



ippr seminar summary – “a panacea for all ills: what can media literacy achieve?”

## **ippr Manifesto for a Digital Britain**

### **“A Panacea for all ills: What Can Media Literacy Achieve?”**

**Office of Communications, Riverside House, Southwark Bridge Road, 13:45-5:30pm, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005**



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## Seminar Summary

An agreed definition of what constitutes media literacy is hard to come by. From child safety, copyright awareness and general ICT proficiency to enabling critical analysis, the educational ‘gaps’ media literacy is intended to cover vary widely in context and scope. But it is an essential component of preparing citizens for the future of increased convergence and the challenges this poses, in particular the increased responsibility citizens themselves will have in controlling content entering their homes. As communications move steadily from a linear broadcasting model to on-demand services, traditional models of regulating content can no longer apply. The understanding and use of new technologies and the wealth of information they provide becomes ever more crucial to developing the skills necessary to become active citizens, consumers and creators.

This joint Ofcom-ippr half day conference looked at current media literacy initiatives, including Ofcom’s media literacy strategy, and considered the key themes to creating a media literate population.

Speakers Included:

- Lord Puttnam of Queensgate, CBE
- Robin Blake, Ofcom
- Heather Rabbatts, 4Learning
- Andrew Burn, Institute of Education
- Roger Darlington, IWF and Ofcom Consumer Panel
- Emma Pike, Director General, British Music Rights

The event was chaired by Richard Hooper, Ofcom and took place at Ofcom, Riverside House, 13:45 - 17:30.

## Biographies

### Dr Andrew Burn

Dr Andrew Burn is Senior Lecturer in Media Education at the Institute of Education, London University; and Associate Director of the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media. He teaches on the MA in Media, Culture and Communication; and is involved in a range of research projects focusing on young people’s engagement with the media, on the use of digital video in schools, and on the place of computer games in media education. He has spoken and published widely on these topics, both in the UK and internationally, and is currently working on a book on media literacy in the secondary school. He taught English, Drama and Media Studies in comprehensive schools for over twenty years; and was Assistant Principal at his last school, Parkside Community College in Cambridge, the first specialist Media Arts College in the UK.



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### **Roger Darlington**

Roger Darlington used to be Head of Research at the Communication Workers Union, but he is now a portfolio worker in the communications field:

- He is the Chair of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), a body established by British Internet service providers to combat illegal content, especially child abuse images, on the UK Internet.
- He is a Member of the Ofcom Consumer Panel which provides independent advice to the regulator on broadcasting and telecommunications issues.
- He is a consultant to Connect, the trade union for professional staff in the telecommunications industry.
- He is an occasional trainer with SpiritWorks, a training consultancy specialising in transformation at work.

He has a web site at: <http://www.rogerdarlington.co.uk>

### **Emma Pike**

Emma Pike has just taken up the role of British Music Rights' Director General in early September. Previously European Affairs Executive at IFPI's Brussels office, Emma has spent the last two and half years representing the music industry at the forefront of developments in European copyright and international trade issues. A lawyer by training, her experience of the political arena at EU level is complemented by considerable substantive knowledge of the issues currently affecting the music sector.

### **Lord Puttnam of Queensgate, C.B.E.**

David Puttnam was educated in London at Minchenden Grammar School. He completed his education at evening classes at City and Guilds, London. After ten years in the advertising industry, he spent thirty years as an independent film producer. His many award winning films include *The Mission*, *the Killing Fields*, *Local Hero*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Midnight Express*, *Bugsy Malone*, and *the Memphis Belle*. He was Chair and Chief Executive Officer of Columbia Pictures from 1986 to 1988 - the only non-American ever to run a Hollywood Studio.

David retired from film production in 1998 and now focuses on his work in education. He has been Chancellor of the University of Sunderland since 1998. He was the founder (in 1998) and is Chair of Trustees of the National Teaching Awards. In addition to having served as the first Chair of the General Teaching Council (2000-2002), he has also served on a variety of other public bodies. He was founding Chair of the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, and for ten years chaired the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television. He was also Chair of Trustees at BAFTA from 2002 to 2004. In July 2002, David was appointed President of UNICEF UK.

David was awarded a CBE in 1982, received a Knighthood in 1995 and was appointed to the House of Lords in 1997. In France he has been honoured as a Chevalier and, later, an Officer of Arts and letters.



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### **Heather Rabbatts**

After graduating from the London School of Economics, Heather Rabbatts was called to the Bar in 1981.

From 1987, when she first joined local government, she held a variety of positions and in 1995 was appointed the Chief Executive role in Lambeth. Advertised as the worst job in local government, her task was to get the Borough out of absolute crisis and in the process she transformed it into the success it is today.

In March 2000 at the completion of her contract with Lambeth, she set up a new company iMPower Plc which provides strategic consultancy to national and local government, focussed on the use of new technologies to improve citizens.

From 1997 to her joining Channel 4 in 2001, Heather was a governor of the BBC.

At Channel 4, Heather is Managing Director of 4Learning which is responsible for the Channel's education Business and output. Her first major commission was Twelfth Night, followed by Teen Big Brother and the highly acclaimed Illustrated Mum starring Michelle Collins.

Previous roles include trustee of the British Council and a Governor of the London School of Economics. She is now on the board of the UK Film Council and also a Non-Executive Director for the Bank of England

Heather was awarded the CBE in the 2000 New Year's Honours.

### **Presentations**

Robin Blake gave an overview of Ofcom's media literacy strategy, including definitions of media literacy, current priorities and areas identified for future research. His presentation is available [here](#).

Roger Darlington outlined his view of what consumers and citizens wanted, and outlined some technical and educational solutions. His presentation is available [here](#).

Andrew Burn gave an overview of the recent literature review the Institute of Education had conducted on Ofcom's behalf, emphasising the role of education in delivering media literacy skills. His presentation is available [here](#).

Lord Puttnam gave the keynote address, detailing why he felt media literacy is important, and the public policy challenges a digital society is facing.

Heather Rabbatts outlined the work of the Media Literacy Task Force, which she chairs, and detailed some future projects Channel 4 are undertaking to increase media literacy across a range of platforms.



Ippr seminar summary – “a panacea for all ills: what can media literacy achieve?” Emma Pike presented the recent education initiative produced by British Music Rights which is provided to music teachers in schools and aims to teach young people about the creative process and copyright. More detail about the initiative is available [here](#).

The presentations were followed by a question and answer session. This is a broad summary of the themes discussed.

### **Digital Inclusion**

In order for media literacy teaching to live up to expectations, it was considered that digital inclusion issues must be dealt with. The lack of Government focus in this area was raised, as was the need to recognise that this kind of education is not just more computers: the popularity of electronic games consoles etc. amongst families that may be considered to be most at risk of digital exclusion means that cultural issues must be tackled, and inclusion sought through a range of media platforms.

### **The role of education**

The importance of formal education mechanisms in promoting media literacy skills was highlighted in Andrew Burn’s presentation. The UK is generally recognised as world leaders in media education. However there are no formal provisions to train media teachers.

There was a great deal of criticism at the lack of involvement from DfES. There was general agreement that media literacy should be central to the curriculum, but that it was in danger of being sidelined into citizenship or ICT training. It was suggested that DfES are concerned for the resource implications of a large scale media literacy strategy which has the potential to drastically alter traditional skills delivery.

Insofar as media literacy includes the provision of critical skills to read media, it was recommended that such teaching be included in the National Literacy Strategy. The inclusion of media literacy in NIACE’s adult education week initiative was welcomed.

### **Current Media Literacy Initiatives**

There are currently a number of active media literacy initiatives, though no formal list had been produced. The importance of networking these initiatives into some form of coherent provision was raised, as was the need for scaling up successful schemes. However a particular problem with evaluation was identified, as statistics and information for each initiative tended to be collected as if each participant was taking part for the first time – there was no method by which to measure individuals’ development over time.

### **Regulating content**

In the introduction, Richard Hooper acknowledged the challenges of regulating content with increased convergence between media platforms. A key feature of Ofcom’s media literacy strategy is the use of labelling to tell people what type of content they are going to get, before they get it. There were concerns that current teaching is not sufficient to enable people to determine what agenda content producers, particular news producers, are following.



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The fact that media literacy does not extend to printed matter was raised, and it was generally agreed that it should be extended to cover printed material in the future.

Difficulties with content regulation and children were raised, in particular the issue of explicit music downloads available via mobile phones. Emma Pike said there was potential to learn from the legal pornography industry in this area to stop children accessing undesirable content.

### **Media literacy and democratic participation**

A key outcome of media literacy teaching was identified at re-engaging people with politics, though not necessarily the political process that currently exists. Giving people creative skills and empowering them to use new media effectively was felt to be an important part of promoting not just digital but also political inclusion, and giving otherwise excluded people a voice. This was particularly the case with community radio for example.

The extent to which new media has given people new freedoms was illustrated by Lord Puttnam who noted that you can now buy from Dixons a digital camera for £2500 which is significantly better than any of the equipment used by the BBC only five years ago.

### **Consumer information and media literacy focus**

Although the majority of attendees were happy with Ofcom's definition of media literacy, there was still concern that the focus would be too wide. The number of government departments under which media literacy work could fall was also a matter of concern as it was considered a significant challenge to engage this many stakeholders in a coherent programme.

Consumer's lack of knowledge in important areas such as privacy and data sharing were raised, and it was questioned whether this should be included as part of media literacy teaching.

The media literacy task force has developed a charter which aims to provide an enabling framework for stakeholders to sign up to, which will be published shortly.



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### Attendees

Name	Position	Company
Gail Bradbook	Director of Strategy and Partnerships	Citizens Online
Rachel Hermer		BBC
Julian Coles		BBC
Sonia Livingstone		LSE
John Fisher	Chief Executive	Citizens Online
Dave Simpson	Manager, Regulatory Affairs	Easynet
David Ferguson	Chair	Creators Rights Alliance
Stephen Collins	Director, International Public Policy	Yahoo!
John Newbigin		Channel 4
Stephen Balkam		ICRA
Andrea Millwood-Hargrave		
Lewis Bronze		Espresso Education
Victoria Nash		Oxford Internet Institute
Chris Dawes		DCMS
Simon White		DCMS
Lisa Kerr	External Affairs Manager	CRCA
Fiona McLeod		Scottish Advisory Committee
Sara Conway	Public Affairs	British Music Rights
Vikram Ravel	UK Regulatory Affairs	Orange
Scott Walker	Public Affairs	British Music Rights
David Johnson	Editor	Doors
Robbie Hudson	Writer	Doors
Martin Stott	Deputy Head of Corporate Affairs	Five
Mita Mitra	Regulatory Affairs	BT
Mike Fox	Regulatory Affairs	BT
Naomi Sargant	Board Member	NIACE
David Sinclair	Policy Manager - Social Inclusion	Help the Aged
Rachel Thompson	Senior Campaigns Officer	NIACE
Hamish McLeod		Mobile Industry Group
Louise Ferguson	Director	Digital Habitats
Professor Phil Redmond		Mersey Television
Richard Sullivan	External Affairs Manager	ICSTIS
Victor Anderson		
Annie Mullins		Vodafone
Dr Ute Navidi	Director	London Play
Ian Roy		O2
Fay McDonald	Communications Co-ordinator	Internet Watch Foundation
Alan Barclay		MediaCitizens
Jon Akass		MediaCitizens
Caspar Melville	Director of External Affairs	OpenDemocracy
David Dawson	Senior ICT Adviser	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
Paul Bason	Development producer	Culture Online



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Cary Bazalgette	Head of Education	Bfi
Nick Lansman	Secretary General	ISPA
Peter Packer	Strategy Adviser	UK Film Council
Will Davies	Senior Research Fellow	ippr
Kay Withers	Research Fellow	ippr
John Chu	Researcher	ippr
Mari Toda		
Dr Jim McDonnell		McDonnell Communications
Nick Winkfield	Research Director	Communication Ethics Ltd
Roger Darlington	Chair	Internet Watch Foundation
Heather Rabbatts	Head of Education	Channel 4
Lord Puttnam		
Andrew Burn		Institute of Education
Emma Pike	Director General	British Music Rights
Mike Jempson	Director	MediaWise Trust
Dr Michael Duggan	Head of Internet Policy	DTI
Salvatore Scifo	PhD Student	University of Westminster
Pilar Guerrero	Regulatory Affairs Assistant	Easynet
Mike Cushman	Research Fellow, Information Systems	LSE
Cathy Aitchison		Aitchison Media and Development
Mike Short	VP of Group Technology	O2
Eve Bearne		University of Cambridge
Sylvia Hines	Head of New Service Development, National and Regional Broadcasting	BBC
Nick Toon	Head of Public Affairs	Channel 4
Paul James		T-mobile
Tim Goerigk	Regulatory Affairs	NTL
Mary Louise Morris	Education and Awareness Officer	Childnet International
Wendy White	Hartley Library	University of Southampton
Lucy Brett	Film and Video Examiner	BBFC
Camille de Stempel	Director, Policy, Communities and Communication	AOL
Johanna Pimentel	Regulatory Counsel	Wannado UK
Jonathan Chetwynd		
Sandra Chalmers		Chalmers Communications
Alexander Popple		MSN
Rebekah Willet		Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media
Emma Wright		
Christian Potschka		Loughborough University
Loi Gellor	CEO	STV / Sound Radio