

While it is valid to scrutinise the impact of digital tech platforms on the commercialisation & disruption of the traditional media landscape there are a variety of other reasons which should also be recognised & considered in this ACCC Digital Platforms Inquiry...

This submission will look at a range of reasons for declining advertising revenue & audiences across the traditional mainstream media landscape including anecdotal comments directly from news consumers.

Reasons inc...

Changes in Advertising Spend & Media Trading

Media Not Meeting Needs of Audiences & Alternative News Sources

Hate Speech

Editorial Bias

Editorial Quality

Mismatch Between Fact & Reporting

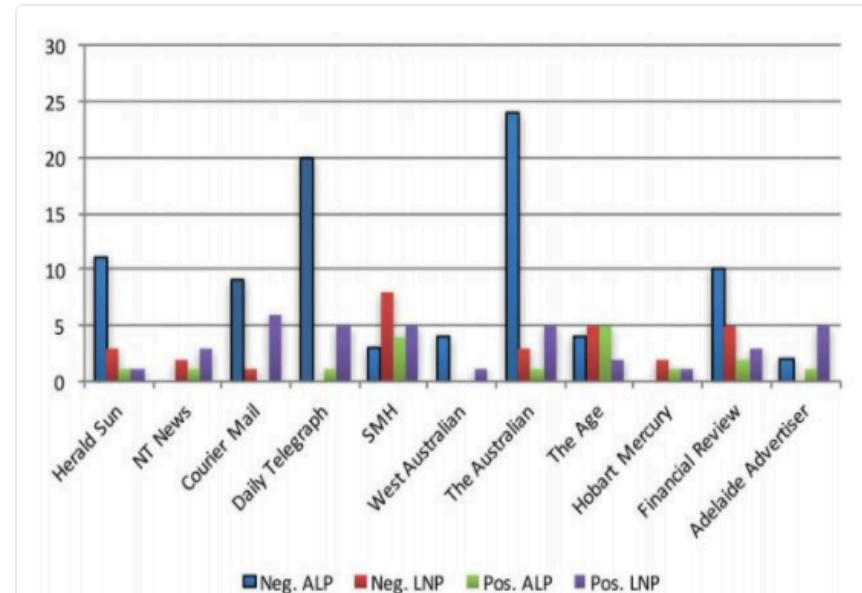


Figure 19.2. Number of positive and negative daily front-page stories by masthead for Liberal and Labor 2016 Election

Notes. n=187 with 74 neutral stories not shown.

Source. Constructed by © Carson and McNair.

This submission also shows results of a survey of *500 media savvy & politically informed Australians from the #auspol Twitter community regarding their media usage & views on the state of journalism

**#auspol on Twitter is the most retweeted hashtag in Australia & the most retweeted political hashtag in the world.*

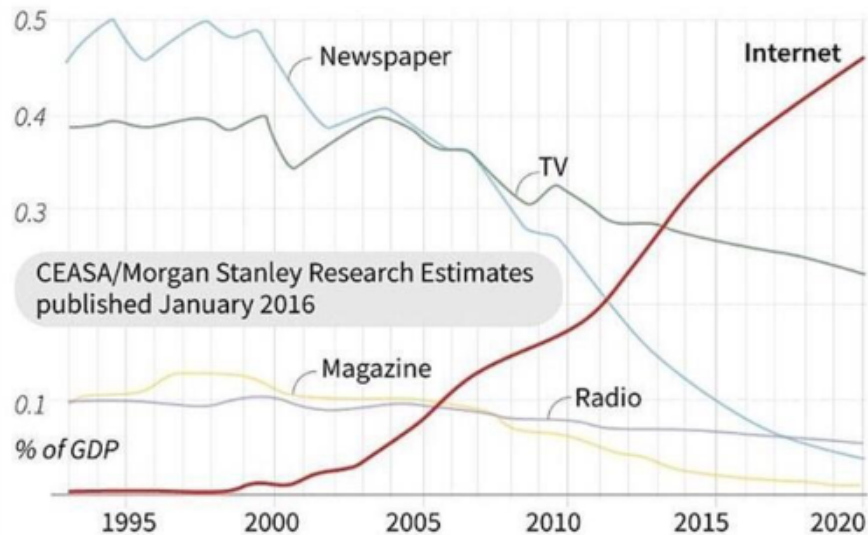
It is a large community of predominately progressive, media savvy & highly politically informed

Australians who are increasingly driving political agenda

Digital disruption has irreversibly impacted the mainstream media landscape as audiences fragment & business models evolve – often away from traditional publishers

Australia advertising

Spending by media



CEASA/Morgan Stanley Research Estimates published January 2016

© AFP

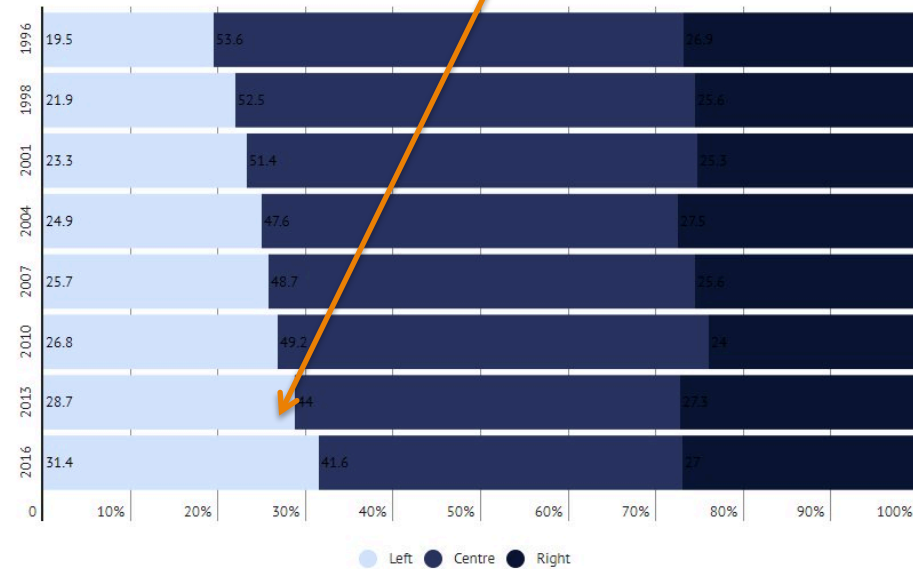
© AFP

These traditional publishers have been relied upon as a pillar of our democracy

It is no co-incidence media & politics is experiencing disruption at the same time

Australians' voting intentions are increasingly becoming 'left' while the most dominant parts of our mainstream media are increasingly turning 'right'.

Percentage of voters describing themselves 'left', 'right' or 'centre'



AES question: 'In politics, people sometimes talk about the 'left' and the 'right'. Where would you place yourself?'

Source: Australian Election Study, AlphaBeta

PRODUCED BY
 MediaScope

NEWS & CURRENT AFFAIRS MEDIASCOPE
 Australian Market – as at April 2018

MEDIA OWNER	PROGRESSIVE MEDIA	CENTRE MEDIA	CONSERVATIVE MEDIA
News Corp Australia			
Fairfax Media			
SEVEN WEST MEDIA			
schwartzmedia	SATURDAY PAPER MONTHLY QUARTERLY ESSAY		
INTERNATIONAL			SPECTATOR
FUNDED MEDIA			QUADRANT
INDEPENDENT			
GOVERNMENT			
USER GENERATED CONTENT			

PRODUCED BY



NEWS & CURRENT AFFAIRS MEDIASCAPE
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SEVEN WEST MEDIA

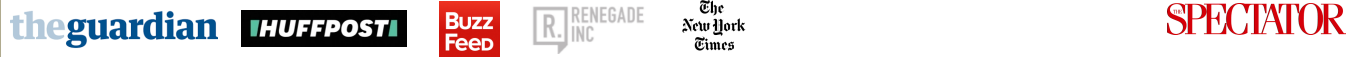
schwartzmedia

Audiences now have more
media choice
through fragmentation



SATURDAY PAPER MONTHLY
QUARTERLY ESSAY

INTERNATIONAL



FUNDED MEDIA



INDEPENDENT



GOVERNMENT



USER GENERATED CONTENT



People powered advertising activist movements both in Australia & overseas asks marketers to stop supporting hate speech in media by pulling their advertising – therefore impacting the revenue model...

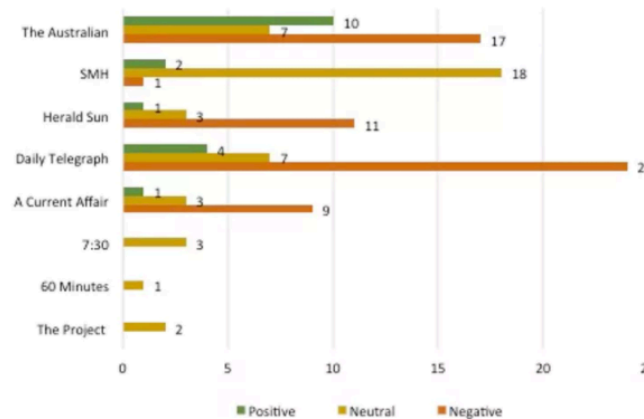


Sleeping Giants starting in the US (& now with affiliates around the world inc Australia) has taken over 3000 off Breitbart & was instrumental in taking advertisers off Bill O'Reilly's show before he left Fox News. Sleeping Giants in Australia now advises marketers when their advertising appears around hate speech in mainstream media



14 Days Straight **The Australian** has attacked the African community

Chart 1: Number of race-related stories by outlet and type of reporting



“Co-founder of the #AfricanGangs campaign says coverage of so-called street gangs of South Sudanese youths has been ‘nightmare’ for community & was akin to ‘media terrorism’.”



Stop Funding Hate in the UK asks advertisers to stop supporting divisive, inflammatory media content within newspaper tabloids such as The Sun & The Daily Mirror

Various industry surveys show brand safety is becoming a larger issue for marketers with one aspect of this being the content their advertising appears around

Comments directly from Australian news consumers speak for themselves ...

Used to be many passengers on daily train trips reading the Sydney Daily Telegraph but no one does now. People are busy with their Facebook and online news. Well who wants to read Murdoch's papers when all it does is spread Trumble's negativity and vindictiveness, and Murdoch's love for LNP. Not many are interested really.

MSM created the vacuum when they vacated the field to pursue news as entertainment and to subvert it opinion.

They've kept us from the truth about how the politicians, for whom we vote and pay to represent us, act when they're away from adult supervision – while dictating how we should act? And for what? To keep on their good side?

They whine and complain about the threat of government censorship but practice themselves – judging “public interest” on anything but.

Too much of our media is made up of self-obsessed, self-gratifying supercilious lap-dogs – to politicians and media moguls – to whom “journalism” is an afterthought – trading on the name of those gone before.

In the mainstream media, Australians are seeing people they've trusted for years tell them things they know are essentially LNP lies and propaganda. And journalists wonder why they're not trusted. #auspol

I'm cancelling my @theage subscription over their mindless pile-on on Dastyari. Who else is with me? @theage or @smh #CancelFairfax #auspol

Me too subscribe saturday paper, guardian and IA waiting for half price subscription to run out @smh to cancel after 25 years subscribing

Went back to NZ. Sad occasion. Something felt different. Took a while for me to understand what was missing.

No fear. No screeching racism. No rampant vicious rhetoric blasting from the media.

Hit me like a furnace the minute I got back to Oz, tho.

#WithoutTwitter I wouldn't know the UN released a report last week noting Australia's 'astonishing' anti-democratic slide under the Turnbull Govt. I wouldn't know this because no mainstream media has reported it - which kinda proves the UN's point 🙄 #auspol

& there's more...

If the Murdoch papers actually reported news events and not made up rubbish and propaganda, maybe people would buy them. Unfortunately for Murdoch with the internet to compete with and the consumer now able to research what is actually happening in the world in real time, he has been found out to be nothing but a conniving manipulator of politics across the world.

Used to be a good paper really I even subscribed a long time ago but when a paper runs ideology over factual, careful, reporting then it ceases to be informative. All stories immediately become suspect because you don't know what or if there is an agenda. So in the end you just cannot trust it. So I cancelled my subscription.

Poorly served by the current editor, who is partisan first, journalist second.

Now on [#springst](#) is a classic example of how the media neglect policy in favour of the gratuitous drama of party politics. There is a policy story to be told. The public says give us policy. Media says we can't because the public want drama. Huh? [#auspol](#)



Ben Eltham  @beneltham · Mar 31

A government press release masquerading as journalism

Annika Smethurst  @annikasmethurst

Up to 80,000 welfare cheats to lose payments if they fail to look for work under new laws [dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/news-...](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/news-...)

The only paper worth reading on Saturday.
SMH not even good for the budgie's cage now

Experienced, competent journalists employed under "legacy" newspaper salaries are being made redundant at a rate of knots. They are fleeing into the burgeoning public relations industry or a working life of precarity. If they are replaced, it is by inexperienced, cheaper staff.

The hollowing out of talent and experience has reached a tipping point, reflected in newspaper content that is both substantially thinner and exponentially dumber.

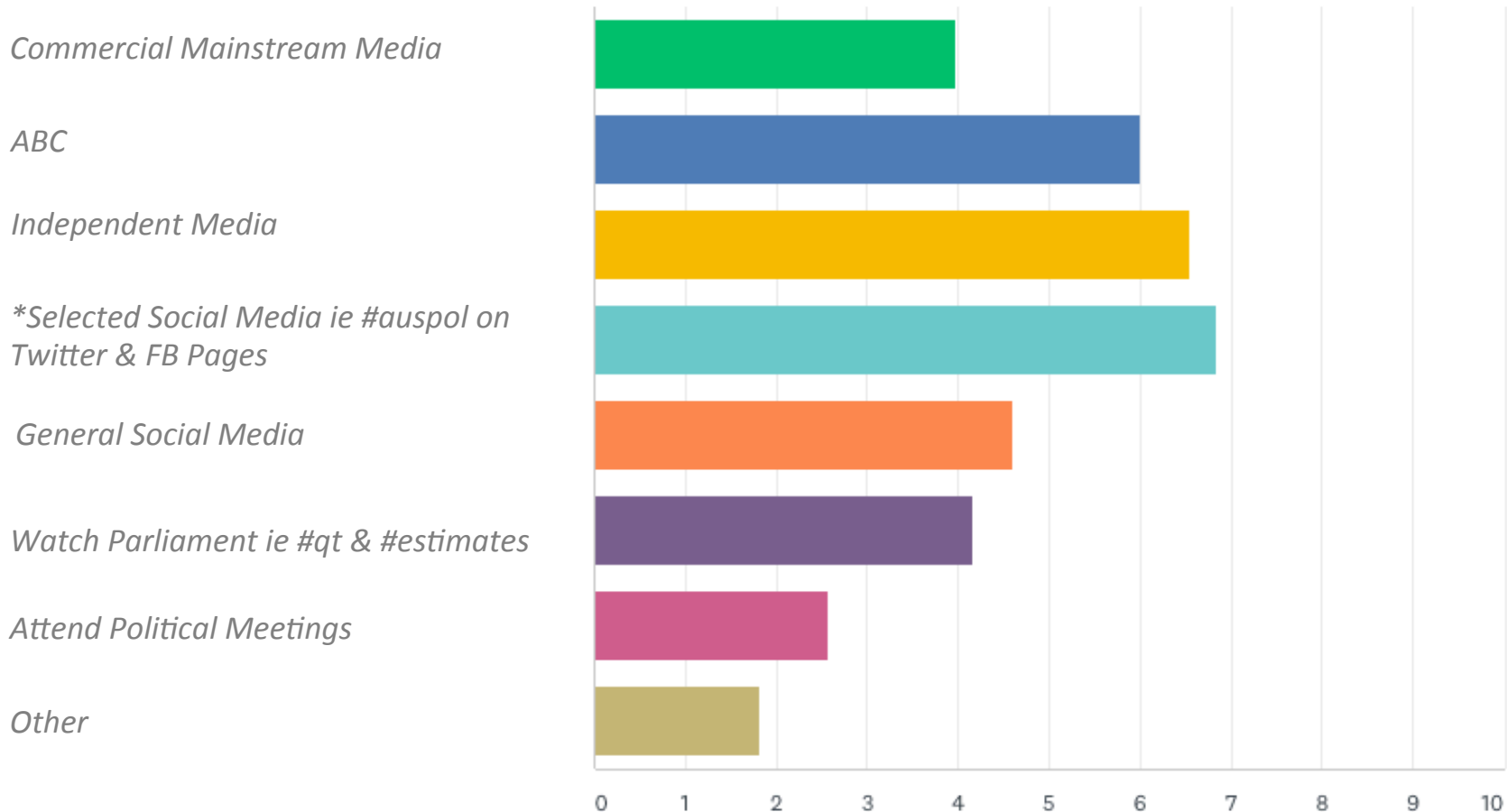
This is a completely irrelevant article...if this is the best the SMH can do its no wonder readers are leaving in droves

**In early April the active, large, media savvy
& politically informed #auspol Twitter
community were asked about their media
usage habits & thoughts around Australia's
political media & journalism**

**In a 24 hour period the survey
attracted 500 respondents**

*#auspol on Twitter is the most retweeted hashtag in Australia & the most retweeted political hashtag in the world.
It is a large community of predominately progressive, media savvy &
highly politically informed Australians who are increasingly driving political agenda*

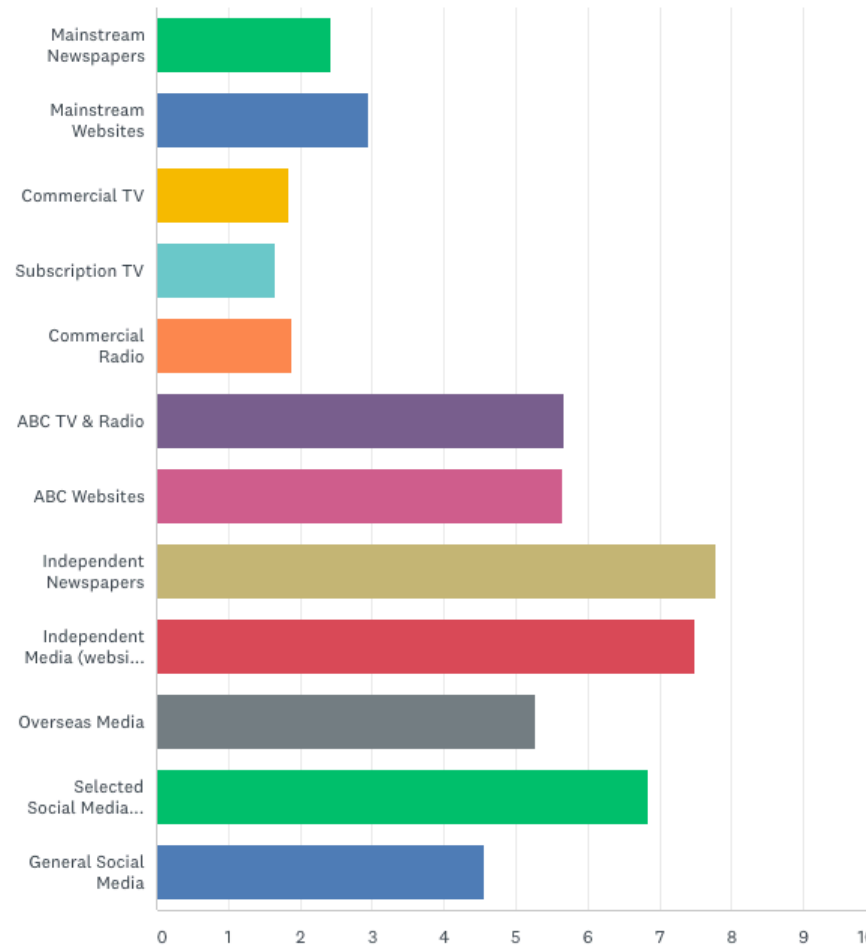
The #auspol Twitter community were asked to rank their main sources of political news...



**Perhaps not surprisingly 42% ranked ‘*selected social media’ as their main news source.
29% ranking independent media as their main news source.
7% ranked mainstream media as their main news source.**

They were asked to rate how much they trust

Australian political news sources...



Commercial media political news sources were ranked as their LEAST trusted news sources, with general social media & ABC ranking lower than independent media, overseas media & *selected social media

Survey Monkey: 500 Respondents over April 3 & 4 2018 – from the media savvy & politically informed #auspol community on Twitter

*'Selected Social Media' refers to curated social media content such as #auspol, chosen Facebook pages

When asked why they MISTRUST media there were some key themes...



Commercial media outlets have editorial decisions driven by either investor/advertiser profits or owner's agenda rather than holding powerful institutions and individuals to account by investigating and publishing truth.

MSM is paid by corporate advertising which have an agenda

Because I've worked for newscorp. I know

Profit driven with narrow ideological focus to align with proprietor and shareholder interests

Commercial radio in Australia is all opinion no fact

Mainstream media has it's own agenda. It has bias in every single segment/ article/ program. Most of the time parties with zero critical thinking.

Commercial imperative. Click bait. Extreme views. Low quality fact checking.

Murdoch influence. Bias.

I have always trusted abc tv and radio as being unbiased and interviewing fairly but of late have noticed that a bias and unevenness has crept in when they deal with opposition and non government voices.

Murdoch has a clear, aggressive right wing agenda, ABC is compromised, cowed and no longer impartial. Fairfax said it will veer right, commercial TV, just woeful!

Sensationalist headlines not representing the guts of the story. Often bias or opinion.

There is no longer a genuine commitment to public information in the public interest. Readiness to promote political spin, partisan commentary and false information

They have profit motive to influence news item choice & presentation.

Inaccuracies due to rush to "break" news Increasing belief in direct media bias

When asked why they TRUST media there was also some stand out replies... MediaScope

Independent newspapers and other media present a variety of views, informed by research and presented with journalistic integrity.

Independent news sources question what mainstream media are too scared or weak to question.

Independent and social media often provide additional references and reasoned analysis along with balanced opinions.

I still have faith in the ABC as an impartial provider but my confidence has been seriously dented over the past two years.

Independent trusted journalists are now the last line of defense against agenda driven, opinion biased journalism.

Independent which aims to provide a scope of views and engage meaningfully with intelligent readership

Cross referencing independent media, twitter, and bloggers who have intellectual integrity

Independent media has no ulterior motives to make money or be beholden to a media mogul ownership.

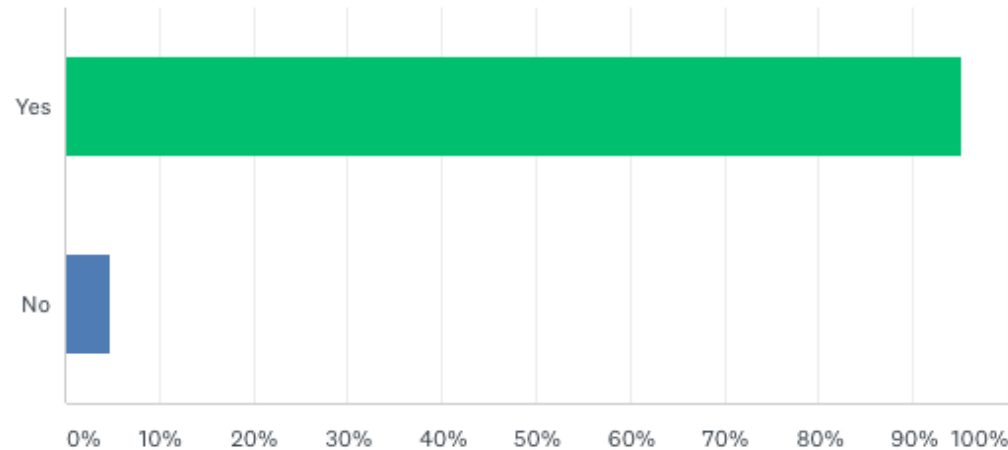
Because I hear what's really happening sometimes months before msm mentions it. Ie the Barnaby affair

Selected Twitter accounts let you find experts with a depth of analysis. Immediate analysis too.

Independence from influence by wealthy owners who want their own interests pushed.

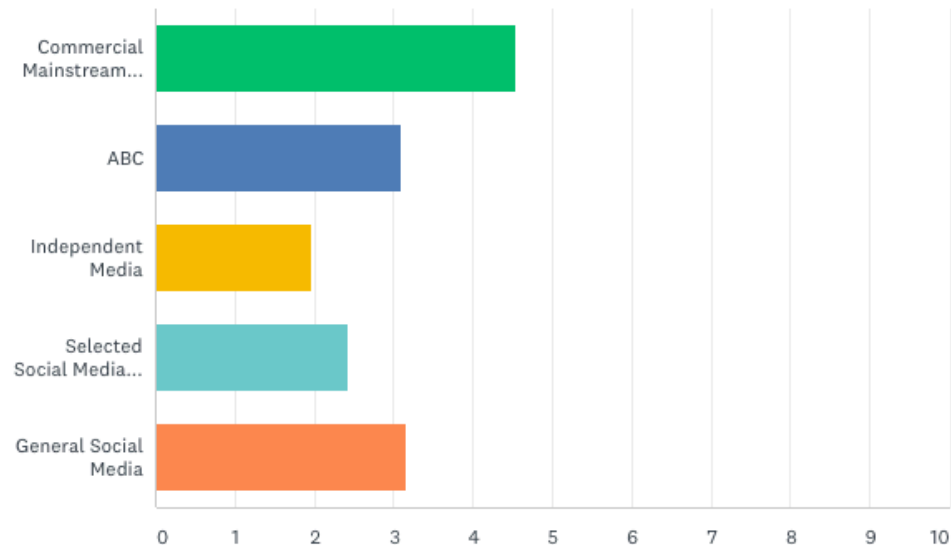
While they are concerned with Government & political party's use of platforms such as Cambridge Analytica & i360...

94% are concerned with the use of data tools such as Cambridge Analytica & i360

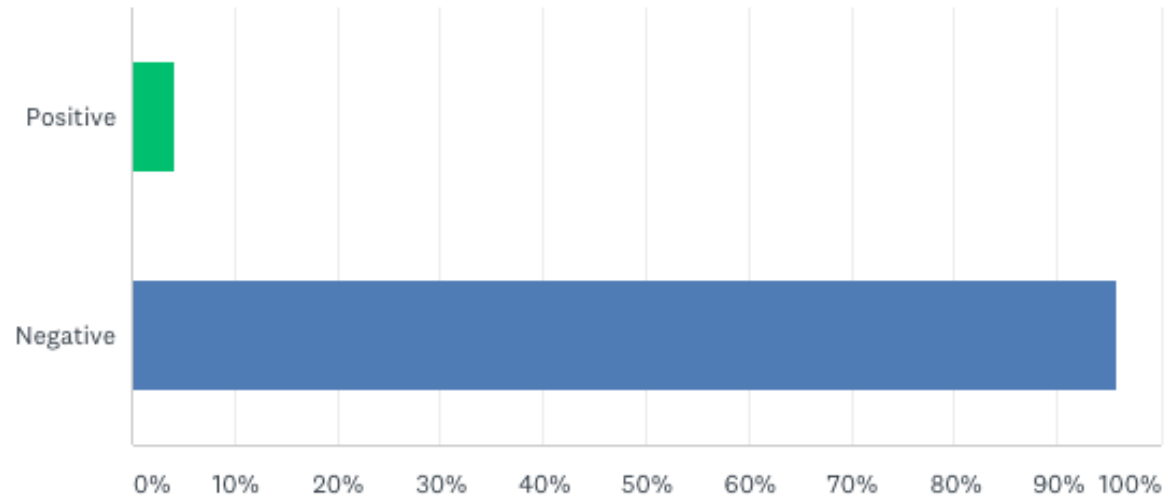


They are more concerned with commercial mainstream media as a source of misleading political news...

76% ranked commercial mainstream media as their main concern over other sources of misleading political news – even over general social media

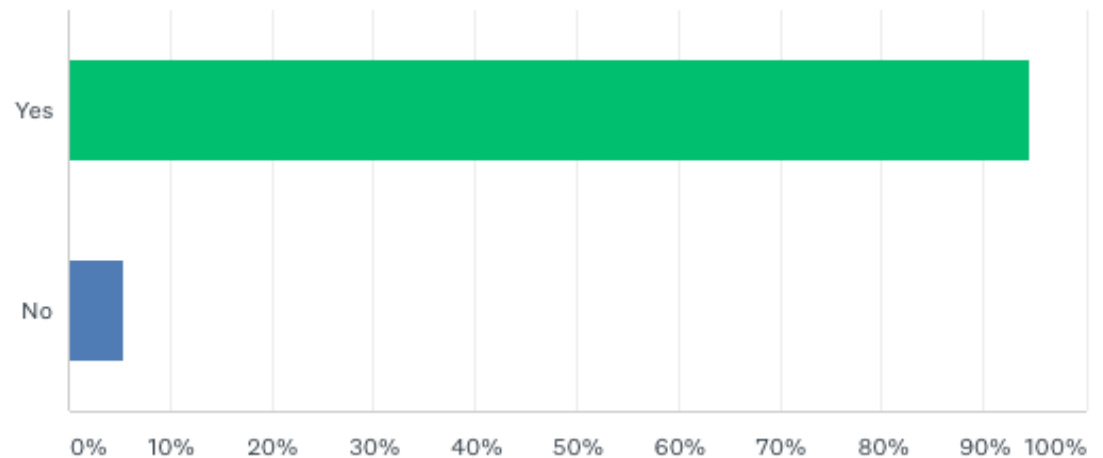


*95% of survey respondents cite mainstream media as having a **negative** impact on our democracy*

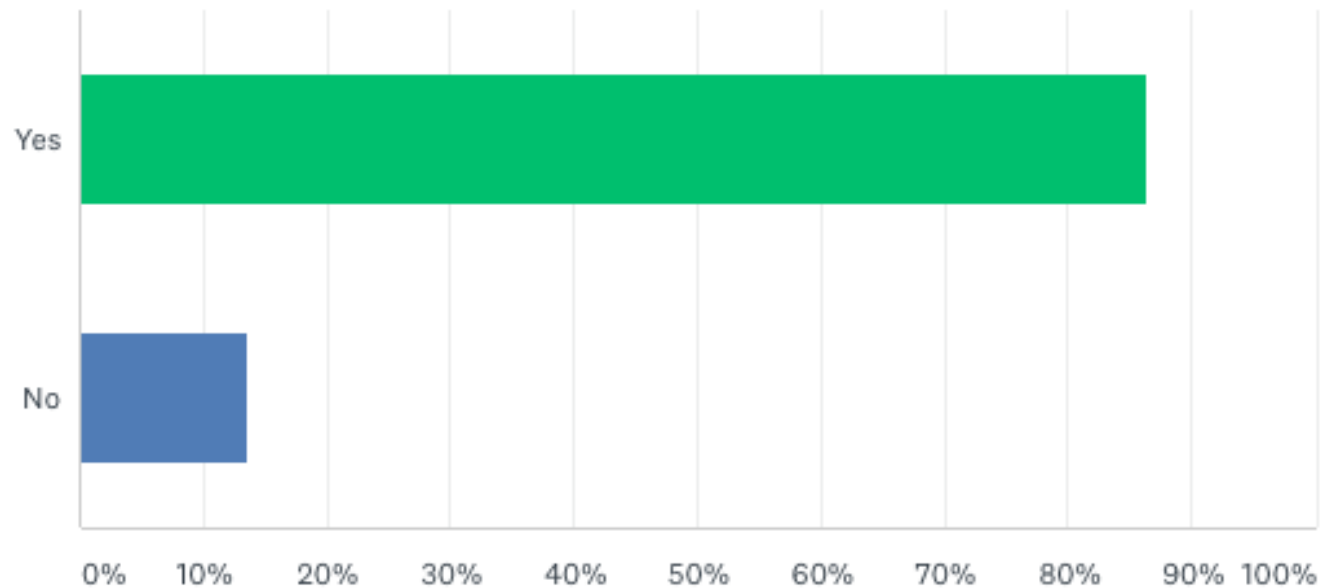


It's a fundamentally broken pillar of our democracy. An ill-informed populace cannot self-govern.

*While 94% of survey respondents said they actively **boycott** some mainstream media due to bias &/or misleading reporting*



85% of survey respondents either already do or would pay for informative & trustworthy public interest journalism...



I will pay for the material that I value (purchase the Saturday Paper every week) because I hunger for quality journalism with insightful in depth analysis

They were asked to share their comments on the state of journalism & our media...



Newspapers standard seems to have dropped. Articles read like press releases and many have a strong political bias

We are currently experiencing a 1984 type control of media to suit narrow interests - the clever distraction agendas to distort real issues that Citizens should be aware of. Our democracy has become a political oligopoly which does not serve citizens. It is a long way back.

I do not directly pay for news services due to lack of trust. Stories need to be verified by consensus across various services. Improvements to business models are needed to adequately fund news services to employ people of unshakable integrity.

Mainstream political journalism in Australia is in crisis. Murdoch's monopoly and influence is doing untold damage to our democracy.

Grossly misleading and out of step with its function as a valued institution. Heavily manipulative. Needs to stop becoming involved in politics and simply report on it

Journalism here is one sided and that goes for Sky and commercial. They think we the people are fools..But I guess some are fooled by the biased MSM. They Need to be honest and impartial but right now they are not..

It's a fundamentally broken pillar of our democracy. An ill-informed populace cannot self-govern. We need more transparency about media ownership, better disclosure of interests, to decouple journalism from the attention economy. Re-establish the independence of the ABC.

Needs better investigative journalists who don't just read out press releases Journos need to get out of the Canberra bubble & ask more relevant questions

Educate media consumers

Political journalism is now "access journalism". I subscribe to multiple organisations who I think value their independence over "access".

Political journalism in Australia seems compromised due to a collective culture from journalists towards not asking politicians the tough questions.

Feel the law needs to be changed in relation to 'truth in advertising' and there should be an ombudsman for media (as self regulation does not work) for incorrect & misleading political reporting. There also needs to be a cut-back on media ownership. No way in hell is particularly so much media owned by News Corp - a foreign owned media org - good for our democracy.

There appears to be no penalty for deliberately engaging in misinformation

More diversity & less Murdoch would be good

& finally word clouds were created as an insights into key themes from the close to 500 comments attracted through the #auspol survey...



*Reasons survey respondents highlighted for **mistrusting** media*

Inaccurate Fox News Sources Proven Vested Interests History Lies
Sky News Commercial False Agenda Longer Murdoch
Misleading Bias Profit Media Believe Reporting Fake News
Propaganda Misinformation Right Wing Individuals MSM
Hold Politicians to Account Issues Self Interest

*Reasons survey respondents highlighted for **trusting** media*

Evidence Important Stories Unbiased Not Controlled Fair Experience
Journalism Strong Facts Accurate Sources Lies Media
Gives Independent Impartial Balanced Articles
Trust Critical Bias Writers Investigative Real People
Vested Interests Rank any High Factual Attempt

Comments on the state of Aust media & journalism

Rid of Murdoch Serious Journalism Improve Known Main Stream Media
Joyce MSM Media Reform Politicians Ban Murdoch
Journalists Place ABC Guardian Political
Media Barons Reporting Unfortunately Bias They're Facts Idea
Media Ownership sadly Investigative Journalism
Media Outlets

The presence of digital tech platforms is not the only reason mainstream media is experiencing commercial disruption & should not be disregarded by the ACCC Board as part of this important inquiry

Political journalism in msm is almost dead. Conservative bias is worst in my memory - at 69 I have been reading and watching/listening to news for over 60 years. My father was SMH journo in 1940s- he would be shocked at current standards.

- *Submission to the ACCC Digital Platforms Inquiry*
- *April 2018*
- *Denise Shrivell – MediaScope*