



## CALL FOR PAPERS

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford &  
MeCCSA Postgraduate Network present:

# **“Minding the Gap”:** **Reflections on Media Practice & Theory**

*One-day training symposium for Postgraduates & Early Career Researchers*

Reuters Institute, 13 Norham Gardens, Oxford, OX2 6PS

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007

Keynote Speaker: **Professor Brian Winston**, University of Lincoln

There is an unmistakable gap between intellectual models of mass media institutions and practices, and the ways that practitioners experience the media. All too often, media theorists lack personal experiences of their topics of study, and university departments separate theory and practice in their internal organisation. This training day - for postgraduate research students and researchers in the first five years of an academic career - will explore the relationship between media theories and mass media practices across three thematic workshops.

Contributions are sought from researcher-practitioners concerned with factual / non-fiction-based mass media that engages with and represents the 'real world' through journalistic and documentary formats, and whose products are intended for mass or substantial public circulation - broadcasting, print, photography, film, web, and multimedia. Fields beyond the scope of the training day will include the electronic gaming industry, PR and marketing, the music industry; also productions primarily intended for artistic or aesthetic purposes or consumption within the education sector or minor non-public audiences. All theoretical perspectives on media, audio-visual and photographic studies are encouraged.

We welcome abstracts for presentations of 15 minutes, posters and debate participants for the following sessions:

### **Workshop 1: Media Practice as Methods of Research and Presentation**

Researchers-practitioners draw on media practices in film, photography, audio and multimedia as methods of research and documentation; and in the presentation of data, to substitute or supplement the written text or structure it in an alternative way. They also use their inside experiences of media practices to inform their research. Examples of this includes drawing upon professional contacts, knowledge of production terminology, roles, codes of conduct and practices to gain access to research subjects and locations, and to interact effectively with them. Presentations on how researchers draw upon practice or professional experience are encouraged.

### **Workshop 2: Theoretical Models in Mass Media Practice**

Co-ordinated by the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research, London.

All media theories begin with intellectual models of media institutions and practices, but how often do intellectual models form the basis of media practice? Noteworthy examples include Western models of journalism practice transplanted in developing world contexts in the training of local journalists by Western media organisations; the switch in the 1990s from an argument-based consensus in factual television production to a narrative-based consensus, aided to some extent by the enthusiasm for popular Narrative Theory; the recent vogue for user-generated content and 'citizen journalism' amongst broadcasters such as the BBC following its advocacy by academics. Contributions that exemplify cases in the West and particularly in the developing world are encouraged.

### **Workshop 3: Double vocations: Mass Media Practice and Theory**

Practitioners - journalists, broadcasters, filmmakers or photographers - who also conduct research encounter ethical, political, personal and practical challenges in spanning the practical and academic arenas.

Contributions are encouraged from those with substantial [practical] media industry AND research experience, whose personal cases offer broad and unusual insights.

Please email abstracts [max 250 words] specifying intended workshop, together with the following details - your name, department, university, name of supervisor or position if an early career researcher and the date when PhD or first appointment obtained, email address and phone number, and any equipment required [for Powerpoint, film or audio clips, photographic display etc.], any disability access and dietary requirements - all in the body of an email [no attachments] to:

[cathy.baldwin@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cathy.baldwin@sant.ox.ac.uk) by Monday 12th February at 6pm at the latest.

### **Lunchtime Debate**

Four practitioners with strong points-of-view on the relationship between academic theory and industry practices are sought for a debate session [with chairperson]. Please outline your experience and personal position in 2 paragraphs and email to Cathy Baldwin, with the personal info requested as above.

The training day committee will let all applicants know of the outcome by **mid February**. There will be a [waived] training day fee of £15.00, returnable on attendance and a few places for non-presenters to attend.

For more information on Reuters Institute and MeCCSA Postgraduate Network please visit:

<http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/>  
<http://www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn/>