

PUBLIC DEBATE - 'WHO NEEDS MEDIA LITERACY?'

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DB OK. I should first of all welcome you to the Institution. My name is David Buckingham. I think there are two kind of groups of people here so I should say welcome to some people and thanks for staying to some other people. As I said, my name is David Buckingham, I am Director of the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media and never being one to miss a propaganda opportunity, there are various bits of glossy propaganda outside which describe what the Institute does and also this nice pink thing which describes what we do in our Centre. So if you're curious about who we are and what we do, that should explain at least some of it. As I said, there are two groups of people and in a way I think I need to do two introductions. We're three-quarters of the way through, or three days through a four-day big international conference here called 'Digital Generations, Children, Young People and New Media.' And it has been a big conference. We kind of imagined when we started planning it that, you know, we'd be lucky to get 150 people. In fact we've had something more like twice that. Over the four days we will have seen 300 people come through, academics, researchers and educators. In fact the focus of the final day which is tomorrow is Education. It's international, so we've seen people from something like 40 countries. And as people who have been here will know, as well as the rigorous and challenging social programme that we've laid on, we have also in between times seen some, I think some top quality presentations, ranging across several areas really. I mean we've looked at a range of media, so there have been papers to do with mobile phones, the Internet, computer games and about how new media relate to old media. Papers around a range of issues, learning, citizenship, gender, play, social exclusion, the digital divide and so on. And our aim has been partly I think, and this will be really the focus of tomorrow, to feed into practice, to feed into education, teaching and learning as they go on both in and outside schools. So as well as seeing some stuff, particularly tomorrow, which is classroom focused, we've also seen some stuff to do with the learning opportunities available for children and young people outside formal education in youth and community projects. So that's been one emphasis. The other emphasis which we're really trying to focus on this evening is to feed into policy. So we've tried to bring in some people from outside, some members of the general public. I'm not ever sure what that means, but you know who you are, some of you are the general public, I know you are. And we've advertised and we've kind of put feelers out for this event. And we also have in the audience then some researchers, academics who are staying on from the conference. And I would say we're very keen to hear from, particularly from international colleagues. Because although in some ways the debate that we'll have this evening will be UK

specific, I think it has many echoes and parallels with debates that are happening in other places, so we're very keen to have that element of the dialogue.

So that's to give a bit of a sense for the newcomers. I think I should also say a bit more, perhaps more for people attending the conference about the context of this discussion.

I think broadly speaking, we're at a point in the UK where we're seeing a shift in the regulation of the media, particularly embodied in the Communications Act which was passed late last year. But I think that Act itself is part of a broader shift in thinking about media regulation. On the one hand, it is about de-regulation, or at least it's about lighter touch regulation. And by that I mean regulation, partly in terms of economics, so there have been, for example some relaxations on the rules to do with cross-media ownership. And certainly there are critics at least who argue that there will be a lighter touch regulation in terms of content. So that's one element of the move. But I think going along with that move has also been a sense that the site of regulation is shifting and Sonia Livingstone talked about that in her presentation this morning and we'll almost certainly come back to it. A sense that the site of regulation is shifting from government into the home. And I think going along with that is very often a new rhetoric. It's a rhetoric about the need for informed, even empowered media consumers. So as we move towards a multi-channel, global, multi-media environment the argument is that it's becoming harder for government to control people's access to media. And part of the aim of government should on the contrary be to enable people themselves to handle this environment, to make decisions on their own behalf.

Now I think the crux is to do with this informing. What do we mean by informed consumers or informed users of media? It's partly about information, it's partly about giving people access to information. But it's also about what we might loosely call the skills or competencies that will enable people to play an active participatory role in their relationships with media. And the term that's kind of emerged to encapsulate that is this term 'Media Literacy'. The argument is that we need, the media need and that society needs a media literate population. And just as literacy in the traditional sense refers both to reading and writing, in the same way many of us would argue that Media Literacy also refers to consumption and production. It's about critical understanding, critical awareness about the media, but it's also about an active participation in media culture. Following the Communications Act, OFCOM, the Office for Communication, was set up as the new regulatory body which is really taking this forward. It has a specific remit in the Act to promote Media Literacy. And the Minister for Culture, Tessa Jowell, has been an enthusiastic advocate of Media Literacy. And I'll read this quote, because I think I know it by heart now, but it's a good one. She says, "I believe that in the modern world, Media Literacy will become as important a skill as Maths or Science. Decoding our media will be important to our lives as citizens as understanding great literature is to our cultural lives."

Now as somebody who has worked in this area for many, many years this is a kind of startling moment, and it's certainly a startling thing for a government minister to be saying. I mean I would like it even more of Charles Clarke, the Education Minister, was saying the same thing. But it's still an amazing, hair-raising thing to be hearing from a government minister.

Having said that, the question that we're all asking is well, you know, what do they really mean by 'Media Literacy' and what is government proposing to do about this? Is Media Literacy just a functional thing, is Media Literacy simply about, as I've said, providing information? Is it about, for example, labelling and rating of media content? Obviously it may well involve those things, but is not Media Literacy something wider than that? Is it a matter of critical thinking, is it a matter of active participation in the media? Media literacy clearly is not something that comes about only through formal education, but I think many of us will have questions about what part formal education, schooling, can and should play in this process. And in particular I would have some questions about how the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, which is where this initiative is coming from, and the Department for Education, could collaborate on that.

So the aim of this session really is to debate some of those issues and particularly to try to think about how research might inform this discussion. One of the emphases that's in the consultation process that OFCOM is currently undergoing around Media Literacy is on research and they want to know what kinds of research people feel is necessary, how research might contribute to this promotion and development of Media Literacy. So what we've done for this is to put together (hello Sylvia [laughs]) I was just going to say, we've put together three, oh no, two, we've put together three of our Keynote Speakers, three leading researchers from this week's conference, and we've asked them, and they've fallen neatly into two sides which I think is very good and I'm kind of in the middle as the referee, three leading researcher's from this week's conference and asked them to talk about how they see Media Literacy, what they think they, or we as researchers, know about it, and also what more we need to know. So on my immediate left, Sonia Livingstone. I won't go into embarrassing, flattering introductions as we've been, we've had enough of those at the conference itself. So Sonia Livingstone from the LSE, she's Professor of Social Psychology at the LSE. Mimi Ito, who's a Research Associate at the University of Southern California and Henry Jenkins who's Professor of Comparative Media Studies at MIT. So we'll hear from them in sequence. And we'll then move over to three responses from, well I said policy makers before and I was told off for that, people playing a part in the process of policy making, or seeking to influence policy making, you get the picture anyway. So I'm not sure if we'll do in this sequence, I think Robin you're going to go last, is that right? Oh we can do it in this sequence, OK. So on my immediate right, Cary Bazalgette from the BFI, then Robin Blake from OFCOM and Sylvia Hines from the BBC. And we've asked to think again in a sense about the same question. Well what do they see as Media Literacy, what are they seeking to do in the area, or are already doing or in

some cases have been doing for a long time in the field of Media Literacy. And again, what more do they feel that they need to know. Now having already taken up too much time, the aim is really to give everybody between kind of five, ten minutes or so. So I will just sort of wave when that happens. Our aim is really to have half an hour or so of discussion and we've got some kind of roving microphones and I'm very keen that the last half an hour is quite an animated discussion by a glass of wine which we'll have afterwards. So we're aiming to finish at half past seven. OK. So at this point I will hand over to Sonia Livingstone.

SL Thank you David. I think I'd like to start by saying something very brief about definitions, because Media Literacy is in a sense a term which I've heard many people speculating about, many different ideas of what it is, and some sense that perhaps it's a rather empty term, perhaps it doesn't mean very much. And yet, also in a sense that intellectually it draws on a very long tradition of debate on literacy which I think offers us a very rich resource for thinking about what Media Literacy could be. Nonetheless, it's the term in the Communications Bill, it's the term that OFCOM and this country is going to work with and so one of the points I would like to make is to suggest that this is a fabulous opportunity for all kinds of debates, all kinds of concerns that as media researchers we've had that can be brought together under the umbrella term, if you like. So this is a moment I hope we're going to seize and really try to argue for certain kinds of ambitious expectations of what Media Literacy can cover and that the anxiety that I hear that is not always spoken is that Media Literacy could end up being something rather minimal, it could end up being just how to use your electronic programme guide or how to use the red button on your remote. So what I would like to start with is saying, we need an ambitious definition. And yet paradoxically I'd like to also suggest that we need a fairly simple definition that we can begin with so we all in a sense agree what we're talking about at least at the very starting point and then I think we need to complicate that. And I think everyone here will have many ideas about what the complications and what the challenges of promoting Media Literacy are going to be. But I think there are a set of simple things and I hear them over and over again across a range of areas. The ordinary person who I always start with in the media audience sitting at home is faced with a rapidly expanding technological array of different kinds of media, some of which are converging in complicated ways, some of which are yet supposed to be converging. And there are a whole set of questions just about access which I don't want us to leave behind when we think about Media Literacy, because they are the source of all kind of inequalities. So there are very many challenges facing ordinary people about how they are to understand another gate and make use of and get access to the expanding range of media opportunities which potentially can bring all kinds of new opportunities. And I think we also need a debate about what those kinds of opportunities are.

The other argument I hear and I think many academics would like to make is to say, once people have got access we really want to include under the term 'Media Literacy'

a push for quite an ambitious notion of people's critical abilities and abilities to evaluate the different kinds of resources they come up against. So that we don't just say Media Literacy is about getting to the media, but it also includes a set of critical skills about understanding an enormously expanding range of forms and channels and contents.

And the third element that I think is crucial is that the new media perhaps are first a very serious opportunity for the general public to become not just receivers of mass communication directed at them, but also to interact with media, to become creators of media content, to have a more dynamic and active engagement with the different media offerings that are available. So that sense of creativity or content creation I think also should be part of our ambition for Media Literacy. And those would be my starting points to say that's what I would like to ensure that we really are promoting.

But I do want to flag up some of the complications as well because I think even as researchers, trying to track the ways in which people are gaining access to a rapidly changing set of media opportunities, trying to track people's understanding and critical evaluation of the different opportunities that are arising and trying to understand the importance of those new creative opportunities, all of those are a research challenge. And I have this uneasy sense that there isn't a very consensual body of academic literature, that we can just say to policy makers or people involved in the policy process, here is what we know. Of course what we know in the academy is contested and argued about so in research terms I think there really is, there's a challenge for us in informing the debate. There's also I think a challenge for the regulators in understanding how to track, if we are going to be improving Media Literacy which is OFCOM's brief, how do we know how literate people are right now, how will we know when they are more literate, what kind of end point, what's our ambition, how will we know when they're literate enough. I think there are some really tricky questions for researchers in following this unfolding process.

In my talk this morning I worried about the way in which Media Literacy, well I worried about the way in which the regulation of the new media environment is increasingly being devolved to people, ordinary people in their homes faced with this expanding and complicated array of new media options, and as one of the sentences in the OFCOM Media Literacy Consultation says: "... ordinary people are now to become the gatekeepers on the content coming into their homes." Which is very different from the way in which they have been. Previously the media themselves have in very many ways acted as the gatekeepers. It's an opportunity, of course it offers all kinds of choice and richness and diversity, but it's also a challenge and I think it's a challenge that people need a very considerable amount of advice and guidance and support in meeting. It's not a challenge that we can very simply and straightforwardly devolve upon people, and particularly upon parents and say, OK, now you're in charge, you manage what your kids get access to, you manage what comes into your home. And

partly I think that challenge arises because literacy is a term that describes how we understand the media and the media themselves have a role of shaping what it is, the way in which we use it. So literacy if you like stands between people's skills, what they can understand, and what they use and what they want and the way in which the media themselves are designed, the way in which they are disseminated, the way in which they afford certain kinds of uses and not other kinds of uses. And so in thinking about literacy, I do want us to also think about the way in which that media offer is designed and structured and made available and that has to be part of a focus. Rather than simply saying how do we get individuals to bear this responsibility and become more literate?

And my final point I think that I would like to say is to ask, to invite us to speculate at this crucial moment in the policy process, to invite us to speculate a little more widely about why we want Media Literacy. What would we hope could be brought under a Media Literacy agenda? And is this about being effective consumers in a competitive market or is this about being creative and self-expressive people in a world of new communicative possibilities, and/or is this about, as David flagged up, being participating citizens informed so that one can make the right kinds of, or so that one can participate actively in shaping the society that we're part of through new communication technologies and opportunities. So if we take what I would say as a minimal definition in terms of the person as consumer, or two much more ambitious definitions in terms of the person as more creative and expressive and/or as a citizen participating, what I would hope for is that we can move towards those more ambitious definitions of Media Literacy in thinking about the policy agenda both here and elsewhere. And I think if we don't, we should also think about the costs. What happens if we get it wrong? What does it matter if we don't get this Media Literacy policy right now? And I think it's a very familiar set of anxieties we would have about missed opportunities really to use the new media, not just so that we can use them safely, so that we can use them as consumers, but really so that we can use them without creating new kinds of inequalities. And I hear some very ambitious statements about improving society, about participating more equally, about being more creative. Are these the kinds of things that we think Media Literacy should be facilitating? And so I would really like to encourage a definitional debate that begins on quite straightforward terms but that begins to open up what it is we would really like Media Literacy to facilitate.

DB OK. That's great, thanks very much. Thanks for keeping to time. And the next one please. Mimi Ito from the University of Southern California.

MI OK, so I think I'm going to use my time to describe a little bit about my research that I've been doing with apologies for those of you who were here for my talk yesterday. And because I'm not a Media Literacy educator per se, or somebody actively working in the field I'm going to try to draw a few implications from the actual concrete ethnographic cases I've been exploring and kind of leave it to all of the other experts gathered here to draw perhaps the more concrete policy

implications of that. So what I want to describe is work that I've been doing with Yugioh which is sort of recent media mix and contemporary Japanese popular culture. I think probably more people are familiar with Pokemon but it basically relies on the same formula where you have integrated media strategy that brings together narrative media forms like comic books and television and movies with various commodities like licensed character goods, pencils, clothing, stationery, things like that. But perhaps most importantly what's central to the media mix are interactive recombinable technologies, some of which are digital, some of which are analogue, like trading cards, but which all rely on a kind of, a fairly new model of interaction where children collect, trade, recombine and customise media in ways that weren't possible with quite the same intensity with previous media formats. So I've been trying to understand the new kinds of social relations that kids are developing around these forms of media and how they're participating in different sorts of economic and social exchanges through their engagement with media. So what I've been looking at is Yugioh which is sort of currently popular in some places but was very popular in Japan when I was doing my field work there around 2000. And I think the important thing that I just want to highlight with respect to Yugioh is that it's really quite different from the metaphors of solitary of media engagement of a child in front of a screen, whether that's a video game or in front of a television set, that the whole premise of engagement is that kids will collect objects like trading cards and monsters and recombine them into personal, personalised playing decks which reflect their personal style of play and personal interests and that these games have to be pursued in a social setting. So you can't get very far in the game, you can't even learn how to play the game unless you're in a setting where you're exchanging knowledge, you're exchanging objects like cards and monsters with other players. So let's see if I can, I'm going to, so part of the reason why there's so much exchange, which I'm calling hyper-social exchange around these systems is that the way the card game in particular is released is in these five card packs, and in the UK they're marketed somewhat differently, but where kids don't know exactly what they're getting inside the card packs. And then the cards are, you can have rare, you can have mostly normal cards, but there's also cards of different kinds of rarity, rare, super-rare, ultra-rare, ultimate-rare cards, so that it fuels a whole collection cycle where kids are trying to covet, are coveting rare cards, they're trying to get cards that are going to enhance their game play. There's several thousand cards I think now in the Yugioh pantheon so it's an extremely esoteric and complicated knowledge universe, much like what you had with Pokemon where you know, the industry realised that children can master extremely difficult and esoteric content, combing different monsters into complicated strategies and figuring out different kind of deck combinations for example. So in terms of, from a literacy perspective it's an extremely complex environment where kids are learning things that I think were not reflected in prior media which used to be based on a fairly small number of characters for any given narrative series. I mean you didn't see 500 characters or 1000 characters that the children were being asked to understand the capabilities of and the relationships between. So these are the sorts of scenes in which Yugioh

information and cards get exchanged. And one of the things that we discovered as fieldworkers trying to understand Yugioh was that it was very difficult to learn how to play and that playing, especially the card game, is premised on the fact that kids will be learning how to play within peer-to-peer ecologies. That you really can't learn how to play without the coaching of more experienced players and then kids negotiate rules locally, they develop conventions of play locally, so it's this highly networked and interactive social environment in which the play is happening. So those are just sort of the high level points from the ethnographic research. I just want to mention three, how am I doing time-wise?

DB You have about three minutes.

MI OK, a minute each for implications for kids' literacy. The first is fairly obvious. Kids are more fluent than adults in this space. When I interviewed parents about it most parents didn't know what was going on. They had opinions about what was appropriate or inappropriate forms of play. Like they didn't want their kids to be buying and selling cards for money for example, but they didn't understand the content of the series and even the TV show is very difficult to understand for a casual viewer because it's all about how to play the card game. So if you just turned on the TV show mid-series you wouldn't really understand what was going on. So it's esoteric knowledge which has the effect of excluding outsiders which are parents and teachers. So if you're talking about trying to create an ecology where adults like parents are teachers are trying to guide reflective behaviour or understanding there's a fundamental barrier which is the lack of fluency on the part of the older generation. Now the second point that I want to bring up is that this fluency that kids are exhibiting, it's an extremely high level form of literacy, not necessarily the kind of content that educators are interested in, but it happens in a natural social ecology, much like kids learn spoken language. So the analogue is closer to learning spoken language than written language, Math or Science. So kids can master highly cognitively, high complex content within peer-to-peer social ecologies and I think that's an important lesson from an educational perspective is that media literacies perhaps are learned most effectively in the naturally occurring peer-to-peer social ecologies.

Now in terms of defining Media Literacy, and this is really building on points that David and Sonia have already mentioned, is that I would really encourage people to consider much more than the relation of the child to the screen or even individual skills and understandings that children bring to production or reading of media, but really to understand media as a resource for social participation. And that's exactly how kids are using Yugioh cards, it's their knowledge about Yugioh, the ownership of the actual cards, the resources in negotiating social relationships, their social capital materialises in a very concrete form which has significant implications for how we understand children's participation economic relations as well as symbolic relations. So it seems to me that this might be some arena where adult intervention would be helpful. Children seem to have no problem learning their own internal rules of how to traffic and understand the value of the

cards and yet perhaps there are some reflective interventions that could happen in terms of making children aware of their own roles as social agents and participating within a broader field of economic and social exchange that is intimately tied both to peer-to-peer networks as well as industry networks. And that's an area that I think even as adults we sometimes have a hard time understanding. OK, I should stop there.

DB Thanks very much. Does anyone appreciate how hard it is for academics to talk for 10 minutes? I find it impossible myself. OK, thanks very much. Henry Jenkins.

HJ Sure. Well first of all let me briefly answer the question, 'Media Literacy, who needs it?' First of all I think teachers, secondly parents, government officials, industry leaders. In other words, grown ups are one of the groups that need Media Literacy. In my country, America, we went through a whole wave of Clinton administration of wiring the classroom and it wasn't accompanied by teacher education programmes, it wasn't accompanied by parent education programmes and so whatever educational gain there was of putting the technology in the classroom was lost by the inability to develop the infrastructural change around it, to prepare people to live in relationship to it. And with Media Literacy it seems even more important, Media Literacy begins at home with parents and pre-schoolers, they've got to deal with media the same way they deal with books. You know, it's got to include the teachers who need to be re-told and re-taught. And if we don't do that then the real risk is that Media Literacy as it happened in the American context will be held hostage by a variety of ideologues and moral reformers and what you get is anti-media education rather than Media Literacy education which I think has been one of the dangers of the American context.

Now all of this is culturally specific and so I want to say a word about the American context. We've gone in the last decade from on-line education, which was sort of the vision of the Clinton administration, that we explore the world through the computer, to in-line education, which is the image and vision of the current Bush administration, right. And this is actually turn of the 19th Century image of what education in the Year 2000 would look like and it's about on time in terms of what Bush understands. Nationally certified curricula, ground up, fed to kids who are in-line and who are expected to meet the standardised testing. I heard last week that the Federal body that governs media, that was funding media education out of the Department of Education in the United States is now closed. It was de-funded. So that far from being any State mandate for media education we're having to fight aggressively to fit media education into national standards which could find against it. So what I want to talk about are ways we've found to deal with that, but I think that actually in the process of working round those barriers, we're onto something. Which is I increasingly see media, I do believe in the skill-base participatory models we've been talking of, but I also think Media Literacy is a paradigm shift. It's a paradigm shift that can't be left to a

specialised course. As the American context, specialised Media Literacy announced to you on Fridays afternoon, if the kids have been good all week we teach them something about media. Right, it's a reward, it's isolated from the curriculum, it doesn't touch anything else in the curriculum and I think it's the wrong way to go. We've got to think of a Media Literacy the way we've thought about Feminism, the way we've thought about multi-culturalism, the way we've thought about globalisation. It is they shape and impact every part of the curriculum and we've got to develop tools that systematically integrate the study of media, the cultural effects of media, the political consequences of media into all of the subject areas. So I'm just going to walk through some examples of things we've been working on in MIT in the American context which interests us in one way or another. This is a project post September 11th, coding visual language elements and news content, and what it does it looks at television screens, front pages of newspapers, magazines and allows you to redesign them and see what the consequences are. It's designed for Civics classrooms and Art Design classrooms. What difference does it make that this picture of Bin Laden has the American flag and this picture has a target around his head? And one is bigger, one is smaller. By being able to redesign those front pages and talking about the permutations and the effect, kids began to think about news and its civic role. This is a Science project. It wasn't designed with Media Literacy in mind but it's a project we do with the Boston Museum of Science where you use hand-helds and you're both taking information off the exhibit space and off of the hand-held and you're reading them to create a game-like experience. But if we took that out next and thought about the role of visualisation in Science and the way scientific processes get represented and understood and what difference it make what visualisation and particular process. We have this great photographer at MIT who does really amazing pictures of chemical processes that are aesthetically beautiful. And how you think about the chemical process differs depending upon the mode of representation. This is part of a project we're working on with the Royal Shakespeare Company here in England and it's got some news coverage here. We're working on developing a game around The Tempest where you get inside the world of Prospero's island. It starts with a curiosity cabinet which is one of those ways of understanding the world that was popular during the Renaissance, but in the process of it you get inside this world, the world is made up of words, the world is made up of text, there's a lot about performance. And the vision there is not that you play the story of Shakespeare's play but you learn the world of Shakespeare's play, you learn the characters, you learn the relationships, you learn the vocabulary, the metaphors of play on exercises and activities within the game world. It's a very surreal space. The RSC doesn't want anything it calls heritage, but what it does want is to get kids to think about the nature of theatre, the nature of game-playing and the relations between them. Another Shakespeare-related project is Hamlet on the Ramparts which worked through the sounds like Folger Shakespeare Library and other spaces. It's got copies of all of the folios and quartos of Shakespeare's plays linked up to hundreds of images from the Folger Library of Shakespeare and Performance, linked up with film clips, and the goal is to get people to understand

the history of Shakespeare and performance. Not Shakespeare as a text on the page, but Shakespeare as something which changed as it's performed on the stage in different time periods. And so Shakespeare becomes a form of Media Literacy. Other projects involve major American writers like Herman Melville, and the Herman Melville project has things like sea shanties, scrimshaw, mock bank notes of the period, the ways in which Melville is drawing on a range of ways in which whaling and sea-faring life are represented in the culture of the 19th Century opens up a space for understanding the range of media that created a culture that Melville wrote within and therefore understanding how all of us live in different media environments at different points in time.

I talked earlier about Revolution, but one of the things we're doing in Revolution, it's a game we're doing with Colonial Williamsburg it's based on the Virginia Gazette, the newspaper of the period. Embedded in it are flows of information and ways of modelling flows of information, included broadsides, speeches, pamphlets, newspapers, committees of correspondence and so forth. And so we're interested there, one of the things we're interested in is how did the flow of information across the 13 colonies affect the American Revolution, and the flow of information from London to Williamsburg, how did that impact the relationships? Why do we have a representational democracy in the American context rather than a participatory democracy? It has to do with the structures of information. This is another project, turn of the century in America, we look at the comic strip and the emergence of the comic strips as a way into thinking about the history of the American newspaper, how the progressive debates were represented in comic strips, the role of comic strips in shaping the ways American responded to modern art. This is a Foreign Language project, 'Couture', where kids in France and kids in the United States upload text, they upload pictures, they upload songs, they compare notes, they have digital connections with each other and they try to understand each other's culture through the media that is produced there. So in each of these cases this is Media Literacy. It involves of interpretation and production. It also involves an understanding of media through technologies, through cultural institutions, through cultural practices, it understands an environment of media that any given historical period had. You know, and Media Studies is as relevant for understanding the Middle Ages as it is the present. But by going back and forth in time across the curriculum you develop a much more sophisticated understanding of how media operates in the culture. It informs then, the contemporary study of media as we understand it in terms of modern mass media, with digital, modern or popular culture. So I'm going to end there.

DB OK. Thank you Henry. That was even less than 10 minutes. We move onto the policy people. Now we expect the policy people not to speak in kind of erudite scholarly sentences but in bullet points, OK [laughter]. All right, so lets move on firstly then to Cary Bazalgette.

CB Thanks David. First of all, David said I was from the BFI. It's possible that some people here may not know what that is. It's the British Film Institute and as I reminded you earlier but you forgot later, we're not policy makers or policy people although David and Robin did separately say to me earlier that perhaps we're policy influencers. Gee, I hope so, that would be great. We're a cultural organisation, we're government funded, we have wide responsibility for the study, conservation, appreciation and access to moving image media, film and television. My department engages particularly with formal education and I'm going to talk mainly about that. I think the term 'Media Literacy' is actually a distraction. I don't want to see Media Literacy added to that great long category of other sort of literacies like emotional literacy or whatever. Media literacy should simply be part of literacy, needs to be seen as a basic entitlement that everyone has access to and one of the ways they would get that is through formal schooling. What do I mean when I say 'part of literacy'? I'll give you one sort of area of example that we've worked with in the BFI and resources that we've produced and in training and research that we've undertaken, and that's working with the perception that many literacy concepts, things you need to know when you're kind of four, five years old, starting to learn print literacy, many of the concepts you need to grapple with aren't necessarily text-specific. What you need to learn when you're getting to grips with learning how to read is not only about narrative structures and character functions and so on, which are clearly not only appearing within print, they appear within many different media. You also need to learn the prior perception, that stories are things you can talk about. There is such a thing as narrative, that they have strategies you can name, that they fall into generic categories. And basically moving image media are the best starting point for developing that kind of thinking, because that's what young children come into school relatively, not completely, but relative expert in. But they shouldn't be just seen merely as a starting point, they should continue to be part of developing those understandings of what it means to communicate, to understand and to share, you know, your ideas and your thoughts and your stories. And that's a bit of what I mean when I say Media Literacy should simply be part of literacy. We've met, as I'm sure many people here have, a continuing reluctance on the part of education policy makers, I'm assuming there's none here, but if there are that would be really great. Hm, OK. Let me just name a few. I think there's a political anxiety about what's seen as "self-evidently" in quote marks, "self evidently" time-wasting activity. Looking at media in school, ridiculous, obviously. And a prime example of that was the Tessa Jowell announcement that David quoted earlier was met with you know, shock horror and general sort of turmoil by the Daily Mail, predictably, to the notion of Media Literacy being as important as Maths or Science. Obviously that couldn't be true, they said. Media are not accepted or valued per se. That's something I'm going to come back to in a minute. And there's a converse which is actually also a barrier and a problem, a sort of easy willingness to see media as merely a stimulus or maybe as Henry said, a resource for participation. And I got a bit worried about that. I think the examples that Henry Jenkins was giving us just now, I thought they were fantastic, I think they're terrific, they look like really

fun things to be doing in education. But I don't think they were so much about media as actually about media as an aid to traditional subject content, so very fine examples of that, but not actually about media as study object per se. And that kind of thing is very easily acceptable to policy makers. Yes fine, we'll use media as long so you're just using them as a stimulus for something else. But as value in their own right? Hm, don't think so.

Moving, even if people accept that argument, then there's a tremendous nervousness about investment in training and equipment. There's an uncertainty, and I think this is something that's a problem for our own Department of Education here, simply a kind of a management issue about where do you put this? Who is supposed to be in charge of this? And that's at the sort of policy level of government departments, but actually the same thing, you come down to that within the school. And again, while I would sort of in principle agree with what Henry was saying about media education shouldn't be a separate subject, it should be across all subject areas, the danger is that that actually then becomes nobody's responsibility, and all of those things that you mentioned, citizenship, you know, global warming, all of those sort of right-on things that you're supposed to learn, nobody's in charge of them in the school and they just vanish into the sand. And you know, in an ideal world, yes, that would be well-integrated and you would be able to manage that within your school, that cross-curricular development of Media Literacy and you would be able to be ensuring that students were developing, they were progressing in their learning through all of those different subject areas. But until we get to that happy time, where do we start? Where do we start to make the argument? That's why I'm saying, actually I think you need to start with something like literacy, you don't want to go into a sort of excuse for saying, oh well Media Literacy would fit really with citizenship because basically, you know, people aren't teaching Citizenship and they sure as hell are teaching literacy.

And finally there is an uncertainty about what it is, and you see some of these, you know, different kind of emphases, expressed maybe on this platform. I'm certainly going to add to that. The criticism I think that I would raise in relation to Sonia's sort of triad is that what that leaves out is the issue of cultural experience and cultural choices and it's not simply people having access to the equipment, people having access to a range of possibilities, to the sort of richness of what the media can offer. And I mean that's something that I think that Media Literacy has to foster. You know, if you're a literature person, you're widely read. If you're a media literate person then you're kind of, would you say 'widely-viewed'? I don't know, but anyway. So because of that sort of fuzziness about definition I think what is happening, what is happening to poor Robin here on my right, is that stakeholders are pulling in different directions on this. The debate is tending to get high jacked in particular by Internet panics, so I find myself in the curious position of realising that television is a sort of old medium now and film is practically prehistoric. There's a tremendous emphasis on protection. So I think the sort of the three areas that we need to be looking at: First of all, there's one

where there's an easy consensus which is around critical skills and citizenship. But if you just leave it there you're then leaving out the creative experiences that Sonia mentioned. And those are too often described simply as a set of IT skills, a set of sort of technological solutions. And actually the way that we look at creativity with media needs to be looked at in the same way that we look at creativity in the other arts, basically. And thirdly, you know, both of those leave out this issue of cultural experiences, the opportunities that developing one's Media Literacy must allow for wider viewing, wider listening, wider gaining, whatever. So any Media Literacy I think, and research into it, needs to combine all of those three areas, the critical skills, the creative experiences and the wider cultural experiences. And the aim, you know, what's the end outcome? The end outcome is too often, particularly in the OFCOM definition that we've been offered so far is, you know, basically if you're media literate you know how to choose what won't offend you. I think that's a pretty poverty stricken notion of literacy. Media Literacy cannot be a substitute for regulation and I'm sure that's why the emphasis has come upon Media Literacy now because we know that regulation is virtually impossible, so hey, let teachers do it instead. Education basically can only empower, it cannot protect, it cannot limit, it cannot stop you doing things. It can only start you doing things. I think that's it.

DB I think that was sufficiently provocative, thank you. I got three bullet points actually, critical, creative, cultural.

CB Did you?

DB Yeah.

CB You're such a bullet-pointer.

DB OK, I am. OK. Let's move on. Robin from OFCOM.

RB Thank you. Because I know that obviously there are a number of people in the room who haven't been through this debate that's been going on in the UK, perhaps if I fill in a little bit of background and clarify some of the points that have been made. And I also want to talk about some of these tensions that we've been hearing about, that OFCOM is being subjected to as it begins to form its policy. And obviously I'd hope that in the debate that follows some of you will be able to provide some of the solutions in terms of research agenda to address some of those different tensions. OFCOM was given the duty to promote Media Literacy in an Act of Parliament and I think this is probably one of the few occasions when you can say it's actually, it's against the law not to promote a subject. We just hope that the rozzers don't come and bang on the door if we don't do a very good job of it. The Act in essence requires OFCOM to promote a greater understanding of the nature and selection of content, the regulation and control of electronic communications, both broadcast and network. That's key. It's key because it's the only place in the Act that gives OFCOM a role in relation

to Internet content. We've used what we think is a wide definition in order to be able to trawl in and draw in a lot in these early days. We may refine that definition as we go forward to limit what we do, but for the moment we're taking something which I think reflects very much what Sonia's view is, that Media Literacy is the ability to analyse, to access to analyse, evaluate and produce communications in a variety of forms. We don't in that definition restrict ourselves to the requirements of the Bill or the Act that it's electronic communications. Our research will seek wider understanding than just electronic communications. We can't talk about Media Literacy and ignore the print literacies but we will try and cover those in our research. We see Media Literacy as a collection of skills and knowledge and understanding. A person through their life will develop and change their Media Literacy levels. In some cases they will be driven by a particular personal need to know more about certain bits of the media, certain bits of technology, and as we're becoming increasingly aware, there are lots of people out there who just don't want to know. But perhaps we need to know what are those barriers, why is it that people don't want to go onto the Internet, why is that people don't want to switch to digital television? But it's not just about the technology. As others have said, it's about knowledge and understanding of the media. It's about understanding how content is produced and delivered. It's about how meaning is made in words, pictures and sounds. It's about how you evaluate those things critically and how you express yourselves. But as the benefits of the digital communications technologies begin to become apparent we need people to, in our view, become more media literate to be able to take advantage of those and to know what's on offer. I'm sure Cary wouldn't mind me just mentioning that some of the things on offer might actually pose a risk. The OFCOM agenda isn't entirely driven by risk and protection, it is about empowerment, it is about a balance between informing and empowering and encouraging people to deal with this new communications technology. But at some stage it is to do with harm and offence. We are required by various EU Directive and other statutes to protect people, particularly young people, from stuff which is likely to be harmful and offensive. And that must be part of our agenda. But it's not all. This is the first year that we've been working in Media Literacy and promoting Media Literacy, so we're going to have to prioritise the work. What do we need to do first? And I think it's clear from our presence here today and your work this week that research is key to that. We need to inform our activity. We need to provide the evidence to justify spending money and putting in effort. Where should we focus that work? What are the tensions that we face? Should we focus our work on young people and parents and what about older people, do they need to be particularly considered? Should we concentrate on different platforms? Should we look at mobile? Should we look at the effect of mobile Internet? Should we look at interactive television, personal video records, should we cut the cake in that direction? Should we have protection at the top of our agenda or should we have empowerment? Should we have understanding and education? And what are the effective strategies we might use to promote it? It's all well and good talking about discovering what the level of Media Literacy is out there, but then what strategies do we put in place in order to

try and move from where we think we are now? And who is going to be best placed to deliver whatever it is we decide we're going to deliver? Should it be OFCOM? Should it be the Department for Education and Skills? Should it be the DTI? What about broadcasters, Internet service providers, content producers, education? Is it all of those? We are having people knocking on our door making all sorts of offers that they can give to us to promote Media Literacy and to make their particular part of the world a much better place, but how do we balance all of those demands that are placed upon us? We are currently consulting on our proposals. We certainly don't know all the answers and I'm sure you'll tell us there are lots of questions we don't even know yet, let alone those answers. We do want people to tell us what they think, we are very much in listening mode. The process will be that having listened as much as we can we will try and produce a Statement of Intent for Media Literacy which will be published later on this year and then we'll get under way and I'm sure that lots of people in this room will be involved in work with OFCOM particularly in the early days of research, so I look forward to working with you.

DB OK. Thank you. And you can go to their website and you can find the Consultation Proposals there and you can submit your comments. OK.

RB The closing date is 10 August but if you're a few days either side I don't think we'll mind.

DB OK. Thank you. So what about the broadcasters then? Sylvia.

SH Well I can't, I don't pretend to speak for all the broadcasters. I speak here unashamedly for the BBC. And I'm afraid what I'm going to say may seem terribly prosaic because really what I'm suggesting is some of the things that we feel we need to know in order to implement some of the things that we want to do. So what I'd like to do is spend a minute or two explaining the strategy of the BBC around Media Literacy, what we think it is and why we think it's important. And then what we think we know in this area and what we feel very clearly that we don't know. Can I just ask before I start, David talked at the beginning about some people here might be from the general public. How many of you are not either professionally or educationally kind of involved in Media Literacy? So kind of, at a generous count about 10. OK, hold onto that thought, it's important. So BBC, for those who may be from overseas, the BBC is a very large broadcaster in the UK and it's funded rather wonderfully from our point of view, maybe not from everyone here's point of view, by a poll tax on every household. And we are coming up to the renewal of the Charter which grants us that license to operate. And so we are under a period of quite intense scrutiny from outside about what we do, but also very intense and proper self-criticism and analysis of what we should be doing and what gives us that right to take money from every household and what is the public value that we offer them back. And we've just published a manifesto which is kind of what we feel we want to be doing in the next Charter period and one of the key objectives in that is the notion of building

a digital Britain and enabling people to become active citizens within that digital Britain. And I see personally Media Literacy as a key plank of what that means. I mean it can mean all sorts of things but Media Literacy forms a very useful thread really which unites a lot of those activities. How we think of it is as a ladder really. And it's not fundamentally different from what any of my colleagues who have been speaking earlier talk about. At the kind of bottom tier you have the ability just to functionally use the media and as we all know that's changing and developing all the time. So it's how can you make the best use of your mobile phone, can you send texts, can you use the PVR, personal video recorder, can you download material using Realplayer, can you listen to the radio, can you use the Internet. The second tier is the ability to engage with the media. From our point of view obviously it's engage with the BBC. And that's a very broad category and it's everything from do you know how to take part in a radio chat show if you want to, do you know how to take part in an on-line chat room? Are you aware of the safety regulations that are in place? Do you know how to take part in a television show as an audience member? Do you understand something of how programmes are put together and do you feel able to engage with us as a broadcaster if you don't like what you see or if you want to improve what you see or hear. And then the final tier is creativity, an opportunity for people to find their creative voice. And our strategy is to offer something to people at every stage of that ladder, but also over time to help people move up that ladder. And that for us a really powerful and important thought. Because it potentially changes the shape of broadcasting. Broadcasting is us to you, it's one to many. It's, I've made a beautiful programme that I've been paid a lot to make and I've worked really hard at and it's brilliant, it's really good and I want you to watch it and I want you to tell me it's really good. What we're talking about is actually a way in which there will still be all that effort put into craft and all the skills that the BBC has developed over the years. But we will also be wanting a much wider range of voices to be appearing on our television screens, heard on our radios and leaving a footprint, if you like, on our Internet content. And so we want to use some of those skills and resources that we have internally to help people develop really good content. Because what we also know is it takes experience, it takes craft skills. Partly you need to know how to press the button on the video camera but much more importantly than that, you actually need to know how to shape a story so that other people will want to listen to it and find it interesting. So as I say, our strategy is to, in terms of offering something to individuals, it's to help them move up that ladder. But in terms of us as broadcasters, it's about changing the way that we relate to our audiences.

So what do we know in this terrain and what do we feel we need to know? And I'm actually just going to talk about adult audiences here because in a sense they're a bit more intractable in some ways. We feel that on that bottom tier of kind of digital competency if you like, we know quite a lot. There's been some work done recently by something called the Digital Inclusion Panel led by a Government office called the Office of the Ear, E-Envoy, and they've done very sophisticated work on audio segmentation and barriers to take up of the Internet

which is really really useful. And so we know that. We've got a lot of research on digital television and barriers to take up of that. So you know, we're kind of pretty happy there. On the engage side, that's where I think we're kind of lacking and I'd like to come back to that. And that's why, you know, it's so interesting that actually most people here are professionally interested rather than personally interested. So let me just come back and explore that in a bit more detail in a minute. I just want to say on the creativity side we've commissioned some research on that. There are a number of projects we've run where we've run workshops where people who often have no previous computer skills or storytelling skills or media skills of any sort, they come and they are given quite an intensive training programme to learn how to create a short multi-media piece, and by sort I mean one and a half to two minutes, that's very carefully structured. It sits on the website, it usually uses old photographs that they've brought in and tells a story that they want to tell and share. And the quality of what they produce is really absolutely spectacular, and that's because of the amount of work that goes into helping them do that. So we've commissioned some research to find out what people had got out of that and what we found was that it's often quite hard to recruit people, you know the barrier to be able to think that you're able to do that is quite high. But when you go through it, everybody just says that, you know, it is one of the best things that happened to me. And you get stories back from people saying my confidence was increased so much, I never thought I'd be able to do anything like that, I've joined an Open University as a result, I've joined the CAB as a result. And so we know that works. What we don't know is how do you make that appeal to people to say, yes, you can do it, and that's one of the things we need to work at.

The other thing that I've been very conscious of looking at the whole range of activity that we do in the BBC that falls into this area, and we actually spend millions of pounds on projects that you could call Media Literacy, is that a lot of them are what I would call push rather than pull. It's us rather saying they're a good thing to do rather than audiences saying, oh, we'd like to do this please. Now by that I'm not abnegating a responsibility that we have to engage people in things that they don't, as yet, know that they want, and you know, the digital storytelling example that I've given you is a powerful one. But I am struck by the comparisons that are made with literacy and when you look historically back at literacy as a movement, you know, the radical agenda, the suffragist agenda, was groups of working people getting together to teach themselves to read because they felt that was important in them being able to change society, better themselves. And I kind of wonder if what the equivalent of that should be. You know, what are the things that people actually want to be able to do? What difference do they want it to make to their lives? And I think to get at that you need quite a sophisticated type of research. It's not focus groups where you ask a few sort of top level questions and get some easy answers back. It is the sort of ethnographic research that allows us to begin to really understand the role that that could play in people's lives. I've got to stop, OK. So that's pretty much it. I think the other thing that I would be really interested to know is, what are the

benefits of being media literate for people therefore. And that kind of goes to the question that was asked about how do you communicate it? You know, one of the quotes that I'm always given from UK On-line Centres which are a kind of access point to teach people how to use the Internet is that so-and-so came and as a result of that, you know, saved £3,000 by on-line shopping. Well that's fine, that's good, but it's not why I'm getting up in the morning to do this job. What I really kind of am interested in is what are the wider benefits of being media literate? What type of participation does that enable us to have in society and where can that go?

DB OK. Thank you very much. So we've now ended up with a whole lot more questions than we started with but I suppose that's the way it goes really. Thanks to all our presenters. Now I think the presenters could all continue to have a debate amongst themselves. My proposal though is that we now have questions and points from you and let's kind of gather a few kind of questions and points rather than playing table tennis here for a while. So please people who would like to make a point or ask a question. OK. Maybe go up there first, and then down there. So perhaps, we've got roving microphones so if you'd like to come down here. OK, go ahead.

MQ Oh yes, there's a saying, 'great art never civilized the Nazis'. I teach Philosophy and Art Theory and I'm wondering, does Media Literacy include literacy in perception, in reasoning, in the nature of ideology and all those sorts of things? It's obviously the nature of ideology to be invisible. Now somehow that term hasn't actually got a look in here. And if we're talking about using the media in a critical way and that involves some sort of view or theory of the human good, of human flourishing, then things like philosophy, understanding perception, understanding reasoning seem to be more and more absent from the kind of society we have. Yes, we're living in a very reactionary society with the Press and media at war so it seems on the intellect and on the mind. And you've only to look at the supposedly liberal Press would probably be the first to deny it, that they're at the vanguard of this sort of anti-intellectualism, this inability to examine the models through which we look at the world. We're saddled with this enlightenment model, this sort of Cartesian, this sort of atomism, focus groups, the effective fallacy, reactions of reducing knowledge, social knowledge, to statistics, to mathematics, to all those sorts of things. So what are we going to do about that? Is Media Literacy going to include understanding the ideology that we're living with, human flourishing, those sorts of things?

DB OK, thank you, I'm collecting points and I'm wanting bullet points. You've got one bullet point each. I'm sorry, but that's the way it will be. So just down here.

FQ I'll try. I'm Lee Burton from the Australian Children's Television Foundation and one of our concerns is to track the progression of Media Literacy in education in Australia and also to support research into it. But just briefly I want to support what Cary Bazalgette said. What's happened in Australia is that Media Literacy

is now being taught compulsorily in all Australian schools from kindergarten to Year 12 as part of English, as part of Literacy and that has been a very successful movement that's taken quite a few years to take hold. It's been supported for about 15 to 20 years from major government officials in the Education Department and it's been a movement that's been carried along by the Australian Association of Teachers of English and the Australian Literacy Education Association. It's resulted in some remarkable new curriculum directions and probably one of the most innovative, if you want to look it up on the Web is called 'Literature Futures' which has arisen out of the English Department of the Queensland Education Department but every State and Territory in Australia now has already started teaching Media Literacy. It's more difficult in primary schools, primary teachers take a lot longer to feel confident about the skills, and the sort of training aspects. Some of you brought that up are really really important. But I just thought I'd point that one out. And then the other movement we've always had is Media Studies and it's been taught in Australian schools for a very long time, I think for over 30 years. But the Literacy thing is absolutely vital. You have to have a subject area that owns it. English is the largest subject area. At a conference recently of 1,000 English teachers in Australia over half of the seminars and the papers and the workshops and the discussions were about areas to do with the media. Thank you.

DB OK. There are two people here.

MQ Hi. Yeah, this is sort of related to Sonia's point if I'm correct. But it's about overwhelming individual choice from a vast mass of information actually ultimately seems to me less freedom to understand and engage than before in the age of heavy censorship and say the 20th Century. And that was the problem in engaging. Now it's almost there's far too much information. And what steps can be taken to deal with this without going down a censorship route?

DB OK, and someone behind you and then someone up there and someone over there.

FQ I guess I just want to say I don't think that it's a ladder, Sylvia. Sorry, I think that Mimi's research demonstrates that it's not a ladder because children are engaged in kind of production as part of consumption. And it's that it's a very circular kind of complex, web-like.

SH Sure, to some people it's a ladder.

FQ It might be adults, as Henry suggested, that need that. And I think that as an example of how do you get at that ideology, from the question from the back, when you watch a News report and you see a soundbite taken out of a politician's speech, it's quite a great Media Literacy project to have students go to the Web, look up, see if they can find a longer version of the speech, the entire text, from the Hansard or whatever kind of record, Senate Record, and so forth. And you've

done a whole lot of things right there. You've analysed the construction of a media story, you know, of a News story as well as used some of the skills that are like, you know, 'can you look this up on the Web?' Which is a bit like, 'can you tie your shoes?' You know, it's, you need to be able to do that in Seventh Grade, right, or something like that. So I mean there are a lot of things that are really rich that don't necessarily fall into Media Studies or Media Literacy. They are Media Literacy embedded within other types of practices that go on in classrooms I think, and go on outside of classrooms hopefully.

DB OK. Thanks. Up there.

MQ Pardon me. When Ms Livingstone asked for a definition I immediately started to write one and there's a word in this one for each of you. Please don't flinch at the first word. Relative fluency of cognition, metacognition and articulation or agency by members of the population relating to socially adapted discourses or cultural transmissions and their technologies, which is learned experientially, transactionally and heuristically.

DB Do what?

[laughter]

DB OK, sorry. There was someone over here. Yeah, and then someone down here. In fact a couple of people over here. So maybe you could pass the mike along.

MQ Yeah, Nick Hine from the University of Dundee. Those of us who have to teach Engineering students and Science students have been horrified by the apparent lack of literacy in both orthography and in language, spoken language. And that's coupled with a kind of dumbing-down or lack of emphasis on the other communication subjects in schools like Music and Art and stuff like that. So what hope for Media Literacy?

DB OK.

FQ I just wanted to ask you to return a bit to the question of who needs this Media Literacy? As you were speaking I was remembering some of the key figures that I know of in debates about new media, digital literacies etcetera, who I know for a fact can't work their e-mail and don't know how to use a word processing package. And I wonder how many members, for instance, of our government, would meet some of the criteria for Media Literacy that you came up with. And I'm just wondering whether we're still missing questions about cultural power and power hierarchies.

DB OK. And then someone just behind you.

FQ Yes, it struck me that probably what I perceive as different now in a debate such as we're having, from 10 years ago, is this question of the access to the means of production and a number of you rather surprisingly really were talking about creative expression. And I guess what I would want to challenge the folks on the panel and the folks that are thinking about policy is to think about the long history of community access television and how does new media present opportunities for you to put some of your dollars towards giving community access and giving community access and distribution on the powerful networks that you have. And I think there were a lot of examples at this conference of how that sort of community production is happening in young people's production. And for example in Canada where I've just moved, I'll just close with this, I find it's very interesting that TV Ontario seems very reluctant to allow young people to disseminate and produce their own work on TV Ontario and I would challenge the media producers and funders here to think about how to do that.

DB OK. Well since we've got a little pause. Oh sorry. OK, go on. OK. Does anyone else want to raise a point? Go on.

FQ Ruth Zanker from New Zealand, just to broaden it out to the world. I'm one of the old campaigners and I've been involved in media education since '72. And I've been working in the critical tradition of media education since then. Now in New Zealand there's good news. The good news is that it's now part of the curriculum, in English and stand-alone and there's growing vigour at the tertiary level. But it's still a very fuzzy concept. There's teacher training going on and there's writing of exemplars and assessment issues being fought over. Huge fights going on within pedagogy. Now the bad news, if that's good news, is that the whole area of Media Literacy is a huge discursive battlefield. We have the Neo-Liberal fix which Sonia talked about, of parents and teachers being told that, you know, they're being given the gateway issues to deal with. But in New Zealand we've had an extraordinary wee anecdote that I think it's worth passing on. We had a Minister of Broadcasting who was a sociology lecturer in his previous life. He was also one of the leading lights in media education in the 1980s. And when he was elected to power in the very liberal new Labour government, there was much talk of media education and all sorts of things and media research. But what has happened is we've been captured by the moral panic area. We've just conducted a wonderful piece of violence research which rediscovered what was discovered in 1972 which cost the money which possibly we could have used on more important research. And it was because of a deal with the coalition with the Greens. So it was a political deal. On the other side we've got the very messy business of commercial free speech going on and the bully boys of the advertising industry making it absolutely clear that there is no concession to be made in terms of, again, making parents and free choice the only avenue forward. So I wish you in Britain good luck. I think that I have had ripples in the on-line news of there being some issues around food advertising in this country as well and that perhaps global capitalism has some issues with some

of the issues of critical media education. I'll watch this space with great interest and I think ideology is at the centre of it.

DB OK. I think it was the guy in the white shirt. OK. This is going to be the last point from the floor and then I'll ask everybody, if they want, to come back and respond. I mean we've had a whole range of, I suppose this is what happens when you have a public debate, when the general public come in, you know. You know, when academics talk it's really focused. [laughter].

MQ My name's Jonathan Chetwind and I work with adults with learning difficulties. I've been working for about nine years in that field. And I'm extremely concerned that the lady from the BBC, Sylvia is it, thinks that we've solved the functional issue. I work with the Web, and to give you an example from today, I tried to print off the prospectus from the Webpage about this event and that's what printed off for me. Because it's a site that uses frames. Because I work in this field I was able to isolate the frame, and it is possible to print off the page. We're nowhere solving the functionality issue. If you go for BBC Homepage, there were something like 200 links from the Homepage. A few months ago I had lunch with Jonathan Kinsbury and Jonathan Hassle and brought this to their attention. I'm sure others have previously done so, they're at the BBC sorry, and that number has been reduced to something like 125 links. But for somebody who's blind, tabbing through 125 links is not a trivial issue. It's something you might do once in a lifetime, you're unlikely to do it twice. It's a very slow process. And it's not just people who are blind. A lot of people with learning difficulties can't actually use a mouse. You know, they don't have the physical capacity. And they need exercise, you know, in order to, they don't need them per se, but in order to learn to use a mouse they need skills that are suitably arranged for them to progress. And we're only just on the beginning of this rather large adventure and I'm just concerned that nobody so far today, or this evening, sorry, I haven't been here for the three days, has mentioned disability. And it's rather a large issue.

DB OK. Thanks. OK, I'm just going to, we have, you know, very few minutes. So I think if people on the panel have any of those points or any other points they would like to come back on. I mean basically you've had some bullets fired at you, so you now get one each to fire back maximum, if you wish. Shall we go down here first?

HJ Sure. I really want to respond in part to a bullet thrown from the woman from the BFI and partly from the audience asking about rationality. Because I think the points are bound together. What I was talking about was not media-enhanced education, it was re-thinking the subject areas of History, of Philosophy, of Art, of Literature, through the lens of media. It is understanding that historic modes of communication created different levels of discourse, different conversation. And it's partially how you address your question, is we can't understand the present moment by soaking it. We have to understand the present moment by thinking

comparatively about other historical moments, the media issues they faced, the skills that were involved, the systems of communication, the effects that they had, the ways media transitions played themselves out. And that's why it has to be integrated across the curriculum. When we do that, then we can look at the Age of Reason alongside the present moment for example and begin to think about what media meant in that time period and what informed debate looked like in that time period. And then we have a grounding to ask the questions about contemporary media that you want us to ask. And so I think it's got to be across the disciplines because each discipline contributes something important. And up to now it's mostly in Literature as we've heard down here, but it's got to be across the Social Studies curriculum as much as across the Literary and Arts Curriculum to do that job.

DB OK. Thanks.

MI Yeah, I just wanted to, I mean was thinking when I was hearing some of the issues at the BBC, that some of the realities, the problems we identify as Media Literacy are a function of the structure of centralised media production and that since I tend to study more ground level, viral and peer to peer forms of Media Literacy I just don't see those same issues. And that there's something, at the risk of sounding a little bit techno-utopian, there's stuff that's happening on the Web, like on blogospheres and in arenas of amateur production and small scale production that don't seem to suffer from a lot of the pathologies of not being able to use things, not being motivated to access information. That somehow when you set up ecologies where people are sort of virally exchanging information that are very targeted to their interests, that it seems to set up a different set of issues around Media Literacy which are not about how do you get people engaged in it, but rather how do you enable the infrastructures in order for the exchange to happen.

SL I want to respond to a debate about, or implicit opposition that I heard, perhaps this is to polarise, but I heard in the discussions a sense of media, and therefore Media Literacy as a route and a resource to social participation which I took starting from Mimi. And an alternative way of thinking about media and therefore Media Literacy of media as a cultural form of expression and experience in its own right. And I realise that's a polarity but the way in which I understand the debate to be happening in this country at the moment and particularly around the Communications Act is that we're really talking about the first four, we're really talking about media and Media Literacy as a route and a resource for social participation rather than an appreciation of particular kinds of cultural forms. So I think that might be worth, I certainly plan to think about that a little more. But I think where that crystallised for me is in Sylvia talking about whether people felt they could engage with the media by knowing how to call a phone-in programme or perhaps access a certain Website. And I suppose I want to say that I'm not particularly interested in whether people can call the phone-in programme or access the Website unless that is the site of participation, unless

that is where public debate is happening. And I do think that is going to be where public debate is happening, the debate and participation are going to be increasingly mediated, so I would rather that we start with that question of, where is the debate, where is participation, what are the crucial dimensions and issues of the quality around participation, and then ask does everyone have the competence and the skills to take part in that? And I think those are going to increasingly be skills of Media Literacy.

DB OK. Thanks.

CB I don't know whether it's a sort of, you know, an academic tendency to see things in terms of sort of debates and confrontations and oppositions. If we did end up with the kind of opposition that Sonia's talking about I think it would be tragic, because I don't think you could have one without the other. That's just sneaking in a second bullet point. The first one was actually responding to the first and second speakers about the absence of reference to, I think sort of robust and you know, tough kinds of content in Media Literacy, and addressing particularly questions like those of ideology. I think I'm suppose I'm worried about the way you asked the question, as though, will Media Literacy be, whatever it is, is it beyond your control? I think Media Literacy is like any other subject area, worthwhile is going to be a continuing area of contention and debate and thank God for that. I think this business about where you place it in the curriculum is much more to do with sort of political pragmatics of the moment. You know, there are pragmatics about placing it in English. So when I was praised by the woman from Australia about putting it there, it's not because I think that's absolutely right, because I think precisely one of the things you do lose when you put Media Literacy within English and Literacy is you actually lose that ideological dimension and that kind of reason that you talked about, and that's a pity. But I agree in the end absolutely with what Henry's saying about it has to be across the curriculum and indeed I've published material to demonstrate how that would happen. But there are pragmatics about where you start, and there is an absolutely essential issue about getting this into the centre of the curriculum, being an entitlement for everyone, not being parked on the margins.

DB Thanks.

RB I don't think I have much to add. I think it would be interesting in a few years' time for academics and others to sit and look back about what's going on in the political agenda that puts Media Literacy where it is today. Here we are, all gathered here, we read about it all over the place, we have erudite writers in The Guardian, we have the Sunday Times doing a poll, over 100 Sunday Times readers have responded through the Sunday Times to us on the Media Literacy debate. Where is all that coming from? What are the political drivers? I suspect that Citizenship agenda which has been touched on is probably one of those main agendas. The digital divide is back with us and back on the agenda. There are a whole host of social drives which I think are moving in our direction and I think

we need to be aware of that in the work that we do, to look to that agenda. Because if we go in a different direction I think we'll be left alone and we might be back where we were perhaps 10, 15, 20 years ago, struggling to get out there and get heard and get our points across.

DB Sylvia.

SH Just to separate points if I may. Firstly to respond to Jonathan. I think absolutely we, I'm sorry if I gave the impression I was saying we have sorted access. I don't think that at all. What I was saying is that we actually have quite a lot of knowledge now about the barriers to access and the difficulties some people face. I think we've got a big job to do to learn from that and it was a point somebody made much earlier about, you know, navigation and the way that a lot of these things are designed is still fantastically clunky and you know, we've got a massive job to do on that. But what I'm saying is I think we've got the beginning of the information we need to help us do it. I think the other really interesting area is what Mimi is talking about which is that, yes, of course there are fantastically vibrant societies and communities that are full of people interacting in these ways and producing content and that certainly don't need the BBC to help them. What I see as our role is partly responding to what somebody over there was saying, is giving a space for those to get aboard a platform if people want it. You know, people may not want to publish it on our space, that's fine, that's their choice. But the second is that that is still a small group. It will grow over time and young people kind of move into it pretty fast, but do we just let that happen organically over time or can we do things to help people get there faster? And I believe we could and should be doing the latter.

DB OK. Thank you. I think it would be nice to go on for another half an hour now but I've actually spent about three hours sitting next to these flowers and they're just, the smell is making me feel very ill. So can I suggest that we all adjourn for a drink and continue the discussion there. Thanks very much.

End of recorded debate