

**Informed citizens, non citizens and empowerment: The challenge of helping asylum seekers exercise their rights**

Gwilym Croucher

University of Melbourne

[gscrou@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gscrou@unimelb.edu.au)

Paper presented at 2007 APSA Conference  
Monash University  
September 24-26

## **Abstract**

Democratic theory is usually predicated on the requirement that citizens be adequately 'informed' to be able to fully exercise their rights and responsibilities. Research into political communication and government communication speaks directly to how citizens become 'informed' or otherwise. More sanguine assessments of the capacity of citizens suggest that people will seek the information they need to be able to exercise their rights and responsibilities. Undoubtedly, governments also play an important role in ensuring that people have adequate access to information. But what of the most vulnerable in the community? What of those afforded some limited and temporary rights, such as asylum seekers? Should (and can) governments ensure that even the most marginalised groups be 'informed'? Through the case of a non-profit asylum seeker employment assistance program in Melbourne, this paper comments on the information needs of citizens and non-citizens. The challenges faced by asylum seekers interacting with state and federal governments provide a useful insight into these questions.

## **Introduction**

Fundamental to an effectively functioning democracy are citizens who are able to make sophisticated decisions. The presumption of a politically knowledgeable and capable populous underlies much normative political theory. It is central to assuring that authority is legitimate and that it represents the will of the people. To exercise rights and responsibilities, people must understand the characteristics of those rights and responsibilities. To effectively choose leaders, publics must comprehend the programs that leaders propose. Democratic practice requires an 'informed' citizenry

To be 'informed' citizens need to have certain access to pertinent information. Modern democracies invest significant resources into ensuring that this information is available. In activities as diverse as being cautioned by the police (one of the most direct methods) to mass media based public information

campaigns (as one of the most indirect), there are many ways that citizens can be guided, instructed and given pertinent knowledge. This is true in regulating individual behaviour and in attempts to change it, governments utilise many different techniques to keep citizens 'informed'.

Research has reinforced contemporary theoretical wisdom that people need to have access to information to be both fully empowered and to ensure a just society. Though there is still debate about the extent that governments should be proactive in fostering engaged citizens, there is wide agreement that they should ensure that the information is available to citizens. In practice, ensuring that publics are adequately informed about the gamut of civic and legal needs of citizenship, presents significant challenges for governments. Politics often have little interest in political issues that are peripheral to their experience. Promoting even the most rudimentary knowledge sees governments competing in diversified, sophisticated and saturated media markets. The complexity of contemporary liberal democratic government and the welfare state is a barrier to those seeking to understand available services. Citizens only have limited time and interest in seeking information, even if it may benefit them directly.

Limited government resources often lead to limited available information. Targeting disadvantaged groups presents real problems. Those who most need information are often the hardest to target. Language can present a serious problem, especially in countries such as Australia with many people who speak English as a second language.

In Australia all levels of government invest significant resources to ensure the availability of information. State and Federal governments undertake many communications activities to ensure that Australians are able to interact with government efficiently and justly, while securing the benefits of a strong state. Despite this investment, significant problems exist for some non-residents who are legally in Australia and want to access information and fully exercise their rights. Asylum seekers are often at a serious disadvantage in understanding what their rights and responsibilities are. They are vulnerable individuals that

face a variety of challenges in understanding what services they can access and how they are required to interact with government.

The difficulties faced by asylum seekers in Australia raises important questions regarding the need for governments to keeping citizens informed. Does access to information empower people? Aside from international conventions, is there justification for the need to keep non citizens informed? This paper reviews theory that explores the need to have informed citizens, and what benefits being 'informed' entail. The research is assessed in view of a group, while not citizens, who exemplify the importance of access to information. Specifically it looks at asylum seekers in Australia and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Melbourne. It highlights the difficulty faced by many asylum seekers in understanding their rights and responsibilities. It concludes that keeping asylum seekers informed about their rights and responsibilities is important both for their well being, and the effective operation of immigration policy.

### **Knowledge and empowerment**

Regardless of neat formulations of popular theoretical sovereignty, rule by the people is a complex and often contradictory principle. Underlying most contemporary understandings of democratic government is the presumption that popular sovereignty can be realised through practical political processes. The system of representative government, at the heart of most modern democracies, has considerably mitigated problems identified in classical political theory. Specifically, unless all members of a political grouping agree to a decision that will affect the whole group, there will be winners and losers. As Dahl (1989, 19) notes, classical Greek democracy was characterised by a very limited franchise, whereby the interests of citizens were undoubtedly aligned in key ways. A polity constituted by a group of male, land owners (who were supported by slaves) had fewer reasons to disagree. A democracy characterised by consistent broad based agreement on most issues of importance has less need for the complex mechanisms of representative government, than contemporary states.

Direct forms of empowerment in most modern democracies is therefore based

not only on the ability to be able directly participate in decision making, but through the ability to choose who governs for the people. This can be understood as empowerment through a citizens' right to choose representatives acting in their best interest. No person is a specialist in all areas of government and so people usually rely on the expertise of others to guide choice (Lupia and McCubbins 1998). Modern governance requires highly specialised skills, for example, economic management and health policy. A key form of empowerment in representative democracy is the ability to remove politicians perceived as unsatisfactory through the electoral process, rather than elect them in the first place. To be empowered through knowledge, a balance must be struck between deferring to other's opinion in deciding upon our own, and yet having access to a broad enough range of opinion that we are able to make a 'real' choice (Lupia and McCubbins 1998).

There are powerful normative arguments for a broadly politically knowledgeable polity. Milner (2002) suggests that civic literacy is crucial to functioning democracies. Civic literacy he defines as the knowledge and capacity of citizens to understand politics (Milner 2002, 10). This forms the basis for understanding distinct cultural contexts, and helps compare the effectiveness of democratic institutions. Classic normative formulations of democracy also note the key need to have informed citizens (Dahl 1989).

Empowerment through being informed is correlated strongly with an individual's own preferences and understanding of those preferences (Keeter & Deli Caprini 1995; Street 2001). A form of empowerment is the opportunity to choose leaders according to individual preference. Yet the complexity of most contemporary democracies requires a polity that is competent to choose competent representatives. The limited capacity and attention of the public presents significant challenges in asserting that people will act *rationaly*, and in their own best interest, in choosing leaders (Caplan 2007; Ostrom 1997; cf. Lupia et al 2000). It is difficult to suggest that polities always have the knowledge to adequately comprehend what is in their best interest, even in the short term. Even the staunchest defenders of the 'rational individual' recognise that people

rely upon proxies to guide decisions. These proxies include experts, journalists, policy advocates and NGOs. Through reliance on proxies, people will over time make choices that are in their own best interest.

In the modern democratic states, knowledge can empower citizens through more than helping guide choice in infrequent national elections. Indeed for many people this is but one very limited form of empowerment. For the most vulnerable, accessing government and community services is central to social and political participation, exercising Marshallian social rights. Adequate knowledge of services and entitlements is obviously a necessary condition. Required knowledge can be as varied as understanding how to seek material aid in crisis situations to accessing mental health services. Comprehension of basic rights is also important to empowerment.

The assumption that political power, socio-economic position and political knowledge are interlinked is fundamental to the argument of this paper. This is important in terms of the power of citizens to be able to redress potential disputes and conflicts through the political and legal system, but it is equally important on an individual and practical level. The more informed citizens are about issues of public importance, the more empowered they are when they vote (Viteritti 1997). People who understand what services they can access are also empowered. As Viteritti (1997, 82) notes, effective communication between government and polity is a political necessity, arising out of the basic covenant between governments and citizens.

### **Informed publics?**

Though opinions differ radically on whether ensuring that citizens remain 'informed' is important, it is generally agreed that citizens need basic access to information. Access to information implies that citizens have a variety of sources of pertinent information, coupled with competent comment on that information to aid in understanding. A free press is often seen to be the key democratic institution (Brasch and Ulloth 2001). Though the idea of truly objective journalism is difficult to defend for a variety of reasons, not least of which is its long partisan

tradition (Stephens 1996), it is seen as a worthy ideal in most democracies. Indeed, a vibrant free press is seen as crucial to emerging democratic states (Voltmer 2006). As Hallin and Mancini (2004) demonstrate, the relationship between the political system and the characteristics of journalism can vary dramatically between national contexts. Inevitably though, the journalism is important to the functioning of modern government.

The media is also a central conduit of communication between political elite and public. Modern media's ability to communicate with a significant proportion of the population with a frequency that would have been anathema to early political theorists, means that the extent of communication between government and citizens is unparalleled. Through both direct means such as advertising and indirect means such as reporting government action, all contemporary democracies utilise widespread, and usually refined, media campaigns (Weiss and Tschirhart 1994). In the Australian case, all levels of government undertake significant print and broadcast media campaigns. These campaigns inform on a plethora of issues, and range from campaigns that attempt to modify behaviour (for example advertising to encourage people to quit smoking), to information on policy changes (changes to the health care system).

### **Capable and engaged publics?**

Access to information is a limited panacea in promoting effective functioning democracies and empowering citizens. As Downs (1957) identified in his *Economic Theory of Democracy*, the relative benefit versus the cost that citizens derive from gaining information often means that they will only seek out what will keep them basically informed. While there are strong normative arguments that suggest the need to promote more active citizens (Milner 2002; cf. Putnam 2000), the fact remains that in the comparatively rich democracies politics is a peripheral concern at best. Though it is of great concern that citizens have little or no interest in politics, of greater concern is that they will be apathetic in the seeking out details of their rights and responsibilities.

Concomitant to the lack of interest in public affairs is the lack of both general and

political knowledge displayed by publics' worldwide (Dalton 2006). The US case has been extensively studied, with research showing a very low level of general political knowledge and comprehension of much of what government does (Dalton 2006). While the Australian case differs, the limited research available suggests broadly similar trends (McAllister 1998).

While citizens may be generally uninterested in politics or unmotivated to actively seek information themselves, research suggests that most people rely on 'information shortcuts'. Through the agent/principal framework, Lupia and McCubbins (1998) argue that citizens act as 'principals' and politicians as 'agents'. To ensure that the political elites fulfil the will of the people, a third party, a 'speaker', guides citizens. This speaker is, for example, a community leader, the press, or trusted friends. Lupia and McCubbins (1998) assert that as long as citizens can trust these proxies they will be, in effect, informed. A similar argument applies to seeking out information on rights and responsibilities. The work of Lupia and McCubbins (1998) suggest that publics will keep themselves informed, given the best information available, through the use of proxies.

The source and mode of acquiring political information has received significant attention. In some formulations media is key (Lyengar and Kinder 1987; Norris 2000), or elite opinion (Zaller 1992). In others party identification plays a key roll (Downs 1957), or campaigns (Lupia 2000), or bias toward 'known issues' (Calvert 1985). Vande Berg et al (2004) argue that key to ensuring that citizens are fully empowered through the use of media is the promotion of media literacy. They suggest that a critically engaged citizenry are able to better understand issues of wide ranging importance.

Having available political information does in and of itself guarantee an 'informed' public who are engaged in politics and are able to exercise and understand their rights. What counts are the proxies that the majority of people use to guide their choices and actions? How the available information is used, the mode of its reception and how it is understood is crucial. Reflecting upon the process of communication and the features of contemporary media in advanced

democracies is illuminating in this regard.

### **Vulnerable publics, marginalised groups and the link with empowerment**

This paper has so far surveyed research and theory that point to the importance of having a public who are adequately informed about their rights and responsibilities. A key reason for this is that knowledge empowers individuals to participate in the political process fully, and as an adjunct it allows them to understand their rights and responsibilities. Through a rights framework, such as the classic T. H. Marshall (1950) typology, information is important to be able to exercise political, civil and social rights. While there is a difference between being knowledgeable about current events that inform a vote, and knowing where to apply for state welfare, these are both key elements of participating as a citizen. They are also key elements in being empowered enough to function in modern societies.

An interesting way to reflect upon the importance of having access to information to fully participate as citizen is to consider those groups most marginalised by lack of it. Australian governments make a considerable commitment to ensuring that marginalised groups have ready access to the information they need to be able to access government services and participate. For example, in 2003-2004 the Commonwealth government spent \$40 million on advertising across many different departments (Tingle and Shoebridge 2004). Much of this direct communication was aimed at making sure people could exercise their rights.

Despite this effort there are still groups within the community that are potentially at a significant disadvantage when it comes to access to information. Indigenous communities are often at a serious disadvantage accessing many services and access to information is certainly part of this (for example see Poroch 2006).

Another group that has significant barriers to accessing information is asylum seekers. The current plight of many asylum seekers in Australia demonstrates how crucial reasonable access to information can be. It is also an interesting example because individuals seeking protection are obviously not citizens, but are legally in Australia and must interact extensively with government. Asylum

seekers have a range of rights under Australian law, whether they exercise them or not is often dependant on their understanding of particular rights. Their precarious legal status means that lack of knowledge can have very serious consequences.

The next section will explore some of the issues that are faced by asylum seekers in Melbourne regarding access to information and the impact this potentially has on their situation and how it impacts on the process of seeking asylum in Australia. Reflecting upon the challenges faced by asylum seekers is a useful heuristic to further understanding just how crucial access to information can be in empowering people to interact with government. It also speaks to current wisdom regarding the ways that people become informed to empower themselves. While the case of asylum seekers is obviously an extreme example insofar as the informational component of empowerment is concerned, it is a timely one.

### **Asylum seekers**

Despite Australia's strong history of resettling refugees, especially those forced to leave South East Asia during the Indo-China conflict, recent asylum seekers that have entered Australia have faced many challenges (Jupp 2007). A key challenge some groups of asylum seekers face is correctly undertaking the process of applying for protection. In Australia, this process can be quite complex and there are many different classifications of asylum applications. For example an individual may be placed on one of several different visas depending on the stage of the process that they are at, and are granted certain rights (benefits) accordingly. Many asylum seekers are not recognised as refugees until after lengthy appeals process.

Many asylum seekers face significant challenges in applying for protection through their ignorance of the rules and the impact that administrative decisions. Through the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), the many different classifications of people migrating to Australia are supported as part of their resettlement. Immigrants are often entitled to services such as 510 hours of English language tuition (DIAC 2007). Asylum seekers are, however, often not

entitled to such schemes or lack the knowledge and support necessary to utilise them effectively. Asylum seekers who are legally in Australia are often unaware of their status and what they are entitled to. This deficiency is perhaps all the more pressing because asylum seekers usually represent the most vulnerable migrants, especially those who are fleeing from persecution.

### **The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre**

The Asylum Seekers Resource Centre (ASRC) centre is located in Melbourne. It was established in June 2001, and provides support for hundreds of people who have applied for or have been recognised as asylum seekers. The centre has provided support to over three thousand people in the last six years. The ASRC provides many services (ASRC 2006). They have a free food service that provides food to those asylum seekers who are unable to work. They have a health care service staffed by volunteers that treat people five days a week. The ASRC also runs support services for those who have recently been released from detention into the community. This is run in concert with Temporary Protection Visa settlement programs. Home English tutoring is provided through another program. Finally the centre provides legal and employment support to a large number of asylum seekers.

The centre does not turn away anyone who is in the process of applying for protection, or appealing a decision with the minister for Immigration. Approximately seventy five percent of the people assisted by the ASRC have no right to earn an income, no access Medicare or the social security system (ASRC 2006). This is the primary means through which the majority of the ASRC's clients survive, as they are destitute. They are heavily dependent upon the ASRC and a few other agencies for their survival. In the past year and a half the ASRC (2006) has assisted over three hundred asylum seekers in gaining permanent protection, and has provided medical care to more than 500 asylum seekers with no Medicare access (ASRC 2006). It has given around twelve thousand Met Tickets to asylum seekers and provided legal advice to more than two thousand asylum seekers.

The exact number of asylum seekers is currently only known to Department of Immigration and Citizenship. However, key agencies that provide support to individuals without the right to work, including the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Melbourne), Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Program (Melbourne) and the Seekers Centre (Sydney), estimate that they have helped several thousand in the last couple of years. The agencies also estimate that they have helped over 500 working age adults, without the right to work, in the last two years. Importantly, this number does not reflect the many asylum seekers that are supported by private individuals around Australia.

### **Procedural advice**

As the situation faced by many asylum seekers that have been assisted by the ASRC demonstrates, many asylum seekers are extremely vulnerable. The very existence of the ASRC demonstrates the difficulty faced by the most vulnerable in understanding how the process works.

The legal advice that is given to clients through the ASRC often provides them with the rudimentary understanding of their options as asylum seekers. There is great discrepancy in the circumstances of clients depending upon the stage of the application process and the visa they have been granted. Some are granted a wide range of entitlements while others are granted very few. The lack of support provided by the DIAC often necessitates extra advice from the ASRC just to help these individuals to properly understand their legal status. The ASRC have dealt with numerous cases in which asylum seekers have been ill informed.

The Support to the Asylum Seekers at Hearings (SASH) program helps asylum seekers through many aspects of the protection application and appeal process. Support is provided to clients by volunteers primarily attending visa compliance meetings and appeals at the Federal court. Volunteers help clients with the often complex process that are involved in protection applications (Howes 2007). A pertinent example is during appeals to the Federal court. Visa appeals rest upon an error of law, and thus are not strictly an appeal based on the merits of the claim for refugee status. The SASH program provides important support during the

process as the complexity of legal appeals places both asylum seekers and judges in a difficult situation, where clients often have difficulty understanding the limitations of what the judge can consider as part of the appeal (Howes 2007).

SASH also supports clients during visits to visa compliance meetings helping asylum seekers understand the conditions of their visa and how to best manage their own conformity. Given that many bridging visa have strict rules that prohibit movement, employment and access to health care this can be complicated. The experience of the SASH program is that asylum seekers are in a vulnerable position for much of the administrative work they undertake (Howes 2007). A serious concern is that without the support of SASH some distressed clients will 'disappear' into the community, severing contact with DIAC and breaking their visa conditions. This obviously makes the situation of the individual much worse, and wastes DIAC time and resources.

A combination of inconsistent support for asylum seekers from DIAC and the complexity of the process means that clients are usually very insecure. Most asylum seekers lack the resources to engage a migration agent, which makes program such as SASH very important.

### **Employment Advice**

Another key area where asylum seekers face significant challenges is in gaining employment. The ASRC runs an Employment Assistance service to those asylum seekers who are allowed to find paid employment. The employment service is funded partly through the support of WISE employment (ASRC 2007). The primary goal of the service is to help clients find suitable employment. In practice the service also needs to help prepare people for the workforce. Understanding employee rights and entitlements is for asylum seekers an important issue. Limited English language skills has meant there is a significant risk that employed asylum seekers will be exploited. Very rarely do they have comprehensive work histories and Australian recognised qualifications, and thus

often can only find work in low skilled employment.

A exemplary case is the situation that many asylum seekers subject to bridging visa experience. For these individuals proving to employers that they are legally allowed to work often presents serious problems (Dutertre 2007). Information regarding their employment status is often difficult for clients to both understand and demonstrate to employers. The only evidence many are afforded is that 'work rights' have *not* been denied, several pages into the 'visa rules' letter provided by DIAC to the client. The experience of the employment program is that this confuses clients, is often meaningless to employers and inevitably requires a detailed explanation (Dutertre 2007). This often manifests as an unwillingness by employers to expend significant time investigating the legal status of asylum seekers as potential employees. It also can further exacerbate employer's concerns over the uncertainty faced by many asylum seekers during the protection process (i.e. whether they will remain in Australia and whether they will continue to be able to work).

Through the ASRC programs and their work supporting asylum seekers, the deficiency in English language skills is a key challenge. All of those seeking protection have English as a second language at least. Some of those seeking protection have a very low standard of English proficiency. Lack of English language skills presents a barrier in and of itself to effectively managing the situation of many asylum seekers.

The employment program also works to ensure that suitable employment can be found that matches language skills, but also to ensure that asylum seekers understand pay rates, legal work hours, and safety issues. At any given time the program has a success rate of sixty to sixty five percent of clients (Dutertre 2007). Without the help provided by the Employment program, having the right to work as an asylum seeker could make little difference to their well being, as it translate into become employed.

### **Information and the protection application process**

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre has proven to be a very valuable resource for those refugees that have utilised the support provided. It has aided the many individuals in both applying for protection and avoiding abject poverty while they undertake the process.

Several programs that the ASRC run demonstrate the value of having comprehensive, accessible information. The SASH and Employment Programs are a key means for those seeking protection to understand the process, and understand how to exercise their rights. Being provided with this support ensures that the process is expedient and just.

The ASRC helps mitigate circumstances that can cause significant distress for individuals and families. A good example of this is to be found in the application of the 45 day rule (those who do not apply for protection in the first 45 days). If the rule is applied, access to government support and paid employment is denied. Ensuring that asylum seekers understand this is very important, as it is obviously better for the individuals if they can support themselves.

Lack of information can also needlessly prolong the application process and often leads to appeals. If asylum seekers are incorrectly informed about required documentation and aspects of the interview process, then they run the risk of failing to fulfil crucial criteria for assessment. With little understanding of the process many asylum seekers are at risk of jeopardising their own application. This can potentially lead to a lengthy appeal process while their case is brought before either the Immigration Minister or the Federal Court. Having sufficient knowledge of the process (however rudimentary that understanding may be) helps to empower these very vulnerable people.

The implementation of immigration policy is greatly enhanced if asylum seekers understand the process they are a party to. A key issue is essentially that of compliance. An informed individual is better able to meet the requirements of the process and this potentially saves considerable resources and effort on the part of the DIAC. It also helps avoid the application of harsh conditions that are applied under Bridging Visa E. This potentially frees up resources that charities

can utilise for other needy groups - totalling at least several million a year in Victoria alone (ASRC 2006).

Moreover, it can be detrimental to the health and well being of those applying for asylum if they are uninformed. While many programs that are run by the ASRC obviously provide direct support that helps alleviate poverty (such as the foodbank), the centre also can act as a 'drop in' and coordination point for many asylum seekers. Without organisations like the ASRC there is the risk that many people seeking protection will end up in the community with very little support.

## **Conclusion**

Democratic theory demonstrates how important it is for citizens to be adequately 'informed' and to be able to fully exercise their rights and responsibilities. Through a clear understanding of rights and responsibilities people can be empowered. Governments play an important role in ensuring that people have adequate access to information, alongside many other different information 'proxies'.

The complex nature of protection claims and the lack of adequate support from DIAC demonstrate the value of organisations like the ASRC. The information and advice that the ASRC provides helps empower asylum seekers to better manage what is often a very tragic situation. Though the case of asylum seekers is not directly comparable with that of vulnerable citizens, asylum seekers are in Australia legally and have considerable interaction with government. The ASRC can be seen to act as an information proxy, in the sense that they are able to keep asylum seekers informed about their situation. While they may appear quite dissimilar to Lupia and McCubbins' (1998) formulation, they fulfil much the same function. The ASRC acts to provide information that promotes rights and responsibilities for asylum seekers and enables them to empower themselves

As the work of the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre demonstrates, those who are most vulnerable can benefit greatly from being better informed. On the one hand it can limit misunderstands that can lead to breach of visa conditions, on the

other it opens new opportunities in education and employment. Ensuring that vulnerable groups have adequate access to information can be very empowering, fostering a more just and equitable society.

- ASRC, *Annual Report*. Melbourne: Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, 2006.
- Brasch, Walter M., and Dana Royal Ulloth. *Social Foundations of the Mass Media*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001.
- Calvert, Randall. "Robustness of the Multidimensional Voting Model: Candidates' Motivations, Uncertainty and Convergence." *American Journal of Political Science* 29 (1985): 1056-70.
- Caplan, Bryan, *The Myth of the Rational Voter: Why Democracies Choose Bad Policies*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007
- Dahl, Robert. *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Delli Carpini, Michael X., and Scott Keeter. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- DIAC. *Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2007*.  
<http://www.immi.gov.au>. [accessed 20-5-2007]
- DIAC "Fact Sheet 94 - English Language Tuition for Adult Migrants." *Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2007*.
- Downs, Anthony. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper, 1957.
- Dutertre, Sophie, *Employment Program Coordinator*, Interview with the author, 10-07-2007
- Hallin, Daniel C., and Paolo Mancini. *Comparing Media Systems : Three Models of Media and Politics, Communication, Society, and Politics*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Head, B. "The Public Service and Government Communication: Pressures and Dilemmas." In *Government Communication in Australia*, edited by S Young. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Howes, Margaret, *Coordinator and founder of the SASH (Supporting Asylum Seekers at Hearings) program*, Interview with the author, 2007
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Donald R. Kinder. *News That Matters : Television and American Opinion, American Politics and Political Economy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Jupp, James. *From White Australia to Woomera : The Story of Australian Immigration*. 2nd ed. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Lupia, Arthur. "Busy Voters, Agenda Control, and the Power of Information." *American Political Science Review* 86 (1992): 390-403.
- Lupia, Arthur, and Mathew D. McCubbins. *The Democratic Dilemma : Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?, Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Lupia, Arthur, Mathew D. McCubbins, and Samuel L. Popkin. *Elements of Reason : Cognition, Choice, and the Bounds of Rationality, Cambridge Studies in Political Psychology and Public Opinion*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Marshall, T. H. *Citizenship and Social Class, and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950.
- McAllister, Ian "Civic Education and Political Knowledge in Australia." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 33, no. 1 (1998).
- McNevin, Anne, and Ignacio Correa-Velez. "Asylum Seekers Living in the Community on Bridging Visa E: Community Sector's Response to

- Detrimental Policies." *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 41, no. 1 (2006): 125.
- Milner, Andrew. *Re-Imagining Cultural Studies : The Promise of Cultural Materialism*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2002.
- Norris, Pippa. *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Post Industrial Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Ostrom, E. "A Behavioural Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action." *American Political Science Review* 91 (1997): 1-22.
- Paterson, Moira. *Freedom of Information and Privacy in Australia*. Sydney: Butterworths Australia, 2005.
- Poroch, Nerelle. "Forms of Risk Communication: Indigenous Australians." *Australian Journal of Communication* 33 (2006): 127-41.
- Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- Stephens, Mitchell. *A History of News*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Pub., 1996.
- Street, John. *Mass Media, Politics, and Democracy*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Tingle, Laura, and Neil Shoebridge. "Nine the Winner in Government Ad Blitz." *Australian Financial Review*, 24 July 2004.
- Vande-Berg, Leah, Lawrence A Wenner, and Bruce E Gronbeck. "Media Literacy and Television Criticism: Enabling an Informed and Engaged Citizenry." *American Behavioral Scientist* 48; (2004): 219.
- Viteritti, J. "The Environmental Context of Communication: Public Sector Organizations." In *Handbook of Administrative Communication*, edited by James L. Garnett and Alexander Kouzmin. New York: Marcel Dekker, 1997.
- Voltmer, Katrin, ed. *Mass Media and Political Communication in New Democracies*. London, New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Weiss, Janet, and Mary Tschirhart. "Public Information Campaigns as Policy Instruments." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 13, no. 1 (1994): 82-119.
- Zaller, John. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.