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**Media and the Olympics
Editorial**

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Contributor note

Dr Verica Rupar carries out research in the field of comparative journalism studies. Her publications include *Journalism and meaning-making*, *Scooped: Politics and power of journalism in Aotearoa New Zealand* and *Getting the facts right: reporting ethnicity and religion*. The last study, funded by the European Commission and commissioned by the International Federation of Journalists, Article 19 and Media Diversity Institute, looks at journalism practice in the UK, France, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Slovakia and Lithuania. Verica was a journalist for 20 years, working as a parliamentary reporter, commentator, editor and foreign correspondent.

Welcome to the first 'Rapid Response' issue of *JOMEC Journal*: a collection of essays on media and the Olympic Games. The events, questions and debates surrounding the London Olympics 2012, inspired and defined the content of this issue; but a need for publishing timely, innovative and intellectually stimulating research on issues of public concern determined its 'rapid response' format.

In our regular themed and open issues *JOMEC Journal* focuses on academic research in the fields of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies. In the 'rapid response' issues we open a space for other forms of research – scholarly research but also practice-based research. Bringing up to date investigations together and using a set of strict criteria for the evaluation – contribution to knowledge, rigour and the verifiable validity of arguments made – we hope to intervene quickly into public conversations on cultural, media and political issues of the moment.

A couple of words about the format. The 'rapid response' issue provides a platform to answer some of the pressing challenges facing academic work and publishing today. The format was conceived as a way to enable:

- rigorous research beyond academic gates;
- academic scholarship that may be also political, punchy and polemical;
- academic engagement more attuned to (the speed of) the information age we are all living in;
- the need for much faster processing of articles in academic publishing;
- new forms of presenting high quality research;
- more communication between the media industry and the academy.

This first rapid response issue, the media and the Olympics, brought together academic and journalistic research. Although these two forms of research use different narrative tools and different norms in presenting findings and arguments, they have many features in common. Both claim to be dealing with 'facts'; both like to be perceived as 'truth-seeking'; both have developed methods that follow strict procedures on obtaining data; both claim to be based on systematic and disciplined investigation that expands our knowledge of the world.

Looking at research in terms of the process and not only the outcome – the underpinning idea of the 'rapid response' issues – posed a couple of problems for me in editing this issue. An early commissioned survey of journalists accredited to cover the Olympics had such a low response rate that it had to be dropped. Similarly, an effort to use different media platforms (audio, video and written word) within the PDF format didn't come to fruition – because file size killed the hard drive it was stored on... Also, among the academic community, insisting on a tough deadline (a month after the Olympics ended) elicited a high level of nervousness; just as various other commitments of many contributors, during and after the Olympic Games caused delays too.

Still, in the end it all worked out well.

I am grateful to David Rowe who kindly agreed to provide an expert introduction to this issue – and for using the term 'refreshing reading' to describe its content! Special thanks also to Lucy Bennett for meticulous proofreading and for comments that inspired my decision to visually signal the format of the articles. So, readers should bear the following in mind: articles

which have only one column are *journalistic pieces*; articles with two columns are *academic texts*.