

Web 2.0 and cultural diversity mobilization

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CulturalDiversity News is a web 2.0 platform designed to inform and engage with culturally diverse communities around human rights issues. This paper explores the background to the development of the project, its implementation and the issues for community on the web that it raises. The platform is published by an NGO (the Institute for Cultural Diversity) (<http://culturaldiversity.net.au>) that was launched under a conservative and essentially anti-diversity government; it now functions with a national government that is Labor (of the centre), in the midst of exploding issues around racism, Indigenous marginalisation, rising asylum seeker arrivals, and inter-communal violence. The web provides an opportunity for groups from different cultural backgrounds to engage with each other, to promote their ideas and to participate in on-line debates. Using the common national language, and focusing on young people, the site is building a portfolio of young bloggers and writers from very different ethnic backgrounds. In the (Australian) summer of 2010 six young interns took on the challenge of reporting their take on cultural diversity in Australia. The paper also identifies the issues they raise, the way in which they interpret the issues, and the take-up of their contributions in the CulturalDiversity community. Using theoretical debates about web 2.0, social networking, and social change, I ask to what extent can this sort of project involve people in conversations about citizenship and human rights?