About The Conversation

The University started a new partnership on the 1st August with the national online debating platform The Conversation, providing academics with the opportunity to share their opinions for public consumption, and sparking discussions on topical news.

The University has joined other leading universities across the UK that have already partnered with The Conversation to post thought-provoking comment pieces.

The Conversation is an independent source of news and views, sourced from the academic and research community and delivered direct to the public. The site launched in Australia in March 2011. Since then it has grown to become one of Australia’s largest independent news and commentary sites.

Latest news from the Conversation:

Last week university academics contributed 4 top stories on the Conversation in one day: Thought leadership blog.

“4 is certainly a stellar performance. What I would emphasise is that for a member institution who’ve only been fully signed up for the last couple of months, Leicester is performing exceptionally well – the quality of content and pitches has been really high, and I’m so glad that academics there are getting a lot out of the process!

“University of Leicester are a tremendous asset as a member. I've had a lot of authors from there write pieces of high quality, and the impact of the university becoming a member has been really noticeable – having quick responses from the morning email and the press office has definitely helped us generate more high-quality writing that's as close to the news cycle as possible.”

Andrew Naughtie, Politics and Society Deputy Editor, The Conversation
The Conversation report

The Conversation report

The conversation reports aims to outline all activities and statistics happening each month. The main scope of the report will be based on Top authors, most read articles, top commenters, most commented article and comparisons to member universities.
The Conversation report

Content

Overall statistics 5-7

Authors on the Conversation by college 8

12th September – 30th September 2014 9-10

Volume of readers 11

Highlights on The Conversation website 12

Top authors 13

Most read articles 14

Most commented article 15-23

Comparison to new members 24

Republishes 25

League table – articles of all time 26
Summary - Overall statistics to date

To date the University has received 515,076 readers, published 59 articles and has received 175 comments.

Number of authors by college:

There are a total of 45 academics who have signed up as authors and 38 academics who have published articles on The Conversation.

- Social Science - 15
- Arts, Humanities and Law -12
- Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology - 5
- Science and Engineering - 5

Reader amounts:

Chart showing reader amounts from July 2013 – October 2014
Article numbers:

Graph showing the increase numbers of articles between July 2013 – October 2014

From the graph, there has been an increase of articles being published
Top 10 countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Reads</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>250,451.00</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>49,094.00</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>45,958.00</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>27,813.00</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>14,623.00</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>13,613.00</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7,580.00</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>6,115.00</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5,962.00</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other countries

- United States: 49.6%
- United Kingdom: 9.7%
- Australia: 9.1%
- Canada: 5.5%
- Denmark: 2.9%
- India: 2.7%
- Germany: 1.5%
- Netherlands: 1.2%
- France: 1.2%
Authors on The Conversation by college

There are a total of 45 academics who have signed up as authors. This table consists of 37 academics who have published articles on The Conversation.

The names in bold are academics who have published an article and joined The Conversation recently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Social Science</th>
<th>College of Arts, Humanities and Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ben Clements</td>
<td>1. Julie Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chris Grocott</td>
<td>2. Sean Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. David Bartram</td>
<td>3. Julia Farley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Paul Reilly</td>
<td>4. Andy Merrills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Jennifer Fleetwood</td>
<td>5. Katija Ziegler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Yvonne Jewkes</td>
<td>7. Sarah Tarlow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Andrew Futter</td>
<td>8. Amy Jane Barnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Oliver Daddow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Jon Moran</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Meryl Kenny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology</th>
<th>College of Science and Engineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Charalambos Kyriacou</td>
<td>1. Marc Reichow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Marco Oggioni</td>
<td>2. Sarah Gabbott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Martha Clokie</td>
<td>3. <strong>Sarah Hainsworth</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Turi King</td>
<td>4. John Bridges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Elizabeth Maratos</strong></td>
<td>5. Andrew Ellis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaughan Centre for Lifelong Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Simon Bennett</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12th September – 30th September 2014 summary

To date we have a total of 44 authors and since the partnership from August we have gained 27 authors.

Between 12th September – 30th September 2014, University articles have increased from 20,386 readers to 67,362, 9 articles published and 54 comments on articles received.

Top authors in September were: John Bridges, Sarah Hainsworth, Martin Parker, Katja Ziegler and Norman Housley. Also, Top commenters in September remain as Martin Parker and Norman Housley.

Top 4 republisher

The publications in which our articles have been republished in were (including Advertising Value Equivalents) are:

- Ars Technica - 23,699.00
- New Statesman - 1,961.00
- Washington Post - 1,007.00
- Phys.org - 319.00

Most read articles

1. ’Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars’ by John Bridges.
2. ’Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III’ by Sarah Hainsworth
3. ‘Why conspiracy theorists won’t give up on MH17 and MH370’ by Martin Parker
4. Explainer: when does a conflict become a war? By Katja Ziegler
5. ’There is nothing ‘medieval’ about Islamic State atrocities – they’re just cruel and brutal’ by Norman Housley

Most commented articles

1. ‘How to pull the plug on irresponsible capitalism’ by Martin Parker.
2. Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars’ by John Bridges.
3. ’There is nothing ‘medieval’ about Islamic State atrocities – they’re just cruel and brutal’ by Norman Housley.
4. Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III’ by Sarah Hainsworth.
5. Why conspiracy theorists won’t give up on MH17 and MH370’ by Martin Parker.

Articles published in September

- “Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars” by John Bridges.
- ‘Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III’ by Sarah Hainsworth.
“How to pull the plug on irresponsible capitalism” by Martin Parker “
Tackling gender inequality on stage needs to go further than female Hamlets” by Gail Marshall.
“Scotland No vote has halted a wider debate about Trident” by Andrew Futter
“More children making music, but are lessons too conventional?” By Mark Banks.
“Glorious Debo: Evelyn Waugh’s adoration of the last Mitford sister” by Barbara Cooke.
“Scotland Decided: experts react to No vote” by Meryl Kenny.

Top 10 countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Reads</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>22,277</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>13,105</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>7,834</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>7,230</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2,879</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 India</td>
<td>2,084</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 France</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Germany</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Netherlands</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sweden</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed statistics 12th September – 30th September 2014

Volume of readers

Graph illustrating the volume of readers within September:

From the graph it shows that we have had low and high peaks of readers throughout the month.

1. The highest peak of readers was on the 24th September which was around the time when the following articles were published:
   - “How to pull the plug on irresponsible capitalism” by Martin Parker.
   - “Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars” by John Bridges.
   - “Tackling gender inequality on stage needs to go further than female Hamlets” by Gail Marshall.
   - “Scotland No vote has halted a wider debate about Trident” by Andrew Futter.
   - “Scotland Decided: experts react to No vote” by Meryl Kenny.

2. The second highest peak was around the 17th September which was around the time when Sarah Hainsworth article was published called “Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III”.
**Highlights**

The University made the list of most read articles in the past week compared to all articles produced by all institutions. These articles were:

- “*Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III*” by Sarah Hainsworth.

Leicester’s Sarah Hainsworth was republished by the New Statesman. It was then translated into Danish and republished by the website Videnskab.dk. Overall, the article was read over 22,000 times.

- “*Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars*” by John Bridges.

- “*Scotland Decided: Experts react to Note Vote*” and “*The Scottish Independence Referendum – A Vote for Change*” by Meryl Kenny.

Our Scotland Decides ‘14 panel has featured academics from Aberdeen, Cardiff, Durham, Glasgow Caledonian, Leeds, Warwick, The Open University, Coventry, Essex, Leicester and Southampton among many others. Coverage really ramped up as the vote drew closer, with those experts acting as a valuable counterbalance to what became a polarized and political debate.

Scotland Decided: experts react to the no vote1, TCUK’s rolling panel coverage on the day after the vote, was republished in Business Insider and has been read more than 21,000 times.
Top authors

1. John Bridges.
2. Sarah Hainsworth.
3. Martin Parker.
5. Norman Housley.

### Top Authors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>READERS</th>
<th>ARTICLES</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Bridges</td>
<td>29,671</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader in Planetary Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Hainsworth</td>
<td>22,121</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor of Materials Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Parker</td>
<td>4,987</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor of Organisation and Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katja Ziegler</td>
<td>1,812</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Robert Jennings Professor of International Law</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Housley</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor of History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most read articles

1. ‘Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars’ by John Bridges.
2. ‘Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III’ by Sarah Hainsworth.
3. ‘Why conspiracy theorists won’t give up on MH17 and MH370’ by Martin Parker.
4. Explainer: when does a conflict become a war? By Katja Ziegler.
5. ‘There is nothing ‘medieval’ about Islamic State atrocities – they’re just cruel and brutal’ by Norman Housley.
Most commented article

1. 'How to pull the plug on irresponsible capitalism' by Martin Parker.

BRAVO for this line: “Corporations are the problem. They are machines built to make money and ensure that someone else picks up the bills, so that is what they do.”

but one correction- people do not 'like' to think that corporations are psychopathic- where the evidence is there we are horrified to acknowledge it.

Companies experimenting on children in Africa with no consent, companies knowingly shipping formula that could not be sold in their own countries because it would cause brain damage sold in Africa so as to not lose the cost of production, illiterate African mothers convinced to stop breast feeding - sold the idea that formula was BETTER for the babies they loved- when they had NO CLEAN WATER to make the formula with- GUESS what happened to those babies?

Shall I go on? These are only a tidbit of what I learned in an MBA.

Phil Gorman
Meedican - retired teacher and matier - quite good company

The article’s manifesto of progressive measures certainly tackles the economic and political causes of inequality, alienation and discontent.

Capitalism is the greatest engine ever devised for turning commodities and labour into goods, services and wealth, but that’s all it is. It has nothing to do with common wealth, democracy or wellbeing. Without appropriate controls it will destroy everything that sustains our planet and its people.

Only if we can learn to harness capitalism’s power for the common good we can move towards a genuine global civilisation. Such measures require the election of genuine socially democratic governments. Given the power of the Anglosphere’s commercial media this is a rather unlikely utopian scenario. The Scandinavians may well pull it off in their region for a while.

alex coppen
retired academic

Thank you for this. One further aspect is that the power of global corporations has a knock on negative effect on national governance - arguably their increasing power has gone hand in hand with the relative impotence of elected governments and may well contribute to the widespread dissatisfaction with the political process. People recognise that real power lies elsewhere....
In reply to John Galt III

William S McCann
Retired

With all due respect John III, I think the point being made here is that our governments are not all powerful. It is the power of the large corporations which drive the decisions made by government rather than the welfare of the citizens. The vast majority of voter get their information from two main sources. The print media and television, both of which are controlled largely by corporations. This is glaringly obvious in Australia. The support of the media is critical for aspiring politicians, and the financial support of the corporate world, essential for the political parties, and although many contribute to both sides, the bulk of corporate donation is directed to their fervent supporters, the Liberals.

16 hours ago • report

Peter Johnston
logged in via Twitter

Universities are in the position that the Catholic Church was in before the Reformation - vast, unaccountable corrupt organisations which hoard power and try to undermine anything which threatens it.

They fight truth with lies and spew accusations of corruption round them like confetti to distract people from the corrupt system they operate which unaccountably sucks in massive amounts of taxpayers money - tax largely paid by the very people they denigrate.

When I worked at Nescafe in the eighties the company would announce the corporate results every half year. Next day there would be a deputation from the union - if you are making all this money, we want some of it. Their implication, like Martin Parker’s, was that Nestle was a big greedy company.

Nestle was certainly big. So the annual profit figure was enormous. But so was the turnover. And the profit was 2.53% of turnover. At the time you could walk into a bank and get 5%.

So effectively Nestle had invested billions to make less return than they could get by putting the money on deposit in a bank. But they did achieve something with it - they kept 30,000 people directly in work in the UK and a similar number in supplier companies (the worldwide figure is 300,000). They paid billions to the UK treasury in income tax, national insurance, rates and VAT, never mind all the little taxes along the way.

Most companies make less than 10% return on investment. Their investors are not get-rich-quick bankers but you and I, through our pension funds. And the tax paid by companies as corporation tax is under 1% of the total they contribute to the exchequer through income tax and national insurance, VAT and rates. These companies are the life-blood of our economy.

Some of that money found its way to third rate Universities like Leicester to pay wages for parasites - people who take the money from these companies but like to pretend they are superior to them - indeed accuse them of obtaining it dishonestly.

So I challenge you Martin - if you dislike these companies so much, give back the salary you earn which comes from the taxes they pay. Come on - a principle isn't a principle until it costs you.
A principle is not a principle unless it costs you?

No, having principles often costs people, especially those anywhere near a corporation BUT principles...

Read more

6 days ago • report

Martin Parker
Professor of Organisation and Culture at University of Leicester

In reply to Peter Johnston

Peter. What a shame that you end up calling Leicester a 'third rate university' and the people who work for it 'parasites'. What a shame also that you fail to register the fact that most of our income no longer comes from the state, and hence that universities are effectively no longer part of the public sector. Anyway, such name calling rather distracts from your argument. So, lets stick to the argument. Some questions for you.

Are you denying that many large corporations routinely evade tax? Do you think that corporate takeovers always produce value? Do you think financial corporations should be bailed out by taxpayers? Do you think senior managers are always worth their salaries and share options? And finally, do you think that any attempt by academics to intervene in corporate governance is wrong?

4 days ago • report

Peter Johnston
logged in via Twitter

Martin misuses the word Capitalism. In the past only kings could own property and they had the right to take it from people without warning and bestow...
2. ‘Billion people hold their breath as India becomes the first Asian country to reach Mars’ by John Bridges.

While I am excited at the technical brilliance, I cannot help but think of the article title. A billion hold their breath, sadly a great percentage probably care more about where they are going to get food, housing, clothing, fresh water! How does a country in so much poverty justify a space program? Not to mention nuclear weapons? Am I still right in thinking India receives international aid?

7 days ago · report

In reply to Arran Evans

This might answer your question: https://theconversation.com/space-research-pays-for-itself-but-inspires-fewer-people-23549

7 days ago · report

In reply to Akshat Rathi

Yes of course a space program creates jobs it is massive technological jigsaw. But what percentage of Indians receive university education?

How many if asked living the slums and rubbish tips, would rather have homes, clean water, schools and healthcare, rather than a space program?

7 days ago · report
Kishor P Dabke  
Retired engineering academic

In reply to Arran Evans

Arran Evans,

Every society has such distortion of priorities. In Victoria, the Govt spends about $70 million on a car race while there are starving and homeless people I meet at a community support organisation where I volunteer. In true democracies such anomalies would not exist.

If a larger number of Indians engage in science, that could bring benefit to the whole world whereas the probability of more petrol heads in Victoria helping the world is lower.

7 days ago • report

Arran Evans  
Student

In reply to Kishor P Dabke

I do not dispute the spending priorities of central governments can sometimes be perverted, to what seems like a cause of national/international interest, rather than a more regional or local.

But the issue I have here is, India seems able to invest money in a space program, nuclear weapons, while a very large proportion of its country are in life threatening Third World poverty. India as far as I am aware, even receives economic aid from other countries to help its poverty. Which of course nobody would argue with, if it were not for the fact that central government feels the need to spend, how many millions on nuclear weapons/space program?
3. ‘There is nothing ‘medieval’ about Islamic State atrocities – they’re just cruel and brutal’ by Norman Housley.

"It's unwise to apply to any group waging war on western values words that derive from a European historical evolution. It carries overtones of cultural superiority – "they haven’t caught up yet" - which sustains misguided beliefs and may even help them recruit others to their cause."

An interesting view on the use of potentially "loaded" language, which perhaps infers a psychological set in how we of Western (largely Christian) Culture, interpret such words. However this must be contrasted with terms such as "Infidel" and "Crusader", epithets deriving from Islamic History, and freely used in more modern times by Salafist and Wahhabi Jihadists, as adjectives applicable to all non-believers. One widely held view of the term "Infidel" is that it has an equivalence of "unworthy of Life".

The phrase.. "overtone of cultural superiority - "they haven’t caught up yet”, could certainly sustain some very misguided beliefs: but rather from the Western Cultural perspective! Of the overarching Abrahamic faiths continuum of the last 2500 years, the first, Judaism and the last, Islam, both view themselves as superior to Christianity.

Just maybe, the term "misguided beliefs" should be referenced to the whole job lot of such Faiths. A very rigorous Academic Debate on that proposition would be most welcome.

Ernest Colatranceschi
Retired Radiographer

To my mind, the use of the word medieval by the press, to describe the cruel killings, reflects on the poor journalistic education of modern students of journalism.

Similar poverty of expression is noticed continuously on the press reportage of todays multifaceted informatics.
Steven Crook
Programmer and software designer at Currently resing

You are, literally, fighting a loosing battle. Less and less people understand what medieval really mean’s.

There are times when I have to admire the French states attempts to fossilise its language. Even if they are misguided and probably futile.

Medieval has become divorced from its academic meaning and to most people it means cruel and brutal behaviour. Nothing more.

2 days ago · report

Norman Housley
Professor of History at University of Leicester

In reply to Steven Crook

You could be right but if so it’s really sad because of the wealth of creativity in the MA. A few days ago I was in Canterbury Cathedral which is simply awesome. It’s odd to say the least to set aside all the achievement and highlight the grimness - especially when it was actually no grimmer than in most periods of history.

2 days ago · report
4. Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III' by Sarah Hainsworth.
Adam Smith
Psychologist & part-time astro-physicist

It is quite true that George II was present at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743 but he was, at best, a spectator or "cheerleader". It is reported that King George's horse bolted during the early part of the battle and he subsequently spent the entire duration sheltering beneath an oak tree, under guard by British troops.

King Richard is the last King of England to play an active part in a battle, and the last monarch to fight, and die, on English soil.

14 days ago · report

Debra Joan Smith
Account Executive

Sarah, I am a Canadian and I loved your article. That also means that I am virtually illiterate when it comes to monarchical machinations. Your article sent me to the internet to learn more about the monarchy. He seems as though he was one tough nut to crack! But no wonder the world has so much crazy stuff happening today- there is a long history of crazy in politics!

14 days ago · report

Hendrik Huizing
Theoretical Theorist

Hi great article and off course the opens to comment and theory. I think the injuries that Richard receive were not as a course of involvement in battle as they appear too profound as a consequence of improper techniques. I feel that there were other possibilities insuronce through uprising one that immediately come to mind. Multiple blows to the head are not the workings of a Soldier in battle as they wasteful of energy but beatings caused by close aides or other low class with the impediment to clean kill are plausible. A twist in the spine could also be forthcoming from the considerable armour he wore.
Comparison to other new member universities

Chart showing comparisons of readers 12th September – 30th September 2014:

Compared to three institutions, the University has received the most read articles, received more readers and produced more articles within September. This is compared to institutions who partnered with The Conversation too.

The university was come up close behind University of Birmingham, who have had a long partnership with The Conversation.
Top 5 republishes were (including Advertising Value Equivalents):

1. Ars Technica - **24,169.00**
2. New Statesman- **2,046.00**
3. Washington Post- **1,100.00**
4. Phys.org - **299.00**
5. The Old Reader- **147.00**

New Statesman is a new republisher that republished the story on how Richard III died: “Nine blows to the head and then he was dead: forensics shed light on killing of Richard III” by Sarah Hainsworth.
Articles written by founding partner and member universities (all time)

Graph showing the number of authors from new member institutions who have partnered and joined membership with The Conversation.

The university has moved up 2 places from the month of August.