

CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANELS

Comparing Children's Media Around the World: Policies, Texts and Audiences

Conference organised by the

Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI)

University of Westminster, with support from the

- Arts & Humanities Research Council

Date: Friday 4 September, 2015

Venue: University of Westminster, Marylebone Campus,

35 Marylebone Road London NW1 5LS

Preceded on Thursday 3 September by:

- Half-day workshop in association with the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) Temporary Working Group on Children, Youth and Media
- Evening event in association with the Children's Media Foundation and Voice of the Listener & Viewer

Conference themes and questions

Where in the world are children best served by media available to them, and who judges the meaning of 'best'? In March 2015 it will be 20 years since advocates from around the world agreed the first Children's Television Charter calling for adequately funded, well produced content that both affirms children's sense of self, community and place and promotes their appreciation of other cultures. In today's multiplatform environment, where children's use of individualised social media challenges the status of professional players, and the expansion of US and other transnational networks fuels concerns about the viability of domestic production, the same calls for quality, representation and diversity persist. That much was clear at the 7th World Summit on Media for Children in Malaysia in 2014.

Yet opinions divide over the levels of regulation and intervention required to improve media provision for children, and over the most urgently needed improvements, such as reducing access to harmful content or ensuring that public policy and discourse are informed by ample and rigorous research.

Meanwhile, researching children's media use remains challenging and, like local media production for children, costs more than some industry players are ready to afford. Children often know how to navigate into unregulated transnational media arenas, accessing horror movies and graphic reporting of wars and catastrophes, with or without dubbing or subtitling. Can analysts hope to conduct a child-informed and child-centred analysis that grasps the multiplicity of children's everyday media practices?

This one-day conference will seek to take a fully international approach to all forms of children's media irrespective of delivery platform. The comparative dimension applies to the conference as a whole, as a prompt for discussion; individual papers are not required to be comparative, although comparative studies are encouraged.

We welcome papers and pre-constituted panels from scholars and media practitioners that engage critically with children's media in different countries. Themes may include, but are not in any way limited to, the following:

- Definitions of childhood and media segmentation of child audiences
- Media implications of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Content generated by children
- Development of child-friendly media policies
- Defining cultural value in children's media
- Aspects of positive regulation: e.g. quotas, incentives, educational requirements
- Aspects of negative regulation: e.g. restrictions on advertising, scheduling, access
- Performance of public service media in generating children's content
- Production issues and producing for multiple platforms
- Prizes, festivals and other systems for evaluating children's media
- Genre issues in children's media
- Gender issues in children's media
- Methodological issues in research with child media users
- Media literacy among children

PROGRAMME AND REGISTRATION

This is a one-day conference, taking place on Friday, 4th September 2015. It will include a keynote address, plenary sessions and parallel workshops. The fee for registration for all participants, including presenters, will be £50, to cover conference documentation, refreshments and administration costs. Registration will open in May 2015, at which point participants will be asked to indicate whether they wish to attend either or both the pre-conference events. Participants fund their own travel and accommodation expenses.

DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACTS

The deadline for abstracts is Monday, February 9th, 2015. Successful applicants will be notified early in mid-February 2015. Abstracts should be 300 words. They must be accompanied by the presenter's name, affiliation, email and postal addresses, together with the title of the paper and a 100-word biographical note on the presenter. Please send all these items together in a single Word file, not as pdf, and give the file and message the title 'Children & Media Conference' followed by your surname. The file should be sent by email to the Events Administrator, Helen Cohen, at journalism@westminster.ac.uk



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