1A. Spreading fictions: distributing stories in the online age

ISR Swinburne panel convened by Jock Given

Jock Given: Where do Australians get their audiovisual stories online?

Marion McCutcheon: How do Australians pay for their audiovisual stories online?

Matthew Hancock: Beyond Beyond the box office — audiovisual stories offline and online

This panel will focus on online video in Australia, presenting early results from an ARC-funded project supported by the ABC and Screen Australia.

The central research question is: ‘How do Australians get their audiovisual stories and how might they get them in the future?’ Responding to the increased emphasis on audiences and distribution in government policy about audiovisual media, the goal is to quantify the changing ways Australians are watching and engaging with audiovisual stories.

The focus on narrative fiction content reflects the high priority given by successive governments in Australia and overseas to policies encouraging the making, promotion, screening and discussion of local audiovisual works, especially feature films, adult and children’s TV dramas and documentaries. These policies are based on the high cost of cinema and TV entertainment relative to the revenue-earning capacity of national markets. Challenges to these underlying economics are coming from at least three related directions: technology, audience behaviour and business models.

Biographical note: Jock Given is Professor of Media and Communications at Swinburne University’s Institute for Social Research and associate editor of the International Journal of Digital Television. He was previously Director of the Communications Law Centre and Policy Advisor at the Australian Film Commission. Jock has recently published articles in the journals Telecommunications Policy, Media International Australia, Info — The Journal of Policy, Regulation and Strategy for Telecommunications, Information and Media, Business History and Media History.

Biographical note: Dr Marion McCutcheon is a research fellow with the Institute of Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology and a communications economics consultant. She has worked as an adviser and researcher with the Australian Broadcasting Authority, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and the Bureau of Transport and Communications Economics.

Biographical note: Matthew Hancock has spent over a decade researching and writing media policy in public and private organisations. He is currently Assistant Manager, Strategy and Research at Screen Australia, the Federal Government’s primary support agency for the independent screen production sector. Prior to this he was Senior Analyst with Mediascape, a private research firm measuring the impact of print and broadcast media on community perception of public policy. He also spent many years as a contributor to the educational journal Metro Magazine and has conducted lectures at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School and NSW TAFE on topics ranging from media participation and representation to content production and release.