

Stage 2 Media Studies – 2014

External Assessment Cover Sheet

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

SACE Registration Number:

Topic _____ Was the media's coverage of **Schapelle Corby's release** newsworthy?

Issue identified.

Topic question.

_____ **word count** 1,998
(for written only)

This **investigation** is assessed using the following specific features:

Knowledge and Understanding	Research and Analysis	Communication
KU1	RA1	C2
KU2	RA2	
KU3		

INTRODUCTION

KU1
Clear
definition of
issue.

Schapelle Corby's story has proven to be a controversial topic of conversation in Australia since her arrest on October 8th, 2004. With our history of racism it is no surprise the Indonesian Government received threats from Australian patriots who believed Corby was wrongly jailed. To begin with, many Australians supported her case, believing her to be innocent of the charge made against her for attempting to smuggle 4.2 kilograms of marijuana into Bali. In the last nine years the media supposedly kept audiences informed by reporting on the Schapelle Corby ongoing saga. With the announcement of her release for early February this year, the opportunistic media felt it necessary to revisit the Corby case. With an investigation into the news coverage of Corby's release it became clearly evident only a small portion of news coverage was pure reporting. Trying to attract the readers' attention with coverage that can be considered un-newsworthy, the media took a sensationalist approach. The use of internet sources including online newspapers and YouTube videos of press releases proved to be useful throughout this investigation in providing evidence of media coverage that is arguably not worthy of the extensive coverage on Corby's release.

Topic defined.

REPRESENTATIONS

Key media concept introduced.

Representations usually contain a particular point of view and tend to stereotype people, they are a product of a process based on selection and omission. Since 2004, Corby has

repeatedly featured in the media, however the media's portrayal is somewhat questionable.

Media releases have described Corby as the former *Gold Coast beauty student*

(www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-10 *Corby has always maintained her innocence*),

(www.news.com.au/national *Could Schapelle*

Corby make money from her crime?)

glamorising her with the intent of making readers believe she was not capable of such a crime. In the *Schapelle telemovie*, (2013

Student provided an image from the movie.

Image removed due to copyright.

Channel Nine production) aired in Australia

February 9, 2014, the early depiction of Corby is again a young, *beauty student from the*

Gold Coast on holiday to Bali. The portrayal of Corby is not of the typical drug smuggler

stereotype and by re-presenting her as "someone Australia loves", the media was able to

evoke an emotional response from the public. (www.lifestyle.yahoo.com/new-idea

Mercedes Corby tells: Schapelle's new hope), (www.news.com.au/national *Schapelle Corby a*

new woman since being granted clemency), (www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-10 *Corby has*

always maintained her innocence). The transparent *depiction* insinuates *her innocence from*

the start, which the ABC's release coverage failed to do, reporting the fact she was "found

guilty by an Indonesian Court" which according to Prime Minister, Tony Abbott "dismays

Australians when the national broadcaster appears to take everyone's side but its own... the

ABC should give her the benefit of the doubt". (www.thetunnelpresents.com *Tony Abbott*

criticises ABC Schapelle Corby coverage) Just because she is Australian, should we believe

KU2
Media influence on audience addressed. Range of forms cited. Well-considered and informed. B

KU1
- media structures - organisations - interactions (public broadcaster and politician) comprehensive and sustained. A

her proclaimed innocence when other Australians prosecuted overseas do not receive the same treatment? (www.canberratimes.com.au 'I want Schapelle Corby treatment', *Australian prisoner complains in Bali*), (www.couriermail.com.au *OPINION: Don't be fooled by Schapelle Corby's misguided fan club*) Why did the media create such a hype? Putting it

KU3
Evidence of understanding of bias in media insightful and informed.
A

Student provided an image of Lawrence and Corby.
Image removed due to copyright.

simply, according to the media itself, she had a face that would sell. "Had she been ugly, or ordinary, we wouldn't have been so quick to jump on the "Schapelle's Innocent" bandwagon... She simply didn't look like a drug courier" (www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au *We wouldn't have cared about Schapelle if she was*

ugly) Unlike Renae Lawrence. "Her case... doesn't rank the same attention or sympathy.

Could that be because she's not as attractive as Corby?" (www.couriermail.com.au

OPINION: Don't be fooled by Schapelle Corby's misguided fan club) Why create a media

frenzy over Corby when "there are over 300 more Australian citizens in jail overseas".

(www.theguardian.com *Beyond Schapelle Corby: ten more Australians imprisoned abroad*)

Why do we not hear about them? Why do we not even know their names, yet we know that

Corby began painting and beading during her time in prison? (www.news.com.au/national

Schapelle a new woman since being granted clemency)

CONVENTIONS

Key media concepts - conventions.

“Conventions are habits or long accepted ways of doing things” (Media new ways and meanings, Colin Stewart and Adam Kowaltzke 1990). The media use conventions to

manipulate audiences via written and visual texts. The *Schappelle* telemovie (2013 Channel

Nine production) is cleverly constructed and portrays her to not fit the typical drug smuggler

KU2 influence on audience through form. No real grade.

stereotype and, “someone Australia loves”. *Schappelle* addresses the media underplaying

Corby’s offence through carefully constructed mis en scenes to persuade audiences of her

innocence. Producers frequently use close-up shots of Corby’s face, making it the focal point

C2 use of media terminology - clear and appropriate. B

(her physical appearance was supposedly the

reason for extensive coverage). The media revisited

Student provided an image of Corby behind bars.

Image removed due to copyright.

this approach during Corby’s release with most

photographs accompanying articles focussing on her

face to again draw sympathy for her ‘unfair prison time’ and excitement for her long

awaited release (www.lifestyle.yahoo.com/new-idea Mercedes Corby tells: *Schappelle’s new*

hope), (www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au *We wouldn’t have cared about Schappelle if she was*

ugly), (www.smh.com.au *Schappelle Corby interview: Seven executives might have to pray for*

an audience), (www.womansday.com.au *Schappelle Corby*

Student provided an image of a trailer for the film. Image removed due to copyright.

leaves Kerobokan jail), (www.dailymail.co.uk *'I feel like a*

crab!': Schappelle Corby's first words after being released

from prison captured on camera). The telemovie teaser

trailer (YouTube), which became noticeable in commercial

breaks during Corby’s release, was created to attract

audience attention with snippets of her innocence and

being framed. By adding a dramatic, forceful closing statement saying “Did she do it?” the

audience find themselves either wondering “Is she guilty?” or “Why does it matter?”. Either way, the media are using these attention seizing conventions to instil the retrieved topic of Schapelle Corby into audience’s minds. Opinion pieces on Corby and the amount of attention she received from her release, ended with a statement on how Australians could expect Corby to be cast on *Dancing with the Stars* after her release. By using a well-known

KU3
Understanding
of using
opinion in
media text.

celebrity television program, the articles show just how ridiculous the attention Corby has received is, by using something audiences can read and understand the point they are

making (www.blogs.theaustralian.news.com.au *The Schapelle Corby Fixation*),

(www.couriermail.com.au *OPINION: Don't be fooled by Schapelle Corby's misguided fan*

club), (www.dailytelegraph.com.au *No profit from Schapelle Corby's pain*). The conventions

used by the media played on representing Corby as a person who should be given attention to rehash her story and attempt to make news out of nothing.

ORGANISATIONS

During Corby's release (February 10th 2014), government organisations both in Australia and Indonesia did not receive the media attention as when she was first arrested. A media scrum gathered to capture her first moments of freedom and what immediately followed. (www.news.com.au/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby released from Bali's Kerobokan jail after nine years*) (www.theguardian.com/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby released from Bali's Kerobokan jail*) (www.abc.net.au/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby released on parole after leaving Bali's Kerobokan Prison: As it happened*) (www.smh.com.au/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby gets parole from jail in Bali*) (www.womansday.com.au/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby leaves Kerobokan jail*), (www.examiner.com.au/ 10/02/2014 *Schapelle Corby released from Kerobokan prison on parole & arrives at luxury*

KU1
Concept of organisation introduced.

spa). The media organisation is highly competitive and while reporters competed for 'the first shot', headlines suggest journalists focused on factual information. Everyone wanted the first interview, an intense bidding war ignited involving all

Student provided an image of Corby's release from jail. Image removed due to copyright.

Media structures discussed.

commercial television networks (www.theaustralian.com.au *Seven to screen Schapelle Corby interview?*). Apparently Channel Seven had already secured an exclusive interview long before parole was approved. The interview was to be "one of the biggest chequebook journalism deals in Australian TV history" worth as much as \$3 million, which although Corby could not benefit from directly, could be reallocated to family members. (www.theaustralian.com.au *Seven to screen Schapelle Corby interview?*), (www.smh.com.au

Seven secures exclusive Schapelle Corby interview), (www.abc.com.au *Channel Seven 'pays \$3m' for Corby exclusive*). Channel Seven denied confirmation of interview.

(www.news.com.au *Channel Seven won't say whether Schapelle Corby interview has been shelved or not*), (www.smh.com.au *Mike Willesee 'hopeful' Schapelle Corby interview will go ahead*).

David Koch from Channel Seven's *Sunrise*, aired his opinion on the lucrative television deal, saying "we should have nothing to do with her as a network... I totally disagree with paying a convicted drug smuggler \$2 million." (www.news.com.au *Sunrise*

host David Koch slams Channel Seven over Schapelle Corby cash for comment). The exclusive interview failed to deliver, the program fell to seventh spot in ratings.

(www.theguardian.com *Schapelle Corby exclusive on Seven's Sunday Night fails to deliver*),

(www.smh.com.au *Few words, if any, from Schapelle Corby in Sunday Night exclusive*) The

organisations involved, Channel Seven especially, had been so determined in attaining an exclusive tell all from Corby that her release was threatened, all for a repeated story with fading audience attraction (www.theaustralian.com.au *Seven secures exclusive Schapelle*

Corby interview). Was the money spent on security, private villas and exclusive interviews really worth it?

KU2
Audience influence on media. Well-considered and informed. B

AUDIENCES

KU1
Key media concepts - audience. Comprehensive and sustained. A

"Texts position audiences to make certain readings...Whether you like characters or dislike them can also be a way of positioning the audience." (Media: New Ways and Meaning, Colin

Stewart and Adam Kowaltzke 1990) The *Schappelle* telemovie does just that. *Schappelle* is

clearly biased and caters for an Australian audience who is

Student provided an image of a scene from the film *Schappelle*.
Image removed due to copyright.

racist by misrepresenting Indonesians and portraying Corby as the innocent victim. (*Schappelle*, 2013 Channel

Nine production). To attract audiences, the telemovie

teaser trailer (YouTube) promises to tell viewers the whole story. Instead, *Schappelle*

provides a depiction of the event, with a strong implication of innocence. Expected to draw

huge audiences, especially with Corby's approaching release, the premiere only just made it

into the top fifty most-watched shows, attracting just over one million viewers. Channel

Seven's mini-series *INXS: Never Tear Us Apart* and Torah Bright's Snowboard final at the

Sochi Olympic Games both received higher ratings,

and if that doesn't show Corby's fading attraction, the

encore screening only attracted one quarter of the

Student provided an image of Bananas in Pyjamas.
Image removed due to copyright.

premiere night's ratings, being out-rated by children's

programs *Banana's in Pyjamas*, *Peppa Pig* and *Charlie*

and *Lola* (www.smh.com.au *Schappelle v INXS: who won the ratings war*),

(www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au *Bananas in Pyjamas out-rated Schappelle telemovie*). News

specials also reached poor ratings, with only 627,000 viewers. (www.smh.com.au *Schappelle*

Corby interview: Seven executives might have to pray for an audience) So why with the hype

over her approaching release, were the ratings not overwhelming? Put simply, audiences

have seen, read and listened to everything there is to know about Corby. With her life in Kerobokan prison and continuous claims of innocence, interest faded as audiences tired of no ground breaking news. (www.theaustralian.com.au *Have Australians tired of the Schapelle Corby story?*) (www.memyselfandmedia.com *Schapelle Corby? Who the Hell Cares?!*) According to the media Corby had a face that would sell, a face the Australian public would see and feel sympathetic for and care about. Maybe nine years ago, the audience would have tuned in to hear Corby's story but over the years the attraction has faded and now the media are left rehashing an old story to an audience who no longer cares whether she is guilty or innocent and would rather watch children's television shows. (www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au *We wouldn't have cared about Schapelle if she was ugly*),(www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au *Bananas in Pyjamas out-rated Schapelle telemovie*).

KU2

Audience influence on media - perceptive and informed.
A

According to evidence, perhaps in the case of Schapelle Corby's release the media industry misjudged its audiences. In retrospect the media coverage could be seen as offensive to the Australian public as desperate measures were taken to create news out of no news.

CONCLUSION

In all, Corby's criminal offence and the lead up to her release received more coverage than the actual day of release. The media continued to rehash an old story, representing her in the same glamorised way they used nine years ago, assuming audiences to still be

Audience influence on media.

supportive of her case. Perhaps the media industry underestimated its audiences. Audiences

are made up of individuals whose values, beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds differ.

Despite extensive market research audiences can be unpredictable. The representation of

her reality by the media was no longer the audience's reality. The fascination with Corby

wore off. Media organisations created such hype over her release, however the news they

reported, mostly about life in prison, the crime committed nine years earlier or personality

changes was not worth the hype. Simply, the media overworked the Schapelle Corby case

with un-newsworthy releases until audiences tired of her.

Additional Comments

C2

Fluent across the Investigation with use of appropriate media terminology.

The student's use of emotive language, without in-text referencing, was noted.

This Investigation was graded at A-.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

RA1

Thorough and well-informed.
- clear evidence of research into bias etc. across a range of media texts.
- currency of issue supported by secondary sources.

A

RA2

Evidence of research and analysis into representation of an individual
- comprehensive.

A

Media: New Ways and Meaning, Colin Stewart and Adam Kowaltzke 1990

Schapelle, 2013 Channel Nine production

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Performance Standards for Stage 2 Media Studies

	Knowledge and Understanding	Research and Analysis	Producing	Communication
A	<p>Comprehensive and sustained knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.</p> <p>Perceptive knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.</p> <p>Insightful and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products.</p>	<p>Thorough and well-informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.</p> <p>Comprehensive research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.</p> <p>Perceptive analysis of interactions with media.</p>	<p>Comprehensive design and planning of media products for selected audiences.</p> <p>Highly proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions.</p>	<p>Comprehensive reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to clearly and consistently convey meaning.</p> <p>Fluent expression, using consistently clear and appropriate media terminology.</p>
B	<p>Well-considered and mostly sustained knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.</p> <p>Well-considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.</p> <p>Well-considered and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products.</p>	<p>Well-informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.</p> <p>Well-considered research into and informed analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.</p> <p>Well-considered analysis of interactions with media.</p>	<p>Thorough design and planning of media products for selected audiences.</p> <p>Proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions.</p>	<p>Sound reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to clearly convey meaning.</p> <p>Mostly fluent expression, using clear and appropriate media terminology.</p>
C	<p>Considered knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.</p> <p>Considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.</p> <p>Considered and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products.</p>	<p>Considered and informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.</p> <p>Considered and informed research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.</p> <p>Considered analysis of interactions with media.</p>	<p>Considered design and planning of media products for selected audiences.</p> <p>Competent use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions.</p>	<p>Competent reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to convey meaning.</p> <p>Generally fluent expression, using appropriate media terminology.</p>
D	<p>Partial knowledge and basic awareness of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.</p> <p>Basic awareness and some understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.</p> <p>Recognition and some understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products.</p>	<p>Basic consideration and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent in one or more media texts and in the investigation.</p> <p>Identification of some of the ways in which groups or individuals are represented in media.</p> <p>Description of one or more interactions with media.</p>	<p>Partial design and some planning of media products for a selected audience.</p> <p>Basic use of some simple and appropriate production techniques and technologies, and some basic media conventions.</p>	<p>Some reproduction of the structural and conventional features of one or more media texts, to convey basic meaning.</p> <p>Occasionally clear expression and use of basic media terminology.</p>
E	<p>Limited awareness of media structures, issues, concepts, or interactions.</p> <p>Limited awareness of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.</p> <p>Limited recognition of facts, opinions, or bias in a media text or product.</p>	<p>Attempted description of a point of view, bias, value, or intent in a media text, and/or the investigation.</p> <p>Attempted recognition of one way in which a group or individual is represented in media.</p> <p>Attempted description of an interaction with media.</p>	<p>Attempted design or planning of media products.</p> <p>Attempted use of a production technique or technology, and one or more basic media conventions, which may be appropriate.</p>	<p>Attempted reproduction of the structural and conventional features of one media text.</p> <p>Limited expression or use of basic media terminology.</p>