

ECREA Section Report 2006
'Digital Communication & Culture' (DCC)

November 2006

History/Organisation

The 'Digital Communication & Culture' section (DCC) was initially an ECCR section. It was founded in 2005 under a different name, which was subsequently changed to DCC in the ECREA merger. The first DCC section meeting was in Amsterdam at the general conference in 2005.

The section has three chairs: Maren Hartmann, University of Bremen, Germany (Chair); Caroline Bassett, University of Sussex, UK (Vice-Chair) and Kate O'Riordan, University of Sussex & Lancaster University, UK (Vice-Chair). The chairs have been communicating regularly (through face-to-face meetings, via email, and by phone) since inception. The last chair/vice chair meeting was in October 2006, and planning for the second DCC section meeting is ongoing.

Conference

In 2005, prior to the first ECCR/ECA (later ECREA) conference, the DCC section issued a separate Call for Papers for the conference. This was based on the official conference CfP, but additionally asked for proposals in the area of digital communication and culture. This CfP was very successful and the section received around 30 paper proposals. These were reviewed through the section heads. From these, eight panel proposals (with different headings and foci each) were formed and submitted to the ECREA conference organisers. One was merged with other panels, but the remaining seven were all (at least initially) admitted as such (slight changes later on). That meant that the section had a continuous stream throughout the conference, which provided a relatively high visibility for the section. We also organised a DCC meeting at the conference for anyone interested in potentially joining the section, or at least interested in its focus. This was also well received and people were enthusiastic concerning the prospect of the section gaining ground in future. The same procedure is planned for the next ECREA conference due to take place in November 2008 in Barcelona.

Future Event/s

There was a planning meeting of the chair/vice chairs which took place at the University of Sussex in October 2006. As a result of this, the DCC section meeting is planned for 2007. This is intended to enable the section to grow through sharing work and ideas for future planning. The general conference will probably be bi-annual and there has been encouragement by the ECREA leaders to

organise smaller events in the years between the main conferences. There are ongoing discussions around the proposed section meeting, but the time and place has not been finalised. However, this will be organised in conjunction with the Centre for Material Digital Culture at the University of Sussex, and the University of Bremen. It is likely to be held at the University of Sussex in summer/autumn 2007. Further planning is due to take place in the next few weeks.

Publication

A special issue of the peer-reviewed online journal 'Fibreculture' is in process. This will be edited by the three section heads. The CfP was widely distributed in November 2006. The publication is scheduled for early 2008.

Communication

The section has also established a weblog:

<http://www.digitalcultureandcommunication.blogspot.com/>

This is intended as a relatively static information page in the first instance, but will also facilitate section communication, resource sharing, networking and planning in the future.

Membership

The section does not have many 'official' members yet (one institutional member has shown an interest). However, this relates in part to the early stage of the life of the section and ECREA as a whole. The section hopes to increase members in the not too distant future by strengthening the existing DCC network, developing resources, and by extending its profile and visibility.

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