

**Temple of the Arts?**  
**The Evolution of BBC Arts Broadcasting in the**  
**Digital Media Landscape**

**Amy Genders**

A submission presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of South Wales/Prifysgol De Cymru  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**August 2017**

## ABSTRACT

Arts programming has traditionally been regarded as an important part of fulfilling the founding principles of public service broadcasting (PSB) to 'inform, educate and entertain'. From popular early radio programmes such as *Music and the Ordinary Listener* (BBC Radio, 1926) to landmark television series such as *Civilisation* (BBC 2, 1969) and *Ways of Seeing* (BBC 2, 1972), the arts have been a staple in BBC schedules since the corporation was first granted licence to broadcast in 1923. However, since the turn of the millennium the narrative of arts broadcasting within a public service context has been one of relative decline. In their first review of PSB in 2004, the media regulator Ofcom reported that arts programming was 'suffering' from a fall in expenditure and was increasingly marginalised within broadcasting schedules. Between 2006 and 2011 annual spend on first-run originated arts and classical music programming reportedly fell by 41% across all public service broadcasters, with output hours falling from 325 in 2006 to 236 in 2011 (Ofcom, 2012).

With the appointment of former Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, Tony Hall, as BBC Director-General in 2013, it seemed that arts broadcasting would be given a new breath of life. In 2014 Hall unveiled 'BBC Arts', a new strategy set to put the arts back 'at the very heart of the BBC' (BBC Media Centre, 2014). Based on qualitative interviews with those directly involved in programme making, commissioning and strategy, the present research examines how the BBC's proposed commitment to the arts is realised within an increasingly competitive and fragmented digital media landscape. The study concludes that whilst fundamental public service values such as cultural enrichment and public engagement are still strong discursive elements within current BBC arts strategy, these ambitions are increasingly difficult to deliver in practice as the corporation faces ever-greater exposure to competitive forces and heightened financial pressures across its services. Under these conditions the BBC has increasingly succumbed to the logic of the market in both its rhetoric and output, resulting in a more challenging climate for the continued sustainability of public service arts provision.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although there is only one name on the front of this thesis, the work presented here would not have been possible without my supervisory team, colleagues, friends and family. Undertaking doctoral study has been a truly life-changing experience, and I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to all those who have contributed to this journey.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr Caitriona Noonan for her continued guidance over the past three years, both in an official capacity at the University of South Wales and as an outside mentor in her role at Cardiff University. During this period she has always found time to offer support and advice, and for that I am sincerely grateful. I would also like to thank Professor Richard Hand and Dr Lesley Harbidge for their excellent supervision during the course of this research. My thanks also go to Professor Ruth McElroy for her invaluable advice and attention to detail during the writing of this thesis.

I am very grateful to the University of South Wales for funding this project through their Centenary Scholarship. Without this financial support the undertaking of this work would not have been possible. I also wish to express my gratitude to all those who agreed to take part in this study that, without their time, experience and knowledge, would not exist.

My heartfelt thanks go out to my family and friends for their unconditional love and support during the last three years. In particular, I would like to thank my mother, Dr Nicky Genders, who has been unwavering in her support even when in the process of completing her own doctorate degree.

Lastly, I would like to thank my A Level Media Studies teacher, Mr Stuart Ward, and De Montfort University lecturer, Dr Andrew Clay. It is through them that I discovered a love of learning that has not only driven me to pursue research, but also to find joy in it.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1. Institutional context	7
1.2. Contribution to knowledge	12
1.3. Thesis structure	15
<b>2. PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING IN BRITAIN</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1. Culture for the Masses	18
2.1.1. Leading the path to enlightenment	20
2.2. Broadcasting's Post-war Years	23
2.3. Public service broadcasting in the digital age	26
2.3.1. The 'citizen consumer'	30
2.3.2. Going digital	32
2.4. Public service broadcasting in Crisis?	34
<b>3. EMERGING PRODUCTION CONTEXTS</b>	<b>37</b>
3.1. Delivering Public Value	38
3.1.1. Producer Choice	39
3.1.2. Accountability	43
3.2. Trends in Specialist Factual Programming	46
3.2.1. Popular formats	48
3.2.2. Presenting expertise	50
<b>4. A HISTORY OF ARTS BROADCASTING</b>	<b>53</b>
4.1. Arts on the Small Screen	55
4.1.1. Presenting <i>Civilisation</i>	59
4.2. Deconstructing High Culture	60
4.2.1. Culture goes commercial	63
4.2.2. The art of discussion	65
4.3. Changing Formats and Engaging Audiences	67
4.3.1. Off-screen engagement	69
4.4. Situating the arts	70

<b>5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>72</b>
5.1. Qualitative Interviewing.....	73
5.1.1. Conducting semi-structured interviews.....	76
5.2. Interview Sample.....	79
5.3. Interview Process.....	84
5.4. Thematic Analysis.....	88
5.4.1. Contextual analysis.....	91
<b>6. ARTS BROADCASTING AS PUBLIC SERVICE.....</b>	<b>93</b>
6.1. Defining Arts Broadcasting.....	93
6.1.1. From high to everyday culture.....	95
6.1.2. Maintaining boundaries.....	100
6.1.3. Persons of taste, intelligence and education.....	104
6.2. Arts Broadcasting as Public Service.....	108
6.2.1. Branding distinctiveness.....	110
6.2.2. Challenges to market failure.....	113
6.3. Delivering Public Service: The Case of Arts Provision in Wales.....	117
6.3.1. Fostering divergencies.....	118
6.3.2. The decline of arts broadcasting in Wales.....	122
6.3.2. An invisible nation.....	126
6.3.3. Serving the nation(s).....	128
6.4. Conclusion.....	128
<b>7. MEASURING SUCCESS: RATINGS AND APPRECIATION.....</b>	<b>131</b>
7.1. The rise of ratings.....	132
7.1.1. Delivering reputation and taking risks.....	135
7.1.2. Audience appreciation.....	140
7.1.3. Arts as event television.....	144
7.1.4. 'I wouldn't necessarily watch it, but I'm glad it's there'.....	146
7.2. Loss of the Magazine Format.....	147
7.2.1. Losing critical perspective.....	150
7.2.2. Losing innovation.....	152
7.3. Popularising the Arts.....	153
7.3.1. Formatting the arts.....	154
7.3.2. The cult of the presenter.....	156
7.3.3. New paths to enlightenment?.....	160
7.4. Conclusion.....	162

<b>8. ARTS BROADCASTING IN THE DIGITAL AGE.....</b>	<b>164</b>
8.1. Multiplatform Strategies: Setting the Scene.....	166
8.2. BBC Arts Online.....	171
8.2.1. 'Shareability' and social media.....	173
8.2.2. Supplementing content.....	174
8.2.3. Standalone content.....	178
8.3. iPlayer Exclusives.....	179
8.3.1. Creating findability.....	181
8.3.2. Shrinking budgets and diminishing value.....	183
8.4. Conclusion.....	186
<b>9. FROM PATRON TO CHAMPTION OF THE ARTS.....</b>	<b>188</b>
9.1. BBC Partnerships: History and Motivations.....	189
9.1.1. From 'closed fortress' to increased collaboration.....	191
9.2. Partnerships in Practice.....	195
9.2.1. Online opportunities and challenges.....	200
9.3. Get Creative.....	203
9.3.1. Measuring participation.....	207
9.4. Conclusion.....	210
<b>10.CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>212</b>
10.1. From enrichment to ratings.....	214
10.2. The future of arts broadcasting.....	217
10.3. Temple of the arts or just a façade?.....	218
<b>11.BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>12. APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>253</b>
Appendix 1: Teleography and Radiography.....	253
Appendix 2: Interview list.....	255

# 1. Introduction

---

With the appointment of former chief executive of the Royal Opera House, Tony Hall, as BBC Director-General in 2013, it seemed that arts broadcasting was about to enter a new 'golden age'. A mere few months after taking the post Hall promised major investment in arts content across the BBC. In a speech outlining his future vision for the broadcaster, the new Director-General announced there would be a 20% increase in funding for arts television programmes, more landmark arts programmes on BBC One and BBC Two, and the re-launch of the BBC and Arts Council England's online project The Space (BBC Media Centre, 2013). The following year Hall unveiled 'BBC Arts' as a new strategy to 'put the arts at the very heart of the BBC'. Speaking at BBC New Broadcasting House at its launch, Hall stated that this was 'the biggest push we've made in the arts for a generation. There'll be more arts on the BBC than ever before' (BBC Media Centre, 2014). The present study critically examines the extent to which this proposed commitment to the arts is realised through qualitative interviews with key individuals involved in arts programme-making, strategy and wider cultural partnerships. In so doing, this work analyses the ways in which commissioning and production strategies have shaped the evolution of BBC arts broadcasting within shifting social and political contexts.

## 1.1. Institutional context

To gain an insight into the origins of PSB in Britain one need only enter the BBC's first purpose-built headquarters, Broadcasting House in Portland Place, London. In the distinctive art deco entrance hall stands Eric Gill's statue of a sower, long used as a metaphor for broadcasting. As the sower casts seeds widely across its land, so too does broadcasting cast its messages in the hope of being fruitfully received by its audiences. On the central archway above this marble statue is carved the following grandiose Latin inscription:

*This Temple of the Arts and Muses is dedicated to Almighty God by the first Governors of Broadcasting in the year 1931, Sir John Reith being Director-General. It is their prayer that good seed sown may bring forth a good harvest, that all things hostile to peace or purity may be banished from this house, and that the people, inclining their ear to whatsoever things are beautiful and honest and of good report, may tread the path of wisdom and uprightness.*

With this sentiment Reith sowed the seeds of PSB in which technological advancements, universal suffrage and higher levels of education within the British population provided fertile soil. Setting out his vision for the BBC in his 1924 book *Broadcast over Britain*, Reith asserted that ‘to have exploited so great a scientific invention for the purpose and pursuit of ‘entertainment’ alone would have been a prostitution of its powers and an insult to the character and intelligence of the people’ (17). Reith believed broadcasting had a responsibility ‘to carry into the greatest possible number of homes everything that is best in every human department of knowledge, endeavour and achievement’ (37), and it was on these ideals that the BBC as a self-proclaimed temple of the arts laid its foundations.



*Foyer of BBC Broadcasting House circa 1939*



Over eight decades later and the reception area of the BBC's recently developed New Broadcasting House (NBH) is almost unrecognisable. In place of solemn Latin inscriptions hang colourful posters featuring famous faces from hit BBC programmes such as *Luther*, *Sherlock* and *Wonders of the Universe*. Absent too are the marble statues, replaced instead by a life-size Dalek representing the BBC's long-running and internationally successful series *Doctor Who*. This is the BBC's shop front in an increasingly competitive and global media market. Yet it has also become a symbol of the increased economic scrutiny facing the corporation, with the Daily Mail dubbing it a 'citadel of profligacy' after its initial construction reportedly ran £55million over budget (Scott, 2013). While next door to this new development the fixtures and fittings of the old entrance hall are still preserved, behind a layer of glass they become more of a museum piece; a relic of the past rather than a symbol of the present.



*Foyer of New Broadcasting House 2013*

Arts programming has traditionally been an important part of delivering the founding principles of PSB envisioned by John Reith: to 'inform, educate and entertain.' Accompanied by detailed programme notes in *The Radio Times*, popular pre-war radio programmes such as *Music and the Ordinary Listener* (BBC Radio, 1926) sought to introduce audiences to and increase appreciation of 'serious' music. In 1969 Kenneth Clark's landmark arts series *Civilisation* (BBC 2, 1969) was watched by an estimated two and a half million people and sold to over 60 countries (Walker, 1993: 82). As a testament to its legacy the BBC has commissioned the production of a new ten-part series 'inspired by the ground-breaking programme' and set to air on BBC Two towards the end of 2017 (BBC Media Centre, 2015). Under the new title *Civilisations* and fronted by three presenters as opposed to one, the ways in which this watershed moment in arts broadcasting has been reimagined for a contemporary audience also indicates how arts broadcasting and specialist factual documentary more broadly has evolved over the past fifty years.

The broadcasting and media landscape has changed dramatically since the opening of Broadcasting House in May 1932. Whereas once the BBC held a virtual monopoly, the proliferation of digital channels, and more recently the Internet and online media, has led to increased competition from both British and international content providers. As the BBC state in their proposed plans for the next Charter period, 'we, like every other broadcaster, are facing a world in transition' (2015: 6). Commenting on recent trends in media consumption habits, Jane Martinson remarks in the Guardian that 'it seems clear that Ofcom's overall view that "public service broadcasting is in good shape" with a relatively robust advertising market in television is only true for the next decade at most' (2015). Consumption habits are rapidly changing with audiences increasingly choosing to access what they want, where they want and when they want, free from the constraint of comparatively limited and linear broadcasting schedules. In their third review of PSB Ofcom predicted that, faced with the variety of content provided by online platforms such as Netflix and YouTube, 'it may be increasingly difficult for PSB to maintain their current large audiences' (2015a: 18). Although the sower may still cast their seeds, the opportunities to take root within this overcrowded landscape are now

significantly scarcer. If arts broadcasting, and indeed more broadly the BBC, are to survive then it must continue to find new and innovative ways to deliver its public service proposition.

Whilst many key elements of arts programming such as the 'expert presenter' and reliance on a prescribed artistic canon are still prevalent, the once authoritative, paternalistic role of the BBC and its programming has in many ways been rendered obsolete by the sheer plurality of new voices and perspectives fostered in this new media environment. The need for the BBC to adapt its mode of address in order to continue to engage audiences within this context is succinctly articulated by the corporation's director of radio and education, James Purnell, who asserts in a blog entitled *Reinventing the BBC*:

This new Charter will last for 11 years, and will take the BBC to its centenary. The BBC that turns a hundred will have come a long way from its beginnings. It won't be the Auntie that dispensed culture from on high. It will be much more of a thoughtful friend. Prodding us to keep our resolutions, helping us ask and find answers. (2017)

Indeed, the past decade has also brought substantial challenges for arts broadcasting. In their first review of PSB television in 2004 Ofcom reported that 'specialist programming on topics such as arts, current affairs and religion was increasingly being pushed out of peak viewing hours' (5). During their 2008 review Ofcom reported that 'hours of Religious and Arts programming continue to decline' (2008a: 5). The review also found that only 10% of respondents to a nationwide survey thought arts programming was important to society, and only 8% saw it as a personal priority (2008b: 33). This narrative of decline appears to have continued, with Ofcom's most recent review of PSB in 2015 reporting that 'following the removal of specific quotas in 2003, PSB provision in arts and classical music, religion and ethics, and formal education has significantly reduced' (4) with spend on arts and classical music declining by 25% between 2008 and 2014 (12) and arts output on BBC One falling from 86 hours in 2009 to just 34 hours in 2014 (23).

A number of high profile figures have also criticised the BBC for its lack of arts coverage. In a 2009 interview former chairman of the Arts Council, Sir Christopher Frayling remarked, 'we've just had a golden age of the arts in this country – not that you'd know it' (quoted in Adams, 2009). In 2013 broadcaster Melvyn Bragg called on the BBC to 'reverse shrinking arts coverage' (Sherwin, 2013), while more recently the BBC's former head of arts, Humphrey Burton, called for 'less cookery, more culture on BBC primetime' (Furness, 2016). For many, this marginalisation of the arts in the BBC's schedules exemplified more deep-seated concerns that there had been a definitive departure from public service values.

## **1.2. Contribution to knowledge**

The development of PSB in Britain is an established area of research, with a number of scholars examining how public service broadcasters have responded to evolving technological and social contexts, both strategically and in practice (Bennett, 2008; Enli, 2008; Grainge, 2010; Hendy, 2013; Sørensen, 2013). However, whilst there is a wealth of literature exploring PSB from various sociological, political and economic standpoints, there are comparatively fewer studies that specifically examine the production of arts programming within this context. Although Walker (1993) and John Wyver (2007) provide a historical account of the genre, the production of arts programming in Britain from a contemporary perspective is still an area of research that requires further investigation. This is particularly apparent when compared to the growing body of literature concerning other specialist factual genres such as history (Holdsworth, 2010; McElroy and Williams, 2011; Gray and Bell, 2013; Sills-Jones, 2016), natural history (Scott, 2003; Cottle, 2004; Wheatley, 2004; Richards, 2012), science (Van Dijck, 2006; Boon and Gouyon, 2015; Campbell, 2016), religion (McDonnell, 2009; Noonan, 2014; Deller, 2015), and business (Kelly and Boyle, 2011). As a genre that has been so closely tied to PSB since its inception and continues to hold significant currency as both a strategic and political symbol of public service ideals, the present study provides a significant contribution to a field in which arts programming has been seemingly neglected.

Situating the work within a public service context, the present research also captures and contributes to wider social and cultural debates around accessibility and participation in the arts. In 2015 Warwick University published the findings of a year-long investigation into the future of cultural value entitled *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*. Commissioned as a collaboration between cultural leaders and Warwick University academics, the inquiry draws upon a diverse range of evidence concerning economic growth, education and skills development, digital culture, locality, and diversity and participation in the creative sector. Concerning the latter, the report warns that: 'Despite the excellent work and high levels of commitment to change in the Cultural and Creative Industries, low cultural and social diversity amongst audiences, consumers and the creative workforce remains a key challenge for future success' (32). Laying out their key recommendations, the Commission called on the BBC to work with arts organisations to 'make our cultural landscape more visible to the public and to reconnect the public with culture at national and local levels' (39). In response to these findings, Tony Hall described the Warwick report as 'a blueprint for the continued success of arts and culture in Britain', going on to state that: 'I join with its authors in calling for all of those who have a part to play to give themselves permission to believe in a better future for the arts. Its conclusions will help us all to deliver that vision' (Warwick Commission Website, 2015).

Indeed, how the arts are represented through broadcasting has the potential to shape the ways in which people understand and relate to the arts and culture beyond the moment of viewing and listening. Writing in 1993, John Walker argued that 'for millions of viewers art is a phenomenon they encounter primarily via their TV sets'. (1). Will Bell also claims that 'more people receive their understanding of culture and the arts through television than through visits to opera houses, theatres or art galleries' (1988: v). With the Warwick Commission reporting that television remains 'a key feature of most people's everyday cultural life' and the BBC's services across all mediums reaching '96.5% of the British population' (2015: 33), the present work provides a more nuanced insight into the perceived social and political value of the arts for the

BBC, particularly as the corporation undergoes review of its Royal Charter in 2016.

There is also a dearth of research around how the arts are presented on radio and the significance of radio in contemporary PSB strategies more broadly. In much of the literature charting the history of PSB in Britain radio is presented as part of a linear narrative in which the medium almost seems to be rendered immaterial or even obsolete by the arrival of television. According to Kate Lacey, 'part of the reason for the original neglect of radio is taken to be the (debatable) notion that its golden age lies in the past' (2009: 22). Indeed, a disproportionate amount of contemporary studies focus solely on television and, increasingly, online provision as a means by which to evaluate the present PSB proposition. However, there is strong evidence for the continued relevance of radio within the current media landscape. According to figures from the radio audience measurement company, RAJAR, radio still reaches 89% of the UK population per week, averaging 21 hours of live radio per listener (2016: 1). The arts proposition on radio is also relatively strong, with magazine programmes such as *Front Row* (BBC Radio 4, 1998-) and the *Radio 2 Arts Show* (2007 -), returning strands including *The Sunday Feature* (BBC Radio 3, 2009 -) and *Free Thinking* (BBC Radio 3, 2010-), along with one-off series such as *The Art of the Nation* (BBC Radio 4, 2014) and *Decoding the Masterworks* (BBC Radio 4, 2015), among others. Taking into account the continued prevalence of the arts on radio and engagement with the medium more broadly, the analysis outlined within this thesis provides a representative account of both arts programming as a genre and radio's role in multiplatform strategies for public service provision.

Finally, the present research addresses the role of PSB beyond broadcasting. In recent years a number of studies have examined the significance of online platforms as an important resource for PSB, both as a complement to other media and as a standalone resource (Bracken And Balfour, 2004; Bennett, 2008; Bennett and Strange, 2008; Enli, 2008; Doyle, 2010; Sørensen, 2013; Van Dijck and Poell, 2015). Building on from this existing body of research, the following work examines how arts broadcasting strategies are realised within

this new multiplatform proposition. In its contribution to the evolving body of literature concerning contemporary PSB, the analysis also looks beyond multiplatform provision alone to examine how the notion of participation within this context has shifted from encouraging audiences to engage with specific content towards prompting wider public engagement with the arts at both national and regional levels. In doing so, the findings chart the BBC's emerging emphasis on presenting itself as an active agent and collaborator in the broader arts landscape through partnership schemes and initiatives such as the 'Get Creative' campaign.

### **1.3. Thesis structure**

The following three chapters set out the historical and theoretical contexts in which the present study is situated. Chapter two outlines the development of PSB in Britain since the formation of the BBC in the early 1920's. In particular, this chapter defines the fundamental principles that have shaped BBC strategy since its inception and its evolving relationship with the public it serves. Chapter three examines how changing institutional, political and economic contexts have shaped production practices and organisational structures for media professionals working within PSB. Building on from this, the chapter then considers trends that have emerged within specialist factual programming as an area of provision informed and influenced by these changing institutional contexts. Attention is then turned in chapter four to the evolution of arts broadcasting specifically within this broader historical narrative.

Chapter five sets out the research methodology informing the practical undertaking of the study. This includes the theoretical background behind qualitative interviewing, how the interview sample was defined and interviewees selected, the practical process of conducting these interviews and an overview of the thematic and contextual analysis of the interview transcripts.

The second half of the thesis is primarily structured around analysis and discussion of the interview findings. Chapter six examines the ways in which arts programming is defined as a public service from an institutional and cultural perspective. The final section of this chapter then analyses the discrepancies in

how this is actually realised in practice through discussing the dearth in arts provision within the nations and regions of the UK outside of London and Glasgow, with particular attention to Wales.

Turning the focus toward specific output on television and radio, chapter seven examines how the arts audience is institutionally constructed and how the success of arts programming is measured. Within this context particular attention is given to the loss of the dedicated arts magazine format and the increase in more risk-averse formatted arts programming on television.

Chapter eight then looks beyond traditional broadcasting to examine how BBC arts strategy has extended to encompass online platforms and services. From a public service perspective, the analysis is primarily concerned with the opportunities and challenges this presents for both producers and audiences as online engagement becomes increasingly prevalent across the media industry.

Chapter nine critically examines the recent emphasis on partnerships within BBC arts strategy. Beyond the supposed values of openness and collaboration presented in policy, this analysis calls for a more nuanced understanding of how these relationships are built and maintained in practice, and whom they ultimately serve in terms of public service outcomes.

Finally, chapter ten presents the conclusions of the study. In doing so it argues that whilst fundamental public service values such as cultural enrichment and public engagement are still strong discursive elements within current BBC arts strategy, heightened financial pressures and greater exposure to competitive forces has made these ambitions difficult to deliver in practice. Under these conditions the BBC has increasingly succumbed to the logic of the market in both its rhetoric and output, resulting in a more challenging climate for the continued sustainability of public service arts provision.



## **2. Public Service Broadcasting in Britain**

---

PSB was founded on the principles of providing programming for everyone within the United Kingdom while catering to a diverse range of tastes and interests. The system set up under the name 'British Broadcasting Company Ltd' by the Post Office in 1922 was to be funded by a licence fee payable by everyone in the UK with a wireless receiver. This universal fee was a device 'not just for raising revenues to pay the bills but one articulating the national status of the BBC and guaranteeing its creative and political independence' (Tracey, 1998:100). However, the 'ethos' of PSB in regard to its role within British society and how the concept of 'serving' the public is negotiated has been the subject of discussion and debate in both academia and politics since its inception. The following provides a historical narrative that examines the evolving concept of PSB from within changing political, social and technological contexts.

When laying down the founding principles of PSB in the early 1920s, the first Director-General of the BBC, John Reith, believed that broadcasting should be used as a tool in 'the creation of an informed and enlightened democracy' (Scannell, 1990: 14). Within this context, David Hendy defines enlightenment as an 'idea that first emerged in seventeenth-century Europe, and which asserted the radical notion that both coercive inequality and avoidable ignorance could be banished if rationality could prevail' (2013: 7). The conception of broadcasting as a force for enlightenment was in part influenced by the recent establishment of universal suffrage and the consequential concern over how this new electorate would be adequately informed to make democratic decisions. This was a time in which 'people's mental ability – their level of education and particularly their capacity to sift through information and process it rationally – had suddenly become a real political problem' (Hendy, 2013: 17). According to Georgina Born, within this climate of uncertainty both in the political establishment and the social elite, 'Reith and his followers saw public service broadcasting as a central part of the solution. By telling ordinary people about the affairs of government, it would allow the electorate to consider policies and aid the development of a genuine public opinion' (2004: 28).

Furthermore, 'by fostering a reasoning citizenry, it would support the development of an inclusive, participatory and enlightened democracy' (ibid). Through weaving an ethos of enlightenment 'deeply into the fabric of public service broadcasting during its foundational years', Reith envisioned a broadcasting system that 'placed education – the cultivation of a reasoning, deliberative approach to human affairs – centre stage' (Hendy, 2013: 8).

### **2.1. Culture for the masses**

To put society on 'the path to enlightenment', Reith believed that broadcasting had a duty to deliver 'all that was best in every department of human knowledge, endeavor, and achievement' (Scannell, 1990: 13). This statement carries with it echoes of Matthew Arnold's often-cited definition of culture as 'the best which has been thought and said in the world' (1869: viii). Indeed, David Hutchison goes as far as to argue that 'the establishment of the BBC was the most overtly Arnoldian response to the coming of the media that there has ever been' (1999: 22). According to Hutchison, Arnold's basic argument was that 'since culture embodies the finest human insights, knowledge of which leads people to behave in a reasonable fashion, then the dissemination of culture throughout society will ensure there is no breakdown, and that what he terms "sweetness and light" will prevail' (1999: 13). As Andrew Crisell asserts, Reith and his colleagues at the BBC built a broadcasting system around a notion of democracy 'based, unlike others, on considerations which were more than merely quantitative: for the aim was to open up to all those who had been denied them by a limited education, low social status and small income the great treasures of our culture' (1997: 35).

One of the driving societal contexts behind this conceptualisation of broadcasting as a tool for cultural enlightenment was 'an anxiety among the upper middle and professional classes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century over the apparent sudden rise of "mass" society, or, more specifically, "mass" *culture*' (Hendy, 2013: 13). Industrialisation in the 1880s was a movement that brought with it a growing working-class population with substantially higher wages and more leisure time, resulting in an expanding new marketplace for mass media (Hendy, 2013; Hutchison, 1999). The 1870s

Education Act established compulsory and free elementary education, leading to increased literacy levels and for the first time in history a mass reading public in Britain. Hendy suggests that the anxiety for the upper classes during this period was based around the idea that 'culture wasn't supposed to be mass produced like this. It was supposed to be elevated, rare, noble, pure, exquisite enduring, moral, transcendent – in short, something for the few, since, of course, only the few were deemed capable of appreciating these qualities' (2013: 13). One reaction against this new mass culture was to put up new barriers by embracing and promoting 'the avant-garde: dissonant music, non-realist novels, abstract paintings' (2013: 14). However, there was also a conflicting belief at the time that 'mass culture shouldn't be ignored: it should be improved', driven by 'a mix of Christian charity, middle-class altruism and nineteenth-century socialism' (ibid). From here we begin to see how the concept of 'service' in the context of PSB is articulated as a paternal, Victorian notion which implies 'a sense of moral purpose and of social duty on behalf of the community, aimed particularly at those most in need of reform— the lower classes' (Scannell, 1990: 22).

Reith's Arnoldian definition of culture did not merely serve as a tool for *reformation* of the 'lower classes'. Arnold strongly believed that culture was a force that could actually *eradicate* class divisions within society:

Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organisations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watch words. It seeks to do away with classes; to make all live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, and use ideas, as it uses them itself freely, - to be nourished and not bound by them.  
(1869: 48)

It was this rather utopian notion of culture that Reith used to establish a rationale for PSB as a way to encourage higher levels of social integration in Britain by being an equalising force between classes. The achievement of PSB, as envisioned by Reith, would be to elevate the tastes of the working classes

represented by the easily influenced homogeneous masses described in Arnold's work. Hendy suggests that Reith's attitude in regard to broadcasting as a tool for cultural enlightenment encompassed the view that 'while most people do not know what they need, they also do not even know what they want, since to want something they have to know it exists, or at least be able to conceive of it' (2013: 22). As such, broadcasting should introduce people to 'new and unfamiliar things: art, literature, ideas, music or arguments that they won't necessarily have come across' (ibid).

### **2.1.1. Leading the path to enlightenment**

In the early days of PSB, radio broadcasters 'deployed a number of strategies in an attempt to bring the audience along willingly on this journey to the cultural uplands, rather than having to drag it reluctantly' (Hendy, 2013: 59). In particular, careful attention was given to improving the ways in which radio presenters addressed their intended audience. The development of radio talk in the early years of PSB saw the mode of address employed by broadcasters evolving from addressing the audience as a collective to entering a dialogue with individuals. Paddy Scannell discusses the style of talk commonly found on BBC radio during its formative years, describing it as 'monologue rather than dialogue, in which selected speakers spoke at length on predetermined scripted topics from the studio to absent listeners' (1989: 148). However, a series of experiments conducted by the then Head of BBC Talks, Hilda Matheson in 1933 found that these absent listeners often switched off to this impersonal, 'droning' mode of address. As Scannell goes on to conclude from the findings of these experiments: 'Broadcasting could not treat its audience as a crowd. It had to learn to speak to them as individuals' (1989: 149).

In his work around the development of radio talk in the late 1920s through to the late 1930s, David Cardiff details how the imagined 'family audience, seated around the fireside at home' (1980: 30) influenced the drive towards a more conversational style of radio talk in the medium's formative years: 'Since it was received by family groups it should be conversational in tone rather than declamatory, intimate rather than intimidating' (1980: 31). Cardiff reveals the effort on the part of radio presenters to try and imitate everyday conversational

speech within their scripts through ‘carefully placed hesitations and slips of the tongue’ (ibid). Matheson believed that through this informal tone, radio would be able to ‘reach people whose lack of literary education barred them from access to ‘complicated, difficult and novel ideas’ (quoted in Cardiff, 1980: 31). To further aid in the introduction of complex ideas to the masses, Hendy describes how listeners were also provided with additional commentary and programme notes to ‘help explain the meaning of music from the likes of Beethoven and other great composers in series such as *Music and the Ordinary Listener*’ (2013: 59). For those with little prior exposure to such discussion or art forms the use of conversational tone and availability of supplementary notes provided an educative experience strongly concurrent with the prevailing cultural enlightenment principles Reith and his BBC contemporaries sought to instill.

Another strategy employed by the BBC during these early years was to use the ‘flow’ of broadcasting, a concept introduced in the influential work of Raymond Williams (1974), to ensure that ‘listeners tuning in for something ‘easy’ on the ear or eye- say, some light dance music – would then be exposed, almost before they knew it, to something rather more difficult which they had not been seeking: a strategy of education by stealth’ (Hendy, 2013: 59). Commonly referred to as ‘hammocking’, this approach is defined by David Bergg as ‘the practice of scheduling a worthy piece of public service programming, such as current affairs, arts or religion, in between more popular fare, such as entertainment, in the hope that the viewer accidentally comes across it and discovers the path to enlightenment’ (2009: 5). The BBC believed such a strategy would be particularly effective during the Second World War when its national and regional broadcast services were merged to form the new Home Service. As a result of this merger and the temporary closure of many other cultural institutions such as cinemas and concert halls, the Home Service ‘had a virtual monopoly of the public’s attention in the early stages of the conflict’ (Hendy, 2007: 25). However, as Hendy notes, the BBC made the error of ‘overloading’ its schedules with serious and uninformative programming, resulting in millions of civilians tuning in to the BBC’s Forces Programme for its ‘undemanding and entertaining mix of series such as *Music While You Work* and *Forces Favourites*’ (2007: 25). In response to this, the Home Service

started broadcasting some of its own light entertainment, which proved successful in bringing back a large share of the national audience and led to it becoming 'part of the deeply felt wartime experience of the British people' (Hendy, 2007: 26). In this regard, the Home Service exemplifies the delicate balance between providing both light and more challenging programming in order to appeal to a broader range of listeners.

Following the end of the war, strategies for leading the listener to cultural enlightenment through a schedule of mixed programming became somewhat obsolete. In 1946 a new system was introduced which served to segregate radio broadcasting into three distinct channels: the Light Programme, the Home Service and the Third Programme, each consisting of lowbrow, middlebrow and highbrow content respectively. This new arrangement was seen as an attempt to 'provide for popular tastes without abandoning the old Reithian seriousness of purpose' (Crisell, 1997:62). However, the new system was criticised by Reith himself who, as Hendy states, 'found the new model 'objectionable' precisely because it ring-fenced culture for a tiny minority, rather than diffusing it in the generality of the BBC's services' (2013: 59). Essentially, the new system was seen as reinforcing the old traditional cultural hierarchies of taste that PSB had sought to eradicate in the first place.

The introduction of this new stratified system in 1946 also came at a time when the BBC was under pressure to adopt a position of impartiality in regard to culture and to see their duty less as leading public taste, and more as providing a diverse range of programmes from which the public could make their own choice. As Crisell states: 'the 'improving function' was transferred from the networks to the listener. She could choose to be 'improved' rather than having improvement thrust upon her' (1997: 63). The then Director-General of the BBC at the time, William Haley, defined the medium of broadcasting as a 'transformational force'. He believed that broadcasting should prompt people to actively engage in cultural life off screen: 'We are only a means to an end and that end is an educated community, each member of which is taking an active part in a full and intensely interesting existence' (Quoted in Tracey, 1998: 66). Part of this 'transformation' of the viewer would be to rise up what Haley

described as the 'cultural pyramid' to engage with more 'highbrow' content (Crisell, 1997). Along with this shift to a more stratified system, BBC radio was also beginning to see challenges in regard to competition between broadcast media. The end of the war also saw the return of television transmissions, which following the medium's relatively modest pre-war years was set to see a surge in popularity.

## **2.2. Broadcasting's postwar years**

Although the BBC's television service first started broadcasting in 1936, it was very limited in terms of content and was only received 'within a radius of 40 to 100 miles by a few thousand viewers in about 400 households' (Crisell, 1997:72). When the television service resumed in 1946 following the end of the Second World War its return was 'bolstered by a new combined radio and TV licence' and in the coming years the service was extended across the country (Crisell, 1997: 73). However, there was a strong degree of resistance to the further development of this new medium for broadcasting from within the BBC itself:

Radio, an essentially verbal medium, was something that [the BBC's] staff, with their typically literate and literary backgrounds, could deal comfortably with. But television was pictures – and their suspicion that pictures were mindless and vulgar drew strength from the fact that cinema, a medium which was both new and popular, was widely regarded as lowbrow. (Crisell, 1997: 74)

Here we start to see how television begins to build a reputation as a 'lowbrow' medium through its association with popular entertainment at its inception. Indeed, in 1953 television 'surpassed radio as the major mass medium' with the coronation of Elizabeth II being watched by '56 per cent of the nation', prompting 'a boom in the sales of TV sets' (Crisell, 1997: 75). The BBC's television service at the time consisted of one channel that carried a similar mix of cultural programming appealing to a wide variety of tastes in a similar fashion to BBC Radio's Home Service. In his research into light entertainment and the emergence of television in postwar Britain, John Mundy discusses how there were many internal debates around 'the 'correct' balance between the 'responsible' and the 'popular', that took place within the BBC television service

in the late 1940s and early 1950s' (2008: 59). In particular, policy makers were concerned with how television would meet the BBC's PSB standards, while still attracting a large enough audience to justify investment in the new service through the licence fee. The already established preconception of television as a lowbrow medium seemed at odds with the notion of providing content that would 'educate' and 'inform' as well as entertain. This pressure to attract viewers while still maintaining a commitment to these public service values only intensified with the arrival of commercial television in Britain in the form of Independent Television in 1955. The establishment of ITV broke the BBC's monopoly over broadcasting leading to increased competition for a share of the television audience.

The introduction of more entertainment-led, popular programming from the commercial sector in turn also led to debate around the BBC's cultural policy. The old Reithian model of the Arnoldian concept of Culture with a capital C: 'Culture as aesthetics – pure, unsullied, civilized' (Hendy, 2013: 47), was increasingly viewed as 'elitist' and began to be replaced with: 'a more anthropological definition which sees it not as a narrow cluster of fine artistic works to be appreciated respectfully but as a 'whole way of life'' (ibid). However, this anthropological notion of culture was not a new development outside of broadcasting. Shortly after the publication of Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), Edward Burnett Tylor offered a definition of culture as 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (1871: 1). Furthermore, he goes on to state that: 'Just as the catalogue of all the species of plants and animals of a district represents its Flora and Fauna, so the list of all the items of the general life of a people represent that whole which we call its culture' (1871: 7). This significantly broader definition of culture encompassing all human customs and behaviour can be interpreted as a reaction against Arnold's top-down conceptualisation of culture as a tool for the upper classes to educate the 'masses' represented by the working class.

The concept of culture as part of everyday life also features strongly in the work of Raymond Williams, exemplified in the statement: 'Culture is ordinary, in every



society and in every mind' (1958: 93). Whereas Tylor's work was based in anthropological tradition, Williams' concept of culture comes from a more sociological standpoint that emphasises the influence of social class. From his Marxist roots, Williams saw culture not just a product of society, but also as a means of production in itself:

A culture is common meanings, the product of a whole people, and offered individual meanings, the product of man's whole committed personal and social experience. It is stupid and arrogant to suppose that any of these meanings can in any way be prescribed; they are made by living, made and remade, in ways we cannot know in advance. (1958: 96)

It is this progression to a broader, more democratic, definition of culture that can also be charted in the narrative of PSB. As Hendy states:

Broadcasters have progressively widened their definition of culture, moving steadily from offering just the selected highlights of Western civilisation towards a more inclusive version, in which radio and television have increasingly devoted themselves to portraying and discussing popular culture – genre fiction, soaps, pop music or garden makeovers, say – and so pushing the 'high' arts of opera, dance, classical music, literary fiction and the rest to the margins, where a minority can find them if they need to (2013: 48).

From here we start to see a shift towards the notion of broadcasting serving the viewer 'by reflecting its culture back to itself as accurately as possible' (Hendy, 2013: 49), rather than presenting it as the possession of an elite few.

The following decades also saw major shifts in terms of how the 'public' in PSB are conceptualised. In particular, there is a marked shift toward a more individualised understanding of the audience during Hugh Greene's tenure as Director-General of the BBC in the 1960's. In reference to debates around public trust and the moral standards of public service broadcasters, Greene describes BBC listeners and viewers not as a mass audience, but rather 'a series of individual minds (each with its own claim to enlightenment, each of different capacity and interests) and not as that statistical abstraction the "mass" audience' (BBC, 1965: 9). Along with shifting social attitudes, this conception of

a more fragmented and individualised audience within broadcasting was also influenced by a rapidly changing technological context. The rise of cheaper television sets and widespread home improvements such as central heating meant that television watching in the 1970s was becoming more of an individual activity. Crisell discusses this process, which he terms 'atomization', as embodying 'that tendency of modern civilisation towards a sense of individual privacy and personal empowerment' (1997: 208). This trend towards more atomised media consumption habits reinforced the notion of the autonomous viewer and listener, as opposed to the mass audience. Within this context, trying to lead public taste became increasingly at odds with the changing consumption habits of contemporary audiences. As broadcasting approached the end of the twentieth century, new technological contexts were also beginning to emerge with the advent of digital broadcasting.

### **2.3. Public service broadcasting in the digital age**

As discussed, the traditional Reithian concept of PSB follows a top-down model in which broadcasters saw their role as providing content that they believed would contribute to creating a more enlightened democratic society. The most radical shift in this thinking came during the 1980s Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher, who famously claimed that 'there is no such thing as society' (interview for *Woman's Own* magazine, 1987). This was a political context that prioritised the individual's right to choose, favouring a bottom-up consumer model of business in regard to all aspects of public life including broadcasting. Hutchison describes this as a climate in which, 'as a reaction against the collectivist approach of the postwar era, there was a renewed emphasis on the ability of markets to satisfy human needs' (1999: 157). As media policy is a 'deeply political phenomenon' encompassing 'the systematic attempt to foster certain types of media structure and behaviour and to suppress alternative modes of structure and behaviour' (Freedman, 2008: 1), this was a time of tension between the public service ethos of the BBC and the dominant ideology of individualism and privatisation within government. There was also increasing debate around the future of the universal licence fee fuelled by Conservative backbenchers that saw the BBC as 'that most visible symbol of a

public culture which was the antithesis of their beloved Thatcherism's commitment to the private being' (Tracey, 1998: 109).

In 1985, Thatcher's Conservative government tasked a committee led by Alan Peacock with assessing whether the BBC should introduce advertising and sponsorship to supplement licence fee funding. This was not a new proposal as throughout its history the BBC has had to continuously fight against pressure to use advertising as a source of revenue (Tracey, 1998). Fortunately for the BBC, the findings of the inquiry were clear in stating that 'BBC television should not be obliged to finance its operations by advertising while the present organisation and regulation of broadcasting remain in being' (1986: 137). However, the Peacock Committee still serves as an example of how media policy is a process that is highly influenced by ideological and economic power structures. In his work on the role of academics in cultural policy, Philip Schlesinger argues that debates around broadcasting policy depend on 'who controls the commanding heights of public discourse, as well, of course, as the political power to push policies through' (2009: 5). As Schlesinger goes on to state, 'a handful of institutional power positions utterly monopolises the articulation of thinkable futures. Rather than going beyond these parameters, the commentariat is limited largely to moving the pieces around the board' (ibid). Indeed, although the proposal to supplement the licence fee by commercial means was rejected, the neo-liberalist political climate was still greatly reflected in findings of the Peacock Committee which argued that 'consumers were the best judges of their own welfare and they, and not the producers, should determine the character of broadcasting' (Crisell, 1997: 213).

Following the authorisation of digital services by the 1996 Broadcasting Act, the media landscape in Britain has changed remarkably. Within a broader political climate that favoured private interests over public service, and under the shadow of increased competition from the commercial sector, PSB had to continually justify its role beyond that of merely 'filling the gaps' for programmes not covered by the market, as was implied by Peacock and various politicians who sat right of centre. In 1997 the BBC released the award-winning promotional video, 'Perfect Day', the message of which was 'linked with the

inherent morality of the licence fee as a contribution to sustaining the greater cultural good' (Born, 2004: 258). Around this time, particular attention was also being given to the branding strategies of BBC One and BBC Two in an attempt to establish their 'intended distinctive qualities' in the minds of viewers:

BBC1, branded 'Our BBC1', was to be a channel of broad appeal, the nation's premier channel; it should be perceived as entertaining, engaging, trustworthy, authoritative, contemporary, warm, welcoming, elegant and so on. 'My BBC2', by contrast, should be perceived as topical and relevant, diverse, playful, modern, challenging, surprising, able to take risks, a channel of ideas. Certain values – being accessible, innovative, intelligent and stylish – were repeated as desired features of both. (Born, 2004: 259)

The 'Perfect Day' promotional video and the development of branding strategies concerning BBC One and BBC Two signified a shift towards an approach to competition in which 'it was widely accepted within the corporation that marketing, promotion and publicity were increasingly central to securing the BBC's success' (Born, 2004: 265). As Born goes on to state: 'In the multichannel era, and with the BBC offering a growing diversity of services, the consensus was that branding had a crucial part to play in distinguishing the BBC from its competitors, providing a basic unity in diversity and reinforcing the perception of the BBC as reliable and trustworthy' (ibid).

As these examples demonstrate, the BBC's branding strategies at this time overtly drew on their public service remit. In particular, the notion that 'cultural good' within society is sustained by public ownership of broadcasting through a licence fee served to distinguish the BBC from its commercial competitors. Public funding and ownership is strongly alluded to in the branding of BBC One and BBC Two as *Our* BBC One and *My* BBC Two respectively. The use of 'Our' also serves to signal BBC One's identity as a channel with 'broad appeal' while also creating the impression of social unity on a national level. In contrast, the use of 'My' suggests that BBC Two caters to more individual interests. As such, the branding strategies used for BBC One and BBC Two at the time served to communicate the fundamental values of PSB in regard to promoting social cohesion and catering for niche audiences and minority interests.

Another core principle of PSB often used to justify the licence fee is the provision of high quality content. Elke Weissmann examines how series produced by the American broadcaster NBC are branded in Britain to reveal 'how 'quality' is used to define a brand and how this idea is disseminated through publicity' (2008: 40). Of particular interest within her research is the ways in which the publicity for early NBC series in Britain drew on elements of the programming which could be associated with PSB, such as 'social uplift, cultural pedigree and political engagement' (2008: 45), in order to create the image of high quality content. In this case, it seems clear that the perceived quality of the programmes were directly linked to their association with the values of PSB. The already established reputation of public service broadcasters as providers of quality content is used to appeal to British audiences. As Weissmann states, brands are promises that 'invite viewers to form judgments on the basis of what the future might hold' and, as such, brands have 'the potential to predefine quality and to suggest it as an experience of affect rather than critical evaluation' (2008: 43). Weissmann's research demonstrates how even programming produced by commercial broadcasters can use the audience's positive perceptions of PSB to give the impression of having an inherent high quality.

The importance of protecting this reputation for quality programming and content continues today, with the official BBC branding website stating: 'The BBC brand is our most valuable asset, recognised worldwide for world-class programmes and broadcasting excellence. The BBC name and visual identity are critical to sustaining this recognition and as such must be used with care to protect the BBC's reputation and integrity' (BBC, 2014). Indeed, in an era of multiplatform broadcasting and increasingly fragmented audiences, it would seem the importance of creating a coherent identity for communicating public service values has never been more pertinent.

### **2.3.1. The ‘citizen-consumer’**

The early 2000’s marked a watershed moment in British broadcasting with the establishment of the 2003 Communications Act and its liberalisation of media ownership (Hardy, 2012). Co-written by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the then Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), its implementation was driven by wider government strategies for engaging the public with digital technologies, including ‘a desire to put Britain at the forefront of the digital economy and to stimulate the domestic market for information and communication technologies’ (Born, 2005: 482). But perhaps most pertinently for the future of the BBC was an underlying push toward greater plurality within the broadcasting landscape, with a particular emphasis on using market competition to extend consumer choice and enhance value for money. Within this context the BBC was put under increased pressure to ‘justify the licence fee, cut costs and increase revenues’ (Hardy, 2012: 533).

In 2003 the independent media regulator Ofcom (Office of Communications) was created under the Labour government. Reflecting the neo-liberalism carried over from the Thatcher years, Ofcom was borne of a political climate that favoured ‘market competition as the key mechanism for the provision of public as well as private goods and services’ (Hardy, 2012: 528). Within this policy framework the public whom PSB serves occupies the seemingly conflicting role of the ‘citizen-consumer’ (Needham, 2003; Livingstone et al., 2007). Catherine Needham succinctly outlines the paradoxical nature of this position as follows:

The consumer is primarily self-regarding, forms preferences without reference to others, and acts through a series of instrumental, temporary, bilateral relationships. Accountability is secured by competition and complaint, and power exercised through aggregate signalling. The citizen-consumer can be contrasted with an alternative model of participatory citizenship centred on concern for a common interest, collective deliberation and discussion, loyalty to the political community and the value of public engagement as a good in itself. (2003: 5)

The implementation of digital broadcast technology also meant there was no longer the issue of spectrum scarcity that had driven much of the previous rationale for regulation in regard to content and distribution. It should not be

overlooked that the push for digitalisation within broadcasting was also driven by internal economic benefits, as Moe states: 'Both commercial and non-commercial actors see potential for saving money' going on to suggest that, for 'public service broadcasters, the coming of digitalization coincided with political pressure to cut expenses, and to make complex institutions financially transparent and well run' (55: 2011). In this regard, the market approach to spectrum allocation employed by Ofcom marked perhaps the most profound shift from the notion of broadcasting as a cultural force towards prioritising consumer choice and 'value-for-money'. As Hardy states, 'Ofcom's first chief executive, Stephen Carter, defined Ofcom's role as overseeing the transition from an economy of provision to an economy of demand' (2012: 530). As such, Ofcom 'elevates competition regulation over the content regulation at the heart of public service broadcasting' (Born, 2005: 496). Sylvia Harvey criticises this approach, arguing that Ofcom 'appears to lack the skills and the will to address some of the key issues of content and of purpose in British broadcasting today' (2006: 91), going on to remark that its focus on attempting to quantify notions of public value has fueled accusations of knowing 'the cost of everything and the value of nothing' (2006: 92).

The most substantial shift in the ethos of PSB during this time was towards a more 'user-lead' model of public service in line with the wider marketisation of media policy. In their critical examination of the BBC's online digital services, Mike Bracken and Alex Balfour argue that the BBC's most popular online ventures, namely BBC News Online, were so successful because they were driven by user demand. From this analysis they suggest that in order to survive in the digital age, public service broadcasters need to be more informed by the statistics of their online media content: 'Public service values have been a supplier led issue for decades. But now interactive public services should be driven by usage, user demand and delivered by various suppliers' (2004: 105).

In his work around Channel 4, Stuart Cunningham describes the ways in which public service broadcasters are adapting to an age in which the hierarchical structure of a top-down broadcasting model is being made obsolete by the seemingly more democratic, user-led environment of the internet, and in

particular web 2.0 (2009). Cunningham uses the example of Channel 4 as commissioning entity which ‘has innovated by developing a philosophy of public service media ‘beyond broadcasting’ by ‘using the interactive potential of digital media to refocus on public service’. It does this, he suggests, by using online content alongside its television programmes to more actively engage and serve its audience in regard to current social and cultural issues and debates. This rhetoric is in many ways symptomatic of a broader anxiety both within the academic and political sphere that ‘public service organisations will pour money into ‘content’ without establishing any meaningful criteria for its success’ (Bracken and Alex Balfour, 2004: 105). In particular, this is a narrative that highlights the increasingly prominent tensions between a subjective view of what is in the ‘public good’ and an economic view of whether services are good value for money.

### **2.3.2. Going digital**

With broadcasting no longer being considered a public utility, PSB once again faced the challenge of justifying its existence and social significance against a commercial system. Public service broadcasters could not resist the impending digital media era if they were to continue to stay relevant to public life in Britain. If the BBC wanted to assert their cultural significance in times of rapid technological progress and social change they would also have to play their part in leading it. Within this context, attention must turn to how PSB strategies are adapting to a multiplatform digital environment seemingly no longer defined by any singular medium. As Moe Hallvard discusses in his work on defining public service beyond broadcasting, the BBC’s regulatory approach set out by the Royal Charter (2006) allows substantially more freedom in regard to how it distributes content across platforms than many of its European PSB counterparts. As Hallvard states: ‘When defining available ways to promote the public purposes, the BBC Charter not only clearly puts online service on equal footing with radio and television but even includes a formulation that explicitly opens up for utilization of currently unknown possibilities’ (2011: 60).

As suggested in the work of Bracken and Balfour (2004), the BBC has long been regarded as a pioneer in terms of its online strategies. Indeed, Hendy



uses the example of the BBC as being 'among the most influential organizations, not just in embracing new media but in seed-funding and popularizing it' (2013: 110). In particular, Director-General John Birt was instrumental in investing in online services and creating a large-scale presence for the BBC on the Internet in the early 1990s. The BBC has also invested in other new technology over recent years such as digital radio, and also played a vital role in Britain's digital switchover not just in terms of technological funding, but also in regard to publicity and information aimed at easing people into using the new system. According to Hardy the BBC proposed to 'play a leadership role in the transition from analogue to digital, investing in infrastructure, content and promotion of digital services, coordinating the expansion of DTT, and launching a free digital satellite service, Freesat' (2012: 535).

Nevertheless, since the arrival of digital services in Britain it has become easier than ever to access a plethora of media and information from a wider variety of providers. In particular, the proliferation of multi-platform media engagement and the rise of user-generated content have led to questions and debate within both academia and the broadcasting industry around the future of PSB. Michael Tracey painted a rather bleak picture for the future of PSB in 1998 when he identified a number of challenges facing the system. One of these challenges was 'the development and character of new technologies, which offer plentiful, interactive communications, which emphasise the visual, immediate and sensual at the expense of the deliberative and cerebral' (17). There is also concern from scholars such as Tina Syvertsen, who argues that the convergence of new media such as the internet and the old media of television and radio creates a climate in which the rationale for a publically funded broadcasting system is questioned: 'Since convergence implies that all forms of content can be made available via any transmission medium, thereby eroding the traditional distinctions among telecommunications, computers, and broadcasting, convergence clearly challenges the idea that broadcasting is special and requires a different regulatory regime' (2003: 160).

Hendy argues that even in this media saturated world, PSB 'is emphatically *not* redundant' (2013: 109, author's emphasis). No matter what terms we use to

refer to it, he asserts, 'we need to recognise that new forms of social media sometimes serve old media rather than replace them, and that new symbiotic relationships are even now being forged' (ibid). This is an argument also articulated by John Hartley, who asserts that 'modern media are being supplemented, not supplanted, by their successors' (2009: 20). Gunn Sara Enli also argues that PSB is not redundant in the digital age, but rather there has been a change in how the public service remit is negotiated within this context by broadcasters. She suggests that the digital era has redefined PSB to emphasise the role of audience participation through multiplatform engagement with media: 'The increased focus on participation in policy and practice can be seen as an adaptation of classic PSB ideals of public access and audience participation, as well as an expression of adjustment to societal and technological changes' (2008: 117). In relation to this, James Bennett (2008) advocates that PSB still plays an important role in the digital age and that our understanding of PSB must be 'remediated' in order for us to recognise the role of online media in creating spaces for public engagement.

#### **2.4. Public service broadcasting in crisis?**

The history of PSB is one in which there have been a number of profound shifts both in regard to the notion of culture that is being broadcast and the conceptualisation of the public for whom it is serving. Reith's vision of PSB as a tool for creating an enlightened democratic society in which the masses are elevated by their exposure to this Arnoldian notion of culture has evolved into an ethos in which the public is served through reflecting the everyday culture of society. The impressionable masses have been reimagined as individual viewers, and later the interactive users of multiplatform digital services. However, despite attempts to respond and adapt to evolving social and technological contexts, a number of commentators argue there has been a decline in the 'PSB tradition in the UK due to various political and economic pressures and new technological challenges, such as digitalization and expansion of multi-channels' (Matos, 2009: 3).

Since the 1980's there has been increased demand on the public service broadcasters to justify the necessity of the licence fee, alongside economic

pressures to deliver 'value for money' in terms of its output and services. Leading up to Charter Renewal in 2006, the BBC published a 'manifesto for action' entitled *Building Public Value: renewing the BBC for a digital world*, which promised to 'make value for money a key criterion for investment and funding decisions at every level of the organisation' alongside seeking 'substantial reductions in programme production costs through advances in broadcast and information technology and multiskilling' (121). Just over a decade later the BBC published *British, Bold, Creative* (2015) in response to the Government's Green Paper consultation on the 2016 Charter Review. The document positioned the licence fee as 'a low cost, high value for money way to fund a universal service' (68) and highlighted how the BBC's mixed model commissioning framework allowed 'in-house and external suppliers to compete to deliver high quality programmes at good value for money' (53).

Despite this rationale, media strategist Mark Oliver argues that the BBC is disproportionately focused on reach over quality, stating that 'BBC value for money exercises often focus on cost per view or listener hour rather than comparing cost with quality and distinctiveness delivered' (2009: 28). This preoccupation with ratings as a measurement of value is also observed by Born when commenting on the corporate culture of the BBC in the nineties as one in which 'the determinedly complex cultural purposes of public service broadcasting were flattened in this mentality to commercial measurements: 'value for money', equated with 'audience performance', equated in turn with ratings and audience share, came to stand in for value itself' (2004: 224). Such trends raise concerns in regard to the future of specialist factual genres such as arts, which although do not command large audiences remain a vital part of the BBC's commitment to public service values.

A further concern in relation to this is the potential for public service broadcasters to be rendered obsolete by a proliferation in commercial choice and changing media consumption habits. Matos suggests that with the BBC seemingly 'on the very verge of total collapse [...] a key dilemma for PSB has been to strike a balance between commercial and the public interest, having had to shift neurotically between adapting to the tastes of a more fragmented

and younger audience of the multi-media age whilst still maintaining its core public service ideals' (2009: 5). This dilemma also signifies the recognition that even public service broadcasters do not operate entirely outside of commercial pressures. As Boyd-Barrett states, 'the survival and operation of public media is greatly influenced by the competition they face from private media for talent, revenues and audiences' (1995, 192).

Within this context, there arises a perennial challenge of how to engage broad enough audiences to justify the universal licence fee, while still delivering minority provision and quality content. Some have argued that 'in its efforts to retain the attention of fragmented audiences, [the BBC] is "dumbing down" and becoming more indistinguishable from commercial broadcasters such as Five' (Matos, 2009: 5). Such criticisms prompt the need to explore how commissioners and producers operate within the context of managing the pressures of increased competition alongside a remit to provide distinctive content that informs and educates, as well as entertains.

### 3. Emerging Production Contexts

---

Following the previous historic account of PSB and the establishment of the BBC, this chapter turns its attention to the particular production contexts that inform and shape the provision of specialist factual programming in Britain. From a theoretical perspective, it is first important to define the nature of the broadcasting industry and the work of media production. It could be argued that the most basic function of broadcasting is to contribute to the creation and circulation of symbols within society. As Simon Cottle states: 'Media industries and organisations are different from most other businesses and organisations in that they characteristically produce and purvey commodities and content that are essentially symbolic in nature – and these symbols enter into the life of society' (2003: 4). For Pierre Bourdieu, the production of these symbols inherently operates within a framework of power, which he defines as the 'power to construct reality' (1979: 79). In the context of the media, Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic power' is perhaps best epitomised by John Thompson, who defines it as the 'capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms' (1995: 17). In this regard media institutions form a framework of symbolic power both internally for those who work within them, and externally in regard to their contribution to the symbols and meanings that are circulated within society.

Within this theoretical framework, Cottle cautions 'against attending to the symbolic nature of media representations alone as the sole means of recovering explanations' when studying production cultures. Rather, Cottle advocates towards a political economy approach to delve 'behind the manifest appearances of media representations – important though these are in the dynamics of power – to explore the ways in which media forms and representations have been produced and shaped within limits set by wider social and economic forces' (2003: 12). Graham Murdock and Peter Golding also assert that 'it is only by situating cultural products within the nexus of material interests which circumscribe their creation and distribution that their

range and content can be fully explained' (1977: 36). When applied to the present study, a principle concern in relation to this is the changing contexts in which those working within the BBC operate. In particular, attention is given to the emerging ways in which producers and commissioners are under pressure not only to deliver content, but also to deliver what is known as 'public value'.

### **3.1. Delivering public value**

The notion of 'public value' is still relatively young in terms of both academic study and implementation in public sector policy. Often cited as introducing the concept, in 1995 management scholar Mark Moore set out a pragmatic model for creating value in public enterprises that was sensitive to the complex and dynamic socio-economic contexts in which institutions operated. As Diane Coyle and Christopher Woolard describe, Moore saw public value as a 'central part of the answer to the question: how can public administrators get the best outcome for society from the assets and resources with which they have been entrusted?' (2012: 6). Here it is important to highlight that Moore was very much averse to using purely economic measurements to judge the success of public value initiatives, asserting: 'We should evaluate the efforts of public sector managers not in the economic marketplace but in the political marketplace of citizens and the collective decisions or representative democratic institutions' (1995: 31).

For Moore, the primary measurement of public value should be intended outcomes, rather than just potential outputs. This was an approach that shifted the emphasis onto the extent to which institutions achieved public service goals in practice and in the interest of the public whom they serve. Nevertheless, the neo-liberalist climate of the late 1980's and early 1990's very much militated against this sentiment. Whilst Moore saw public value in terms of meeting the needs of citizens, the prevailing political discourse of the time approached the concept from a definitively market perspective. As Fiona Martin and Gregory Ferrell Lowe note, 'the public value framework also corresponded with a general political interest to strengthen the evaluation of public sector activities, and improve economic performance, in the drive to improve administrative efficiency' (2013: 22). In policy and practice this resulted in shift toward

accountability and efficiency across the public sector that in many ways corresponded to economic rather than social benefits.

In the context of PSB, the emergence of this new public value framework was also part of a larger shift across Europe that began around the mid-1980s, in which increased market competition had introduced a need to 'use economic arguments to mount their case for the continued existence of public service broadcasters' (Goodwin, 2013: 78). Accusations of 'marketisation' within the BBC can be traced back to the early nineties with the dramatic and often controversial restructuring of the corporation under the then Director-General John Birt. According to James Curran and Jean Seaton, this was a period in which 'what had been a producers' programme-led hierarchy became a management-led power structure' (2002: 218). With the 1996 Charter renewal looming, 'value for money' and 'efficiency' became the buzzwords of the era: 'Closure, cuts and reduced budgets were legitimised by the reigning values of the Birt period: the importance of 'efficiency and the necessity of pursuing 'efficacy savings'' (Born, 2004: 100).

### **3.1.1. Producer Choice**

Perhaps the most defining policy put in place by Birt during this era was 'Producer Choice'. This was a scheme which entailed 'an 'internal market' supposedly designed to squeeze inefficiencies out of the system by making each individual programme team or department responsible not only for their direct costs but also for a share of the hitherto hidden overheads' (Hendy, 2013: 86). With the 1990 Broadcasting Act requiring the BBC to buy 25% of programming from the independent sector, in-house production was also facing new outside competition for commissions. In this regard, Producer Choice also created increased competition between in-house production teams and independents as 'producers could compare the cost of in-house resources against those available in the external market, and were permitted to choose between them' (Born, 2004: 106). From a management perspective, it was hoped this would force producers to consider how they used resources and their budgets more carefully, leading to lower overall costs for the BBC.

Increased competition within the BBC itself resulted in each production department becoming increasingly insular. Although Born describes rivalries between departments as 'essential preconditions for an independent and innovative production culture' (2004: 77), the competitive and insular production ecology created by Producer Choice resulted in departments becoming overly possessive of their ideas in a way that stifled innovation. Tunstall also describes the nature of this fragmentation and isolation internally within the BBC, asserting that each genre had 'its own internal system of status and prestige, its own values and its own world-view' (1993: 3). This is further perpetuated by the nature of media work in terms of how producers move between institutions and independent companies, tending to stick within the same genre and often following senior colleagues. As such, 'the producer's own work-career advances within the private world of a particular genre whose peculiar work-mix of timetables, goals, production schedules and world-view largely shuts its members off from the members of other private genre-worlds' (Tunstall, 1993: 3).

A culture of meritocracy propagated within the BBC in the wake of these changes to the financing of programmes that 'centered on the necessity of foresight, a form of financial enlightenment aimed at instilling a kind of anticipatory discipline' (Born, 2004: 108). When referring to the wider social trend towards institutions becoming increasingly fragmented, Sennett argues that the 'emerging social order militates against the ideal of craftsmanship, that is, learning to do just one thing really well; such commitment can often prove economically destructive. In place of craftsmanship, modern culture advances an idea of meritocracy which celebrates potential ability rather than past achievement' (2006: 4). This emphasis on meritocracy along with increased competition from the external market resulted in a growing belief that 'talent was valued more highly when it stood outside the BBC' (Born, 2004: 133).

In 2006 the required 25% of independent production was extended by a potential further 25%, with the introduction of the 'Window of Creative Competition (WOCC), in which both in-house and independents could compete for BBC commissions. This was a move unsurprisingly welcomed by Ofcom,



who in their 2005 document *Competition for Quality* advocated for greater plurality in PSB production. Following the establishment of WOCC, Ofcom's 2010 review of the television production sector commended the BBC for its 'intention to enhance creative competition and create a more level playing field for external producers', while at the same time raising concerns for how 'the operation of WOCC will be monitored' (1). The concept of the 'citizen-consumer', or perhaps rather the 'consumer-citizen', is again explicit within this discourse, with Ofcom asserting that 'a mixed ecology of production is important in delivering diversity in programming – which is important for viewers as consumers and UK citizens' (2010: 1). As of 2013 independents reportedly supply '42 per cent of the BBC's PSB content' (Bennett et al., 2013: 109).

However, despite motivations to the contrary, the hiring of independent companies did not automatically mean diversity on screen or behind the scenes. Commissions were still 'typically won by former BBC producers (so-called 'sweetheart' deals) and/or relatively large-scale mainstream production companies, most of which are based in London' (Cottle, 1998: 303). In part this was also due to the independent sector at the time being largely made up of former BBC staff who saw it as a more lucrative option, with former BBC producers 'offered more generous returns than had they remained in-house' (Born, 2002: 72). This is a trend that has continued, with Simon Turner and Ana Lourenco noting that 'of the top 10 indies the BBC used in 2007, only Tiger Aspect Productions and Wall to Wall Television were neither founded nor headed by former staff of the BBC or other broadcasters' (2012: 506). Using already existing professional relationships when buying from independents also represented a low-risk strategy for the BBC as former employees carried the benefit of having 'internal experience and an established reputation'. However, Turner and Lourenco argue that although 'maintaining durable relationships with indies seeds mutual understanding and trust, [...] recommissioning existing producers may reproduce the same routines, to the detriment of exploratory practices that could be achieved by working with breakthrough companies' (2012: 509). In this regard, whilst independent commissions are framed as constituting public value in terms of reducing the costs of in-house production

and increasing diversity, there seems to be little evidence to support the achievement of the latter in practice.

Another area of interest here is the potential tensions encountered by independent producers in terms of creating public service content and generating private profit. Bennett et al. suggest that although this is an area that is constantly subject to negotiation, such tensions are balanced by 'the willingness of Indies to invest in public service content – often above and beyond economic reward' (2013, 111). This is also echoed in the work of David Lee, whose examination of the working lives of individuals in the independent television sector found that documentary and factual entertainment producers 'carry out creative work not just for the "glamor" but also because they want to inform, educate, and have a positive impact on society' (2012: 487). However, Bennett et al. warn that 'increasing competition and diminishing security of PSB funding may reduce the commitment of independents to producing content with PSB characteristics' (2013: 111).

Concerns have also been raised about the sustainability of the BBC's in-house production and the BBC itself as a public service broadcaster as guaranteed commissioning quotas continue to shrink. An independent report by the Work Foundation commissioned by the BBC in 2005 claims that when the independent production sector becomes larger than BBC in-house production, there will be a 'tipping point' in which 'independents will increasingly dictate the terms over what kind of programmes they want to make within the quota and WOCC constraints (ie low-risk programmes in long-run formats), so that an important section of BBC output will look indistinguishable – despite its claims for public value creation – from other commercial channels' (7). The work of Bennett et al. and Lee would suggest that this is not because independents inherently create more commercially orientated content, but rather increased competition within the production sector and wider media landscape has resulted in the potential of content to attract significant audiences becoming a dominating factor in commissioning decisions.

### **3.1.2. Accountability**

Over the last couple of decades producers and commissioners have faced growing pressure from senior management to draw in substantial audience figures. As Hendy states, a wider loss in trust in public institutions in Britain has led to a social and political climate in which the 'BBC, along with universities, schools, hospitals and local councils, now needs to be both accountable and *seen* to be accountable. As a result, all these public bodies are increasingly forced to quantify intrinsically unquantifiable values, such as 'quality' or 'creativity' (2013: 84, author's emphasis). In relation to this, Tunstall describes how during Birt's tenure as Director-General there was increasing priority placed on quantification as a measure of value: 'Hidden costs were made transparent; audience research (which had existed since the 1930's) became much more central to BBC commission and scheduling of programmes; and PSB began to be quantified and measured in new ways' (2010:153). The rise in accountability as a distinct ideal within PSB also resulted in a substantial increase in audience research. As Born states, it was thought that this form of public accountability would 'empower the BBC to hone its public service offerings to provide what audiences actually want and need, rather than what producers think they want and need' (2004: 273).

In relation to this, it is important to recognise that media professionals who work within PSB institutions today do not inherently operate outside of commercial pressures. Historically, the Reithian principles of providing a diverse range of programming and leading public taste has been practiced within PSB by allowing programme makers a higher degree of creative freedom than their commercial counterparts: 'Reith's organisational policy aimed for centralised administration and unified control, but independence in the running of production 'output' departments so as to prevent uniformity and encourage diversity in the making of programmes' (Born, 2004: 69). Further to this, Hendy charts a narrative of PSB in which the system allows 'talented individuals the creative time and space to practise their craft, try new techniques, take risks' (2013: 55), going on to suggest that often 'this investment has resulted in audiences being given something they did not ask for, but which later turned out to be hugely popular or at least possess cult appeal' (2013: 56). However, since

the BBC's monopoly over broadcasting was broken by the arrival of ITV, public service broadcasters have been forced to compete within the commercial market for audience share. To justify funding through a universal licence fee, they must demonstrate that significant amounts of people are engaging with their content. Within this competitive environment, the provision of more niche or diverse content and its potential to compete against commercial counterparts are often positioned as conflicting ideals.

During this period of transition the emphasis on audience reach and economic efficiency had tangible consequences for the creative autonomy of producers and the diversity of output produced. A key element highlighted as contributing to the relative decline in producer autonomy is the apparent 'tiers of bureaucracy' established in order to oversee the new market systems brought in by Producer Choice (Born, 2002). Cottle suggests that such rigid management structures and what one producer in his study termed 'Byzantine bureaucracy' created an environment in which 'creative energies are squandered by a corporate culture and hierarchy unwilling to innovate, experiment and give full support to producers capable of making new, sometimes challenging, programmes designed to push the conventional programme boundaries in both matters of form and programme subjects' (1998: 301). This excessive bureaucracy and prevailing managerial culture that emerged within the BBC during the 1990's also informed a move towards the centralisation of commissioning, with consequential 'anti-creative effects' on programme making (Born, 2002: 73). Here it is useful to draw upon the work of Mike Wayne, who argues in his Marxist approach to studying the media that there is a fundamental contradiction in the role of cultural workers within such contexts:

As labour they exist to produce surplus value or are a crucial component in ensuring the production of surplus value by their co-ordination of the circuits of capital. But their very assets require some autonomy, dialogue and temporal duration not easily harnessed to capital's usual mechanisms of top-down control, while the inextricable connection between their use-value to capital and their individual minds and bodies places certain barriers in the way of making them as interchangeable and

controllable as more routine and material kinds of labour power (2003: 27).

Because media producers give their product a distinctive identity through their unique practices, they cannot be replaced as easily as other forms of labour within the capitalist model of production. As such, there can arise tensions between the creative autonomy of producers and the competitive media marketplace in which they operate. One response to this is to create content that is less distinctive so that it may compete within the commercial marketplace:

...‘successful’ (that is profitable) commercial products – whether film, books, music, magazines or computer games – will tend to be replicated *ad nauseam*, producing formulaic cultural products that leave little room or opportunity for cultural creativity, expressions of cultural diversity or the development of autonomous and sustainable spheres of artistic activity (Cottle, 2003: 10).

These commercial restraints on ‘cultural diversity’ were evidenced on BBC television in the 1990’s and early 2000’s with the rise of heavily formatted output, particularly in the areas of makeover and lifestyle programming (e.g. *Changing Rooms* (BBC One, 1996 – 2004), *Ground Force* (BBC One, 1997 – 2005)), and the ‘docusoap’ (e.g. *Driving School* (BBC One, 1997), *Airport* (BBC One, 1996 - 2008)). As Lisa Kelly and Raymond Boyle state, ‘this type of light, factual entertainment responded to changing market conditions by being more economical to produce than drama, comedy, or serious documentary and proving popular with a desirable audience’ (2011: 237). As such, these new forms of ‘infotainment’ represented a low-risk, low-cost way of keeping up with commercial rivals.

For many the rise of this heavily formatted, reality TV-style programming signaled a fundamental shift away from public service values, resulting in ‘fears that British documentary and public service broadcasting are both in crisis’ (Dover, 2004: 243). Moreover, in relation to the independent sector, Bennett *et al.* warn that ‘changes in the sector that have fostered competition have also brought about increased consolidation, an emphasis on formats and

international sales that can heighten pressure on production budgets, reducing creative freedoms, the standard of working conditions and individual workers' belief in PSB' (2013: 111). As Andrea Esser states, over reliance on formats can result in a 'heavy focus on light entertainment, not just during the day but also in prime-time. Other genres must necessarily lose out to this and we have to ask, what are the programmes that fall off the agenda as a result?' (2013: 166).

### **3.2. Trends in specialist factual programming**

Within the broader category of factual programming, specialist factual can be defined as content that covers the topics of religion, arts, nature, science, history and culture. With a remit to 'inform, educate and entertain', it has been argued that public service broadcasters are a 'natural home for traditional factual such as news or documentary' and from their inception 'have made a commitment to a consistently high level of factual output' (Hill, 2007: 31). Furthermore, in relation to the export value of PSB content, Bennett et al. suggest that 'specialist factual is peculiarly representative of the UK's PSB environment, representing its high-quality nature, commitment to 'making a difference' and social impact, as well as representation of diverse interests and voices' (2012: 24).

Nevertheless, in their first review of public service broadcasting in 2004, Ofcom reported that 'specialist programming on topics such as arts, current affairs and religion was increasingly pushed out of peak viewing hours' (5), going on to state that audiences were 'drifting away from specialist arts, religious and current affairs programming' in the multichannel age (10). Despite hours of factual programming increasing by 20% between 2009 and 2014, spending across all UK public service broadcasters fell by 8%, with a further decline of 24% in Arts and Classical Music, 28% in Religion and Ethics and 77% in Education (Ofcom, 2015b). Bennett et al. also reference this trend, asserting that in a time of increased economic pressure there is a 'growing disjuncture between diminishing budgets and increased output hours' (2012: 38). Further to this, in their third review of public service broadcasting Ofcom note that 'as licence fee income has fallen in real terms, the last few years have seen the

BBC reduce its investment in programmes in some key PSB genres such as drama, current affairs, specialist factual and education' (2015a: 28). In turn this could result in tangible effects on the diversity of programme output and production as independent producers increasingly see specialist factual as neither commercially viable nor sustainable.

Charting the rise of so-called 'infotainment', Graeme Turner argues that as 'the battle for market success has unfolded, it has become clear that the central commercial focus must rest upon the provision of entertainment; even where information is provided, such as via news services or lifestyle programming, it is wrapped in packaging of entertainment in order to attract significant audiences' (2010: 161). As has been established, PSB is not exempt from such commercial pressures. Since the arrival of satellite television in Britain in the 1980s, there has been a trend toward what Turner describes as 'the overwhelming commercialization of the media as entertainment industries' (2010: 161). No longer holding a monopoly, publically funded media must compete in what Brett Christophers terms an 'attention economy' in which 'the proliferation of distribution channels in the transition to digital media has further fragmented consumer attention and thus compounded its scarcity and economic value' (2009: 302).

In this highly competitive, not only multichannel but also multiplatform environment, concerns have been raised for the future of less commercially viable genres of programming that have traditionally been a staple of PSB schedules. In order to survive, specialist factual programming has had to adapt to contemporary production trends, changing audience expectations and increased economic pressure. Within this context, Erin Bell and Ann Gray highlight that 'one profound and enduring tension is that between the entertainment imperative and the still significant role of some broadcasters in the UK to fulfill their public service remit' (2013: 26). Such statements inevitably raise questions around the sustainability of specialist factual provision in mainstream broadcasting and how tensions between marketisation and public service values are negotiated with varying degrees of success.

### 3.2.1. Popular formats

In 2004 Ofcom criticised the main public service broadcasters in the UK for a 'reliance on [programmes] with more obvious popular appeal' such as 'factual entertainment within factual, as all the main terrestrial TV channels pursued a more ratings-led agenda' (5). This shift toward more entertainment-led, popular factual programming is also evident within the literature across various sub-genres of specialist factual. In her study of religious programming, Caitriona Noonan found that 'commissioning was overly concentrated on an increasingly narrow range of entertainment-based formats' resulting in 'their limited resources being diverted away from more serious journalistic approaches' (2014: 71). The concentration of resources on more mainstream output is also evidenced by Dafydd Sills-Jones, who outlines the palpable effects of marketisation and the centralisation of commissioning on individual production departments and programme genres within the BBC. Examining the dip in history documentary production during the late 1980s and early 1990s, Sills-Jones argues that the lack of provision during this time resulted from 'a change in the ideology of the broadcast production culture, from one that was mainly interested in traditions of expression structured through producer taste and peer review, to a system in which a measurement of audience taste became more and more important' (2016: 92). Kelly and Boyle also chart a parallel shift in the proliferation of the 'business entertainment format' on British television and the increased commercialisation of broadcasting in which 'the television industry has itself developed into a business' (2011: 229). As a genre regarded as synonymous with public service values, such trends within specialist factual programming are often framed as evidence for broader deviations toward market logic.

In discussing this shift toward more entertainment-led programming, a number of studies draw attention to new forms and narratives emerging across specialist factual provision. In her work on the popularisation of science and nature programming, Karen Scott examines the ways in which 'natural history has had to develop a new aesthetic to cater to the demands of a changing audience' (2003: 34). She argues that this new aesthetic is primarily driven by the notion of 'spectacle' created both visually through the use of new



technologies such as computer-generated simulations, and narratively through positioning the presenter as the 'protagonist' in a series of potentially dangerous unfolding events. Scott also highlights the proliferation of celebrity-led programming within this context, suggesting that the use of well-known figures in popular culture 'widens the programs' general appeal by drawing in viewers who want to see their favorite celebrity in unusual situations' (2003: 34). Similar trends have also been observed by Bell and Gray, who suggest that increased pressure to produce popular programming that will draw in large audiences has resulted in 'certain types of history programming being made which rely upon key elements, including on-camera presenters, linear narrative and accessible visual material' (2007: 117). In relation to this, Aldridge and Dingwall assert that in a more competitive broadcasting environment, 'powerful financial drivers lead to reliance upon proven techniques for appealing to the maximum audience without being unfaithful to the underlying science' (2003: 438). They go on to suggest that this is achieved through 'borrowing' programme formats as a way to build on the proven success of other popular genres and provide a narrative structure audiences are familiar with. From here we can begin to consider how the previously outlined marketisation of PSB and wider broadcasting trends are reflected within contemporary specialist factual production and subsequent output.

One prominent example of this over the past two decades is the increase in factual programming that uses formats and tropes characteristic of the reality TV genre that dominated peak-time schedules during the 1990's and 2000's (e.g. *The 1900 House* (Channel 4, 1999), *Big Cat Diary* (BBC One, 1996–2008), *Who Do You Think You Are* (BBC One, 2004–)). In reference to wildlife documentary, Morgan Richards discusses how smaller production teams and tightened budgets led to 'a new style of personality presenter-led series, shot on digital video, and designed to create a sense of "liveness"' (2012: 322). In part driven by advancements in production technologies such as smaller, more lightweight cameras and economic pressures to cut down production costs (Kilborn, 1998), the rise of reality style formats of documentary represented an economically efficient solution for keeping in step with contemporary broadcasting trends.

Although such tried and tested formats are attractive to broadcasters as a low risk strategy for high audience return, it also raises pertinent questions in regard to the diversity and range of specialist factual output available and where already limited resources are invested. Further to this, Richards raises concerns about how these new production methods within factual programming can potentially deceive the audience in terms of how accurate these representations of reality are. In a similar vein, Scott notes that ‘the spectacle of the visual image often overshadows the very history being explored’ (2003: 34). Indeed, achieving the right balance between creating entertaining content while still maintaining a degree of accuracy seems to be a pertinent issue for producers of specialist factual content. As the work of Bennett et al. reveals, ‘many viewed the production of PSB factual and specialist factual output as requiring a strong sense of ethics’, and a ‘commitment to the truth’ (2012: 16). In light of such trends, some commentators warn that public service commitments to ‘inform’ and ‘educate’ are becoming increasingly difficult to sustain in mainstream broadcasting schedules. ‘As broadcasting becomes increasingly subject to commercially determined imperatives’ Richard Kilborn asserts, ‘so factual programming is expected not so much to be educational or consciousness-raising in its intent as to display the kind of entertaining properties which will ensure healthy audience ratings’ (1998: 213).

### **3.2.2. Presenting expertise**

Concerning the integrity of contemporary specialist factual provision, it is also important not to overlook the role of the presenter. According to Bell and Gray, ‘the author-presenters of TV history are central to the success of history programming not only in terms of ratings, but also in their support for the programmes’ claims to legitimacy and credibility’ (2007: 125). Although there has been a noticeable rise in celebrity-fronted factual series, the expertise and reputation of the presenter still constitute a defining feature of the genre in the minds of both producers and audiences. As Aldridge and Dingwall observe, the reputation of wildlife documentaries for ‘facticity’ is reinforced by ‘the authoritative mode of their presentation and, in many cases, by the trusted and familiar character of the presenters’ (2003: 439). The importance of familiarity

and trust is also alluded to by Kelly and Boyle, who describe how the trend toward business programmes which feature the name of the presenter in the title 'indicates the importance that was now placed on providing viewers with a reliable expert to guide them through the business world and who was also, more importantly, able to function as an appealing television personality' (2011: 235).

On the subject of presenters, Bell and Gray also discuss the 'significant lack of female historians and historians of colour on British television screens' arguing that 'they cannot serve as authentic national storytellers when the stories told are often, although not always, those of European men' (2007: 123). A wider issue here across specialist factual genres seems to be the question of who is the acceptable voice of authority and expert knowledge. Erin Bell argues that 'women appearing on TV are often presented in ways that limit their authority' through placing them in subordinate roles to their male counterparts and devaluing their level of expertise by communicating knowledge predominantly through interviews with male experts within the field (2008: 5). The marginalisation of female presenters in history television and specialist factual more broadly could be seen as symptomatic of a ratings-led broadcasting environment in which there is little space for innovation beyond the familiar status-quo of the white, middleclass, male presenter. In this regard, the work of Bell and Gray highlights the need for further investigation into both the potential challenges and opportunities for representation and diversity within specialist factual public service provision and the contexts in which these emerge.

From the literature examined, there would also seem to be a dearth in analysis around the ways in which specialist factual programming is commissioned and produced for radio. Much of the work within this field tends to focus disproportionately on television production and output, leaving a gap in knowledge in regard to how the two mediums may differ or align in their approach to specialist factual provision. Furthermore, in a multiplatform era it is important that no one broadcasting medium is taken as representative of overall strategy for provision. In this regard, more attention needs to be drawn to the application of multiplatform strategies and approaches to specialist factual

content across radio, television and online. As online platforms become an increasingly prominent method of media distribution for public service broadcasters, consideration also needs to be given to the unique challenge and opportunities such new mediums afford to producers of specialist factual content. Building on from discussion of the institutional and academic discourse surrounding specialist factual more broadly, attention will now be turned to work concerning one sub genre within this category: the arts.

## 4. A History of Arts Broadcasting

---

The arts have been a staple of PSB schedules since its very inception. During the pre-war years the BBC's radio service largely consisted of a Reithian schedule of highbrow content mixed with light entertainment, of which the arts were featured prominently in the form of classical music, operas, theatre and talks. In his historical account of the BBC's Third Programme, Humphrey Carpenter asserts that, in particular, 'talks on classical music proved hugely popular' with long running programmes such as *Music and the Ordinary Listener* (1926) attracting a substantial number of listeners (1996: 4). The popularity of arts programming on the radio in the early days of broadcasting can perhaps be attributed to audience demographic, as due to the price of receivers it was predominantly the affluent who were tuning in. As Cardiff notes, when developing a form of radio talk in the pre-war years the 'image of the audience was cosily middle-class; its setting the suburban home or rural cottage' (1980: 30).

The introduction of six new regional radio services in 1929 not only allowed listeners more choice alongside the national network, but also led to a situation in which 'some nights they scheduled programmes of serious interest which clashed with each other, while on other evenings there was only lightweight material on both' (Carpenter, 1996: 5). As a solution to this, in 1930 a third radio network for the purpose of broadcasting highbrow and 'serious' content was suggested by the head of the BBC's Education Department, J. C. Stobart. Interestingly, Carpenter notes that Stobart 'wanted to call it the 'Minerva Programme', after the Roman goddess of the arts' (1996: 4), perhaps suggesting what the primary focus of the proposed network would be. Stobart's proposals were, however, rejected, leaving the BBC to 'muddle along' with its two existing networks that attempted to serve the tastes of all listeners.

It was not until the end of the Second World War in 1945 that proposals to introduce a specialist network for the arts and culture were actually put into practice. According to Carpenter, the war produced a social climate in which 'there were signs of a growing national interest in the arts' (1996: 6). During

these years the government established the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, later to become the Arts Council of Great Britain, which contributed to the funding of various arts institutions around the country. Higher rates of adult education and more people going to university as a result of raising the school-leaving age also played a significant part in expanding the potential audience for the arts. Following the end of the war the BBC proposed broadcasting would be 'the prime re-educative agency of the post-war world' (Carpenter, 1996: 6). This led to another proposal for a highbrow, 'cultural' network, aimed at 'a highly intelligent minority audience' (ibid). But the 're-education' of the public was not the only motivating factor behind establishing a network focusing on more highbrow content. As Carpenter states, the 'BBC's Charter would come up for renewal in 1946, and the cultural programme scheme had about it a whiff of wanting to make a good impression' (ibid). This is perhaps one of the earliest overt instances in which the arts also perform a strategic function in terms of currying political favour for PSB's cause.

The Third Programme, later to become BBC Radio 3, first went on air in 1946 and soon became known for its serious and demanding content, particularly in the areas of arts and culture. BBC Director-General William Haley laid out the rationale behind establishing the service in an introductory article in the *Radio Times*, stating that:

A public service such as the BBC has to feel that it is covering the whole range of its possibilities, that it is providing for all classes of its listeners, and that it is, among its other functions, presenting the great classical repertoire in music and drama, and "so far as they are broadcastable" in literature, and the other arts. (1946: 1)

The 'class of listener' that Haley envisioned for the new network constituted an audience that was 'selective not casual, and both attentive and critical. The programme need not cultivate any other audience, and any material that is unlikely to interest such listeners should be excluded' (quoted in Carpenter, 1996: 11). In stark contrast to the Reithian ethos of broadcasting listeners had to seek cultural enlightenment, rather than be fed it through a carefully constructed diet of highbrow and light entertainment. Through their segregation

from more 'middlebrow' and mainstream content, the arts also retained a rather elitist image, in many ways reinforcing their place within a taste hierarchy inherently bound by class and education. These established cultural boundaries between highbrow and lowbrow culture were set to be challenged, however, as the arts began to make their appearance on the small screen.

#### **4.1. Arts on the small screen**

The history of arts broadcasting on television is also one in which broadcasters have continuously grappled with the best way in which to present the arts on screen. As John Walker argues, the 'fine arts pose a particular problem to television producers because the dichotomies between high and low culture, minority and mass audiences' (1993: 2). Martine McLoone also comments on this conflict between television and the arts, stating that their relationship 'is a clash between culture at its most popular and accessible and culture at its most exclusive and elitist' (1986: 11). Along with blurring the boundaries between these established cultural dichotomies, producers must negotiate the ways in which the art itself is unavoidably mediated through television both at the point of production and transmission. According to Walker, in the 1950s 'British broadcasters were reluctant to show films about art on television because of the medium's lack of colour and the fact that the formats of paintings had to be compressed to fit the small size and odd shape [...] of the television screen' (1993:28). As such, the prevailing approach to presenting the arts through the new medium of television was based on the notion that it cannot act as a mere reproduction of the original work.

A prominent way in which this was achieved during the early years of television was through attempting to portray an insight into the artistic process itself, rather than just the finished work. Emphasising the role of the artist also makes the arts seem more accessible for viewers by situating it within the context of everyday life, making 'the subject of art more human and approachable' (Walker, 1993: 59). Television also offered the opportunity to 'bring to life' works of art through its very nature as a medium that emphasises immediacy and movement, alongside various modes of audio-visual engagement:

In defence of television, it can be argued that when the medium deals with contemporary paintings and sculptures its special ability is to animate a set of inert, mute art objects by adding images of people, the sounds of speech and music, and the dynamism of camera movement. What television shows is that such artefacts are not simply things to be preserved in a museum, but part of the lived experience of human beings. (Walker, 1993: 217)

As such, a significant format in the history of arts broadcasting is that of the artist profile. The emergence of this genre in the early 1950's by its pioneer, John Read, primarily known for his work with the artist Henry Moore, 'shaped the BBC's presentation of the visual arts throughout the 1950s and beyond. In a dozen or so important films made during the decade with contemporary artists he defined the forms of the filmed profile' (Wyver, 2007: 17). Read's process for filmmaking was an ethnographic one, getting to know the artist and their creative process first hand before beginning to write the script. At the time working in the Talks Department at the BBC, Read wanted the artists themselves to narrate documentaries, feeling that 'the first-hand information artists could provide was of more interest and value than second-order commentary' (Walker, 1993: 28). This aimed to create a sense of purity in his work in respect to presenting a 'direct encounter with the artist' (Wyver, 2007: 22). Through allowing artists to speak for themselves, the viewer is also encouraged to produce their own conclusions and interpretations without interference from critics or Read himself. In this regard, Read portrays the notion of art in the traditional Romantic sense in that it is a product of the process by which the 'artist perceives and represents Essential Reality, and he does so by virtue of his master faculty Imagination' (Williams, 1958: 43).

Read was also an advocate for the Reithian ethos of PSB. As Walker states: 'What impressed Read about the new medium of television was not its live quality but its democratic potential as a mass medium of communication' (1993: 30). Further to this, Read believed that 'public broadcasting channels had a responsibility to communicate the arts to people' while also asserting that 'the arts had a reciprocal duty to communicate to society, otherwise the gulf between contemporary art and the general public would never be closed' (ibid). In line with these public service ideals, Read himself wrote in an article for *Sight*



*and Sound*: 'The faith that underlies Documentary is in the faith of democracy and education' (1948: 157). However, this style of programming was soon to become overshadowed by a number of highly influential series that emphasised the authority of the presenter as a source of knowledge and information about the art being presented on screen.

Like in the early days of radio, in order to strike a balance between an authoritarian approach and the more abstract modes of address, such as that found in Read's work, a number of television presenters employed a conversational tone within their programming. The BBC's first arts magazine series, *Monitor* (1958-65) was originally created to address a gap in the BBC's television arts coverage, and with the arrival of ITV was 'part of an overall BBC strategy to fight the commercial opposition, albeit on the BBC's own terms' (Irwin, 2011: 326). The series was presented by Huw Wheldon who, despite his role as Arts Council administrator for the Festival of Britain, had little knowledge of the arts and as such saw his role as presenter of *Monitor* as 'representative of the layperson' (Walker, 1993: 47). This led to a presentation style that was more akin to that of a conversation than a lecture. As Walker explains, part of the pre-production process for Wheldon was writing his own lines then learning them to recite off by heart: 'Those items that were broadcast live had to be prepared and planned with military precision, yet the results had to look natural. According to Humphrey Burton, the effect sought was 'rehearsed spontaneity'" (1993: 47). Utilising this mode of address, the series attempted to engage a wide range of viewers through its accessible conversational presentation.

Here it should also be noted that in the case of *Monitor*, the working culture of the BBC at the time and Wheldon's own prejudices impacted heavily on representation both behind the scenes and in front of the camera. Mary Irwin discusses the history of the series as one that downplays the significant roles of associate producer Nancy Thomas and in particular, Catherine Freeman, who with her experience in arts broadcasting played a vital role in establishing the series and was even tipped to be the series' producer in the early stages of planning of the programme. As Irwin states: 'The dominant narrative of *Monitor* with which we are presented serves in fact to reproduce the power structures

and inequalities of treatment which sat at the heart of the series; thus, for example, women's stories are best marginalised or are simply not told at all' (2011: 330). In line with this, Walker also discusses how Wheldon's own prejudices impacted on what was presented on screen: 'Paul Ferris's 1990 biography of Wheldon discloses that he would not permit anyone 'overtly queer' to appear on the programme' and that 'given the fact that many many artists have been and are gay, this ban was a form of censorship' (1993: 49). Such accounts highlight how the range and diversity of arts coverage is merely symptomatic of the contexts in which it is produced and as such susceptible to the priorities dictated by institutional power structures and indeed even the prejudices of dominant figures within them.

Again, following a similar trajectory as radio, it was not long before BBC television decided to create a separate service for more highbrow and 'serious' content. In 1964 the BBC launched a second channel to cater to more niche interests alongside its popular programming. In theory, this meant that 'arts programming could afford to take more risks, to tackle more offbeat subjects and to experiment with their forms of presentation' (Walker, 1993: 53). However, the BBC still could not afford to be too experimental with its programme output on BBC Two. Receiving the channel required viewers to purchase new television sets, and in order to provide an incentive for this 'the programme strategy seems to have been to leaven the generally serious output with a sprinkling of populist programmes' (Crisell, 1997: 115). But 'despite the concerns to appeal to a wide group of new viewers' Wyver asserts, 'the channel adopted – in the arts at least – a rigorously 'highbrow' agenda, with a modern but hardly contemporary focus' (2007: 34). Some would argue that this was perhaps most evident in BBC Two's hugely successful arts documentary series, *Civilisation* (1969).

#### 4.1.1. Presenting *Civilisation*

In 1967 BBC Two became the first European channel to transmit programmes in colour. To mark this landmark in television history, the BBC commissioned its first blockbuster arts documentary, *Civilisation*. The then controller of BBC 2, David Attenbrough, wanted ‘a really prestigious series to show off colour’ by filming ‘all the loveliest things that human beings have made in Western Europe over the last 1,000 years’ (Walker, 1993: 77). The presenter of the series, Kenneth Clark, was not only an art historian and former Director of the National Gallery, but also a skilled broadcaster with experience in presenting the arts on television to a mass audience through his previous work with ITV. *Civilisation’s* aim, Clark would later explain, ‘was to entertain viewers rather than to educate them. On reflection, however, he considered these two aims need not be incompatible because one learns ‘through delight’ (Walker, 1993: 80).

Through his work on *Civilisation* Clark established the format of the ‘pundit’ series on British television and it would be uncontroversial to suggest, represents the archetypal ‘he who knows’ figure described by Bell and Gray (2007). In line with this, Walker defines the role of the presenter in the arts ‘pundit format’ as follows: ‘He – the pundit, guru or expert tends to be a white, middle-aged male – supplies a running commentary by speaking direct to camera and/or in the form of a voice-over’ (1993: 73). This was attractive to viewers as having ‘a single presenter humanises the electronic medium, facilitates viewer identification and fosters the impression of a face-to-face conversation or dialogue, even though viewers cannot literally interrupt or ask questions’ (Walker, 1993: 74). This authoritative approach to presenting knowledge has also led a number of academics to liken Clark’s presentation style to that of a lecturer, with Walker describing the series as ‘the television equivalent of illustrated, history of art, lecture courses’ (1993: 73).

The emphasis on the individual presenter and the authority of their interpretation of knowledge has also faced significant criticism for presenting a somewhat blinkered account of the subject matter, leaving little room for audience interpretation while also stripping away ideological, political and economic contexts. As Wyver comments on the nature of the lecture format:

'The ideas too are complete in themselves, formed into a singular satisfying narrative, whether of a man's life or of the development of civilisation, and admitting no gaps or problems, no alternatives and no sense of difference' (2007: 145). Clark's particular approach in this regard presented what McLoone describes as 'The Hero as Artist' (1986: 12). McLoone also goes on to criticise Clark's on screen presence as overpowering, stating that the series should have been dubbed 'The Presenter as Hero': 'Clark's Erudition, his possession of knowledge and his unique access to interpretation and meaning reduce work and artist to the manageable – or raise him to the heroic!' (1986: 12). He goes on to state that 'the level of mediation in the *Civilisation* series is so overpowering that there is very little space left for the viewer to organise his/her own responses' (1986: 13). Here McLoone's analysis encompasses not only Clark's mode of address itself, but also the choice of camera angles, arguing that it reinforces the presenter's disposition and dominating thesis through focusing on certain aspects and neglecting others.

In line with McLoone's criticisms, Walker states: 'History was filtered not just through the medium of television, but also through the person of an urbane, omniscient man who had the power to dominate all content' (1993: 83). Walker suggests that Clark's aim with *Civilisation* was 'to affirm a society which encouraged the emergence of exceptional individuals' (1993: 80). Through associating the arts with these select 'exceptional individuals', *Civilisation* reinforced the established preconception that the arts and culture were separate from most people's everyday experience of the world. As such, it could be argued that offering viewers an insight into this cultural world that often seemed distant both geographically and ideologically reinforces a cultural hierarchy that serves to make the arts seem only accessible to a select few.

#### **4.2. Deconstructing high culture**

The concept of the arts as 'high culture' and their place in our experience of culture as a whole is inherently linked with class and Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital. As Walker states: "Decoding' contemporary art normally requires specialist knowledge that in turn is dependent on access to higher education' (1993: 2). Furthermore, Walker draws a connection between the

class distinctions of those who visit cultural institutions and how arts producers imagine the audiences of their programmes:

Surveys of visitors to museums indicate that the public interested in the arts comes mainly from the middle-classes. It can be safely assumed that viewers who watch serious arts programmes are also drawn from the same social strata. Most arts programmes and series are designed, consciously or unconsciously, with the cultured fraction of the middle-classes in mind (1993: 195).

In the companion book to his series *Ways of Seeing* (BBC 2, 1972), known for its distinctly Marxist critique of the visual arts, John Berger also comments on the relationship between cultural capital and art, although he does not use overtly Bourdieu's term: 'when an image is presented as a work of art, the way people look at it is affected by a whole series of learnt assumptions about art. Assumptions concerning: Beauty, Truth, Genius, Civilisation, Form, Status, Taste, etc.' (1972: 11). Both Berger's television series and the accompanying book were influential for the ways in which they directly tackled debates around the mediation of the visual arts on screen. In this regard, the series 'represented a radical departure from the traditional arts programme as it took *seeing* to be the primary source of understanding the plastic arts. Further, it recognised the importance of understanding how the camera changes the meanings of paintings' (Walker, 1993: V, author's emphasis).

It is clear that Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* heavily influenced *Ways of Seeing*, with Berger's underlining thesis building on the notion that art has lost its 'aura' through the means of reproduction enabled by modern technology. For Benjamin, the concept of the aura represents the authenticity and originality of the artwork as being uniquely present in space and time: 'In even the most perfect reproduction, one thing is lacking: the here and now of the work of art-its unique existence in a particular place. It is this unique existence - and nothing else-that bears the mark of the history to which the work has been subject' (1936: 5). Berger takes this thesis further to discuss how the interpretation of the visual arts is altered when it is contextualised within the viewer's living room through the television screen. In the companion book to the series Berger states: 'Because of the camera the

painting now travels to the spectator rather than the spectator to the painting. In its travels, its meaning is diversified' (1972: 20). The series was revolutionary in the sense that it prompted viewers question the significance of how knowledge and meaning are constructed and presented on screen. As such, it presented the cultural knowledge communicated through programmes such as Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation* as situated within a context that was intrinsically linked with the politics of class and taste.

The 1970s was also an era in which the rise of the topical magazine format on radio also coincided with a concerted effort to distance arts programming from its elitist, highbrow image. In the early 1970s BBC Radio Four ran two regular programmes about the arts, *Options* (1970) and *Scan* (1971). However, the then controller, Tony Whitby, had reservations around who exactly these programmes were aimed towards: 'none of these programmes, he felt, had quite made up their minds whether they were addressing a knowledgeable 'specialist' audience or a less well-informed 'general' one' (Hendy, 2007: 80). Whitby wanted to capture a more mainstream audience in Radio Four's arts programming, and to do this he felt that the programmes had to be more clearly accessible for the average listener in both form and content. As Stefan Collini states, Whitby 'might have done his Oxford thesis on Matthew Arnold, but he was not always averse to pandering to the philistines. During discussions in 1972 that eventually resulted in the arts magazine *Kaleidoscope*, Whitby told producers in the talks department: "I don't care what you call the programme, as long as the word 'art' or 'critic' isn't in the title'" (2007).

The discourse surrounding the creation of *Kaleidoscope* demonstrates how the arts were still inherently linked with an element of elitism associated with high culture in the mind of the listener, which Radio Four as a platform for more middlebrow content were keen to distance themselves from. In contrast to BBC Radio 3's popular discussion programme *Critics' Forum*, which had 'served up sustained conversation for the length of each edition in the classic 'Talks' manner'; *Kaleidoscope* 'offered a more fragmented and less lofty approach' (Hendy, 2007: 80). This presented the arts in a magazine format that was familiar to viewers from such programmes as *Owt About Owt* (1934) and

*Woman's Hour* (1946 -), and its offering of 'speech in a series of short, loosely connected items [...] fitted the way in which radio was now listened to at home' (ibid). But this new magazine format for the arts also faced criticism: 'Philip French and Lorna Moore, both of whom had produced *Critics' Forum* before it was dropped, distrusted *Kaleidoscope* because, as a topical magazine, its inevitable duty was to concentrate on news *about* the arts rather than offering the stuff itself' (Hendy, 2007: 83, author's emphasis).

#### **4.2.1. Culture goes commercial**

Britain's first commercial channel, ITV, broadcasted a small range of arts programming in its early years, most notably Kenneth Clark's series of programmes that included titles such as *Is Art Necessary?* (1958) and *Should Every Picture Tell a Story?* (1958). But the channel's first major arts programming success took the form of London Weekend Television's *The South Bank Show* (1978-2010), seen by many as the commercial counterpart to BBC Two's open-ended and often innovative series, *Arena* (1976-). Walker describes *The South Bank Show's* title sequence as a 'mixture of traditional and modern, fine art and popular culture imagery immediately signifies that this weekly, Sunday evening series adopts a broad, pluralistic approach to culture' (1993: 109). Editor and presenter Melvyn Bragg, whose past experience in arts broadcasting includes serving as writer and editor on both *Monitor* and *New Release* (BBC Two, 1964-68), established the series with three basic principles: 'to respect the integrity of the subject; to respect the audience; and to be professional and skilful in the use of the medium' (Wyver, 2007: 43).

According to Walker, 'Bragg's overall objective has been to make arts programmes that are both 'serious and entertaining, rigorous and accessible'' (1993: 110). However, the commercial environment of LWT with its focus on audience numbers also meant the programme was rarely experimental, concentrating 'on established reputations and rarely took risks with the truly edgy' and as a result 'failed to develop a critical voice' due to its keenness to avoid controversy (Wyver, 2007: 44). In this regard, the competitive environment of television broadcasting can restrict any discussion or ideas that seek to venture outside the status quo and challenge popular opinion. In the

words of McLoone, this creates a context in which: 'Dominant television practice actually denies the complex arguments within the disciplines – the substantial disagreements, for example, in art history as to the meaning of art, its social/political/historical contexts and most crucially, the very considerable debate about the ideological role of art, and art history, in our society' (1986: 14).

The BBC's most significant terrestrial rival in terms of cultural programming came with the launch of Channel 4 in 1982 and its founding Charter committed to encouraging 'experimentation in both form and content' (Walker, 1993: 147). Indeed, according to Wyver, "a high priority to the arts' was one of nine commitments outlined by Jeremy Isaacs in his letter of application for the job of the new channel's Chief Executive' (2007: 51). In contrast to the reputation of the BBC's cultural output, in its early years Channel 4 portrayed the arts and culture with a much more democratic and sociological approach: 'In the arts, Channel 4's programming was underpinned by a sense of commitment to the central value of culture in all our lives' (Wyver, 2007: 55). Channel 4's innovative coverage of the arts was also driven by its role as a publisher for independent producers. This created a diverse range of content that 'proved more flexible and innovative than ITV and the BBC in its attitude towards the visual arts and towards the medium of television itself' (Walker, 1993: 124); along with frequent co-productions with foreign broadcasters such as the French-German arts channel ARTE and public bodies such as the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Arguably Channel 4's most successful arts programme during the channel's first decade was the six part documentary series, *State of the Art* (1987). In line with Channel 4's brand identity as an 'alternative public service broadcaster', the series was particularly significant in regard to its overt attempts to avoid any kind of authoritative tone typically found in the documentary tradition. Scriptwriter Sandy Nairne chose to use on-screen quotes and interviews rather than a single presenter or commentary 'in order to avoid the single authoritative, omniscient author and to present a challenge to viewers. Instead of passively consuming pre-digested art appreciation, viewers were expected to engage



intellectually with a montage of words and images' (Walker, 1993: 157). Further to this, Wyver notes how the interviewees featured in the series would speak directly to the camera rather than 'to the side of frame as if to a surrogate for the viewer' (2007: 174). This created a sense of engaging the viewer in the discourse surrounding the artwork being shown.

With its focus on ideas and reducing the mediation of art on screen, *State of the Art* is described by Walker as 'the consequence of developments in the discourses of criticism, film theory and art history during the period 1968 – 85' (1993: 156). In relation to this, Wyver also suggests that through 'the use of these quotations and associated images – both of artworks and of sequences in the world – the films have a concentrated engagement with the ideas of postmodernism, with questions of sexuality and identity, and with leftist politics' (2007: 173). However, that it not say, of course, that the viewer had total autonomy in their interpretations: 'Although *State of the Art* had no single author or point of view in the traditional sense, it is true of course that the material it contained had been *selected, arranged and edited*, consequently it cannot be claimed the series was ideologically neutral or undetermined' (Walker, 1993: 15, author's emphasis). The series also faced backlash for its distinct style, as Wyver notes: 'Responses to the series were far from generally enthusiastic. For many, it came off the screen as inaccessible, alienating, humourless, relentless, confusing' (2007: 174).

#### **4.2.2. The art of discussion**

One way in which television and radio have tried to make some of the more complex ideas and themes around the arts more accessible is through discussion and review formats. Discussion programmes featuring the arts, such as Channel 4's *Voices* (1982) and later BBC Two's *The Late Show* (1989-1995), emerged during a time in which 'academic fields such as literary criticism, cultural studies and art history underwent a succession of theoretical revolutions' and if 'television had ignored these developments altogether, then it would have run the risk of becoming an intellectual backwater (Walker, 1993: 149). Discussion programmes allow these complex ideas to be introduced to

the public in a way that is easier to discern through their conversational tone and, due to the time restraints for each topic, concise nature.

Discussion and review programmes also serve as a platform for discourse around contemporary political issues through the arts. Using the example of *The Late Show* Wyver suggests the underlining the agenda of such programmes was 'the belief that the arena of culture was where many of the political debates of the time were now played out' (2007: 61). He goes on to suggest that this notion was borne of the radical changes made by the Thatcher government 'to every aspect of British society with a determinedly free-market agenda' (2007: 61). This was a time in which people were becoming increasingly disenfranchised with the political system and their representation as citizens within it. The blurring of the boundary between 'high' and 'low' culture played out through the content of programmes such as *The Late Show* was seen as symbolic of wider societal concerns around who now had the right to make judgements about cultural value. From a public service perspective, the arts became a context within which to discuss wider societal issues and broadcasting the public arena in which these discussions took place, allowing listeners and viewers to feel more informed and engaged with contemporary cultural agenda that they may have previously felt excluded from.

However, beyond this political discourse and debate, a number of academics have argued that the discussion format inherently hinders the communication of opinions, knowledge and ideas concerning the arts. Walker asserts that along with the 'lack of illustrations and visual examples' (1993: 149), the format does not allow for in depth discussion on each topic featured: 'Review programmes have qualities of immediacy and novelty, but they can prove frustrating in their inability to explore any topic at length and in depth' (1993: 175). Wyver also notes how, when reflecting on what he considers his unsuccessful tenure creating arts programming for ATV, Kenneth Clark 'found that the lecture format was far more effective than the discussions in his early programmes, as he discovered that what viewers wanted was narrative rather than abstract musings' (2007: 26). It is also useful to consider here Bourdieu's wider discussion around how the circumstances of television's production, in

particular its time pressures, do not give people enough time to think and therefore form thought-provoking original ideas and discussion:

[W]hat we have to ask is why these individuals are able to respond in these absolutely particular conditions. Why and how they can think under these conditions in which nobody can think. The answer, it seems to me, is that they think in clichés, in the “received ideas” that Flaubert talks about – banal, conventional, common ideas that are received generally. By the time they reach you, these ideas have already been received by everybody else, so reception is never a problem. (1998: 29)

It was from this analysis that Bourdieu came to the conclusion that ‘television poses a serious danger for all the various areas of cultural production – for art, for literature, for science, for philosophy, and for law’ (1998: 10). By limiting the creation of original ideas and opportunities for discussion, ideas around the arts and other forms of cultural production presented on television do not seek to challenge the viewer to examine their preconceived notions of the topic, but rather just reinforce the current status quo. From a contemporary perspective, it could be argued that today this argument is perhaps becoming somewhat obsolete due to the proliferation of online discussion that is encouraged around a particular television or radio programme, which may allow for more in depth analysis of the topic to play out. Nevertheless, for the BBC the need to find new ways to distance the arts from its elitist reputation and create more engaging educative content through which to communicate these ideas is still a pressing concern.

### **4.3. Changing formats and engaging audiences**

The advent of digital television had a substantial impact on both the production and wider significance of arts programming in Britain. As Wyver states: ‘Around the millennium, arts programming became one particular focus for a wider debate within and beyond broadcasting about the perceived retreat by the mainstream broadcasters, most especially the BBC, from the public service values’ (2007: 80). Furthermore, the introduction of more niche digital channels had led to a decline in arts programming on terrestrial services. Some regarded this as ‘a shift that was [...] symptomatic of the dilution of Reithian values’

(Wyver, 2007: 81), causing many critics to suggest that PSB's commitment to the arts was wavering. As Christopher Dunkley wrote in a 1999 article in the *Financial Times*: 'the broadcasting executives who, in less than one generation, have ceased to be keepers of culture, and have become instead slaves to audience figures and focus groups' (14). Here the decline of cultural content in broadcasting is framed as systematic of a wider shift towards the notion of broadcasting as a commodity for consumers, rather than a cultural force in the service of citizens.

However, for the BBC, such digital strategies were defended as emblematic of its role as a public service broadcaster to respond to advances in media technologies and changing consumption habits. In 2002 the BBC launched BBC Four, a digital channel to replace BBC Knowledge, which began broadcasting in 1999 'as a specifically educational channel but in 2000 its remit had been broadened to a documentary and arts channel' (Wyver, 2007: 87). The launch of BBC Four came at a time when the BBC was facing increasing competition from Rupert Murdoch's satellite television service, BSkyB, which provided a plethora of programming to suit a wide range of both mainstream and niche interests. The launch of Artsworld (later to be known as Sky Arts) in 2000 provided a dedicated satellite channel for the arts in direct competition with the public service offering of the BBC. Marketed as 'a place to think', BBC Four was clear about its commitment to highbrow cultural content from the beginning, with its opening night 'dominated by the arts' (Wyver, 2007: 87). However, there are on-going concerns that the channel is serving as a 'cultural ghetto' and preaching to the converted, rather than trying to introduce new audiences to the arts; a concern shared by journalist Stuart Jeffries when he warned at the launch of the new channel that 'we shouldn't let great art disappear into BBC4's cultural ghetto and let the mainstream be dominated by Carol Smillie's mirthless smile' (2002).

Wyver argues that the proliferation of multi-channel programming at the turn of the century was a time in which 'the mainstream broadcasters hastened their retreat to the middle ground, when audience share became the dominant factor in decision-making, and when certain previously central subjects, including the

arts, were marginalised' (2007: 48). This view is also supported by Ofcom, who in their first statutory report on PSB in 2004 found: 'Specialist programming on topics such as arts, current affairs and religion was increasingly pushed out of peak viewing hours' (2004: 5). Ofcom's report goes on to state that: 'Dedicated arts programming has also been marginalised on the channels that have traditionally supported it – BBC Two and Channel 4' (30) and in terms of audience response, was 'much less widely valued than news, drama and factual programming' (6).

Coverage of the arts in terms of subjects and formats had become increasingly narrow. With heightened competition from the wealth of new media options available, the overall focus within arts programming 'was on traditional mainstream figures and forms, and the opportunities for engaging with contemporary work, for being exposed to unfamiliar names and, most especially, for true innovation were limited' (Wyver, 2007: 83). Within this context the genre became 'increasingly hybridised', with the arts being 'packaged and mediated by the forms and formats of entertainment today' (Wyver, 2007: 166). This led to formats such as the illustrated lecture, for instance, featuring elements such as dramatised scenes. In this regard the arts were more mediated than ever before, prompting Wyver to assert that what 'is missing from all this – and which television is unquestionably able to offer effectively – is *experience* of the arts, culture without layers of mediation, ideas and images from which the viewer is encouraged to construct their own meanings, their own revelations' (2007: 166, author's emphasis.).

#### **4.3.1. Off-screen engagement**

One prominent way in which broadcasters are still encouraging '*experience* of the arts, culture without layers of mediation' is through the sponsorship and promotion of off-screen arts and cultural events. In the past, programmes such as Channel 4's art quiz *Gallery* (1984-1990) attempted to encourage viewers to engage with the arts beyond their television screens by including in the credits 'the museums where the works of art illustrated were located in the hope that viewers would make the effort to see them' (Walker, 1993: 22). This served to not only present broadcasting as the starting point to further engagement with

the arts, but also situates television and radio within a wider context consisting of other cultural institutions such as museums and galleries. In today's digital media environment with its increasingly fragmented audiences, the link between the on-screen and off-screen cultural worlds is becoming increasingly more important for broadcasters to demonstrate their commitment to public engagement with the arts.

The issue of audience fragmentation and levels of engagement in the arts is particularly evident in the work of Damien Stankiewicz, whose study of the trans-European public television channel ARTE poses the question of how producers 'collect together disconnected audiences and groups of viewers that have been primarily nationally constituted' (2012: 487). Although his study focuses on transnational media professionals, he raises important points about how audiences are no longer thought of as gathered round the television screens in their homes, but rather 'gathered together at events, debates and festivals as fellow fans, crowded-together spectators, and committed "followers"' (2012: 488). In the context of PSB in Britain, it is also worth considering how producers negotiate the concept of 'addressing the nation' in an era of the Internet and global media, and how this can extend beyond the television screen to engaging with 'the public' through events and festivals. From here, we can also consider how the identities of channels and broadcasting institutions are constructed not just on screen, but through the festivals and projects they are associated with through sponsorship and presence both online and offline.

#### **4.4. Situating the arts**

The historical account of arts broadcasting outlined in this chapter establishes some of the major landmark shifts in terms of how production practices and institutional ideologies have shaped the genre, and how this in turn has influenced the mediation of the arts through broadcasting. In particular, this analysis has drawn attention to the ways in which public service broadcasters has used various strategies to encourage public engagement with the arts through programme format, presentation and scheduling. This has revealed on-going tension throughout the narrative in regard to arts broadcasting's place within the preconceived dichotomy of 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow' culture. In this regard, the arts are still intrinsically linked to notions of class and cultural hierarchy, even within the context of the supposedly democratising system of PSB.

## 5. Research Methodology

---

The present research examines how the BBC's proposed commitment to the arts is realised within an increasingly competitive and fragmented digital media landscape. To gain an understanding of the social, cultural and institutional contexts in which BBC arts broadcasting strategy is both discursively negotiated and implemented in practice, this analysis is based on the perspectives of those directly involved in programme-making, commissioning and partnerships. In common with the work of Gray and Bell around history programming, interviewing, as opposed to ethnography, was regarded as the most affective method to explore 'the dynamics of commissioning and programme making, rather than the actual practice of production' (2013: 5).

Seventeen semi-structured interviews were conducted between February 2015 and December 2015 with media professionals working across a variety of capacities within arts broadcasting. These included BBC employees, both present and past, and those in the independent sector who had worked on BBC commissioned content. The range of this sample allowed for a varied account that was representative of the arts broadcasting production ecology both in its present state and as a testimony to how it has evolved. Interviews were also conducted with three representatives from the prominent cultural institutions Voluntary Arts, The Royal Opera House and the Arts Council of Wales, to gain an insight into how partnerships between these organisations and the BBC are established and maintained. The following chapter outlines the rationale behind the chosen methodology and the methodological procedures undertaken when conducting this research.



### **5.1. Qualitative interviewing**

Within the theoretical parameters of the present study, qualitative interviews are understood as situated narratives dependent on both the context in which the interview occurs and on the structure of the interview itself. In this regard, it is important to first establish that interviews are not a 'window' into the lived reality of participants. As David Silverman asserts: 'It is problematic to justify research in terms of its 'authentic' representation of 'experience' when what is 'authentic' is culturally defined' (1993: 6). Rather, interviews allow for an approach to undertaking empirical research that is both situated in social processes and captures the complexities of our dynamic social world.

Interviews provide the opportunity to examine the discourses around power and representation that shape the working practices of media professionals and which constitute their particular fields of production. In his case study on production culture in Los Angeles, Caldwell reveals how 'storytelling rituals' (or 'trade stories') within the media industry serve as 'a source of knowledge and a form of pedagogy intended to help assistants and trainees master their specialised crafts in unions and guilds' (2008: 37). Caldwell discusses how those within the media industry use the exchange of trade stories as a tool for making sense 'of their specific work worlds and their creative managerial task at hand' (2008: 38). Trade stories also serve as lessons and cautionary tales that communicate the social and cultural norms of that specific group of media workers. This creates a sense of solidarity and strengthens affinities between what Caldwell terms the 'below-the-line technical craft' workers. In the case of those higher up the organisational hierarchy, or what Caldwell terms the 'above-the-line creative sector', trade stories serve to reinforce established power structures by functioning as 'a form of territorial turf marking' (2008: 49). Although the reflexive narrative of production culture that emerges from Caldwell's work is primarily concerned with the interpersonal relationships of media workers within hierarchical organisational structures, it also demonstrates the value of understanding how fields of practice are discursively constituted.

When considering the interview as a social process it is also important to establish how knowledge, and indeed data, is produced within this context.

Oppenheim asserts that interviews do not constitute a 'conversation' in that they do not occur naturally, but rather they are constructed. He states that the interview is 'essentially a one-way process' going on to argue that 'if it should become a two-way process of communication (more like a genuine conversation), it will lose much of its value because of the bias introduced by the interviewer' (1992: 66). Further to this, Robert Weiss notes that 'the style of the qualitative interview may appear conversational, but what happens in the interview is very different from what happens in an ordinary conversation' (1995: 8). Weiss argues that one of the primary ways in which the interview is different from everyday conversations is that in the latter both participants occupy relatively equal status in terms of deciding on the topic and the direction in which to steer the discussion, whereas in an interview setting it is predominantly the interviewer who is directing much of the interaction. No matter how open-ended the interview approach is, the interviewer is always the one in control as they decide on the topics, questions, follow up questions, and so on. Bruce Berg also comments on the unusual nature of the interview, stating that 'there is assuredly something extraordinary (if not unnatural) about a conversation in which one participant has an explicitly or implicitly scripted set of lines and the other participant does not' (2001: 66). This would suggest that in such situations both the interviewer and interviewee are stepping outside of their everyday approach to social interactions and adopting a new persona governed by the constructed nature of the interaction. As will be discussed further in section 5.3., this is a particularly important consideration when interviewing those who work in the media or occupy prominent positions within an institution such as the BBC, as such participants are highly likely to have previous experience and/or training in interview techniques (both as interviewee and participant).

However, whilst interviews are in many ways fundamentally distinct from everyday conversations, the theoretical understanding of this method posed by scholars such as Oppenheim and Weiss can overlook some of the key similarities between these forms of communication. Tom Wengraf describes interviews as a 'type of conversational face-to-face interaction' in the sense that they 'are not asocial, ahistorical events' (2001: 4). This supposes that when

both conducting and taking part in an interview you do not leave behind defining characteristics, particularly visible aspects such as age, race and gender that whether conscious or not influence how we see ourselves and others. Likewise, both interviewer and interviewee take to the interview their own predispositions, anxieties and prejudices that are informed by their own unique experience of the world and their place within it. Particularly useful in this context is Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann's description of an interview as 'a conversation that has structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge' (2009: 3). As a definition this serves to establish a balance between acknowledging that interviews are more constructed in nature than everyday conversations, while at the same time recognising the ways in which such interactions are shaped by established social norms of communication and situated within specific cultural contexts.

In relation to this, a number of academics have persuasively argued that interviews are a two way process in which the construction of knowledge is inherently a joint endeavour performed by both interviewer and interviewee. Robert Dingwall argues that 'the interview is an artifact, a joint accomplishment of interviewer and respondent. As such, its relationship to any "real" experience is not merely unknown but in some senses unknowable' (1997: 56). Such propositions inevitably raise the question of validity and the reliability of data analysis. As James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium state, traditional approaches emphasise 'interviewer and question neutrality' as a means of obtaining valid data (1997: 116). This is also indicated in of Oppenheim, who asserts that 'in order to do their job [the interviewer] must 'switch off' their own personality and attitudes (this can be very exhausting) and try to be unaffected by circumstances, by their attitude to the topic or the respondent, or by personal involvement' (1992: 66). But rather than regarding the interview setting as an obstacle to minimise and overcome in order to reveal 'truth', Holstein and Gubrium describe the interview as a process in which knowledge is collectively constructed between the interviewer and the interviewee. In regard to this, they use use the term 'active interviewing' to refer to the ways in which:

Meaning is not merely elicited by apt questioning, nor simply transported through respondent replies; it is actively and communicatively assembled in the interview encounter. Respondents are not so much repositories of knowledge – treasuries of information awaiting excavation, so to speak – as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers. (1997: 114)

The notion of active interviewing also emphasises the role of the interviewer within the interview process and acknowledges that the data constructed within these settings is always context specific. This is also recognised in the work of Tim Rapley, who describes interviews as ‘spaces for interaction’ in which ‘talk [...] is always locally collaboratively produced’ (2001: 310). He goes on to state that ‘...the ‘data’ gained in the specific interview begin to emerge *as just one possible version*, a version that is contingent on the specific local interactional context’ (2001: 318). Building on from this, the methodology outlined in this chapter is established upon the underlining epistemological assumption that interviews are occasions for two-way knowledge production, rather than a means of uncovering the “truth” of certain social realities and experience. Although unavoidably constructed to some degree, the ‘conversations’ that occur within this setting are inherently based in distinct social contexts, the analysis of which is essential to situating the perspectives of those involved in BBC arts production, distribution and strategy.

### **5.1.1. Conducting semi-structured interviews**

Wengraf succinctly summarises the nature and form of semi-structured interviews, stating: ‘Semi-structured interviews are designed to have a number of interviewer questions prepared in advance but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way’ (2001: 5). Semi-structured interviews allow a certain degree of standardisation and replication for data reliability, while still allowing for the interviewer to ask some spontaneous questions in a way that is sensitive to the participant’s need to express themselves. As Holstein and Gubrium suggest, this creates a situation in which the ‘objective is not to dictate interpretation, but to provide an environment conducive to the production of the range and

complexity of meanings that address relevant issues, and not be confined by predetermined agendas' (1997: 123). As such, unlike standardised interviews, semi-structured interviews 'can reflect an awareness that individuals understand the world in varying ways. Researchers thus approach the world from the subject's perspective' (Berg, 2001: 70). Furthermore, as opposed to a structured, standardised interview, semi-structured interviews also create a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect data, as participants often feel more comfortable with a conversational style of interaction rather than a rigid survey style of questioning. In the case of the present study, this was seen as being more conducive to collecting information from individuals who are often hard to gain access to for the purposes of academic research and may feel more at ease with a less confrontational style of questioning in which they feel they have a degree of control to steer the conversation.

Despite their conversational nature, semi-structured interviews often require more planning and preparation than standardised ones. Wengraf describes semi-structured interviews as 'high-preparation, high-risk, high-gain, and high-analysis operations' (2001: 5). Semi-structured interviews have the potential to generate rich data by not constraining possible responses to a set of predefined questions and allowing respondents the opportunity to discuss what is relevant to their own experience of that particular topic. However, this also represents a high-risk strategy in that when relying on a certain level of improvisation care needs to be taken that the data generated is still relevant to the research problem being explored. In order to reduce the risk of generating immaterial data, time must be given to ensure scrupulous planning and preparation is undertaken prior to each interview. As Wengraf states: 'They are *semi*-structured, but they must be *fully* planned and prepared' (2001: 5, author's emphasis). The importance of preparation for semi-structured interviews is also emphasised by Kvale and Brinkmann, who suggest that 'knowledge of the topic of the interview is in particular required for the art of posing second questions when following up the interviewee's answers' (2009: 82).

Preparation is particularly important when interviewing 'elites', such as those occupying senior roles in organisations such as the BBC, for example. When

conducting interviews with such participants the interviewer should ensure they are 'knowledgeable about the topic of concern and master the technical language, as well as be familiar with the social situation and biography of the interviewee' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 147). The demonstration of this knowledge legitimises the study and contributes toward reducing the power asymmetry in the interview relationship. Due to their prominent position, such biographical information is usually available to the public through sources such as official websites and articles in the press. For the present study, the BBC website was a significantly useful source of information about participants, with many having a profile and even blog posts hosted on the site. A number of participants also emailed CVs to the researcher that detailed past work and other occupational achievements. This was particularly useful for planning lines of questioning in relation to their work on particular programmes and series. Due to the amount of preparation required for each interview, and also the richness of the data generated, it was important to be aware that the researcher would conduct fewer semi-structured interviews within a given timeframe than structured interviews. This informed the sampling process, setting an upper limit of twenty interviews to be conducted within this time as a realistic objective.

The first stage of preparing for the interview process was to conduct a literature review in order to identify key areas of interest and establish a theoretical underpinning that would inform the topics discussed. Throughout the length of the interview period it was also important to keep up to date with developments in contemporary broadcasting practices and policy through engaging with relevant trade journals and other published discourse pertaining to such subjects. The themes that emerged from both the literature review and published industry discourse then formed the basic framework of an interview guide. The themes were as follows:

- The purpose of arts broadcasting
- Representing the arts on screen
- The BBC Arts brand
- Mainstream and specialist programming

- Partnerships with other cultural institutions
- The future of arts broadcasting

Once the themes had been established it was then possible to begin to identify whom to approach to take part in the study.

## **5.2. Interview sample**

An initial list of potential interviewees was drawn from identifying key individuals involved in BBC arts programming and strategy. A purposive sample of twenty-five was selected with the understanding that not all the individuals identified would be available to be interviewed. This is a common issue when trying to recruit participants such as media professionals who often work busy and unsociable hours. The initial list of participants was also subject to change as those currently working within the field also provided recommendations and access to further interviewees relevant to the study.

All potential interviewees were contacted via email. This method allowed for the researcher to inform the participant of the nature of the study in a way that was more cost effective and efficient than traditional mail correspondence and less obtrusive than making unsolicited telephone calls. Email also allowed participants to reply with any questions or concerns about the nature of the study that could then be addressed before the interview began and also provided a point of contact for dealing with any issues after the initial interview had been conducted. This ease of communication between researcher and interviewee also demonstrates an approach to research ethics that is based on the assumption that it is an on-going, reflexive process, rather than one that constitutes a particular stage of the study. As Kvale and Brinkmann recommend, 'ethical guidelines should be reconfigured pragmatically as tools to think with in fields of uncertainty, rather than being seen as the final moral authority that ignores real-life ambiguities and uncertainties' (2009: 70).

Between February 2015 and December 2015 twenty interviews were conducted. The sample included those involved with commissioning, scheduling

and overall arts strategy in order to gain an insight into how arts provision is actively managed and coordinated across the BBC. The study was also concerned with the experiences of television and radio producers both working within the BBC itself and those from the independent sector who have also been involved in creating arts content for the BBC. This allowed for a more representative account of the contemporary production landscape in which public service content is created both in-house at the BBC and by independent companies. Many of the participants within the study had also been involved in broadcasting for a number of years, allowing for the analysis to capture how the field has developed and changed within that time. However, it was difficult to identify potential participants who were new to the field, suggesting the need to examine further the ways in which arts broadcasting may not be attracting as much new talent as other genres.

When defining the sample, it was also important to include a cross section of media workers from radio, television and online. This enabled the data to capture the contemporary multiplatform broadcasting landscape, while also being sensitive to the distinct challenges and opportunities each medium provides. The study also sought to examine the relationship between the BBC and other cultural institutions both in terms of collaboration and programme output, and as a matter of public service and establishing a position within the wider arts ecology in Britain. To do this it was important to speak not only with those within the BBC, but also to representatives from other cultural institutions about their experiences working with the BBC in order to create a more balanced account of how these partnerships are managed in practice.

When selecting the sample consideration also had to be given to the potential challenge of gaining access to and conducting interviews with 'elite workers' such as senior BBC staff and other prominent individuals. In her own extensive research inside the BBC, Born describes the process of gaining access to the corporation as 'onerous from the outset and remained taxing throughout the fieldwork', which she attributes to 'the unceasing criticism faced by the corporation' (2004: 16). Here Born's reasoning for the BBC's reluctance to grant access to researchers at an institutional level could perhaps be applied on an



individual basis, with William Harvey suggesting that elites 'are often scrutinized by television and radio journalists and therefore can also feel threatened in an interview, particularly in contexts that are less straightforward to prepare for such as academic interviews' (2011: 433). While the majority of the interviewees in the present study were willing to take part in an interview, many of those at more senior levels requested that the interview questions be sent in advance.

In relation to this, Harvey asserts that an important part of getting access to elite interviewees is gaining their trust through being 'as transparent as possible' in regard to the position of the researcher and the nature of the research being carried out (2011: 433). When contacted in the first instance via email potential interviewees were provided with information about who the researcher is, the university they are affiliated with, and a summary of the research aims. As already discussed, this is presented as an open dialogue in which the interviewee can raise any queries or concerns before and after the interview is conducted. It also proved useful when conducting interviews with influential figures to ask for suggestions of other individuals to contact on their recommendation. Not only did this aid in identifying other relevant participants that may have been overlooked in the initial sample selection, it also provided the study with legitimacy through the visible endorsement of other senior staff.

Another key strategy when securing an interview is to ensure that the interviewer is flexible in regard to when and where the interview will take place. As Neil Stephens (2007) found, this is important both when dealing with elite figures with busy schedules and other creative professionals who often work unconventional hours. Further to this, Harvey reports that flexibility is often 'appreciated by the respondent and therefore helped to achieve a high quality interview' (2010: 210). Privileging the convenience of the interviewee also meant being flexible in terms of the means by which the interview took place. Face-to-face interviews were preferable as it can be easier to develop rapport and build trust when speaking to participants in person. In his comparison of in-person and television interviewing, Roger Shuy states that, 'face-to-face interaction compels more small talk, politeness routines, joking, nonverbal

communication and asides in which people can more fully express their humanity' (2003: 179). In this regard, developing rapport is seen as a crucial step in generating rich and insightful qualitative data. Conducting interviews in person also provides the opportunity to capture contextual nonverbal data such as body language and facial expression through the use of detailed field notes. As Rapley states: 'An awareness of the local context of the data production is central to analysing interviews, *whatever analytic stance* is taken when analysing the data' (2001: 306, author's emphasis). These nonverbal cues also aided in the interview process through the researcher being able to observe signs of confusion or discomfort and adjust their line of inquiry appropriately. The use of detailed field notes also allowed the researcher to take into account the performative nature of language and account for the ways in which 'talk is always occasioned and produced in a context, in interaction with others – and that participants are orientating towards the questions, concerns, assumptions, interpretations and judgements of others in producing their talk' (Firth and Kitzinger, 1998: 317).

When interviewing those who work within a particular professional field, in-person interviews can also have the added advantage of allowing the researcher privileged access to places of work and practice that are often restricted to the general public. Interviews with BBC personnel often took place in the staff cafeteria and various meeting rooms at BBC Broadcasting House, London and BBC Cymru Wales, respectively. This not only proved conducive to the quality of the interview in the sense that it took place in an environment that was familiar to the participant and in which they would feel more at ease, it also allowed the researcher to observe the atmosphere and everyday institutional context in which the practices and experiences being discussed were situated. There are, however, some disadvantages to conducting face-to-face interviews in such settings. The noise level in the BBC cafeteria at New Broadcasting House meant that it was sometimes difficult to hear the interviewee's responses on the recording and thus slowed down the transcription process considerably. There was also the issue of practicality in terms of the finite time and financial resources available for the researcher to travel from Cardiff to London where many of the participants were based. Additionally, it was often hard to organise

numerous interviews to occur on the same day as participants fitted the interviews in around very busy schedules that rarely coincided with one another. In such work there is also the inevitable risk of cancellations after the researcher has already invested substantial time and money to travel to the interview location. This is a particularly prevalent issue when interviewing elites for whom the research interview is of much lower priority than their job specific commitments.

For these reasons a small number of interviews took place over the telephone, which ensured that a broad enough range of experiences were captured within the financial and time constraints of the study. In many cases telephone interviews were also more convenient for the participant as they did not need to travel to a specific location or put aside too much extra time in their schedule to do so. This is particularly important when dealing with media professionals whose schedules are often very changeable and susceptible to last minute alterations. Telephone interviews also produced clearer audio recordings compared to those that took place in busy environments such as cafeterias, making the transcription process less time consuming. It is, however, important to acknowledge the potential ways in which the absence of visual cues such as body language and facial expressions, along with a lack of other contextual data such as the physical setting, affect both the interaction during the interview and the analysis of the data produced. Some academics argue that due these challenges 'breakdowns in communication easily arise' and 'the ability to conduct a meaningful conversation is readily compromised' (Hermanovicz, 2002: 497). However, there is a growing body of evidence to support the use of telephone interviewing in qualitative research as a method that can produce just as rich data as face-to-face interviews (Chapple, 1999; Sweet, 2002; Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004; Stephens, 2007; Holt, 2010). In line with the findings of these studies, the present research found no notable differences in the quality of responses between the data generated from face-to-face and telephone interviewing methods.

One interview did take place through email correspondence due to difficulties in securing either a face-to-face or telephone appointment. Although not optimal,

conducting interviews through email does hold some advantages. As Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez state: 'In email interviews, both the researcher and the participant have more time to reflect on the question(s) and provide thoughtful answers' (2015 :80). Furthermore, answering researcher questions via email is sometimes more attractive to potential interviewees as 'participants can reply to questions at his/her convenience' (2015 :80).

In total, fifteen of the twenty interviews were conducted in-person; four took place via telephone and one through email correspondence. Please see Appendix 1 for complete list of interviews conducted.

### **5.3. The interview process**

Before contacting potential interviewees, a pilot interview was conducted to test the effectiveness of the interview guide and familiarise the researcher with the practicalities of the interview process. Through listening back to the audio recording, the researcher was also able to pick up on missed opportunities for prompting further discussion from the participant around certain topics. In line with the semi-structured nature of the interview methodology, this highlighted a need to be aware of sticking too rigidly to the questions set out in the interview guide in a way that stifled, rather than facilitated in-depth discussion of particular themes.

Once the pilot stage was completed potential participants were contacted in order to secure dates for interviews. The majority of the interviews were around an hour in length. This ensured there was enough time to develop rapport and prompt in depth discussion around the key themes to generate an adequate amount of rich data for analysis. However, as already discussed in regard to the nature of media work, it was also important to be prepared for participants to only be available for a shorter time than anticipated. In preparation for this, the interview guide for each participant identified a number of key questions to be used in the case of a more limited time frame than expected. Due to other commitments, a number of participants were only available for thirty minute interviews, whereas a couple of interviews went on for up to two hours as participants were happy to continue the discussion.

All the interviews began with the researcher briefing the interviewee on the purpose of the interview and answering any questions or concerns raised. Following the briefing participants were asked to sign an informed consent form to ensure that they understood the nature of the research and how their data would be used within it. The audio for each interview was recorded using a Dictaphone with the expressed permission of the interviewee. The use of an audio recorder allowed the researcher to capture tone of voice, pauses and so on that can be listened to again at a later date while also freeing 'the interviewer to concentrate on the topic and dynamics of the interview' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 179). Due to the nature of their work many of the participants, particularly those occupying influential roles within the organisation, had previous experience with interviewing or being interviewed themselves. As such, most of the participants were relatively comfortable with what the process involved and how the interaction would be structured.

The primary concerns brought up by interviewees prior to the interview were around where the data would be published and the level of anonymity that would be afforded to them. In these instances the researcher referred the participant to the informed consent form and reassured them that the interview data would only be published in the form of a doctoral thesis and other academic publications such as journal articles and conference papers. It was also made clear to participants that they would be referred to in the research by their job title (e.g. series producer, BBC), and as such may be identified through discussion of programmes they have worked on. The level of anonymity afforded was also greatly reduced when only one person was occupying a particular role (e.g. director of arts). Although in some ways this may have limited the views and opinions interviewees felt comfortable expressing, it was essential for the aims of this study to situate the experiences of participants within the context of their particular role and status within the BBC.

Each interview began with asking participants to tell the researcher about their role and history in broadcasting. This allowed the interviewee to become comfortable with the interview process and flow of conversation through starting

with a topic that was relatively easy to recall. The telling of this personal narrative also allowed the researcher to note down particular areas of interest that would be the subject of subsequent follow-up questions and guide the discussion. There were also specific questions that the researcher asked every interviewee such as 'how would you define arts broadcasting?' and 'what is the future of arts broadcasting?' These are what Berg refers to as 'essential questions', which 'exclusively concern the central focus of the study' (2001: 75).

The remaining questions in each interview guide focused on the interviewee's specific role and background. In line with the format of semi-structured interviews, these were designed to prompt more open-ended discussion, with the use of closed questions only to clarify certain points within the narrative. The importance of open-ended questions is noted by Schoenberger, who argues that 'respondents are likely to feel less frustrated if they are able to explain exactly what they mean in their own terms rather than trying to fit themselves into the terms of references proposed by the researcher' (1991: 183). This was particularly important when interviewing BBC staff who may be wary of particular lines of questioning and the potential ways in which their responses may be interpreted as reflecting those of the corporation. In this regard it was also important to reduce any potential ambiguity through phrasing questions in ways that was easy to understand without disrupting the conversational flow of the interaction. The interview process also required the researcher to demonstrate sensitivity to the evolving social context of each interaction when prompting discussion of the themes outlined in the interview guide. Harvey advises that 'in most cases interviewers should avoid asking too many formulaic questions and instead focus more on achieving conversational flow' (2010: 214). This more informal conversational style also puts participants at ease, prompting them to be more open in their responses and creating an environment more conducive to the generation of rich qualitative data.

As many elites already have previous experience of being interviewed, it is also crucial to take into consideration that many of the more senior BBC staff 'may more or less have prepared "talk tracks" to promote viewpoints they want to communicate by means of the interview, which requires considerable skill from

the interviewer to get beyond' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 147). Indeed, the perennial challenge for the present study when interviewing influential figures within the BBC has been getting beyond the official party line. One way of addressing this is through the use of probing follow-up questions, which 'ask subjects to elaborate on what they have already answered in response to a given question' (Berg, 2001: 76). This technique is particularly useful for gaining an insight into the reasoning and context behind particular decisions at both a personal and institutional level. However, the interviewer should be cautious when phrasing such follow-up questions that they do not come across as too confrontational as this could cause the participant to limit their responses or even shut down the line of questioning completely. In relation to the challenges of getting beyond the official doctrine, Harvey also suggests that in 'such instances and if possible, cross-checking and triangulating different kinds of evidence is an important form of verifying the reliability of the data' (2010: 211). In this regard, it was often useful to interview prominent figures within the BBC towards the beginning of the data-gathering period in order to cross-reference and compare their experiences with those occupying less high-profile roles within the organisation.

At the end of each interview the researcher asked the participant if there was anything else they would like to discuss that had not already been covered. As Kvale and Brinkmann state, this 'gives the subject an additional opportunity to deal with issues he or she has been thinking or worrying about during the interview' (2009: 129). It also recognises the importance of allowing interviewees a degree of freedom to discuss issues that matter to them that may not have seemed significant to the researcher prior to the interview and as such did not feature in the interview guide. Field notes were also written up after each interview to capture non-verbal data that would not be picked up through the audio recordings, such as the environment in which the interview took place and some general impressions of the interviewee and their responses. Such information serves to further contextualise the audio data gathered and contribute towards a more informed interpretation during data analysis.

Once recorded, the interviews were transcribed ad verbum using audio playback software and Microsoft Word. The researcher chose to omit any idiosyncratic elements such as stutters or other involuntary vocalisations from the transcript in order to focus on the informational content of the speech. As Oliver et al. state, the accuracy of such approaches ‘concerns the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation’ (2005: 1277). In this regard, it was imperative that copies of the completed transcripts were sent out to the interviewees to ensure that, to the best of their knowledge, they represented a fair and accurate account of the conversation that had taken place. Concerning the nature of the present study and those being interviewed, it was also important to confirm that the researcher had correctly interpreted the use of industry specific terms and their meaning within the context of the conversation. Any data contained within the transcript that was perceived as having the potential to damage the reputation or integrity of the interviewee was also omitted on their request. As Kvale and Brinkmann state, ‘the researcher should be aware that the openness and intimacy of much qualitative research may be seductive and can lead participants to disclose information they may later regret having shared’ (2009: 73). For the present study this usually constituted instances in which the participant had specifically named a colleague as the subject of criticism. However, the effect of this on quality of data was minimal as such criticisms were often voiced in more generalised terms at other points of the transcript.

#### **5.4. Thematic analysis**

Once transcribed, the interviews were analysed using thematic and contextual analysis with the aid of qualitative data analysis software NVivo. Jennifer Fereday and Eimear Muir-Cochrane define thematic analysis as involving ‘a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon [being studied]’, and as such constitutes ‘a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis’ (2006: 82). As a method that can be ‘applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches’, Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke emphasise the strength of thematic analysis as ‘a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of



data' (2006: 5). In regard to the present study, the interview transcripts were analysed to identify patterns and themes pertaining to the social and institutional contexts informing the production and provision of arts broadcasting within the BBC. To support these research aims, a constructionist framework is adopted which presupposes that 'reality is socially constructed' and as such 'the sociology of knowledge must analyse the process in which this occurs' (Berger and Luckmann, 1991: 13). As Braun and Clarke state, this latent approach 'does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided.' (2006: 14).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) the first stage in conducting a thematic analysis is for the researcher to become familiar with their data. To aid in this process the researcher opted to transcribe the interviews herself. In their work around transcription in research and practice, Judith Lapadat and Anne Lindsay argue that this is a 'valuable' process that 'facilitates the close attention and the interpretive thinking that is needed to make sense of the data' (1999: 82). Once transcribed, the interviews were read again while noting down initial ideas and observations and highlighting any key words or phrases. Once the researcher had read and familiarised herself with the data, the transcripts were imported into the qualitative data analysis [QDA] software, NVivo, in order to facilitate a systematic coding of the entire data set. Despite what the name suggests, QDA software does not analyse the data on behalf of the researcher, but rather provides a set of tools to aid in the analysis and visualisation of qualitative data. Patricia Bazeley and Kirsti Jackson outline the benefits of using this approach, stating that 'the computer's capacity for recording, sorting, matching and linking can be harnessed by researchers to assist in answering their research questions from the data, without losing access to the source data or contexts from which the data have come' (2013: 2). In this regard, NVivo enabled the researcher to efficiently code and recode the interview transcripts and identify recurring themes across the data set.

At a fundamental level, coding data involves assigning pithy labels to 'the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed

in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon' (Boyatzis, 1998: 63). Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance of distinguishing between an inductive or theoretical approach to identifying codes and themes within the data. However, it could be argued that the present study inevitably employs an approach that is both inductive and deductive in the sense that it started with a basic framework of theoretical ideas derived from the research questions and literature review, and then discovered new ideas, theories and explanations within the data. Initially the data were coded for as many possible patterns and themes pertaining to the area of research as possible with the assumption that these initial codes would then become more refined as the researcher's understanding evolved during the process of analysis. When coding it was also important to avoid losing too much context by ensuring that some of the surrounding data was also included in the selected text. As such, the start and end point of each coded selection was determined by intent to accurately reflect the meanings present in the original transcript.

The coded data was then organised into potential themes for analysis. Richard Boyatzis defines a theme as 'a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon' (1998: 161). As such, a theme captures something that is key to the data and to the research question that occurs numerous times across the data set. However, it is important to recognise that the importance of the theme comes from its conceptual value, not from frequency of occurrence. 'The "keyness" of a theme' Braun and Clarke assert, 'is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures – but in terms of whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question' (2006: 10). In line with the constructionist paradigm employed in this analysis, the validity of such interpretations is based on the degree to which they explicate 'the unique, idiosyncratic meanings and perspectives constructed by individuals, groups, or both who live/act in a particular context' (Cho and Trent, 2006: 328). As the interview sample constituted participants working within different media and roles within arts broadcasting, in this regard it was also important to consider how their relative position and level of influence within the field contributed to

the significance of certain ideas and experiences beyond just the regularity of their occurrence within the data set.

#### **5.4.1. Contextual analysis**

In line with the theoretical understanding of qualitative interviewing outlined at the top of the chapter, the production of meaning within the interviews was also situated within specific cultural, historical and political contexts. At the turn of the century Mike Wayne advocated for the development of contextual analysis within the field of television studies to further understand 'why television produces the meanings which it does, what the limits to those meanings are and why alternative meanings cannot be accommodated in a given historical moment' (2000: 196). From an empirical standpoint, the first stage in employing this method constitutes 'identifying themes that are present in the broader culture at the time that the texts were produced' (Kahl and Grodal, 2016: 346), with 'texts' in this context referring to the interview data.

In establishing the contextual framework in which to situate the interviews, the present study primarily drew on academic literature, policy documents, BBC year books/annual reports, and articles in the press. This provided a framework of analysis concerning three key narratives. The first of these is the political discourse surrounding BBC Charter Review. The dominant themes within this narrative were ensuring value-for-money for the licence fee, measuring public value and responding to austerity. The second narrative concerns evolving cultural debates around both the value of the arts and the place of PSB within society. In regard to the former, particular attention is given to the relationship between the arts and class, and the influence of these debates on BBC arts strategy and output since the corporation's inception. Finally, the interview analysis is situated in the social context of evolving media consumption habits, and the discourses surrounding the ways in which the BBC serves the public as a public service broadcaster from both a historical and contemporary perspective.

In this regard, the use of contextual analysis enabled a more nuanced insight into the political economy of arts broadcasting in terms of how output and

strategy are governed by wider social, political and economic forces. Analogous with the results of most qualitative methodologies, the present findings claim only to be representative of the experiences of those working within a particular field in a particular moment in time. The depth of analysis granted by such approaches provides valuable insight into the ways in which the provision of arts content is shaped by both trends in contemporary production practices and wider socio-economic debates around the role of PSB in an increasingly competitive media landscape.

## 6. Arts Broadcasting as Public Service

---

From the Arnoldian sensibilities of Lord Reith to the current BBC Director-General Tony Hall's public commitment to increasing overall cultural engagement, the provision of arts content has been presented as an intrinsic part of delivering public service since the BBC's inception. The following chapter examines how arts programming is discursively and strategically framed as symbolic of public service values within current BBC strategy. The chapter begins by establishing how arts broadcasting is defined in discourse concerning programme content and aesthetics. In doing so, the present research does not propose to contribute to broader philosophical questions around the definition of art. Rather, it is concerned with how the inherent ambiguity of the term provides the space for certain forms of creative expression to be elevated above others. The second part of the chapter analyses the ways in which arts content is positioned through both institutional rhetoric and branding strategies as a visible commitment to the BBC's public service values. In particular, it highlights the challenge of distinctiveness in an era in which minority interest programmes and narrowcasting is increasingly a feature of subscription-based commercial broadcasters. Finally, attention is turned to how this commitment to public service is delivered in practice through the mixed fortunes of arts broadcasting in the UK nations and regions, with particular attention to the situation in Wales.

### 6.1. Defining arts broadcasting

Within wider academic literature arts broadcasting is typically situated as a sub category under specialist factual alongside genres such as history, natural history, science and religion (Hill, 2007; Peter Lee-Wright, 2010; Bennett et al., 2012). The parameter of each genre is predominantly defined by subject matter, with other key elements such as the role of the presenter and even the presenter themselves transcending individual categories such as art or history (e.g. Simon Schama). Wyver also alludes to presence of a unifying subject matter, suggesting that 'because television arts programming can be seen to possess a clear core but increasingly fuzzy boundaries, critics feel compelled to develop a classification for *kinds* of arts programmes' (author's emphasis, 2007:

137). Indeed, the few studies that look at arts broadcasting specifically often approach their analysis through the lens of specific programmes and formats that privilege a received artistic canon, particularly in regard to the visual arts (Walker, 1993; Irwin, 2011, 2015; Adriaensens and Jacobs, 2015; Lee and Corner, 2015). Starting from this primarily textual perspective, current literature often treats the definition of 'arts programming', and as such the parameters of study, as self evident within the content itself. Less attention is given to the ways in which such definitions are understood and discursively constructed, both from an academic and industry perspective. The following shifts this focus to examine arts broadcasting from an industry, rather than textual perspective, with attention to the ways in which this 'public service genre' is at once both ideologically and strategically defined.

In his work concerning television genres, Jason Mittell proposes a theory of programme classification that 'situates genre distinctions and categories as active processes embedded within and constitutive of cultural politics' (2004: xii). Rather than emerging from television texts, Mittell argues that 'genres work to categorize texts and link them into clusters of cultural assumptions through discourses of definition, interpretation and evaluation' (2004: xiv). In regard to television, the definitions that emerge within this context are also a product of the stratified and insular nature of production in Britain. As Tunstall describes:

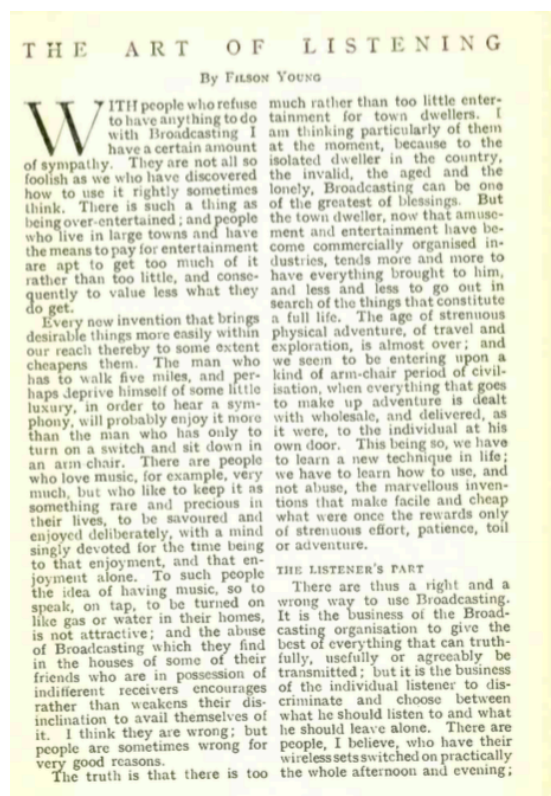
Each genre develops into a private world; each genre has its own characteristic goals and values, costs and budgets, and type of audience appeal. Each field within television recruits somewhat different kinds of people to be producers. There is no general TV induction; induction is done largely within one of the specialized genre-specific worlds. (1993: 201)

With respect to radio, the implicit nature of content classification and norms of practice within arts broadcasting was also strongly evidenced by the commissioning editor for BBC Radio Four and BBC World Service, who when discussing his role stated: 'I think [producers] have a certain understanding of what would make an arts story or what would make a culture story' (Interview 11). Through interviewing media professionals, the present study analyses how

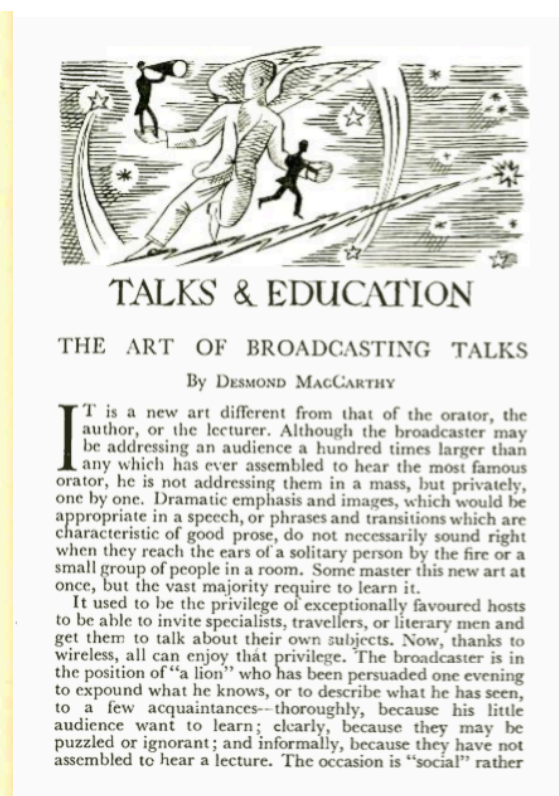
this shared 'understanding' of arts broadcasting is discursively constructed and maintained.

### 6.1.1. From high to everyday culture

Before examining the classification of arts content from a contemporary perspective, it is first important to understand how the BBC's definition of arts programming has evolved within an institutional context. In doing so, the following analysis situates themes within the present interview data as part of a wider historical narrative. As Mittell asserts: 'Genres operate in an ongoing historical process of category formation – genres are constantly in flux, and thus their analysis must be historically situated' (2004: xiv). The primary resource for establishing this historical background are the official BBC Year Books, published from 1928 through to 1987 (replaced by the BBC Annual Report), which document the year's programming alongside other cultural and technological achievements. Although arts programming is not listed as a distinctive genre in early editions of the BBC yearbooks, opera, classic music, radio drama and even the practice of both listening and broadcasting itself are frequently referred to as art forms.



*'The Art of Listening'*  
BBC Year Book, 1928



*'The Art of Broadcasting Talks'*  
BBC Year Book, 1929

With the expansion of the BBC's services to television in 1936 and the introduction of a new stratified radio system ten years later, such subjects were increasingly referred to as 'serious' programming directed toward an attentive but minority audience, in contrast to the 'light entertainment' of comedy, variety, quizzes, popular music and drama, of which the primary job was to 'entertain as many people as possible as often as possible' (1955: 69).

It is not until the 1970's that 'Music and Arts' begin to be listed as a distinctive genre of programming. In terms of production and commissioning, the BBC Music and Arts department was first established in 1965 under the leadership of prominent arts broadcaster Humphrey Burton. The increased prominence of Music and Arts output within the BBC year books from the early 1970's can be in part be attributed to the prevalence of open-ended series such as *Omnibus* (BBC One, 1967-2003), *Full House* (BBC Two, 1972) and *Arena* (BBC Two, 1975-). Although the specific subjects listed in the year books tend to prioritise traditional art forms such as classic music, opera, ballet, literature and the fine arts, over the years there are increased references to more popular creative forms such as film and pop music. In itself, this was very much in keeping with the tone of series such as *Arena*, which were 'as much concerned with popular culture/design/music as with fine art' (Walker, 1993: 108).

A further shift toward a broader definition of the arts is again suggested during the mid-1990's, with the 1996 BBC Annual Report stating that 'arts coverage can range from the discursive documentary to Barry Norman's review of the week's film releases in *Film 97*' (17). In many ways this reflected the prevailing social climate of the time. The emergent academic discipline of cultural studies in the 1980s alongside an increasingly prevalent leftist liberal sentiment within the creative industries had laid the foundations for a new emphasis on democratising the arts and blurring the boundaries between notions of high and low culture (Walker, 1993). As the Mail on Sunday journalist, Matthew Norman, asserted at the time: 'Just by being there, *The Late Show* says something important: that BBC2 is making precisely the commitment to public service broadcasting we have every right to expect. By being so good, it plays an active



role in setting as well as covering the cultural agenda' (quoted in Wyver, 2007: 63). This was further underpinned at the turn of the century by what Wyver describes as an 'anti-elitist drive to make the arts 'accessible'' in response to the proliferation of digital television channels (2007: 167).

It would appear this broad definition of the arts is one that continues to be promoted by the BBC today, with the current BBC One commissioning steers listing 'the visual arts, performance, craft, architecture or dance' as part of a 'vast and dynamic range of our country's culture' reflected on the channel (2015a). Indeed, when asked during the interviews to define arts broadcasting, commissioners and key decision makers within the BBC drew on incredibly broad definitions encompassing a wide range of cultural activities. As the BBC's director of arts states:

I would say that simply put, the arts are what happen when creativity and self-expression come together, and that can increasingly take many different forms. The more we can think about it that way, and start to challenge our own genre classifications, the more the BBC can be front-footed about being a part of the changing cultural landscape. (Interview 1)

This definition of the arts takes an overtly inclusive approach to include amateur artists alongside professionals, and traditionally marginalised creative forms such as craft alongside more established disciplines within the artistic canon. The use of terms such 'creativity' and 'self-expression' also feature quite prominently in a lot of the BBC's press releases and reports concerning its arts content. From an academic perspective, this broad, 'bottom-up' formulation of the arts is in no way new. As Raymond Williams proposes in his 1957 essay, *Working Class Culture*:

Art that can be defined in advance is unlikely to be worth having. [...] What a socialist society needs to do is not to define its culture in advance, but to clear the channels, so that instead of guesses at a formula there is opportunity for a full response of the human spirit to a life continually unfolding in all its concrete richness and variety. (30)

In a regulatory context, this remit for arts programming aligns with a number of the public purposes set by the BBC's 2017 Royal Charter, such as reflecting 'the diversity of the United Kingdom both in its output and services' and raising 'awareness of the different cultures and alternative viewpoints that make up its society' (5). With Ofcom becoming the BBC's first external regulator from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017, it is expected that the corporation will face greater accountability in regard to the delivery of these ambitions. With the arts, and by extension arts broadcasting, often associated with notions of elitism and exclusion, broadening output to include more everyday expressions of creativity is naturally positioned at the forefront of delivering these commitments.

The notion of being 'front-footed' also suggests a shift toward the BBC taking a more active role in shaping the broader cultural agenda. In its 2014/15 report the BBC describes itself as a 'champion of the arts', stating that their work across television, radio and online has 'strengthened the BBC's position as one of the country's main arts institutions and as a cornerstone of the UK's global success in music' (2015b: 48). Although primarily considered a broadcasting institution, the discursive framing of the BBC as an arts institution in its own right serves to at once situate the organisation within a broader historical narrative of cultural life in Britain, while also creating a sense of legitimacy that broadcasting, and in particular television, typically struggles to establish within the art world (McLoone, 1986; Spigel, 2008). Whereas historically the BBC has often positioned itself as a mere intermediary between the arts and the audience, the prominent rhetoric utilised in reports and press releases today is one of agency and social change. Pushing, and in some ways even subverting traditional genre expectations is presented as a significant part of this strategy, as further illustrated by the following statement by the arts commissioning editor for BBC Radio Four and the BBC World Service:

Part of my role is to help push those definitions and boundaries, and allow certain things to come in. It would be a rare thing for me to throw out an idea saying "that's not the arts because I don't consider that the arts". (Interview 11)

This need to 'push definitions and boundaries', while at the same time not dictating the form these innovations take, is set against the backdrop of both historic and contemporary criticisms around the BBC's 'top-down' approaches to culture, perceived by many to primarily reflect and preserve middle and upper class values (Ang, 1991; Crisell, 1997; Turnock, 2007). With a founding mission to provide 'not just something for everyone, but the *best* of everything', the BBC laid itself open to claims of cultural elitism from its very inception (author's emphasis, Crisell, 1997: 34). Due to its ambiguity, Crisell asserts that 'the best' is a 'notoriously difficult concept which is likely to cause controversy not simply about the merits of programmes within certain categories, but about where those categories should be drawn', going on to state that: 'From the number of programmes it devoted to them, the BBC evidently took the view that 'the best' works were the classical ones' (ibid).

Although the BBC's repertoire of programming has since dramatically expanded to include a wealth of light entertainment programming, the continuation of this elitist approach to the arts is a point of contention both within the press and the BBC itself. As one independent producer commented:

When Tony Hall came in with his particular background of a particular elite - I mean there's no more elite art form, opera was invented to be elite - and he came in and said more art. The first thing he did was to start putting sort of elite performances, things that were pre-existing, onto the screen with that BBC Arts logo. (Interview 8)

This was also the subject of criticism for Guardian journalist Stella Duffy, remarking that especially for those from working-class backgrounds 'a programme citing opera, ballet and still more Shakespeare is most definitely not "arts for everyone"' (2014). Whilst broadcasting opera and theatre may be democratising in terms of availability, reports such as that by the Warwick Commission (2015) demonstrate there are still social and cultural barriers to engagement that need to be taken into consideration. In regard to the broader arts ecology in Britain, the Warwick Commission found that substantially low engagement among 'lower social groups' is 'more the effect of a mismatch between the public's taste and the publicly funded cultural offer' (2015: 34). In

the context of PSB this disparity has in many ways been evident since the BBC's inception, encapsulated by the Reithian attitude that 'while most people do not know what they need, they also do not even know what they want' (Hendy, 2013: 22). Within this context defining 'the arts' has long been situated at the intersection between morality and taste; who gets to decide what type of creative expression will best serve to 'lead the masses to enlightenment'.

### **6.1.2. Maintaining boundaries**

Despite assertions in reports and from key decision makers around broadening parameters, many producers report that in practice the BBC's definition of the arts is still too narrow. In particular, many voiced concern around commissioners favouring a relatively small selection of art forms and well-known figures from the artistic canon for the subject of programmes. This is particularly highlighted in the statements below from two BBC executive producers during separate interviews:

The number of programmes we've made about Leonardo and the Mona Lisa. Michelangelo, Leonardo, Shakespeare, Dickens, they just keep being revisited in different forms. I mean it's partly because I've been in arts television so long. If I were just starting off I'd probably go "Oh! Dickens, great!" but trouble is I've seen them all and they keep on being remade and remade and remade. (Interview 12)

For me culture is a very, very, very broad church. I think sometimes the BBC, what they tend to commission is arts programmes as more established, like here's a programme on painting, and here's a programme on theatre, and I think they could broaden it out an awful lot more. (Interview 7)

In part, such comments reveal how the subject of arts programming is still very much influenced by traditional genre expectations and norms of practice. Concurrent with other areas of specialist factual, representation of the arts in broadcasting is often contextualised in relation to prestigious institutions and figures as a signifier of quality and expertise. As Hayward states, the BBC 'still possesses a marked inferiority complex with regard to traditional 'fine art' media, the result of which is its constant quest for status-by association' (1998: 8). A prominent recent example of this in the arts is Simon Schama's *Face of*

*Britain* (BBC Two, 2015). Made in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery, the institution and its collection are featured prominently in the series. Schama himself is also an established figure within arts broadcasting, alongside being an accomplished author and academic in the field of art history. Both the prestige of the institution and the reputation of the presenter instil a sense of cultural legitimacy and authority that continues to be a significant characteristic of arts broadcasting. However, by its very nature the arts establishment has always privileged certain forms of culture and creative expression. As McClellan states:

Since their inception two centuries ago, museums have been vested with ever greater responsibility to define what qualifies as art. Art is what is shown in museums. Art may also exist outside of museums, of course, but its status as such may be questioned in a way it never is inside a museum, especially where abstract or conceptual works are concerned. (2003, XIII)

This was also a recurring topic of discussion when speaking with the BBC's arts editor. Voicing frustrations around the way the arts are presented both through broadcasting and more broadly, he was highly critical of the role of the establishment in serving to maintain a false dichotomy between 'high' and 'low' culture, of which the BBC intrinsically plays a significant part:

I think the way we talk about the arts creates segregation. I think it's often a way for the establishment to seize control of something it doesn't own, and to a certain extent to humiliate and intimidate, make people think I'm not worthy, I'm not part of that club. Which is rubbish, everything's arts. Jay-Z is arts. Kanye [West] is arts. (Interview 2)

In this regard, a defining feature of arts content is that it is inherently situated within a value system that serves to elevate certain aesthetic forms above others. This is also evidenced within policy and regulation documents concerning the classification of content. For instance, the independent regulator Ofcom currently defines the category of 'Arts and Classical Music' as any programme that covers 'theatre, opera, music, dance, cinema, visual arts, photography, architecture and literature' (2016b: 14). But such terms for creative expression could also be said to encompass popular entertainment

formats such as *The X Factor* (ITV, 2004 -) and *Britain's Got Talent* (ITV, 2007 -), demonstrating how an element of value judgement is still implicit within this definition. As alluded to by the BBC's arts editor, intrinsic in these debates is the apparent dichotomy between high and low culture. Indeed, despite an overriding institutional rhetoric that promotes the contrary, the BBC's director of arts admitted that such concepts were still an inevitable consideration within programme-making and commissioning:

You know when you're doing ballet that you're doing high culture. The right thing is not to think about things in that way, but I think associated with particular art forms, there are notions. Essentially what I'm saying is if I would say I don't think about things, about high and low culture at all, I just think about culture, I would be slightly lying. But I think it's the right way to be thinking, and so I try to as much as possible. (Interview 1)

The concept of high and low culture that emerges within this discourse can be traced back to the nineteenth century and Matthew Arnold's moral distinction of the arts as a force to oppose the apparent 'vulgarity' and 'anarchy' of mass culture (1867). As stated by Ann Bermingham, 'by the second decade of the nineteenth century, "art" and "culture" come to refer to an exclusive realm of refinement and creative genius free from the taint of commerce' and thus culture 'evolved from a term of social inclusion to one of social exclusion' (1995: 4). Within this context discourse surrounding the production, consumption and mediation of the arts in Britain is inseparably entwined with the concepts of elitism and class. Contributing to an on-going debate in the press during the early 1990's around cultural standards on British television, Canadian academic Michael Ignatieff argued that 'in few other cultures are aesthetic standards so saturated with class content [...] Any debate about cultural standards in Britain is necessarily about who gets to talk down to whom, about which accent does the judging' (quoted in Walker, 1993: 3).

The notion that it is predominantly those of higher socio-economic status who define the canon of artistic expression is in no way limited to the cases examined within this study or indeed broadcasting more widely. Rejecting the universal aesthetics presented by enlightenment philosophers such as Kant and Hume, Pierre Bourdieu argues that judgements of taste and value are

intrinsically linked to class structures within society: 'The pure disposition is so universally recognised as legitimate that no voice is heard pointing out that the definition of art, and through it the art of living, is an object of struggle among the classes' (1984: 48). The categorisation of content is in itself a value judgement determined by the ways in which cultural experience and education is stratified within society, rather than an innate quality found in particular forms of culture. According to Steve Edwards, 'the rigorous study involved in the development of connoisseurial modes of attention limits this position to the members of a leisured and wealthy social class' (1999: 7). Such statements also tap into broader beliefs around the necessity of cultural capital to understand, decode and thus recognise 'great' works of art. As Bourdieu states, 'a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded' (1984: 2).

The issue of class and aesthetic standards in arts programming is well documented in studies concerned with both production and the textual aspects of the genre (Walker, 1993; Sexton, 2007; Irwin, 2011; Lee and Corner, 2015). In line with this work, a number of those interviewed for the present study also drew attention to the social and economic backgrounds of those setting the parameters of arts provision. A former BBC producer who now works in the independent sector attributed this as an underlying context behind the narrow range of subjects covered by the BBC's current arts proposition:

There are too many white, male, middle to upper class, Oxbridge educated commissioners in arts who are defining arts and have done for way too long because it's the only world they know. (Interview 20)

More broadly, despite just 1% of the UK population having an Oxbridge education, a 2014 government report entitled *Elitist Britain?* found that 33% of BBC executives had graduated from Oxford or Cambridge, while 26% were privately educated (40). Although it would appear women are relatively well represented in producer and executive producer roles, the heads of commissioning for arts across BBC television, BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, and BBC Arts Online, along with the BBC's director of arts, are positions all occupied by men at the time of writing. As an Oxford graduate and former chief

executive of the Royal Opera House, it is also important not to overlook the role of the BBC's Director-General himself. Coming from what one producer previously described as 'a particular background of a particular elite', Hall's prominent position in terms of spearheading the BBC's current arts 'revival' is also one inherently steeped in the discourses of class politics and cultural elitism. Indeed, a number of commentators regarded Hall's decision in 2014 to axe youth-orientated channel BBC Three, as opposed to the 'highbrow' arts and culture service BBC Four, as evidence of a BBC that had become 'whiter, older and more middle-class' (Brown, 2014).

Evidence that arts broadcasting is still inherently situated within discourses of class and taste is also reflected in how the audience is constructed and subsequently addressed. 'Since aesthetic knowledge and the authority to impose aesthetic standards are in Britain associated with the upper middle class', Bignell asserts, 'the broadcasting of arts programmes and the representation of the arts are imbued with assumptions about class, especially the class of the audience' (2009: 60). As such, the rhetoric surrounding how arts broadcasting is defined captures not only the range of artistic expression on air, but also the image of the audience for whom this programming is created.

### **6.1.3. Persons of taste, intelligence and education**

Although the BBC has historically positioned its arts provision as a democratising force across social classes, the intended audience within this rhetoric has often been aligned with other exclusionary markers such as taste and education. At its launch in 1946, BBC Radio's Third Programme was unapologetically highbrow in both its content and desire to cater to a very particular audience demographic. As asserted in the BBC's proposed terms of reference for the new service:

The Programme is designed to be of artistic and cultural importance. The audience envisaged is one already aware of artistic experience and will include persons of taste, of intelligence and of education; it is therefore selective not casual, and both attentive and critical. The Programme need not cultivate any other audience, and any material that is unlikely to



interest such listeners should be excluded. (quoted in Carpenter, 1996: 11)

Despite the working class constituting 35% of the listeners in 1949 (Briggs, 1979: 76), in 1956 the then controller John Morris blamed falling ratings on the service catering to the 'very people who are in a position to satisfy their cultural needs from many other sources' (20). The demographic of this imagined audience was also evident in the programme's mode of address, which much of the criticism at the time described as sounding 'stuffy and pretentious' and like 'two dons talking to each other' (quoted in Hewett, 2016).

As the BBC's first specialist culture service, the Third Programme reveals further reaching assumptions around how the arts audience was and in many ways continues to be constructed. In her seminal work around television audiences, Ien Ang argues that, from an institutional perspective, the very concept of 'the audience' bears little relation to the everyday practices and identities of media consumers. Rather it is a discursive construct, 'taken-for-grantedly defined as an unknown but knowable set of people [...] constructed from the vantage point of the institutions in the interest of the institutions' (1991: 2). Whereas an audience in a theatre, for instance, is to some degree knowable in that it can be directly observed, the television audience is, according to Ang, a 'far more elusive phenomenon' (34). In this regard, gathering so-called 'factual' knowledge in terms of audience figures and more 'informal' presumptions around the types of content that will appeal to certain demographics allows broadcasters to develop output strategies and predict the success (or otherwise) of certain types of programming. For the BBC the arts audience were traditionally a 'cultured minority' of taste, education, and undeniably, class and this was reflected in its programming. 'Consistent with its conservative and elitist cultural perspective', Crisell asserts, the BBC 'recruited most of its own staff from the educated middle class, and this provided the social background and moral values of the audience it constructed' (1997: 44).

Despite a notable shift in recent years toward a more inclusive formulation of the arts audience, this concept of the educated and culturally astute minority

audience continues to persist. This is particularly evident in the branding and rhetoric surrounding the BBC's dedicated digital television service for the arts and culture, BBC Four. Launched in 2002 and initially branded as 'a place to think', journalist Toby Young describes BBC Four as 'pitched squarely at the class Keynes referred to as "the educated bourgeoisie"' despite the BBC's overt avoidance of the term 'highbrow' (2003). In a similar fashion to The Third Programme, from its inception BBC Four has positioned itself as a niche service that is 'unashamedly expert, undiluted and in depth', and for 'the most demanding audiences' (BBC Four Commissioning, 2016). However, as Young acknowledges, from its launch the channel came under scrutiny for its 'unambiguously upmarket' and 'elitist image' (2003). Similar criticisms have also been made against the Third Programme's successor, BBC Radio 3. Speaking at the British Library Radio Festival in 2015, prominent broadcaster and former newspaper editor Janet Street-Porter described the service as a 'bastion of cosy middle class listening' that assumed 'only one kind of person listens to classical music' (quoted in Plunkett, 2015). Referring to the tone of BBC programming more broadly, Street-Porter went on to assert that 'BBC bosses are Waitrose people through and through. They seem to have decided that middle class and middle of the road is the way to reach their audience' (ibid).

The suggestion that a significant proportion of those interested in the arts are excluded within this dominant middle-class mode of address is also evidenced by the few published accounts of audience research within arts broadcasting. Preceding the launch of its strand *Signals* in 1988, market research by Channel 4 reported that '70% of the public said they would watch more arts programmes if the latter abandoned "their off-putting tone"' (Walker, 1993: 196). Research conducted by the BBC in 1994 also found that listeners of Radio 3 felt the station was too "stuffy" and 'highbrow' leading to a 'feeling of being excluded and not welcome' (BBC, 2004b: 8). More recent statistics also reveal apparent discrepancies between levels of cultural engagement among the general population and the narrowly defined audience demographic the current arts proposition appears to prioritise. As Telegraph columnist Sarah Crompton comments in relation to arts content increasingly moving to BBC Four: 'While it is true that not all the population care about culture, a vast proportion do: as

many people go to the theatre as to Premiership football matches' (2013). This is further supported by the data gathered through the DCMS Taking Part survey, which in September 2016 reported that 77% of participants had engaged with the arts in the previous 12 months (1).

Within this context, the BBC now balances precariously between self-consciously promoting an anti-elitist stance, while at the same time attempting to refute accusations of 'dumbing down'. In his recent manifesto for reinventing the BBC during the next Charter period, Radio and Education director, James Purnell, promised a shift toward 'expertise, without the elitism' across the BBC's documentary output. Writing for the BBC blog, Purnell drew particular attention to the upcoming series, *Civilisations*, which he described as:

...inspired by Kenneth Clark's seminal documentary series, but in many ways the opposite of the original. Rather than a single view of civilisation, we will have three presenters. Rather than looking at Western civilisation, we will look at many, and question the very concept of civilisation. (2017)

In contrast to Clark's 1969 series, this greater plurality of voices, both literal and figurative, is framed as symbolic of the BBC's efforts to distance itself from the paternalistic image of 'the Auntie that dispensed culture from on high' (Purnell, 2017). Nevertheless, the present research reveals the need for greater institutional change behind the scenes if these ambitions are to be fully realised in practice beyond the remit of token series.

The notion of being *ahead* of public taste rather than just pandering to it served to distinguish PSB from commercial systems during the BBC's formative years. However, criticism examined thus far in regard to the range of arts content available on the BBC highlights a more contemporary dilemma within PSB. On the one hand, while often branded as 'elitist', the high arts provide a visible justification for continued public funding as they represent minority interests that theoretically may not otherwise be met by commercial broadcasters. On the other hand, there is now increased pressure on the BBC to democratise and diversify the representation of its arts output to appeal to broader audiences and reflect the contemporary cultural landscape. In this regard, defining arts

broadcasting is not only evaluative in terms of taste; it also holds strategic significance within wider debates around the purpose and relevance of PSB today.

## **6.2. Arts broadcasting as a public service**

Throughout its history the narrative of arts broadcasting on the BBC has been unequivocally intertwined with that of delivering public service. Since the corporation's formative years discourse around broadcasting the arts has been primarily framed in terms of cultural engagement and enrichment. The Arnoldian ideals on which PSB was founded instilled the belief that 'exposure to the great works of art, poetry, music and literature could help us rise above our narrow, selfish lives' (Hendy, 2013: 46). This is perhaps most clearly articulated in Henry Warren's reflections on the BBC's patronage of the arts for the corporation's yearbook in 1934. Addressing a hypothetical BBC audience who proclaim that the broadcaster's job is to 'amuse them', he asserts:

Certainly we will do our very best to amuse you; but we shall not stop at that. We have a further responsibility towards you. We believe that we can also give you something which, in the end, may perhaps help you to rise clear of those miseries. We can give you great music, poetry, drama and prose. (62)

Such statements encapsulate the prevailing thought at the time that PSB had a duty to be a transformational force in the lives of the people for whom it serves and the society of which they are a part (Tracey, 1998). The responsibility to provide 'great music, poetry, drama and prose' was largely influenced by Matthew Arnold's definition of high culture as both a moral good and a means by which to cultivate both the individual and a more equal, civilised society.

Although the discourse surrounding BBC arts broadcasting today is, almost self-consciously, less grandiose and paternalistic, the notion that the arts are inherently beneficial to the individual and society still serves as justification for their significance within the wider public service provision. As part of its public purposes, the BBC lists arts output as one of the key contributions to ensuring 'enrichment for all audiences by covering a wide range of cultural activities'

(2016a). This is also echoed on the BBC One arts commissioning page, which states that ‘the arts enrich our lives, whether we are spectators or active participants’ (2015). Such statements capture the current stage in what Hendy calls the ‘steady process of democratization in cultural programming’ that first began 1920’s (2013: 48). Rather than a model of PSB that promotes ‘*virtual* cultivation – where a ‘higher’ culture enriches and the lower reaches of society’, the public service values of arts broadcasting outlined above suggests a ‘*horizontal*’ approach to culture ‘where we viewers and listeners are enriched, through being quietly exposed to the fullest range of cultural experiences’ (ibid: 68, author’s emphasis).

In this way, the arts remain an integral part of the BBC’s identity as a public service broadcaster. As the BBC’s creative director stated, ‘it’s a very fundamental part of what the BBC does. I mean absolutely at the core of what we do’ (Interview 3). This was a sentiment also articulated through numerous references throughout the interviews to the founding principles of the BBC to ‘inform, educate, and entertain’, with one BBC executive producer asserting that ‘the three Reithian themes are very much in arts broadcasting. They’re sort of always on my mind; educate, entertain, inform’ (Interview 6). The importance of these themes within the BBC’s wider branding strategy is also emphasised in its official guidelines, which state: ‘[The BBC] exists to enrich people’s lives through high-quality and distinctive content for everyone – to inform, educate and entertain. This is the essence of the BBC brand’ (2012: 32). Arts broadcasting is often presented as symbolic of these core public service values not only within BBC itself, but also within political and industry discourse more broadly. In its definition of public service broadcasting, the independent regulator Ofcom lists arts programmes alongside news coverage and religious broadcasts as examples of programmes ‘that are broadcast for the public benefit rather than for purely commercial purposes’ (2016c). In its 2016 white paper the DCMS also define arts as a key ‘public service genre’ alongside current affairs, religion and children’s programming.

### 6.2.1. Branding distinctiveness

At a time in which the BBC is under increased pressure to demonstrate distinctiveness, there is a sense that the prevalence of these Reithian principles within arts broadcasting also contributes to the unique character of its output.

As the arts lead for BBC Scotland stated:

I think for the BBC to survive it has to keep being different. We shouldn't become like our rivals at ITV. The things that we do that are different are the things we were born to do in the first instance - to educate, entertain and inform, and I think arts is a crucial part of that. (Interview 7)

Such accounts exemplify a recurring theme throughout many of the interviews that the BBC's arts programming in itself demonstrates a strong commitment to public service values and provides an alternative to commercial rivals such as ITV and Sky. Within this context it is increasingly important that the BBC is *seen* to be investing in and promoting the arts, particularly in the run up to Charter renewal. This is strongly evident in the recent prominence of logos and other visual signifiers, which, as Johnson argues, are 'central to the consumer's experience of a wide range of content and services created by the corporation' (2013: 319). In line with BBC News and BBC Sport, BBC Arts also has its own logo and ident which appear before television programmes and on associated online platforms such as the BBC Arts website.



*BBC Arts logo*

Although the visual nature of the logo determines its absence from radio, audio programmes are still promoted under the BBC Arts branding through a weekly email newsletter and on social media. Further to this, when attending live BBC radio programme recordings at Hay Literary Festival in 2015, the researcher observed that general BBC branding featured prominently in the venue.



*Example of BBC branding at Hay Festival 2015*

In an official blog announcing its launch, the BBC's director of arts makes a point of addressing his use of uppercase to refer to 'BBC ARTS', stating that 'we're treating it as a new brand within the BBC in the way we treat NEWS or SPORT. As of today, regardless of where a piece of output originates, if it is about the arts, it is part of something else too' (BBC Blog, 2014). This 'part of something else' would seem to refer to a wider arts provision available on the BBC. A number of those interviewed, both in production and strategy, referred to the challenge of making audiences and policymakers aware of the quantity of arts content available. As BBC Arts' head of digital development states:

It's also a way of badging our output so that people actually realise we're doing it. You know, because one of our paradoxical challenges for the BBC is we really do do so much and yet not everybody realises we do so much. (Interview 5)

Echoing this sentiment, one BBC executive producer also highlighted the importance of increasing the visibility of content that usually commands a relatively small audience:

Branding for the arts is the same as branding for anything else; it's to bring people to it. But it's also about making it more visible just how much we do across the whole of the BBC. We do so much and there are lots of small audiences, certainly on the radio tuning in. (Interview 6)

Highlighted in the above statement is the strategic value of such branding initiatives. Here parallels can also be drawn with the rhetoric Carey suggests is often employed by arts institutions to secure public funding: 'Since it cannot be made accessible to a large public, it is argued, everyone must help pay for it, otherwise the minority who like it would not be able to afford it' (2005: 46). Branding strategies such as this provide a visible rationale for the status of PSB within the UK media landscape and its continued funding. As Sorensen asserts, 'both the BBC and Channel 4 use documentary as one of the main genres with which to promote their brands, differentiate themselves from their competitors and demonstrate their commitment to serious, public service programming' (2013: 36). For the BBC, promoting areas of provision which typically constitute minority-interest programming, such as arts, serves to represent an approach which privileges public service value over commercial viability.

The role of the arts in demonstrating distinctiveness is particularly apparent in the comparisons a number of interviewees made between the BBC's output and commercial broadcasters. When one BBC executive producer referred to Sky Arts during an interview the tone was mostly dismissive, drawing attention to its low level of social impact and monetary motivations behind the service:

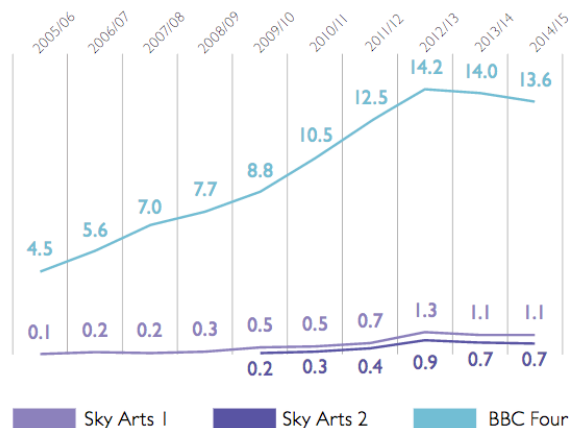
There's Sky Arts of course, which nobody watches, no one. I mean I pay extra to have it and I think I've watched it three times. [...] It's a marketing tool to get middle class people to buy Sky subscriptions. They



think they wouldn't touch it because they think it's trash TV, but oh they've got arts there must be something on there for us. (Interview 6)

This is a statement that reflects wider cynicism toward the involvement of commercial broadcasters in arts programming and specialist factual more broadly. Following the acquisition of Artsworld by Sky in 2005 (rebranded as Sky Arts in 2007) a number of commentators accused the dedicated satellite service of being merely 'a kind of cultural fig-leaf to off-set against the remorseless commercialism of its sister channels' (Wyver, 2007: 80). In regard to audiences and impact, the BBC's response to the most recent Charter review also compared the weekly reach of BBC Four compared to Sky Arts 1 and Sky Arts 2, with BBC Four reaching 13.6% of the UK population in 2014/15 compared to the 1.1% and 0.7% reached by Sky Arts 1 and 2 respectively (pictured right, 2015a: 27). In an interview with the Radio Times in 2012, then BBC Director-General George Entwistle was also critical of Sky Arts' limited reach, stating 'I don't have a passion for creating tiny niche stuff that only incredibly small numbers of people see. If you're going to do arts, aspire to half a million people watching, not 5,000!' (Quoted in Preston, 2012).

**BBC Four is one of the UK's most popular digital channels**  
 (Weekly reach to the UK population (%), all homes)



### 6.2.2. Challenges to market failure

With an average audience share of around 0.10% (BARB, 2016) it might be assumed that Sky Arts is more of a political opportunity than a commercial one. In a 2009 House of Lords select committee on the future of PSB, Sky Arts was cited as an example of how 'the market can be relied upon to provide public service content of sufficient quantity and quality' (9). This strongly undermines the BBC's discursive use of market failure as a rationale for continued public funding. Moreover, in regard to mainstream entertainment formats, the BBC has faced growing scrutiny around the distinctiveness of its provision compared to

that offered by the commercial market. In 2015 BBC One's painting competition format *The Big Painting Challenge* was met with overt criticism for being derivative of Sky Arts' *Portrait Artist of the Year*. In a review for the Independent Ellen Jones remarks:

When Sky Arts launched *Portrait Artist of the Year* in late 2013, they hit on a combination of high art and low television that deserved to reach a larger audience. So it's no surprise that the BBC has finally nicked the concept and launched their version, *The Big Painting Challenge*. (2015)

Indeed, the similarity between the programmes is undeniable. Both feature two celebrity presenters with no obvious connection to the art world; the narrative of both programmes is structured within the format of a competition; and both are almost identical in their aim to find the UK's (although Ireland is also included in the case of Sky Arts) best amateur artist. Even the taglines to describe the series are strikingly similar with *Portrait Artist of the Year* described as 'Joan Bakewell and Frank Skinner present the search for the Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year' (Sky, 2013), while *The Big Painting Challenge* is billed as 'Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon lead a nationwide search for Britain's best amateur artist' (BBC, 2015c).



*Promotional image for Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year*



*Promotional image for The Big Painting Challenge*

The notion that Sky Arts may actually be outpacing the BBC in terms of arts provision was also a topic of discussion when speaking with the former head of arts at BBC Cymru Wales who is now the creative director of an independent production company. As opposed to a mere ‘cultural fig leaf’ or marketing exercise, the interviewee praised Sky Arts for their innovative mainstream formats and a willingness to invest in more niche content than their public service counterparts:

In a sense Sky Arts has stolen the march on public service broadcasters in terms of delivering productions which engage with broad audiences so that you are bringing more people to the table. Then of course Sky Arts is also not afraid to put 3D opera on or live relays or a range of concerts and performance that everybody else had let go. I must be honest; I think most of us feel well, well done to Sky Arts. Somebody had to do that and they’ve managed to halt the demise of arts programming. (Interview 14)

With its commitment to screening highbrow content such as opera and ballet alongside more popular series such as *Portrait Artist of the Year* (2013 -), a number of commentators argue that Sky Arts now fills a gap in provision that the BBC has recently struggled to occupy. Writing in response to Sky Arts’ proposal to televise four of Chekhov’s plays with all-star casts, Michael Billington found it ‘astonishing that Sky Arts is currently occupying territory that

once would have been claimed by public-service broadcasting' going on to assert that 'the BBC's abject failure is Sky's opportunity' (2010).

All this might be to suggest that commercial broadcasters such as Sky are actually better positioned within the contemporary media landscape to provide arts content that traditionally commands relatively small audiences alongside more overtly commercial formats. Although these subscription-based services do not operate under a remit to serve minority interests, unlike the BBC they also do not contend with the perennial public service issue of trying to be 'all things to all people'. As Doyle states, 'the programming strategies deployed by pay-television operators involve specialization and differentiation between different audience segments according to tastes and interests, in much the same way as takes place in consumer magazine publishing' (2002: 77). Operating under a multichannel subscription-based model also allows for the funding of special interest channels to be supplemented by more popular services in terms of advertising revenue and sponsorship. At a time when the BBC is under increased scrutiny and pressure to demonstrate value for money, it could be argued that such funding models provide a more conducive platform for the provision of arts programming which traditionally does not attract large audiences. As a prominent example of how 'public service genres' are being served by commercial broadcasters, the case of Sky Arts gives further credence to Weeds' assertion that 'in the digital world consumer market failures no longer provide a strong basis for major public intervention in television broadcasting' (2013: 15).

Nevertheless, the present findings strongly suggest that market failure continues to be a prevalent framework by which the BBC's value is judged. As already discussed, many of those within the BBC itself referred to the corporation and its public service values as integral to arts broadcasting, even to the point of being overtly dismissive of the capacity for other broadcasters to provide such content. However, within this rhetoric a far more fundamental value of PSB is often neglected. Writing back in 1924 Reith saw the technological affordances of broadcasting as determining its public good, stating that 'most of the good things of this world are badly distributed and most

people have to go without them. Wireless is a good thing, but it may be shared by all alike, for the same outlay and to the same extent' (217). Frequently missing from contemporary debate both within the broadcasting industry itself and wider political discourse is the social value of this universality, which subscription-based funding models by their very definition impede. Commenting on Sky Arts' limited reach, one BBC arts presenter and freelance journalist asserted:

It comes back to audience, which is it matters that stuff is free access, that it's shared, that you know what you're watching loads of people around the country are watching and you can share in that national conversation. (Interview 16)

Although arts programming does tend to command significantly smaller audiences than genres such as drama, current affairs and sport and as such would not be thought of as universal in its *appeal*, PSB occupies an important role in making the arts universally *available* on a 'free at the point of use' basis. Indeed, even if the BBC is criticised for failing to address the more complex social and cultural barriers to participation, there still seems to be a wider appreciation for the availability of its arts programming. This is also echoed in a response to the government's 2016 Green Paper, in which the BBC argue that 'what makes it possible to have a licence fee to fund news coverage or documentaries or live classical music is the broad support that comes from providing programmes for all' (24). However, this is not to assume that the BBC's assertion 'because everyone pays, everyone benefits' (21) should go uncontested. To further analyse how this commitment to universality and public service is delivered in practice attention will now be given to the provision of regional arts programming with particular reference to arts broadcasting strategy and production in Wales.

### **6.3. Delivering public service: nations and regions**

As a publically funded institution the BBC has a requirement to 'represent the UK, its nations, regions and communities' (BBC, 2016a). However, as noted by Charlotte Higgins in her account of the corporation and its origins, 'the relationship between the BBC and the UK at large has never been uncontested

or straightforward' (2015: 196). From its very beginning the provision of regional programming has also been concomitant with increased regulation and policies of centralisation. This was in large part symptomatic of a prevailing attitude that 'considered local and provincial culture to be inferior to that of London' (Hajkowski, 2010: 118). As Crisell succinctly describes:

The BBC's cultural conservatism was typical of the time, in that broadly speaking it perceived the distinction between the good and the inferior as corresponding not only to the distinction between the preferences of the 'educated' and 'uneducated' or of those 'higher up' and 'lower down' the social scale, but to that which exists between 'capital city' and 'the regions'. (1997: 36)

Within this context, regional directors worked within the remit of: 'Take from London what you cannot do better yourself, and do yourself what London cannot give you' (Briggs, 1995: 285). As Asa Briggs states: 'Roger Eckersley talked in 1928 of 'fostering local debates and discussions', but he saw the main work of the provincial stations as secondary, something which should be paid for only if there were adequate funds in the purse' (1995: 285). More recently, Ofcom's 2015 review of public service broadcasting reported that 'nations and their regions are the areas where there is the greatest mismatch between public expectations of PSB and how it is delivering in practice' (2015a: 4). Further to this, the government's public consultation in response to BBC Charter review stated that although 'the BBC has responded to the need to produce more in, and better represent, our nations and regions [...] some suggest that it is too London-centric' (2015: 2).

### **6.3.1. Fostering divergencies**

Whilst much has been written both in academia and within policy around the BBC's present and past representation of the nations and regions of the UK (Harvey and Robins, 1994; Blandford and Lacey, 2012; McElroy and Noonan, 2016; McElroy et al. 2017), the history of regional arts broadcasting specifically is more difficult to procure due to a dearth in literature concerning this area of provision. Within an institutional context, the earliest references to what now might be defined as arts programming from the nations and regions can be found in the second of the BBC's annual year books, published in 1929. Before

discussing the output for various areas of the UK in turn the report sets out a rationale for regional programming as a public service as follows:

Much has been said and written of the effect which broadcasting is having in raising standards of taste and standardising English pronunciation. In equalising opportunities for all countries, classes and conditions of men of hearing the best of culture and entertainment, surely broadcasting can at the same time foster local divergencies, keep alive the memory of historical association and import into its programmes the colour derived from romantic ceremonies and dialect survivals. (87)

According to Briggs, the inception of regional broadcasting in Britain was largely motivated by a need to begin ‘the necessary task of giving listeners in all parts of the country the chance of listening to ‘alternative programmes’” (1995: 273). Thomas Hajkowski contextualises this point further, noting that ‘if the BBC failed to deliver alternative programming, the government might have considered revoking its monopoly status in order to give radio listeners a measure of choice’ (2010: 116). Still, the notion of fostering ‘local divergencies’ through the arts was at odds with the assumption within much of the BBC that ‘raising standards of taste’ was a product of nationalising London’s cultural offering. ‘If national culture was morally uplifting’, Sylvia Harvey and Kevin Robins state, ‘regional cultures, in contrast, were seen as no more than expressions of the everyday life and manners of particular places, and were generally considered, in the pejorative, Johnsonian sense, as ‘provincial’” (1994: 42). Within this context regional coverage of the arts was limited to programming considered distinct enough, and that is to say, lesser than that produced in the capital (Briggs, 1995; Hajkowski, 2010).

The inconsistent and precarious nature of regional arts broadcasting during this period is reflected in the BBC’s 1929 year book. From the programmes described, the majority of output appears to be concentrated in Scotland, with comparatively extensive mention of Scottish theatre, opera, poetry and classical music. On the other hand, the report’s description of broadcasting in Northern Ireland is predominantly concerned with how it has contributed to improving the nation’s political situation, rather than specific content. Within this context the BBC’s establishment of a permanent orchestra in Belfast is described as ‘an

incalculable asset, not only to the broadcasting service, but also to the community at large' (93). Similarly, there is little mention of actual programming in Wales with attention instead focusing on the value of radio in the 'depressed valleys' of South Wales and only a brief nod to 'the excellence of the National Orchestra of Wales' (96). In regard to the English regions the report goes on to cite 'the North of England's contributions to wireless programmes' through classical music concerts broadcast from cities such as Manchester and Liverpool (99). Coverage in the Midlands also featured 'increased output of serious music' alongside claims that programming had been 'enriched by contributions of considerable importance from the artistic resources of London without suffering any loss of local talent and personality' (102).

From the 1930's until the 1970's the status of regional arts broadcasting as reported in an institutional context becomes harder to discern. Output from the nations and regions within the BBC year books is strikingly sparse during this period, often relegated to a mere few pages of coverage. It is not until 1971 that regional production and broadcasting is again subject to more detailed evaluation, with the eventual inclusion of reports from the National Broadcasting Councils for Scotland and Wales in 1974 and then also Northern Ireland from 1983. In 1985 the National Broadcasting Council for Scotland reported that alongside specialist music and serious programming, Scotland's greatest network contribution came from the Music and Arts department (99). In comparison, the few arts programmes cited by the National Broadcasting Councils for Wales and Northern Ireland were regional in their output, with reference to Radio Wales' weekly magazine *On Show* and BBC Northern Ireland's flagship television series *Gallery*.

The mixed fortunes of regional arts broadcasting continue to be evident almost two decades later, as outlined in the BBC's 1994 annual report. Although there is no mention of arts coverage from the Broadcasting Council of Northern Ireland or the English National Forum, the report highlights the 'exceptional' output from BBC Scotland's in Music and Arts, going on to state that 'the distinctive nature of the contemporary arts in Scotland should continue to be represented in network output' (19). Interestingly, BBC Cymru Wales is also 'commended' for



its 'range of quality factual programmes and the excellence of its arts output and activity' (18). As one interviewee who led BBC Cymru Wales' arts strategy during this time recalls:

There was a bit of a spurt in the early and mid 90's in arts television and I forget how that related to Charter renewal, but it probably did. But certainly there was a bit of a spurt and in Wales that was driven hard by Geraint Talfan Davies who believed in arts television because he believed it was crucial that the nation had the cultural reflection of itself. [...] We've probably never quite recovered that energy since. (Interview 9)

The brief growth in Welsh arts broadcasting during the first half of the 1990's can be set within the emergence of what Harvey and Robins refer to as 'a new agenda of regionalism' in which, 'Both politicians and broadcasters have begun to recognise new forms of identity and authority deriving from the differences of region, race, age, sexuality and gender' (1994: 44). Further to this, from the 1980's onwards there was also increased recognition and emphasis on 'the importance of broadcasting both for the local economy and for local cultures' (ibid). As controller of BBC Cymru Wales during the 1990's, Geraint Talfan Davies was publicly committed to strengthening arts output (Brown, 1993) and since leaving the role in 2000 has served as Chair of numerous arts organisations including the Welsh National Opera, Cardiff Bay Arts Trust and Arts Council of Wales. Under Talfan Davies' tenure, BBC Cymru Wales saw a number of new and innovative arts series and strands. Perhaps most notable of these was critically acclaimed magazine programme, *The Slate*, described by Jon Gower as 'a programme which satisfied both the general viewership and the arts cognoscenti' (2009: 76).

However, as alluded to by the interviewee above, the narrative of Welsh arts provision over the past couple of decades is one of relative decline. As asserted the former head of arts at BBC Cymru Wales who now works in the independent sector:

To be honest, cutting to the chase, we've ended now where there's precious little arts provision in a Wales context. There are programmes commissioned that have an arts sensibility and we've made quite a lot of

films about writers and the usual things. But there's no real strategy for it at the moment and it's a weakness in the overall public service provision. (Interview 14)

Despite claims by Tony Hall that the BBC is currently 'the biggest and best arts broadcaster anywhere in the world' (BBC Media Centre, 2014), there is little evidence to support this statement in a Welsh context. Although BBC Radio Wales does feature *The Radio Wales Arts Show*, a weekly 30-minute arts magazine programme, there are few regular returning arts series or strands on BBC television. A notable exception to this is the BBC One BAFTA nominated series *Great Welsh Writers*, with two series in 2014 and a special on Alun Lewis in 2015 to mark the centenary of his birth. However, as the executive producer for the programme acknowledged: 'That's the arts provision on BBC Wales done and dusted. There's not much else out there' (Interview 14).

### **6.3.2. The decline of arts broadcasting in Wales**

In a broader PSB context, the production and representation of English-language programming concerning Welsh arts and culture is severely limited. Since 2008 ITV Wales' output has fallen by 73%, constituting just 5.5 hours in 2015 (IWA, 2015: 22). With much of this already substantially reduced output centred on news and current affairs, ITV Wales produces few arts programmes. One recent exception is *My Grandfather Dylan*, a single documentary commissioned to mark 100 years since the birth of Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas in 2014.

Unlike the BBC and ITV, Channel 4 does not offer any specific regional programming or services. Nevertheless, as a public service broadcaster Channel 4 must still work within a remit to 'to reflect the lives and concerns of different communities and cultural interests and traditions within the United Kingdom, and locally in different parts of the United Kingdom' set by section 264 of the 2003 Communications Act. In setting the conditions of Channel 4's most recent licence renewal in 2014, Ofcom increased the broadcaster's 'out of England' production quota from 3% to 9% in output and spend by 2020 (18). However, the potential of this to increase the representation of Welsh arts and culture appears unlikely, with Ofcom stating that these productions 'may not

necessarily reflect the place in which they are made; nor should Nations producers be limited to making such programming' (3).

Since its inception in 1982, the Welsh-language public service broadcaster, S4C, has operated under the objectives to 'reflect and strengthen Welsh cultural heritage' and 'support Welsh music and arts' (BBC Trust, 2013: 7). Within this remit, S4C has provided a strong arts proposition compared to its English-language counterparts. For instance, in 2006-07 S4C broadcast 193 hours of music and arts output, compared with just 31 hours across the BBC and ITV (Talfan Davies, 2009: 16). Nevertheless, whilst music and arts programming constituted 133 hours of S4C's output in 2014/15, compared to 12.9 hours on BBC Wales (S4C, 2016: 113), a broader narrative of decline and the impact of increased financial pressures can also be identified even here. Following the 2010 General Election funding for S4C was reduced by 24% (IWA, 2015: 6). Within this context, spend on Music and Arts programming has declined year-on-year between 2010 and 2015, dropping from £39,104 to £30,975 during this period (ibid: 31).

With regard to the BBC, a primary contributing factor to the decline in English-language arts provision was actually a push to increase content production within the nations and regions. The late 2000's saw major changes to the organisational structure of the BBC in terms of where funding is allocated within certain areas of provision. As the arts lead for BBC Scotland explained:

In terms of the arts we had always made a lot of arts programmes but it was kind of sanctioned that Glasgow and London would be the two main places to make arts programmes, then there's also a small enclave of arts specialists in Bristol as well. So we tend to get to make most of the arts programmes and I think that's really important. (Interview 7)

The establishment of these 'centres of excellence' were largely the result of a commitment by the BBC in 2008 to increase spending on programming outside of London to 50% of its overall budget by 2016 (BBC, 2008). While the achievement of this target has predominantly been bolstered by the relocation of high profile series out of London and the production of big budget drama in

Wales, factual programming and the arts now makes up a significant proportion of BBC Scotland's output. At the time of writing, the production of a number of series is split between London and Glasgow, such as BBC One's flagship arts strand, *Imagine* (2003 -) and BBC Two's latest topical magazine programme, *Artsnight* (2015-). BBC Scotland has also seen a number of successful single-series landmark commissions such as *The Story of Scottish Art* (2015), which aired on BBC Two Scotland before moving to the network at a later date. BBC Scotland is also part or wholly responsible for a number of on-going arts series such as BBC Four's *What Do Artists Do All Day?* (2013 -). Further to this, radio arts provision is relatively strong with the two-hour *Janice Forsyth Show* (2010-) airing every weekday afternoon and critically acclaimed single series such as *A History of Scottish Literature* (2014). BBC Arts Online is also based in Glasgow, facilitating collaboration between BBC Scotland and cultural organisations in the region and enabling a more immediate response to unfolding news and events concerning the area.

This concentration of resources inevitably raises concerns around where this leaves the rest of the UK outside London and Glasgow. The practical challenges of delivering arts provision for Wales within this context is recalled by the former head of arts at BBC Cymru Wales, who stated:

What I realised though as I took the role on was that all the network funding had been apportioned to Scotland on the basis that the music centre of excellence funding had been apportioned to Cardiff. So Cardiff became the centre of excellence for music production and Scotland got the network money. The problem for Wales was it didn't have any funding allocated to it within a BBC context to deliver that proposition. So we had to shoot round the edges then really to just pick up an extra little project here and there. (Interview 14)

Rather than having a distinct category of its own, the BBC Cymru Wales annual reports group Music and Arts with Drama, Comedy and Entertainment, making the exact number of output hours for arts programming is difficult to discern. According to the Institute of Welsh Affairs (IWA), output of Arts and Music programming 'was limited', constituting just 12.9 hours in 2014/15 (28). Writing in 2009, former BBC Cymru Wales arts and media correspondent, Jon Gower,

asserted that ‘quantitatively, television arts coverage in Wales is inadequate to reflect the range and breadth of current activity’ (75). As the data above suggests this is a trend that has continued, if not increased, with a more recent report from the Arts Council of Wales stating that ‘in recent years we have seen a decline in capability of BBC Cymru Wales to deliver a cultural offer to Wales. [...] Coverage of the arts in Wales has been neglected’ (2015: 5). Despite BBC Cymru Wales claiming that they continue to put ‘Welsh arts, culture and new writing at the heart of our schedule’ (2016: 11), it would appear this dearth of funding has inevitably been reflected in arts output.

With Ofcom reporting that Wales has seen ‘the biggest decrease, by more than a fifth, in spend on nations’ programming since 2008’ (2014: 11) and overall broadcast hours falling by 47.8% between 2009 and 2014 (2015b: 58), BBC Cymru Wales has been under pressure to increase its English-language output in spite of limited funding. This is a particularly chilly climate for the arts, with concerns raised around increased resources being directed toward peak time factual entertainment series, which the former head of arts for BBC Cymru Wales describes as an attempt to mask an overall decline in hours:

The BBC has recalibrated its output so arts is not seen as the must have, and what is a must have is 7:30pm in peak where they’ll do a factual entertainment series. Nothing wrong with a factual entertainment series, but you could argue is that really what BBC Wales should be doing? It’s public service, so should we be doing that? Yes, it represents contemporary Wales. That’s the argument for it, that BBC Wales should reflect contemporary Wales in all its forms. But obviously the funding doesn’t really stretch to cover. (Interview 14)

A concentration in funding more broadly is also noted by Ofcom who state that ‘PSB broadcasters have shifted investment towards cheaper genres over the review period (e.g. replacing drama with relatively cheaper entertainment programmes) and they have also reduced spend outside evening peak time’ (2015: 9). In a Welsh context, factual entertainment series such as *Live Longer Wales* (2015) possess public service value in terms of promoting public health and representing contemporary Wales, whilst being relatively low cost and low risk compared to more traditional documentary and factual formats. However,

many would argue that rather than popular purchase, limited funding should prioritise areas of provision that are unlikely to be fulfilled by the commercial sector (i.e. specialist factual) to both add plurality and strengthen the case for publicly funded broadcasters. One of the prominent issues raised in the government's recent public consultation was around 'the distinctiveness of the programmes the BBC delivers, and whether it uses its broad purposes to act in too a commercial way, chasing ratings rather than delivering distinctive, quality programming that other providers would not' (2015: 2). Further to this, as many interviewees emphasise the influence and role of the BBC within Britain's wider cultural landscape, it would seem apparent that a strong arts proposition is pivotal in sustaining the range of output necessary to nurture a thriving production sector and wider arts ecology in Wales and promote Welsh arts institutions across the UK.

### **6.3.2. An invisible nation**

Concerns have also been raised around the degree to which the BBC is fulfilling its public service commitments to 'reflect the different nations and regions of the UK' on a network scale. Although spend on first-run UK-network regional productions has increased by 1.5% in Wales since 2008 (Ofcom, 2015: 10), this has predominantly been bolstered by high-profile dramas which often do little to reflect the unique cultural identity of the nation in which it is produced. As the chief executive for the Arts Council of Wales asserted:

It's also about the representation of Wales and the culture of Wales on the BBC, and that's been slightly more challenging I think, particularly given the division between BBC Cymru Wales and BBC UK, and the fact that it is more difficult to get network coverage for things made in Wales. Also people talk a lot about well, isn't it wonderful we've got *Sherlock* and *Casualty*, all these things made in Wales. Well yes, up to a point, but in a sense Wales is just providing a warehouse for these things to be made. Of course it has benefits, but I think we'd like to see more Welsh product reflected, particularly on the network. (Interview 17)

This is a sentiment also echoed in the findings of a report by McElroy and Noonan on the proliferation of BBC drama production in Wales, highlighting concerns that most were 'not explicitly Welsh in their setting, dialogue, casting, thematic address of mode of address to viewers' and as such had 'not led to

significant change in Wales's visibility on the UK television network' (2015: 3). Further to this, despite efforts toward decentralising production, a 2016 report by the Welsh Affairs Committee stated that this 'has not resulted in an increase in the portrayal of the nations and regions on screen' (25). In this regard Wales continues to be the 'invisible nation on UK television screens' described by the Wales Broadcasting Committee in 2008 (BBC). As the BBC's Centre of Excellence for drama and the high international profile of many of its productions such as *Doctor Who* and *Sherlock*, it follows that much of the discourse around the issue of representation is framed predominantly in reference to this genre. However, it is also important not to overlook the value of the arts in reflecting Welsh cultural life and fostering a more vibrant and representative public service provision across the network. As Gower concludes in his critique of the state of arts broadcasting in Wales, 'we need to safeguard and expand what few outlets and inadequate mirrors we have in Wales. Without them the arts are invisible. As a consequence, so too are we' (2009: 79).

Within this debate it is also imperative to recognise the broader contribution of the arts to Welsh civic life. A 2016 survey by the Arts Council of Wales found that '96% of Welsh adults attend and/or participate in the arts each year' compared to sports events which were reportedly only attended by 41% of respondents (2). Furthermore, according to the Arts Council's website 'over 24,000 people are employed in the arts and creative industries, in a sector that contributed around £465m to the Welsh economy'. Wales also makes a significant contribution to the world of contemporary art. Based in Cardiff and founded by Welsh artist William Wilkins in 2002, the Artes Mundi prize is the biggest in the UK in terms of prize money, and unlike the more prolific Turner Prize is open to artists of any age and any nationality. This has led some to argue that despite less media attention Artes Mundi might actually have a larger impact on the contemporary art world than that of the Turner Prize (BBC News, 2015; Wright, 2015). As the Arts Council's response to the BBC Charter review states: 'Arts and culture matter to Wales' (2015: 2). For the BBC not to reflect this indeed signals a fundamental weakness in the public service provision for Wales and the UK more broadly.

### **6.3.3. Serving the nation(s)**

Although this section has predominantly focused on the situation in Wales, this dearth in regional arts broadcasting is an issue reflected across many other areas of the UK outside of London and Glasgow. Respondents to a 2014 public consultation on the BBC's television services highlighted the need for 'more regional coverage of arts, culture, music and festivals with less reliance on London/English events and the big national events (e.g. The Proms, Glastonbury)' (BBC Trust, 38). But without the funding that comes from being in the capital or identified as a centre for excellence it would appear that the other nations and regions of the UK are left without a coherent arts strategy that serves their licence fee payers and promotes diverse cultural perspectives across the network.

From a historical perspective, this would seem to be an approach to the arts that, rather than 'foster local divergencies' (BBC, 1929: 87), continues to regard 'local and provincial culture to be inferior to that of London' (Hajkowski, 2010: 118). For a number of commentators this signals the need for change in the internal, London-centric culture of the BBC. In a blog post criticising the BBC's coverage of the arts in the nations and regions the director general of National Museum Wales, David Anderson stated, 'we need the BBC, with headquarters in London, to remember the importance of geography, of the connections between culture and place' (2014). In serving all licence fee payers from all parts of the UK, the provision of programming that represents and reflects the diverse art and culture of the nations and regions should be a requirement, not a rarity.

### **6.4. Conclusion**

John Reith believed that PSB had a duty to deliver 'all that was best in every department of human knowledge, endeavor, and achievement' and bringing the arts and culture to the masses was perceived as an important part of this. The findings of the present study would suggest that arts broadcasting remains a strong part of the BBC's identity for commissioners and programme-makers alike. Within the interviews this is most strongly articulated through recurring references to Reith's defining edict and the BBC's continuing mission statement



to 'inform, educate, entertain'. Alongside this, the prevalence of new brandings initiatives also reveals the strategic value of arts content. Under increased pressure from both politicians and the popular press to demonstrate its distinctiveness, the arts are framed as a visible symbol of public service commitments to cultural enrichment and minority-interest programming.

But with subscription-based commercial broadcasters such as Sky now offering arts programming that is almost indistinguishable from the public service offering, and to some extent doing this in a greater capacity, the BBC's privileged position as the 'world's greatest arts broadcaster' is becoming increasingly contested. Within this context the gravity of the argument must shift from judging public service commitments by just the existence of arts programming alone toward the social and cultural value of the content being produced. This is essentially about the public in 'public service broadcasting' and who is actually being served and what is the service being offered relative to this. This will entail addressing a number of fundamental issues within the BBC's the arts proposition. Firstly, as will be explored further in the following chapter, whilst the arts audience is relatively small compared to other genres such as drama, it could be argued that it is all the smaller for a lack of provision that reflects and speaks to the real diversity of culture in the UK. In contrast to the broad definitions offered by commissioners, programme-makers raise concerns around how narrow the BBC's arts coverage is, with much of it centred on a prescribed artistic canon. There is a notable dearth of programmes that devote care and attention to subjects such as street art and video games, for instance, or provide an in depth look at the work of contemporary artists such as Theaster Gates or Teresa Margolles. The arts are infinitely more diverse and at present this does not appear to be reflected in the BBC's output.

Another prominent issue is the concentration of arts funding in London and Glasgow. This has resulted in a production ecology in which Wales, Northern Ireland and also the north of England are not only invisible on the network but also within their own regional television output. The dearth in regional arts broadcasting highlights a fundamental discrepancy in Tony Hall's commitment to 'arts for everyone' and how this ambition is delivered in practice. Calling for

further regional arts and cultural representation across the BBC within the next Charter period, Arts Council England asserted, 'it is vital that entry points to culture can be located within regional arts coverage and reflect the diversity of the population on both regional and national platforms, to engage and stimulate the widest audience possible' (2015: 6). For the BBC as a public service broadcaster, any commitment to increasing cultural participation and engagement in the arts must also be a commitment to increasing regional and national representation and cultural diversity within the overall arts proposition.

## **7. Measuring Success: Ratings and Appreciation**

---

For commercial broadcasters, reliant on funding from advertisers and shareholders, output strategy predominantly centres on attracting the greatest number of viewers/listeners for a given time slot. In comparison, funded by a universal licence fee, the BBC has traditionally constituted a platform on which a programme's merit is largely judged by the degree to which it advances 'human enlightenment' and contributes to the creation of an informed democratic society (Hendy, 2013: 27). Although such Reithian values may seem strikingly paternalistic in the context of contemporary society, the underlying ethos of public value and responsibility over profit remains fundamental to the identity of the BBC and wider expectations of PSB. As stated in a 2004 BBC report entitled *Building Public Value*, '[The BBC] aims to serve its audiences not just as consumers, but as members of a wider society, with programmes and services which, while seeking to inform, educate and entertain audiences, also serve wider public purposes' (7).

It is often supposed that such principles are conducive to the production of more special interest and minority programming, which a commercially driven system focused on high audience return may be reluctant to invest in. As explored in the previous chapter, for the BBC these programmes also serve as a visible symbol of public service commitments. While landmark arts documentaries may command smaller television audiences than the latest BBC drama, their presence on screen demonstrates that the BBC is operating in the interests of the public, rather than the market. Writing for the Independent in 1999, journalist and broadcaster, Mark Lawson, referred to series such as Andrew Graham-Dixon's *Renaissance* (BBC Two, 1999) as 'canary shows', stating that 'as long as they remained chirping in the schedule' they would 'prove that the coal-mine of television had not become totally poisoned by the gasses of greed' (quoted in Wyver, 2007: 74).

Although a small number of 'canary shows' still occupy relatively prominent positions within BBC television schedules (a recent prominent example is *Face*

*of Britain by Simon Schama* (BBC Two, 2015)), a recurring theme throughout the interviews was the increasing influence of and pressure to provide quantifiable measures of success, particularly in terms of audience reach (ratings), but also through engagement (social media response). As one BBC executive producer stated when discussing the attitude of arts commissioners:

There's such a sense of fight for survival in a multichannel, multimedia environment that the sense that this is worth doing even though it may not reach a whole lot of people and it's a resource that may later be used, that's kind of gone actually. (Interview 12)

Within this context television has seen the almost wholesale loss of the arts magazine/review format and the rise of 'infotainment' series, while on radio both the arts magazine and niche programming continue to thrive. Situating this trajectory alongside previous criticism in regard to claims of distinctiveness, the following examines how the prevailing market logic within the BBC's current television arts strategy militates against the provision of critical and innovative public service programming.

### **7.1. The rise of ratings**

When speaking with those working within the field there was a resignation that, measured by viewing figures, the audience for arts programming is relatively small when compared to other genres. As the BBC's director of arts stated:

Arts programming doesn't rate in the same way that other programming does. It's the age-old thing, which is why doesn't arts programming rate? Surely it can be done better so it does rate as much as entertainment shows do? You talk to anyone in the world and it's the same thing if you say arts programming; it is public service. You have to accept that you're not going to drive the same sorts of audiences. (Interview 1)

Historically, arts programming has often struggled to command significantly large audiences in comparison to other genres such as drama. Although frequently cited as arts broadcasting's most prolific landmark documentary, only an estimated 2.5 million people watched Kenneth Clark's thirteen-part series, *Civilisation* when it first aired in 1969 (Walker, 1993: 82). While it is often suggested that this is due to a significant proportion of the population unable to

receive BBC Two at the time, internal figures state that of the 'BBC2 public' (that is, those able to receive the channel) only 4.2% actually tuned in (Conlin, 2016: 269). Similarly, despite BBC Two's audience expanding over the following three years, in 1972 John Berger's critically acclaimed series *Ways of Seeing* was only watched by 1.6% of those able to receive the channel (ibid). Still, both series made a substantial impact on both viewers and the art world itself, with Walker stating in regard to the latter that 'fine artists in Britain and North America were encouraged by Berger's analysis to undertake their own critiques of mass media images' (1993: 100). As will be explored in more detail later, appreciation has often been regarded as an important metric to measure the success of arts programming in the face of seemingly unimpressive viewing figures.

In the context of television, a number of interviewees attributed arts broadcasting's limited reach to it being out of step with contemporary audiences. In relation to this, the BBC's head of commissioning described the arts as posing a particular challenge compared to the other public service genres:

One of the challenges with BBC Two is that people want to be entertained, they want to be emotionally sustained, they want a gripping narrative, they want some spectacular "gosh, wow, amazing", and unless it's natural history it's quite hard to deliver. (Interview 4)

Especially within the areas of natural history and science there are notable examples in which traditional, expert-led documentary series have attracted substantial audiences. For instance, in 2011 the third episode of David Attenborough's *Frozen Planet* (BBC One) was the most watched programme of the day with an audience of 7.2 million (Sweney, 2011). The same year also saw Brian Cox's *Wonders of the Universe* (BBC Two) garner 'impressive viewing figures' of between 5 and 6 million per week (Jeffries, 2011). Although such programmes may be considered exceptions in the context of the broader specialist factual provision, they still point to generic possibilities yet to be achieved within arts.

Despite being an area of provision seemingly synonymous with minority audiences, one particularly prevalent theme identified within the interviews was a shift toward a more ratings-led television commissioning culture within the BBC's current arts proposition. As one BBC executive producer stated, 'in the early days they didn't really care how many people watched, that wasn't really a concern. Now it's very much a concern' (Interview 6). To further illustrate this trend, a former BBC producer described meeting with a channel executive following the successful launch of a new daytime classical music series:

We went into her office and sort of sat there and she said, "Well, I have to say, when we commissioned this we weren't at all sure that you'd be able to deliver something that worked for us, but you really have". But while she was saying all this to us she was literally spinning round on the chair and kind of tapping away on her computer and looking at the screen and then talking to us. She was looking at the audience figures as they came in minute by minute. That's how obsessed they are. (Interview 10)

Alongside streamlining organisational and commissioning processes, the BBC is also expected to demonstrate value for money in regard to its programme-making. Increasingly this is achieved through offsetting the cost of production against audience reach, with the BBC's annual parliamentary accounts report for 2014/15 highlighting the 'impressive' viewing figures of high profile dramas such as *Wolf Hall* and *The Missing* (2015b: 68). Further to this, in 2009 the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee reported that on its radio services, the 'BBC justifies the high costs for some presenters because of the large audiences they reach and the resulting low cost per listener hour' (12).

The use of ratings as a quantifiable measure of public value is not an entirely recent one. In her extensive anthropological study of the BBC, Born describes how an emphasis on viewing figures proliferated during the 1990's with the arrival of satellite television. When faced with a substantially more competitive multichannel environment, 'executives became increasingly aware of the huge significance of popularity, as measured by ratings, for the legitimacy of the BBC' (2005: 62). This was also a time of broader shifts within the public sector toward the quantification of public value as a means to hold to account and judge the

performance of organisations and institutions (Boyle, 2001). Bourdon and Méadel point even further back, asserting that ‘audience ratings are part of a 200-year-old effort to quantify the world’ that started with the rise of scientific reasoning in the eighteenth century and the enthusiastic embrace of ‘rigour and clarity found in the objectification of phenomena through statistics’ (2014: 6). However, as William Davies asserts, when ‘measurement becomes too pervasive, qualitative and moral values are left out in the cold’ (2005).

### **7.1.1. Delivering reputation and taking risks**

The influence of this ratings-led culture in the arts is perhaps most strongly evident in the discourse that surrounds television commissioning practices. As the BBC’s head of arts commissioning explained:

BBC Two is the big creative challenge because you’ve got the desire to get big audiences – it’s a mainstream channel – combined with absolute requirement to deliver a reputation. Whereas BBC Four, you can deliver reputation and the ratings are less kind of material. If you got 300,000 on BBC Two, that’s difficult to justify, whereas 300,000 on BBC Four for a local show that’s going to be repeated, that’s fine. (Interview 4)

Here it is significant to note how ‘delivering reputation’ is presented as incongruous with delivering substantial ratings within the mainstream provision. As Bourdon and Méadel assert, within wider academic critique ‘audience ratings are often considered as both the symptom and the cause of mediocre quality programmes’ (2014: 7). On the one hand ratings are used as evidence that the BBC is attracting large enough audiences to justify programme spend, on the other hand there is the suggestion that by appealing to this larger demographic the fundamental qualities of PSB in terms of innovation and diversity are lost. The ‘creative challenge’ arises in terms of how to package arts content in a way that will appeal to broad audiences but still be recognised as promoting more qualitative public service values in terms of quality and distinctiveness. The practical impact of this was a particular point of criticism when speaking to programme-makers within this genre. As stated by a former BBC producer who now works in the independent sector:

It seems like they're trying to justify that they have to get a certain amount of viewers – of course everyone wants viewers, but the BBC is not commercially driven; it's not driven by advertising. So although of course they need to make things that are popular, they don't always have to make things that are popular. It's a real shame that they still see things in terms of viewing figures the whole time because it will prevent certain stories being told because it's not the most popular demographic. (Interview 20)

The importance of viewing figures for television is also particularly striking when compared to the responses of radio commissioners when asked how they measure programme success. Whilst the head of arts commissioning for television often made reference to approximations of 'good' audience figures for particular channels, the arts commissioning editor for BBC Radio 4 and the World Service admitted he did not 'know the size of it as much as I probably should' (Interview 11). This was an attitude also felt by programme-makers, as one independent producer with experience working in both radio and television stated:

One of the good things about Radio 3 is even though they are more concerned with ratings now than they ever have been, it is at such a kind of lower level of expectation than television, and that isn't a criticism. If you put a programme on BBC Two, it's got to score on the ratings, whereas even now Radio 3, particularly in the evening and things like that, they're prepared to take a bit more of a risk. (Interview 10)

As the above accounts highlight, although ratings are in no way inconsequential in radio their impact on arts commissioning appears to be substantially less than that described in television. In part this can be attributed to the method by which radio audiences are measured. Whilst the television measurement organisation BARB provides overnight figures for individual programmes, RAJAR (Radio Joint Audience Research) publish quarterly figures of how many people are listening at particular times, rather than to particular content. In this regard individual programmes face a lesser degree of scrutiny than might be expected in television. Whereas poor viewing figures for an arts programme on television can make headlines the following day, the time taken to publish results and the lack of specificity in regard to content make it hard to frame listening figures as performance measures for specific genres.



The notion that radio commissioners are subsequently more prepared to take risks with programming is also significant when compared to the comparatively more risk averse television commissioning culture described by those working within this sector. Indeed, many described the BBC's radio output as covering more specialist, niche subjects in greater depth compared to television, as one independent producer illustrates below:

On telly it tends to be broader brush strokes, it tends to be bigger stories and all of that sort of thing. I think the beauty of radio has always been and continues to be that it can look at the world at a sort of slightly finer grain, a higher magnification level than you can on television. (Interview 10)

The continued prevalence of niche content on radio compared to television could also be considered a product of the distinct forms of consumption fostered by the audio medium. Despite the increased popularity of downloads and podcasts, the findings of the present study would suggest that radio is still predominantly perceived as a more linear experience than that of contemporary television. As BBC Radio 3's commissioning and scheduling manager explained:

I think with radio because, you know, people have radios in cars or in their bathrooms or in their bedrooms or sometimes at work, it's something they take with them more, so it's slightly more linear; they'll just turn on when they want some music or some talking or some background noise or whatever, whereas with television it's more of a case of sitting down and finding episode three of the latest blockbuster serial or whatever. (Interview 13)

This is a theme also evidenced within Tacchi's anthropological study into the listening habits of fifty people over the course of three years, which found that radio helped participants get through 'the routine and mundane nature of domestic life' (2009: 180). Furthermore, due to the ways in which radio easily integrates into the rhythms of everyday life, McLeish and Link argue that 'the medium is less demanding' than television or print media (2016: 6). However, as they go on to state, radio is also a selective medium in that listeners mentally 'switch off' from items that do not interest them and then concentrate on those

that do. This notion of tuning in and out in terms of concentration is also referred to by Tacchi, who asserts that radio listening 'is often both routine and energizing. It can entertain, inform, educate, stimulate, annoy or get you moving, dancing, singing; it can just 'be there', or it can be the focus of attention' (2009: 180). As such, listeners are more likely to stay tuned in to one station or service for prolonged periods of time, rather than sifting through schedules and content to find programming which aligns with their specific interests. This would suggest that radio facilitates a mode of consumption in which the listener is more likely to be introduced to content that they may otherwise have avoided in other media such as television or online. To illustrate this, one interviewee describes listening to BBC Radio 4 while driving when the station aired a conspicuously esoteric natural world programme:

It said, "Today we go to Malham Tarn in Yorkshire, which is one of only two habitats in the entire world where you can find a certain sort of sedge fly". I thought, come on, you're taking the mick now! You can't seriously be convincing me that you can spend half an hour talking about a fly. At the end of that half hour I was absolutely transfixed. It was amazing. You can't do that on telly. (Interview 10)

In this regard, it could be argued that radio as a medium still allows for the Reithian scheduling strategy of placing niche content between more popular fares. As a former producer of BBC Radio 4's flagship arts series, *Front Row* describes:

It's always been one of the great advantages of *Front Row* that it comes on after *The Archers*. We were always very conscious that there was an audience of somewhere around eight million, which is massive but you know, a really, really good TV programme gets more, but actually when you're listening to *The Archers* that's very good. We would hear it in the studio coming off air because they always play the previous programme while you're preparing so you know what you're coming to and you're very conscious of this audience who, you know, before they get to the off switch because they're not interested in the arts, we want to tell them how important it is. (Interview 15)

The opportunities for programmes to inherit listeners through the linear nature of radio consumption habits seems to provide the ideal setting in which to position the arts within the wider public service provision. Indeed, when viewing

BBC Arts' weekly newsletter the number of programmes available on radio compared to television is particularly striking. Within a three month period between September 7th and November 30th 2015 there were just 60 programmes listed under television compared to 244 on radio, the majority of which were on-going strands and returning series. This also highlights a far more pertinent issue in regard to how unbalanced the BBC's current arts provision is across its services. As one BBC executive producer remarked:

You look at [the BBC Arts newsletter] and you think oh that's rather good, and in a way it is quite good to have it all laid out in front of you. But an awful lot of that stuff is not on television, an awful lot of it is on Radio Four - which has always been a highbrow channel - or it's online. But if you're asking me about arts television, I would say the future is fairly bleak actually. They don't want much of it, they don't give much money to it, and it's increasingly safe. (Interview 12)

While a strong proposition on radio bolsters the BBC's arts coverage in quantitative terms, it also serves to mask the degree to which there has been a decline in both output hours and the distinctiveness of arts programming on television. As Ofcom reported in 2015, on television spend on arts and classical music has declined by 25% between 2008 and 2014 (12) and arts output on BBC One fell from 86 hours in 2009 to just 34 hours in 2014 (23). From the perspective of producers and other commentators it would appear that the biggest loss as a result of this is the provision of more niche and special interest public service programming on television. In the late 1990's the BBC's board of governors reportedly urged the BBC to 'rise above the ratings game' and be 'unashamedly public service in the quality and range of its programmes', including more arts programming in peak-time schedules (Gibson: 1). Despite these recommendations this ratings-led commissioning culture has continued to propagate within the BBC with adverse consequences for more niche areas of arts output on television.

In an interview with The Times in 2013, artistic director of the National Theatre, Nicholas Hytner criticised the BBC for 'neglecting the arts', asserting that 'they've really got to detach themselves from this Downton ratings mentality'

(quoted in Malvern). During the interviews this was a point of frustration also discussed by the former head of arts for BBC Cymru Wales who stated:

Broadcasters and I think everybody involved including producers are always beating themselves with the audience thing. I'm not saying audiences don't matter; audiences do matter. But in a sense audience return isn't the most important thing. Audience appreciation is the most important thing. You might have hit a very niche target area that is really appreciative of that genre in arts and that niche audience really love it. (Interview 14)

Such statements highlight fundamental concerns with the use of ratings as a measure of public value and the practical impact of this in terms of delivering a rich and diverse arts proposition. As Walker notes, 'the limitation of viewing figures is that they are a purely quantitative measure of impact. They do not measure the intrinsic, aesthetic quality of the programme, nor the quality of the experience for individual viewers' (1993: 196). With the BBC's founding principle to serve audiences as citizens rather than consumers, the use of ratings in this context is arguably very much in contention with fundamental public service values.

### **7.1.2. Audience appreciation**

First established by the BBC in 1936, gathering data regarding appreciation actually predates ratings as a method for measuring audiences in Britain (Napoli, 2011). What began as a basic questionnaire sent out to radio licence holders had, by the early 1950's, developed to become known as the 'Reaction Index' measuring 'not so much how many people watched the TV programmes, but to what extent they liked them' (Schwarzkopf, 2014: 38). In what is now termed the audience appreciation index, or 'AIs', audiences mark their enjoyment of a programme on a scale from 1 to 10, with these responses then consolidated to give an overall appreciation value between 0 and 100. Despite significant limitations in the system (see Hart, 1991: 48), AIs were the primary measurement by which the BBC judged the success of its programming during this period.

From 1955 ratings began to gain increased currency with the arrival of commercial television in Britain. As stated in the BBC's 1957 handbook, it was now of 'obvious interest and importance to the BBC to know how those of the television public who have a choice of programmes divide their viewing time' (104). Nevertheless, AIs continued to be regarded as a valuable tool for measuring the public value of programming that typically commanded smaller audiences. As stated by the BBC's 2011 audience information document, 'niche, targeted programming, even though attracting a limited number of viewers, can often score very highly, as it is actively chosen and appreciated by the viewer' (2011: 10). Indeed, in 2014 BBC Four had the highest appreciation rating across the BBC's network television channels with a score of 85, four points above BBC One despite the former only reaching 14% of the UK population per week compared to 75% by the latter (BBC Annual Report, 2014: 66).

Surprisingly there were few references to or discussion of AIs when speaking with both programme-makers and key decision makers involved in the BBC's arts provision. Rather, alongside ratings, an increasingly prominent measure by which to judge the audience's appreciation for programming is its 'talkability', defined by Green as 'the extent and duration of viewers' on- and off-line conversations during and after a programme or ad has aired' (2011: 3). This seemed to be a particular area of focus for the BBC's head of arts commissioning:

You're constantly trying to think of new ways of achieving scale, impact, getting people to want to watch it. Most of it's about you want people to talk about it and say "Oh my god, did you see that amazing thing?" So even if you didn't see it, at least now you can catch up with it. (Interview 4)

Before the proliferation of online media these were often referred to as 'water cooler moments', alluding to discussions between colleagues in the workplace about the previous evening's television. For broadcasters, the ability of a programme to become part of social discourse beyond the moment of consumption soon became a marker of success. As Billings states: 'The "water

cooler” show is a concept that television networks consider the pot of gold at the end of the programming rainbow’ (2011: 183).

In recent years, the proliferation of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook has resulted in the emergence of what some have termed the ‘virtual water cooler’. However, this might be something of a misnomer given the term’s original reference to discussion predominantly occurring *after* a programme has aired. Rather, social media platforms allow users to instantaneously post and read responses to programmes during transmission, a practice that Lochrie and Coulton dub ‘second screen viewing’ (2011). Building on from this, Harrington et al. argue that ‘Twitter and services alike, become a kind of virtual lounge room, connecting the active audiences of specific TV shows at an unprecedented scale and thereby amplifying audience activities even further’ (2013: 405). Furthermore, from an audience perspective, social media has become increasingly influential when presented with such a wide array of content to choose from. As Webster et al. state: ‘Facebook and Twitter provide platforms for gathering and aggregating opinions about what media are worth of attention’ (2014: 103).

In this regard, social media response has become a significant measure by which to judge the value of programming for both audiences and broadcasters. According to Woodford et al., second screen viewing and social media engagement has ‘turned the active audience of television into a *measurably* active audience that generates a rich trail of publically available evidence for its activities (2015: 150, authors’ emphasis). For broadcasters, monitoring this engagement can provide both quantitative (numbers of Tweets, ‘likes’, etc) and qualitative (messages contained within these interactions) measures of value. High levels of social media response can also lead to increased press coverage and publicity, with ‘trending’ programmes frequently featured within both tabloid and broadsheet news outlets.

Although much of the current academic analysis around the significance of social media in relation to television audiences centres on popular genres such as drama and current affairs, the accounts of those interviewed for the present

study demonstrates how social media response also holds significant currency within this area of provision. According to the BBC's director of arts:

The main reason for wrapping up *The Review Show* wasn't the low viewing figures. It was the fact that it was silence on Twitter when it was going on. That was the biggest thing for me. [...] Often you can have a programme which not many people have watched, but Twitter is alive with it. Other times, you can do things where it's absolutely silent. It's a very sure sign that it's just wallpaper for people at that moment. (Interview 1)

As highlighted above, it is the instantaneous nature of response that holds particular value as a measurement of success. The notion of wanting to avoid being 'just wallpaper for people' chimes with a wider paradigm shift towards an emphasis on media texts that encourage audiences to 'lean forward' and 'interact, engage and pay attention', as opposed to the 'leaning back' media consumer 'passively soaking up low brow, undemanding entertainment' (Wilson, 2015: 182). Within the broadcasting industry this instantaneous response to content on social media is often referred to as 'noise', with the potential of a programme to 'create noise' now regarded as a valuable asset. The effect of this on commissioning in the arts is perhaps most succinctly articulated in the following statement from the creative director of an independent production company:

Everybody wants to have talked about television and everybody wants to create noise. Clearly from a commissioning point of view if there's nothing being said about it, there's no interest or no pickup, then clearly that's a good indicator that it's not really struck home anywhere. It might have been appreciated, but it hasn't done enough really. Maybe that's just an inevitable demand of modern day broadcasting that television does need to sort of connect and if it isn't connecting and if it isn't creating that sort of immediate response and dialogue, then maybe it is missing the mark a bit. (Interview 14)

However, the ability to 'create noise' has become substantially more challenging across all genres in recent years with the proliferation of on demand services and digital video recorders (DVR). Watching programmes at a later date than the original transmission, or 'time shifting' as it is often referred to is an increasingly common practice. Although this is a trend that many public

service broadcasters have embraced to meet the changing needs of their audience (the BBC frequently runs advertisements prompting viewers and listeners to visit their on-demand service iPlayer to catch up with the latest ‘must see’ programmes), within this context the ability of a programme to bring audiences to that initial transmission has come to signify success in itself.

### **7.1.3. Arts as event television**

For commercial broadcasters initial transmission ratings of course hold significant economic value, with audiences unable to skip past advertisements while watching a programme live. But this is not to say that these figures are any less material in a public service context. In a recent submission to the 2016 Charter Review public consultation the BBC outlined in its key public service purposes the mission to build ‘a stronger sense of community through shared experiences’ (2015: 15). Expanding on this, the report goes on to list a broad range of programming that has proven to command both high viewing figures and generate a substantial response on social media during initial transmission:

The BBC turns things as diverse as ballroom dancing (*Strictly Come Dancing*), home baking (*The Great British Bake Off*), business (*The Apprentice*), classical and pop music (*The Proms*, *The Voice UK*, *Radio 1’s Big Weekend*), as well as charitable causes (*Children in Need*, *Comic Relief*) and sport (*Wimbledon*, *The Olympics*, *The FA Cup*) into national events. They become shared pastimes everyone can experience and talk about. (2015: 18)

As the above statement suggests, it is often programmes that constitute a form of ‘event’ which achieve both high ratings and create noise on social media. These are either events happening outside of broadcasting where the role of the broadcaster is mainly to capture and transmit them (e.g. *Wimbledon*, *The Olympics*, *The Proms*) or events that are created especially for television, usually in the form of a competition or live show (e.g. *The Great British Bake Off*, *The Voice UK*, *Comic Relief*). In the context of BBC arts broadcasting, many programme-makers commented that the notion of marking anniversaries with special programming and seasons had become increasingly prominent:

Commissioners love an anniversary. The easiest way to get commissioners is to say “50 years of this and 70 years of that”. There’s



an obsession with anniversaries that I don't understand [laughs]. But it's a good thing to help get some commissions. (Interview 7)

As part of its Shakespeare season to mark 400 years since the playwright's death, the BBC hosted and screened a 2.5-hour event live from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. Entitled *Shakespeare Live! From the RSC* (BBC Two, 2016), the programme was hosted by actors David Tennant and Catherine Tate and featured a range of performances by other well-known names from film and television, including Benedict Cumberbatch, Judi Dench, Ian McKellen and Helen Mirren. *Shakespeare Live!* garnered critical acclaim with *The Guardian* calling it a 'bold and innovative tribute' (McCrum, 2016) and *The Telegraph* claiming it 'sent shivers down the spine' (Cavendish, 2016). Furthermore, despite being scheduled against ITV's hugely popular *Britain's Got Talent* and only attracting an audience of 1.5m (BARB, 2016), keywords related to the programme trended on Twitter in the UK throughout its transmission.

The response to *Shakespeare Live!* would suggest that although the live event did not command what would be considered substantial audience figures in a television context, it still prompted significant levels of audience engagement from those who did watch it. Still, popular tabloid newspapers such as the *Mail Online* were quick to report that *Shakespeare Live!* attracted fewer viewers than a repeat of *Dad's Army* from 1972 broadcast earlier that evening (Creighton, 2016). Indeed, despite the increased prevalence of social media responses and analytics in journalistic coverage of the media, audience figures are still commonly portrayed as infallible evidence for 'the success or otherwise of programs and broadcasters' (Woodford et al, 2015: 145). Although the *Daily Mail* and its online counterpart make no effort to disguise their fundamental opposition to the BBC, such articles still contribute to wider rhetoric which frames low viewing figures as evidence that the public broadcaster is not meeting the needs of licence fee payers.

#### 7.1.4. 'I wouldn't necessarily watch it, but I'm glad it's there'

An underlining issue in regard to both quantifiable and more qualitative measures of value in arts programming is the apparent disparity between audience appreciation and actual engagement. When speaking with numerous interviewees involved in both programme-making and strategy there was a sense that whilst many appreciate arts programming being available on the BBC, far fewer tend to actually engage with it. As the BBC's director of arts stated:

People want to know that something is there, but not actually consume it very often. So if you take *The Review Show*, that was something that people didn't watch, but they liked the fact it was there. So there's a particular type of person who felt very strongly that *The Review Show* should be there but it didn't translate actually into a desire to watch it. That in the end was the hardest thing in winding that up. (Interview 1)

This 'I wouldn't necessarily want to watch all of it but I'm glad it's there' attitude toward arts broadcasting was a recurring theme throughout a number of the interviews with BBC producers and commissioners. Intrinsic in this sentiment are particular expectations of the BBC as a public service broadcaster to provide access to areas of arts and culture perceived to be elite or exclusive alongside more accessible and mainstream fare. This notion of a gap between appreciation for arts programming and audience figures is also alluded to in one of the few – or perhaps only – examples of academic research concerned with audiences' reactions to arts programming. In the 1996 study, d'Haenens reported that the 'vast majority' of participants believed that 'there should always be a place for in-depth arts programmes on television, even if only a minority watches them' (162). In a broader context, this is a sentiment also supported by Ofcom following research in 2008 that found 'the majority of individuals support payment for public service broadcasting, even for parts they do not use' (5).

The accounts presented above suggest that despite substantial changes to the broadcasting landscape over the last two decades, such attitudes prevail, or at least are perceived to. However, as the case of *The Review Show* highlights, this has had a tangible affect on certain areas of the arts provision. The nature

of this will now be explored in further detail, first in regard to a format once considered a staple of television schedules: the topical arts magazine.

## **7.2. Loss of the magazine format on screen**

Characterised by the use of short features, rather than in-depth approaches to single subjects, the topical magazine has historically been regarded as an important format for introducing cultural commentary and criticism to wider audiences. Under the editorial control of Huw Wheldon, BBC television's first arts magazine programme, *Monitor* (1958-65), set out to 'appeal to a broad rather than specialist audience' with its mission to 'inquire and explain' (Walker, 1993: 46). Broadcast in 'a prestigious late Sunday evening slot' (Irwin, 2015: 168) the series set the precedent for a number of successful magazine series in the years that followed, including *Wednesday Magazine* (BBC, 1958-63), *New Release* (BBC Two, 1964-68) and *Omnibus* (BBC One, 1967-2003). The topical arts magazine also featured prominently on independent television during ITV's formative years with programmes such as *Tempo* (LWT, 1961-68), *Aquarius* (LWT, 1970-77) and *The South Bank Show* (LWT, 1978-2010). During the 1980's the format saw a surge in popularity on the back of a recent resurgence in the fields of literary criticism and cultural studies (Walker, 1993). It was during this period that *The Late Show* was broadcast on BBC Two every weeknight, a regularity that a number of interviewees drew upon as evidence of the BBC's commitment to arts programming at the time.

However, a common trend throughout the history of the arts on television is a change in programme format from the topical magazine to a documentary/thematic approach. *Monitor*, *The South Bank Show* and more recently *The Culture Show* (2004-) are all prominent examples of series which started out as magazines, gradually shifting to focus on single subjects per episode. Although BBC Two's new flagship magazine strand *Artsnight* (2015 -) has been touted as a successor to *The Culture Show*, the series still represents a diversion from the traditional magazine/review format in that each episode takes a thematic approach by focusing on a particular interest of the guest editor for that week. Further to this are instances in which topical arts magazine series are cancelled completely. One recent high profile example is *The Review*

*Show*, which started life on BBC Two in 1994 before being moved to BBC Four in 2013 and eventually being cancelled in 2014. The overarching reaction to this in the press was predominantly negative, with Sarah Crompton asserting in *the Telegraph* that ‘arguments about culture, about what is good and what is bad, should be part of the essence of things’ going to conclude that ‘the end of *The Review Show* as we know it is a worrying harbinger for the way in which the BBC is now defining itself’ (2013).

The BBC’s head of arts commissioning also acknowledged this decline in the magazine format on television, attributing it in part to increased coverage of the arts in the news and online:

The tide goes in and out on straight topical, whether it’s review through to magazine shows and so forth. [...] So magazine shows, obviously there are less magazine shows than there were and that’s been a big change. That is partly due to the growth of online, partly due to the change in the way news works – news has a lot more culture in it now in the way that newspapers have a lot more culture in them now than they used to. You look at *Newsnight*; it’s much more of a blend of topical politics through to current affairs and cultural thought. (Interview 4)

This is to suggest that the dedicated arts magazine has been made obsolete by increased topical coverage of the arts within other areas of provision. Here it is important to note how the BBC itself have driven such trends, with much of the rhetoric surrounding the launch of BBC Arts promoting the need for a more holistic approach to arts coverage. In particular, BBC One’s nightly light entertainment magazine, *The One Show* has been highlighted as part of Tony Hall’s vision to put ‘arts at the heart of the BBC’ and ensure they ‘are a part of people’s every day experience’ (BBC Media Centre, 2014). As a result there has been an increase in arts features within the programme, including short films on the works of artists such as Holbein, live reports from The Hay literary festival, and the launch of a summer art competition offering viewers the opportunity to have their work displayed at the Royal Academy in London.

The BBC has also made a notable effort towards increasing arts coverage within its overall news provision through the creation of roles dedicated to this remit. As the BBC's arts editor explained:

Arts editor, in the context of the BBC, is just a journalist, so exactly the same as an arts correspondent. The only difference is the post has been elevated to this status of editor, with the principle aim of giving it a higher status within the institution so it's harder to drop arts stories, to be honest. (Interview 2)

Reaching 82% of UK adults across its services each week (BBC Annual Report, 2014: 62), BBC News is presented as an ideal platform for raising the profile of the arts across the BBC's output. However, although typically commanding a larger viewership in terms of ratings, it is inadequate to claim that this serves as a suitable alternative to the dedicated arts magazine. Despite the introduction of the role of arts editor, the amount of coverage arts receives is still largely determined by a wider news agenda that tends to privilege breaking stories from other areas of public life such as politics, health, education and science. Furthermore, when the arts are covered it is often in the context of issues such as funding cuts or high profile controversies. As the arts critic Michael Billington asserts in his short essay *The Decline of Criticism*: 'In a period of high inflation and low funding, the arts are a running news-story and criticism is inevitably upstaged by the latest report from the Casualty Department' (1990: 37). Within the interviews, a freelance journalist who had previously worked for both Channel 4 and BBC news also described the precarious and limited nature of this coverage, stating:

If you turn on the television news and there are full-time correspondents, you might get a piece about when the North Korean embassy opened up for its first art exhibition, that would have got on the news, and we certainly did it on *Front Row*. But often it's fighting – this is the bigger challenge of fighting with breaking news developments and often that's the story that gets dropped. (Interview, 16)

Such accounts highlight a fundamental disparity between ambitions to increase arts coverage in the mainstream provision and how this is achieved in practice. In actuality, it would appear that such strategies have contributed to an overall

decline in both the quantity and depth of topical arts coverage available on the BBC.

### **7.2.1. Losing critical perspective**

While determining the type of stories featured, the informative nature of news reporting militates against the type of critical analysis characteristic of the magazine/review format. Within this context, there are growing concerns among programme-makers around a loss of critical perspective within the wider public service proposition. As the arts lead for BBC Scotland stated:

On *The Review Show* you would suggest that maybe a theatre show was quite bad [laughs]. I think the BBC has lost a little bit of that in my mind, that kind of space for reviewing and criticism. (Interview 7)

This apparent gap in provision on television is particularly evident when compared to the accounts of those working in radio. In line with television the arts magazine and review formats have historically been a prominent feature within BBC radio schedules, with programmes such as *The Arts This Week* (Third Programme, 1969-71) *Critic's Forum* (BBC Radio 3, 1974-90) and *Kaleidoscope* (BBC Radio 4, 1973-98) providing weekly discussion on a range of topics including theatre, books, films and the visual arts. However, whilst television's commitment to the magazine format has clearly waned over the past few years, it continues to be a staple of the BBC's speech radio schedules. In particular, the radio arts magazine is relatively well represented in the nations and regions of the UK compared to the sparse offering on television, with *The Arts Show* (2007-) on BBC Radio Ulster in Northern Ireland, *The Janice Forsyth Show* (2010-) on BBC Radio Scotland, and *The Radio Wales Arts Show* (2008-) on BBC Radio Wales and *Stiwedio gyda Nia Roberts* on BBC Radio Cymru.

In part the continuation of the arts magazine on radio can be attributed to the ways in which it is particularly suited to this medium, as its very format facilitates an approach to listening in which the listener can dip in and out of the various features throughout the programme (Chignell, 2009). As already discussed, it is often assumed that radio audiences are engaged in other activities and as such are not dedicating the same degree of attention that is usually expected with

television. Perhaps the most prolific example of the arts magazine on BBC network radio today is Radio 4's flagship topical arts strand, *Front Row*. Airing every weekday evening at 7.15pm, content is often driven by recent developments in various fields of culture, from popular film and music to more esoteric areas of visual arts and literature. When speaking with one of the presenters for the programme, they described the importance of maintaining a critical position to the subjects and artists covered as fundamental to the character of the programme:

My bigger interest is, and I think it's something that *Front Row* tries to do - the phrase my editors uses is "interrogate the arts". So you're looking at, you know, who is this new writer and what is this interesting new idea? How are they doing it? Especially if they are doing something innovative. [...] But also to ask is this good or bad. (Interview 16)

Free from requirements to appease advertisers and shareholders, the BBC has traditionally been positioned as the most conducive environment in which to nurture these values. Within the context of commercial broadcasting the potential for cultural institutions to provide sponsorship and financial imperatives for promotion represents a conflict of interests in respect to the apparent authenticity of any critical review. As Walker notes in reference to Channel 4's former sponsorship of *The Turner Prize*, 'the cosy relationship between the Tate and Channel 4 means negative criticism of the Prize is unlikely to be aired on the latter' (1998: 93). In contrast, the BBC's public funding, in theory, should provide 'a forum where ideas should be expressed freely, where information, opinions, and criticisms circulate' (Price and Raboy, 2003: 3) (although, as will be explored further in chapter 9, the notion that the BBC are inherently exempt from wider influences is in no way uncontested). Further to this, a degree of critical distance is also concurrent with the fundamental principles of PSB to serve audiences as citizens rather than consumers. The BBC's coverage of the arts cannot just be an advertisement for cultural institutions. Rather, it has a responsibility to engage critically and add plurality to contemporary cultural debates within the public sphere. However, whilst radio continues to provide a valuable critical perspective on contemporary cultural developments, coverage

on television has effectively been narrowed leaving considerably few spaces for this type of cultural 'interrogation' on screen.

### 7.2.2. Losing innovation

Beyond a loss of critical perspective, the concentration of topical coverage within one medium also inherently limits the range of creative opportunities for communicating ideas about the arts. The television arts magazine has historically been regarded as an innovative format, with many early series praised for their distinctive filmmaking from now legendary figures such as John Schlesinger and Ken Russell, the latter of which exclaimed that 'Monitor was and still remains the one and only English experimental film school ever' (In Dickinson, 2007: 70). Within the interviews it was common to hear participants refer back to such series as examples of high quality arts programming. As one BBC executive producer remarked:

Arts broadcasting at its best has always engaged in a kind of critical way and has itself often been quite creative. I mean a lot of the filmmaking on *The Late Show* or on *Arena* was itself done with great style. (Interview 12)

The departure of the dedicated arts magazine format from BBC television has both contributed to and become the symptom of a broader decline in the tradition of creative programme making within the arts. As alluded to in the comment by Ken Russell above, magazine formats such as *Monitor* provided both a training ground for producers and set the template for arguably some of the most ground-breaking pieces of arts television ever produced. Single subject documentary films such as Russell's *Elgar* (1962) and *The Debussy Film* (1965) along with *Arena* films such as Nigel Finch's *My Way* (1972) and *The Private Life of the Ford Cortina* (1982) were radical and innovative, artistic works of cultural significance in their own right.

As Wyver asserts, 'the importance of these programmes lies in the way in which they break with television's usual forms of dealing with the arts and with the medium's dominant form of vision' (1998: 42). However, it is undeniable that the media landscape has changed substantially since series such as *Monitor* and



*Arena* achieved critical acclaim. The contemporary ratings-led commissioning culture described by many programme-makers is one that privileges competitive value over that of public service, with already limited funding becoming increasingly concentrated on popular entertainment-led formats. Within this context, the following examines the proliferation of arts programming that increasingly conforms to, rather than subverts television's dominant forms.

### **7.3. Popularising the Arts**

Writing in 2004 Dover argued that the British documentary tradition was in 'crisis' in part due to the rise of the popular 'docu-soap' format. This was part of a growing body of literature in the mid 1990's and 2000's commenting on the ways in which the boundaries between specialist factual programming and light entertainment were becoming increasingly blurred as a result of changes in 'the economic, institutional, generic and reception contexts of television' (Bignell, 2010: 196; Kilborn, 1998; Paget, 2007; Corner, 2009). Entertainment-led factual formats were frequently criticised within both academia and the press for their overly formulaic approach and lack of quality in terms of both production values and factual content. As one documentary-maker remarked at the time in *Life* magazine:

As the broadcasting market becomes more refracted, so investigative programme makers will have to fight harder to justify their budgets. Are we going to enter into a no-risk scenario – no risk financially and no risk editorially? Because, if we are, then it is a scenario of no imagination. (Quoted in Kilborn, 1996: 149)

Today specialist factual television must compete with an even greater wealth of media possibilities including online content and the recent proliferation of on-demand streaming services. In a comment that appears to almost directly confirm the concerns of the documentary-maker above, a BBC executive producer states:

It's such a kind of bizarre, fragmented, competitive world. What they're all terrified of doing is just going on commissioning what we might call well-crafted series about art. (Interview 12)

Although the BBC does still commission series that subscribe to the traditional documentary format, from the perspectives of those interviewed these sort of commissions have very much seen a decline in terms of both quantity and funding. Greater competition and emerging new consumption habits have placed renewed emphasis on sustaining the reach and impact required to justify the costs incurred by such productions. This in turn has led to what many regard as an overreliance on popular narratives and formats within what has traditionally been regarded as more niche areas of provision in a bid to appeal to broader audiences. Within this context, Dover asserts, programme-makers 'find themselves operating within a paradoxical situation whereby their legitimation is derived from the maintenance of traditions but their continuing relevance is derived from reinvention' (2004: 256).

### **7.3.1. Formatting the arts**

The 'challenge' of making the arts appeal to a broader audience is one that received attention in the previous chapter in regard to how the arts are defined and the elitist connotations that continue to surround the term. Beyond just definition, there is also the issue of how the arts are presented, particularly on screen. In a bid to attract broader audiences, there has been a notable shift in commissioning priorities toward arts programming that utilises the common formats and narrative conventions of more popular television genres. The official commissioning page for arts on BBC One lists under its current steers programmes which 'merge arts with different genres and apply storytelling styles from different genres' going on to state that '*Fake or Fortune?* works well on BBC One because it doesn't feel like an arts programme' (BBC Commissioning, 2016). From speaking with the BBC's head of arts commissioning, it would appear that such programme strategies are predominantly a response to changing consumption habits and increased competition from on-demand streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime:

Specialist factual and arts, the audiences for it are tough at the moment partly because television-viewing habits are changing. People watch much more on demand; so the people who like arts know they like arts, they'll go and find it where they want to find it, but that's quite a small

core audience. The schedule as I knew it and grew up with it is changing. People view TV differently, people go to BBC Two for different reasons, all those things are changing very, very quickly and it's on demand, it's the growth of boxsets that's changing it... The desire for really straightforward educational telly we get the impression is decreasing slightly. (Interview 4)

In terms of format creativity, it could be argued that such series are creative in the sense that common narratives and generic conventions within popular television are applied within an arts setting to create seemingly new and distinct forms of programming. Looking at output on the mainstream channel BBC One, *The Big Painting Challenge* is in many ways reminiscent of the hugely successful *Great British Bake Off* and other popular competition formats such as *The Apprentice*, while *Fake or Fortune?* (BBC One, 2011-) feeds off a recent revival in the detective/crime drama genre driven by prolific series such as BBC One's *Sherlock* (2010 -) and ITV's *Broadchurch* (2013 -) along with a recent influx of Nordic Noir on British screens.

Using formats and conventions that in many ways mimic other popular television genres can turn traditionally niche subjects such as the arts into peak time viewing. This is a trajectory that can also be seen across other areas of specialist factual that have witnessed television 'revivals' in recent years. Natural history and wildlife programming saw a surge in popularity in the late 1990's and early 2000's with the visual CGI spectacle of *Walking With Dinosaurs* (BBC One, 1999) (Scott, 2003), along with *Big Cat Diary* (BBC One, 1996 – 2008), described by Richards as 'the first wildlife docusoap' (2012: 321). Dafydd Sills-Jones (2016) also describes a 'history boom' on UK television during this time, following a dip in history documentary production during the late 1980s and early 1990s. This was largely driven by what Hunt (2006) terms the 'bastard genre' of 'historical reality' television, with series such as Channel 4's *The 1900 House* (1999 – 2000) and the BBC's celebrity genealogy format, *Who Do You Think You Are* (2004-) (Holdsworth, 2010; Gray and Bell, 2013).

In this regard, the rise of these formatted series within arts broadcasting is in many ways emblematic of a broader shift within specialist factual production towards so-called 'infotainment'. As outlined in chapter 3, this form of factual

content often focuses on entertaining audiences, with lesser emphasis on informing and educating than the traditional documentary or topical magazine format. From the accounts of those interviewed, these heavily formatted infotainment series are often seen as a more viable option when trying to negotiate limited resources. As one independent producer stated in reference to the current BBC arts provision:

The impression I get is that it's done quickly in terms of the research and the preparation. Because you can't squeeze shooting time beyond a certain point without it showing, so you squeeze the research time, the prep time. I would think that's possibly where smaller budgets push you towards more conservative form because you just don't have time to think or to take a different approach. (Interview 8)

By the nature of their approach, infotainment formats often require less research time and rigour compared to the traditional documentary. However, in this regard they are also seen to produce 'poor quality, overly stylized, ratings-driven programmes that work against the knowledge project' (Hill, 2007: 12). For many this has signalled the increased marginalisation of on-screen expertise in a genre that has previously relied so heavily on it.

### **7.3.2. The cult of the presenter**

Alongside a shift toward infotainment formats, a number of those interviewed also talked more broadly about an increasing emphasis on personality-led programming across the arts provision. Within two separate interviews the interviewees referred to this as the 'cult of the presenter', characterised by programming formats that privilege showcasing the personality of the presenter over the creativity of the filmmaker. This is perhaps most overtly evidenced by the number of programmes which now feature the name of the presenter in the title itself (e.g. *Face of Britain by Simon Schama*, *Mark Lawson Talks To...*, *Romanov Russia with Lucy Worsley*, *Goya Exposed with Jake Chapman* on television, and *The Radio 2 Arts Show with Jonathan Ross*, *The Janice Forsyth Show*, *Will Gompertz Gets Creative* on radio).

In many ways specialist factual programming has always been 'obsessed' with presenters. As Bennett asserts, 'the credibility of a personality's vocational skill

– for example, Schama’s status as a professor of history or Paxman’s career as a respected journalist – is tied inextricably to the public service values of both educating and informing programming’ (2011). However, in a mainstream capacity there has been a notable departure from the archetypal ‘expert presenter’ within the arts, and indeed specialist factual more broadly. Writing in the wake of the hugely popular *Crocodile Hunter* series presented by Steve Irwin, Cottle outlines a migration from ‘presenters to celebrities’ in which the ‘use of personalities to enhance the appeal of natural history programmes has become almost a stock response of programme-makers in their bid to win commissions and enhance programme attractiveness’ (2004: 91). Although the history of BBC arts broadcasting is one that has largely demonstrated resistance to such trends, the recent push toward more ‘accessible’ programming within the BBC’s arts output strategy has resulted in a tangible subversion of genre norms within the mainstream proposition. As one BBC executive producer stated:

We’ve become completely obsessed with presenters. That was a conscious thing, I don’t know how many years ago, maybe ten years ago? That was a conscious thing; we need presenters to be the people who bring – whether it’s history or arts or politics or anything – the cult of the presenter. And that tends to militate against creative filmmaking. (Interview 12)

When asked why this shift had occurred, the interviewee responded:

I think it was felt, and possibly rightly, that audiences engage with personalities first and subjects second. Why do you get Joanna Lumley going to Siberia? Because actually a programme about Siberia may not necessarily grab people. (Interview 12)

Recent BBC One programmes such as *The Big Painting Challenge* and *Fake or Fortune?* are particularly notable for the ways in which they use well-known presenters outside the programme’s field of expertise, with the former fronted by actress Una Stubbs and television personality Richard Bacon, while television journalist and news anchor Fiona Bruce presents the latter. As an area of provision that shares many of the same generic conventions in terms of both mode of address and form, it is also interesting to note such strategies can

also be identified in recent history programming (De Groot, 2009; Gray and Bell, 2013). In a similar case to that of Fiona Bruce in arts broadcasting, Blandford and McElroy also observe that BBC Cymru Wales' choice of BBC One news anchor Huw Edwards to present *The Story of Wales* (2012) was 'integral to its strategic aim of connecting with the BBC One audience' due to his familiarity and "natural' authority and trustworthiness from reading the news' (2013: 123).

Within this context, presenters are chosen strategically in accordance to their potential to appeal to a broad audience, rather than their expert credentials or academic reputation. They may be selected because they are already recognisable figures within popular culture (e.g. Fiona Bruce, Richard Bacon, Una Stubbs) or are highly charismatic on screen in a way that commands attention (e.g. Steve Irwin). For Ytreberg this is evidence of a shift from the ideal paternalist type within PSB toward an emphasis on charismatic self-presentation in which 'the audience is invited to believe in what the charismatic says because the charismatic communicates his or her personal belief in it so intensely' (2002: 765). Bell and Gray also expand on this thesis, concluding that in the context of history programming presentation styles can be split into two distinct categories; 'he who knows' and 'he who wants to know'. In the former, 'knowledge is the property of the expert and can be imparted to the lay person (the viewer).' While in the latter, 'knowledge is being constructed by putting together a series of clues, the provenance of which includes non-experts offering experiential accounts which are valued as knowledge' (2007: 130). When applied to an arts context it could be argued that presenters such as Fiona Bruce and Richard Bacon firmly occupy this second category, prompting what Bell and Gray term a 'mindful viewing position' in which the audience is provided with a multiplicity of voices and perspectives from which to interpret information. In contrast to this, the archetypal 'he who knows' figures of Kenneth Clark and Simon Schama utilise a mode of address that presents a single perspective, leaving little room for alternative readings or opportunities for more sustained audience engagement.

Nevertheless, this departure from the expert-led presentational style has not escaped criticism. As reviewer Rachael Cooke cuttingly remarks in reference to

Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon presenting *The Big Painting Challenge*, ‘what, I wonder, do they get up to while the artists are busy with their palette knives? It’s pretty clear that neither spends the hours leafing through E. H. Gombrich’ (2015). Presenter Fiona Bruce has also been described as responsible for ‘dumbing down BBC arts’, with writer and broadcaster Lucinda Lambton stating that she was ‘unqualified and not highbrow enough to front recent BBC TV programmes about Leonardo da Vinci and the Royal Palaces’ (in *The Week*, 2011). Within this context, the term ‘populist’ is often used in both the press and academia to dismiss the cultural and public service value of more mainstream arts programming. In 2005 former head of the BBC World Service, John Tusa, asserted that a reliance on ‘populist presenters’ had resulted in a ‘flight from intelligence’, going on to state that the BBC was ‘patronising its audience by watering down arts programmes and documentaries’ and the broadcaster was ‘unable to trust viewers with challenging ideas for fear of damaging ratings’ (quoted in Alleyne, 2005). In his seminal text on television and the arts in Britain, Wyver also refers to Channel 4’s strand *J’accuse* (1991-96) and four-part series *Art is Dead, Long Live TV* (1991) as driven by a ‘populist iconoclasm’, with the latter ‘perceived by commentators as symptomatic of a television time that had lost confidence in the traditional values of the arts’ (2007: 67).

As the work of Wheatley (2004) and Gray and Bell (2013) demonstrates, it is important to recognise the ways in which this relative disdain for populism is grounded in on-going debates around the nature of ‘quality’ television, particularly in a PSB context. As Wheatley asserts, ‘the meanings of quality within this public service broadcasting debate are to be understood as semantically opposed to the common or vulgar’ (2004: 330). Congruent with previous discussion in regard to defining the arts, this frame of reference for judging the public service value of programming is strikingly Arnoldian. In much the same way Arnold envisioned high culture to be a beacon of morality and social change in the face of the ‘vulgarity’ and ‘anarchy’ of mass culture, this notion of ‘quality’ is closely aligned with a sense of paternalistic moral duty inscribed within what Gray and Bell describe as the ‘taste codes so beloved by the educated middle classes’ (2013: 95). As Ang states, in the context of PSB it

is 'not enough for audiences to just pay attention to the programmes offered them: they must get something out of those programmes that is presumably 'good' for them' (1991: 83).

### **7.3.3. New paths to enlightenment?**

Rather than merely preserving the arts, many of those involved in making and commissioning these programmes position their role in terms of widening the parameters of access, with the hope that people then might go on to engage with more niche programming. As the BBC's head of arts commissioning explains in regard to the strategy behind popular arts programming such as *Fake or Fortune?*:

What you're trying to do is to encourage people to go from the broad entry point programmes, so to speak, through to other deeper dives into greater levels of art historical detail or possibly programmes that might look a little bit more academic. (Interview 4)

Such statements in many ways reflect more traditional notions of public service in the sense of widening the parameters of cultural participation and introducing audiences to new areas of cultural life that they may not have previously been exposed to. Whilst historically this was achieved through a Reithian diet of programming pushed by scheduling – that is, 'highbrow' content positioned between a more mainstream offering – in a more fragmented media landscape this is increasingly being articulated through the use of modes of address, formats and conventions that mimic those of more popular television genres. Again, here there are strong comparisons to be drawn with arguments made in support of popular history formats. As McElroy and Williams assert, 'perhaps, historical reality television's most potent public service rationale is its claim to offer new routes of entry to public history to those who have elsewhere been denied it' (2011: 91). Indeed, whilst for some the rise of this so-called 'populist' output represents a decline in both quality programming and public service values, the BBC maintain that the use of well-known figures and popular formats offer new perspectives and broadens the appeal of arts programming in a way that strengthens, rather than diminishes its ability to 'inform, educate *and* entertain'.



Nevertheless, a number of producers raised pertinent concerns that other areas of the arts provision are being left underserved, with already limited resources disproportionately directed toward this type of programming in pursuit of large audiences. As stated by one BBC executive producer:

Quite a lot of the time programmes which I would not really called arts programmes, programmes like *Historic Gardens* or *The Big Painting Challenge*, they get arts money. The money that is being put aside for arts broadcasting goes to them. But I'd say at the expense of the things which are telling you about art and culture. (Interview 12)

This is arguably not only an issue of quality, but is also in direct contention with the BBC's broader public service commitment to distinctiveness within its programming. As already discussed, the BBC's distinctiveness (or perceived lack of) has been a prominent point of debate throughout the current Charter review period. In particular, attention has been drawn to what many regard as an overreliance on popular entertainment formats within peak time schedules. With reference to programmes such as *Strictly Come Dancing* and *The Voice*, in their 2015 public consultation the DCMS state that 'concerns have been raised that the BBC behaves in an overly commercial way, encroaching on TV genres and formats that could be served well by its commercial competitors, particularly during the peak hours' (38).

In light of such criticism there would appear to be an even more pertinent need for space within contemporary television schedules for experimentation and innovation. Yet it would appear that the arts offering today has also become strikingly formulaic, at least in a mainstream capacity. Although some may argue that the value of such programming lies in introducing new audiences to the arts, for many this has signalled a significant shift toward an arts proposition characterised by more risk-averse, formatted output, with commissioners less willing to invest in programming that is creative in terms of style as well as subject matter. Within this context, any claims of distinctiveness in reference to the arts proposition must surely first be presupposed by a production and commissioning culture in which experimentation and creativity can thrive.

#### 7.4. Conclusion

Almost two decades ago Wyver accused the arts of being an ‘impoverished’ genre due to the limited programme forms and narratives ‘television has developed to understand and communicate culture’ (1998: 28). Rather than being determined by the capabilities of the medium itself, this is taken to have emerged from a long and established tradition of programme-making spearheaded by the BBC in the late 1950’s. But as with any genre, there are notable diversions. In particular, programmes such as *Monitor* and *Arena* were overt in their resistance to these prescribed forms, and as such have been held up as some of the most creative pieces of filmmaking not just in arts but also within television more broadly. Most significantly, they carved out spaces in the schedule for creative expression in terms of form as well as subject matter.

The findings outlined in this chapter would suggest there are now comparatively few opportunities to develop innovative new styles of programming and ways of communicating ideas within arts broadcasting. Under increased pressure to demonstrate value for money and efficiency within its television output, the current BBC arts provision is one that appears to prioritise market logic at the expense of public value. Whilst a significant number of licence payers supposedly ‘appreciate’ arts programming, the disparity between such attitudes and actual viewing figures is in contention with a wider social and broadcasting climate in which quantitative evidence of value holds substantial currency. Within this context there has been a marked decline in the range and diversity of arts programming presented on screen, particularly when compared to that available on radio.

Whereas the arts magazine format is still a staple of BBC radio schedules, its marked absence from television signals a significant decline in both critical approaches to the arts and spaces for experimentation on screen. Further to this, whilst the rise of popular formats has broadened the audience for arts programming, it has also resulted in a dearth of imagination within the mainstream proposition. In this regard the current proposition appears to be one in which introducing new audiences to the arts and providing a diverse range of innovative programming are positioned as mutually exclusive aims in the

context of the present ratings-led, risk-averse television commissioning culture. But if any genre invites innovation it is surely the arts. The arts are one of the most vibrant and diverse areas of public life and for the BBC not to reflect this is not only a clear loss for the audience, but also undermines many of the most fundamental claims of distinctiveness as a public service broadcaster.

## 8. Arts Broadcasting in the Digital Age

---

In a speech at its launch, Director-General, Tony Hall described online content as ‘the third pillar of BBC Arts’ going on to state that ‘there are so many different ways to watch, listen and connect with audiences and we’re going to lead the charge’ (2014). Indeed, the current broadcasting landscape has changed dramatically since Kenneth Clarke’s *Civilisation* first aired on BBC Two in 1969. Whereas the only substantial competition facing the BBC then came in the form of commercial rival ITV, there are now countless digital radio and television services to contend with. But perhaps the most significant impact on broadcasters in recent years has been the proliferation of online media. Hours of Internet usage in Britain have more than doubled since 2005, with Ofcom reporting that although ‘TV remains hugely popular, it has increasingly converged with the Internet, and user-generated video content has become a prominent information source’ (2015: 35). In 2016 Ofcom reported that viewing of paid on-demand services had ‘especially increased, rising 14 percentage points to 20% in two years’ (2). There has also been a significant increase in the consumption of short-form video through sites such as YouTube with 65% of 16-24 year olds and 52% of 25-34 year olds now watching this form of content at least once a week (Ofcom, 2015a: 20).

The media through which content is consumed is also changing, with Ofcom reporting that ‘weekly viewing of short video clips on a mobile has risen substantially, from 29% in 2013 to 40% in 2014’ (2015d: 10). The use of tablets such as the Apple iPad has also grown substantially. In 2015 54% of UK households owned a tablet device, with the most rapid uptake in the 35-54 age group (Ofcom, 2015). Furthermore, if young people’s consumption habits are indicative of future trends, then the privileged position of television within the media landscape is in no way assured. In 2016 an annual survey by Childwise found that time online had overtaken time watching television for the first time ever. The report went on to state that the video streaming website YouTube ‘has taken centre stage in children’s lives this year to become the place they

turn to for entertainment, music, games, TV programmes, instruction and advice' (1).

It could be argued that such findings give further credence to claims that we have moved into a so-called 'post-network' or 'post-broadcast' era, characterised by the ability of audiences to 'increasingly select what, when, and where to view from abundant options' (Lotz, 2007: 15). Alongside technological developments, Amanda Lotz highlights 'generational shifts' as key in driving such change, stating that 'this generation moves fluidly and fluently among technologies' (2007: 17). This new abundance of options has led some to argue that, if not already, then PSB will soon be rendered obsolete. In a 2003 paper entitled *The Impotence of Arguments for Public Service Broadcasting*, Elizabeth Jacka argues that 'the political rationality of PSB (to educate, inform, and influence taste) has been displaced by a new political rationality in which the paternalistic state has no role' (187). By this she implies that the justification for publically funded broadcasters has eroded in an age of decentralisation and fragmentation, concluding that 'the nostalgic harking back to an earlier time when PSB provided a secure and predictable diet for a coherent national audience is fruitless. We need to move beyond it' (188). Over a decade later and the emergence of this new media ecology has undeniably had a palpable affect on genres that have traditionally been thought to epitomise public service values. As examined in the previous chapter, in an era of time-shifting technologies and seemingly unlimited consumer choice commissioners report that it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract substantial audiences to specialist factual programming, particularly in more traditionally esoteric subjects such as the arts.

However, as briefly discussed in chapter 2, a number of scholars have argued that rather than being made obsolete, PSB has adapted to this new media environment in ways that prompt a redefinition of traditional notions of 'public service' and 'broadcasting' (Bracken and Balfour, 2004; Bennett, 2008; Cunningham, 2009; Enli, 2008; Hendy, 2013). In order for PSB to remain sustainable it must meet the needs of the public for whom it serves across a variety of different mediums and in a variety of different forms. As Hendy

asserts, 'treating either radio or television as constituting a self-contained entity seems absurd [...] at the very least, we need to stop talking about public service *broadcasting* and start talking about public service *media* or public service *communication*' (author's emphasis, 2013: 106). Throughout the interviews the notions of arts broadcasting and the BBC more broadly needing to 'adapt to survive' was a recurring theme. As an executive producer and arts lead for BBC Scotland stated:

We all know audience figures are going down. We need to work really hard, especially to bring younger people back to the BBC, and certainly more diverse audiences to the BBC. I think we're doing a lot of research now on how people are consuming and interacting with content, and it is about much more personal and interactive storytelling. I think if we can join up a bit more through online and TV and radio and think about new ways of telling stories... that's something that we're going to have to think about to survive, I think. (Interview 7)

To further unpack this notion of adapting to survive, this chapter examines the ways in which the BBC's current arts strategy extends beyond just television and radio to encompass new opportunities and challenges for delivering public service content across a variety of platforms.

### **8.1. Multiplatform strategies: Setting the scene**

Within the broader context of public service provision, the integration of online platforms and digital services has been a growing priority for broadcasters since the turn of the millennium (Steemers, 1999; Meier, 2003; Bennett, 2008; Enli, 2008). In regard to specialist factual programming, this is most strongly evidenced in the work of Bennett and Strange (2008) in relation to early applications of interactive television and the BBC's so-called 'multiplatform projects'. Within this analysis it is significant to note that the BBC's first application of interactive television was for the 2001 natural history series *Walking With Beasts*. Through the 'red button' viewers could access supplementary material and information streaming alongside the broadcast programme. As Bennett and Strange state, these 'were spaces the viewer could 'explore' and 'delve deeper' into for more information on each episode's beasts', and that like the arrangement of a museum they were designed to 'present the

visitor with an itinerary based on educative principles' (2008: 109). Although these interactive strategies would soon be extended across practically all areas of provision, their initial implementation within natural history signalled new opportunities for engaging audiences with factual content on a previously unprecedented scale. In this regard it was not long until this strategy was also implemented within arts broadcasting. According to Wyver early examples of this include a live transmission of *Shakespeare's Richard II* in 2003, which, in a similar fashion to *Walking With Beasts*, provided 'text information about the play and its plot plus commentary from Andrew Marr about contemporary political parallels, together with access to backstage cameras' via the red button (2007: 194).

It is important to note here that the provision of supplementary material is in no way a new concept within arts broadcasting. Detailed programme notes in magazines such as *The Radio Times* accompanied most classical music concerts in the early years of radio, providing a guide for those unfamiliar with the pieces being performed. 'Through articles, programme notes and announcements', asserts Jennifer Doctor, 'the BBC strove to cultivate interest in its art music programmes and to provide basic information, so that the uninformed listener would have a foundation for comprehending them' (1999: 103). Fundamental in such initiatives was an acknowledgement that merely broadcasting concerts and performances was not enough to eradicate the social and cultural barriers that made such art forms inaccessible to many. Rather, the ambition of democratising the 'high culture' of the arts envisioned by Reith and his contemporaries had to start from making their meanings and contexts available to all rather than a select few. In many respects the multiplatform arts strategies of the early 00's could be considered a continuation of this tradition. However, whilst the physical magazine format only allowed for text and images, digital platforms such as that offered by interactive TV provided a more versatile and integrated approach to conveying supplementary content. From a public service perspective this provided a new and novel way to introduce audiences to the arts and expand the parameters of cultural engagement.

Although arguably not as prolific as in other areas of provision, from the mid 00's there was still a shift within arts broadcasting strategy from just providing supplementary content toward encouraging more active participation and interaction. The most notable example of this is the 2005 series *A Picture of Britain* (BBC Two), described by Bennett and Strange as 'markedly more sophisticated' than the multiplatform television events that had preceded it, with 'user interaction moving beyond simple voting to generation and contribution of content' (2011: 140). Alongside an array of programming across television and radio, viewers and listeners were invited to submit their own photographs to the official website for the opportunity to have their work displayed in the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, as well as selected entries also appearing in a digital gallery accessed via the red-button. Bennett and Strange also outline how the programme's website featured 'digital photography master class providing practical tips and "on location" trade secrets from professional photographers' (ibid). As Van Dijck and Poell state, around this time 'online participation was considered a key-strategy for public broadcasters in an attempt to regain their position in national arenas' (2015: 153). In this regard *A Picture of Britain* is emblematic of broader shifts within the BBC at the time toward participation as both a measure of value and way to strategically manage audience attention within a more competitive media landscape.

With the proliferation of digital television and steadily increasing broadband access across the UK during the mid to late 00's, the requirement for multiplatform content provision soon became built into the organisation and commissioning structure of the BBC itself. In 2006 the then BBC Director-General, Mark Thompson, announced the corporation's new '360-degree' commissioning strategy as part of the Creative Future initiative. Framed as a response to changes in technology and audience consumption habits, the reform represented 'the full-scale adoption of a multi-platform and multimedia approach to commissioning, producing and distributing public service content' (Bennett and Strange, 2008: 106). Building on from this, Doyle asserts that 'a 360 degree strategy implies that, from the earliest stages of conceptualization, content decisions are shaped by the potential to generate consumer value and returns through multiple forms of expression of that content via a number of



distributive outlets' (2010: 2). In a speech to BBC staff, Thompson also highlighted the particular need for this shift in strategy when delivering the 'educate' part of the BBC's remit, going on to state that 'even the words we use – learning, educative, specialist factual – can feel a little uninspiring' (The Guardian, 2006). A year following this announcement Wyver asserted that 'within arts programming at this date there was no standout project that fully demonstrated the 360-degree vision' (2007: 194). However, as Bennett et al. note, the standardisation of multiplatform approaches within the production and commissioning process needs time to develop in practice, with such strategies requiring 'a profound transformation of the cultures of production away from broadcast linear as the default setting' (2012: 51).

A decade later and the BBC are currently undergoing another restructure in a bid to further streamline its services. This latest reform is set to see the abolishment of divisions between radio and television channels and the introduction of a new commissioning and content structure based around genre and reportedly within the broader jurisdiction of three 'super-departments', 'BBC Entertain', 'BBC Inform' and 'BBC Educate' (Dowell, 2016). Although at the time of writing such reforms are yet to be officially initiated, this more streamlined approach to public service provision is already strongly evident within the current BBC arts commissioning and organisational strategy. As the BBC's director of arts states:

By BBC Arts it's saying of course everyone sits in their own divisions and makes content for particular services, but there is a group of us - and we're a virtual department - that those of us who are making arts programming, or working in the arts in the BBC, we're also part of this thing called BBC Arts, and from that we have a mission as a cultural institution and to behave as one. (Interview 1)

In this respect operating as a 'cultural institution' is framed as signalling a more holistic approach to arts provision which targets different areas of the BBC's portfolio with different types of content appropriate to the character of particular services. Building on from discussion in the previous chapter, there is also a sense of media specificity in regard to the tone and nature of arts content across platforms. As the director of arts goes on to assert:

In terms of how we move into a tri-media world, television is increasingly about things which feel special or a special event on their own. Radio is about that intimate on-going engagement with the arts. Online needs to be about personalisation and interactivity. (Interview 1)

It is significant to note in the above description that the nature of television and radio content is discussed as established aspects of the overall arts provision (television *is* increasingly about things which feel special, radio *is* about that intimate on-going engagement with the arts), whereas the role of online is framed in more prospective terms (online *needs to be* about personalisation and interactivity). It could be argued that this reflects what Bennett describes as ‘the difficulties PSBs face in bridging the gap between the rhetoric and reality of transforming themselves into [public service media] organisations that treat the audience as interactive users’ (2013: 15). Such statements contribute to broader criticisms that despite the BBC’s frequently renewed commitment to multiplatform strategies, public service provision is still predominantly broadcast focused, and even in an online context continues to have a top-down relationship with the audience that inherently limits opportunities for interaction and personalisation. In relation to this, Andrew Chitty asserts that ‘if you look for deep multiplatform experiences from Channel 4 or the BBC today you wouldn’t look in specialist factual, learning or current affairs’ (2013: 126). This is to argue that whilst digital and online services have been regarded as concurrent with the public service goals of specialist factual programming from their inception, their potential to actually *interact* with what Rosen (2006) terms ‘the people formerly known as the audience’ is yet to be realised in practice.

Building on from this, the following further examines the role of online platforms within the BBC’s current arts strategy. As Enli states, ‘every decade seems to demand a reorientation of PSB in order for the institutions to survive technological, societal and market changes’ (2008: 105). Focusing on the BBC’s dedicated arts website, [bbc.co.uk/arts](http://bbc.co.uk/arts), and BBC iPlayer as key platforms for BBC arts content online, the present analysis provides an insight into the strategic role of these services in both meeting changing consumption habits

and ensuring the future sustainability of PSB, and by extension arts 'broadcasting', in the evolving digital media landscape.

## **8.2. BBC Arts Online**

Launched in 2014, BBC Arts Online draws together content from across the BBC's services including iPlayer, news and archival material, alongside specially commissioned articles, short-form and long-form video. The site also hosts livestreams of opera, dance and theatre, and serves as a platform for extensive coverage of cultural festivals and events from around the country, most notably the Hay literary festival and Edinburgh Festival Fringe. BBC Arts Online also features a weekly email newsletter which lists upcoming BBC arts programmes and events across television, radio and online.

Describing where BBC Arts Online fits within the wider BBC arts strategy, the director of arts stated:

In terms of the online side, I want Arts Online to be like news, the place where the story comes together. So it will never drive the most traffic, BBC One will and so on, but I want there to be a place where the BBC's art story comes together, and that's online. (Interview 1)

When talking with those involved with online strategy the 'challenge' of generating traffic was identified as a key issue in regard to online content. Although lesser than that of television and radio, for public service broadcasters the development and maintenance of online platforms still requires significant investment in terms of resources and skills, and as such there are still pressures to demonstrate value for money. In a rhetoric strikingly similar to that of the BBC's head of arts commissioning in the previous chapter, the BBC's head of digital strategy frequently cited 'uniques' (the number of unique visitors to a webpage) as evidence of the success of specific online content. In many ways this is symptomatic of efforts to standardise measurements of public value in order to 'help with making investment decisions across the BBC's entire portfolio of services' (Doyle, 2010: 13). However, as Doyle asserts, the quantitative measures of success applied to television are not always applicable in an online context: 'Whereas 'time spent' is a positive indicator for an activity

such as watching television [...] longer time spent using an online news service, for instance, may indicate a negative rather than positive value if the explanation is that the user cannot find what they are looking for' (2010: 14). Conversely, it could be argued that the limitations discussed in the previous chapter around quantitative measures of public value are also evident in the extent to which trends in arts television are replicated in an online context.

When describing articles and features which had generated substantial traffic to the site, many of the examples given referenced popular culture. These included the hit television series *Game of Thrones* in an article about cinema in Northern Ireland and *Premium Bond* (2015), a series of short-form videos in which actor/writer Mark Gatiss and Matthew Sweet discuss James Bond. Here parallels can be drawn with discussion in chapter 7 around the proliferation of the popular arts format on television. Using a similar strategy, such content draws on popular formats, topics and presenters to appeal to a broader audience. Whilst series such as *The Big Painting Challenge* and *Fake or Fortune?* employ the conventions and formats of other popular television genres, the head of digital development explained how online content can also draw on contemporary cultural trends to attract audiences:

A great one, which got a lot of traffic, was just recently with an Agatha Christie piece on BBC One at the moment. Agatha Christie was a surfer, you know, she was one of the first women surfers. There's a great picture of her with a surfboard, and it's kind of ten things you always wanted to know about Agatha Christie. Lists, listicles, what a surprise! But the point is you can use those as secret weapons in the arts because those can be really interesting things. I think that's the thing, it's not about trivialising the content, it's about finding ways of communicating that to the broadest audience and a good strapline certainly helps. (Interview 5)

Such statements are in many ways demonstrative of the wider logic that permeates online content creation. A number of commentators have argued that the proliferation of online media and information consumption has resulted in a shift from a distribution economy toward an 'attention economy' (Goldhaber, 1997; Davenport and Beck, 2001; Lanham 2006; Webster, 2011). Often cited as introducing the term to the public lexicon, economist Herbert

Simon states that 'a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it' (1971: 40). In this regard, attention has become a quantifiable currency similar to that of television ratings by which the value of content is judged online.

### **8.2.1. 'Shareability' and social media**

Another key aspect of online strategy is the role of social media platforms in circulating content beyond the BBC Arts homepage. When speaking with the head of digital development he often referenced the amount of 'likes' and 'shares' content had accumulated on sites such as Facebook ([facebook.com/BBCArtsOnline](https://facebook.com/BBCArtsOnline)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/BBCArts](https://twitter.com/BBCArts)). From the statement above regarding the use of particular formats to generate traffic, the head of digital development went on to assert: 'just like any other part of the online environment, short, shareable, snackable stuff is often what works' (Interview 5). In relation to social media, the term 'shareable' holds particular significance in the context of online strategy more broadly. In 2013 Jenkins et al. proposed a paradigm shift away from the notion of 'viral' to describe the spread of online content toward the concept of 'spreadable media'. In essence, this is a way of analysing and discussing this phenomenon from a *user-centric* rather than *media-centric* perspective. As Jenkins et al. state: 'In this emerging model audiences play an active role in "spreading" content rather than serving as passive carriers of viral media: their choices, investments, agendas, and actions determine what gets valued' (21). From this description, it follows that 'shares' and 'likes' have become part of a larger rhetoric around how public value is measured by institutions such as the BBC.

One concern to highlight in relation to this online economy is the ways in which an overreliance on 'short, shareable, snackable' content could lead to a dilution of public service values in pursuit of 'clicks' and shares on social media. According to a report by the Independent, a recent push within the BBC's online news output toward content that emulates popular 'youth-friendly' media sharing sites such as BuzzFeed was met with 'anger from traditionalists in the BBC newsroom who feel the organisation's journalistic values are being

compromised by a desire to go after “clickbait” content in order to drive up online traffic numbers’ (Burell, 2015). Fundamental in this are concerns that impact measured quantitatively by clicks (attention) is increasingly taking precedence over impact measured by public value in terms of content quality and journalistic integrity. In a similar vein, Bennett asserts that ‘whilst it is important that over eight million unique users have visited the related website and that the programme and its personalities’ twitter accounts have a cumulated following of over 500,000 people, it is the quality of interactions that remains important’ (2013: 10).

While attention-grabbing headlines, video titles and images might generate substantial traffic; the public value of this in terms of meaningfully engaging audiences in the arts remains obscure. Although such content only constitutes a small part of the BBC’s online arts provision at present, if changes within other areas of the BBC’s online portfolio are indicative of future trends then the use of these strategies may gain increased prominence.

### **8.2.2. Supplementing content**

The majority of the BBC’s current online strategy is focused on the management of what Caldwell (2003) terms ‘audience/user flows’ from broadcasting to online. This is predominantly achieved through so-called ‘calls to action’, in which viewers and listeners of television and radio programmes are prompted to visit specific websites and engage in particular activities. In doing so broadcasters ‘attempt to bring new forms of rationality to unstable media economies’ through ‘herding’ increasingly fragmented viewers/users within ‘a single brand-bounded flow’ (Caldwell, 2003: 135). As Bennett and Strange observe, for public service broadcasters such as the BBC these strategies aim to keep ‘audiences engaged with their proprietary content for as long as possible’ while at the same time playing ‘a crucial role in providing a coherent identity across media platforms’ (2008: 108). With respect to BBC Arts Online, a number of interviewees referred to the reach and reputation of the BBC’s broadcasting portfolio as crucial in promoting online content and driving traffic. As the BBC’s director of arts asserted:

One thing we have is that we can just drive to the site through broadcasts. That is the oxygen. So days where we're able to editorially link from radio shows and television shows, the traffic picks up, the days when you can't, everything is a bit flat. (Interview 1)

This was a sentiment also echoed by the head of digital development, who described broadcasting as 'really key, because it drives numbers' (Interview 5). From this it is assumed that the primary role of online platforms at present is to complement traditional media output through providing a space for more in-depth content within the broader public service provision. The nature of this content can be split into three main categories: topical coverage of events and developments in the area of arts and culture; collections of archive footage and other historic media; and content specially designed to contextualise and expand on specific television and radio programming.

With respect to the latter, the provision of supplementary online content is positioned as particularly beneficial for radio when dealing with topics such as the visual arts, with programmes such as BBC Radio 4's *The Art of The Nation* (2014) and *Decoding the Masterworks* (2015) encouraging listeners to visit online galleries to view the works being discussed. When speaking to an interviewee who had recently been involved in the production of online content for radio, he cited a shift in radio consumption habits as the catalyst for such initiatives:

They're acknowledging that more and more people are listening online or that they're listening in the traditional way but with a tablet there or something like that. (Interview 10)

In 2016 RAJAR reported that analogue radio listening was at its lowest rate ever, with 57% of all listening now via a digital platform (1). Further to this, Hilmes argues that due to listening increasingly occurring through computers, tablets and smart phones, radio is now 'a screen medium, possessing extended capabilities that posed an enormous challenge to producers used to working with sound in its traditional forms' (2013: 49). The influence of this within the context of arts broadcasting is perhaps best articulated in the first episode of *Decoding the Masterworks*, in which presenter Dr Janina Ramirez prefaces an

in-depth examination of Manet's 'A Bar at the Folies-Bèrgere' with a description of the painting as she stands before it in the Courtauld Gallery in London. This is then followed by a prompt to 'find it by typing the title of the painting into your internet search engine'. Implied in such statements is the expectation that the majority of those listening are also in proximity to a computer or smartphone on which they can view the painting as a reference point to the discussion.

Although a number of academics argue that radio has always been a 'visual' medium in the sense the listener imagines whatever details are being described to them (Crisell, 1986), Berry asserts that 'technology and audiences have evolved to the point where radio can introduce visualization to complement the auditory offering, in a way that neither diminishes the impact of sound nor substantially alters the nature of the medium' (2013: 171). In this regard, visual materials add to the listening experience, rather than replacing it. As Berry goes on to state 'the programme remains the 'main event' but visualization enhances and extends that experience' (172). The visual arts have always had a place on radio, but the use of online images in this way provides new creative opportunities for producers to add an extra layer to programming, and for listeners the option to enrich their listening experience should they choose to.

In a similar fashion to the red-button television services discussed earlier, in 2015 BBC Radio 3 also provided live online text commentary and images to accompany the broadcast of Handel's *Orlando* as part of its *Opera on 3* strand. As already discussed, the provision of information to accompany radio broadcasts can be traced back to the inception of the medium itself. However, online is regarded as a particularly conducive platform for broadening the demographic of traditionally niche arts audiences. As explained by one BBC executive producer who had recently been involved in coordinating the provision of this live commentary:

If you know your opera and you know your stuff then you probably don't want to do that, you know what it is. But if you don't, somebody screaming at you in a foreign language is quite a difficult thing to climb on to. [...] It's not necessarily age related, I have no objection at all if an eighty year old wanted to follow it on there, but I'm hoping that somebody



like you might come and say, “you know what I’m not that familiar with how the opera works but this is how I can get more into what that is, and the BBC is offering us something in parallel with the Welsh National that is quite special”. (Interview 15)

Again, the idea of ‘offering something quite special’ suggests that such strategies primarily serve to enhance the listening experience, particularly for those unfamiliar with the performances being broadcast. Online users were also able to access photographs of the production that ‘not only capture the magical costumes and design of the show, but also take us through the action scene-by-scene’ (Smith, 2015). To further contextualise the performance, the website also featured interviews with the cast and shots from backstage including ‘selfies by the artists’ (ibid). With the average age of opera goers in the UK reportedly between 60 and 69 (O’Neill et al., 2014) the provision of such content would seem an overt attempt to appeal to a younger demographic and thereby broaden the appeal of this traditionally niche art form.

In recent years there has been a wider push within opera institutions and organisations themselves to lower the median age of their audience through initiatives such as reduced price tickets for under 30’s, targeted advertising campaigns, and experimental new performances. As La Scala spokesman Carlo Maria Cella states, ‘every theatre has to cultivate a renewal of its audience. As someone wrote: new blood for the old ceremony’ (quoted in Stranger, 2009). With its reach and universality, broadcasting has often been regarded as playing an important role in efforts to broaden the demographic of opera and classical music. However, overt attempts to ‘popularise’ these art forms on television have often been met with resistance. In 2010 ITV’s reality TV format *Popstar to Operastar* was widely slated in the press, with Telegraph journalist Rupert Christiansen accusing the series of being just ‘a very superficial commercial exercise’. The 2015 BBC Proms were also criticised for including an Ibiza concert and grime symphony, with one commentator heralding it as the first step toward commercialisation and corporate sponsorship: ‘stand by for next year’s Audi BBC Proms – or maybe a bigger betrayal, the Apple iTunes BBC Proms’ (Lebrecht, 2015).

The criticism surrounding these attempts to engage broader audiences is in many ways symbolic of a wider rhetoric that both equates popular appeal with commercialism and frames commercial imperatives as counterintuitive to artistic expression. As the critic George Steiner once stated in relation to literature: 'Dumped on the mass market, the products of classic literacy will be thinned and adulterated' (1971: 82). Imbued in such statements is the sense that presenting these typically niche art forms in popular formats inherently alters the very characteristics that define them. In comparison, the provision of supplementary online content offers opportunities to cultivate a new audience for highbrow art forms in a way that, in the words of Berry (2013) 'enhances and extends' rather than 'diminishes' the original work. As the managing director of Royal Opera House Enterprises stated:

For people who are really keen on ballet or want to learn more about ballet then there's a whole set of material there that otherwise in the pre-internet days would never have found its way onto a TV channel. I think it's just adding to what we have in place already. (Interview 19)

In respect to both educative and illustrative online content, it could be argued that the adaptation of BBC Radio to the new media environment in this way strengthens public service provision and supports Hendy's assertion that 'new forms of social media sometimes serve old media rather than replace them' (2013: 109).

### **8.2.3. Standalone content**

While the BBC's online strategy is primarily focused on supplementing linear broadcasting at present, it is also important to acknowledge the increasingly notable cases in which online content is the centrepiece to a wider cross-platform array of programming. In particular, online services are now being utilised platform for streaming full-length theatre and opera performances that have all but disappeared from the BBC's television schedules. This is perhaps most strongly evidenced in the coverage of the Welsh National Opera's 2016 production of *In Parenthesis*, based on the epic poem by David Jones. Whilst television only dedicated 30-minutes to a documentary on the making of the production, the opera in its entirety was available to watch online through a joint

commission by The WNO, the BBC and The Space. As ‘behind the scenes’ and ‘making of’ documentaries are more commonly considered to contextualise content rather than be viewed as standalone products, this would suggest that television is now also providing the supplementary content for online provision. Although the symbiotic relationship between media described by Hendy is still evident more broadly, there are increasing instances within specialist areas of provision where online is leading, rather than following television and radio.

Within this context, many of those interviewed voiced concerns around the arts being increasingly ‘shoved online’ to ‘free up’ television and radio schedules (Interview 14). In this regard there is also the need to address the tensions between responding to changing consumption habits and what is seen as the increased marginalisation of arts within the overall public service provision. In particular, concerns were raised around the possibility of key services such as BBC Four moving online and following what one interviewee dubbed ‘the BBC Three model’. To examine this further, attention will now be turned to the increased prominence of the BBC’s on demand streaming service iPlayer as a standalone platform for arts content.

### **8.3. iPlayer Exclusives**

In 2007 the BBC launched a new online ‘catch up’ service, BBC iPlayer, which allowed UK audiences to stream BBC programmes from the past seven days. Following its launch, Mark Lawson wrote in the Guardian that ‘iPlayer may represent the biggest step-change yet in the way television is seen’ in regard to facilitating new forms of consumption and distribution (2008). In January 2016 BBC iPlayer received ‘315 million TV and radio requests’ with ‘an increase of 2 per cent month on month’ and highest usage among those under 55 years of age (BBC Media Centre). As stated on the iPlayer commissioning website: ‘30% of viewers are enjoying content on iPlayer they’ve discovered for the very first time. With reach to iPlayer up 16% year-on-year, iPlayer is fast becoming a primary entertainment destination, especially for younger audiences’ (2016b).

Engaging younger audiences appears to be a prominent issue within arts broadcasting, with a number of interviewees raising concerns around the so-

called 'aging audience'. This included the BBC's head of arts commissioning, who asserted that 'on the whole the arts audience is a bit older than I'd want it to be' (Interview 4). It could be argued that this reflects a dearth in arts programming that appeals to younger people, rather than a lack of demand. Speaking on a panel at the annual Culture Comms conference the BBC's director of arts admitted that it had become increasingly challenging to deliver arts content for young people due to cuts in funding (2015). Even on specifically youth-orientated services like the former broadcast channel BBC Three, the capacity to put in place strategies to engage younger audiences have been hindered by assumptions that they are either uninterested in the arts or their interests are concentrated to single areas of popular culture. As the BBC's head of arts commissioning explained:

It's been frustrating to me that I've never had a slate on BBC Three for ages and ages, and that's partly because people go "oh right, BBC Three, we'll put all the culture and arts money towards music because that's what young people like". Now I think that young people like other stuff as well, so I think it's important that we find ways of engaging those audiences and that's partly why we do performance poetry and stuff. (Interview 4)

Indeed, there is strong evidence of a younger audience for the arts that have arguably been underserved by the BBC. According to the DCMS's Taking Part survey, 80% of those aged 16-24 had participated in the arts or attended events such as exhibitions and festivals between October 2015 and September 2016 (2016a: 1). A 2013 report commissioned by Ticketmaster also found that the audience for theatre was getting younger, with a 71% increase in 18-25 year olds buying tickets since 2009, and 87% of 16-19 year olds saying they were likely to see something at the theatre compared with 66% of those aged 45-54.

The need for the BBC to reflect young people's interest in the arts is not only crucial in terms of its public service remit, but also in regard to ensuring the future sustainability of arts provision. In 2014 BBC Director-General Tony Hall voiced concerns that 'the arts could become more marginalised unless we do more to reach out to children and young people' (BBC Media Centre). From speaking to those involved with both programme making and strategy there was

a sense that the realisation of this ambition would require an arts strategy that looks beyond traditional broadcasting to embrace new forms of distribution and audience engagement. As one BBC executive producer asserted:

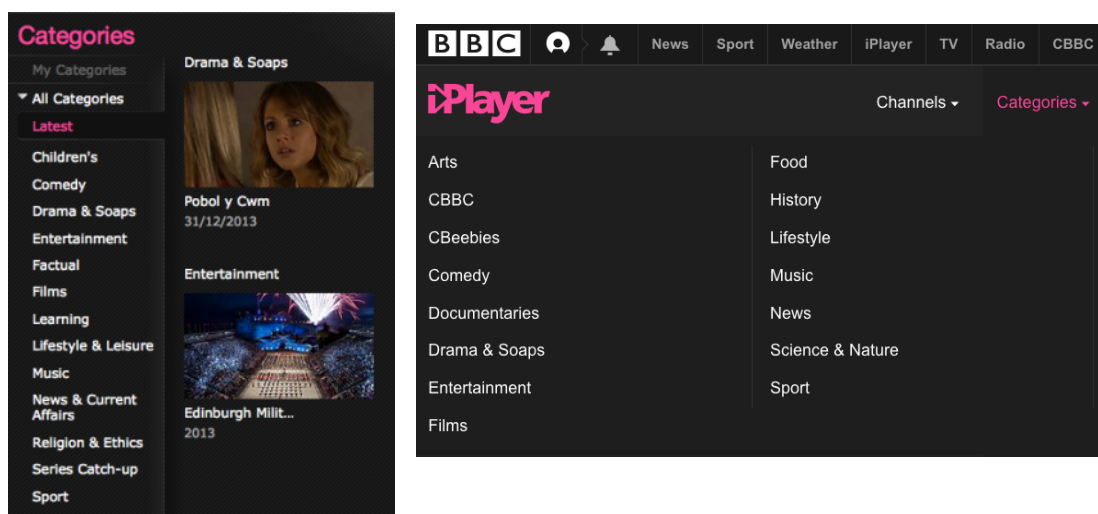
I wish I could say I'm sure there's a way to [engage young people with the arts] on television, but I don't think there is because I just don't think young people go to television for arts programming. (Interview 12)

Following the digital ambitions for BBC arts laid out in Hall's speech, the BBC launched *Private View* (2014-), a series of 'iPlayer exclusives' aimed at a younger demographic using prominent figures in popular culture to guide viewers through areas of the artistic canon. The series of 20-minute films commissioned specifically for the iPlayer include dub poet Benjamin Zephaniah on Turner, Glastonbury founder Michael Eavis on Constable, musician Tinie Tempah on Alexander McQueen and comedian Jo Brand on Grayson Perry. Although no official viewing figures have been published, according to the series' producer an episode featuring DJ Goldie at a Matisse exhibition was the highest watched arts programme ever on iPlayer at the time of interview. The interviewee also referred to another series of iPlayer exclusives she produced entitled *Women Who Spit* (2015), which she described as made 'exclusively for a younger audience' and featured women who were all under the age of 25. With 16-34 year olds constituting iPlayer's largest audience share (BBC Media Centre, 2016), the success of series such as *Private View* is in this way presented as evidence of the BBC's commitment to arts content that aligns with both the preferred modes of consumption and aesthetic tastes of this demographic.

### **8.3.1. Creating findability**

Peter Morville defines the concept of findability as both 'the degree to which a particular object is easy to discover or locate' and 'the degree to which a system or environment supports navigation and retrieval' (2005: 4). In the media saturated landscape of the Internet and social media, the 'findability' of content is becoming both increasingly important and challenging. As Mark Thompson highlighted in his speech on the future of BBC content strategy: 'If we don't coordinate our content, make it easy to find and brand it clearly, it may just

disappear' (The Guardian, 2006). Prior to the launch of BBC Arts, arts programming on iPlayer was placed under the broad heading of 'factual' content. This resulted in the word 'arts' being absent from the site's homepage, making the location of programming that fell within this category substantially more challenging. Following iPlayer's re-launch in 2014, the arts now constitute a distinct category, which as a result of its alphabetical order, is first in the list of programme genres. In regard to this increased visibility, the Director-General stated: 'Arts now has its own home on iPlayer, which will be a showcase for all we can do together' (BBC Media Centre).



*BBC iPlayer homepage programme menu in 2013 on the left compared with 2014 on the right*

As already mentioned, there are a growing number of users accessing iPlayer to browse for, rather than 'catch up' on content. Concerning factual content more broadly, Sørensen discusses how, in an online landscape saturated with content available on commercial platforms such as YouTube and Netflix, public service broadcasters 'are seeking to make their presence and brand felt online, in order to ensure that their channel or site remains the first point of call and that users stay with their content' (2014: 39).). Building on from John Caldwell's notion of 'second shift aesthetics' (2003), Sørensen goes on to describe this type of multiplatform strategy as 'the control and management of user flows between digital, dispersed texts across platforms' (2014: 40). Although broadcasting still remains the dominant medium by which the majority of people

encounter BBC programming, current online strategy in regard to platforms like iPlayer suggests a recognition that user flows between broadcast and online are likely to weaken if consumption habits continue to change in line with current trajectory. As Ofcom state in their 2015 PSB review: 'Young audiences' viewing behaviour may be the precursor to a general shift to online and on-demand across all age groups' (2015: 4).

### **8.3.2. Shrinking budgets and diminishing value**

In relation to the possibility of more arts content moving online, a pertinent concern for many of the producers interviewed was one of funding. Thirteen years after its launch BBC Three became the first BBC television channel to become available only online in February 2016. With young people spending more time online than watching broadcast television for the first time ever, changing consumption habits provided the BBC with a strong rationale for BBC Three's departure from the linear broadcasting landscape. However, whilst this shift in viewing trends was acknowledged by the BBC Trust in their approval of the proposal, the decision was also framed as a cost-saving measure with the move of BBC Three content to the iPlayer set to make savings of around £30 million a year. As the BBC Trust's report stated, 'the financial context and the need for the BBC to deliver savings' was a 'significant factor' in their decision-making' (2015: 42). When asked to comment on what the cessation of BBC Three as an on-air channel means for the future of other niche services former BBC Four controller, Danny Cohen, stated that 'if future funding for the BBC comes under more threat then the likelihood is we would have to take more services along the same [online only] route [as BBC3]' (Quoted in the Guardian, 2014).

In line with this rhetoric, a number of those interviewed regarded moving more content online as synonymous with even further cuts to budgets and resources. As one independent producer stated:

I'm less worried about it moving online. I'm more worried about its money dropping away and it being not treated as a proper channel anymore. That would be my concern. (Interview 20)

As Doyle asserts in relation to BBC Three, the emphasis placed on framing online platforms as presenting new creative opportunities obscures the fact that proposed savings ‘stem purely from cutting back on investment in content’ (2015: 699). It would be uncontroversial to suggest that this is in many ways counterproductive to delivering the fundamental values and commitments of PSB. Within the context of academic study Irene Meijer asserts that ‘most scholars agree that ‘quality’ is the defining feature of public broadcasting’ (2005: 35). Although this point in itself is highly contestable (many studies also highlight other defining aspects such as universality and funding models), the concept of quality undeniably fulfils a vital role within both the branding strategies of public service broadcasters (see Johnson, 2013) and as rationale for their continued position in the media landscape. In rearticulating the BBC’s core public purposes going forward into the next Charter period, Tony Hall stated ‘our role in the next decade is to enable content of the highest quality, made in Britain, for audiences to enjoy’ (BBC, 2015: 5).

Specialist factual and documentary output is an area of provision often utilised in debates around quality programming within the context of PSB (Dover, 2004; Sørensen, 2014; Wheatley, 2004). As Dover states, ‘the intangible traditions associated with documentary television – revelation, truthfulness, advocacy, information, creativity and story-telling – have long earned the genre a reputation of quality and worthiness particularly valued within public service broadcasting’ (2004: 245). However, with regard to the arts on television and radio, many of the programme-makers interviewed were already describing having to negotiate the practical consequences of decreased funding in terms of reducing the time allocated to preparation and research. With respect to the actual shooting process this dearth in resources also results in having to compromise quality in regard to programme aesthetics. As one independent producer stated:

You can question to what extent you need a tracking shot and things like that. I mean, it does make a programme look classier, but if that adds a few hundred quid to every shooting day, is it worth doing? (Interview 8)



Further reducing these already small budgets would not only undermine many rationales for public funding, but also weaken the BBC's brand identity as a producer of quality arts and factual content in the digital landscape. As Sørensen asserts, 'given the vast amount of audiovisual content uploaded to the Internet every day [...] the problem for viewers is not so much accessing audiovisual material, as identifying high-quality content online' (2014: 37). Within this context the ability for the BBC maintain its reputation and stand out as a world leader in high quality content is paramount to the sustainability of factual provision online.

In light of this direction in funding and the prevailing impact of traditional broadcasting, fewer television and radio commissions are also seen by many to negatively reflect the relative value of a genre within the BBC itself. As articulated by a freelance presenter and journalist working within the field:

It's also a really obvious indicator of whether you're valued. If you're pushed online it's a sign that people at the top don't really think you're for them. (Interview 16)

This was a sentiment that was also strongly voiced at the close of BBC Three as a broadcast channel with, among others, television producer Ash Atalla asserting that the BBC had 'given up on young people' (quoted in Plunkett, 2014). Further to this, Mills argues that by positioning BBC Three 'in a realm well away from 'mainstream' audiences' the diverse identities and interests it served and represented are further 'marginalised simply by their positioning within the broadcasting landscape' (2015: 228). Similar criticism has already been made against the BBC in the context of its arts output on television since the launch of BBC Four in 2002. According to Wyver, there was a 'widely-held concern that, welcome as BBC Four's output was, the BBC was now going to exile its arts programming to a specialist channel that could only be viewed by a comparatively small proportion of the population' (2007: 89). Although access to BBC Four has proliferated since the digital television switchover began in 2007, this notion of marginalisation has shifted from focusing on a lack of universal availability to the smaller budgets and audiences synonymous with specialist niche channels. In the view of a number of those interviewed within the BBC

itself, independent producers and representatives of cultural institutions, moving more arts content online could further perpetuate this issue.

#### **8.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has examined both the opportunities and challenges of online content as part of the BBC's wider multiplatform strategy for the arts. In regard to the latter, a perennial issue identified throughout the interviews with key strategists was that of driving traffic to the BBC Arts website. Although there are notable efforts to make content that will attract attention and be shared on social media, the principle method of generating traffic is still through the management of user flows from broadcast and online. In this regard, at present the majority of the BBC's online arts provision is centred on complementing, rather than replacing traditional broadcast media. In particular, this has produced new creative and educative opportunities for presenting the arts on radio through providing supplementary material to accompany broadcasts and widen the accessibility of more esoteric art forms such as opera. Nevertheless, with more niche arts content being distributed exclusively online, both producers and representatives from cultural institutions had significant concerns that increased financial pressures may lead to fewer and fewer arts programmes being commissioned for television.

According to Hendy, 'even if we accept the inherent multi-media character of contemporary society, [...] we're confronted with the stubborn survival of radio and television well beyond the moment of their predicted demise' (2013: 109). Indeed, if anything the resurgence and success of event television in recent years would suggest that any claim to having moved into a 'post-broadcast era' is presently premature. As Sørensen asserts, 'at the same time as more content is being recorded or watched time-shifted, more TV than ever before is being watched, and interacted with or alongside, as it is transmitted' (2016: 5). For instance, in 2016 *The Great British Bake Off* finale reached audiences of 14.8 million viewers during its initial broadcast (BBC News, 2016). The series regularly prompts high levels of engagement on social media too, with the hashtag #GBBO trending on Twitter worldwide during each episode. Writing in the *New Statesman*, Amelia Tait asserted that the series 'dominates not one,

but two of our screens' with one episode in 2014 prompted 'a whopping 3,948 tweets a minute' (2016). From this it would seem safe to assume that broadcast television is far from dead. Although people are consuming more content online and on demand than ever before, linear broadcasting still has an important role to play in creating a sense of shared experience and engaging audiences as citizens in a national conversation.

Although many seem to agree that it is unlikely arts programming will ever attract an audience on the same scale as popular entertainment series such as *The Great British Bake Off*, as a prominent component of civic life its absence from this part of the public sphere would be a fundamental disservice to both the licence fee-paying public and, as will be explored in the following chapter, the wider arts ecology in Britain. As long as public service *broadcasting* continues there needs to be a space for the arts within its schedules.

## 9. From Patron to Champion of the Arts

---

In 2013 the BBC promised the inauguration of ‘a new generation of BBC partnerships with national arts institutions’ as part of a wider commitment to put the arts ‘back at the heart of the corporation’s output’ (Thorpe, 2013). Besides proposals to increase the coverage of these institutions and their work across television, radio and online, the BBC’s latest partnership schemes are perhaps most notable for the ways in which they attempt to engage audiences in various aspects of cultural life beyond broadcasting, while also playing an active role in nurturing the wider UK arts ecology. With these goals often presented as interdependent for success, such strategies also reflect wider pressures on the BBC as an organisation to be less insular and more outward facing in its operations. In 2012 the high profile Pollard Review of *Newsnight*’s dropped investigation into Jimmy Savile highlighted concerns around the ‘insularity’ of the BBC and whether ‘all parts of it are sufficiently open to outside industry practices and attitudes’ (40). In response to such criticism from Pollard and others, increased openness has been a key element within much of the BBC’s proposed commitments for the next Charter period. In a speech to the 2016 Media and Telecoms Conference, Hall set out his vision for a BBC ‘more open than ever to partnerships and collaborations – open to working with the best ideas and talent wherever they come from’ (BBC Media Centre).

Parallel to representing a more holistic approach to organisation and content provision within the BBC, from its inception BBC Arts was also presented as epitomising this commitment to openness and creative collaboration with external organisations. Alongside the ‘Make it Digital’ initiative, the BBC website lists BBC Arts and ‘Get Creative’ as primary examples of the ways in which the broadcaster has ‘sought to give partnership activity a higher profile’ over recent years (2016). The DCMS’s Green Paper on the future of the BBC also makes reference to the corporation’s partnerships within the arts and cultural sectors as evidence of the BBC’s potential to be an effective partner in other markets (2016b: 26). Within this context, the following examines the strategic value of partnerships for both the BBC and arts organisations. Alongside identifying the

opportunities presented by creative, financial and/or strategic collaboration, the present analysis also considers the challenges of building and maintaining these relationships in practice from both perspectives. Furthermore, with many arts organisations funded partly or entirely by public money and the BBC's own status as a public service broadcaster, attention must also be given to the outcomes of these partnerships and the degree to which they demonstrate public value within the current financial and political climate.

### **9.1. BBC partnerships: history and motivations**

The BBC's founding mission statement to bring 'the best of everything to the greatest number of homes' has inevitably involved working with and alongside outside arts institutions since its inception. During the early years of radio live broadcasts of opera, classical music concerts and other performances hosted by various institutions constituted a substantial proportion of BBC schedules. In light of its technological affordances as a one-to-many medium, broadcasting was regarded as having a moral duty to make available to all the works of great artists and arts institutions regardless of the listeners geographic location or socio-cultural background. Through the 'magical agent' of broadcasting, asserted the corporation's 1928 year book, 'no longer is the Promenade Concert available only to Londoners, the Halle Concert to Mancunians, the Belfast Philharmonic to the inhabitants of that city, and the Scottish Orchestra to those living in Glasgow' (84). But equally important, as the document goes on to state, 'the labourer in his squalid tenement in our but too familiar slums, or the lonely invalid on her monotonous couch, may all, in spirit, sit side by side with the patrons of the stalls and hear some of the best performances in the world' (ibid). Despite concerns that this would in turn lead to a reduction in box office takings as the public opted instead to listen at home, the BBC reported that 'on the contrary, we are convinced that broadcasting has created a great field of potential concert-audiences – people who until their interest was awakened by radio in music would never have dreamed of going to a symphony concert' (1928: 86). Rather than a threat to the arts establishment the BBC firmly positioned itself as an ally, committed to nurturing new audiences for high culture by extending the reach of arts institutions on a previously unprecedented scale.

The years following the Second World War saw the gradual introduction of a more formalised approach to cultural partnerships and patronage across the sector with the formation of the Arts Council of Great Britain. Initially established in 1940 as the Committee for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), the primary purpose of the Council was to promote and preserve British culture in response to a growing interest in the arts among the general public. In an editorial for *The Listener*, the Council's first Chairman, John Maynard Keynes, credited the BBC for creating this demand, going on to state: 'I believe that the work of the BBC and the Arts Council can react backwards and forwards on one another to the great advantage of both' (1945: 32). Along with also being a publically funded organisation, the Arts Council's remit set by its Royal Charter in 1946 had much in common with that of the BBC in so far as it aimed to develop 'greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts exclusively, and in particular to increase the accessibility of the fine arts to the public throughout Our Realm' (3). When the BBC's television signals were suspending during the second world war, the former CEMA to some extent occupied this gap in public life through carrying 'music, drama and pictures to places which otherwise would be cut off from all contact with the masterpieces of happier days and times' (Keynes, 1945: 31). In the post-war years the BBC and the newly established Arts Council were the primary patrons of the arts in Britain, providing the majority of funding and employment within the sector.

Nevertheless, despite the similarities in their aims and operations the Arts Council and the BBC did not always have a harmonious relationship. As Hutchison states, 'the establishment of bodies such as the Arts Council of Great Britain was in itself a response to the dangers seen to be posed by the existence of a commercially driven mass culture, to whose appeals it was all too easy for people to succumb' (1999: 25). Particularly in relation to television, the Arts Council was historically often reluctant to fund and collaborate in broadcasting projects due to the medium's 'relatively low cultural status' (Wyver, 2007: 136). Such attitudes were primarily symptomatic of a more deep-seated conflict between perceptions of television as a medium for 'lowbrow' popular entertainment and the proposed 'highbrow' nature of the arts. As Spiegel

asserts, 'In both academic and popular circles television is widely viewed as the opposite of art' (2008: 295). On the other side of the coin, for the BBC fostering a relationship with the broader art world was an essential part of maintaining the reputation of its arts output within the context of television's growing popularity. As discussed in chapter 7, alongside the expert presenter, the visible involvement of prestigious arts institutions further supports the legitimacy of its programming by instilling what Hayward terms 'status-by-association' (1998: 8). However, as one interviewee remarked, 'the BBC has a very long history of being a very isolated institution' (Interview 10), and as such this rarely translated into a push toward formal partnerships agreements or concerted efforts for creative collaboration with outside organisations.

### **9.1.1. From 'closed fortress' to increased collaboration**

Across the BBC's year books the term "partnership" is scarcely used until the introduction of the Open University in 1969. In the context of the arts, from the mid-1970's there begins to emerge a few references to programming made in 'collaboration' with organisations such as the Arts Council. In particular, the Welsh Arts Council appear to have contributed to numerous productions in Wales during the late 1970's and early 1980's alongside other organisations such as the Welsh Books Council. Still, the suggestion of more long-term formal agreements beyond the scope of individual projects is markedly absent. Indeed, a strategic partnership between the BBC and the Arts Council was not established until half a century after the latter was founded despite the recommendations of numerous commentators and policymakers. From the perspective of the BBC, this unwillingness to enter what many regarded as a natural partnership was largely driven by a desire to maintain a sense of autonomy. According to Wyver: 'The broadcasters [...] felt they alone would decide which productions and activities to record or discuss, and they were sufficiently well-funded not to need the comparatively small funds (and consequent obligations) that might be on offer from the Council' (2007: 124).

The first substantial watershed moment in the BBC's strategic relationship with outside organisations came following the 1990 Broadcasting Act when, for the first time in its history, the BBC was required to source 25% of its programming

from independent production companies. The walls of the BBC's 'closed fortress' were set to erode to make way for a more open and efficient broadcasting market (Franklin, 2001: 48). The Broadcasting Act also came at a time when all areas of the public sector were under increased scrutiny to demonstrate public value and efficiency (see Doeser, 2015). One response to this was to extend the reach of their output through broadcasting, which provided 'access to substantial and quantifiable audiences' (Wyver, 1997: 122). In a document entitled *Bringing the Best to the Most* the Arts Council of Great Britain set out their future strategy for closer collaboration with broadcasters, stating:

In the past the main benefits of public subsidy of the arts have gone to the many thousands who attend theatre, dance, music and opera performances and art exhibitions or who read literature. The Arts Council aims to extend these benefits to the millions who watch television and video by encouraging broadcasters to record and transmit the best of British arts. (1989: 2)

In regard to the present study, the notion of reach was a recurring response to questions around the value of partnerships with the BBC for arts institutions both from respondents representing these institutions and those within the BBC itself. With the BBC's services reportedly reaching 97% of the UK population every week (BBC, 2015: 11) many arts organisations saw television and radio coverage as a crucial in terms of reaching new and wider audiences. This is particularly demonstrated by concerns voiced around the future of traditional broadcast channels such BBC Four following a speech by Tony Hall on his future vision of the BBC in 2015. In summary of the issues facing the corporation, Hall stated that 'the BBC faces a very tough financial challenge. We will have to manage our resources ever more carefully and prioritise what we believe the BBC should offer. We will inevitably have to either close or reduce some services' (BBC Media Centre, 2015). In response to this statement, the managing director of Royal Opera House Enterprises voiced anxieties around the further reaching impact of such possibilities for arts institutions in the UK:



If we do get to a point where whole services start to potentially disappear - so for example the loss of BBC Four as a TV channel to us would be a huge loss because that's how we currently reach hundreds of thousands of viewers for some of our absolutely key work. [...] I don't think it's enough to say well digital will sort of solve everything, we'll put it all on the internet, because we know that they're appointment to view moments, via terrestrial or by a broadcast channel. It's still hugely powerful. BBC Four plays a really key role in the arts ecology and if those services come under threat, then I think for arts institutions that's a major issue. (Interview 19)

As highlighted in the statement above, despite trends toward time-shifting and increased fragmentation, broadcasters and arts institutions still place significant value on audiences tuning in at the time of transmission. As Cowman states, 'the emergence of 'appointment to view' television along with 'event' programming for cultural events such as the Olympic opening ceremony or live theatre, opera and ballet performances add to the home's potential as a site for shared cultural experience' (2015: 5). Coverage by a national broadcaster such as the BBC also provides a stronger rationale for public funding, as the works of arts institutions are no longer just based in one location but available across the UK. With institutions such as The Royal Opera House and the National Theatre citing public funding as integral to maintaining the quality and diversity of their work, the role of the BBC in terms of reach and impact is still framed as crucial in the wider arts ecology in Britain.

Another important drive to partner for both the BBC and arts institutions in the decades following the 1990 Broadcasting Act was a need to demonstrate efficiency and increase return on investment through the sharing of resources and costs. While the wider cultural sector was seemingly going through a period of prosperity with increased funding from the government and the National Lottery, there was also a growing pressure to enhance and evidence the value of these investments. In 'justifying its consumption of public money' John Holden asserts, the value of the public sector became increasingly expressed in terms of 'efficiency, cost-per-user and audience diversity, rather than discussed in terms of cultural achievement' (2004: 13). Within this context partnerships became almost synonymous with public value and as such increasingly prominent in the strategies of the BBC and organisations such as the Arts

Council (Doeser, 2015; Raats et al., 2013). As the BBC stated in a 2004 document entitled *Building Public Value: Renewing the BBC for a Digital World*:

Cultural partnerships like *Painting the Weather* with the National Gallery and many other galleries around the UK have inspired and motivated audiences far more powerfully than any of the parties could have done on their own. These achievements show how much more the BBC can contribute when it faces outwards rather than inwards. We no longer want to leave the creation of such relationships to chance but will put the idea of partnership at the centre of the BBC's strategy and ensure that every part of the organisation understands what it takes to become a good partner. (18)

However, it was not until a decade later that the ambitions of this statement in relation to the arts were put into practice on a significant scale. In its 2014/15 annual report the BBC branded itself a 'champion of the arts', asserting that through its vast range of new partnership initiatives the corporation had strengthened its position 'as one of the country's main arts institutions and as a cornerstone of the UK's global success in music' (48). When asked why partnerships are so important for the BBC at this moment in time, the director of arts stated: 'It's about response to austerity, and the BBC not being a closed off fortress but being something which is supportive and sharing' (Interview 1). This was also a recurring theme when asking others within the BBC and those working within arts organisations why such partnership schemes were important. As stated by the chief executive of Arts Council Wales:

I think during times of financial austerity it's very important that we can demonstrate value for money by making sure that we are pooling resources and that we are getting better value out of the cultural product that we are investing in. (Interview 17)

Following the election of a Conservative-led coalition government in 2010 there were widespread cuts across public sector, of which the arts were no exception. In their first Spending Review funding for Arts Council England was cut by 30%, with the organisations chief executive Alan Davey warning that such a reduction would 'inevitably have a significant impact on the cultural life of the country' (BBC News, 2010). It is the depth and impact of these cuts that leads former Managing Director of the Barbican Arts Centre, John Tusa to assert that 'as the

world of arts and culture in Britain moves towards the midpoint of the second decade of the twenty-first century, it is beyond argument that it will suffer pain – for some organisations severe, perhaps terminal pain’ (2014: 3).

As already discussed throughout previous chapters, the BBC is also currently under significant financial pressure. Once elected, the new Conservative lead government froze the licence fee for six years in what former Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw called an ‘act of cultural and political vandalism’ (quoted in Burrell, 2010). Further to this, as part of Charter renewal negotiations in 2015 the BBC reached an agreement to shoulder the cost of the free licence fee for those aged over 75, which had historically been met by the government, at a reported cost of £750m by 2020 (Martinson and Plunkett, 2015). Within this context the prevailing rhetoric around partnerships as a response to austerity further evidences the pressures on public organisations to deliver value for money while at the same time promoting cost saving strategies. However, such discourse often does not account for the inherent complexities of building and maintaining these relationships in practice.

## **9.2. Partnerships in practice**

At a 2015 seminar Tony Hall outlined his aim to improve the BBC’s relationship with other creative institutions, stating that he wanted to ‘open the BBC to become – even more- Britain’s creative partner, to become a platform for this country’s incredible talent, cultural institutions, and to open up to our audiences in new ways’ (BBC Media Centre). This came in response to criticisms from the chairman of Penguin Random House that the BBC had a ‘history of being truly awful over the years’, with Hall also admitting that during his time as chief executive of the Royal Opera House the ‘BBC were terrible to work with’ (quoted in Conlan, 2015).

Beyond anecdotal evidence, the challenge of these partnerships in practice has also been the subject of academic attention in recent years. In 2014 King’s College London, in collaboration with the BBC, launched a major Cultural Enquiry into the potential of partnerships to support the strategic aims of publically funded cultural organisations. Working with a number of academics

from King's College, the initiative was led by the BBC's Head of Creative Partnerships and former BBC Radio 4 Commissioning Editor for General Factual Programmes, Jane Ellison. Speaking on the motivations behind launching the Enquiry, King's College Assistant Principle Deborah Bull asserted that the report represented 'perhaps the most comprehensive overview to date of partnership in the arts and culture sector', going on to express hope that it would in turn 'help to generate a deeper understanding of the nature, practice and complexities that make partnering, at its best, an art' (King's College London Website, 2015).

Most notably in regard to the discussion above around austerity, the Enquiry reported mixed responses toward the notion of using partnerships primarily to access funding and resources. In particular, it highlighted a 'suspicion of partnerships that were imposed rather than being allowed to develop organically, especially when this is perceived as a tool only to save money' (2015: 3). As the report went on to state, there was 'a strong conviction that the most successful partnerships, of whatever type, were inspired by motivations other than value for money' (2015: 18). Rather, successful collaboration is built on the requisite of shared objectives, clear communication and trust that has developed over time through formal and informal partnerships frameworks.

In respect to the challenges of realising this in practice, the Enquiry highlighted a 'lack of shared understanding' in regard to the dynamics of partnerships in terms of equality. The report highlights a particular instance in which 'an organisation was funded by a national body, but the relationship was so unequal and hierarchical that, although the funder regarded it as a 'partnership' to the organisation it felt like a service agreement' (2015: 8). This was also identified as a recurring theme within the present study. When describing what made a successful partnership the importance of shared objectives and aligned interests were reiterated numerous times by those working within the BBC and those representing outside organisations. Yet the interviews also revealed contradictory accounts in regard to unequal power dynamics between the BBC and other cultural organisations. As one BBC executive producer stated:

On the whole when you work with those big institutions, much as you might protest to the contrary, you are the junior partner. You tend to be following their agenda. Politicians like it because it looks democratic, which in a way it is - it's helping those great institutions to reach a wider public. That's fine. But it's not the BBC setting the agenda. (Interview 12)

Further to the comment above, one interviewee occupying a key position within the BBC's arts strategy also raised concerns that there had been a slight shift toward making programmes *for* institutions rather than *about* them. This also ties into the discussion in chapter 7 around a lack of critical perspective in the BBC's current arts proposition. For a number of programme-makers and other key BBC personnel involved in production and strategy there was the sense that arts institutions were increasingly dictating the terms and outcomes of these partnerships. The BBC's arts editor attributed this in part to the establishment of PR departments within many of the big arts institutions over the past couple of decades:

They very quickly stop being helpful if you're pursuing a line they don't want to know, that they either don't agree with or don't want exposed, or don't want to be involved with. So they kind of do try and play it both ways, you know, you have PR departments push stories at you and spending public's money a lot of the time, and then closing down public access when it suits them, and that's not great. (Interview 2)

In relation to this, there has also been a shift toward arts organisations no longer needing to rely as heavily on the BBC in terms of both the production and distribution of their work within a media context. Although the reach of the BBC's portfolio still holds significant value for many arts organisations, the proliferation of online media and affordable, relatively easy to use technology has democratised the means by which arts content is produced and distributed. Wyver identified the emergence of this trend in 2007, stating that with the proliferation of online distribution platforms 'many cultural organisations have also begun to create and disseminate forms of arts-based media' (190). Perhaps the most ambitious initiative to emerge during this time was the Tate's launch of 'Tate Media' in partnership with BT. In a press release, the Tate described this new online strategy as a 'response to changes in technology' and 'the ways in which people engage with contemporary culture'. It also goes on to

outline ambitious plans to transform the Tate's website into a 'digital broadband arts channel' which will 'allow people of all ages anywhere in the world to research, enjoy and participate in the visual arts' (2006).

Although Tate Media represented a milestone in cultural strategy at the time, over the past decade creating a strong online presence has very much become part and parcel of how arts organisations operate today. Alongside activity across social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook, institutions including the National Gallery, Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, Royal Opera House and indeed the Tate also upload content to the online video platform YouTube. The Tate's most watched video featuring Yayoi Kusama's 'Obliteration Room' has over 600,000 views, almost double the reported overnight figures for Channel 4's broadcast of the Turner Prize in 2015 (BARB, 2015). This lessening of dependence on broadcasting to produce and distribute content may suggest a shift in power away from the BBC in regard to negotiating the nature and terms of these relationships that is seemingly felt by a number of those interviewed within the corporation.

However whilst the executive producer quoted above had asserted that 'it's not the BBC setting the agenda', a former BBC producer who, alongside their freelance work, is now the artistic director of an international music and arts festival gave a strikingly different account:

One of the things with the BBC is that they come along and they say we'd like to have a partnership with you and you go 'okay, great'. Hardly anybody says no because they realise there are benefits to be had. But I think a lot of people find that suddenly they become swallowed by the BBC's agenda and you think, God what have we got ourselves into? (Interview 10)

This inequality was also articulated by a number of organisations in response to the most recent Charter review public consultation. One fundamental aspect in this regard is the unprecedented scope of the BBC's operation and influence. As stated by the Creative Industries Federation in their Charter submission, 'the size and scale of the BBC introduces a power imbalance in many partnerships' (2015: 9). Another key issue is the degree of control required by the BBC over

its output and services. According to Arts Council England, the 'BBC's editorial policies have sometimes impeded partnership working and encouraged less equal relationships' (2015: 4). Indeed, editorial control is one of the key principles outlined in the BBC's current partnership guidelines, which state: 'The BBC's editorial impartiality and integrity must not be compromised. The BBC must retain editorial independence and editorial control of its output' (n.d.). As already discussed, maintaining its brand and reputation is a central concern for the BBC and is one that informs a significant part of the broadcaster's arts strategy. However, what has been described by Mark Thompson as an 'obsession with authorship and editorial and brand control' (quoted in Plunkett, 2012) is also inherently counterproductive to engaging in a truly collaborative approach to partnerships with outside organisations.

In regard to the interviews, such contrasting accounts further support King's College London's findings that the term partnership 'was widely associated with an ethos implying equality which was not always shared by all partners' (2015: 8). Within the present study, many of those representing arts organisations referred to the challenge of aligning the process of artistic production with that of contemporary broadcasting. There was the suggestion that both production processes operated within a different set of demands and timeframes, which needed careful negotiation in order to generate desirable outcomes for both parties involved. For instance, the managing director of Royal Opera House Enterprises referred to the challenge of 'meshing the immediate demands of the TV production crew with the demands of the rehearsal process' (Interview 19). On the other hand, the chief executive of Arts Council Wales drew attention to the rigidity of broadcasting in regard to responding to emerging developments within the art world, stating that 'sometimes their schedule is committed such a long way in advance that interesting things come up and are more difficult to take advantage of' (Interview 17).

Such assertions indicate that compromise either on behalf of the broadcaster or arts organisation is a fundamental aspect of many partnerships. In line with the findings of King's College's Cultural Enquiry a number of interviewees from both the arts sector and the BBC suggested that such compromises are not

insuperable when the partnership between organisations is built on a longstanding relationship of shared objectives, on-going communication and established trust. However, this is substantially harder to achieve in practice given the precarious nature of contemporary broadcasting and the creative sector more broadly. Within this context partnerships are largely realised through short-term, project-based work with limited funding timeframes. In their study of public value partnerships between public service broadcasters and external organisations, Raats et al. note that collaborations were primary 'ad hoc and project driven' (2013: 274). Given the findings of both King's College and the accounts of those interviewed for the present study, it appears that such conditions strongly militate against the characteristics of a successful partnership described above.

### **9.2.1. Online opportunities and challenges**

A further element to draw attention to in relation to partnerships strategies is the role of online platforms as a site for on-going collaboration between broadcasters and arts institutions. In 2010 the then Director-General, Mark Thompson, asserted that the BBC would be 'working more closely than ever before with the UK's cultural institutions' in the digital landscape, going on to state that 'we know how important we can be in connecting them, their current work and their rich archives with the public, because we know that we share the same public space'. While the BBC shared its technology, reach and expertise, it was envisaged that arts institutions would in return contribute significantly to populating this emerging online public space with content. The realisation of this ambition would appear to have finally come four years later with launch of BBC Arts Online. When speaking to the BBC's head of digital development he described how, alongside expanding the range and depth of the BBC's own arts coverage, BBC Arts Online also serves a strategic function in allowing greater opportunities for collaboration with outside organisations:

Arts Online is much more porous and open to its partners than a conventional broadcast environment. So it's possible to take third-party material, or co-produce material and do that with a far bigger range of relationships and indeed subjects than is possible on broadcast. (Interview 5)



In regard to the last point, the potential for the distribution of more experimental and innovative content seems to be particularly valued by cultural institutions in partnership with the BBC. In separate interviews with the managing director of Royal Opera House Enterprises and the chief executive of Arts Council Wales both interviewees highlighted the benefits of online platforms in terms of providing the space for a wealth of niche content that would otherwise have been neglected, particularly on television. As the chief executive of Arts Council Wales asserted:

I think that the new platforms that the BBC operates obviously opens up new opportunities for content and different kinds of content that you wouldn't put on a standard broadcast platform. Perhaps some of the more experimental work where there are niche audiences. With a digital platform you can have any number of different niche areas for people to look at in a way that you wouldn't in terms of broadcast channels. (Interview 17)

Given the discussion in chapter 6, it might also be assumed that the provision of such content also strengthens the BBC's commitment to distinctiveness within its arts proposition. As the inclusion of more independent production is often framed in terms of introducing more diversity to broadcasting output, collaboration with arts institutions in the online space is often motivated by a drive to introduce more innovative and experimental content to the BBC's portfolio. But despite these affordances online collaborations are still subject to considerable external scrutiny from politicians and the press when seemingly failing to deliver public value in terms of output. As a former BBC producer explained:

Even if they get something absolutely right they only need somebody to stand up in parliament and say "oh it's bloody disgraceful" or to get attacked by certain parts of the press and so much of the press is out to get the BBC it's ridiculous. Suddenly something that was actually a really good constructive relationship has to be withdrawn just because somebody has kicked up a fuss about it. (Interview 10)

Perhaps the most prolific example of this in the context of the arts is the controversy surrounding the BBC and Arts Council England's joint online

venture, 'The Space'. In an official press release the BBC described the project as 'an experimental digital arts media service and commissioning programme that could help to transform the way people connect with, and experience, arts and culture' (BBC Media Centre, n.d.). However, it would seem The Space would struggle to deliver these rather lofty ambitions on a significant scale. Since its initial pilot stage in 2012 the project faced criticism from the press and the art world itself, with film director Don Boyd describing its £16m funding as 'a shocking abuse of public money' due to the site's poor functionality and limited reach (The Guardian, 2014). The BBC were also prompted to issue a statement in defence of The Space (BBC News, 2015a) after tabloid newspaper *The Sun* branded them 'muppets' for 'blowing £8m on odd puppet art website' (Goslett and Newton Dunn, 2015).

The nature of these criticisms also highlights a more fundamental disparity between how broadcasters measure the success of partnerships and how the public value generated by such initiatives is discerned. As Raats et al. assert, 'often broadcasters measure the success of projects on the success of the collaboration, rather than the outcome of the project' (2013: 267). Although this specific project will be explored in further detail later, this is also overtly evident in the rhetoric surrounding the BBC's latest flagship partnership scheme, 'Get Creative'. When speaking with a BBC executive producer tasked with organising a weekend of Get Creative events in Wales, he described the initiative primarily as a conduit for building connections and promoting discussion between arts organisations and the BBC:

Even if Get Creative as a brand and everything stops, what we've done in terms of communication and making contact and so on is always going to be of value. (Interview 15)

In the case of The Space, the BBC defended the project on the grounds that it made arts content available across a wider range of platforms (thereby increasing its 'accessibility' in a technological sense) and provided arts organisations with the tools and skills needed to potentially extend the reach and impact of their work in an online capacity. Defending the BBC's involvement in the partnership, the director of arts argued that as part of their

public service commitments, 'we want to make the arts more accessible and use our knowledge of digital production to help our partners make the most of online opportunities' (BBC blog, 2015). However, on behalf of the stakeholders (the public), The Space was criticised for what was perceived as high investment for low return in terms of reach and impact. As described by Guardian journalist Matthew Caines, The Space 'struggled to make it into mainstream conversation, and if it did, the conversation usually turned to the site's purpose, rather than its content. Put simply, the public didn't really know it existed' (2013).

The rhetoric surrounding the supposed 'failure' of The Space is in many ways indicative of the tensions identified by Bracken and Balfour almost a decade earlier when they suggested that: 'Reithian principles are usually used as post-launch justification for what are sometimes truly public value services, but are just as often hard to justify, departmental pet projects (2004: 100). But perhaps more pertinently, The Space demonstrates how even if a partnership has been judged a success in terms of the process of building and maintaining a collaborative relationship between organisations, there is still pressure to deliver demonstrable public value with respect to reach and impact. Building on from this example the following specifically examines Get Creative as an initiative almost self-consciously promoting traditional public service values in terms of personal enrichment and cultural engagement at the very forefront of its strategy.

### **9.3. Get Creative**

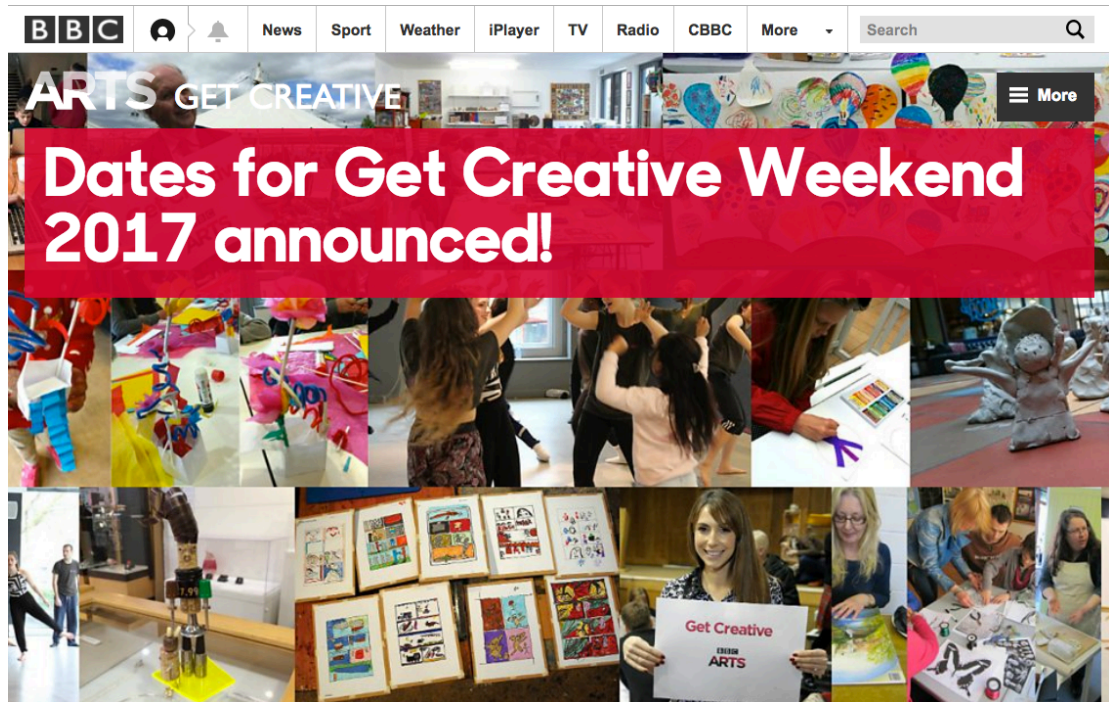
Beyond its programming and content across television, radio and online, another fundamental part of the BBC's current strategy for the arts is the fostering of everyday creativity and artistic expression. In February 2015 the BBC and 'What Next?' launched the nationwide, year-long 'Get Creative' initiative. With the purpose of 'inspiring everyone to make art or do something creative' (BBC News, 2015b), the launch of Get Creative was a direct response to the Warwick Commission's recommendation for the BBC to undertake 'a high-profile campaign aimed at raising the profile of everyday arts and cultural

participation across the UK' (2015: 39). The nationwide campaign launched with a series of events across the country arranged by Voluntary Arts, an organisation that primarily works with policy makers, funders and politicians to 'promote and increase active participation in cultural activities across the UK and Republic of Ireland' (Voluntary Arts homepage).

Describing the motivations behind the organisation's involvement in Get Creative, the chief executive of Voluntary Arts drew on an alignment of objectives in terms of fostering 'everyday grassroots creative cultural activity', alongside 'raising the profile and credibility' of their work to reach broader audiences. In relation to this, she went on to highlight the significance of the BBC within the wider arts ecology, stating:

I believe the case for continuing public funding for the arts will depend on those institutions that receive public subsidy better articulating how the support they receive indirectly supports the wider cultural ecosystem, particularly those millions of voluntary participants for whom taking part in creative cultural activity is an essential part of their everyday lives. (Interview 18)

This statement also highlights a further ambition underlying the Get Creative campaign in respect to extending public engagement beyond the BBC to encompass other cultural institutions at both a regional and national level. According to the BBC's director of arts, over 750 organisations have signed up to take part in the campaign, including prominent cultural institutions such as Arts Council England, The Royal Shakespeare Company and the BFI, among others. The Get Creative website also functions as an 'activity finder', allowing users to locate events hosted by various arts organisations in their area.



*Get Creative homepage 2016: [bbc.co.uk/getcreative](http://bbc.co.uk/getcreative)*

In many ways the Get Creative campaign is in contrast to what Enli describes as the more prevalent 'media-centric' audience participation strategies, 'designed to keep audiences watching and additionally engaged with activities initiated by the broadcasters' (2008: 107). Indeed, much of the current literature examines audience participation in a PSB context in terms of engagement with content (Bennett, 2008; Bennett and Strange, 2008; Enli, 2008; Van Dijck and Poell, 2015). However, initiatives such as Get Creative demonstrate the need for further investigation into how 'audience' participation can also become 'public' participation through promoting wider engagement in cultural life beyond specific content strategies. As suggested by Syvertsen, PSB has traditionally addressed viewers as citizens, by which 'the success of a television service lies not in the time people spend watching the programmes, but the time spent elsewhere, exercising what they have learnt' (2004: 367). As the director of arts stated when asked to discuss the motivations behind the launch of Get Creative:

A big breakthrough for me has been thinking how do we use what we have to not just make things that people consume but actually inspire

people to do? So a push towards inspiring and inclusiveness, and participation, is *the* most important theme for me. (Interview 1)

Such assertions seem strikingly reminiscent of what has been termed PSB's 'improving function' (Crisell, 1997) and 'transformational force' (Tracey, 1998), which has often been at the heart of its public purposes in the past. Indeed, as Dijck and Poell assert: 'Public television prioritized participation over consumption long before the emergence of Web 2.0' (2015: 150). A prominent example of this within the recent Get Creative initiative was 'The Little Painting Challenge', a competition running alongside BBC One's *The Big Painting Challenge* that prompted viewers to send postcards of their own artwork. According to the BBC Media Centre, the competition attracted over 29,000 entries, with 1,000 of those exhibited at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester (2015c).

The Get Creative campaign has also been presented as serving an important role in terms of engaging young people with the arts and culture more broadly. As stated by Tony Hall at the campaign's launch:

The BBC needs to play an even greater role in getting the wider public to participate in the arts – particularly young people and children, as creativity can help boost innovation and help forge a life-long passion that can raise aspirations. That's why the BBC will be forming a range of new partnerships to help that happen. (BBC Media Centre, 2015b)

Again, the notion of PSB as a transformational force is brought to the fore in such statements, alongside suggestions concerning the public service value of the arts and creativity characteristic of the rhetoric previously discussed in chapter 6. Here it is also interesting to note how 'boosting innovation' appears to take precedence over the forging of 'life-long passion that can raise aspirations'. The identity of the BBC as a broadcaster that is itself innovative and also encourages innovation is strongly articulated throughout many of its most recent policy documents and statements. As Tony Hall states in the introduction to *British, Bold and Creative*: 'We entertain, we educate, we inform, but we also innovate and inspire' (2015: 5). The term also carries broader political weight, with a 2014 report by the UK government asserting that

'innovation is vital for prosperity' in terms of fuelling economic growth and addressing a range of social challenges from 'energy supply' to 'food security' (i). In this regard nurturing future innovation through the arts is not only positioned in terms of individual enrichment and growth, it is also framed as contributing to wider and more long lasting benefits for both society and the economy as a whole. One such event to arise from Hall's above commitment was 'Generation ART' organised by the arts education group, Engage, and publicised by the BBC on the Get Creative homepage. The project offered young artists between the ages of 4 and 18 the opportunity to exhibit their work alongside established artists as part of a touring exhibition across England. The Get Creative homepage also encouraged users to engage with and follow the progress of the exhibition via the social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #GenerationART.

### **9.3.1. Measuring participation**

Social media has been a prominent component throughout the Get Creative campaign, primarily through the BBC Arts and Get Creative Twitter pages and using the hashtag #bbcgetcreative. When speaking with the BBC's director of arts he was keen to assert Get Creative's impact by highlighting the social media response and recruitment of celebrity 'ambassadors' as markers of success:

This was our launch: Top trend on Twitter in London. Second top trend in the UK. Good press headlines. Lots of celebs and so on. I never thought I'd have Kate Moss holding up a BBC Arts sign, but we did. So people have been keen to take part, and I'm encouraging them to take up creative hobbies and tweet about them. (Interview 1)

The prevailing concern within this strategy appears to be raising the visibility and profile of the campaign through social media, coverage in the press and the endorsement of well-known figures within popular culture. With online platforms being the primary medium by which the Get Creative campaign is orchestrated by the BBC and its partners, this increased visibility and popular appeal are crucial to negotiating the 'attention economy' discussed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, encouraging people to engage with the campaign through social

media also aligns with a further reaching shift toward participation and engagement as key components of PSB strategy. Whilst public service broadcasters have historically often been reluctant to embrace more extensive participation in programming contexts (Enli, 2008; Syvertsen, 2004), the arrival of Web 2.0 and proliferation of interactive online platforms have cultivated the need to 'provide the public with opportunities for participation across established and emerging media platforms' (Enli, 2008: 110). Within this context fostering public engagement has become a significant element of BBC strategy across its services with the introduction of numerous roles dedicated to the production and management of social media content.

User engagement on social media is also particularly important in regard to how the actual ambitions of Get Creative appear to be counterproductive to gaining a kind of critical mass of visible user engagement online. By asking audiences and users to go and *do* something creative in their everyday lives rather than just consume specific content, it could be argued the BBC are actually prompting *less* engagement with its output. In terms of the user flows discussed in chapter 8, this would be a shift from managing user flows between broadcasting and digital platforms towards encouraging flows from content toward 'real world' activities. Although, as already discussed, this has always been a key principle of PSB in regard to addressing audiences as citizens rather than consumers, it does present issues in regard to how the BBC demonstrates the public value of such initiatives. Sites such as Facebook and Twitter provide important metrics of user engagement that can be utilised as quantifiable 'evidence' of the BBC's role in promoting personal creative development and nurturing amateur artistic talent. Indeed, when asked how the success of the scheme would be judged, the director of arts replied that he wanted 'a quarter of a million to have done something creative because of the BBC'. After being prompted to explain how this would actually be measured, he went on to state that the BBC would 'tot up everyone' who had taken part in schemes initiated by the Get Creative campaign (Interview 1). The ability to provide this quantitative 'evidence' of success would seem particularly important given the backlash surrounding The Space in relation to its limited impact and reach.



The use of these quantitative measures to judge the success of partnerships is again another facet of the prevailing market logic that now permeates PSB and indeed the wider public sector. Although some partnerships within the arts sector are built around measurable goals such as increasing theatre attendance for instance, the core ambitions of many public value partnerships are based on more subjective outcomes such as individual enrichment and cultural engagement. With a mission to ‘celebrate and support the everyday creativity happening in homes and public spaces’ (Voluntary Arts homepage), the Get Creative campaign in many ways epitomises the latter of these categories. For both the BBC and their partners this poses the issue of how to evidence the public value of this partnership to stakeholders and policymakers. Such a predicament is also echoed across many other partnerships of this type, with King’s College reporting that ‘quantifying the ‘softer benefits’ remained a bigger challenge. This was where many respondents saw the true additional value of partnership yet were least able to give evidence of those benefits’ (2015: 28). However a lack of willingness or means by which to measure the inherently qualitative benefits of these partnership schemes raises two fundamental concerns around how public service commitments are delivered in practice.

Firstly, without a method of evaluating these ‘softer benefits’ throughout the course of a given partnership it becomes difficult to identify and address aspects of strategy that may curb the very ambitions underlining such initiatives. In terms of sustainability, questions are then raised around how broadcasters and arts institutions improve on and develop future partnerships from past experience. Secondly, within this context there is also a potential loss of ‘intrinsic’ values, defined by Holden as those that ‘relate to the subjective experience of culture intellectually, emotionally and spiritually’ (2006: 14). As Holden goes on to assert, ‘messages about spending more, increased delivery, outputs and outcomes – that is, about instrumental value – tell us nothing about what the public *itself* values’ (2006: 35). This is a rhetoric that has been strikingly evident throughout the preceding chapters in regard to the BBC’s approach to arts strategy and public service more broadly. Indeed, when faced with limited resources, Holden argues, cultural professionals tend to prioritise

'producing 'good stories' and 'convincing numbers' to make the case for next year's grant, rather than building a broad basis of popular support' (2006: 40). Although Holden is primarily referring to institutions such as museums and art galleries, no more is this evident than in the present discourse surrounding the achievements of Get Creative and indeed the BBC's arts strategy more broadly. Within this context it now seems increasingly important to question whether it is the interests of the broadcaster and their partners rather than the public whom they serve that are actually realised in practice.

#### **9.4. Conclusion**

Over the past decade there has been a substantial and concerted effort by the BBC to shed its closed-off and inward-facing reputation and present itself as a more porous institution, open to working with a range of outside organisations to deliver value for money and innovation. That the arts should be presented at the forefront of this is highly significant in itself. Whilst the BBC has always positioned itself as a 'patron of the arts', this has historically been realised primarily through providing employment for those within the creative sector and extending the reach of arts organisations to become UK-wide institutions. As a self-styled 'champion of the arts' this remit has evolved to encompass a more proactive role in the wider arts ecology through working more closely with organisations to support public engagement in the arts and increase efficiency within the creative sector. This is particularly pertinent at a time when many areas of the arts and cultural sector are under significant pressure due to cuts in public funding. Within this context the degree to which arts organisations are able to demonstrate value for money, particularly to politicians and policymakers, has not only become desirable but necessary for survival. Further to this, these relationships also hold an important stake in the BBC's own sustainability. At a time when the proliferation of online and on-demand media is prompting many to question the future relevance of PSB, the capacity to go beyond just engaging audiences with various content toward enriching the lives of people through cultural participation has become increasingly important. In doing so the BBC situates its value as a public service broadcaster not within any single medium, but rather woven into the cultural fabric of British society itself.

From the perspective of those interviewed it would appear that partnerships are expected to continue to be a key element of future arts strategy, with both the BBC and partners such as Voluntary Arts expressing ambitions to extend the life of Get Creative seemingly indefinitely. Alongside this there is also a sense of optimism in regard to the role of online platforms in facilitating greater collaboration and strengthening relationships between organisations. However, in further support of the Culture Enquiry conducted by King's College, the findings of the present study would suggest there are still significant challenges that need to be addressed if these relationships are to remain sustainable. In particular, the apparent power imbalances expressed from both broadcasters and those within the arts sector signifies a fundamental discrepancy between how partnerships are idealised within institutional rhetoric and how they are actually realised in practice.

Further to this, there is also the need for a more nuanced strategy in regard to how the success of such partnerships is measured. At present quantifiable levels of public response and even just the existence of a given partnership appears to be presented as evidence of public benefit in and of itself. This is in many ways symptomatic of the broader narrative toward quantifying subjective values such as appreciation and quality within PSB and indeed across the public sector more widely. But markedly absent from such discussion are the perspectives and interests of the very public for whom these partnerships are supposed to serve. As such, it could be argued that partnerships are increasingly built on a need to demonstrate public service commitments to policymakers rather than actually deliver them to licence fee payers.

## 10. Conclusion

---

At the start of this research in 2014 the BBC was undergoing significant changes both in regard to its arts strategy and broader governance. Tony Hall had only been appointed BBC Director-General a year prior, and coming from his role as chief executive of the Royal Opera House many cultural commentators seemed positive for the future of BBC arts programming under his tenure. Following Hall's appointment, 2014 also saw the establishment of BBC Arts as a brand and 'cultural institution' across the BBC. This signalled a more holistic approach to commissioning and output that attempted to ensure the arts were more prominent on television, radio and online than ever before. From the outside it appeared that we had entered a new golden age for arts broadcasting. There were flashy idents, online live streams from Hay Festival, celebrities telling us to 'Get Creative', and the weekly BBC Arts email newsletter was full of content. To coin Harold Macmillan's often quoted phrase, in terms of the arts it seemed we had 'never had it so good'. But interviewing programme-makers in 2015 the picture painted was one of commissioners reluctant to take risks and programming increasingly pushed to the margins of broadcasting schedules. BBC arts broadcasting now had less funding and was less creative than it had ever been, despite the speeches and press releases that suggested the contrary.

With impending Charter review as its backdrop, it is easy to be cynical about the motivations behind the launch of BBC Arts in 2014 and the subsequent increased visibility of the arts across the BBC's services. Within the broader categories of 'public service genres', arts output hours and spend is often used as a litmus test by policymakers and evidence by the BBC for how well the broadcaster is performing in terms of distinctiveness. The government's public consultation on the future of the BBC strongly advocated for increased distinctiveness through the provision of high quality content that may otherwise 'either not be provided or under-provided by the wider market' (DCMS, 2015: 76). Within this rhetoric the supposed inadequacies of the commercial sector constitute the primary rationale for continued public funding. But with

commercial broadcasters such as Sky Arts now providing ‘public service like content’ (some would even argue to a better extent than the BBC) and the plethora of arts content available online through sites like YouTube, this rationale for continued public funding has become increasingly weak.

At the same time the BBC is also under pressure from the government and the centre-right conservative press to demonstrate value for money and efficiency. Although not state run, the process of Charter review allows the government to occupy an important role in setting the purposes of the BBC, alongside determining its funding and, as such, future sustainability. The latest licence fee settlement has signalled a period of substantial financial strain for the BBC. Along with cuts in funding amounting to a predicted £700m, a number of commentators have also criticised the proposed introduction of a contestable funding scheme as a form of ‘top-slicing’ the licence fee. Although positioned as a way to increase diversity through enabling outside organisations to create ‘public service’ content, there is still doubt that this scheme will prompt sufficient interest and innovation from commercial broadcasters within certain genres (Steemers, 2016). In this respect, further reducing the BBC’s resources could lead to a greater loss in quality arts programming within the public service proposition.

The BBC has also emerged from its latest Charter review under the jurisdiction of its first external regulator, Ofcom. With an established reputation as ‘a high-powered competition and market-oriented communications regulator’ a number of observers have described the new role as ‘a huge challenge for an organisation run by economists’ (Brown, 2016). Effective from April 2017, Ofcom’s new operating framework will closely assess the BBC’s impact on the broader media landscape, ensuring that the corporation does not ‘crowd out’ or ‘harm the ability of others to compete’ (2017: 5). Alongside this, the BBC will also ‘face sanctions, including - for the first time - the possibility of financial penalties, if it fails to meet these regulatory conditions’ (ibid: 4). Under these conditions, the public value and distinctiveness of the BBC’s content and services will face greater scrutiny than ever before. Yet the details of how Ofcom will define and measure this remains obscure. One emerging emphasis

is on news coverage, with proposals to increase hours of news and current affairs output on BBC Radio 2 (Ofcom, 2017). As commercial radio's most significant rival in terms of funding and reach, the requirement to increase news coverage during peak time is an overt attempt to distinguish BBC Radio 2's output and limit its supposed negative impact on the commercial market. This is also in line with the BBC's new Royal Charter, which lists the provision of 'impartial news and information' as the first of its public purposes. With regards to the arts, this could result in fewer resources to develop innovative and experimental programming, essentially undermining the very distinctiveness such regulation seeks to foster.

### **10.1. From enrichment to ratings**

Within this social, political and regulatory climate it is unsurprising that the BBC has increasingly succumbed to the logic of the market in both its rhetoric and output. As Holden identified over a decade ago in relation to relationships between cultural industries, their publics and the wider political sphere: 'The problem is not that cultural professionals do not know the value of what they do. [...] But those who create the operational context for their work – government, government agencies or local authorities – do not recognise the value' (2006: 33). Across the public sector this is not only evidenced by reductions in funding, but also in regard to the disparity between how public value is articulated in policy and how it is achieved in practice. Although public services should be held to account, the focus on quantifying inherently unquantifiable subjective values in terms of social, cultural and individual benefits raises pertinent questions around whose interests these processes ultimately serve.

In this regard, the proliferation of a ratings-led agenda within the BBC is just one facet of a wider socio-political narrative that has contributed to a devaluation of the arts more broadly. Along with cuts to the funding of arts organisations at a local and national level, there has also been a notable decline in commitments to the arts within education. In 2014 the former secretary of state for education reportedly warned that 'choosing arts over STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects could "hold them back for the rest of their lives"' (quoted in Merritt, 2016). In recent years a

number of commentators have also criticised government policy for creating a political climate in which 'creativity, culture and the arts are being systematically removed from the UK education system' (Brown, 2015). With many advocating for their benefits in terms of encouraging creative expression and even self-realisation, it is this same rhetoric that defines the arts as a 'soft' subject that perpetuates the need to demonstrate the value of PSB through quantifiable measures. The subjective perspective of the world that the arts traditionally represent and encourage is in many regards the antithesis to what Boyle (2001) terms the 'tyranny of numbers' and obsession with quantification that increasingly dominates almost every aspect of society. If you were to ask any number of visitors to the Tate gallery in London to describe the value of seeing John Constable's *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows*, their answer is unlikely to include exactly how much the painting was purchased for or how many others were also stood alongside them. Likewise the fundamental values of PSB are equally immeasurable in such objective terms (Briggs, 1961: 239; Walker, 1993: 196).

Within this context the very public service values that have been the driving force behind some of the BBC's most distinctive and ground-breaking arts programmes have seemingly been eroded. As the media landscape has become more competitive, public service broadcasters have been put under increased pressure to demonstrate return on investment through the reach of their programmes and content. Although felt to a lesser extent on radio, as a result of this a more risk-averse, ratings-led commissioning culture has permeated all areas of public service television in Britain, including the arts. In pursuit of popular appeal, the mainstream arts proposition is largely made up of low-cost, low-risk programming that has been described by producers as overtly derivative in its format and limited creatively in regard to both subject and style. A similar ratings-led agenda can also be seen to emerge within the BBC's online arts provision. Despite often being framed in terms of enabling more opportunities for creativity and innovation, the same quantitative, ratings-led rhetoric is still evident within online strategy. While the capacity of digital platforms is regarded as seemingly infinite compared to linear broadcasting, the BBC still only possesses finite resources with which to invest in the

development of online services and content. As such there is still significant pressure to demonstrate the reach and impact of these investments in quantifiable terms, particularly given the backlash against past projects such as *The Space*.

However, in light of the current political and economic climate it would seem that the role of the BBC in providing a diverse platform for the arts across its services is more important than ever before. Writing in the *Huffington Post* in 2015, Labour MP Chris Bryant described the BBC as 'our cultural NHS', an analogy that seems particularly fitting in this context. The arts provide a vital contribution to personal and civic life in Britain, and as a public service broadcaster it should be the BBC's role to facilitate this. As the Warwick Commission states, 'the arts, culture and heritage are an essential part of our personal and national character and act as catalysts for creative as well as human development' (2015: 44). The arts not only improve our quality of life, but also make us better citizens through providing a subjective insight into different perspectives and fostering mutual understanding between cultures and communities. They can offer a critical commentary on contemporary politics and society, and give a voice to marginalised identities. According to the novelist Toni Morrison, periods of social and political upheaval are 'precisely the time when artists go to work' (2015). In this respect PSB and the arts have always been ideologically as well as strategically entwined.

As an independent institution funded by the public, it is the duty of the BBC to look beyond failures in commercial broadcasting toward an arts strategy that addresses this detrimental failure in governmental cultural policy and funding. Although not always of public value in economic terms, the need for programming that enriches, inspires, and indeed criticises, as well as informs, educates and entertains has arguably never been greater. But perhaps greater still is a need to ensure that this is a public service that serves all the nations and regions of the UK as licence payers and citizens. Over the past few years major political events such as the Scottish and EU referendums have provoked further reaching questions and debate around the nature of nation, belonging and alienation. During this time of uncertainty the arts are not only a mirror by



which cultural identity is reflected back, they are also the stage on which it is expressed beyond the boundaries of individual nations and regions. Rather than further contribute to the regional disparity in arts funding, PSB should be ideally placed to address this imbalance through drawing attention to artistic work originating and taking place beyond the M25.

## **10.2. The future of arts broadcasting**

Looking to the future of arts provision, the present study raises pertinent concerns in regard to the sustainability of the genre and PSB more broadly. Following the recent axing of BBC Three as a broadcast channel, one particularly pertinent theme was the increased prominence of online platforms. At present the BBC's online arts strategy is primarily concerned with supplementing traditional programming through providing contextual information and resources in a variety of multimedia forms. A number of those interviewed voiced apprehension that current industry trends could lead to a premature shift away from television commissions toward online, particularly in regard to more niche or experimental content. While linear broadcasting continues to be the way in which the majority of the population encounter BBC content it is difficult to separate an increase in exclusive online programming with further reductions in funding and an overall marginalisation of the arts within the BBC's overall public service provision. In terms of long-term strategy this could also prove counterproductive to the BBC's brand identity as a producer and distributor of high quality documentary and factual content in an online context. If public service broadcasters are 'to reinvent themselves as public service media providers and curators of documentary content online' on both a nation and international scale as Sørensen describes (2014: 34), then there needs to be the adequate resources and funding to maintain the standards of quality that the BBC is currently recognised for.

Another prevalent theme discussed within the interviews was the BBC's evolving relationship with the wider arts ecology in Britain. This appears to have emerged as a result of two converging narratives. The first of these is the idea that partnerships can solve many of the economic issues faced by public sector institutions, which is examined in detail in the Cultural Enquiry conducted by

King's College (2015). The second is a pressure on the BBC to be more open in all aspects of its organisation and practices in the wake of high-profile controversies such as the Jimmy Savile sexual abuse scandal that came to light in 2012. Within this context flagship partnership schemes such as Get Creative are promoted as enabling the BBC to work more closely with outside organisations to achieve public service goals and enhance efficiency within the creative sector. But there are still fundamental issues to be addressed in regard to the motivations behind these relationships and how they are built and maintained in practice. In particular, measures of success for policymakers do not always align with those of the broadcasters or the organisations they were working with. Again, the preoccupation with demonstrating public value through quantifiable outcomes often resulted in partnerships that were built on the shallow foundations of 'austerity' and 'value-for-money' rather than deep rooted shared ambitions that have been given the space to grow and develop over time. In line with the findings by King's College, partnerships were regarded by many interviewees as merely efforts to be 'seen to be doing something' with little regard to the more complex dynamics of these relationships in practice.

### **10.3. Temple of the arts or just a façade?**

The fundamental PSB enlightenment principles of promoting cultural engagement and enrichment are still prominently evident within BBC arts strategy today. It is the conditions under which these ambitions are realised and measured that has undeniably transformed since the Latin inscription pronouncing the establishment of this 'Temple of the Arts' was first unveiled in Broadcasting House in 1931. Within the dominant economic rhetoric around austerity and cost-saving public response also becomes reduced to numbers and statistics that offer little insight into the more subjective benefits that both arts strategies and PSB more broadly are supposedly built around. To this extent it would seem the moneychangers have already invaded the temple. Indeed, when the public become lost within this discourse it is only a matter of time before the purpose of PSB becomes lost too. Speaking at the 2015 Hay Literary festival, broadcaster Paddy O'Connell asserted: "When the BBC gets it right it remembers who the audience is. When it gets it wrong it forgets who the audience is". This is not an issue that can be solved by increased funding and

output hours alone. It is not enough for arts programming and partnership strategies to just be a figure in policy documents. They also have to be valued and resonate with the very public for whom the BBC was created to serve. If not then this temple of the arts is in danger of being reduced to merely a façade.

## 11. Bibliography

---

Adams, S. (2009). Sir Christopher Frayling attacks BBC arts coverage. *The Telegraph*, 21<sup>st</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/6397222/Sir-Christopher-Frayling-attacks-BBC-arts-coverage.html> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Adriaenssens, V. and Jacobs, S., (2015). Celluloid Bohemia? Ken Russell's Biopics of Visual Artists. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 12(4): 479-495.

Aldridge, M. and Dingwall, R., 2003. Teleology on Television? Implicit Models of Evolution in Broadcast Wildlife and Nature Programmes. *European Journal of Communication*, 18(4): 435-453.

Alleyne, R. (2005). Populist presenters 'lead the BBC's flight from intelligence'. *The Telegraph*, 19<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1488131/Populist-presenters-lead-the-BBCs-flight-from-intelligence.html> [Accessed: 06/07/17]

Anderson, D. (2014). The BBC and the Arts in the Nations and Regions: Impartiality and Equality?, *National Museum Wales Blog*, 21 July [Online] Available at: <http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/blog/?cat=487> [Accessed: 21/09/2016].

Ang, I. (1991). *Desperately Seeking the Audience*. London: Routledge

Arnold, M., (1869). *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism*. London: Smith, Elder and Co.

Arts Council England. (2015). *DCMS Green paper on the renewal of the BBC Charter*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/BBC\\_Charter\\_Review\\_public\\_consultation\\_response.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/BBC_Charter_Review_public_consultation_response.pdf) [Accessed: 21/09/16].

Arts Council of Great Britain. (1946). *The Charter of Incorporation Granted by His Majesty the King to the Arts Council of Great Britain*, 9 August.

Arts Council of Great Britain. (1989). *The Arts and Broadcasting: Bringing the Best to the Most*. London: Arts Council of Great Britain.

Arts Council of Wales. (n.d.). *Advocacy Toolkit: Government Agenda*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.arts.wales/what-we-do/advocacy-toolkit/government-agenda> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

Arts Council of Wales. (2015). *BBC Charter Review: Public Consultation. Arts Council of Wales Submission*. [Online] Available at:

[http://www.arts.wales/c\\_enterprise-and-regeneration/bbc-charter-review-submission](http://www.arts.wales/c_enterprise-and-regeneration/bbc-charter-review-submission) [Accessed: 22/09/16].

Arts Council of Wales. (2016). *Arts in Wales 2015 Survey: Initial Release of Headline Data*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.arts.wales/what-we-do/research/latest-research/arts-in-wales-survey-2015> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

BARB, (2015). Weekly top 30 programmes: 5 October – 11 October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.barb.co.uk/viewing-data/weekly-top-30/> [Accessed: 11/10/16].

BARB. (2016). *Monthly viewing summary*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.barb.co.uk/viewing-data/monthly-viewing-summary/> [Accessed: 19/09/16].

Bazeley, P. and Jackson, K. eds. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. London: Sage.

BBC. (1929). *BBC Handbook*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (1955). *BBC Handbook*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (1957). *BBC Handbook*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (1965) *The Conscience of the Programme Director: An Address Given by Sir High Greene, Director-General of the BBC, to the International Catholic Association for Radio and Television, Rome, 9 February 1965*.

BBC (1973) *Limitations to the Recruitment and Advancement of Women in the BBC*, Report to Board of Management BM(73) 31. BBC.

BBC. (1985). *BBC Annual Report and Handbook*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (1994). *BBC Annual Report*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (1996). *BBC Annual Report*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC. (2002). *BBC Press Office: Culture, controversy and cutting edge documentary: BBC FOUR prepares to launch*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2002/02\\_february/14/fourlaunch.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2002/02_february/14/fourlaunch.shtml) [Accessed: 08/09/16].

BBC. (2004a). *Building public value: Renewing the BBC for a digital world*. [Online] Available at: <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/policies/pdf/bpv.pdf> [Accessed: 01/06/16].

BBC. (2004b). *Submission to the BBC Charter Review: Radio 3 Network Paper*. [Online] Available at:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/pdf\\_documents/r3\\_0904.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/pdf_documents/r3_0904.pdf) [Accessed: 31/03/17].

BBC. (2011). BBC Audience Information: January – March 2011. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/audience\\_0711.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/audience_0711.pdf) [Accessed: 13/10/16].

BBC (2012), *Fair Trading Guidelines*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/howwework/policiesandguidelines/fairtrading.html> [Accessed: 08/05/16].

BBC. (2014). *Branding: Use of BBC Assets*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/branding/>. [Accessed 30/11/14].

BBC. (2015a). *British, Bold, Creative: The BBC's programmes and services in the next Charter*. [Online] Available at: <https://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/futureofthebbc2015.pdf> [Accessed: 27/09/16].

BBC. (2015b). *BBC Annual report and Accounts 2014/15*. [Online] Available at: <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/pdf/2014-15/bbc-annualreport-201415.pdf> [Accessed: 06/09/16].

BBC. (2015c). *BBC One: The Big Painting Challenge*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02cs0gw> [Accessed: 19/09/16].

BBC. (2016a). *Inside the BBC: Public Purposes* [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/howweare/publicpurposes> [Accessed: 14/09/16].

BBC. (2016b). Strategic reorganisation of BBC TV sees Charlotte Moore appointed Controller, TV Channels and iPlayer, *BBC Media Centre*, 19<sup>th</sup> January. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2016/controller-tv-and-iplayer> [Accessed: 25/04/2016].

BBC. (2016c). *Inside the BBC: The BBC and Partnerships*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/howwework/partnerships> [Accessed: 24/08/16].

BBC Annual Report. (2014). *Performance: How we performed against our objectives by content area, genre and channel or network*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/342225/bbc\\_annualreport\\_201314\\_bbcexecutive\\_performance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342225/bbc_annualreport_201314_bbcexecutive_performance.pdf) [Accessed: 13/10/16].

BBC Blog. (2014). *Introducing BBC Arts Online*, 15<sup>th</sup> May. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/18d1a680-1f13-3b58-8c64-2df76c7fb57b> [Accessed: 07/07/16].

BBC Blog. (2015). *What The Space is and why the BBC is involved*. 22<sup>nd</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/bdf2d3c7-750a-4aef-9ed2-c967696d85dc> [Accessed: 11/07/16].

BBC Commissioning. (2015). *Arts on BBC One*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/arts-bbc-one> [Accessed: 06/09/16].

BBC Commissioning. (2016a). *BBC Four*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/bbc-four> [Accessed: 10/10/16].

BBC Commissioning. (2016b). *TV: BBC Three*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/bbc-three> [Accessed: 04/07/16].

BBC Commissioning. (2016c). *BBC iPlayer*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/iplayer> [Accessed: 07/07/16]

BBC Cymru Wales. (2016). *BBC Wales Management Review 2015/16*. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mypension/en/bbc\\_wales\\_review\\_web\\_15\\_16.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mypension/en/bbc_wales_review_web_15_16.pdf) [Accessed: 22/09/16].

BBC Editorial Guidelines. (n.d.). *Partnerships: Guidance in Full*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidance/partnerships> [Accessed: 06/11/16].

BBC iPlayer. (2015). *We British*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06h40h7> [Accessed: 08/06/16].

BBC Media Centre. (n.d.). *The Space*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/mediapacks/olympiad/other/space.html> [Accessed: 07/11/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2012). *London 2012 Olympics deliver record viewing figures for BBC*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2012/olympic-viewing-figs.html> [Accessed: 08/06/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2013). Director-General Tony Hall announces major new investment in arts programming across the BBC. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/dg-arts-programming.html> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2014). *Tony Hall – BBC Arts launch*, 25<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/speeches/2014/dg-bbc-arts.html> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2015a). *Simon Schama, Mary Beard and David Olusoga to present BBC Two series Civilisations*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2015/civilisations> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2015b). BBC to demonstrate renewed commitment to prime time arts programming and partnerships. 15<sup>th</sup> February. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2015/arts-programming-partnerships> [Accessed: 19/07/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2015c). The BBC's Little Painting Challenge attracts over 29,000 pieces of art – 1,000 of which are to be exhibited at the Whitworth. 28<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2015/little-painting-challenge-whitworth> [Accessed: 19/07/16]

BBC Media Centre. (2015d). *Tony Hall speech to the Creative Industries Federation*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/speeches/2015/tony-hall-cif> [Accessed: 07/04/17]

BBC Media Centre. (2016a). BBC iPlayer Performance Pack – January 2016. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2016/iplayer-perf-pack-jan> [Accessed: 07/07/16].

BBC Media Centre. (2016b). Speech by Tony Hall to the Media & Telecoms Conference, 8<sup>th</sup> March. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/speeches/2016/tony-hall-enders> [Accessed: 25/08/16].

BBC News. (2008). Wales is 'invisible nation' on TV. *BBC News*, 9<sup>th</sup> July. [Online] Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7497905.stm> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

BBC News. (2010). Arts Council's Budget cut by 30%. *BBC News*, 20<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-11582070> [Accessed: 04/11/16].

BBC News. (2015a). *Chicago artist takes home £40,000 Artes Mundi Prize*, 22<sup>nd</sup> January. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-30934979> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

BBC News. (2015b). *BBC Defends digital arts website The Space*. 21<sup>st</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-34313328> [Accessed: 08/07/16].



BBC News, (2015c). *Dench, Moss and Vegas back campaign to get UK creative*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-31531887> [Accessed: 17/04/15].

BBC News. (2016). The Great British Bake Off reaches record audience. *BBC News*, 27<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-37786108> [Accessed: 28/10/16].

BBC Press Office. (2006). *BBC reorganises for an on-demand Creative Future*, 19<sup>th</sup> July. [Online] Available at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/07\\_july/19/future.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/07_july/19/future.shtml) [Accessed: 18/07/16].

BBC Trust. (2007). *BBC on-demand proposals: Public Value Test final conclusions*. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/consult/decisions/on\\_demand/decision.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/consult/decisions/on_demand/decision.pdf) [Accessed: 07/07/16].

BBC Trust. (2010). The BBC's Strategy: Putting Quality First. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/review\\_report\\_research/strategic\\_review/final\\_conclusions.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/review_report_research/strategic_review/final_conclusions.pdf) [Accessed: 08/06/16].

BBC Trust. (2011). Service Review: BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4 & BBC Radio 7, February 2011. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory\\_framework/service\\_licences/service\\_reviews/radio\\_347/radio\\_347\\_final.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory_framework/service_licences/service_reviews/radio_347/radio_347_final.pdf) [Accessed: 04/07/16]

BBC Trust. (2013). Operating Agreement: S4C. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory\\_framework/other\\_activities/s4c\\_op\\_agreement.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory_framework/other_activities/s4c_op_agreement.pdf) [Accessed: 04/04/17].

BBC Trust. (2014). *Service Licence Review of BBC TV: BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three and BBC Four – Analysis of Responses to Public Consultation*. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory\\_framework/service\\_licences/service\\_reviews/television\\_services/consultation\\_analysis.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory_framework/service_licences/service_reviews/television_services/consultation_analysis.pdf) [Accessed: 23/09/16].

BBC Trust. (2015). *BBC Trust Service Review: Radio 1, 1Xtra, Radio 2, Radio 3, 6 Music and Asian Network*, March 2015. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our\\_work/music\\_radio/music\\_radio.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our_work/music_radio/music_radio.pdf) [Accessed: 04/07/16].

Bell, E. (2008) *No one wants to be lectured at by a woman – women and history on TV*. *Women's History magazine*, 59: 4-11

Bell, E., and Gray, A. (2007). History on television Charisma, narrative and knowledge. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10(1): 113-133.

Bell, W., (1988). Preface. In: Hayward, P. (ed). *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Art & Artists*. London: Libbey.

Benjamin, W. (1936). *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. (2008 edition). London: Penguin Books.

Bennett, J. (2008). Interfacing the Nation Remediating Public Service Broadcasting in the Digital Television Age. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 14(3), 277-294.

Bennett, J., (2011). *Television personalities: stardom and the small screen*. Oxon: Routledge.

Bennett, J. and Strange, N. (2008). The BBC's Second-Shift Aesthetics: Interactive Television, Multi-Platform Projects and Public Service Content for a Digital Era. *Media International Australia*, 126(1).

Bennett, J. and Strange, N. (2011). *Television as Digital Media*. USA: Duke University Press.

Bennett, J., Strange, N., Kerr, P. and Medrado, A. (2012). Multiplatforming Public Service Broadcasting: The economic and cultural role of UK Digital and TV Independents. [online] Available at: <http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/21021/1/bennett-strange-kerr-medrado-2012-multiplatforming-psb-industry-report.pdf> [Accessed: 24/03/2016].

Bennett, J., Kerr, P., Strange, N., Ellis, J., Graham, A., Wyver, J., Steemers, J., Merck, M., Wakefield, E. and Chitty, A. (2013). In Debate: Cowboys or Indies? 30 years of the Television and Digital Independent Public Service Production Sector. *Critical Studies in Television: An International Journal of Television Studies*, 8(1): pp.108-130.

Berg, B. L., (2001). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences: Fourth Edition*. USA: Allyn and Bacon.

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. (2008 edition). London: Penguin Books.

Berger, P.L. and Luckmann, T. (1991). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (No. 10). UK: Penguin.

Bergg, D. (2004). Taking a horse to water? Delivering public service broadcasting in a digital universe. In: Cowling, J. and Tambini, D. eds. *From public service broadcasting to public service communications*. London: IPPR.

Bermingham, A. (1995). Introduction. In: Bermingham, A and Brewer, J., Eds. *The Consumption Of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object Text*. Oxon: Routledge.

- Berry, R., (2013). Radio with pictures: Radio visualization in BBC national radio. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 11(2): 169-184.
- Bignell, J. (2009). *Beckett on Screen: The Television Plays*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bignell, J., (2010). Docudramatizing the real: Developments in British TV docudrama since 1990. *Studies in Documentary Film*, 4(3): 195-208.
- Billings, A.C. (2011). *Sports Media: Transformation, Integration, Consumption*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Billington, M. (1990). The Decline of Criticism. In: Philip French (Ed.) *Ariel at Bay: Reflections on Broadcasting the Arts*. Manchester: Carcanet Press.
- Billington, M. (2010). Theatre on TV: Sky Arts leaves BBC in the wings with Chekhov revivals. *The Guardian*, 12<sup>th</sup> July. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2010/jul/12/theatre-tv-sky-arts-chekhov> [Accessed: 13/09/16].
- Blandford, S. and Lacey, S., (2011). Screening Wales: Portrayal, representation and identity: A case study. *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*, 6(2): 1-12.
- Blandford, S. and McElroy, R. (2013). Memory, Television and the Making of the BBC's 'The Story Of Wales'. *VIEW Journal of European Television History and Culture*. [Online] Available at: <http://viewjournal.eu/index.php/view/article/view/jethc038/72> [Accessed: 19/10/16].
- Blumler J. G., Brynin, M. and Nossiter, T. J. (1986). Broadcasting Finance and Programme Quality. *European Journal of Communication* 1(4): 343-64.
- Bonner, F., (2011). *Personality Presenters: Television's Intermediaries with Viewers*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Boon, T. and Gouyon, J. (2015). The origins and practice of science on British Television. In: Canboy, M. and Steel, J. (eds) *The Routledge Companion to British Media History*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Born, G., 2002. Reflexivity and Ambivalence: Culture, Creativity and Government in the BBC. *Cultural values*, 6(1-2): 65-90.
- Born, G. (2004). *Uncertain vision: Birt, Dyke and the reinvention of the BBC*. (2005 edition). London Random House.
- Bourdieu, P. (1979). Symbolic Power. *Critique of Anthropology*. January 1979 (4): 77 – 85.

- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998). *On Television and Journalism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2005). The Political Field, The Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field." in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, edited by R. Benson and E. Neveu. Cambridge: Polity.
- Bourdon, J and Méadel, C. (2014). Deconstructing the Ratings Machine: An Introduction. In: Bourdon, J and Méadel, C. (eds) *Television Audiences Across the World: Deconstructing the Ratings Machine*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bowden, C., and Galindo-Gonzalez, S. (2015). Interviewing when you're not face-to-face: The use of email interviews in a phenomenological study. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 10, 79-92.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (1995). The political economy approach. In: Boyd-Barrett, O and Newbold, C, *Approaches to Media: a reader*. London: Edward Arnold
- Boyle, D. (2001). *The Tyranny of Numbers: Why Counting Can't Make us Happy*. London: Flamingo.
- Bracken, M. and Balfour, A. (2004). Public service interactivity and the BBC In: Cowling, J. and Tambini, D. eds. *From public service broadcasting to public service communications*. London: IPPR.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2): 77-101.
- Briggs, A. (1979). *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: Volume IV: Sound and Vision*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Briggs, A, (1995). *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: Volume II: The Golden Age of Wireless*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, M, (1993), Welsh BBC adds to drama output. *The Independent*, 9<sup>th</sup> February. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/welsh-bbc-adds-to-drama-output-1471816.html> [Accessed: 03/04/17].
- Brown, M. (2014). Tony Hall confirms plans to axe BBC3 and might cut more. *The Stage*, 6<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2014/tony-hall-confirms-plans-bbc3-might/> [Accessed: 01/04/17].

- Brown, M. (2015). Arts and culture being 'systematically removed from UK education system'. *The Guardian*, 17<sup>th</sup> February. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/feb/17/arts-and-culture-systematically-removed-from-uk-education-system> [Accessed: 14/11.16].
- Brown, M. (2016). Ofcom: the BBC's first external regulator. *Royal Television Society Magazine*, June 2016. [Online] Available at: <https://rts.org.uk/article/ofcom-bbcs-first-external-regulator> [Accessed: 05/04/17].
- Bryant, C. (2015). *The BBC is Our Cultural NHS – The Government Must Tread Warily if They Seek to Cut it Down to Size*. *The Huffington Post*, July 16. [Online] Available at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/chris-bryant/bbc-licence-fee\\_b\\_7810484.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/chris-bryant/bbc-licence-fee_b_7810484.html) [Accessed: 04/06/16].
- Burrell, I. (2010). BBC: Freeze on licence fee is an 'act of cultural vandalism'. *The Independent*, 20<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/bbc-freeze-on-licence-fee-is-an-act-of-cultural-vandalism-2112207.html> [Accessed: 04/11/16].
- Burrell, I. (2015). BBC told to emulate BuzzFeed by producing 'informal' short videos where report acts as a 'friend'. *The Independent*, 5<sup>th</sup> November. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/bbc-told-to-emulate-buzzfeed-by-producing-informal-short-videos-where-reporter-acts-as-a-friend-a6723216.html> [Accessed: 26/10/16].
- Caines, M. (2013). *Should the BBC and Arts Council England relaunch the Space?* *The Guardian*, 30<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/poll/2013/oct/30/bbc-arts-council-the-space-relaunch> [Accessed: 11/07/16].
- Caldwell J (2003) Second-shift media aesthetics. Programming, interactivity and user flows. In: Everett A and Caldwell JT (eds) *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality*. New York: Routledge.
- Caldwell, J. T. (2008). *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*. USA: Duke University Press.
- Campbell, V. (2016). *Science, Entertainment and Television Documentary*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Campion, M. J. (2005). *Look Who's Talking: Cultural Diversity, Public Service Broadcasting and the National Conversation*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/Resources/Guardian/Documents/lookwhostalking.pdf> [Accessed: 27/04/2016]
- Cardiff, D. (1980). The serious and the popular: aspects of the evolution of style in the radio talk 1928-1939. *Media, Culture & Society*, 2(1): 29-47.

- Carey, J. (2005). *What Good are the Arts?*. London: Faber and Faber Limited.
- Carpenter, H. (1996). *The envy of the world: fifty years of the BBC Third Programme and Radio 3, 1946-1996.*. London: Phoenix Giant.
- Carpenter, H., and Doctor, J. R. (1996). *The envy of the world: fifty years of the BBC Third Programme and Radio 3, 1946-1996.* (1997 edition). London: Phoenix Giant.
- Carver, R. (1990). Nothing if Not Critical: Editor's Introduction. In: *Ariel at Bay: Reflections on Broadcasting and the Arts. Critics' Forum festschrift for Philip French.* Manchester: Carcanet Press Limited.
- Cavendish, D. (2016). Shakespeare Live! Sent shivers down the spine – review. *The Telegraph*, 24<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/tv/2016/04/24/shakespeare-live-sent-shivers-down-the-spine---review/> [Accessed: 16/06/16].
- Chignell, H., (2009). *Key Concepts in Radio Studies.* London: Sage.
- Childwise. (2016). *Press Release: Childhood 2016.* [Online] Available at: [http://www.childwise.co.uk/uploads/3/1/6/5/31656353/childwise\\_press\\_release\\_-\\_monitor\\_2016.pdf](http://www.childwise.co.uk/uploads/3/1/6/5/31656353/childwise_press_release_-_monitor_2016.pdf) [Accessed: 30/06/16].
- Chitty, A. 2013. "How Multiplatform PSB Stopped Trying to Change the World and Grew Up (But Got Smaller)." *Critical Studies in Television* 8 (1): 126–30.
- Cho, J. and Trent, A. (2006). Validity in Qualitative Research Revisited. *Qualitative Research*, 6(3): 319-340.
- Christiansen, R. (2010). Pop Star to Opera Star: TV won't make any pig's ear the next Domingo. *The Telegraph*, 4<sup>th</sup> January. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/6931912/Pop-Star-to-Opera-Star-TV-wont-make-any-pigs-ear-the-next-Domingo.html> [Accessed: 27/10/16].
- Christophers, B. (2009). *Envisioning Media Power: On Capital and Geographies of Television.* Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Christopherson, S., (2008). Beyond the self-expressive creative worker an industry perspective on entertainment media. *Theory, culture & society*, 25(7-8): 73-95.
- Collini, S., (2006). *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain.* Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Collini, S. (2007). Mainly fair, moderate, or good. *The Guardian*. 22 September. [online] Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/22/radio.bbc> [Accessed: 19/09/2014].



Conlan, T. (2015). BBC pledges to improve creative partnerships after 'truly awful' jibe. *The Guardian*, 24<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/sep/24/bbc-pledges-to-improve-creative-partnerships-after-truly-awful-jibe> [Accessed: 23/08/2016].

Conlin, J. (2016) 'An irresponsible flow of images': Berger, Clark, and the Art of Television, 1958-1988. In: Hertel, R. and Malcolm, D. (eds) *On John Berger: Telling Stories*. The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV.

Collins, N. (2012). Robert Winston: BBC is dumbing down science. *The Telegraph*, 30 October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/9640822/Robert-Winston-BBC-is-dumbing-down-science.html> [Accessed: 13/06/16].

Cooke, R. (2015). A brush with boredom: The Big Painting Challenge wants to do for easels what Bake Off did for whisks. *The New Statesman*, 26<sup>th</sup> February. [Online] Available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2015/02/brush-boredom-big-painting-challenge-wants-do-easels-what-bake-did-whisks> [Accessed: 18/10/16].

Corner, J., (1997). Re-styling the real: British television documentary in the 1990s. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 11(1): 9-22.

Cottle, S. (1998). Making ethnic minority programmes inside the BBC: professional pragmatics and cultural containment. *Media, Culture & Society*, 20(2): 295-317.

Cottle, S. (2003). Media Organisation and Production: Mapping the Field. In: Cottle, S. (Ed.). (2003). *Media organization and production*. London: Sage.

Cottle, S., (2004). Producing nature(s): on the changing production ecology of natural history TV. *Media, Culture & Society*, 26(1): 81-101.

Cowman, Krista (2015) *Cultural value: from parlour songs to IPlayers: experiencing culture in the 20th & 21st century home*. Project Report. Arts and Humanities Research council. [Online] Available at: <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/19698/> [Accessed: 17/07/16].

Creative Industries Federation. (2015). Submission by the creative industries federation to the government's green paper on the BBC. [Online] Available at: [http://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/assets/userfiles/files/Federation%20-%20BBC%20-%20Submission%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/assets/userfiles/files/Federation%20-%20BBC%20-%20Submission%20(1).pdf) [Accessed: 05/11/16].

Creighton, S, (2016). Dad's Army routs Charles and the Bard, *Mail Online*, 24<sup>th</sup> April [Online] Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3556790/Dad-s-Army-routs-Charles-Bard-Celebration-Shakespeare-watched-200-000-fewer-people-repeat-44-year-old-episode-comedy.html> [Accessed: 20/06/16].

Crisell, A. (1986), *Understanding Radio*, London: Routledge.

Crisell, A. (1997). *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting*. London: Routledge.

Crompton, S. (2013). The Review Show: does culture matter less than cookery? *The Telegraph*, 3<sup>rd</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturenews/9905765/The-Review-Show-does-culture-matter-less-than-cookery.html> [Accessed: 15/10/16].

Culture Comms. (2015). *Demystifying BBC Arts*. [Online] Available at: [http://culturecomms.weebly.com/uploads/4/8/3/9/48391421/demystifying\\_bbc\\_arts\\_panel\\_discussion\\_culture\\_comms\\_2015.pdf](http://culturecomms.weebly.com/uploads/4/8/3/9/48391421/demystifying_bbc_arts_panel_discussion_culture_comms_2015.pdf) [Accessed: 06/07/16].

Cunningham, S. (2009). Reinventing television: The work of the 'innovation' unit. In: Turner, G. and Tay, J. (eds). *Television Studies After TV: Understanding Television in the Post-Broadcast Era*. Oxon: Routledge.

Curran J and Seaton J (2002) *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain*. London: Routledge.

D'Arma, A. and Steemers, J. (2010). Serving the Digital Citizens of the Future. In: Iosifidis, P. (Ed). *Reinventing Public Service Communication: European Broadcasters and Beyond*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Davenport, T.H. and Beck, J.C., 2013. *The attention economy: Understanding the new currency of business*. USA: Harvard Business Press.

Davies, K. (2011). Record Listening Figures for The Archers. *BBC Blog*, 16<sup>th</sup> May [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thearchers/entries/3e4df109-6162-3a26-87d1-efb0bd5d3f91> [Accessed: 09/06/16].

Davies, W. (2005). Evidence-based policy and democracy. *Open Democracy*, 23<sup>rd</sup> November. [Online] Available at: [https://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-think\\_tank/policy\\_3056.jsp](https://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-think_tank/policy_3056.jsp) [Accessed: 12/10/16].

Department for Business, Innovation & Skills. (2014). Innovation Report 2014: Innovation, Research and Growth. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/293635/bis-14-p188-innovation-report-2014-revised.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/293635/bis-14-p188-innovation-report-2014-revised.pdf) [Accessed: 09/11/16].

DCMS. (2015a). *BBC Charter Review Public Consultation*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/449830/DCMS\\_BBC\\_Consultation\\_A4\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/449830/DCMS_BBC_Consultation_A4_1_.pdf) [Accessed: 27/09/16].

DCMS. (2016a). *Taking Part 2016/17 Quarter 2: Arts Visualisation*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/586988/Arts\\_infographic.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586988/Arts_infographic.pdf) [Accessed: 31/03/17].



- DCMS. (2016b). A BBC for the Future: a broadcaster of distinction. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524863/DCMS\\_A\\_BBC\\_for\\_the\\_future\\_linked\\_rev1.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524863/DCMS_A_BBC_for_the_future_linked_rev1.pdf) [Accessed: 27/09/16].
- Deller, R.A. (2015). Religion as makeover: Reality, lifestyle and spiritual transformation. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 18(3): 291-303.
- Deuze, M. (2007). *Media Work: Digital Media and Society Series*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- d'Haenens, L. (1996). Arts Programming on Public Television An Analysis of Cognitive and Emotional Viewer Reactions. *European Journal of Communication*, 11(2): 147-172.
- Dickinson, K. (2007) 'The very new can only come from the very old': Ken Russell, national culture and the possibility of experimental television at the BBC in the 1960s. In: *Experimental British Television*, Mulvey, L and Sexton, J (eds). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Dingwall, R. (1997) 'Accounts, Interviews and Observations', in Miller, G. and Dingwall, R. (eds). *Context and Method in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage
- Doctor, J.R., (1999). *The BBC and ultra-modern music, 1922-1936: shaping a nation's tastes* (Vol. 10). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Doerer, J. (2015). The Drive to Partner. In: King's College London. *The Art of Partnering*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/Cultural/culturalenquiries/partnership/Full-report.pdf> [Accessed: 04/10/16].
- Dowell, B. (2016). BBC expected to announce massive restructure bringing TV and radio together into three 'super-departments'. *Radio Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2016-04-26/bbc-expected-to-announce-massive-restructure-bringing-tv-and-radio-together-into-three-super-departments> [Accessed: 18/07/16].
- Doyle, G., (2002). *Understanding Media Economics*. London: SAGE.
- Doyle, G., (2010). From Television to Multi-Platform Less from More or More for Less?. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 16(4).
- Dover, C. (2004). 'Crisis' in British documentary television: the end of a genre?. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 1(2): 242-259.
- Duffy, S. (2014). Arts for everyone on the BBC? Not with opera, ballet and still more Shakespeare. *The Guardian*, 26<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/26/arts-for-everyone-bbc-tony-hall-london-establishment> [Accessed: 08/09/16].

Dunkley, C. (1999). High culture knocked from its pedestal by pop. *Financial Times*, 25 August, 14.

Edwards, S. (1999). *Art and its Histories: A Reader*. London: Yale University Press in Association with The Open University.

Enli, G. S. (2008). Redefining public service broadcasting multi-platform participation. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 14(1): 105-120.

Esser, A. (2013) "Format is King": Television Formats and Commercialisation. In: Donders, K., Pauwels, C. and Loisen, J. (eds). *Private television in Western Europe: Content, markets, policies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fanthome, C. (2007). Creating an iconic brand—an account of the history, development, context and significance of Channel 4's idents. *Journal of Media Practice*, 8(3): 255-271.

Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1): 80-92.

Foster, P. (2011). BBC scores highest audience appreciation figures ever. *The Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2011/sep/19/bbc-high-audience-appreciation-score> [Accessed: 13/10/16].

Foster, P. (2016). BBC Three to go off air and online-only, it is confirmed. *The Telegraph*, 26<sup>th</sup> of November. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/bbc/12018408/BBC-Three-to-go-off-air-and-online-only-it-is-confirmed.html> [Accessed: 14/07/16].

Franklin, B. (2001). *British Television Policy: A Reader*. London: Routledge.

Furness, H. (2014a). Classic FM claims BBC Radio 3 'apes' its output for more listeners. *The Telegraph*, 25<sup>th</sup> Jan. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/10596257/Classic-FM-claims-BBC-Radio-3-apes-its-output-for-more-listeners.html> [Accessed: 04/07/16].

Furness, H. (2014b). Radio 4's Today programme lightens up after summer of 'distressing' news. *The Telegraph*, 25<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/11122335/Radio-4s-Today-programme-lightens-up-after-summer-of-distressing-news.html> [Accessed: 05/07/16].

Furness, H. (2016). Less cookery, more culture on BBC primetime, former head of arts says. *The Telegraph*, 1<sup>st</sup> June. [Online] Available at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/01/less-cookery-more-culture-on-bbc-primetime-former-head-of-arts-s/> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Gibson, J. (1999). BBC urged to stay clear of ratings game. *The Guardian*, 24<sup>th</sup> of July. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/1999/jun/24/broadcasting.bbc> [Accessed: 13/10/16].

Gill, Rosalind (2002). Cool, creative and egalitarian? : exploring gender in project-based new media work in Europe [online]. London: LSE Research Online.

Goldhaber, M.H. (1997). The attention economy and the net. *First Monday*, 2(4).

Goslett, M. and Newton Dunn, T. (2015). Muppets: 'Hard-up' BBC blows £8m on odd puppet art website. *The Sun*, 20<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/archives/news/138027/muppets/> [Accessed: 25/10/16].

Gower, J. (2009). The mirror of the arts. In: Geraint Talfan Davies (ed.) *English is a Welsh language: Television's crisis in Wales*. Wales: Institute of Welsh Affairs.

Grainge, P. (2010). Elvis sings for the BBC: broadcast branding and digital media design. *Media, Culture & Society*, 32(1): 45-61.

Gray, A. and Bell, E., (2013). *History on Television*. Oxon: Routledge.

Green, A. (2011). Understanding Television Audiences. *Warc Best Practice*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/knowledge-ideas/media-content-technology/Understanding\\_Television\\_Audiences.pdf](http://www.ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/knowledge-ideas/media-content-technology/Understanding_Television_Audiences.pdf) [Accessed: 03/06/16].

Haley, W. (1946). The Third Programme: An introduction by the Director-General of the BBC, Sir William Haley, K.C.M.G. *Radio Times*. September 27<sup>th</sup>.

Hardy, J. (2012). UK Television Policy and Regulation, 2000-10. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 9(4): 521-547.

Harrington, S., Highfield, T., and Bruns, A. (2013). More than a backchannel: Twitter and television. *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies*. 10 (1).

Harrison, J., and Wessels, B. (2005). A new public service communication environment? Public service broadcasting values in the reconfiguring media. *New Media & Society*, 7(6): 834-853.

Hart, A. (1991). *Understanding the Media: A practical guide*. London: Routledge.

Hartley, J. (2009). Less popular but more democratic? Corrie, Clarkson and the dancing Cru. In: Turner, G. and Tay, J. eds. *Television Studies After TV: Understanding Television in the Post-Broadcast Era*. Oxon: Routledge.

Harvey, S. (2006). Ofcom's first year and neoliberalism's blind spot: attacking the culture of production. *Screen*, 47(1): 91-105.

Harvey, S. and Robins, K., 1994. Voices and places: the BBC and regional policy. *The Political Quarterly*, 65(1): 39-52.

Harvey, W.S. (2010). Methodological Approaches for Interviewing Elites. *Geography Compass*, 4(3): 193-205.

Harvey, W. S. (2011). Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews. *Qualitative Research*, 11(4): 431-441.

Hayward, P. (1998). Introduction: Representing Representations. In: Hayward, P. (ed). *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Arts and Artists*. University of Luton Press: Luton.

Henderson, M. (2013). *The Geek Manifesto: Why Science Matters*. London: Random House.

Hendy, D. (2007). *Life on Air: A History of Radio Four*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hendy, D. (2013). *Public Service Broadcasting*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2006). Media organisations and media texts: production, autonomy and power. In: Hesmondhalgh, D. (ed.). *Media production*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Hesmondhalgh, D. and Baker, S. (2008). Creative work and emotional labour in the television industry. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7-8).

Hesmondhalgh, D. and Baker, S., (2010). 'A very complicated version of freedom': Conditions and experiences of creative labour in three cultural industries. *Poetics*, 38(1).

Hesmondhalgh, D., Nisbett, M., Oakley, K. and Lee, D. (2014). Were New Labour's cultural policies neo-liberal?. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21(1): 97-114.

Hewett, I. (2016). The Third Programme: 'the best that has been thought and said'? *The Telegraph*, 22<sup>nd</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/radio/what-to-listen-to/the-third-programme-was-the-best-that-has-been-thought-and-said/> [Accessed: 10/10/16].

- Higgins, C. (2015). *The New Noise: The Extraordinary Birth and Troubled Life of the BBC*. London: Guardian Books.
- Hill, A., (2007). *Restyling factual TV: audiences and news, documentary and reality genres*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Hilmes, M. (2013). The New Materiality of Radio: Sound on Screens. In: Loviglio, J and Hilmes, M. (eds) *Radio's New Wave: Global Sound in the Digital Era*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Holden, J, (2004). *Capturing cultural value: how culture has become a tool of government policy*. London: Demos.
- Holden, J. (2006). *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy: Why Culture Needs a Democratic Mandate*. London: DEMOS.
- Holdsworth A (2010) Who Do You Think You Are? Family history and memory on British television. In: Bell E and Gray A (eds) *Televising History: Mediating the Past in Postwar Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 234–247.
- Holstein, J. and Gubrium, J. (1997). Active Interviewing. In: Silverman, D. (ed). *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*.
- Holt, A. (2010) 'Using the telephone for narrative interviewing: a research note', *Qualitative Research*, 10(1): 113–121.
- House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee. (2015). *Future of the BBC: Fourth Report of Session 2014-15*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmcomeds/315/315.pdf> [Accessed: 27/09/16].
- House of Commons Public Accounts Committee. (2009). *The Efficiency of Radio Production at the BBC: Twenty-fifth Report of Session 2008-09*. London: The Stationery Office Limited.
- House of Lords. (2009). *Public service broadcasting: short-term crisis, long-term future?*. London The Stationery Office Limited.
- Hutchison, D. (1999). *Media policy: an introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Irwin, M. M. (2011). Monitor: The Creation of the Television Arts Documentary. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 8(3): 322-336.
- Irwin, M. M. (2011). Monitor: The Creation of the Television Arts Documentary. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 8(3), 322-336.
- IWA. (2015). *IWA Wales Media Audit*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.iwa.wales/click/wp-content/uploads/IWA\\_MediaAudit\\_v4.pdf](http://www.iwa.wales/click/wp-content/uploads/IWA_MediaAudit_v4.pdf) [Accessed: 22/09/16].

Jacka, E., (2003). " Democracy as Defeat" The Impotence of Arguments for Public Service Broadcasting. *Television & New Media*, 4(2): 177-191.

Jackson, J. (2016). BBC to anonymise job applications in social diversity bid. *The Guardian*, 27<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/apr/27/bbc-anonymise-job-applications-social-diversity-interviews> [Accessed: 01/04/17].

Jackson, J. (2017). BBC Focus too middle aged and middle class, says Ofcom chief. *The Guardian*, 8<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/mar/08/bbc-focus-too-middle-aged-and-middle-class-says-ofcom-chief> [Accessed: 31/03/17].

Jakubowicz, K. (2010). Serving the Digital Citizens of the Future. In: Iosifidis, P. (Ed). *Reinventing Public Service Communication: European Broadcasters and Beyond*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jeffries, S. (2002). Betrayed by the Beeb. *The Guardian*. 2<sup>nd</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/mar/02/books.guardianreview2> [Accessed: 19/09/14].

Jeffries, S. (2011). Brian Cox: 'Physics is better than rock 'n' roll. *The Guardian*, 24<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2011/mar/24/brian-cox-wonders-of-the-universe> [Accessed: 11/10/16].

Jenkins, H., Ford, S. and Green, J., (2013). *Spreadable media: Creating value and meaning in a networked culture*. USA: NYU Press.

Johnson, C. (2007). TELE-BRANDING IN TVIII: The network as brand and the programme as brand. *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 5(1): 5-24.

Johnson, C. (2013). From brand congruence to the 'virtuous circle': branding and the commercialization of public service broadcasting. *Media, Culture & Society*, 35(3): 314-331.

Jones, E. (2015). The Big Painting Challenge, TV review: Even Una Stubbs' saucy innuendo can't save this show. *The Independent*, 22<sup>nd</sup> February. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/the-big-painting-challenge-tv-review-even-una-stubbs-saucy-innuendo-can-t-save-this-show-10062848.html> [Accessed: 19/09/16].

Kahl, S. K. and Grodal S. (2016). Multilevel Discourse Analysis: A Structured Approach to Analyzing Longitudinal Data. In: Elsback D. and Kramer R. M. (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Organizational Research: Innovative Pathways and Methods*. Oxon: Routledge.



- Kelly, L.W. and Boyle, R. (2011). Business on Television: Continuity, Change, and Risk in the Development of Television's "Business Entertainment Format". *Television & New Media*, 12(3): 228-247.
- Keynes, J. (1945). The Arts Council: Its Policy and Hopes. *The Listener*, 12<sup>th</sup> July.
- Kilborn, R (1996) 'New Contexts for Documentary Production in Britain, *Media, Culture and Society* 18(1): 141-150.
- Kilborn, R. (1998). Shaping the Real Democratization and Commodification in UK Factual Broadcasting. *European Journal of Communication*, 13(2): pp.201-218.
- King's College London. (2015). *The Art of Partnering*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/culturalenquiries/partnership/Full-report.pdf> [Accessed: 23/08/16].
- King's College London. (2015). News: King's launches key report on partnerships with the arts and cultural sector. [Online] Available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/Cultural/newsandviews/newsrecords/151013-the-art-of-partnering-within-the-arts-and-cultural-sector.aspx> [Accessed: 29/06/17].
- Küng-Shankleman, L. (2003). Organisational Culture inside the BBC and CNN. In: Cottle, S. (ed.). *Media organization and production*. London: Sage.
- Kvale, S., and Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. USA: Sage.
- Lacey, K. (2009). Ten years of radio studies: The very idea. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 6(1): 21-32.
- Lacey, S. and McElroy, R. (2010) 'Real Performance? 'Ordinary' people and the problem of acting,' special issue, 'Acting with Facts', *Studies in Documentary Film*, 4 (3): 253-266.
- Lanham, R.A., 2006. *The economics of attention: Style and substance in the age of information*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lapadat, J. C., and Lindsay, A. C. (1999). Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positionings. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5 (1): 64-86.
- Lawson, M. (2008). The news at...whenever. *The Guardian*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2008/jan/03/bbc.television> [Accessed: 07/07/16].

Lebrecht, N. (2015). The Last of the BBC Proms. Standpoint, September. [Online] Available at: <http://standpointmag.co.uk/music-september-2015-norman-lebrecht-bbc-proms> [Accessed: 13/06/16].

Lee, B. (2015). UK TV ratings: Doctor Foster concludes with nearly 8 million viewers on BBC One. *Digital Spy*, 8<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.digitalspy.com/tv/great-british-bake-off/news/a672615/uk-tv-ratings-doctor-foster-concludes-with-nearly-8-million-viewers-on-bbc-one/> [Accessed: 11/10/16].

Lee, D. (2012). The Ethics of Insecurity: Risk, Individualization and Value in British Independent Television Production. *Television & New Media*, 13 (6): 480-497.

Lee, D. and Corner, J., (2015). Situating the South Bank Show: Continuity and transition in British arts television. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 12(3): 364-382.

Lee-Wright, P., (2010). *The Documentary Handbook*. Oxon: Routledge.

Lewis, P., 2004. Opening and closing doors: radio drama in the BBC. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 1(3): 161-176.

Lezard, N. (2013). The sad decline of BBC Radio 3 into Classic FM without adverts. *The New Statesman*, 28<sup>th</sup> November. [Online] Available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/2013/11/the-sad-decline-of-bbc-radio-3> [Accessed: 04/07/16].

Livingstone, S., Lunt, P. and Miller, L., 2007. Citizens and consumers: discursive debates during and after the Communications Act 2003. *Media, Culture & Society*, 29(4): 613-638.

Lochrie, M. and Coulton, P. (2011) Mobile phones as second screen for TV, enabling inter-audience interaction. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Advances in Computer Entertainment Technology* (73). ACM.

Lotz, A. (2007). *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. New York: New York University Press.

Malvern, J. (2013). BBC 'is neglecting the arts in chase for Downton ratings'. *The Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/tv-radio/article3707341.ece> [Accessed: 13/10/16].

Martin, F. and Lowe, G. F. (2013). The Value and Values of Public Service Media. In: Lowe, G. F. and Martin, F. (eds.) *The Value of Public Service Media*. Sweden: Nordicom.

Martinson, J. (2015). What is the future of public service television? *The Guardian*, 25<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at:



<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/oct/25/public-service-television-ofcom-bbc-channel-4> [Accessed: 27/09/16].

Martinson, J. and Plunkett, J. (2015). George Osborne forces BBC to pay for over-75s' TV licences. *The Guardian*, 6<sup>th</sup> July. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/jul/06/osborne-slashes-bbc-budget-pay-over-75s-tv-licences> [Accessed: 04/11/16].

Matos, C. (2009). Comparing Media Systems: the role of the public media in the digital age. *The Global Studies Journal*, 2(3): 203-220.

McClellan, A. (2003). *Art and its Publics: Museum Studies at the Millennium*. Oxon: Blackwell Publishing.

McCrum, R. (2016). Shakespeare Live! Was a bold and innovative tribute. *The Guardian*, 24<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/apr/24/shakespeare-live-rsc-stratford> [Accessed: 16/06/16]

McElroy, R. and Noonan, C. (2015). *Television Drama Production in Wales: A report by the Centre for the Study of Media and Culture in Small Nations*. [Online] Available at: [http://culture.research.southwales.ac.uk/media/files/documents/2015-11-11/Television\\_Drama\\_Production\\_in\\_Wales.pdf](http://culture.research.southwales.ac.uk/media/files/documents/2015-11-11/Television_Drama_Production_in_Wales.pdf) [Accessed: 23/09/16].

McElroy, R and Noonan, C. (2016) Television Drama Production in Small Nations: mobilities in a changing ecology. *Journal of Popular Television: special issue*, 4(1): 109-127.

McElroy, R., Papagiannouli, C. and William, H. (2017). Broadcasting after devolution: policy and critique in the Welsh media landscape 2008-2015. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, DOI:[10.1080/10286632.2016.1268133](https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2016.1268133)

McElroy, R. and Williams, R. (2011). Remembering ourselves, viewing the others: historical reality television and celebrity in the small nation. *Television & New Media*, 12(3): 187-206.

McDonnell, J., (2009). From certainty to diversity: The evolution of British religious broadcasting since 1990. In: Geybels, Mels and Walrave (eds) *Faith and Media: Analysis of Faith and Media: Representation and Communication*. Brussels: Peter Lang.

McLeish, R. and Link, J. (2016). *Radio Production: Sixth Edition*. Oxon: Focal Press.

McLoone, M. (1986). Presenters, Artists and Heroes. *Circa: Contemporary art in Ireland* (31) November-December. 10 – 14.

Meier, H.E. (2003). Beyond Convergence Understanding Programming Strategies of Public Broadcasters in Competitive Environments. *European Journal of Communication*, 18(3): 337-365.

Meijer, I.C., 2005. Impact or content? Ratings vs quality in public broadcasting. *European Journal of Communication*, 20(1):27-53.

Merritt, S. (2016). Squeezing out arts for more 'useful' subjects will impoverish us all. *The Guardian*, 26<sup>th</sup> June. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jun/25/squeezing-out-arts-for-commercially-useful-subjects-will-make-our-culture-poorer> [Accessed: 14/11/16].

Millington, C. (2000). Getting in and Getting on: Women and Radio Management at the BBC. In: Mitchell, C (ed) *Women & Radio: Airing Differences*. London: Routledge.

Mills, B. (2015). 'Shoved Online': BBC Three, British Television and the Marginalisation of Young Adult Audiences. In: Thorsen, E., Savigny, H., Alexander, J. and Jackson, D. (Eds) *Media, Margins and Popular Culture*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mittell, J. (2004). *Genre and Television: From Cop Show to Cartoons in American Culture*. London: Routledge.

Moe, H., (2008). Public service media online? regulating public broadcasters' internet Services—A comparative analysis. *Television & New Media*, 9(3).

Moe, H. (2011) Defining public service beyond broadcasting: the legitimacy of different approaches. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 17(1): 52-68.

Morris, J. (1956). The Development of the Third Programme, Its Influence on the Cultural Life of Great Britain and on International Cultural Exchange. In: *Cultural Radio Broadcasts: Some Experiences*. U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare Office of Education: Paris.

Morrison, T. (2015). No Place for Self-Pity, No Room for Fear: In times of dread, artists must never choose to remain silent. *The Nation*, 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/no-place-self-pity-no-room-fear/> [Accessed: 15/11/16].

Morville, P. (2005). *Ambient Findability: What We Find Changes Who We Become*. USA: O'Reilly Media Inc.

Mundy, J. (2008). SPREADING WISDOM: British post-war light entertainment, the BBC and the emergence of television. *Media History*, 14(1): 53-71.

Murdock, G. and Golding, P. (1977). Capitalism, communication and class relations. In: Curran, J., Gurevitch, M. and Woollacott, J. *Mass Communications and Society*. London: Edward Arnold

Napoli, P. (2011). *Audience evolution: New technologies and the transformation of media audiences*. USA: Columbia University Press.

Needham, C. (2003) *Citizen-Consumers: New Labour's Marketplace Democracy*. London: Catalyst Forum.

Noonan, C. (2014). 'Not a museum piece': Exploring the 'special' occupational culture of religious broadcasting in Britain. *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*, 10(1): 65-81.

Ofcom. (2004). *Ofcom review of public service television broadcasting: Phase 1 – is television special?*. [Online] Available at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb/summary/psb.pdf> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Ofcom. (2005). *Ofcom review of public service television broadcasting: Phase 3 – Competition for quality*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/15911/psb3.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/15911/psb3.pdf) [Accessed: 22/03/17].

Ofcom. (2008a). *Public Service Broadcasting: Annual Report 2008*. [Online] Available at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb08.pdf> [Accessed: 29/09/16].

Ofcom. (2008b). *Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review: Phase One: The Digital Opportunity*. [Online] Available at: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb2\\_1/summary/consultation.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb2_1/summary/consultation.pdf) [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Ofcom. (2008c). Annex 11: Market failure in broadcasting. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0022/32665/annex11.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/32665/annex11.pdf) [Accessed: 22/03/17].

Ofcom. (2010). *Television production sector: a review*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-1/tpsr/tpsr> [Accessed: 22/03/17].

Ofcom. (2012). *PSB Output and Spend*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/72810/section-b.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/72810/section-b.pdf) [Accessed: 20/03/17].

Ofcom. (2013). *Public Service Broadcasting Annual Report 2013*. [Online] Available at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/reviews-investigations/public-service-broadcasting/annrep/psb13/> [Accessed: 20/08/14].

Ofcom. (2014). *Renewal of the Channel 4 licence*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0033/83778/channel\\_4\\_licence\\_renewal\\_statement.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0033/83778/channel_4_licence_renewal_statement.pdf) [Accessed: 04/04/17].

Ofcom. (2015a). *Public Service Broadcasting in the Internet Age: Ofcom's Third Review of Public Service Broadcasting*. [Online] Available at: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb-review-3/statement/PSB\\_Review\\_3\\_Statement.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb-review-3/statement/PSB_Review_3_Statement.pdf) [Accessed: 27/09/16].

Ofcom. (2015b). *PSB Annual Report 2015: Output and Spend annex*, July. [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb2015/PSB\\_2015\\_Output\\_and\\_Spend.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb2015/PSB_2015_Output_and_Spend.pdf) [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Ofcom. (2015c). *The communications Market Report*. [Online] Available at: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/cmr/cmr15/CMR\\_UK\\_2015.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/cmr/cmr15/CMR_UK_2015.pdf) [Accessed: 06/06/16]

Ofcom. (2015d). *Adults' Media Use and Attitudes*. [Online] Available at: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/media-lit-10years/2015\\_Adults\\_media\\_use\\_and\\_attitudes\\_report.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/media-lit-10years/2015_Adults_media_use_and_attitudes_report.pdf) [Accessed: 30/06/16].

Ofcom. (2015e). *Half of UK homes turn to tablets in just five years*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/media/media-releases/2015/five-years-of-tablets> [Accessed: 21/10/16].

Ofcom. (2016a). *PSB Annual Research Report 2016*. [Online] Available at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb2016/PSB-Annual-Report-2016.pdf> [Accessed: 27/09/16].

Ofcom. (2016b). *PSB Annual Research Report 2016 Annex: Information Pack Methodologies*. [Online] Available at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb2016/Annex-D.pdf> [Accessed: 30/08/16].

Ofcom. (2016c). *What is public service broadcasting?* [Online] Available at: [http://ask.ofcom.org.uk/help/television/what\\_is\\_psb](http://ask.ofcom.org.uk/help/television/what_is_psb) [Accessed: 19/09/16].

Ofcom. (2017). *Introduction to Ofcom's Operating Framework for the BBC*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0030/99408/bbc-framework.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0030/99408/bbc-framework.pdf) [Accessed: 05/04/17].

Oliver, D.G., Serovich, J.M. and Mason, T.L. (2005). Constraints and Opportunities with Interview Transcription: Towards Reflection in Qualitative Research. *Social Forces*, 84(2): 1273-1289.

Oliver, M. (2009). Changing the Channel: A case for radical reform of Public Service Broadcasting in the UK. *Policy Exchange*.

O'Neill, S., Edelman, J. and Sloboda, J. (2014). Opera Audiences and Cultural Value: A Study of Audience Experiences. *Creativeworks London Working Paper No.2*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.creativeworkslondon.org.uk/wp->

[content/uploads/2014/05/27-May-Opera-Audiences-and-Cultural-Value.pdf](#)  
[Accessed: 27/10/16].

Paget, D., 2007. 'Acting with Facts': Actors performing the real in British theatre and television since 1990. A preliminary report on a new research project. *Studies in Documentary Film*, 1(2): 165-176.

Peacock, A. (1986). *Report of the Committee on Financing the BBC: Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, July 1986*. HM Stationery Office.

Plunkett, J. (2012). BBC and Arts Council launch joint digital Space for culture. *The Guardian*, 1<sup>st</sup> May. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/may/01/bbc-arts-council-digital-space> [Accessed: 06/11/16].

Plunkett, J. (2014). BBC3 closure: decision makes BBC 'whiter, older, and more middle class'. *The Guardian*, 6<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2014/mar/06/bbc3-closure-ash-atalla-whiter-older> [Accessed: 14/07/16].

Plunkett, J. (2014). BBC should stop being 'cosy middle class' club, says Janet Street-Porter. *The Guardian*, 29<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/sep/29/bbc-janet-street-porter-great-british-bake-off> [Accessed: 31/03/17].

Pollard, N. (2012). *The Pollard Review: Report*, 18<sup>th</sup> December. [Online] Available at: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our\\_work/pollard\\_review/pollard\\_review.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our_work/pollard_review/pollard_review.pdf) [Accessed: 24/08/16].

Preston, B. (2012). George Entwistle on improving the BBC, paying for big name talent and his love for Mad Men. *Radio Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> September. [Online] Available at: <http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2012-09-24/george-entwistle-on-improving-the-bbc-paying-for-big-name-talent-and-his-love-for-mad-men> [Accessed: 14/09/16].

Price, M. E. and Raboy, M. (2003). *Public Service Broadcasting in Transition: A Documentary Reader*. The Netherlands: Kluwer Law International.

Purnell, J. (2017). Reinventing the BBC. *About the BBC Blog*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/b9e4a5d4-035e-4c7e-8ffe-74a8ef6bcd44> [Accessed: 20/03/17].

Raats, T., Donders, K. and Pauwels, C. (2013). Finding the Value in Public Value Partnerships: Lessons from Partnerships Strategies and Practices in the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Flanders. In: Lowe, G. F. and Martin, F. (eds.) *The Value of Public Service Media*. Sweden: Nordicom.

Raats, T. (2012) Public Service Media and partnership practices. Matching public policy with broadcasting policy. *International Journal for Media and Cultural Politics*, 8(1): 105-125.

RAJAR. (2016). *RAJAR Data release: Quarter 1, 2016*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.rajar.co.uk/docs/news/RAJAR\\_DataRelease\\_InfographicQ12016.pdf](http://www.rajar.co.uk/docs/news/RAJAR_DataRelease_InfographicQ12016.pdf) [Accessed: 20/02/17].

Rapley, T. J. (2001). The art (fulness) of open-ended interviewing: some considerations on analysing interviews. *Qualitative research*, 1(3): 303-323.

Read, J. (1948). Is There a Documentary Art? *Sight and Sound*, 17(65): 157 – 9.

Reith, J. (1924) *Broadcast over Britain*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Richards, M. (2012). The Wildlife Docusoap: A New Ethical Practice for Wildlife Documentary?. *Television & New Media*, 15(4): 321 – 335.

Rosen, J. (2006). The People Formerly Known as the Audience. *Press Think*, June 27<sup>th</sup>. [Online] Available at: [http://archive.pressthink.org/2006/06/27/ppl\\_frmr.html](http://archive.pressthink.org/2006/06/27/ppl_frmr.html) [Accessed: 24/10/16].

S4C. (2016). *Annual Report & Statement*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.s4c.cymru/abouts4c/annualreport/acrobats/s4c-annual-report-2016.pdf> [Accessed: 04/04/17].

Scannell, P. (1989). Public service broadcasting and modern public life. *Media, Culture & Society*, 11(2): 135-166.

Scannell, P., (1990). Public Service Broadcasting: The History of a Concept. In: Goodwin, A. and Whannel, G. (eds) *Understanding Television*, Goodwin, London: Routledge.

Scannell, P. (1996). *Radio, Television, and Modern Life: a phenomenological approach*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Schlesinger, P. (2009). *The Politics of Media and Cultural Policy*. London: Media@LSE, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Schlesinger, P., 2010. 'The Most Creative Organization in the World'? The BBC, 'Creativity' and Managerial Style. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 16(3): 271-285.

Schwarzkopf, S. (2014). The Politics of Enjoyment: Competing Audience Measurement Systems in Britain, 1950-1980. In: Bourdon, J and Méadel, C. (eds) *Television Audiences Across the World: Deconstructing the Ratings Machine*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.



Scott, K.D., (2003). Popularizing science and nature programming: The role of “spectacle” in contemporary wildlife documentary. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 31(1): 29-35.

Scott, P. (2013). The citadel of profligacy... or how the BBC flushed another £200m of YOUR money down the drain. *Mail Online*, 8<sup>th</sup> June. [Online] Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2337744/The-citadel-profligacy--BBC-flushed-200m-YOUR-money-drain.html> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Sennett, R. (2006). *The Culture of the New Capitalism*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sexton, J. (2007). From art to avant-garde? Television, formalism and the arts documentary in 1960s Britain. In: Mulvey, L. and Sexton, J. eds. *Experimental British Television*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Sherwin, A. (2013). Melvyn Bragg calls on new BBC boss to reverse ‘shrinking arts coverage’. *The Independent*, 25<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/melvyn-bragg-calls-on-new-bbc-boss-to-reverse-shrinking-arts-coverage-8548842.html> [Accessed: 28/09/16].

Shuy, R. W. (2003) ‘In-person versus Telephone Interviewing’ in Holstein, J. A. and Gubrium, J. F. (eds) *Inside Interviewing: New Lenses, New Concerns*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Sills-Jones, D., (2016). Before the history boom Revisiting UK television history documentary production. *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*. London: Sage.

Simon, H. (1971). Designing Organizations for an Information-Rich World. In: Greenberger, M. (Ed.), *Computers, communications, and the public interest*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press.

Sky. (2013). *Portrait Artist of the Year 2013*. [Online] Available at: <http://go.sky.com/tvboxsets/series/content/series/1752ac9475402410VgnVCM1000000b43150a> [Accessed: 19/09/16].

Slattery, L. (2015). RTÉ to ‘reformat’ television arts show ‘The Works’. *The Irish Times*, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. [Online] Available at: <http://www.irishtimes.com/business/media-and-marketing/rt%C3%A9-to-reformat-television-arts-show-the-works-1.2164307> [Accessed: 17/11/16].

Smith, M. (2015). Orlando on Radio 3 0 Pioneering Live Online Commentary. *BBC Blog*, 6<sup>th</sup> November. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio3/entries/6509d3b3-8c38-4446-82ab-b809e2762780> [Accessed: 27/10/16].

- Sørensen, I. E. (2014). Channels as content curators: Multiplatform strategies for documentary film and factual content in British public service broadcasting. *European Journal of Communication*, 29(1): 34-49.
- Sørensen, I.E. (2016). The revival of live TV: liveness in a multiplatform context. *Media, Culture & Society*, 38(3): 381 – 399.
- Spigel, L. (2008). *TV by Design: Modern Art and the Rise of Network Television*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stankiewicz, D., (2012). Regathering the Imagined Audience: Shifting Strategies at a Trans-European Public Television Channel. *Television & New Media*. 15 (5): 487-503.
- Steemers, J., (1999). Between Culture and Commerce The Problem of Redefining Public Service Broadcasting for the Digital Age. *Convergence: the international journal of research into new media technologies*, 5(3): 44-66.
- Steemers, J. (2016). *The Politics of Children's Television in the Context of BBC Charter Renewal*. Submission to the Inquiry into the Future of Public Service Television. [Online] Available at: <http://futureoftv.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Jeanette-Steemers.pdf> [Accessed: 05/04/17].
- Steiner, G. (1971). *In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Re-Definition of Culture*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Stephens, N. (2007). 'Collecting data from elites and ultra elites: telephone and face-to-face interviews with macroeconomists', *Qualitative Research* 7(2): 203–216.
- Strange, N. (2011) Multiplatform public service. In: Bennett J and Strange N (eds) *Television as Digital Media*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Stranger, A. (2009). Opera's push into the mainstream. *BBC News*, 14<sup>th</sup> November. [Online] Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/8359379.stm> [Accessed: 27/10/16].
- Sturges, J. E. and Hanrahan, K. J. (2004). 'Comparing Telephone and Face-to-Face Qualitative Interviewing: a Research Note', *Qualitative Research* 4(1): 107–118.
- Sweney, M. (2011). David Attenborough's Frozen Planet tops TV ratings. *The Guardian*, 10<sup>th</sup> November. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2011/nov/10/attenborough-frozen-planet-tv-ratings> [Accessed: 11/10/16].
- Syvertsen, T. (2003). Challenges to public television in the era of convergence and commercialization. *Television & New Media*, 4(2): 155-175.



Syvertsen, T. (2004) Citizens, Consumers, Customers and Players: A Conceptual Discussion of the Relationship between the Broadcasters and their Publics, *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 7(3): 363–80.

Tacchi, J. (2009). Radio and affective rhythm in the everyday. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 7(2): 171-183.

Talfan Davies, G. (2009). English is a Welsh Language. In: Geraint Talfan Davies (ed.) *English is a Welsh language: Television's crisis in Wales*. Wales: Institute of Welsh Affairs.

Tate. (2006). Tate launches Tate Media and announces plans to transform Tate Online into a broadband arts channel with online partner, BT. *Tate Press Office*, 10<sup>th</sup> July. [Online] Available at: <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/press-office/press-releases/tate-launches-tate-media-and-announces-plans-transform-tate-online> [Accessed: 05/11/16].

The Guardian. (2006). *BBC Creative Future: Mark Thompson's speech in full*, 25<sup>th</sup> April. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2006/apr/25/bbc.broadcasting> [Accessed: 18/07/16].

The Guardian. (2014). BBC3 Closure: no director of TV refuses to guarantee the future of BBC4, 6<sup>th</sup> March. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2014/mar/06/bbc3-no-guarantee-future-bbc4-danny-cohen> [Accessed: 14/07/16].

The Guardian. (2016). The Space: is this what £16m worth of digital art looks like? [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/dec/09/the-space-ruth-mackenzie> [Accessed: 08/07/16].

The Space. (2016). About Us. [Online] Available at: <https://www.thespace.org/who-we-are> [Accessed: 08/07/16].

The Telegraph. (2014). *How young viewers are abandoning television*, 8<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/mediatechnologyandtelecoms/media/11146439/How-young-viewers-are-abandoning-television.html> [Accessed: 07/07/16]

The Week. (2011). *'Bland' Fiona Bruce accused of dumbing down BBC arts*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.theweek.co.uk/tv-radio/43202/bland-fiona-bruce-accused-dumbing-down-bbc-arts> [Accessed: 18/10/16].

Thompson, J. (1995). *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Thompson, M. (2010). Mark Thompson's MacTaggart Lecture – the full text. *The Guardian*, 27<sup>th</sup> August. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2010/aug/27/mark-thompson-mactaggart-full-text> [Accessed: 07/11/16].
- Thorpe, V. (2013). Tony Hall plans to promise a sharp increase in the BBC's arts coverage. *The Guardian*, 6<sup>th</sup> October. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2013/oct/06/tony-hall-pledge-bbc-arts-coverage> [Accessed: 01/11/16].
- Ticketmaster. (2013). *Theatre UK: Evolving and Engaging in 2013*. [Online] Available at: <http://blog.ticketmaster.co.uk/news/theatre-uk-evolving-engaging-2013-2209/> [Accessed: 06/07/16].
- Tracey, M. (1998). *The Decline and Fall of Public Service Broadcasting*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tunstall, J. (1993). *Television Producers*. London: Routledge.
- Tunstall, J. (2010). The BBC and UK Public Service Broadcasting. In: Iosifidis, P. (Ed) *Reinventing Public Service Communication: European Broadcasters and Beyond*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Turner, G., (2010). *Ordinary People and the Media: The Demotic Turn*. London: Sage Publications.
- Turnock, R. (2007). *Television and Consumer Culture: Britain and the Transformation of Modernity*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- Tusa, J. (2014). *Pain in the Arts*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- Tylor, E. B., (1871). *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*. London: Bradbury, Evans, and Co., Printers.
- Ursell, G. (2006). Working in the media. In: Hesmondhalgh, D. (Ed.). *Media production*. Open University Press.
- Van Dijck, J. (2006). Picturizing science The science documentary as multimedia spectacle. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 9(1): 5-24.
- Van Dijck, J. and Poell, T. (2015). Making public television social? Public service broadcasting and the challenges of social media. *Television & New Media*, 16(2): 148-164.
- Voluntary Arts. (n.d.). *About Voluntary Arts*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.voluntaryarts.org/about-us/about-voluntary-arts/> [Accessed: 09/11/16].

Walker, J. A. (1993). *Arts TV: A History of Arts Television in Britain*. London: John Libbey & Company Ltd.

Walker, J. (1998). British TV Arts coverage in the Nineties. In: Hayward, P. (Ed) *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Art and Artists*. Luton: University of Luton Press.

Warwick Commission, The. (2015). *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*. [Online] Available at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/> [Accessed: 26/09/16].

Warwick Commission Website. (2015). *The Future of Cultural Value: The Report*. [Online] Available at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/> [Accessed: 29/06/17].

Wayne, M. (2000). Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? Contextual Analysis and the endgame of public service television. In: Fleming, D. (ed). *Formations: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Media Studies*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Wayne, M. (2003). *Marxism and Media Studies: Key Concepts and Contemporary Trends*. London: Pluto Press.

Webster, J.G., (2011). The duality of media: A structural theory of public attention. *Communication Theory*, 21(1): 43-66.

Webster, J., Phalen, P. and Lichty, L., (2014). *Ratings Analysis: Audience Measurement and Analytics*. Oxon: Routledge.

Weeds, H. (2013). Digitisation, Programme Quality and Public Service Broadcasting. In: Picard, R. G. and Siciliani, P. (eds) *Is there Still a Place for Public Service Television: Effects of the Changing Economics of Broadcasting*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.

Weiss, R. S. (1995). *Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: The Free Press.

Weissmann, E. (2008). Negotiating American quality: the NBC brand in Britain. *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*, 3(2): 40-58.

Welsh Affairs Committee. (2016). Broadcasting in Wales: First Report of Session 2016-17. [Online] Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwelaf/14/14.pdf> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-Structured Methods*. London: Sage.

Wheatley, H. (2004). The limits of television? Natural history programming and the transformation of public service broadcasting. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(3): 325-339.

Williams, R. (1957). Working class culture. *Universities and Left Review*, 1(2): 29-32.

Williams, R. (1958). Culture is Ordinary. In: Highmore, B. ed. (2002). *The Everyday Life Reader*. London: Routledge.

Williams, R. (1958). *Culture and Society: 1780 – 1950*. (1960 edition). New York: Anchor Books.

Williams, R., (1974). *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Fontana.

Wilson, S., (2015). In the living room: Second screens and TV audiences. *Television & New Media*. 17(2).

Woodford, D., Goldsmith, B. and Bruns, A. (2015) Social Media Audience Metrics as a New Form of TV Audience Measurement. In: Lind, R. A. (Ed.) *Producing Theory in a Digital World 2.0: The Intersection of Audiences and Production in Contemporary Theory*. New York: Peter Lang.

Work Foundation, The, (2005). *The Tipping Point: How Much is Broadcast Creativity at Risk?* The Work Foundation.

Wright, K. (2016). Artes Mundi: Why can't the Turner Prize be more like this?, *The Independent*, 18<sup>th</sup> January. [Online] Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/artes-mundi-why-cant-the-turner-prize-be-more-like-this-9986482.html> [Accessed: 23/09/16].

Wyver, J. (1988). Representing Art or Reproducing Culture? Tradition and innovation in British Television's coverage of the Arts (1950-87). In: Hayward, P. (ed). *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Art & Artists*. London: Libbey.

Wyver, J. (2007). *Vision On: Film, Television and the Arts in Britain*. London: Wallflower Press.

Young, T. (2003). Why I Just Love BBC4. *The Guardian*, 10<sup>th</sup> December. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2003/dec/10/broadcasting.arts> [Accessed: 10/10/16].

Ytreberg, E. (2002) 'Ideal Types in Public Service Television: Paternalists and Bureaucrats, Charismatics and Avant-Gardists', *Media, Culture and Society* 24(7): 59-74.

## **Appendix 1: Teleography and Radiography**

---

### **Teleography**

*A Picture of Britain* (BBC Two, 2005)

*Aquarius* (London Weekend Television for ITV, 1970-77)

*Arena* (BBC Two, 1976-)

*Artsnight* (BBC Two, 2015-)

*Bookmark* (BBC Two, 1983-)

*Civilisation* (BBC 2, 1969)

*Fake or Fortune?* (BBC One, 2011-)

*Great Welsh Writers* (Bulb Films and BBC Cymru Wales for BBC One, 2014-)

*Imagine* (BBC One, 2003 -)

*Is Art Necessary?* (Associated Television for ITV, 1958)

*Monitor* (BBC Television, 1958-65)

*New Release* (BBC Two, 1964-68)

*Omnibus* (BBC One, 1967-2003)

*Popstar to Operastar* (Globe Productions, ITV Studios and Renegade Pictures for ITV, 2010)

*Portrait Artist of the Year* (Storyvault Films for Sky Arts, 2013 -)

*Private View* (BBC iPlayer, 2014-)

*Shakespeare Live!* (BBC Two, 2016)

*Face of Britain by Simon Schama* (BBC Two, 2015)

*State of the Art* (Illuminations Media for Channel 4, 1987)

*The Story of Scottish Art* (BBC Scotland, 2015)

*Tempo* (ABC Television for ITV, 1961-68)

*The Big Painting Challenge* (BBC One, 2015-)

*The Culture Show* (BBC Two, 2004-)  
*The Late Show* (BBC Two, 1989-95)  
*The Review Show* (BBC Two, 1994-2014)  
*The South Bank Show* (London Weekend Television for ITV, 1978-2010)  
*Voices* (Brook Productions for Channel 4, 1982)  
*Ways of Seeing* (BBC Two, 1972)  
*Wednesday Magazine* (BBC Television, 1958-63)  
*What Do Artists Do All Day?* (BBC Four, 2013 -)  
*Women Who Spit* (BBC iPlayer, 2015)

## **Radiography**

*Critics' Forum* (BBC Radio 3, 1974-90)  
*Decoding the Masterworks* (BBC Radio 4, 2015)  
*Free Thinking* (BBC Radio 3, 2010-)  
*Front Row* (BBC Radio 4, 1998-)  
*Kaleidoscope* (BBC Radio 4, 1972-98)  
*Music and the Ordinary Listener* (BBC Radio, 1926)  
*Options* (BBC Radio 4, 1970)  
*Scan* (BBC Radio 4, 1971)  
*The Art of the Nation* (BBC Radio 4, 2014)  
*The Arts Show* (BBC Radio Ulster, 2007-)  
*The Arts This Week* (BBC Third Programme, 1969-71)  
*The Janice Forsyth Show* (BBC Radio Scotland, 2010-)  
*The Radio 2 Arts Show* (BBC Radio 2, 2009-)  
*The Radio Wales Arts Show* (BBC Radio Wales, 2008)

## Appendix 2: Interview List

#	Role	Organisation	Interview Location
1	Director of Arts	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
2	Arts Editor	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
3	Creative Director Presenter	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
4	Head of Commissioning, Arts	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
5	Head of Digital Development, BBC Arts	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
6	Executive Producer	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
7	Executive Producer Arts Lead, BBC Scotland	BBC	Telephone Interview
8	Producer/Director	Independent/Freelance	University of South Wales Cardiff
9	Creative Director Chair Former Head of Arts, Music & Features	Green Bay National Theatre Wales BBC Cymru Wales	Green Bay Cardiff
10	Producer Artistic Director	Independent/Freelance Swansea International Festival	University of South Wales Cardiff

11	Commissioning Editor BBC Radio 4 BBC World Service	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
12	Executive Producer	BBC	New Broadcasting House London
13	Commissioning and Scheduling Manager BBC Radio 3	BBC	Telephone Interview
14	Chief Executive Officer  Former Head of Arts	Flame Media BBC Cymru Wales	Flame Media, Cardiff
15	Executive Producer	BBC Cymru Wales	BBC Wales Broadcasting House, Cardiff
16	Journalist/Presenter	Freelance/BBC	New Broadcasting House London
17	Chief Executive	Arts Council Wales	Arts Council Wales Cardiff
18	Chief Executive	Voluntary Arts	Email Interview
19	Managing Director	Royal Opera House Enterprises	Telephone Interview
20	Producer/Director	Freelance	Telephone Interview