



## **MeCCSA Postgraduate Network Newsletter: November 2006**

This newsletter is for members of the PGN, to keep you up to date of past and upcoming events for the 2006/7 academic year. It reports on the annual conference held in June this year, and offers information about upcoming postgraduate events in conjunction with the MeCCSA PGN. Finally, details about the website, organization of events, and some ideas about the network are found at the end. This network is for postgraduate students, run by postgraduate students and any input and suggestions about our activities are always welcome!

### **Third Annual MeCCSA Postgraduate Conference.** **University of Ulster 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006**

#### **Delegates**

There were **65** delegates at the conference, including those 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 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 after mostly over-ran the allotted time. The MeCCSA Postgraduate Executive Committee all said that the confidence levels of presenters, and quality of presentations were clearly increasing. Postgraduates clearly need an arena such as this to present.

## 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 PhD's on both film and music. The scope of the event seems to be getting wider, and the quality of the papers both in terms of content and presentation is excellent. Titles included:

- Playing the Revolution in Military Affairs in Computer Games
- "It Had to be You": Musical Nostalgia in the Ephron Trilogy
- Environmental Direct Action (EDA) and Deconstruction Neo-Liberalism or Counter-Hegemony?
- Zimbabwe's Media Online: Preachers of Hate, Purveyors of Violence or Democratic Public Spheres?
- How does it sound when you are *living dangerously*? An analysis of sound in Peter Weir's last Australian movie (1982)
- Visible Victims and the Politics of Suffering in 'Omagh'
- 'Can this happen to a normal woman?': *Ginger Snaps*, Gender and Werewolves

## Plenaries

Plenary sessions this year were organized as a result of the feedback from the 2005 Cardiff conference. Consequently they focused on life after the PhD ('The PHD and After') and a more politics emphasis on the effects of the RAE on young academics and PhD students ('The RAE and Me'). The PowerPoint from the latter plenary can be found on the website. 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 successfully found work and political insights regarding the effect of the RAE on job opportunities, and wider reports on what other PhD students had gone on to do.

## **Fourth Annual MeCCSA Postgraduate Conference**



University of the  
West of England

Next year's conference (June 2007) will be hosted by the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol.

Einar Thorsen is the main organizer for the conference and call for papers and information about the event will be posted on the website and emailed early in the New Year.

This conference will have a more specific aim of showcasing *students*, and will include workshops on teaching practices and more personal histories of life immediately after the PhD by young academics. Peter Golding has also preliminarily agreed to a plenary session on publishing and as a co-editor of the European Journal of Communication, chair of the European Sociological Association Media Research Network, and co-chair of the European Science Foundation Programme on media research, his session promises to be exciting and informative. Other speakers will include Jane Arthurs, Helen Kennedy and Mark Jancovich (to be confirmed). Look out for information about this event on the website, and keep an eye on your emails!



**This is a must for all postgraduate students.  
Put it in your diary now!**

## **Other MeCCSA Postgraduate Events for 2006/7**

The MECCSA PGN is also working closely with Aberystwyth and Oxford this year to bring you two smaller 'training' events in the form of one and two day sessions. These will be billed as training events to encourage institutions to financially support their students to attend. As you will all be aware, your institution receives money to 'train' you and, rather than offering a 'generic' skills day, we thought we'd offer more media-specific events which might actually be useful! Of course these events are also networking activities and will offer a limited amount of students a chance to showcase their own work.

### **'Sharing Experience' Audiences in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies** *3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> April 2007: University of Wales, Aberystwyth*

This event will run methodology and teaching workshops, as well as providing a platform for researchers to present their work.

It aims to

- provide a forum for research students in media, communication and cultural studies to present and discuss their work in a friendly and supportive environment
- encourage interdisciplinary work, and further develop and strengthen the broad field of audience and reception studies
- offer workshops on methodology, as well as on issues of teaching in media, communication and cultural studies, with a particular focus on the audience
- ensure peer support and the formation of learning networks for future contact and collaboration

Speakers will include Jenny Kitzinger, Martin Barker, and Tom O'Malley (to be confirmed). A copy of the CFP can be found at the end of this newsletter.

**This event is a must for any postgraduates interested in, or doing, practical work.**

### **Reflections on Media Practice and Theory**

*12<sup>th</sup> May 2007: University of Oxford, in conjunction with Reuters*

This event, which is still in its planning stage, is for postgraduates and early career researchers. It aims to explore the relationship between 'actual' experiences of media 'practice' and academic ones, an important practical and political issue for anyone wishing to research or work in media.

Informal workshops will also be organized along three broad spectrums:

- media practice as a research method
- mass media which draws upon media theory or policy
- mass media practice and theory/research as a double vocation

This event is crucial for anyone wishing to understand or study the political and practical relationships between 'actual' and academic media.

Information about these events will be appearing on our website [www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn/](http://www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn/) shortly.

These events are organized, and executed by postgraduates, and information about how to plan such an event, along with funding possibilities and how to get support from the MeCCSA PGN will also be appearing soon on our website.

The MeCCSA PGN would like to encourage and support more of these events for 2007/8 academic year.

### **The Website**

The website is improving all the time. If you have any information about postgraduate events at your institution or elsewhere, post it on our website. We are continuing to try and build a database of PhD students and their theses so that students in similar areas can network. A request will shortly be sent round asking members of the PGN to update their details, and of course, this is entirely voluntary.

### **The Executive Committee**

The MeCCSA Postgraduate Executive would also like to take this opportunity to welcome its newest members and say goodbye to its old ones. As a postgraduate committee, members come and go as their PhD's dictate, and it was very sad to see **Vicky Ball** and **Stephen Cushion** leave the executive in January this year, not only because of their hard work but also because they conceived the idea and founded the network back in 2004.

The new committee as it stands, and their roles within the network are outlined below, along with contact details. All this information will soon be available on the website:

**Chair:**

Kaitlynn Mendes      Cardiff      [mendes@cf.ac.uk](mailto:mendes@cf.ac.uk)

**Communications:**

Salvatore Scifo      Westminster      [scifos@wmin.ac.uk](mailto:scifos@wmin.ac.uk)

Iain Smith      Nottingham      [arxirs@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:arxirs@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Main Conference planning:**

Helen Thornham      Ulster      [thornham-h@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:thornham-h@ulster.ac.uk)

Einar Thorsen      UWE      [Einar.Thorsen@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Einar.Thorsen@uwe.ac.uk)

**Other Events:**

Kerstin Leder      Aberystwyth      [kll00@aber.ac.uk](mailto:kll00@aber.ac.uk)

Cathy Baldwin      Oxford      [cathy.baldwin@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cathy.baldwin@sant.ox.ac.uk)

**Secretary:**

Farida Vis      Open University      [f.a.vis@open.ac.uk](mailto:f.a.vis@open.ac.uk)

**Website Address:**

[www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn](http://www.meccsa.org.uk/pgn)



# ***'Sharing Experience'***

## ***Audiences in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies***

A MeCCSA Postgraduate Network symposium at the Department of Theatre,  
Film and Television Studies, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

Audiences come in all shapes and forms – as viewers, listeners, readers, users, participants, fans, aficionados and learners – focusing their attention on a variety of sources within an increasingly changing media landscape. The range and diversity of audiences and their experiences is both exciting and challenging for researchers, and it is the very nature of the field that requires a multitude of systematic approaches when studying and teaching about audiences.

This training day aims to bring together postgraduate researchers interested in the broad field of audience and reception studies, whether this is in relation to contemporary or historical audiences, theoretical or empirical work, quantitative or qualitative studies, questions or answers. In addition to presenting and discussing their work in thematic panels, there will be an opportunity for delegates to take part in workshops concerned with 'how to do' and 'how to teach' audience and reception studies.

Confirmed speakers include **Professor Jenny Kitzinger** (Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies) and **Professor Martin Barker** (Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, Aberystwyth).

**We welcome abstracts of 200 words to be sent to [sharing\\_experience@hotmail.com](mailto:sharing_experience@hotmail.com) by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006. Please also briefly indicate why you would like to participate in this event, and what you would hope to get out of it. In particular, we are interested to hear about the issues of teaching and methodology that might become relevant to you in the process of your work.**

