

5/04/2006

The General Manager,
Digital Broadcasting and Spectrum Management,
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts,
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA 2601

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am greatly concerned that the proposed changes in the cross-media ownership laws will be hugely deleterious to Australian culture and diversity of media. We are already the most restricted Western country in terms of diversity of editorial opinion and the most impoverished in terms of exposure to our own cultural products.

The effect of opening out the media to increase competition will be to for fewer players to try to attract the greatest number of viewers/readers/audience at least cost. This means more cheap game shows, reality TV, and imported sitcoms for TV, and more pop music and shock-jocks for radio. Australian produced drama, quality television and thought-provoking discussions will become fewer and fewer, particularly if the ABC continues to be starved of funding and otherwise marginalised.

It is ironic that in the USA there is far more media diversity than here, yet an American citizen, who already dominates the media scene, will become more powerful still and more committed to importing cheap American shows displacing what little home-grown material we already have.

More competition in the climate that exists here will not produce more diversity for us consumers to choose from but less. Choice from a profusion of look-alikes and sound-alikes is no choice.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Biggs', with a horizontal line underneath.

John Biggs