



Three-D



MeCCSA and AMPE merge: latest report

Tributes to Roger Silverstone and James
Carey

A new journalism think-tank at LSE

MeCCSA with AMPE conferences

The two main professional associations for media, communication and cultural studies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, MeCCSA and AMPE, are moving towards merger. Christine Geraghty reports on the key developments in this issue. The name of the new organisation is still to be resolved and so, for now, this is the newsletter of MeCCSA with AMPE.

Two major figures in media, communication and cultural studies died this summer: James Carey and Roger Silverstone. Most MeCCSA with AMPE members will be familiar with at least some of the work of both writers, and many will have known Roger. Inside, we publish tributes to both these important writers and thinkers, who had such great personal and intellectual influences on the fields. This issue also looks ahead to Roger's legacy:

Charlie Beckett explains the mission of POLIS, a journalism think-tank established by Roger at LSE.

One more thing. This is my final issue of *Three-D* as co-ordinator. I'm taking up a new post in the Institute of Communication Studies at the University of Leeds in April of next year. After five years on the MeCCSA executive, I've decided to stand down to concentrate on all the malarkey involved in moving and starting a new job in a new place. I'd like to thank Di Harris for all her terrific assistance in putting together the newsletter over the last few years. If you'd like to take over as editor, please contact one of the officers of MeCCSA with AMPE (see www.meccsa.org.uk).

Dave Hesmondhalgh
The Open University

MeCCSA with AMPE merger

Christine Geraghty

Those of you who attended the AGMs at the last conference or read reports in the previous edition of this newsletter will recall that the Executive Committees of AMPE and MeCCSA were charged with implementing a new constitution for a combined organisation. We are now moving well along this road. The two old Executive Committees have been meeting as one since January and have begun to get used to working together. During that time, both treasurers, Mike O'Brien and Gillian Doyle, have worked very hard to sort out the new financial and membership arrangements. Letters have now been sent to members of the previous organisations and we are hoping that old and new members will sign up for the new organisation. Thanks are due also to Karen Ross and Nick Sayers who have worked to make sure the website is up to date. Find it at <http://www.meccsa.org.uk>. Finally, my sincere thanks to the other members of the two Executive Committees who have worked on this project and now know more about rules than they ever wanted to.

Obviously there is more still to do. A new Executive Committee will be elected in time for the AGM to be held at the conference in January. The rules for that were agreed when the new constitution was agreed last year and invitations to nominate for the Executive Committee will go out shortly. Election will be by ballot and so it is important that we get as many members as possible signed up so that the elections can be carried out properly.

The transitional arrangements had a commitment to set up a section for members teaching practice. When we met as a Joint Executive it was agreed that this might be rather confusing to set up the network while AMPE was still a separate organisation. That commitment still remains and is something the Executive will return to.

One further question still to be addressed is the name. The MeCCSA and AMPE executive committees have had a number of discussions on this tricky question and we are adopting the 'MeCCSA with AMPE' formulation which is the rubric for this newsletter and the website. We will discuss this further at the AGM which is the body which will finally agree on a name. It has taken us a long time to get to the position where MeCCSA and AMPE can combine into one organisation. Emphasis has been placed on different traditions in that process and those will be maintained. But the whole process has confirmed what we have in common and the new organisation has a flexible constitution in which all kinds of activities can find a home. In addition, we will be stronger in speaking up for the sector in all the formal and informal debates which are a constant feature of Higher Education.

Christine Geraghty is co-chair (with John Ellis) of MeCCSA with AMPE.

New MECCSA with AMPE brochure for schools and colleges

Every school and college in the country will have received this month a copy of a brochure, *Media Programmes at University: Choosing the right course for you*. It aims to help prospective students, and the people advising them, how to decide which courses to apply for by explaining some of the differing purposes and distinctive features of the variety of degree courses currently available. It also explains in general terms what a degree in media can offer in terms of intellectual development and future careers.

Signposting the links to the UCAS and BFI listings is designed to encourage students and careers tutors to research a wider range of courses before narrowing down to what is available in a few preferred university prospectuses.

The link is also given to our website www.meccsa.org.uk where further copies of the brochure can be downloaded and answers given to a set of FAQs that expands on the brochure content. These website pages will be very limited at first but we hope that

as a community we can develop this service to include a lot more information for prospective students.

Remember that the aim is to produce broadbased information for the sector as a whole rather than trying to promote one type of course or institution.

We would welcome your feedback on this initiative with any suggestions on how we might develop it for the future. With this in view please have a look yourself and write to jane.arthurs@blueyonder.co.uk if you have any suggestions for additional questions and answers.

Jane Arthurs,
School of Cultural Studies, UWE.
Communications subcommittee of the Meccsa with
Ampe Executive

New Online Journal — Announcement and Call for Submissions

A new online journal, *Radical Musicology*, is being produced in the International Centre for Music Studies at the University of Newcastle (UK). The Editorial Collective, based in Newcastle, is supported by an Editorial Board, made up of internationally known scholars. The Co-ordinating Editor is Richard Middleton. For full details, including more information about the journal profile, please go to <http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk>

Why yet another new journal? Because, even with the growth in publication opportunities in musicology, we believe there is still good work that struggles to find an appropriate home without suffering damaging delays.

Why online? In order to make use of the many advantages internet dissemination offers: speed of publication; low production costs; ease of access; potential for dialogue; multi-media formats. The case is not just pragmatic; we see it as part of our political agenda — democratisation.

Why 'radical'? Because, we feel, theoretically challenging work is still under-represented in established journals, and the need to encourage such work would benefit from the existence of a new point of focus. This is of course a symptom of a broader situation where the innovations associated with the 'new' and 'critical' musicologies of the 1990s have now to a considerable extent been 'accommodated' (swallowed, diluted, smothered, marginalised...) by conservative forces within the discipline; the time is right for a renewed, progressive push. Beyond 'new', beyond 'critical' (but incorporating the best insights of both) lies 'radical musicology'!

We invite submissions for Volume 1, which will be published between now and the end of 2006, and for Volume 2, which will follow in 2007. All submissions will be reviewed by at least one member of the Editorial Collective and at least one member of the Editorial Board. Full guidelines can be found on the website.

Roger Silverstone 1945 – 2006

Andy Medhurst, Caroline Bassett, Kate Lacey and Janice Winship wrote this tribute on behalf of the Department of Media and Film and the former School of Cultural and Community Studies at the University of Sussex.

Roger Silverstone was the first Professor of Media at Sussex, and swiftly and indisputably became its driving force.

He arrived shortly after the launch of the degree, and wasted no time in moulding the shape of the Media and Cultural Studies programme and creating a rich and sustaining working environment for both colleagues and students.

Through his deft and purposeful stewardship he ensured that Media became a serious player in the university's ecosystem.

He seemed to find the interdisciplinary ethos of Sussex a welcome release from his previous incarnation as a wholly respectable social scientist, and his time here was characterised by an open-mindedness and generosity of spirit rare at the time and even rarer a decade or more deeper into the audit-driven conservatism we all now face across the sector.

His tenure as Director of an interdisciplinary research centre allowed him to pursue his wider interests with characteristic vigour and dynamism and he was inspirational in fostering a research culture that could embrace many different traditions and approaches.

His own distinctive, complex, but always accessible work on the poetics and politics of mediated experience has continued to enrich the ways in which many of us think about our own research.

His doctoral students valued the time he gave to them, his capacity to listen and his willingness to engage with new ideas. He was confident enough in his own standpoints to encourage and nurture younger colleagues working within frameworks entirely different to those he himself employed,

and above all he had the ability to enthuse — to sow seeds, to foster connections, to remind us that what we did could really matter.

He did all this with shaming levels of commitment and hard work, with a mischievous sense of humour not often detected in senior academics, and with only the occasional burst of professorial irascibility. He knew there was more to life than work, and many of his colleagues and students will remember well the legendary parties that he and Jennifer would throw every year. He was also one of the few Englishmen not to look ridiculous in a fedora.

The Media programmes at Sussex have continued to expand and flourish, yet although their success is unimaginable without Roger's contributions, it's undeniable that things have never quite been the same since he left. After he had gone many of us missed the energetic figure in the long coat and the trademark hat striding across the campus with colleagues or students in tow, or his ability to cut through the endemic waffle of meetings with another unerringly incisive but unfailingly constructive remark.

It is also telling and apt that the news of his enragingly untimely death has brought tributes from colleagues in many other departments here, since the mark he made at this University could never be confined to just one degree or discipline.

Putting it at its simplest, he made a real difference, and those of us lucky enough to benefit from his input and influence will always know how fortunate we were.

As mentioned in the editorial, dozens of further tributes to Roger Silverstone can be found on a site accessible from the home page of the Department of Media and Communications at LSE. See also the article by Charlie Beckett on POLIS (page 8).

James William Carey 1934 – 2006

On May 23, 2006, Jim Carey died peacefully in his sleep, with his family (his wife Bette and their four wonderful sons) at his home in Rhode Island. Jim was my doctoral advisor, mentor and friend. I will miss his wisdom and eloquence. I will miss his stories. I will miss his generosity and deeply rooted sense of loyalty and community. And I will miss his carefully forged synthesis of political idealism and institutional pragmatism. Jim taught me, as much by example as by conversation, how to be a scholar, a political (and public) intellectual, and most importantly, a teacher.

I know that many people, upon learning of his death, will stop and reflect on their own sense of personal and professional loss. Jim had many students, only some of them formally registered as his students. He influenced many people, and many different kinds of people, through his extraordinary teaching, his magical lectures, his exquisite essays, and his public enactment of a moral and political intellectual. For Jim, his politics could never be separated from his deep sense of morality and even of religion. (He was after all deeply invested in his Irish Catholic roots, which he saw not only as a tradition but as a lived reality, embodied in the various communities in which he lived.)

Perhaps the diversity of audiences to which Jim's work speaks, and the breadth and significance of his contributions, can stand as a measure of his intellectual contributions. Jim was one of the most important commentators on the importance and failures of journalism. His hope for the possibilities of journalism as perhaps the crucial communicative form of modern life was constantly reenacted, not only in his writings but also in his decisions, first as the Dean of the College of Communication at the University of Illinois and later, as Professor of Journalism at Columbia University. He was a great advocate of the importance of a broad humanistic education for young journalists. Jim's love for journalism and even occasionally for journalists was always tempered by his frustration with the political and economic realities that defined contemporary journalism. He was an intellectual devoted to the public and yet he refused to compromise his intellectual and moral values in order to fit into the media's image of

what a public intellectual should be.

For students of media, Jim will always be one of the pre-eminent figures in the history of media technology. Drawing upon the work of Innis and McLuhan on the one hand, and of such figures as Mumford and Ong, he created a tempered vision of technology, navigating the tumultuous waters between unearned pessimism and banal optimism. He consistently argued for a careful scrutiny of the complex contextual realities of technology, as opposed to the constant reenactment of political fantasies. He refused to fetishize technology, or to fall back into any sort of determinism, technological or otherwise.

For students of communication more generally, Jim will always stand as the leading opponent of the scientific (positivist, utilitarian, functionalist) reduction of communication to "facts" and measurable effects. His ritual theory of communication, with its vision of human reality as both symbolically constructed and lived, gave him, as well as many of his students, unique insights into the ways culture and communication matter in modern societies. He continued his whole life to fight against the unreasonable worship of science, even its most contemporary forms (from cognitive theory to chaos theory), in both the discipline of communication and in the academy more generally.

And Jim was, I believe, the most significant founding figure in the emergence of cultural studies in the US, and in the effort to define a uniquely "American" (US) configuration of cultural studies. While he shared an intellectual and political vision with Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, he built his own understanding of cultural studies on the pragmatism of John Dewey and the Chicago School of Social Thought, the symbolic anthropology of Clifford Geertz, and the non-Marxist political economy of Harold Innis. Consequently, he always opposed the division between cultural studies and political economy. He was deeply committed to a radically anti-reductionist and contextualist practice capable of understanding the complex articulations of symbolic, material and lived realities.

Finally, let me add one more constituency — the broad constituency of the academy and especially the academic

left. Jim had no tolerance for political correctness, or for the facility with which the left too often and too quickly makes its judgments. Neither would he tolerate the commitment to theory for theory's sake, as if theoretical sophistication (and even worse, novelty) could ever provide answers to the important questions of politics. Even more, Jim was a critic of the changing culture of the university; his faith that ideas and education do matter made him a passionate spokesperson against the economic, administrative and even epistemological forces operating on the university, long before such changes were obvious, and long before it was easy to be so publicly critical.

And yet, despite his growing fear about what was happening to the university (as well as to American society), he refused to give up his pragmatic commitment to institutional work and change. And he refused to give up his moral and political hope. Jim remained, throughout his life, committed to the values of community and democracy, and to the ongoing conversation that is the condition of their existence. Jim knew the conversation began long before he entered into it, and his greatest hope, I believe,

was that it would continue long after he left it, despite his recognition that it goes against the grain of contemporary political and academic life. His commitment to this conversation (and hence his choice of the essay as his medium) directed and shaped his intellectual and political life. And that life has enriched and enlivened the conversation in so many immeasurable ways.

I was honored to have been his student and friend. We all benefited from his intellectual and political contributions, from the example he set as a committed intellectual and scholar, and from his generous mentoring. He will be missed. I will miss him.

Lawrence Grossberg

A version of this tribute appears in Cultural Studies volume 20, issue 4/5. A special issue of Cultural Studies in memory of Jim Carey is planned, to commemorate his contributions to cultural studies. Anyone interested in submitting an essay, or a reminiscence, is invited to contact the editors directly (see the Cultural Studies website for contact details).

MeCCSA with AMPE Postgraduate Forum Report on University of Ulster conference

Delegates

There were 56 delegates giving papers at the conference, plus a further 5 who were not giving papers. Those not giving papers had heard of the event either through the MeCCSA list, or from previous postgraduate events (The Irish Postgraduate Film Research Seminar, for example). The feedback from the delegates has, so far, been excellent. This was a first conference for many of the delegates, who all said it was a friendly and supportive conference. The quality of the papers was fantastic and the discussions mostly over-ran the allotted time. The MeCCSA Postgrad Exec who have been at all three conferences all said that the confidence levels of presenters, and quality of presentations, were clearly increasing. Postgraduates clearly need such an arena.

Topics

The topics of papers were diverse, with papers on new media, music, identity, film, print media and gender. We also attracted specific Irish themed papers from Trinity College, Dublin, QUB and the University of Ulster as well as practice based PhDs on both film and music. The scope of the event seems to be getting wider, and it was a real pleasure to have these presentations.

Plenaries

Plenary sessions included 'The PhD and After' and 'The RAE and Me' and the powerpoints from those plenaries will be appearing on the website as well. There is clearly anxiety around what to do immediately after the PhD in terms of being a junior academic, and the sessions were aimed at highlighting some of the options available to current PhD students. The Plenaries were a mix of personal narratives by PhD students who had recently completed and who had successfully found work. There were also political insights regarding the effect of the RAE on job opportunities, and wider reports on what other PhD students had gone on to do.

Outcomes

Hosting a postgraduate conference and having obvious institutional and departmental support for such an event has clearly encouraged other postgraduates in various institutions to hold one-day seminars. This year there have been two postgraduate events advertised on the website — at Sussex and UEA. Next year there will be a postgraduate event at Nottingham, which will also be promoted via the website. The website is thriving under Salvatore Scifo (Westminster) and we are hoping to add more events and

activities (formal and informal) to the site to encourage postgrads to network. There is a huge amount of postgraduate interest and support in the network, and we have a further nine postgraduates from all over the UK interested in becoming involved in the executive committee activities.

Next year's conference will be held at Sussex University or the University of the West of England. Following on from this event, there has been an increase of interest by postgraduates to host this event, and pressure is being put on departments to host and support the MeCCSA with AMPE postgraduate events.

Other postgraduates who have expressed an interest in joining the executive committee will be contacted and invited to the next

executive meeting at Westminster in September. Maire Messenger Davies suggested that a formal vote was unnecessary at this stage until roles were formalized a bit more. The committee now includes the following people:

Helen Thornham (Ulster), Salvatore Scifo (Westminster), Kerstin Leder (Aberystwyth), Niki Strange (Sussex), Robbie Edmonstone (Glasgow), Cathy Baldwin (Oxford), Kaitlynn Mendes (Cardiff), Iain Smith (Nottingham), Einar Thorson (UWE), Debbie Flint (ADM-HEA), Mark Jancovich (UEA), Maire Messenger Davies (Ulster).

For details of MeCCSA with AMPE events for postgraduates, please see the website. Please inform all your postgraduates of the existence of this network.

Update on MeCCSA with AMPE conference Coventry 10 – 12 January 2007

Our upcoming conference looks set to provoke some interesting discussions as the academy faces the challenge of finally deciding tactics and getting RAE returns completed, chasing down more elusive pots of cash, working more effectively with industry and generally trying to stay solvent, if the latest THES headlines are to be believed.

Although at the time of writing (29 September) we have not yet received in all the abstracts, panel and workshop proposals which are likely to be submitted, as we are still two days off the deadline, so far we've received 130. This compares well to previous conferences and interestingly, there is more diversity across the sub-disciplines of our field, with film and cultural studies, as well as media pedagogy, being much better represented than in previous years. Of course, how this translates in terms of acceptances is anyone's guess at the moment, but we hope to be able to respond to some of the complaints levelled at the conference in the past, in terms of choice, interest, number of parallel sessions and variety of speakers.

And speaking of speakers, the confirmed line-up is looking good. Cees Hamelink will open the conference and speak on the all-too-topical subject of human rights. We are also organising a theme panel on 'Women in/and News' and have a high-calibre BBC line-up which includes Helen Boaden, Suzanne Franks and Kerensa

Jennings. We have also secured Bruce Brown who chairs Panel O in the RAE and our own Peter Golding who chairs sub-panel 66. Our other primary coup has been getting Philip Ensler and Ian Diamond (chief executives of the AHRC and ESRC respectively) to talk about research council funding. With a mix of paper sessions, workshops, round-tables and screenings, we hope to provide lots of things for everyone, as well as a great venue — wi-fi throughout — and great company. See you there. The conference website will be launched in mid-October — check out the MeCCSA with AMPE website for updates.

Please note that we are also running a concurrent film festival — i-blink — which starts on the evening of the last day of the conference (12th January). This is a free event and will run from 12th – 14th January: it is the culmination of a script-writing competition we have been running for new talent — see: www.i-blink.org As well as the prize-giving, the opening event will also include a 'show and tell' by Pratibha Parmar who will be showing and telling about her first feature length film, Nina's Heavenly Delights, which was released in September 06. All the film festival events are free. If you would like to submit a film for screening, please contact Peter Woodbridge – p.woodbridge@coventry.ac.uk – for further details.
Karen Ross for the conference organising committee
k.ross@coventry.ac.uk

POLIS — a new journalism think tank

LSE and the London College of Communication have collaborated to create a new international journalism think-tank called POLIS. Here founding director Charlie Beckett explains why he made the leap from newsroom to lecture theatre.

POLIS wasn't my idea — it sprang mainly from the mind of the late Professor Roger Silverstone, convenor of the LSE's Media and Communications department. Before he died unexpectedly this summer, Roger outlined to me why he thought that journalism must be brought back to the heart of media studies specifically, and higher education in general. His thesis of journalism's role in creating a cosmopolitan world culture is outlined in typically elegant and passionate prose in his last book, *Mediapolis: Media and Morality* (Polity 2006).

Roger recognised that in an ever more connected world, information and the mechanism for mediating it matters more than ever before. The news media are central to the mediation of the kind of topical, political, social and economic messages that construct our understanding of the forces that can build or damage civic society. Roger believed that we are at a critical moment facing a challenge comparable to global warming. As he puts it in *Mediapolis*, "if we can and do legitimately recognize and struggle against the damage being done by the human race to its physical environment, there is no reason why we should not also find and commit ourselves to struggling against the equivalent damage to our symbolic one." Or, to put it in terms that I understood as a hack, 'good' journalism is 'good' for society.

Well, that's the big picture — but what will POLIS actually do? POLIS is firstly a forum for debate about journalism and society. We want to create a space where journalists, academics and the public can meet to discuss how the news media works and its role in society. I'm not looking to have a go at journalists nor do I want to reduce the necessary distance between the news media and its subjects. But I do think there is a tremendous desire among both journalists and the public to make the relationship work in a much healthier way.

We have a major public lecture series called "The News We Deserve?" Charles Clarke gave the first in the series, making a trenchant attack on media spin — and look what happened to him. This autumn we welcome the boss of Al-Jazeera, the Press Complaints Commission Chairman Sir Christopher Meyer, Culture Minister David Lammy and Mail Newspaper's editor Paul Dacre to continue the series.

We are also holding a day of discussion with foreign correspondents, the MoD and politicians about the state of war reporting. Next term we plan to hold a major conference on the role of media in development.

And we're also running private seminars. One series will bring together news media executives and new media pioneers to brainstorm aspects of the digital revolution sweeping through UK journalism. And a top figure in the world of law and order has agreed to an "off the record" briefing for journalists who cover the murky world of intelligence and public security.

But POLIS is very much an international journalism think-tank, so this December we will also be holding a seminar with Indian media leaders as part of the LSE's Asia Forum in Delhi. Future ideas include events looking at Reporting Sport and the Future of Documentaries.

One way we are hoping to open up the debate is through the website www.lse.ac.uk/POLIS which will have podcasts of the main events and through my Director's Blog at www.charliebeckett.org which will become a discussion forum for POLIS' work.

But POLIS is more than a talking shop. It will also build a research programme. Every event will have research input and publication of the proceedings. We will also be appointing newsroom fellowships where journalists are given a chance to research an aspect of their work in greater depth with the academic support that POLIS can draw upon at the LSE and LCC. And we are also planning major long-term research projects that will seek to analyse the changing nature of journalism and its social impact — here in the UK and globally.

And, of course, POLIS will be a centre for teaching and study. From this autumn London College of Communication journalism students will be taking up internships with POLIS. I'll be doing some lecturing at both LSE and LCC and we are planning a Summer School at the LSE for 2007.

But the real aim is to create an international journalism masters degree which will attract post-graduate and working journalists who want to study and research into journalism and society.

POLIS will not teach people how to be journalists. Nor will it teach Media Studies, as such. There are plenty of excellent places that do that already, including at the LSE and LCC. But the idea of Media Literacy is at the heart of POLIS. Journalists, and anyone working around journalism, must have a greater understanding of its social role if good journalism is to survive and thrive.

I am not a pessimist, unlike some journalists who have ventured in

to the academy. I believe that journalism has unprecedented opportunities thanks to new technology and social change. We have a chance to foster a better informed and empowered public, but it will not happen automatically. As Roger Silverstone wrote: "There has to be a way to consider the issues: to till the ground perhaps, so that it becomes more fertile and so that the seeds of political action and professional judgement have greater likelihood of germinating."

Charlie Beckett was plucked from ITN's Channel 4 News to be founding director of POLIS. He also worked for BBC news for many years.

Women's Media Studies Network

MeCCSA Women's Media Studies Network presents...

Women, Sex and Media

An afternoon seminar examining some of the ways in which women's sexuality is produced, represented and consumed in television drama, women's porn and girl zines.

Sheffield Hallam University

Friday 8 December 2006, 1pm - 5pm

This event is organised by the Communication and Media Studies Group, Sheffield Hallam University.

All women working in media, communication and cultural studies welcome. The event is free, but please register before 16th November 2006 by emailing Feona Attwood on feona.attwood@btinternet.com.

Programme

1.00 Welcome

1.15-2.30 Keynote Talk and Discussion

Jane Arthurs, Charitable Politics: Women's rights as human rights in campaigns against sex trafficking

Jane Arthurs teaches Media and Cultural studies at the University of the West of England and is a member of the MeCCSA executive committee. She has published widely on women, sexuality and the media. Her most recent book is *Television and Sexuality: Regulation and the Politics of Taste* (2004, Open University Press) which investigates the impact of multichannel digital television on sexual portrayal. She is currently researching the media strategies used in global charitable campaigns against sex trafficking, such as UNICEF or MTV's Exit Campaign, and the aesthetic and ethical issues these raise.

2.30-3.00 Coffee

3.00-4.30 Panel Presentation and Discussion

Clarissa Smith, Emotional Vibrations and Physical Sensations: Women Reading Porn Fictions

Clarissa Smith teaches Media & Cultural Studies at the University of Sunderland. Her research interests are the production and consumption of pornography, sex retailing, audiences and popular cultures. Her published work includes studies of softcore pornography, readers of *For Women* magazine, and the erotic performers, The Chippendales. Her book, *One for the Girls! The Production and Readership of Pornography for Women* is published by Intellect Books in 2007.

Rebecca Munford, 'If it feels good, screw it': Girlie Feminism, the Sex Wars and Raunch Culture

Rebecca Munford teaches English at the University of Exeter. Her research interests are women's writing, contemporary feminist theory and popular culture. She is the co-editor of *Third Wave Feminism: A Critical Exploration* (2004). Her latest book, *Feminism and Popular Culture: Explorations in Post-feminism*, co-authored with Stacy Gillis, is published by I.B. Tauris in 2007.

4.30-5.00 Discussion and Conclusion

Conference calls

BIRTH The Cultural Politics of Reproduction

An interdisciplinary conference hosted by the Institute for Advanced Studies, Lancaster University, Wednesday 7th March 2007

New health practices and technologies are rapidly transforming cultural understandings and individual experiences of reproduction. As a consequence of these changes 'birth' (by which we mean not only childbirth but the range of embodied, social and cultural practices associated with reproduction and parenting) has become the site of intensive academic research. BIRTH aims to create a dialogue between different disciplinary approaches to reproduction. Through a focus on the cultural politics of reproduction, this event aims to bring together academics and researchers from across the social sciences and humanities working in the area of reproduction, pregnancy, birthing, parenting and childcare.

Possible themes include:

- Birth narratives and body stories:
- The birthing subject
- Childbirth
- Reproductive 'failure'

Non-speakers can enroll for the event as a participant by contacting the conference administrator June Rye, <mailto:j.rye@lancs.ac.uk>. Please include full contact details with your conference registration email. Please note that places will be limited. This event is fully funded and there will be no conference fee.

Call for papers

Slash 2: the 2nd DMU

fanfiction study day

Faculty of Humanities, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK.

Tuesday 27th February 2007

10.00 am – 6.00 pm

After the success of last year's Slash Fiction Study Day, Slash 2 offers another slash-friendly forum for discussion of the most exciting developments in fanfic.

The main focus will be on slash fiction, a category of fan stories, almost exclusively by women, about homoerotic affairs between male characters in popular films and TV series. Proposals are invited, however, for papers on all fanfic topics and controversies.

Please send an abstract of 200 words for a 20 minute paper to Dr Ian Hunter, iqhunter@dmu.ac.uk or to the following address:

Dr Ian Hunter
Principal Lecturer in Film Studies
Faculty of Humanities
De Montfort University
Clephan Building
The Gateway
Leicester LE1 9BH

Deadline for proposals: 15th December 2006

All readers, writers and academic researchers of fan fiction, as well as interested members of the public, are welcome to participate.

Attendance fee: £20 / £12 concessions for the day. Please contact Ian Hunter at iqhunter@dmu.ac.uk to reserve a place.

Slash 2 launches a series of regular seminar and lecture events hosted by the Cult Media Research Group.

Call for papers and presentations

CULTURAL STUDIES NOW: an international conference
Docklands Campus, University of East London, UK, 19-22 July 2007

Plenary speakers will include Ien Ang, Rosi Braidotti, Kuan-Hsing Chen; Judith Halberstam, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Doreen Massey.

Cultural Studies, as the paradigmatic interdisciplinary project, has always been defined by its relationships to proximate sets of ideas, practices and institutions. As Cultural Studies has grown and matured, its borders have multiplied. Cultural Studies has affected and been affected by contiguous disciplines, academic and non-academic institutions, political movements and projects, and creative practices of many kinds.

The question now is: has Cultural Studies been expanded, relocated and disseminated to the point where it no longer has a coherent identity? Is there a future for Cultural Studies as such? This major international conference will consider these issues by addressing a number of connected topics:

- Cultural Studies and politics:
- Cultural Studies and its disciplinary neighbours:
- Cultural Studies in the public sphere:
- Cultural Studies and creative practice:
- Cultural Studies and national contexts:

Today, when Cultural Studies risks responding to these challenges by collapsing into theoretical obscurantism or technocratic ineffectuality, we at the University of East London believe that there is a place for a Cultural Studies which is politically committed and relentlessly experimental in its intellectual, institutional and creative practices.

To this end, we invite contributions which address these topological and methodological questions directly or which present examples of current work in the field. We welcome proposals for papers and presentations engaging with the full range of current themes and issues in contemporary cultural studies, cultural theory and cultural production.

Panels will normally consist of three twenty-minute presentations. Abstracts (max 200 words) and biographical notes (max 150 words) for individual papers and/or suggestions for panels or alternative formats to be sent by 1st November 2006 to:

csnow@uel.ac.uk
School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies
University of East London
University Way, London E16 2RD

Practice Section

John Ellis, co-chair of MeCCSA with AMPE

MeCCSA with AMPE is setting up its new Practice Section, in accordance with the 'merger' constitution voted at the last AGM. The new Practice Section will need a chair from the date of the AGM of the combined association in Coventry, 10 – 12 January. The Section will have a delegated budget and will continue to support the Journal of Media Practice for a minimum of three years.

In the meantime, I will chair this section for its inaugural meeting on Friday 1 December at 11.30 – 1.00 (immediately before the MeCCSA with AMPE Executive) to discuss them.

The venue is Royal Holloway at Bedford Square, 2 Gower Street WC1. All are welcome.

Issues for discussion include:

- A programme of activities and meetings for Practice Section members
- Practice and the RAE, including the new issue of metrics
- HEFCE banding of media courses and the problems of high-capital courses
- Skillset initiatives: Film Academies, Screen Academies
- Relationship of Ofcom and UK Film Council with Skillset
- The reconstitution of the Journal of Media Practice
- Relations with other practice-oriented associations eg AJE

British Universities Film and Video Council Learning on Screen Awards

These awards were announced and presented at the Learning on Screen conference, held at University of Aston in September.

GENERAL EDUCATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Video and Broadcast Award

- Tales from the Green Valley
Peter Sommer & Lion Television for BBC Two

Interactive Multimedia Award

- FourDocs
Magic Lantern Productions

COURSEWARE AND CURRICULUM RELATED CONTENT

Video and Broadcast Award

- Hardeep Does ... Race
Tiger Aspect Productions for Channel 4

Interactive Multimedia Award

- Analysing Media Texts DVD-Rom
The Open University, Understanding Media

STUDENT PRODUCTION AWARD

- The New Black
Daniel Roberts, Goldsmiths College

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE

A special award to a programme or interactive production deserving of special recognition.

- Teachers TV

PREMIERE AWARD

Presented for an outstanding production that most effectively meets its specified learning objectives.

- Four Docs – Channel 4

You what, guv?

This issue's example of clumsy, cluttered, confused or just plain bad academic writing in media, communication or cultural studies comes from a well-known writer on diaspora.

Diaspora space is the intersectionality of diaspora, border and dislocation as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural and psychic processes... and where the accepted and transgressive imperceptibly mingle even when those syncretic forms may be disclaimed in the name of purity and tradition.

Closing Credits

Three-D (Issue 8: November 2006) was brought to you by:

David Hesmondhalgh
co-ordinator

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production and distribution

Three-D is a publication of MeCCSA with AMPE, the subject association for media, communication and cultural studies teaching in Higher Education in the United Kingdom. This is a merger of two previously separate subject associations: MeCCSA, the Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association, and AMPE, the Association for Media Practice Educators.

Except where stated, contributions do not necessarily reflect the views of the MeCCSA with AMPE, or its Executive Committee.

Co-chairs: Christine Geraghty, University of Glasgow and John Ellis, Royal Holloway, University of London
Hon. Secretary: Peter Golding, Loughborough University
Treasurer: Gillian Doyle, University of Stirling

Full details of MeCCSA with AMPE, including how to join, along with a full list of the Executive Committee for 2006 can be found at www.meccsa.org.uk