for(e)dialogue

Department of Media and Communication

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Editorial

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The first issue of *for(e)dialogue* is composed of a collection of papers given at the New Directions in Media Research (NDiMR) postgraduate conference in June 2015 at the University of Leicester. NDiMR is a one-day postgraduate focused conference organised by PhD students from the Department of Media and Communication. This conference has a similar aim and purpose of this journal as a whole which is to provide postgraduate students, PhD students and early career researchers with a platform and opportunity to develop and share their research and critically contribute to discussions of theory and methodology on a variety of Media and Communication issues. The NDiMR conference has been held annually since 2012, each year growing in size and attracting more delegates and presenters from across the world. However, this is the first time that some of the events' presentation papers have been collected for a published conference proceedings.

This issue features eight papers presented at the NDiMR 2015 event that all touch upon one or more of the broad themes of the conference. Two of the issues' papers are more theoretical in nature with one being the only new media focused work of the collection. This first paper, *'A poststructuralist review of selfies: moving beyond the heteronormative visual rhetorics'* by Patricia Routh, discusses 'gendered selfie production' and the relevant theories for gender identity within the online communities that 'selfies' are shared. The second more theoretical paper, *'Paul Ricoeur, visual hermeneutics and political science: an 'incompatible' relation (?)'* by Nikos Kaplantzis, explores the idea of re-working Ricoeur's critical hermeneutics notion to offer a stronger basis for combining visual studies and political communication approaches.

As well as theoretical discussion, there is a strong theme of exploring media representations within this issue. In *'A review on China's soft power projection through its transnational media institutions: conveying discourse of economic responsibilities in media 'going-out''* Xin Zhao presents a literature review on China's media 'going out project', a soft power initiative put in place by the Chinese government to represent their country in a way that counteracts the notion of 'China as a threat'. Other than the media representing a key government message, this journal issue also includes *'Public service broadcasting: the challenges of representing ethnic minority audiences'* by Gurvinder Aujla-Sidhu, a paper that explores equality of representation at the BBC, the UK's public

broadcaster, with special attention paid to the BBC's Asian Network Radio and issues of representing minority groups.

Papers in this issue also cover topics of media use featuring *'"Here you can use it": understanding mobile phone sharing and the concerns it elicits in rural Kenya'* by Leah Komen and *'The 2011 Egyptian Revolution: its effects on the Egyptian community in the UK in terms of political participation, media use, belonging and Egyptian identity'* by Rua Al-Sheikh. Leah discusses mobile phone use in Kenya, with a particular focus on examining mobile phone sharing practices amongst a sub-ethic group and Rua explores the role the Egyptian Diaspora played in the Arab Spring revolution and to what extent the media was used to increase political involvement.

From the papers described it can be seen that this issue covers media topics from numerous different cultures, however, in our last two papers, it is not just ethnic or national cultures that are the focus but the cultures of organisations in two fields. The first of these, *'A re-examination of the cultural resistance of orthodoxies with scholarly open access communication'* by Gareth Johnson, which presents a critical re-consideration of the UK's academic culture and its responsiveness in relation to open access ideologies and praxis. The second of these works, *'Dynamics of news selection in different socio-cultural contexts: theoretical and methodological issues'* by Andreas Anastasiou, focuses on cultures of journalism and news values. This paper is the most methodologically focused, and explores the methodological and theoretical issues and challenges of a comparative project that aims to contribute to the discussion of news judgement in different socio-cultural contexts.

All writings within this special issue move their research areas forward whether methodologically, theoretically or empirically which helps us fulfil the overriding aim of *for(e)dialogue*: pushing knowledge boundaries within the field of Media and Communication in small but important ways.

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