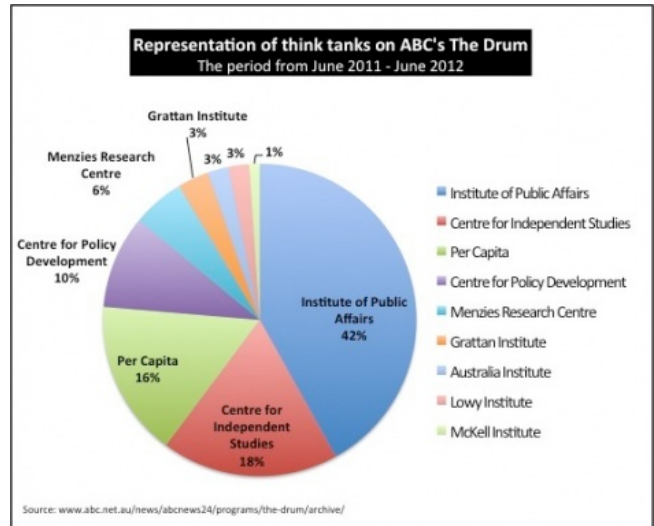


ABC Drums up appearances for the IPA

By Andrew Kos

20 July 2012

New research on ABC current affairs panel show *The Drum* conclusively shows its preference for guests from the Liberal Party aligned – climate change denying – Institute of Public Affairs. Andrew Kos presents his findings.



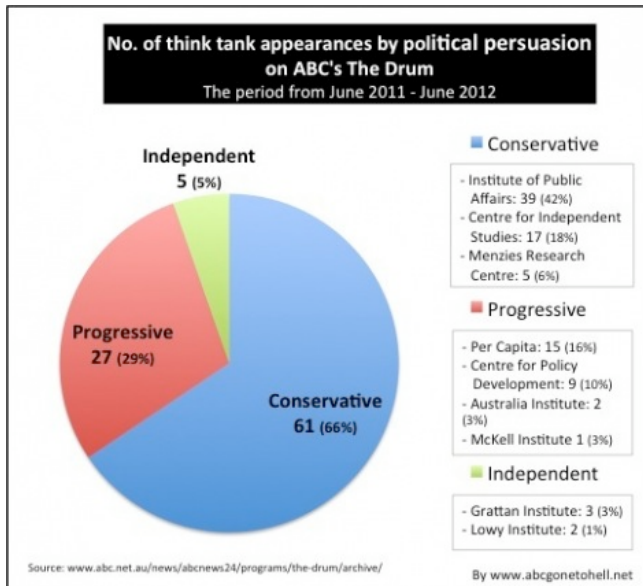
Looking over a period of a year (June 2011 – June 2012), I have analysed how many times a representative from a think tank has guested on ABC's *The Drum*. Out of the nine think tanks appearing in that period, the results showed an overwhelming representation of the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA). It took a staggering 42 per cent of the media exposure. The next highest was the Centre for Independent Studies at 18 per cent; followed by Per Capita and the Centre for Policy Development at 16 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

The IPA averaged three appearances a month, a substantial number that was bolstered by a record high of five appearances in January 2012. Third overall, and the highest represented progressive think tank, Per Capita, averaged just one appearance a month.

Think Tank	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	TOTAL	Average	Conservative	Progressive	Independent	
Institute of Public Affairs	3	4	4	4	3	4	2	5	2	3	2	2	1	39	41.9	3.0	61	27	5
Centre for Independent Studies	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	17	18.3	1.3			
Per Capita	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	15	16.1	1.2			
Centre for Policy Development	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	9	9.68	0.7			
Menzies Research Centre	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	5.38	0.4			
Grattan Institute	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3.23	0.2			
Australia Institute	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2.15	0.2			
Lowy Institute	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2.15	0.1			
McKell Institute	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.08	0.2			

The combined total of *all* progressive think tank appearances came to 27, leaving them still well behind the 39 made just by the IPA. The other two conservative think tanks, Centre for Independent Studies and the Menzies Research Centre, chalked up 17 and five guest spots respectively. These additional

appearances brought the total conservative appearances to 61, compared to 27 from progressives, and five from independents.



The bias shown towards the IPA (also an organisation with significant question marks over its ethics and credibility) is a violation of ABC's [Editorial Policy](#), under section 4. "Impartiality and diversity of perspectives".

Standards:

4.2 Present a diversity of perspectives so that, over time, no significant strand of thought or belief within the community is knowingly excluded or disproportionately represented.

and

4.5 Do not unduly favour one perspective over another.

In addition to the IPA's dominant presence on *The Drum* television show, there is also *The Drum* online, where the Institute's [Chris Berg](#) publishes pieces literally on a weekly basis. Fellow stable mates [Tim Wilson](#) and [James Paterson](#) are regularly published as well. [Independent Australia](#)'s managing editor, David Donovan, wrote an in-depth [analysis](#) of the guest spots on the popular ABC program Q&A, and in his data the IPA is significantly overrepresented there also.

Instead of *The Drum* – and the ABC in general – giving valuable media time to partisan think tanks – of any political persuasion – they should give viewers a *real* cross-section of civil society. Organisations such as the Community Council for Australia, Australian Council of Social Services, or St James Ethics Centre would enrich discussion and likely give commentary divorced of politicisation, corporate interests and that media know-it-all self-importance .

If you think the ABC should be held to account, then please sign the petition below and fill out an ABC complaint [here](#). Feel free to use the information in this post to go with your complaint, or use a ready-made letter on the petition website (click image below).

SIGN THE PETITION



<http://www.change.org/en-AU/petitions/abc-australia-stop-the-bias-towards-the-institute-of-public-affairs-ipa>

Please sign the petition if you agree and share throughout your networks.

(You can read more by Andrew Kos on his blog [ABC Gone to Hell](#). Read also Sandi Keane's study of ABC biases in [Climate change denial is as easy as ABC](#).)



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