

Findings

CAMRI Newsletter

Issue 7

February 2006

CAMRI launches Africa Media Series

The Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI) has from 2006 begun a series of Conferences on media and cultural studies in Africa. It is part of its effort to help de-Westernise and internationalise the field.

A call for papers for 'The Media and Social Change in Africa' a one-day CAMRI Africa Media Conference on 25th March is being circulated. The major objective of the conference is to debate ways in which the media are changing in African countries.

The conference is based on the realisation that processes of mediation elicit reactions and patterns of change in Africa and, more importantly, in the media sectors.

It suggests that the shift from pre-colonial, colonial to post-colonial social formations has been reflected and affected by changes in media and communication. The media have been harbingers of African social change and are strongly implicated in the change processes taking place in Africa. Traditional and modern communication patterns are increasingly overlapping with mass mediation. Africa now has different kinds of media serving many purposes.

Individual papers may, amongst other topics, focus on the:

- Media's Role in Pre-Colonial, Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa
- Media and Modernisation in Africa
- Changing Media Institutions and Production cultures
- Social Cultural Changes, Continuity and the Mass Media
- Media and Changing Individual, Local and National Contexts
- Changing Media and Changing African Lifestyles

More information is on Page 4

Internationalising Media Studies



Daya Thussu

Reflecting CAMRI's emerging research focus, we are organising a major international

conference on the theme of internationalising media studies in September .

The conference, which will enable many eminent scholars to explore the theme of internationalisation of our discipline, is the brainchild of Professor Daya Thussu (pictured above), who is also Managing Editor of the Sage journal *Global Media and Communication*, which is supporting the conference. Other editors of the journal - John Downing, from Southern Illinois University, USA; Terhi Rantanen of the London School of Economics and Yuezhi Zhao from Simon Fraser University, Canada – will be presenting papers along with other distinguished members of the journal's editorial board.

Confirmed speakers include James Curran of Goldsmiths College, University of London; Tristan Mattelart from University of Paris II; Jan Ekecrantz of University of Stockholm and Francis Nyamnjoh from Senegal.

The two-day conference, to be held on 15 and 16 September, aims to be a significant intervention in the discipline of media studies, and will include a round-table discussion where presidents and senior executives of some of the world's leading media and communication associations, including Robin Mansell of the International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR); Sonia Livingstone of International Communication Association (ICA) and Indrajit Banerjee, Secretary-General of the Singapore-based Asian Media and Information Centre (AMIC), will discuss the imperatives and impediments in internationalising media studies.

The University of Westminster

ster, which pioneered the study of media in Britain, has played a leading role in the field nationally and internationally. While celebrating the valuable work done in the field of media research within the Western canon, the conference intends to extend the borders of media studies.

It will endeavour to go beyond 'de-westernising' media discourses, avoiding the negative connotation, and deploying more inclusive, internationalist and comparative approaches.

A Call for Papers has been issued and the deadline for submission of abstracts is 24 March.

Interested scholars should contact either:
Dr Winston Mano at winstonmano@yahoo.com
or Yael Friedman
yael_friedman@hotmail.com

Also in this issue...

Where are they now:
Ruxandra Trandafoiu

A word from the Research Office:
Erica Spindler and Rachel Groom

Research News
Paddy Scannell, Tarik Sabry, Jean Seaton,
Maria Way

Doctoral Student's stories:

Wilberforce Dzisah, Heather Sutherland,
Salvatore Scifo, Ogo Charity Ekwenchi,

Forthcoming CAMRI Conferences:

Media and Social Change in Africa, Modernisation, Modernity and the Media in China,
Internationalising Media Studies

WPCC: *Mediating Celebrity* issue out

Findings is the Newsletter of the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI) at the University of Westminster, London, UK. Electronic copy of this and previous issues can be downloaded from: www.wmin.ac.uk/mad/page-874

Editor: Winston Mano

E-mail: manow@westminster.ac.uk

Or

E-mail: winstonmano@yahoo.com

Tel. 020791 15000 ext. 4427

Contributors in this issue:

Salvatore Scifo, Ogo Charity Ekwewuchi, Caroline Dover, Paddy Scannell, Jean Seaton, Erica Spindler, Daya Thussu, Maria Way, Tarik Sabry, Heather Sutherland, Ruxandra Trandafoiu, Wilberforce Dzisah

What Fun: Jean Seaton on number crunching journalism

Jean Seaton has written about journalists' use of numerical evidence in the latest edition of *Open Democracy*.

She explores the way in which over-estimates of Hurricane Katrina's mortality figures are part of a long historic pattern and locates estimates going back to the Balkan Wars of the 1860s, through discussion of atrocities in the First World

War, and to the way in which the Holocaust was reported as it developed in the 1930s and 40s.

She also raises issues about the way in which audiences conceive of numbers and makes some suggestions to improve public understanding.

The work develops from analysis of 'statistical' and

named lives in *Carnage and the Media*, published by Penguin in September.

She has also written 'Nano-truths and the story', an article about the contemporary use of evidence and proof in journalism. The article, in December's edition of *Prospect*, explores the contemporary uses and meaning of the colour black.

Scholars celebrate 50 years of *Personal Influence*

By Paddy Scannell

In 1955 Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld published *Personal Influence*, a landmark study in the American sociology of mass communication, the so-called 'effects' tradition. Fifty years later the book has been re-issued, with a new introduction by Katz, to coincide with a one-day conference held on 21st October 2005 at Columbia University, New York.

It was at Columbia that Lazarsfeld established the famous Bureau of Applied Social Research which pioneered the study of the impact of the new mass media of communication (newspapers, film and especially radio) on individuals. The initial hypothesis was of powerful media manipulating the tastes and opinions of isolated, vulnerable individuals, but case studies of voting behaviours in the early 1940s began to tell a different story: what



Paddy Scannell

most affected voters' decisions was not the media but other people. *Personal Influence*, as its title makes clear, was about the influence of other people on individual tastes and opinions. The famous 'two step flow' hypothesis of media influence (from centralised media to local 'influentials' and from them to their friends, family, colleagues) was confirmed. The media were not as directly powerful as had been assumed.

Personal Influence established the reputation of the young Elihu Katz (Lazarsfeld, his Professor, was already recognised as a leading American sociologist) and the 50th anniversary event was as much a celebration in his honour as a review of the book's impact. The first panel of the day, to which I contributed, reviewed the historical contexts of the book's production and its personal influence on the developing field of mass communication studies. Later panels discussed its im-

pact on the study of politics and everyday life and at the end, in a wonderful tour de force, Elihu came to the rostrum and reviewed and commented on all that had been said about himself and Paul Lazarsfeld (who died in 1976) and their book.

I have been working with Elihu for the last few years on his latest project: an attempt to review the impact of television on 20th century life. His work has been enormously important for me, especially his ground-breaking study of *Media Events*, which he and Daniel Dayan published in 1992. He is truly the grand old man, the last surviving still active founding father of the field of mass communication sociology. Working with him is both a pleasure and an honour, and I was delighted to take part in the celebration of the book that launched him on a career that got going fifty years ago and is still going strong today.

“Where are they now”: Ruxandra Trandafioiu



Ruxandra Trandafioiu

As much as I have always enjoyed the rich and sophisticated academic environment provided by Westminster, a girl has got to eat. So after submitting my PhD in Autumn, 2003, I arrived, wide eyed, in the sleepy market town of Ormskirk, north of Liverpool, to become a full-time lecturer. My long student life over, I am now in my third year of teaching, marking, managing, tutoring and supervising, the full shebang of the academic circus. This July, I will don my snazzy doctoral outfit and join my students, the first set of graduates that I have 'raised' from the first year.

Glad to be away from London to tell you the truth. I could not believe how small the place was, but it's nowhere THAT expensive. There was no pollution, quality of life is so much better, and just a stone's throw away from the cool Lake District. Or

am I just getting old, you reckon? I found Scousers fun and fascinating people, creatures of the North are the friendliest ever, and Manchester and Liverpool incredibly trendy and alive cities. The working classes still have some life left in them and while the Blairites in London are going up in the world, growing bellies and becoming property dons, we in the North have the decency to retain contact with the real world!

My college, currently accredited by Lancaster, is officially on its way to becoming a new university, West Lancashire's own. My office has a superb view of the lake, handy for all those gorgeous sunsets, Swans occasionally visit us and ducks are as numerous as students. Why, you can hardly tell them apart! You might gasp in awe, but these hills have also been blessed by the fleeting visits of those two rare birds, our own Tarik and Winston, both bravely venturing onto the tilting Virgin trains and

into our humbled little community. Raving success, I might add.

At the end of March I am off to the fun city of Amsterdam, to present a paper at the European Social Science History Conference and, later in the year, to the International Communications Association Conference in Dresden, rubbing elbows with Colin Sparks and Jurgen Habermas. With a couple of book chapters to come out later this year, I call it a successful and at the same time pleasurable one. It's not over yet, as I am quite hopeful to see all of you back in London in September. Till then, be proud of yourselves and keep that Wmin flag flying!

Ruxandra's contact details:

Dr. Ruxandra Trandafioiu
Department of Media
Edge Hill
St. Helens Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4QP
Tel: 01695 584145
Email: trandar@edgehill.ac.uk

A word from the Research Office...

Some of you are familiar with the workings of the Research Office – some of you are not. For those in doubt, here is your chance to find out more (albeit in a somewhat abridged form....).

We are located in a small office in Harrow Business School – across The Street from the doctoral rooms, but easily found with use of a compass. Although under the 'umbrella' of the Postgraduate Office, we are a separate entity providing a service exclusively for research staff and students. So – what do we do? We will attempt to be brief....

The office is run by two people - a Senior Administrator (Rachel Groom) and a Research Administrator (Erica Spindler).

Our aim is to support research in Media, Arts and Design (not forget-

ting Harrow Business School and Harrow School of Computer Science). This takes on many forms.

On the all-important financial side, staff and students approach us with queries on grants (such as AHRC, ESRC). Additionally, staff and students may obtain paperwork for financial bids. We also process claims.

Symposia, conferences and seminars are also organised by this office (in conjunction with academic staff), and we also advertise them. Other than that, we are also a major conveyer of information on a range of internal and external issues.

To conclude – it's impossible to include everything here but hope you get the general impression. Obviously, if you have any questions do come over and see us. You'll be more than welcome.

Erica Spindler

Research Office Info:

Erica Spindler

Research Administrator
Telephone 020 7911 5000 (ext 4154)
E-mail: E.Spindler@westminster.ac.uk

Rachel Groom

Senior Research Administrator
Telephone 020 7911 5000 (ext 4561)
E-mail: R.Groom@westminster.ac.uk

Location:

Harrow Campus

Opening hours:

9.00 am to 5.00 pm
Mondays-Fridays

Call for Papers: Forthcoming conferences



Internationalising Media Studies

Imperatives and Impediments

Dates: Friday, 15th September, and Saturday, 16th September, 2006

Venue: University of Westminster, 309 Regent Street, London

Papers are invited for a major international conference organised by the Communication and Media Research Institute of the University of Westminster and supported by the new Sage journal *Global Media and Communication*.

The conference will map the field of media studies as it enters its fourth decade in the UK and as an emerging area of academic enquiry in other countries. **Papers**, both theoretically oriented and/or empirically grounded, are invited on the theme of internationalising discourses and approaches to researching and studying media.

Topics might include:

Comparative media histories, Theorising media in an international framework, Studying global media cultures, Internationalising media curricula, Global media - global public sphere?, International media research: methods and methodologies, Analysing global media production and consumption, Transnational media flow and contra-flow

Interested scholars should contact either:

Winston Mano at winstonmano@yahoo.com or Yael Friedman yael_friedman@hotmail.com

Media and Social Change in Africa

25th March 2006, 9am-5pm

University of Westminster, London

CAMRI Africa Media Series are organising a one-day on the 'Media and Social Change in Africa'. It will discuss ways in which media are changing Africa and examine the role media play in a changing Africa. In countries from Egypt to South Africa, Kenya to Zimbabwe, Cameroon to Nigeria, Rwanda to Morocco, the 'media', defined as widely as possible, mediate old and new African social realities.

Processes of mediation elicit reactions and patterns of change in Africa and, more importantly, in the media sectors. The shift from pre-colonial, colonial to post-colonial social formations has been reflected and affected by changes in media and communication. The media have been harbingers of African social change and are strongly implicated in the change processes taking place in Africa. Traditional and modern communication patterns are increasingly overlapping with mass mediation. Africa now has different kinds of media serving many kinds of purposes.

Papers are invited on **Media and Social Change in Africa**. The **deadline** for abstracts is 15 February 2006. Those whose papers are accepted will be notified by 28 February 2006. Completed papers (not more than 6000 words) must be e-mailed to us not later than 15 March 2006. Send 200-word abstracts to Winston Mano at: manow@wmin.ac.uk or winstonmano@yahoo.com

Call for Papers - Modernisation, Modernity and the Media in China: 15-16th June, 2006

Venue: China Media Centre, University of Westminster

The media present a dual role in this debate. On the one hand, the media articulate the public opinions on 'modernity' and its relationship with the Chinese nation and tradition. They disseminate the ideas about what the 'modern' individual, organisation, culture, society and state are supposed to be. They mediate the public imaginations of 'modernity' through its texts, images and narratives. On the other hand the media, as social institutions, embody the cultural-political-economic conditions in the society and the characteristics of the societal modernisation process. These characteristics inform the practices, structures and changes in the media and the messages they propagate. What kind(s) of modernit(ies) do Chinese media and society consume, create and perform today? How and why do these appropriations, formulations and mediations emerge? Why do they assume the patterns which they do? Papers addressing one or more of the above concerns are welcome.

Guidelines for submitting abstracts/panel proposals/papers:

Abstracts of proposed papers (max. 300 words) are due by 15th January, 2006.

Panel proposals (max. 500 words including title, rationale, and a full list of participants) are due by 20th January, 2006.

Please send submissions via e-mail to: CMC-Office@wmin.ac.uk Applicants will be notified of the result by mid-February 2006.

For applicants who want their papers to be considered for inclusion in the conference proceedings, the deadline for completed papers is 31st May, 2006. For further enquiries, please contact the conference co-ordinator, Ms. Yik Chan Chin, via e-mail: chiny@wmin.ac.uk, or phone: +44 (0)20 7911 5000 ext. 4882, or fax: +44 (0)20 7911 5943.

Maria attends major Italian conference

Maria Way attended the conference *Comunicare e Partecipare* at the Università Pontificia Gregoriana in November 2005. This conference was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Centro Interdisciplinare sulla Comunicazione Sociale (CICS), the interdisciplinary department which teaches communication and media there. The conference also celebrated the 75th birthday of Fr. Professor Robert A. White, S.J., which will be in January. Fr. White will be continuing to teach in Tanzania, Nigeria and Chile.

Maria's recent publications include:

- "Same Old Story" in Jiménez Cataño, Rafael & Juan José García-Noblejas (eds.) (2004) *Poetica e Cristianesimo*, Edizioni Università della Santa Croce: Rome, pp. 527-542.
- "Church as Auteur", paper published (in both Italian and English) in *Cinemascope* Vol. I. No.1, an Italian, peer reviewed film e-journal. October 2004. at <http://www.cinema-scope.net/Articolo05.html>.
- 'A global farewell to 'Papa Wojtyla' in *Global Media and Communication*, Vol.1(3) pp.399-402

She hopes to begin another research project at the Vatican during 2006.

Caroline joins CAMRI

It was back in 2000 that I first came to work in the Media Department at Westminster.

My first year here was also my first experience of being employed as an academic researcher and I worked for Annette Hill on an ESRC audiences project, whilst also successfully completing my PhD at Goldsmiths College. That first job encouraged me to pursue academic work further, rather than return to the television production industry where I had previously earned a precarious freelance living.

In the following four years I returned to Westminster to work on various teaching and research contracts, including further projects with Annette and also a news and factual programming project with Steve Barnett. Similar work also took me to King's College London, Brunel University and a couple of American Universities with London programmes.

Then in July of last year, the very welcome opportunity of an EPSRC Research Fellowship allowed me to join CAMRI on a longer-term basis. This five-year scheme is a national initiative and reflects a - some would say belated - recognition by the government funding bodies of the benefit in supporting contract researchers' academic careers.

So, as well as working on publications and contributing to the teaching in the department, my aim in the next few years is to build upon my research experience and, ultimately, to bring in further external funds for research projects concerned with questions of media consumption and ethnicity. This I should now be able to do as a principal grant holder and I look forward to the possibility of collaboration with other members of the department in these efforts.

Currently, I am working at Westminster on a 0.8 contract, to accommodate my concurrent employment as a Research Consultant at King's College London. By developing a research project in which I was previously involved in the Education Department at King's, and a team of four others have successfully bid for a 3 year research grant within the ESRC's 'Identities and Social Action' Programme (www.identities.org.uk). Our project 'Urban Classroom Culture and Interaction' (- the original title was much more of a mouthful!), is broadly concerned with issues of popular culture, ethnicity and identity amongst young people at school. We began work in Spring 2005, have now conducted the first stage of ethnographic fieldwork, and are due to complete in Spring 2008.

The project is unusual and at times difficult but, ultimately, both innovative and interesting because different research team members specialise in sociolinguistics, educational studies, cultural studies or, in my case, media studies. Some information about the project and links to initial papers can be found by following the links on the Identities web site cited above, or by going to: www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/identities/profile_rampton.shtml

WPCC grows in leaps and bounds



Tarik Sabry

Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture (WPCC), a newly launched journal has become an instant world-wide success with young and established scholars.

Call for papers for issues of the journal attracted 40 abstracts in 2 months.

The editor of WPCC, Tarik Sabry, is extremely pleased that the journal, he helped found in 2004 to promote work by scholars in the field of media and communication, is now publishing its fifth issue. Issues already published are *Media and Migration*, *Alternative Political Media Practices*, *Media and Zimbabwe* and, recently, *Mediating Celebrity*.

The editorial team has already decided on topics for the next half dozen issues. These will include *Transformations in Chinese Media and Society*, *Media and Religion* and also *Narrations of Europe*. Recently Sabry, as editor, signed a contract with EBSCO, an American-based provider of information access through print and electronic journal subscriptions, to publicise the journal worldwide. "The success of the journal is due to the dedication of the editorial team, most of whom are CAMRI doctoral students. It has proved that PhD study can be combined with rewarding intellectual pursuits".

PhD registration: My story

By Ogo Charity
Ekwenchi



The story of my journey to register as a PhD student at the University of Westminster is strewn with anxious moments.

The phone call that changed the uncertain future of my doctoral research came three days before the February 2005 enrolment which still stands out in my mind for two reasons. I understand it's the last time the University will do two admissions in a year and so I almost didn't get in.

I was lying in bed staring at the University of Westminster application pack. I had been promising myself to get rid of this constant source of annoyance as it reminded me of what might have been: studying finally at the University of my choice. Roza's

call that morning, asking if I were still interested in the admission, was the academic lifeline I was desperately waiting for.

When I heard about writing a registration document, my initial reaction was: why did one need to write a document in order to register? The university had just given me admission, for crying out loud, and so registering my topic must necessarily be automatic. But I was wrong!

My topic was still very much like some phantom in my head, no shape or form. Suggestions ranged from identifying a gap in knowledge in my research area and making a case for how my study would fill this gap. But my knowledge didn't amount to much either. Never one to run away from challenges, getting a PhD is one challenge I avowed would never get the better of me. I wrote the document after some false starts. Now I am waiting for the result!

CAMRI Seminars

Wednesday 1st March
2.00pm-5.00pm
Room 107, Regent Street

Eduardo Cintra Torres, Lisbon University

"Televised Tragedies: TV Events as 'Total Social Facts'"

Wednesday 8th March
3.00pm-6.00pm
Room 107, Regent Street

Andrew Puddephat, LSE

Freedom of Expression: Its Philosophical Origins and History

Wednesday 29th March
3.00pm-6.00pm
Room 107, Regent Street

Inka Salovaara Mooring

University of Helsinki, Finland

'The Symbolic Economy of 'Second-Hand Europe': Studying Eastern European Media Systems

PhD transfer: Not a laughing matter!

by Heather Sutherland

I looked at the transfer process in the wrong way and viewed it entirely as an exam to either pass or fail. I had feared the transfer since the beginning of my PhD and despite talking to numerous people, all of whom, looking back, were pretty reassuring, I ignored all their advice and got into a panicky mindset. What if I wasn't good enough?

What if my work wasn't up to scratch? All the usual self-doubts of PhD students. I knew I was going to attempt to transfer in the November 2005 session and had thought about what I would include in my application, but I hadn't anticipated the early interview date and thus the even earlier submission date for the written work. As such I worried a lot, most specifically about whether what I had written was suitable or 'right' or even enough.

My supervisor attempted to cheer me up by teasing me about how awful the interview was going to be but this was no laughing matter! The actual interview passed very quickly. Despite my nerves, I distinctly remember relaxing once it had started. The Board's members were not 'out to get me'.

The questions all drew on what I had written and were helpful rather than obstructive. Having questions from those with no direct connection with your work can open up new ideas; had I thought about how I could develop the draft chapter I had included? How would I continue sifting through the archives and would I be able to tailor my research in order to be able to finish on time? How had I got on with my interviewees? Had I thought of the interconnections between the BBC and the US in terms of TV production? The questions all enabled me to elaborate on the written application where I had not explained fully what my thesis would be trying to say.

By the end of the interview I had realised that the purpose of it was to help me progress and think further about my work, as well as to demonstrate to the Board that I would be capable of producing a good PhD on time. At the end, I was asked to produce an outline of my thesis structure and a couple of pages referring to my 'emergent findings' as these were elements they wished to see that I had not included. Writing this after the interview also proved to be a useful task; I took a proper inventory, as it were, of my research so far.

Starting... 'a real battle with this thing called PhD'

One can imagine the high hopes of a newly enrolled PhD student. After the induction into the programme in September 2005, I set out to develop the theories and models as I have spelt out in my research proposal.

This impeccable blue-print has been secretly tucked in my pseudo-jacket. All I want to hear is 'what's your topic?' and to which I planned to turn the dialogue into a lecture session. This was not to be, as the unfolding events have shown that my preliminary proposal is but the beginning of the actual PhD programme.

Bubbling with enormous enthusiasm, I emailed my supervisor to arrange a quick meeting. It went very well. But before I left his office, he asked for an overview of my research topic. I was not prepared for this as I thought the meeting was to discuss the direction of my project.

It did not take long to realise that the battle ahead is arduous and demands toughness of mind. All this flows from the stories and pieces of advice you get from those who have scaled the initial walls of the first year.

I am in for a real battle with this thing called a PhD. I am trying to come to terms with the difference between a Masters degree and what I have now set out to explore. The gulf is indeed deep between a Masters programme and the PhD. Also, I have since discovered that PhD study involves more complex tasks.

The few months spent at the University of Westminster are too big a mouthful to contend with. While the staff and students are very warm and in most instances, in a communicative mood, the independent base of research work is a solitary minefield.

I am beginning to understand that to attain the ultimate, there are indeed many rivers to cross. I find studying for a PhD exciting and mentally engaging. It promotes conviviality and adds zest to one's intellect.

Wilberforce Dzisah*

**Wilberforce Dzisah is a first year CAMRI PhD student from Ghana. His working title is 'Researching Media and Democracy in Ghana'. He is supervised by Steven Barnett.*

MeCCSA Postgraduate Networking: My role

In the last six months I have been researching a project with Annette Hill, funded by the Higher Education Academy.

The Postgraduate Networking project seeks to provide case studies of completed research degrees in Communication, Media, Film, and Cultural studies, in order to facilitate networking and the sharing of good practice within these fields.

The key findings of the research, published on www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn, highlight that the majority of doctoral students who completed their degrees, as represented in this project, have found work in higher education institutions in the UK and abroad. This shows that the training and support provided to doctoral students is directly connected to the development of junior scholars in media, communication and cultural studies.

The majority of respondents (both ex-students and members of staff), agreed that this project (and its website) could be a very useful resource for sharing of good practice and a sense of community among students in the areas covered.

There is little evidence of existing databases in higher education institutions completed doctoral students and their exit routes in media, communication and cultural studies.

This lack of information on the experience of doctoral students, and their subsequent career paths, indicates a lack of value in profiling the existing experiences of doctoral students during the thesis, and following this through to post-PhD life.

The lack of existing databases on completed PhD students has meant that it has been difficult to collect information regarding the sample, even with continuous reminders to some students who expressed great interest, but failed to give feedback before the deadline, and, most importantly, among members of staff.

In many cases, the workload of academics and researchers in their early careers, has resulted in continuous 'reminders', even furthering the deadlines, to some of the respondents, which showed that their extremely busy schedules gave little time to respond with the data requested for submission of the case study.

A project with a wider time-frame would probably allow more interested contributors to send their information.

The website for completed PhD students and the selection of case studies will encourage new participants in the project and further case studies.

Further projects could build on this heritage and it would be desirable to continue the database and raise awareness of its existence among students and members of staff in Media, Communication, Film and Cultural Departments across the UK, especially the HEIs that are under-represented in this research project.

Salvatore Scifo



For further info:
scifos@wmin.ac.uk

Project Website:
www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn



Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture (WPCC) is a peer-reviewed journal, published four times a year in hard copy and PDF format. WPCC recognises the interdisciplinary nature of the field of Media and Cultural Studies, and therefore deliberately encourages diverse methods, contexts and themes. Particular interests include, but are not limited to, work related to Popular Culture, Media Audiences, Political Economy, Promotional Culture, New Media, Political communication, Migration and Diasporic Studies.

A major goal of the WPCC is to help develop a de-westernised and transcultural sphere that engages both young and established scholars from different parts of the world in a critical debate about the relationship between communication, culture and society in the 21st Century.

WPCC invites contributions from all scholars; particularly those at the beginning of their careers.

The articles of the second issue on 'Alternative Political and Media Practises', published in June 2005, are available at the webpage <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/mad/page-1034>

The third issue on 'Media and Celebrity', edited by Sofia Johansson, was published in December 2005.

The focus of the fourth issue, to be published in February 2006, is 'Media in China'.

WPCC, Vol. 2(2) December 2005 Mediating Celebrity

There is little doubt about the significance of celebrity to modern life, with the media providing varied outlets for fame. Celebrity is prominent in the news, it dominates sections of the magazine market and reality TV pervades schedules around the world. The issue, edited by Sofia Johansson, is a contribution to the ongoing dialogue within the growing academic literature in the field, and reflects the broader debates discussed here. The articles in the collection focus on the media as the primary site of celebrity, but approach this subject from a range of perspectives and from within different national contexts. Papers include:

Su Holmes 'Starring Dyer?' Re-visiting Star Studies and Contemporary Celebrity Culture

Anthony McNicholas *EastEnders* and the Manufacture of Celebrity

Gareth Palmer Undead: Life on the D-List

Kathie Muir Media Darlings and Falling Stars: Celebrity and the Reporting of Political Leaders

Jeremy Hockett Brand "W" and the Marketing of an American President: Or, Logos as Logos

Maria Claudia Coelho Experiencing Television Fandom: Notes on the Tension between Singularization and Massification in Brazil

WPCC Call for Papers: Narrations of Europe

The questions of "What constitutes Europe" and "Who is European" are not novel, neither is their significance.

These much debated questions have been influential in shaping national histories both in and outside the contested frontiers of Europe. Indeed the growing tension around the different perspectives on multiculturalism, Islam, immigration and enlargement indicates the significance of this debate today.

Within this context, the European Union occupies a crucial part in formulating, contesting and negotiating different conceptualisations of Europe. In this respect, it is not only an outcome of Europe's efforts to define itself, but also contributes to and shapes the idea of Europe. This is a relationship fraught as much with ambivalence, as with attempts to unite similarities and orchestrate differences. Therefore the key question remains whether and how the

high-politics of the European Union will resonate with the cultures and identities of Europe at the domestic level.

To explore this question and the surrounding debates further, we would like to welcome contributions across a range of theoretical /methodological perspectives and presenting new empirical research. Possible topics might include, but are not limited to:

How do media disseminate different images/discourses of Europe? Between different national contexts, how do these resonate at a comparative level?

How does the European Union influence domestic policies and politics?

How useful is the concept of European identity? Can we trace its contours?

Who are the "others" of Europe? Perceptions of foreignness in Europe.

How significant is the European Union's role in defining Europe?

How do the discourses of globalization compete with discourses of Europeanization?

Applicants may submit abstracts of no more than 250 words to Burcu Sumer at burcus@gmail.com or to Aybige Yilmaz at aybigeyilmaz@yahoo.co.uk. The deadline for submission of abstracts is **Monday, 20th March, 2006**. For accepted articles the deadline of the submission will be Monday, 10th July, 2006.

Further details of WPCC are available at the journal's home page:

<http://www.wmin.ac.uk/mad/page-880>

To contact the editor, Tarik Sabry, please send an e-mail to:
T.Sabry02@wmin.ac.uk