UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

WestminsterResearch

http://www.westminster.ac.uk/westminsterresearch

Participatory public service media: presenters and hosts in BBC New Media.

Elizabeth Helen Anthea Jackson

School of Media, Arts and Design

PARTICIPATORY PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA:

PRESENTERS AND HOSTS IN BBC NEW MEDIA

ELIZABETH HELEN ANTHEA JACKSON

April 2009

Acknowledgements

Participatory public service media: presenters and hosts in BBC New Media

The BBC is moving from being a public service broadcaster to being a provider of public service media delivered across platforms which also offer audiences the opportunity to engage and contribute. This production study provides an in depth analysis of the mediation of 'interactive' content by one of the world's most established public service media outlets as it began to adopt participatory practices. It is argued the provision of human facilitators online encourages purposeful participatory media. Participant observation of developmental production workshops (December 2002 - June 2003) with five 'Interactive Presenters' and over twenty BBC producers tested mediation practices from a production perspective but also from the audiences' points of view. Sociable media theories assisted comparison of the roles of the broadcast presenter and online host, and examination of the changing relationships between BBC personae and audiences. Significant evidence was found to show engagers wanted facilitation, but a variety of levels and types of facilitation. A framework is therefore suggested which distributes the different mediation tasks identified between BBC staff, automated means, and participating audiences.

The study also considers the internal changes and external challenges which took place as the BBC adopted interactivity (2002-2004), a pivotal period in the Corporation's history. The BBC was 'besieged'; under pressure from changing regulation, economic factors, audience behaviours, and a changing mediascape. Public service broadcasting as a whole in the UK was under review prior to the renewal of the BBC's Royal Charter in 2006. Ofcom, the new media and telecommunications regulator, began to influence the BBC's strategic and economic activity, and the BBC's journalism practices were under scrutiny through the Hutton Inquiry which subsequently resulted in the resignation of the Chairman and the Director General of the BBC in January, 2004.

CONTENTS

Chapter Four: Researching the mediation of participatory content at the BBC

Chapter Five: The rise and fall of the iPresenters

Chapter Six: Findings on the mediation of participatory content at the BBC

Chapter Seven: Findings on the construction and mediation of semi-converged brands in the case study 'Celebdaq'

Chapter Eight: Producing participatory media

Bibliography

Appendix

(In the sleeve of the soft binding)

CD with five short video clips

BBC Talent Leaflet: *If you've got it, we'll flaunt it…*

Introduction

The context of the research

A production study of the BBC which used participant observation of developmental workshops to examine the mediation of a small range of genres of interactive content at the BBC New Media Division from December 2002-July 2003. The research argues for the foregrounding of mediation – particularly by human agency - in public service participatory media. The specific site of the fieldwork was the BBC's six-month Interactive Presenter Scheme which was jointly initiated by the BBC New Media and BBC Talent departments. This scheme aimed to bring new talent into the BBC, in this case five young presenters whom it was hoped would work for BBCi, the BBC's newly-created brand denoting the presence of interactive content on television and online. Participant observation of six months of workshops was organised and this was supported by wider observations of the Interactive Presenter Scheme and the BBC New Media Division from 2002-2004. Existing mediation techniques used by BBC online hosts and presenters in new media were explored and then tested 'in action' on BBC content in the public domain. The five Interactive Presenters, were also on placements with production departments at BBC London, 'Top of the Pops', 'So' (the website for teens), 'Onion Street' and 'Celebdaq' (a mythical stock exchange for the buying and selling of shares in celebrities). A small scale audience study was also organised at a later date to inform the workshops which specifically examined the mediation of semi-converged content situated around the brand 'Celebdaq' on television and online.

The new Interactive Presenters arrived in December 2002 after winning auditions organised in conjunction with Virgin Megastores. At that time the promotion of the new brand BBCi was a high priority for BBC New Media as a Division, the idea to accept five Interactive Presenters and to also support one of BBC Talent's six month work experience initiatives was therefore attractive. The Interactive Presenter Scheme also coincided with the launch of a new multimedia BBCi studio where it was hoped research and development in online live events and interactive television could take place. The Interactive Presenter scheme was one of several run by BBC Talent and it was the third

year of the initiative. BBC Talent was a department mentored by the BBC's Director General who at that time was Greg Dyke to encourage young broadcasters but also to introduce new skills and ideas into the BBC. BBC Talent and BBC New Media decided to offer five six-month contracts to the five winners of a year long talent trawl to find five people who would 'create the broadcasting skills for the next century' (BBC Talent Brochure, 2001, n.p.).

In 2002 BBC producers used the term 'interactive' to refer to any non-linear digital service. For research purposes the term was felt to be too imprecise as the genres of 'interactive' content offered different levels of reciprocity and complexity from online voting to the long-term membership of an online community. The term 'participatory media' was used and is defined as iterative content produced by a collaborative and creative activity which takes place within a shared online space facilitated by a media outlet, the rules and outcomes of which were negotiated between the producer and the audience. This is in partial opposition to Henry Jenkin's definition of engagers as being 'participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands' (Jenkins, 2006: 3). Participatory media was used to refer to message boards, blogs, online archives, virtual environments, digital storytelling, interactive dramas, and the publishing of other user-generated content such as text, audio, video, and photographs. The term 'social media' was used to refer to communication services which specifically enabled a direct sociable relationship between audience members, which could be away from the broadcast; social media is therefore framed as a genre of participatory media.

The study provides an overview of the challenges faced by an established public service broadcaster as it moved to becoming a provider of public service participatory content on television, radio, and online. Three sets of findings were produced; on the Interactive Presenter Scheme, on the overall mediation of participatory content at the BBC, and on the mediation of pan-platform content in the case study 'Celebdaq'. The findings indicated the BBC was using the Interactive Presenter Scheme as a marketing device for BBCi as well as being a training scheme. The Interactive Presenter Scheme was affected

by wider changes happening within the BBC and the observation of the initiative produced findings about the BBC New Media Division undergoing change.

The workshops and testing on the Interactive Presenter's placements produced good data on the range of tasks necessary to facilitate participatory media both on a single platform and on semi-converged content (on television and online). For the brands examined during the workshops, the producer-hosts were found to be often absent or if present were not comfortable when engaging with the audience; they were principally web producers who were being asked to host the shared spaces as an additional and part-time duty. The audience liked having someone from the BBC to assist them online, both to prove the experience was 'real' and to offer customer relationship management. Different kinds of facilitation were identified as being necessary for different services, however there were also attributes shared; the producer-hosts managed the reputation of the BBC in the participatory media by overseeing the work of moderators who removed content which was illegal, defamatory or racist, for example.

The argument is made for the foregrounding of human hosts in new media because public service content has particular mediation requirements in order to support, for example, deliberative democracy, high quality content, learning and inclusion. Sociable media theory was used to show the hosts of sociable broadcasts have similarities to online hosts, however online hosts have additional responsibilities to the engagers.

> ...in a multi-channel world, public service companies need to pay greater attention to relationship management with their audiences, whose members are increasingly conceiving themselves as consumers of media products and services – and expecting to be treated differently than mere audiences (Picard, 2005:286).

This study supports Picard, believing online audiences require more assistance than in broadcasting. The opportunity to find out what kinds of mediation were useful was felt to be an attractive project for the University of Westminster and to the BBC, who

sponsored the research by offering access and time out of my working week, as I was a BBC employee for the first five years of the project.

The location of the study within the BBC

Even as an ex-BBC employee undertaking research I find the BBC is a confusing organisation to experience and study. The names of departments and internal departmental structures constantly change and this has been the case over the last ten years. The BBC's new website was launched in 1997 by a department titled 'BBC Online' which created, built and launched the BBC's new website. BBC Online later changed its name to BBC New Media with the mission of leading the Corporation towards digital media; developing new genres of interactive content and new platforms which were then used by the production divisions, in this way amplifying the adoption of participatory practices.

The fieldwork was undertaken between 2002 to 2004 when the BBC New Media Division changed from creating new media content to creating new media technology. The Division was keen to retain its old territorial claim to be the home of interactivity at the BBC therefore BBC New Media's newly-created brand 'BBCi' had institutional as well as audience-facing functions. By 2002 the BBC's production divisions (Sport, Children's, Drama and Entertainment, BBC Wales, BBC Cornwall and so on) had created their own new media departments. Between 2002-2006 the BBC New Media Division was a hybrid department, creating some content such as 'Home Pages', overseeing some social media and user-generated content, but increasingly developing databases, a global registration system for all the BBC's web content, and various 'content management production systems'. The aim was to automate the websites as much as possible, each page of which had been created by hand in 'raw html', a position which was becoming increasingly impractical.

Overall the BBC was keen to encourage the audience to find and use the new interactive services under the brand BBCi. Adoption of broadband was slow, this was felt to be partly due to the cost of a faster internet connection in the UK in 2002, ADSL was costing

around £40.00 per month (Wakefield, 2002). It was likely, however, that audience adoption of the web would increase dramatically over the next few years. From the time the audience study was completed in 2004 (the last part of the fieldwork) to the completion of the project in early 2009 there has been a huge change in participatory behaviours online. In 2002 only segments of the BBC audience used message boards and chat, in 2009 a significant proportion of the BBC's audience are familiar with social networking, for example on Facebook and Twitter. A survey from Nielsen, found that 67% of all those going online in the UK were spending time at social network and blogging sites (BBC News, 2009).

The iPresenter Scheme launched with a high level of visibility and publicity at a launch party in a marquee at the headquarters of the BBC New Media Division in October, 2002. The iPresenters were featured in the national and local press and the scheme was heavily promoted by BBC Marketing. In March, 2003, at the mid-point of the Interactive Presenter Scheme, the BBC New Media Division was instructed to stop creating content and to concentrate on creating technology. The Interactive Presenter Scheme became incompatible with the direction of the rest of the BBC New Media Division. The scheme had always been an idea 'grafted on' to the department in order to support Greg Dyke's ideas of opening out the BBC, therefore with Dyke's departure, and the change of strategy and budget cuts it was considered expendable. The workshops exploring the mediation of interactive content however proved to be a good site for research and findings were produced. The BBC New Media Division has recently begun to explore social media in more detail again (Walpole, 2009), therefore the substantiated findings are likely to be of interest to the BBC.

This project reviews the BBC New Media Division during a significant period of change. The Corporation's website was being reviewed by Philip Graf, who released a report on 23 August 2003 (Graf, 2003, n.p.). The corporation's journalism practices were also under scrutiny by Lord Hutton whose report was released on 1 August 2003 (Hutton, B, 2003, n.p.). Hutton's report resulted in the resignation of both the Chairman and Director General of the BBC, creating a leadership vacuum at a crucial time. The reviews of the BBC and of public service broadcasting in the UK prior to the Charter renewal began on

18 September 2003. Ofcom, the new regulatory body for broadcasting and telecommunications was created by Royal Assent of the Communications Bill on 17 July, 2003 (Ofcom, 2003, n.p.) resulting in a new regulatory climate for public service media in Britain. Concurrently the corporation began experimenting with new forms of 'interactive' content (the term used by BBC producers) in order to keep pace with technology, changing audience behaviours, and new forms of content being offered by commercial media outlets. Participatory media offered a new way of relating to audiences, particularly younger audiences, the future consumers of BBC content. In a speech during the second year of his leadership of the BBC, 2002, Greg Dyke had acknowledged the need for the BBC to evolve.

> I believe the stark choice facing the BBC today is that we either change or we simply manage decline gracefully...the changes happening in technology, in the wider society, and in our competitive environment make this one of those times in history when change at the BBC is essential (Dyke, 2004:160).

The BBC's first message boards launched in 1998, and they were introduced gradually as it was the first instance, for the BBC, of the immediate publishing of audience-generated content which had not been checked by producers or journalists before being seen by the public. Each message board was overseen by two hosts whose role was to facilitate the online communities which formed within the forums and to liaise with moderators who removed any unsuitable content. By 2002 there were over 300 online communities supporting television and radio programmes situated in message boards. There were also daily live chats with celebrity and expert guests and a selection of weekly chat rooms, some of which were linked to live radio programmes. The websites were being gradually extended to include a wider range of participatory programming such as digital storytelling, games, interactive dramas, and archives of 'user-generated' content for example the 'World War2' diaries from veterans and their families. The BBC also had over 600 producers who facilitated the online communities as well as maintaining the websites or producing radio and television programmes. The 'producer-hosts' (the term used in this study) were asked to engage with the audience and manage the members of

the groups associated with their website, however this was often perceived as a secondary activity largely undertaken during office hours. The 'producer-hosts' were supported by teams of moderators who removed content which broke the 'House Rules'.

In 2002 the management of the online communities devolved from a specialist team in the New Media Division to the production divisions (Sport, Factual and Learning, Entertainment and Children's broadcasting and so on). It was therefore an appropriate time to consider the quality and nature of online mediation. Before the research project began I had been the BBC's Online Communities Editor, therefore already had an understanding of the topic. I had managed the BBC's social media from the launch of the first message boards in 1998. As BBC New Media's role was to develop and then devolve services the devolution of the online communities was perceived as a success. Over the years I had noticed, however, that the message boards, live chats and chat rooms which were well hosted were of higher quality. The facilitator therefore appeared to be important however this was anecdotal evidence and the idea had not been scientifically tested. In 2002 I was given a new job, to manage the BBC's internet safety initiatives. I was also asked to oversee the Interactive Presenter Scheme, part-time, working with a fellow manager who would look after the year long talent trawl for 'Interactive Presenters'. The manager would go on tour across the UK, working with the BBC Talent team and Virgin Media whose Megastores provided the location of auditions. The manager was assisted by a producer who stayed on after the scheme launched to look after the Interactive Presenter Scheme on a day to day basis for the six months they were with the BBC.

The organisation of the research project

I asked my managers in BBC New Media if I could undertake part-time research on the role of the online host, locating the study within the Interactive Presenter Scheme. This was accepted as a good idea by both the University of Westminster and BBC New Media. A formal Agreement was drawn up which covered access, permissions, commercial confidentiality, the use of material including BBC research sources, copyright and the ownership of the intellectual property. I could devote one day a week to the research for

three years (later extended to five years) and could work with the 'iPresenters' and a range of BBC producers every Wednesday morning for six months in the new BBCi studio. It was jointly agreed that a literature review and interviews with four senior BBC managers would inform the areas of questioning.

After the literature review it was clear sociable media theories would be useful as the presenter's function for audiences appeared to have some similarities with the function the producer-host offered to online engagers. The relationship possible between producer-hosts and audiences online could be realised to a degree, unlike the relationship between the broadcast presenter and audiences which was defined as para-social by Horton and Wohl and something only found in broadcasting (Horton and Wohl1956). The presenter-audience relationship of broadcasting lacked the 'reflexive monitoring of others' responses which is a routine and constant feature of face to face interaction' (Thompson, 1995: 96). Moores disagrees believing the relationship between presenters and audiences is better defined as 'social "para-interaction"' as 'all human relationships, including those technologically mediated by broadcasting, are best thought of as fully "social"' (Moores, S, 2005: 75). It is not easy to define the degree of quasi-sociability or real sociability in an online context as the amount of reciprocity and visibility varies so greatly between genres of participatory media, and there are other differences such as synchronicity and asynchronicity.

The notion of sociability and of people who facilitate sociable shared spaces was present in both broadcasting and participatory media online. Scannell's ideas of broadcasting being a 'public discourse' had obvious and increasing resonance in an online context (Scannell, 1991). The work of the Broadcast Talk group proved useful in showing how the presenter controlled radio talk show audiences. There might be similarities between specific techniques used by broadcast presenters and online hosts but there were also differences, as the technologies framing the activity were different. The broadcast presenter enabled cogniscence, flow and sociability however there was little literature on the online host. Two models for online facilitation were found however, the first was for playful online environments (Jo Kim, 2000), and the second was for the mediation of

virtual learning environments (Salmon, 2003). The research questions which resulted from the review of the body of knowledge on broadcast presentation and online facilitation and the areas of enquiry which interested the BBC were:

1. What mediation and facilitation was being provided by the BBC in online participatory media and in semi-converged media?
2. What mediation and facilitation did audiences want or need to assist them to participate?
3. What aspiration did managers have for the Interactive Presenter Scheme?
4. What was the implication of a membership culture for audiences and for the BBC?
5. What were the editorial policy implications of participatory media?

The term 'mediation' was used to denote activities which improved the quality of the participatory media, following Watson and Hill, who defined the mediation of broadcast content as 'a process of interpretation – shaping, selecting, editing, emphasizing, de-emphasizing – according to the perceptions, expectations, and previous experience of those involved in the reporting of the event' (Watson and Hill, 2006:172). The term 'facilitation' is used in this study to describe activities which were found to be more related to customer relationship management, such as providing technical help and instructions, or interceding between engagers online.

The timetable for the study was as follows: a review of the literature was undertaken from August 2002 to July 2003, the production workshops were organised between December 2002 to June 2003, and the small audience study of 'Celebdaq' took place during March-April 2004. The audio and video data was logged, encoded, transcribed and analysed from May 2004 to August 2005 using Sony Vegas Movie Studio and 'Transana' (a programme for the academic analysis of video). A coding frame assisted the analysis and cross-referencing between data sources (the video, audio and diaries). From September 2005 to April 2006 indicative findings were produced and given to the BBC in July 2006 through presentations to producers in London and in BBC Wales. A report was

also written for the Controller, BBC Internet who responded that the findings were 'timely and useful'. He forwarded the findings to the Controller of BBC Children's and the Head of BBC Education. The writing up of the project was during 2007-2009. In 2006 I moved away from the BBC New Media Division to work with the BBC Children's department as a BBC staff consultant in online community and then left the BBC in July 2007 to become a full-time researcher at the University of Westminster working on an AHRC/BBC co-funded project looking at virtual worlds for children. The move away from the BBC New Media Division was useful as it assisted objectivity, particularly during the analysis and writing up stages of the project.

The research design

Developmental production workshops were constructed to explore the role of the online host and the broadcast presenter across a range of genres of participatory content including message boards, live chats, the Red Button television overlays, user-generated content, and games. Participant observation was felt to be a good method and it had also been used by previous researchers for production studies on the BBC (Schlesinger, 1978, Born, 2004). The workshops were organised as a kind of action research 'experimentally based and usually set up to try and solve a problem' (Wisker, G, 2001:74) but also, retrospectively, akin to the creative methods used by David Gauntlett (Gauntlett, 2007) as they offered production activities during which the participants were able to reflexively consider their own performances and engagement with the audience, each other, and the technology. Each workshop employed different activities from review and discussion to audience analysis, role play and the creation of content. Existing mediation techniques and ideas for new forms of engagement were tested – as much as possible - with existing participatory services and any significant changes to audience behaviours or to the quality of the shared space was reported back at the next workshop. The testing 'in action' took place on the 'iPresenters' work experience placements with 'Top of the Pops', 'So', 'Onion Street', BBC London and 'Celebdaq'. Other brands and departments involved in the workshops were the 'Red Button', and 'Video Nation'.

'Top of the Pops' was the BBC's long-running television programme which covered the popular music charts each week. 'So' was the BBC's brand for teenagers, the content associated with 'So' was aggregated online, therefore the 'So' website provided a directory of programmes of interest to teens, additional web content and an online community who chatted to each other in message boards, a weekly chat room and live chats with experts, celebrities and pop bands. 'Onion Street' was BBC Education's online community for junior and middle-school children; it was the website for an imaginary school called Onion Street School. BBC London is the BBC's website, television news and radio station providing topical news and features for those living in the capital. 'Celebdaq' was the BBC's first brand conceived for semi-converged content (on television and online). The idea was to run a mythical stock exchange, 'The Daq' which traded shares in celebrities every day. 'Traders' (the audience) ran investment portfolios and competed against other Traders to become the Trader of the week. The value of individual celebrities depended on the number of column inches they generated in the tabloid press and in magazines. The BBC's 'Red Button' service is the information and video given in television 'overlays' which can be access through a television's remote control. Additional television content associated with live television programmes could occasionally be access through the Red Button, creating 'interactive' television. 'Video Nation' was the first open access programme launched by the BBC which offered audiences the opportunity to make a video diary which was transmitted on the BBC's second television channel, BBC2. At the time of the fieldwork for this study 'Video Nation' had just launched a website which offered a small selection of the video diaries online.

The workshops were designed to explore the research questions in series of themed sessions over six months; exploring interactive presentation within live online events, evaluating how user-generated content is facilitated, finding out how presentation could be of value to the Red Button service which augmented interactive television and finding out how facilitators might draw together brands situated both on television and online. The themes were finalised in conjunction with a producer from the BBC New Media Live Chat team who volunteered to work on the workshops for a half a day each week. The Live Chat producer led the workshops working to the agreed outline which left me free

to undertake the participant observation. I also took a minor role in order to situate myself as a participant within the social group, setting up the studio and clearing away at the end. All the workshops were recorded on video, using a static camera which produced around 36 hours of data. The video was augmented by audio interviews with managers, producer-hosts, a fieldwork diary, and the iPresenters also kept diaries over the six months. The study has also drawn on production literature, meetings, and BBC audience data.

There were limitations placed on the study for both analytical and practical reasons. Participatory activity around television-led content was included but engagement around radio-led brands was excluded. The reason for this was because BBC Talent had hired the Interactive Presenters to present BBCi. The advert had specifically noted the applicants should 'be able to talk into a camera with confidence' (BBC Talent, 2001) and the managers of BBCi had aspirations of creating new forms of interactive television. As the workshops were also situated in the BBCi multimedia studio, which had cameras as well as Internet Relay Chat the brands chosen for analysis were mainly television-led or included television. Moderation (the removal or 'parking' of content) has been included where it informed broadcast presentation, interactive presentation, hosting, mediation or facilitation.

The study was not organised as a comparative project, for example it did not compare the hosting of BBC content with the hosting of content by other public service media organisations or with commercial media outlets; there were several reasons for this. Commercial media outlets combined the role of the host and moderator and I felt it was important to study mediation and facilitation rather than moderation. The BBC was also offering a good range of genres of participatory media and interactive television in 2002. The aim of the study was to find out whether the BBC should foreground the human mediation of content online, but also to identify the types of mediation and facilitation tasks therefore a wide range of genres of participatory media needed to be included in any production workshops. The study also aimed to examine the mediation of semi-converged television-led brands; the producers of the case study 'Celebdaq' offered good

access and accompanying audience data. The workshops on semi-converged content proved to be particularly significant as producing pan-platform content aggregated around a brand became one of the main strategies for the BBC going forward, alongside the development of the iPlayer and 'Project Canvas' (Internet Protocol Delivered Television). From April 2007 the BBC re-organised its previously separated radio, television and new media production departments into multimedia production divisions which were either television-led (BBC Vision) or audio and music-led (BBC Audio and Music), (BBC Press Office, 2006: n.p.). Overall the BBC offered access to a wide range of production departments, and producers were happy to allow the testing 'in action'. It therefore seemed both practical and suitable to locate the study within the Interactive Presenter Scheme at BBC New Media.

The structure of the thesis manuscript

Chapter two considers how regulation affected the development of participatory media in Europe and the UK and how the new telecommunications regulator in the UK, Ofcom, began to apply pressure on the BBC to commission content from a range of independent suppliers of public service content to ensure plurality of supply. The changing media habits of audiences are reviewed alongside the adoption of broadband in the UK. The re-framing of the idea of public service broadcasting over the last ten years is discussed alongside the changing definition of public service media and public service values. The chapter ends by offering a history of the adoption of participatory media by BBC departments.

The second foundational chapter, chapter three, considers the role of the broadcast presenter and the nature of the para-social relationship between presenters and audiences as found in talk shows, soap operas, dramas and the broadcast schedule. The techniques used by presenters including the gaze (looking) and varying the visual proximity are shown. Online facilitation is discussed and two models are identified (Jo Kim, 2000 and Salmon, 2003). Sociable media theory is used to link the sociable host of broadcasting with instances of the producer-host online. The work of Reeves and Nass (Reeves and Nass,1996) introduces the user-interface as an agent of mediation. Studies

looking at the control of broadcast audiences are compared with studies on the control and proactive facilitation of online social media (Wright, 2006, Wright and Street, 2007).

Chapter four examines earlier studies on the BBC such as those undertaken by the Glasgow University Media Group, (1976), Schlesinger, (1978), and Georgina Born, (2004). The suitability of participant observation of developmental production workshops as a method of analysing the hosting of participatory content is considered and the advantages and disadvantages of using video are discussed. The organisation of the small audience study is outlined, and the nature of managing multiple data sources is reviewed. How the analysis programme 'Transana' assisted the coding and the internal validation of the data is described, including the ability to show and review 'collections' of video clips and to file and re-file supporting evidence. The overall administration of the project is detailed, and the way the study was tested for reliability is shown.

Chapter five provides findings on the significance of the Interactive Presenter Scheme, how its rise and fall was symptomatic of the wider changes affecting the BBC and the institutional politics. The relationship between the five iPresenters and the new BBCi multimedia studio is discussed alongside the iPresenter's function for BBCi and the BBCi marketing department. Managers and producers' different agendas and aspirations for the iPresenters are given. The iPresenter's own perceptions of the iPresenter Scheme, the BBC New Media Division and the BBC over the six months are given perspective.

Chapter six offers a deconstruction of the different tasks involved in mediating and facilitating participatory media. Recommendations are made for a 'sharing out' of the tasks between hosts, the audience, moderators and the technology. The changing nature of the relationship between producers is identified, showing how the addition of membership changes status of the audience. The editorial policy issues concerning shared space environments are discussed and their implications for industry practice.

Chapter seven provides a third group of findings on the mediation of semi-converged content (television and online). The elements necessary for the aggregation of creative

audiences around a brand are outlined. Reasons for the failure of 'Celebdaq' brand on television, and the success of 'Celebdaq' online are given. The 'Celebdaq' audiences' responses to the 'Celebdaq' producer hosts and to a 'multimedia console' created specifically for the 'Celebdaq' audience in the workshops are given. The inadequacies of the BBC's audience data, at that time, for semi-converged participatory media are discussed. Recommendations are given for ways to gather a more holistic picture of the audiences' longitudinal, participatory, and pan-platform behaviours.

Chapter eight draws together the findings of the study as a whole and relates the dominant themes back to the literature and theory. The foregrounding of mediation by human agency is assessed and general recommendations are made on how the BBC might develop a new relationship with audiences. Additional studies on the mediation of participatory content are offered to ensure the body of knowledge is as complete as possible. BBC managers' and producers' responses to the findings are discussed alongside the implications for public service media production overall. Finally, the limitations of the study are considered alongside recommendations for future research and a continuing engagement with the topic.

Conclusion

This production study was undertaken with the support of the BBC to explore the importance of mediation by human being in the BBC's participatory media on www.bbc.co.uk, but also on the Red Button services and for semi-converged content in the case study 'Celebdaq'. The BBC Interactive Presenter Scheme was felt to be a suitable location for the project and good access was provided for the fieldwork. Participant observation of six months of developmental production workshops were organised with the five iPresenters and with producers in a range of BBC departments. The workshops were recorded on video for later transcription and analysis. Additional data in the form of a small scale audience study was undertaken after the production workshops.

The study shows the BBC in transition, from being a public service broadcaster to being a provider of public service content. The organisation was beginning to accept it had to

make large changes internally in order to respond to changing audience consumption patterns. The structure of the BBC was also affected by recommendations from the new Broadcasting and telecommunications regulator Ofcom and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport that the BBC commission public service media from commercial and independent outlets in order to maintain plurality of supply. The BBC is framed as besieged, facing a review of its Charter, its journalism practices and changing EU and UK regulations relating to the internet, audio visual media and copyright. Finally the BBC was realising that its relationship with audiences also had to change as the level of participation increased in its message boards, live chats, and archives of user-generated content. It has been suggested that BBC producers need to foreground a more communicative relationship with audiences and to also facilitate communication between audience-members.

Chapter Two: New Media Public Service Content

Introduction

The BBC was undergoing significant change in 2002 - 2004, beginning to move from being a 'pure broadcaster' to offer participatory media online content to audiences, including the ability to chat around broadcast content in message boards, live chats and chat rooms. Managers had begun to realise that the BBC's new website was not an isolated third medium or something which merely supported television and radio. BBC managers also realised that the adoption of new media would significantly affect production processes across all media. The BBC's strategy was broadcast-led, however the Corporation was keen to explore how it could move beyond broadcasting, using the internet to deliver content, therefore the website was highly significant. The BBC New Media division created the brand 'BBCi' in 2002 to assist audiences to find interactive content via the Red Button or on www.bbc.co.uk. The BBC was foregrounding interactive television, therefore BBC Talent's suggestion of finding five 'interactive presenters' was attractive, particularly for BBCi. A multimedia studio where new forms of interactive television and online events could be explored had just been built at BBC New Media's headquarters in the Aldwych, London.

The Corporation had also begun to experiment with locating brand-led content across several 'platforms', for example across television and online or across radio and online. How to aggregate that content around brands was still being developed. This strategy was in response to research showing that the audience had a 'complex inter-relationship [between the] TV and the internet' (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003a). It was felt that a '360 degree' approach to content might counter the fragmentation of the audience consumption patterns and increase the amount of time audiences spent 'with' brands overall. The BBC was also assessing how to fulfil its public service purposes in a digital age in preparation for an unprecedented number of reviews on the future of public service broadcasting in the UK and the BBC which began in 2003 and continued until the awarding of a new Charter to the BBC in 2006 (DCMS, 2003).

This foundational chapter begins by offering an overview of the regulatory framework in Europe which influenced the development of new media in the UK. The BBC is shown as besieged, undergoing several simultaneous reviews of its content and purposes. The ways in which audiences were beginning to consume content in a more active way are discussed, and the ideals of public service broadcasting are explored to see how the BBC and other public service outlets might update the ethos of public service media for a networked age. Participatory production practices at the BBC are identified to introduce the topic of the facilitation of public service participatory content online. The chapter concludes by introducing the BBC's online producer-hosts and the production culture around the BBC's social media from 1998 when the first message boards launched to the end of the fieldwork in 2004. The BBC is still finding it problematic to engage with active audiences and the mediation of participatory content remains an issue of concern in 2009.

Regulation affecting the growth of participatory media in the UK

The idea of an information society to benefit Europeans encouraged discourse of an 'information age' within the European Union in the late 1970's and early 80's (Servaes, 2003). This was given additional momentum through 'technological advances stemming from research in the defence-related electronic sector [which] introduced new satellite, cellular radio, fibre optic and digital exchange technology' (Chakravartty and Sarkakis, 2006:62). There was a relaxing of regulation, counterbalanced by the creation of EU 'Directives', within the telecommunication sectors across Europe intended to stimulate economies and exploit advances in media and communication:

> New economic growth and trade theories re-enforced the link between technology, public policy and economic growth. These theories were instrumental in justifying policy intervention in high technology sectors and, in turn, with their emphasis on economies of scale, in lending support to the European single market project (Michalis, 2007:102).

Moves to create an internal EU market for the telecommunications and broadcasting industries included the breaking down of national regulations, 'this resulted in the adoption of a battery of Directives (secondary community laws) that have liberalized, harmonized and standardized the production and distribution of both the hardware and software sectors' (Servaes, 2003:63). The Directives however require statutory legislation in each particular nation state before they can be enforceable. The EU was keen to encourage a good supply of quality producers to enhance a broadcasting industry which was wholly European and which reflected the culture of Europe. This was particularly to counter-balance the globalisation of the media partly resulting from mergers and acquisitions which were creating global media corporations.

The EU encouraged the production of broadcast and telecommunications equipment, the growth of distribution channels, and the production of content in order to stimulate convergence between the broadcasting and communications industries. EU regulation of the internet, however, lagged behind audiences' adoption of the web in Europe; 'during the 1990s, it was estimated that the Internet grew by 100 percent per year, with a brief period of explosive growth in 1996 and 1997' (Coffman and Odlyzko, 1998). The 1989 'Television Without Frontiers Directive' was not updated to cover television-like services until 1997 and later amended to encompass televisual media delivered via the internet, becoming the 'Audiovisual Media Services Directive', in 2007. This showed a growing understanding of the impact content delivered via internet protocols was having and of the mixed media combinations which were beginning to be offered, for example video embedded within a web page. Richard Collins believes 'The convergence of telecommunications, computing and broadcasting into a single digital bit stream poses obvious challenges to a regulatory regime organised around historically distinct media and communications technologies' (Collins, 2002:149). Collins goes on to say how ill-equipped the different regulatory bodies were to deal with what was ceasing to be a semantic argument, not just in the UK, the EU, but worldwide.

Reaction to the proposed changes to the 'Television without Frontiers' Directive was not positive in the UK; the BBC's Director General warned Brussels that extending television-

style regulation to the new generation of online and mobile phone content was unrealistic as

> …public expectations of BBC online content are very different from their expectations of what they see on BBC television – [audiences] simply do not feel they need, or want, the same level of protection' (Thompson, 2005, cited in Plunkett, 2005).

Thompson felt that it would soon become impossible to impose quotas of, for example, European content on the internet, where national boundaries would become irrelevant. Restrictions have been imposed on some internet service providers however, notably Google who agreed to remove search terms on the request of the Chinese Government when it launched its Chinese language service in April, 2006 (Reuben, 2008).

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive covered 'audiovisual media services, whether television broadcasting or on demand, which are mass media' (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). Lord Currie, Chairman of Ofcom, the UK communications regulator, felt the challenge in the future would be how to amend the Directive 'when the boundaries between TV and the internet truly blur' (Currie, 2005 n.p.). Tessa Jowell, the UK's Culture Secretary, felt 'regulation of these platforms will have an enormous impact on how they develop…creativity and enterprise can't flourish if they are beset by reams of red tape' (Jowell, 2005). A light touch approach to media regulation was seen as beneficial however this also resulted in a lack of guidance for broadcasters and telecommunications companies, particularly where the internet was concerned. The coupling of broadcast and communication cultures became increasingly obvious as broadcasters such as the BBC launched websites offering chat, forums, and instant messaging, and television programmes which invited the audience to vote or 'text via SMS'.

The 'Television Without Frontiers' Directive stressed the importance of safeguarding 'certain public interests, such as cultural diversity, the right to information, the

importance of media pluralism, the protection of minors and consumer protection and action to enhance media skills' (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). The function of public service media in supporting the culture of the EU nation states was believed to be of importance, 'the matter has been of such significance that it has...affected the direction of the EU and added an unusual note to international agreements' (Chakravartty and Sarikakis, 2006 : 106). Public service broadcasters have been challenged by the growth of new kinds of media companies and the fragmentation of audiences.

Commercial media outlets lobbied the EU against public service broadcaster's perceived privileged position, being partly protected by public funding. Michalis notes how several media consortiums submitted a memorandum to the EU Commission requesting the activities of public service broadcasters be limited in scope

> they stressed the "growing similarity" between public and commercial broadcasters with regard to content, social and market functions and analysed the "privileges" of public broadcasters including public funding and special regulatory treatment (Michalis, 2007: 239).

Michalis argues that because of the EU's deregulation of the media and telecommunications industries in the 1990's in order to encourage an 'information society' and convergence, the European parliament was coming under increasing pressure from commercial companies to monitor the marketplace. Commercial companies were finding themselves working alongside new types of content providers and distributors from new media, and experiencing falling revenues. In 2008 the EU decided to move from an open market structure (Michalis, 2007: 165) to adopt indicators which began to measure media pluralism (Michalis, 2007: 221). The strategy of market plurality is increasingly affecting public service broadcasting in the UK with the BBC becoming more like Channel 4 who is both a commissioner and distributor of public service content. In the BBC's case the increase in the amount of content it commissions

from the industry has resulted in a significant reduction of their internal production base.

Another issue concerning producers globally was the need to protect intellectual property against increasing copyright infringements by internet users. In 1996 the World Intellectual Property Organisation negotiated a 'Copyright Treaty' and a 'Performances and Phonograms Treaty'. These two treaties ensured creators of content retained an exclusive right to assign the copyright. In Europe a 'Copyright Directive' was created to assist member countries to comply with the treaties, however it was considered to be flawed. Firstly there was concern 'that the Directive has little if anything to offer for the protection of individual authors, composers and performers' (Hamelink, 2003: 145), the sources of new work from which the European cultural industries ultimately draws. Kung et al also believe 'the law can be used to promote monopoly control that exceeds that needed solely to protect copyright' (Kung et al, 2008:119), therefore the principle of 'fair use' of works already in the public domain might be restricted. Finally the European Directive also contained a long list of exemptions or limitations to copyright protection, which could be applied locally, creating a complicated pan-European approach to copyright in an effort to offer some level of autonomy to member states.

In Britain the Home Office encouraged the self-regulation of the internet by issuing 'codes of conduct' to internet service providers, which also applied to broadcasters and publishers. In January 2003 the 'Home Office Task Force for Child Protection on the Internet' issued the first of a series of guidance codes following several high profile cases of grooming of children online in chat rooms. The codes suggested a level of moderation and the provision of education on internet safety for participatory services which might appeal to children such as message boards, live chats, chat rooms and instant messaging. The Task Force's second guidance codes were for mobile phone operators, and again specific recommendations were made in order to safeguard children. In 2008, the Task Force issued a further code on social networks, once again intended to protect children. The UK internet has therefore been significantly influenced by the child protection lobby, specifically, the children's charities (Childnet, the NSPCC, Barnardo's). The guidance codes

are drawn up with the assistance of nominated individuals from the media and telecommunications industries. Scholars have also assisted by providing research into the behaviours of children and teenagers online (Livingstone and Bovill, 2001, Livingstone and Bober, 2007, Byron, 2008). From 2001 the European Union began to fund extensive research into the risks children encountered online under the 'InSafe' European awareness network (InSafe, 2009). The EU has adopted a protectionist stance towards the development of a 'European internet', foregrounding moderation and education over the development of industry standards for the production, mediation or facilitation of social media.

The 2003 the Royal Assent of the *Communications Act* in the UK created Ofcom, a new UK communications regulator. Ofcom was instructed to 'further the interests of citizens in relation to communications matters' and to promote competition and plurality of supply whilst ensuring 'the fulfilment of the purposes of public service television broadcasting in the United Kingdom' (Office of Public Sector Information, 2003). Ofcom was also asked to promote digital literacy and the interests of the different ethnic communities of the UK, something traditionally the responsibility of public service media.

The *Communications Act* recommended that the BBC should begin to commission 'no less than 25% of the total amount of time allocated to the broadcasting of qualifying programmes' from independent production companies (Office of Public Sector Information, 2003). As a direct consequence the BBC, who had already begun to reduce their workforce, made further cuts in December 2004. The British Entertainment Traders Union reported 3,000 jobs would be lost at the Corporation (BECTU, 2004). On 10 March 2005, Mark Thompson, Director General of the BBC, announced a further 3,780 posts would close over the next three years, 'almost one in five employees in UK public service divisions' (BBC News, 2005). 2,050 of the staff affected were content producers and the remaining posts were from 'professional services', administrative staff who supported production departments. By 2007 the total number of staff leaving the BBC was 6,300, reducing the size of the corporation by one third, from 30,000 employees to 20,000 (Gibson, 2007).

The BBC gave a name to the body of work which would be commissioned from the independent sector, 'The Window of Creative Competition' (WOCC) (Harvey, 2004a:1). The name is significant as the intention was that both in-house and independent producers could compete for work, which would be awarded at the BBC's discretion. This gave the BBC some level of flexibility and a way of commissioning the best content rather than having a hard percentage set by Ofcom and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. All the BBC's independent production partners would need to comply with the Home Office codes of conduct for participatory media. The BBC's editorial policy unit produced a set of 'Interactive Producer Guidelines' from 2002 partly to ensure the new participatory services complied with the BBC's moderation and hosting standards (BBC, 2009: n.p.). The implementation of the guidelines was the responsibility of the independent producers working in tandem with newly appointed Executive Editors who had particular responsibility for content commissioned via the WOCC.

The new regulator, Ofcom, stressed it wished to take a 'light touch' with the BBC, however in September 2004 it announced the idea of a 'public service publisher' setting aside the sum of £300 million for the idea (Ofcom, 2004c). By 2007 Ofcom had reduced the sum to between £50 million and £100million. In 2008 Ofcom's chief executive, Ed Richards, confirmed the regulator would abandon the plans for a public service publisher. It was felt the idea had 'served its purpose in shifting the debate on the future of public service broadcasting by emphasising the importance of digital media' (Tryhorn, 2008). In 2008 Channel 4 committed £50 million to explore new forms of public service content suitable for a networked age; Channel 4 subsequently launched '4ip' in January 2009 stating an intention to 'rethink public service media'. 4ip defines itself as 'a collaboration between Channel 4 and a series of development and media agencies from around the UK' (Channel 4, 2009a, n.p.). The new Head of Channel 4ip, Tom Loosemore, led the BBC's 'Web 2.0' initiatives between 2003-2007 before going to Ofcom to explore the idea of a public service publisher (Loosemore, 2007).

A besieged BBC

The BBC was under great pressure during the years 2002-2004, from changing regulation, economic factors, audience behaviours, and a changing technological

landscape. Looking towards the future they were not certain whether the public would continue to pay the licence fee as free 'rich media' (audio and video) began to be delivered by the internet. The public were also beginning to adopt participatory media and participatory practices. Kjus notes

> ...the spread of media platforms over the last decade has provided individuals with practical, immediate feedback channels. That, in turn, has presented PSB with new challenges in mediating collective activity...The need for common ground and integrative interaction has grown rather than diminished. And yet the means for PSB to adequately provide for this service has diminished due to changes in the media ecology' (Kjus, Y, 2007: 141).

The mediation of public service purposeful collective activity is central to the hypothesis of this study and I believe mediation and facilitation is of high importance, yet the ability of the BBC to maintain global mediation standards may have reduced over the last few years due to falling staff numbers and the fragmentation of production supply.

Content received via the internet, or by Freeview and FreeSat in the UK, is not free as it is necessary to buy equipment or to maintain a subscription to an internet service provider. The intellectual connection between content and the media outlet who originally produced that content is becoming increasingly less obvious. Therefore the forthcoming review of the BBC's funding model, which was timetabled to begin five years after the awarding of the BBC's new Charter in 2006 will be interesting. It may be the audience becomes less willing to pay for BBC content in the future, 'the precariousness of the BBC's position is reflected in the fact that the government has renewed its licence funding only until 2016' (Crisell, 2006: 58). Collins and Murroni believe 'the government's ability to set its level makes the BBC vulnerable to political pressure' (Collins and Murroni, 1996:145).

The economics of the media are changing; a lightly regulated internet assisted the expansion of global media corporations into new media and across national boundaries.

The AOLTimeWarner merger in January 2000 created a pan-platform production giant worth $350 billion USD (BBC News, 2000a). Additional plans to also merge with EMI were challenged by the European Union who were concerned 'Warner-EMI might be able to bypass the traditional copyright collection societies, thus raising entry barriers and costs for smaller players' (Kung et al, 2008:110) and dominating the market for online music. In 2004 Sony and Bertelsmann announced a merger of their record companies, which would, like AOLTimeWarner, bring together content production and distribution.

'Traditional' media organisations were adjusting their business structures in order to be able to find and retain audiences across platforms, across a wider footprint, and over time. A second strategy therefore was to aggregate products and content on different platforms around large media brands. In this way it would be possible to exploit 'Long Tail' economics (Anderson, 2007). Merchandise such as real world toys and online virtual objects (such as 'furni') could be purchased over time by consumers using micro-payment systems. Consumers could also be encouraged to purchase subscriptions, and the music industry began to seriously explore the possibility of an additional revenue stream, offering music for download, after the closure of Napster in 2000 (BBC News, 2000b). These new audience consumption patterns were not only technologically determined but also socially determined, 'the idea that technology drives its own development has rightly been rejected' (Bardoel and Lowe, 2007:13). Bardoel and Lowe argue that a great many factors influence technology, and that they are all social in origin, including economics, politics, cultural factors, military technology, and the way people use technology.

The BBC understood that its website was going to be instrumental in helping the Corporation move production towards digital and 'interactive' content. The website had launched in 1997 under an experimental service licence, receiving a full licence in 1998. In 2003 Tessa Jowell, the UK Culture Secretary for the Department of Media, Culture and Sport, appointed Philip Graf to review the website. Lord Graf stressed to delegates at a Westminster eForum on Tuesday 4 November, 2003, that his aims were first of all to look at how the BBC had met the criterion under which the licence had been originally

awarded. This included whether the BBC 'has provided a distinctive service, and acted as a trusted guide to the web' (Graf, 2003: 9). Graf also wanted to assess whether the website had a market impact, and he would consider the website in the context of the future and the forthcoming review of the BBC's Charter.

There was a (fairly distant) possibility the licence could be revoked, however as the service had become popular closing it down would have been politically difficult. When the Graf Review was published in July 2004 only minor adjustments were requested including the closure of the 'Cult' site which provided web pages for fans of popular television programmes such as the American television series 'Buffy The Vampire Slayer' and '24'. Philip Graf recommended that at least 25% of the BBC's online content (excluding news) should be commissioned from independent producers by 2006, bringing the BBC's online service in line with requirements in television and radio. Overall, he felt BBC Online should prioritise news, current affairs, and education and information of value to citizens. Lastly Graf recommended the prioritization of innovative, rich and interactive content (DCMS, 2004a).

Other public consultations on BBC television and radio content followed from 2004, notably Lord Burn's report on public service broadcasting, released in February, 2005. The Burns report recommended the creation of a Public Service Broadcasting Commission, 'Offbeeb', to regulate the BBC and replace the BBC Governors. This recommendation is likely to have influenced the subsequent creation of the BBC Trust in January 2007, a body which was instructed to act on behalf of the public where the BBC was concerned. In addition Burns recommended that a proportion of the BBC's licence fee should be given to other public service broadcasters, such as Channel 4, in order to maintain plurality of supply. The BBC's response to this suggestion was negative, there was also surprise as 'it was widely thought in broadcasting circles that this "top slicing" proposal has been abandoned' (Harvey, 2005: 2). The BBC began to feel increasingly besieged as the list of organisations that could either regulate the BBC or have a right to examine the corporation's business included Ofcom, the DCMS, the National Audit Office, the Culture Media and Sport Select Committee, and the Public Accounts Committee.

Concurrent with changes in regulation, the mediascape, content reviews and the review of the BBC's Charter, the corporation also had to defend its independence and journalism practices. In May 2003 at 06.07 am on the 'Today' programme, BBC Radio 4, reporter Andrew Gilligan claimed the Government had 'sexed up' a report justifying going to war with Iraq. The resulting investigation into the quality of the BBC's journalism practices would cause both the Chairman and Director General of the BBC to resign. Lord Hutton was asked by the Department of Culture, Media and Science to provide a report which was released on 28 January 2004 (Hutton, 2003). The report stated Gilligan's claims were 'unfounded' and that there was no evidence to show government intelligence sources had inserted any additional facts into a folder from which the report recommending military action was written. The Hutton report also found there was no evidence to suggest the Government had named the source of Gilligan's report, Dr Kelly, which had ultimately resulted in his suicide.

The Sunday following the 'Today' broadcast Gilligan wrote an article for *The Mail on Sunday* which claimed the British Prime Minister's press secretary, Alistair Campbell, had encouraged Tony Blair to ensure the folder and report contained sufficient evidence that Britain should take military action. Gilligan maintained his facts were correct and that his source was credible; the BBC supported Gilligan. Tony Blair noted in the House of Commons (28 January, 2004) that the BBC

> ...has never clearly and visibly withdrawn this allegation...Lord Hutton does, however, find that the Ministry of Defence was at fault in not telling Dr. Kelly clearly and immediately that his name would be confirmed to the press... Let me repeat the words of Lord Hutton: "false accusations of fact impugning the integrity of others....should not be made". Let those who made them now withdraw them' (Blair, 2004).

Being trustworthy and of good repute is one of the fundamental qualities of public service media therefore the allegation that Gilligan's facts might not be correct was of high importance for the BBC. Greg Dyke believed the BBC was right to broadcast Andrew

Gilligan's report, he also felt, after the internal BBC review had taken place, that Gilligan had sufficient evidence to support his claim. Dyke admitted, however, there were also flaws in the way Gilligan had substantiated his position. The Government was not able to persuade the BBC to retract the story, however, and both the Chairman of the BBC, Gavyn Davies, and the Director General, resigned.

The Gilligan incident had a profound effect on the BBC both internally, as an institution in the middle of great change, and externally as the reputation of an established public service broadcaster was called into question. Retrospectively Greg Dyke felt that

> In the months since Lord Hutton's report was published a myth has been fostered. The myth is that Gilligan and the BBC made a series of very serious mistakes. This is simply not the case. Gilligan did make errors, a couple of which were serious; but it was Lord Hutton, not the BBC, who got it fundamentally wrong' (Dyke, 2004:287).

Dyke believed Hutton, who had trained as a criminal lawyer, did not understand media law, furthermore that 'the Government chose the judge and then he failed to permit full examination of the witnesses' (Dyke, 2004: 291). If the BBC believed it was in the public interest to report what it believed was the facts it should be able to do so. The Corporation is contracted to report what is perceived to be of importance for the public in order to fulfil its Agreement. Seaton believes that often broadcasters have 'failed to perceive the public interest and even more frequently, have been too acquiescent to political pressure' (Seaton,1981: 363). In this case the BBC believed it was strongly acting in the public interest yet the corporation found itself placed in a highly uncomfortable position; in opposition to the Government.

Changing audiences and changing media consumption habits

In 2001 Andrew Curry from the Henley Centre consultancy advised the BBC 'the notion of the broadcast model belongs as squarely in the 20th century as the fixed line telephone and the production line' (Curry, 2001:2). Curry believed cultural goods for

audiences were being replaced by services which connected the audience together, and that there would be a steady growth of audience interactivity via a 'PC-based internet' over the next ten years, assisted by the mobile phone and interactive television. Curry described a future mediascape where the traditional 'top down' organisation of content would change to being 'bottom up' control, with the audience in charge. Media would be accessed via networks which extended out from the audience-member's own media and social or business connections, to the media shared by friends and family, and from there, out to the world. He believed this placed media companies into the role of facilitator; 'companies have started to masquerade as friends' (Curry, 2001: 12). Curry felt several companies, such as Boots and Virgin were re-orienting themselves to provide more reciprocity between information givers and receivers, consumers 'expect not to be talked to like a stranger' (PCC, 2000, cited in Curry, 2001). In addition he felt audiences and consumers had become tired of too many media messages, 'the problem is that many of those shared experiences have been corrupted by the desire of the market to capture our attention – and this has corrupted public space and our notion of "the public"' (Curry, 2001:24).

To find out what audiences wanted from 'interactive content' the BBC commissioned audience research from various sources in 2002 and a new brand, BBCi, was created the same year to denote the presence of interactive content whether it was located online, on interactive television, or on mobile devices. One of the studies from The Future Foundation found that between 15-25% of adults aged 18 and over (from a base of 1726 surveyed in the UK in 1999) felt they 'don't have time to read, view or listen to all they would like to' (The Future Foundation, 1999, in Knapman, 2002: 54). Knapman, the audience research manager in the BBC New Media division, felt the new brand BBCi could help 'facilitate and enrich busy lives' and provide convenient and relevant content of quality, overcoming a perception of new media as being a 'divider and an encroachment of work into the home' (Knapman, 2002: 50). The BBC believed audiences viewed the television as a 'lean back' experience and the PC as a 'lean forward' media, more useful for information gathering.

Ceefax, the BBC's text service had been in existence since 1974 (BBC News, 2004), and it was popular with audiences. A feed from Ceefax therefore began to supply the BBCi Red Button service and the television overlays which offered additional information around television. The audience however were not adopting BBCi, an audience report, *Project Communicate*, found 'massive confusion exists over the entity that is BBCi – only a tiny handful of respondents were aware of its full remit and potential' (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003b: 10). The Interactive Presenter Scheme was grafted on to the campaign to introduce audiences to BBCi. The BBCi marketing team believed the iPresenters could work on the Red Button services, however they were not aware of the limitations of the technology. The BBC's audience research had identified the need for a 'friendly face', and for the demystification of the jargon around the technologies delivering interactivity, they felt the BBCi Presenters might be able to supply this.

The BBC also approached the lack of recognition of the BBCi brand by simplifying the navigation, attempting to improve the – often painfully slow – loading of content on the Red Button services and creating a series of television promotions illustrating the benefits of interacting via the television and online. BBCi was therefore an attempt to create an intellectual perception of convergence where practical or physical convergence was not possible. The BBC's approach to interactive content has often been distinctly different from Channel 4 who closed their Red Button service in 2006. Andy Duncan, the Chief Executive, believed it was 'a clunky and inefficient use of capacity…not much loved or used by audiences, it's too expensive, and it has been rather overtaken by the opportunities offered by the internet and broadband' (Duncan in Deans, 2006).

The adoption of online media was inhibited by the slow take up of broadband. In November 2002, according to the UK Cabinet Office's *UK Online Annual Report*, (Cabinet Office, 2002: 71) 45% of UK households were online and 47% of UK adults were regularly using the internet.
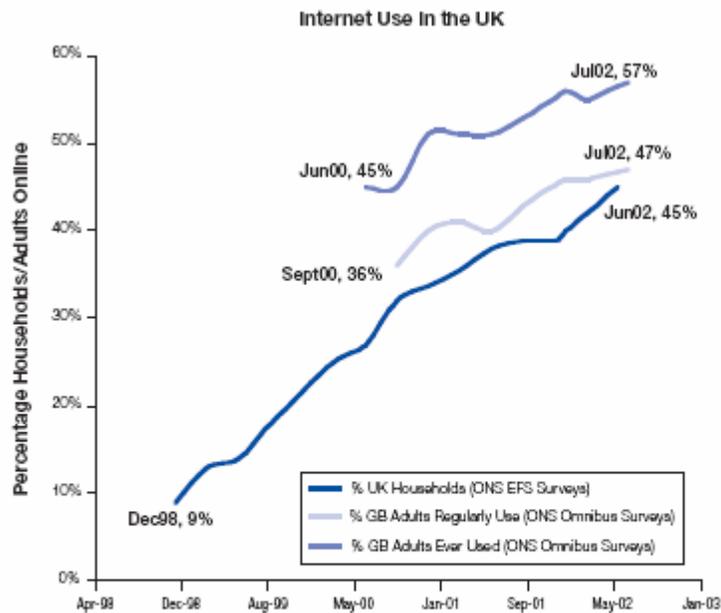
Figure 1: Percentage of UK adults online 1998-2003 (Source: UK Online Annual Report, UK Cabinet Office).

By 2004 64% of adults had a computer at home and 45% of adults now had internet access at home (Ofcom, 2004a). Most people were however accessing the Internet via dial up connections therefore the time they spent connected was only 90 minutes per week (Ofcom, 2004b). Only 15% of UK homes had broadband and in those homes audiences were spending an average of 18 hours a week online. It became clear to the BBC that as the internet grew faster the audience would use it for longer and that as soon as it became possible to deliver rich media online, audience behaviours might change.

From the mid-1990's onwards message boards, chat rooms and instant messaging offered audiences communication around and within content. It was possible to chat to others and to the content provider, however the idea of a shared place to meet and chat to others online was still rather alien to many. Sue Thomas describes digital space as

> a new kind of ecology, comprising a fast-growing and complex web of interrelationships build upon the physical (hardware, local user conditions and so

on) and the virtual (software, navigation, imagination and so on), and it must be no surprise that when we try to grasp what all of this means, we turn to the language of nature' (Thomas, 2009: 22).

Thomas believes we use metaphors to describe cyberspace using terms such as 'trees', data 'fields', and 'paths'. In 2000 a thousand UK writers were asked by the TrAce Online Writing Centre what worried them about the internet (Thomas, 2000, n.p.), the replies generated words such as 'swamp', 'dump', 'erosion'; when the participants were asked to say what they liked about the internet words such as 'world', 'source', 'growth' and 'vastness' were used. We describe the internet how we might describe a large, natural, landscape or feature, softening and humanising the heavy technology. Far from being an established medium it is young, and continually being shaped by our social useage; we iteratively re-form the internet to mimic and support our daily lives.

The BBC was aware the audience was taking a more creative role in the development of the web and decided to undertake the latest of a series of large audience studies. Every 5-10 years since the 1930's the BBC has undertaken a review of the audience and their media consumption. *The Daily Life Study, 2002-2003* (Knapman, 2003) was therefore completed in the spring of 2003, six months before the start of this research project therefore it was possible to draw on the data. The corporation wanted to find out how the media complemented or contributed to audiences' daily lives, however the study also included the audiences' daily habits when they were *not* consuming media in their family groups, at work, at school and so on. 6,000 participants were given personal digital assistants to record their everyday routines every half hour in the form of 'real time' personal diaries.

The findings of the study showed the audiences' media habits were changing slowly, this was an evolution, rather than a revolution' (Knapman, 2003). There was significant evidence showing young people's consumption of media was different from that of the over 24 year olds who participated in the project. Children's bedrooms now offered multimedia connectivity, however they were not drawing together media to make a

mixed media experience, they were multi-tasking and 'snacking' media from different sources. Young people (16-24 year olds) were still watching television but they were also doing other things simultaneously. 13% of the 16-24 year olds were chatting via SMS, 12% were chatting on a landline phone, and 11% were using a mobile phone. The findings also showed 37% of teenage girls with digital television claimed to listen to the radio through their television. How the media reached audiences was becoming more irrelevant, radio could come via the television, or entertainment could be enjoyed on a games console or online. Boys and young men played games, 95% of teenage boys had a games console at home and over 50% of them spent over nine hours a week playing games. This was not a weekend activity, up to 60% of boys aged 6-12 were using games consoles on weekdays, three times as many as used the internet.

The audience had a complex consumption relationship between the television and the internet, with heavier internet users also being heavier consumers of television. Participants who had access to broadband at home spent twice as long online as those with narrowband access and they also watched less television. Broadband and the 'rich media' experiences it offered was just beginning to be perceived as a greater 'threat' to television than narrowband internet, and broadband clamed much more attention. Overall audiences who consumed media in 'new media homes' (those with broadband and digital television) consumed the same volume of media as 'old media homes' (those who had narrowband internet and analogue television). What was being seen – removing the multi-tasking or media snacking of the under 24 year olds - was a move to consume media in new ways and on new platforms, particularly radio. In addition, media was increasingly seen as ambient entertainment by older audiences as well as younger audiences, continually on in the background whilst other activities were undertaken. *The Daily Life Study, 2002-2003* (Knapman, 2003) also offered the BBC insights into the way audiences were beginning to participate using digital television (Knapman, 2003). Audiences were motivated by 'calls to action' associated with a strong brand. It was also found that different genres of programming stimulated different patterns of engagement; audiences of sports programmes interacted throughout a match, whereas

audiences of factual and learning programmes interacted after the linear show had ended.

The BBC commissioned a study, *Online Audience Expectations,* from the media analyst company Blinc in November 2004. The study involved nine groups from London, the Midlands and the Nations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). The report does not show how many participants were in each group, nor the overall number of participants however the number of participants was presumably sufficiently large enough to be able to be split into three age bandings (a) 18-24 year olds, (b) 25-44 year olds, and (c) 45+ year olds. The study showed information and convenience were the main reasons audiences went online and that the BBC had a clear role to play in the provision of information. The participants were less clear whether the BBC should provide 'challenging' content; user-generated content and 'certain forms of interactivity (chat rooms)' (Blinc, 2004: n.p.). Parents particularly viewed online environments as potentially dangerous places for children and for teenagers, and the overall audience questioned the provision of material that 'did not have a clear connection or root in BBC programming or a BBC Channel' (Blinc, 2004: n.p.). All the participants in the study believed the internet had become mainstream therefore the presence of the BBC on the internet was also accepted.

What emerged from the Blinc study was that audiences expected the BBC to retain the same values and qualities in new media as it had in 'traditional' media. All the participants in the Blinc study strongly felt the BBC should 'be a standard bearer in the online world' (Blinc, 2004: n.p.). They expected the BBC to be better regulated than other sites and that a failure to regulate would undermine core BBC values. The linking of regulation with quality, replicates the Home Office Task Force position of foregrounding moderation over mediation. BBC-generated content was expected to have high editorial standards and to have methods for quality control, this expectation extended to user-generated debates around television and radio programmes, and any online communities around BBC brands. The segment of the audience who took part in the study were clear, the BBC should be an 'edited' environment.

The Blinc study also provided some detail on how the BBC should mediate participatory content; younger audiences felt user-generated content was highly important and 'it may even provide creative stimulus for programme makers' (Blinc, 2004). 'UGC' (user-generated content), they believed, should be largely un-regulated, but that there should be some mediation if the environment was likely to provoke racism or extreme violence (particularly towards women). Older online audiences felt the BBC should provide the editorial standards they valued, however they were aware that by making a judgement on what could and couldn't be shown the BBC was curtailing free speech. The participants in the Blinc study were concerned that impartiality and censorship might become confused, or that by moderating and editing in places, this would not be providing free speech or a truly focussed environment either. Overall, the participants felt the BBC should be ensuring UGC environments were impartial, editing material accordingly, indicating there would be support for proactively mediated participatory public service media.

By the end of 2003 broadband was beginning to be adopted by greater numbers of the UK audience increasing the amount of video, audio and animation being consumed and opening up the possibility for televisual services to develop such as 'YouTube' which launched in 2005. Crabtree and Roberts felt 'Broadband Britain had a rough start. Well behind comparable countries in international comparisons' (Crabtree and Roberts, 2003: 3). They reported that there were 2.5 million broadband subscribers in the UK in 2003 and predicted there would be double that number by 2005. Adoption was in fact faster than they had predicted, by April 2005 there were 7 million broadband subscribers in the UK and that number was expected to double over the next five years (Durman, 2005: 5). As internet speeds increased, the numbers of audience engagers also increased; in 2003 the BBC message boards were receiving 111 posts per minute at peak times, which was 40,000 posts per day, or 3,333 posts per hour. Traffic to the BBC's social media was tripling every year (BBC WebServer, 2003), therefore by 2004 the question for the BBC was not whether the audience wanted to participate but how to facilitate the participatory media.

From public service broadcasting to public service media

In order to illustrate the development of intellectual ideas about public service broadcasting over the last ten years selected views are presented. Some scholars are optimistic about the future of public service media, some feel public service broadcasting is an idea which is becoming outdated. Andrew Graham and Gavyn Davies (Graham, and Davies,1997: 63) suggest the need for PSB 'increases, not decreases' as the public adopt new technologies, an optimistic position suggesting the ethos is translatable from broadcasting across to media which is not delivered within a broadcast schedule. Tracey believes public service broadcasting was an 'idea constructed within one moment in time, the early part of the twentieth century; on patrician and governmental principals from another, the nineteenth century' (Tracey, M, 1998: 263-264), this suggests public service broadcasting is a set of immovable criterion. The core' values of public service media have always varied, they are adjusted in order to remain relevant and without this flexibility the ethos of public service media would loose its vigour. Tracey's 1998 definition of PSB offered eight principals:

1. Universality of availability
2. Universality of appeal
3. Provision for minorities
4. Serving the public sphere
5. A commitment to the education of the public
6. Distanced from all vested interests
7. Structured to encourage competition in good programming rather than competition for numbers
8. The rules of broadcasting should liberate rather than restrict the programme-maker. (Tracey, 1998:26-32)

McQuail's list of qualities is less prescriptive, listing universal service, diversity, editorial independence, social responsibility and accountability, cultural quality and identity and public financing and/or non-profit operation (McQuail, 2001:125). Sussman argues that a modern public service organisation 'needs to be subject to an authority of public taste,

which is rooted and represented in the pluralistic lifestyles of ordinary people' (Sussman, 2003: 111). This offers flexibility but it might be problematic to measure. Jauert and Lowe believe public service broadcasting has four functions,

> First, public service broadcasting should be a beneficial socialising agent...second, public service broadcasting should be a robust discursive medium...third, public service broadcasting should be an essential civil society organisation...fourth, public service broadcasting should be about democratic mediation for intercultural communication' (Jauert and Lowe, 2005 :29-30).

All these functions support the idea that public service media is the glue which helps to strengthen the social fabric of a democratic, well-functioning, open and pluralistic society. Bardoel and Lowe suggest 'the soul of the PSM ethos is *communication in the public interest'* (Bardoel and Lowe, 2007:17) and the internet is amplifying communication and sociability.

The Work Foundation undertook a large study in 2003 to examine the effect social software would have on society. They concluded that social technology was not a replacement for pre-existing social behaviour but an amplifier of sociability, and that the sociable networks enabled by the internet was going to radically change institutions

> The challenge for organisations and communities is somehow to dig down to this new social base, and try not only to realign people's social and psychological interests with institutional interests, but to reconstitute institutions around this quite complex, intangible social reality' (The Work Foundation, 2003:57).

Public service media will need to not only reflect the sociability offered by the internet, but to become engaged with it, if PSM fails to adopt online sociability the idea will become out of step with the public and with the societies PSM serve. Jakubowicz believes 'there is no guarantee that PSM will survive in the 21st century. It is, however, certain

that it will not survive unless it fundamentally transforms itself' (Jakubowicz, 2007:44). Jakubowicz supports Jauert and Lowe believing that

> Now is the time to take the next step and reconstruct PSM into a platform for open societal communication. This would be a radical departure from the traditional model of paternalistic top down communication. This would complete the evolution of PSM (Jakubowicz, 2008: 24).

The position I am suggesting is somewhere in between the top down communication of the traditional model of broadcasting and the utopian open system suggested by Jakubowicz. An adjustable position where more highly mediated services or content is provided in some areas and either less or un-mediated content is provided in others. In addition, that the mediation is also adjustable within those places or spaces, responding to the needs of the audience in an iterative way. Some kinds of environments may need to be purposeful, and this is where mediation by professional hosts would be useful. Other shared space environments might be hosted by the audience themselves or mediated by the user-interfaces. The ability of a public service media organisation to facilitate flexible mediation depends on their willingness to be open, transparent and to share the management of the services at times. Furthermore it depends on their ability to offer sophisticated mediation which steers rather than edits, which suggests rather than declaims, which encourages creativity and participation, and which proactively promotes plurality of expression. The selected separate definitions of public service media reviewed show how the idea of public service media has changed over the last ten years. They indicate a gradual shifting of authority from the broadcast organisation towards the audience. Whether public service organisations are able to accommodate this shifting of authority is another matter, Jacka is pessimistic, supporting Tracey in believing public service broadcasters are out of touch with people and that they are the product of another era (Jacka, 2003).

Towards public service partnerships

On the 29 June 2004 the incoming Director General of the BBC, Mark Thompson, and the new Chairman of the BBC Governors, Michael Grade, released a four-page 'Manifesto for the Future' of the BBC in *Ariel*, the staff magazine. Within the manifesto was a statement of the values of public service media, interpreted for a modern age as individual value, citizen value and economic value.

> Individual value represents the benefit people derive as individuals from a BBC service compared with the costs of providing it...citizen value represents the benefit that people derive from a BBC service as citizens, such as its contribution to a better informed democracy, higher educational standards or a more inclusive society...Economic value represents the net benefit that the wider media economy may derive from BBC services (*Ariel*, 2004: 2).

The document launched the BBC's dialogue with the constituency in the UK who wanted to debate its future. A subsequent BBC publication, *Building Public Value* suggested that individual value might be measured by the 'quality, reach and impact' of programmes. This was not something new, the Corporation was already measuring 'reach', an industry-facing measurement which would not involve the licence fee payers. Citizen value, it was suggested, might be measured through 'the reach of the service among disadvantaged groups, or evidence of its impact beyond the broadcast programme, such as follow-up educational courses, or participation in sporting or musical events' (BBC, 2004: 45). There was little mention of assisting audiences to engage with the democratic process, which might have been indicative of a wish to maintain some distance from the Government. It was further suggested that new methods could be implemented such as asking people to put a value on the direct effects, or by estimating how much financial outlay another public body might have to spend to achieve the same results. The BBC felt that measuring economic value would be straightforward and that it could achieved through an analysis of the market impact of BBC content. The document was largely written from an institutional perspective and the BBC did not include the audience in the active measuring of the value of its overall offering. Collins and Muroni believe 'the BBC's

accountability could also be bolstered by *formal* mechanisms of public *influence*' (Collins, R and Murroni, C, 1996:154).

The BBC's audience is perceived – by producers - to be 'outside' the corporation's buildings or firewalls, except when they are contained in areas which are specifically designed for producer-audience interaction and managed. These 'audience' spaces either exist in the 'real world' or now exist online. They include BBC bookshops, cybercafés, audience shows, the BBC buses (mobile studios run by local production staff which tour from town to town) or outside broadcasts such as the BBC summer Proms or the Radio 1 Roadshow. Online communities and user generated content begins to place the audience within the BBC's firewall, which changes the relationship between BBC producers and audiences, something this study has examined.

In addition to a possible new relationship with the public, as has been said already, the BBC was committed to commissioning 25% of its content from independent producers therefore developing partnerships with commercial production companies. It seemed likely Ofcom might ask the BBC to increase the amount of commissions therefore 'rather than face a government imposed hike' (Harvey, 2004a); the BBC decided it would offer the 'Window of Creative Competition (WOCC), mentioned earlier, as a compromise. Up to a quarter of the BBC's output, on top of the existing 25% commissioned from the independent sector, could theoretically be provided by commercial media outlets, however BBC production departments would also be able to pitch for the work via the WOCC. By taking this proactive stance the BBC was able to use its own discretion on the percentage of independent content commissioned each year. The WOCC was framed as stimulating a healthy market economy however in practice the larger independent media companies would be more likely to win contracts for long-running series. The BBC also keeps a list of preferred suppliers which introduces a further selection process. The WOCC will however move the BBC some way towards Channel 4's model of being a content commissioner and distributor. Jana Bennett, Director of Television, BBC, felt any moves to expand the role of the BBC beyond this position, for example as a *supplier* of commercial content, would require further discussion. Bennett felt 'there are arguments

for seeing the BBC as a programme producer as well as a broadcaster, and not seeing them as, necessarily divisible, as a sort of either or' (Bennett, 2004: 129).

Since it came into being Ofcom has provided regular reviews on public service media, keen to ensure the BBC is not the sole provider of public service content in the UK the regulator has proactively supported additional suppliers of public service media. Channel 4ip launched in January 2009, stating its purpose was 'rethinking public service media', supported by a £40 million innovation fund, 'to stimulate public service digital media (beyond television) across the UK. In plain English, that means supporting great ideas for websites, games and mobile services which help people improve their lives' (4ip, 2009 n.p.). The funding was achieved by amalgamating £20 from Channel 4's own finance with a further £20 million from 'partner agencies', however the specific partner agencies are not specified, the £40 million is expected to increase to £50 million over time.

Going forward it will be interesting to follow Channel 4iP's exploration of new forms of public service media through their new model. Channel 4ip will provide online tools for the public and for public bodies to use, in particular 4ip will commission participatory, networked, media which will help audiences find content which 'empowers and connects' people. The tools, it is hoped, will lead the audience to content situated around the internet and promote networks of people who may, if required, 'call those in power to account'. Channel 4ip wishes to encourage 'wise crowds' to develop and they will do this by offering 'disruptive' media tools to creative participants (4ip, 2009b, n.p.). There is no mention of broadcasting instead the term 'broadbanding' is used indicating a future faster internet delivering more 'rich media'. Channel 4ip's audience will therefore aggregate around tools whilst the BBC's audiences will continue to aggregate around content. Foregrounding tools rather than content may have advantages but there are also disadvantages; the public has a toolkit of parts to use, but without facilitation some of the activity may be directionless, however many activities may not need facilitation as the shared purpose may be self-directed or led by the tools themselves.

Participatory practices at the BBC

The BBC has always had a sociable relationship with audiences in broadcasting, considered 'para-social' by Horton and Wohl (Horton, D and Wohl, R,1956) as it was a relationship which was limited by the lack of face to face reciprocity. The relationship between broadcast personae and audiences was later defined as monological by Thompson because it was separated from the 'reflexive monitoring of others' responses which is a routine and constant feature of face to face interaction' (Thompson, 1995: 96). Moores feels the relationship between presenters and audiences is better defined as being 'social "para-interaction"' as 'all human relationships, including those technologically mediated by broadcasting, are best thought of as fully "social"' (Moores, 2005: 75).

It is now possible for producers to offer a sociable two-way exchange of conversation in either real time or asynchronous time online, however, unlike face to face interaction there is less possibility for equality as the producer-host may not reply. The word relationship has been defined as 'the way in which two people affect each other' (Garmonsway et al, 1965:594) and as 'a creative developing partnership' (Litvinoff,1992:11). An ideal or idealised relationship is a proactive and beneficial entity which has some notion of being ongoing and which has a positive and measurable effect for both parties. If this kind of relationship is to be fostered in the BBC's social media then the foundations for Jakubowicz's model of public service media for the 21st Century, 'open societal communication' (Jakubowicz, K, 2008: 24), will have been laid. The 'soul' of the public service media ethos described by Bardoel and Lowe as '*communication in the public interest'* (Bardoel, J and Lowe, G, 2007:17) will be both observable and flourishing. The engagement between the audience and the BBC producer-hosts was examined in the developmental production workshops and the findings are given in chapter six.

The BBC began to launch message boards in 1998 the first board supported the 'Home Truths' BBC Radio 4 programme, which encouraged conversation and light-hearted reviews of family issues, the message board was therefore highly complementary to the programme. It was selected as the BBC's first steps into social media because the

audience was older therefore it was considered to be a safe group of people to invite to join the first open (post-moderated) online conversation. Post-moderation is the publishing of messages from the public without intervention by a moderator, a moderator may, however, remove the message after it has been automatically published if it breaks the community's 'house rules'. Other radio and television programmes quickly wanted to make their programmes 'interactive' by adding either a message board or by offering a live chat with a celebrity or expert guest after the broadcast. One or two departments were particularly active, developing a strong online membership culture around their brands, notably 'EastEnders' (the long-running television soap), 'The Archers' (the long-running radio drama), and Terry Wogan's 'Togs' community ('Terry's Old Geezers'). Terry Wogan is a talk show host who particularly appeals to audiences in their 50's, 60's and 70's. The BBC's social media therefore appealed not just to the young but to particularly types of audiences who either felt an affinity to long-running content such as soaps or daily programmes or who shared a particular real world interest. My experience over the time I managed the BBC's online communities was that online communities didn't form around radio or television channels such as 'Radio 3' or 'BBC2'.

The understanding of how to run participatory media permeated out from the BBC New Media Division. In 1999 I organised a conference on online community, working with BBC Training, to familiarise managers across the BBC with the idea and practice of online communities. Howard Rheingold gave the keynote speech during which he predicted the internet would turn everyone into a broadcaster and journalist, however 'Mass-media will continue to exist, and so will journalism, but these institutions will no longer monopolize attention and access to the attention of others' (Rheingold, H,1999, n.p.). Rheingold felt BBC News in particular had a role to play in the age of many to many media; 'the role of active host and participant in community-building. Establishing a dialogue with readers and viewers that extends beyond letters to the editor' (Rheingold, H, 1999, n.p.). BBC News began to offer an 'email and publish' system which launched in 2000. The web pages invited the public to post comments on the news and BBC News journalists selected a small proportion of the incoming messages to 'post'. BBC News also began to add blogs written by BBC journalists in 2002 which allowed users to

comment on the entries, again, the comments were editorialised. 'Pre-moderated' news forums were launched by BBC News in 2004 which offered an automated publishing of most audience comments. The BBC News forums currently indicate to the public how many posts have been removed, and this varies from being around a quarter to a third of all comments submitted. This shows an increasing movement towards inclusion of the audience and a move away from the perception of user-generated content as content which is either to be rejected or selectively placed into the public domain. Pavlik believes 'interactivity promises to help increase understanding between journalists, their audiences, and their sources, bringing the potential for improved accuracy in news reporting' (Pavlik, J, 2008:77). Identifying what is 'the news' and what is contextual information around 'hard news' from a range of professional and non-professional sources is becoming commonplace as citizen journalism, blogging and conventional news gathering converges.

In 2002 the BBC's knowledge of the facilitation of online communities was concentrated within the BBC's New Media Division in four teams of producers, namely a live chat team, a message board team, a chat room team and producers who looked after 'H2G2' an online community aggregated around Douglas Adam's book 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy' . 26 producers in BBC New Media therefore assisted just over 600 producer-hosts across the BBC to manage 300 message boards, daily live chats and chat rooms. The producer-hosts also managed additional participatory services such as archives of user-generated content, interactive dramas or online games. When I developed the production practices for the BBC's message boards in 1997 the editorial policies developed in broadcasting were useful as was the work of Howard Rheingold (Rheingold, H, 1994) and Amy Jo Kim (Jo Kim, A, 2000). Rheingold and Kim had considered the role of the host and believed it was a different function from moderation, but they had not considered the topic in isolation. Rheingold is currently considering how to gain and hold the attention of students in conjunction with his new work teaching participatory media and running a social media classroom online (Rheingold, H, 2008: n.p.).

The BBC's hosting model was influenced by Rheingold (Rheingold, 1994) and Jo Kim (Jo Kim, 2000), but also drew from the way radio discussion programmes were organised, I had been a radio producer at the BBC before retraining in multimedia. Two hosts were appointed to run every online community and I advised they should take turns in engaging with the public every day. They were also advised to provide some structure to the space, to run some events and to assist the members of their communities. The host role therefore also drew on the membership secretary functions performed by leaders of 'real world' clubs and groups. The mediation model had never been scientifically tested, however it had proved to be particularly useful for the BBC during the 2001 and 2005 General Elections in the UK and during the UK's wars with Afghanistan and Iraq.

During those times BBC News, and any other BBC programming which included debate around the news, used a higher level of mediation and monitoring to ensure balance and quality. I worked with the BBC's Chief Political Advisor, Anne Sloman, to develop the editorial processes for online debates which would be used during periods of high editorial 'alert'. BBC News did not want to offer debate but the audience were leaving messages asking to talk about what was in the news as it unfolded. It was agreed certain message boards would be allowed to offer debate about current affairs, but they had to be run in a particular way which adapted the way talk shows were run on television and online when the BBC operated under 'special conditions'. The chosen boards were the BBC Scotland message board, BBC Wales and Northern Ireland, and for the following radio broadcasts, the *Today Programme* (BBC Radio 4), *Jeremy Vine* (BBC Radio 2), *One Life* (Radio 1), *Five Live (BBC Radio 5Live)*, *The Great Debate* and *the Asian Network.* There was no message board for England as the BBC's Nations and Regions Division felt there was no need, a position which was possibly counter to the BBC's commitment to offer universal debate.

If a large-scale conversation on the general election (or on the situation in Afghanistan or Iraq) developed in any of the other message boards the online hosts were asked to encourage the debaters to move to one of the designated boards which were allowed to offer debate on the election or conflicts. The debates were not allowed to be open-ended,

they had to be mediated by an experienced host who was also a journalist. The host was to ensure the discussion topics were balanced (and logged and *measured*) over one week. All points of view and all parties were given the same amount of debate-time, and the right of reply was encouraged. No polarisation of debates was allowed, and no lobbying, canvassing or spamming. Incidents which disrupted the debates were discussed at a weekly editorial meeting at which two (retired) ex-BBC News Editors provided advice, employed by BBC New Media for a designated period to assist the development of the new practices. In 2001, the first time the special period of pro-active hosting began, the production processes were untried. During the weeks pro-active hosting was used the quality of the debates was high and there was less disruption; which convinced me pro-active hosting should be researched in detail if it was possible to organise such a study in the future.

The BBC's moderators worked to the producer-hosts and they would alert them if there were any problems. There was a clear separation between the tasks done by moderators (content removal) and the work of the producer-hosts (encouraging debate and running events for members). Content coming into the BBC's participatory media was moderated by teams who were either in-house staff or (in the main) provided by an external moderation company. The BBC used three types of moderation, (a) pre-moderation (messages were published by a moderator), (b) post-moderation (messages were automatically posted into the message boards but a moderator viewed the debates every two hours) and (c) reactive moderation (the audience could 'call' a moderator if they found any content they felt was offensive). Pre-moderation was used for the children's message boards and for some sensitive or volatile boards such as the Asian Network which had a problem with racism, and the BBC Northern Ireland Message Board which also required sensitive hosting at the time. The cost of moderation was high, £16 per hour, with moderators able to process around 100 'offending' messages every hour. In 2003 the message boards were receiving 40,000 posts per day, 3,333 posts per hour (BBC WebServer, 2003). If messages were removed from public view an email was sent to the poster inviting them to post again, removing the offending portion of the message.

Traffic to the BBC's participatory media was tripling every year and managers began to be concerned that this significant growth would not be scaleable, particularly as the moderation of content was expensive. Various solutions were explored. Firstly to design a reputation system; good content or members could be rated more highly. The second potential solution was to automate the relationship with the audience as much as possible, however this was problematic as some posts required a 'tonal' or cultural judgement or the content needed to be considered in context. A third suggestion was to begin to involve the audience by placing an 'alert' link next to every piece of user-generated content, which audience members could click on to call a moderator. The third solution was adopted in 2002 as being the only viable course of action which could solve the 'problem' of the increasingly active audience. As internet speeds increased, the numbers of audience engagers rose dramatically, in 2003 the BBC message boards were receiving 40,000 posts per day, or 3,333 posts per hour (BBC WebServer, 2003).

Jakubowicz believes 'Media users are being conditioned by the interactivity of multimedia experience to expect opportunity to participate, contribute, and influence both the production and orientation of the media they use' (Jakubowicz, 2008:23). He suggests ways in which the audience can begin to play a democratic role in public service media making, including feedback, access, the ability to influence media makers and, lastly, contributing actively alongside policy makers. I support this idea and believe finding ways to enable a more collegiate relationship with the audience will be inevitable for the BBC.

It is highly likely the audience will need to assist the BBC to run participatory environments in the future. So far, there has been little analysis of the role human facilitators might play. Bardoel and Lowe suggest public service providers should learn how to be 'public service communicators' as 'Multimedia is necessarily interactive; the channel is obligated to interact with users. Unlike audiences, users not only attend but also activate' (Bardoel and Lowe, 2007: 17). In 2002 the audience were activating the interactive relationship but the circle was not being closed, mainly as the BBC had few resources allocated towards effecting two-way participation. The emphasis was on

providing responsive user-interfaces rather than engagement by human agency; the BBC's online community hosts were part-time. Bardoel and Lowe believe public service communicators may need to rethink their role, whilst also 'keeping faith with excellence in the editorial function which is a unique component of the public service brand' (Bardoel and Lowe, 2007: 21). High quality participation might indicate a need for skilled online mediators in the same way broadcast presenters have enhanced the quality of transmitted programming. There may be member of the public who come forward to mediate public service participatory content, in the same way citizen journalists have begun to contribute to the mediascape over the last ten years.

The value of sociable media for audiences and the BBC

Alongside other content on bbc.co.uk the BBC's social media was reviewed by Philip Graf who released interim findings on 4 November, 2003 at a Westminster eForum in London (Westminster eForum, 2003). A number of independent contributors also gave their views. John Grogan MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary BBC Group, quoted the five aims which were given to the BBC on the granting of the original licence in 1998. One of the aims was to 'facilitate communication and interaction between the BBC and the audience (and within the audience) enhancing accountability and offering opportunities to listen to their views' (Grogan, 2003: 24). Ian Kearns felt

> Social and technological change means facing the challenge of renewal – from public service broadcasting to public service communication...the BBC needs to view itself not just as a communications channel but also as a provider of social space. It needs to provide participation spaces so that it serves the function of empowering citizens' (Kearns, 2003: 13).

It was clear there was some agreement on the potential value of participatory media, particularly where it contributed to civil society. The BBC Governors also held a consultation on the BBC's online services over the same time as the *Westminster eForum*, the 70 invited participants felt 'message boards were felt to be a particularly important public service for younger people, providing them with a forum for anonymous

discussion of personal issues'. They believed social media was the province of younger audiences however this was not the case, the members of the *Archers* and *Terry Wogan* communities were over 30 and over 50 years of age; these were three of the most successful message boards in 2002. The participants also felt the 'regulation of message boards was a widely shared concern' as the moderation was too restrictive (*BBC Annual Report*, 2002:59).

The Governors convened a second consultation attended by an unspecified number of 'BBC Advisors'. They were unsure whether the BBC should be 'connecting communities' or 'connecting with communities' online' (*BBC Annual Report*, 2002: 60). The first model places the BBC as a provider of technology whilst the second includes the BBC as a participant. The first model may not assist the BBC to develop a deeper relationship with audiences whereas the second model might offer a new way of relating to audiences. Overall the group questioned whether message boards were a good use of resources. Stephen Coleman, who contributed to the Graf Review felt 'interactive media need to be controlled neither by government nor corporations, but by citizens operating within a neutral public space, regulated by scrupulously non-partisan public-service bodies' (Coleman,1999:72). BBC managers were, in effect, being told social media was a good idea, but in the same way broadcast and online content was expected to be of high quality and oriented towards some public purpose, the BBC's social media must be different from anything a commercial outlet might offer.

Jan Servaes believes audiences are moving towards the centre of all business aspects of internet and communication technologies and that they need to be assisted in finding out 'how the technology or service is relevant to their lives? How does it improve life or help them? Why is it valuable for them' (Servaes, 2003: 154). Yngvar Kjus believes looking at new formats such as the BBC's 'Great Britons' reveals an evolution of public service media is taking place, 'how different forms of mediation and different techniques of gate-keeping first impact and then help to comprise different media and genres' (Kjus, 2007:148). The BBC is a post-traditional organisation which is hindered by the legacy of an organisational structure which gives commands from the 'top' down and which

resolves issues from the 'bottom' up. There have been moves over the last ten years to change the culture, and the BBC's intranet, Gateway, has reflected this, becoming more playful and offering social media for producers. For Slevin the 'opening out' of organizations means promoting dialogue and setting standards of relevance which are in keeping with organizations which have a less rule-directed culture and more of a reflexive, rule-altering one' (Slevin, 2000 :134). The internal changes to the BBC's culture may promote greater understanding of how to engage with audiences within a public sphere.

In 2004 BBC Producers were introduced to a new set of BBC values, *The BBC's Values Framework*, developed as part of a new manifesto for a future BBC. Mark Thompson, the new Director General said he aimed to 'maintain a close relationship with audiences' (Harvey, 2004b: 1). Thompson also told *Ariel*, the internal magazine for BBC staff, 'I'm not convinced we have pushed audiences up to the start of the decision making process' (Thompson, 2004: 1). In the past media companies been accused of being exploitative; 'non-media people, when they come into contact with the media as a 'television audience', are treated as props. This treatment reinforces the sense that non-media people do not belong in the media, it is a place of the elite' (Lacy, 2002:220). Thompson was suggesting a much more egalitarian partnership with audiences and appeared to be indicating audiences should have a more formalised role in deciding the strategy of the BBC but as yet there have been no large scale initiatives.

Conclusion

This foundational chapter has reviewed the European and UK regulatory frameworks which aimed to encourage the development of an information society. The need for adaptable regulation has been suggested in order to keep pace with the technological and economic changes and a converging media and telecommunications landscape. The media industry responded to change in different ways, through mergers and acquisitions to create multi-platform, global, corporations and by extending existing businesses outward to the internet and aggregating content around brands. There have been new global initiatives in order to place frameworks around copyright and the safety of

children online, which have shaped new media content and new production processes for participatory media.

Overall the BBC has been framed as being under pressure at the time the fieldwork took place (2002-2004), undergoing reviews of its content and public purposes prior to the renewal of its Royal Charter. Philip Graf reviewed the BBC's new website in 2003, Ofcom, the new regulator, was also created in 2003, and the Hutton Inquiry placed the position of the BBC under scrutiny in 2004, resulting in the resignation of both the Chairman and the Director General. Public service media was being encouraged to create partnerships with commercial companies who lobbied the EU parliament to ensure there was a buoyant marketplace for European-originated content. Commercial producers have been concerned that public service media have an ongoing access to a supply of public funding which gives them an unfair advantage. Ofcom, the media and telecommunications regulator in the UK proactively stimulated the plurality of suppliers of public service media resulting in the BBC offering a 'Window of Creative Competition' (WOCC), up to 40-45% of the BBC's total commissioning, to independent producers. In order to make this practical the BBC reduced its workforce 'Over the past four-and-a-half years, 7,200 jobs have been cut at the corporation, with another 1,200 still to go' (Press Association, 2009).

An analysis of audience consumption habits has been provided to show how the BBC was responding. The BBC was finding it problematic to attract audiences to its interactive television service, the Red Button. The 'Project Communicate' report indicated 'there is a resistance to the idea that iTV can "replace" the internet' (BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003b:72). The brand BBCi had been created in 2002 to denote the presence of 'interactive' content on the BBC, however it was found the brand was not understood by audiences and there was confusion about the purpose of the red button services and of interactive television (iTV). The BBC Interactive Presenter Scheme, the site of the fieldwork for this study, was 'grafted on' to the marketing which surrounded the launch of BBCi in 2002.

The changing nature of public service broadcasting has been discussed and it has been suggested that the main function of public service media in the future may be to provide '*communication in the public interest*' (Bardoel, and Lowe, 2007:17).

This study argues that participatory media offered by public service content creators requires a particular kind of mediation in order to produce shared space environments of high quality. Audiences indicated the BBC's new media content, and in particular the BBC's participatory media, should follow the same standards as broadcast content. These findings were from consultations run by the BBC Governors at the same time as Philip Graf was reviewing the BBC's new website. Channel 4ip's new model for public service media has been introduced, which will provide toolkits for the public to use, in direct contrast to the BBC's model which is to aggregate participating audiences around branded content situated on several platforms. Both these models are in partial response to changing audience behaviours and expectations, and they indicate the range of views on how public service media should adapt in order to keep pace with the changing media landscape.

A short history of the development of participatory practices at the BBC has been provided in order to introduce the idea of the producer-host who was the principal mediator of participatory content. The difference between the producer-host and the moderators of user-generated content has been indicated; the former having responsibility for the editorial quality of online content and the latter being responsible for the removal of content which has broken the 'House Rules'. In 2002 the BBC was just beginning to develop production practices for participatory media, two general elections and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq has offered an opportunity to test proactive mediation on the message boards which offered debate on those topics. Proactive hosting was only specifically stipulated at times of high editorial alert, which brought the BBC's social media content in line with debates on television and radio. These instances provided sufficient evidence over a reasonable amount of time to suggest proactive producer-hosts might assist the BBC to find a new way to mediate participatory content

in the future. A dedicated study which compared the role of the sociable broadcast talk host with the producer-host online would be one way of testing the hypothesis.

Chapter Three: Broadcast Presenters and Online Hosts

Introduction

Collaborative activities usually work better if they are facilitated, whether that is within a real world group, between sociable broadcast talk show hosts and audiences (Scannell, 1996), or within a shared online space. The chapter reviews what we know about broadcast presenters and online hosts and how they mediate content and facilitate sociable engagement. It begins by looking at the nature of mediation from the creation and interpretation of Neolithic cave paintings when man began to separate the here and now from what was in his imagination or 'elsewhere'. Like the paint on the cave walls broadcast presenters articulate or help to show us what is outside of what we are experiencing 'here and now' by using particular tools, social signals, as super-communicators.

Studies which have explored the relationship between presenters and audiences have been collected together and reviewed beginning with Horton and Wohl's identification of a particular kind of personae found only in broadcasting (Horton, and Wohl, 1956). Livingstone deconstructed Horton and Wohl's ideas by analysing the audiences' relationship with actors in the television soap 'Dallas' (Livingstone, 1990). Gauntlett and Hill's study of audiences and the television schedules for the British Film Institute (Gauntlett, and Hill, 1999) explores the function announcers play in our everyday lives. Wood's 2007 study on 'utterances' looks at how audiences situated at home respond to sociable approaches from presenters, building on Scannell's idea of an imagined shared space between the presenter and audiences where sociable exchanges take place (Scannell,1996).

The third section of the chapter looks at studies which have identified techniques used by broadcast presenters for example Corner's work on how the act of looking is used by animals and humans to both stimulate and control in social interactions; the 'gaze' (Corner,1999). Argyle provides a useful comparison through his work which looks at how

the gaze mediates sociable exchanges between groups of animals (Argyle, 1975). Goffman's work on the nature of sociable exchanges usefully segmented forms of address (Goffman,1981) and Thompson provided orientation on the range of interaction shapes possible in broadcasting (Thompson, 1995). Slevin updated Goffman and Thompson's work for the digital age by considering the new kinds of interactions which were made possible by the internet (Slevin, 2000). The way in which a presenter's personality has a bearing on audience responses was discussed beginning with Ytreberg's ideas on the existence of personality types found within public service media (Ytreberg, 2002). Livingstone and Lunt (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994) researched how the British talk show presenter Kilroy positioned himself at the centre of the broadcast. Industry studies were included where they offered insights. The importance presenters have for the radio industry was evidenced through a research study 'Presenters – who needs 'em?' commissioned by the UK's Radio Academy and the BBC from BMRB International Limited (BMRB, 2001). The Radio Academy wanted to find out whether audiences felt radio DJs remained an important part of music radio as several radio stations were beginning to offer automated music play-outs, removing presenters from broadcasts.

Turning to the hosting of online content, the second half of the chapter looks how online social spaces are organised beginning with Howard Rheingold's description of the online 'hosts' in 'The Well', one of the oldest online communities (Rheingold,1994). Amy Jo-Kim, a scholar who created the social architecture for 'The Sims Online', provided an overview of the socialisation process which takes place over time online (Jo Kim, 2000) and Gilly Salmon (Salmon, 2003), who created the Open University's virtual learning environments, offered a mediation model for ongoing virtual learning environments. As the user-interface is also an agent of mediation Reeves and Nass' longitudinal study on audience responses to computer-mediated communication provided findings on user's orientations towards technology (Reeves, and Nass, 1996).

Having considered the role of the broadcast presenter and the online host, it became obvious it was important to conclude the chapter by looking at the sliding scale of mediation and control used in the broadcast and online spheres. Carpentier's study of

the Belgian television programme 'Jan Publik' looked at the way producers managed audience-participants within a talk show which was framed as offering the vox populii (Carpentier, 2001). Hutchby looked at how presenters dominate talk shows through a technique he labelled 'turn-taking' (Hutchby, 1996). Sophisticated techniques have been developed in broadcasting, since the 1920's, to call and hold the attention of audiences, but the techniques of mediating online content appear to be nascent. Online mediation is often about managing risk and most content providers take a protectionist stance to user-generated content. John Davies from Microsoft's Social Computing Group provided an overview of the different agents of control used online, which are often to do with moderation rather than mediation or facilitation (Davies, 2002). Scott Wright has subsequently offered a useful analysis of the range of controls used in two British central government online discussion forums, Downing Street's 'Speakers Corner' and 'Policy Forum', and Citizen Space's 'E-Democracy Forum' (Wright, 2006).

Mediation and mediated relationships

Mediated storytelling has existed since Neolithic times when paintings in caves articulated daily life (what is existing now and nearby) to what was in the past, what was believed, and what can be imagined. It shows a basic human wish to extend the everyday beyond what is touchable. The act of imaging might also be framed as a way of rehearsing what might be and of analysing what has been. In this way human beings were able to use reflexivity as a tool through which they could begin to understand and therefore express, mediate and remediate, the world around them and beyond. Modern media gives us access to a much wider range experiences and information than we could not see or gather for ourselves. Sights and sounds which we could not access are brought to us by the media and the repetition of particular images or particular people gives us a sense of 'knowing' an actor in an ongoing soap or a morning weather presenter. The internet extends again what we can see, hear and experience, out to a global sphere, one which is highly sociable.

Mediation has been defined as a 'process of interpretation' (Watson and Hill, 1984:172), which may be effected by professional mediators such as broadcast presenters, by

technology such as user-interfaces, or by a serial re-telling by 'friends, relatives, work colleagues' (Watson and Hill, 1984:172). Mediation is framed as the act of helping us understand, but also of transmitting onwards those thoughts to others. 'Mediation can mean different things, ranging from neutrally informing, through negotiation, to attempts at manipulation and control' (McQuail, 1994:65). McQuail additionally introduced another dimension, that of adapting the amount of interpretation which is provided from something which does not change the original entity in any way to an interpretation which radically changes or alters the source. Bolter and Grusin add to the complexity by identifying the process of re-mediation believing the media are 'continually commenting on, reproducing, and replacing each other, and that this process is integral to media' (Bolter and Grusin, 2000: 55).

In the context of the internet Tolson believes 'mediation offers the possibility of living in at least two communities – that is, both an immediate social network and an infinitely expanding mediated community of people with whom we share forms of communication, but are never likely to meet' (Tolson, 1996: x). The use of the phrase 'social network' makes his comment sound contemporary, however he was obviously writing before the mass adoption of Facebook or MySpace; our social networks have existed in off-line world for centuries, the internet extends our everyday lives. The BBC launched its first message boards in 1998, offering audiences the ability to form sociable relationships online. The online relationships formed between members of the BBC's online communities occasionally resulted in face to face meetings such as the Dr Who fans who regularly met up in a pub in Leicester Square in London, having established online friendships. The online community of 'The Archers' radio soap visited the fictional pub 'The Bull' to meet the cast of the long-running radio soap and at other times (Gill, 2005). This behaviour indicates that sociable relationships developed within online environments are a natural extension of our everyday social networks.

Yet there is resistance to the idea of online relationships having the potential to become 'real' relationships. Castell's view is that the internet 'allows the forging of weak ties with strangers...weak ties facilitate linking of people with different social characteristics, thus

expanding sociability beyond the socially defined boundaries of self-recognition'
(Castells, 2000: 388). The problem with Castells view is that he is generalising; online
sociability takes many different forms, from relationships which have weak ties to those
which may develop into face to face encounters. McQuail believes 'relationships which
are mediated through mass media are likely to be more distant, more impersonal and
weaker than direct personal ties' (McQuail, 1994:65). I disagree believing that a range of
different types of relationships are possible online, from those which are reciprocated
and which develop to those which are more transient and temporary. In broadcasting the
relationship between the broadcast presenter and the audience was defined as para-
social, not usually able to be reciprocated.

Broadcasting on television offers narratives mediated by professional presenters who
give mostly formalised performances influenced by a literary tradition (reading aloud),
but also by the theatre and film. New media offers a space mediated by an 'agent-
acting-with-mediational-means' (Erstad and Wertsch, 2008:36). The agent could be
many things from a human host, a moderator, a user-interface, a non-player character
(in gaming) or the users themselves. The internet has been influenced by a wider range of
traditions including architecture, mathematics, video, audio, performance, and visual art.

> As a digital network, cyberspace...remediates the visual spaces of painting, film,
> and television; and as a social space, it remediates such historical places as cities
> and parks and such nonplaces as theme parks and shopping malls. Like other
> contemporary mediated spaces, cyberspace refashions and extends earlier media,
> which are themselves embedded in material and social environments (Bolter and
> Grusin, 2000:183).

Online, the agents of mediation are wider however the techniques of online mediation
are in their infancy, unlike the body of knowledge which has built up over the years on
the mediation of broadcast content.

Para-social relationships between producers and audiences

Horton and Wohl's influential paper *Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance*, identified a type of performative personality created by the media, 'quizmasters, announcers, "interviewers" in a new "show-business" world' (Horton and Wohl, 1956: 216). These special types of personae were not usually found in social spheres outside of the media and they offered a 'para-social', ongoing relationship with audiences. Para-social relationships, Horton and Wohl felt, were 'governed by little or no sense of obligation, effort, or responsibility on the part of the spectator' (Horton, D, and Wohl, R, 1956: 215). Announcers provided 'a regular and dependable event, to be counted on, planned for, and integrated into the routines of daily life. His devotees "live with him" and share the small episodes of his public life – and to some extent even of his private life away from the show' (Horton and Wohl, 1956: 216). Horton and Wohl believed a sense of 'knowing' developed over time through an accumulation of shared past experience. Their paper, although influential, is based on personal observations and interviews; there was little ethnographic data. The paper also deviated from the topic to discuss whether para-social relationships formed via television were 'peculiarly favourable to the formation of compensatory attachments by the socially isolated, the socially inept, the aged and invalid, the timid and rejected' (Horton, and Wohl, 1956: 223). This echoes Castell and McQuail's view that online relationships are 'weak', ergo possibly attractive to those who find face to face relationships difficult.

Moores believes Horton and Wohl and also Thompson 'appear to privilege co-present, face to face interaction over technologically mediated communication, investing the former with greater "authenticity"' (Moores, 2005: 82). Thompson believed the monological nature of the broadcast relationship offered no checking of reactions, 'producers do not have to pay attention to the recipients and try to determine whether they are following what is being said' (Thompson, 1995: 97). Thompson preferred the term 'mediated quasi-interaction' to describe the relationship. Thompson suggested one way to counter the imbalance of reciprocity was to open out the broadcast to include online chat and the possibility for face to face engagement. Moore's feels the term 'social

"para-interaction"' is more appropriate to use when describing the relationship between presenters and audiences as all human relationships are sociable (Moores, 2005: 75).

Sonia Livingstone explored the nature of the para-social relationship identified by Horton and Wohl within a scientific framework, something she claims they had failed to do (Livingstone, 1990). She examined audience orientations to actors in television soaps using multidimensional scaling which considers semantic relations in order to draw analogies between conceptual and physical proximity. The significance of things is represented graphically, for example, a map of the world drawn during the height of the British Empire might place Britain centrally. The data collected from Livingstone's audience participants enabled graphs to be drawn up which depicted the importance and centrality of the actors for audiences within three soap operas (*Dallas*, *Coronation Street*, and *EastEnders*).

Participants for the study were found from the Oxford University subject panel, and they were between 8-80 years of age. Two thirds of the group were female as it proved hard to find men who were willing to participate therefore, Livingstone acknowledges, there was an imbalance towards the feminine within the sample. Livingstone drew on person perception theories (implicit personality theory and gender schema theory) for the study. Gender schema theory suggested audiences would mentally categorise characters towards either the masculine or the feminine but this was not the case. In 'Dallas' characters who occupied 'the weaker and softer side of the space' were not perceived as having either masculine or feminine qualities. This was because 'Dallas' contained a few counter-stereotypic female characters which prevented the emergence of a general gender dimension' (Livingstone, 1990:140). In contrast, 'the theoretical predictions of implicit personality theory were partially borne out by the importance of such properties as *warm*, *dominant* and *active*' (Livingstone, 1990:140). The viewers in Livingstone's study were more likely to be making an emotional connection to television personae because they had qualities they admired, rather than through their gender. The findings also showed people did identify with on-screen personae.

Gauntlett and Hill's study on the role of television in everyday life involved 500 participants drawn from a larger pool of 22,000 people who took part in the 1988 *One Day in the Life of Television* project, a mass-observation across the UK (Gauntlett and Hill, 1999). The result was a detailed analysis of longitude of the participant's daily lives and the way they watched television. Participants were selected to ensure a balance of variables such as sex, age, marital status, region, occupation, and household size and composition. One omission was the ability to select participants to ensure a balance of racial (and therefore, possibly, cultural) backgrounds, this was due to the lack of data collected by the *British Film Institute* when they found their original selection. Gauntlett and Hill found people viewed the television in a much more personal and emotional way than had been generally thought and that one of the reasons for this was the presenter.

> Actually seeing presenters, newsreaders or actors on television is an important part of the relationship between the viewer and their TV. This seems to be more immediate and more powerful than radio, which many diarists also listened to on a regular basis (Gauntlett and Hill, 1999:116).

An elderly lady of 76 who took part in the study said of her television, 'It is a husband, a boyfriend, another member of the family! And I quite love two of the news announcers! Especially the one who softens his voice when he reads out calamities' (Gauntlett and Hill, 1999:116).

If the announcer is perceived by viewers as offering a powerful sociable presence it is natural to assume audiences may respond in some way. Wood's 2007 study of the 'utterances' viewers offer 'back' to broadcast personae, whilst viewing alone at home, is intriguing. She captured the spontaneous speech from (female) viewers in response to daytime talk shows and refers to the place of these utterances as the 'mediated conversational floor'. 'The viewers at home are actually taking part in conversation that is directed at speaker(s) in the studio, as though they are co-present, and they foreground the concept of the "para-social" as reciprocated by the audience' (Wood, 2007: 82). Wood placed microphones at the border of the room and recorded utterances from the female

viewers (watching daytime TV), she found viewers joined in the dialogue by making their own comments

> Through broadcast communication, in morning talk television at least, viewers' experience of the discussion can be influenced as much by their own speech production as that produced in the studio, so producing a 'mutually constructed text (Wood, 2007: 99).

The relationship between broadcast personae and audiences can therefore be considered to be real enough to evoke 'naturally-occurring' spontaneous responses from audiences to presenters. Wood's mediated conversational floor drew on Scannell's work on the sociable space created by the combination of a studio, liveness, a producer and present audience, and the overhearing audience at home; the essential ingredients being 'an organised set of social interactions situated in a studio, or some other suitable public space' (Scannell, 1996:25).

Meyrowitz felt the addition of electronic media would lead to a 'nearly total dislocation of physical place and social "place". When we communicate through telephone, radio, television, or computer, where we are physically no longer determines where and who we are socially' (Meyrowitz,1985: 115). Meyrowitz' idea that there is a dislocation between physical place and 'social' place becomes challenged with the advent of virtual spaces online such as 'Second Life' where identity and home building is a central activity.

Behind the 'smoke and mirrors' of broadcast presentation

Turning to individual techniques used by broadcast presenters, Tolson found the way announcers continually engaged audiences over time was significant as it offered the opportunity for audience to develop a sense of ongoing 'knowing'. Audiences began to anticipate familiar phrases or behaviours, and presenters often accentuated or personalised their performances in order to stimulate the development of a restricted code of catch-phrases or of familiar actions known to themselves and their fans. Presenters also addressed audiences personally, 'media texts always address somebody –

that is to say, they invite the reader/viewer to participate, and seek to engage her or him in specific practices of reading and viewing (Tolson, 1996: x). Scannell also felt presenters always addressed 'someone', illustrated clearly by presenters raising their voice implying "can everyone hear?" The moment was, he suggested, often accompanied by the camera 'pulling back' to show the audience as being present in the communicative event. Scannell defined the potential participants of a sociable broadcast as being:

> (1) a host, (2) participant-performers, (3) a live audience and (4) absent listeners and viewers...There are...at least three sets of communicative interaction always in play in programmes of this kind: (1) host and participant-performers, (2) host and audience, (3) host and listeners or viewers (sometimes there is an organised interaction between performers and audience) (Scannell, 1996: 25).

New media augments Scannell's model for sociable broadcasts by offering a fourth line of communication which enables audience to audience communication away from the broadcast, either in real time or in 'asynchronous time'. Engagers can be involved in consuming the broadcast and simultaneously exchange comments with other audience members online. Technology is now able to facilitate the natural 'utterances' identified by Wood (Wood, 2007) as emanating (from time to time) from the 'mediated conversational floor'.

Corner stressed the importance of the gaze and the voice in presentation and he used news presentation to illustrate his point, 'the speaker engages the hearer in simulated eye-contact via the camera lens and, with variations as to formality, displays the facial behaviours associated with interpersonal exchange' (Corner, 1999: 40). Corner felt a large number of variations of direct address, 'tones', have been developed by presenters over the years. The importance of the gaze has been acknowledged in social psychology where animal behaviour has been studied:

> The threat signal is used to evoke either aggression or submission; cut-off or gaze aversion signals appeasement. However, gaze is also used as an affiliative

signal, for example in grooming and play, and animals in a group direct their visual attention upwards in the status hierarchy, forming an 'attention structure', though it is not known whether this is a cause or effect of their hierarchy (Argyle,1975:153-157).

A high level of gaze can also interpreted as acceptance and emotional engagement with gaze levels being higher in individuals who are extroverted, dominant assertive or socially skilled. Television presenters can therefore be framed as 'super communicators' who amplify natural social behaviours.

Turning to the use of the voice, Goffman listed vocal production (in a literate society) as consisting of (a) memorisation, (b) reading off from a written text or score that has not itself been memorised and lastly, (c) 'the extemporaneous, ongoing assembly and encoding of text under the exigency of immediate response to one's current situation and audience, in a word, "fresh production"' (Goffman,1981: 227). He identified three 'modes' specifically used by radio presenters, 'action override', the 'three-way' mode of announcing and 'direct' address. 'Action override' was Goffman's term for unscripted narration, extemporising or describing events as they happen, which he particularly found in sports commentary or live reporting. The three-way mode included audiences by treating all those present (whether in the studio or at home) as a 'ratified participant, albeit one that cannot assume the speaking role' (Goffman,1981: 227). Goffman's modes are useful as they indicate how presenters switch between formal and informal address which can be linked with McQuail's sliding scale of mediation, from neutrally informing participants to manipulation and control (McQuail, 1994).

The presenter first captures the attention of the audience and then moves the narrative along, but they can also indicate moments for reflexivity; John Ellis noted, 'the current affairs presenter will tend to pose some rhetorical questions at the end of their programme: "Will the two sides sit down and talk through their differences?" (implication: they'd bloody well better...)' (Ellis, 1982: 145). The presenter is giving signals to the audience on how to behave, what to do next and how to feel. Overall presenters

are using a range of techniques which reduce the interpersonal distance between where 'they are' and where audiences may be, producing an active, cognitive, space that is 'in between'.

Another tool identified was the 'personality'; broadcast announcers may embody the characteristics or brand values of the television or radio channel they work for. Espen Ytreberg felt personality 'types' were particularly useful for the analysis of public service television, they included 'paternalists', 'bureaucrats', 'charismatics' and 'avant-gardists'. Paternalists, he felt, were the "most well-established of public service broadcasting's ideal types of self-presentation" (Ytreberg, 2002:761). He believed the paternalist personality indicated to audiences that the broadcaster knew what was best drawing on Williams (Williams,1976: 131-2) who defined paternalism as a system of monopoly and censorship. This is interesting as any foregrounding of moderation over mediation will be indicative of a paternalistic position in an online context. Ytreberg felt public service broadcasters have an opportunity to explore more attractive, informal presentation types such as the 'charismatic' personality, which he found in the presentation styles of audience shows or entertainment. Overall Ytreberg felt public service broadcasters were increasingly using a more conversational tone of voice.

From the 1950's the BBC noted the popularity of American radio talk show hosts who used unscripted talk effectively. In contrast BBC presenters read from scripts written 'to time' to keep the BBC's schedule aligned with clock time and the Greenwich Time signal. The announcers often read too slowly or too fast resulting in the Deputy Director General of the BBC commenting to the Director General in a memo dated 21 January, 1941 'American methods are not suitable for British listeners, but the BBC could with advantage take a leaf out of their book which is their absolute accuracy of timing. And if the Americans can do this, the BBC can' (Graves,1941: n.p.).

The BBC's presentation style for the radio came from a literary tradition with many scripted talks being delivered by well-known literary figures. McLuhan felt 'It is probably the print and book bias of the BBC and the CBC that renders them so awkward and

inhibited in radio and TV presentation' (McLuhan, 2001:335). Phone-in programmes encouraged audiences to give their own opinions and an arena within which presenters could develop a more conversational style. 'The British public were still largely unaccustomed to requests for their views and, unsurprisingly the quality of debate was often poor' (McNair et al, 2003:27). The audience are framed as 'not doing it quite right', perhaps just phoning in for something to do.

Livingstone and Lunt's four year study of talk on television (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994) explored the relationship between audiences and talk shows, soaps and dramas. Focus groups were used and the analysis of subsequent discussions with participants. In addition the content of a range of different talk shows was analysed 'for the sequencing of expert and lay speakers'. The study looked at 'Kilroy', 'The Time, The Place', 'The Oprah Winfrey Show', and 'Donahue'. After viewing one episode of 'Kilroy' it was found that 17% of the comments were about the host, 'there is some interest in the host as a person – their motivation, aims, private life, but most interest centres on the host's role in facilitating and managing the discussion and on evaluating that role' (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994:76). The greatest number of comments indicated the host was seen as a heroic figure keeping editorial control of a difficult and fast moving situation, 'for some he was emotionally manipulative – malicious, uncaring, stirring things up, and upsetting people...for others he was sympathetic, sensitive, charming, and good at putting people at their ease' (Livingstone and Lunt,1994:77-78). The study also described how Kilroy changed his mediation in order to keep the audiences' attention.

> The host provides both orientation and socialisation at the top of the programme
> before opening out the narrative to include the topic under discussion: Kilroy
> takes us 'with him' back into the studio audience. He opens by prioritizing the
> revelation of personal, lay experience through story-telling, preventing any initial
> discussion of the nature and scope of the issue (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994:77-
> 78).

Kilroy was highly in control, moving between 'directive' and 'conversational' modes and this carried on throughout the programme. He also used direct address and gaze, looking into the camera at the beginning and end of the programme and at moments when the attention of the audience at home needed to be captured and held.

Broadcast presentation from practitioners perspectives

Zorian-Lynne, a practitioner who wrote a book for aspiring presenters, defined two distinct presentation roles, the announcer and the interviewer. The announcer acted as the host inviting the audience to stay with the channel to watch the next programme, embodying the character and personality of the station. The Interviewer was, she believed, more concerned with the broadcasts themselves creating a 'triangle of trust' within which interviews take place, 'in essence, each party trusts that the others will co-operate to provide the best possible interview for them....ask the questions you consider that the viewer would like answered' (Zorian-Lynne, 2001: 103). The BBC broke this 'triangle of trust' in September, 2007 by inserting 'noddy shots' of their presenter Alan Yentob giving the impression that he had been the interviewer, which was not the case. Ben Dowell's article on the incident for *The Guardian Online* quotes Yentob as saying 'everybody does it - it is a universal technique' (Dowell, 2007).

In 2000 the Radio Academy and the BBC commissioned BMRB International Limited to carry out a study 'Presenters, who Needs 'em?' (BMRB, 2001: 4) on what audiences aged between 15-45 thought of presenters. Five music stations were included in the research; BBC Radio 1, BBC Radio 2, GWR, Heart and Kiss. Managing directors, programme directors, programme editors, heads of marketing and specialist programming were interviewed; a total of 756 participants took part between 9-15 May 2001. The profile of respondents was weighted to be representative of 15-45 year olds in the UK (the core market for contemporary music listening). In terms of age and sex, the race or culture of the participants was not taken into consideration which unfortunately prevented any analysis of genres of music or of cultural sub-groups.

The findings showed both the audience and producers were clear the music was primarily drawing audiences to the programmes, however the presenter also played a key role in building and maintaining audiences over time. This is significant as 'Long Tail' economics (Anderson, 2007) are important within online content where audiences are often measured under a 'conversion and retention' rate and where advertising revenue is partly measured by the amount of time the engager stays with the brand. 81% of respondents said they preferred music radio with presenters rather than music only stations, a significant percentage, and women were more likely to say they preferred to have a presenter (85% compared with 78% of men). Listeners aged 25 or over were more likely to prefer having a presenter (83%) than those aged 15-24 (76%). Listeners to BBC Radio 2 were the audience who most preferred presenters (91%), suggesting audiences aged 35+ felt more comfortable if the programme featured a presenter. The study concluded that 'Presenters can have a real effect on how people are feeling, providing a sense of companionship' (BMRB, 2001: 4). Stations also said 'it is key for a presenter to connect with the audience; and reflect back who the audience is' (BMRB, 2001: 3). Radio presenters therefore enabled a sociable relationship to develop, and although audiences felt the music should be foregrounded, the participants disliked fully automated music radio stations.

What presenters add to music radio	%
Entertainment and humour	44
Personality/character	22
Provide information about the songs	17
Interesting/provide variety	16
Break up the music	15
Provide information on bands/concerts/celebrity gossip	9
Good/lively atmosphere	7
Interaction/involve the listener	4
News and traffic information	3
Provide information (general)	3
Waffle/talk too much	3
Make you feel like there is someone with you	2
Annoying/nuisance	1
Base: All respondents	

Figure 2: 'Presenters, who needs 'em', Radio Academy, 2001

A high 66% of the participants felt the presenter brought sociability to the broadcast (44% entertainment and humour and 22% personality/character). The presenter was felt to be both the 'voice' and branding of the channel, and he or she also provided the emotional connection between the audience, the music and the station itself.

Peter Barker, who wrote a book for aspiring broadcasters, felt the presenter was often the scapegoat if things went wrong, 'even when you become someone the public want to read about, the camera people, director or make-up people won't fawn over you and pamper you all day...It's simply that your mistakes are more public' (Barker, 1995: 91). Books written for those who wish to become television directors interestingly hardly mentioned the presenter.

The cameraman, the editor, the presenter, the major contributor and your boss
may even start to refer to the programme as 'my' programme. Don't worry about
this; it's usually a good sign...The first point to be clear about is that the
programme is yours (Watts, 1997: 171).

The inference is the broadcast presenter's status varied considerably and that it could be
a precarious position.

Hosting sociable spaces online

Studies on the mediation of participatory media online were considered beginning with
Wenger's work on communities of practice. Wenger believed communities of practice
involved two principal processes participation and reification which are linked.
Participation involves 'a complex process that combines doing, talking, thinking, feeling,
and belonging. It involves our whole person, including our bodies, minds, emotions, and
social relations' (Wenger, 1998: 56). Reification produces meaning, the action of 'making
into a thing' (Wenger, 1998: 58). 'We project our meanings onto the world and then we
perceive them as existing in the world, having a reality of their own' (Wenger, 1998: 58).
Wenger believes that if participation dominates there may be not enough material with
which to find meaning, and if reification dominates there is little opportunity for 'shared
experience and interactive negotiation' (Wenger, 1998: 65). Wenger therefore believes
participation and reification

> ...cannot be considered in isolation, they come as a pair...The use of language in
> face to face interactions is a good example. Words as projections of human
> meaning are certainly a form of reification. In face to face interactions, however,
> speech is extremely evanescent; words affect the negotiation of meaning
> through a process that seems like pure participation. As a consequence, words
> can take advantage of shared participation among interlocutors to create
> shortcuts to communication (Wenger, 1998: 62).

The art of both broadcast presentation and online hosting were clearly linked through a shared sliding scale of mediation. The art of good mediation, studies indicated, was to know how much leading to provide; when to engage and lead, and when to listen, watch or acknowledge.

Howard Rheingold was one of the first online hosts of *The Well,* arguably the oldest organised online community of size. The vision for *The Well* when it launched in October 1986 was to 'facilitate interesting communications between interesting people in the San Francisco Bay area, to provide sophisticated conferencing at a revolutionary low price, and to bring e-mail to the masses' (Rheingold,1994: 42). To do this the organisers needed a collection of people who could act as fairground barkers, welcoming people in and showing them around the virtual space; 'they invited a lot of different people, gave them free accounts, called them 'hosts', and encouraged them to recreate the atmosphere of a Paris salon – a bunch of salons' (Rheingold,1994: 42). The hosts were instructed to 'welcome newcomers, introduce people to one another, clean up after the guests, provoke discussion, and break up fights if necessary' (Rheingold, 1994: 42). Rheingold has recently been exploring how to attract and keep the attention of students in a social media classroom; 'the way to do this attention-turning is by developing a participative pedagogy assisted by digital media and networked publics, that focuses on catalyzing, inspiring, nourishing, facilitating, and guiding' (Rheingold, 2008: 5).

Amy Jo Kim, a scholar who also works in industry, for example creating the social architecture for 'The Sims Online', believes a progressive socialisation process takes place over time online. Jo Kim also believes shared spaces online don't function without the fostering of a sense of joint involvement in the enterprise, she uses gardening metaphors to show how continual nurturing needs to happen to keep the civic space flourishing.
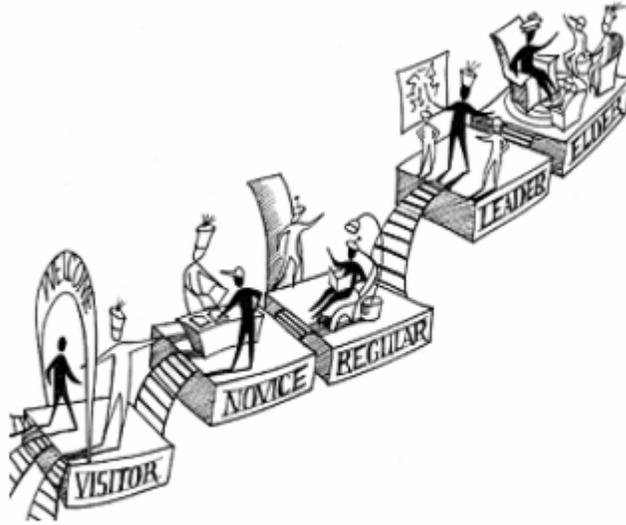
Figure 3: 'From Newcomer to Old Timer', Jo Kim (2000a)

As the inhabitants learn the architecture and the social norms they begin to take on roles. Jo Kim believes the community 'elder' has a 'profound' importance, but that all the participants have a part to play in the collaborative endeavour. She feels engagers may interpret the actions of producers as 'authoritative pronouncements' if the right approach is not taken and the right tone of voice is not used. Jo Kim also stresses the importance of training facilitators, 'they must be properly selected, trained, and then empowered to do their job effectively' (Jo Kim, 2000:146). Furthermore, Jo Kim believes a range of facilitation and mediation roles are necessary for high quality online spaces to develop and that these kinds of purposeful online spaces are not achieved by the technology alone.

Ginny Salmon, who created the virtual learning environments for the Open University prefers the term 'e-moderator' however she acknowledges many other terms have been used in the past; 'negotiator', 'host', 'convenor', 'manager', 'leader', and 'e-teacher'. This aggregation of different roles under the label 'e-moderator' is problematic as it combines facilitation and moderation which are separate activities however she may have amalgamated the roles intentionally as small online learning environments might not have many people facilitating. Salmon's e-moderator is a lecturer, host, librarian, guide

and technologist. Jenny Preece believes mediators who work alongside moderators are useful for larger shared space environments, 'mediators, as the name suggests, are on call to help resolve problems reported by community members, but they do not review each message' (Preece, 2000: 294).

Salmon's model for teaching and learning online shows the pedagogical and technological steps the learner and the provider of the learning must achieve in order to begin to gain benefit from the experience. There is a learning journey about the environment itself to be taken in advance of any exchange of knowledge. As the engager learns the shared spaces progressively Salmon believes the amount of interactivity increases, however this is not automatic as there are other factors which come into play, such as the amount of motivation the learner has, the time of day at which the activity takes place, the level of access to the technology and so on.
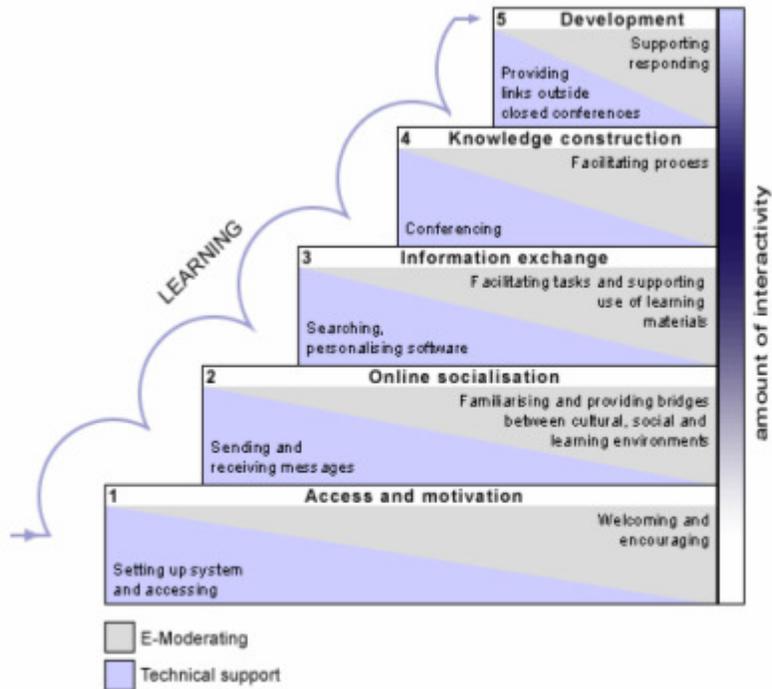
Figure 4: Model for teaching and learning online, Salmon (Salmon, 2003:29)

Jo Kim and Salmon's models have some commonalities, in both cases there is an initial moment during which participants register and become acclimatised to the shared space environment. During the second stage participants need to be welcomed by someone and to be informed of what is going on, including how the shared space is organised. This directly relates back to Livingstone and Lunt's study (Livingstone and Lunt,1994) of the techniques used by the talk show host Kilroy as he welcomed and informed audiences to his discussion programme. The third stage Jo Kim and Salmon identify is when the participants are familiar enough with the shared space and its systems to be able to begin to undertake activities such as extending the space, building new objects, archiving, exploring or undertaking quests. In the case of online learning environments this is when constructive learning can begin, or collaborative and creative activities can begin to be undertaken.

'Talking Heads' was an informal online learning community for head teachers established on an experimental basis at the National College of School Leadership in August 2000. It

grew out of a research and development project based at Ultralab, part of Anglia Polytechnic University. A policy of active facilitation was followed drawing in educational professionals who explored different kinds of online learning. The original community had over 1300 members, gradually growing in size until the National College decided to change their online community in 2006 in order to create a new online learning community which built on the success of the first. Findings from their seven year study were presented in a report published in 2007 which drew together the research from Anglia Polytechnic and studies for the college from researchers at Bristol University (McFarlaine & McMahon, 2002). The Bristol university researchers found

> ...where facilitation is withdrawn or inconsistent, community activity often decreases. Where it is pro-active, consistent and visible, communities tend to flourish provided purpose and expectations are clear and understood by the participants (National College of School Leaders, 2007:30).

Cliff Figallo was the Director of 'The Well' for six years, working with Howard Rheingold. Figallo felt 'The online discussion host is, in many cases, the most important link in the chain that connects a user to the site, for it is through the host that the user's experience can be most influenced'. Figallo segmented hosting into (1) the facilitation of an expanding discussion space, involving the host in many different conversations, (2) the facilitation of a shared space where there was focussed activity around a purpose, (3) communities where the activities of a discussion host may be almost superfluous as the activity itself gave the structure

> You not only maintain the meeting place – arranging chat room schedules, starting and naming new discussion topics, and serving as a librarian for online resources – but you act as a social adhesive between the people who meet there. You make your home inviting to newcomers and keep it a safe environment for participation and the open exchange of ideas (Figallo, 1998: 305-312).

Hosting a live chat event was, Figallo found, slightly different from hosting more permanent shared spaces online. He invited Sue Boettcher, who hosted live chats for America Online, to list the tasks involved in a live online event. The tasks she described were very similar to the preparations made by the presenter of a live radio discussion programme. Firstly Boettcher described how the host wrote a promotion for the event, then questions were written to pep up the chat if the pace of direction of the chat needed adjusting. She advised producers to 'start out with software that gives you tools to: (a) boot or gag people if or when necessary (b) engage in backchannel communication with people'. Boettcher also believed it would be advisable 'if you're going to do a serious topic chat, especially one with a guest, you'll need to have a co-host (or even two) to deal with the backchannel interaction while you're out there handling the main room' (Boettcher in Figallo,1998:311). Live chats provide one of the clearest observable direct links between 'old' and 'new' media as there are obvious similarities between broadcast talk shows and online real time chat.

Sociable user-interfaces

It was important to review the user-interface as an agent of mediation, however, to consider the large body of literature on human-computer interaction would have been impractical. The work of Reeves and Nass (Reeves and Nass, 1996) and of Nass and Brave (Nass and Brave, 2005) on the sociability of user-interfaces deserved inclusion as their studies have specifically examined how audiences perceive computers which offer sociability. Reeves and Nass showed how user-interfaces which provided high enough levels of signification could become agents of mediation or stimulators of reciprocity.

Reeves and Nass picked a standard social science methodology to find out how people react to interactive media and began to test findings on social interactions substituting media as the other party involved in the social exchange. Each social science finding from earlier research literature (person to person interaction) was tested within a scientific framework

We made no assumptions about whether the results would be the same for real people and places and their mediated counterparts. Rather people were asked to visit a laboratory, and to experience media. We gathered data that were summarised, statistically analysed, and interpreted using the same standards that were used in the original experiments. When an experiment is successful, the results of the media study match the original study (Reeves and Nass, 1996:15).

Reeves and Nass concluded people do treat computer programmes in the same way they would react to a real person, the outcome of this being they felt interactive media should be both built and judged by their ability to be sociable in addition to how well the technology works. The human-like characteristics they found to be of most importance were politeness, interpersonal distance, the ability to flatter, personality, emotion (positive, negative, arousal), social roles within a hierarchy, gender, facial and body signifiers, motion, framing and even fidelity (suggesting a para-social relationship of some longevity). This strongly relates back to the literature on the techniques used by broadcast presenters to enable the para-social relationships found in broadcasting.

Reeves and Nass also found that alterations in interpersonal distances resulted in the following rules: Rule 1: When viewers saw a picture of a person who appeared close rather than far, their evaluations of the person in the picture were more intense. Rule 2: Viewers paid more attention to pictures of people who appeared close rather than far away. Rule 3: Pictures of people who appeared close were remembered better than pictures of people who appeared far away (Reeves and Nass,1996: 39). This last finding supports the use of camera close ups in television for the disclosure of 'intimate' information to viewers, the use of close ups can also signal the need to pay attention.

Janet Trewin, who wrote a book for the media industry on presentation, believed the voice was a stronger signifier for audiences than the gaze (Trewin, 2003). Nass and Brave also believed this to be the case, releasing a large set of findings (Nass and Brave, 2005) on the voice as an agent of motivation and mediation. Twenty experiments were organised with a number of participants noted, rather unspecifically, as 'thousands' in

order to test their theories and assumptions. The participants experienced a range of different devices such as computers, the telephone, the web and even a driving simulator. All the devices used the 'voice' to communicate, sometimes the devices only talked, sometimes they only listened and sometimes they did both.

Nass and Brave's findings showed humans rarely make the distinction between speaking to a machine or speaking to a person. They concluded this was because 'humans use the same parts of the brain to interact with machines as they do to interact with humans' (Nass and Brave, 2005: 4). Nass and Brave related this to the way the three main centres of the brain (the Thalamus, the Limbic system and the Cortex) dealt with incoming messages. Messages entered the brain at different speeds with information coming through the senses and reaching the Thalamus first; it is here the basic processing took place. The thalamus then sent the information simultaneously to the Limbic system and the Cortex. The Cortex dealt with the 'higher-level thought processing' and the Limbic system assessed data for relevance to any 'needs' or 'goals'. The Limbic system could tell the heart to beat faster and get the larger muscles ready to move, but it could also inform the Cortex what was 'going on'. The Limbic system could directly communicate back to the Thalamus if there was a need for a fast, primitive response such as a 'fight or flight' response.

Nass and Brave believed the few seconds it took after the participant received the 'message' was crucial. There were two stages of de-coding which happened in the brain, one first and the other almost immediately afterwards. The first was an emotive unconscious reaction, a very fast primitive reading during which the decision was made on whether the stimulus was beneficial or not. The second reading took longer to complete as the brain was accessing linguistic and cultural information. Reeves and Nass had originally felt the reason for this sequential dual reading was that 'people are not evolved to twentieth-century technology. The human brain evolved in a world in which *only* humans exhibited rich social behaviours, and a world in which *all* perceived objects were real physical objects' (Reeves and Nass, 1996:12).

Some signals generated more consideration, warning bleeps activated a fight or flight response, and screaming, crying or laughing were also given more attention by participants. Faces stimulated more emotion than voices; Trewin, Nass and Brave were therefore correct in believing the voice was a powerful motivator, but the gaze elicited a stronger emotional signal. Nass and Brave concluded that most engagers would respond to user interfaces with a secondary reaction such as feeling frustration, pride or satisfaction. Reeves, Nass and Brave's studies show the importance of building human-like responses into user-interfaces, and that a complex range of types of motivational signifiers needed to be employed ranging from visual to aural stimuli.

Controlling 'unruly' audiences

Producing participatory media such as message boards and live chats was particularly problematic for the BBC as 'Interactivity is...closely related to the shift of power balance in the communication process as electronic media are reorganized into two-way communication systems' (Kim and Sawhney, 2002: 221). Livingstone believed this had always been the case for producers as the 'creation of meaning through the interaction of texts and readers' is 'a struggle, a site of negotiation between two semi-powerful sources' (Livingstone,1990: 23). Ang felt the BBC's idea of audiences as being a united mass of citizens ready and willing to be reformed 'was impossible to sustain in the face of what the institution came to know about actual audiences in empirical terms' (Ang, 1991:119).

In my role as the Online Communities Editor I had found producers were often enthusiastic about the idea of 'user-generated content' in theory but not in practice. Producers were used to working to an 'editorial brief' which was often formulated at senior level, however the aims of services where the public co-created or wholly created the content were often vague. It appeared to be easier to have either full control or little control. The idea of having a sliding scale of facilitation or mediation to suit the audience, activity or context was not considered as this would mean direct ongoing involvement. During the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the General Election in 2005 it was found that adjusting the level of mediation was useful in order to ensure the

audience could lead at times, and at other times the BBC producer-hosts could provide intellectual orientation. This seemed to be a more sophisticated approach, however it required more hosting than was normally available on an everyday basis.

The BBC added online content to broadcast content in 1997, and the addition of websites to support television and radio programmes was seen as offering a place to put information about programme times or additional content. By 2002, when this study began, the BBC was working on making the web pages participatory however the social media was separated out from the other online content. This was partly because it was felt to be often of low quality, and partly because the social media was dynamic (changing every minute) and the web pages were updated daily by hand, therefore largely static. Producers were beginning to engage with the audience in a spasmodic way, but the idea of a production/reception interaction was not developed. The BBC was, however, beginning to realise that the presence of an active audience would have greater implications than they at first realised.

> Media production and reception practices operate in a big loop, connecting people who are media professionals of one sort or another with members of the public, some of whom participate in the media. The different levels of involvement in the production and reception...highlight ethical issues to do with the treatment of people by programme makers, the motivations of people to participate in programmes, and audience responses to this (Hill, 2007: 172).

As the audience become more present within programming it is likely the relationship between producers and audiences will change. When this study began the flow between audiences and producers was less developed, however early experiments were taking place. Carpentier's study of 'Jan Publik' a live prime-time Belgian television talk show provided a detailed analysis of the negotiation of control between producers and audience-participants which took place within a live, prime-time, Belgian television talk show (Carpentier 2001). Carpentier analysed sixteen episodes of the programme which involved twenty 'ordinary people' (10 female, 10 male) who became the content of the

show. The participants were not told the order of topics before the rehearsal and the production team were not introduced to the audience-participants before the transmission. This is significant as the audience-participants were therefore framed as 'outsiders', not part of the production team. The control of the content therefore began during the 'pre-broadcasting phase' when the topic and type of participant were selected by the producers, placing the control with the broadcaster. Predictably the producers picked audience-participants who were eloquent therefore it was arguable whether the participants were 'ordinary people'. Before the live transmission there was a rehearsal during which the audience-participants might have been able to influence the editorial in some way, however this was not possible.

The 'House Rules' for the programme were clearly communicated to the participants before the show. The host (Jan) would not be able to give the floor to everyone at the same time therefore there might not be the opportunity for those taking part to speak on all the topics covered in the show. The participants were also told they could not go back to any topic which had already been covered, and they must only react to the topic under discussion at that time. This would therefore result in a kind of 'ostensibly fresh talk' (Goffman,1981: 234), however it was rehearsed 'ostensibly fresh talk' therefore institutionalised and constructed. Jan, the presenter, was also working to the producer's agenda therefore and the narrative was ultimately controlled from the production gallery. Carpentier illustrated how the host played several parts during the broadcast including switching from enabling and encouraging to moderating. 'Jan Publik' was not a programme which offered the public the opportunity to have their say or to change the direction of the programme, it was highly editorialised, yet it was still promoted as offering something 'new'.

Hutchby showed how radio talk show presenters controlled participating audiences, through turn-taking. Conversation analysis was used to deconstruct nine broadcasts of the 'Brian Hayes' phone-in on London's LBC Radio (1996), the phone calls from the public to the programme and the host's interactions with those participants formed the text. Hutchby's interest was principally to explore how Hayes managed his callers

The way calls are organized leads to the host initially taking (and subsequently being in a better position to maintain) second position against the caller...a form of power relationship is built into the very set of turn-taking practices by which they collaboratively accomplish the call (Hutchby,1996:115).

Hayes maintained his dominance by challenging the relevance of the argument, expressing scepticism, and building opposition within arguments. Adjusting the level of mediation appeared to be significant to Scannell, 'on the one hand there is the danger of too little control leading to disaster and chaos, on the other there is the danger of too much control leading to an awkward self-consciousness and an air of embarrassment all round' (Scannell,1996: 29). Skilled interviewers appear to know the right balance of mediation to use, and at what times.

It was important that some observations on the effects of online networks on broadcast programming be included. As soon as a television or radio programme has been augmented by participatory content situated online, the broadcast model is affected. The 'one to many' model of mass broadcasting becomes augmented by the ability to potentially link the audience together serially in a mathematically expanding network of networks, if it were possible to access the unrestricted internet in total. This kind of communication is not easily controlled nor, utopians would argue, should it be controlled. Professional broadcaster and journalists believe there is a need to shape and to mediate in order to avoid cacophony and chaos. The BBC's producer-hosts and moderators had a large role to play in this as they were managing the risk to the BBC brand by ensuring content which was not sufficiently like BBC-generated content was not left in the public domain. As producers learnt more about participatory media they became more used to the different production processes and online culture and more 'UGC' was 'left up' and encouraged. Terranova argues the internet is in many respects the opposite of organised communication, 'the purpose of communication (the exclusion of noise and the establishment of contact) is simultaneously presupposed, technically produced, and actively reinforced' (Terranova, 2004:17).

Studies on the moderation of online social media tend to be from a developmental perspective, for example exploring technical solutions to managing unruly social groups. Jo Kim described how Rob, the CEO of the *Slashdot* community

> ...wrote a programme that gave moderator access to 400 Slashdot members who'd posted good comments. Some people ignored their new duties, but about half of the newly minted moderators began rating posts. When people (inevitably) abused the system, Rob removed them from the pool of potential moderators (Jo-Kim, 2000:178).

In 2002 John Davies of Microsoft's Social Computing Group published a paper reviewing the types of disruptive behaviour found in social media and he investigated ways of managing the problem used by internet service providers. He concluded that moderators were expensive, that automatic methods such as reputation systems had potential, and that filtering systems which detected 'bad' behaviour 'were not adept at dealing with more complex, subtle forms of adverse behaviour' (Davies, 2002: 2).
He also felt the use of live monitors (hosts) was extremely expensive and administratively cumbersome 'while they are more able to deal with the subtleties surrounding online behaviour in sometimes complex contexts, they must also be adept at interpreting behaviour and they must be carefully trained to avoid abuses of power' (Davies, 2002: 2). This supports Amy Jo Kim's belief that mediators need to be trained and supported and that staff mediators need to make sure they are using an appropriate tone and behaviour in order to avoid being rejected or resented by engagers.

Social scientists Yen and Hsu from the National Central Science University of Taiwan wanted to find out whether community management made a difference to the quality of a social online environment and the motivation of participants, and whether such groups could be self-sustaining. 469 respondents completed a survey which asked a range of questions on community management, technology, and behaviours in social media the participants had frequented for over three months. All the responses were measured on a

6-point Likert scale and the theoretical model was tested using Structural Equation Modelling. Yen and Hsu found that community management had a significant positive effect on cooperation and participation (Yen and Hsu, 2006: 89-94).

Scott Wright analysed two British central government forums, Downing Street's 'Speakers Corner' and 'Policy Forum', and Citizen Space's 'E-Democracy Forum'. The two discussion services were run in different ways, Downing Street's 'Speakers Corner' forum relied on 'silent moderation'; messages were removed without explanation. Citizen Space's 'E-Democracy Forum' foregrounded 'active moderation' (facilitation or hosting) coupled with open moderation which followed viewable rules. There was higher quality participation in the 'E-Democracy Forum' and they found more likelihood of deliberative debate and on-topic discussion. Conversely there were complaints about censorship in the 'Speaker's Corner' Downing Street forum

> The most questionable moderation policy – again not listed in the moderation rules but noted by the website team in Official Responses – was that messages replying to a deleted message were also deleted in an attempt to maintain the coherence of the discussions. However this meant that, in contradiction to the moderation rules, many perfectly legitimate messages were deleted (Wright, 2006:560).

Wright identified a list of potential roles for 'interactive moderators'; being a greeter, a conversation stimulator, resolving conflict, writing summaries of debates, being a problem solver, bring in external information to enrich debates, bringing in new speakers, being 'cybrarians', being an open censor (giving feedback to the poster on why their post was deleted), being a covert censor (deleting messages but not saying why), and lastly being a 'cleaner' (removing or closing old threads and separating discussions if necessary, for clarity)

> The moderator brings both new citizens and political institutions into the discussion; encourages existing users to respond; moderates the content of the

messages, attempting to maintain civility; where possible, by persuasion and not censorship; frames the debate and sets sub-topics; provides feedback to the institution; and participates in the debates (Wright, 2006: 556).

Wright's description of the role of the 'interactive moderator' is similar to the description of the BBC's online producer-hosts given in the Corporation's Online Guidelines for producers

> A good host will meet and greet, stimulate discussion, monitor the overall tone of conversations, defuse rows and take pride in their space. The host's presence should help create a distinctive experience for the visitor, whether the space is premoderated, postmoderated or reactively moderated. They may also be able to offer, or point to, some expert knowledge on the subject in question (BBC Online Service Guidelines, 2009).

Wright and Street demonstrated, a year later, that the way online discussions were organised helped 'to determine whether or not the result will be deliberation or cacophony' (Wright and Street, 2007: 850). The online host of a purposeful online debate is very similar to the host of a broadcast talk show, leading the conversation by using mediation which varies from a high level of engagement to a lower level acknowledgement or 'listening and watching' at other times. Corner described the interviewer as being 'openly interventionist' and that each intervention was signalled verbally and visually. He felt the presenter or interviewer drew together or enabled the flow through different kinds of material, talk shows 'mix storytelling, interrogation, and debate' (Corner,1999: 89). As the internet begins to carry more audio and video and as more texts begin to combine media forms it may be useful to draw on the skills of the broadcast presenter and the online host, either in ways we already recognise or new ways we haven't yet discovered.

Conclusion

From a media studies perspective the term 'mediation' can refer to the alteration or explanation of texts through re-framing or re-imagining. From a social psychology perspective it is the way relationships and encounters are managed. Human beings have mediated their environment since they were first able to express the human condition and to articulate beliefs or places which were 'elsewhere', away from the here and now or the tangible. Our relationship with the world has been mediated in different ways through the ages using pictures, literature, theatre, spectacle, music, radio, video and now the internet. When we enjoy experiences in groups there is often someone who mediates or facilitates the event, on television the sociable host was found to perform that function. Presenters have a high value for broadcast organisations who understand charismatic presenters can make programmes more attractive to audiences. The range of personae employed for mediation purposes by broadcasters was found to be wide, from talk show presenters to announcers and news readers.

Sociable media theories were found to be useful in showing how presenters construct a para-social relationship with the audience (Horton and Wohl,1956). Audiences were found to identify with actors in long running soaps and presenters of talk shows, indicating a stronger bond is formed over time if the relationship has regularity (Livingstone, 1990, Livingstone and Lunt, (1994). It has become clear presenters perform a highly important function acting as the 'glue' between the audience, the text and the technology. Presenters have been framed as being super-communicators who amplify the signals we use in everyday face to face encounters such as the gaze, the voice, and changes to interpersonal distance. We respond instinctively to social signals, whether they are received via a television set or a radio, even causing spontaneous 'utterances' from audiences in reply (Wood, 2007) indicative of a shared social space constructed by the live event, the presenter, the studio and the audience (Scannell, 1996).

Reeves and Nass found it was possible to evoke a response from engagers via computers and embedded user-interfaces if social signals were offered. User-interfaces which were polite or which offered praise were responded to in a similar way to a face to face

encounter with a human being (Reeves and Nass,1996). The user-interface is increasingly another actor or agent of mediation therefore assessing the sociability of the technology is an important consideration. There appears to be a hierarchy of attention-calling with the gaze being a strong emotional motivator, followed by the voice and personality. The brain was found to decode signals at two speeds, urgent signals such as screaming or warning bleeps took priority over signals which were culturally embedded (Nass and Brave, 2005).

Goffman offered a range of modes of address from the performative 'font' footing, which might be accompanied by direct forms of address, to more conversational modes (Goffman,1981). Ytreberg drew on Goffman to suggest public service broadcasters offered a range of presenter 'types' ranging from 'paternalists' and 'bureaucrats' to 'charismatics' and 'avant-gardists'. He suggested public service broadcasters tended to use paternalistic modes of address (Ytreberg, 2002) and comparison has been with the foregrounding of moderation by the BBC in an online context. Radio talk show hosts used turn-taking to control the audience (Hutchby, 2003). Carpentier's study of the Belgian discussion programme, 'Jan Publik' (Carpentier, 2001), illustrated how producers are beginning to explore how to offer audiences more participation within live broadcasts, yet they are ultimately retaining control.

In the 'pure broadcast era' producers and presenters had fewer means to find out about audiences, they were therefore more likely to believe they were 'addressing: well-informed, critical, professional people like themselves', (Curran and Seaton, 2003:338). The addition of message boards and chat in the late 1990's made invisible audiences visible to producers. The act of adding social media to broadcast content altered the interaction paths introducing the possibility for audience to audience communication about the broadcasts in an almost-real time frame. Terranova felt professional communicators may find it increasingly difficult to continue to maintain meaningful or editorialised messages as audiences adopt network practices in the future (Terranova, T, 2004).

Two models of ongoing online facilitation were identified (Jo Kim, 2000, Salmon, 2003). Both models illustrate that a progressive socialisation process takes place over time, in a similar way to the developing sense of 'knowing' soap opera characters identified by Livingstone and Lunt (Livingstone and Lunt,1994). However there are differences as online engagers need to learn the technology, the environment and to meet other engagers before any organised or cognitively complex activities can begin. Once a level of familiarity has been reached, Jo Kim showed engagers may begin to take over some roles or tasks. There were indications that there is some continuity between the mediation of broadcast content and the hosting of online content. A useful body of knowledge exists on the techniques used by broadcast presenters and about the mediation of participatory media, however it was necessary to draw it together from media and communications studies, social psychology and across old and new media.

Chapter Four: Researching the mediation of participatory content at the BBC

Introduction

The production study uses participant observation of BBC Talent and BBC New Media's Interactive Presenter Scheme situated within the New Media Division, the BBC department, in particular of developmental production workshops. The study used sociable media theories to show that some of the functions broadcast presenters perform for television and radio audiences were also being offered by producer-hosts online. The study also explored the viability of a new role, the Interactive Presenter. It is argued that participatory public service content requires mediation by professional personae in order to maintain high quality shared spaces of purpose for audiences. At the time of the project (2002-2004) the BBC was beginning to move from being a broadcaster of linear programming to being a provider of public service content on multiple platforms which included 'islands' of participatory media aggregated around brands. The Corporation is framed as being besieged, undergoing significant change in order to retain its influential position within British culture.

> The room for errors by the BBC's management seems very small indeed, and the survival of public service broadcasting as an object of public policy is itself in question. Given this is so, one of the objectives of a long-term production study...would, be to trace the BBC's attempts to navigate through these exceptionally treacherous seas (Schlesinger, 1987: xxxi-xxxii).

The last ten years have been, perhaps, the most turbulent in the BBC's history, resulting in radical changes to the internal structure of the Corporation. Previously separated television, radio and new media teams have been combined into multimedia production divisions which are either vision-led or 'audio and music-led, and content is becoming aggregated around multi-platform brands distributed on a variety of platforms including

mobile phones. Lastly, the BBC's relationship with the Licence Fee payers is changing as audiences become engagers as well as viewers or listeners, therefore it was important to study the way in which BBC producers mediate the participative services.

The research methods used are detailed beginning with a review of previous studies of the BBC which shows a development of approaches towards the analysis of public service media. In depth participation of the developmental production workshops, which took place over six months, is explained. I also locate myself within the study having been an employee of the BBC for a large percentage of the time it was being undertaken. The range of methods used within the methodology are documented; namely participant observation of developmental workshops supported by interviews and an audience study. The project looked primarily at the production of participatory media, however as much consideration of the audience as possible was organised through the use of BBC audience data, observations, and the small audience study of the brand 'Celebdaq', a semi-converged brand situated across television and www.bbc.co.uk/celebdaq. The observations included the Interactive Presenter Scheme itself as it reflected the changes in strategic direction of the BBC New Media Division and the BBC as a whole. The formulation of the research questions is outlined, building on the reviews of the literature and interviews with managers in BBC New Media. How those themes were subsequently explored is also explained. A pilot workshop tested the viability of developmental production workshops and illustrated what adjustments needed to be made. The second half of the chapter documents how the data was processed including logging, reduction, encoding, coding and a cyclical process of analysis and re-coding. The benefits and limitations of the methods are given, including the technical issues faced when using video and a software analysis programme, 'Transana'. 'Transana' is similar to Nvivo, the programme was specifically designed for the analysis of audio and video. The chapter ends with the consideration of the reliability and validity of the data, including how the indicative findings of the study were received by BBC producers in London and Cardiff.

The site of the fieldwork: the Interactive Presenter Scheme

The site of the fieldwork was the BBC's Interactive Presenter Scheme which ran from December, 2002 to the end of June, 2003. The six-month scheme was grafted on to the BBC New Media Division and run as a joint initiative by BBC Talent and BBC New Media. The BBC Talent schemes had run for two previous years aiming to give "people their first break in the business" (BBC Talent, 2001). The schemes often began with a talent trawl looking for young people from a variety of backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the BBC's audience. The 2002 schemes looked for presenters for CBBC, young comedians, sports reporters, children to go on an expedition to Borneo, a presenter for the BBC's flagship science programme 'Tomorrow's World', radio production trainees, urban music bands, film makers, sitcom writers, directors of drama, animators, programme concept creators, and five 'Interactive Presenters'. In 2002 the schemes were sponsored by Kelloggs, Odeon Cinemas, Persil, and Virgin Megastores. Sponsorship of a BBC production scheme was something new for the BBC, signalling that the organisation was open, not just to new talent, but to working with selected commercial outlets.

The Interactive Presenter Scheme was a good location to study the mediation of participatory content at the BBC. Unlike the other roles being advertised under the scheme the role of 'iPresenter' did not exist. Part of the task over the six months would be to imagine and explore what 'iPresenters' might do. I therefore suggested a series of developmental workshops to the managers in BBC New Media and BBC Talent which aimed to find out what mediation was currently being offered within the participatory content on BBCi and to find out what additional mediation might be required. Subsequently I suggested testing the different kinds of facilitation - where possible - on content in the public domain. This was felt to be a suitable site for research and a suitable plan by the University of Westminster and BBC New Media.

The justification for the study from an academic perspective was firstly because I was interested in the topic and wanted to test anecdotal evidence indicating that pro-active hosting of purposeful participatory services was important for public service media. The University of Westminster was interested to find out how the BBC was adapting to new

media and managers in BBC New Media wanted to understand how to increase audience engagement with their new brand BBCi. The BBC's website was gaining new users at a faster rate than the new services for interactive television, for example, the Red Button television information 'overlays'. The 'BBCi Monthly Performance Report' showed that in December 2002 BBCi (on the web) had increased its reach of home users by 0.9% with an increase of 4% of unique users, whereas BBCi's traffic had decreased slightly on digital television and by 26% on 'emerging platforms', such as the Red Button and mobile phones (Mustafa, 2002). The level of participation to the BBC's message boards was increasing, 'TV-related activity accounts for over a fifth' of all the online community traffic (Beckenham, 2003). Managers felt there was evidence that the audience wanted to 'interact' around television however the audience were often not actively discussing television programmes, but other unrelated issues. This was a matter of concern as the message boards were seen as existing solely to support sociable and creative activity around broadcast content.

Audiences were often not behaving in the ways BBC producers expected, there was also evidence showing BBCi was not well understood by audiences although 44% of licence fee payers were aware of the brand (BBCi, 2002). The audience research data showed BBCi was not perceived as a gateway or as a channel or as a brand therefore BBC Marketing felt ways needed to be found to promote the channel (BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). Unlike broadcasting where continuity announcers promoted content and made audiences aware of content apart from promotional banners there were few equivalents in new media and less cross-promotion between content at the time of the study; BBC Talent's invitation to the BBC New Media Division to find five 'Interactive Presenters' for BBCi was therefore attractive. Using presenters to enhance a brand was a broadcast-led strategy familiar to the BBC and to the BBC's marketing teams.

Locating myself as the researcher within the project

As previously explained my role as the Editor of the BBC's Online Communities had ceased to exist before the research project began because the online communities had

devolved away from BBC New Media to be managed by producer-hosts across the BBC. I had accepted a new role (in December 2001) as the Editor of the BBC's internet safety initiatives, working across the BBC with different departments. Alongside this role I had asked if I could undertake doctoral research into the role of the Interactive Presenter and the online host, having heard about the BBC Talent Scheme from my line manager. In return I was asked to assist the scheme by overseeing its progress as a part-time activity and offering assistance if needed, for example with the budget. It was agreed that I could work on the research project every Monday for three years, and organise half-day workshops every Wednesday morning.

It was felt practical for a project manager to be hired to oversee the year-long tour for talent which would travel across the UK. The trawl ran from January 2002 to October, 2003 and the five iPresenter contracts ran from December 2002 to June 2003. An Interactive Presenter Scheme Producer provided the day to day management of the Interactive Presenters once they had arrived, liaising with me if there were any problems. Additional training courses were organised for the iPresenters and work experience four days a week with BBC London, 'Top of the Pops', 'So' (the BBC's content for Teens), and 'Onion Street' (BBC Education's website for younger children). The iPresenters were also invited to present a number of live chats from the BBCi studio over the six months; each iPresenter worked on around five live chats over their time at the BBC. They also presented live chats for the BBC's annual day-long charity broadcast, Comic Relief. In order that I could be a participant observer one of the Live Chat Producers offered to work with me and lead the workshop sessions working to a workshop plan which would explore previously agreed areas of questioning. At the point where I began analysing the data I left the BBC New Media department to become the BBC's (staff) consultant in online community for one year. During the writing up of the research project I left the BBC to become a full-time researcher, the progressive removal from the site of the fieldwork assisted objectivity.

Previous studies of BBC production

To inform the research design I felt it was important to find out how previous researchers had undertaken production studies at the BBC. The Glasgow Media Group's studies of BBC News during the1970's used textual and image analysis of television news reports following Barthe's ideas on signification. They found 'news is not a neutral product...it is a sequence of socially manufactured messages, which may carry many of the culturally dominant assumptions of our society' (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976: 1). The group switched to participant observation of newsroom practices for later studies, as they found textual analysis to be flawed; it was sometimes difficult to perceive any ideological bias because it might be 'concealed under a veil of impartiality that not even the most perceptive textual analysis could detect' (Laughey, 2007:67). Laughey notes the Glasgow Media Group have been criticised for their 'lack of sustained audience research to test whether the ideological functions of media representation actually affect viewers' opinions at the point of reception and thereafter' (Laughey, 2007: 67). What was missing from the Glasgow Media Group's studies was some consideration of the audience, or at least of audience data. I felt it would be important to draw together any existing relevant BBC audience data and to instruct the workshop participants to observe audience behaviours whenever possible both before and after they changed their mediation methods, for example by observing audience activity in the message boards, the live chats and also reviewing any feedback emails.

Schlesinger undertook a production study of two BBC newsrooms in 'batches' of time over the years 1972-1976, a total of 1,260 hours of observation, accompanied by interviews with 120 BBC staff. He stressed the importance of studying 'the mediatedness of the production process' (Schlesinger, 1978: xxxii) in order to discover the culture of journalistic practises. Schlesinger believed studies would be limited if production methods were studied using only context, textual, or discourse analysis. He also felt that although observational studies have strengths, they also have limitations as the access to data may be controlled by the departments being observed.

David Morley's 1980 study 'The Nationwide Audience' used an audience-centered structuralist and semiotic approach in order to analyse audience readings of two editions of the BBC's early evening regional news magazine programme. The audience was placed into categories, under their occupations, to see whether (a) they accepted the news features as given to them by the producers (the dominant or preferred meaning), (b) partly accepted the content (a negotiated code or meaning), or (c) rejected the views of the producers (an oppositional reading of the content). Morley moved away from an institution-text-audience model to follow Stephen Neale who suggested genre theory as a useful model to analyse production *and* reception; seeing the active processes as 'systems of orientations, expectations and conventions that circulate between industry, text and subject' (Neale 1980: 19). This study is concerned with a BBC division as it explored ways of mediating participatory content therefore the bias was towards production, however it was also important to consider the audience as much as possible.

Georgina Born's 2004 study of the BBC looked at the start of the 're-invention of the BBC' detailing the years when Director Generals John Birt and Greg Dyke began to move the Corporation from linear analogue to non-linear digital content. Born presents an anthropologists view, partly through observation of defined moments and places (defined by the BBC) and partly through diary-keeping. Participant observation was used as a way of experiencing the everyday culture of the BBC and to 'explore the differences between what is said in publicity or in the boardroom and what happens on the ground in the studio, office or cleaning station' (Born, 2004: 15). Born spent a year in the Drama Group and several months with the BBC's flagship news programme *Newsnight* over the 1997 general election. Additional smaller scale observations took place elsewhere in BBC News and other factual departments such as Documentaries, Current Affairs, the Community Programmes Unit and the 1997-8 News Programme Strategy Review. Interviews were also undertaken with 'script readers, researchers, secretaries and receptionists to the many tiers of BBC creatives and bosses' (Born, 2004: 16).

The areas which were picked for Born's observations were mainly those offering the 'high culture' programming for which the BBC is well known, rather than a more

representative spectrum of programming. In addition, new media was not considered in detail although the BBC's new website (which launched in 1997) did receive some consideration. The lack of analysis of www.bbc.co.uk is surprising as the message Born's book delivers is of a BBC undergoing change. As Born is reflecting the institutional culture of the time, it is likely the website was still viewed at senior management level as supporting broadcast content rather than as a medium in its own right. Born did not spend time in the BBC's New Media Division.

Participatory content requires a slightly different approach as the audience is an important element of the content production process. Morley's 'institution-text–audience' model offered a more rounded analysis, however for this study the emphasis was on the presenter, text, user-interface, and audience. Each workshop emphasised a different genre and different elements of the participatory experience. Jorgensen felt 'participant observation is especially appropriate for scholarly problems when little is known about the phenomenon' (Jorgensen, 1989: 12). The fieldwork for this study was looking at a new area and also at research and development processes in progress. Williams et al believed effective research design should be

> ...(1) reflecting natural settings and realistic influences, (2) showing clear relationships among causes and effects, (3) controlling extraneous variables, (4) excluding alternate explanations for the results, (5) exhibiting strong validity, and (6) demonstrating reliability of the research procedures and results (Williams et al, 1988:55).

The developmental workshops were self-contained and the regular participants of the workshops were the five Interactive Presenters, the producer of the Interactive Presenter Scheme, the Live Chat Producer and myself. Additional production teams were invited to take part for specific themes, from 'Video Nation' (audience video diaries), Live Chat (live Internet Relay Chat with streamed video), the Red Button (television information overlays), 'Celebdaq' (a semi-converged brand) and BBCi ('interactive' content across the BBC). The location of the workshops was the BBCi studio apart from one or two

workshops which involved filming or the gathering of information. The BBCi studio offered a set, television studio lighting, and three cameras for the video streaming side of events and four computers which enabled the internet relay chat side of the production. Live chats with celebrities and experts took place almost daily. Ashley Highfield, the Director of BBC New Media hoped that new kinds of interactive television programming would be developed using the studio.

Formulating the research questions

From the review of the literature it appeared there had been little examination of the mediation of public service participatory content. Themes which had emerged which would be worthy of study were 1. how to enable the sociability of an imagined shared space online, 2. to look at the sliding scale of mediation (or control) from a high level of leading to spaces where there might be little mediation, 3. how the position of the audience was changing due to their increased presence within public service content, and 4. the difference between mediation and facilitation (customer relationship management). The research questions were also informed (but not led) by interviews with the four managers within the BBC New Media Division who had a direct involvement and interest in the Interactive Presenter Scheme.

Hour long semi-structured interviews were undertaken in December 2002 and January 2003. The first area of questioning asked what the manager's aims were for the Interactive Presenter Scheme and how they thought the iPresenters could assist audiences within BBCi. The second area of questioning explored the specific skills the managers wanted the iPresenters to pioneer such as leading audiences around BBCi and between television and the accompanying online content. The third area of the interview focussed on how managers felt the skills should be disseminated to the rest of the BBC whilst they were on their placements for example. The last area of questioning concerned whether the managers felt the iPresenters should be celebrities, like the hosts of broadcast talk shows, or whether they should be 'with the audience'.

Several themes emerged from the interviews, firstly the acknowledgement that engagers were believed to need assistance from BBC staff. One or two managers felt participating audiences wanted someone like them, a 'non-geek' who would be able to show them around. The Interactive Presenter Scheme was also associated, in the manager's minds, with increasing the awareness of BBCi and increasing the amount of participation; an institutionally-led perspective. There was acknowledgement that audiences would need some form of 'customer relationship management', for example with their membership of groups and technical help, however there was also a wish for the participatory services to be 'self-servicing' as much as possible.

The themes which emerged from the interviews were transcribed, coded and placed alongside the areas of questioning which I felt were important. The BBC manager's aims for the research project were consumption-focussed; concerned with encouraging large numbers of audiences to engage with BBCi. My focus was on examining the nature of the BBC-audience relationship and whether a fundamental shift was taking place from 'human to human' mediation (presenter to audience) to 'technology to human' mediation; which would result in the removal of more direct BBC staff engagement with the audience. The research questions which resulted were

1. What mediation and facilitation was being provided by the BBC in online participatory media and in semi-converged media?
2. What mediation and facilitation did audiences want or need to assist them to participate?
3. What aspiration did managers have for the Interactive Presenter Scheme?
4. What was the implication of a membership culture for audiences and for the BBC?
5. What were the editorial policy implications of participatory media?

As a research question, question #1 seemed sensible as I wanted to begin by finding evidence on the current facilitation practices before finding out what audiences might want or need. Question #2 indicated the need for audience data. Initially I decided to use

existing BBC audience data and observations brought back by the workshop participants of the effect their activities were having on audience engagement. Question # 3 was important as the Interactive Presenter Scheme was interesting in its own right; illustrative of the changing strategy of BBC New Media as a division to accommodate participation and increasingly technologically complex services. Question #4 was designed to find out whether the BBC was beginning to accommodate a shift in the audience orientations towards the BBC which I believed was happening as audience took ownership of participatory environments. Question #5 explored the editorial issues involved in mediating and facilitating shared space social and collaborative environments online.

The Research Timetable

The research was undertaken part-time and I was released from my job for one day a week for three years, later extended to five years. Preliminary fieldwork began in the spring of 2002 with observations of the auditions for the five Interactive Presenters however the project began in earnest with the review of the literature in August 2002.

Task	Start	End	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Begin Fieldwork Notes	4/2/02	7/5/04	4/2		7/5				
Literature Reviews	2/8/02	2/7/03	2/8	2/7					
Interviews with managers	5/12/02	30/1/03	5.30/1						
Pilot Workshop	12/12/02	12/12/02	12/12						
Workshops	12/12/02	23/5/03	12/1 23/5						
Audience Study	2/2/04	23/4/04			223/4				
Logging of Data	3/5/04	30/7/04			3.30/7				
Data Reduction	2/8/04	17/12/04			2/17/12				
Coding in Transana	10/1/05	26/8/05				10/1 26/8			
Articulating the Findings	5/9/05	28/4/06				5/9 28/4			
Indicative Findings to the BBC	1/5/06	28/7/06					1.28/7		
Writing Up	7/8/06	23/4/09					7/8		

Figure 5: The overall management of the research project.

Electronic data was stored on a computer, external hard drive and on data CDs. The video and audio data was stored both electronically and as tapes. Paper sources such as production literature and academic papers were stored in filing cabinets in hanging files. I also used two programmes to assist the management of the project, Milestones, a project management tool and EndNote to record the books, papers and other sources either referred to in the study or read and rejected.

Organising the production workshops

The Live Chat Producer and I discussed the structure of the workshops in advance, working to the research aims. The Live Chat Producer led the sessions leaving me free to participate and observe. The workshops were designed in order that both the research project and the BBC achieved outcomes and findings. The difference in outcomes can be illustrated in the following way (the items listed are not paired).

Sample research outputs	Sample production outputs
▪ Types of mediation	▪ How to increase participation
▪ The difference between facilitation & mediation	▪ How to increase adoption and retention of audiences
▪ Host orientations to the audience	▪ How to increase quality
▪ Orientations to presenter/host control	▪ Exploring audience and production responsibilities
▪ Broadcast-led and participatory-led orientations	▪ Audience focussed production
▪ Production and reception cycles	▪ The creation of a multimedia console for broadband
▪ The user-interface as an agent of mediation	

Figure 6: Sample academic aims and production-facing aims of the workshops

The difference between the intellectual outcomes and the practical outcomes is clear. It was possible to produce dual 'outputs' of value for both the research project and the BBC. Ten workshop themes were devised by the Live Chat Producer and myself, the session titles and a brief explanation is given below.

1. Coping with the unexpected in a live chat environment - the editorial policy issues of live, online, interactive events.
2. An evaluation of the live chat experience from the producers' and audiences' perspectives.

3. Working with 'Video Nation' to identify the difference between user-generated content and professional content. 'Video Nation' wanted to know if the iPresenters could present 'Video Nation' online in any way.

4. Improving the live chats - by including an interactive presenter in the production.

5. Bringing the community closer to the broadcast - finding ways to improve the internal audience 'flow' between platforms for semi-converged brands (television and radio).

6. Creating 'Community TV' for delivery via a mixed-media console for broadband. This workshop was later combined with workshop #5.

7. 'Feature-making'- these workshops were principally training for the iPresenters, however they were also videoed and analysed.

8. 'Project Communicate – how can presentation improve the perception and understanding of BBCi'. This workshop series aimed to explore how the iPresenters might encourage audiences to participate via BBCi.

9. Interactive TV (the Red Button) – How the iPresenters might present on the television 'overlays' which come up when you 'press red' on digital television.

The workshops usually focussed on one genre of participatory media, or one brand, in order to include a representative range of types of participation.

	Live Chats	Message Boards	Video Nation	Red Button	Celebdaq
Type of interactivity					
Synchronous	X		X	X	X
Asynchronous	X	X			X
Linear media	X		X	X	X
Pan-Platform content (TV, Web)	X		X		X
Produce with audiences			X		
User-generated content	X	X	X	X	X
Chat and comment	X	X			X
Feedback to BBC	X	X	X	X	X

Figure 7: Types of participatory media considered in the workshops

The range of participatory content included synchronous and asynchronous media, different states of 'liveness', different levels of creativity for audiences, and different levels of responsiveness from the BBC. Finally each entailed a greater or lesser degree of mediation by presenters or producer-hosts.

Participant observation of the workshops and the Interactive Presenter Scheme

Jankowski and Wester believe 'the primary purpose of participant-observation research...is to describe in fundamental terms various events, situations, and actions that occur in a particular social setting' (Jankowski and Wester, 1991:44). The participant observation of the workshops took the form of either passive viewing to taking a minor

part in discussions. Burgess identified four types of participant observer; the complete participant, the participant-observer, the observer as participant and the complete observer. Burgess felt that his role often changed during his fieldwork, 'I found that although I principally took a participant-as-observer role there were several different phases associated with this role over time and which varied with the individuals with whom I worked' interestingly he also cites Janes who identified the progressive socialisation process takes place between the researcher and participants 'from newcomer to provisional acceptance, categorical acceptance, personal acceptance and imminent migrant' (Janes, 1961 in Burgess, 1990: 82-84).

My position within the Interactive Presenter Scheme was both as a researcher and providing the Interactive Presenter Scheme Producer with help if it was necessary, on a part-time basis; my primary responsibility was to the BBC's internet safety campaign. I attended meetings to discuss the launch of the BBCi Studio and the Interactive Presenter Scheme and meetings with the iPresenters and the Interactive Presenter Scheme Producer to check the progress of the iPresenter's placements with BBC production teams. I assisted the iPresenters to send out their showreels and CVs at the end of the scheme. The danger of becoming too much a part of the culture was noted, however Bruyn feels it is also important to establish a genuine human relationship with participants, one that is 'friendly, direct, and honest' (Bruyn, 1966: 203), however he also acknowledges that the presence of the observer will change the social relationships, 'the researcher may become changed as well as changing to some degree the situation in which he is a participant' (Bruyn, 1966: 14). This is considered an inevitable fact by Denizen and Yvonna, 'All observation involves the observer's participation in the world being studied. There is no pure, objective, detached observation; the effects of the observer's presence can never be erased' (Denzin, N, and Yvonna, S, 2003: 49). My involvement meant I could be 'naturally' present and working alongside the live chat producers and Interactive Presenters yet also observing them at the same time.

At the start of each of the developmental workshops I recorded the mood of the group and anything noteworthy, for example several people being late, hungover, angry, tired,

or silent. A note of group behaviours was also kept and how the group dynamics progressed over the session, recording laughter or arguments. Bailey provided a useful list of instances to look out for and note during fieldwork including changes to body posture and the distance between participants and vocal patterns, 'You can gather hints of embedded meaning by listening to the tone of a conversation: polite, hostile, relaxed, instrumental, playful, or formal…remember that how something is said is frequently more important than what is said' (Bailey, 1996:69). The language used by the participants was also noted, as the use of BBC production terms showed how the iPresenters were adopting BBC culture as the months went on. There was always a high use of industry jargon after the iPresenters had completed BBC Training courses such as the 'Newsroom Training' course or the 'Use of Cameras' course, indicating a wish to belong and to show knowledge of professional techniques. Interestingly one of the BBC managers had said in her interview she was keen that as many ideas and opinions as possible should be 'captured' from the iPresenters early on, before they became institutionalised.

From February 2002 to date the data-gathering has included a wide range of sources either within the BBC or outside of the BBC. Within the BBC I attended several meetings on the Charter Review process including Greg Dyke's 'One BBC' and 'Just Imagine' sessions (2001 and 2002). Outside of the BBC I attended the Westminster e-Forum's Review of the BBC's website. Conferences included those held by the National Union of Journalists on the future of public service broadcasting in the UK, and the bi-yearly conference on public service broadcasting, Ripe, in Mainz, Germany, in 2008 where I presented a paper about the research project. The paper was accepted for inclusion in an edited book aggregating fifteen papers from the conference titled The Public in Public Service Media: Ripe, 2009.

The pilot study
A 'pilot' workshop was organised on the 12 December, 2002 in the BBCi studio. The five iPresenters, the iPresenter Scheme Producer, the Live Chat Production team and I were present. From a research perspective the aim was to practice positioning the camera and

microphone, to allow the participants to become accustomed to the studio as a place for workshops, and to observe the interplay between the iPresenters, producers, the user-interface and the 'audience' (played by the producers). The aim of the session from a production perspective was 'to challenge the iPresenter's ability to cope with the unexpected in a live environment' (Berry, R, 18 December, 2002). The activities were stated as being

> We will put each iPresenter in a live chat scenario whereby a guest (played and prepared for beforehand by a member of the live events team) instigates a potentially tricky situation that the iPresenter is forced to cope with. The team as a whole will assess the results (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002).

Four live chats were filmed (one of the iPresenters arrived in January, 2003). The iPresenters were assisted by five Live Chat producers who produced the live chats, one acted as the 'question-picker' who chose (dummy) questions from the audience, one became the dummy interviewee, one was the cameraman, one sent in dummy questions from an imagined 'audience', and the last producer directed the live chat from the studio 'gallery'. The iPresenters had to deal with a troublesome guest and most of the scenarios were a presenter's worst nightmare; dealing with a racist or drunk interviewee, or an interviewee who was either verbose or silent. The iPresenters were not told the scenarios in advance therefore they had to deal with both the situation in the studio and questions coming in live from the public as best they could.

My notes written after the workshop recorded that there was a lack of fully-formed production procedures in comparison to television and radio, showing Live Chats were a new genre of content for the BBC. There were however established editorial policies, largely borrowed from radio and television, in place to deal with racial comments from presenters (for example) or potential libellous or defamatory comments from unruly guests or members of the public. There were also new issues to deal with concerning the processing of comments from the public and problems to do with attempts to 'converge' the text and video sides of the chat which were out of synchronisation with each other

by up to thirty seconds on occasion. In addition, there were a high number of agents of mediation:

> 1. The User Interface, 2. The user's PC, 3. the technical skill of the audience/member, 4. The profanity filter which removed words thought unacceptable by the BBC, 5. The registration process created a barrier to entry, 6. The moderator acted as a mediator by choosing some questions over others, 7. The presenter and producer both shaped the interactive event to some degree (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary* 12 December, 2002).

It was clear audiences were likely to find it hard to participate and when the participating audience finally reached the live event the experience was not highly satisfactory. In order for the audience to be motivated the iPresenters might need to provide additional activities to tempt participants when they arrived.

The pilot session was useful to establish how subsequent workshops would be run. After the pilot session I took more control of the activities within the workshop sessions as I found the Live Chat production team appropriated the workshop at times and they were being highly directive. This was counter to the research and development aims and it inhibited any 'naturally-occurring' ideas emerging from the fresh and objective Interactive Presenters. The workshop gave the participants the opportunity to work together and to get used to the idea of being 'free' to explore mediation and production processes rather than being led by existing practices. The iPresenters initially 'performed' to the fixed camera recording the session for research purposes during the pilot workshop, however as it became clear the camera was merely capturing the workshop in progress the camera was soon forgotten. For BBC New Media's purposes the pilot workshop gave the participants the opportunity to review the existing live chats, which had not used a presenter, before beginning to explore how they could accommodate an iPresenter.

The workshops in progress

The overall aims of the iPresenter scheme from BBC New Media's perspective was to 'encourage users to interact via a friendly face, to bring the community and the broadcasts closer together, to explore the creative possibilities of interactive presentation, and to promote BBCi' (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002). From a research point of view the workshops were constructed to answer – in part - the five research questions, the observations of the Interactive Presenter Scheme overall contributed to the data. A session plan expressed the theme of each particular set of workshops and the objectives for that day, who was involved, the activities and the resources required. The same form was used to note down, after the session had finished, any observations, conclusions, thoughts or points to action for the next workshop. These were separate from my own fieldwork notes.

In order to ensure the workshops had structure (rather than as a methodology) scholarly literature was reviewed on how creative and reflexive practical work has been organised. The workshops were practice-based interpretive and constructivist, similar to action research, 'Action research depends on working with other people to discuss, plan, test, retry, ensure validity' (Wisker, 2008:231). The creative aspects were similar to the methods employed by Gauntlett who invited children to engage playfully and to create media using what he calls 'activity-based ethnography' (Gauntlett, 2007: 96). Gauntlett believes 'If participants are invited to spend time in the reflective process of making something...they have the opportunity to consider what is particularly important to them before they are asked to generate speech' (Gauntlett, 2007:182-183). In this case the BBC producers were creating media, rather than metaphors about the media, through creative activities, however the opportunity for reflexivity was also offered and actively encouraged.

Each session began with a briefing to all present on the aims, the genre of participation being explored and what the day would entail. The range of activities over the six months included discussion, deconstruction, role play, brainstorming, production (media making), analysis, viewing and reviewing. After every half-day workshop the participants 'tested'

any new techniques 'for real' on their placements – where possible - following how the audience responded, for example, introducing a game or group activity for the online engagers or adapting the Live Chat production process. The following week's session often started with a report from the iPresenters on how things had gone in the intervening days. The iPresenters were often able to see how the public was reacting to any newly introduced mediation or facilitation by observing comments and behaviours in the message boards or any other observable feedback channel such as email. Any increase in the level of participation was also noted.

The first few workshops analysed the existing BBC live chat experience through a discussion of the iPresenter's own live chats with celebrities which had already been recorded. The group subsequently assessed what interactive presentation might be and how to accommodate a sense of live engagement with the audience online, such as how to acknowledge the presence of the audience. A debate on how much the audience or the iPresenters should lead the experience led on to a discussion of whether the iPresenter should be the 'star of the show' or whether they were a facilitator. The Live Chat Producers workshop notes record the debates included 'should the iPresenter ask their own questions? How and when do we incorporate them in text, i.e. if a question is asked at the beginning of the chat, does this take precedence over the users?' (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002). Before the session the iPresenters had been asked to analyse a Live Chat by joining in as a member of the audience then to bring their thoughts to the brainstorming session the iPresenters strongly felt they could 'maximise audience participation and bring out the best in the triangular relationship between the iPresenter, the guest and the audience' (Jackson, *Workshop Notes*, 23 January, 2003). The subsequent sessions on improving the Live Chats inevitably drew on television techniques to enhance the live experience such as having more cameras or doing a show with pre-recorded segments. However 'new media production conventions' such as increasing the amount of audience visibility and the level of cross-referencing to other social media such as the message boards were also suggested.

The workshops with 'Video Nation' introduced the iPresenters to the idea of user-generated content on BBCi and placed them in the position of being a non-professional content-creator. The 'Video Nation' producers also introduced their own agenda into the workshops as they wanted the iPresenters to help the audience create video diaries and to provide orientation around their archive of user-generated content on their new website. A 'Video Nation' diary was analysed then the iPresenters recorded a 'Video Nation' diary in order to analyse what was 'quasi-natural' talk (to camera) and what indicated performed talk. What emerged from the session was the amount of leading given to the public; what appeared to be naturally-occurring speech was in fact semi-constructed because it was situated within an institutionalised process. The third workshop on Video Nation (3 April, 2003) involved the iPresenters making a trail (advert) in the style of a 'Video Nation' piece which would encourage the audience to do a diary piece for 'Video Nation's' new website. During this session it became clear the production department wanted the iPresenters to become producers helping the audience to join in and take part. This idea was compatible with the manager's aims in New Media for the iPresenters and the Interactive Production Scheme as a whole, however, it was not palatable to the iPresenters whose image of a 'presenter' was not helping the audience but performing for the audience.

Several workshops had to be adjusted; a planned series of workshops planned to find out how the iPresenters might present BBCi became one workshop, a presentation from an Audience Research Manager. From a research perspective it was highly interesting as it showed how BBC strategists were foregrounding interactive television at that time in preference to the web and online content. The session is reviewed in more detail in the next chapter as part of the findings on the Interactive Presenter Scheme as a whole. The workshops on 'Bringing the Community closer to the Broadcast' and 'Creating Community TV' were combined as they were felt to be complementary, becoming a series of sessions deconstructing the semi-converged brand 'Celebdaq'. In contrast to the sessions on presenting BBCi which were reduced the workshops on 'Celebdaq' were expanded.

The workshop series on 'Celebdaq'

`Celebdaq' was the first semi-converged brand intended for simultaneous launch on television (BBC3) and online. It is a mythical stock exchange where Traders (the audience) maintain portfolios of shares in celebrities with the aim of becoming the top 'Trader of the Week'. The first workshop began with a content analysis of 'Celebdaq' online and on television. This was followed by a discussion of the 'Celebdaq' audiences' behaviours, also across television and online, and across one week of content. This was followed by 'mapping' the audience activity around the brand both inside the BBC and away from the BBC on MSN and AOL. The available BBC audience data on the 'Celebdaq' audience both on television and online was analysed. The workshop participants also observed the audience in the 'Celebdaq' message board at different times over one week. The 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts were also consulted to find out how they perceived the 'Celebdaq Traders'. During the second workshop all the data was very roughly analysed and discussed.

A further session brainstormed a new genre of content which might fulfil the audience needs; a multimedia console suitable for broadband users. Two of the iPresenters then worked with the BBC's Broadband Development Producer over several weeks to make and test the console which was subsequently brought back to the workshop and demonstrated, along with a description of the production process. The workshop series on 'Celebdaq' produced excellent findings, however as it was not possible for the workshop participants to 'follow through' how the multimedia console was received by the audience as the console didn't launch until March 2004. The workshop participants found the deconstruction and re-construction of 'Celebdaq' to suit audience behaviours was a highly interesting exercise. It was successful partly because the iPresenters were not yet institutionalised, they questioned everything, and partly because they considered the audience and audience behaviours in detail, over time.

I felt it was important to find out how the 'Celebdaq' Traders had received the new multimedia console in context with the television programme and website therefore in February 2004 I recruited fourteen participants for a small audience study via the

'Celebdaq' message board. The use of social media as a recruitment method caused a minor problem as two participants communicated with each other about the interview and observation before my visit but their conversation had been about myself as the researcher rather than any reporting of what was said during the session. The participants matched the audience profile outlined in a BBC audience study the *Celebdaq InSite Survey, 2003* in composition if not in volume. The InSite study (a form on the website) had received a total of 922 responses 830 of which were from UK adults aged 15+. The survey defined the average 'Celebdaq' user as professional, and around 25 years of age. There were slightly more men than women and they were mainly living within England, particularly around London. The number of participants who took part in the audience study was low, which could have meant it would not be possible to explore instances "until the informant discourses start to resemble those of previous interviews" (Shroder et al, 2003:160), however codes and themes emerged and the data proved useful. Shroder also notes

> ...the more narrowly one defines one's target group, the closer one may get to some kind of representativeness for the group in question: if one interviews, say, ten young teenagers, with different social backgrounds, about a youth programme, there will be as many representatives of this group as there are likely to be in a statistically representative sample of the whole population' (Shroder et al, 2003:160).

Information about the participants was collected before my visit by telephone including the participant's name, address, age, and the length of time they had been playing 'Celebdaq'. All the participants were asked which media they used to access the brand either television, online, or both. Participants were also asked if they received the weekly email update and whether they visited any message boards or chat rooms on 'Celebdaq', for example on MSN or AOL. Finally, all the participants were asked if they had ever attended a face to face meeting for fans of 'Celebdaq' as a monthly meeting took place in a pub in Charing Cross, London. The resulting sample group was 50% male and 50% female, with ages ranging from 23-55 but slanted heavily towards those in their mid-late

20's. The participants also reflected the BBC data on the 'Celebdaq' web 'users' in age, sex, socio-economic status and geographic location. All were from England; specifically, Southampton, London, Southend, Leicester, Coventry, Brighton, Bristol, and Leamington Spa. The occupations of the group included students, animators, a teacher, a secretary, a financial consultant, salesman, and a company director.

All the interviews and observations took place at the participant's homes during the week in the evenings and they all signed consent forms at the start of the session. The participants were informed at the beginning of the visit that everything would be recorded in audio 'to save making notes'. The audio recorder was kept out of the participants 'line of sight' during the active parts of the visit but was used in a more formal way during the interview. The interview questions were semi-structured, if the participant wanted to talk about something they found significant it was indicated that this was acceptable. The questioning began with the role of the presenters and hosts on 'Celebdaq' and continued with the role of the moderators, their perceptions of the BBC's social media, and the participants views of 'Celebdaq' overall. The interviews were a good 'ice-breaker' as they established a rapport. It was then easier to move on to spend thirty minutes watching the participants as they played 'Celebdaq'. The activity triggered thoughts and emotions which were useful to capture. The session ended with a short fifteen minute session watching a recording of the 'Celebdaq' television programme during which time the Traders tended to comment spontaneously about their participation, the programme, the presenters, and the future of 'Celebdaq'. After every visit I made notes from my observations on the person's home and media consumption, for example what type of books, DVDs, video games and so on they had on their bookshelves, whether they had broadband and where the computer was placed in the home.

The year long time lag between the analysis of 'Celebdaq' in the workshops (February and March, 2003) and the audience study (March, 2004) did not reduce its value as the participants had carried on playing the 'Daq' stock market online. The audience study produced rich qualitative data and the value of linked production and audience studies

was very clear, particularly when considering participatory media as it is an iterative, cyclical process between the engager or engagers, the text, the various platforms involved, and any professional personae involved such as producers, hosts or moderators.

Reflections on the data capture

As has been said already, all the developmental workshop sessions were captured on video using one static camera on a tripod. There was no production or adjustment to the camera other then moving it if the participants re-located to another part of the studio or another room. A microphone on the top of the camera was used to record the audio, so that the recording equipment would not be intrusive. If the project was repeated a gun microphone with a much longer field of response would be used to improve the clarity of the recording. The sound in the studio was 'dead' as it had been constructed to absorb stray sound waves, however the sound quality was not an undue problem during transcription. 36 hours of video were produced and this formed the largest data set of the study. By reviewing my own interactions with the participants or as part of the workshops it was possible to 'self-check' my engagement and if necessary, identify any. comments I had made (for example) which indicated a prior knowledge of the topic, in case the 'field' had been affected. The video acted as a permanent record which was retrievable at any time, many times. Janice Morse believes video augments observational methods well

> Using videos, as a method to collect data, removes some of the accusations of researcher bias, as data can be played and replayed, and the results displayed. It produces powerful research. Not only can we tell others about our research, we can show them the perspective of the observer and the observed (Morse, 2003: 156-157).

My interventions were very few, the most natural behaviour for me was to actively watch the proceedings and to join in from time to time. Not joining in would have been more disruptive and unnatural than taking part. Kellehear feels video offers advantages and disadvantages, the permanence of the record and the ability to do reliability checks is an

advantage as well as the use of recordings as an aide memoire. The disadvantages are the hardware can attract attention and, Kellehear feels, it can be complex to operate, expensive and 'dependent on the control of the operator' (Kellehear, 1993:140). Video was suitable for this study as it was about performance and interaction. The production of televisual content online was the participants' everyday work, therefore the equipment was a commonplace tool used on a daily basis within the social setting.

The use of additional data

The participant observation was augmented by interviews and the small audience study to open out the topic for reflections from different perspectives. I was aware of the difficulties of cross-referencing different data sources, 'such a design must ensure that the same question will be addressed by each of the types of data or approaches' (Richards, 2005:21). This was borne in mind during the audience study, however it is also important not to let the first data set lead or influence the second. Other additional data used in the research such as BBC production literature and audience data (quantative and qualitative) gave the study good contextual information from which to draw, for example the 'Daily Life Study: 2003' and the '"Celebdaq" InSite Study: 2003'.

Each iPresenter kept a diary over the six months which showed how they perceived their six months at the BBC and their day to day thoughts. The notes I made as the workshops were in progress were typed into my fieldwork diary. At the start of the project I kept *two* diaries; a fieldwork diary which tracked how research was going and a research diary which kept track of literature reviews, books and searches. Later I decided to amalgamate them both as they became cumbersome to manage. Kellehear believes a good fieldwork diary should contain self-observations, 'a record of your own reactions and feelings about what you saw and heard' (Kellehear, 1993: 133). Bailey supports this view adding

> ...write down if you were scared, happy, rejected or felt loved. Whom did you like and when did you feel completely stupid...field notes don't begin once you are in the field...The process of gaining entry is documented in the notes. As you arrive

in the field, jot down in your field notes things that you are feeling (Bailey, 1996: 83-84).

I began the diaries in February 2002 during the BBC Talent trawl. Later, note taking during the workshops consisted of jotting down any significant points, such as laughter or disagreements. Alongside that, in the margin I wrote the rough time into the session that each event happened which helped me find the location on the video later. The workshop notes often helped to bring back the 'real' experience as the camera did not capture, for example, what was out of frame. In 2005, I recorded a small number of supplementary interviews with the presenter of 'Celebdaq', the producer-host of the 'Today' programme on BBC Radio 4, and the producer-host of 'The Archers' online community. The interviews were coded to see if they reflected the findings which had emerged. Several instances were found which helped to validate the data, for example, the producer-hosts interviewed expressed feelings of inadequacy when they were asked to 'be the voice of the BBC' and to make institutional pronouncements in the message boards.

Logging, reducing, encoding and coding the video and audio

Working with video was not easy as it was necessary to prepare the video for importation into the computer by changing the format from Mini Digital Video to AVI, and then from AVI (which were large files) to Mpeg (for storage and retrieval). I therefore decided to log the tapes first and to only encode significant instances which reduced the data by 50%. The remaining video was encoded into Mpeg2 files and imported into the computer for transcription within a software programme 'Transana' (University of Wisconsin, 2008). Transana is similar to Nvivo, and designed enable researchers to transcribe, code, sort and play out video clips to support findings.
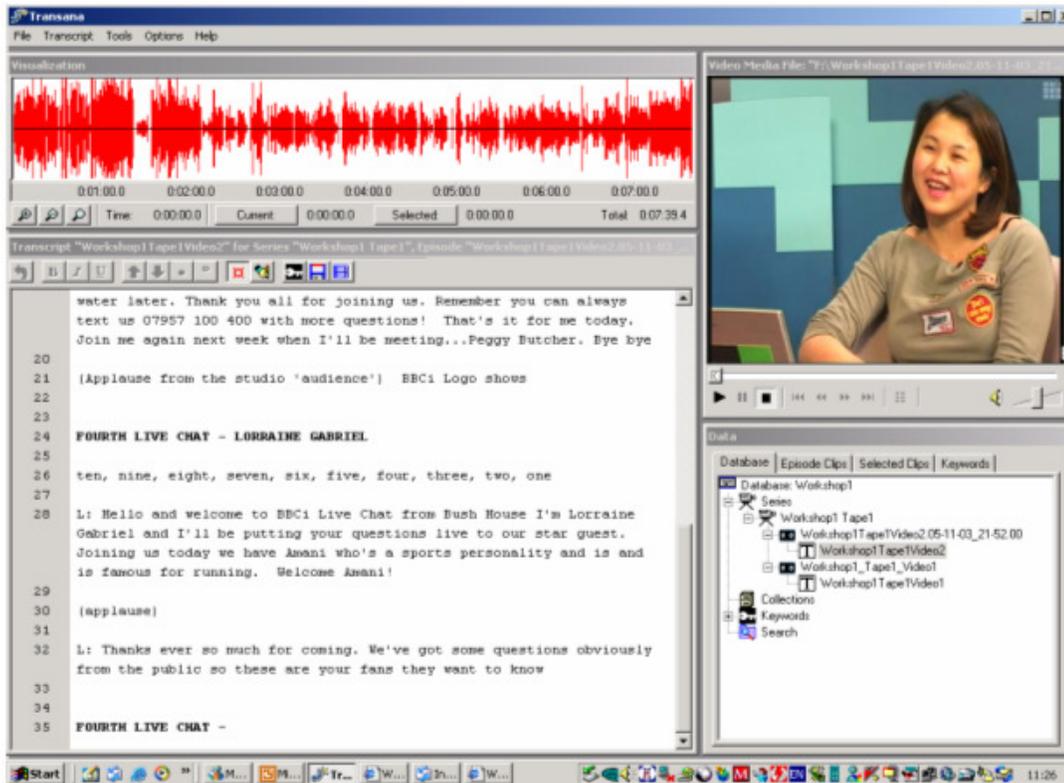
Figure 8:   Transana: transcribing window

I was actively analysing and making links between sections of video throughout the viewing, logging and encoding process. In fact the analysis began during the observations with the insertion of analytical notes in the fieldwork diaries however detailed analysis of the video began in January 2005. During the transcription process it was also possible to attach additional information to clips, for example, who was speaking, what was happening at that time, and why that portion of video was felt to be significant; 'Virtually all methodologists recommend initial and thorough reading of your data while writing analytic memos or jotting in the margins tentative ideas for codes, topics, and noticeable patterns or themes' (Saldana, 2009:18).

Playing and replaying sections of video offered a way of getting to know the data 'at close range'. As themes were identified they were noted in a list which developed into the coding frame (see the Appendix). Some themes were later abandoned and some grew in significance. An 'other' category was set aside for instances which appeared to have

significance but for which I had, as yet, no category. I created 'collections' of video clips (the name given to clips linked by a name in 'Transana') and it was possible to compare and re-sort collections to assist the development of intellectual ideas and support the findings. The re-sorting of collections also assisted decisions on which were the dominant and less dominant themes. The idea of separating mediation (editorialising) from facilitation (customer relationship management) emerged at this time. I could support the idea with a body of evidence, video clips which could be played out as a string of sequential clips via the 'Transana' programme.
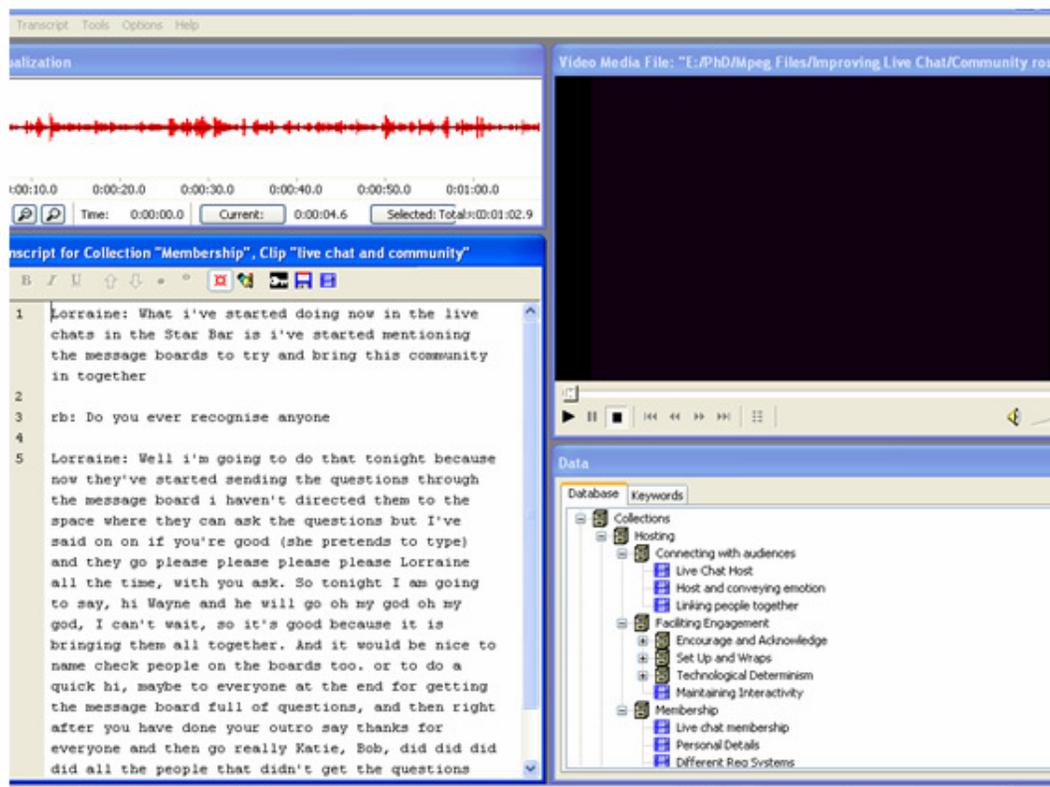
Figure 9: 'Collections' of video clips assisted coding

Overall the intellectual coding process was in three stages which roughly followed Lyn Richard's methods, 'Descriptive coding', 'Topic coding' and 'Analytical coding', (Richards, 2005: 87-88). Descriptive coding involved identifying and annotating clips which were then placed under topics, I then organised the topics into themes. The themes were

analysed and related back to any relevant theory. Saldana notes the importance of reviewing the data in different ways, looking for different instances, different codes or considering the evidence from different intellectual positions. He feels the process requires 'such analytical skills as classifying, prioritizing, integrating, synthesizing, abstracting, conceptualizing, and theory building' (Saldana, J, 2009: 45). The 'looser' analytical coding which had begun during the fieldwork was sifted and substantiated in a 'tighter' way during this period. The eighteen hours of audio from the audience study and the interviews with managers, and presenter-hosts was also imported and analysed in 'Transana' in the same way as the video.

Challenges and limitations

Ensuring the workshops fulfilled the requirements of both the research project and the BBC became an issue during the pilot workshop when the session began to be framed as 'training' by the invited Live Chat team, who wanted to use the iPresenters for their live events and, ironically, have a greater involvement with the workshops, 'the workshops are presently being seen as being jointly 'owned' by the iPresenter Scheme and the Live Chat team' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Notes*, 8 January, 2003). The appropriation of the sessions was resolved through a discussion with the Live Chat Producer assigned to the Interactive Presenter Scheme workshops over the six months. Once the intentions for the workshops had been explained in further detail and how academic research works the sessions progressed without any further problem.

Other problems included the collapse of the series of workshops to explore how the iPresenters could 'become the new faces of BBCi' (BBC Talent, 2001) which turned into a presentation and debate with an Audience Research Manager over one workshop half-day (20 March, 2003). BBCi Marketing had decided not to use the iPresenters to promote BBCi, four months into the six-month scheme. The decision was partly due to newly-announced staff redundancies across the BBC. The workshop produced good findings however, which are given in the next chapter. The importance of adding audience studies to a production study for participatory media was only realised when it became clear existing BBC audience data would be insufficient. The importance of observing audience

behaviours both over time and across any relevant platforms also became clear as the study progressed. Undertaking a paired production and reception study might have resulted in a reduction of the range of genres of participatory content considered due to practical constraints. As one of the research questions was to find out the types of mediation being offered at that time, it was important to keep the genres of media examined in the workshops broad. A paired study would also have generated twice the amount of data which would need to be carefully managed. There would also need to be some means of cross-checking the data-sets during coding.

There were several technical issues during the project, firstly it was necessary to learn the analysis programme, 'Transana'. 'Transana' was built by two academics at the University of Wisconsin specifically for the analysis of video recorded during fieldwork. The programme was new therefore only five scholars were using it in Britain in 2004. It was possible to attend a weekend course when developers visited the UK in September, 2004. Once I had learnt 'Transana' it was relatively easy to use, however it was difficult to move work between computers as three linked folders had to be moved together, a database, the video clips associated with that database and the transcriptions associated with both the database and the video files. It was easy to lose the folders and hard to re-import them into 'Transana' again once the 'link' was lost. Due to the large file size of the video it was necessary to buy an additional external hard drive and upgrade my computer to work with video. There were further difficulties in encoding the video from MiniDV to AVI and then again into Mpeg files. After trying several open source packages I eventually bought a licence for Sony MovieMaker which was a good investment. The programme could import, encode and 'clip' video ready for 'Transana'. I also used a second-hand digital audio recorder for the interviews, the equipment developed a fault during one interview which was not perceivable at the time therefore half the recording was lost, however I had made fieldwork notes which were available for use.

Reliability, validity, ethical issues, and safety

The internal validity of the data was partly ensured through the persistence of the observations; the participant observation of the workshops and the observation of BBC New Media as a whole took place over a reasonably long period of time, which allowed for observable occurrences to be repeated. In addition it was possible to play, replay, and check instances within the body of the data including my own interventions and participation within the workshops. Evidence to support the major themes and the findings was also drawn from multiple sources where possible, for example the fieldwork diaries, video, interviews and BBC audience data. Finally, the findings were supported by the wider observations of the BBC New Media Division, by notes, and production and industry literature. My job relocation to the BBC Children's Department and finally to the University of Westminster assisted objectivity during the data analysis phase and the writing up of the study.

External validation of the data was through presentations of the indicative findings to BBC producers in London, at two sites, and for BBC Wales in Cardiff. The findings were received with interest by 25 technologists, designers and developers at BBC New Media (by this time almost exclusively engaged in building technology) who, perhaps predictably, felt the audience did need assistance but they felt technical solutions might be found. There was also interest in Amy Jo-Kim's model of socialisation which happens in shared space environments but less interest in Gilly Salmon's model of engagement which requires pro-active facilitation. 40 producers from production departments in London who attended a second presentation of the indicative findings were more interested in the facilitation techniques identified. There was a high level of recognition and two producer-hosts took me aside at the end to express how they felt they had little time to engage with the audience. One said he felt it difficult to decide whether he was able to give a personal opinion and whether he was supposed to be speaking on behalf of the BBC.

The findings were enthusiastically received by over 60 producers and managers in BBC Wales in Cardiff who, alongside BBC Children's were exploring participatory media to a

greater degree than most of the other BBC departments at that time. A lively and lengthy debate followed the presentation and several producers asked to be kept informed of additional findings as they emerged. The audience supported pro-active hosting and agreed more audience-facing activity would be necessary, however they felt there were fewer resources available within the BBC. A report on the implications of participatory media was written for the Controller, BBC Internet, who felt the report was 'useful and timely'; it was therefore forwarded to the Head of BBC Education and to the Controller of the BBC Children's Division. One of the iPresenters ('Stuart') is presenting a BBC technology programme and he is using some of the techniques developed in the workshops including linking across media platforms, using 'rich media' online and addressing the audience as equal participants. The programme is offered on the BBC iPlayer and as a Videocast.

There were two ethical issues which affected the research. Firstly there was a need to maintain the anonymity of the participants. These included the Interactive Presenters, BBC staff, and the participants of the 'Celebdaq' audience study. The managers and producers in BBC New Media have been identified by their job titles and the names of the Interactive Presenters and 'Celebdaq' Traders have been changed. The Live Chat Producer was offered the opportunity to remain anonymous but as he had enjoyed the workshops he was happy to be named; he was also more of a facilitator than a participant. The video clips of the workshops have not been shown during any presentations in order to protect the identity of the presenters, one of whom has subsequently become a well-known presenter on BBC television. Written permission was obtained from all participants and all agreed that their contributions could be used for research purposes. The video data was stored on a password protected hard drive and personal data was kept in conditions which complied with the 1998 Data Protection Act. The office where the data was stored was in a location protected by video security and porterage. To ensure the project complied with the university and BBC ethics, insurance, and health and safety guidelines I was accompanied by a BBC producer during the audience study and equipment was either carried in neutral carriers or taken in taxis to the locations. As

there were no minors involved in the project it was not necessary for the university's Ethics Committee to be informed.

Conclusion

The developmental production workshops were organised to find out how iPresenters and producer-hosts could assist audiences, and whether there were similarities between the techniques used by broadcast and online hosts. The four BBC managers involved with the Interactive Presenter Scheme wanted to find out how the iPresenters could promote BBCi and encourage audiences to join in. How to engage with active audiences is still a topic of enquiry at the BBC. During the years 2004-2008 there was little expansion due to the internal reorganisations taking place, redundancies, the development of the BBC iPlayer, and a budget freeze which was placed on all new media development after a £36 million overspend (Rajan, 2008). The strategic relevance of participatory media, in particular social media, is beginning to be explored again by the BBC (Walpole, S, 2009). Erik Huggers, Director of BBC New Media (now BBC Future Media and Technology), said in an interview for Brand Republic 'every time I go onto bbc.co.uk I feel alone. Instinctively, I know there are other people on the site, so we need to connect audiences with programming and with each other, embracing social media' (Donnelly, 2008). A second report giving BBC managers an overview of the findings from this study will be submitted in June or July, 2009. I have been approached to jointly run Beebac, a new network for academics and BBC producers supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Group and the BBC which aims to connect academics with BBC producers for mutual benefit; the report will be offered as part of that initiative.

The iPresenter workshops offered a good location for the observation of new mediation and facilitation techniques in development. It was a contained space within which existing production practices could be explored and extended, away from deadlines and distractions. The half-day sessions provided a constant setting for a stable group of participants to consider the topic of mediation online. Various methods had been used to study the production of content at the BBC, including the Glasgow Media Groups content analysis, an institution-text-audience approach (Morley, 1980), genre theory as a

means of studying both production and reception (Neale, 1980), and Schlesinger and Born's use of participant observation with interviews, (Schlesinger, 1978, and Born, 2004). I decided to follow Schlesinger and Born by using participant observation and interviews, accompanied by BBC audience data. The developmental production workshops, the site of the participant observations, were structured in a similar way to action research, that is they often involved a cycle of deconstruct, review, re-construct, test, review, remake, test again. The media production elements of the workshops were organised in a similar way to Gauntlett's creative methods (Gauntlett, 2007) as the participants were invited to imagine and create media in a very free way, often using drawings, role play or describing. as well as to deconstruct and reconstruct existing media forms. The workshop methods described were to give the activities structure in order that there was observable activity for the participant observation.

The participant observation was augmented by interviews, and a small scale audience study which was a subsequent addition to the methods when existing BBC audience data was found to be inadequate. The need for paired production and reception studies was realised and were the study to be done again a more in depth examination of the audience would be considered. There would be difficulties to be overcome as an effective system for cross-referencing codes and themes would need to be developed. The study also found there was a need to extend the analysis of both producer and audience behaviours over time and over any relevant platforms for semi-converged and participatory media. This is because shared space participatory environments are defined by collective engagement which happens over weeks or even months, and there is an exchange of activity between the producers and engagers or between engagers and the user-interface as the agent of mediation if there is no human mediator present.

Video offered continuous on-demand access to the data and also provided information on group body positioning and individual and group facial and body signifiers. It was also important to note down significant behaviours as some actions were (very occasionally) off camera. The video showed when ideas were adopted or rejected and when ideas were 'marketed' to others as being 'good' or valuable. Similarly it was possible

to see when an idea was rejected by the group, lowering the 'intellectual capital' of the individual temporarily. Some of the participants were verbose, and some were quieter, some led and some wanted to be led. Dominant characters often had a higher influence over the research and development activities. The fact that the five iPresenters were efficient communicators and the live chat team were professional enablers helped to create a constructive atmosphere for the workshops. From a sociological point of view the two groups remained 'two tribes' over the six months however they began to socialise together as time went on.

By comparing video shot early on in the scheme with video shot towards the end of the scheme the increasing institutionalisation of the Interactive Presenters could be tracked. In the workshop with 'Video Nation' for example 'Nigel', one of the Interactive Presenters, turned to another iPresenter (off camera) as they watched a noisy 'Video Nation' on karioke, 'see, what they've done there is overlaid the sound over the image' (iPresenter Nigel, *Video Transcript*, 17 January, 2003). It was possible to self- check and therefore isolate anything which might have compromised the data. David Gauntlett described his status in his own creative workshops in this way, 'I was not one of the film-making group, as such, but followed and helped each group...whilst also inconspicuously recording the process and discussions (some of which, conveniently, could be filmed along the way)' (Gauntlett, 2007: 96). The video analysis programme 'Transana' was useful in many respects, but not in others. It was possible to 'lose' batches of video clips and their accompanying transcriptions as the programme required different kinds of data to be stored in different folders. Transana therefore saved time but it also took up time, principally preparing the video. The lack of compatibility between file types increased the amount of processing necessary, files had to be changed from MiniDV to AVI and then from AVI to Mpeg which was technically challenging. Dealing with large amounts of video was cumbersome, and I had to reduce the data in order to store it on the computer, however this imposed a good discipline of choosing significant video clips rather than copying more than was required. It was easy to import video again, from the source video, if something was retrospectively found to be significant. There was some reviewing between the 'reduced' data and the original 36 hours of recorded material.

The results of the study are given in the next three chapters, the findings are presented in three sets, chapter five gives an analysis of the rise and fall of the Interactive Presenter Scheme and how it reflected wider changes happening within the BBC New Media Division and the BBC as a whole. Chapter six presents results on the overall mediation and facilitation of particularly genres of participatory content, selected in order to provide a representative sample. The third set of findings on the mediation of semi-converged brands (television and online content) are presented in chapter seven through the case study 'Celebdaq'.

Chapter Five: The Rise and Fall of the iPresenters

Introduction

The Interactive Presenter Scheme was not a success as the role of Interactive Presenter was not able to be formalised over the six months. The understanding of the mediation of participatory content and the importance of mediation by human agency, however, was extended, therefore the scheme and its developmental workshops was a good site for research. This chapter provides an overview of the scheme from an institutional perspective distilled from longitudinal observation of the New Media Division and the Interactive Presenter Scheme itself recorded in my fieldwork diary, from workshop notes kept by the Live Chat producer who assisted the workshops, from diaries kept by the iPresenters, from video transcripts of the workshops and from production literature collected from October 2002 to June 2003. As the title of the chapter suggests the progression of the scheme is given and this is segmented into themes in order to assist the presentation of the findings which are given at the end of every section and also at the end of the chapter as an overview.

The Interactive Presenter Scheme began in a wave of publicity yet it ended in relative obscurity, the reasons for this are given. The chapter begins by showing the origins of the BBC Talent department and how the national auditions for Interactive Presenters progressed from January 2001 to October 2002. The manager's aims for the iPresenters when they arrived are compared and discussed, showing there were differences in opinion. The rise of the BBC New Division and the significance of their new BBCi studio is outlined, a hybrid Live Chat and television production space which was intended to offer the audience on the street a means to communicate directly with the production staff. When the iPresenters arrived they began to work with the Live Chat team in the BBCi studio. They would eventually work together on the developmental production workshops throughout the six months, however their first priority was to improve the Live Chat production process itself in order that prove the new studio was capable of

producing innovative televisual programming. The Interactive Presenters had to convince BBC producers to give them a role for six months, something more than administrative duties and this was partly achieved through the developmental workshops where the 'iPs' were able to negotiate, demonstrate and test how they could improve content for particular teams, mostly within the New Media Division.

The chapter continues by discussing the rise of video on demand within the BBC and how the iPresenter's progress within new media as a form of content was inhibited by the lack of bandwidth which limited the amount of video which could be offered by services under the BBCi brand. How the lack of bandwidth has in turn slowed down the development by the BBC of new forms of televisual media delivered by internet protocols is illustrated. The chapter closes with a review of the change in fortunes of the Interactive Presenter Scheme and how that impacted on the opportunities for the iPresenters personally within the BBC.

BBC Talent and the nationwide trawl for iPresenters

Greg Dyke was keen to open out the BBC as much as possible to show that the corporation reflected the nature of the BBC's audience and to encourage new talent to consider applying for jobs. Dyke also felt that the Corporation should take more risks; something he felt public service organisations found it particularly hard to do, he wanted innovation and change. BBC New Media was approached by BBC Talent, a new department supported by Greg Dyke and an offshoot of BBC Marketing, to become involved in BBC Talent's campaigns to recruit young professionals into the BBC. BBC Talent was keen to associate itself with the young division and suggested finding five 'Interactive Presenters' who might work on BBCi for six months. BBC Talent was the product of a Masters Dissertation written by Angela Stephenson from BBC marketing for her MBA at Bradford University. Stephenson convinced BBC managers to put the dissertation, *The Role of Talent in 21st Century Broadcasting,* into action. The paper discussed how the Corporation could broaden its intake beyond the feeding ground of Oxbridge.

David Lister wrote an article in the 'Independent' on the 19 March, 2002, three months after the launch of the Interactive Presenter talent trawl. Lister quotes Stephenson who explained how she hoped the corporation could 'grow a talent base that reflected the UK and "broaden the roots into the business"' (Lister, 2002). It was agreed by senior BBC managers that the BBC should look for presenters, sports commentators, actors for soap dramas, and news trainees for local radio. Two million pounds had been allocated to run the BBC Talent 'campaigns' and financial support was agreed for a further three years. The article continues, 'On Thursday, Angie Stephenson will brief the Governors on how the scheme will change the BBC's recruitment procedures'. However this sweeping prediction was tempered as Lister reveals there was some doubt, quoting 'a senior colleague' of Stephenson's as saying, 'To be honest, the BBC really only saw this as a worthy diversion at first. But she has turned it into a major initiative which appeals to Dyke's vision of a more diverse BBC' (Lister, 2002). In his 'manifesto' written in 2000 during the application process to become the Director General of the BBC, Dyke had said 'I believe I could bring to the BBC a style of leadership which enables creative talent to flourish at the same time as being financially and managerially accountable' (Dyke, 2004: 148).

From the outset the BBC Talent schemes were initiated from talent, innovation, and marketing perspectives. Three of the Talent schemes for 2002-2003 were sponsored, by Odeon Cinemas, Persil and Kellogg's. The talent trawl for interactive presenters was run with Virgin who provided their 'Megastores' for the auditions. This suggests the BBC might have been getting itself into a position to operate within a more commercial sphere, should the Charter not have been renewed in 2006. The Corporation was adopting a business culture evidenced by the hiring of project managers and the popularisation of a project management culture. The New Media Division was often referred to as 'The Business' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, March, 2003). In his second McTaggart lecture (2004) Greg Dyke expressed his personal belief that

> ...the stark choice facing the BBC today is that we either change or we simply
>
> manage decline gracefully...The changes happening in technology, in the wider

society, and in our competitive environment make this one of those times in history when change at the BBC is essential (Dyke, 2004:160).

The trawl to find five Interactive Presenters began in January 2002 and lasted ten months. Six video audition booths were taken to Virgin Megastores in Glasgow, Hull, Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Cardiff, Southampton, Birmingham, Belfast, London, and Oxford.

> There were about 200 people there the first day - nothing like Big Brother or Pop Idol queues! Goes down to about 160 the next day and stays like that for most of the tour dates across the UK. London and Oxford draw the largest crowds (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, Liverpool, April, 2002).

For BBC New Media the association with Virgin customers was useful as they matched the BBCi demographic, 'younger viewers and males most likely to be iTV users' (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003b:29). BBCi was often used to refer to iTV (interactive television) which caused internal confusion at the BBC. The mechanism for the auditions was innovative as the audition booths contained a computer terminal and a camera. After queuing up for a free booth auditionees were invited to type the answer to the question 'The internet has changed my life because...' and then present that same answer to the camera situated above the keyboard. The performance was recorded on disc for uploading later to a website on the BBC's intranet, Gateway. The auditions produced almost 6,000 thirty second clips, therefore the talent trawl team sifted and rejected a large percentage at the end of each day. 1,600 video clips were subsequently viewed on the BBC's intranet by a panel of BBC judges from BBC New Media, BBC Radio Cornwall, BBC Nations and Regions, BBC Science and BBC Drama and Entertainment.

Figure 10: Audition booths for the iPresenter Scheme, at Virgin Megastore, Liverpool.

'The Guardian' wrote a two page article on the search for its media supplement (Saturday 8 June, 2002). Sensing that the BBC Talent campaign reflected the vogue for 'reality' talent shows the article was titled 'You've had Pop Stars, now try TV Stars'. The writer, John Crace, commented 'After the collapse of ITV Digital, some analysts have predicted doom and gloom for interactive television, claiming it is a bottomless pit that eats money and that there just aren't enough subscribers out there for the service to pay its way' (Crace, 2002: n.p.) Crace concluded by saying how 'everyone seems a little less certain about what it will take to be a presenter across the new platforms. For all its spiel about what they will do, there is still something a little vague, something elusive, about what the BBC says it is looking for'. Professor Steven Barnett offered the view that presenting interactive content might need different types of skills:

> We're already seeing a transitional stage of presenter on programmes such as
> Radio 5 Live, where hosts not only run the show but answer emails and weave
> listener responses into the fabric of the programme...interactivity is a much more

fluid process and can take the programme into unexpected directions (cited in Crace, 2002, n.p.).

Ariel, the BBC's staff magazine, gave the Interactive Presenter Scheme coverage for two weeks in succession before the launch.

by Morwenna Gordon
Five members of this cheery bunch will be named this week as the very first ipresenters. They will work across television, radio and online, covering entertainment, sports, music and science for an interactive audience.

The BBC Talent search whittled down the thousands of applicants to a final shortlist of 15, 13 of whom are pictured here.

A public vote will determine the people's choice, with the four other winners chosen by a panel comprising director of new media Ashley Highfield, tv presenter Gail Porter and agent Samira Higham.

Once the winners are revealed, they will be taken to the interactive studio in Bush House to interview a celebrity live online. Samantha Mumba, James Gooding and Chris Eubank are already lined up to take part.

To participate in the public vote and to see profiles of the 15 finalists, visit: www.bbc.co.uk/ipresenters

Figure 10: 'Ariel', 11th October, 2002

As a final twist one of the contracts was given to the auditionee who had attracted the most votes on the BBC Talent website, re-enforcing the framing of the scheme as a marketing device. The BBC was positioning itself as a promoter of talent and the iPresenter Scheme was being marketed as a text in itself. The similarities to the BBC's 'Fame Academy ' which was running at the time and 'Popstars: The Rivals', which had just completed its run on television, are obvious; the Interactive Presenter Scheme used the construct of reality television.

To summarise the findings on BBC Talent and the nationwide trawl for five 'Interactive Presenters':

- The Interactive Presenter Scheme was the product of a Masters Dissertation which was expanded by its author, Angie Stephenson, into a major BBC initiative which intended to grow a talent base at the BBC which was broader than the traditional intellectual feeding grounds of 'Oxbridge'. The idea appealed to Greg Dyke's vision of a talented, diverse, BBC and to his management style.

- The Interactive Presenter Scheme was a text in itself, evocative of reality television and using the same constructs, particularly during the talent trawl and launch. The mechanism for the auditions was also innovative, embodying the 'character' or strategic mission for the BBC New Media Division.

- The actual aims for the Interactive Presenters when they arrived were considered vague, however it promoted the idea that the BBC was foregrounding interactive television, considered by many to be a 'bottomless pit that eats money'.

- The Interactive Presenter Scheme was indicative of the BBC's increasing move towards having formal partnerships with suitable organisations. In addition to, the Window of Creative Competition, 'the BBC has proposed a range of partnerships in content, production and distribution which are the subject of engagement with other broadcasters' (DCMS, 2009:13). Since 2004 the Corporation has explored partnerships for research and development with other large organisations such as IBM (Stokes, 2007).

BBC New Media's aims for the Interactive Presenter Scheme

My Fieldwork Diary shows 'discussions continue about what to do with the iPresenters once they have been found! Who owns them' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 8 August, 2002). In an meeting between Ashley Highfield and the Producer of the Interactive Presenter Scheme the Director of New Media stated his aims for the scheme echoed those of BBC Talent which was to show the public that BBCi was 'democratic and that people off the street' could become presenters in new media (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 10 April, 2003). In fact three of the five iPresenters had experience of presenting, two had presented commercial radio programmes, one iPresenter had been a contestant on 'Survivor', a well-known reality television series, one had working in television as a production assistant, leaving only one iPresenter who qualified as being 'off the street'. Great efforts

were made during the selection process to avoid 'Oxbridge' graduates and the recruitment included a half-day workshop which was intended to select candidates who were new to broadcasting, but who had the right personality profile. The workshops were organised in conjunction with the BBC's 'Occupational Psychology' department 'psychologists who are specifically employed by the BBC to assess people when hiring (if required, mostly it's not). This is a training and development scheme run by BBC Talent so we have to hire using their rules' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 10 July, 2002). The culture of the BBC Talent department was different from that of BBC New Media.

The iPresenters were placed within the BBCi Connect department. BBCi Connect was created in December, 2001 to build the BBC's new social media technology. The Interactive Presenter Scheme therefore did not match the aims of Connect from the beginning. The Head of Connect said he believed the scheme was largely a training initiative '[we have] to give them the experience, training and knowledge...about the interactive space in general' (Head of Connect, Interview, 9 December, 2002). He expressed the hope the public might begin to identify with the iPresenters seeing them as 'the anti-geek, someone in the corner you can wander over to and say how do I use this mouse or how do I contribute to a message board'". This was placing the iPresenters as offering customer relationship management rather than being celebrities and he was also framing the iPresenters as receiving knowledge from the BBC rather than the iPresenters being able to contribute. The Head of Development at BBC New Media felt the iPresenters should pioneer new techniques to help the audience participate, 'getting people more familiar, more comfortable about interacting' (Head of Development, Interview, 10 December, 2002). This was a more optimistic view of the incoming iPresenters and one which offered an opportunity for a more reciprocal exchange of knowledge.

A third manager, the Head of Content, BBC New Media, felt the aim of the scheme was to 'give the feeling that BBCi is created by real people' and that the role would be 'being an intermediary between the digital space and the real world computers'. (Head of Content, Interview, 14 January, 2003). This framed the iPresenters as digital mediators

who would work somewhere within the user-interfaces, humanising the technology in some way for engagers. The Head of Content had an additional aim for the Interactive Presenter Scheme which the others had not mentioned, that was to explore how to integrate social media into the BBC's web pages. This could be perceived as a technical rather than an 'editorial' problem as the social media were 'driven' by content management production systems and the BBC's web pages were still 'hand-coded' in html. The iPresenters were being asked to achieve objectives which were both editorially and technically challenging. Five placements were also organised by the Interactive Presenter Scheme Producer for each of the iPresenters with 'Top of the Pops', 'BBC London', 'So' (the brand offering content for teenagers online), 'Celebdaq', and 'Onion Street' (a website for school children). All the receiving departments were keen for the iPresenters to host their online communities and to do live chats.

Findings on the manager's aims for the Interactive Presenters and the Interactive Presenter Scheme:

- The managers hoped the iPresenters would be someone to represent the audience, 'someone off the street' who was just like them. The iPresenters would also show BBCi was created by 'real people' like the audience themselves. The iPresenters were therefore seen as 'translators' who would draw together BBC producers and the audience, showing they had qualities and interests in common.
- There was a strong customer relationship management element to the role. The iPresenters would be someone the audience could approach for technical help, but also there was a proactive element to the role, 'getting people more comfortable with interacting'.
- There was a production element to the role, that of integrating the BBC's social media into the web pages, however without technical help and some global strategy leading this, it would be difficult to implement.
- The managers in BBC New Media were leaving the, more junior, production staff and the iPresenters to find out how to deliver the interactive relationship, how it would work in detail.

- There was a dual message from the managers that this was both an opportunity for creative exploration but that the six month scheme was also training.

The BBCi Studio: a symbol and aspiration towards future media

In the winter of 2002, just before the iPresenters arrived, BBC New Media held the first conference for its staff some of whom were based in Belfast, Cardiff and Glasgow. The assembled Division numbered just over 2,000 staff by that time (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, October, 2002). They crowded into a cavernous conference room to hear presentations from a podium and to view the work of different teams at two rows of booths to one side of the room. The guest of honour Greg Dyke climbed up the Olympic-style rostra to stand on a lower step the Director of New Media stayed in position on the top step. Dyke looked towards the furthest parts of the room with one hand shielding his eyes and, after a very long pause, said the Director of New Media was getting 'far too tall' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, October, 2002). By hosting a day which offered demonstrations on the new content and technologies being produced by the Division to the Director General of the BBC a clear statement was being made, that this was the Division which would transform the BBC, something which Greg Dyke believed was of paramount importance. But this was also a territorial move which aimed to demonstrate that BBC New Media was intending to remain the 'home' of interactivity within the BBC despite the growth of new media departments across the Corporation.

Georgina Born expressed Dyke's aims for a digital BBC as being to 'tempt viewers by enabling them to see what digital offers, without pre-empting the future pattern of viewing, while creating a presence in the markets for children and young people so as to resist any possible marginalisation' (Born, 2004: 486). The idea was to create new genres of programming on new platforms in order to test what services were attractive to licence fee payers. It was to provide small amounts of innovative content directed at the right audiences at the right time. Successful services would then be expanded quickly at the point in the adoption curve where the BBC might be first to market, ahead of commercial rivals. The BBCi studio, it was hoped, would find favour with Greg Dyke and show that BBC New Media was an innovative Division, 'The [Live Chat] team got a

computer generated model of the studio to send to agents, to get them to give their talent. It was a fly through. Item on Tomorrow's World? Aim is to influence ExCo. [the BBC's Executive Committee] and Greg Dyke' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, April, 2002).

The location of the BBCi studio was at the New Media headquarters in the Aldwych London, a building situated on an island in the middle of a flow of fast traffic which would have a significant impact on the studio. It was located within a section of the ground floor of the building ('Bush House') in three parts, firstly an area called 'The Creative Space' which had whiteboard walls for meetings and brainstorming. Secondly there was a 'control room' for interactive television defined by a bank of computers at which webmaster/engineers worked. Additional streams for interactive television were managed from here, as well as the data streams feeding the Red Button screen overlays. A third area was dedicated to the glass-walled studio where the live chats and the developmental workshops with the iPresenters took place every Wednesday morning.

The glass-walled studio, next to 'The Creative Space' and the control room for interactive television had a studio and a gallery, following the practice common to both television and radio. The 'gallery' was outside the glass windows framing the studio, with two computers used by the production team to produce the Internet Relay Chat text stream and the accompanying video stream. The video and text streams were not synchronised with the text arriving to the audience 30 seconds in advance of the video. Inside the studio, which had glass on three sides, there were three further computers, one which accepted questions as they came in live from the public, and one which was used by a typist who entered the guest's replies. Two small cameras on stands were used to video the guest and provide two types of shots, and therefore some simple production of the vision-led side of the event. The studio had 'television studio style' lighting and a talkback system so the production team in the gallery could talk to the cameramen and to the host or presenter of the live chat.

Figure 12: A live chat with Barbara Windsor during the launch of the BBCi studio

At the back of the studio an LED screen could be programmed to promote further live chats coming up or it could show the questions coming in live from the public, either via IRC or from the public standing outside in the street via SMS Texting on their mobile phones. The idea was to create crowds outside the studio and to connect those crowds directly with the celebrities or experts being interviewed.

Figure 13: The press are invited to see the new BBCi Studio

Plasma screens showing BBCi web and interactive television content were attached to the glass windows, with touch pads enabling the audience outside to change channels and to browse. Other screens showed previous and future attractions on BBCi with the content scheduled by BBCi marketing.

Figure 14: The public 'interact' through the glass window

The new studio was innovative, however there were problems, firstly, as has been said, the location of the studio was an island in the middle of a circular road with high levels of traffic, including lorries and buses all around, cutting it off from people who might have walked past the glass windows. A series of bus stops were also immediately outside the window. However it was interesting to observe over the following year how school girls and boys from local London schools began to assemble outside the window for live chats with their favourite bands if the chat was in the evening after school. The children subscribed to a mailing list about the daily live chats with celebrities and experts, which the live chat team sent out every week. The second problem facing the iStudio was internet was not fast enough to show video streaming in quality and the text and video elements were not synchronised.

From the street it was possible to see activity going on during the day and often during the evenings. If a live chat was not in progress, then one or two webmaster/engineers working on the interactive television feeds could be viewed working at computers. The channel outputs were provided for them on banks of screens above their workstations.

Figure 15: The control room for BBCi

The control room appears amateurish, and rather 'retro', evoking the early days of television or perhaps designed to emphasise the fact that the new BBC production methods were uncluttered, nimble, and potentially even portable. The large windows were intended to offer a spectacle which would foster interest in BBCi and the work of the BBC New Media Division, but there was little organisation of visually stimulating public-facing activities, visual images or sense of theatricality. The BBCi studio was, however, the first attempt to create a new kind of mixed media studio for the Internet, designed for streaming 'rich media' such as video and animation. The studio was also

attempting to narrow the separation between what was television and what was online televisual media, therefore it was ahead of its time and build before the internet was sufficiently developed to offer a reasonable experience for most BBC licence fee payers. As a potential innovation for the BBC, the BBCi studio received much internal publicity. The press were offered tours around the new studio resulting in an in depth review by Internet Magazine which took up a section of the December edition of the magazine, 'it was the brainchild of Ashley Highfield, the BBC's director of new media and technology...inspired by NBC TV's studio of Rockerfeller Plaza in New York, he came up with the idea for an interactive studio' (Internet Magazine, 1 December, 2002). The studio also received much internal BBC publicity in *Ariel,* the staff magazine.

Figure 16: Announcement in Ariel on the opening of the BBCi studio

Tony Poston reported in *Ariel* (3 September, 2002) in a full-page, front page, article entitled 'Watching us Watching You' that

Highfield hoped that the studio would lead to new media developing interactive programme formats of its own, as well as providing interactive elements for other departments' programmes, such as *The Oscars* and *Test The Nation*. (Poston, 2002: 1).

An information sheet was also produced for the press and BBC producers.

The BBCi studio allows the public to get up close and personal and interact with their favourite stars and programme presenters. From the street they can watch and listen to celebrity guests, text in questions and see the replies there and then on the screen visible from outside...The interactive window gives the public the chance to explore the very best of our live digital television services by using the heat sensitive pads on the surface of the window....But the space isn't just on display for inquisitive passers by; you also have the chance to propose guests for the studio for your own live and interactive broadcasts. There's no better way to give your audience the opportunity to get involved whilst adding more value to your programme content (BBCi Marketing, 2002a).

Figure 17:   Live Chat with Greg Dyke in the BBCi studio, 2003

One of the iPresenters interviewed the Director General of the BBC, Greg Dyke, when the BBC's *Annual Report and Accounts* were published (BBC, 2003). The live chats had been run without a presenter before the Interactive Presenter Scheme began, the mediation between the guest and the audience, who sent in questions in real time, was by one of the live chat production team who acted as a host/question-picker. Sometimes the host was on camera and sometimes it was a 'text only' event. A typist typed the answers from the guest and a producer in the 'gallery' outside the studio (two computers on two desks) produced the chat.

The BBCi studio cost 'under £1 million' and took over a year to build, a large investment for the Division. In August 2002, in preparation for the launch of the studio, the marketing and communications team wrote a second pamphlet for producers and the press which indicated the BBCi studio would

> ...provide a window on the world to New Media...The studio also provides BBCi
> with a showcase of its output. Bringing all the exciting and modern elements of
> new media and broadcasting to the fore. The studio will be leading edge

reflecting the brand values of BBCi which in turn give credit back to the BBC for being at the forefront of innovation and technology (BBCi Marketing, 2002).

The pamphlet capitalised the words 'New Media' indicating that the marketers were referring to the Division not the medium; BBC New Media would continue to lead the rest of the BBC providing new media genres of programming situated within the first studio designed for multimedia production.

The findings on the BBCi studio:

- The BBC New Media Division had increased in size to over 2,000 employees by 2004, and as it was leading the rest of the BBC towards new technology, something which had been identified by Greg Dyke as being essential. The Division was therefore in a powerful position and they aimed to provide, and were providing, innovative and ambitious solutions for the rest of the BBC. Many of the BBC New Media Divisions solutions have been successful, such as the BBC iPlayer, but several have failed.
- The BBCi studio was impractical and it was not able to deliver interactive television via the internet as the internet was too slow.
- As a way to publicise the BBC New Media Division by attracting crowds the glass-walled BBCi studio failed as it was situated on an island surrounded by fast moving traffic. A further problem was the studio was not situated at Television Centre or Broadcasting House where the expert and celebrity guests were situated.

Launching the BBCi Studio and the Interactive Presenter Scheme

A launch party was organised for the BBCi Studio, and it was expanded to include the Interactive Presenter Scheme. The manager of the Talent Trawl was asked to stay on and work with BBCi Marketing to organise a joint event, 'meeting to discuss the studio launch (which ends up being one and the same as the iPresenter party). September press launch is wanted' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 11 April, 2002). The guest list included the national and local press, producers from other BBC departments and independent

producers. It was a big affair, with a large marquee and artificial lawns laid out in the car park of Bush House. The evening took a Japanese theme which extended to oriental cocktails and sushi served from waiters on roller-skates. Guests were invited from both inside and outside the BBC including press and industry figures. The most style-conscious agency in London at the time, 'Wallpaper', were hired to create the event which was intended to say to the rest of the BBC that BBC New Media, as a BBC Division, had arrived. In effect, this was also the launch of BBCi as a brand, therefore the style guide was important as it embodied the qualities BBC Managers believed BBCi should have: 'urban, aspirational, diverse, connecting, glamorous, challenging, interactive' (Clarke, 2002).

The brief produced for the agency was determinedly fashionable suggesting something which would be more akin to the marketing of commercial broadcasting.

> The 'i' in *iPresenters* and *BBCi* stands for 'interactive' in the sense of interactive media and technologies (...) BBCi's culture is self-reflexive and hip...the event needs to reflect this. Think: Nintendo Gamecube, not Xbox, *Heat*, not *Vanity Fair*, Alex from 'Big Brother', not Sandy, Japanese turntablism, not drum 'n' bass (Clarke, 2002).

The resulting event colonised most of the ground floor of Bush House and television presenter Ed Hall linked the proceedings. The BBCi Studio was officially opened with live chats, presented by the five new iPresenters, with Barbara Windsor, James Gooding, Samantha Mumba, Ed Hall and Chris Eubank as the celebrity guests. Each of the live chats were produced for both the BBC's narrowband and broadband websites, at that time there were two BBC websites built in different ways to suit what was becoming a two speed Internet as only 2.5 million people had subscribed to a broadband service at that time (Crabtree and Roberts, 2003). Far from generating the kind of media coverage the BBCi marketing team had intended, the event was criticised in *Broadcast* (Broadcast, 25 October, 2002) under the strapline 'Starry iBash not a hit with World'. The article described how 'BBC World Service staff...were mightily disgruntled by the shindig. They

were given no invites, left with nowhere to park their bikes, but were most peeved that the corporation chose to splash the cash on a party rather than their pay-rises' (Broadcast, 2002). The World Service staff, who shared the building with BBC New Media, dress and behaved differently from the young new media producers, developers and coders. They took the opportunity to express their view that the young Division was behaving in a way which they felt was not acceptable for the public service broadcaster.

Findings on the launch of the BBCi Studio and the Interactive Presenter Scheme:
- The launch event reflected BBC New Media's wish to be perceived as the 'home' of interactivity at the BBC.
- The launch party was marketing the BBC New Media Division through the twin vehicles of the BBCi studio and the Interactive Presenter Scheme.

Presenting BBCi

The iPresenters were welcomed into the BBC in December, 2002 by the Head of 'Connect' department. The new Interactive Presenters expected to be given an overview of BBCi and some idea of how they were going to assist the BBC to present the brand. During his welcome speech however a surprising and a new emphasis was proposed; the Interactive Presenter scheme was being framed as 'training'. There was little mention of the iPresenters being 'the face of BBCi'. The presenter's diaries show they were, however, highly enthusiastic, 'this is the best job in the world, and I'm immensely excited. Everyone is really wonderful to work with and I'm so proud to be working for the BBC as one of the world's first iPresenters' (iPresenter 'Lucy', *Diary* December, 2002). Each iPresenter had received a welcoming letter from the Director of New Media which included the phrase 'investing in the future together'; one of the male iPresenters said 'That makes me feel good. I hope the contract will exceed six months' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 5 January, 2003).

The Live Chat team in New Media were keen to prove they would be producing innovative live events in the new studio. An introductory discussion was organised for the Live Chat team and the iPresenters on interactive presentation. Opinion was divided

on what it actually meant; one of the live chat producers felt the Director of New Media just 'wanted to pick funky faces and young people' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 9 May, 2002). The iPresenters couldn't agree on what 'being the face of BBCi' meant feeling the description was too wide, one of the iPresenters commented that 'being the voice of Radio 4 is easier' (iPresenter, Toby, December, 2002). The personality of BBCi was not communicated to the iPresenters directly at any stage, however a description of the brand values, and therefore the personality of the service, was given as being 'innovative, credible, involving, and straight-talking' (BBCi Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). What BBCi was from both a technology and 'brand' point of view was felt to be unclear, "BBCi is about interactivity not what kind of person you are" was the most final consensus summed up by one of the iPresenters (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 12 December, 2002). One of the Live Chat Producers offered to summarise the discussion and he later assisted with the workshops.

> Our aim is not to create Parkinson or Richard and Judy on the web. The emphasis will no longer be on just the guest and the interviewer as in traditional media. There's now a very important third party in the equation: the audience. [The iPresenter's] role, which is crucial, is to maximise their participation and bring out the best in this triangular relationship' (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 12 December, 2002).

From the marketing literature produced at the time BBCi was described as '"creating connectivity", something which expands the role of the BBC beyond simply "broadcaster"'. The aspiration was BBCi would 'uncover' the digital world for audiences and provide 'unexpected content' which would be relevant and useful to audiences; 'interactivity with ease'. (BBCi Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). It was hoped that audiences would also get an emotional benefit from engaging with BBCi, such as being stimulated, enlightened, entertained and surprised. The concept of BBCi was expressed as 'BBCi is the name for the BBC's interactive services on the web, digital TV, and mobile phones. Now I can access information and entertainment wherever, whenever and however I want' (Discovery, 2002, n.p.).

The iPresenters and the Live Chat team were unclear what BBCi included, whether it was the website, the Red Button services and interactive television. BBCi Marketing noted that BBCi extended across the digital text services, video highlights, interactive programmes, navigation, split screen and full screen television effects on scheduled BBC television, 'real-time information' (such as the BBC news 'Ticker'), and any other 'access points to the BBC' (BBCi Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). The perceived benefits of BBCi for audiences was choice, control, and accessing something which kept audiences 'up to date' with what was going on. BBCi would also offer the ability to connect and to catch up (BBCi Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). Other benefits were given as being the ability to enjoy a 'deeper experience', to participate and to access tools which 'enhanced viewing'. BBCi was felt to be modern, dynamic, interactive and up to date; able to offer immediacy (BBCi Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). Overall it was hoped that the use of the brand BBCi would motivate audiences to access content across different new media platforms.

BBC Marketing's descriptions didn't include examples how the audience were going to engage with BBCi nor what participatory activities were available. There were many 'islands' of audience participation which existed by 2003, however they were not integrated with the web pages or the Red Button Service, which was indicative of the perception of user-generated content as being of variable quality at that time. There were over 300 message boards, several live chats and chat rooms every week, 36 'Where I Live' websites accompanying the BBC Local Radio stations which each had a conversation area for the public and 'H2G2' the online community which aggregated around Douglas Adams 'Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy'. There were several archives of public content such as the new 'Video Nation' website, an archive of public memories on World War 2, and a digital storytelling project from BBC Wales. BBC News offered two fairly extensive 'email and publish' services called 'Talking Point' and 'Have Your Say' where the public could leave comments. Finally there were blogs, two blogs from staff in BBC Scotland, 'Scotblog 'and 'Up All Night' and a project encouraging a series of bloggers called 'The Island Blogs' which aimed to connect communities living on the small Scottish islands together (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, February 20 2003). The amount of

audience engagement was growing significantly; the message boards had experienced a three-fold growth every year from 1998 onwards. A new message board system had been launched and it was processing 111 posts per minute at peak times, 40,000 posts per day, and an average of 3,333 posts every hour. This traffic rose to 120,000 posts per day in 2004, and increased again to 360,000 posts in 2005 (1,000 per minute at peak time) (WebUser, BBC Gateway, 2003-2005).

Findings on the brand BBCi:

- As all the BBC's production Divisions extended their new media production departments and teams the idea that the BBC New Media Davison remained the 'home' of interactivity was being increasingly contested. BBCi was a brand created and owned by the BBC New Media Division in 2002. It was intended to indicate the presence of 'interactive' content across the BBC, thereby re-positioning BBC New Media as 'owning' interactivity. BBCi was therefore highly significant and strategically important from an institutional perspective. It was underlined in all BBCi publicity that BBCi was the name for the BBC's interactive services on the web, digital TV, and mobile phones.

- The function of BBCi was not clear despite the brand being efficiently marketed (on television). BBCi would be 'creating connectivity' and the ability to participate and to access tools. The inference was that BBCi was moving the BBC beyond being simply a broadcaster to also providing 'interactivity with ease' and the ability to access content in the way audiences wanted to receive it.

The Live Chat team and the Interactive Presenters

The Live Chat team decided they wanted to integrate an Interactive Presenter into their live chats, turning what had been a largely technologically mediated live experience into something with performativity. There was a culture clash on the second workshop, the Live Chat team felt questions should be put to the guest in their 'natural' order, that is, how they arrived at the Live Chat content management production system (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 18 December, 2002). The Live Chat team also advised the iPresenters to

'shift from a TV interview mentality...the iPresenter should be a vessel...not the 'star' of the show' (Jackson, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002). It was not clear therefore how to incorporate the iPresenters into the live event, 'how and when do we incorporate them in the text i.e. if a question is asked at the beginning of the chat, does this take precedence over the users?' (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002). The iPresenters, however, wanted to mediate the event, to editorialise and shape the chats, 'I know the idea is to bring the community closer to the programme, but for entertainment value wouldn't they rather watch a well-structured interview than a series of unrelated user questions?' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 9 February, 2003).

Over the workshops the workshop participants found a compromise situation, the iPresenter organised an introduction to 'frame' the experience as originating from professionals, yet the middle sections of the chat retained an element of serendipity and surprise with 'good' questions from the audience being put through to the guest via the presenter. The iPresenter vocalised the question on behalf of the member of the public, putting the question to the guest to give coherence to the video side of the live event. For the accompanying text stream any question chosen by the 'question-picker' as being worthy of putting to the guest was 'posted' in to the live chat by the live chat producer. This gave the producers come control of the production. To orientate the public it was agreed the 'set up and wraps' (pre-prepared text which was cut and pasted into the chat to help orientate the audience) would continue. The 'set up and wraps' had the same function as 'stings' in radio (short bursts of the presenter's name and the programme, overlaying music to grab the audiences' attention). They consisted of phrases such as 'we have with us today' or 'just time for one last question' for example. The iPresenters did a final 'wrap' at the end of the chat similar to the 'sign offs' found on television or radio which thanked the guest and recommended other BBC content which might also interest the audience joining in (*Video Transcript*, 12 December, 2002).

All the workshop participants agreed it was important to 'continually acknowledge the audience by speaking their names and by thanking them for the questions', in this way making the connection between the studio, those participating, and those who might be

'lurking' (*Video Transcript*, 12 December, 2002). This resonated strongly with Paddy Scannell's analysis of the participants for sociable broadcasts: '(1) a host, (2) participant-performers, (3) a live audience, and (4) absent listeners and viewers' (Scannell, 1996: 24). What was new was the audience to audience connectivity and the audience having greater control of the broadcast. An examination of the live chat text and the email feedback showed participating audiences wanted to have proof that the event was really live (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 14 December, 2002). If they performed an action they wanted to experience a corresponding and immediate reaction from the producers or the guest. The fact that the presenter/guest to audience and back to the presenter/guest could be completed and also demonstrated live was highly exciting for the audience. During live chats members of the audience would send in questions which asked for signs from the iPresenter that the event was 'really live', the iPresenters would then wave to the camera and cite the enquirer's name as proof.

A typical live chat got around 1,000 questions over either an hour or half hour and a high traffic live chat might receive up to 16-17,000 questions (BBC WebUser, 2002). It was therefore impossible for the live chat team to provide anything other than an automated response back to most of the participating audience. For a live chat where a much larger audience was expected the producers often launched a series of chat rooms to offer audience to audience chat for engagers while they were waiting for their question to be answered from the celebrity or expert guest (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary* 12 December, 2002). A transcript of the live event and the video file was always put up on the Live Chat website a day later, extending the experience (to some degree) for audiences. The Live Chat producers wanted to extend the live event across time partly to show managers high audience figures didn't necessary reflect who was joining in over time. Audience figures could then be aggregated to show that although the live event was a narrowcast rather than a broadcast, the audience figures when aggregated were potentially high and potentially ongoing if people accessed the content several times. This follows the business model articulated by Chris Anderson, of *Wired Magazine* as 'The Long Tail', '(1) the tail of available variety is far longer than we realise, (2) it's now

within reach economically, (3) all those niches, when aggregated, can make up a significant market' (Anderson, 2007:10).

Findings on the Live Chat team and the iPresenters:

- There were territorial issues on the 'ownership' of the 'improved live chats' between the Live Chat producers and the iPresenters. The Live Chat producers believed they 'owned' the studio and the Interactive Presenters felt they 'owned' the mediation of the Live Chat experience by human agency.
- There was a separation of approaches towards live online events. The Live Chat producers constructed the events around the newest and best questions from the audience whereas the iPresenters foregrounded an editorialised experience led by a previously organised narrative.
- The Live Chat producers were being asked by their managers to prove the popularity of their live chats events through the number of simultaneous engagers, the method traditionally used for broadcasting and mass media activities, rather than by using 'Long Tail' measures over time which were more suitable for a participatory service.

'Selling' interactive presentation to Producers

The next series of workshops involved producers from the Red Button services on interactive television. The aim was to find out whether the iPresenters could present on the video loops within the text service and if this was possible, what kind of presentation might be helpful or useful. The workshops showed the Red Button technology was not able to offer a video loop for interactive presentation as there were also only four video loops of thirty second duration available to the iPresenters. Two of the video loops were reserved for BBC News and there was an additional queue of departments who were waiting to use the slots.

Red Button Producer: "At the moment for the first phase of the re-launch it's only going to be the news loops and (pause) it's not possible to have, at the

moment, because it requires so much bandwidth, it's not possible to have a sort of series of them."

iPresenter: "And that's it for the whole of BBCi?"

(The producer looks pensive, she is not sure)

Red Button Producer: "The loops....um..."
(*Video Transcript*, 17 April, 2003 – available for viewing in the Appendix, 'Video Loops').

As the loops were so short it is clear the wish to offer video online was outstripping the opportunities which could be technically provided. An additional problem for the iPresenters was the fact that several different versions of the Red Button services had to be produced to suit satellite, cable and digital terrestrial television. In order to accommodate links or video from the iPresenters at least four different versions of any package or clip would need to be incorporated into the Red Button overlays.

The series of sessions with the BBCi Marketing team was contracted into one, with an audience research manager. The findings from a recent audience research study on the audience perception of BBCi, *Project Communicate*, (BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003b) were presented and it was hoped ways could be found on how the iPresenters could 'become the new faces of BBCi' (BBC Talent, 2001: n.p.). The audience study had been undertaken to find out why the audience were having problems identifying BBCi and why the audience was not using the Red Button service in particular. The Audience Research Manager explained the findings clearly showed audiences 'wanted and needed a clear explanation of what interactivity is' but he then contradicted himself by saying '"Big Brother" has set a precedent of what interactivity is, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" has also been pretty successful, everyone gets what it is' (*Video Transcript*, 20 March, 2003). His personal view of the internet was that it was not particularly useful and that chat rooms were for the young. The report had found

interactive television was the most positive direction for the BBC as audiences can 'see more logic in TV than in the internet' (*Video Transcript*, 20 March, 2003). The audience research manager continued that the *Project Communicate* report (BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003b) felt the solution was to simplify the message about BBCi, 'shorter is normally better you know 'press the red button', 'press the red button here'; make sure it's a phrase that's understandable in it's own right and not a new piece of jargon' (*Video Transcript*, 20 March, 2003). In contrast the audience study on 'Celebdaq' showed the 'Celebdaq' Traders had a high level of understanding of the internet and of how to participate online.

The research manager felt the way interactivity was referred to by presenters might not be helpful, 'if you say the programme is interactive you are kind of saying it has a red button service rather than is it a programme you can participate in …which is why Joe Public is so confused' (*Video Transcript*, 20 March, 2003). The decision had also been made to work with 'familiar faces, or faces that will become familiar. At the moment they use well-known people and familiar voices to the BBC. It helps people and makes the thing seem essential and effective (he mumbles and becomes indistinct, and the iPresenters nod and look resigned)' (*Video Transcript*, 20 March, 2003). This unexpected pronouncement had a visible effect; the iPresenters decided to ask for more training and they began working on a showreel which they hoped would help them get work after their contracts ended.

The workshops with *Video Nation* were intended to find out if the iPresenters could host a weekly round up of the best video shorts, reflecting the mood of the Nation.

> Presenters/hosts could create a voting environment, by asking people to log on and view 5 nominated shorts, which they would introduce on TV. Viewers would select which one they wanted to see and text them with their choice and reasons why. An hour later the host would inform the public of why a particular short had been selected and screen it (*Video Transcript*, 17 January, 2003).

The iPresenters were not attracted by the proposition, firstly because this was not a 'job' and secondly because they did not want to change the role of the presenter to the extent that they became producers overseeing content from the public, 'I don't think assisting other people to film stuff themselves is going to help me develop as a presenter' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 3 April, 2003). It became clear over the six months that this position would be untenable in new media as the production staff were beginning to be multi-skilled, something which was likely to be re-enforced by the impending redundancies, budget reductions and a move towards creating converged, multimedia, departments. Two weeks after the last session with 'Video Nation' iPresenter 'Stuart' had changed his view on insisting on presentation being separate from production, 'the value of an iPresenter can now be demonstrated by our willingness and ability to master several different elements of the broadcast – to be the one-person production unit' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 16 April, 2003). In the intervening two weeks the iPresenters had spent a day with a Broadcast Journalist at BBC Oxford who had researched, recorded, edited, presented, mixed and played out a video feature during her working day.

Findings:
- The Red Button technology was not suitable for 'in vision' interactive presentation as the number of video loops were restricted. There were therefore no opportunities for the Interactive Presenters to present on one of BBCi's most important services.
- The role of the presenter was being increasingly combined with that of the producer in new media. This converging of roles was not isolated to new media as production staff working in 'old' media were also becoming 'one person production units'.

The increasing lure of video on demand

Video on demand was new to BBC producers in 2003, this was clearly evident during the workshop brainstorming the 'Celebdaq' console; iPresenter 'Stuart' draws the multimedia console on a flip chart, he explains one segment will be on how to play 'Celebdaq'.

> Broadband Producer: Put VOD.
> Stuart: Sorry?
> Broadband Producer: VOD, Video on Demand
>
> (*Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003. Available in the Appendix as video clip: 'Celebdaq Multimedia Console').

The BBCi studio, the experiments with video loops on the BBCi Red Button service, and the creation of the multimedia console for 'Celebdaq' on broadband were all evidence of the BBC's first steps to offer increasing amounts of video both online and on other new distribution platforms (such as the Red Button, and later, mobile phones). In 2003 the demand from production staff across the BBC to be able to put up video clips on their websites became so great that the BBC's webmasters began to operate a quota system, with each production department being allocated an amount of bandwidth per week or month (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, February, 2003). Not having enough bandwidth was one of the main problems for the BBCi studio; it had been created to explore mixed media production methods and convergence however there problems coupling the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) with streamed video (the video often lagged up to 30 seconds behind the text as the internet was too slow) and the approach to televisual media was amateur at times, 'it became apparent that all of us were unhappy about the set. For a futuristic studio, the backdrop is pretty poor' (iPresenter 'Tracy', *Diary*, 30 January, 2003). The aim of the BBCi studio was to provide models of new forms of interactive televisual experiences for the rest of the BBC, something which was impractical and unachievable due to the technology and the level of expertise. What the Live Chat team and the iPresenters did bring, however, was a willingness to experiment and 'break rules'. As time went on it was noticeable that the Live Chat team became more courageous and

experimental and the iPresenters became more institutionalised. The BBCi Studio was trying to achieve programming which was not technically possible, YouTube did not launch until February, 2005 (YouTube, 2009: n.p.); the BBCi studio was three years in advance of an internet capable of carrying such programming.

This problem of bandwidth would increasingly plague the BBC over the following years. After the launch of the BBC iPlayer in December 2006, the managers of the service were asked by Internet Service Providers in the UK (August 2007 and again in March 2008) to foot part of the bill for new servers as their customers were demanding more bandwidth due to the popularity of the BBC iPlayer. A blog post on The Guardian Online, *ISPs warn BBC over iPlayer bandwidth use*, from Jack Schofield on 13 August 2007 said UK Internet Service Providers were having talks on how to approach the BBC. The blog post quotes Mary Turner, chief executive of Tisali UK, 'The internet was not set up with a view to distributing video. We have been improving our capacity, but the bandwidth we have is not infinite' (Scholfield, 2007).

In 2009 the BBC announced plans to develop 'a standards based open environment for internet connected television devices' (BBC Trust, 2009: n.p.), 'Project Canvas' which will be matched by a similar project Hulu.com in the USA (www.hulu.com), the details of both are as yet unclear. What is clear is that this is in response to a further decline in terrestrial television broadcasting. Techradar.com, a trend-analysis company cited a recent report by Coda Research Consultancy who believed that 'by 2015, VOD will increase four-fold across both TV on-demand services and via PCs, whilst linear (or live TV) viewing will decline by 15 per cent' (Coda Research in Techradar.com: 2009).

Findings:
- The BBCi Studio was not capable of delivering interactive televisual experiences online. This was due to several factors, the Live Chat team did not have sufficient professional experience, the studio did not have the right technology and the internet was not fast enough to offer audiences a good enough experience.

- Video on demand was new to the BBC and it was experimenting in different ways with this new form from video loops on the BBC Red Button, to video embedded in web pages, by experimenting with video in the BBCi studio and finally by creating the first multimedia consoles which would become the BBC iPlayer.
- There was a strong wish to offer as much video as possible from producers across the BBC, however the restrictions on bandwidth within the BBC imposed by the BBC's webmasters and technical infrastructure, and the overall speed of the internet in the UK, held back innovation in new forms of televisual media for the BBC.

The fall of the iPresenters

The Interactive Presenter Scheme began with a large launch party which also launched the new BBCi studio at the headquarters of the BBC New Media Division. On Wednesday 15 January, 2003, the iPresenters had presented their work to producers in BBC Children's (at their request) and their ideas were well received, although only four workshop sessions and a small range of Live Chats with the iPresenters had as yet taken place. In the 'thank you' at the end of the presentation the organiser acknowledged that BBC Children's presenters and producers 'have a lot to learn from the iPresenter Scheme as they are embracing interactivity pan-platform, not just in TV' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 15 January, 2003). The iPresenters themselves were not so confident in what they were expected to do, 'feel that we need to sit down and outline a clear approach to what we say to people about iPresenters without telling people that we are "clueless" and that we are having to make opportunities for ourselves' (iPresenter 'Toby', *Diary*, 10 December, 2002).

For the first four months of the scheme, December 2002 to the end of March 2003, the Interactive Presenters had high expectations of a future career with the BBC. They were also excited about going on their placements with 'BBC London', 'Top of the Pops', 'Onion Street', and 'So'. There was interest in the iPresenters from different departments across the BBC, the reason was often because the producers were keen for the 'iPs' to take over the participatory elements of their websites; 'first day at TOTP! Wicked! Had a meeting

with Rob, about what they want me do exactly at TOTP; will be the Community Face, and basically TOTP's iPresenter, also hosting the message boards' (iPresenter 'Lucy', *Diary*, 11 December, 2002). One of the largest live broadcasts in the BBC's year was 'Comic Relief', the 'iPs' were highly excited when they were approached by the producer to host live chats with celebrities throughout the programme (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 5 February, 2003). This gave the iPresenters the feeling that they were offering something new and that they were being given a high profile, live, slot to work within and via which they could promote themselves. BBC Talent had, however, stopped having any involvement with the scheme once the iPresenters were settled into their placements, something common to all the schemes they ran therefore the iPresenters felt they had been 'left' by one of their sponsors, 'once you're in, you're on your own, and [the BBC] is a big political animal' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 29 May, 2003).

From February 2003 onwards BBC production departments were being informed of budget cuts and the need to make staff redundant, 'There has been a financial sea change and a capping of budgets. Massive changes in BBC strategy and economies' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, February, 2003). The Producer of the iPresenter Scheme and I go round different departments to find out if there is any likelihood of work for them after June, 'see [Editor] at BBC3 online to see if there's any possibilities for the iPresenters – nothing much as they've had a severe budget cut' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 11 February, 2003). A week later a visit to the Science department has the same result, '[Executive Editor] tells me that the Science and nature categories are amalgamating and that there will be redundancies... therefore he doesn't feel he can take on an iPresenter under the circumstances over the same period' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 19 February, 2003).

The Executive Producer from Interactive Factual and Learning expressed to 'Lucy' that he felt another barrier for the iPresenters was because the production departments 'did not feel a shared ownership of the iPresenters' ('Lucy', *Diary*, 15 April, 2003). There was a divide between the BBC New Media Division and the BBC's production divisions which had a link to the historical sense of 'ownership' that BBC New Media had over

'interactivity'. The dynamics of this relationship changed from 1997 to 2007; as expertise in new media expertise in the production divisions grew the 'ownership' of content production passed from BBC New Media and there was an accompanying shift of power and influence.

The Head of Connect in BBC New Media decided to talk to the iPresenters to make their situation clear after the announcements about redundancies and the changes to the strategy of the New Media Division. The fieldwork diary recorded 'the iPresenters have a meeting with [the Head of Connect] in the afternoon. I hear later that he was sitting in a very closed position and looked v uncomfortable. There is unlikely to be any work for them...only freelance work' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 21 February, 2003). The iPresenters subsequently called a meeting at which they expressed 'how angry they are about how they have been duped by the BBC' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 25 February, 2003). A manager from BBC Talent arrived to 'speak to the iPresenters about BBC Talent Schemes and the six month opportunities and what the rules are' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 26 February, 2003). Just over two weeks later the same manager from BBC Talent visited the iPresenters for a second meeting, '[Name of the BBC Talent Executive] visits the iPresenters to see how they are going. They are glum. They each do a list of what they are doing and what they have achieved and learnt' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 13 March, 2003). A mood of despondency is evident in all the iPresenter's diaries, 'it just seems like everyone is working against me. I'm just trying to do my job, and no-one wants to know. Everyone is wrapped up in their own stuff, and we can't get the break we need' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 25 April 03). One month later and 'Stuart' was still despondent about the iPresenter Scheme.

> The first 2 months (of 5) were spent chasing up blind alleys – working really hard to impress departments which eventually said "no" – iF&L [Interactive Factual and Learning], Radio, 50 Things to do before you die etc. Some of these were budgetary issues (iF&L), but some were just people not having the time to take on someone new (and for free!)' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 29 May, 2003).

The iPresenters had given up any thoughts of discovering a role titled an 'Interactive Presenter', it did not exist, however the workshops had identified a range of tasks which people involved in mediating participatory services might do to improve the shared spaces or the live events. 'Lucy' wrote in her diary that 'utilising the iPs to the maximum potential has been a missed opportunity' (iPresenter Lucy, *Diary*, May, 2003).

As the scheme closed one or two of the iPresenters began to feel more cheerful as they found either agents or work. One or two BBC departments had expressed a wish to employ particular iPresenters, 'Interesting meeting with [producer from interactive television, New Media], she loves my ideas, and said "we can't let you go! Your ideas are fab, you must get a job at the BBC." But there is so little time now to mailshot everyone and try for work' (iPresenter 'Lucy', *Diary*, 15 April, 2003). 'Stuart', one of the iPresenters who had given up a well paid job to do the scheme, summarised his experience:

> BBC Talent is a great opportunity for the right people...but it's no easy ride, and once you start, I've seen no evidence that Talent will continue to support you. For the BBC it's just a marketing exercise...[BBC Talent Executive] said herself that "most Talent winners are shoved in a newsroom to make tea and do photocopying for 6 months". Despite all this, believe it or not, I have enjoyed pretty much every day that I have worked here. The main reason is because I have been able to pursue my own agenda, and push myself in the direction I want to go...I now believe this is what BBC Talent is really for – you get in any way you can, and you then use the facilities and contacts to make sure you get the experience and contacts you need' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 29 May, 2003).

One of the iPresenters found permanent presenting work at the BBC, on a technology programme which is both on television and online, one went to the USA to work in television, one is presenting on cable television in the UK, another has returned to her old job and the last ex-iPresenter is running her own recruitment business. In 2004 the Live Chat team was disbanded and the producers were asked to work in other areas within BBC New Media Division building new technology. The BBC iStudio was dismantled when

the BBC New Media Division left Bush House in 2004. The iPresenters felt the developmental production workshops had given them an opportunity to explore new techniques, 'the workshops have been fairly useful, have been our chance to try things and talk about things, and have taught me to think in a different way about presenting' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 29 May, 2003).

Conclusion

The Interactive Presenter Scheme was grafted on to the BBC New Media Division in order to provide publicity for BBC New Media's brand BBCi and to support the launch of a new multimedia studio which aimed to develop new forms of interactive television. From a wider BBC perspective the BBC Talent initiatives were intended to 'democratise' the BBC by promoting the idea that anyone could work for the Corporation. Managers involved in the scheme also had a genuine wish to explore how to offer audiences help with new technology, and there was a wish to encourage audiences to adopt new services such as the Red Button service. The scheme suffered from being given tasks which were impossible to achieve as the technology was not yet able to provide a suitable platform for interactive presentation. Despite this good findings resulted from six months of developmental production workshops which drew together the five Interactive Presenters with producers from across the BBC. The iPresenters also benefited from placements with BBC production departments where they were offered genuinely responsible work experience. The iPresenters also went on training courses which encouraged them to develop skills in presentation, using cameras, journalism and so on.

The BBC New Media Division and the BBC was becoming more business-oriented. BBC Talent fostered partnerships with commercial organisations such as Kellogg's, Odeon Cinemas and Virgin Megastores. The BBC has expanded its partnerships with other organisations over the last ten years and this has been encouraged by Ofcom and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. In 2001 BBC Talent's partnerships and the commercial sponsorship of BBC initiatives were seen as new, radical, and innovative. Innovation was a strategic aim within the BBC New Media Division and there was evidence of a degree of pressure on the Interactive Presenter Scheme to innovate and

provide solutions to large problems, some of which required a high level of technical assistance such as integrating the BBC's online communities into web pages and linear television. This was symptomatic of often over-ambitious aims within the Division in order to retain its position as the 'home' of interactivity at the BBC. Despite these aims the BBC was still exploring what interactivity meant with some production departments being more aware than others. The BBC New Media Live Chat team was still being asked to monitor the success of its online events by the number of simultaneous engagers logging in at the same time, a measurement used by 'old' media, rather than something akin to the new 'Long Tail' measurements of the internet (engagement and activity over time).

There were three specific areas where BBC New Media was keen to do research and development, firstly to explore interactive television and interactivity, secondly to move towards convergence and lastly to offer more 'rich media' (television and audio files) online. The BBC New Media Division was becoming increasingly technologically determinist, focussing on delivering the technology of social media rather than the social activities which existed within shared space environments. This was because the management of the social media had devolved to the production divisions. Because of the territorial issues between the BBC New Media Division and the production divisions the expertise on how audiences engage online began to be separated from the technologists who were building the social media technology in the New Media Division. Separating the two resulted in the need for 'building by committee' which would slow down the development of the BBC's participatory services.

The BBC was moving towards convergence and beginning to experiment with semi-converged content aggregated around brands such as 'Celebdaq'. However, as will be shown in chapter seven, the BBC did not have converged production processes in place to manage converged brands, nor yet an understanding of audience behaviours across converged brands. Jenkins' view is that convergence is being accelerated in two ways.

Media companies are learning how to accelerate the flow of media content across delivery channels to expand revenue opportunities, broaden markets, and reinforce viewer commitments. Consumers are learning how to use these different media technologies to bring the flow of media more fully under their control and to interact with other consumers' (Jenkins, 2006b: 18).

Robert Fiske's notion of 'inter-textuality' (Fiske,1987), although quite dated feels contemporary and increasingly appropriate. Horizontal intertextuality is the term he uses to describe genres of media such as 'Celebdaq'. Intertextuality is also a clear way of describing brands which are situated across multi-platforms as it is often the case that one text will be the 'primary' and one will be the secondary text or texts. It will be shown that although 'Celebdaq' was provided across television and the web, the primary text was the online content, in contrast to the original expectations by BBC3, the television channel who claimed to 'own' the brand.

The internal culture of the BBC was changing as new media practices such as the offering of user-generated content, iterative content development, downloading and asynchronicity began to become part of everyday production. The broadcast and new media cultures were very different and television production teams were seen as being 'powerful' therefore the New Media Division was keen to be associated with live television events. This was evidenced in the Live Chat team's wish to develop new forms of interactive television and the iPresenters' excitement of presenting live chats for 'Comic Relief'. BBC departments were often territorial, the New Media Division wished to remain the home of 'interactivity' at the BBC creating the brand BBCi which would show the presence of 'interactive content'. The qualities attributed to BBCi as a brand reflected the New Media Division. The production divisions admitted they did not feel any 'ownership' of the iPresenters, intimating the divisions might have been more accommodating if BBC New Media hadn't appropriated the scheme. The Live Chat teams felt an ownership of the BBCi studio and the Live Chat production method and BBC Talent displayed ownership of the talent trawl but not the resulting six month placements. The culture of having separate 'crafts' within production departments was

beginning to break down, with multi-skilling and multi-tasking replacing individual tasks within production processes. .

The marketing and positioning of BBCi was that of being able to offer connectivity, however the publicity did not foreground the existing and emerging range of participatory services which were available to audiences. The previous chapter showed how the BBC Governors held consultations to find out how the audience perceived online engagement. The audience felt it was generally of interest however there was a lack of clarity on whether the BBC should be connecting audiences or connecting with communities. If a progression towards adopting participatory practices became a central strategy for the BBC, then there were likely to be technological challenges as evidenced with the BBCi studio, the lack of bandwidth, and the rising cost of moderation (also mentioned in the previous chapter).

The BBC Talent schemes changed after 2004 to become an initiative which aimed to aggregate access schemes across the BBC under a new name 'BBC New Talent'. Activities run by a range of departments were given publicity and support, for example BBC Blast (www.bbc.co.uk/blast). BBC Blast has strong links to other BBC content for young people on different platforms, BBC Radio 1, BBC Three (television) and BBC Switch (online). The BBC New Talent website is not now being updated indicating the scheme is no longer running. The web pages at www.bbc.co.uk/newtalent direct audiences to existing schemes around the BBC and to the BBC jobs website, the BBC's commissioning website for independent producers, and to web pages on how to gain work experience with the organisation.

Chapter Six: Findings on the Mediation of Participatory Content at the BBC

Introduction

Following on from the findings on the BBC Talent and BBC New Media Interactive Presenter Scheme, this chapter gives findings on the mediation of public service participatory media at the BBC. The chapter examines the topic from the perspectives of the human mediators of content at the BBC and that of the audience. The evidence was drawn from the six months of developmental production workshops and also from the Interactive Presenter's placements with the production departments of particular television or online brands. The iPresenters hosted the brand's online communities and presented their live chats. Finally, evidence is also drawn from the audience study of 'Celebdaq', and from interviews, participant diaries and production literature. The brands selected for study were 'Top of the Pops', BBC London, 'Celebdaq', 'So', 'The Today Programme', 'Video Nation', the Red Button service on television, 'The Archers', 'Liquid News' and Radio 1. These brands provided a representative cross section of content at the BBC. Each of the brands also offered a good range of genres of participatory media, for example, message boards, live chats, user-generated content, gaming, digital storytelling, and a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous content.

For clarity a brief explanation of the brands is given. 'Top of the Pops' was the UK's oldest running television programme which offered a weekly overview of pop music therefore its audience was principally young people. BBC London is the BBC's mixed-media brand (television, radio and online) offering news, features and topical content on the capital city. 'Celebdaq' was the BBC's first brand created for simultaneous launch on a new digital television channel (BBC3) and online. It is a mythical stock exchange ('The Daq') where 'Celebdaq Traders' (the audience) can keep portfolios of stocks and shares in celebrities and the value of individual celebrities is measured daily by the number of column inches of journalism they generated in magazines and the tabloid press. 'So' was

the BBC's website for teenagers, 'The Today Programme' is the BBC's most significant radio current affairs programme, 'Video Nation' offers the audience the opportunity to make a video diary for transmission on television and for downloading from the 'Video Nation' website. The BBC's Red Button service on television has already been mentioned, it provides information in text form laid over television programmes. Additional information either about the programme you are watching or general information in text form can be accessed via the red button on the Television remote control. 'The Archers' is the BBC's longest-running radio soap which is about life in the countryside. 'Liquid News' is a short-form news bulletin for young people on the digital television channel BBC3 and Radio 1 is the BBC's radio station for young people interested in popular music.

The chapter begins by examining the role of the 'producer-host', the term I use to describe the human mediator who both editorialises the content within the participatory services and who also engages with the audience. What audiences want or need from online hosts is discussed in the next section of the chapter and the nature of the host-audience relationship overall. Barriers to a participatory culture at the BBC are identified and considered, including negotiations of control which were found between hosts and audiences. How the BBC framed the audience as members is examined including a deconstruction of the idea of a 'BBC Club' for audience-members. The way the BBC's shared space environments are managed for its participants is analysed and how the audience is framed by the BBC. The chapter continues by drawing together the new editorial policies which have been developed by the BBC in order to ensure that participatory media is safe for members and engagers. The Corporation is framed as taking a protectionist and therefore paternalistic stance, however several reasons for this are given. The chapter closes by suggesting a sliding scale of mediation is a more sophisticated means of mediating shared space environments than either automation or a reliance on the moderation of content, however in order for this to succeed the presence of trained and experienced human hosts is required.

Hosting participatory content

In 2003 the BBC's participatory content was produced and hosted by young web producers (referred to in this study as producer-hosts) who engaged with audiences on a part-time basis. There was strong evidence in two of the BBC's message boards, 'Celebdaq' and 'Liquid News' indicating that they were often absent; 'the 'Celebdaq' hosts seem to only answer technical questions, [host's name] doesn't have time to do much else' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003). Stuart referred to the active hosting that Lucy had done for 'Top of the Pops', saying she's 'giving all this huge stimulation, I think there's huge scope for that...the only time [the 'Celebdaq' host] posts is when people say 'why is the site down again, have my trades gone through as it went down half-way through what I was doing' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003). This was also evidenced by several 'Celebdaq' Traders, 'three or four people will ask the same question three or four times and nobody will get an answer and you see that all the time...it just creates bad feeling really' ('Suzy', Administrative Assistant, aged 30, 'Celebdaq' Audience Study). Suzy also noticed the producer-hosts of the 'Liquid News' message board on BBC3 were absent 'that doesn't have a host and it hasn't had a host for about what six or seven months...when they're not around you really do miss them.'

The producer-hosts in the 'Liquid News' and 'Celebdaq' message boards were relying on moderators to manage the relationship between the BBC and the audience. The moderation was outsourced to a commercial company and their staff worked to a set of BBC moderation guidelines (BBC, 2009). If the lack of engagement by producer-hosts found in the 'Liquid News' and 'Celebdaq' message boards was replicated elsewhere, the management of the BBC's relationship with active audiences was being supervised, to a degree, by a commercial company. The implications of this were two-fold, firstly the BBC was foregrounding moderation over facilitation (a 'defensive' position), and secondly if this was replicated across *all* the BBC's participatory media (i.e. wider than the representative sample) the relationship between the BBC and participating audiences was likely to be without sufficient reciprocity. Referring back to Wenger's idea of communities of practice, he found that purposeful activities required a balance of

participation and reification (the action of 'making into a thing', Wenger, 1999: 58). If the BBC's producer-hosts were not engaging there would be little reification, and less understanding of active audiences' behaviours. It is also probable that hosts with limited time would deal with emergency situations first or perhaps *only* with critical situations; there was significant evidence that this was the case.

The Interactive Presenters pursued a policy of active hosting during their placements, and they measured the effect this had over the six months. 'Lucy' found the posts to the 'Top of the Pops' message board had increased from 20,000 to 100,000 posts per month and the 'Top of the Pops' producers had also told her 'the quality of tending on the TOTP message board has increased dramatically' (iPresenter, 'Lucy', *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003). Lucy had also noticed that as soon as her live chats ended (or even during the live event) the audience opened another browser window in order to leave messages in the message board giving their reactions, 'Hello there [Lucy] good to see my question was answered on the Sum41 chat. Friday's TOTP was OK. I enjoyed Liam performing Songbird. It fitted the occasion perfectly I thought' (iPresenter, 'Lucy', *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003). The 'Top of the Pops' audience liked to share and comment with other audience-members online, immediately, after the end of the live event. There was a wish to talk about the shared experience with the iPresenter and with others who shared the same interest or who were part of the same online group. iPresenter 'Toby' also reported a significant increase in audience engagement after actively hosting the community areas of the BBC London website. The live chats he presented, which had been 5.6% of the total BBC London website traffic, increased to being 29.3% of the overall traffic to BBC London online on the days when he hosted a live event. Overall the 'hits' to the 'Communicate' area of www.bbc.co.uk/London (the portal to the live chats and the BBC London message board) increased from 6,127 to 12,297 over the six months, with the live chats increasing from 348 to 3,603 participants per week (iPresenter 'Toby', *Diary*, 12 May, 2003).

The BBC's presenter-hosts were not thought of as celebrities, they were perceived by the audience as BBC employees who had a particular knowledge of the subject area, the

content and the technology. This framing of sociable online hosts was contrary to the expectations the iPresenters had before they began their placements who believed they were going to be much more akin to a broadcast presenter. The talent trawl and the launch party had given them the impression that the role would be high profile; Lucy wrote, 'I'VE WON! The world's first BBC iPresenters. WOW WOW WOW! The night was just unbelievable...My God. I couldn't believe it when Ed Hall announced my name' ('Lucy', iPresenter, *Diary*, 17 October, 2002). The iPresenters also resented the fact that the Live Chat team felt the audience were more important than the presenters. When they began hosting the live events the iPresenters were firmly advised to 'shift from TV interview mentality...the iPresenter should be a vessel...not the 'star' of the show' (Jackson, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002). The workshops on live chat included debates on whether the iPresenter should ask questions at all during live chats; 'How and when do we incorporate them in the text i.e. if a question is asked at the beginning of the chat, does this take precedence over the users?' (Berry, *Workshop Notes*, 18 December, 2002).

Data from the developmental workshops was analysed to find out what tasks BBC managers, producer-hosts and audiences felt should be offered by BBC personnel in participatory media (not what was being offered). The findings are shown in the following table:

Tasks identified for the mediation and facilitation of public service participatory media		
Moderators	Online Hosts	Sociable Broadcast Hosts
Content	Content	Content
Remove	Stimulate sociability	Stimulate sociability
Park and refer	Create and present content	Create and present content
Manage risk to people and brands	Encourage	Lead the narrative
	Acknowledge users	Encourage audiences
	Set quality level	Negotiate turn-taking
	Assist flow, continuity	Assist flow, continuity
	Curate public content	Lead to online content
	Host events	Manage risk to brands
	Manage risk to people and brands	
Member management	Member management	Audience management
Kick	Keep the group's history	Acknowledgement of co-
Ban	Explain the House Rules	present audiences and
	Set the moderation level	audiences at home
	Refer upwards	
	Ban	
	Technical Assistance	Technical Assistance
	Offer technical help	Provide narrative in the
	Maintain the user-interface	event of technical problems
	Open new spaces and services	

Figure 18: Tasks identified for the mediation and facilitation of public service participatory media

A wide range of activities were identified, and required on an ongoing basis, every day of the year, in contrast to the tasks performed by presenters who could be said to have an episodic connection with audiences. The online hosts were undertaking a greater number of tasks than broadcast presenters as the producer-hosts were overseeing the audience in addition to the content. Suzy, one of the 'Celebdaq' Traders, felt broadcast presenters were different from hosts mainly because presenters 'are just there for the programme and then they go home' ('Suzy', Administrative Assistant, aged 30, Audience Study). Online hosts and moderators also managed the risk to the BBC and its individual brands.

As the flow of user-generated content into the BBC became greater the level of disruptive or unsuitable content also became greater. The range of disruptive behaviour or of unsuitable or offensive content seen by the iPresenters was wide. The BBC's moderators and hosts were trained in identifying libel and defamation or in judging what was obscene, and the iPresenters received guidance during their course of 'Hosting Online Communities' whilst they were at the BBC. Some judgements, however, were hard to make (between a 'terrorist' or a 'freedom-fighter' for example) and many notions of what was offensive were culturally-based. This indicates the importance of having hosts who understand the participants and the content area, as moderators are usually trained to work across all content, regardless of the topic or context. The iPresenters were 'matched' to a brand where they had some expertise or interest.

The hosts were in charge of 'member management', for example, it was the hosts not the moderators who banned members, something which only happened rarely. The host of 'The Archers' online community said he took great care to 'garden' the culture of the fans. 'The Archers' fan fiction (parodies of 'The Archers') was 'curated' and organised into a new section of 'The Archers' website, the participating audiences contributions were therefore being acknowledged by the BBC and celebrated. The reason 'The Archer's' host was able to be proactive was because he was given time to do this in his working week ('The Archers' Host', Interview, 29 June, 2005). Some hosts actively intervened in order to maintain balanced debates, the producer-host of the 'Today' programme said he was 'sometimes posting on there to challenge the views that need to be challenged, if they are racist views or unsavoury views' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2005). This kind of control has similarities to the management of the turn-taking identified in radio talk shows by Hutchby (Hutchby, 1996).

The user-interface was also found to be an agent of mediation, processing content submitted by audiences through a 'profanity filter', similar to the profanity 'delay' loop found on live talk radio (which can remove unsuitable content from the broadcast before it is transmitted). The user-interface was therefore not a neutral agent, furthermore, the list of words in the filter could be altered by the producer-hosts. The BBC's editorial

policy unit was keen the filter only contained the fewest number of words possible. These were drawn from a list of profanities and 'unacceptable words' identified by BBC television as being unsuitable for pre-watershed viewing.

The role of Interactive Presenter did not exist, however the 'craft' of hosting participatory media was found to exist. A significant number of tasks were found and they tended to fall into two groups, (1) the mediation of the content to assist cogniscence and consumption and (2) what could be termed 'customer relationship management', that is assisting audiences with the technology and with any membership issues. The role of the presenter-host was not given any status by the BBC, it was perceived as a 'part-time' activity which could also be done by generalists rather than specialists in hosting.

Finding the right tone of voice and persona to use was something the producer-hosts found difficult. The 'Today' Programme host said, 'You have to be aware all the time that you're the ambassador and that you are the voice of the Corporation...when an issue comes up I will step into the debate and answer a charge against the BBC' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2005). He went on to admit however that he felt uncomfortable in this position and that he often qualified this by saying to the audience 'well look I'm not an official spokesman'. Realising he'd contradicted himself in the interview he explained that he felt he was '_a_ voice of the organisation, you're not the organisation's mouthpiece.' One of the 'Celebdaq' hosts said 'we are representing the BBC...so we've got to have an authority but [we are] trying to be quite sort of friendly with these people, trying to be their friend I suppose which you probably don't get the chance to do as a presenter really, I think it's more personal isn't it' ('Celebdaq' Host, Interview, 27 October, 2005). The hosts who supplied information about their role for this study appeared unclear how to engage with audiences, what to do and when and how to do it. In addition they were unclear whether they were representing the BBC or not. The producer-host continued by saying she used two forms of address, 'You're giving a message, updating them about something that's happening in the game, and sometimes you're just popping in there to have a chat about what they're talking about because you are interested in whatever they are saying' ('Celebdaq' Host, Interview, 27 October, 2004).

This change of register or of tone links directly back to Goffman's view that broadcast personae use two main forms of address, 'performed talk' and 'conversational talk' (Goffman,1981). Hosts were also adjusting their tone of voice and performative style to suit the brand. 'Lucy', the iPresenter hosting the 'Top of the Pops' community was told to be sexy, controversial and current, 'I can be quite controversial as a 'TOTP' host, because it is *my* opinion, so I can have my own music preferences, and stick to my guns even if people disagree'.

Findings on the mediation which was being offered by producer-hosts in the BBC's participatory media:

- A degree of ongoing online mediation was found to exist within BBC participatory media and it was effected by 'producer-hosts'. The presenter-hosts were, however, not given any public-facing or institutional status and the role was part-time.
- There was strong evidence showing pro-active hosting increased the amount of participation and there was some evidence showing the quality of the shared spaces also improved. The level of participation was seen to increase in message boards and live chats therefore this is a finding that is platform-neutral.
- There was significant evidence showing that many producer-hosts were often absent or that they only answered technical questions, and this was often framed (by the audience) as being because the hosts didn't have time. Some participatory areas didn't appear to have a host at all.
- The producer-hosts often had a specialist knowledge of the subject area, the content, the technology, and the participants. Some hosts pro-actively facilitated in order to maintain balanced debates and some organised events such as live chats.
- Many producer-hosts offered a level of customer relationship management which included .managing members' accounts and intervening if there were arguments or disputes. The producer-hosts managed the risk to the members, the associated brand and the BBC by dealing with offensive content.
- Most of the producer-hosts were unclear how to engage with audiences. At

times they felt they should be making proclamations on behalf of the BBC, but they were not certain whether they were 'the' voice of the Corporation or 'a' voice of the Corporation. One host felt she used two forms of address, an 'official voice' and a personal tone when she was being 'a friend'. This links to Goffman's 'performed talk' and 'conversational talk' (Goffman, 1981), found in sociable broadcasts.

What audiences want from BBC personae in participatory media.

The findings on audiences' perspectives of BBC personae were aggregated from observations of the audience during the iPresenter's placements, discussions during the workshops and the small audience study of 'Celebdaq'. It was clear audiences wanted to have someone from the BBC who was able to offer appropriate and timely assistance, something which indicates the need for human judgement. Suzy ('Celebdaq' Trader and Administrative Assistant, aged 30, Audience Study) thought it was good knowing a host was 'on call' if you needed help, 'It's reassuring that they are always there if there is something you need to know'. Alan felt it was important people had some help with the more complicated elements of the game

> ...you would feel more comfortable because you can ask someone instead of if its getting harder and harder to deal with you would just give up and do something different which is obviously what the people running it don't want people particularly to do [laughs] (Alan, 'Celebdaq' Trader and cartoonist, aged 28, Audience Study).

The audience tended to contact the hosts when there were technical problems or when they wanted to find out information; 'I can't buy anything including Alexander McQueen! What's going on? Come on [host] sort it out!' and 'All I want is a straight forward explanation of what has happened at least then everyone would know' (Elizabeth, 'Celebdaq' Trader and Personal Assistant, aged 35). Suzy (Administration Assistant, aged 30) said the 'Liquid News' message board on BBC3 (which included useful information for the Traders) 'hasn't had a host for so long that it only gets around 7 or 8 posts a

week. It really suffers from not having a regular host.' This correlated with the increase in audience visits as a result of the active hosting on BBC London and 'Top of the Pops' which the iPresenters noted earlier. Lastly Suzy wanted the hosts to 'deal with the trouble makers when you get people coming in with the express interest of causing trouble and disharmony.' The hosts acted as arbitrators between the audience if there were disagreements, which was another strong indication for foregrounding human mediators.

The 'Celebdaq' 'Traders' were divided on the amount of time hosts should be visible, Andrew ('Celebdaq' Trader and Company Director, aged 32) thought three times a week was enough as 'if they're there all the time it loses it's specialness a bit.' Helen ('Celebdaq' Trader and Student, aged 20) said it 'makes you feel somebody is taking in what you say' if comments were acknowledged by a host. Pete ('Celebdaq' Trader and Graphic Designer, aged 23) said he'd never posted on the message board but had observed the hosts 'do seem to clear up a lot of questions', which indicates the need for an ongoing and fairly regular presence. Christine said 'it does help having [a permanent host] on the internet especially because the tele's only happening once a week' ('Celebdaq' Trader and Receptionist, aged 25).

The 'Celebdaq' Traders were sometimes uncomplimentary about their producer-hosts, referring to them as 'hampsters' implying an endlessly spinning commitment to serve the members. The relationship between the producer-hosts and audiences was better at 'Top of the Pops', 'Lucy' (iPresenter) was encouraged to run events and to develop 'playful' activities for the 'Top of the Pops' fans.

> The experiment I set up was to eat cheese and stare at a poster [of their favourite band] before you go to sleep, chanting their names over and over...It was popular, some dreamt of their fave bods, but a lot complained of having nightmares! The thread still keeps coming back too, under the heading 'Cheese Dreams' ('Lucy', iPresenter, *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003).

The Top of the Pops message board fans developed a sociable and reciprocal relationship with Lucy over the six months, and she was referred to with great warmth by the members, 'It's brilliant having u here and been able 2 ask questions 2 different music acts, I think that's great...How r u?' ('Lucy', iPresenter, *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003).

There was one instance within the data which showed an anomaly. 'Nigel', the iPresenter who was placed with 'So', the BBC Teens brand, returned from his placement believing teenagers did not want a host, however the teens *did* want 'the BBC' to be aware of what they were doing.

> I sent a message saying 'hi welcome I'm the new host for 'So', just introducing myself. Somebody said 'Great, it doesn't matter if you post a hundred posts a week or no posts a week it's good to have you here.' They don't want somebody to walk with them and hold their hand they want their own independence (iPresenter 'Nigel', *Video Transcript* 20 March, 2003).

Some level of 'BBC presence' was required by teenagers but it was clear the teens wanted a largely adult-free space. They did not need any technical help as participating online was a familiar activity to them.

Findings on what audiences want from BBC personae in the participatory media:
- Participants almost universally felt hosts were important, they wanted to know someone was there to offer assistance if necessary. There was realism, however, about the amount of assistance which would be possible.
- The audience were divided on the amount of time hosts should be visible, it appeared to depend both on the activity and the particular shared space in question. Teenagers did not want a host to be present, but they did want 'So' (the teen brand) to be aware of those activities which were more performance-oriented, for example, displaying their identity or demonstrating creativity.

- In common with broadcast presenters having hosts who used the right tone and 'personality' was found to be significant for audiences. Some hosts had a good rapport with engagers while other hosts were less well received.

Barriers to a participatory culture and 'interactive presentation'

The BBC was aspiring towards participatory practices but there were several barriers. Producer-hosts approached engaging with the audience in a spasmodic and piece-meal way largely because of a lack of time, but also because they were unclear how to engage with participating audiences. The technology was also having difficulty coping with the number of engagers who were adopting the services resulting in new Servers having to be added. During a 'chat with [the BBC Webmaster] he says new Servers are needed... Traffic has increased dramatically to the message boards. Plus they are adding a pair in New York as 40% is traffic from the US' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, August, 2002). As traffic increased the message boards became slower, new servers had to be added, including several in New York, USA as a significant proportion of the membership were American, something which had implications for the BBC (and for the UK Licence Fee payers). In October 2002 the fieldwork diaries recorded there were 'temporary technical problems which were causing 50% of the message board members to be stuck in pre-moderation' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 14 October, 2002).

From a behavioural perspective the BBC was having problems with unruly audiences who were behaving in unpredictable ways. Many of the BBC's difficulties with participatory media were epitomised in the BBC Teens online community. The message boards and other 'interactive' media were highly popular with teens and it was a natural and familiar media to them. Teens used the social media, particularly the message boards and chat rooms in 'So', (the brand for Teen content on the BBC) for disclosure, and the swapping of advice and information on controversial topics such as sex, self-harming, drugs, depression, parental divorce, moving to another part of the country, dating, eating disorders and so on. At the time of this study the teens message board was getting 120,000 posts per week, and there were 80,000 teens using the board regularly (BBC WebUser, 2003). Four hosts worked on the social media, double the usual number, and

they were concerned as 'parents have been looking at the board and are worried about the chat on there in the "Real Lives" message area' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, February, 2003). There appeared to be however little active hosting; the hosts were not visible, which might have been due to the fact that teenagers didn't want an overt presence from the BBC. The iPresenter hosting the 'So' message board noted in his diary that there had been teens placing suicide posts in the board, but 'Nobody is answering from the BBC, answering the questions' (iPresenter, 'Nigel', *Diary*, 10 February, 2003).

The message board for teens was closed down in 2004 as the managers felt it was too expensive to run, it was not providing enough value, and it was too high risk for the BBC. A teenager who used the message board as a confessional before causing themselves harm was not what they felt the teens participatory services should be for. Such activity would also leave the Corporation open to litigation or to claims of neglect. The managers did not want teenagers to begin to rely on the message board as an 'action line' or help service, something which was undoubtedly happening. The closure of the teens message board resulted in the BBC ceasing to provide young people with the social networking tools they were increasingly using in their everyday lives. The BBC's teens site re-launched in 2008 as two websites, BBC 'Slink' for girls and BBC 'Switch' for boys, areas were set up on 'MySpace', 'YouTube', 'Bebo', 'Facebook' and 'Twitter', with 'Slink' and 'Switch' branding. This is therefore a dual strategy, an aggregated site which offers editorialised replies to letters and comments from teens within the BBC website, and a distributed presence on a small range of social media outside the BBC. This avoids the need to host and moderate and it links the BBC with commercial social sites; the BBC is letting the commercial providers take the risks it did not wish to take. However the UK's teenagers are developing a relationship with commercial social media providers who enable their friendships and the expressions of their identity, rather than the BBC.

The idea of losing editorial control was not popular with producers who were used to being able to edit, a lower risk environment. When they were faced with managing participatory environments they found it difficult to know how much control to use and how much freedom to offer audiences.

media producers are responding to these newly empowered consumers in contradictory ways, sometimes encouraging change, sometimes resisting what they see as teenage behaviour. And consumers, in turn, are perplexed by what they see as mixed signals about how much and what kinds of participation they can enjoy' (Jenkins, 2006, 18-19).

The producer of 'Video Nation' believed the public who recorded 'Video Nation' diaries had 'complete control over their material' ('Video Nation' Producer, 2002: *Video Transcript*, 17 January, 2003.) however it became clear every diarist received training and orientation. What appeared to be naturally-occurring speech was in fact semi-constructed because it was situated within an institutionalised process. Secondly 'favourite' diarists would be recalled to do other diaries from time to time and several appeared to have favoured status therefore the 'members of the public' were not completely self-selecting.

The production departments who offered placements to the Interactive Presenters had reasons for doing so, they needed help. For 'Top of the Pops' it was to give the existing producer-hosts time to develop new online content. 'BBC London' wanted to find out how to manage an unruly online community who were objecting to the re-branding of 'BBC London' from being a music station to being a talk-led station. 'So', the brand for teens online content, wanted help to manage their teen online community who were having conversations about sex, drugs and self-harming; one of their online discussions, the 'Real Life' topic on their message board had particularly generated complaints from parents. 'Video Nation' wanted 'to promote the fact that 'Video Nation' is back and you can get involved' (Producer, 'Video Nation', *Video Transcript*, 17 January, 2003). The brand had just re-launched on www.bbc.co.uk therefore the producers were keen to explore new techniques such as hosting 'a round up of video shorts from the UK/region for the week, which sum up the mood of the nation'. The 'Video Nation' producers felt the iPresenters 'would add an energetic and personable face to this project and create a 'can do' and 'can get involved' feeling' (Producer, 'Video Nation', *Video Transcript*, 17 January,

2003). The Red Button producers wanted to see whether it would be possible for the iPresenters to use one of the video loops within the Red Button menu frames. The idea was that the iPresenters might record a 'piece to camera' which encouraged audiences to use the new service (which was part of BBCi). After two days of explanations of the complex technology and much brainstorming by the iPresenters in the workshops it became obvious the technology was not advanced enough to provide a platform for presentation on camera.

> *iPresenter*: (to the Producer of the Red Button services) Can you give us some tips...how long the loops can be, how much of the screen can it take up...one full screen but you can split that up into as many small screens for each of the services, you know how much bandwidth have we got to play with? How long?

> *Red Button Producer:* (Pointing to a TV screen) it's a quarter screen on satellite and on DTT (Digital Terrestrial) it's one sixteenth of the screen. On cable? On cable it's just practically useless.

> *iPresenter 'Stuart':* Impossible.

> *Red Button Producer*: ...as regards seeing anything that goes on.

> [All the workshop participants talk at once, over each other]

> *iPresenter "Nigel":* That's smaller than our little screen for the live chats (Producer, Red Button et al, *Video Transcript*, 17 April, 2003).

The Red Button technology offered such a small amount of video (six video loops, each of around three minutes maximum duration) that 'being the face of BBCi' was unrealistic. The technology was often not capable of sustaining video and therefore of 'interactive presentation'.

Findings on the barriers to a participatory culture at the BBC:

- The idea of 'interactive presentation' was premature as the technology was not sophisticated enough to offer a platform for televisual performativity online therefore being 'the face of BBCi' was unrealistic.

- There was an institutionally-based wish to show large numbers of engagers online, particularly in the live chats but also in the other social media. Once the audience became a 'mass' the software could not accommodate the traffic. It was therefore found the BBC was using the same success criterion for online content as it had in broadcasting which was not suitable for the internet.

- The 'Video Nation' producers 'assisted' the audience by offering instruction and the BBC's user-interfaces were not neutral as they had profanity filters. The idea of user-generated content being 'natural', unadulterated, was therefore a utopian construct, however leaving user-generated content 'as submitted' was being increasingly explored.

- In 2003 teenagers were adopting the BBC's social media with enthusiasm, however managing the participatory services was proving problematic. In 2009 the new BBC teens websites 'Slink' and 'Switch' offers editorialised comments from teens and links to commercial services such as 'Bebo' and 'Facebook'; the BBC has therefore decided commercial providers should take the risks it did not wish to take.

The audience as members

The adding of a registration system and the provision of groups suggested the existence of a 'BBC Club' or clubs which had become available to join. This suggests a reframing of the audience from the receiver or consumers of content to a more equal participant alongside professional producers. There was some evidence suggesting the audience were perceived as 'outsiders', often as a resource. The 'Celebdaq' Traders commented that they felt the BBC was sometimes using the community, particularly when they had just launched new services; they would ask the members what they thought. Suzy felt it was

important that hosts were 'keeping an eye on the discussion, not just the bits the BBC are more interested in' ('Suzy', Administration Assistant, aged 30, Audience Study). The 'Today' message board producer-host said we 'get ideas for stories, and we could exploit [the message board] a lot further; we could use it to find contributors...our community is getting stronger, better behaved and keener to get to grips with discussions' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2005). The words he uses, 'exploit' and 'better behaved' illustrate this is also still largely a paternal relationship. Miranda Joseph believed 'the elaboration of the community group as a distinct, different, particular community makes it available for insertion into a particular slot in the hierarchy of capitalist exploitation' (Joseph, 2002: 29). The BBC doesn't make money, but it does make cultural goods, therefore it was found the audience were making cultural goods for the BBC.

The BBC's online community was not one club but many, each group having a distinctly different identity and behaviours. The numbers of engagers was growing rapidly, therefore it was clear audiences wanted to participate. The members of the online groups were often surprising and it caused problems; Americans adopted the BBC's social media in large numbers during and after 9/11 when the Corporation was able to offer a source of ongoing news when many of the USA-based online services were overloaded and therefore not able to deliver web pages. As a public service media outlet funded by the UK Licence Fee payers having a large percentage of regular users from the USA began to be an issue, the UK licence fee payers were effectively subsidising 'services' used by non-UK audiences. American engagers were easy to identify through the conversations and content; the addition of participatory media made the previously invisible audience visible, 'If old consumers were isolated individuals, the new consumers are more socially connected. If the work of media consumers was once silent and invisible, the new consumers are now noisy and public' (Jenkins, 2006: 18).

The members of the BBC's online community had the right to freely use the participatory services however it was also their responsibility to comply with the 'Terms of Use' which stated, for example, members 'may not submit or share any defamatory or illegal

material' or contribute material 'with the intention of committing or promoting an illegal act' (BBC 'Terms of Use', 2009). The Terms acknowledged participatory media was often complex, 'be patient: users of all ages and abilities may be taking part'. Provision was made for social and technical issues which are specific to the internet, for example, the Terms stated there should not be any spamming of the shared space or impersonation of other members. The benefits of being a member included the ability to post messages and to take part in debates, but also to create and 'upload' content, to play games and receive alerts based on previous choices. The audience agreed to keep the 'House Rules', which included the instruction not to post 'off-topic material in subject-specific areas'. BBC members were asked not to quote any web site addresses unless it was allowed for a particular purpose under 'local house rules'. A final rule for members was that they must not talk about 'material which contains plot developments which haven't been transmitted on UK television', if any such messages are found these will be 'deleted unless submitted in a designated "spoilers" area or marked as a "spoiler"' (BBC 'Terms of Use', 2009). The BBC, as a national broadcaster had to find ways around the fact that the internet is global.

During their placements the iPresenters were continually dealing with audience members who felt they had been unfairly treated by moderators. One of the iPresenters gave this example from the Radio 1 community; 'Lucy, you know how much we love you here, or maybe that's just what I think, I doubt it though! You could stop a lot of our posts getting removed for no reason at all' (iPresenter 'Lucy', *Video Transcript*, 14 February, 2003). Lucy also quoted a second similar post she had seen recently, 'Can you try and stop some of our posts getting deleted for stupid reasons like "wandering too far off topic" etc. because it gets very annoying!' 'Stuart' ('Stuart', Interactive Presenter, *Video Transcript*, 14 February, 2009), found this post in the 'Celebdaq' message board; 'Obviously, on a week like last week, both my accounts were in MJ [MJ = Moderation Jail] but for different reasons? Is this considered illegal?' There was some evidence showing the moderation was not of a unified standard across the participatory services considered during the study, in addition some audience-members felt unfairly treated by a host or moderator.

There was some evidence to indicate the audience wanted to help run the shared spaces, the 'Today' programme host felt this was already happening 'members will welcome new members onto the board because the host isn't always there. Often if a new name has cropped up they have been welcomed by the time I get round to them, because I am not there for most of the time, let's face it' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2005). The BBC was reluctant to allow the members to help run the shared spaces, this was partly due to the fact that there was at that time no clear regulation or governance for web content. Companies providing web content were considered to be publishers, therefore subject to the laws of publication.

The idea of involving audiences in the participatory media had been considered as far back as 1998 when Mark Frost, the Head of BBC Online (the old name for BBC New Media) commissioned a study on the potential for involving the audience in the management of the BBC's online communities from the head of the Community Leader Programme of 'America Online'. The idea was to recruit volunteers (community leaders), as AOL had done, however the BBC decided against the idea, firstly as it was considered too much of a risk, and secondly because the AOL Community Leaders took AOL to court in 1999, as 'Wired Magazine' reported at the time.

> Call them volunteers, remote staff, or community leaders - they are the human face of AOL. They host chats, clean scatological posts off the message boards, and bust jerks for terms-of-service violations. Fourteen thousand volunteer CLs not only play hall monitor to AOL's vaunted "community," they are that community. Their hours? Flexible: Some work as few as four per week, others put in as many as 60. Their pay? A $21.95-per-month AOL account "empowered" with some special CL-only enhancements (Margonelli, 1999).

'America Online' closed its volunteer programme in 2005, and the legal case brought by the AOL volunteers seeking payment is still ongoing with the last call for potential claimants to come forward being in July 2008.

Whether the audience or producers finally oversee the participatory services provided by the BBC, they will need to be of a high quality. When the BBC's Charter was renewed in January 2006 the Corporation entered into an Agreement with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to provide content which 'must be high quality, challenging, original, innovative and engaging, with every programme or item of content exhibiting at least one of those characteristics' (DCMS, 2006). It was therefore logical to assume that the BBC's participatory environments will also need to be of high quality, providing challenging, original, innovative and engaging activities or purposeful environments which exhibit those characteristics. This study has found significant evidence to support the hypothesis that pro-active hosting improves the quality of participatory environments.

Findings on the audience as members of a BBC Community:
- There was evidence showing the audience-members of both the 'Celebdaq' and 'Today' programme communities wanted to help run the shared spaces.
- The BBC was asking members to adapt their online behaviour to suit the constructs of time-based and scheduled-based broadcasting. Members who had already seen episodes of television programmes such as EastEnders were asked not to place plot developments in the social media. The placing of links to external websites was also not permitted in most communities; in 2009 links to websites outside the BBC are more often permitted, and also offered.
- Members complained about the moderation and this was observed in the message boards and it was also discussed at the meetings convened by the BBC Governors with audiences. There did not appear to be a global standard, this may have been due to a lack of communication between the hosts and moderators.
- The audience was sometimes framed as being a resource, a way to find contributors, or as a means of finding out what members thought of new services. This, however, could also be framed as a positive activity for members or indeed as a sign of membership.
- The presence of members who were not resident in the UK was problematic.

New editorial policies for shared spaces

The BBC's editorial policies are designed to protect members and the BBC as an organisation and also to act as a guide for producers. The protection of the audience is becoming more critical for the BBC as it is acting as an agent of introduction between members. In addition the BBC is beginning to be considered as offering shared space environments online, therefore the laws protecting individuals gathering together in the 'real world' are beginning to apply to online media. The BBC's members are advised they should 'never reveal any personal information about yourself or anyone else (for example: telephone number, postal address, home address or email address or any other details that would allow you to be personally identified)' (BBC 'Terms of Use', 2009). As the publisher the BBC can be proceeded against for failing to take action if a member of the public is put at risk through exposure to another member, or to harmful content, and the duty of care also includes protection from anti-social behaviour such as racism, bullying or libel.

The term 'duty of care' has a status in law, the requirement that a person should act towards others and the public with 'watchfulness, attention, caution and prudence that a reasonable person in the circumstances would' (legaldictionary.thefreedictionary.com 2009). If an agent or person is found to be negligent, they can be proceeded against. The status of a 'duty of care' falls under the body of law known as 'tort' which both addresses civil wrongs and suggests remedies. A person may be able to use tort law to bring proceedings in order to receive compensation from a body that has been found to be legally responsible and therefore liable for any injury or injuries. The status of a 'duty of care' originated from a Scottish legal case, Donoghue v Stevenson (1932) AC 562. The case was proved and it is considered to have status in English common law by the House of Lords, also in North American law (Canada and the USA). It is often referred to as the 'Paisley Snail' or the 'Snail in the Bottle' case. The principle of a 'duty of care' was stated by the judge, Lord Atkin as being

The rule that you are to love your neighbour becomes in law, you must not injure your neighbour; and the lawyer's question, 'Who is my neighbour?' receives a restricted reply. You must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour. Who, then, in law is my neighbour? The answer seems to be - persons who are so closely and directly affected by my act that I ought reasonably to have them in contemplation as being so affected when I am directing my mind to the acts or omissions which are called in question' (Donoghue v Stevenson, 1932: AC 562).

The BBC producer-hosts were unclear how far their duty of care extended towards audiences in the participatory media. Nigel, the iPresenter working with the BBC Teens service, reported that 'So' provided an advice line for teens which operated with the help of an expert agony aunt, Dr Nell.

Dr Nell [answers questions about] everything from HIV, Cancer, puberty, the lot. And if somebody's got a problem I can put in the link of that on the message board and say "for further advice go to Dr Nell's home page where you'll be able to find da da da just copy this link into your address file" or whatever (iPresenter 'Nigel', *Video Transcript*, 14 February, 2003).

The presence of a trained agony aunt gave 'Nigel' someone with whom he could share some of the responsibility. It also provided an opportunity to educate the teenager concerned as well as other teens who might subsequently read the advice. The producer-host of the 'Today' programme also felt giving advice was one of the most difficult parts of the role, 'we are not doctors and we are not psychotherapists and we are not financial advisors...I think one should really stop and think 'well am I really qualified to help in this situation or is it better in fact to refer that person to an organisation' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2004). In addition to responsibilities under the duty of care the BBC had a duty to beware making a negligent misstatement which is also tortuous; they need to be careful not to present themselves as being competent to advise (Hedley Byrne & Co. Ltd. v. Heller & Partners Ltd, 1963). Media outlets are beginning to be required to

understand new fields of law which cover new forms of content.

Despite indications that the producer-audience relationship is changing the BBC was found to be largely continuing with the 'old' relationship it has always had with the public. Online, the relationship was found to be ongoing and having the potential to be a more intimate relationship, an implication which had not been discussed globally by the corporation. The BBC was found to be paternalist towards the audience, for example, the BBC's 'Terms of Use' includes the clause that, for serious, persistent offences which break the Terms, 'the BBC may use whatever information that is available to it about you to stop any further such infringements. This may include informing relevant third parties such as your employer, school or email provider' (BBC Terms, 2009). This indicated that a highly interventionist stance might be taken in order to protect other members, the participatory services, or the BBC itself.

One of the biggest editorial policy questions the BBC was facing was how to keep the cost of moderation down, it was taking up an ever greater proportion of content budgets. In August 2003 the message boards were getting 30,000 posts a day therefore there were discussions on whether to cap the BBC community at a particular size, for example at 50,000 posts a day. In September, 2003 two new servers were added to the existing servers in the London Docklands, and two more servers were added in New York (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, March, 2003). According to the moderation company e.moderation.com one moderator was able to process 100 posts an hour, at a cost of £17.00 per hour per moderator, however 'now we are beginning to process video it takes much longer' (Littleton, Interview, 2008). If it is assumed only 5% of the posts to the message boards needed moderating, it is obvious the BBC's moderation bill has become one of the most significant production costs for new media.

As a result of the increasing moderation costs, the BBC's Connect department began exploring reputation systems as a possible solution in the summer of 2003. Reputation systems rate either the person or the content, and the way either is rated varies; the rating is done by the participating audiences. Content rated highly is raised in

prominence within the user-interfaces therefore content (or individuals) who receive no votes begins to drift to the bottom of the database. The problem with reputation systems is obviously that it is counter to the public service aims of offering content may be significant but not necessarily popular and of ensuring plurality and representation. The idea was later dropped as it was felt to be unwieldy, however it illustrates the BBC's desire to find solutions to the question of how to process the increasing amount of user-generated content that is submitted. It is likely that only certain genres of content could be automated; the producer-host of the 'Today' Programme felt it there might be problems automating content such as debates where editorial judgements needed to be made.

> In order for it to be effective [hosting] has to be human, it has to be tailored. You see from things like the auto-replies on moderation settings that it doesn't really satisfy anyone, it doesn't really answer their question, it doesn't really answer 'why was my message removed' for example…It's really important for a real human host to be there, even if it is just some of the time ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2004).

As has already been noted technology is not neutral, it cannot make the same cultural and tonal judgements as a human host and is not able to respond in a sufficiently human-like way. Automated mediation can give the appearance of reciprocity and it will always be timely, however the reciprocal action may not be appropriate.

In order to resolve the BBC's need to find solutions to the rising level of participation and therefore the rising cost of moderation several solution have been suggested, however Shirky's idea of a sliding scale between 'filter then publish' and 'publish then filter' seems a useful way forward (Shirky, 2008). Shirky's model also echoes the idea that was found in broadcast presentation, that skilled interviewers or sociable broadcast hosts use a sliding scale of mediation which they alter to suit the particular sociable situation. This could be translated to sociable online media as being the offering of some spaces which are highly mediated and others which have less mediation. Many participatory activities

will not require pro-active hosting, yet some may, such as debates or times when the BBC's staff want to engage with audiences for purposeful or playful events, for example.

During the last two general elections it has been described how the producer-hosts of the BBC's 'election message boards' used a range of levels of intervention, which worked well, however this was time intensive and it required the presence of trained and skilled online mediators. At times the debates needed more leading and at other times the audience took over the direction of the shared space. The producer-hosts who were interviewed for this study often said they were unclear when to editorialise more and when to pull back. The 'Today' producer- host thought 'We should probably set a topic now and again...it doesn't do too well to say you can't discuss that you've got to discuss that', his experience was that if you did set a topic those discussions would 'tend to fizzle out quite quickly and largely get ignored' ('Today' Host, Interview, 22 September, 2005). Some hosts opened areas specifically for 'off-topic' chat, such as catching up with friends and the observations of the BBC's message boards for the production workshops showed the off-topic areas often had more traffic than the 'on-topic' areas. The provision of 'off-topic' areas had the effect of 'cleaning up' the on-topic areas for those who wanted a serious or structured debate.

On the 14 October, 2003 the BBC's monthly Editorial Policy meeting discussed how the creation of Ofcom (29th December, 2003) would affect BBC policy and production processes. Ofcom, the meeting was told, would take on the work of the Broadcasting Standards Committee. The implications for new media would be an increase in the tracking of production processes. For 'interactive' services 'it will be the context and also the steering of user-generated content' which will become more important in the future (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, 14 October, 2003). This comment from one of the BBC's senior editorial figures indicates the role of the online host may grow in significance in the future as the requirement and understanding of the mediation of participatory media matures.

Findings on the new editorial policies for participatory media:

- The BBC was acting as an agent of introduction, which ensuring a sufficient 'duty of care' was being taken. The duty of care included making sure audience-members remained safe while they were within what could be argued was 'BBC space' and also giving appropriate advice if advice was being given.
- The BBC's lawyers were aware of the BBC's responsibilities under the law therefore they indicated a highly interventionist stance would be taken if necessary. This included contacting an audience-member's school or work.
- The producer-hosts were unclear how far their 'duty of care' extended towards the public.
- One of the most significant duties the producer-hosts performed was the management of risk which involved judgements being made. Those judgements relied on having an understanding of the cultural nuances and an up to date knowledge of a topic.

Conclusion

The chapter has given findings, firstly on the mediation and facilitation which was identified as being necessary for the provision of high quality public service participatory media by managers, producers, hosts, and the five interactive Presenters. Secondly, the mediation and facilitation which was in evidence within the participatory media examined during the fieldwork has also been given. The evidence was collected from the developmental production workshops, from observations, from the audience study of 'Celebdaq', and from diaries kept by the iPresenters and myself.

The tasks identified for the maintenance of high quality public service participatory environments were separated out into those effected by moderators, online hosts and the presenters of sociable broadcast programming. The tasks identified for producer-hosts were greater in number than those identified for moderators and sociable broadcast presenters, this was because the online host is managing both the *environment* and the *participating audience*. The moderators did not have a relationship with the audience however they did influence the audience-BBC relationship

significantly. The audience felt the BBC's moderation was too severe at times and this was evidenced in the observations and the audiences' consultation sessions with the BBC Governors before the renewal of the BBC's Charter and Agreement.

A degree of ongoing mediation and facilitation was found in the range of brands and participatory services examined for this study, however the producer-hosts were not given status and the role was part-time. The producer-hosts often had a specialist knowledge of a subject area and a good knowledge of the content and the technology. Many hosts had a good understanding of the participants who engaged with the content and services in their area of responsibility. Some producer-hosts pro-actively engaged with the public participants, organising events and activities. Many of the producer-hosts offered customer relationship management, however this was not universal. There was strong evidence showing pro-active hosting increased the number of participants to both the message boards and live chats, indicating this may be something which is 'platform-neutral'. There was also significant evidence showing many producer-hosts were absent or that they only answered technical questions. Some participatory spaces did not appear to have a producer-host at all.

This is primarily a production study, however audiences were examined as much as possible and there were findings produced. The audience were divided on the amount of visibility the producer-hosts should have, and it is likely that this is dependent on the nature of the shared space, the audience, and the particular activities going on. The audience responded to some producer-hosts in a more positive way than to some others and this was found to be due to the amount of time the hosts spent with the engagers, and also the tone of voice and the personality used. This links directly to the body of knowledge collected for this study on the importance of the presenter's voice and personality in a broadcast context. Most of the producer-hosts were unclear how to engage with audiences and whether or not they were speaking on behalf of the BBC. They were also unclear whether or not they were supposed to be being friendly to regular participants. Teenagers did not want to have a pro-active host, but they did want someone from the BBC who could react to what they were doing. There may be a

division between what teens want 'the BBC' to see and what they would rather do 'in private'.

There were many barriers to participation found during the study. The first barrier was the technology; many of the participatory services were operating at a critical level, unable to cope with the numbers of engagers, particularly the message boards. The live chats also suffered from an institutionally-led wish to crowd audiences together in a mass, echoing the success criterion of broadcasting, rather than adopting new criterion for participatory and online media, such as the quality of engagement, the level of reciprocity, the length of time a participant remains engaged in an activity (retention) or and the number of times a visitor returns. The idea of wholly 'natural' user-generated content was found to be utopian as all content from audiences was processed by the user-interface, and even 'Video Nation', the programme offering the audience the opportunity to make their own video diary, supplied training and orientation. The BBC's teens community illustrated a strategic issue faced by the BBC; the teens used the social media for disclosure, to obtain advice, and sometimes to ask for urgent assistance. Rather than find ways to manage the risk of not seeing a teenager in distress and responding to that call in a timely manner, the BBC decided to offer teenagers links to commercial services.

There was evidence to suggest that the audience wanted to help the BBC run the participatory media, for example, by welcoming new users and that they were beginning to do this spontaneously. The members were often framed as being a resource for BBC producers, however the audience might welcome being invited to speak and to take part; this was not necessarily negative. Members were constrained by not being allowed to talk about plot developments if a programme had already been transmitted. In 2009 it has been found that programmes appear on the BBC iPlayer sometimes in advance of the transmission within the broadcast schedule. In 2003 members were not allowed to post addresses to external websites however in 2009 some website addresses are permitted in some of the participatory services (not those for children). The fact that the BBC's participatory services had members from countries such as the USA was problematic for

the BBC therefore some restrictions were later imposed on visitors from outside the UK. An international home page is provided for computers accessing from abroad. Data showing the number of applications to register for the BBC's participatory services has not been able to be obtained for this study, however the launch of a new network for BBC producers and academics, Beebac, in April 2009, may prove to be a useful way to request for the release of this information.

The last group of findings concerned the new editorial policies which have been developed for the management of shared space participatory environments run by the BBC online. The BBC was beginning to act as an agent of introduction between audience-members therefore the responsibilities which exist in the off-line world when groups come together for organised activities in a space which is owned or hosted by an organisation began to apply. The producer-hosts were the BBC staff responsible for these environments and a 'duty of care' applied. It was found the BBC lawyers were aware of the implications of providing a suitable duty of care, but the BBC's producers were not sufficiently aware of the legal implications. The producer-hosts were unclear how far they should look after and supervise group activities.

The third set of findings produced from the study are concerned with the mediation of semi-converged content, in the case study 'Celebdaq'. 'Celebdaq' was a mythical celebrity stock exchange where 'Traders' (the participating audience) could manage portfolios of shared in celebrities, traded on 'The Daq'. The value of shares fluctuated depending on the number of column inches generated by celebrities in magazines and the tabloid press each week. The 'Top Trader of the Week' was featured in the 'Celebdaq' television programme. The 'Celebdaq' brand was the first to be designed by the BBC for simultaneous launch on television and online, in order to support the terms of the licence for the BBC's new digital television channel for younger audiences, BBC3. Tessa Jowell, the culture secretary requested that BBC3 explore and offer new kinds of television programming. The findings are presented in the form of an historical analysis of the brand, and they are also aggregated and discussed within the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: The construction and mediation of semi-converged brands in the case study 'Celebdaq'.

Introduction

This chapter considers the mediation of semi-converged content at the BBC, in the case study 'Celebdaq'. The conditions which motivated the BBC to begin experimenting with convergence are given, followed by a history of 'Celebdaq' which provides the context for an interest in the brand. An explanation of the developmental workshops on 'Celebdaq' which took place follows, and the chapter ends by offering findings on the presentation and hosting of semi-converged content, and the production of semi-converged content. Experiments with semi-converged content began at the BBC with brands such as *Walking with Dinosaurs* (1999), which interlinked a television series with an accompanying website, book and CD Rom.

The BBC became interested in the idea of launching what their strategists termed 'skyscraper brands' to aggregate audience consumption around a central point but across multiple platforms. If the audience was exhibiting 'media snacking' behaviours as their audience studies showed (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003a) then this might be a way to maintain a share of the audience against rising competition and the fragmentation of television channels. Brands considered worthy of this treatment included *EastEnders* or *The Archers* (for example). One or two large media corporations were aggregating media platforms through mergers or acquisitions, such as Disney and AOLTimeWarner. The AOL merger (2001) was seen as one of the largest and the intention was 'redefining what the next generation of digital-based leaders will look like', the idea was to create multi-platform distribution which would allow the cross-fertilisation and redistribution of content' (Johnson, 2001).

The BBC's view was the Corporation was also well positioned to create semi-converged or 360 degree media. If this was proved it could deliver content for audiences when they

wanted it, where they wanted it, how they wanted it something BBC managers called 'martini media' after the well-known Martini advert of the 1970's ('anytime, any place, anywhere....'). As an example of semi-converged programming 'Celebdaq' failed, the 'Celebdaq' website and game was, however, a great success winning an interactive BAFTA and spawning cloned content such as 'SportDaq', a second trading game for sports fans. It is argued the construction of the brand was flawed partly because the audience behaviour across its two platforms (television and the web) was not taken into consideration.

Towards convergence

In order to establish why large media organisations began to consider drawing together content around brands and across media platforms, it is necessary to understand what audience behaviours were indicating this would be advantageous. According to iSociety, the number of broadband users in the UK had increased from 300,000 subscribers in 2001, to over one million in 2002, and 2.5 million in 2003. The adoption of broadband had been fairly slow in the UK, however British Telecom was predicting there would be five million people in the UK subscribed by 2005. iSociety felt the adoption of broadband in Britain was slower than expected. They wanted to know why the UK public was being so reticent and 'what can be done to make them want it more' (Crabtree, J et al, 2003: 5).

The BBC's large ten-yearly audience study, *The Daily Life Study 2002-3* (Knapman, 2003) showed 16-24 year olds were watching less television than were the over 25s, however when they did watch television they concentrated solely on the programming, not using other devices such as mobile phones or gaming consoles. Young people were increasing their consumption of all kinds of media online with '15-24 year olds spending three times as long using new media as were the over 25s'. In addition 95% of teenage boys were spending over nine hours a week playing on games consoles. It was clear that the BBC's future audiences would have significantly different media consumption behaviours than previous generations. The '360' degree content strategy, and the BBC iPlayer, were responses to *The Daily Life Study* and a range of other smaller commissioned audience reports.

The Daily Life Study did not examine the audience behaviours of specific brands, however it did give an overall picture of media consumption in age bandings. 'Celebdaq' was an idea commissioned for the new digital channel BBC3, which was aiming to attract 25-34 year olds two-thirds of whom, *The Daily Life Study* showed, were available to watch TV on weeknights between 7-9pm. A good time to have the 'Celebdaq' transmission was therefore during the evening; it was scheduled for Friday evenings. There was low use of the internet during the early evenings. 25-34 year old's internet use peaked at work at 10 am and at home at 6.30 pm. 35% of BBC3's audience was going online before their evening meal at 6.30pm and 12% were watching television as the main media activity after dinner. BBC3 wanted to appeal to existing 25-34 year olds and to 'incoming' younger audiences therefore the idea of a brand which offered content on television and online seemed attractive; *The Daily Life Study* had also found 'heavier net users are also heavier TV users'. It was also reasonable to assume that to add a gaming element would appeal to young men, who the BBC knew had been the early adopter group for interactive television and www.bbc.co.uk when they had first launched.

BBC Audience and Consumer Research produced a report, *Connecting with New Media Audiences,* in October 2003 (BBC Audience and Consumer Research, 2003). This confirmed internet users at that time were likely to be male and young (aged 25-34). The 'always on' nature of broadband was also shown to be encouraging 'media snacking'. Young audiences were consuming content 'little and often', with the average number of online sessions per user per month being 31 visits and the average time spent online each session being 33 minutes. The report went on to look at how viewers interact with interactive television, it was found that interaction (activity via the Red Button) occurred at different times depending on the genre of programming. Audiences watching sport interacted throughout the match, whereas audiences watching programmes from the BBC's Factual and Learning Division interacted after the linear show had ended.

The BBC's Audience and Consumer Research department report stated the main problem was how to encourage people to interact "in the first place". The BBC believed the

reasons why people were not interacting was because they were not aware of the benefits, didn't know how to interact, had no time to interact, or had had a bad experience in the past. They felt there was also a perception amongst some audiences that it cost money or was 'information for information's sake' and that 'the "best bits" should be in the linear programme anyway' (BBC Audience and Consumer Research, 2003).
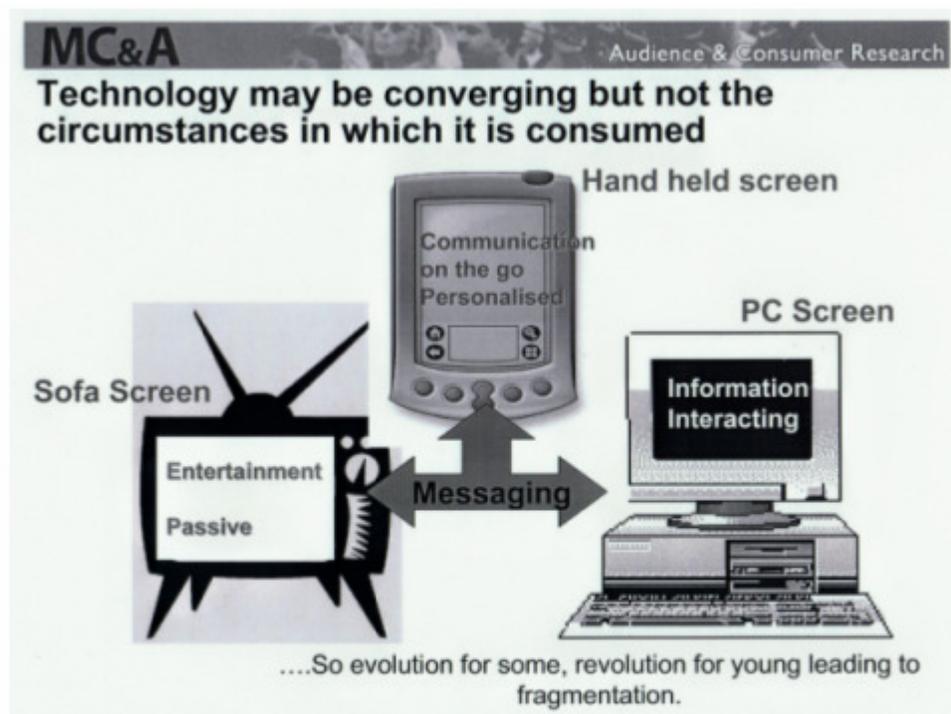
Figure 19: Connecting with New Media Audiences, BBC Audience and Consumer Research, 2003

The BBC believed the challenge for brands like 'Celebdaq' was that television was still perceived to be a 'lean back' experience and the PC was perceived as offering information and engagement. Because of this difference in attitude towards the different technologies and because the PC was often located in a different room, it was felt important to monitor the situation and to try out new forms of semi-convergent content, but with caution. The BBC felt, however, that the consumption behaviours of young audiences indicated there would be some kind of convergence happening in the

future and that people were beginning to use laptop computers and wireless technology, which made 'the internet' portable. The suggested strategy was therefore to position the BBC so it would be one of the first media organisations to offer new forms of semi-converged content which might encourage audiences to move between the TV and the PC. The digital channel BBC3 was targeting the right audience to trial semi-converged content. Furthermore BBC3 had just been given approval by the Department of Culture Media and Sport (2002) on twelve conditions, one of which was to offer programmes which were 'genuinely new to television' (DCMS, 2002).

The gestation of 'Celebdaq'

Conrad Green moved to the BBC in October 2001 from being Executive Producer of *Big Brother* to develop new reality television formats. Green was commissioned to create something new for the launch of BBC3, an integrated brand which would be delivered on television and online. The result was 'Celebdaq' an online game, online community and television programme which facilitated the buying and selling of shares in celebrities through an imaginary stock market, The Daq. 'Traders' as the Celebdaq players are termed, watched the Friday night show which offered features on celebrities and celebrity culture. The programme encouraged potential new Traders to visit the website where the mythical stock exchange game was situated. Participants ran personal investment portfolios of shares, seeded with £10,000 of mythical cash, aiming to become the 'Trader of the Week'. The television element was twenty-four thirty minute shows, in addition a daily update on share prices in the Daq was given every day within BBC3's entertainment news bulletin *Liquid News*. Share prices were calculated by the number of column inches celebrities generated in the tabloid press and gossip magazines each week.

The audience was committed to a relationship of longevity as it took time to build up a portfolio worth, for example, one million Daq pounds. In the Trader's week there was a set programme of activities: Monday was 'knee-capping day' otherwise known as 'Millionaire Day' when those who have made over a million Daq pounds were reduced to having nothing but a symbol of their previous wealth such as an island or a yacht or jet.

This resulted in Traders who had portfolios of just less than one million 'down-trading', guided by the Daq, on Sunday nights. Wednesday was the day the 'Top Trader' was announced and profiled on the website, Thursday the 'Daq Diary' was published which gave orientation around the movement of the stock exchange, and Friday was 'Dividend Day' when the value of every individual portfolio was announced. Experienced Traders developed sophisticated strategies which were swapped in forums and chat rooms online.

'Celebdaq' was not a new idea as the BBC admitted, 'Popex.com has been 'trading' in musicians since 1998, while the *Hollywood Stock Exchange* allows investors to buy and sell stock and bonds both in films and the performers they feature' (BBC News Online, 2003). The project was presented by the BBC as being unique in that it would 'allow viewers to interact in a way that lets them get under the skin of what they see on television' (Broadcastnow.com, 2002). Channel 4 was forced to abandon its own plans to open a celebrity stock exchange as the BBC's plans were discovered.

'Celebdaq' on television was transmitted as a complete television programme, with the first transmission on BBC3 which was repeated on BBC2. In addition elements of the programme were included as news items on 'Liquid News', BBC3's entertainment news television bulletins.

Figure 20: Paddy O'Connell interviews a guest on 'Celebdaq'

The television set for 'Celebdaq' was futuristic and evoked the feeling of being in the heart of the City of London. A large website accompanied the broadcasts and offered the complex trading game, including the position of the traders and the top trader of the week. The website foregrounded the position of the traders and the fluctuations of the 'Daq' stock exchange, giving a feeling of ongoing, minute-by-minute change, just like the real London Stock Exchange. Once a Trader had established a portfolio it was important to check the changing prices daily.
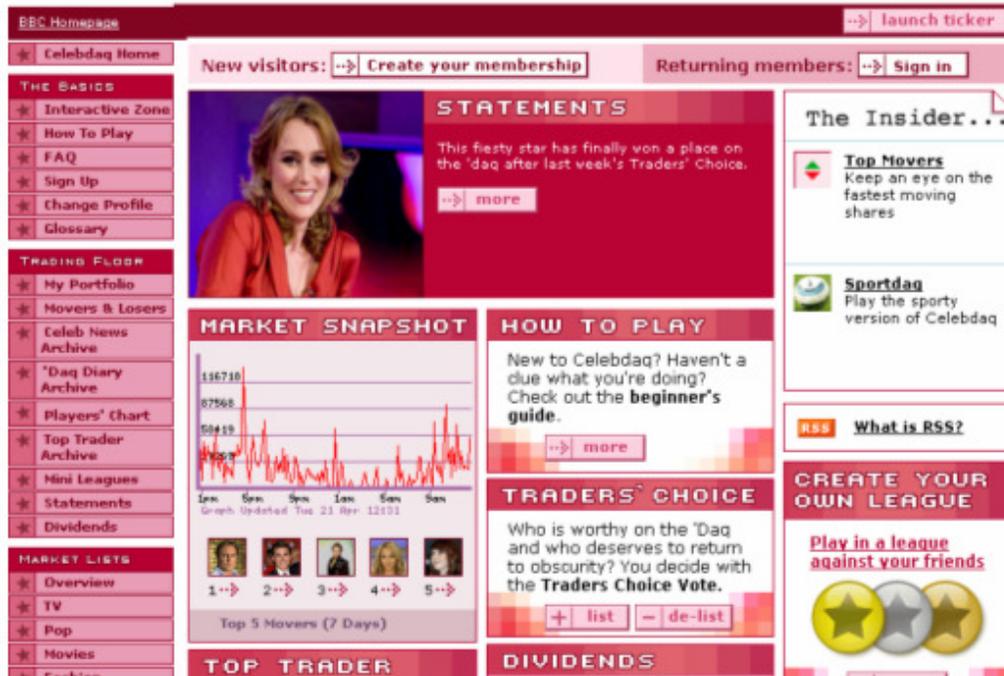
Figure 21: The home page of the 'Celebdaq' web site

The website included a message board and there were also live streamed events which took the form of a 'shareholders' meeting, again mimicking the financial industry. 'Celebdaq' content was distributed further by fans who created websites and chat rooms around 'Celebdaq' on MSN (known as 'the other place') and AOL. Traders often chatted in the BBC's message board signalling they would meet 'at the other place' for more open conversation and real-time chat. Finally, Traders built fan websites in honour of the game, including one which used complex software to forecast the future movements of the value of celebrities, again mimicking the software used to track the movements of the London Stock Exchange.

The website launched in advance of the television programme, in July 2002, drawing 104,556 visits on the 20 July (BBC Web Server Statistics, 2003). The reason for this was that the launch of BBC Three was delayed, for a second time, due to the government's

indecision about the content of the channel and its potential market impact (Whitehead, J, 2002). As the website was ready to launch the producer-host of 'Celebdaq' said 'we soft launched it assuming it would tick along quietly until the channel launched. However, it quickly became popular through personal to personal recommendation, virally, and had a considerable following by the time the show went on air which was actually really beneficial to the show's content' (Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq', Email, 26 January, 2009). On the 13 August, 2002, an article in *WebUser Internet* magazine showed that the nascent 'Celebdaq' online community (16,000 Traders) were using the BBC's 'Celebdaq' message board to complain back to the BBC, 'Damn BBC need to increase their bandwidth allocation, what's the point in promoting this site in all the papers and then it falls over because of so many using it at the same time' (Craig, 2002). The aim of 'Celebdaq' website was

> To create a community of players and to generate the first stats/market values and timely celebrity listings for the programmes...the idea always was that the programme could not exist without the site (not the other way round) (Walpole, S, 2009).

Sophie Walpole, who was, at the time of the study, the Head of Interactive Entertainment for the BBC, believed 'Celebdaq' was primarily an online brand, and that the broadcast supported the online content, a position which countered the BBC's 'broadcast-led' position at that time.

'Celebdaq' on Television

In the weeks immediately after the launch of the television programme (15 February 2003) there were nearly 3 million visits each week to the 'Celebdaq' website. According to the BBC's intranet 130,000 people had already registered as Traders:

> Celebrity stock exchange 'Celebdaq', last week registered just 10.000 fewer hits than the BBC International news homepage. It ranks higher than both 'EastEnders' and Radio 1 on BBCi's most visited sites...On February 21 the site

burst through the 1m hits-per-day barrier, and 13,000 new players signed up on Sunday alone (BBC Intranet, 2003).

The BBC's intranet framed Celebdaq' as a success and followed the progress of the brand over the coming months. *Ariel Online* reported that Chris Wilson, the TV show's executive producer, had told the *Guardian* that the popularity of the format had exceeded all expectations, 'It's potentially a very good model for the future. *Big Brother* has a very popular website, but the programme could easily have existed without the site. 'Celebdaq' is the first TV show to rely entirely on a website for its content' (*Ariel,* 2003). The television programme and the website carried the same branding, was intended for the same audience, and the web and TV production teams worked together at Television Centre.

In March, 2003, BBC Executives in WorldWide, the commercial arm of the BBC, took 'Celebdaq' to MipTV in Cannes 'in the hope that it might be sold to other countries on the back of the appetite for celebrity gossip which has fuelled demand for the show' (BBC Intranet, 2003). Colin Jarvis, Worldwide director of programming and operations said with great confidence '"Celebdaq" is the talk of the UK – you cannot walk into any workplace around the country without hearing who's buying shares in whom. It is a truly interactive idea and BBC Worldwide expects great things from the format' (BBC Intranet, 2003).

Figure 21: 'Celebdaq'   Photos courtesy of Richard Carr (Art Director, 'Celebdaq')

The website was flourishing however the audience figures for the 'Celebdaq' television programme never registered high enough to be included by the Broadcasters' Audience Research Board. The Controller of BBC3, Stuart Murphy, thought having a more regular television show might help the brand as a whole. He wanted to bring the website audience, which was then drawing 41,000 unique users each week, over to the broadcast as the television programme was failing. Jenkins feels fan groups associated with broadcast brands can be defined as 'viewers who speak back to the networks and the producers, who assert their right to make judgements and to express opinions about the development of favourite programmes' (Jenkins, 1992: 278). The 'Celebdaq' fans could have been useful to the television producers, they had ideas and expressed them in the 'Celebdaq' message board. Broadcast Now continued to follow how 'Celebdaq' was developing and in an article published on the 7 March, 2003 claimed the 'much hyped' 'Celebdaq' audience figures to be 89,000 viewers. On BBC2 during 'Celebdaq's' repeat transmission on the more mainstream channel the percentage share on the 9 March, 2003 shows an average audience (in millions) of 0.39, which was a 5% share of the market. According to data from BBC Marketing, Communications and Audiences (BBC Marketing, Communications and Audiences, 2003b) the audience gender split was 55%

male and 45% female for the Sunday lunchtime slot. The predominant age of viewers was 35-44 years of age (23%), older than the BBC3 audience, with the second largest demographic being 25-34 years olds (18%). The audience was professional, intelligent and sophisticated.

'Celebdaq' online suited the audience and reflected the audience, the 'Celebdaq' Traders. It was also content which was accessible to them on demand, which suited their busy lives. The Traders were often out the house on a Friday night therefore they had to record the television programme, or miss it. As BBC3 was a digital channel a proportion of the audience did not have access to it, at that time Freeview was new, having launched in October, 2002, therefore the numbers of viewers to BBC3, which was in any case a new channel, was low. The Controller of BBC3 wished to attract a young audience (under 35 years of age), however 'Celebdaq' was attracting older audiences which was problematic for the Controller BBC3. The presenters of 'Celebdaq' understood the audience was older as they engaged with the Traders online and attended the monthly meetings organised for fans in a London pub.

'Unruly' audiences

The 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts overseeing the 'Celebdaq' website worked with moderators from ChatModerators.com who removed any messages in the message board breaking the local house rules, they particularly looked out for libel and defamation. Such posts were either removed by the moderator or, if the moderator was in any doubt, escalated to the producer-hosts who decided whether or not the post should be removed. Matt Hills feels there is always a negotiation of control which happens between fans and broadcasters and he doubts whether broadcasters treatment of fans shows as much homage as fans show broadcasters as 'there is social pressure not to be too far "off-thread)"' (Hills, 2002:178). On the 3 and 5 March 2003, stories appeared in the *Guardian* claiming a footballer at the centre of a 'kiss-and-tell' story had been named on the 'Celebdaq' message board despite a High Court injunction banning his identification, 'it emerged that the corporation does not check all messages for potential libel or offensive content before they are posted...It appears this is the reason for a blunder that could

land the corporation in the high court facing a contempt of court action' (Deans, 5 March, 2003). The offending message had not been noticed by the moderators or the 'Celebdaq' hosts, however it was seen by the press. The event became the first large scale public test of the editorial policies surrounding the management of the BBC's participatory media. Deans also noted that 'BBC executives are today asking tough questions about how the offending messages, which could land the corporation in legal hot water, were allowed onto the website' (Deans, 5 March, 2003). The following day, 6 March, 2003, Deans noted 'The BBC has launched an investigation into editorial controls at one of its most popular websites at the same time as the government is preparing a far-reaching review of the corporation's internet services' (Deans, 6 March, 2003).

The BBC managed to avoid any charge of contempt of court, however the 'Celebdaq' message board was placed into pre-moderation, messages now queued for inspection and subsequent publishing. The timing could not have been worse as Philip Graf was beginning his review of www.bbc.co.uk and the event had made the front cover of the tabloid press. Within the BBC the speculation was whether the BBC might have been 'set up' by the tabloids as a test of the BBC's editorial processes online. A faction within the press felt the BBC was expending into their territory as they also had websites, and as online content was classified and regulated as 'published' content not broadcast content.

The licence to run BBC3 was granted on the condition that the BBC produce innovative television content, they were not instructed, nor under any obligation to deliver pan-platform content. 'Celebdaq' was a response and an experiment intended to find out whether such genres of programming would be possible and popular. The television producers were at liberty to drop their association with 'Celebdaq' online if they wished. The television producers feared what the unruly audience might do next, online chat and open comment was also unfamiliar to them, they therefore retrenched and 'took back' control by retrenching to a 'check then publish' model. Shirky believes

> Filter-then-publish, whatever its advantages, rested on a scarcity of media that is a thing of the past. The expansion of social media means that the only working

system is publish-then-filter. We have lost the clean distinctions between communications media and broadcast media (Shirky, 2008: 98).

The BBC felt it needed to gain an understanding the 'Celebdaq' Traders in more detail, therefore they commissioned an audience *InSite* study. The study was carried out between 16-23 April, 2003, one month after the controversy over the naming of the footballer. It took the form of a pop-up on the website designed to appear at random on a '1 in X' basis as the audience' browsers downloaded the 'Celebdaq' home page. The survey collected information on Traders over 15 years of age and aimed to build in-depth profiles of users in order to measure attitudes and collect comments and suggestions on the 'Celebdaq' website. The study was not designed to find out about 'Celebdaq' as a semi-converged brand, but solely about the online audience, which meant the study of the audience around the brand was incomplete.

922 responses were generated of which 830 were UK Traders and 2% of the respondents were from North America. It was discovered that there was a higher percentage of male users then the 'overall Internet universe' at that time, and the Traders were younger. The Traders occupations were professional, clerical or junior management. A larger percentage of Traders lived in England (78%), and it was found they were more likely to have access to the internet at home or at work than the norm, however as this was an online survey, that might account for this figure. The Traders logged on at home mainly in the evenings after 6pm and a surprisingly high number of Traders (53%) visited 'Celebdaq' every day to check their portfolios, mostly from home after 6pm. They had a high level of understanding of the internet, 49% had used the internet for over 5 years, and they were mostly high technology users who incorporated mobiles and digital television into their daily lives. 'Celebdaq' had largely become popular through viral recommendation between friends (39%), in addition to finding out about 'Celebdaq' through television trails or the television programme itself (19%). The study found the Traders were high users of email, they also used search engines often, and were interested in UK or world news, and entertainment news. The gender split was 63% male and 37% female, and a high 82% of traders were childless.

As can be seen, most of the questions (set by BBC's audience research) were about the Trader's use of media and communications, there were no questions about the culture of the game or about the Traders motivations for playing the game. In addition the study did not ask questions about the significance of the Trader's week; Millionaire's Day, Top Trader Day, Diary Day, the popular chat room on MSN on Thursday nights (from 10pm to 0100am), or Dividend Friday. The study did not ask about the Trader's attitudes towards the television programme, or whether they watched the programme, although there was a box for comments at the end of the survey. The resulting information therefore did not assist the television producers to understand the Traders and what they liked to do, however this information could have been easily obtained by playing the game, reading the message boards, or talking to the producer-hosts.

The reason for this failure to investigate 'Celebdaq' in an holistic way, across both television and online was because BBC3 had its own audience research team and the BBC's web team situated in BBC Drama and Entertainment had a different set of audience researchers; they did not communicate or work together. This was indicative of the wider territorial issues which was causing problems at the BBC, which have been discussed with reference to BBC New Media's territorial claims to own 'interactivity'. In addition to the fragmentation between the production teams working in broadcasting and online, the BBC's many different audience research teams assisting the various channels and brands offered by the BBC, did not cross-reference audience data.

The 'Celebdaq' Traders were not interested in celebrity gossip, a significant misunderstanding indicating a lack of connectivity between the players and producers. The Traders were interested in creating a role play activity around celebrity culture and in the parody it created of celebrity culture. Not understanding the Traders and mistrusting the participatory elements the television producers distanced the programme from the fans active online, the Trader of the Week was no longer featured on the television programme for example. What appeared to be a small detail from a television production point of view was highly significant for the audience playing the game. In May 2003 *BBC3* Controller Stuart Murphy ordered changes to the television programme to 'broaden

its appeal' away from the celebrity trading website. The official statement was that BBC managers were concerned the programme's audience was too niche, which seemed contradictory as BBC3 aimed to serve a niche audience (but a different niche audience).

The Friday night show became a 'media review' and the set was redesigned. According to *Broadcast Now*, the 'Celebdaq' television programme was getting 70,000 viewers, whereas the website had 250,000 registered users; 'A BBC3 spokeswoman said "A few editorial changes have been made to broaden the programme's remit. The concern was that it only made sense if you played the game on the website"' (*Broadcast Now*, 2002). The article added that Stuart Murphy was still completely committed to the show, that it was commissioned until July 2003, and that the controller was in talks about taking it to BBC2; a second transmission on BBC2 duly followed. As the BBC2 audience was older, this might have been a better fit for the 'Celebdaq' Traders, however the semi-converged brand was getting increasingly fragmented which did not assist the flow of the brand across television and online. A secondary aim for this repeat transmission on BBC2 was the BBC's attempt to encourage viewers across to the digital channels and any accompanying participatory content; several programmes which had originated on the new digital channels were repeated on BBC2 in 2003 for the same reason.

Paddy O'Connell was axed as the anchor presenter of 'Celebdaq' in January, 2004, and the TV show went off the air for a six week break for a radical reversioning. The audience study and observations of the 'Celebdaq' message board found the removal of a much-loved presenter, O'Connell, and the revamp had the effect of rejecting the Traders, turning the hard core fans against the programme. Messages were left in the 'Celebdaq' message board stating the Traders felt the BBC was not listening to them and that the essence of being part of the 'Celebdaq' stock exchange was being ignored. The main interest in 'Celebdaq' for Traders was to challenge others in a role play environment which had a highly competitive element, and an identifiable culture and temporality. None of the distinguishing characteristics of 'Celebdaq' were present in the new-style programme, which the original presenters felt was a mistake. The new presenters, Jenny

Éclair and Joe Mace, unlike Paddy O'Connell and Libby Potter, did not keep a trading portfolio; effectively the new presenters did not appear to be involved in 'Celebdaq'.

In February, 2004 'Celebdaq' online won an Interactive BAFTA for 'The Best Entertainment Site on the Internet' and BBC News Online covered the event, noting the television programme was presently off-air, but that it would return to BBC3 as a half-hour show on Mondays and Thursdays from the 8 March 2004. The fieldwork notes show that, as the television programme's audience declined, the online activity remained high with 85,000 active Traders and 250,000 registered Traders in April 2004 (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, May, 2004). The television programme returned as a chat show for a month of programmes from March to April, 2004, for four days a week but there was no reference to the 'Celebdaq' website or the Traders. A very simplified version of the broadband multimedia console developed during the Interactive Presenter Scheme workshops was also launched at the same time, offering the 'Celebdaq ' television programme on demand, however it was not promoted and many audience members failed to find it.

The message board was removed from 'Celebdaq' in the summer of 2004. A post from one of the Traders titled 'Has the BBC given up on "Celebdaq"? ' commented...

> The game seems to be getting less funding...The message boards are now getting very quiet and no one seems to listen to the traders anymore...When they ran the new show it was a reincarnation of all the problems that the original had but with worse presenters...is it me or are the BBC just letting the game die a slow death? (Grizzly Adams, Trader, 'Celebdaq' Message Board, 27 May, 2004).

The television programme did not complete its final four week run, however 'Celebdaq' online continued, spawning a sister brand 'SportDaq' which traded imaginary shares in sports celebrities. Neither 'Celebdaq' nor 'SportDaq' offered a message board, therefore there was no way the producer-hosts could communicate with the audience, which the hosts felt was inhibiting, 'I think access to the people who run the game is actually quite important... that is lacking since the message boards were closed' (Producer-Host,

'Celebdaq', Interview, 27 October, 2005). The 'Celebdaq' Traders continued to play the game on the BBC but, having the means to create their own message boards and chat in MSN and AOL, they extending the fan sites they had made themselves and moved between the official and unofficial elements of the game. The BBC had created a participatory, semi-converged, brand yet the interactivity had moved elsewhere.

A multimedia console for 'interactive presentation'

In March, 2003 executives from BBC Worldwide were taking 'Celebdaq' to MipTV in Cannes to sell the format. On the 14 February, 2003 the iPresenters were deciding how to explore bringing the online community closer to broadcasts. This was something which had been specifically requested by the managers in BBC New Media. The iPresenters chose to look at 'Celebdaq' taking apart the brand, analysing the audience, and seeing if they could re-construct the elements in a better form, perhaps by converging those elements even further. The aim was also to see if the audience could become more involved in 'Celebdaq' and to find out whether the qualities of television and the internet could be combined, or drawn together, in any way, for consumption on broadband. The iPresenters worked with the BBC's producer responsible for developing new genres of content suitable for a faster internet. Finally they also wanted to create a new kind of vehicle for interactive presentation online. Whatever it was it should contain the best elements of the television programme, the website, involve the Traders, and feature the Daq Stock Exchange. The workshop participants decided to analyse the broadcast and the website. This was followed by an analysis of the audience and their behaviours over one week both on television and online. The audience data they used was drawn from the message boards, BBC audience data, the fan activity outside the BBC and by talking to the 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts about the Traders. A list of activities the Traders enjoyed doing was subsequently drawn up:

Existing activities Traders enjoy
Planning strategies
Getting clarification of the rules
Confirming position/status in the Leagues
Getting updates on the user-interfaces/other technical issues
Asking for new features
Chatting to other Traders
Swapping jokes, humour
Swapping gossip
Swapping tips on how to play the game
Breaking news on Celebrities
Giving opinions
Offering predictions

Figure 23: The activities the 'Celebdaq' Traders were observed to enjoy.

The 'Celebdaq' Traders activities in the message boards were particularly examined, by looking at the messages over one week and over previous conversations. They next listed the activities the Celebdaq Traders were asking for; the things they would like the 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts to organise for them. A table of 'wished-for' activities and content was compiled:

The Traders 'wish list'
A round-up of the gossip papers
A celebrity 'guru' to advise Traders each week
Daily updates on celebrities
Predictions of the value of celebrities
A debate
A tipster
Insider information on the Traders themselves
Consultants from real stock markets
User-profiles so the Traders could see who they were engaging with online
A quiz based around the idea of the Paparazzi
Information on the producer-hosts, the presenters, and the producers who create 'Celebdaq'
Interviews with tabloid journalists

Figure 24: The 'Celebdaq' Traders list of things they would like to do.

The broadband producer suggested adapting a broadband console which had just been created for BBC News, additional features could be added. The workshop participants were all also keen to show the process of maintaining the console would be as economical as possible largely because the iPresenters would be able to shoot additional video, input the content into the console's content management system, and they could also present the interactive 'show'. During the course of their training the iPresenters had learnt how to make web pages, film, and to mix and edit video features therefore they felt one iPresenter could maintain the console every day and that together they might be able to produce several consoles, perhaps for several different departments, as a kind of new 'cottage industry', across the BBC.

Working from the Traders 'wish list' and using the suggestion of creating a multimedia console, the participants 'brainstormed' and drew a mock up for the console, which they

subsequently built and tested. Drawing the console on an A3 Flip Chart, iPresenter 'Stuart' described the idea

> An iPresenter guides you round the different features...Press here for this press here for this...You've got to have your links to the trading floor, and to the *Celebdaq* board and you want to have your links to the messages as well, I mean that goes without saying. And why not have some tickers down the bottom? Its part of the game isn't it, so you can have your trading prices, live   (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Video Transcript*, 18 February, 2003).

After the presentation the Broadband Producer responded by saying he felt 'A presenter-led broadband show that leverages message board content, mixing it with the TV and narrowband offering and placing it into a broadcast environment would have a number of benefits' (Broadband Producer, Email, 13 February, 2003). He added this would show the Traders the BBC was listening and reacting in a tangible way, furthermore that this could be an ongoing service of some kind rather than a 'one-off' event.

The console used the time code embedded within video to trigger a slideshow of images and web links in the two right-hand windows, co-ordinating a mixed media experience.
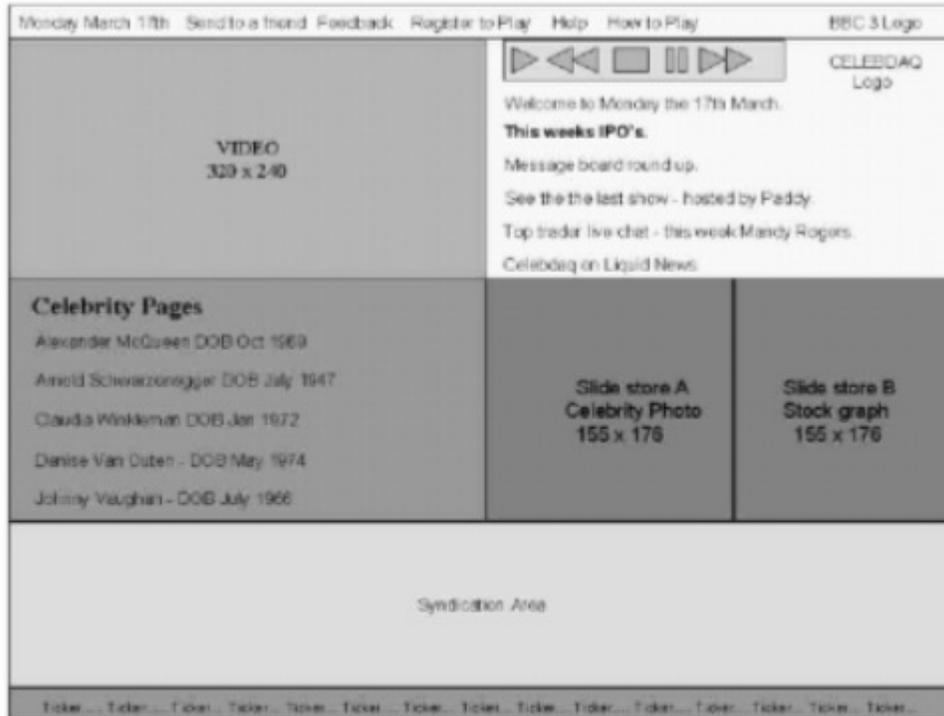
Figure 25: Screenshot of the shell of the Celebdaq media player, April, 2003

The console could play the whole 'Celebdaq' broadcast or 'chunks' of the programme. The stock exchange prices could be tracked and at the top of the console it was also planned to offer a news 'ticker' showing the ongoing price fluctuations of the Daq. A gateway was provided to the message board and Traders could also submit video for inclusion.

Figure 26: *iPresenter presenting the working model of the Celebdaq Console.*

The iPresenters chose to illustrate the benefits of the console playfully, by including a review of the newspapers from the day the controversial naming of the football star was discovered in the 'Celebdaq' message board. The decision to show the front page of *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* was, on the one hand, completely in the spirit of 'Celebdaq' and its promotion of news about celebrities, they also wanted to be controversial, something BBC3 had said it wanted to be as a channel. In addition, by this point in their contracts (towards the end), the iPresenters had given up trying to achieve full-time employment at the BBC and they were, increasingly, promoting their own careers; this was good material for their showreels.

The Traders who took part in the March 2004 audience study on 'Celebdaq' were shown the console and a significant level of interest was found; Andrew said 'I think I would probably watch this more than the TV show' (Animator, aged 35). In a number of cases the Traders expressed a high level of enthusiasm, particularly the students who could not afford a Freeview box and therefore couldn't access BBC3. Helen said it was 'quite cool actually even though it pauses now and then. I would watch it especially during the holidays' (Helen, Student, aged 19). She went on to say the help section was particularly

useful, 'If I'd known about this I wouldn't have had to ask all my friends how to play...I'm impressed...I'm really glad they've got Celebdaq TV on here as well. Oh genius'. Andrew (Company Director, aged 32) said 'I would probably watch this more than the TV show...You could watch ten minutes of that just to wind down over a cup of coffee'.

The content within the console was seen as having greater relevance for Traders, Jane (Student, 21) thought 'it's got more of a purpose to it because it is related to the game'. Douglas felt 'content-wise it's exactly what I would be interested from playing Celebdaq' (Animator, 27). Some Traders were, however, quite critical, the console had to be useful as well as entertaining, Elizabeth said, 'I'm a devotee of the game so I'd definitely not want it to be like the TV show it should be all about the game itself'. Paddy O'Connell thought the console was beginning to 'get it right' and that 'we were trying to see how the different medias could develop', he also felt 'the broadband application could have involved Libby, me, and [producer-host's name] who runs the website'.

The 'Celebdaq' console was launched for one month, in March, 2004. It was not promoted well, the participants of the audience study had to be told where to find it on the website. The Broadband Producer received 'over 100' emails via the console from Traders who were enthusiastic about the console, the console therefore appeared to be a good solution to 'Celebdaq's' fragmented form, drawing together the television and the internet. It was also perceived by the audience as something new, exciting and useful. The console was responding to the BBC's own audience research data, including the very large *Daily Life Study* which, as has been mentioned earlier, suggested younger audiences 'snacked' on media. The console was well received by Traders as it had been designed with their interests, their culture, their demographic and their consumption habits in mind. The 'Celebdaq' producer-host felt the console had been a missed opportunity, 'it's a shame it wasn't there from the beginning...when ['Celebdaq'] was more about the website and we could probably have done a bit more with it' (Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq', Interview, 27 October, 2005).

Findings on hosting semi-converged participatory content

The sociable facilitators of 'Celebdaq', both within the television programme and on the website, were found to be the 'glue' which connected the Trading community and which assisted the flow across the different platforms. The original presenters of 'Celebdaq', Paddy O'Connell the 'anchor' and Libby Potter the 'newsdesk' presenter, were particularly important in the creation of a culture around the game and stock market. O'Connell had been a reporter working on Wall Street for the financial press and for broadcasting, he was irreverent, sharp, witty and clever and he joined in with the Traders as a player-participant in the game. As the presenter of the television programme his style was 'light, satirical and very much tied to the show' (Jackson, *Fieldwork Diary*, March, 2004). O'Connell used the same restricted codes as the Traders themselves, such as the terms 'a wodge of cash' and 'the Daq' in the broadcast and on the message board. O'Connell also exposed the mechanics of television in the same way celebrity culture was being exposed, and 'shared' the show with the Traders 'We're back on the right camera next week' (O'Connell, *Video Transcript*, 12 February, 2003). He included the audience as 'overhearing' and co-present participants of the television programme, 'Can you talk a lot now, so I don't have to' and read out emails and messages from the Traders, commenting on the progress of any accompanying chat room, to show the audience were 'present' across the semi-converged brand. The online game and stock exchange was referenced and, for the first few broadcasts, the 'Top Trader of the Week' was interviewed on the programme. The TV show was witty, slick and sophisticated, which suited the audience; 'Every day we measure the column inches...it's a top job'. The removal of O'Connell a much loved presenter in 2004 by the television producers alienated the fans.

Figure 27: Paddy O'Connell presents 'breaking news' on 'Celebdaq'

O'Connell and the newsdesk presenter Libby Potter had distinctly different functions in the show, O'Connell linked the elements of the show together (interviews, news and features), while Potter gave an overview of the fluctuations of the Daq stock exchange. Large 'election-style' graphs were used to stimulate comments on the movements of the stock exchange, giving a humorous gravitas to the proceedings.

The new presenters = a different function, more old media, did not keep a trading portfolio Helen (Student, aged 20) wanted the new presenters to come and 'meet' the community in the message boards, but thought it unlikely to happen, saying they 'just go off and do other things whereas the message board hosts are there all the time'. Celebrities who played 'Celebdaq' (and there were several) were referenced and sometimes introduced on the programme, for example Richard Baker, Ant and Dec, Anthea Turner and Kate Lawler. The fact that celebrities were also 'trading on the Daq', possibly investing in themselves, added a further layer of playfulness and gave a sense of having proximity to those whose lives the Daq was reflecting.

The presenter-hosts working online were highly important for the Traders, Christine (Receptionist, aged 28) said 'It does help having [a permanent host] on the internet

especially because the tele's only happening once a week'. The Traders were also aware the producer-hosts had, from time to time, ulterior motives, Elizabeth (Senior Secretary, aged 35) said 'they do talk about the TV show but only in the sense that that they are trying to plug it to get us to watch it [laughs]'. The Traders were realistic about the potential cost to the BBC of offering hosts online, Eimon (Salesman, 30) said, 'I don't expect them to be listening to me 24/7'. They also thought they could begin to help the BBC, 'finding people to voluntarily host a site for a few hours a week wouldn't be any difficulty at all', Suzy (Administrative Assistant, aged 30).

The producer-hosts undervalued themselves, which might not have been assisted by the fact that they were nicknamed 'the hampsters' or 'the blues' by the Traders. They had a high level of influence over the development of the culture online, just as Paddy O'Connell had on the television programme. The producer-host of 'Celebdaq' described how the hosts would create 'little scandals to get people interested and to give content to the programme and give them something else to talk about…there's no more interesting time on Celebdaq [than] when something like that is happening' (Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq', Interview, 27 October, 2005). The hosts, however, also felt highly exposed, left to deal with the audience with insufficient support, 'you are open to criticism…you're open to anything that comes in, you have to deal with it, and sometimes it's nice and sometimes it's not' (Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq', Interview, 27 October, 2005). However despite the role being problematic being able to engage with the audience was felt to be highly important. When the board was removed from 'Celebdaq' the hosts had no means of communicating with the audience; an important element was felt to be missing 'certainly from our experience of launching 'SportDaq' which didn't have a message board' (Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq', Interview, 27 October, 2005).

The addition of live feedback channels such as message boards for live chats changed the presenter and producer-hosts relationship with the public. There was a need to treat the members differently to provide a better level of client relationship management. The first 'Top Trader' featured in the television programme was interviewed in one of the BBC's

small, un-manned, studios which have one microphone, a camera and a pair of headphones. A local representative places the interviewee in position, they are then left to wait until they hear the production staff in London begin to give instructions through the headphones. The first Trader to be interviewed felt they had been badly treated. The message board offered an immediate way to express her feelings. 'I was disappointed that I got questions barked at me from an interviewer who was more interested in hearing his own voice than putting me at ease'. She was also asked to put on a jacket which had been left for her, which was unexpected. The striped jacket imitated those worn by London Stock Exchange employees on the trading floor. The Trader of the Week was then asked to model the jacket in front of the camera. She apologised to the rest of the community, feeling humiliated, and concerned she had not represented the Traders well. iPresenter 'Stuart' read out her message from the 'Celebdaq' message board, 'Sorry folks, I let you down' (iPresenter, 'Stuart', *Video Transcript*, 14 February, 2003 – Available for viewing in the Appendix, titled 'Top Trader'). The presence of instant feedback on television programmes means a far greater level of transparency is required from production staff, if audiences feel they are not treated well, humiliated even, they can complain very publicly and instantly.

Summary of the findings on hosting semi-converged participatory content:
- In the case of 'Celebdaq', as an example of semi-converged participatory programming, presenters and hosts had a highly significant role. That was to enable the sociability of the programming across all its platforms and iterations. This extended to having some presence wherever the fans of the content gathered.
- The presenters and hosts fostered a 'living culture' which drove the popularity of the brand. To do this the presenters and hosts included the Traders, the audience and the celebrities themselves, in the mechanics of the brand. All those involved were ratified participants who understood what was going on 'backstage', and the specialised language and humour which developed.

- The producer-hosts of 'Celebdaq' undervalued themselves. The Traders felt the producer-hosts were highly important particularly as some of the elements of the semi-converged brand were time-based ('the tele's only happening once a week'). The producer-hosts maintained the continuity of 'Celebdaq' across time.
- If the Traders were mistreated the whole community was made aware.
- The level of media literacy (how the media worked) was high. The Traders clearly recognised when the producer-hosts had ulterior, institutionally-focussed aims.
- The sociability of 'Celebdaq' was severely reduced when the presenter, Paddy O'Connell was taken off the programme and the message board was closed (March 2004). The producer-hosts were then unable to communicate with the Traders.

Findings on 'Celebdaq' as a semi-converged brand

'Celebdaq' was highly successful online however the brand failed *as a semi-converged text* and this was for several reasons. The Trader's culture was not reflected in the television programme, the replacement television presenters were also not Traders themselves therefore they didn't understand the level of sophistication which was involved, or their audience. The website could have reflected the television programme by offering stills of the programme or quotes and more links between the two could have been organised. The Traders felt the television and web content was performing very different functions, Kylie (Receptionist, aged 25) said, 'I see the message board as telling you the facts...also information on things that have actually happened in the news already, whereas the programme, it's more "this is a suggestion of what we think is going to happen"'. The Traders media consumption patterns indicated they would have liked to have consumed elements of the 'Celebdaq' broadcast online and the whole programme online and on demand. The Traders were 'early adopters' of new technology, therefore they were more likely to have access to a fast internet connection.

The Traders wanted the game and stock exchange to be featured equally across the television and web and to include the particular trading activities which were timetabled over the trading week on specific days. Suzy (Admin Assistant, aged 30) said: 'Friday's is the biggest day so why not have [events] for us on a Friday'. Eimon recommended having activities on a Thursday night when Traders habitually got together online in the MSN chat room as they waited for the dividends to be (automatically) posted after midnight, 'maybe there could be something going on then, you know, late at night which is obviously anti-social hours' (Marketing Manager, aged 30). The television programme and the website was found to be too dissimilar, Jane (Student, aged 21) said 'I thought they were completely separate from each other and that there was just completely different people doing it...I didn't realise there was a connection'. One of the 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts felt 'The programme was always in competition with the website you know we got 250,000 people playing the game why haven't we got 250,000 people watching the programme?' Paddy O'Connell felt the question was 'how much focus to put on the game and how much to put on the world of Celebrity...should it be an entertainment show or should it be, to put it in disparaging terms myself, a nurdy geeky show based on an internet website' (O'Connell, Interview, 6 September, 2004).. He also felt he had had no control over the direction the programme was taking as the TV executives attempted to find a larger audience for the show, 'as that balance shifted my say got less and those bigger than me, the people who employed me, ultimately changed the format' (O'Connell, ibid).

The shared ground between the television and the online elements of the brand was the role play of the Daq stock exchange and the parodies of celebrity culture. In addition the human elements of 'Celebdaq', the Traders and the presenters and producer-hosts were a further, and most important, commonality between the elements of the brand. The Traders 'amplified' 'Celebdaq' by recommending the game to others and by opening websites and forums on AOL and MSN. Jenkins feels the re-creation or constant iteration of a brand away from the source within social media assists convergence, 'these networks build upon synergies within the entertainment corporations to ensure that talk about their hit reality series continues throughout the week' (Jenkins, 2006:86). The

evidence suggests the participatory elements also link the individual texts and platforms together to become an aggregated brand, and build the social capital which drives the brand forward.

Over 80 percent of the participants of the audience study felt the Traders should have been visible within the television programme. As there were 'mini-leagues' of Traders across the UK who played against each other in a second level of competition, this could also have been incorporated. It was surprising the audience was not featured to any great degree as Conrad Green who commissioned 'Celebdaq' was hired to develop reality television formats for the BBC. What sets reality TV apart from other television is, as Hill notes, 'the capacity to let viewers see for themselves' (Hill, 2005: 55). The 'Celebdaq' Traders were not given the opportunity see themselves and the activities of their fellow Traders situated within what could have been 'their own' show.

Morley stresses the importance of validation and acknowledgement of *audience members* in broadcast content 'through the recitation of their names and of their familiar local landmarks and symbols. Through this process the listeners are granted (and grant each other) recognition of this virtual community, which is overlaid on the geographical space of their lives' (Morley, 2000:123). Several Traders felt there 'seemed to be a great reluctance to let the players have anything to do with the programme' (Alan, Animator, aged 28). James a real financial trader in the City, agreed, 'I'd feel more involved with the 'Celebdaq' TV programme...if I could contribute towards the show in some way' (Financial Analyst, aged 44). This indicates, again, the need for a more 'collegiate' relationship referred to earlier in this study, for some genres of programming and for some audiences, particularly those where the audience are directly involved in contributing, and therefore partly creating, a brand.

Summary of the findings on 'Celebdaq' as a '360 degree' brand:
- There was a lack of cohesion between the different elements of the brand and they were not linked together sufficiently nor co-supporting.

- The Traders were not sufficiently featured in the original television programme and they were not featured in the re-launched television programme. The brand required a more collegiate relationship with the public which was at first fostered and then reduced.

- The specific timetable of the Traders trading week was not reflected or used in the television programme, nor the 'mini-leagues' of players who traded against each other across the UK.

- The culture of 'Celebdaq' and the Traders was not sufficiently understood by the television producers (or their managers). The purpose of 'Celebdaq' was incorrectly believed to be an interest in celebrities and celebrity culture, rather than the parody of the genre; a more sophisticated reading of the text.

- From an institutional perspective 'Celebdaq' was an experiment to see if a particular genre of programming would drive young audiences from the web to the new digital television channel, BBC3. The television programme was also 'dependent on' the website, therefore in competition with the website. This was a position which was 'reversing' the previous perception of new media as being secondary to 'old' media.

Conclusion

The launch of BBC3 and the instruction to the Controller of BBC3 from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to offer innovative television content chimed with Greg Dyke's similar call to producers to innovate or risk becoming a relic of another media age. Producers were keen to show that they could produce new kinds of participatory content in advance of review of the BBC's Charter. 'Celebdaq' was considered to be the right kind of content for BBC3 and to have the potential to create an attractive and innovative semi-converged brand. 'Celebdaq' however proved to be problematic; as the level of engagement increased and a culture developed around the brand the audience began to feel a level of ownership of the Daq. The producer's strategic direction of 'Celebdaq' and the Trader's ideas were radically different resulting in the online engagers largely abandoning the television programme. 'Celebdaq' online has continued to be popular and

has spawned 'SportDaq', a second mythical stock exchange where you can trade shares in sports celebrities; the last transmission of 'Celebdaq' on television was in April, 2004.

There was no evidence to suggest the BBC's editorial processes for participatory media were being tested by the tabloid press, the Trader who posted the name of the footballer, in breach of the court injunction, may have been ignorant of the court's instruction to the press not to publish the name. The outcome of the controversy, was, however to cause a retrenchment back to a 'filter then publish' model rather than 'publish and then filter', which had been the case. The incident had wider implications as the BBC's Drama and Entertainment department closed all its message boards a year later, however their strongest performing online fan groups were associated with the websites which Philip Graf recommended should be cut, the Cult TV websites and the Film website. These two websites were felt to be content which could be supplied by the market, rather than by a public service media organisation; 'Celebdaq' was retained, however, the 'Celebdaq' message board was removed.

The producers of the 'Celebdaq' television programme believed the solution to their low audience figures (which were too low to be rated by BARB) was to turn the television show into a celebrity-led programme. The change of style resulted in alienating the existing core audience, however there may have been a need for the Controller of BBC3 to adjust the content to appeal to a younger audience, one of the new presenters of 'Celebdaq', Joe Mace, was in his early twenties. The original presenters of 'Celebdaq', in particular Paddy O'Connell, had build up a large following of fans, and he was known to be 'authentic' that is he had been a financial reporter working on Wall Street. The Traders liked his style and he was keen to engage with the game and with the audience in new ways. The Traders also felt the BBC was not listening to them or acknowledging them when they complained about O'Connell's removal from the show, O'Connell was 'one of them', he had his own portfolio on 'Celebdaq', therefore the audience were protective.

Paddy O'Connell felt there was a need for a new kind of presenter in 360 degree programming which had a participatory element, or, in the case of 'Celebdaq' which was highly participatory

> There is no conceivable way to succeed with an interactive form of presentation unless you breathe the same oxygen as the people you are hoping to correspond with. You are absolutely not there to be a personality...because it's the wrong forum to do it. Go to present *Top of the Pops*, go on *Big Brother*, go and do a show about how to clean your lavatory and organise the wallpaper, but don't mess around with the [culture] you've got to be a disciple of the one religion, and that is the project at hand (O'Connell, Interview, 6 September, 2004).

The BBC was not prepared for the amount of effort from BBC personnel running a pan-platform, participatory brand would entail, they were also not prepared for the transference of 'ownership' that would take place once a culture had formed around 'Celebdaq'. Participatory media which has a high percentage of audience content results in the audience feeling a high level of 'ownership' of the service. The partial sense of public ownership of 'Celebdaq' caused problems when the BBC wanted to make changes with which the Traders didn't agree with. The BBC's removal of the message board was also not popular amongst the Traders, even though they used the MSN and AOL chat rooms more than the BBC's message board. The controversial posting of the footballer's name in the 'Celebdaq' message board resulted in the BBC removing the audiences' ability to chat around the content and their ability to engage with the producer-hosts and vice versa. This defensive course of action taken to protect the BBC from potential future risk effectively severed the para-social relationship online as the producer-hosts became invisible, they did not show their presence to the Traders by any other means, nor was there any way they could offer reciprocity.

Audiences are likely to become increasingly active in the future, to the extent of producing alternate sources of news or information, such as *Wikipedia*; 'Few Big Media people will see these kinds of community publications as competitive. But their presence

has at least two positive effects. First, it shows people that they can do it themselves. Second, it expands the information pool at a time when Big Media is cutting back on staff and resources' (Gillmor, 2006:144). 'More of us, for more of the time, will be participants as well as recipients, players not just spectators' (Leadbeater, 2008:103). Active participation in media-making is growing steadily

> Peer production will continue to grow in importance because key enabling conditions are present and growing. These include access to computing power and applications; transparency; globalization; the democratization of knowledge and skills; and the increasing complexity of systems (Tapscott and Williams, 2006: 95-96).

It will be increasingly important for the BBC to find solutions as to how to engage with participating audiences as media-making becomes as commonplace for audiences as it is for producers. A more collegiate relationship with the public and a more inclusive perception of the public will be required, one that places participants more centrally. There is significant evidence showing the increasing importance of sociability within both old and new media. In the 'pure broadcast' era audiences were framed as gathering around texts or of massing together to watch and listen to content. It may become more practical to consider audiences as the 'glue' between texts which they can arrange around themselves to consume in whatever manner and at whatever time they wish.

Chapter Eight: Producing Participatory Media.

Introduction

William Boddy accurately predicted the effect digital technologies would have on broadcasting 'The technological promise of digital television, in the form of higher definition images, greater bandwidth, and interactive services, has thrown into crisis, or at least historiographic relief, long-established industry practices, business relationships, and textual forms' (Boddy, 2004: 124). Broadcasters are playing with digital technology, exploring new forms and new genres of programming, but they are also exploring or negotiating a new relationship which places audiences more centrally within professional content, the outcome of this re-positioning is as yet uncertain.

> Within organisations, managers and professionals will struggle to retain power based on privileged access to information and knowledge as the people they lead and serve become less deferential. Followers will increasingly acquire their own voices, challenge official sources and look for their own information. One of the most pressing questions will be when we will want top-down control by professionals – for example to control flows of dangerous technologies – and when not' (Leadbeater, 2008: 236).

Leadbeater's question about control is highly relevant to organisations such as the BBC. The addition of user-generated content changes the structure of formal interrelated texts as the case study 'Celebdaq' demonstrated. 'Celebdaq' was largely created by the audience as the Daq stock exchange, central to the editorial of the brand, was composed of the movements of the share prices and the portfolios of thousands of Traders. The Traders assumed a level of ownership of 'Celebdaq' which was expressed in the message boards. 'Celebdaq' was therefore a wholly sociable cultural entity, highly suited to the internet. The producers however moved back from offering open comment in the 'Celebdaq' message board to pre-moderation (messages were checked then published by

a moderator) after the libellous message about the footballer was posted. Shirky calls this position a 'filter then publish' model whereas the internet is however a 'publish then filter' model (Shirky, 2008). For broadcasters it may be necessary to learn how to operate a more sophisticated sliding scale of mediation which foregrounds facilitation over protectionism. If the 'Celebdaq' producers had been able to pro-actively facilitate the 'Celebdaq' message board they would have notified the Traders of the need to avoid speculation about the footballer in question (which was subjudice) or would have spotted and removed the post more quickly. This is supposing the producer-hosts were aware of the court case in the first place. Closing down the 'Celebdaq' message board (in the summer of 2004) moved the brand from a communication model 'back' to a publishing model.

> The media landscape is transformed, because personal communication and publishing, previously separate functions, now shade into one another. One result is to break the older pattern of professional filtering of the good from the mediocre before publication: now such filtering is increasingly social, and happens after the fact' (Shirky, 2008: 81).

This study has traced the growing adoption of social and participatory media over the years 2002-2004 by the BBC. The Interactive Presenter Scheme offered the opportunity to undertake participant observation of six months of developmental production workshops where the facilitation of the audience and the mediation of audience-generated content was explored. The BBC, as one of the most established public service media outlets, is observed by other public service broadcasters therefore the study is likely to be of interest. In 2009 social and participatory media are of growing interest to media producers due to the high level of adoption of social networks such as 'Facebook', of archives of user-generated content such as 'YouTube', and of new communication methods such as 'Twitter'.

This chapter draws together and analyses the key findings from the study to illustrate its major themes. How the BBC received the findings and my ongoing connection with research in the field is also given. The position of the producer-hosts from 2004 to date is discussed, including the BBC's changing attitudes to the facilitation of user-generated content and to the strategic importance of participatory media overall. An analysis of the implications of the findings for BBC and industry practice is given, including suggestions which might assist the Corporation to resolve some of the resource issues. Suggestions are also made for future research to extend the study. A review of other contemporary research projects is provided, in order to indicate any new areas of study connected to the mediation and facilitation of participatory media which may be being pursued by scholars. The chapter continues with a discussion on the limitations of the project and how far the research questions were answered, and closes with a short review of the BBC's perception of pro-active hosting in the spring of 2009.

Towards participatory public service content

In 2003 'islands' of participatory media such as message boards, blogs, archives of user-generated content and chat were beginning to be provided for BBC audiences around broadcast and web content. There was, however, some resistance from producers who felt content from the public was of low quality and that audience activity was potentially controversial. For the BBC the choice of whether to engage with the audience may not be an option in the future as the internet 'has transformed large parts of the traditionally passive audience into active communicators, willing to engage in debate and expecting a similar willingness on the part of professional media' (Jakubowicz, 2008: 5). The argument of this study is that the BBC should foreground the hosting of participatory media by human agency and that full-time hosting should be provided by specialists, supported by automation, moderation and an invitation to the audience to assist where this is useful. There were indications the audience were already beginning to welcome new members, helping them to orientate. The BBC often builds participatory services then leaves audiences to their own devices, something perceived by Coleman et al, 'the media perform the job of consciousness-raising and then abandon the effort, leaving people to the second and third stages on their own' (Coleman, R et al, 2008, 181).

Participatory services have been shown to require ongoing mediation as there is continuous customer service management required, for example, the banning and un-banning of members, the 'curation' of user-generated content and liaison with moderators. This study found the practice of pro-actively facilitating deliberative debate online had direct antecedents in the hosting of radio and television talk shows by sociable broadcast hosts. The BBC's producer-hosts were extending an existing broadcast practice rather than introducing something new. The 'giving away' of a level of editorial control by producers in favour of the audience was however new, and therefore often problematic for BBC staff.

As the number of channels and genres of media available to audiences increases it will become important for the BBC to find ways to call and hold the attention of the public who were found to be exhibiting 'media snacking' consumption patterns, across delivery platforms and genres of media; *Daily Life Study: 2003* (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). For public service media having an attentive and engaged audience is particularly important for programming where purposeful activities take place such as debates, collaborative and creative activities, or learning. In broadcasting the BBC is expected to provide high quality distinctive online content, for participatory media that translates to offering well built and well managed shared space environments. For public service media the increase in the understanding of a topic might be a good measure of quality, or how culturally rich and representative an archive of user-generated content is. For online debates the quality can be measured by inclusiveness, originality, or the referencing of additional sources of information provided by the online host. Other indicators might be the amount of resolution which was achieved. The number of new joiners versus the number of people leaving is also indicative of the quality, as is the percentage of rejected content, and the number of banned members.

Access to public service media is understood by many to be 'an important historical right of citizenship as well as an index of modern social and cultural fragmentation' (O'Sullivan, et al, 1994:252). More 'social glue' may be needed as busy lives snatch

moments of contact with others who are 'elsewhere'. Public service media have a role to play in providing high quality communication and in providing models of high quality civil participation. The 'new' purposes of the BBC which were set out in the 2006 Charter and Agreement included 'stimulating creativity' which indicated an awareness that the public will increasingly create as well as consume media. Examples of public service participatory media which fulfil the BBC's public service purposes are the 'World War 2' archive of public memories organised by the BBC's history producers and the 'Island Blogs' which encouraged connectivity and reflection between inhabitants of the Scottish islands by BBC Scotland. The BBC children's service 'Bugbears' helps children swap problems and find advice and support online. All these participatory services are very much in keeping with the public service ethos to inform, educate and entertain. The BBC's social media also offers the opportunity for people in the UK to 'think aloud' as citizens by providing online debate on topics of national interest.

The addition of social media to broadcasting adds a fourth line of communication to the three previously identified by Scannell between '(1) host and participant-performers, (2) host and audience, (3) host and listeners or viewers (sometimes there is an organised interaction between performers and audience)' (Scannell, 1996:25). The fourth line of communication is between audience members, away from the broadcast, using (for example) synchronous or asynchronous chat. It is therefore now possible to simultaneously view or listen *and* chat, enjoying the broadcast with others who are not with you but have a co-presence with you in a producer-enabled shared space. Broadcasters have only just begun to explore what participatory media can offer and in 2002-2004 the practices were formative and often experimental. This study has examined experiments in engaging with audiences online; some of those experiments failed, but the findings provided good insights.

As has already been said, 2002-2004 was a highly significant period for the BBC, the review of the BBC's web service by Philip Graf began in 2003 and Lord Hutton's review of the BBC's journalism practices was about to begin. Ofcom, the new regulator for broadcasting and telecommunications, came into being in 2003 and almost immediately

suggested the creation of a 'Public Service Publisher' to ensure plurality of supply in the UK for public service media. Finally the reviews of public service media as a whole in the UK began in 2003, they would continue until the new Charter for the BBC received Royal Assent in 2006. Public service media as an ethos was being questioned in the light of changing media consumption habits.

> Commercial competition and alternative delivery platforms are undermining their core audience, cultural fragmentation and political disengagement are depriving them of new audiences, and income cuts threaten not just their ability to respond to these new demands but to sustain their existing standards' (Lee-Wright, 2008: 249-250).

The BBC realised it would be necessary to continue to evolve and it was hoped the BBC New Media Division would provide both innovation and technology. Most of the staff were based in London but some were placed in BBC Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, they were instructed to act as evangelists, spreading the word to the rest of the BBC. Lee-Wright feels the 'new style' BBC is like an 'elderly parent trying to appear "hip" to their disaffected young. Like William Hague's doomed attempt to rescue his Conservative party leadership by donning a baseball cap, the audience is too far gone to buy cosmetic change' (Lee-Wright, 2008: 258). The BBC was however changing radically internally from both a production and institutional perspective, even if that was not perceived 'externally'.

In 2006, as a result of the internal 'Creative Reviews' of the BBC's purposes which had taken place over the previous two years, the Corporation felt its position within the global media industry would be strengthened if it produced semi-converged content around established BBC brands. To do this Mark Thompson, Director General of the BBC, needed to bring together production teams working in radio, television and new media. The old production departments who had supported television, radio and online content were to be closed and replaced by two large Divisions launched in April 2007, BBC Vision and BBC Audio and Music. They would produce either vision-led or audio-led content,

which would be available to audiences at any time, on all relevant platforms. The BBC New Media Division would become 'Future Media and Technology' and place designers and developers in every BBC department, retaining a 'home base' from which large scale research and development into new forms of media and technology would 'feed' the rest of the BBC. Thompson announced his re-organisation on the 19 July 2006, 'We need a BBC ready for digital and for 360 degree multi-platform content creation, which brings different kinds of creativity together – in technology as well as content – to deliver what we need in this converging world' (Thompson, 2006a).

Figure 28: The re-organisation of the BBC (Source: BBC Press Office, 2006)

It was claimed the new structure would put audiences at the heart of the BBC, however as the diagram shows, 'audiences' were situated below the Marketing and Communications department. A proportion of the content would continue to be organised within a broadcast schedule but increasingly content would be also offered 'on demand'. Perryman, writing about the BBC Brand *Dr Who* noted how 'A factory that can fashion a single world under a collective roof to create distinctive – yet linked –

programming, spanning platforms, audience and channels is now regarded by the BBC's hierarchy as a template for all major television commissioning decisions in the future' (Perryman, 2008:37). In 2009 the BBC is still a 'broadcast-led' organisation, however that may change as more content is distributed via the internet and via other distribution devices such as game consoles, mobile phones and personal digital assistants.

This study found audiences were beginning to articulate what they wanted yet this was new for both audiences and producers in 2003; being able to converse with producer-hosts was novel and exciting. They wanted their activities to be acknowledged by BBC personae, and they also wanted a level of orientation and assistance in the participatory media. The moderation of the BBC's services was criticised and this had been brought to the attention of the BBC's Governors during their consultations with the audience prior to the renewal of the BBC's Charter. The findings also showed the producer-hosts were often absent or just offering technical assistance rather than also editorialising the participative environments to keep them fresh and interesting. Bardoel and d'Haenens feel the BBC is keeping its distance from the public, 'As a result of a paternalistic tradition...public broadcasters have kept citizens and civil society at a distance. Only recently have PSBs started to develop new policies of public accountability' (Bardoel and d'Haenens, 2008a: 351).

The findings showed, in some mitigation for the BBC, that producer-hosts did not have time to engage with audiences, hosting was considered a part-time activity. The working day for new media producers was office hours Monday to Friday 10 am to 6pm, they did not like working during the evenings and weekends. Audiences obviously wanted to participate all the time, including evenings and weekends. The working hours of new media producers was therefore unlike that of broadcast producers who were used to working anti-social hours (for them) to suit the broadcast schedule, which in turn, reflected audiences everyday lives (or organised the audiences everyday lives at times). One of the iPresenters, 'Stuart', noted in his diary that many live chats suggested by broadcast producers were vetoed by the New Media Live Chat team who could decide whether or not the BBCi Studio and the live chat equipment could be used. Each time the

decision was made to turn down a live chat it was deeply resented by the broadcast producers. Stuart felt that

> ...many of these decisions were to protect the staff from unreasonable hours etc. But this is the media, and we are in a developing area – *you have to do whatever it takes and pull out all the stops*. When you're 'Newsnight', you can turn stuff down. But you've got to build the reputation first' (iPresenter 'Stuart', *Diary*, 29 May, 2003).

The responsibility of providing sufficient trained personae to mediate and facilitate for increasing numbers participants – at the right time of day - is the responsibility of the BBC's senior managers. However they may not, as yet, be aware of the need to engage with active audiences online nor of the need for a level of customer relationship management.

From 2004-2009 the status of the producer-host at the BBC has largely remained static apart from a continued increase in the number of participatory services which have been launched and a resulting increase in the number of engagers. The overall ratio of producer-hosts to audience members has reduced which means a reduction in the level of pro-active facilitation which is possible. The number of producers available has declined; the last large scale round of reductions in January 2008 involved 2,500 staff (4NI.co.uk, 2008). From 2004-2009 the BBC New Media Division has concentrated on launching a blogging platform to enable Editors and senior Journalists to produce columns to which the public can also add comments, although not all the BBC's blogs allow this facility. The BBC's global registration system which enabled audiences to only have to sign on once to use every participatory service across the BBC was completed alongside the technical infrastructure which would begin to 'drive' new services in the future.

Another reason for the lack of progress where participatory media was concerned was a long 'budget freeze' as the internal reorganisation of the BBC took place; no large scale

development was undertaken from 2006-2009 apart from what was considered essential or of BBC-wide use. Production divisions who wished to offer new participatory content for audiences, notably BBC Children's and BBC Wales commissioned games or 'interactive dramas' from independent production companies. The BBC New Media Division felt this undermined their position, however BBC Vision and BBC Audio and Music had been given a level of autonomy therefore they could spend their budgets how they wished. From a technology point of view every new participatory service commissioned by the production divisions had to be 'plugged into' the new 'Single Sign On System' (the new global registration system) by BBC New Media.

The BBC Children's department bought 'Adventure Rock' in 2005, a 3D virtual world offering children an immersive place to explore (on their own) from Larian Studios in Belgium. A Belgian version of the world which had been made for the Belgian public service VRT was reversioned and extended over two years as a joint production before being announced in 2007 (BBC News, 2007). The original version 'KetnetKick' had won awards in Belgium and it had been very popular with children. 'KetnetKick' was re-released on the 24 October, 2008 at 'KetnetKick2' (Larian, 2009) and 'Adventure Rock' launched in April 2008. BBC Children's also commissioned other participatory content from independent producers in 2007; 'MyCBBC', which offered children the ability to create their own bedroom on CBBC (CBBC, 2009), and a multiplayer game, Tronji, which will be released in 2009. BBC Children's realised they needed to provide the equivalent genres of participatory media that children were using in their everyday lives, or risk being left behind. From a strategic point of view they could not wait for the BBC's global technology to 'catch up'.

Since the appointment of the new Director of BBC New Media, Erik Huggers, BBC New Media is reviewing its strategy for social and participatory media. There is likely to be more use made of user-generated content and more investment in social and participatory media. A Head of Social Media was appointed in 2008 and Editors for Social Media have been appointed for BBC Vision and BBC Audio and Music. Throughout July

and August 2008 Martin Belam a blogger and employee of*The Guardian Online* audited global news sites use of social bookmarking.

> Although it did not generate as many social bookmarking links as The New York Times or CNN, overall the BBC was the third most successful of the 50+ media sites I was monitoring, with 341 popular links across the 8 services during the month. The BBC was the most successful British media site, with The Telegraph and The Guardian being the closest UK competitors' (Belam, 2008).

The BBC has adopted some participatory practices more than others. One of the BBC's main orientations is promotion and the onward distribution of content by viral means, person to person recommendation, the second orientation is towards the use of blogging as a new distribution platform, and the third, the most problematic for the BBC, is user-generated content. Social bookmarking and blogging extends the 'broadcast' model whereas user-generated content alters the 'filter and publish' processing by introducing what Shirky called 'publish then filter' (Shirky, 2008). Beelam refers to 'social media' when he means social bookmarking; the term 'social media' has become widely used and it is becoming increasingly problematic as the range of genres of social media increase.

Review of the overall findings

Since the early days of the internet a few significant 'pockets' of *facilitated* social media have existed. The discussion forum *The Well* (The Whole Earth Lectric Link) launched in 1985. Howard Rheingold and other early adopters in the USA first learnt about social media by acting as hosts on *The Well*. Kate Hafner, a journalist, who wrote the history of *The Well* described how they provided hosts who were instructed 'to intervene in discussions only in emergencies' (Hafner, 2001: 15). Since then more pro-active techniques have been explored, particularly in communities of practice and by educationalists for virtual learning environments.*Talk2Learn*, one of the largest online networks of head teachers which is based in the UK, began running forums and weekly online 'hot seats' with experts in 2002. Over the years they have explored active hosting for both their message boards and live online events. The organisers believe facilitators

are highly important, and they provide staff mediators, believing an informed human facilitator is crucial to their success. The virtual world *Second Life* offers 'Liaisons' whose part-time home-based role is to communicate *Second Life* to inhabitants, to assist with technical and social problems, to orientate new arrivals, to organise events and to channel any concerns back to *Second Life's* Community Managers and developers. *Second Life* also provides governance systems, a court room, and punishments such as temporarily banishing an avatar to endless cornfields to calm down and reflect. The understanding of how to mediate participatory and immersive environments is a specialist skill and it is still in its infancy, despite the longevity of online 'hosts'.

The key findings on presenters and hosts in participatory public service media are presented below:

1. Significant evidence was found to support the mediation of participatory media by human agency. The producer-hosts were found to be important as they enabled the sociability of the shared spaces and the level of reification, reciprocity and participation which resulted. The producer-hosts ensured all those involved were ratified participants who could participate and contribute. The producer-hosts managed the message boards, live chats, games and user-generated content.

2. The producer-hosts fostered a 'living culture' which was a visible expression of popularly in broadcast-led brands. In semi-converged brands the hosts enabled an aggregation of the audience around a shared purposeful activity, which helped to 'glue' the brand together across its constituent platforms.

3. There was also significant evidence showing that the producer-hosts managed the reputation of the BBC and ensured the BBC's duty of care towards engagers was fulfilled. They worked with moderators to ensure offensive content was removed and unsocial or harmful behaviour was dealt with. The producer-hosts were unclear how far their duty of care extended towards the audience.

4. Proactive hosting was found to have a significant effect on the level of engagement (length of time spent on an activity) and also the number of engagers increased dramatically.

5. In common with broadcast presenters the personality and tone of the producer-hosts was of importance for the particular audiences considered in this study. Some producer-hosts had a good rapport with engagers, others were seen as being more remote. One or two hosts were pro-active, others only offered technical assistance.

6. The sociable host of broadcasting was found in the BBC's new media, identified as a 'producer-host'. The broadcast presenter's para-social relationship with the audience was also episodic as it was within the broadcast schedule whereas the producer-host's relationship with the audience was ongoing and it had the potential to be two-way, therefore more than para-social.

7. A mixture of mediation and facilitation was identified. Mediation assisted the reification of the text and environment (making meaning out of something). Customer relationship management was also found to be an important part of the role (membership duties, technical assistance).

8. Sliding scales of mediation and facilitation were identified. At times engagers wanted more help than at others, sometimes participants wanted the producer-hosts to have more visibility and at others less visibility or no visibility. At times the shared space needed more attention or direction-giving and at other times the activities were self-directed.

9. The level of mediation was often poor with hosts being absent for some period of time or else not present at all. The producer-hosts were often unclear about their role, which was part-time. They were often reluctant to engage and to make pronouncements on behalf of the BBC.

10. The audience were realistic about the amount of time the producer-hosts could spend attending to their needs, however it was important for them to know someone was there to offer assistance if necessary. There was some evidence to show the audience were beginning to take over some of the tasks from producer-hosts such as welcoming new members.

The tasks important for the mediation and facilitation of public service participatory media have been identified. Recommendations have also been made on what activities should remain the province of a human host, what should be done by moderators, what could be effected by the audience and what tasks could be automated. This segmentation of tasks has been considered in order for participatory media to be scaleable for the BBC and other public service media outlets. In addition it is acknowledged that some participatory environments will not require a host, some may require a host at times and some activities will require a high level of hosting.

How the overall findings may assist the BBC

The question of how to manage the BBC's increasingly prolific and active participatory services was one of the most significant issues facing the BBC in 2004, and it remains the case in 2009. The problem has become more acute as the numbers of staff involved in production at the BBC has been reduced. Suggestions have been made to reallocate some of the workload undertaken by producer-hosts to ensure they spend most of their time engaged in 'higher' level tasks (mediation and reification).

What mediation could be automated or partially automated			
	Automated	Facilitated by the audience	Facilitated by Producer-hosts
New member help	Welcoming Orientation	Welcoming Orientation	Updating registration Commissioning orientation and help sections
Technical assistance	Answering questions Demonstrating	Answering questions Demonstrating	Answering complex questions Keeping automated Q and As up to date
Community management	Tracking group history Reputation management (filtering)	Keeping group history Reputation management (alert moderators or hosts)	Editorialising the history Manage moderators and any audience members who are acting as 'assistant hosts'
Content management	Updating archives and publishing user-generated content (UGC)	Curating archives, UGC, assisting with activities	Setting strategic direction and editorialising archives, UGC, content, activities

Figure: 29: What mediation could be automated or partially automated.

Write and Street concluded in their study of political forums (Wright and Street, 2007) that a mixture of suitable technology and facilitation by human agency could produce high quality discussions, in addition they were interested to note that

> Computer designers have already begun to develop actively systems of what Sack (2005, following Jones and Rafaeli, 2000) calls 'discourse architecture': the practice of designing networked environments to support conversation,

discussion and exchange among people (Sack, 2005: 243, cited in Wright and Street, 2007: 854).

User-interfaces, it was found in this study, are not neutral therefore it is suggested automation is only a partial solution, used for 'secondary hosting' such as welcoming or reminding engagers how to use the technology. The management of participatory media has been segmented into mediation (ensuring the participatory media is of high quality) and facilitation (offering a level of customer relationship management). In order to automate some levels of hosting the activities could be segmented into 'primary hosting' and 'secondary hosting'. Primary hosting being activities which will require an in depth understanding of the content and 'secondary hosting' would be activities which could be automated. Several customer relationship management activities might be able to be automated.

Technology is not yet sophisticated enough to deal with 'primary hosting', the recognition of cultural issues or the emotional content of posts. In the case of political debates the need for human intervention and judgement is likely to be high. In 2009 there are signs that some tasks effected by producer-hosts might be automated by using conversational agents or 'linguabots'. Organisations who offer call centres are beginning to commission avatars who will give customers answers to repetitive questions online. The avatars are driven by pattern-matching databases that are programmed by anthropologists and other specialists in the art of human conversation. The British companies Waterstones and the UK's National Rail Enquiries office use conversational agents or 'linguabots' CreativeVirtual, the company who makes the conversational agents claim their 'virtual assistants' are 90% accurate, returning a useful response to most queries (CreativeVirtual, 2009). However these automated systems, although they reduce the amount of customer support that is required, still need updating regularly, 'our conversational systems aren't self-learning they depend on good human backup to evolve and develop' (Elzware.com, 2009). Reducing the human within participatory environments doesn't reduce the amount of human activity that is still required.

This study will recommend the BBC undertake a large scale review of how to engage with the audience and what being a member of 'the BBC community' offers. The exercise would offer time during which options for the sharing of mediation and facilitation could be discussed, and ideas for the co-management of user-generated content by both producers and audiences. As the audience begins to create more content they will assume more ownership of the services therefore the BBC might consider offering a more collegiate relationship to particular groups or to examine whether a new system of shared governance could be developed rather than the present rather rigid 'House Rules'. It may also be beneficial to appoint an ombudsman or ambassador for the audience to represent engagers.

In 2006 BBC Children's decided to expand the number of producer-hosts they employed within their 'Communities' team as the number of participative services they were launching increased and as the number of children who were engaging also increased. I was asked to organise workshops for the hosts to feed into the department the findings from this study. The workshops were organised in 2006 and they aimed to assist the presenter-hosts to refine and extend their role. The BBC Children's hosts were called 'Helpers' by the children. They wanted to create their own 'Helpers' home page (Helpers, 2009) and work on creating personae. BBC Children's decided to use representations of characters rather than to reveal who the real 'Helpers' were, this was for several reasons, firstly they felt the children wanted to engage with cartoon-like creatures, secondly because the children already had images of the 'Helpers' (who were previously known by their nickname only, and thirdly because it meant as the 'Helpers' came and went in the department there would be continuity for the children. The 'Helpers' would effectively 'learn' the character and any particular quirks of that personae.

The children were given one month to describe what the 'Helpers' looked like, several children sent in pictures they had drawn, and the characters eventually used were drawn from the most dominant features or the most interesting super-power for example. The BBC Children's 'Helpers' now provide a daily news service for children visiting 'Adventure Rock' and they also contribute to a weekly radio show also within 'Adventure Rock'.

('Adventure Rock' Helpers News, 2009) During December, 2006 the 'Helpers' assisted the children to organise a pantomime in the message boards which was written, cast and rehearsed, then performed (all in text).

As this is was BBC-sponsored study indicative findings were presented to producers at BBC Television Centre, and developers at the BBC's White City offices in London and at BBC Wales in Cardiff in 2006. I have already described how the findings were received, however to recapitulate; producers in BBC Wales were the most interested in the findings, over 60 people attended the presentation and the questions continued for over half an hour at the end of a forty minute talk scheduled during the lunchtime break. This was because producers in Wales had begun to 'specialise' in participatory media. The findings on the role of the producer-host were recognised by producers in Wales and London. Producer-hosts in London took me aside after my lunchtime presentation at BBC Television Centre to say they wanted more help understanding how to engage with audiences and that they felt they were not sufficiently prepared for the task.

The third presentation for developers at BBC New Media showed they were highly interested in Amy Jo Kim's model (Jo Kim, 2000) which describes the increasing socialisation process experienced over time online within a particular social setting. They were not so interested in Gilly Salmon's model believing it referred to online learning; the BBC's online learning teams were situated in another department. The findings were discussed for a second time in 2006 during a one day session on user-generated content at BBC Wales which drew together producers from across the BBC who were solely working on user-generated content in order that a report be written for the Director General of the BBC, Mark Thompson. Thompson felt not enough consideration of the potential of user-generated content had been given. The placing of the day in Cardiff underlined the perceived specialisation in participatory media at BBC Wales, where a large-scale digital storytelling project had been undertaken. The fact that all the (thirty) BBC producers who worked solely on participatory services which featured user-generated content could fit into a small conference room in 2006 was indicative of the slow adoption of participatory practices at the BBC.

A report, *Overview of the Implications for the BBC of Participatory Media: Management, Awareness, Literacy and Safety on Interactive Media Platforms,* (Jackson, 2005) was written for the Controller of BBC Internet based on the review of the literature, with additional information on BBC editorial policy for participatory environments. The Controller found it to be 'timely and useful', it was subsequently forwarded to the Controller of BBC Children's and the Head of BBC Education. The report was read by BBC Strategy who asked for more information via a face to face interview. Extracts from the interview were placed into a report for the Director General, on the implications of user-generated content for the BBC. The BBC has not seen the completed findings however a summary of the project will be written for the BBC during the summer of 2009. The BBC's archivist, Jacquie Kavanagh, has also requested a copy of the thesis be kept for historical purposes in their 'Written Archives' library at Caversham.

My relationship as a researcher with the University of Westminster has continued with a two-year research project (2007-2009) on 'Adventure Rock which won funding against competition for a grant jointly awarded by the BBC and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The project explored the relevance of virtual environments for public service media and included the organisation of what was believed to be the first conference on virtual worlds for children (www.childreninvirtualworlds.org.uk). The project ended on the 12 April, 2009 and the findings were presented on the 27 April, 2009 at a conference jointly organised by the University of Westminster and BBC Children's. The project extended the methodology of developmental workshops first used in this study but combined the production workshops with Gauntlett's creative methods (Gauntlett, 2007). The workshop participants were not producers and presenters this time but children 90 children aged 7-11 from London, Cardiff, Belfast and Glasgow. The children were encouraged to express their thoughts on imaginary places and spaces, and then to articulate their own virtual world which BBC Children's might make. The children were then introduced to 'Adventure Rock' and asked to explore the world over one month. A second workshop collected their thoughts and ideas on 'Adventure Rock'

resulting in findings on what children want from public service virtual media and eight player 'orientations' to virtual spaces.

The project won a second grant in 2008 to extend the work to public service virtual places and spaces for adults. This time two workshops were organised with 65 producers and academics in London and Manchester who created metaphorical expressions of a range of public service virtual environments, in groups, using plasticine. The workshops produced eleven virtual spaces which supported the public service ethos. Three of the 'imagined' public service virtual environments were designed as a series of storyboards by a designer from BBC Children's and the results will be presented to BBC Future Media and Technology in May, 2009. The 'audience' will be the BBC's 'rapid prototyping' team who will assess whether they are interested in taking the ideas further. The 'Adventure Rock' project has been selected as a good model for future research collaborations between the BBC and academia; the way the collaborative research project was organised was significantly informed by this study on presenters and hosts in BBC New Media.

Looking forward this study could be extended through an analysis of the social and organisational systems used in multi-user gaming. The deconstruction of the social systems found in multi-player games might help the BBC design new shared-governance or social systems to assist the development of a new kind of collegiate active, two-way, relationship with audiences. The first stage would be to identify a small range of 'models of engagement' for analysis such as live action role-play games (LARPs), ARGs (Alternate Reality Games) or quests as found in 'World of Warcraft' and 'RuneScape'. Having deconstructed and categorised the dominant themes, the models would be discussed and explored in workshops with mixed teams of producers and audiences. It would be useful to pair producer-hosts with audience-members in order to ensure the systems were suitable for both producers and audiences and, in addition, how audiences might assist the BBC in the management of participatory media.

I have been asked to co-facilitate an online knowledge exchange network for academics and public service media producers who want to explore new forms of public service media. The 'beebac' network is co-funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the BBC. It is described as

> ...a space where academics and media professionals can find people and projects that interest them. It is a network for BBC staff, academics and industry partners. It enables you to find people and projects you want to be involved with, explore areas of mutual interest and exchange ideas and resources. You can explore subjects that interest you by joining the relevant groups on the network or set up your own topics of discussion and invite others to join you' (Crowther, 2009).

If the knowledge network is successful it could be extended to other public service media outlets if that was felt to be mutually useful, which is obviously likely to be the case.

How the study contributes to the intellectual field

Georgina Born's (Born, 2004) study of the BBC did not consider new media in any depth nor the effect the internet would have on the BBC's broadcast content. This study has examined the BBC New Media Division over the years 2002-2004, in particular the relationship between the BBC New Media Division and the development of participatory practices across the BBC at that time. During these years the Corporation began to re-invent itself, large-scale, for the digital age. Participatory practices began to be explored, along with 'on demand' content and the aggregation of audiences around semi-converged content. The BBC's New Media Division was pivotal as to how the BBC responded to digital media, therefore it was a good site for participant observation of the BBC as a whole. Participatory public service content was new for the Corporation, Jorgensen feels 'participant observation is especially appropriate for scholarly problems when little is known about the phenomenon' (Jorgensen, 1989: 12). It was also valuable to critically consider the BBC's New Media Division over a long period of time as it showed the department changing from being the 'home' of interactivity for the BBC, a powerful position, to becoming what was, in effect, a service industry for the

Corporation. The study will be of contextual interest to scholars studying the transition public service broadcasters are making to being public service media outlets.

The rise of partnerships between the BBC and other institutions will be of interest as public service media organisations consider funding models going forward. The BBC was not certain at that time that their Charter would be renewed and the culture of paying for content was changing as the internet began to foster a perception that content was 'free'. The professional origination of content is not a free process therefore the internet is merely distributing professionally-produced content, and enabling the public to also become media-makers and distributors. The internet is, however, offering new business models such as providing free online content and access to participatory services and environments, partly funded by selling 'furni' (articles to furnish a 'home' in a virtual place for example) through micro-payment systems or by selling complementary products and services. The content aggregates the audience which enables some commercial activity to be subsequently undertaken. Picard advises caution about claims of new financial eco-systems however as 'digitisation does not change the laws of economics. It may change in business models and it often alters costs structures (particularly production and distribution costs), but it does not change any economic laws or remove the need for capital, operational financing, or effective management' (Picard, 2003:155). This study has shown the BBC is beginning to adopt the practices of commercial businesses to a greater degree, and that it is open to new ways of funding its operation.

This project has also identified the new editorial policies developed by the BBC for participatory media including the duty of care for audiences participating in shared spaces. This duty of care was shown to be problematic for producers who are often unclear how far it extends. There were new rights and responsibilities for both the BBC and audiences in the participatory media. The audience agree to keep the 'House Rules' and 'Terms and Conditions' before they begin to participate. The BBC was shown to be willing to take a highly interventionist stance if there was a severe and persistent breach of the rules, to the extent of contacting the participants place of work or school. There

was some confusion over whether the BBC's online services should be regulated as broadcasting or publishing, at present it is classified as publishing, however as more audio and video are incorporated into the site and more collaborative and social spaces are launched on www.bbc.co.uk there may be a need for new policy or definition from Ofcom and from the European Union.

For scholars studying production practices the study offers an analysis of the changes happening within the BBC in order to move from single media to multi-media content creation and from single platform delivery to multi-platform delivery. The negotiations of control between producers and audiences which take place as participatory media is gradually introduced will also be of interest. The early experiments chronicled and examined in this study will illustrate how the BBC failed in some ways, but how it succeeded in others. The close observation of the research and development techniques used by producers in BBC New Media will also be of interest as will the two case studies, the Interactive Presenter Scheme and 'Celebdaq'.

The idea of the audience as an aggregating force has been suggested as a way to create links between semi-converged content such as the case study 'Celebdaq' where a 'living culture' was found to be the sole connective tissue between the website and the television programme. The culture of 'Celebdaq' was also framed as one of the driving forces behind the success of the brand. This invites a new way of perceiving audiences, as the strategists who consume professionally produced media as a swarm; in contrast to the broadcast model of audiences massing round professionally-produced content. If the case study 'Celebdaq' is replicable elsewhere then it is likely the role of the producer-host will be highly useful for content makers as a kind of queen bee who leads the swarm in interesting, beneficial, and fruitful directions.

The project will be of interest to researchers working in computer mediated communication as social media technologists are increasingly considering the nature of gaining and holding 'attention', the drawing together of literature on the gaze and on the social signals used by sociable broadcast presenters may assist their work in this area.

In addition the work of Reeves and Nass (Reeves and Nass, 1996), juxtaposed with that of Paddy Scannell (Scannell, 1996) shows the framing of the media as a sociable activity is becoming increasingly useful. The importance of using ethnographic data when considering technologies which facilitate participation has been illustrated through the work of Reeves and Nass (Reeves and Nass, 1996), but also through the data collected during the developmental workshops of this study. Audiences can be considered as 'inhabiting' shared online spaces they frequent regularly therefore producers may find it useful to both view and consult audiences in depth during development and also periodically after the launch of services.

From a methodological perspective the combining of a production study with BBC audience data, audience observations and a small audience study proved to be useful as an holistic approach for the study of participatory media which is an interactive exchange between creators and consumers. The workshops offered the opportunity for a cycle of analyse, deconstruct, reconstruct, test and analyse again, which was useful. The activity of media-making also seems increasingly suitable for the analysis of both producers and audiences and their activites. The use of the hands and the physical nature of making something takes away the intellectual pressure of having to explain an idea, it also created a sense of equality and shared purpose which helped to facilitate a good atmosphere for the exploration of the topics under consideration.

The use of 'Transana' as a way to manage projects which involve video and audio may introduce other researchers to useful software. Transana is being continually developed therefore it is likely to extend its functionality over the next few years. The documenting of the technical problems associated with the method may assist other researchers to assess whether the investment of time they can make in the setting up of the software and the preparation of the video is worthwhile long term. Once the preparations had been completed the flexibility of the system for coding and re-coding material was significant. The need to invest in additional software, such as Sony MovieMaker, in order to encode the video (MiniDV to AVI and then AVI to Mpeg2) was also worth documenting for others.

The project has attempted to provide clarity on the use of terms within the emerging field of participatory media. The use of the term 'interactivity' was found to be problematic as the number of ways to be 'interactive' had diversified. The term 'participatory media' was used as it can act as an overall definition under which, for example, social bookmarking, citizen journalism, viral marketing, online archives, immersive media – and so on - can be individually identified. Definitions for the acts of mediating and facilitating participatory media have been provided in order to provide further clarity on the active hosting of shared space environments. The ideas of reification (Wenger, 1999) and reciprocity have also been associated with the mediation and facilitation of participatory environments. In addition the management of participatory media has been segmented into mediation (ensuring the participatory media is of high quality) and facilitation (offering a level of customer relationship management). Mediation, it has been suggested is a primary activity and facilitation is a secondary activity (but of equal importance). 'Primary hosting' requires an in depth understanding of the content and 'secondary hosting' might be automated. The audience might, at times, undertake either primary or secondary hosting.

Sociable media theories were shown to be a highly useful way of drawing together the previously separated practices of broadcasting and new media, particularly for the study of participatory media. It was possible to find commonalities between the functions of the sociable broadcast presenter and producer-host online. For example the emotional connection between the sociable host and the audience could be compared, and the mediation and facilitation functions could also be compared. Examining previous studies on the nature of the sociable relationships between professional broadcast personae and audiences provided evidence of the importance of human mediators and of the individual techniques they use. Many scholars had approached the subject from different directions and perspectives but the social element or the enabling of the social through various means was common to all.

The existence of an emotional and empathic connection between the audience and actors in television soaps was identified by Livingstone and Lunt in their studies of the TV soap 'Dallas' and Kilroy Silk's talk show (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994) was not found to be so evident in new media as the host was not considered to be a celebrity. There were similarities however, as there was the same sense of gradual 'knowing' between online hosts and regular participants as Livingstone and Lunt found to exist between the viewers of soaps and the personae in soaps and talk shows. The findings from this study also show online participants left spontaneous messages for the 'Top of the Pops' producer-host, iPresenter 'Lucy', in a similar way to the 'utterances' noticed by Wood during her observations of women watching afternoon programmes (Wood, 2007). Goffman (Goffman, 1981) and Tolson's (Tolson, 1996) studies on the registers and tones used by broadcast presenters translated directly to a new media context. The predominant register used in the BBC's message boards was found to be the conversational voice, however an 'institutional' register was used to denote official pronouncements. During live chats the iPresenters employed (a) a conversational tone, (b) a performative tone and (c) an institutional tone of voice, with the host switching between the three. This was found to be a useful device to orientate the online engagers between the questions coming in from the public, the celebrity, and the text and video sides of the live chats.

Morris and Ogan feel mass communication researchers should consider the potential of the internet for research an opportunity to 'explore and rethink answers to some of the central questions of mass communication research, questions that go to the heart of the model of source-message-receiver with which the field has struggled' (Morris and Ogan, 1996: 39, in Oblak, 2005, 88). Researching brands which exist as both broadcast and online is not easy; new communication paths are added which enable interesting new ways to consume content such as the simultaneous viewing of a programme alongside chat and the posting of a comment or a piece of content; all on the same topic. The different permutations of juxtaposing of texts and communication are endless; interactionism therefore proved a less attractive theoretical compass for the study due to the complexity of interaction patterns which are now possible. Theories on the sociable

nature of the media were easily 'portable', flexible and extendable. For example when broadcast and online content are linked the three-way engagement between the host, present audiences and absent overhearing audiences identified by Scannell (Scannell, 1996), is affected by network effects. The sociability of the live event is extended outwards from the source into networks of sociable networks, and the 'footprint' of the original text is also amplified. Clusters of engagers can form and reform as they wish online to discuss the original topic, the mediated conversational floor, identified by Wood, is therefore also portable (Wood, 2007).

As this study progressed the idea of mediation began to be perceived by scholars as being increasingly important, 'the concept of mediation, which has been advanced since the early days of new media research in the 1980s, and elaborated more recently by a number of prominent new media scholars constitutes a promising new direction' (Lievrouw, 2008, n.p.). Lievrouw feels the idea of mediation is useful not only for scholars, but also for the discipline more widely as communicative practices and technologies become inseparable. Silverstone agrees, 'As everyday life, in its taken-for-granted ordinariness, becomes inseparable from the mediations that guide us through it, and connect or disconnect us from the everyday lives of others; how the media position us, or enable us to position ourselves, becomes crucial' (Silverstone, 2004, 443). Asa Briggs and Peter Burke concluded their social history of the media by noting how the 21st Century world may be remembered as one where 'more was being mediated than ever before in its history' (Briggs and Burke, 2002: 333). This study has begun to deconstruct the notion of mediation by beginning to consider individual qualities such as reciprocity, reification, and the difference between mediation and facilitation.

Emerging directions for research on the mediation of participatory content

The mediation of online texts and discourses for civil purposes are increasingly being explored intellectually, 'Some researchers have recently devoted attention to the issue of what we have called the *nature of intervention*, arguing that it is important to go deeper into questions such as whether or how to enable minorities to speak, to enable them to be heard' (La Porte, et al, 2007: 387). For a public service broadcaster, who has a duty to

reflect civil society the need to find ways to be inclusive is important and it has been found the BBC's producer-hosts have a crucial role to play in the provision of mediation to ensure reification. In an increasingly competitive mediascape how to attract consumers is also essential. Castello and Moore call for studies which examine why

> ...certain programs tend naturally to impel viewers to the internet for supplemental enjoyment of the program narrative, others are less successful in cultivating online fan activity. This is certainly an area that needs to be studied with more attention (Costello and Moore, 2007: 139).

This study has considered how producers-hosts can lead audiences through active hosting; steering debates, providing summaries, leading to good content, curating archives of public content and acknowledging high quality contributions. The active encouragement of any developing fan or participant culture was also found to be significant. Lundby feels it is important to consider how audience-produced content ('digital storytelling') affects the balance of control between audiences and producers, 'Such participation is related to patterns of authority: Digital storytelling not only bypasses set forms of authority, but also invites new forms' (Lundby, 2008: 368). The art of hosting was found to be, in part, knowing what level of facilitation to provide, too much control or too little control might result in a decline in participation. Too much leading might stifle creativity and too little guidance result in a lack of clarity of purpose.

The interface between 'old' and 'new' media continues to be a subject of interest with Lievrouw believing the continuities between 'old' and 'new' media have recently become clearer:

> As traditional media interests control more of the content of, and access to, new media services, the new genres tend to look more like the old. 'The internet' is portrayed less as a tool to foster social interaction and more as a pipeline to deliver media products to paying, mass-style audiences (Lievrouw, 2004: 12).

This study found BBC producers were being asked to prove the success of new media participatory services by showing mass audience figures; the internet was not designed to accommodate massed audiences. There was also a significant 'pull' towards what was familiar; the BBC iPlayer, in a negative light, is linear content delivered by the internet, and the BBC's use of social bookmarking frames BBC News' use of the internet as a delivery platform. Traditional media organisations are less familiar with user-generated content and the 'giving away' of some of the editorial control that running participatory services entails. In a positive light the BBC iPlayer may help to ensure the public service broadcaster retains a dominant position as the audience figures for television within a broadcast schedule decline. It could also be argued the iPlayer is fulfilling one of the specific purposes mentioned in the last Charter Renewal, to promote the switchover from analogue television to digital television.

The dichotomy between being servants of the public and protecting the interests of the BBC Corporation continues as Enli notes, 'In line with their history as monopolies, the European public broadcasters have a self image as innovative spearheads that should be present on all relevant platforms' (Enli, 2008: 110). In the future it is likely broadcasters may increasingly use the internet to deliver linear media, however it is important for public service content creators to provide content that is distinctly different therefore new forms of public service media will need to be explored. The pessimist view of the effect of new media on public service broadcasters is described by Vartanova as being, 'As the BBC and other PSBs go digital...the needs of commerce will come to overweigh those of public service' (Vartanova, 2004:56). This study found, in the BBC New Media Division, there was an adoption of what could be considered a business-orientated culture, which was partly due to the influx of senior managers from other industries who were bringing their skills into the BBC in order that the Corporation could 'compete' or keep pace with the changes happening in media overall.

Turning to research which contributes more specifically to the mediation of participatory media, Beyer et al identify the adoption of SMS chat into television, particularly in Norway. They found SMS-based television characterised almost one-third of the output

of the Norwegian broadcaster's second television channel, NRK2. This indicated a shift from one-way to two-way communication:

> What is striking in these and other shows with chat features is the presence of both textual and graphic information. In some cases this is organized in a fairly complex way...They feature a vertical 'scroll', two differently paced horizontal chat 'crawls', and a fairly stable list of upcoming items, in addition to a video or host(s) addressing the viewer in the upper-left-hand corner (Beyer, Y et al, 2007, 217).
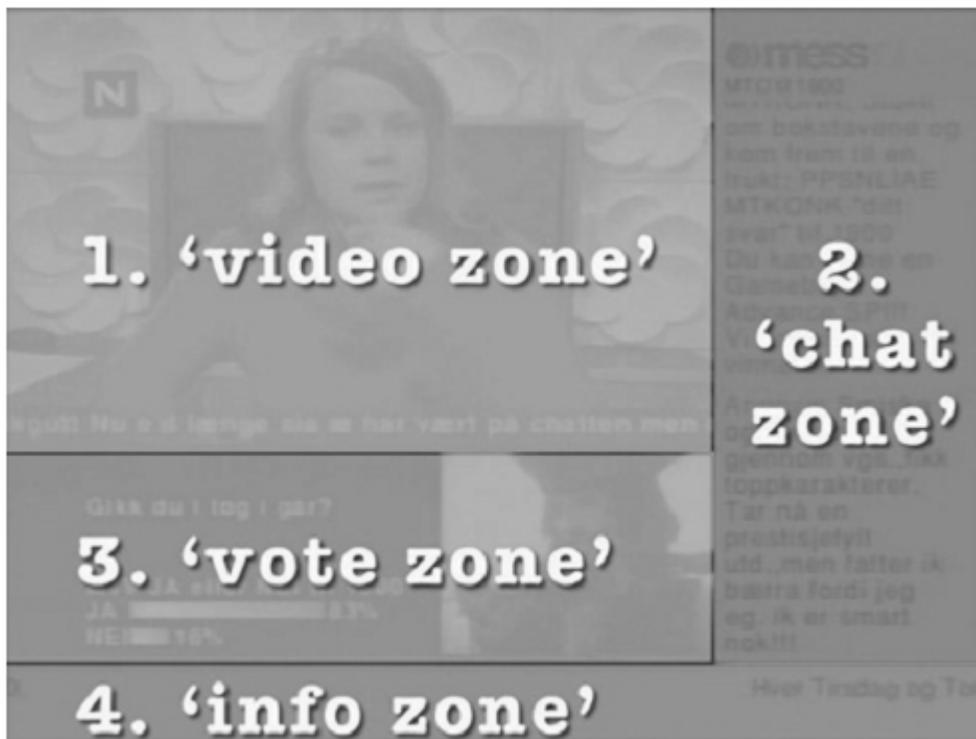
Figure 30: Communicative 'Zones' in SMS-based Television.

The researchers describe how the host and a moderator may simultaneously connect three or four of the communication services and that this may be done through words or through gesture. 'Both the host and moderator play important roles in interpreting individual messages, as well as in focusing attention on selected aspects or topics' (Beyer

et al, 2007, 220). It is interesting to note the terms being used for the broadcast personae, 'host' and 'moderator', indicating a convergence of broadcast and new media production cultures. Beyer et al appear to be divided on whether the resulting experience could be considered of value, however. In addition they note that SMS messaging into programmes provides a new revenue stream for broadcasters. The additional communication may not necessarily result in a high quality experience for the participants who have to 'queue' and their contributions are filtered before being 'posted' onto the screen.

Ytreberg considers the sociable hosting of both broadcast and non-linear content. He identifies three types of presentation (a) scripted performance in a linear setting ('cueing'), (b) non-linear hosting in an interactive setting, (c) and the camera placing (in *Big Brother*). This is useful as he introduces the camera as an agent of mediation, alongside the performances of the show host. This is indicative of the increasing awareness of the need to include the technology as an independent actor, the broadcast equivalent of the user-interface. Yetreberg believes the host signals

> ...a shared and continuous time and space between professional media performers and their audiences, including the welcoming of guests, home and studio audiences. This, and ritual references to 'we' and 'us', serve to draw all parties together as ratified participants in the communicative here and now (Ytreberg, 2006:433).

This links to the BBC's live chat events where the iPresenter kept the different elements of the live event in play, which might be in text, on video, and within an accompanying chat room.

In the same way broadcasters are beginning to explore new kinds of collaborative and creative relationships with the public Penguin Books worked with DeMontfort University to launch 'A Million Penguins', in February 2007. This was the writing of a collaborative novel to which anyone could contribute, via 'MediaWiki', the software used by *Wikipedia*.

75,000 different 'authors' viewed the site over one month and 1,476 people had registered to either contribute or edit content. By the end of March 2007 over 1,000 pages of the novel had been produced. The 'hosts' or managers of the experiment were drawn from both Penguin Books and DeMontfort University.

Over the first weekend the facilitators found they were overwhelmed with contributors resulting in the website 'going down'. In addition there was a 'carnival' of editing, vandalism and spam from participants which resulted in the need to 'lock down' the site overnight to give the 'hosts' some respite from purging unsuitable content. One of the organisers expressed his feelings at the end of the fifth day, 'The first few days I would log on and drop my head into my hands in despair' (Organiser, cited in Mason and Thomas, 2008:11). However as time went on the organisers began to feel 'a touch of wistfulness' as the number of contributions declined. The study found that instead of the normal 'rules' of publishing being reversed (as expected), what was reversed was 'the normal rules of publishing and the relationship between the authors and the publisher. Every unvarnished, unfinished, ephemeral thought, edit and scribbling could be instantly published with Penguin Books' masthead attached to it. So it was' (Mason and Thomas, 2008:11). It is interesting to see the same issues were facing publishers as broadcasters, and the same negotiations and discussions on what is acceptable and of 'quality' were taking place. Penguin Books faced the same dilemma when considering content generated by the public and the same ongoing negotiation of control, transparency and acceptability between the collective authors of the novel as the BBC's producer-hosts often faced.

The limitations of the study

The study did not consider the mediation of commercial content as commercial producers were – in the main - managing social media through moderation or combining the role of host and moderator. There was very little active hosting being provided. In addition the range of genres of participation was narrow, forums and live chats. Active hosting was mainly to be found in small scale 'communities of practice' and in a few political debates being hosted online, for example the government message

boards analysed by Wright and Street (Wright and Street, 2007). 'Sift', a consultancy in Bristol, won awards for its community of practice for accountants, 'Accounting Web' and AOL UK, Granada and Channel 4 were running message boards and some live chats however they were not offering a wide-enough range of participatory media to explore mediation comparatively. The independent producer, Endemol, provided semi-converged content in the form of *Big Brother*, but the forums were not actively hosted and the brand had been much researched in the past, however in the context of the emergence of reality programming. The BBC was the principal organisation experimenting with a wide range of genres of participatory media which also involved broadcast media. They had 300 message boards, 36 'Where I Live' websites, daily live chats, chat rooms, digital storytelling, two blogs, the 'World War 2' public archives and wartime diaries, and 'iCan' (a service which encouraged involvement in civic projects).

The decision had to be made whether to compare the mediation of a commercial participatory service with a public service, or whether to do a study which compared mediation across several genres of public service media. It was felt to be more fruitful to limit the study to the BBC, who offered good access and support. Looking forward, this study will to contribute to a book chapter to be published by Nordicom titled *The Public in Public Service Media: Ripe, 2009*. The Editors have asked for a comparative study between the BBC's approach to participatory media and that of National Public Radio in the USA. This will provide an opportunity to extend this study usefully. Presenters and hosts at National Public Radio will be interviewed in Washington, in May 2009. The chapter will draw together sociable media theories and practice under the title, 'Facilitating Creative Audiences: Sociable Media Theory and Practice'.

Another concern was that the findings might become out of date very quickly, this has not proved to be so as the BBC's 'inter-regnum' on the development of participatory media meant existing practices have remained. There is however, a re-examination of the potential for social media across the BBC since the appointment of the new Director of New Media and the completion of the internal re-organisation of the BBC. New media gives the impression that it is developing at a fast pace, however production techniques

in 'new' media evolve slowly, just as they do in 'old' media. The industry interest in the management of participatory media has grown over the last few years, partly in response to growing regulation but also in response to the adoption of social media by the masses which makes the topic attractive to businesses and media producers. As has been shown, there has also been a corresponding interest in the topic by scholars. The BBC is moving towards the adoption of participatory practices in stages. Stage one was the launching of the first social media services in 1998, and the subsequent initial experimentation with new forms of 'interactivity' and the building of the technical infrastructure which will drive the participatory activities. Stage two began in April 2007 when the internal reorganization of the BBC into multimedia teams began.

> The evolution from a television dissemination mode of pre-produced broadcasts for passive viewers to the interaction mode offered by the computer and digital networks where users can be senders as well as receivers (see Anderson, 2007) is undoubtedly the major change that public service broadcasters have to go through in order to become true public service media in a multimedia environment (Bardoel and d'Haenens, 2008b:357).

Since 2007 the BBC has begun to move towards adopting participatory practices more broadly yet there has been no large scale analysis of how the BBC's relationship will fundamentally change as audiences become both participants and media-makers.

> The second wave of digital will be far more disruptive than the first and the foundation of traditional media will be swept away, taking us beyond broadcasting... We need to understand our audiences far better, to be more responsive, collaborative and to build deeper relationships with them around fantastic quality content (Thompson, 2006b).

The BBC has started to make what may be a fundamental shift into a 'post-broadcast' era. One of the issues it will have to resolve is what kind of relationship the Corporation will develop with its participating audiences. Recent indications are this process is going

to be slow. The BBC's 'Internet' blog on the 29 January, 2009 records this meeting discussing proactive hosting which shows the BBC has not developed the practice much beyond where it was in 2004.

> Rowan who is currently hosting the Television board stressed (for me) the key problem with the boards at the moment. The community there feel they are not listened to by the BBC and want a closer relationship and better feedback. As she put it, they feel like they are sometimes "talking in a corner"' (Reynolds, 2009).

There have been initiatives however over the last few years which have aimed to adjust the BBC's relationship with audiences, but it is taking time. A 2007 'Safeguarding Trust' project explored ways to enable a more open dialogue with audiences about taste and decency. An article on the BBC's new College of Journalism website about the scheme admitted that 'Until autumn 2007, the BBC hadn't asked its audiences directly where they drew the line of acceptable artifice', the article goes on to say that a number of audience focus groups throughout the UK would be organised aiming 'to understand more about what audiences think is and is not acceptable' (BBC College of Journalism, 2007a). The BBC's College of Journalism, it will be remembered, was started in response to the Hutton Report, the findings of which were released in Jan, 2004. A second article on the College of Journalism website notes that often BBC producers' 'first priority is the programme or the website or the live event, not the audience'. The College made a further recommendation to producers after the BBC was fined by Ofcom for manipulating the results of competitions in 2007; 'staying on air is not the priority. Safeguarding the trust of the audience is' (BBC College of Journalism, 2007b).

Recently Jem Stone, Audio and Music's Executive Editor for Social Media described in his blog on 3 April, 2009 how Executive Producers of BBC programmes were beginning to go on the message boards to answer questions and engage with audiences. He felt this 'should happen more on BBC boards but when it does…it usually results in more considered, articulate, useful exchanges even for sensitive subjects such as

creationism/evolution' (Stone, 2009). Yet another indication of the value to audiences of proactive hosting and the presence of BBC personae.

Conclusion

Some scholars have framed the future of public service broadcasting with pessimism, but others see an opportunity to explore new forms of public service media. Participatory media offers new ways of working creatively with audiences. Silverstone feels that, in the past, the BBC acted as a positive, *hospitable* agent providing an umbrella, a shelter, underneath which divergent populations could foster understanding of the other.

> What is required now is something much more like a raft: a raft which provides safety and connectivity in a stormy sea; a raft which can move with the political and economic tides and the currents; and a raft which essentially (with its various bits and pieces) provides the resources necessary for those on it to survive and ultimately prosper culturally, civically and civilly (Silverstone, 2004:97-98).

Silverstone's view of the BBC is attractive as it frames the Corporation as a vessel which contains the essential elements needed by audiences to enable them to take an active part in civil and cultural life. Perhaps one of the most important tasks for public service media in the future will be to act as a positive and deliberative agent leading us through genres of non-linear media situated on different platforms and available at different times. Unlike broadcasting where audiences massed around content producers may begin to aggregate content around audiences. If this is so then having professional 'tourist guides' to recommend particularly significant or useful content might be useful and create a link between the originator of the content and the consumer. It is also likely linear content will remain one of the staples on offer, however how that linear content is received could also be totally flexible. Augmented reality is beginning to offer interesting mixtures of the real and virtual; the ability to snack media, chat about the media and bookmark instances of media to view or review. The opportunities for public service

media in the new mediascape are legion, the next step for the BBC is to find out how the audience as media consumers and media makers want to colonise Silverstone's raft.

Bibliography

4ip, (2009), *Submission Guidelines*, [online] 4ip, Available from: http://www.4ip.org.uk/guidelines [Accessed 12 January, 2009].

4NI.co.uk, (2008), *Ongoing Negotiations on BBC Redundancies*, [online] 4NI.co.uk, http://www.4ni.co.uk/northern_ireland_news.asp?id=70264 [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Adams, G, (2004) *Has the BBC given up on Celebdaq?* 'Celebdaq' Message Board, 27 May, 2004, web page not now available, [Accessed 6 June, 2004].

Adventure Rock Helper's News, (2009), *Adventure Rock Helper's News,* [online], http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/adventurerock/island/ [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Anderson, C, (2007) *The Long Tail: How Endless Choice is Creating Unlimited Demand,* London: Random House.

Ang, I, (1991) *Desperately Seeking the Audience.* London: Routledge.

Argyle, M, (1975) *Bodily Communication.* London: Methuen.

Ariel, (2003) *Celebdaq is Booming,* [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed November, 2003].

Ariel, (2004), 'Public Service Broadcasting in the Modern Era', in *Manifesto for the Future,* in *Ariel,* June 29, 2.

Audience Manager, (2003) *Video Transcript,* 20 March

Bailey, C, (1996) *A Guide to Field Research,* Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Bardoel J and d'Haenens, L, (2008b) 'Public Service Broadcasting in Converging Media Modalities: Practices and Reflections from the Netherlands', *Convergence,* Vol 14, 357

Bardoel J and d'Haenens, L, (2008a) 'Reinventing Public Service Broadcasting in Europe: prospects, promises and problems', *Media, Culture and Society,* Vol 30, 337.

Bardoel, J and Lowe, G, (2007) 'From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Media: The Core Challenge', in *From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Media: RIPE @ 2007,* Lowe, G & Bardoel, J, (eds.), Gothenburg: Nordicom.

Barker, P, (1995) *Making it as a TV or Radio Presenter: An Insider's Guide.* London: Judy Piatkus Publishers.

BBC Audience and Consumer Research, (2003) *Connecting with New Media Audiences*, BBC internal report.

BBC College of Journalism, (2007a) *Audiences*, [Online] Gateway, BBC Intranet http://college.gateway.bbc.co.uk/journalism/main.asp?page=5346 [Accessed, 21 January, 2008].

BBC College of Journalism, (2007b), *Interacting with Audiences*, [online] Gateway, BBC Intranet http://college.gateway.bbc.co.uk/journalism/main.asp?page=5339 [Accessed, 21 January, 2008].

BBC Intranet, (2003) *Celebdaq to be flaunted in Cannes*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed November, 2003].

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003) *Celebdaq InSite Survey*.

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003a), *The Daily Life Study, 2002/3*.

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003b), *Project Communicate, Presentation of Findings*

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003c) *Celebdaq Audience Data*.

BBC News Online, (2003) '*Celebdaq' Proves Addictive*, [online], BBC Online http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/reviews/2752135.stm [Accessed 11 February, 2006].

BBC News, (2000a), *The AOL Time Warner Merger*, [online], BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/597782.stm [Accessed 15 February, 2009].

BBC News, (2000b), *Record Industry backs Napster Closure,* [online] BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/853912.stm [Accessed 15 February, 2009].

BBC News, (2004), *Ceefax marks 30 years of service*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/tv_and_radio/3681174.stm [Accessed 13 February, 2009].

BBC News, (2005), *At a glance: BBC Job Cuts,* [online], http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/tv_and_radio/4369221.stm [Accessed 8 February, 2009]

BBC News, (2007), *BBC Plans Online Children's World*, [online], BBC News Online, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6290585.stm [Accessed 19 April 2009].

BBC News, (2009), *Social Sites Eclipse Email Use*, [online], http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/7932515.stm [Accessed 9 April, 2009].

BBC Press Office, (2006), *BBC Reorganises for an On Demand Creative Future*, [online], http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/07_july/19/future.shtml [Accessed 9 March, 2009].

BBC Talent, (2001), *If you've got it we'll flaunt it...* London: BBC.

BBC Trust, (2009), *Trust Assessment of 'Canvas' Proposals*, [online], BBC Trust Online, http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/consult/open_consultations/canvas.html [Accessed 4 April, 2009].

BBC WebServer, (2003), *Web Statistics, BBC Online Communities*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed 22 January, 2004].

BBC WebUser, (2002), *Live Chat statistics*, [online], BBC Gateway, Intranet, [Accessed 15 May, 2003].

BBC WebUser, (2003), *WebUser Statistics*, [online], BBC Gateway, Intranet, [Accessed 19 June 2004].

BBC, (2002) *Annual Report and Accounts*, London: BBC.

BBC, (2003) *Annual Report and Accounts*, London: BBC

BBC, (2003) *Web Server statistics*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed November, 2004].

BBC, (2004), *Building Public Value*, London: BBC.

BBC, (2009) *Online Service Guidelines – Moderation*, [online], BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/onguide/interacting/moderation.shtml [Accessed: 7 April, 2009].

BBC, (2009) *Online Service Guidelines – Hosting,* [online], BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/onguide/interacting/hosting.shtml [Accessed 10 January, 2009].

BBC, (2009), *Interactive Producer Guidelines*, [online], BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/edguide/interacting/interactivetvse.shtml [Accessed 15 February, 2009].

BBC, (2009) *Terms of Use*, [online], BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/terms/ [Accessed 7 April, 2009]

BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003) *Celebdaq InSite Study*

BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003b) *Project Communicate*

BBCi Marketing and Communications, (2002) *BBCi Studio Launch Briefing*

BBCi Marketing and Communications, (2002) *The BBC iStudio*

BBCi, (2002), *Qualitative Research Presentation: November, 2002*

Beckenham, L, (2003), *Market Report on TV-Related Online Communities*

BECTU, (2004), *Unions plan fight against BBC Cuts,* [online], http://www.bectu.org.uk/news/bbc/nb0233.html [Accessed 8 February, 2009].

Belam, M, (2008), *Social media and TV news: Measuring the BBC's success with social media,* [online], http://www.currybet.net/cbet_blog/2008/09/social_media_bbc.php [Accessed 19 April 2009].

Bennett, J, (2004), 'Questions and Comments from the Floor', in *The Future of the BBC,* London: Westminster Forum Projects Limited.

Berry, R, (2002) *Workshop Notes,* 18 December.

Beyer, Y, et al (2007) 'Small Talk Makes a Big Difference: Recent Developments in Interactive, SMS-based Television', *Television & New Media*, Vol 8, 213.

Blair, T, (2004), *Publications and Records*, [online], House of Commons, Hansard, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmhansrd/vo040128/debtext/40128 -10.htm [Accessed 9 February, 2009].

Blinc, (2004), *Online Audience Expectations: Audience Research,11.04*

BMRB International Limited, (2001) *Presenters – who needs 'em?* London: The Radio Academy and the BBC.

Boddy, W. (2004) *New Media and Popular Imagination: Launching Radio, Television, and Digital Media in the United States,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Boettcher, S, (1998) in Figallo, C, *Hosting Web Communities: Building Relationships, Increasing Customer Loyalty, and Maintaining a Competitive Edge,* New York: John Wiley.

Bolter, D and Grusin, R, (2000) *Remediation: Understanding New Media,* Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press.

Born, G, (2004) *Uncertain Vision: Birt, Dyke and the reinvention of the BBC.* London: Secker and Warburg.

Bovill, M. F., and Livingstone, S. (2001) 'Bedroom culture and the privatization of media use' in Livingstone, S., and Bovill, M. (Eds.), *Children and their Changing Media Environment: A European Comparative Study.* Mahwah and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Briggs, A. and Burke, P. (Eds.) (2002) *A Social History of the Media, from Gutenberg to the Internet,* Malden: Blackwell Publishers.

Broadband Producer, (2003), *Email to the iPresenters,* 13 February.

Broadcast, (2002) *Starry iBash not a hit with World,* 25th October.

Broadcastnow.co.uk, (2002) *Choice Devises New Celebrity Formats,* Broadcast Now, web page not now available, [Accessed 11th February, 2006].

Bruyn, S, (1966) *The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Burgess, R, (1990) *In the Field: An introduction to Field Research,* London: Routledge.

Byron, T, (2008), *Safer Children in a Digital World: The Report of the Byron Review*, [online], Department for Children, Schools and Families, http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/byronreview/pdfs/Final%20Report%20Bookmarked.pdf [Accessed 14 February, 2009].

Cabinet Office, (2002) *UK Online Annual Report* [online], http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/e-envoy/reports-annrep-2002-pdf/$file/04people.pdf [Accessed 21 November, 2008].

Carpentier, N, (2001) 'Managing Audience Participation: The Construction of Participation in an Audience Discussion Programme', *European Journal of Communication,* Vol.16, 209-232.

Castells, M, (2000), *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Volume 1, The Rise of the Network Society,* Oxford and Malden Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

CBBC, (2006) MyCBBC, [online], http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/mycbbc/ [Accessed 19 April 2009].

Chakravartty P and Sarikakis, K, (2006) *Media Policy and Globalization*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Channel 4, (2009b), *4iP Innovation for the Public*, [online], http://www.channel4.com/about4/4ip.html [Accessed 7 March 2009].

Channel 4ip, (2009a), *Channel 4 launches £50 million public service digital media fund,* [online], http://www.channel4.com/about4/pdf/next-on-4-2.pdf [Accessed 7 March, 2009].

Clarke, M, (2002) *iPresenter Launch Party Briefing*

Coda Research Consultancy, (2009), *Video On Demand will Impact on Live TV says Study* [online], Techradar.com, http://www.techradar.com/news/television/vod-will-impact-on-live-tv-says-study-583107 [Accessed 4 April 2009].

Coffman, K. G; Odlyzko, A. M. (1998), *The size and growth rate of the Internet.* [online], AT&T Labs, http://www.dtc.umn.edu/~odlyzko/doc/internet.size.pdf, [Accessed 1 August, 2009].

Coleman, R, et al, (2008) 'Public Life and the Internet: if you build a better website, will citizens become engaged?' *New Media and Society*, Vol 10,179.

Coleman, S, (1999) 'The New Media and Democratic Politics', in 'What's New about New Media', *New Media and Society,* Vol1 (1),10-82.

Collins, R and Murroni, C, (1996), *New Media, New Policies: Media and Communications Strategies for the Future*, London and Cambridge Mass: Polity Press.

Collins, R, (2002) 'Media and Identity in Contemporary Europe: Consequences of Global Convergence', in *Back to the Future – Digital Television and Convergence in the United Kingdom.* Bristol: Intellect Books.

Commission of the European Communities, (2005) *Amendment to the Television Without Frontiers Directive,* [online], EC, http://www.ebu.ch/CMSimages/en/leg_amsd_ec_officialproposal_290307_tcm6-50421.pdf [Accessed 10 January, 2009]

Corner, J, (1999) *Critical ideas in Television Studies.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Costello, V and Moore, B, (2007) 'Cultural Outlaws: An Examination of Audience Activity and Online Television Fandom, *Television and New Media*, Vol 8,124.

Crabtree, J and Roberts, S, (2003) *Fat Pipes, Connected People: Rethinking Broadband Britain*, London, iSociety.

Crace, J, (2002) *Turn up, Type in and you are on the Air,* [online], The Guardian Online, www.guardian.co.uk/media/2002/jun/08/bbc.workandcareers [Accessed Jan 3, 2008].

Craig, A, (2002), *BBC Celebrity Game Fiasco Continues*, WebUser Magazine www.webuser.co.uk/news/31423.html, [Accessed 12th February, 2006].

CreativeVirtual, (2009) *Solutions: Self-Service*, [online], Creative Virtual.com
http://www.creativevirtual.com/solutions-self-service.php [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Crissell, A, (2006), *A Study of Modern Television: Thinking inside the Box*, New York: Palgrave.

Crowther, B, (2009), *Beebac – Knowledge Exchange Network*, [online], BBC,
http://beebac.welcomebackstage.com [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Curren, J and Seaton, J, (2003) *Power without Responsibility: The press, broadcasting, and new media in Britain,* (Sixth edition), London: Routledge.

Currie, D, (2005), *Net Regulation 'Still Possible*, [online], BBC News,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4211415.stm, [Accessed 8 February, 2009].

Curry, A, (2001), *Looking for the Audience: presentation to the BBC*, The Henley Centre.

Davies, J, (2002) *The Experience of 'Bad' Behaviour in Online Social Spaces: A Survey of Online Users*. [online], Redmond: Microsoft Research.
http://research.microsoft.com/scg/papers/Bad%20Behavior%20Survey.pdf?0sr=a
[Accessed 15 November, 2005]

Deans, (2003) *BBC starts website controls inquiry*, [online], Guardian Online,
http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2003/mar/06/business.newmedia [Accessed 21 November, 2003].

Deans, J, (2003), *BBC Rethinks web chat rules after 'Celebdaq' Leak*, [online], Guardian Online, http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2003/mar/05/bbc.broadcasting [Accessed 21 November 2003].

Denzin, N and Yvonna, S, (2003) (eds.) *Collecting and Interpreting Quantative Materials*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2003) *Tessa Jowell Appoints Terry Burns on Charter Review,* [online], DCMS,
http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/2737.aspx [Accessed 8 February, 2009].

Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2004), *Independent Review of BBC Online*,
[online], DCMS, http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/4591.aspx
[Accessed 9 March, 2009]

Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2009) *Interim Digital Britain Report,* [online], DCMS,
http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/S3_digital_britain_interimreportjan09.pdf [Accessed 4th April, 2009].

Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2002) *Tessa Jowell Gives Approval to BBC3*, [online], DCMS, http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/2900.aspx [Accessed 3 October, 2008].

Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2006) *BBC Agreement*, [online], DCMS, http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory_framework/charter_agreement/bbcagreement_july06.txt [Accessed 7 April, 2009]

Discovery, (2002), *BBCi Qualitative Research Presentation*

Donnelly, A, (2008) *BBC to boost social networking on websites to halt web rankings slide*, [online], Brand Republic http://www.brandrepublic.com/Digital/News/861042/BBC-boost-social-networking-websites-halt-web-rankings-slide/?DCMP=EMC-Digital-Bulletin [Accessed: 28 November, 2008].

Donoghue (or McAlister) v Stevenson, (1932) *All ER Rep 1; AC 562;* [online], House of Lords, http://www.leeds.ac.uk/law/hamlyn/donoghue.htm [Accessed 16 April, 2009].

Dowell, B, (2007) *Yentob in 'Noddy' Controversy,* [online], *The Guardian Online*, Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2007/sep/07/bbc.television1 [Accessed 21 November, 2009].

Duncan, A, (2006), in Deans, J, *Channel 4 Switches off Red Button* [online], http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2006/jan/19/channel4.broadcasting, 19 January, 2006 [Accessed 10 April, 2009].

Durman, P, (2005), 'Net Destroyer', *The Times,* 24 April, 5.

Dyke, G, (2004), *Greg Dyke: Inside Story*, London: Harper-Collins.

Ellis, J, (1982) 'Cinema, Television, Video', in *Visible Fictions*. London: Routledge.

Elzware.com, (2009), *About our Conversational Systems,* [online], Elzware.com, http://www.elzware.com/uk/systems.html, [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Enli, G, (2008), 'Redefining Public Service Broadcasting: Multi-platform Participation', *Convergence*, Vol 14, 105.

Erstad, O and Wertsch, J, (2008), 'Tales of Mediation: Narrative and Digital Media as Cultural Tools' in Lundby, K. (Ed.) *Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories: Self-representations in New Media,* New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Figallo, C, (1998) *Hosting Web Communities: Building Relationships, Increasing Customer Loyalty, and Maintaining a Competitive Edge.* New York: John Wiley.

Fiske, J. (1987) *Television Culture,* Routledge, Abingdon and New York

Future Foundation, (1999), 'Media and Gender Survey', in Knapman, S, (2002), *Places, Spaces and People*, BBC Marketing and Communications.

Garmonsway, G et al, (1965), *The Penguin English Dictionary*, (Second Edition), London: Penguin.

Gauntlett, D and Hill, A, (1999) *TV Living: Television, Culture and Everyday Life.* London: Routledge

Gauntlett, D, (2007) *Creative Exploration: New approaches to identities and audiences.* London: Routledge.

Gibson, 0, (2007), 'Anger and Anxiety over Corporation's Restructuring Plans', *The Guardian*, 19 December, 2007,12.

Gillmor, D, (2006) *We the Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People,* California: O'Reilly.

Glasgow University Media Group, (1976) *Bad News Volume 1*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Goffman, E, (1981) *Forms of Talk.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Graf, P, (2003) 'Summary of Philip Graf's address to Westminster eForum', in *Review of the BBC Online Services*, London: The Westminster eForum Seminar Series.

Graf, P, (2003), *BBC Online Review*, [online], http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/BBCOnlinereview.pdf [Accessed 28 February, 2009].

Graham, A., Davies, G, (1997) *Broadcasting, Society and Policy in the Multimedia Age,* Luton: John Libbey.

Graves, C, (1941), *Presentation and Continuity,* Memo, BBC Written Archives, Caversham.

Grogan, J, (2003), in *The Review of BBC Online Services*, London: The Westminster eForum Seminar Series.

Hafner, K, (2001) *The Well: A story of Love, Death and Real Life, in the Seminal Online Community,* New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers.

Hamelink, C, (2003), 'Communication Rights and the European Information Society' in Servaes, J (ed), *The European Information Society: A Reality Check*, Bristol and Portland: Intellect Books.

Harvey, A, (2004a), 'The Prize and the Pain', *Ariel*, 7 December,1.

Harvey, A, (2004b), 'Do you know what Mark Thompson is Talking About?' *Ariel*, 19 November, 1.

Harvey, A, (2005), 'Governors under Threat from Offbeeb Proposal', *Ariel*, 1 February, 2005, 2.

Head of Connect, BBC New Media, (2002), *Interview*, 9 December.

Head of Content, BBC New Media, (2002), *Interview*, 15 January.

Head of Development, BBC New Media, (2002), *Interview*, 10 December.

Hedley Byrne & Co. Ltd. v. Heller & Partners Ltd. (1936), *5.7.36 Hedley Byrne & Co. Ltd. v. Heller & Partners Ltd.,* [online], http://www.eod.gvsu.edu/eod/engineer/engineer-122.html [Accessed 21 April, 2009].

Helpers, (2009) *Message Board Helpers*, [online], http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/mb/helpers.shtml [Accessed 19 April 2009].

Hill, A, (2005) *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television*, Oxon & New York: Routledge.

Hill, A. (2007) *Restyling Factual TV: Audiences and News, Documentary and Reality Genres,* London and New York: Routledge.

Hills, M, (2002) *Fan Cultures,* London: Routledge.

Horton, D. and Wohl, R (1956) 'Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observations of Intimacy at a Distance', *Psychiatry Journal,* Vol.19, 215-229.

Hulu.com, (2000) *Hulu.com*, [online], http://www.hulu.com/ [Accessed 4 April, 2009].

Hutchby, I, (1996) *Confrontation Talk: Arguments, Asymmetries, and Power on Talk Radio.* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hutton, B, (2003), *The Hutton Enquiry*, [online], The Hutton Enquiry, http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/ [Accessed 28 February, 2009].

InSafe, (2009), Safer Internet Programme, [online], InSafe, http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/index.htm [Accessed 10 April, 2009].

Internet Magazine, (2002) 'Where the Interaction Is', *Internet Magazine*, 1 December, 48.

iPresenter 'Lucy', (2002) *Diary* 11 December.

iPresenter 'Lucy', (2002) *Diary,* 17 October.

iPresenter 'Lucy', (2002) *Diary* (no date given).

iPresenter 'Lucy', (2003) *Video Transcript,* 14 February.

iPresenter 'Lucy', (2003) *Video Transcript,* 18 February.

iPresenter 'Lucy' (2003) *Diary,* 15 April.

iPresenter 'Lucy' (2003) *Diary,* May.

iPresenter Nigel, (2003), *Video Transcript,* 17 January.

iPresenter, 'Nigel', (2003) *Diary,* 10 February.

iPresenter 'Nigel', (2003) *Video Transcript,* 14 February.
iPresenter 'Nigel', (2003), *Video Transcript,* 20 March.

iPresenter 'Stuart', (2003) *Diary,* 5 January.

iPresenter 'Stuart', (2003) *Diary,* 9 February

iPresenter 'Stuart' (2003), *Video Transcript,* 14 February.

iPresenter 'Stuart' (2003), *Video Transcript,* 18 February.

iPresenter 'Stuart', (2003) *Diary,* 3 April.

iPresenter 'Stuart', (2003) *Diary,* 25 April.

iPresenter 'Stuart', (2003) *Diary,* 29 May.

iPresenter Stuart, (2003), *Diary,* May.

iPresenter 'Toby', (2002), *Diary,* 10 December.

iPresenter 'Toby', (2003), *Diary,* 16 April.

iPresenter 'Toby', (2003), *Diary,* 12 May.

iPresenter 'Tracey', (2003) *Diary*, 30 January.

Jacka, E, (2003), 'Democracy as Defeat', *Television and New Media*, Vol 4, Number 2,177–191.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary*, 11 April.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary*, 9 May.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary*, 10 July.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary*, October.

Jackson, (2002) *Fieldwork Diary,* 14 October.

Jackson, (2002) *Workshop Notes* 18 December.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary* 12 December.

Jackson, (2002), *Fieldwork Diary*, 14 December.

Jackson, L, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary* 8 January.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 14 January.

Jackson, L, (2003), *Fieldwork Notes*, 23 January.

Jackson, (2003) *Fieldwork Diary*, February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 5 February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 11 February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 19 February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 20 February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 21 February.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 25 February.

Jackson, (2003) *Fieldwork Diary,* March.
Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 13 March.
Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, April.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 10 April.

Jackson, L, (2004) *Fieldwork Diary*, May.

Jackson, (2002) *Fieldwork Diary*, August.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 8 August.

Jackson, (2003), *Fieldwork Diary*, 18 December

Jackson, L, (2005) *Overview of the Implications for the BBC of Participatory Media*: *Management, Awareness, Literacy and Safety on Interactive Media Platforms,* BBC Internal Report.

Jackson, et al, (2008) *Children in Virtual Worlds, 'Adventure Rock' users and producers study*, Report for the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the BBC.

Jakubowicz, K, (2007), 'Public Service Broadcasting in the 21st Century', in Lowe, G and Bardoel, J (eds.), *From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Media: RIPE, 2007,* Gothenburg: Nordicom.

Jakubowicz, K, (2008) 'Participation and Partnership: A Copernican Revolution to Re-engineer Public Service Media for the 21st Century', Ripe, 2008, [online], http://www.uta.fi/jour/ripe/papers/Jakubowicz.pdf (Accessed 21 December, 2008).

Janes, (1990), in Burgess, R, *In the Field: An introduction to Field Research,* London: Routledge.

Jankowski, N and Wester, F, (1991) 'The Qualitative Tradition in Social Science Inquiry: Contributions to Mass Communications Research', in Jensen, K and Jankowski N, (eds.), *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*, London: Routledge.

Jauert, P and Lowe, G, (2005), 'Public Service Broadcasting for Social and Cultural Citizenship: Reviewing the Enlightenment Mission', in Lowe, G and Jauert, P, (eds) *Cultural Dilemmas in Public Service Broadcasting: RIPE, 2005,* Gothenburg: Nordicom.

Jenkins, H, (1992) *Textual Poachers: Television fans and Participatory Culture,* New York: Routledge.

Jenkins, H. (2006) *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide,* New York: New York University Press.

Jo Kim, A, (2000a), *From Newcomer to Old Timer*, [online], http://www.naima.com/community/ch04/index.html, (Accessed 10 December, 2005).

Jo Kim, A, (2000), *Community Building on the Web.* Berkeley: Peachpit Press.

Johnson, T, (2001) 'That's AOL Folks', [online], CNN Money, http://money.cnn.com/2000/01/10/deals/aol_warner/ [Accessed 17 April].

Jorgensen, D. (1989) *Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies,* Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Joseph, M., (2002), *Against the Romance of Communities,* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Jowell, T, (2005), in Informitv News, *Calls for caution in reviewing Television without Frontiers*, [online], Informitv, http://informitv.com/articles/2005/10/06/callsforcaution/ [Accessed 11 October, 2005].

Kearns, I, (2003), in *The Review of BBC Online Services*, London: The Westminster eForum Seminar Series.

Kellehear, A, (1993),*The Unobtrusive Researcher: A Guide To Methods*, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin.

Kim, P and Sawhney, H, (2002), 'A Machine-Like New Medium – Theoretical Examination of Interactive TV', *Media, Culture and Society*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Vol. 24, 217-233.

Kjus, Y, (2007), 'Ideals and Complications in Audience Participation for PSM', in Lowe, G and Bardoel, J, (eds.), *From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Media: RIPE @ 2007*, Gothenburg: Nordicom.

Knapman, S, (2002), *Places, Spaces and People*, presentation, BBC Marketing and Communications, July 2002.

Knapman, S, (2003) *The Daily Life Study, 2002/3,* BBC.

Kung, L, et al, (2008) *The Internet and the Mass Media*, London: Sage.

La Porte, T, et al, (2007), 'Globalisation and Pluralism: The Function of Public Television in the European Audiovisual Market', *International Communication Gazette* 2007; Vol. 69, 377.

Lacy, N, (2002), *Media Institutions and Audiences: Key Concepts in Media Studies*, Houndmills and New York: Palgrave.

Larian Studios, (2009), *KetnetKick2: The Mysterious Island,* [online], Larian, http://www.larian.com/ketnetkick02.php [Accessed 19 April 2009].

Laughey, D, (2007) *Key Themes in Media Theory*, London: Open University Press.

Leadbeater, C., (2000), *Living on Thin Air, The New Economy, With a New Blueprint for the 21st Century,* London, New York, Victoria, Toronto, Auckland: Penguin.

Leadbeater, C, (2008), *We-Think: Mass innovation not mass production.* London: Profile Books.

Lee-Wright, P, (2008), 'Virtual News: BBC News at a "Future Media and Technology" Crossroads', *Convergence*, Vol 14, 249.

Legaldictionary.thefreedictionary.com, (2009). *Duty of Care*, [online], The Free Dictionary.com, http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/duty+of+care, [Accessed 16 April, 2009].

Lievrouw, (2008) *Mediation, New Media, and Communication*, Keynote speech, Internet Research 9.0: Rethinking Community, Rethinking Space, University of Copenhagen, 15-18 October, 2008, from verbatim notes.

Lievrouw, L, (2004) 'What's Changed about New Media: Introduction to the Fifth Anniversary Issue of New Media & Society', *New Media & Society*, Vol 6, 9

Lister, D, (2002) *The Talent is out There*, [online], Independent Online, 19 March, 2002, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/the-talent-is-out-there-654661.html [Accessed 12 April 2009]

Littleton, T, (2008), *Interview*, 23 June, 2008.

Litvinoff, S, (1992),*The Relate Guide to Better Relationships*, (Second Edition), London: Vermillion.

Livingstone, S, (1990) *Making Sense of Television: The Psychology of Audience Interpretation*, Pergamon Press: Oxford

Livingstone, S, and Lunt, P, (1994) *Talk on Television,* Routledge, London.

Livingstone, S., and Bober, M. (2007) 'UK children go online: A child-centred approach to the experience of using the internet' in B. Anderson, et al (eds.), *Information and Communication Technologies in Society: E-Living in a Digital Europe*, p.104-118 [online], http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/1021/ [Accessed 5 February, 2009].

Livingstone, S. and Lunt, P, (1994) *Talk on Television,* London: Routledge.

Loosemore, T, (2007), *From BBC to PSP*, [online], Loosemore, http://www.tomski.com/2007/06/from_bbc_to_psp_via_wtf.shtml [Accessed 28 February, 2009].

Lundby, K, (2008) 'Editorial: Mediatized Stories: mediation perspectives on digital storytelling', *New Media & Society*, Vol 10, 363.

Margonelli, L, (1999) *Inside AOL's 'Cyber-Sweatshop'*, [online], Wired Magazine, Issue 7,10 October, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.10/volunteers_pr.html [Accessed 30 September, 2008].

Mason, B and Thomas, S, (2008) 'A Million Penguins: An Analysis', *The Journal of the Institute of Creative Technologies*, Vol 1, 11.

McFarlane, McMahon, (2002), *Evaluation of the Online Communities for School Leaders*, Bristol University, unpublished report for the National College for School Leaders.

McLuhan, M, (2001), *Understanding Media*, London: Routledge.

McNair, et al, (2003), *Mediated Access: Broadcasting and Democratic Participation in the Age of Mediated Politics*, Luton: University of Luton Press.

McQuail, D, (2001) 'Commercialization and Beyond'' in McQuail, D and Siune, K, (eds.) *Media Policy: Convergence, Concentration and Commerce* (Second Edition), London: Euromedia Research Group.

McQuail, D. (1994) *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*, London: Sage.

Meyrowitz, J, (1985), *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Michalis, M, (2007) *Governing European Communications: From Unification to Coordination*, Plymouth: Lexington Books.

Moores, S. (2005) *Media/Theory: Thinking about media and communications*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Morris, M. and C. Ogan (1996) 'The Internet as Mass Medium', *Journal of Communication* Vol 46 (1), 39–50.

Morley, D, (2000), *Home Territories – Media, Mobility and Identity*. London: Routledge.

Morley, David (1980), *The 'Nationwide' Audience: Structure and Decoding*. London: BFI

Morse, J, (2003) 'Perspectives of the Observer and the Observed', *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol.13, Number 2, 156-157.

Mustafa, S, (2002), *BBCi Monthly Performance Report*, BBC Audience Research.

Nass, C & Brave, S, (2005), *Wired for Speech: How Voice Activates and Advances the Human-Computer Relationship*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

National College of School Leaders, (2007) *10,000 Heads are Better than One: Lessons from the world's largest online learning community for school leaders*, [online], http://www.ncsl.org.uk/media-dda-cf-100000-heads-are-better-than-one.pdf (Accessed: 4 December, 2008).

Neale, S, (1980) *Genre*. London: British Film Institute.

O'Connell, P (2004) *Interview*, 6 September.

O'Connell, P, (2003) *Video Transcript*, 12 February.

O'Sullivan et al, (1994) *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*, London and New York, Routledge.

Oblak, T, (2005) 'The Lack of Interactivity and Hypertextuality in Online Media', *Gazette*, Vol 67, 87.

Office of Communication, (2004a), *The Ofcom Internet and Broadband Update - April 2004,* [online], http://www.ofcom.org.uk/research/telecoms/reports/bbresearch/int_bband_updt/may2004/ [Accessed 16 September, 2008].
Office of Communication, (2004b) *The Communications Market (August)* [online], http://www.ofcom.org.uk/research/cm/cmpdf/ [Accessed 2 November, 2008].

Office of Communication, (2004c), *Ofcom invites detailed responses on Public Service Publisher*, [online], http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2004/11/nr_20041103 [Accessed 8 February, 2009].

Office of Public Sector Information, (2003) *Communications Act, 2003,* [online], http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2003/ukpga_20030021_en_1 [Accessed 16 September, 2008].
Office of Public Sector Information, (2003), *The Communications Bill,* [online], http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2003/ukpga_20030021_en_1 [Accessed 28 February, 2009].

Pavlik, J, (2008), *Media in the Digital Age*, New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press.

PCC, (2000), 'This isn't just theory – consumers get it too', in Curry, 2001, *Looking for the Audience: presentation to the BBC'*, The Henley Centre, 5 September, 2001.

Perryman, N, (2008) 'Dr Who and the Convergence of Media: A Case Study in "Transmedia Storytelling"', *Convergence,* Vol 14, 21.

Picard, R, (2003), 'Business Issues facing New Media' in Servaes, J (Ed), *The European Information Society: A Reality Check*, Bristol and Portland, Intellect.

Picard, R, (2005) 'Audience Relations in the Changing Culture of Media Use' in Lowe, G and Jauert, P, (eds.), *Cultural Dilemmas in Public Service Broadcasting: RIPE @ 2005*, Gothenburg: Nordicom.

Poston, T, (2002) 'Watching Us Watching You', London, *Ariel, 3 September, 1*

Preece, J, (2000), *Online Communities: Designing Usability, Supporting Sociability*, Chichester: Wiley and Sons, Limited.

Press Association, (2009), BBC Prepares to make Significant Cuts to Budget, [online], http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=1&storycode=43379&tc=1 [Accessed 10 April, 2009].

Producer, 'Video Nation', (2003) *Video transcript,* 17 January.

Producer, Red Button et al, (2003) *Video Transcript,* 17 April.

Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq' (2005) *Interview,* 27 October.

Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq' (2009) *Email* , 26 January.

Producer-Host, 'The Archers' (2005) *Interview*, 29 June.

Producer-Host, 'Today', (2005), *Interview,* 22 September.

Rajan, A (2008) *BBC Chiefs Cash in after Year of Turmoil*, [online], Independent Online, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/bbc-chiefs-cash-in-after-year-of-turmoil-862950.html 9 July 2008, [Accessed 12 April, 2008].

Reeves, B, Nass, C (1996) *The Media Equation: How people treat Computers, Television, and New Media Like Real People and Places,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reuben, A, (2008), *Google Faces Human Rights Votes*, [online], BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7386426.stm [Accessed 15 February, 2009].

Reynolds, N, (2009), *Points of View Message Board 5: Summary of Meeting With POV programme and BBC Vision,* [online], BBC Internet Blog, http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcinternet/2009/01/points_of_view_message_board_5.html 24 January, 2009, [Accessed 25 January, 2009].

Rheingold, H, (1994) *The Virtual Community: Finding connection in a computerised World.* London: Secker and Warburg.

Rheingold, H, (1999), *The Role of Journalism in Cybersociety*, [online], BBC Online Community Day. http://www.partnerships.org.uk/bol/howard.htm [Accessed on 21 November, 2008].

Rheingold, H, (2008) 'Understanding and Extending Human Sociality: Literacies, Transliteracies and 21st Century Pedagogy', in the *Journal of the Institute of Creative Technologies*, Leicester, Institute of Creative Technologies, Vol.1, 5.

Rheingold, H, (2008), Howard Rheingold one of 17 winners of HASTAC/MacArthur Foundation Competition, [online], http://www.smartmobs.com/2008/02/23/howard-rheingold-one-of-17-winners-of-hastacmacarthur-foundation-competition/ [Accessed 29 February, 2009].

Rheingold, H. (1994) *The Virtual Community: Finding connection in a computerized world,* London: Martin Secker & Warburg.

Richards, L, (2005) *Handling Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide*. London, Sage.

Sack,W. (2005) 'Discourse Architecture and Very Large-scale Conversation', in R. Latham and S. Sassen (eds) *Digital Formations: IT and New Architectures in the Global Realm*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Saldana, J, (2009), *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi and Singapore: Sage.

Salmon, G., (2003) *e-Moderating: The Key to Teaching and Learning Online*, (Second Edition), London: Routledge-Falmer.

Scannell, P, (1991) 'Introduction: the Relevance of Talk', in P. Scannell (ed.) *Broadcast Talk*, London: Sage

Scannell, P, (1996) *Radio, Television and Modern Life: A Phenomenological Approach,* Oxford and Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Schlesinger, P, (1978), *Putting Reality Together: BBC News,* London: Methuen.

Schlesinger, P, (1987), 'Introductory Essay' in Schlesinger, P, *Putting Reality Together: BBC News,* (reprint), London: Methuen.

Scholfield, J, (2007) *ISPs warn BBC over iPlayer bandwidth Use*, [online],*The Guardian Online*, 13 August, 2007 http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/blog/2007/aug/13/ispswarnbbco [Accessed 25 November, 2008].

Schroder, K., et al (2003) *Researching Audiences,* Arnold, London.

Seaton, J, (1981), 'Broadcasting and the Theory of Public Service', in Curran, J and Seaton, J *Power without Responsibility: The Press, broadcasting, and new media in Britain*, (Fifth Edition), Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Servaes, J, (2003) *The European Information Society: A Reality Check*, Bristol and Oregon: Intellect Books.

Shirky, C. (2008) *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations*, London and New York: Allen Lane.

Silverstone, R, (2004) 'Regulation, Media Literacy and Media Civics', *Media Culture & Society*, Vol 26, 440.

Slevin, J, (2000), The Internet and Society, (Third Edition), Malden: Polity Press.

Stokes, J, (2007) *IBM and BBC team up on Video Search,* [online], Arst Technica.com http://arstechnica.com/business/news/2007/03/ibm-and-bbc-team-up-on-video-search.ars [Accessed 13 April, 2009]

Stone, J, (2009) *Common User, 3 April, 2009*, [online], http://jemstone.wordpress.com/ [Accessed 19 April, 2009].

Sussman, G, (2003) 'The Struggle for and within Public Television', *Television and New Media*, Vol. 4, No 2, 111.

Tappscott, T and Williams, A, (2007) *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*, New York and London: Atlantic Books.

Terranova, T, (2004) *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age*, London and Michigan: Pluto Press.

Thomas, S, (2000) The Wired Writer, [online], http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/survey.htm [Accessed 21 February, 2009].

Thomas, S, (2009), 'When Geeks Go Camping: Finding California in Cyberspace', *Convergence*; Vol. 15, 13.

Thompson, J. B. (1995) *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media,* Polity Press, Oxford.

Thompson, M, (2004), in Harvey, A, 'Do you know what Mark Thomson is Talking About?' *Ariel*, 19 November, 2004.

Thompson, M, (2005) in Plunkett, J, *Thompson Warns EU over New Media,* [online], http://media.guardian.co.uk/broadcast/story/0,7493,1574475,00.html [Accessed 22 September, 2005].

Thompson, M, (2006a), *Speech to BBC staff on the re-organisation of the BBC,* [online], BBC Press Office, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/07_july/19/future.shtml [Accessed, 1 November, 2008].

Thompson, M, (2006b) *Creative Future – BBC Addresses Creative Challenges of On-demand,* [online], BBC Press Office, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/04_april/25/creative.shtml [Accessed: 6 December, 2008].

Tolson, A, (1996) *Mediations: Text and Discourse in Media Studies.* London: Arnold.

Tracey, M, (1998) *The Decline and Fall of Public Service Broadcasting,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Trewin, J, (2003) *Presenting on TV and Radio,* Burlington, Mass.: Focal Press.

Tryhorn, C, (2008), *Ofcom scraps Public Service Publisher Plans,* [online], http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/mar/12/ofcom.digitalmedia [Accessed 8 February, 2008].

University of Wisconsin, 'Transana', [online], University of Wisconsin, http://www.transana.org/ [Accessed 20 December, 2008].

Vartanova, E, (2004) 'Public Service in Old and New Media', in *Shaping Tomorrow's Systems*, Vartanova E and Zassoursky, Y, (eds), Moscow: UNESCO.

Developmental Production Workshops, (2002), *Video Transcript* 12 December

Developmental Production Workshops, (2003), *Video Transcript,* 17 January

Developmental Production Workshops, (2003) *Video Transcript,* 18 February

Developmental Production Workshops, (2003), *Video Transcript,* 20 March

Developmental Production Workshops, (2003), *Video Transcript,* 17 April

Wakefield, J, (2002), 'Will 2002 be the year of Broadband?' http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/1755343.stm [accessed 7 February, 2009].

Walpole, S, (2009), *Email,* 15 January.

Watson, J, and Hill, A, (2006), *Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies,* London: Hodder Arnold.

Watson, J, and Hill, A, (1984), *Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies,* London, Hodder Arnold.

Watts, H, (1997) *On Camera, Essential Know-how for Programme-makers*. London: Aavo.

Wenger, E. (1999) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity,* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Westminster eForum, (2003) *Review of BBC Online Services*. London: Westminster Forum Projects Limited.

Whitehead, J, (2002) *BBC3 Launch to be Delayed Again*, [online], PR Week UK, http://www.prweek.com/uk/news/article/155435/BBC-Three-launch-delayed-again/ [Accessed 17 April 2009].

Williams, F, Rice, R and Rogers, E, (1988) *Research Methods and the New Media*. New York: The Free Press.

Williams, R, (1976) *Communications*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Wisker, G, (2008), *The Postgraduate Research Handbook* (Second Edition), Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave.

Wood, H, (2007) 'The Mediated Conversational Floor: an interactive approach to audience reception analysis', *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 29, 75

Work Foundation, The, (2003), *You Don't Know Me But...Social Capital and Social Software*, London: iSociety.

Wright, S, (2006) 'Government-run Online Discussion Fora: Moderation, Censorship and the Shadow of Control', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol 8, Issue 4, 550-568.

Wright, S. and Street, J, (2007) 'Democracy, deliberation and design: the case of online discussion forums', *New Media Society,* Vol. 9, 849-869.

Yen, R and Hsu, H, (2006) 'Consumer Co-production in Product-Related Virtual Community – Does Community Management Matter?' *Proceedings of the 11th Annual Conference of Asia Pacific Decision Sciences Institute*, Hong Kong, 89-94.

YouTube, (2009) *Company History*, [online], YouTube, http://www.youtube.com/t/about [Accessed 4 April, 2009].

Ytreberg, (2006) 'Premediations of Performance in Recent Live Television: A Scripting Approach to Media Production Studies', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol 9, 421.

Ytreberg, E, (2002) 'Ideal Types in Public Service Television: Paternalists and Bureaucrats, Charismatics, and Avant-gardists' in *Media, Culture and Society,* Vol 24: 759-774.

Zorian-Lynn, J, (2001) *Presenting for TV and Radio.* London: A and C Black.

Appendix

Sample producer-host activity

Producer-host activity on the 'Celebdaq' message board showing an exchange about the mechanics of trading on the 'Daq' stock exchange. The 'alert' link to call a moderator can also be seen.
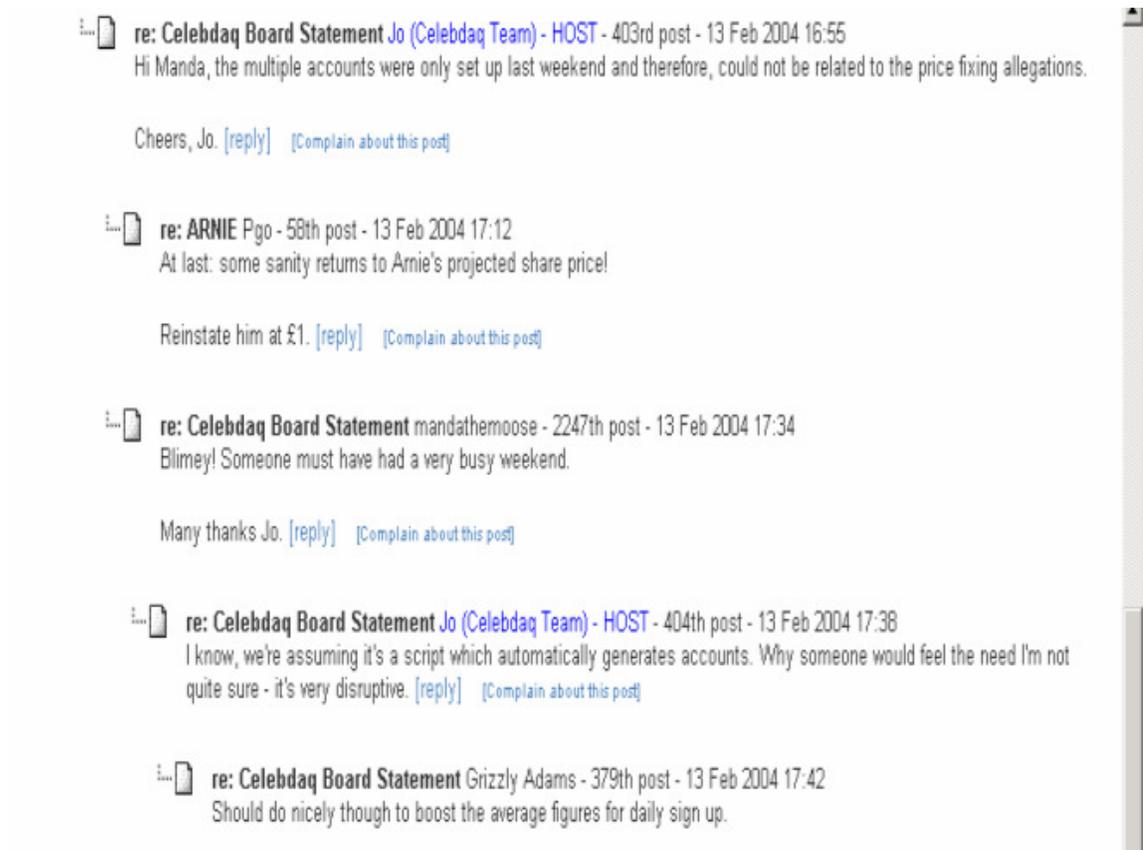

Figure 31: The 'Celebdaq' producer-host engaging with Traders

Information on the video clips offered for viewing

Clip Title: *Sample Live Chat.*

In: "Totally different chemistry. I've got a question here…

Out: …stuffed animal. For us the first time we was…"

Dur: 1.05"

The clips shows a band being interviewed live for 'Top of the Pops' by iPresenter 'Lucy'. Questions come in to her via the Live Chat user-interface to her laptop, from the public. Other questions also come into the studio from the public standing outside the BBCi Studio, via SMS from mobile phones; they can be seen on the board above the live chat guests.

Clip Title: *Video Loop on Red Button.*

In: "For what we want to come up with…

Out: …for some time (all talk over one another)."

Dur: 56"

The Red Button Producer explains that the number of video loops which have been planned for the re-launch of the Red Button on BBCi. The iPresenters express their alarm both vocally and visually.

Clip Title: '*Video Nation.'*

In: "You're arriving at the home…

Out: …you've got to come back with something."

Dur: 1.23"

The 'Video Nation' Producer explains how the 'Video Nation' Producers produce a 'natural' performance from the public. The point of the clip is to show how user-generated content was perceived at that time; as having to be editorialised.

Clip Title: *Top Trader of the Week.*

In: "Well, they're not going to trust the show...

Out: ...won't actually watch the TV show."

Dur: 1.36"

The Broadband Producer introduces the subject under discussion during the first workshop on 'Celebdaq'. How the Traders are treated by the BBC staff they encounter both online and on the television show is being analysed. One of the iPresenters reads out the message left in the 'Celebdaq' message board by the first 'Top Trader of the Week' after she was interviewed. She had been told to go to a small BBC studio outside of London, and to sit in the studio in front of a fixed camera, and wait for instructions. A jacket had been left on a chair beside her.

Clip Title: '*Celebdaq' Multimedia Console.*

In: "So you've got your...

Out: ...that's what's going to be in there (all talk).

Dur: 1.09"

iPresenter 'Stuart' explains how the iPresenters have imagined a 'show' on video might be. He talks about separate web pages which are linked. The Broadband Producer explains what 'video on demand' is, showing how the idea of video on line is something very new. The Broadband Producer later explains how a multimedia console could be made; the first BBC player had just been trialled for BBC News. These first multimedia consoles were precursors of the BBC iPlayer and the knowledge gained from the 'Celebdaq' console was fed into the BBC iPlayer project which began later that year (2003).

The participants of the developmental production workshops

Technical Facilitator: Senior Live Chat Producer, BBC New Media

Administrative Assistant: Assistant Producer, Interactive Presenter Scheme, BBC New Media

Live Chat Assistant Producer, One.

Live Chat Assistant Producer, Two.

Live Chat Talent Booker.

Live Chat Typist.

'Stuart', Interactive Presenter, (aged 29).

'Lucy', Interactive Presenter, (aged 30).

'Nigel', Interactive Presenter, (aged 23).

'Toby', Interactive Presenter, (aged 28).

'Tracy', Interactive Presenter, (aged 30).

Five Live Chat producers.

Live Chat Talent Booker.

Message Board Producer.

Message board Assistant Producer

'Video Nation' Producer, One.

'Video Nation' Producer, Two.

Broadband Producer

BBCi Red Button Producer, One.

BBCi Red Button Producer, Two.

BBC Audience Research Manager.

Producer-host, 'Celebdaq'.

The 'Celebdaq' audience study participants

'Kevin', Marketing Manager, Southampton, (aged 55). Interviewed 15 March 2004.

'Suzy', Administrative Assistant, Gravesend, Kent, (aged 30). Interviewed 16 March 2004

'Kylie', Secretary, Rainham, Kent, (aged 25). Interviewed 17 March 2004.

'Helen', Student, Lemington Spa, (aged 20). Interviewed 9 March 2004.

'Susan', Student, Lemington Spa, (aged 20). Interviewed 9 March, 2004.

'Elizabeth', Personal Assistant, Pimlico, (aged 35). Interviewed18 March 2004.

'James', Financial Analyst, Twickenham, (aged 44). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Andrew', Animator, Bristol, (aged 35). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Pete', Animator, Bristol, (aged 23). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Douglas', Animator, Bristol, (aged 27). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Alan', Animator, Bristol, (aged 28). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Christine', Secretary, Bristol, (aged 28). Interviewed 22 March 2004.

'Eimon', Marketing, London, (aged 30). Interviewed 11 March 2004.

'Jane', Student, Brighton, (aged 21). Interviewed 13 March 2004.

The interviews

Head of Children's Interactive, Interviewed 5 December 2002.

Head of Connect, Interviewed 9 December 2002.

Head of BBCi Development, Interviewed10 December 2002.

Head of Content BBCi, Interviewed15 January 2002.

Paddy O'Connell, Presenter, 'Celebdaq', Interviewed 6 September 2004.

Producer-host, 'Today', Interviewed 22 September 2005.

Producer-host, 'Celebdaq', Interviewed 27 October 2005.

Producer-host, 'The Archers' Interviewed 29 June 2005.

The structure of the developmental production workshops

1. Coping with the unexpected in a live chat environment - the editorial policy issues of live, online, interactive events.

Workshop date: 12 December 2002.

Activities: A discussion on 'interactive presentation' began the workshops; what it might be or encompass. The iPresenters then presented dummy live chats, and had to deal with a difficult guest.

2. An evaluation of the live chat experience from the producers' and audiences' perspectives.

Workshop date: 18 December 2002.

Activities: The iPresenters viewed previous live chats they had presented and critiqued both their performances and the live chat production process. The performances and engagement techniques used by the iPresenters to link the studio, guest, and audience were also discussed.

3. Working with 'Video Nation' to identify the difference between user-generated content and professional content. 'Video Nation' wanted to know if the iPresenters could present 'Video Nation' online in any way.

Workshop dates: 17 January, 6 March, 3 April, 10 April, 2003.

Activities: An introduction to 'Video Nation' began the first session. This was followed by a discussion on how the iPresenters might host 'Video Nation' online; the idea of presenting a weekly 'round up' of video shorts was suggested. The iPresenters were given training on how to do a video diary. During the second workshop the iPresenters filmed a dummy 'Video Nation' diary piece (in the courtyard of the building) returning to the studio to critique their recordings. Between the second and third workshops the iPresenters planned, filmed and edited a 'finished' 'Video Nation' piece. The resulting diaries were critiqued and discussed by the iPresenters and the 'Video Nation' producers during the third workshop, which concluded with a discussion on how the idea of the iPresenters hosting the 'Video Nation' website could be taken forward.

4. Improving the live chats - by including an interactive presenter in the production.

Workshop dates: 23 and 30 January 2003.

Activities: The iPresenters and the Live Chat producers discussed the weaknesses in the existing live chat processes and brainstormed how the iPresenters could improve the live participatory event. They deconstructed what happens before, during and after the live chat from production and audience perspectives. This included how to deal with the guest, studio etiquette, presentation techniques, the use of a laptop on the presenter's lap to receive questions from audience participants, and the studio set, lighting and camera work. The workshop also considered the problem of the text and video streams not being synchronised. The session closed with a debate on how to offer additional orientation for the audience such as providing 'set up and wraps' (pre-prepared text such as 'You are joining in with a live chat with.....' or 'Just time for one last question.'

5. Bringing the community closer to the broadcast - finding ways to improve the internal audience 'flow' between platforms for semi-converged brands (television and radio).

Workshop dates: 14 and 18 February, 2003.

Activities: The aim of the first workshop was to analyse the Traders, what they liked to do, and how they could better be catered for, particularly within the broadcast. The workshop began with an analysis of the 'Celebdaq' pilot programme and website. The 'Celebdaq' audience was analysed through the 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts' views, BBC audience data and initial observations from the website (including the message board). Between the first and second workshops the 'Celebdaq' Traders were observed over one week and the results were brought to the second workshop. The iPresenters also had a planning meeting between the workshops to produce an outline for a multimedia show for broadband. During the second workshop the iPresenters presented their idea; it was translated into a 'multimedia console' by the Broadband Producer. After the second workshop one of the iPresenters worked with the Broadband Producer to create and test the console and to carry out a time and motion study on the production method they

had created for the console, in order to provide an exact costing for managers in BBC New Media.

6. Creating 'Community TV' for delivery via a mixed-media console for broadband. This workshop was later combined with workshop #5.

7. 'Feature-making'- these workshops were principally training for the iPresenters, however they were also videoed and analysed.
Workshop date: 27 February and 10 April 2003.
Activities: The session aimed to help the iPresenters develop and 'pitch' ideas to producers both within the BBC and to commercial production companies. The iPresenters brought along a television feature that they liked and these were analysed in detail for content and style. Each iPresenter decided on a particular idea which they developed on paper during the week. During the second workshops the resulting ideas were 'pitched' to the other iPresenters and the Live Chat and Interactive Presenter Scheme Producers, who acted as imaginary programme Commissioners.

8. 'Project Communicate – how can presentation improve the perception and understanding of BBCi'. This workshop series aimed to explore how the iPresenters might encourage audiences to participate via BBCi.
Workshop date: 20 March 2003.
Activities: An Audience Research Manager from BBC New Media presented the findings from a recent report, *Project Communicate*. It was planned that the session would include a discussion on how the iPresenters might help the audience orientate, and how they might present elements of BBCi. As the report found the BBC wanted to use well-known faces to *promote* BBCi (the implication being rather than hire iPresenters to *engage with* audiences), the session ended with a short discussion on the findings of the report.

9. Interactive TV (the Red Button) – How the iPresenters might present on the television 'overlays' which come up when you 'press red' on digital television.

Workshop dates: 17 and 29 April, 2003.

Activities: The ideas behind interactive television were explained by the Interactive Television Producers. The iPresenters then discussed how they might contribute and they were asked to think up ideas which were then critiqued. The second session, on the BBCi Red Button service, began with an explanation of the different Red Button technologies, which was followed by a discussion on how the iPresenters might present within the Red Button video loops. The length and number of the video loops (six loops of a maximum duration of three minutes each) resulted in any presentation for the Red Button service being impractical.

Note: The developmental workshops continued in May, however the time was mainly used by the iPresenters to record their show reels, to finish off their 'Video Nation' pieces and for meetings with BBC Executives. The iPresenters also visited different production departments across the UK during this time, such as the BBC's Interactive Television experiments in Kingston-upon-Hull. One or two visiting speakers came to talk to the iPresenters and they also had sessions on presentation (clothing and body language). These sessions were not recorded on video but they were documented in the fieldwork diary, particularly when any group activity or group meeting took place.

The coding frame

Final coding Frame (April, 2007)
Flow Within content Between related content Between media platforms
Changes in Liveness On demand time Asynchronous time Live chat time (sequential – text then the video)
Production Co-production User-production Camera Microphone User-interface Direct Gaze
Presence of producer-hosts/presenters Visibility Proximity Identity or persona(e) Tone (expressed in text or face/voice/body) Context Decline in connectivity with the BBC/the brand? Decline in quality or vitality of the space? Anger or resentment Confusion …or nothing changes?
Facilitation *Note: To Facilitate: "make easy or easier; promote, help forward" (the Penguin English Dictionary, Second edition 1969)* Assisting cognisance (sorting material, explaining)

Encouragement
Affordance
Socialisation
Knowledge exchange
Governance
Democratisation
Co-production
User-production

Mediation *Note: Mediation: Act of mediating; intercession*
Socialisation (mediating between members)
Knowledge exchange
Development of cultural capital
Moderation (of content, names and identities)
Arbitration
Intervention
Negotiation
Episodic AND ongoing relationships
Potential of more intimacy

Membership
Storage of member content
Curating member content
Showcasing of member content
Management of members
Maintenance of the technology

Editorial policy
Duty of care
Data protection
Child protection
Libel and defamation
Copyright of material
Tracking of content
Removal of content on request
Accessibility

The 'Celebdaq' audience study

The preparation for the audience study began in October, 2003 with a second review of the BBC's audience data such as viewer and user reports, a BBC audience research study, and the *Celebdaq InSite Survey*, (BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, 2003). Participants were found through the 'Celebdaq' message boards in early February, 2004. Responses were sifted and any unsuitable respondents (five PhD and MA students) were contacted and informed that they were unsuitable as they were actively engaged in studying the media. The remaining potential participants were contacted by telephone in mid-February and dates for a home visit were organised. During the telephone call information about the audience study was given, and information about the participant was collected. All those who took part in the study had 'traded on the Daq' for over six months and they had all watched the television programme.

I was accompanied to most of the home visits by an Assistant Producer from the BBC's Live Chat team. The activities during the visit included (a) a twenty-minute interview recorded in audio, (b) an observation of the Trader as they managed their portfolio and 'did what they normally did' when they visited the 'Celebdaq' website and (c) a shared viewing of part of the original 'Celebdaq' television programme, presented by Paddy O'Connell. The interviews were semi-structured; the interviewees could talk about anything they felt was significant, however they were led through areas of questioning. The areas of questioning were the role of the 'Celebdaq' producer-hosts, their own view of their relationship and attitudes to the producer-hosts, their thoughts on the presenters of the television programme, the role of moderators, their own perception of the 'Celebdaq' community, and finally their impressions of the 'Celebdaq' broadband console. All the participants signed consent forms and they were informed that they would receive the findings from the study when they were available.

Bibliography of BBC Sources used in the study

BBC Audience and Consumer Research, (2003) *Connecting with New Media Audiences*, BBC internal report.

BBC College of Journalism, (2007a) *Audiences*, [Online] Gateway, BBC Intranet http://college.gateway.bbc.co.uk/journalism/main.asp?page=5346 [Accessed, 21 January, 2008].

BBC College of Journalism, (2007b), *Interacting with Audiences*, [online] Gateway, BBC Intranet http://college.gateway.bbc.co.uk/journalism/main.asp?page=5339 [Accessed, 21 January, 2008].

BBC Intranet, (2003) *Celebdaq to be flaunted in Cannes*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed November, 2003].

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003) *Celebdaq InSite Survey*.

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003a), *The Daily Life Study, 2002/3*.

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003b), *Project Communicate, Presentation of Findings*

BBC Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003c) *Celebdaq Audience Data*.

BBC Talent, (2001), *If you've got it we'll flaunt it...* London: BBC.

BBC Trust, (2009), *Trust Assessment of 'Canvas' Proposals*, [online], BBC Trust Online, http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/consult/open_consultations/canvas.html [Accessed 4 April, 2009].

BBC WebServer, (2003), *Web Statistics, BBC Online Communities*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed 22 January, 2004].

BBC WebUser, (2002), *Live Chat statistics*, [online], BBC Gateway, Intranet, [Accessed 15 May, 2003].

BBC WebUser, (2003), *WebUser Statistics*, [online], BBC Gateway, Intranet, [Accessed 19 June 2004].

BBC, (2002) *Annual Report and Accounts*, London: BBC.

BBC, (2003) *Annual Report and Accounts,* London: BBC

BBC, (2003) *Web Server statistics*, [online], Gateway, BBC Intranet, [Accessed November, 2004].

BBC, (2004), *Building Public Value,* London: BBC.

BBC, (2009) *Online Service Guidelines – Moderation*, [online], BBC,
http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/onguide/interacting/moderation.sht
ml [Accessed: 7 April, 2009].

BBC, (2009) *Online Service Guidelines – Hosting,* [online], BBC
http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/onguide/interacting/hosting.shtml
[Accessed 10 January, 2009].

BBC, (2009), *Interactive Producer Guidelines*, [online], BBC,
http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/edguide/interacting/interactivetvse.s
html [Accessed 15 February, 2009].

BBC, (2009) *Terms of Use*, [online], BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/terms/ [Accessed 7 April,
2009]

BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003) *Celebdaq InSite Study*

BBC, Marketing, Communication and Audiences, (2003b) *Project Communicate*

BBCi Marketing and Communications, (2002) *BBCi Studio Launch Briefing*

BBCi Marketing and Communications, (2002) *The BBC iStudio*

BBCi, (2002), *Qualitative Research Presentation: November, 2002*

Beckenham, L, (2003), *Market Report on TV-Related Online Communities*

Blinc, (2004), *Online Audience Expectations: Audience Research,11.04*

BMRB International Limited, (2001) *Presenters – who needs 'em?* London: The Radio
Academy and the BBC.

Broadband Producer, (2003), *Email to the iPresenters,* 13 February.

Clarke, M, (2002) *iPresenter Launch Party Briefing*

Curry, A, (2001), *Looking for the Audience: presentation to the BBC*, The Henley Centre

Discovery, (2002), *BBCi Qualitative Research Presentation*

Future Foundation, (1999), 'Media and Gender Survey', in Knapman, S, (2002), *Places,
Spaces and People*, BBC Marketing and Communications.

Graves, C, (1941), *Presentation and Continuity,* Memo, BBC Written Archives, Caversham.

Harvey, A, (2004a), 'The Prize and the Pain', *Ariel,* 7 December,1.

Harvey, A, (2004b), 'Do you know what Mark Thompson is Talking About?' *Ariel,* 19 November, 1.

Harvey, A, (2005), 'Governors under Threat from Offbeeb Proposal', *Ariel,* 1 February, 2005, 2.

Jackson, L, (2005) *Overview of the Implications for the BBC of Participatory Media*: *Management, Awareness, Literacy and Safety on Interactive Media Platforms,* BBC Internal Report.

Jackson, et al, (2008) *Children in Virtual Worlds, 'Adventure Rock' users and producers study*, Report for the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the BBC.

Knapman, S, (2002), *Places, Spaces and People*, presentation, BBC Marketing and Communications, July 2002.

Knapman, S, (2003) *The Daily Life Study, 2002/3,* BBC.

Mustafa, S, (2002), *BBCi Monthly Performance Report*, BBC Audience Research.

PCC, (2000), 'This isn't just theory – consumers get it too', in Curry, 2001, *Looking for the Audience: presentation to the BBC'*, The Henley Centre, 5 September, 2001.

Producer-Host, 'Celebdaq' (2009) *Email* , 26 January.

Reynolds, N, (2009), *[Points of View Message Board 5: Summary of Meeting With POV programme and BBC Vision,](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcinternet/2009/01/points_of_view_message_board_5.html)* [online], BBC Internet Blog, http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcinternet/2009/01/points_of_view_message_board_5.html 24 January, 2009, [Accessed 25 January, 2009].

Thompson, M, (2004), in Harvey, A, 'Do you know what Mark Thomson is Talking About?' *Ariel,* 19 November, 2004.

Thompson, M, (2005) in Plunkett, J, *Thompson Warns EU over New Media,* [online], http://media.guardian.co.uk/broadcast/story/0,7493,1574475,00.html [Accessed 22 September, 2005].

Thompson, M, (2006a), *Speech to BBC staff on the re-organisation of the BBC*, [online], BBC Press Office, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/07_july/19/future.shtml [Accessed, 1 November, 2008].

Thompson, M, (2006b) *Creative Future – BBC Addresses Creative Challenges of On-demand*, [online], BBC Press Office,
http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/04_april/25/creative.shtml
[Accessed: 6 December, 2008].

Walpole, S, (2009), *Email*, 15 January.