of news. Despite feeling that news was not always accurate, the respondents did not necessarily draw upon further networks of information, as they themselves were limited by time. That the respondents were aware of the inherent limitations of commercial television news programmes but did not use broader networks of information points to the role of everyday mainstream Australian journalism.

Elizabeth: The news can only tell you so much though, they can't go in, they're not a fly on the wall ... I don't think they can ever really be 100% accurate.

Anne: How are we to know? ... I don't pay that much attention, really I just look at news sometimes and I say oh yeah ... well I don't read many newspapers now, and I don't read news on the internet either ... it's basically TV.

Pratima: I don't know I don't go beyond that okay? I just listen and ... when we watch it we never know what the source is how it was taken and those things ... But when they send, when they show, we just watch it and that's it.

Laclau and Mouffe (2001 [1985], 173) elaborate how neo-conservative hegemonic forces work to redefine the 'notion of democracy', through a separation of the political system from society. Hegemony operates to remove 'public decisions more and more from political control, and to make them the exclusive responsibility of experts' (ibid.). Journalists are the responsible experts in charge of mediating relevant everyday political information. Respondents touched upon the significance of professional journalism by outlining gaps in their personal knowledge, time, or motivation. Here the respondents accounted for the professional aspects of journalism which underscored their inability, as non-professionals, to know where to go or who to trust when sourcing information.

Jane: Well it would depend on how interested I was in the story, you know, it's also kind of knowing sometimes where to go to, to look.

Jim: If there's a topic that's got my interest ... we're all busy living our lives. I don't have the time to chase every piece of knowledge in the world out there.

Bill: Basically [I] just watch it on TV and that's about it ... No didn't need to get into too much detail ... we haven't got any other type of information to rely ... personally I don't know whether I'm missing out on any information or not, because what I see on TV is the main issues of the day. That's your daily news.

Respondents relied upon journalists to vet and chase knowledge, as journalists had greater access to political sources of information. Television news programmes, and the broader traditional media environment, were responsible for mediating everyday political knowledge and leading public discourse on key political issues. Despite news being acknowledged as inadequate, it was accepted for its ability to define important daily issues. Ultimately, the commercial television news programmes have an important everyday function in providing relevant space/power/identity knowledge for audiences. The importance of using commercial television news programmes for political knowledge relates to the intersections between the

respondents' direct experiences, participation in face-to-face or online discussions, and the use of wider media networks for alternative information. Although the respondents deployed discourses of indifference to the role of the news, the constraints of everyday life subsequently highlighted the significance of commercial television news in mediating social, political, and cultural knowledge.

6.5 Conclusion

By investigating how media is implicated in the space/power/identity formation, this chapter has situated respondents' commercial television news viewership in relation to broader social and media networks. When analysing how viewers engage in constructing relational formations to elaborate media use, this chapter appropriated spatial scholarship to extend Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. Routines of watching television news programmes are connected to wider conceptualisations of everyday place, space, and scale. In the process of discussing these spatial dimensions, the respondents constructed relational space/power/identity formations to explain the relevance of commercial television news (East and West Sydney; local, national, and global). Furthermore, audiences used television news programmes in a complex manner to nurture connections to different, multiplicitous and overlapping communities. Commercial television news programmes thus constitute a significant form of social knowledge.

Considering the differing social interactions of audiences has allowed for an account of commercial television news programmes in mediating knowledge outside the respondents' everyday contexts of space and place. Audiences do not necessarily engage in political discussions in either online or offline environments; however, political talk is more likely to occur in bound contexts. Processes of filtering are deployed to ensure that political discussions take place in friendly or familiar contexts, which minimises any social conflict. Exploring the viewers' awareness of the structural and institutional constraints demonstrates

an awareness of the frameworks within which commercial and public broadcast news reports are produced. While respondents are critical of the content, they simultaneously flagged reasons for not seeking out alternative information as connected to lack of professional expertise. Audiences raised attention to the difficulties in evaluating credibility and truth outside traditional news platforms, which demonstrates the role that Australian news has in providing space/power/identity knowledge on an everyday basis. Commercial television news programmes are an everyday and significant source of news for the audience. Even when dissatisfied with the content in commercial television news programmes respondents situated their lack of interaction within structural and material factors. The ramifications are that commercial television news programmes are used in a spatial manner, to provide concise and straightforward information about the local-national scale. The following chapter furthers the argument that commercial television news programmes mediate space/power/identity knowledge through an analysis of case studies based upon the respondents' exploration of issues of interest.

Chapter 7: The Politics of Place: Imagining the Nation through Television News

Despite the availability of a wide range of media sources which challenge the traditional notions of space and place, audiences access news through spatialised practices. Respondents employ television news programmes for immediate information to mediate knowledge about the local, national, and global space/power/identity formations. While commercial television news programmes are important forms of everyday knowledge, the ways in which audiences draw upon mediated content needs to be further analysed. The fluidity between scales leads Lefebvre to argue that the national scale is challenged by ‘spaces that have burst open on all sides: ... the nation-state no longer has any borders’ (2003[1978], 92). Yet, the nation-state continues to be the privileged geo-political scale of reference when respondents discuss the importance of viewing Australian content. Spatialised patterns of viewership unify ‘national audiences ... in the consumption of news’, but also result in the construction of spatial discourses in news based upon the audiences ‘general preference for local programming’ (Turner 2009, 62). Commercial television news programmes perpetuate nationalised discourses that draw upon ‘the production of certain kinds of geographical knowledge oriented to achieving cohesion and legitimacy of powers grounded in territorial-based sovereignties’ (Harvey 2005, 221). In commercial television news the construction of territorial sovereignty is accompanied by an emphasis on national boundaries, which demarcates the local and global scales as separate domains.

In order to analyse the ways by which respondents draw upon mediated knowledge in commercial television news reports, it is necessary to situate the respondents’ discourses in the wider context of the news genre. Respondents deploy ‘common sense’ understandings of the news genre, interpreting its importance as a political and economic source of information. In doing so the respondents discuss political reporting more than the coverage of other issues. The ‘common sense’ journalistic approaches that privilege the nation-state and the political as

pertinent sources of information subsequently impacts upon how news reports are discussed. By concentrating on the issue of asylum and migration, the respondents replicate the journalistic focus on discourses of governmentality. Respondents call upon intertwined space/power/identity relationships that privilege national politics as the primary domain for providing knowledge on asylum. When discussing the coverage of asylum respondents also employ relational formations to understand space/power/identity relationships across the local, national, and global. Massey asserts that ‘if space is indeed the product of interrelations, then it must be predicated upon the existence of plurality’ (2005, 9). The respondents’ discourses demonstrate that there is a plurality of constructions regarding the nation-state space/power/identity formation. The respondents make use of multiple conceptions of the Australian nation-state, drawing upon the discourses of multiculturalism and assimilation. This chapter establishes that audiences participate in disarticulating and rearticulating mediated hegemonic formations that assert the sovereign authority of the nation-state.

7.1 Privileging the political

Commercial pressures to capture a large audience mean that the news format is continually evolving and blending entertainment with information. However, viewers continue to use news in a political manner across a number of changing news formats (Harrington 2013). Although news is used for a variety of purposes, audiences draw upon wider popular notions of the news genre to point to the ‘traditional political relevances of news’ (Jensen 1990, 73). Throughout the period of interviewing 90% of respondents discussed the federal election, national politics, or governmental policies. Those that did not ranged from those who simply did not touch upon the subject (Ellen, Barbara, Pratima), to Emma who expressed her outright aversion to political content. Despite outlining an aversion to participating in political discussions (Chapter 6, section 6.3), the respondents devoted most attention to political issues

when discussing reports of interest.³²¹ The political function of news was brought to the fore during periods of heightened political concern, including elections and the periods of political instability.³²² Respondents thus directed the discussions of news to focus upon two prominent Australian political events.

7.1.1 The federal election and the Labor Party leadership spill

The respondents' deliberation on political reports connected to both the June 2013 Labor Party leadership spill and the coverage of campaigning in the lead up to the September 2013 Australian federal election. By discursively focusing on political content, the respondents drew attention to the importance of televisual processes of mediation. Television news coverage of political events is significant as Pateman (1974) states that society operates with 'television elections', whereby campaigning does not exist independently of the processes of mediation. Morley (1996) builds upon the notion of televisual elections to argue that for most ordinary individuals, all general politics occurs through mediatised processes. That 90% of respondents chose to discuss the immediate political context in the recall of news reports emphasises the role of news in mediating political knowledge. Furthermore, three individuals discussed Australian politics in-depth, by drawing upon an extended period of mediatised knowledge (Salman, Albert, and Stuart).³²³ The overwhelming reliance on commercial television news reports for immediate knowledge about the national space/power/identity

³²¹ See Chapter 6, sub-sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 for the analysis of participation in 'political-talk'. Appendix 3 provides a full overview of all the topics and news report discussed by all 40 respondents. All these discussions had important themes (for example sports and gender, sports and space-place); however, an in depth exploration of the discursive formations is not attempted across all issues owing to the scope of the thesis. Appendix 3 provides brief summaries of the reports they discuss. While the appendix shows the wide range and depth of topics that were explored by respondents, this study limits itself to the similarities in the ways viewers discussed the news genre and their reports of interest. With the exception of the political topics particularly asylum and migration, respondents discussed all other topics in a more dispersed manner. It should be noted here that in the appendix, there are also 25 respondents listed in the category of 'sports' discussions. However, 'sports' conversations were more fragmented. Some individuals discussed actual sports reports, others discussed the commercial tendency to focus on sports journalism in Australia, some others discussed sports audience.

³²² Chapter 3, section 3.2 of the thesis discusses how the respondents' discussions of news content has invariably been affected by the tumultuous Australian political environment. The federal election and the three different Prime Ministers during the period of data collection meant that the commercial television news programmes covered federal politics for a prolonged period.

³²³ These three respondents also included contemporary political news reports in their discussion of a wide range of issues.

formation was particularly noticeable the day after a major political event (Marcia and Karl). However, the Labor Party leadership spill on the 26th June 2013 continued to direct the discussions of news even after the immediate period of coverage (Lisa and Bob).³²⁴

Marcia: Only what went on last night.

Karl: It's a bit hard when the news of the day is that Kevin is in.

Marcia: And that Julia's gone.

... **Karl:** I mean that's been up and running for the last couple of weeks ... it's a circus at the moment! An absolute circus! I mean we have to wait probably for a couple of weeks ... they're obviously all gonna [*sic*] sit down and analyse what will probably occur.

Marcia: And when the election actually will be.

Lisa: I think the whole most obvious one would be the whole political thing with the, you know, with Gillard going the way she did.

Bob: I know the election was only called three weeks ago but prior to that we had all of the crap that went on between Gillard and would he run wouldn't he run, yes, no, and that's covered the Australian TV issues 6 months? ... So the last six months the only news has been politics.

Respondents recalled an extended period of political instability, perpetuating the mediated discourses of a 'representational crisis' (Jessop *et al.* 1984, 45, n. 29). While federal electoral campaigning usually results in ongoing political coverage, the Labor Party leadership spill intensified and elongated the normal period of heightened political reporting. It was found that 17.5% of respondents felt that the ongoing political coverage was repetitive leading to a disinterest in political content (Gary, Emma, Nick, Dianne, Anne, Vicky, and Greg).

³²⁴ Lisa was interviewed on the 31st July 2013, and Bob was interviewed on the 5th September 2013. Marcia and Karl were interviewed the morning after the Labor Party leadership spill on the 27th June 2013.

Dianne: In the middle of an election campaign you are really swamped with campaign type news which I listen to with half an ear and it's only because again to me this feels forced, or I just wonder how much new information there is in anything like this.

Anne: Even with the elections, oh they're going to bombard us with information until they get elected, every five minutes the commercials (channels). I know you've got to be informed but its overkill I think.

Vicky: Yes, it's our immediate political situation and coming up to election later on in the year, although I do think the leadership thing is much overdone and every night there seems to be a new poll and I do question where these people come from and who the Channel 7 News poll includes.

Greg: Apparently there's some kind of big opinion poll happening on the 7th of September that's sort of getting a lot of attention, although, I'm a little bit over it. We've been in election mode for eight months ... I think everyone's sort of keeping up with whether they want to or not.

Emma: The politics stuff tends to bore me stupid ... I switch off, I remember I suppose the things that they plug like the things that Tony Abbott said being silly ... they show it over and over again ... I've never been interested, just it's been on all the time leading up to the elections.

Nick: It's not that appealing ... it just becomes a bit draining after a while.

Gary: It's politics, so it's not very interesting, that's the problem when you're in an election.

Despite the political fatigue, the seven respondents continued to frame their discussion of news reports around federal electoral politics. While commercial television news mediated the respondents' knowledge of electoral issues, it also drew audiences together when viewing politics as connected to a certain time, space, and place. Bill and Anita expressly

acknowledged the significance of mediated electoral politics in unifying a nation. Watching politics prepared them for the future political and economic developments in Australia. News coverage provided insights on the potential effects that the electoral result would have on their everyday lives.

Jenny: But Syria's probably the one that's more prominent at the moment besides the election ... definitely election that's very important.

Anita: The election ... Just all these changes that are going to be made it sort of makes you cautious of who to vote for ... The loss of jobs, how they're looking at cutting jobs, that is a main concern for me ... What interested me? Well I don't want to lose my job! [Laughs]

Bill: Obviously it's the elections a big thing that's going on at the moment, you know changing government could potentially effect a lot of people in Australia ... government plays very key role in Australia ... so you gotta [*sic*] make sure they know what they're doing or that we have good leaders elected to make sure that they run the country correctly.

Priya: Politics at the moment especially with the candidate for my area, for the Liberals he stuffed up and that was a big headline ... Jaymes [*sic*] Diaz, I mean common [*sic*] just remember there's six points! And then what else? At the moment it's all politics related because they've got the election coming up.³²⁵

Respondents discussed mediatised electoral politics in connection with the nation-state by highlighting a range of policy areas.³²⁶ These policy areas included the National Disability Insurance Scheme,³²⁷ education policy through the Gonski scheme,³²⁸ same-sex marriage

³²⁵ Priya referred to a report that covered the Liberal Party Federal candidate for the seat of Greenway. A Channel 10 news team interviewed Jaymes Diaz, asking him how the Liberal Party would stop the boats. Mr. Diaz stated there was a six-point plan but could only state that '... the key point would be stopping the boats when it's safe to do so' (McKenny 2013).

³²⁶ See Appendix 3 for a full account of the discussion topics.

³²⁷ The National Disability Insurance Scheme provides support to individuals who have a permanent and significant disability. Individuals must be aged less than 65 when they first access the scheme. The first stages of the scheme took effect in July 2013 through specific trial sites.

laws, and environmental policy as related to discussions of climate change.³²⁹ However, the respondents predominantly reflected upon the policy areas of asylum and migration when exploring federal electoral politics. 67.5% of the respondents discussed the areas of migration, multiculturalism, and asylum. Sixteen respondents drew upon the national scale to frame the discussion in relation to asylum policy and asylum seekers. Twenty-one respondents discussed the global and local dimensions to migration,³³⁰ which impacted upon cultural diversity and integration.³³¹ Respondents connected local multiculturalism to asylum and migration, which perpetuated the political discourses that operate to position the boundaries of the Australian nation-state in relation to the management of borders and identity.³³² While the subsequent subsections provide an account of different federal electoral issues, sections 7.2 and 7.3 analyse how the respondents draw upon mediatised discourses of asylum and migration in greater depth.

7.1.2 Environmental policy

One of the political dimensions that garnered respondents' attention was the area of environmental policy, particularly as relating to climate-change debates. In the respondents' discussions, environmental issues intrinsically connected to the spatial-power formation of the nation-state and the ability to regulate the environment along with policy areas like economics (Kate, Darrin, Dianne, Greg, Albert, and Rob).³³³ Respondents utilised the two-party political framework when pointing to the mediation of information in the Coalition-Labor political perspectives. Wilson notes the politicisation of environmental issues through the 'increasingly

³²⁸ Julia Gillard commissioned the Gonski report in 2010 while she was a Minister for Education under the Rudd prime ministerial leadership of the Labor Party. The report findings demonstrated that a need for an increase in funding to schools based upon the individual students' needs.

³²⁹ See Appendix 3 for a summary of each of these policy issues at the time of interviewing.

³³⁰ Here, there was crossover and the local-global dimensions to migration often linked to asylum movements.

³³¹ A total of twenty-seven respondents discussed the broad area of migration, multiculturalism, and asylum. Some respondents discussed the categories of asylum and migration as a national policy area while others discussed the local impacts of asylum and migration in terms of integration and multiculturalism.

³³² See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for the ways in which identity discourses are politicised in relation to the national borders.

³³³ In the context of the federal election coverage a wide range of issues are unified when presenting on the Coalition and Labor Party platforms. Environmental policy, same-sex marriage legislation, and immigration policy thus become linked together as part of an overall 'macro' approach to Australian government.

fractious political milieu of climate change ... [which] has evolved into a scientific and political lighting rod' in media coverage (2000, 202). The simplified and dichotomised political coverage of environmental issues is directly related to the structural limitations of televisual news production. Time constraints in the production process result in a reliance on limited sources mostly policy makers for information and the brevity of news reports restricts the amount of detail that news sources can provide in the time and space made available (Wilson 2000, 206). Consequently, environmental coverage becomes part of political coverage, whereby the sources of information are political elites and the range of perspectives are limited to those of the major political parties. The respondents related the two-party politicised focus to the perceived political orientations of the different Australian television news channels. Environmental coverage was even more fractious as the varying television news programmes were thought to emphasise either Coalition or Labor policy approaches.³³⁴

Darrin: Because every greenie who can stand up and say where the temperature's rising and we're doomed, you'll find some scientist of some sort who will say no its rubbish, because the temperature changes over longer period of time, so you get more contention or heated disagreement on something perhaps around the environment.

Albert: ABC versus commercial networks, because nearly everybody in the ABC that reports climate change, they're all climate change believers ... whereas on the commercial side there were more sceptics. Now it's up to the viewers political, uh sense ... what side are they going to believe, because I'll try and listen to what an expert has to say, and I'll listen to an expert on a climate change side and they make perfectly good sense, and I listen to an expert on the sceptics side and they make perfectly good sense ... it's one that I haven't sort of come to grips with yet because I don't know who to believe.

³³⁴ The Labor government approach included the introduction of the Carbon-tax in July 2012, a policy directed at businesses with heavy carbon emissions. The Coalition opposed the policy of taxing businesses and industry for excessive carbon emissions. See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.3 for greater elaboration of the carbon-tax.

The plurality of perspectives on environmental issues was not necessarily understood as a positive aspect of coverage. Rather, the reporting of environmental issues was further connected to economic frameworks and the varied political interests accompanying the range of involved groups – from governmental actors, non-governmental actors, and business groups.

Kate: Coal seam, I mean fracking, coal seam gas and fracking would be, who are you going to believe? Who are you going to believe? Are you going to believe the mining company? Are you going to believe Getup? Who do you believe? Um [*sic*], I don't know? I'd say that coal seam gas, fracking, climate change there's plenty of controversy and conflicting opinion.

Darrin: There was a story on the ABC news the other night about the uh this huge solar farms built on in West uh Western New South Wales ... how that you know they were going to generate a lot of electricity what they didn't say in the story is there's 200 million dollars of the government money going to build the farm. People say oh that's good they're going to have you know cheap solar energy well you're not ... the fact is that there was a huge government subsidy required to build it.

All respondents perpetuated the mediatised discourses that emphasised the nation-state scale, and constructed space/power/identity relationships that gave the Australian government prominence in defining environmental issues (Kate, Darrin, Dianne, Albert, and Rob). Greg was the only exception. He employed a scalar relational formation to evaluate the national politicisation of environmental issues in commercial television news. By comparing the global context to the situation in Australia, Greg performed a disarticulation-rearticulation of the hegemonic discourses to engage with a broader space/power/identity framework.

Greg: There has [*sic*] been a few sort of natural disasters this year uh in, in like in Africa ... that doesn't get much of a run and you know when you have news, politicians, discussing climate change policy, things like this, I think that would be an interesting thing to bring to the Australian populations attention ... it's not just about Australia. There's a much greater

international perspective, whether you believe in climate change or the actions or policies of Australians or not, I think it's something we need to know about.

The importance of framing information in the national space/power/identity formation was a subsequent limitation for Greg's ability to develop knowledge on environmental issues. Greg articulated knowledge of place and space structures in the coverage of everyday Australian environmental issues. However, Greg felt that the multiplicitous and interconnected experiences of environmental issues needed to be further elucidated in commercial television news coverage to simultaneously flesh out the global dimensions. Commercial television news programmes' inability to situate the Australian approaches to environmental issues in relation to those of other nation-states was also noted across other policy areas. The coverage of same-sex marriage legislation was also discussed as an issue that needed to be mediated in a much broader space/power/identity formation in news reports.

7.1.3 Same-sex marriage legislation

The respondents' use of commercial television news programmes for mediated political information also manifested in discussions on same-sex marriage legislation (Aiko, Jane, Susan, and Greg). The respondents mobilised discourses of governmentality and emphasised the national formation to discuss sexuality in politicised terms. All the respondents drew upon the Australian national space/power/identity formation and its ability to legislate and recognise the union of two individuals in a relationship. Elder argues that sexual normativity is inextricably linked to the social health of the nation (2007, 95-96), which consequently accounts for reporting same-sex marriage in politicised frames. Legislating on marriage relates to national spatial-identity formations as marriage connects to the ongoing maintenance of the population and the family unit. Respondents also problematised the mediated representations which focused on the two-party political framework. Greg's reflection on the mediated representation of same-sex marriage employed notions of

citizenship. He referred to the ways in which the Australian population and political elite were responsible for setting the parameters of same-sex marriage legislation, particularly as connected to children.

Aiko: Well considering how much it's focused on our politics at the moment ... I don't think there has been enough reporting on gay marriage ... the only TV news that has actually covered anything about it has been the politics side of you know ... I just saw it as here's [*sic*] two people trying to get as many votes as they can ... but they're not really going into depth about what's going to happen, and what they're [the politicians] doing, and what they [the politicians] hope to achieve.

Greg: Given now it's being floated as an Australian issue in the coming election, because both parties are taking a different position on that ... I mean they'll run whole segments on a very basic on a very simple understanding of it, you know? ... To me it's just like there's the one question, do we allow it or do we not? ... But in what way do we allow it? How should we allow it? What are we going to recognise, what about children? What about adoption? What about legal rights? What about religious services? What about access to welfare? ... We tend to simplify everything down to a yes/no.

Susan: Well ABC and SBS is [*sic*] not too bad on those issues, so I can listen to the story, but they probably don't go into a lot of detail behind it ... so they may announce, say, that ACT has passed [the same-sex marriage law], and there's some discussion over whether it will be repealed, and now all these couples are all trying to get married for this weekend ... most news covers a wide range of things that might get ten or thirty seconds of coverage, which isn't really a lot. So if I feel deeply about an issue, I need to go and read elsewhere as well.

The lack of depth in the two-party approach to representing same-sex marriage meant that respondents wanted greater contextualisation of the issue. Respondents subsequently drew upon scalar formations and compared the Australian approach to those of other nation-states. Although the respondents engaged in relational constructions whereby the Australian nation-

state was contrasted with other nation-states, the constructions ultimately perpetuated hegemonic discourses that emphasised the national space/power/identity scale. These discursive articulations are important, as same-sex marriage was not framed in global human rights discourse drawing on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, but within the boundaries of the nation-state sovereign authority. Furthermore, the types of nation-states that are discussed are those that are relatively comparable to the Australian context.

Susan: I've been following the same-sex marriage stories since I've been here really, because in Canada it's been legal for quite a long time and I'm very interested in how it hasn't passed here and how they actually change the marriage act and that kind of stuff.

Greg: Canada very poorly structured their proposed gay marriage legislation and their civil unions ... Canadians had a lot of litigation around poorly designed, poorly structured, very sort of populist sort of tokenistic same sex unions, same-sex marriage proposals and recognitions they've put forward which have had huge legal issues ... say California's done an amazing job with their gay marriage legislation, they don't have all the huge issues that Britain and Canada are starting to develop. And when it comes to legal drafting we are a lot more like Canada and uh Britain than we are [to] the [United] States ... for Australian issues, we, the media needs to go other countries have done this, we need to put pressure on politicians to make sure that they do a better job or a better one than other countries.

Across all of the interviews only Susan and Kate discussed the use of local advocacy groups to supplement their knowledge of same-sex marriage issues. All respondents engaged in the processes of spatialising and politicising the discussion same-sex marriage issues in relation to the domain of the nation-state. These discursive frameworks replicated the respondents' approach to analysing commercial television news coverage of environmental issues. The dominant space/power/identity discourses that structure the discussion of environmental and same-sex marriage issues also influences the respondents' evaluation of asylum and migration reporting.

7.1.4 Immigration policy and asylum

In the case of Australia, the extended history of attempting to control migration in relation to ‘identity’ means that border control discussions connect to local debates on multiculturalism.³³⁵ While the two terms asylum and migration are distinctive there a broad conflation of the two terms (Cohen 2011, Philo *et al.* 2013, Alia and Bull 2005), as established in the Introduction Chapter, which was also reflected in the respondents’ discourses.³³⁶ Respondents engaged in constructing relational formations that positioned identity as connected to space and power which is significant in the Australian context. As a nation of migrants Australia has continually had its ‘identity’ challenged. Benhabib (2004, 5) states that in an increasingly de-territorialised global environment ‘even in the face of the collapse of traditional concepts of sovereignty, monopoly over territory is exercised through immigration and citizenship policies’. Respondents maintained the conflation between asylum movements and migration policy as they engaged in discursively politicising the issue. The discourses perpetuated the federal electoral framework that occurs in news reports to structure the coverage of asylum and migration.³³⁷

Andrew: Because news generally talks about policies and stuff and what these people are. So for Liberal, in terms of their immigration policies, stuff like that ... [I] draw on that ... and why I think this is good for Australia and why he [the friend] thought it was bad, not for Australia ... for other people, not just Australia.

Greg: Look the asylum seeker thing is just a partisan thing which just keeps coming up cause [*sic*] it keeps coming up. I don’t think everyone’s informed about that because that’s all politicians every talk about you know, it’s the race, it’s the race, it’s the race to the bottom with politicians and while it’s kinda [*sic*] fun to watch and lower themselves as we get closer to the date.

³³⁵ See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for the political frameworks relating to border control.

³³⁶ See the Introduction Chapter and n. 2 for a clarification of the ways that the terms asylum and migration are employed as interconnected in the thesis.

³³⁷ See Chapter 4, subsection 4.1.1 for a quantitative analysis of the commercial television news programmes approach to structuring the inclusion of national political sources in content.

Gary: For some reason it is a political football and I don't understand why it is, because it's a divisional one. Certainly, it's dividing a country,

The media coverage of asylum was further discussed as being conducted within the two-party political approach.³³⁸ Through a mediational perspective, the respondents questioned whether the political agenda shaped content; or rather the two-party approach was a product of media construction. In particular, the news coverage was linked to a disconnection and an apparent sensationalism of the actual asylum situation.

Jane: I'll listen to the lot, if I think it's not newsworthy, you know like another boat of asylum seekers, I just shut down completely you know I don't want to listen to it because I'm a supporter of asylum seekers and I think the uh media beats it up too much.

Susan: The whole asylum seeker issue ... a lot of it is repeating soundbites from politicians and again opinions ... specifically any time they let Tony Abbott on screen ... these are my platforms and 'Stop the' ... it just gave more airtime to his views and didn't necessarily produce as much debate around the issues.

Mike: The journalists themselves may not have control over that editing process, so they're obviously choosing a particular twenty second grab to show ... they may just show Morrison trodding [*sic*] out his line and then that's it, it's not like and we're now gonna [*sic*] question that ... Channel 9 and Channel 7 will never allow Abbott or Morrison, and now we've got somebody with an entirely different point of view about the same thing and now we're gonna [*sic*] talk to them

Azar: And the thing that's not clear is the significance of the issue due to the politicians making it a big issue? Or is it because the media's is giving it more emphasis than it deserves,

³³⁸ See Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.3 for the ways by which respondents articulated awareness that all news content was produced within dichotomised political perspectives replicating the Coalition-Labor two-party federal framework.

and maybe it's both I'm not sure? But certainly it's getting a lot more attention, a lot more drama than it deserves.

While the respondents criticised the mediation of asylum as connected to governmentality, the discussions of asylum replicated these news conventions. The above excerpts reveal that respondents felt that the mediatised two-party approach, the use of brief soundbites and repetition resulted in a lack of analytical depth on political information. The following section addresses the ways in which respondents employed journalistic techniques to frame their discussions of asylum. Despite establishing that respondents expressed a disengagement from political discussions in the previous chapter,³³⁹ the overwhelming focus on discussing political issues demonstrates that 'politics' is pertinent to the audience. The dominant recall of political issues although during a period of political instability, underscores the importance of understanding the news as an inherently political genre. The political framework that shaped the respondents' understanding of the news genre subsequently impacted upon how they explore space/power/identity in asylum and migration coverage.

7.2 Engaging with journalistic conventions

By taking a microscopic approach and concentrating upon the respondents' discourses within one policy area, it is possible to understand how textual mechanisms shape in-depth knowledge of an issue. The coverage of asylum and migration is particularly salient, as it creates a crisis through the employment of a range of journalistic techniques to convey that the nation-state space/power/identity boundaries are disrupted. Clarke (2014, 92) argues that 'from the perspective of entrenched news production values, "common sense" includes the idea that "government" is at the centre of the social universe'. The 'common sense' methods of structuring television news reports on asylum rely on the representation of the nation-state's attempts to control its borders, as established in Chapter 5. The respondents

³³⁹ See Chapter 6, section 6.3 for an analysis of the respondents' participation in face-to-face, online, and social media discussions.

reproduced these mediatised discourses, particularly when constructing relational space/power/identity formations. The reliance on discourses of governmentality is emphasised in the respondents' notions of documenting proper migratory processes. The 'documentation' rhetoric mobilised discourses of illegality when the nation-state's power in regulating identity, citizenship and spatial boundaries was highlighted. Respondents engaged with social statistics to evaluate the ability of the government to monitor migration and enforce the notion of national borders. The respondents also employed scalar relationships to compare the national context with developments globally. By situating Australia among other nation-states, the respondents contextualised the social statistical data in a macroscopic framework. Respondents also used economic frameworks across a number of spatial dimensions when evaluating the costs of seeking asylum, the national governmental expenditure on managing asylum, and the impacts that international conflicts have upon Australia. The 'common sense' notions of reporting asylum further manifests through the respondents' emphasis upon the importance of official governmental sources. When relying on official rhetoric the respondents reified the entrenched space/power/identity relationships that privileged the national political arena as the domain for credible information. Analysing the specific ways that respondents' negotiated political content in news reports allows this section to address how journalistic conventions are used to structure everyday space/power/identity knowledge.

7.2.1 Documenting proper process through discourses of illegality

When deliberating on the coverage of asylum and migration issues the respondents drew upon discourses of legitimacy. Despite the limited use of the term ‘illegal’ across news reports,³⁴⁰ respondents deployed the term and stressed the need for proper documentation in their discussions. The respondents’ invocation of the frame of illegality is historically situated. The preferred term used by the Howard government was ‘illegal immigrant’ (Green 2003). The 2007 Labor government altered the official terminology to ‘irregular maritime arrivals’; however, the re-election of the Coalition government in September 2013 saw an official return to the phrase of ‘illegal’ (*9 News* 21-10-2013). Although Australian governmental policy currently labels the individuals as ‘illegal’ the terminology is discouraged at the global level. Both UNHCR guidelines and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights establish that ‘illegal’ is not an appropriate referent as it has the potential to criminalise asylum movements (Phillips 2015a, 2). The limitations to the discourses of illegality are reinforced when analysing the numbers of maritime asylum seekers that are found to be genuine refugees which have fluctuated between 70% and 97% since 1999 (Phillips 2015a, 8). The discourses of illegality work to enforce the notion of Australian borders as connected to both the government and citizens. Respondents situated power not only in relation to Australian

³⁴⁰ *9 News* 16-08-2013 then Opposition Leader Tony Abbott provides two soundbites, ‘Don’t turn up illegally by boat’ and ‘People who come here illegally by boat uh will get temporary protection visas’. *9 News* 21-10-2013 reports on the labelling of asylum seekers with news anchor Peter Overton introducing the report with ‘Minister Scott Morrison has ordered his department to call the illegals’, the reporter informing a boat is ‘carrying what the Abbott government calls illegal arrivals not asylum seekers’, and Scott Morrison stating ‘People who’ve entered Australia illegally by boat have entered illegally by boat’. In *9 News* 24-09-2013 there are no verbal references to illegality; however, there is video footage of a Liberal Party sign ‘How many illegal boats have arrived since Labor took over? 639 ILLEGAL BOATS. Labor has lost control of Australia’s borders’. Similarly, in *7 News* 21-02-2013, there are no linguistic mentions of illegality. However, video footage includes the visualisation of a banner and posters at a protest march with the slogan ‘NO ONE IS ILLEGAL’. *9 News* 27-06-2013 includes a sound bite of Tony Abbott as Opposition Leader in parliament asking ‘Will the Prime Minister finally accept responsibility for the decisions that have led to illegal boat arrivals now running at over three thousand, every month’. *7 News* 15-07-2013 includes news anchor Chris Bath introducing the report with ‘An asylum seekers boat has nearly reached the Australian mainland at Broome just as Labor hints at new measures to stop the growing wave of illegal arrivals’. The *7 News* report on 12-06-2013 investigates people smuggling and the reporter introduces Peshawar as ‘A city menaced by warlords and criminal gangs, this city is a by word for anarchy you can buy just about anything here, guns, drugs, and an illegal passage to Australia’. Also, in the news 19-09-2013 the word ‘illegal’ is used to describe Abbott’s new asylum policy first by the news anchor Peter Overton: ‘Tony Abbott is confident he can strike a deal with Indonesia to stop the asylum boats despite their claims his policy is offensive and illegal’ and then by Indonesian Member of Parliament Tantowi Yahya ‘It’s illegal, it might uh potentially uh jeopardise our already good relationship’.

national politics, but also to the collective identity of citizens who permitted, or, did not permit arrivals of asylum seekers.

Nick: Boat people ... that come in as illegal immigrants.

Albert: Oh boat people, cause [*sic*] um [*sic*] I find it fascinating, how they can leave the various countries in the Middle East they can travel through six or seven countries to get to Indonesia, but when they come to Australia they've got no papers.

Adam: I think what adds more to the complexity is they come without papers, so you don't really know their name, their history, they could come up with any story you know, so there's probably a big reason why.

Lesley: The people smugglers and the illegal immigrants into Australia.

Jenny: You do feel for people, but there's [*sic*] also plenty of people who aren't legitimate refugees.

Jane: And a lot of them are genuine, there are some that aren't as we all know.

Greg: I'd say uh asylum seekers I mean it's do we let them in or do we kick ... you know refuse them entry?

Tim: You've got the boats ... that one's got a lot of people, there's so much interest in it, like yeah should we allow people to turn up?

The respondents drew upon space/power/identity constructions and asserted that the nation-state was the domain where identity and movement should be regulated. Furthermore, the use of passport and documentation controls by Albert and Adam replicated the multimodal

discourses in news reports.³⁴¹ Even if like other respondents Susan and Gary did not deviate from the illegality discourses, they differed from others in that they drew upon alternative space/power/identity formations. Susan and Gary employed a scalar understanding to situate the Australian context in reference to UN conventions. This relational construction allowed them to contest the governmental use of 'illegality'.

Susan: Sometimes erroneous opinions as well, again saying that it is illegal, for example.

Gary: I mean the politicians say the same thing, they're illegal people, that the method they're using to get here is illegal, well the only thing that's really illegal is the people that ... sell them the boats ... there's nothing to say they are under the UN convention, and they're legally in their own rights to seek out that method to escape the hardship they're going.

The respondents built upon the legality discourses when evaluating the role of refugee camps, attributing to the nation-state the power to control spatial boundaries in the context of regional or global co-operation. Phillips (2015a, 4) outlines the official governmental stance that the 'queue' is a mythologised asylum process. However, the respondents employed the notion that asylum seekers were 'jumping the queue' when constructing dichotomies between 'genuine' refugees and those who took advantage of the asylum system.³⁴² Albert connected the refugee camps located in other nation-states to health and security issues in Australia. He linked the use of global UNHCR refugee camps to the power of the Australian government to vet undesirable individuals. Contrastingly, Gary's response highlighted the arduous and uncertain process of attempting to circumvent the refugee camps, which would inevitably result in asylum seekers being interned in an Australian detention centre.

³⁴¹ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.2.3 for the multimodal analysis of documentation controls, particularly in regards to *9 News* 07-07-2013 which includes a visual representation of a passport.

³⁴² Chapter 7 subsection 7.3.4 further connects the notion of 'queue jumping' to the local community in terms of the rhetoric of assimilation, and the perceived inability of asylum seekers to integrate and abide by Australian laws.

Albert: I'm all happy to bring in refugees because there are hundreds of thousands of people in camps that have gone through the right way, let's take them, they've been checked, had health checks, happy to bring them in and help them along, but the people that want to just come in you don't know who they are ... they could be ex-army, like criminals you've got no control over it.

Jenny: There's [sic] plenty of people in camps who should be allowed in first. Who have been waiting. I think that's, they should all go back, and go back to the camp and wait in line like other poor people.

Gary: The idea that they're terrorists just totally miffs [sic] me ... if I was a terrorist and I wanted to go to another country and do harm in that country, why would I choose the slowest, longest, tedious method to do that? That may end up in me not succeeding. I'd much rather go through the channels where I can get proper passage, passports, and everything. Get there as quick as possible and do the harm I want to do you know?

Through a relational construction the importance of refugee camps in the global context was thus connected to the local population. Respondents were also concerned about the internal provisions needed to support refugees. When drawing upon the space/power/identity formation of the Australian nation-state, Lesley employed 'us/them' terminology to question whether the Australian population could support refugees. Philo *et al.* (2013, 38) state that in the UK news represents refugees and asylum seekers as posing a strain on the social welfare system. Nick pointed to the popular perception that those seeking asylum were attempting to access 'our' social welfare. The respondents employed national identity discourses to assert concerns regarding the ability of non-citizens to receive social welfare provisions. Albert drew upon his discussions with assimilated migrant populations and elaborated that asylum seekers were circumventing the 'proper' processes in order to receive social welfare support.

Lesley: It interested me because of the humanitarian aspects, particularly where these people were going to be placed... in regards to our population, um [sic] in regards to housing, in

regards to our health services, how are we going to help these people? Do we really help them just by bringing them in? Do we have enough of our own resources? Can we deal with um [sic] young children and babies? Can we deal with the mental health issues of these people that have travelled across the seas for a better life and have experienced some of the worst tragedies by losing loved ones? Um [sic] and can they really assimilate into Australia? ... Are we skilled enough to take on these people and look at all of those issues rather than just putting them on an island?

Nick: We just see them as oh they're coming here to reap our benefits and they're coming here to exploit our country ... that's across the board unfortunately.

Albert: And a lot of them [his friends] have come from overseas as migrants and just as a personal thing, they've said all these boat people they're just shonking [sic] the system. They say I came in the right way; I paid my taxes I had to assimilate, why don't they? Now people are bending over to help them, nobody helped me ... they see the influx of boat people now and they think oh they're only here for the welfare, but that's a personal issue that they've told me.

The respondents' discursive association of the national borders with the internal provisions of social welfare perpetuated the mediated frames in commercial television news reports.³⁴³ By conflating social welfare and crime with the refugee population *7 News* (15-06-2013 [7]) outlined the ongoing difficulties faced in integration into the Australian community. While the broader set of news reports might not use the term 'illegal', the multimodal discourses and the politicised rhetoric connotes that seeking asylum on arrival by boats is akin to a crime. The respondents drew upon mediated notions of national space/power/identity boundaries asserting the idea that there was a proper process of seeking asylum. The importance of the national governmental scale is maintained through the respondents' discursive construction of

³⁴³ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.2 for the multimodal analysis on the ways that *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7] structures this particular discursive connection.

asylum in relation to statistical data. When quantifying the data on asylum the respondents rearticulated news discourses that emphasise the nation-state's ability to monitor the borders.

7.2.2 *Using social statistics*

Respondents conveyed the importance of the nation-state space/power/identity by using national social statistical data to measure asylum arrivals. Commercial television news programmes present statistics in reports to highlight the governmental inability to control spatial boundaries.³⁴⁴ While the inclusion of social statistics is not a routine feature, the dramatised visuals remained salient in the minds of audiences. However, the respondents deployed relational spatial knowledge to situate Australian data within a broader space/power/identity formation. When mobilising global information comparisons were made between the Australian nation-state as a destination country and other destination nation-states. By utilising nation-state unit as the domain for quantifying asylum arrivals the respondents replicated the mediatised focus on the nation-state as the domain for monitoring the movement of individuals.

Nick: Then you look at it from an international perspective, like Americas got like 50, 60 [thousand] something ridiculous every year coming in from Mexico from other countries, Africa as well that type of thing. So like when you look at Australians talking about that 3000 it's just like, it's not that bad.

Susan: That there is [*sic*] a huge number of them and somehow they're going to storm the borders and take over the country ... it's giving misinformation and then people suddenly think that this is actually the dominant opinion and somehow it just spreads like a virus.

Albert: I just want them to tell me yes, we haven't had any boats this month, or yes we've had 10 boats, I don't want them to tell me because of the government's policies ... that's the reporters spin on it.

³⁴⁴ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.2 for the multimodal discourse analysis on the use of social statistics in asylum coverage.

Jenny: When we bring in another 10,000 people that [other] 10,000 have to sit there another how many years? It's not right.

Jane: You know, when you sort of hear the quotas that other countries take in; you know, ours is a very tiny amount of people really, yeah.

Gary: While in Italy we were listening to similar ... I mean the numbers that they're getting make ours look insignificant. It's basically a Sunday school picnic coming across compared to you know a *Titanic* load of people up there.

The inclusion of social statistics when reporting on asylum borrows from crime reporting and builds upon the discourses of illegality. Conventions of reporting often include social statistics as a measure of objectivity, and also to condense complex socio-cultural information into comprehensible units for the audience. Dianne discussed how racial frameworks were drawn upon by journalists when referring to motorcycle gang members [bikies] as being of Middle Eastern 'appearance'.³⁴⁵ She mentioned that it created social panic regarding crime at the local level which replicated the criminalised frameworks used in asylum coverage.³⁴⁶

Dianne: When you look at crime statistics or you hear about them, crime hasn't really increased that much in New South Wales but ... we will have numbers of people killed in the areas and that sort of stuff and I think that possibly the commercial stations, because of the popularity of shows like *Underbelly* and that sort of thing find that you know these sort of stories do very well, you know people like to hear about that sort of thing.

These broad racial categories used to classify the appearance of individuals and the inclusion of social statistics also influences the reporting of asylum.³⁴⁷ The criminalised associations of

³⁴⁵ See Chapter 7, subsection 7.3.3 for an analysis of the racial frameworks employed in crime reporting.

³⁴⁶ Quantitative relationships between certain identities and 'crime' in the coverage of asylum have been provided in Chapter 4, subsection 4.4.3., especially figure 33.

³⁴⁷ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.3 for the multimodal discourses analysis regarding the stereotypical representation of asylum.

reporting asylum in relation to social statistics were also discussed by respondents (Tim, Gary, Nick, and Jennifer). The distinction between maritime arrivals and those arriving via plane or overstaying visas was used to assert that news sensationalised the information on asylum arrivals.³⁴⁸ The respondents engaged in processes of hegemonic space/power/identity disarticulation when contesting the mediatised focus on boundaries. They also performed a discursive rearticulation as they concentrated their own discussions on these boundaries.

Jennifer: Yes, we get refugees that come to Australia by boat, but statistically you know ... UK people who overstay their visas, and actually in the big scheme of things these refugees are only like 10% proportion ... then what about all these other people who um [*sic*], yeah overstay their visas and aren't entitled to be here but are, and there's hundreds, hundreds, thousands of them and what's being done about that?

Nick: Boat people in comparison to what's happening internationally like, the video that I saw there was 3,000 people a year, thereabouts [*sic*] that come in as illegal immigrants. But if you look at the total of illegal immigrant population it's like 15,000 or something, or 10,000 and a lot of it is people overstaying their visas.

Gary: Oh I dunno [*sic*] five, five or more times the amount of people come in by plane and get a bridging visa and they're not terrorists. Yet, they're the same countries of origin.

Tim: That's why people are interested in it, its cause [*sic*] in terms of actual numbers the numbers of people that are arriving by boat compared to the numbers of people arriving by plane with dodgy visa paperwork, [laughs] it might be insignificant.

³⁴⁸ Phillips (2015a) states that the predominant method of travel for asylum seekers up until 2012 was via air with a valid visa. In 2012, the number of maritime asylum seekers increased, and reached 68.4% of Australia's onshore asylum claims (*ibid.*). In the years 2013 and 2014, the figures of maritime asylum seekers decreased, and individuals arriving via air lodged 51.5% of onshore asylum applications (*ibid.*). Phillips (2015a) also notes that those arriving by boat are more likely to be found to be refugees. The top country of citizenship for maritime arrivals is Afghanistan and the final protection visa grant rate has been between 96% and 100% since 2009 (*ibid.*). In contrast, the top country of citizenship for air arrivals claiming asylum is China, and the success rate is only 20 to 30% (*ibid.*).

While respondents were critical of the journalistic conventions that simplified and presented information in statistical form, they nonetheless employed these frameworks to shape their knowledge of asylum. The respondents' disarticulation-rearticulation emphasised maritime spatial anxieties, informed by a prolonged period of historically situated identity discourses.³⁴⁹ The respondents also drew upon the mediatised structures to organise their discussion of asylum and migration through the journalistic 'common sense' discourses of economics.

7.2.3 Employing economic frameworks

Discussions of the asylum seeking process in economic terms were particularly significant, as they appealed to overlapping spatial-power scales. Two respondents drew upon mediated economic figures that undermined the sense of national political control. Gary and Azar recalled a 7 News report and went into detail when they recollected the amount made by people smugglers.³⁵⁰ The reference to political sources of information reified the importance of 'official' data, but also problematised the accuracy of political information.

Gary: I mean that's another thing that was brought out recently with Channel 7 you know, one politician, Liberal side, tried to make out it costs um [*sic*] ... it was in the thousands, hundreds thousands.

Azar: No, 5000 [a person] he said.

Gary: Yeah, which meant that a boat load of people ... the smuggler was making around a hundred thousand or more, and I said well that's not true, if you actually google it you work it out quickly for him to get a hundred thousand there'd have to be about two hundred people on a boat, and they don't usually have that number, it's usually about 60 to 80. And therefore you know the real true figures are more like you know uh three hundred thousand if he's lucky he's made out of that ... uh three thousand sorry out of it not three hundred, or a hundred.

³⁴⁹ See figures 1, 2, and 3 in Chapter 2. The figures illustrate an extended discursive concern, which links 'identity' to the protection of maritime borders.

³⁵⁰ Gary and Azar's interview took place on the 10th August 2013, the news report they discussed aired on 7 News 27-07-2013.

The multimodal construction of the *7 News* report 27-07-2013 has been analysed regarding its economic focus and the inclusion of ‘PolitiFact’.³⁵¹ While Azar correctly recalled the specific amount paid by the refugees, Gary had difficulties in coming up with the accurate figures but managed to remember the average number of individuals per boat (70 people). Notably, Gary’s recollection attributed the claims to a Coalition shadow minister, but in fact they were made by the then Labor Home Affairs Minister Jason Clare. When drawing upon the mediated information, Gary and Azar did not discuss how the *7 News* report included a ‘PolitiFact’ expert to counter the minister’s erroneous statements. Similarly, the inconsistent references to financial figures highlights how respondents remember mediated information in patterns that already fit in with their understanding of the issue.³⁵² Other respondents deployed economic frameworks when discussing asylum and connected the global to the national scale. In particular, Jenny considered the rights of those legally entitled to work and the potential threat increasing numbers could add to the existing pressures in Australia.

Jenny: Obviously, the asylum seekers is [*sic*] another big one. So that gets reported on a lot ... I think people here are more concerned about their own jobs ... so there’s a lot of reporting on that because people I think are against it.

Priya: In terms of the asylum seekers, ... I just think just the whole situation it is at the moment wasting a lot of funds and we need to find a solution.

Nick: Right now you never hear on mainstream media, especially with what the politicians are saying, like we need to strengthen our borders. There’s this giant bloody banner outside saying ‘More jobs, stronger borders’. I see stronger borders the first thing I think is racism. Like that’s all it is essentially. Like oh we don’t want those people coming into our country, but you’ll never hear what’s happening in like Jakarta ... the police over there are just ruthless.

³⁵¹ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.2 for the multimodal analysis of *7 News* 27-07-2013.

³⁵² See n. 63 in Chapter 2, section 2.4 for Levine and Murphy (1949) in Curran (1990, 149) on the ways in which pro and anti-communist groups remembered political information in relation to their existing political frameworks.

The threats of asylum movements at the global scale linked to the national political domain, as Priya highlighted it as the arena where a solution had to be found. The economic expenditure on asylum diverted much needed economic resources away from the Australian population. Nick also mobilised the nation as embedded among global space/power/identity formations. He placed the management of asylum arrivals within both racial and economic frameworks. Nick's discursive connections exemplified how 'power-geometries' worked across spatial planes and enabled the movements of some groups over others (Massey 1991, 25-26). Asylum seekers and refugees created further strain on economic resources within nation-states and the protection of the national market is thus associated with spatial and identity control. Respondents also used economic frameworks when engaging with the global scale as linked to the national space/power/identity formation. When investigating the commercial coverage of international conflict zones, the respondents disconnected the issue of asylum from war. Rather, respondents explored the situation in Syria as tied to the Australian national economy. The relationship between the Syrian conflict and the Australian economy pointed to the interconnected nature of global economic flows. However, the fluidity of the global environment did not extend to the asylum movements that would result from the international conflicts. By utilising 'common sense' economic frameworks to shape their knowledge of international conflicts, the respondents detached the nation-states of their responsibility to accommodate asylum seekers.

Bill: The most recent one might have been the Syria debate ... even though it's not local news it has potential effects to affect the Australian economy ... there's obviously not going to be a war in Australia, but if it has effects on the American economy and the European economy that could get passed onto us.

Todd: Well, the situation in the Middle East is obviously one of worry for us here with the supply of oil and everything amongst other things. The situation in Syria is not good.

Adam: Lebanon, Syria ... I think kind of it does impact Australia directly, well um [*sic*] through oil prices, other commodities, travel, all kinds of stuff, security ... most Australians would probably look at it and think oh they've been fighting for centuries ... they may not realise it, but through all the commodity prices oil prices, petrol and everything it does, whatever happens in the Middle East has big ramifications worldwide.

Jenny was the only respondent who linked the Syrian conflict to increased movement of people. She recalled seeing the displacement of '2 million people ... they actually had a map ... you don't know where they were walking to but there was [*sic*] masses of people and it also showed the camps'. When questioned whether the maps and video footage contributed to her understanding of the global context of asylum, she stated '[d]efinitely, [but] I think it gives you more empathy too'. Although there were some instances when the humanitarian aspects of international conflict were covered in commercial television news reports,³⁵³ the predominant focus of coverage remained on the economic and political costs of asylum. The national space/power/identity discourse gains further prominence when the respondents' evaluation of different sources of information in asylum coverage is considered.

7.2.4 Official rhetoric and the sources of significance

Commercial television news programmes tend to structure the coverage of asylum around the inclusion of national political sources.³⁵⁴ The reliance upon official sources of information is connected to the political economy of news production, where airtime is 'granted [to politicians] in recognition of their crucial role as sources of news supply and commentary' (Clarke 2014, 93). When included in news, official political party spokespersons are furthermore endowed with a sense of 'authority which permitted them to establish the primary framework or terms of an argument' (Hall 1982, 81). In contrast, there are the non-official sources 'whose "definitions" were always more partial, fragmentary and delegitimated'

³⁵³ 7 News 11-07-2013, 12-07-2013, 13-07-2013 covers the Syrian crisis from the Za'atari Refugee camp in Jordan and a Syrian rebel base in Jordan. 7 News 15-06-2013 [7] reports from Liverpool, Sydney to outline the impacts that the increase in refugees from Syria and Iraq will have on the local context.

³⁵⁴ See Chapter 4, subsections 4.1.1 for the quantitative frequencies of including different sources of information.

(ibid.). By emphasising the ‘official’ political discourses in coverage of asylum, the commercial television news reports impart a sense of objectivity. However, national political sources also contribute a sense of immediacy while flagging the importance of the information to everyday Australians. The respondents stressed how the inclusion of official sources of information in news underscored the credibility, immediacy, and relevance of the news to their understanding of asylum. Notably, Australian military and political figures were valued as key sources of knowledge in comparison to alternative advocacy or academic sources.

Greg: In honesty, seeing the same grainy image of some guys get off a boat you know on you know ... is not going to make me watch one or the other ... if they said we have an interview with the chief of the navy on asylum seekers I’d go yep [*sic*] that would be it.

Jim: They [*Q and A*] continue to get the top ministers and the Prime Minister willing to participate. I think if they were strongly biased in anyway ... these people of prominence just wouldn’t, yeah well having people of prominence on the show, that’s what makes it credible because you know ... these people wouldn’t appear if so.

Vicky: So yeah, it’s just absence of sources ... sometimes when they get peripheral people to comment on it um [*sic*] who aren’t directly oh say I dunno [*sic*] a professor of politics at a university or wherever? I guess it’s interesting but I’m not sure if um [*sic*] they’re the last word on the matter or the best person to be commenting.

The respondents’ location in the Australian context (space and place) subsequently impacted upon those deemed appropriate to provide information on asylum. Only three respondents recalled alternative information outside the dominant space/power/identity formation of the nation-state (Gary, Azar, and Kate). Gary and Azar engaged with a relational and scalar perspective, which enabled them to analyse the Australian coverage. They recounted the experience of watching asylum coverage in Italy, which allowed for a comparison of the

different approaches in mediation of political information. Nonetheless, Gary and Azar predominantly referred to national political sources of information while discussing asylum. On the local scale, Kate elaborated on receiving an email with details on the ‘Welcome Dinner Project’. The ‘Welcome Dinner Project’ started in Sydney, and involved ‘old’ Australians welcoming ‘new’ Australians (refugees) through the act of sharing a meal together. She elaborated that it was a valuable source of grassroots information that expanded upon her knowledge of how to deal with the issue of asylum at the local level. While Kate, Gary, and Azar were the only respondents to draw upon broader spatial frameworks, other respondents emphasised the importance of national sources in a global context relating to coverage of issues other than asylum.

When discussing the missing Malaysian MH370 airplane, both Ellen and Tom scrutinised the inclusion of official sources of information in relation to the knowledge they contributed. By flattening out the space/power/identity differences between nation-states Ellen stressed the importance of any official political and expert sources across the global scale. However, there were also inherent power hierarchies that influenced the respondents’ evaluation of official sources of information. Tom elucidated the variations between foreign politicians and ‘our’ official sources, asserting that credibility was restricted to the Australian nation-state and its political officials.

Ellen: They had um [*sic*] two experts, and um [*sic*] I think the Malaysian air minister was there as well. I could be wrong but anyway yeah two aviation experts, one a terrorist expert and one just an aviation expert ... it added to the um [*sic*], what do you call it? The authenticity, probably, of the story.

Tom: At the risk of not being racially prejudiced I’m not overly trustworthy of the uh Malaysian government system. I don’t think they uh tend to think in the same way that we do ... they do control the press and a lot of other things like that so you don’t really know how much information their military or their government is actually sharing.

Although respondents concentrated on the significance of national official political sources in the coverage of global events, one respondent employed regional formations to broaden the analysis of mediation of asylum. Mike outlined the limitations of commercial television news programmes in accessing alternative perspectives. He considered that the Australian government might have restricted investigative reporting, but also addressed the ability of commercial television news programmes to hold the nation-state to accountability.

Mike: Channel 9 could have a TV crew on Manus Island ... they don't and that's true of the ABC as well ... there may be issues where the PNG [*sic*] government's gonna [*sic*] restrict their movement to the place ... that in itself becomes a story in that we've attempted to send our journalists here and the government has blocked us from going, so surely that alludes to the fact that they've got something to hide, what do they have to hide? That in itself becomes a story but it doesn't appear that they're even trying to do that.

Mike utilised the idealised fourth-estate role of the media; however, this was not shared by other respondents. Rather, investigative reporting that undermined the nation-state space/power/identity formation was seen to be unethical. Jennifer and Adam cited 'national interest' when considering the impacts of the ABC reportage of the Indonesian phone tapping scandal.³⁵⁵ They linked the global to the national scale, and emphasised that even if reporting was accurate such investigative journalism could endanger fellow Australian citizens.

Jennifer: But also too I think um [*sic*] they do need to be careful particularly with what's happened with Indonesia ... there is um [*sic*] you know responsibility of making sure they report when is suitable and do look into the national interest, because of all the drama that's been created now from this ABC report.

³⁵⁵ The Indonesian phone tapping scandal involved the Australian government monitoring the mobile phone calls of the then Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, his wife, and senior Indonesian officials. Media coverage linked this incident to the revelations that the United States spied on the German Chancellery.

... **Adam:** Yeah they [*ABC News*] broke the news, they don't realise that they put Australians at risk over there, plus there's gonna [*sic*] be a huge backlash because of it. It's not something we needed to know, I don't think. You know, I'm all for freedom of information all that, but if it's going to damage, you know the economy and safety of your citizens, terrible.

Jennifer and Adam expressed the opinion that there should be better regulation and policing of journalistic codes at a national level. If the Australian government enjoyed greater powers in managing the release of sensitive information, Australians located across the local, national, and global scales could be better protected, they felt. The space/power/identity formation of the nation-state became the naturalised unit against which respondents evaluated sources of information.

Respondents replicate the journalistic conventions of legitimising the official political sources as the key definers of information, which perpetuates politicised rhetoric on asylum. The local and global space/power/identity scales are largely excluded from the respondents' discussion of asylum, particularly as there is no recourse to advocacy groups, non-governmental organisations, supranational organisations, or asylum seekers and refugees. When relying on the national political party spokespersons the respondents also reinscribe the Australian government with the ability to define how asylum manifests across the spatial scales. However, the respondents also anchor the knowledge of asylum in the Australian context to the global and local domains through an exploration of migration. Respondents only move beyond the nation-state centric approach when discussing the broader dimensions of migration across the global and local space/power/identity formations.

7.3 Multiculturalism and difference

In Australia the historical context of migration has resulted in a culturally plural demographic where the traditional bounds of the nation-state continue to be challenged by globalised identities. The mediated anxieties over the spatial boundaries of the nation-state intertwine

with the global and local scales of identity discourses. By situating the respondents' discussion of asylum within the broader frameworks of migration, this section addresses how concerns about borders move beyond the domain of the nation-state. The respondents mobilised frameworks of crime at the local level at the same time connecting them to global discourses of terrorism. Racialisation of crime in Sydney often focuses upon individuals of Middle Eastern appearance across the South-West of Sydney localising the fear of international terrorism (Poynting *et al.* 2004, 16 and 250). Guibernau (2001) echoes these observations theorising that 'in the West the absence of war' means that national identity is formed in relation to 'new kinds of external and internal enemies':

The former include more abstract 'enemies' such as the threat of international terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, organised crime, or ecological disasters. The latter may include some national and ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as groups, which for various reasons, represent the 'alien', the 'different' and generally prompt the reinforcement of the state's national identity (2001, 263).

When analysed in a co-constitutive and relational framework, the demarcations between purely internal and external are reductive. The external threat of international terrorism becomes imposed on the groups of 'others'. Respondents simultaneously drew upon the local, national and global when considering information on asylum and migration. The respondents exhibited awareness of the politicised discourses regarding the de-humanisation of asylum seekers that located asylum seekers outside the boundaries of the national community. In situating the asylum seekers outside the boundaries of the nation, the respondents also domesticated global 'terror' discourses. Furthermore, the respondents made use of racialised frames as connected to crime, when localising broader space/power/identity formations. Ultimately, the respondents' exploration of the local and global elements of migration relates to pluralised understandings of the Australian nation-state. Both the rhetoric of assimilation and multiculturalism are employed as intertwined concepts in the discussions of the

space/power/identity formations in Australia. By investigating the ways in which respondents use interconnected knowledge of space/power/identity formations, this section underscores the importance of mediatised discourses in affirming the everyday functions of the nation-state

7.3.1 Situating dehumanisation

When contesting mediatised representations of asylum, the respondents used the broader global space/power/identity formations to frame the discourses of dehumanisation. Commercial television news programmes create multimodal discourses of dehumanisation by employing a range of visual mechanisms that paralleled ‘crime’ reporting.³⁵⁶ By pixilating the identifying features of asylum seekers and filming individuals at a public distance the television news reports attempt to de-identify individuals. Five respondents discussed how journalistic representations employed wider space/power/identity relationships depicting asylum seekers within frames of terrorism (Susan, Jennifer, Adam, Gary, and Azar). The respondents’ awareness of the multimodal discursive ‘attack’ rhetoric built upon the historically located concerns that asylum seekers will ‘storm the borders and take over the country’ (Susan). However, the discourses assumed a racialised formation in connection with Middle Eastern terrorism. Adam’s assertions highlighted the concerns over the mediatised representations that linked local-global racial anxieties to the issue of asylum.

Adam: They dehumanise them! Basically you just see boat people you think almost like suicide bombers, if we let them through they’ll blow themselves up!

Gary: We were in Italy ... the boat issue and I mean the way they present it there is a more humane presentation ... they’re trying to deal with the problem. Here it’s a very like they’re criminals you know and they’ve got to be punished attitude, and they even in Italy, they were

³⁵⁶ See Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.2 for the multimodal relationship between pixilation and social statistics in asylum reporting.

very um [sic], critical of the Australian approach, and the way we're demonising and that's the word demonising boat people.

... **Azar:** It's a style of reporting ... that they're portrayed as not individual human beings ... like they don't have a face, they don't whatever, not as humans you know it's just them [sic] sorts of things.

Gary: well to me they're portrayed as terrorists.

... **Azar:** Also I think that these poor souls on the boats are seen as almost um [sic] attacking our country you know whereas they're just poor souls trying to get a new life I suppose.

The discursive construction of dehumanisation in commercial television news reports intertwines with the politicised discourses of illegality. Following the electoral victory, the Coalition enacted a return to the terminology of 'illegality' (9 News 21-10-2013). Bill Shorten, the leader of the Labor Party, alleged that Labor opposed 'the demonization of refugees' as associated with the term 'illegal' (Hall, 2013). Adam's awareness of the 'suicide bomber' connotations in the mediated representations was particularly pertinent. Ahmed (2004, 79) argues that 'the international terrorist has been mobilised in close proximity to the figure of the asylum seeker'. Discourses of dehumanisation are one of the mechanisms of representing the asylum seeker as connected to the international terrorist. Although the four respondents criticised the association between national boundaries and the processes of dehumanisation, other respondents explored international frameworks of terror at greater depth. The respondents both acceded and contested the mediated space/power/identity knowledge by mobilising the local, national, and global scales of terrorism.

7.3.2 Replicating the domestication of terror

While some respondents demonstrated criticality toward the racial frameworks employed in the reportage of asylum, they also replicated racialised migration discourses in their discussions of global terrorism. In the Australian context, Poynting *et al.* (2004) state that the conflation between international terrorism and domestic Middle Eastern crime is situated in

multiculturalism and identity discourses. When discussing news the respondents global and local positioning of the 'other' made predominant references to the Middle Eastern or Muslim identities. However, the respondents' discourses occupied a range of positions when contesting or perpetuating the mediated knowledge. Albert conveyed a relational understanding of space/power/identity knowledge and linked global terrorism discourses to the national Australian borders. He mobilised monolithic notions of the West and Islam when asserting the relationship between asylum seekers and terrorists. Albert drew upon a prolonged period of mediated representations to construct the global space/power/identity discourses.³⁵⁷ Vicky reflected upon the historically situated context of contemporary space/power/identity discourses. However, she also considered the hegemonic openings by which commercial news programmes disarticulated the conflation between terrorism and Muslim identity.

Albert: In 1993, there was an attempt to bring down the Twin Towers ... That was done by refugees, people who had entered the US as refugees ... is that happening here? Are we bringing in people whose background we don't know and they're fostering anti-, anti-Western ideas now?

Vicky: I think the Boston incident they linked it to 9/11 ... I think it always comes back to this war on terrorism ... they sometimes over-generalise so with the British guard that was murdered and calling it a 'War on Terror'... in that case that they back tracked and said that it was just one guy who was just crazy super vigilante ... it wasn't representative of the whole culture, religion.

³⁵⁷ Only one out of the six individuals Ramzi Yousef involved in the attack, had requested asylum (Benjamin and Simon 2002, 7).

Nick also echoed Vicky's observation that news reports of the Boston Marathon bombing was placed within broader discourses of global terrorism.³⁵⁸ While Nick criticised the news coverage which connected the global to the national formation, Kate disarticulated and rearticulated the hegemonic representations when drawing upon mediatised frameworks of terror.

In his discussion of the coverage of the Boston bombings Nick explored the invocation of the Australian national space/power/identity formation in relation to the local-global 'Muslim' identity. Referring to an unrelated incident of Al-Shabbab Kenyan shopping mall attack, Kate called on the local-global 'Muslim' identity formation³⁵⁹ By drawing upon international frameworks of terror, Kate domesticated the discourses to consider the global 'other' and the criminal in the Australian space/power/identity scale.

Kate: I'm more aware now ... how we perceive the other, and the, or the criminal. How we perceive them, what do we make of such an attack? In what should be a very ordinary every day safe environment, a shopping mall ... what is it that they are so angry about that this is the only way of communication? Or they believe it is the most effective way of communicating? ... if we don't look to the people in our communities who do feel aggrieved not heard, excluded, marginalised um [*sic*] all of those things are very, very, they cause pain, they're disempowering and they can lead to very angry people and I think that we have an opportunity as Australians to be a more welcoming place and I don't know that we're doing a great job of that at the moment.

Nick: It was a commercial for one of the, I think it was *10 News* ... I can't remember who it was but they were saying it's Australia next, and I was thinking why is it relevant to bring Australia into this context? Saying that we're next like that's just invoking fear ...

³⁵⁸ On the 15th April 2013, a terrorist attack occurred at the Boston Marathon. The attack resulted in the deaths of 3 people and the injured 264 individuals. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was sentenced to death over the incident, and his brother Tamerlan Tsarnaev was killed during firefight with police. Both brothers immigrated to the United States with their family in 2002 as refugees.

³⁵⁹ On 21st September 2013 the Islamic extremist group, al-Shabaab, attacked a shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. The siege lasted 48 hours. The mass shooting led to the deaths of 67 individuals and injured more than 175 individuals.

they're focusing on a sub-class to raise a flag type of thing and start saying like the fault ... well not flag but like right now where they're riling everyone up saying like he's another Muslim, he was another Muslim, you know what I mean?

When discussing the mediated representations which linked global terrorism to the Australian nation-state both respondents deployed the nationalist discursive construction of 'us/them'. Billig (2011 [1995], 172) comments that Islamic fundamentalists have come to replace 'old Soviet demons' in the flagging of our 'ideological matrix'. Here, the Muslim 'other' does not only signify the boundaries of identity, but also the space/power/identity formations across the local, national, and global scales.

The respondents also delineated how mediated representations functioned to perpetuate international political tensions in terms of social cohesion in local areas in Sydney (Nick, Rob, and Todd).³⁶⁰ Nick employed bi-lateral relationships to explain that the news discourses were a manifestation of global allegiances in the coverage of the Boston Marathon bombings. The emphasis on Islamic difference was because 'we're [Australia] so tight with American culture'. Nick problematised the connection between ethnic or religious identity and the representation of crime and terrorism, pointing to its potential to contribute to intercultural dissonance. Rob pointed to the discourse of global-local tension between different cultural groups in his evaluation of the commercial coverage of the Boston bombings.

Nick: During the Boston Bombings I guess, they were very focused on, talking about like um [*sic*] how this teenage boy ... how he was religious, like he was Muslim religion ... bringing up his religion isn't going to help the situation or explain what's happening at the moment ... I'm Greek Orthodox, he was Muslim ... we're just completely different religions, but I still ... well not empathise, that's a horrible thing to say, especially after what he did. I was tryna

³⁶⁰ See subsection 7.3.4 of this chapter for Todd's comments on the connections between Middle Eastern conflict and its ramifications for Sydney.

[sic] see it as his religion has nothing to do with it ... I don't like it because it just sends a negative image of culture, for no reason, like you're talking about less than 1%.

Rob: Maybe it is ... a very big issue in the world, terrorism ... But in this country, there is [sic] more and more important issues. For example, like this, a few months ago, this guy, you know there was a, an Islamic demonstration in March or something like that and they clash with the police and this guy in, in the court and he didn't stand up when the judge coming inside the court. He said, I just, only I can stand up against Allah ... this is similar like in Boston, like the Boston bomb, but who knows if this sort of ideas is going to be happening in here too.

Rob drew upon globalised terror discourses and domesticated them to relate to their ramifications on the local areas in Sydney. By mobilising religious identity to explain local acts of deviance, Rob disarticulated the global space/power/identity formations and rearticulated it in the local scale. The 'Arab other' is the 'primary folk devil of our times' and expresses broader national identity concerns (Poynting *et al.* 2004, 251). The respondents predominantly considered the global space/power/identity scale in relation to the paradigms of local-global crime-terrorism. However, Adam clearly coupled the terror frameworks with asylum. When elaborating on the mediatised portrayals, he dwelt on hierarchical discourses of legitimacy. Nunn (2010, 186) states that media discourses often create relational dichotomies between the 'helpless ... victims' and the 'opportunistic "illegal" migrants'. Adam perpetuated the mediatised framework by positioning the Middle Eastern terrorist in comparison to asylum seekers from 'African' backgrounds.³⁶¹

Adam: The way they portray let's say the boat issue, an average person might think you know we're importing a bunch of terrorists ... someone from Nigeria their whole village gets

³⁶¹ Here, the term 'African' is used as the media tend to construct monolithic representations of Africa and African refugees. Interestingly, Adam is specific and refers to Nigeria, but does not elaborate on the conflict or whether he is making more generalised comments. In 2013 there was a massacre in Baga, Nigeria and he could be indirectly referring to the incident. On the 16th April 2013, two hundred individuals were killed and hundreds injured by the Nigerian military. However, some in the military opined that Boko Haram undertook the attack.

slaughtered they manage to get away ... I'm sure certain individuals slip in who may have been al Qaeda or whatever, but then they would be a minority but I think the way they're portrayed is like they're all something to be really afraid of when they're really struggling just to survive.

The use of racialised frameworks to create global hierarchies is important, specifically in terms of the associations between Al Qaeda and asylum seekers. Even when disarticulating the hegemonic space/power/identity formations which depicted asylum seekers as terrorists Adam rearticulated the discursive formation by asserting a certainty that a terrorist may in fact 'slip in'. Adam's comments correspond to the other respondents' use of historically situated discursive formations, relating September 11 to the domestication of terror and border protection. The respondents' discussion of crime reporting further elucidates how the global, national, and local space/power/identity formations are simultaneously mobilised when discussing race.

7.3.3 Racialising crime

Commercial television news programmes deploy racial hierarchies in content, particularly when reporting on 'crime' (Phillips 2011, 2009; Phillips and Tapsall, 2007; Poynting *et al.* 2004). In the discussion of crime coverage, the respondents said representations were often stereotypical. When evaluating how news programmes conveyed racial identities the respondents drew upon local and global space/power/identity formations. However, there were also some respondents who replicated the mediated frameworks that focus on the spatialisation of 'racial anxieties' (Poynting *et al.* 2004). In particular, Priya and Anita brought up the issue of racial tensions in Sydney, which resulted in the representation of an ideal Anglo-Australia against the deviant ethnic 'other'.

Priya: But I'm talking about in terms of the Middle Eastern community that's where they tend to congregate [Mt Druitt/Hurstville] and that's another big debate as to the violence and

the drug abuse and so forth... this is just from what I've sort of seen over the months and years and so forth ... if there's an offence or a crime's occurred in you know Granville, unfortunately we don't hear about the person we hear about their background first. So we know Middle Eastern man allegedly did this ... you don't ever hear an Anglo-Australian you know crashed into a car or things like that it's always their nationality that's attached with the person rather than ... we don't hear about the person.

Anita: The recent story where the girl was um [*sic*] sexually harassed by um [*sic*], how can I put this in a more diplomatic way? By a foreigner. She was blind ... they used the word I can't remember, I cannot remember. He wasn't an asylum seeker ... they had a visual of him, but it was blurred out ... I can't remember, I think it was Indian ... Yeah but I can't remember, I think it was Bankstown or down there.

When demarcating the space/power/identity relationships, Anita drew upon the criminalised visual representation of pixilation to explain the difficulties in locating the identity of the individual. While Anita could not recall the specific details of the report, she relied upon her wider space/power/identity knowledge to place the crime in suburban Bankstown. The local space/power/identity formations that were employed are significant, as Bankstown is associated with being a lower socio-economic area housing a diversity of ethnic backgrounds.³⁶² Anita relied upon mediated discourses to reconstruct the details. In the report, the actual crime took place between Ashfield and Gymea station and an asylum seeker was charged over the incident.³⁶³ The conflation of spatial regions in relation to identity indicates

³⁶² In Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.1, Vicky also connects the suburb of Bankstown to Islam in discussion of a news report. The socio-economic demographics for the suburb of Bankstown indicate that the average wage is \$42,635 for 33,449 residents (ABS 2013c). The wider Bankstown city area has 172,029 residents with an average income of \$47,071 (ABS 2013d). In the suburb of Bankstown, the total percentage of the population born overseas is 61.7% as identified by the 2011 Census (ABS 2013c). Of the total individuals born overseas, 12.4% are from North Africa and the Middle East, 6.8% from North East Asia, 4.4% from South East and Central Asia, and 6.2% from Southern and Eastern Europe (ABS 2013c).

³⁶³ A Bangladeshi asylum seeker on a train from Ashfield station (Inner-West) to Gymea (South Sydney) assaulted a visually impaired woman on 17 July 2013. *7 News* 01-08-2013 [4] and *9 News* 01-08-2013 [10] followed up with the information that it was a Bangladeshi asylum seeker. It is not clear which of the two reports Anita refers to as her interview occurred after both segments had aired.

that the respondents utilised a prolonged period of exposure to mediated discourses when elaborating on the relationship between crime and migration.

Although some respondents were critical of the mediatised space/power/identity representations in Sydney, news frames continued to influence how crime was conceptualised. The respondents engaged in the mediated ritual of being connected ‘not with the affirmation of what we share, but with the management of conflict and the masking of social inequality’ (Couldry 2003, 4). Lesley, Jane, and Dianne outlined the racialised frameworks employed by commercial television news programmes, which emphasised the differences between Middle Eastern communities and the ‘other’ Australian identity groups. Lesley further invoked religious dimensions when conflating Middle Eastern groups with a monolithic Islamic belief.

Lesley: Drugs and um [*sic*] armed robberies and those in that particular area of crime how the ... I guess how a lot of Muslim cultures could be misrepresented, I feel that they actually are misrepresented, you know that the proportion of people that do commit crimes you know with that particular ethnic background, are not all bad ... I do think, I do think when it comes to drugs, and weapons you know that Muslim um [*sic*] ... a Muslim culture is often identified as being involved with crime.

Jane: To be quite honest I don’t always think it’s newsworthy, you know? Like the debate of shootings a lot of it is sort of racial um [*sic*]. And I suppose we do need to know about it [pause] but they concentrate mainly on the negative side of it.

Dianne: I think it’s because it’s all tied up with Channel 9 and *Underbelly* ... how it’s almost made out to be heroes and villains and that sort of stuff.

Dianne’s deliberation on the coverage of crime within racial frameworks emphasised the televisual blurring of reality and fictional programming across news and entertainment content. The televisual discourses on crime and race have a continuous hegemonic ‘flow’ across commercial programmes (Williams 1974 [2004]). She mobilised a relational spatial

construction to argue that aggressive criminal motorcycle gangs were present across cultural groups, rather than being confined to migrant groups.

Dianne: It can affect society to a certain extent because it's giving um [*sic*], it's starting almost like a racist type argument up. That these people, these bikies [*sic*], are sort of Middle Eastern appearance or you know? They always like to say that they're of Middle Eastern appearance or, you know, this sort of thing and you can then start getting the wrong sort of ideas when bikies [*sic*] have been in Australian society for many, many years and it's the same in most countries, they usually have some sort of motorcycle clubs and that sort of thing, and they are aggressive people that's, you know, but they're not necessarily one particular culture.

By drawing out the links between local crime and ethnic difference, the respondents simultaneously engaged in disarticulating and rearticulating the positions offered in media discourses. However, when contesting the televisual news representations of Middle Eastern 'others' they nonetheless replicated the mediatised racial hierarchies in news that focussed specifically upon 'Middle Eastern/Muslim' identity. The tensions between the Middle Eastern and Australian local-global space/power/identity formations further manifests in the respondents' conceptions of the Australian nation-state. When articulating discourses of assimilation or multiculturalism, the respondents demonstrated some pluralised understandings but ultimately converged on the importance of integration.

7.3.4 Pluralised conceptions of the nation-state?

The respondents articulated varying conceptualisations of the nation-state in the discussions of both asylum and migration. The discursive positions concentrated upon the local and national problems posed by asylum seekers and migrants by mobilising racial frameworks. Respondents argued that the national government was integral in maintaining the Australian space/power/identity formation in the context of ongoing migration. Through the discussions, the respondents discursively constructed the Australian nation-state as either a multicultural

sphere or a space for the assimilation of cultural differences. The two discursive positions are inherently intertwined. Both conceptions employ exclusionary rhetoric in the local and national scale to demarcate the differences between ‘our’ and ‘their’ behaviours. The multiculturalist discursive constructions thus articulated the tactics of the hegemonic bloc by perpetuating divisions between Middle Eastern culture and Muslim identity and the rest of Australia. As Smith (1998, 174-175) argues:

The hegemonic bloc must appear to provide a surface of inscription for the satisfaction of every legitimate demand. Of course, part of this appearance is achieved through concealed acts of exclusion. A centre-right democratic discourse, for example, might construct itself as a universal surface of inscription by articulating multicultural symbols ... it will probably embrace a conservative type of multiculturalism ... the appearance won by a hegemonic discourse as a space in which all the demands of all the people can be heard is supported by aggressive ‘behind-the-scenes’ exclusionary campaigns to manage the boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate demands; and between ‘genuine citizens’ and ‘surplus populations’.

In the previous sections, the respondents demonstrated an awareness of the mediatised stereotypes that produced divisionary representations across crime, asylum, and conflict/terrorism coverage. When discussing the Australian space/power/identity formation in connection to asylum and migration however, respondents replicated the mediatised frameworks. The discourses of integration and assimilation were discussed as being related to Middle Eastern or Muslim individuals and the issue of asylum and migration (Jennifer, Adam, Rob, Jane, Lesley, and Albert).

Lesley: ... And can they really assimilate into Australia?

Jane: The ones that really annoy me is when they don’t blend into our country and accept our laws and um [*sic*] abide by them, you know they think they’re above our laws and they think they’re better than us.

Rob: You see to me this is a very important thing, you're living in this country you have to; you have to rely to the rule of this country. I don't care, whatever who you are but nobody said anything. You see this sort of [Islamic] ideas not good for the Australian society.

The particular concerns regarding Muslim integration in Rob and Janes' responses is drawn from broader political and mediatised discourses. Taylor (2011) reports that Scott Morrison urged the Coalition 'to capitalise on the electorate's growing concerns about "Muslim immigration", "Muslims in Australia" and the "inability" of Muslim migrants to integrate'. Although other Coalition MPs refuted the calls stressing the importance of non-discriminatory immigration for nation-building, it nevertheless demonstrates the ways in which identity formations can be mobilised by national politicians.³⁶⁴ By emphasising the discourses of cultural assimilation, the respondents employed scalar space/power/identity formations to rearticulate the role of the Australian government in managing the integration of identity.

Salman emphasised the function of the media industry, which created an internal cultural segregation in the Australian nation-state. Salman utilised multicultural discourses when he recalled the efforts undertaken by Al Grassby, the then Minister for Immigration under the Gough Whitlam Labor Party government. However, he moved to an assimilationist discursive position when describing how multicultural policy impacts upon long-term social integration. Interestingly, Adam also stated that cultural difference itself undermined the multicultural pluralistic Australian nation-state. The atmosphere of cultural tolerance was seen to encourage segregation in Australian communities, which destabilised the local and nation-state space/power/identity formations.

³⁶⁴ The concerns over integration were further noted in Chapter 5, subsection 5.3.1 which connected the *7 News* 15-06-2013 [7] report to visual signification of Middle Easter/Muslim difference through the use of women in hijabs. See figures 41 and 42 in Chapter 5 subsection 5.3.1 for a visual representation of the process. It is noteworthy that two of the women in image 1 are used again in image 2 from a different angle, providing the perspective that there are more Muslim women in a hijab than there actually are in the news report.

Jennifer: And I also blame the government for that as well, because the government should be like putting some more resources to get these people [asylum seekers] integrated into the community.

... **Adam:** The government has definitely failed in integrating into the society; you know all these, all these little um [sic] segregations of communities around Sydney. You know your Muslim group who have their own school their own belief system trying to bring Sharia law in ... I don't think government really informs them, what they, how they're expected to act as an Australian citizen. They come here and try to enforce their own set of laws whereas when we go to like Saudi Arabia you have to act their way, you skew a little bit you're jailed. You know they're very tough there's no, two ways about it. Here the government is just kinda [sic] you know bending backwards and um [sic] sort of even in endangering the whole ... the culture that Australia was founded upon.

Jennifer: They're building hatred I think within the people, because the people think why do they have special rules or special exceptions?

Salman: Egypt yeah ... I came in 79 I think... they shifted that effort from getting the Australian community to accept migrants and to get to know their habits ... into serving the migrant on his own, in his language ... like if I speak Arabic I'll have an Arabic interpreter, an Arabic doctor, and Arabic songs on the radio, an Arabic programme on channel 0 ... SBS now, Arabic movie, so do I need to speak English? ... The other thing is the Australian community has to know about them ... so both ways you integrate. Now, you don't tell the Australian people anything about this man and you're telling this man just speak your language you don't have to worry, everything is provided in your language, so you're really separating [Laughs].

Albert: Especially the Italians that came in the 60s ... we gave them hell and they took it and they ... made good their society and they blended in and then you grew up with them and they became mates ... they say to you oh friggen [sic] boat people we had to put, they're bending over to help them and we got nothing.

Albert and Salman used historically situated discursive formations to position Middle Eastern and asylum seekers in relation to other migrant groups. By considering the differences in integration the respondents created further hierarchical divisions between cultural migrant groups. The respondents' concerns regarding asylum seekers and Muslim integration continue with regard to contemporary politicised discourses. Morrison's recent rhetoric drew upon 'crime' and 'terrorism' to question the integration of Muslim asylum seekers (Maley 2015). The statements by Morrison were supported by Haset Sali, the founding president of the Australian Federation of Islamic Council, who claimed that there was a division between Muslim refugees that had 'adopted Australian values and those who had not' (ibid.). Although the nation-state formation was the dominant space/power/identity scale to manage the integration of cultural difference, Todd further connected it to the trans-national domain. He articulated the concern that the global factions between different Middle Eastern identities created further local conflict in Sydney.

Todd: Well the Middle East, we've got a lot of people from that part of the world as it is so ... it can raise temperatures locally; you know you've got different factions here on the scene so it does affect a lot of people so ... I've seen supporters of one side arguing with supporters of another side.

Todd's anxieties regarding the different cultural factions in Sydney were echoed by Lisa. However, she emphasised the role that mediatised representations play in nurturing racial tensions between the varying migrant groups. Lisa touched on the ability of news programmes to employ 'fake words ... to invest these matters with significance, to make it apparent to the common sense that what was being visualised was worth attending to' (Ericson, Baranek, and Chan 1987, 339). She stressed the role of mediatised representations in encouraging audiences to employ understandings of identity that drew upon Anglo-ethnic binaries.

Lisa: Every so often Ch. 7 or Ch. 9 will pop up this um [*sic*] on the current affairs shows ... this phrase they use is reverse racism and then they'll do a story on how you can be Chinese and go into Yum Cha and get a different price you know than if you're Australia or you know Indian ... it always pisses me off because there's no such thing as reverse racism ... this is a national presentation that goes out to all of Australia that a lot of people watch ... who don't have the education to go oh there's no such thing as reverse racism ... they're banding this term around that doesn't even exist it kind of, something like that trivialises the whole idea of racism.

Hartley (1992, 144) maintains that these 'professional fouls [fake words] are not a fabrication of events to deceive the public' rather they 'help public understanding of the world by rendering it meaningful at a structural level, as a whole'. Yet, the inclusion of 'fake words' like 'reverse racism' has real connections to the space/power/identity relationships in Australia. Consequently, it perpetuates the negative discourses of cultural plurality in Australia, when encouraging the frames of assimilation and integration.

A pluralised conception of the national space/power/identity formation was evident in some of the respondents' discourses as they engaged with asylum and migration coverage. However, the appeals to multicultural Australia occur at a superficial level when analysed in the context of the assimilatory discourses. These respondents espoused the benefits of cultural difference and migration in the context of integration. Altan, Jennifer, and Jane discussed different aspects of multiculturalism as associated with migration. Altan's contemplation of multiculturalism centred on the culinary benefits of a diverse cultural population, whereby food could bring different identity groups together.³⁶⁵ Jennifer emphasised the benefits of multiculturalism to the Australian community by further alluding to economic growth as linked to a strong population. While Jennifer previously employed assimilatory discourses when discussing the integration of asylum seekers, here she mobilised the multicultural

³⁶⁵ The topic of 'food' as facilitating connections across identity groups was also addressed by Kate in relation to the 'Welcome Dinner Project', see subsection 7.2.4 of this chapter.

Australian base as an asset when managing the continued migration benefitting the nation-state population.

Altan: Australia is a multicultural country with different cultures, different backgrounds, our foundation is based on multiculturalism as a society we need to embrace that multicultural aspect of it and promote it ... food is uniting Australians ... one remarkably unique aspect of this country in the globe and it's that you can find anything from Kenyan authentic foods to fricken [*sic*] Icelandic foods right to Norwegian restaurants to Italian and Lebanese and Afghani restaurants.

Jennifer: I do blame the media for that ... because they have portrayed a particular image in in with refugees and you know, and they're they haven't portrayed it in a neutral way ... I mean why aren't they looking at why they're coming here? Or why aren't they looking at these other sides or all that? This is great for Australia, we've got different cultures ... we need people, we don't have many people ... we need more people to grow!

Jane: You know like Daphne's got um [*sic*] kids that go to the girls school, and it's made up of different families so it maybe an aunty and an uncle raising cousins and daughters and sons and they've kind of blended it all together you know because mum and dad have been shot and killed, so they've taken on raising those children ... when you kind of look at it like that you know why should um [*sic*] we not accept those people you know with open arms you know?

When discussing the integration of asylum seekers, Jane utilised the mythological 'Aussie battler' discourse. The 'Aussie battler' term draws upon class formations in Australia and predominantly refers to working class struggles and perseverance in the face of hardship. Jane discursively situated the Sudanese refugees in the 'battler' mythology when considering their space in Australian society. The term 'battler' has been invoked 'throughout Australia's white

history' (McIver 2009, 49),³⁶⁶ but the term operates here to encompass individuals from different backgrounds as they assume their position as new Australians. Yet, the rhetoric of multicultural pluralism remains connected to notions of integration and assimilation. These discursive positions emphasise the role of the government in managing the population. The respondents' limited focus on the positive associations between asylum, migration, and multiculturalism ultimately mirrors the mediated frameworks that concentrate on establishing space/power/identity boundaries across the local, national, and global scales.

7.4 Conclusion

When engaging with commercial television news the respondents emphasised the political relevance of the programmes by predominantly recalling political news reports. The respondents articulated the importance of structuring information utilising the political binary frame across a range of policy areas. Even as respondents were critical of programme content, they drew upon 'common sense' notions of reporting. In doing so, they addressed governmental issues that were perceived as the issues of most relevance to Australian society. The respondents' discourses centred on the issues of migration and identity, which culminated in the concerns over spatial borders. By discussing the commercial television news coverage of asylum, the respondents replicated the mediatised frames which reflected governmental discourses. Respondents reinforced the notion of the nation-state's authority by reproducing discourses of illegality, social statistics, economic frameworks and official governmental political sources of information employed by media. Audiences drew upon commercial televisual news discourses to perpetuate hegemonic space/power/identity formations, locating the nation-state scale as the domain of predominant political importance.

This chapter has established that the ways in which respondents mobilise complex space/power/identity formations to understand news. They move between positions of media

³⁶⁶ See Nick's discussion of the 'Aussie battler' terminology and the stereotypical 'Anglo' associations in Chapter 6, subsection 6.2.2.

criticality and unquestioning adoption of mediated and essentialist constructions of identity. Respondents contest both the media and the political discourses that construct dehumanised representations of asylum seekers. Although the respondents problematised the representations of asylum seekers, the discussions of space/power/identity formations converge within the frameworks of terrorism and crime. By mobilising the local and global scales to explore identity, the respondents drew upon relational formations that centred on the conflated Middle Eastern/Muslim 'other'. The identity discourses were historically situated hegemonic rearticulations, which understands the Australian nation-state as a place of assimilation. However, the rearticulation simultaneously integrated multicultural difference alongside assimilatory discourses when asserting a new national identity. The recourse to mediated discourses asserts the importance of commercial television news in affirming the spatial-identity boundaries of the Australian community as situated among the local and global scales of interaction.

Conclusion

This thesis investigated the role of commercial television news programmes in contributing to everyday knowledge on space/power/identity formations. Analysing how audiences made use of popular televisual news discourses among broader media and social networks was crucial to understanding the ongoing pertinence of television news. The ‘participation paradigm’ approach has enabled an account of the ways in which hegemonic discourses are perpetuated in the current communication environment. Contrary to the audiences accessing a pluralistic range of information sources across social and media networks, research undertaken for this thesis has established that news information is used relation to everyday local space/power/identity formations. Space, place and scale influence the ways in which Australians employed news information in their day-to-day lives. Commercial television news programmes appealed to the everyday local and immediate contexts of audiences. Commercial news reports presented viewers with information relevant to maintaining their social, political, and cultural connections to Sydney and Australia. At times, news reports and the audiences’ use of these mediated discourses and their everyday experiences facilitate hegemonic openings in the understanding of asylum and migration. These hegemonic openings allowed alternative ‘truths’ to be mobilised to contest the dominant space/power/identity discourses. However, these hegemonic openings remained limited across both the audiences and the commercial television news discourses. Audiences were critical viewers of a range of commercial television news programmes; nonetheless, they drew upon popular mediatised discourses when discussing news.

Summary of main findings and argument

The first part of this thesis considered how a range of academic works across interdisciplinary fields have dealt with the space/power/identity relationship. The theoretical review argued that any account of hegemony must address how the overlapping spatial scales

of the local, national and global are invoked in relation to identity and power. The study found that past analyses of identity and migration in Australia did not adequately explore the concept of audience participation. When exploring a range of research posited within Media Studies and Cultural Studies, the literature review furthered the argument that the 'participation paradigm' enables a more comprehensive account of the audiences' ability to participate in and interact with news information in the contemporary media environment. The second part of the thesis engaged with empirical research and contributed knowledge on the intertwined processes of contesting and acceding to mediated space/power/identity information. The study found that audiences employed relational space/power/identity formations to explain the everyday relevance of commercial television news. By situating the audiences' use of commercial television news in relation to participation, the study developed knowledge on the relationship between their media interactions and the respondents' broader contextual frameworks. Audiences were critical of commercial television news coverage and have access to wider media networks. Yet, space, place, and scale shape the motivation and time available to interacting with alternative social, cultural, and political information. The study also revealed that the commercial television news programmes have different approaches to representing asylum and migration, as they mobilise varying space/power/identity formations. The textual analysis pointed to the hegemonic openings in commercial television news, and also to how these hegemonic openings contributed to a rearticulation of hegemonic relationships. The study found that audiences perceived and recalled commercial television news reports within politicised frameworks. The respondents' discussions on issues of asylum and migration demonstrated how 'common sense' understandings of the news genre are employed to shape space/power/identity knowledge. Even when critically deconstructing commercial television news coverage, audiences perpetuated the mediated focus on nation-state governmentality. The respondents performed a hegemonic 'disarticulation-rearticulation' using media discourses to shape their discussions of

the local, national and global aspects of migration (Mouffe 1979, 197). A thematic summary of the main findings of this study presents an overview of the argument throughout the thesis.

Reinforcing the role of television news programmes

When analysing both the audiences and commercial television news, it was evident that traditional news platforms continue to have significant impact upon the lives of everyday Australians. This study not only supported the findings that highlight the importance of the television news in the Australian context (ACMA 2011, Newman *et al.* 2016, Papathanassopoulos *et al.* 2013, Watkins *et al.* 2016), but also answers the question of why television news was pertinent to viewers. Commercial television news programmes appealed to the local, the national, and the immediate spaces and places that audiences occupy on an everyday basis (Chapter 6). The daily constraints of time and broader social commitments limit audiences' interest in interacting with alternative news on a day-to-day basis. The decentralised online news environment heightens these constraints, where a plethora of information is not necessarily a positive feature. Rather, respondents emphasised the importance of professional journalism in delineating credible sources and mediating access to official elite sources of information. The limitations articulated by the audience results in a disengagement from the 'participation-interaction' dimensions to the news cycle (Carpentier 2011b). Although audiences have access to a wide variety of news across traditional and new media platforms, the ability to access does not lead audiences to seek alternative forms of information. Commercial television news programmes are relevant because they provide immediate information about the everyday context of the audience and foster a connection to the local and national context.

Appealing to patterned ways of 'feeling'

Audiences demonstrated that commercial television news programmes provided a sense of social connection to others in Sydney and Australia (Chapter 6). However, commercial

television news programmes also enacted ‘feelings’ of disruption to the normative space/power/identity formations. In discussions of a range of political news reports audiences were found to predominantly concentrate on the issue of migration (Chapter 7). The issue of asylum and migration weakens the notions of a nation-state in control of space, power, and identity boundaries. By referring to their emotions and feelings, the audiences discussed how local and national space/power/identity formations were challenged through certain forms of cultural difference. Subsequently, discourses of governmentality and integration were employed to resolve the feeling of a lack of control, emphasising that Australian political action was needed to deal with the local-national space/power/identity issues. The audiences perpetuated the multimodal discourses in commercial television news content (Chapter 5). While television news represents the world as it is, the coverage of asylum also generated emotive connections. News reports convey ‘emotions’ which encouraged the audiences to draw upon the feeling that the local and national space/power/identity formations were under threat. Commercial television news reports conveyed the feeling that the normative space/power/identity formation was challenged. This was done by positioning discourses within a binary of the two-party political framework. Thus, the commercial television news reports evoked the sense that ineffective leadership contributed to threats from asylum and migration. During the period of political instability in the lead-up to the federal election, these threats manifested in a greater inclusion of local and global perspectives in *7 News* reporting.

Hegemonic Openings

By undertaking a close analysis of the two most popular television news programmes in Sydney, this study revealed that commercial news cannot be thought of in monolithic terms. Common-sense notions of governmentality shaped the approaches to reporting asylum and migration across both *7 News* and *9 News*. However, across *7 News* and *9 News* coverage of asylum and migration there were key differences in the production of information (Chapters 4

and 5). When reporting on asylum and migration, *9 News* provided a more conservative nation-centric approach to structuring space/power/identity knowledge. The hegemonic articulations of the national space/power/identity formation were conveyed through the overwhelming focus on national political sources of information, but also through the multimodal discourses which emphasised the national frame. In comparison, *7 News*' coverage of asylum and migration was more dynamic, as news reports more often engaged with the local and global scales. Through the local and global perspectives, *7 News* provided hegemonic openings for alternative frameworks of knowledge. The inclusion of a range of relational space/power/identity formations reflected the commitment by *7 News* to cover the local Sydney scene, which has an inherent cultural diversity. Cultural diversity in the Sydney region thus facilitated the simultaneous connections between the local and the global. The hegemonic openings in *7 News* were also, on occasion, used by respondents to broaden their understanding of identity (Chapter 6). The coverage of asylum and migration across *7 News* and *9 News* constructed overlapping space/power/identity discourses across the local, national, and global scales. At times, the discourses privileged the dominant nation-state frame, while on other occasions the local or global provided alternative knowledge. The overlapping perspectives were mobilised by the audiences, where they neither entirely contested nor acceded to the hegemonic discourses.

Beyond the frameworks of contesting-acceding to televisual news discourses

Conceiving of the audiences as active and passive is not conducive as it assumes 'an idealist position by emphasising the active role of the viewer in processes of signification' (Carpentier 2011b, 192). Similarly, conceptualising the audience as contesting or acceding to media discourses reduces the complexity of the hegemonic process. Audiences simultaneously engaged in the disarticulation of the hegemonic discourses, and participated in the rearticulation of the dominant structures in new formations. While respondents did not

necessarily agree with the manner in which commercial television news programmes report asylum and migration, they nonetheless perpetuated the mediated focus on nation-state governmental frameworks (Chapter 7). The disarticulation-rearticulation was also evident when space/power/identity formations were employed to discuss multiculturalism. Audiences problematised the negative spatial and cultural representations in commercial television news (Chapter 6). However, discourses of integration were also mobilised in varying forms when respondents conveyed the fear that the local and national space/power/identity formation was threatened (Chapter 7). Audiences wove together the positions of contesting and acceding to the dominant discourses, which perpetuated new hegemonic formations. The ongoing process of disarticulation-rearticulation ultimately stresses the everyday political importance of commercial televisual news in shaping space/power/identity knowledge.

Future directions for research

This study has produced a deeper analytical account of the relationship between commercial television news and audiences in Sydney. In an era in which television news is but one form of information, this study has situated audiences' viewership among broader processes of making meaning. As this study presented a close analysis of *7 News* and *9 News*, it concentrated on the traditional format of television news and its attempts to enact socio-political relationships. However, there are other types of television news programmes that audiences rely on for everyday political information. Harrington (2013) argues that the divisions between the traditional and non-traditional news formats are archaic as audiences draw political meaning from a range of new 'news' programmes that blend entertainment with political information. When discussing commercial television news, the audiences in this study referred to a range of programme formats. This included the traditional evening news bulletins, the morning breakfast news programmes, and the comedy-news programmes such as *The Project* (Channel 10). A study of new 'news' programmes would be illuminating, as it

would establish how different types of news programmes present an array of space/power/identity formations in the Australian context. Do different types of news formats provide greater opportunities for hegemonic openings in content? Does 'comedy-news' facilitate a platform for non-dominant space/power/identity perspectives? Future research could help understand the hegemonic openings that are created by the many formats of news.

The arguments in this thesis provided an account of the manner in which individuals draw meaning from news content within Sydney. Ongoing research is required to understand how individual diaspora groups make use of commercial television news programmes as part of range of alternative sources of news information. In this study, the audiences spatialised their viewership when asserting that commercial television news allowed them to stay connected to the local. Recent migrants may draw from alternative overlapping space/power/identity formations, which could influence their use of local, national, and global media sources. How do recent migrants use traditional media to learn about the new social, cultural, and political environment? How do migrants use new media platforms to sustain connections across space/power/identity formations? Additionally, this study focused on Sydney and an analysis of audiences across other Australian cities would deepen knowledge of the audiences' participation and interaction in constructing alternative frameworks of understanding.

Even as this study has analysed the ways in which commercial television news programmes structure space/power/identity discourses and how audiences draw upon mediatised discourses, it has been unable to account for the news production environment. Much like Putnis' ethnographic research on the ways in which commercial television news production environments contributed to an understanding of the production of content in Australia (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b), a contemporary newsroom ethnography is required to understand how commercial television news production has changed. Commercial television

news programmes are able to access a wide range of sources of information through new technologies, which presents diverse opportunities to structure hegemonic openings in news content. An interesting question that follows is: under what conditions do commercial television news programmes produce alternative discourses? What factors enable news producers to create smaller-level hegemonic shifts in content by including alternative perspectives? An ethnographic study of the television newsroom would facilitate a greater academic understanding of the processes by which news production negotiates space/power/identity formations to appeal to audiences with local, national, and global connections. Extending the analysis further is particularly relevant in the context of Australia as migration continues to alter the local, national and global dimensions of identity to create ever-changing space/power/identity formations.

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Appendix 1: Topic/Interview guide for interviews

1. Describe your television news and current affairs viewing habits.
2. What channels and programmes do you choose to watch news and current affairs? Why these?
3. Do you feel that certain programmes are more informative than others? If so, which ones? Why?
4.
 - a. Tell me whether you can recall a story of interest that you watched recently.
 - b. Describe what aspects appealed to you.
 - c. Can you elaborate on whether you feel that the information you received is accurate?
 - d. Have you read/viewed/heard of conflicting opinions?
5. Can you tell me whether you follow up these conflicting opinions by accessing other sources?
6. Do you feel that television news and current affairs are informing audiences on significant issues in Australian culture and society? Why or why not?
7. Do you discuss what you watch on television with family, colleagues, and friends?
8. Are you compelled to respond through other media forms?
9. Age Group: Which of the following age groups are you in?
 - a) 18-30
 - b) 31-45
 - c) 46-60
 - d) 61-80+
10. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a) Primary
 - b) Some Secondary School
 - c) Completed Secondary School
 - d) TAFE/Trade Certificate
 - e) University/Centre for Adult Education Degree or Diploma
 - f) Post-Graduate Qualification
 - g) Other
11. Are you currently employed? What type of work do you do?

Appendix 2: Quantitative analysis coding framework

SECTION A.

Identifying aspects

Date:

News Programme:

1. *7 News*
2. *9 News*

Report Headline (first sentence):

Order in the Broadcast:

Report Duration (min, sec, ms):

SECTION B.

Sources

Which of the following are included as sources?

1. News Anchor
2. Journalist (s)
3. National Politicians
4. State Politicians
5. Local Politicians/councillors
6. International Politicians (please specify)
7. Diplomats (former or current)
8. United Nations representatives
9. Academics
10. Non-academic experts and analysts
11. Government Officials
12. Australian Armed Forces (Navy, Army, Air force)
13. International Armed Forces (Navy, Army, Air force) (please specify)
14. Australian police
15. International police (please specify)
16. Advocacy and Special Interest groups
17. Refugee/Asylum Seeker
18. 'Australian' Person/People
19. 'International' Person/People (please specify)
20. Other (please specify)

Visual Sources/Footage

Which of the following sources of visual footage are incorporated into the news report?

1. Live video footage
2. News programme's video footage (including news anchor in-studio or graphics)
3. Public service (ABC/SBS) programme footage
4. Commercial programme footage (7, 9, or 10)
5. Australian Cable programme footage (*Sky News*)
6. File-tape/pictures
7. Australian government footage
8. International government footage
9. International news programme or service (CNN/BBC)
10. Still Photos
11. Other (please specify)

Computer Generated Images and Special Effects

Are computer generated images or special effects used anywhere in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes then record which of the following are used.

1. Statistics, figures, or tables
2. Pixilation/blurring out of footage
3. Graphic Stills (Flags, maps, pictorial representations, illustrations, etc.)
4. Animated Graphics (graphics incorporating movement, or integration of graphic stills into a larger animated graphic)

Flags

Are Flags used at any point in the news report?

1. Yes (please specify):
2. No

If yes, is the flag incorporated through

1. Video footage
2. CGI or Special effects

Where do the flag(s) feature in the news report?

1. In-studio intro
2. Main body of the news report

Maps

Are Maps used at any point in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, is the map incorporated through

1. Video footage
2. CGI or Special effects

If yes, then does the labelling information record:

1. Placenames (e.g. Indonesia, Perth, etc.)
2. Event/Report Information
3. None

If [1], then what placenames are highlighted?

Emblems/Logos and Official Symbols

Are emblems/logos or official insignia featured through CGI and special effects in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, are they

1. Australian
2. Another Nation-State
3. International Institution (e.g. UN)

Aural (non-speech) sources

Are aural effects used throughout the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, are they:

1. Music
2. Sound effects

Languages other than English

Are languages other than English used in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, does the news report identify which language it is?

1. Yes (please specify):
2. No

Is the person dubbed over in English?

1. Yes
2. No

Subtitles and captions

Are subtitles, captions, or written quotes used in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, is it:

1. Quote of off screen statement or information
2. Summary of on screen aural speech

Other media sources

Do other media sources feature in the news report?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, then record whether:

1. Newspaper (please specify):
2. Radio (please specify):
3. Internet Websites (please specify):
4. Social Media (please specify):
5. Email

SECTION C.

Issues

Which of the following issues/themes are included in the report?
Code for as many as applicable.

1. National Politics
2. State Politics
3. Local Politics
4. Crime
5. International Relations/Policy
6. Law
7. Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure
8. Asylum and migration Seekers
9. Health Policy
10. Defence Policy
11. Social Integration
12. Environment/Agriculture/Energy
13. Education
14. Science and Technology

15. Religion/Ethnicity
16. Same-sex Marriage
17. Protests
18. War
19. Sports
20. Disability Policy
21. Royal Family
22. Poverty/Homelessness
23. Other

Identify the primary and secondary focus of the news report:

Primary Focus:

Secondary Focus:

Identity

Are there references to specific racial, cultural, religious, national or ethnic identity in the news report?

1. Yes (please specify):
2. No

Appendix 3: List of topics discussed in interviews

Issues discussed and story recall	Respondents	Summary and for event-based reports when the report first occurred/broke.
Crime and Missing Persons		
Schapelle Corby	Barbara Albert Ellen James Salman	An Australian woman, Schapelle Corby, was convicted of drug smuggling and was imprisoned in Indonesia. During the time of interviewing respondents she was released from jail.
Motorcycle Gangs	Darrin Dianne Rob	The respondents discussed motorcycle gang crime in Sydney, and Darrin and Dianne connected the issue of motorcycle gangs to multiculturalism to contest the mediated representations of 'racialised' crime.
Azaria Chamberlain	Barbara Salman	Lindy Chamberlain claimed a dingo killed her baby, Azaria Chamberlain on 17 August 1980 at Uluru, Northern Territory, Australia. Lindy was tried for murder, went to prison, and released after further evidence was found.
Daniel Morcombe	Barbara Darrin Dianne	Daniel Morcombe was abducted from the Sunshine Coast on 7 December 2003 (Queensland, Australia). On 13 March 2014 Brett Peter Cowan was found guilty of murder.
Malcolm Naden	Vicky	Malcolm Naden was the most wanted man in NSW and was in hiding from June 2005 until March 2012. The respondent highlighted the mediated comparisons made to Ned Kelly, a notorious Australian outlaw from the 19 th century who has become an icon of criminal culture.
Dianne Brimble	Vicky	Dianne Brimble died on 24 September 2002 on a P&O cruise ship of a drug overdose under suspicious circumstances.
Madeleine McCann	Vicky	Madeleine disappeared on 3 May 2007 in Portugal, and has been continually featured in the press.
Sentencing of a Man Charged with Whipping a Muslim Convert	Vicky	The report concentrated on the decision of a Muslim man to whip an Muslim convert in Sydney as punishment for drinking alcohol.
Crimes Against the Elderly	Emma	Emma recalled an <i>A Current Affair</i> report where elderly people were the targets of criminal activities.
Train Station Assault on a Visually Impaired Woman	Anita	A Bangladeshi asylum seeker on a journey from Ashfield station to Gympie station assaulted a blind woman on 17 July 2013 (Sydney, NSW, Australia). <i>7 News</i> 01-08-2013 [4] and <i>9 News</i> 01-08-2013 [10] followed up with the information that it was a Bangladeshi asylum seeker. It is not clear which out of the two reports that Anita refers to as her interview occurred after both had aired.
Trayvon Martin Shooting	Nick	On 26 February 2012 George Zimmerman shot and killed Trayvon Martin in Florida, United States of America. The media covered the American shootings and featured racial discourses.
Hunters Hill Bomb Collar Scare	Galvyn	Madeleine Pulver was taken hostage in Hunter's Hill, NSW, Australia on 4 August 2011. Subsequent

		reporting revealed that the bomb device was an elaborate hoax.
Road-rage Attack	Galvyn	Galvyn recalled a news report from when he was a child, where his father was the featured subject. Galvyn's father was stabbed in car road rage attack in 1996.
Murder at Winston Hills	Barbara	The respondent recalled a news report she had seen 20 years ago, where a boy's head was smashed into a toilet and he subsequently died.
Muslim Defendant Refuses to Stand for a Female Magistrate	Rob	A Muslim defendant, Mohammed Issai Issaka, refused to stand up in court for a Magistrate Jacqueline Milledge in Sydney, Australia on 20 May 2013.
Disasters, Accidents, and Controversies		
Malaysian Airline Incident MH370 ³⁶⁷	Tom Ellen Stuart Jim	A Malaysian Airlines flight disappeared on 8 March 2014 flying from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Beijing, China.
Natural Disasters – Floods, Bushfires, and Droughts	Greg Gary Azar James Rob Albert Anne Elizabeth Galvyn	All natural disaster discussions were situated in the spatial context of Australia. The Victorian Bushfires, the Queensland floods, and the Blue Mountains Bushfires.
South Korean Ferry Disaster	Stuart	On 16 April 2014, the South Korean Ferry MV Sewol sank. The captain and three crewmembers were charged with murder on 15 May 2014 for abandoning the vessel.
Chinese Bus Accident	Gary Azar	The particular report focused upon the commercial television news coverage of a bus accident in China in which people were thrown about the bus because of the violent collision.
Stuart Diver	Darrin Dianne	Stuart Diver was a ski instructor and the sole survivor of the 30 July 1997 Thredbo landslide, NSW Australia. Dianne and Darrin also mentioned the Beaconsfield Mine Collapse on 25 April 2006 in Tasmania Australia in connection to this report.
Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant	Altan Salman	The power plant suffered major damage during the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on 11 March 2011. The area continues to release radiation, and there is a 30km exclusion zone around the plant.
Japan Tsunami	Galvyn	The Japanese Tsunami referred to the Fukushima incident but identified differently by the respondent.
Beach Accident at the North Shore	Aiko	On 16 March 2013 a 23-year-old surfer was chain surfing and killed on North Curl Curl Beach in NSW, Australia. The respondent knew the victim and recalled the incident in connection to her personal

³⁶⁷ These are not clear-cut categories. The dynamics of conversation meant that often interviewees would locate topics within other themes. For example, Tom used the Malaysian Airline incident to discuss international relations and to branch out into national politics. It is through this discussion that he used the Malaysian airline incident to reflect on the different social and political contexts – integrating the global /regional into his understanding of the role of the nation-state.

		context.
Wall collapse at a Blacktown School	Priya	On 15 August 2013 a wall collapsed at Nagle College in Blacktown, NSW, Australia. Three teenage schoolgirls were injured.
Indonesian Spying Incident	Susan Adam Jennifer	In June 2013 <i>The Guardian</i> and <i>ABC News</i> alleged that the Australian Signals Directorate tried to monitor the mobile phone calls of then Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, his wife, and other senior officials. Susan also considers the parallels to a similar incident involving the United States and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
WikiLeaks – Bradley Manning, Edward Snowden, and Julian Assange	Nick Greg Jane Jenny	Respondents discussed the WikiLeaks incidents. In June 2013 Snowden leaked classified information from the United States National Security Agency. Also, Manning leaked classified information in 2010 to WikiLeaks. While the two are separate they were simultaneously discussed as whistle-blower incidents occurring in US security and military institutions.
War and Conflict and Local attacks		
Boston Marathon Bombing	Nick Rob Vicky	On 15 April 2013 a terrorist attack occurred at the Boston Marathon resulting in the deaths of 3 people and the injury of 264. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was sentenced to death over the incident, and his brother Tamerlan Tsarnaev was killed during firefight with police. Both brothers immigrated to the United States with their family in 2002 as refugees.
Conflict in the Middle East – Syria, Turkey, and Egypt.	Pratima Adam Jennifer Altan Gary Azar Bill Jenny Todd Salman Nick Susan Rob Stuart Galvyn	The ongoing conflicts and upheaval in the Middle East were covered in these discussions. Respondents also explored governmental intervention and the decision to send troops overseas. It is also interesting to note that Bill discussed the national economic ramifications that global events could have.
Russian Invasion of Crimea	Jim	On 26 February 2014 Russian troops invaded and annexed Crimea, which is Ukrainian territory.
Kenyan Shopping Mall Attack	Kate Altan	On 21 September 2013 the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi Kenya was attacked. The terrorist organisation Al-Shabaab killed 67 individuals and wounded 175 people. The attack concluded on the 24 September 2013.
London Soldier	Vicky	On 22 May 2013 British soldier Lee Rigby was attacked and killed in a street by Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, Islamists who claimed the attack was carried out to avenge the killing of Muslims by British Armed Forces.
Politics and Policy		
National Politics and the Federal Election	Greg Adam	The discussions covered either contemporary national politics or references to past politicians

	Jennifer Priya Gary Azar Vicky Marcia Karl Nick Darrin Dianne Susan Jenny Bob Mike Bill Lesley Aiko Anita James Stuart Tom Lisa Jane	(former Prime Ministers John Howard and Paul Keating for example). It also explored the context of the Federal election, the Labor spill, and the aftermath of the Federal election (Tony Abbott becoming Prime Minister).
Asylum Seekers and Migration Policy	Lesley Adam Jennifer Jane Gary Azar Kate Anne Elizabeth Galvyn Altan Darrin Dianne Mike Jenny Lisa Susan Nick Priya Greg Vicky Albert Jim Todd Salman Rob Anita Andrew	Respondents considered asylum seeker policy and also migration law. It also included those discussions which centred on aspects of cultural integration as a result of the arrival of asylum seekers and culturally diverse migrants. Andrew briefly touched on asylum policy in the context of his ‘political-talk’ with friends.
Climate Change Policy – Coal Seam Gas and Wind Turbines	Kate Darrin Dianne Greg Albert	Respondents evaluated environmental policy and law, and drew particular attention to the Gillard government’s Carbon Tax. Andrew also briefly touched on Carbon Tax but the discussion was very fleeting and in connection to his elaboration on his

	Rob	experiences of ‘political-talk’ with friends rather than exploring it as a report of interest.
Same-sex Marriage Legislation	Aiko Jane Susan Greg	The respondents explored the local and international aspects of same-sex marriage legislation.
Disability Policy	Kate Lesley Jane Greg	Discussions occurred in relation to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a new scheme to support people with permanent disabilities acquired before the age of 65.
Gonski Review	Priya	The Gonski education funding commenced in 2014 after a review established that many children were missing out on education due to a lack of resources and funding. The Gonski plan recommended that schools be funded to provide for the individual needs of students. Five state and territory governments signed onto the plan in 2013.
Reducing Aged Pension	Stuart	The respondent discussed federal governmental decisions to increase the pension age and reducing the amount that pensioners with higher incomes receive.
Car-industry Bail Out	Greg	The respondent discussed government subsidies to support the automotive industry.
Comparison of Policies to open your own business – Australia, France, Japan	Nick	The respondent discussed government policies supporting businesses and trade across countries.
Gun Laws	Jane	The respondent discussed explored gun laws in the context of historical re-enactments (Iron-fest).
Gender Equality in the Aftermath of the Julia Gillard ‘Menu’ Scandal.	Vicky	7 News report considering sexism in connection to the Liberal National Party menu. The menu featured a dish called ‘Julia Gillard Kentucky Fried Quail – Small Breasts, Huge Thighs, and a Big Red Box’.
Julia Gillard’s Partner’s Sexuality	Rob	On 13 June radio talkback host Howard Sattler asked if the Prime Minister’s partner Tim Mathieson was ‘gay’ because he was a hairdresser in a live radio interview.
Peter Beattie Running for Election (mentioned as ‘Warren Beattie’)	Gary Azar	The respondents mentioned the campaign of the Queensland politician and then said that it did not interest them much and they immediately changed the subject, the discussion also fits under the issue of federal election.
George Brandis Repealing Freedom of Speech	Jim	On 8 November 2013, Attorney General George Brandis repealed the so-called “Andrew Bolt” provisions of the Racial Discrimination Act. It would change the parameters of racial vilification in freedom of speech.
Other		
Improperly Licensed Laser Hair Removalists.	Anita	Anita discussed the dangers of laser hair removal in improperly licensed laser hair salons.
Royal Baby	Aiko Greg Anne Elizabeth Rob	The respondents focused upon the birth of Prince George to Prince William and Catherine Middleton.

Homelessness	Aiko Greg Lisa	The respondents discussed the situation of homelessness in Australia. Greg talked about a sleeping bag that could be made available to homeless people. Greg and Aiko both talked about the lack of coverage. Aiko spoke from the experience of being homeless. Lisa makes brief mention but does not go to much depth.
Sport ³⁶⁸	Pratima Anne Elizabeth Galvyn Mike Adam Jennifer Susan Darrin Dianne James Marcia Karl Nick Gary Azar Salman Stuart Rob Andrew Greg Priya Todd Vicky Lisa	This includes a range of sporting codes canvassing soccer, Australian Rugby League, Australian Rugby Union, the Australian Football League, netball, hockey, tennis, and cycling. Respondents also talked about the ASADA drug scandal and the ongoing investigation into doping in Australia. Nick also discussed Adam Goodes, an AFL player, being called an 'ape' by a thirteen-year-old girl. The incident resulted in a subsequent discussion regarding racism in sport and Australian society.
Finance and Property Markets	Altan Bill	The two respondents discussed the finance and property markets in Australia.
Child Abuse in the Catholic Church	Dianne	The Catholic Church and the ongoing investigations of child abuse were discussed.
Provisional Licensed Drivers	Nick	The respondent discussed the stereotyped mediated representations which depicted young provisional drivers as 'hoons' in cars.
Nelson Mandela	Gary Azar	The respondents discussed the illness of Nelson Mandela, which was covered for an extended period of time.
The Kogarah Kid	Bob	This focused upon the literary work of Clive James and his personal life.
Arranged Marriages in the Indian Subcontinent	Pratima	The respondent discussed arranged marriages in the Indian subcontinent and their value in contemporary society. This also touched upon intercultural difference.
Asbestos being dumped	Anita	The respondent recalled an <i>A Current Affairs</i> report where a truck dumped asbestos in the middle of the city near a pre-school.
Alzheimer's Breakthrough	Emma	The respondent focused upon the potential medical

³⁶⁸ For the most part 'sports' was discussed in terms of internal difference (i.e. certain ethnic groups prefer certain news channels for their sports content), but Pratima and a few others consider the transnational context of sports coverage in relation to the nation.

		developments in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.
Housing Commission	Emma	Emma discussed situations regarding housing in Sydney, and talked about the lower socio-economic conditions in housing commission areas.
Child Support	Emma	Emma focused upon the issue of child support payments, and the government's inability to ensure, at times, equitable payment.
Bernie Banton	Tom	The respondent focused on the asbestos victim Bernie Banton and his attempts to champion compensation for those affected by asbestos.
Repositioning of Speed Cameras	Todd	The respondent was concerned regarding the repositioning of speed cameras and also faulty speed cameras. The respondent was concerned regarding the revenue raised from not disclosing the ineffective speed cameras.
Shark Attack Victims	Andrew	The respondent discussed a report on shark attack victims and their bravery on re-entering the water.
Financial Scamming	Andrew	The respondent recalled a report where a person was robbed of their life savings.
Noisy Neighbour	Andrew	The respondent recalled an <i>A Current Affair</i> report on a noisy individual who kept aggravating neighbours to the point where they had to move.
Financial Hardship During Christmas	Andrew	The respondent explored a report which covered the financial hardships suffered by Australians during the Christmas period.
Slaughter of Australian Cattle in Indonesia	Rob	The respondent discussed ongoing issues with Indonesia regarding the live export of Australian cattle to Indonesia which are then killed in an inhumane manner.
Putin Performing 'Blueberry Hill'	Salman	In December 2010 Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin sings Blueberry Hill at a charity event in St Petersburg.
Indigenous Education	Nick	Nick broadly discussed the issue with indigenous education and the lack of support provided to the indigenous community.
Royal Family Charity Efforts	Emma	Emma briefly discussed the charity efforts of the Royal Family, in particular those of Princes William and Harry.
Mother Finds Out About her Son's Death on Facebook	Anne	Anne briefly discusses Facebook, and a news report she viewed on commercial television where a mother discovered son's death through Facebook.
Jamie Oliver vs McDonalds	Altan	On October 2013 Jamie Oliver won a legal battle against Mc Donald's claiming that the fatty parts of the beef are washed in ammonium hydroxide and then used in filling the burger. Jamie Oliver called this the 'pink slime process'.
American Politics: Obama vs Kerry	Altan	Altan discussed international affairs, including Syria, but the discussion predominantly focused on United States politics in relation to Syria.
New Zealand Girl Caught in Indonesia with Drugs	Barbara	On February 2014 a New Zealand woman was arrested in Bali on drug charges. The interviewee connected it to Schapelle Corby.

Iron-fest Festival	Jane	The respondent covers a local festival of historical re-enactments. See also gun laws.
<i>A Current Affair</i> Assists an Orphaned Family	Jane	The respondent explored a current affairs report covering a family that lost their parents. A Network Nine journalist, Mike Willesee raised money and bought them a house.
Clive Palmer Claims Rupert Murdoch's Wife is a Chinese Spy	Jenny	On 5 September 2013 Clive Palmer claimed that Rupert Murdoch's wife Wendi Deng was a Chinese spy, which was why he divorced her. The claims were made live on Network Nine's <i>Today</i> show.
Wollongong Chimney Stack Demolished	Mike	On 20 February 2014 a 200m chimney was demolished at the Port Kembla Copper Stack near Wollongong.
Welcome Dinner Project	Kate	The respondent discussed the information that was not seen on television but framed it as a report that should be featured on Network Ten's <i>The Project</i> .
Tim-o-matic's Charity Work	Kate	The respondent explored Australian celebrity Tim-o-matic's charity work with children with disability.
Chinese Manufacturing and Asbestos	Jennifer	The report covered Chinese made trains and automobiles having asbestos due to differences in regulation between blue asbestos and white asbestos – and the difficulties with imports into Australia.
Bondi Beach Whale	Aiko	On 8 July 2013 a 15-metre whale swam near people at Bondi Beach and knocked a surfer off the board.

Appendix 4: Inter-coder reliability statistics

50 News Reports	Reliability
Sources	
News Anchor	1.0
Journalist (s)	0.98
National Politicians	1.0
State Politicians	1.0
Local Politicians/councillors	1.0
International Politicians (please specify)	0.98
Diplomats (former or current)	0.98
United Nations representatives	1.0
Academics	1.0
Non-academic experts and analysts	0.96
Government Officials	0.98
Australian Armed Forces (Navy, Army, Air force)	0.96
International Armed Forces (Navy, Army, Air force)	1.0
Australian police	0.96
International police (please specify)	1.0
Advocacy and Special Interest groups	0.98
Refugee/Asylum Seeker	0.94
‘Australian’ Person/People	0.94
‘International’ Person/People (please specify)	0.94
Other (please specify)	0.90
Visual Sources	
Live video footage	0.98
News programme’s video footage	1.0
Public service (ABC/SBS) programme footage	0.96
Commercial programme footage (7, 9, or 10)	1.0
Australian Cable programme footage (<i>Sky News</i>)	1.0
File-tape/pictures	1.0
Australian government footage	1.0
International government footage	1.0
International news programme or service (CNN/BBC)	0.96
Still Photos	1.0
Other (please specify)	0.92
CGI	
Yes	0.86
No	0.86
Statistics, figures or tables	0.94
Pixilation/Blurring out of footage	0.96
Graphic Stills	0.88
Animated Graphics	0.82
FLAGS	
Yes	0.98
No	0.98
Video footage	0.98
CGI or Special effects	0.98
In-studio intro	0.98
Main body of the news report	0.96

MAPS	
Yes	0.98
No	0.98
Video footage	1.0
CGI or Special effects	0.98
In-studio intro	1.0
Main body of the news report	1.0
Placenames	0.98
Event/Report Info	0.94
None	0.96
EMBLEMS AND OFFICIAL SYMBOLS	
Yes	0.98
No	0.98
Australian	1.0
Another Nation-State	1.0
International Institution (e.g. UN)	0.98
AURAL (Non-Speech) SOURCES	
Yes	0.96
No	0.96
Music	1.0
Sound effects	0.96
LOTE	
Yes	1.0
No	1.0
Specify language yes	1.0
Specify language no	1.0
Dubbed in English yes	1.0
Dubbed in English no	1.0
SUBTITLES/CAPTIONS	
Yes	0.98
No	0.98
Quote of off screen statement or information	0.98
Summary of a person with on screen speech	1.0
OTHER MEDIA SOURCES	
Yes	0.98
No	0.98
Newspaper	0.98
Radio	1.0
Internet Websites	1.0
Social Media	1.0
Email	1.0
REPORT ISSUES	
1. National Politics	0.84
2. State Politics	1.0
3. Local Politics	0.98
4. Crime	0.90
5. International Relations/Policy	0.80
6. Law	0.98
7. Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	0.80
8. Asylum and migration Seekers	0.98

9. Health Policy	0.98
10. Defence Policy	0.96
11. Social Integration	0.90
12. Environment/Agriculture/Energy	0.96
13. Education	0.98
14. Science and Technology	1.0
15. Religion/Ethnicity/Culture	0.90
16. Same-sex Marriage	1.0
17. Protests	0.96
18. War	0.98
19. Sports	0.98
20. Disability Policy	1.0
21. Royal Family	1.0
22. Poverty/Homelessness	1.0
23. Other	1.0
PRIMARY FOCUS	
National Politics	0.98
State Politics	1.0
Local Politics	1.0
Crime	0.96
International Relations/Policy	0.96
Law	1.0
Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	1.0
Asylum and migration Seekers	0.84
Health Policy	1.0
Defence Policy	1.0
Social Integration	0.98
Environment/Agriculture/Energy	0.98
Education	1.0
Science and Technology	1.0
Religion/Ethnicity/Culture	1.0
Same-sex Marriage	1.0
Protests	1.0
War	0.98
Sports	1.0
Disability Policy	1.0
Royal Family	1.0
Poverty/Homelessness	1.0
Other	1.0
SECONDARY FOCUS	
National Politics	0.80
State Politics	1.0
Local Politics	1.0
Crime	1.0
International Relations/Policy	0.92
Law	1.0
Economic Policy/Monetary Expenditure	0.94
Asylum and migration Seekers	0.82
Health Policy	1.0
Defence Policy	0.94

Social Integration	0.96
Environment/Agriculture/Energy	0.98
Education	0.98
Science and Technology	1.0
Religion/Ethnicity/Culture	0.96
Same-sex Marriage	1.0
Protests	0.98
War	1.0
Sports	1.0
Disability Policy	0.98
Royal Family	1.0
Poverty/Homelessness	1.0
Other	1.0
IDENTITY	
Yes	0.92
No	0.92

Appendix 5: Summary of 160 9 News and 7 News reports

Programme/Date	Position in Broadcast	Length	Title/Headline
7 News			
7 News 01-08-2013 [4]	Report 4	0:33.7	A man accused of indecently groping a blind woman on a Sydney train is an asylum seeker from Bangladesh who arrived here a month ago.
7 News 01-08-2013 [5]	Report 5	1:58.7	The Rudd Government will reveal the true cost of its PNG Solution when it releases its budget update tomorrow.
7 News 02-06-2013	Report 7	2:08.6	Work For Welfare: The Opposition has outlined in detail how it would deal with the growing number of asylum seekers in the community.
7 News 02-07-2013	Report 6	1:55.0	Kevin Rudd is on his way to achieving his first policy breakthrough since taking back the top job.
7 News 02-08-2013	Report 1	3:10.1	The Federal election is expected to be called the Rudd Government has unveiled billions in tax hikes and spending cuts for the worsening budget.
7 News 03-05-2013	Report 2	0:35.6	In breaking news, boats carrying around 500 asylum seekers have been detected.
7 News 03-07-2013	Report 5	1:40.8	The Federal Opposition has accused Kevin Rudd of giving up on stopping asylum seekers ahead of his trip to Indonesia.
7 News 03-08-2013	Report 1	2:44.3	Kevin Rudd has tried to out manoeuvre Tony Abbott on border security, announcing a new deal with Nauru on asylum seekers.
7 News 04-05-2013	Report 1	1:52.8	The Prime Minister has effectively admitted her border protection policies are failing after two more asylum seeker boats were intercepted.
7 News 04-06-2013	Report 3	2:24.6	Bad to worse: One of Julia Gillard's closest supporters has told her the Government's dead at September's election if she doesn't act on crucial issues, like asylum seekers.
7 News 04-07-2013	Report 4	1:59.7	Seeking solutions: A new report has reopened an old controversy for Kevin Rudd, slamming his handling of the deadly home insulation program.
7 News 04-08-2013	Report 4	2:04.0	Now Sydney of course will play a crucial role in the election with the western suburbs a key battleground.
7 News 04-10-2013	Report 6	0:27.0	Asylum seekers drown after boat fire.
7 News 05-06-2013	Report 5	1:56.5	Kevin Rudd has urged everyone within Labor to pull their heads in following the latest destabilisation of the Prime Minister.
7 News 05-07-2013 [1]	Report 1	2:32.1	A new asylum seeker crisis is unfolding tonight with a boatload of people sending a distress signal just as Kevin Rudd meets with Indonesia's President.
7 News 05-07-2013 [4]	Report 4	1:43.6	Not good enough: An apology from Kevin Rudd for the deaths of four workers from his government's free insulation scheme has not satisfied their relatives.
7 News 05-08-2013 [9]	Report 9	1:57.2	People smugglers: One of the biggest debates leading up to the September 7 election will be how

			to stop asylum seekers risking their lives to reach Australia.
7 News 05-08-2013 [1]	Report 1	2:18.5	On the first full day of the election campaign, Kevin Rudd has opened his wallet, making more than \$500 million worth of promise.
7 News 05-09-2013 [5]	Report 5	1:30.	An Iranian asylum seeker is under arrest, accused of stabbing a man to death in western Sydney early today.
7 News 05-09-2013 [4]	Report 4	4:01.6	The Coalition has finally released its policy costings, with just over a day to go before the Federal Election.
7 News 06-07-2013	Report 2	1:52.4	Returning fire: The Liberal Party says turning back asylum seeker boats can and will be done under a Coalition Government despite Indonesia dealing a blow to Tony Abbott's plans.
7 News 07-05-2013	Report 2	2:34.5	Families will miss out following a budget back flip.
7 News 07-07-2013	Report 5	1:50.3	Asylum row: The Rudd Government claims there's confusion in Coalition ranks over its controversial plan to turn back asylum seeker boats.
7 News 08-06-2013	Report 6	0:17.0	A search is underway near Christmas Island following reports an asylum seeker vessel may have sunk.
7 News 09-05-2013	Report 6	1:54.9	Workplace laws: Tony Abbott believes unions will have no reason to campaign against his newly unveiled workplace policy.
7 News 09-06-2013	Report 1	2:12.1	13 asylum seekers are confirmed dead and at least 42 are still missing following the latest boat tragedy in Australian waters.
7 News 09-09-2013	Report 4	2:14.0	Tax target: Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott has had a busy first day in Canberra in his new job.
7 News 10-06-2013	Report 3	0:32.2	Australia's maritime agencies have gone to the aid of another asylum boat which got into trouble around 200km north.
7 News 10-07-2013	Report 7	2:44.5	Humanitarian crisis: Australia's asylum seeker crisis is being overshadowed by one building in the Middle East, where almost 2 million people have been displaced by the Syrian civil war.
7 News 11-05-2013	Report 5	0:25.1	Asylum seekers: A brief stopover in Darwin by Julia Gillard has been overshadowed by asylum seekers following a breakout at a local detention centre.
7 News 11-07-2013	Report 11	2:34.1	Fleeing war: Now to our series on refugees, and each day thousands of Syrians fleeing civil war risk their lives crossing a desert into neighbouring Jordan.
7 News 11-10-2013	Report 2	2:37.8	Two more Abbott Government ministers have been caught in the MPs expenses controversy, just as a Seven News ReachTEL poll reveals voter anger issue.
7 News 12-05-2013	Report 7	0:31.4	Police stop asylum seeker boat: Police in Bali have stopped a boat carrying asylum seekers which was on its way to Australia.
7 News 12-06-2013	Report 7	2:01.6	Smuggler found: Seven News has tracked down a people smuggler in Pakistan who admits helping dozens of desperate families make the dangerous

			journey to Australia by boat.
7 News 12-07-2013	Report 8	1:39	To our special reports on the Syrian crisis now and Seven News has uncovered alarming evidence of torture at the hands of Government forces.
7 News 12-08-2013	Report 2	3:07.4	And the winner is: Tony Abbott's had a spring after viewers in a Seven News poll of last night's debate.
7 News 12-10-2013	Report 11	0:30.7	50 feared drowned in asylum seeker tragedy.
7 News 13-07-2013	Report 1	2:29.2	A baby boy is dead and eight other people are missing, feared drowned, after an asylum seeker boat capsized on its way to Australia.
7 News 14-07-2013 [10]	Report 10	2:23.3	A new start: A Sydney school has reported great success in helping asylum seeker children to a fresh start in Australia.
7 News 14-07-2013 [3]	Report 3	0:38.0	Search suspended: A search has been called off for eight people missing in the latest asylum seeker tragedy.
7 News 15-06-2013 [6]	Report 6	0:34.1	A fisherman has told how he was ordered to abandon a stranded asylum seeker vessel which had children on board.
7 News 15-06-2013 [7]	Report 7	1:51.9	Sydney's refugees: Police have been warned that up to 3,000 new refugees are flooding into Sydney with most expected to settle in the city's South-West.
7 News 15-07-2013	Report 2	1:58.1	Knife's edge: An asylum seekers boat has nearly reached the Australian mainland at Broome just as Labor hints at new measures to stop the growing wave of illegal arrivals.
7 News 16-08-2013	Report 2	2:51.6	Our country: Tony Abbott has borrowed a line from John Howard on the Coalition's asylum seeker policy.
7 News 17-07-2013	Report 2	1:55.4	Deadly voyage: The Navy is tonight answering from an asylum seeker boat north-east of Christmas Island.
7 News 18-07-2013	Report 4	1:55.5	The navy has again had to help an asylum seekers boat, the fifth time this week, as the coalition demands Kevin Rudd come up with a solution, 7 News can exclusively reveal secret changes to fast track boat people back to their homelands.
7 News 18-09-2013	Report 5	2:48.4	Tony Abbott's ambition to reach the highest office in the land is complete after he was sworn in by the Governor-General as Australia's 28th Prime Minister.
7 News 19-06-2013	Report 4	1:51.1	Restoring authority: Julia Gillard is seeking to restore her authority as Prime Minister, tackling the asylum seeker crisis with new vigour.
7 News 19-07-2013	Report 1	3:17.0	All asylum seekers trying to reach Australia by boat from now on will be sent to Papua New Guinea.
7 News 19-09-2013	Report 4	1:52.7	Prime Minister Tony Abbott says there is no argument with Indonesia over his 'turn back the boats' policy.
7 News 19-10-2013 (hour-long news bulletin)	Report 8	1:38.5	Prime Minister Abbott claims his Government is winning the fight to stop asylum seeker boats, seizing on a drop in arrivals.
7 News 20-07-2013	Report 1	3:10.3	The first boatload of asylum seekers to be processed under Kevin Rudd's new PNG deal has

			arrived at Christmas Island less than a day after the Prime Minister announced his new policy.
7 News 20-08-2013	Report 2	3:04.3	The election campaign has been interrupted by a new asylum boat rescue north of Christmas Island, more than 100 people saved after the vessel capsized.
7 News 21-07-2013	Report 1	2:37.2	Dozens of asylum seekers have been charged after causing tens of millions dollars damage during a riot on Nauru.
7 News 21-09-2013	Report 3	1:45.1	Secret business: Labor is already accusing the new government of a culture of cover-up over its plan to stop the boat.
7 News 22-07-2013	Report 2	2:40.5	Kevin Rudd has more issues to tackle: Kevin Rudd has been confronted by protesters after he took his Government to the streets of Balmain.
7 News 22-09-2013	Report 4	1:32.8	Asylum secrecy: The first asylum seeker boat has been intercepted since the Abbott Government was sworn in.
7 News 22-10-2013	Report 22	4 :19.9	An Australian woman sexually attacked by a criminal known as the 'refugee rapist' is campaigning to keep him behind bars.
7 News 23-07-2013 [4]	Report 4	1:55.9	Honeymoon over?: Tony Abbott has intensified his attack on Kevin Rudd's PNG solution after a poll showed Labor's new asylum seeker policy resonating with voters.
7 News 23-07-2013 [5]	Report 5	1:49.0	News of Kevin Rudd's plan to send asylum seekers to Papua New Guinea has reached those already on their way.
7 News 23-09-2013	Report 5	1:55.6	Quick turnaround: Immigration Minister Scott Morrison he is aiming to send asylum seekers off shore within 48 hours of being intercepted.
7 News 24-07-2013[03]	Report 3	2:28.0	Tragedy at sea: A search-and-rescue operation is under way after the latest asylum boat sank off the Indonesian coast.
7 News 24-07-2013 [11]	Report 11	2:09.6	Now on the developing asylum boat tragedy.
7 News 24-08-2013	Report 8	0:28.0	Around a hundred people have marched in the city in support of asylum seekers, part of a national day of action.
7 News 24-09-2013	Report 12	0:32.9	Julie Bishop in New York for UN leaders week: Tony Abbott's only woman in Cabinet has hit the world stage.
7 News 25-07-2013	Report 2	2:43.2	Tony Abbott's plan for against people smuggling is already under fire from defence and legal experts.
7 News 27-06-2013	Report 15	1:46.6	Kevin Rudd faces a monumental task – keeping dozens of MPs in line, millions of voters on side and powerful vested interests off his back.
7 News 27-07-2013	Report 4	1:49.6	Immigration Minister Tony Burke has returned from inspecting Australia's offshore detention facilities, declaring PNG's Manus Island is ready to go.
7 News 27-09-2013	Report 6	1:43.9	Row brewing: Indonesia has tried to take the heat out of a row that's brewing with Australia over asylum seekers.
7 News 28-07-2013	Report 3	1:55.5	Kevin Rudd wasn't able to escape the asylum seeker crisis while overseas, admitting his PNG

			plan could take many months to work.
7 News 28-09-2013	Report 3	1:51.5	Boat tragedy: An asylum seeker boat headed for Australia has capsized killing at least 22 people, most of them children.
7 News 29-06-2013	Report 2	1:18.9	Hoping to combat Kevin Rudd's popularity, the liberals have wheeled out one of their big guns.
7 News 29-07-2013 [10]	Report 10	1:37.6	Counting the cost: The Nauru Government is asking Australia for more resources and better training of its police force to help deal with asylum seekers.
7 News 29-07-2013 [5]	Report 5	1:53.9	Budget razor gang: Australians will almost certainly go to the polls in September with the deadline for calling an August election now expired.
7 News 29-08-2013	Report 4	0:30.1	Federal police are claiming a major breakthrough against people-smuggling syndicates after arresting five alleged ringleaders.
7 News 29-09-2013	Report 2	1:32.2	Sydney protestors have lashed out at Tony Abbott's asylum seekers policy.
7 News 30-07-2013	Report 5	1:43.4	Tent city: The Rudd Government claims Tony Abbott's plan to increase the asylum seeker processing centre on Nauru is full of mistakes.
7 News 30-09-2013	Report 5	1:53.3	Tony Abbott's arrived in Indonesia for crucial talks with the country's president on his first overseas trip as Prime Minister.
7 News 31-08-2013 [1]	Report 1	2:21.9	This time next week, the polls will have just closed and Australia will have chosen its government for the next three year.
7 News 31-08-2013 [10]	Report 10	0:25.3	More than three hundred people have protested in support of asylum seekers.
7 News 31-08-2013 [11]	Report 11	1:48.9	Labor could be at risk of losing a seat it's held for more than a century because of plans to house asylum seekers in the Hunter Valley.
9 News			
9 News 01-08-2013 [03]	Report 3	2:18.4	Banks and credit unions will be hit with a new levy in the Federal Government's mini-budget, expected tomorrow.
9 News 01-08-2013 [10]	Report 10	0:14.0	An asylum seeker from Bangladesh is refused bail.
9 News 01-10-2013	Report 5	1:54.9	Tony Abbott is on his way home from Indonesia tonight, but his first overseas trip Prime Minister has been overshadowed by his asylum seeker policy.
9 News 02-08-2013	Report 1	2:35.9	The federal budget deficit will blowout to 30 billion, despite tax increases and spending cuts announced today.
9 News 03-05-2013	Report 3	0:20.5	A boat carrying 184 asylum seekers, the biggest group so far this year, has been intercepted north-west of Christmas Island.
9 News 03-07-2013	Report 3	1:36.0	It was a day of contrasts in Canberra, Julia Gillard urged voters to give Labor a second chance as she packed up her belongings from the lodge. The new Prime Minister focused on diplomacy as he prepared for his return to the international stage.
9 News 03-08-2013	Report 1	2:29.3	No decision on date: Kevin Rudd has all but ruled-out a seven September election, despite frenzied

			speculation the date would be set this weekend.
9 News 03-09-2013	Report 6	1:27.8	An asylum seeker has been warned he's likely to be deported if found guilty of sexually assaulting a teenaged girl in Sydney's West.
9 News 04-05-2013	Report 2	1:39.0	The Prime Minister says there's no evidence people smugglers are trying to increase the number of asylum seekers they bring to Australia before the September election.
9 News 04-07-2013	Report 3	3:19.4	One of the scandals of Kevin Rudd's first term as Prime Minister returned today to mar his comeback.
9 News 04-08-2013	Report 1	4:21.0	It's on – that's how Kevin Rudd today confirmed the Federal Election date of September 7.
9 News 05-06-2013	Report 1	2:38.0	Julia Gillard has ordered a top-level inquiry into the management of asylum seekers regarded as serious security risks.
9 News 05-07-2013	Report 4	1:56.0	Kevin Rudd's lightning visit to Indonesia has paid off, with an agreement to hold regional summit on the asylum seeker issue.
9 News 05-09-2013	Report 5	0:21.3	One man dead, another in custody: An Afghan-born asylum seeker is being questioned over a fatal stabbing in Sydney's West.
9 News 05-10-2013 [9]	Report 9	0:17.3	Asylum tragedy: It's now feared up to 200 asylum seekers have died after their boat sank off the Italian island of Lampedusa.
9 News 05-10-2013 [6]	Report 6	1:34.5	Tony Abbott flies to Bali this weekend for APEC, his first international summit as Prime Minister.
9 News 06-07-2013	Report 1	1:34.9	The Prime Minister has wasted no time in getting back on the campaign trail, just hours after his whirlwind visit to Indonesia.
9 News 07-05-2013	Report 7	0:17.0	Asylum Changes: Asylum seeker families who arrived by boat will be given bridging visas as part of changes announced by Immigration Minister, Brendan O'Connor.
9 News 07-07-2013	Report 4	1:48.8	He's been back for less than a fortnight but the new look Kevin Rudd will tonight be the star of a new commercial campaign for the Labor Party.
9 News 07-08-2013	Report 2	3:26.4	Election 2013: Tony Abbott has targeted business on day three of the election campaign, promising to cut company tax if he wins.
9 News 08-05-2013	Report 11	1:39.5	Australia is close to extraditing a people smuggling king pin from Indonesia.
9 News 08-06-2013	Report 6	0:16.0	A sea and air search is under way for an asylum seeker boat believed to be sinking 65 nautical miles of Christmas Island.
9 News 08-10-2013	Report 4	2:27.2	The growing travel expenses row is plaguing Tony Abbott at the APEC Summit.
9 News 09-06-2013	Report 1	1:39.7	Asylum seeker tragedy: We begin with an emergency that's unfolding off Christmas Island.
9 News 10-05-2013	Report 5	1:41.3	Gifts, hugs and a thousand thanks – Julia Gillard has received a rock star's welcome from locals in Papua New Guinea.
9 News 10-06-2013	Report 5	0:29.0	Two more boatloads of asylum seekers have arrived at Christmas Island, including this group in a canoe-like vessel.

9 News 11-05-2013	Report 3	1:39.7	Three days out from the federal budget, the Government wait could a time frame on delivering a surplus, despite speculation it could come within four years.
9 News 11-06-2013	Report 5	0:14.1	A search is under way for an asylum seeker boat 260 nautical miles north of the Cocos Islands.
9 News 11-07-2013	Report 5	1:39.7	There may be relief from soaring power bills with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd promises to regulate prices as part of a new pact with unions and businesses to look at ways to boost growth.
9 News 11-09-2013	Report 7	1:26.1	Tony Abbott gets down to business and the Federal Opposition remains without a leader.
9 News 11-10-2013	Report 5	1:39.6	Prime Minister Tony Abbott is back from his international summits, turning his attention straight to stopping asylum seeker boats.
9 News 12-05-2013	Report 8	0:18.6	Boat stopped: Police in Bali have stopped a boat carrying around 100 asylum seekers that they believe was heading for Australia.
9 News 12-10-2013 [6]	Report 6	0:15.0	Dozens of asylum seekers travelling from Africa to Europe have died after their boat sank off the coast of Malta.
9 News 12-10-2013 [5]	Report 5	1:31.9	It seems both sides of politics are playing a waiting game.
9 News 13-05-2013	Report 2	2:03.0	In a little over 24 hours, we will know the true state of the country's books when Wayne Swan hands down his 6th and probably final budget.
9 News 13-07-2013	Report 1	4:09.1	A baby boy has drowned and a search is tonight under way freight people missing after an asylum seeker tragedy of Christmas Island.
9 News 14-07-2013	Report 4	1:37.0	More than 330 asylum seekers have been picked up by Australian authorities in the past 24 hours as the search for 8 missing people is called off.
9 News 15-06-2013	Report 14	2:47.2	Illegal immigration is a problem for almost every first world country, but no way is it worse than the border between Mexico and the United States.
9 News 15-07-2013	Report 3	1:46.7	A second major opinion poll has confirmed Kevin Rudd's popularity has lifted the government to a neck and neck race with the coalition.
9 News 16-06-2013	Report 7	0:16.0	Asylum boat arrival: A young mother has died after making the dangerous journey to Australia on board an asylum seeker vessel.
9 News 16-08-2013	Report 2	2:33.1	Tony Abbott has vowed to toughen his asylum seeker policy as the election campaign nears the end of week two.
9 News 16-09-2013	Report 1	2:13.3	Prime Minister elect Tony Abbott has come under heavy fire from within his own party after unveiling his new frontbench.
9 News 17-06-2013	Report 3	2:35.0	The Coalition today showed how it will attack Kevin Rudd if Julia Gillard is ousted and he is returned to the Prime Ministership.
9 News 17-07-2013	Report 3	1:48.1	Emergency crews have rushed to a boat in distress in heavy seas less than 24 hours after four people died when their vessel capsized.
9 News 18-07-2013	Report 3	1:37.4	It's been a day behind closed doors for Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

9 News 18-09-2013	Report 3	2:05.0	Finally sworn in, Tony Abbott and his ministry have already started to make changes.
9 News 19-06-2013	Report 2	1:53.0	Julia Gillard will travel to Indonesia in two weeks seeking a breakthrough on asylum seeker policy ahead of the election.
9 News 19-07-2013	Report 1	2:51.1	As of tonight, any asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat will be banned from ever living here.
9 News 19-09-2013	Report 3	1:49.3	Tony Abbott is confident he can strike a deal with Indonesia to stop the asylum boats despite their claims his policy is offensive and illegal.
9 News 19-10-2013 (hour-long news bulletin)	Report 7	1:20.0	Tony Abbott has boasted that asylum seeker boat arrivals have fallen dramatically since he became PM.
9 News 20-06-2013	Report 3	2:01.0	Julia Gillard's grip on the Prime Ministership remains shaky with time rapidly running out for any leadership challenge.
9 News 20-07-2013	Report 1	2:35.0	The first boatload of asylum seekers to be sent to Papua New Guinea under the Government's new policy has arrived in Christmas Island.
9 News 21-07-2013	Report 5	1:49.0	Kevin Rudd's new hard-line asylum seeker policy is tougher, with a \$200,000 reward to catch people smuggler.
9 News 21-08-2013	Report 9	0:12.8	Asylum boat tragedy: Survivors of the latest asylum boat tragedy have been arriving on Christmas Island.
9 News 21-09-2013	Report 2	1:51.4	The Government has dismissed as hysterical accusations it's creating a culture of secrecy over asylum seekers.
9 News 21-10-2013 (hour-long news bulletin)	Report 14	1:45.5	A war of words has broken out between the Government and the Opposition over the word used to describe boat arrivals.
9 News 22-07-2013	Report 2	2:41.8	Kevin Rudd says the coalition's undermining of his hard-line asylum seeker policy calls into question Tony Abbott's fitness to be Prime Minister.
9 News 22-09-2013	Report 4	1:49.0	A boatload of asylum seekers has arrived at Christmas Island, believed to be the first under the Coalition's watch.
9 News 23-07-2013	Report 4	1:50.2	Kevin Rudd's honeymoon with voters might be short lived.
9 News 23-08-2013	Report 2	2:50.3	It seems Tony Abbott believes one way to stop the boats is to buy them.
9 News 23-09-2013	Report 5	1:34.8	The public won't be told when asylum seeker boats have been turned around under a new policy to control the release of information.
9 News 24-07-2013	Report 4	1:35.0	One hundred and fifty seven people have been rescued but many more could still be missing after an asylum seeker boat sank on its way to Australia.
9 News 24-09-2013	Report 2	1:38.3	After just two weeks in power, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop is hard at work at the United Nations in New York.
9 News 25-06-2013	Report 10	2:10.2	The government has accused Tony Abbott of missing a crucial vote because he was drunk and not caring if asylum seekers died at sea.

9 News 25-07-2013 [4]	Report 4	0:09.0	And in the last fifteen minutes we've just had news of another boat that's been picked up near Christmas Island.
9 News 25-07-2013 [3]	Report 3	2:09.4	It's the crisis generating bold ideas and today Tony Abbott said he'd call in the military as part of his attack to stop the asylum boats.
9 News 25-09-2013	Report 5	2:01.9	After weeks of silence, Julia Gillard has spoken publicly today, revealing plans to write her memoir.
9 News 26-07-2013	Report 4	1:40.2	There's no sign of a slowdown in boat arrivals a week after Kevin Rudd unveiled his new asylum seeker policy.
9 News 27-06-2013	Report 1	4:35.9	It was a brand new day in Canberra, but strangely familiar, with Kevin Rudd surrounded by his family at Government House, as he was sworn in for the second time as Prime Minister.
9 News 27-07-2013	Report 1	2:00.5	Kevin Rudd has been accused of playing games with the Australian people as he faces increasing pressure to name the election date.
9 News 27-09-2013	Report 4	1:57.8	Tony Abbott's mission to Jakarta has become more sensitive after former foreign minister Alexander Downer hit out at Indonesia over the asylum seeker issue.
9 News 28-06-2013	Report 2	2:42.7	Kevin Rudd's new ministry will be sworn in on Monday.
9 News 28-07-2013	Report 3	1:49.1	During Mr Rudd's visit, the focus here was on his Papua New Guinea solution for asylum seekers.
9 News 28-09-2013	Report 4	1:39.8	Tony Abbott is being criticized for refusing to comment on the latest asylum seeker boat tragedy.
9 News 29-06-2013	Report 2	2:19.7	Kevin Rudd's return has given Labor an immediate poll surge, for now at least putting them back in the race with the Coalition.
9 News 29-07-2013	Report 2	1:34.1	Federal Cabinet spent the day locked in talks on tough budget cuts ahead of the economic statement expected this week.
9 News 29-09-2013	Report 3	1:50.	Hopes of finding survivors from the Indonesia boat tragedy are fading with rough seas hampering search efforts.
9 News 30-07-2013	Report 4	1:43.0	A fresh shot has been fired in the tit-for-tat battle over how to deal with asylum seekers.
9 News 30-09-2013	Report 3	1:48.3	Tony Abbott is spending his first night in Jakarta as Prime Minister, ahead of high-level talks with the Indonesian President.

Appendix 6: Final Approval Ethics Application

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confidential content.