

In 2006, BBC and ITN journalist Charlie Beckett joined the department to set up Polis, the LSE's international journalism think-tank that is just one of the ways that academic research is connected to the world of media practice. Beckett is now a professor and head of the Department in this anniversary year.

Nurturing Excellence

Cammaerts, Georgiou and Helsper, junior level faculty who started at the LSE early in their careers, are prime examples of how the department has engaged in both capacity building and the nurturing of academic potential. Cammaerts began his career with the department as a post-doc while Georgiou and Helsper were PhD students in the department's earliest years. Since joining as permanent faculty each have greatly impacted the direction of the department.

Cammaert's forte in power and social change has dovetailed with Mansell's specialty in ICTs, development and inequality. The result of their fruitful collaboration was the MSc in Communications and a Development. Both Georgiou and Helsper have recently worked on multi-year grants funded by the European Commission, Georgiou for a project on transnational television culture and identity and Helsper, with department colleague Professor Sonja Livingstone, on young people and the Internet.

With such rapid growth over the past 10 years, the road that lies ahead is an optimistic one. Currently the department offers five different MSc programmes and two PhD programmes, each reflective of diverse and vibrant research specialisations. Additionally, 2012 saw the largest PhD intake ever at nine due to to the majority these students holding full scholarships from a number of funding bodies. Additionally, in 2013 two new permanent faculty—Drs. Wendy Willems and Allison Powell—joined the department.

Challenge Ahead

Livingstone, a founding member with Mansel and the late Roger Silverstone, is proud of what she has helped to build over the last 20 years but also, "humbled by the scale of the challenge ahead—the many questions and puzzles that remain as institutions and practices of socio-technical mediation become ever more complex, subtle, perhaps insidious, and yet critically important to us all."

Entering this department as a student in Autumn of 2012, I quickly became aware that I would not be receiving training where I would be asked to regurgitate. Instead I have been challenged to critically investigate the social world through issues germane to media and communication. This is crucial in the increasingly digital and globalised world of today—a fact never lost on the faculty. The crafting of the department as a protected space for critical and engaged research from an interdisciplinary perspective is ever apparent and is a defining feature of the its past and future.

For updates and news you can follow the department on Twitter @MediaLSE.

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