

Student magazines: edgier or bland?

by Lucy Arthur

Student magazines range from the bland and safe to the contentious and risk-taking.

Older New Zealand university magazines seem to be edgier and get into more trouble, while those from newer tertiary institutions tend to be less risky. So, is it a matter of editorial independence?

Richard Neal, general manager of Unitec Student Union, says there is a difference between polytechnic and university magazines. "Uni ones are old and established, perhaps more aware of student issues," he says.

University magazines tend to "push the dial".

As a former president of the University of Canterbury Student Association, he has looked at many student magazines and their editors. Polytechnics are quite recent tertiary education providers and they aren't as aware of students as universities might be.

One possible reason may be the way editors of the magazines are chosen.

Mr Neal says he has had some bad experiences with student editors. "I prefer journalists who have studied journalism formally. Some people use the magazine as a screen to go out and be a martyr with no talent."

Daniel Trevarthen, former Auckland University of Technology journalism student and the new editor of Massey University's Albany campus magazine *Satellite*, says his predecessors were journalists. "They [the student union] employ journalists, I believe. But I don't know their policy."

Unitec's *In Unison* is edited by former AUT journalism student Megan McKechnie. Fellow AUT journalism graduate Rebecca Williams edited *Satellite* and now edits AUT's *Debate*. Although AUT is registered as a university, it has only recently graduated from technical institute status. Similarly, Massey is a younger university than the University of Auckland — by 44 years to be exact. Miss Williams, Miss McKechnie and Mr Trevarthen got their positions by simply applying for the job.

Craccum, renowned for its edgy editorial content, is one of the only student magazines in the Auckland area that is actually edited by students who are elected by students. Co-editor of *Craccum* Allan Swann says: "I think for a student magazine it is the best way. The students should choose rather than a detached board of directors."

The other half of the *Craccum* editing team, Hannah Jennings-Voykovich, says union member vote is a good way of electing editors. All students can join their union, AUSA, for free.

"Would you argue with Richard Prebble that a primary election is the wrong way to elect a party leader? I

do believe that appointment by election is a good way, because the people that read the magazine are the very people that vote in the elections."

Although this process has been labelled as a popularity contest by some, Mr Swann insists upsets are rare.

Mr Trevarthen disagrees. "How can you expect someone who wins a popularity contest to be a good news editor? Students are smart people, but what would they know about appointing someone? What's really important is their ability to do the job. I don't see how a group of students can discern that."

Miss Williams says: "They elect the editors at *Craccum* and then say 'I don't like what they do' but they elect them because they are popular."

However, former *Craccum* editor Colin Mitchell says that someone with writing experience must run the magazine and because of the varied nature of the student body it is difficult to please everyone. "It was hard not knowing what the target market was for *Craccum*. The student body is such a nebulous group."

But when the journalists were asked what they wanted to achieve with their magazines, their answers were interesting.

"Eventually get the editor on TV just like *Craccum* does," says Miss Williams. "I think [student magazines] should challenge authority and definitely challenge the executive. But if I challenge the executive, I'll get fired," she says.

However, Mr Neal says editors not being able to criticise management is "pretty rare". Otago and Canterbury Universities' magazines have charters that allow them to criticise and the University of Auckland's has a disclaimer. But those universities have students as their editors, not appointed journalists as the polytechnics or new universities do.

If Auckland's suburban newspaper journalists criticised Fairfax, they would probably get fired too.

"Yeah, I'm unemployable now," says Mr Mitchell. "It [*Craccum*] got nation-wide press twice while I was editing it." Under Mr Mitchell's co-leadership with Susan Edmunds in 2000, articles on how to date-rape someone and how to make pure methamphetamine were published.

According to *The Evening Post* (now *The Dominion Post*), over the past 10 years *Craccum* has published articles on how to shoplift, make bombs, commit suicide, use drugs, crack secure websites, rob banks and cheat the student allowance scheme.

Craccum has been told off by the New Zealand Police, New Zealand Drug Foundation, Auckland Medical School, Press Council and the Ministry of Health, just to name a few.

"The students should choose rather than a board of directors."



PHOTO: DOUG COLE

AWARD NIGHT: Erica Lloyd with Bill Ralston, head of TVNZ news and current affairs.

TV graduate wins four awards

by Dean Campbell

Erica Lloyd broke into a television career the hard way.

A mother of three young children, she had to juggle her family commitments with the full-time Bachelor of Communication Studies course at AUT, sometimes having to fit in classes in four streams so she could get home before her children returned from school.

But it paid off. Graduating in March, Mrs Lloyd collected four awards at the School of Communication Studies annual prize giving and now she is a producer and researcher for TVNZ's *Breakfast* show.

"I feel really lucky. Grads don't often get jobs like this one straight away," she says.

Some would say luck has little to do with it.

Her hard work in her third year earned her awards for excellence in documentary production, excellence in

corporate and community videos, and excellence in communication theory.

She was also named television graduate of the year.

The curriculum leader for television at AUT, Eileen Lavranos, says this does not happen every year and it is unusual for a student to excel in both the creative and academic sections of the course.

"Last year's students were of a very high standard, but Erica stood out above them. She was an exceptional student," says Ms Lavranos.

Before starting her BCS studies, Mrs Lloyd (35) ran her own film post-production business and started a family. She has three children who joined her at the awards — Nina (14), Miles (11) and Grace (8).

Having left school without Sixth Form Certificate, she decided to get formal qualifications.

After doing short courses in media and script writing to ease herself back

into study she was accepted for the BCS course in 2001 and has never looked back.

After taking out the award for top student in her first year, she went on to major in television in 2003.

"You have to be a master of time management," she says. "Initially it was hard being an older student, but the other students were cool and a real camaraderie developed in the class."

A highlight was creating her own 12-minute documentary — *'Eyesores: The Architecture of Electricity'* — for which she won the documentary award.

After finishing the degree last year she took a holiday, and then landed the job at TVNZ.

Mrs Lloyd says she is challenged at the moment, but in the future hopes to undertake more self-directed work. She is also planning to continue studying next year.

The full award list:

Top Student Certificate in Communications Studies — **Thomas Stewart**.

Top Year Two Bachelor of Communications Studies — **Steven Mahoney**.

Top Year One Bachelor of Communications Studies — **Jessica Blackwood**.

Excellence in Communication Theory — **Erica Lloyd**.

Top Year One Master of Arts in Communication Studies — **Felicity Brown**.

Excellence in Post Graduate Research — **Philippa Smith**.

AUT/PIMA Scholarship for Bachelor of Communication Studies — **Hila'atu Tuli**.

AUT/PIMA Scholarship for Master of Arts in Communication Studies — **Mere Elliott, Christine Gounder**.

Excellence in Magazine Journalism — **Juliet Rowan**.

Excellence in Broadcast Journalism — **Amanda Kyne**.

Graduate Journalist of the Year — **Kathryn Philpott**.

Outstanding Graduate in the Graduate Diploma in Journalism — **Michael Otto**.

All-round Excellence in Public Relations — **Kristy Mayo**.

Post Graduate Project in Public Relations — **Jess Malcolm**.

Top Public Relations Graduate from the Bachelor of Communication Studies — **Tessa Lawrence**.

Outstanding Graduate in the Graduate Diploma in Communication and Public Relations — **Peta Gibson**.

Outstanding Dynamic Website Design — **Amy Irwin-Coxall**.

Outstanding Digital Videography — **Elisabeth Topping**.

Graduate of the Year in the Graduate Diploma in Multimedia — **Rangi Powick**.

Graduate of the Year in the Bachelor of

Communication Studies, Multimedia Major — **Sarah Davies**.

Outstanding Advertising Creativity Graduate on the Bachelor of Communications Studies — **Emma Verberne**.

Outstanding Advertising Creativity Graduate in the Graduate Diploma — **Julie MacIver (Art Direction) and Joanna Davies (Copywriting)**.

Bachelor of Communication Studies Advertising Creativity Majors 2004 — **Aimee Kelly, Alice Tegg**.

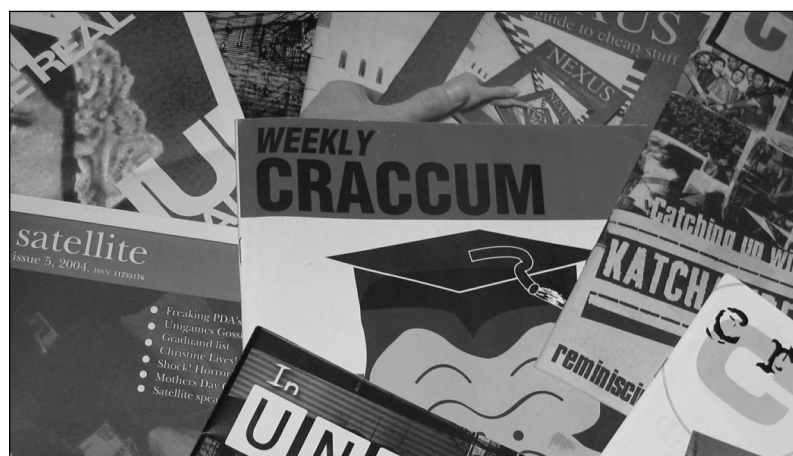
Best Documentary — **Kirsty Bull**.

Radio Graduate of the Year — **Rohani Evans**.

Excellence in Documentary Production — **Erica Lloyd**.

Excellence in Corporate and Community Videos — **Erica Lloyd**.

Television Graduate of the Year — **Erica Lloyd**.



Former AUT student wins Qantas Award

by Shannon Elliott

Former AUT student Ingrid Hipkiss was taken by surprise when she won Junior Reporter of the Year at the 2004 Qantas Media Awards in May.

"I was absolutely thrilled. It was a real surprise," says Miss Hipkiss.

"I can't remember the last time I won anything. When you see your name in lights it's pretty special."

She was so taken aback with her name on the certificate she forgot she had also won \$500.

"You look at the certificate and then you think, 'oh, I won some money

as well. That's great."

Miss Hipkiss studied for a communications degree at AUT from 1999 to 2002. She has been working as a reporter for TV3 for 18 months, and loves it.

She is now based in Wellington covering politics.