

ECREA Section Report 2007

'Digital Culture & Communication' (DCC)

December 2007

History/Organisation

The 'Digital Culture & Communication' section (DCC) was founded in 2005 as an ECCR section under a different name, but it subsequently became DCC in the ECREA merger.

The section has three chairs:

- Maren Hartmann, University of the Arts Berlin, Germany (Chair)
- Caroline Bassett, University of Sussex, UK (Vice-Chair) and
- Kate O'Riordan, University of Sussex, UK (Vice-Chair).

The chairs have been in constant communication exchange (primarily via email, sometimes phone as well as in the meetings) throughout the last few months.

Conference /Workshop

The section organised a workshop at Sussex University in November 2007 (1-3). This was done in collaboration with the Research Centre for Material Digital Culture (<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/rcmdc/>). The workshop centred on the question of European perspectives in digital culture and communication. It especially asked what the specificity of the digital was (in comparison to other 'media' or other foci). The question of specificity was also raised in relation to Europe. The number of presenters was kept relatively small in order to allow the workshop atmosphere to prevail (long time for discussions for each presentation as well as general discussions around the overarching topic). There were ten presentations altogether. Topics covered ranged from theories to methodologies to sounds to digital television. Overall, everyone involved felt that it was a very productive workshop. The identification of possible future research topics at the end was also felt to be fruitful and might lead to collaborations in the not too distant future (methods, for example, was discussed as a key theme and might therefore be pursued in the future). The work of the workshop is also meant to be at least partly documented online (see section on communication below).

Future Event/s

The section is now concentrating on the organisation of the section's paper submissions and organisation of sessions for the general conference that will take place in Barcelona in November 2008.

On top of this, the section has developed initial ideas for a conference in Berlin in November 2009,

co-organised with the sections 'sociology of media communication' and 'computer-mediated communication' of the German communication associations (DGPuK). Further talks have to be held concerning the specification of the topic.

Publication

The section heads were are in the midst of the process of editing a special issue of the peer-reviewed online journal 'Fibreculture'. The CfP was widely distributed in November 2006 amongst ECREA section members and others. The publication is scheduled for spring 2008.

Communication

The section has a weblog:

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

This was used to announce the section event. It is also planned to document the workshop with some of the work presented there.

Membership

Next to the wide range and high number of people interested in the work of the section overall (not all of the presenters and guests at the workshop were ECREA members, for example), the section now also has an increasing number of 'official' members. There might be the need for a more coherent identity in the future that encourages more of those interested in the section to also join officially. Generally though this is thought to be the result of ECREA overall still being fairly young. The overall positive feedback to the section encourages us to continue as we have done for the time being and to simply have another look at this issue after the next ECREA conference.

MH

(KOR + CB)