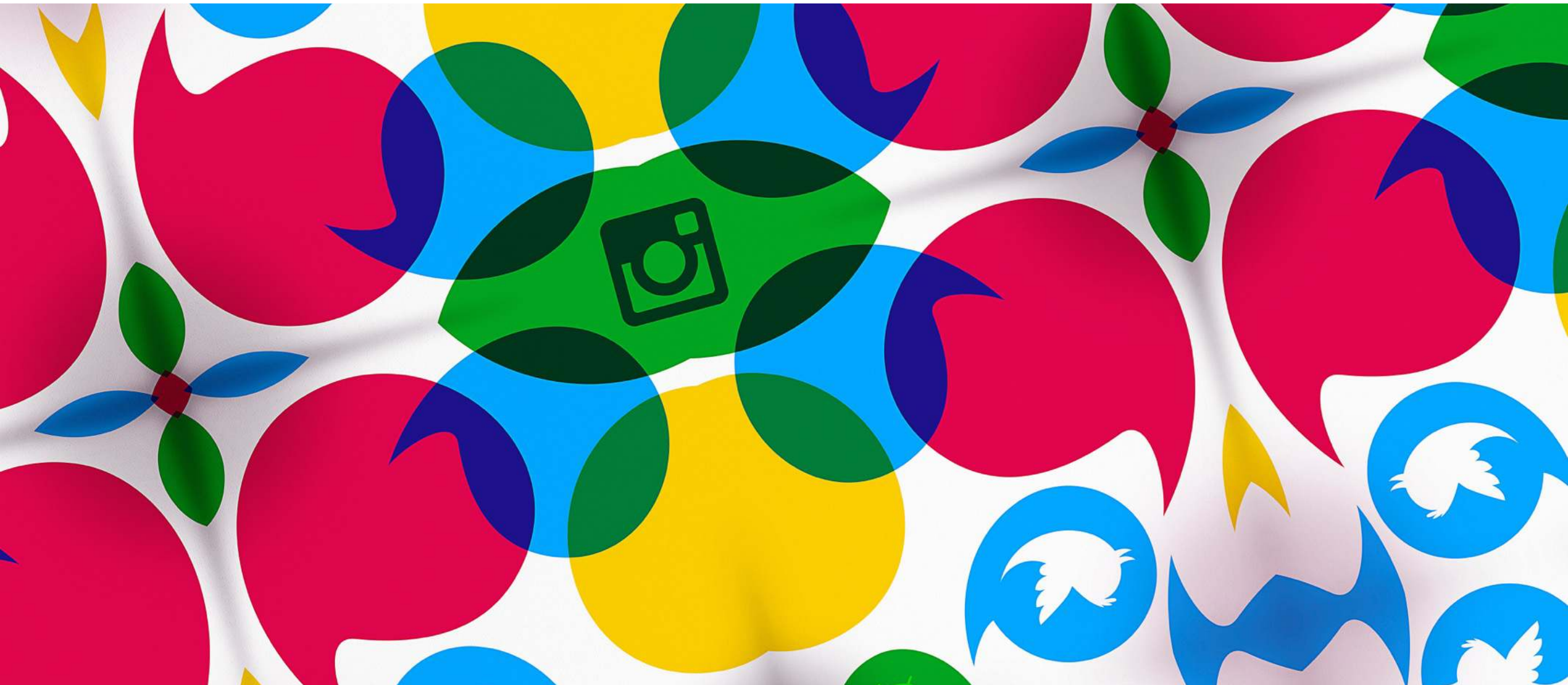


Amplifying Public Value

Use of amplifier platforms for engagement and impact



Digital Media
Research Centre

Stuart Cunningham & Kim Osman | @kimosman

Collaborate Innovate, May 16, 2018

*Amplifying Public Value:
Scholarly Contributions'
Impact on Public Debate*

The Project

- ARC Linkage (LP160100205) with partners the Cooperative Research Centres Association and The Conversation
- Contribute to the official impact agenda
- Investigating alternate indicators for engagement and impact
- Building a picture of different types of scholars
- To stimulate the value of public communication by academics, and
- Contribute to its better measurement by developing an experimental dashboard of indicators which combine inputs from social media like Twitter, universities' research output repositories, and other data aggregator sites like Altmetric.



The Impact Agenda

- RAE, REF (UK), RQF, ERA, EIA (Australia)
- Traditional measures of impact:
 - Citation rates
 - Competitive grants income
 - Industry partnerships
- Negative consequences:
 - Reduction of research activities to those with countable metrics
 - Focus on established rather than emerging fields
 - Staff poaching to bolster institutional impact



Rethinking Impact

- There is a need to recognise other forms of impact
 - Altmetrics:
 - Not all forms of citation and dissemination are covered by citation counts
 - For example, eprint and preprint access and citation.
 - Circulation through social networking platforms
 - Public value of research:
 - Impact beyond academic and industry circles
 - Visibility of scholars in public debate
 - Media take-up of research and public presence of scholars
 - Social and societal impact of scholarly research
 - Take-up in public policy making at all levels of government

Public Value

- Scholars have a duty to engage in public debate as public intellectuals
- Institutions should encourage and recognise such engagement
- This should include amplifier platforms and social media where possible.

Amplifier Platforms

Amplifier Platforms

- Loosely, any outlet that facilitates research-based knowledge being disseminated to the public
- Specialist platforms that have arisen in response to different stages of media.



1st Stage

- Main media:
 - Very limited space and time
 - Professional journalists/editors control access and produce the output, using input from researchers
 - researchers don't have access to the final product and there are often editorial decisions made where the final product is subject to space, higher level decisions, editorial line, dumbing down
 - Loss of specialist science journalists/editors



2nd Stage

- Disintermediation via web 1 (including blogging) and web 2 (social media)
- Researchers could blog, and many Australians used the affordances of social media web 1 and web 2 with impact eg John Quiggin, Mark Bahnisch
- However DIY on social media is difficult: doing it all yourself, balancing your day job with the demands of public communication, and ‘platformisation’ of the online space means that you need strong branding to cut through in a massively crowded space



3rd Stage

- Specialist amplifier platforms emerged:

Examples:

- The Conversation
- Medium
- Analysis & Policy Observatory
- Scimex ([AusSMC](#))
- University blogs
- Eureka Alert





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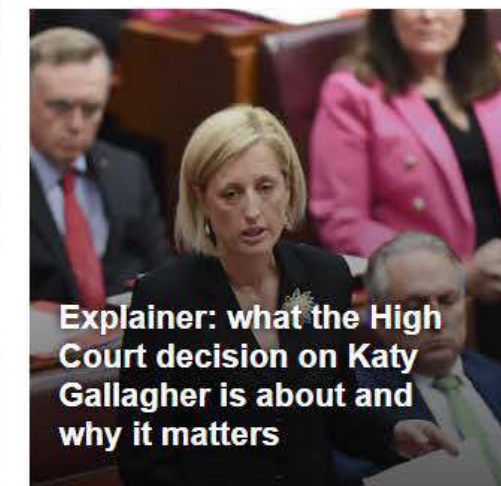
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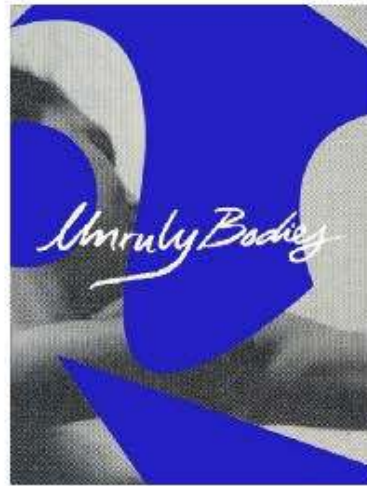
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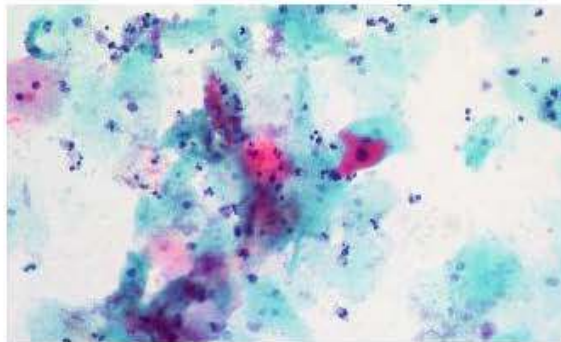
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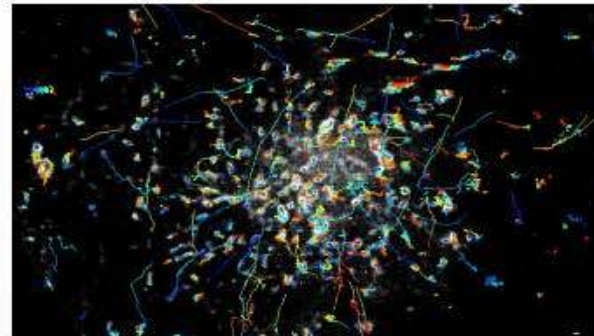
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Different Types of Amplifiers

- Some platforms are disintermediated
 - Eg Medium
 - So this has a bigger reach
- Some platforms are reintermediated
 - Eg The Conversation
- Some are curated or moderated
 - Eg Analysis & Policy Observatory (APO)

Amplifier of amplifiers

- This 3rd stage is recursive and main media is still an amplifier of research.
- Social media shares of Conversation articles can make Facebook an “amplifier of amplifiers”
- The CC licensed model of The Conversation means stories are republished in mainstream media outlets.



Research Activities

What are we doing?

- Collecting social media and other data (like The Conversation metrics) to show how scholarly inputs are contributing to national public debates.
- The research is informed by surveys of The Conversation readers and authors from the Australian and international editions
- We are conducting interviews with scholar and communications professionals on their use (or not) of amplifier platforms and different media for communicating research-based knowledge to the public
- Considering the role of Open Access scholarship and open licensing in the context of public communication.



Developing a Typology of Scholarly Personae

Next Steps

- The development of a typology of scholarly personae (Marshall, 2015) through interviews and case studies.
- Mapping activities
 - What research translation activities do you engage in?
 - Why? Why not?
 - How important is the public communication of research to your CRC?
Or to your university?
 - What is the value of these types of activities to the business arms of CRCs or to publicly-funded research organisations?

What can I do?

- Get in touch with your younger colleagues and let them know we need their stories.
- If you are an early career researcher and want to talk about impact and how you engage in public communication activities visit us in **Room 102 down the hall on Level 7**, or e-mail kim.osman@qut.edu.au - we want to talk to you.

Thank you

For further information on the project, or to be involved contact
kim.osman@qut.edu.au