

Findings

Issue 1

September 2000

What is Findings for?

This is the first issue of *Findings* and potential readers need to know what they are getting.

CCIS has got a lot bigger over the years. At the last count we had twenty staff and about fifty doctoral students. It is getting more and more difficult to keep up with what everyone is doing. The primary purpose of this publication is to give some idea of what we are all up to so that we continue to form a genuine community of researchers.

There are many people in the School, the University and in the wider community who we hope might be interested in finding out what is going on at Harrow.

We are also particularly keen to keep in contact with the many people who have studied and worked in CCIS and have now moved on to better things.

Contributions and comments are welcome from all of our readers. We are starting out very modestly, but with your help we can soon get more professional.

Getting ready for the RAE Paddy Scannell

The staff in CCIS are currently selecting four of their recent publications to include in the RAE. Paddy Scannell explains what this is all about, and why it is so important to us all.

What is the RAE?

The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is used by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as the mechanism to distribute government money in support of the general research activities of universities. This year the QR (quality research) funds distributed by HEFCE amounted to £867 million (as compared with the £466 million distributed by the Research Councils). The whole School's QR income this year from the most recent

1996 exercise is just over £1 million.

To enter the 2001 exercise, we have to provide information under seven Research Assessment (RA) headings. RA0 is the summary of non-research active staff. RA1 provides details of all research active staff entered in the exercise, and RA2 provides details of the four selected research outputs for each one of us. RA3 provides information about PhD students and RA4 lists non-HEFCE research income. RA5 describes the research strategy, the structure, environment and staffing policy, while RA6 provides further information, mainly evidence of esteem.

There are 69 different Units of Assessment (UoAs) to which research is submitted. Each has a panel made up of leading

research academics in that particular field. We submit to Unit 64 (Art and Design) and 65 (Media, Communication and Cultural Studies). The panels for each UoA provide guidelines of what is expected under the seven RA headings.

Evaluation

The panels first evaluate the four individual research outputs and judge them under three categories: international, national and sub-national. The first two count positively, the third counts negatively. The criteria for each category are supplied by the panels and every researcher is placed in one of these three categories.

The numerical results for all researchers in a unit are added up and

(Continued on page 2)

EU Democratic Deficit and Audiovisual Policy Dave Ward

My thesis explores the European democratic deficit. I argue that this can be ascribed to the absence of a 'demos' (a body of people who identify themselves as having a primary allegiance to the EU), and to the lack of structures facilitating the

practice of citizenship through communicative action. European citizenship continues to be a formal rather than an active category.

Regulation

I focus on EU audiovis-

ual policy. Historically, legal and constitutional regulatory structures helped maintain a platform for a practice of citizenship at the national level that supported democratic representation. This regulation attempted

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue

<i>Where are they now?</i>	2
<i>Researching diasporic communication</i>	3
<i>In the field with Winston Mano</i>	3
<i>Publications from CCIS</i>	4
<i>Seminars and lectures</i>	4

Getting ready for the RAE

(Continued from page 1)

translated into a ranking system for the particular UoA: 5*, 5, 4, 3a, 3b, 2, 1. Panels then pay particular attention to the research culture (RA5) and use this as a check on the preliminary results. A high quality research culture can improve the initial results of the evaluation of RA2.

Rankings

To obtain a 5, a department must achieve attainable levels of international excellence in some areas of research and levels of national excellence in nearly all others. This means you must have more than 10% of the staff entered ranked international and no more than 10% ranked below national. It is thus crucial to avoid a 'tail' of below national

Some scores in the 1996 RAE	
CCIS	5
Stirling	5
East London	5
Sussex	5
Goldsmiths	4
Leicester	3a

researchers who would drag you down into a lower category. A 5* department has a majority of internationally rated researchers, with all the rest ranked national. A 4 rated department has 'some indications' of

international excellence (less than 10%) and almost all the rest at national excellence.

In the last exercise, funding was awarded only to the top 5 categories. A 5* submission earns 4 times as much as a 3b. The amount of money we get depends on how many researchers we have in each UoA. Each subject area is assigned to one of three cost weights: A (high cost lab), B (intermediate cost subjects), C (others). Unit 64 has a B and Unit 65 a C weighting. A formula is applied to allocate QR money on this basis.

Sorry for all the boring details. But I hope they show why high quality research matters more and more for the School as a whole and for the income and reputation of CCIS in particular.

EU Democratic Deficit and Audiovisual Policy

(Continued from page 1)

to ensure that the broadcasting sector contributed to supporting the idea of democratic communication through universal access to a range of information, independent of both state and market.

Advantages

The EU offers advantages in an increasingly international economy, where the regulation of broadcasting

is difficult inside purely national boundaries. However, it cannot tackle the issue of the democratic deficit as broadcasting remains the prerogative of the member states on national interest grounds.

My findings show that there are three pillars to EU audiovisual regulation: the free movement of services; the maintenance of plural markets to ensure effective competition between the commercial undertakings, and public service broadcasting. The latter is defined as a service of general economic interest, and so is granted derogation from the provisions of competition policy.

Ineffective

I conclude that whilst EU communication policy has been ineffective in the context of the democratic deficit, it has adopted an increasingly mature approach to the audiovisual sector in the member states, rather than at the EU level. This is unlikely to change because of the structure of the EU, where the Council of Ministers retains decision-making power. The lack of accountability will continue to be a feature of European Union integration, and the potential for creating democratic structures is therefore limited.

Where are they now? Anna Reading

I'm currently Principal Lecturer in Media in the new Division of Arts and Media at South Bank University, London. I doubt whether without the completion of my Phd from CCIS in 1996 I'd be in this position now.

My current research is for a book on *Gender, Memory and Culture*. It developed out of a strand of my doctoral thesis on social memory and cultural inheritance in Poland. I've

conducted research in the form of interviews and focus groups with men and women aged between 16-30 in Poland, the U.S and the U.K exploring their social inheritance of the Holocaust.

I have combined these with gendered readings of memorial sites and museums, survivor autobiographies and popular cultural forms. I'm interested in how the history of the Holocaust has been handed down in different ways and the extent to which our memories of the events are constructed and identified with in gendered ways.

As well as teaching on audiences, cultural memory and scriptwriting for the stage, as part of the development of critical practice at South Bank, I've written and had produced another play, and am currently working on a some fiction related to my academic research and a new script, *The Collector*.

I'm one of the editors of *Media Culture and Society*, edited a collection with Jane Stokes - *The Media in Britain* (Macmillan, 1999), and have recently published a number of articles and chapters on the cultural memory of the Holocaust.

Researching diasporic communication

Roza Tsagarousianou

A CCIS-supported project on *Diasporic Communities and the Media: Transnational Flows, Locality, Identity and Citizenship* that commenced in October 1998 has provided some of the first real evidence about media use in diasporic communities.

Survey

The research included an extensive survey within London's South-Asian and Greek-Cypriot communities seeking to explore audiences' attitudes, evaluations and uses of mainstream and diasporic media. There were 24 focus groups sessions with participants of South Asian and Greek-Cypriot origin, 45 individual interviews and 1033 completed questionnaires from people from both communities. The research generated a wealth of data about the relationship between mainstream and diasporic media and diasporic communities, the relevance of class, gender, age and locality among diasporic audiences and their media consumption, the intersecting of transnational and local communications, experiences and practices, and the link between all these factors and identity formation processes. Many themes emerge from the research project.

Complexity

Existing theoretical discussion has largely tended to stress at an abstract level the transnational, hy-

brid and 'cosmopolitan' character of diasporic experience without attempting to support such assumptions with empirical evidence or to examine the ways in which this relates to local contexts of everyday life. My research attempts to revisit aspects of the debate on diasporic communities by exploring the ways in which they utilize transnational media flows in conjunction with local media products as resources.

My findings challenge assumptions that overemphasize the distinc-

tion between younger and older members of diasporic communities. The evidence points to the need to revise distinctions between cosmopolitan youth and a parochial or ethnic first generation within diasporas

Spaces

The research prompts a further investigation of the ways in which diasporic communities re-imagine themselves at the local and transnational level by generating spaces of diasporic experience, partly through their media consumption practices.

In differing degrees diasporic communities share common experiences of *cultural aporia*. Despite different media preferences and uses, marginalisation, under representation and lack of provision are common experiences.

When thinking about how one can do justice to the complexity of experience, emotion, cultural strategies, tactics and practices devised by diasporic communities one confronts the need to develop an adequate theoretical framework that can address the numerous issues related to globalization.

Moving on

The recognition of the importance of cross-national, comparative research in this area has been central in plans for future research. As a result, the CCIS is participating in a European Union sponsored COST action to further European-wide research on diasporic communities and media policy and regulation.

Call for Papers
Diasporic Communications:
Transnational & Local Cross-currents

London, 5-7 September 2001

Proposals are invited for papers on any aspect of diasporic identities, audiences and cultural politics, the intersections of transnational and local diasporic communication, or any other aspects of diasporic cultural production and consumption.

Prospective participants should send abstracts of about 200 words to Dr. Roza Tsagarousianou (tsagarr@westminster.ac.uk) or Shehina Fazal (s.fazal@unl.ac.uk) as soon as possible, and in any event by Friday 23 March 2001. Invitations will be issued by the end of April 2001.

For more information visit
<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/media/diasporas>

In the field

Winston Mano

Report of a preliminary research trip to Zimbabwe: July-Sept 2000

Most of us agree that carrying out fieldwork in one's own country has its highs and lows. The obvious advantage is that one will very well know their way around the research sites. The down side could be, at the worst, coming to the research with conventional biases. This is not a

confession on my part, although my research is based in Zimbabwe, where I come from!

Audience

The working title of my research project is *Popular Radio and Everyday Life: A Case Study of Radio 2 Listening in Zimbabwe*. My core focus is on the nation-wide audience of Radio 2, a popular public service radio channel in Zimbabwe. I am concerned with the way ordinary people in an everyday context appropriate meaning out of Radio 2 content. This extends to an investigation of how

popular cultural practices influence identity formation. However, it is important to stress that within my project, the concern with consumption is one that also acknowledges the involvement structures that are often laid out by broadcasters.

Map

During my just ended preliminary fieldwork trip to Zimbabwe, between July and September (2000), I managed to map out the historical context of Radio 2. I consulted widely, reaching out to the national ar-

(Continued on page 4)

CENTRE FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION STUDIES

University of Westminster
Watford Road
Harrow
Middlesex HA1 3TP UK

Phone: +44 (020) 7911 5800
Fax: +44 (020) 7911 5942
Email: waym@wmin.ac.uk

Findings Editorial Board

Gholam Khiabany (khiabag@wmin.ac.uk)
Winston Mano (manow@wmin.ac.uk)
Tarik Sabry (sabry1@wmin.ac.uk)
Colin Sparks (sparksc@wmin.ac.uk)
Roza Tsagarousianou (tsagarr@wmin.ac.uk)
Maria Way (waym@wmin.ac.uk)

In the field

(Continued from page 3)

chives, libraries of all sorts and combined my documentary findings with the other information I got from interviews, especially those I held with retired broadcasters.

Interviews

At a second level, I held interviews with Radio 2 management about the station's policy framework. Here, I was using the information from documents to prepare more focused questions. I also recorded some of the station's most popular programmes for content analysis before I met the broadcast-

ers. The recurrent difficulty was in trying to pin down the broadcasters since most of them kept on postponing appointments. But once I broke the ice and interviewed one, I was glad to learn that they were always very helpful in arrangements for my next appointment.

Popular

Thirdly, I talked to producers and presenters of some of the most popular Radio 2 programmes. I sought to establish the strategies that Radio 2 broadcasters develop for effective listenership. I could not get to talk to some of the key broadcasters owing to my limited stay. I will continue studying aspects of Radio 2 production this December, before my research in August 2001.

New CCIS publications

Nicholas Garnham: 'Information Society' as theory and ideology. *Information, Communication and Society*. 3(2) 139-52.

Steven Barnett: A Public Service Argument for Broadcasting in the 21st Century. Barnett, S. et al, *e-britannia: the communications revo-*

lution. University of Luton Press, 153-161.

Jill Hills and Maria Michalis: Restructuring regulation. *Review of International Political Economy*. 7(3). 434-64.

Robert Peck: The Banning of Titanic. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*. 20(3).

Vincent Porter: Outsiders in England. Ashby, J. and Higson, A. (eds.) *British Cinema Past and Present*. London: Routledge. 152-65.

Roza Tsagarousianou: Electronic democracy in practice. *Hermes*, 26-27. 233-46.

Brian Winston: *Lies, damn lies and documentaries*. London: BFI.

Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, Michael Brunson to lecture at Regent Street

Two leading international cultural theorists, Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha will be in conversation about 'Postcolonialism', provisionally at Regent Street, Provisionally at 17.00 on 11 December. Mitra Tabrizan, who has organised this important event, says that everyone from the School of Communication and Creative Industries, as well as the public, will be welcome to attend.

Another big-name speaker is Michael Brunson, former political editor of ITN. He will be giving a public lecture on 'The Changing Nature of Politics on Television', again at Regent Street, on 15 November between 17.00 and.

The normal CCIS seminar series runs every Wednesday between 14.00 and 16.00 in Room A5.4 at Harrow. All staff and doctoral students are invited to attend. Anyone else wanting to come should contact the organizer, Colin Sparks (sparksc@wmin.ac.uk) in advance.

Other CCIS Speakers this Semester

4 October	John Ellis (Bournemouth)	Newspapers and the popular debate about factual television
11 October	Allen Chun (Westminster)	Internet and the public sphere in Taiwan
18 October	Barry Cox (Channel 4)	Does commercially-funded public service broadcasting have a future?
25 October	Ubonrat Siriyuvasak (Chulalongkorn)	The democratisation of the media in Thailand
1 November	Chin-Chuan Lee (Minnesota)	In search of the audience: three press models in modern China
8 November	Peter Bazalgette (Endemol)	The impact of industrial change on creative output in television
15 November	Robert McChesney (Illinois)	Making a molehill out of a mountain: US communication research
22 November	Robin Mansell (Sussex)	The E-commerce juggernaut: an empirically grounded critique
29 November	John Tomlinson (Nottingham Trent)	Immediacy
12 December	Frank Webster (Birmingham)	Information warfare: changing forms and changing reasons for war