Creativity Management in Original
Television Production at the BBC.

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For my Mum.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A B S T R A C T

The primary concern of this thesis is to explore how creativity is managed in original television production at the BBC, and to that end, it seeks to make an original contribution to both organisational creativity management and television production discourses. The thesis offers an extensive literature review that connects cultural production, television production and creativity discourses. The thesis is consequently divided in two sections. In the first, it addresses the major theoretical frameworks of organisational creativity management and television production, and also includes a chapter on methodology. The second aims to explore BBC creativity from three viewpoints. These are, from a historical perspective, from how the BBC is affected by external factors, and from how it attempts to manage creativity of original television production from 2004 onwards. Findings suggest that despite the efficacy of numerous policies regarding how creativity is stimulated at the broadcaster, others are open to criticism. One such policy is the Window of Creative Competition (WoCC). The WoCC requires BBC's in-house production units and the independent production sector to openly compete for approximately 250 million pounds of annual commissions for original television production. The thesis concedes that the WoCC will lead to a progressive decline in in-house television production and possibly to a decline in UK television creativity. The thesis draws on a wide range of primary and secondary sources. It combines case study explanatory analysis with long-term historical perspectives on organisational changes at the BBC.

Creativity Management in Original Television Production at the BBC.

"Public Service Broadcasting has somehow been contaminated by commercial thinking."
Ien Ang, Desperately Seeking the Audience

Prologue

INTRODUCTION

> *'Whenever television is discussed…it seems that creativity is invoked to describe those ways in which television breaks free from its status as product or commodity and rises to the condition of art'*
>
> *- Edward Buscombe (2003, p. 56)*

Television is at once a technology, a social influencer, and increasingly, a global industry. Occasionally, as noted in Buscombe's citation, it can also be considered an art form. Notwithstanding the widespread notion that art and commerce are in conflict with each other (e.g. Williams, 1981; Adorno and Horkheimer, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2007), television has taken over from more 'authentic works of art' in offering audiences the opportunity to experience 'polymorphic meanings' (Adorno and Horkheimer 2001, p. 164). Gorton (2006) reminds us that television is used by audiences in order to 'experience a journey…that provides an emotional and intellectual engagement with the story that unfolds' (72). For a television programme to have a chance of being considered an art form, programme-makers aspire to produce work that is perceived as 'creative'.

At the heart of UK television creativity is the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) – today, the country's most dominant cultural institution. The broadcaster is renowned around the world for producing some of the most creative television programmes in the history of broadcasting. Numerous BBC programmes, particularly from the 1960s and 1970s, are considered benchmarks in television production, with many recent successful shows such as HBO's *Six Feet Under* adopting similar creative production techniques. Some examples of creative BBC productions include Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones and Michael Palin's *Monty Python's Flying Circus,* Peter Watkins's *The War Game*, Alastair Fothergill's *Planet Earth*, Jacob Bronoswski's *The Ascent of Man,* Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective* and *Pennies in Heaven,* Stephen Merchant and Ricky Gervais' *The Office,* and Richard Curtis, Ben Elton's and Rowan Atkinson's *Blackadder.* These examples make the BBC's role in achieving creative excellence in television production indubitable.

From the late 1970s onwards, a wave of changes has occurred throughout the media landscape that has ultimately led to alterations in how we perceive television broadcasters, and public service broadcasters more generally. Instead of the BBC acting as a bastion of creative television programming in the UK, there is now a growing concern of how powerful and influential it has become. Due to its immense presence across all areas of media, from professional online content to a vast array of radio and television stations, the most

vociferous concerns derive from commercial media. Barnett (2006) notes, 'in a global war of corporate expansion, public corporations, which themselves have significant shares of the media cake, are perceived as significant inhibitors of private sector expansion and therefore seen as legitimate targets for the advocacy of greater restrictions and smaller scale' (p.3). Furthermore, while private media organisations have to make their way in a world of diminishing advertising revenues, the BBC is in the enviable position of receiving guaranteed public funds every year. As such, it is less prone to financial shifts and according to its critics, this places the organisation at a disproportionate advantage.

Yet, due to its public service obligations, the BBC has responsibilities that evade commercial media. Phil Redmond, a long-term advocate of public service broadcasting notes, 'in the BBC we have a public service broadcaster always under pressure to think, act and behave more commercially, then instantly damned if it does' (2004, p.75). Similarly, Georgina Born (2004) emphasizes the BBC's need to continuously justify its funding mechanism. The organisation has a string of unique responsibilities it must fulfil, while at the same time it is required to demonstrate its popularity by retaining a high audience share. Attempting to define public service broadcasting in an increasingly competitive media landscape, Born states (p. 54):

> Competitive ratings are necessary but not sufficient to justify the license fee. The BBC must provide a range and diversity of programming. It must offer mass-appeal programmes, but it must also serve minority programmes and those unattractive to advertisers, who are under-served by commercial television. It must engage in creative risk and innovation. It must provide those genres that are currently out of favour but have value in themselves or may be about to become popular. The BBC, in other words, has to achieve what commercial broadcasters do and much more.

Under former Director General Greg Dyke and current Director General Mark Thompson, the BBC has managed to succeed in achieving this almost unattainable dual mission. As a result the public service broadcaster, notes John Mullholland of *The Observer*, has become 'a victim of its own incredible success' (2009, p.4) and as such criticism against the BBC continues to proliferate.

As the body of critics keep a hawkish eye on the presumed burgeoning strength of the organisation, there are a few that fear the BBC, and British television more generally, is not what it once was due to what they see as a steady decline in UK television creativity[1]. The deterioration, as they argue, is manifested in changes that have occurred in television production over the past 20 years. According to Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten (2008), these

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[1] The decline appears more conspicuously at the BBC possibly due to its history of producing unforgettable and enduring television programmes.

changes are 'a significant step towards the complete marketisation of the sector' (p.2). The authors contend that it is only because of the long-standing values of public service broadcasting that marketisation has not yet fully triumphed. These values note Barnett and Curry (1994), were in the past founded on 'a social rather than a commercial view of the purpose of broadcasting (p. 7). However, that it has progressed so far leads Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten (2008) to query, 'what precisely is the nature of the structure which has emerged', leaving them further wondering, 'can it be relied upon to deliver creativity and diversity of programme production which are core aims of current broadcasting policy' (ibid.). A report by the Working Group has argued that while there have been recent attempts to stimulate broadcast creativity, the actions taken might in fact stifle it (Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, 2005). As the report states (p.21),

> British Television broadcasting has earned a significant reputation for creativity, although there are growing concerns that the ecology and organisational context in which that has taken place are becoming more unfriendly. The question is whether the dynamics now in train are together going to reduce, maintain or increase creativity – and what policy response, if any, there should be.

1.   AIM OF THE THESIS

This thesis wishes to contribute to the debate regarding the aforementioned dichotomy of views. It does not however seek to answer the taxing question as to whether the dynamics occurring at the BBC are reducing, maintaining or increasing creativity. For those involved in television production, answers to such questions do not exist. As Jana Bennett, *BBC Vision* Director, emphasised at The Manchester Media Festival (2008), 'it would be wonderful if I could stand here and let you into the BBC's secret golden formula which guarantees creative success'. The difficulty in answering such a question is in having to judge what precisely *is* creative; and, like quality, this is extremely difficult to do mainly because of the subjective and unquantifiable nature of both. Such tasks might best be left for the UK's broadcast regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom), to execute[2]. What *is* attempted to be accomplished in this thesis is to *explore in a descriptive way,* broadcast creativity *of original television programmes at the BBC* and only then can any explanatory depth be offered. Given the schism described above, this question remains surprisingly underexamined both across academia and within policy circles. The thesis therefore aims to *lend support* to future studies that might attempt to shed more light on tracking and measuring whether programmes are indeed less or more creative, or even the more difficult task of creating the 'secret formula' Bennett describes.

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[2] The regulator has in fact included in its *Review of the Television Production Sector* (Ofcom, 2006a) a research commissioned by Granada Media that attempts to measure innovation (see chapter two).

Other than the above primary concern of this thesis, it additionally wishes to add to the discourse on creativity studies, now a burgeoning area of inquiry across many academic disciplines. In relation to this, it aspires furthermore to be of value to management practitioners wanting to better understand how organisations manage creativity. The literature review of this thesis will attempt to show the recent significance now afforded to creativity in management studies. Throughout the BBC's almost 100 year history there have been a number of notable scholarly works conducted on management creativity at the BBC (for example, Briggs, 1961; Burns, 1977; Barnett and Curry, 1994; Born, 2004). Yet, in the context of organisational studies, it seems these scholarly examples – and the BBC itself - have been ahead of their time since creativity is only now starting to be realised as an important factor of organisational productivity. This study on organisational creativity at the BBC therefore seems, in the current state of management, pressing. As Moultrie and Young (2009) argue, management theory has much to learn from creative organisations.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

In 2008 Prime Minister Gordon Brown noted (DCMS, 2008a), 'Britain is a creative country…you can see it when you watch the best of our television'. The significant role television plays in the UK is witnessed by looking at the investment that goes into original programming. Specifically, the UK television industry generates in excess of £9bn in annual revenues. From that amount, £5bn goes into programming of which £2.6bn represents spending on original programming (Ofcom, 2006a). When breaking down these figures, the BBC's influence in UK broadcasting is made clearer. This is because the organisation receives approximately £3.5bn worth of public funds via an annual license fee paid by all UK television households. From that amount, approximately £1bn of the total £2.6bn that represents UK spending on original programming is produced either at the BBC or for the BBC every year. It is undeniably, a large amount of public money. Consequently, a lot of effort goes into how that amount is allocated. Throughout the BBC's history, allocating programme-making budgets has varied considerably depending on many factors such as political, economic, social and other externalities.

In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, producers were left largely to manage their own creativity and often worked with large resources. Having access to sufficient resources, as any programme-maker will agree, is a major factor in producing creative television programmes. As a result, these three decades are considered by many as the golden age of broadcasting. In the 1980s and 1990s the BBC came under severe and sustained attack, and efforts were therefore redirected from producing creative programmes to making the organisation more accountable. With fewer resources and less freedom given to producers, creativity suffered. From the 2000s onwards the BBC is attempting to be both creative and accountable; the efforts by the organisation are summarised by Hutton, O'Keeffe, and Turner's (2005) as follows: 'organisations can foster creativity by self-consciously designing processes and

systems that maximise the creativity of their workforces – and then ensuring the implementation of creative ideas by the commitment of their leadership teams to the processes' (p. 5). It is only recently therefore that the organisation has attempted to knowingly and scientifically stimulate creativity and with the arrival of Greg Dyke in 2000, and in 2004 of Mark Thompson, creativity particularly in programme-making is resurfacing as a priority. The BBC's vision is to be 'the most creative organisation in the world' and to make creativity 'the lifeblood of the organisation' (BBC, 2006e). The renewed Royal Charter that was put into place on January 1st 2007, states that one of the six public purposes of the BBC is '*to stimulate creativity and cultural excellence'* (BBC Royal Charter). If creativity at the BBC has now been given the emphasis it requires in the field of television production, a pressing question is why are there 'growing concerns' that creativity might be deteriorating, as the paper by Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, and the Working Group study (Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, 2005) imply.

The same Working Group Study recognizes the BBC as a leader in broadcast creativity, not just in the content of the programmes it produces, but also in addressing new characteristics of media usage such as how audiences are proactively engaging with content and in how new technological services are been used to stimulate creativity. Yet while this all may be true, the study points to the risk the BBC faces in becoming a *less* creative force due to various 'shifts' occurring in the broadcasting landscape. The most significant of these shifts involves a gradual disempowerment of the BBC's in-house studios that have served the organisation so well, for so long. As creativity becomes important once again at the BBC, production budgets are shifting from in-house production to the independent production sector. This is largely because of decisions made by regulators to make the BBC a catalyst for increasing creativity of the whole UK through the growth of the independent sector. BBC in-house production is therefore, gradually being undermined, and new mechanisms are been put into place to stimulate creativity. Historically, there are four reasons as to why the BBC's in-house production studios have been severely dented. All four will be addressed in this thesis in detail in the chapters that follow, but are also briefly introduced here.

Firstly, the introduction of Channel 4 and the initial steps taken towards the establishment of the independent production sector in 1982. The 1980s saw the BBC attacked by a pro-market government that argued the best way forward is by means of a free-market policy with as little intervention as possible. Commercial media would be the answer to a more diverse and creative landscape for viewers across the UK. Wanting to break the stranglehold the BBC and ITV had on television, the Communications Act of 1981, based on recommendations from the Annan Committee in 1977, introduced a fourth channel that would offer alternative programming to what already existed; significantly, the channel would not have its own in-house production studios but would commission programmes from the independent sector. As a result, many producers opened their own businesses to provide content for the new channel.

Secondly, the introduction of a quota in 1990 which made all broadcasters commission at least 25 percent of their programming budgets from the independent production sector. When Thatcher chose Alan Peacock to head a group of experts to review the BBC in the mid-1980s, what the government had in mind at the time was to methodically commercialise the organisation. While not entirely successful in their attempts, the Peacock Committee did lead to the 25 percent quota.

Thirdly, the terms of trade between independent producers and broadcasters brought into effect with the Communications Act of 2003. In the Act, the independent sector is given more negotiating power because the market is considered a 'buyers market' in which broadcasters have too much power when negotiating ownership rights of television programmes made for them by the independent production sector. The new terms tip the scales of power in favour of independent producers by allowing them to regain control of creative rights of the television programme. According to a study by *Analysys Mason* (2009) on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) 'the independent production sector, supported by the terms of trade agreed in 2003, has grown at an average of 15.6 percent per annum between 2005 and 2007, reaching a total turnover of GBP2.14 billion in 2007, of which 20 percent is generated by international sales (predominately to the United States).' (p.9).

Fourthly, the BBC's self-imposed policy, the Window of Creative Competition (The *WoCC*), in which the organisation allows the independent sector to compete for an additional 25 percent of commissions. The *WoCC* was agreed upon in an October 2006 Board of Governors meeting (BBC, 2006a) based on strategies the new management team has tried to implement from 2004 onwards regarding a more creative BBC. The *WoCC* therefore places a 50 percent guarantee of commissions from in-house production, a 25 percent guarantee on the independent production sector and the remaining 25 percent permits BBC commissioners and genre controllers to choose the best ideas from either in-house or external suppliers. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport White Paper, 'A public service for all: The BBC in the digital age' notes (BBC Trust, 2008, p. 1),

> We believe that encouraging competition in television production through the introduction of a window of creative competition, combined with a strong and sustained BBC in-house capacity, is the best way of ensuring that the best programmes reach the screen.

There is no doubt the continuing growth of the independent production sector has contributed in making the UK the largest audiovisual market in Europe. With 731 million inhabitants, Europe is the largest audiovisual market in the world (Iosifidis, 2007); the decision to strengthen the independent production sector therefore, particularly through the 2003 Communications Act, has been fruitful. Yet, as already mentioned, as the indies (short for independent producers) continue to accumulate strength in dictating terms to UK

broadcasters, the strength of BBC's in-house studios are waning. Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, (2005) ominously note the following (p.45),

> Once the independent production sector is larger than BBC in-house production with a capacity to produce in every genre and outproducing it in some, the BBC may reach a tipping point at which it will find it very difficult to justify in-house production on even its reduced scale.

3.   ORGANISATION OF THESIS

The thesis consists of seven chapters, divided into two parts. The first part includes the first three chapters, none of which deal directly with the BBC, but rather have been written in an attempt to theoretically set the scene for the remainder of the thesis. Specifically, the first two chapters are conceptualisations of the major theoretical frameworks of both television production and organisational creativity, whereas the third chapter looks at how the thesis approaches the fieldwork and the overall methodology of the study. The second part of the thesis addresses the BBC directly. Chapter Four investigates in detail, the history of the BBC and how creativity has been affected either by internal or external policies from its inception up to 2004. Chapter Five deals with how the UK TV production sector has changed from 2003 and how these changes have affected the current state of the BBC. Chapter Six examines the BBC from 2004 onwards; it shows the organisational approaches the BBC has taken toward creativity as opposed to previous years at the organisation. Chapter seven offers a conclusion to the thesis. Following is a more detailed chapter by chapter breakdown.

Chapter Breakdown

In Chapters One and Two, as well as this prologue, an attempt is made to capture the elusiveness of the title. **Chapter One: Conceptualising Cultural and Television Production** is a large chapter that seeks to bring together all aspects of cultural and television production. The chapter is divided into three sections. *Section one* traces cultural production historically by drawing mainly from the work of Hauser (1962), Williams (1981) and Wolff (1993). It breaks down cultural production in four different historical periods that all show different approaches regarding how cultural products were produced. From the *instituted artist*, to *patronage,* and from the more commercial aspects of the *market professional* and the *corporate / complex professional*, conclusions are drawn regarding how the cultural producer is perceived. *Section two* looks at contemporary cultural production and the plethora of ways that exist in analysing it. The section begins by looking at how production connects with other aspects of the communications process and emphasises the literature on the 'continuous circuit of communications' advocated by many communications researchers. It then looks at the overall stages of cultural production before taking a closer

look at the connection between diversity and production, particularly by drawing on the work of McQuail (1992) and Iosifidis (1999). The section next attempts to unravel how cultural production is perceived today by investigating in closer detail the different disciplines and ideologies researchers have used hitherto. Drawing significantly from the work of Hesmondhalgh (2007) in order to structure this part of the chapter, it points to six overarching theories and disciplines and offers a literature review of each one that has in one way or another affected the overall structure of this thesis. Specifically it looks at *classical economics*, *liberal pluralism*, *radical media sociology*, *cultural studies, political economy* and *sociology of culture*. Although these disciplines have approached cultural production from different angles and ideological perspectives, they share the view that cultural production plays a significant role in shaping societies. While various television studies are analysed within the aforementioned disciplines, *section three* is an attempt to investigate in closer detail the main aspects of television production. It looks specifically at tensions between commerce and creativity in television; these are underlying tensions witnessed across all cultural production although possibly not so palpably as in television. Finally this section addresses the concept of 'original' television production and compares it with other aspects of programming such as acquisitions and continued series.

Chapter Two: Conceptualising Organisational Creativity is the second chapter that seeks to offer a theoretical framework for the thesis. Where chapter One investigated cultural and television production, chapter two shifts its attention towards creativity, with an emphasis on organisational creativity. The chapter attempts to investigate the differences between the two overlapping discourses on *creative societies* and *creative economies*. Within the literature on *creative economies* is a review of the burgeoning research on 'creative management'. 'Creative management' is recognised as a new paradigm in organisational management. The *first* of the four sections of this chapter addresses erstwhile management models of the previous century in order to illustrate the paradigms that have existed prior to 'creative management'. In particular, it looks at Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy and how it was applied in organisations as an example of how creativity has been stifled. It also draws on the work of DiMaggio (2001), Henry (2006), and particularly of Xu and Rickards (2007), to examine the four management paradigms that have led to today's 'creative management'. These are *19th – 20th Century Rational Management*, a period that reflects the applied practises of managers such as Henry Ford and theorists such as Frederick Taylor and Max Weber. The next paradigm is what Xu and Rickards call *Early 20th Century Total Quality Management* in which priorities were on product control and quality. Particularly in these first two paradigms, an erosion of human autonomy is witnessed at the expense of manufacturing efficiency. The third paradigm, *Mid-20th Century Humanistic Management*, saw efforts by social psychologists such as Kurt Lewis to implement more employee autonomy, motivation and subjectivity in order to gain the most in the workplace. The fourth paradigm is *Late 20th Century Organisational Creativity,* and emphasises the need for more teambuilding and cooperation among

employees particularly through the use of technologies such as online networks. Finally, the chapter dissects the fifth paradigm, *21st Century Creative Management,* as a new order in management models. Before moving on to the next section, this part of the chapter also analyses a specific model of management known as *New Public Management* that looks at methods used by public institutions - not least of which is the BBC - on how more financial accountability and efficiency can be introduced. The *second section* of the chapter reviews the rapidly changing *creative industries*. It opens with an analysis of how the cultural industries have shifted to creative industries before looking closer at UK creative industries policy. *Section three* takes a closer look at techniques used to stimulate organisational creativity. It addresses the significance of linking creative personnel with managerial personnel as well as the connection between competition and creativity. The *final section* constitutes the various definitions regarding creativity. It argues that the most significant scholarly work regarding creativity has derived from psychology, such as Amabile (1996), Csikszentmihalyi (1997), and Runco (2007). It looks closer at what creativity is not, the great man theory, problem-solving and creativity, and innovation and creativity. It finally attempts to analyse what creativity is, and looks in close detail at Csikszentmihalyi's frequently-cited *Social System Model* of creativity.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Natural History of the Research argues that the case study research method is the most suited for this thesis. This method requires scrupulous organisation and a combination of large amounts of data-collection (for example, large amounts of narrative primary research through ethnographies and in-depth interviews, and / or secondary research on literature surrounding the case being studied). In this respect, the work of Yin (2003) is crucial in the methodology, design and analysis of the data. However, since a large part of the thesis is on the history of a specific organisation and the policies affecting it, as well as other historical references (of cultural production, of management theories), a section highlighting the significance of historiographies is included in the chapter. Silverman (2005) argues that a requirement for a methodology chapter is that the researcher must explain and justify their decisions by providing full descriptions of what is to be done and what techniques and strategies were used (p. 305). Therefore, the methodology chapter involves three sections. The *first* is appropriately called *methodology* and involves seven subsections that deal with how this thesis is methodologically and empirically structured through the lens of the case study approach. It starts with a personal context due to the subjective nature of qualitative research. This part of the chapter offers a historical analysis and logic behind the research topic from a personal perspective. The chapter then moves on to justify why the study is both a qualitative and a case study approach. Thereafter the propositions and units of analysis are studied in closer detail before justifying and addressing the validity, reliability and issues of generalisation. Subsequently, the data collection is analysed in more detail. The *second section* of the chapter argues the significance for a *historiography* to be introduced as well as more general support regarding the use of history. The *final section* is the *natural history of the research*. This section involves elements of the

fieldnotes and research diary that according to Silverman (2005), allow the reader to become more familiarised with the research topic.

Chapter Four: The Road Towards Creativity: The British Audiovisual Sector and the BBC (1922-2004) is in three chronologically ordered sections. In the *first, 1922-1979*, the chapter attempts to cover a large chronological period starting from the organisation's inception under the guidance of its first Director General, John Reith through to the Second World War and the golden period of broadcasting in the 1950s and 1960s, and up until the pro-market policies of Margaret Thatcher. It covers also the period in which ITV was introduced as the first commercial broadcaster in 1955 in order to compete with the BBC and offer UK audiences more diversity in programming options. Additionally, this period covers the New Public Management reforms that began to gradually take affect. These changes became the normative manner of thinking and the basis for introducing a whole new set of managerial techniques that analysed, scrutinized and made the BBC more accountable. It is during this period that many commentators began to witness a decline in creative programme-making. The *second period, 1979-1992* covers a phase in the history of the BBC that saw the public service broadcaster come under continuous attack by a pro-market conservative government that had just been voted in to office. It was also a period of global changes regarding the communications sector that led to tremendous technological advancement in multichannel global television. These changes led to policy changes that resulted in a new publisher-broadcaster (Channel 4) and the growth of the independent production sector. It also led to the 25 percent quota in 1990. The *last section, 1992-2004* is identified as a period of turmoil and change at the BBC due to the introduction of internal competition through the then Director General John Birt's 'Producer Choice'. While Birt's reign is considered by many as creatively disastrous, he is nevertheless, often praised for having set the wheels in motion for creating what is today one of the most popular and significant websites in the world (bbc.co.uk), as well as embracing digital television and preparing the organisation for an online environment.   This section also identifies and reviews the vast changes that occurred at the BBC when Greg Dyke took over in 2000 both in the strategies regarding new niche channels, and in the significant rise of creative programme-making.

Chapter Five: The UK Television Production Landscape Post 2004: External Policies Affecting the BBC is the smallest chapter although nevertheless a significant one in that it sets the scene for the next chapter that deals directly with internal organisational policy. The chapter consists of one section that is broken down into five subsections. The section deals solely with the UK Television production sector and how it affects public service broadcast creativity. The first subsection tries to offer a rationale for why the 2003 Communications Act was formed, and looks in detail at the various regulatory bodies that were involved in its creation. The second subsection seeks to address how Ofcom deals with innovation and creativity of pubic service broadcasting.   This is followed by the third subsection, an

assessment of Ofcom's interpretation of television production creativity. The fourth subsection deals with how Ofom, through the 2003 Communications Act, has sought to protect the independent production sector by introducing the codes of practise that all broadcaster are obliged to follow when commissioning programmes from the independent sector. This has led to the creation of various large independent production companies known as super indies, the subject of the final subsection of the chapter. As noted, the chapter offers an ideal prelude and analysis of the television production landscape to the chapter that follows, on the BBC.

Chapter Six: Creativity and Accountability at the BBC: 2004 and Beyond is a large chapter combining data analysis with historical accounts of television production policy. It is in four sections. The *first section* looks at the BBC's investment in creativity since Mark Thompson has taken over from Greg Dyke. It is argued that much of what Dyke has achieved is acknowledged and appreciated by Thompson and therefore a similar philosophy continues today, such as the focus on *creative management* throughout the organisation. It could be argued however that Thompson has used creative management approaches to destabilise in-house production. This is evident in the introduction of the WoCC and the redundancies made in BBC production units. However, the organisation has also taken steps in other directions regarding creativity. *Section two* concentrates on how the organisation has restructured itself and how it uses technology to stimulate creativity. *Section three* shifts its attention to *BBC Vision* and the commissioning process at the BBC. The section sets out to examine how commissioning is processed at the BBC, how ideas are implemented, and importantly, how the WoCC works. Finally, section *four* looks at how the BBC sees audience research as an important part of the creative process, particularly in an environment in which multi-platform media consumption is growing[3].

The final chapter, **Chapter Seven: Conclusion** is in two sections. The first seeks to highlight the themes that run through the thesis and offer a synopsis of the whole thesis. The section will focus its attention on the areas it finds significant regarding how the BBC attempts to stimulate creativity. It highlights also the policies that have affected the creativity of the BBC and seeks to look closer at what the role of a creative BBC is in a digitally fragmented environment. The second section seeks to offer an answer as to whether the actions taken regarding BBC creativity are benefiting UK broadcasting. In other words, the section wishes to lend support and offer some insight amidst the two divergent opinions concerning whether BBC broadcast creativity is today better or worse. Regardless of what side of the wall the reader is situated, for what surely there should be no discord, is of the need to shed light on the issue in order to safeguard the heritage of audiovisual production in the UK.

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[3] In the Analysys Mason report (2009) conducted for the DCMS, it is noted that recent BARB figures show that while live in-home viewing accounts for approximately 85 percent and time-shifting accounts for the remaining 15 percent, by 2018 BARB expects that to decrease to 66 percent and time-shifting to grow to 14 percent. It also suggests that out-of-home viewing will increase as well as other forms of viewing (pp. 16-17).

Chapter One

Conceptualising Cultural and Television Production

INTRODUCTION

It is a basic premise of this study that despite its primary subject matter concerning television production, it is imperative not to jettison its overarching literature regarding cultural production[4]. The first two of the three sections of this chapter therefore, conceptualise cultural production, while the third section addresses the distinctiveness of television production. It is important here to note that chapter five will return to the topic of television production by offering a contemporary analysis of the field.

Section one (1.1) places cultural production within a *historical perspective*. It draws mainly from the work of Arnold Hauser (1962), Raymond Williams (1981), and Janet Wolff (1993) who have all divided cultural production into distinctive historical periods. The three scholars point toward the significance of the eventual commercialisation of cultural production from the twentieth century onwards. As they note, residues from the past have continued to linger on and hamper how cultural production is managed in its commercial environment.

Section two addresses *contemporary* issues of cultural production. This section is in two parts. The first part signals out four characteristics that require detailed attention. These are:

1. why cultural production needs to be seen as a continuous circuit and not as a separate part of the communications process (1.2.1);

2. how cultural production has grown in complexity since becoming commercialised and how it is now broken down into different contemporaneous stages (1.2.2);

3. the importance of diversity and pluralism within cultural production (1.2.3);

4. The various theoretical approaches used to study cultural production in contemporary societies. This part dissects six overarching theories identified by David Hesmondhalgh (2007). Hesmondhalgh concisely analyses the strengths and weaknesses of each approach thus organising an area of study that is often perceived as confusing and laborious. In order to construct this study, literature on cultural production from all six theories have been used to a greater or lesser extent and are therefore reviewed in this section. Yet it is the theoretical strands of political economy and sociology of culture that have aided the most in conceptualising this study. The six theories are:

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[4] Cultural production is taken here as a field that deals primarily with 'expressive-aesthetic value' (see Hesmondhalgh 2006a, for more on the definition of cultural production).

1. *Classical economics*
2. *Liberal-Pluralism*
3. *Radical Media Sociology*
4. *Cultural Studies*
5. *Political Economy*
6. *Sociology of Culture / Production of Culture*

The third and final section of this chapter deals with specific characteristics of television production. The section opens with why tensions exist between creativity and commerce within television (1.3.1). Following, the section looks at television institutions and original programmes, and includes a detailed analysis of the broadcasting process in today's audiovisual UK sector (1.3.2).

1.1 A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION

The contemporary cultural producer (e.g. the artist, the musician, the screenwriter), is often regarded as someone that works in isolation whereby external determinants are insignificant to what he or she produces. This is because today's cultural producers are seen with a certain kind of mysticism that transcends external factors. It is rather as though their inspiration derives from the muses (Ryan, 1992). As such, it is often noted that managing such 'celestial' work is impossible. Significantly, much of the tensions witnessed today in cultural production between creativity and commerce derive from the above explanation[5]. Conversely, it is generally accepted that the way humans behave is determined by external factors as much as internal (argued particularly within sociology). Cultural production is no exception and therefore does not escape from sociological analysis of how humans are affected by external determinants. As Wolff (1993) emphatically argues, 'it has never been true, and it is not true today, that the artist has worked in isolation from social and political constraints of a direct or indirect kind' (p. 27). One way of analysing this is historically. For example, in attempting to define Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*[6] by differences through time and space, Robbins (2000) states, 'the interesting comparison…between societies, both geographically and historically, is between the ways in which groups strategically acquire different positions rather than in the universal similarities of their situations' (p. 30). Williams (1981) similarly argues that making general claims vis-à-vis cultural production based on the situation of the present day can be misleading. In order to demystify cultural production and substantiate the effects of external factors on cultural producers, we are required to look at long-term historical and sociological transitions that have contributed to the labelling of the 'genius' cultural producer. As noted in Williams (ibid., p. 33),

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[5] In this context, it is particularly interesting to refer to the Chicago study on art students by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi (1976) who argue that romantic ideals are embedded in the curriculum of art students (see also Caves, 2000).
[6] According to Bourdieu (1977; 1991), *Habitus* is a 'system of durable, transposable dispositions' (1977, p.72) in which the biological being is connected to the social world, *Field* is a semi-autonomous, structured social space, and *Capital*, 'as an index of relative social power'.

Much actual sociology of culture presumes, in a way inevitably, the typical or dominant relations of the period with which it is concerned; it goes on to adduce detailed evidence of these. But it can then happen that these relations become a norm, from which other periods are interpreted or even, by contrast, judged.'

By placing external constraints within a historical context we can begin to comprehend the genius thesis as a non-valid argument. What follows is a breakdown Williams' four different historical phases of cultural production. While each phase has distinct characteristics, all of them include external factors as variables used to create cultural products.

Instituted Artist

Williams calls the first phase[7] (occurring during the Middle Ages) the *instituted artist.* Cultural producers during this period (e.g. poets or bards) were given 'an honoured place in the official organisation of the kingdom or tribe' (p. 36). Significantly, during this phase cultural producers would remain within an institution for most of their lives. Yet although they had a special and privileged role within the institution, they were often 'forced' to produce. Additionally, artists had to earn their right to practise in craft guilds and would then have to follow strict rules on how to produce works. The guilds were usually attached to various religious movements in which a master-apprentice system would be the norm (Hauser, 1962; Williams, 1981). The works themselves were not based on original ideas and had 'no independent value in intellectual originality and spontaneity…and considered plagiarism permissible' (Hauser, 1962, p. 61). Art was considered highly objective and while cultural products were perceived as vastly important, the artists that created these works were not. As such, the social standing of artists during this period was significantly lower than during future periods. Wolff argues that during the guild crafts, 'artistic labour processes…still took place entirely in collective forms' (1993, p. 27). Cultural producers would produce their work at the building sites (most work was commissioned by the Church and towns). Additionally, the creative process itself was not glorified like during other periods and as such could not add value to the 'genius' thesis. In fact, during this period, it was common practice for patrons to intervene with the creative process (e.g. choosing colours). For all these reasons, cultural producers were not acknowledged as anything more than ordinary individuals. As Hauser points out about the cultural producer of the day (1962, p. 228), 'his workshop was still organised in exactly the same way as that of any other tradesman; the painters did not regard membership in the same guild as the saddler as in any way derogatory'. There was in other words, equality amongst all those working under guilds.

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[7] It should be noted that Williams leaves out of his analysis the *magic and naturalism* of Prehistoric times, the *geometricism* of the Stone Age, Asian art history as well as Ancient Greek and Roman art (see for example Hauser, 1962). However, in order to comprehend the genius myth as a non-valid argument we only need to go as far back as Williams' Middle Ages' first phase.

Patronage

What allowed the genius myth to blossom is a combination of significant changes that occurred across many societies during the 'patronage' era (End of Middle Ages – nineteenth century). During this period an ideology of liberalism and 'a discovery of the world and of man' began to unfold (Hauser, 1962; Wolff, 1993). The decline of feudalism and the gradual growth of the middle classes paved the way for several changes particularly in social, cultural and economy areas. Additionally, the rebirth of Greek and Roman philosophies led to the rise of the Renaissance period. The Church continued to be considered an important patron of the arts. With the emancipation of the artists from the guilds, and with the growth of academic institutions, older models of practise began to be replaced by scientific approaches that were taught in the academies. Additionally, with the growing competition of artistic work and the revival of Greek and Roman philosophies, Renaissance humanists began to praise art, and give it more value. These new forms of social institutions became the new deciding factors of who and how one became a cultural producer. As societies grew and became more complex, so did the role of cultural producers. Hauser notes, (1962, p. 226), 'only when the purchasing power of the town bourgeois had grown to such an extent that private individuals…began to form a regular market for works of art…this point was reached in the fourteenth century'. Similarly, various patrons 'in opposition to the guild ideals of the Middle Ages' (1962, pp. 9-10), led to many cultural producers becoming more free-floating and emancipated than they were under the guilds. Artists could now move from one patron to another during the instituted era (Williams, 1981, p.41). The artist no longer had to work directly at the building sites (unless of course it was decorating the building itself). This resulted in individual 'cultural producer' workshops cropping up across Italy, France and other areas. As art became available to the middle classes, aristocracy sought to differentiate itself from the kinds of cultural products the middle classes acquired. Aristocrats became important patrons of talented artists that had an ability to create original artistic works. These more talented artists therefore, began to establish personal connections with aristocracy; as such, aristocracy were more than willing to introduce them to their acquaintances. In fact, a few of them grew similar in status with the nobility of the period. Hauser identifies this historical period with the growth of the genius myth. As he argues (1962), 'the development of the concept of genius begins with the idea of intellectual property. In the Middle Ages both this conception and the desire for originality are lacking' (p. 62). This also resulted in artists being paid considerable amounts of money during this period unlike during the master-apprentice system of the guilds. Michelangelo for example was paid 3000 ducats for the Sistine Chapel (Hauser, 1962, p. 53). Artists could now use their learnt techniques and were free to express themselves and their talents. Hauser notes (ibid., p.58),

> All this is the expression of an unmistakable shift of attention from the works to the personality of the artist. Men begin to be conscious of creative power in the

> modern sense and there are increasing signs of the
> rising self-respect of the artist.

Wolff (1993) also locates this period as one in which 'the artist becomes a unique and gifted individual' (p. 27). The genius myth therefore became a reality.

Market Professional

From the early nineteenth century onwards, and with the genius myth now a significant component of cultural production, the sector grew increasingly more complex. A number of factors characterised the period. The most salient of these was the increased commercialisation of the field of cultural production. Essentially, the genius myth 'clashed' with the market during this period. According to Hesmondhalgh, 'symbolic creativity…increasingly became to be organised as a *market'* (2007, p.53) and is therefore a crucial period in understanding the creativity versus commerce debate. Hauser notes of the growing commercial aspects of the period in his introduction of his fourth volume, 'if the purpose of historical research is the understanding of the present – and what else could it be? – then this enquiry is approaching its goal. What we are now to be concerned with is modern capitalism…in short our own world' (1962, p.1). The beginning of the nineteenth century therefore was the start of the *market professional era* in which the cultural producer became 'wholly dependent on the immediate market' (Williams, 1981, p. 44).

For the most part, many cultural producers lost their privileges they had with patrons and their employment became increasingly more precarious. Therefore, Janet Wolff (1993, p. 18) argues,

> With the disintegration of traditional ties between
> producer and consumer (Church, Patron, Academy)
> of the arts particularly in Europe during the
> nineteenth century, the artist is, in a certain way, a
> free-floating, unattached individual not bound by
> patron or commission. In this way, the conditions of
> artistic work are even more sharply contrasted with
> those of other types of work.

In Pierre Bourdieu's *The Rules of Art* (1996), it is noted that nineteenth century cultural production has many similarities with contemporary cultural production due to the growth of 'self-made' men that were 'installed in power' on account of the growth of capitalism (p. 50). Gradually, these men created social structured fields that came to be known as the fields of power, or those of politics and economics (see also Hesmondhalgh, 2006a). The field of cultural production, dependent on various patrons until that period, suddenly became increasingly interwoven and dependent on the field of power. Due to the considerable growth of educated middle-aged graduates all looking for work in Paris during the period, it led many of them to try their luck in cultural production fields (that did not require specific

academic backgrounds). In such a competitive environment, only the truly talented and 'most conformist' cultural producers that interacted with members of the field of power managed to make a living.

Ironically, as cultural producers' dependence on the market grew, the genius myth created during earlier periods continued to spread. In large part this was because of the growth of a new profession that helped increase the persona of cultural producers. Specifically, in order to alleviate tensions between cultural producer and market rationalities, a new 'intermediary' profession was introduced as a crucial part of the creative process. It was the responsibility of this division of labour to act on behalf of the cultural producer. At a time when many organisations began to introduce scientific and bureaucratic methods of management (see chapter two), cultural producers were oppositely moving in a more free-floating direction that was governed by these intermediary groups. Williams (1981) introduces the phrase, 'productive intermediary' (p.45) in order to explain the new organisational form. Publishers, art dealers and booksellers helped represent cultural producers and at the same time attempted to sell as much of their work as possible. As such, the genius myth was supported and used by these mediators in order to sell more cultural works. At the same time, the growth of new technologies became established concurrently with the new complexities of the market. This resulted in more copies of original works that in turn resulted in the introduction of copyright and royalties that replaced earlier forms of payments that were made directly to cultural producers. Copyrights and royalties led to one of the most significant changes that occurred during the period. Specifically, cultural producers increased their efforts in accumulating new customer / consumers. They did so particularly by becoming what Hauser calls, 'advocates and teachers' (p.5) of an oppressed middle class (1962). Arguably, such a responsible role once again strengthens their position as 'geniuses'. A large portion of literary work was introduced in newspapers as supplements that were bought particularly by middle class readers (Alexander Dumas was paid roughly 200,000 francs yearly for writing in the *Presse* and the *Constitutionnel* ibid., p. 14). Various writers became idolised and often other writers were hired as ghost-writers to increase the production and consequently the sales of the newspapers they wrote for. Additionally, newspaper owners often attempted to influence the writing by demanding more violent or adventurous plots; and cliff-hangers became common practise in order to keep the reader interested much like the soap operas of today.

Corporate / Complex[8] Professional

According to Williams, the corporate / complex professional era (early twentieth century – to date), coincides with the growth of media technologies, marketing and advertising, and of large media organisations known as conglomerates (see Bagdikian, 2004). The two

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[8] Renamed by Hesmondhalgh as *complex professional* (2007, p. 54).

important points from Williams' analysis regarding this era are firstly, the growth of corporations that produce cultural goods, and secondly the '*planning* of saleable cultural products has become a normal mode' (p.52).   A large number of cultural producers became direct employees of these burgeoning organisations and particularly from the 1950s onwards, the level of complexity involved in cultural production increased sufficiently. Management techniques established during this period resulted in stringent divisions of labour and is therefore generally perceived as a period that hindered and suppressed human autonomy (see chapter two).   During this period the 'artist', argues Bill Ryan (1992), does not like being conformed by organisational structures and bureaucracies; 'it offends their supposedly finely-tuned sensibilities…to speak of their subject in the same breath as money' (p.51).   When an original work enters into its commercial character, it competes with other goods as an exchange value.   As a result, 'according to the conventions of its constitution, art is supposed to transcend the earthly, utilitarian realm.' (p. 53), therefore, in Marxian terms, its use-value is undermined by its economic value (or exchange-value).   Jason Toynbee (2000) offers another interesting perspective on the two extremes of commerce and creativity during this period and deserves to be cited at length (p.3):

> Popular culture perverts capitalism. It does so by producing a radius of creativity that is a space in the economic field where precisely non-economic goals are pursued.   Certainly capital continues to be valorised here, but by a paradoxical twist this depends on the reduction of the system imperative towards accumulation.   To put it another way, in order for culture to be sold it must be shown to be (partially) external to the economic system.

Adorno and Horkheimer (1979), offer a critical and pessimistic account of how during the twentieth century cultural production has been negatively affected due to inflexible divisions of labour and large corporations taking over cultural production in order to profiteer.   As noted by Keith Negus (1997), 'Like the Sociologist Max Weber, they [Adorno and Horkheimer] were concerned about a type of reasoning through which groups and individuals were encouraged to pursue particular aims in a 'logical' and calculated way untouched by sentiment' (p.71).   This resulted in what the two scholars name the *standardization* and *pseudo-individuality* of cultural production whereby cultural products become unoriginal and formatted (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1979; see also Negus, 1997).   In a harsh critique of jazz for example, Adorno argues, 'the so-called improvisations are actually reduced to the less feeble rehashing of basic formulas in which scheme shines through at every moment' (Adorno, 1967, p.123).   Jazz, according to both Adorno and Horkheimer, is just like all other cultural products of the twentieth century that demand the consumer to 'psychologically regress' (ibid.).   The growing commercialisation of culture during this period has added to the tensions witnessed between creativity and commerce, because the creative process involves a certain amount of nonconformity that is antithetical

to early day capitalism management techniques and strategies that would rather cater to a more dumb-downed audience.

This period is characterised by immense changes in cultural production. For example, there has been an increase in both larger and smaller cultural organisations (particularly media-related), changes in copyright issues, deregulation and re-regulation, and increased advancements in communications technologies[9]. Cultural producers are now expected to deliver cultural commodities to a predefined group with the help of marketing and market research as well as with the intervention of corporate professionals. In sum, since the Renaissance, cultural producers have become accustomed to an increased level of autonomy, and even genius-like attention. While all these attributes continue today in various forms across different cultural products, they either clash with the demands of commercial capitalist ideals, or (not so ironically), are used to increase sales of the final product.

1.2   CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Having analysed cultural production in a historical perspective, the remainder of the chapter looks at cultural and television production as it is perceived today. In this section, cultural production is studied across six academic disciplines (or grand theories). However, before addressing these disciplines, it is first required to look at three common themes that need to be introduced in isolation from the analysis of the grand theories. The first is the connection between consumption and production, the second looks at the various stages of cultural production, and the third deals with the significant issue of diversity and its connection to cultural production.

1.2.1   Cultural Production as Part of a Continuous Circuit

Throughout the twentieth century, scholars have struggled to address how cultural products (particularly the media) affect users (particularly audience reception). Cultural production however was studied in isolation therefore creating what Robins and Webster (1988) call a 'theoretical schism' (p. 46). Stuart Hall's (1980) Encoding / Decoding model has attempted to unify the field of communications by arguing that the traditional communications process (criticized for its linear approach) is part of a continuous circuit involving 'distinctive moments – production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction' (p. 197). In a paper by Hall on the Encoding and Decoding of Television (reprinted in Nightingale and Ross et al., 2003), he cites Phillip Elliot who calls the audience both 'source' and 'receiver' and of how *circulation* and *reception* are 'moments of the production process in television and are reincorporated, via a number of skewed and structured feedbacks into the production

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[9] It is no wonder why Hesmondhalgh prefers the phrase complex professional era to Williams' 'corporate'. Regardless of how the era is named, there is no doubt that it is considerably more corporate (commercialised) and complex.

process itself' (p. 53). Kellner (1996) also attempts to make a connection between production and consumption by arguing that political economy (primarily dealing with production) and cultural studies (primarily dealing with consumption) are not antithetical but are rather part of a continuous circuit that 'encompasses a production – distribution – consumption – production' movement (echoing Hall). Kellner notes further, 'there are few pure or pristine audiences, and understanding the system of media production dominant in a culture thus provides insight into audience expectations and practices' (p. 114). More recently, Georgina Born (2000) has pointed out that production research should occur before consumption since it has 'cumulative historical effects in the formation of prevailing currents of public culture' (p. 404), while economist Richard Caves (2000) argues that the connection between the elements of the continuous circuit should not be undermined. As he states in his introduction of his study on cultural industries using economics as a backdrop (p.173),

> Although this book addresses the organisation of creative goods' production and distribution, characteristics of consumption play a vital role, just as supply and demand interact to determine a market's size.

Taking into consideration the above examples, an approach will be applied throughout this thesis whereby production is seen as having a deterministic relationship with circulation, distribution, consumption and reproduction. For this reason, theoretical approaches regarding cultural production are significantly more flexible than erstwhile approaches that have not taken into consideration the relationships of the cultural whole. For example, political economy, despite all its strengths in analytically criticizing the growth of media organisations, has too often been criticized itself as being too economically deterministic and on concentrating on macro-issues of ownership (Grossberg, 1995). In this context, the thesis echoes Garnham's (1997), Kellner's (1996) and Negus' (1998) views that in order to effectively study media texts and audiences, one must first understand the production process of cultural commodities. They argue however that other factors play a role in the production process other than the economic base. These factors might be socio-cultural or political, and have little to do with the economy.

Kellner's example of how media institutions in the US throughout the 1980s and 1990s would produce more programmes concerning what he calls 'good blacks' (e.g. The Cosby Show), cannot be analysed textually without understanding that the programme-makers were, amongst other things, predominantly white (1996, pp.111-112). Therefore, the programmes were made with what white producers *had in mind* to what it means to be black. It was not until the work of directors and producers such as Spike Lee (e.g. the excellent *Do the Right Thing* and *Inside Man*), and John Singleton (e.g. the also excellent *Boyz in the Hood* and *Four Brothers*) that other African-American media professionals would receive credit and significantly more opportunity to produce their own work. In a somewhat similar vein, Negus'

thesis (1998) on the production of music argues, 'we cannot fully explore the details of the conventions and codes of genres through textual analysis without fully understanding how corporate organisation intersects with the broader genre culture' (p. 363). Negus here identifies the role of other determinants in studying cultural production. In this thesis Negus argues that the growth of rap is historically attached to various social and political issues such as the Civil Rights Movement in America that finally led to the formation of more black music divisions (p. 369).

Similarly, media literacy (e.g. as mentioned in the European Union's *DG Information Society*, Ofcom's *Communications Act 2003*, and in Media Studies A' Level curriculum) underlines the importance of studying the media as a continuous circuit. Sonia Livingstone (2003) defines media literacy as 'the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and create messages across a variety of contexts' (Livingstone, 2003). Jhally and Lewis (1998) equally, fully support the notion of implementing media literacy in school syllabi in order to construct societies made of more sophisticated citizens rather than merely of consumers. They stress that in order to do so, the syllabus regarding media literacy needs to not only include textual analysis but to teach 'citizens', 'to engage and challenge media institutions' (p. 1). The authors therefore conclude that we must include how media organisations function in order to become more participant citizens. This in turn consequently results in a more *civil society*. The notion of a civil society argue Vasilara and Gotelenne (2007), 'is considered a crucial resource in advancing good governance principles, and among them open dialogue and democratic principles.' (p. 108). This important point leads us to a more complete definition of what makes a healthy democracy. It can be concluded therefore that a better understanding of cultural production and of a continuous circuit of communications is significant due to the support it lends towards a promotion of a participatory society that in turn leads to better-functioning democracies.

1.2.2 Stages of Cultural Production

Cultural production is broken down into three stages[10] (Ryan, 1992; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). This is so in order to 'discipline the creative process and bring it under the control of the firm as discussed in the complex professional era, such that management may set the standards, rate and timing of creation and keep labour costs to a minimum' (Ryan, 1992, p. 104),. The three stages are,

1. Creation
2. Reproduction
3. Circulation

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[10] An analysis of the Television Production process is reviewed in the section below on television production

Hesmondhalgh points out that the three above stages are now more entwined and complex than in the erstwhile media organisation and hence require closer examination. When doing so, the creation stage is divided further into three parts (pp. 66-69). These are, 1. *conception* (design, realisation, interpretation etc.), 2. *execution* (performance in recording studios, film and TV sets etc.), and 3. *transcription*[11] on to a final master (editing, mixing etc.). Ryan points out that the creation phase, particularly the conception stage of that phase, stands out as a complex and different process to others phases. He notes further that the original idea during this phase is 'held to be a product of the imagination and talents of identifiable individuals and an expression of human experience', and therefore cannot be 'mechanised' (p. 108). Contrasting this phase with the bureaucratic traits of scientific management, Ryan goes on, 'scientific management is barely possible' (ibid., p. 110; see also chapter two of this study for an analysis of scientific management), and as such the stage 'revolves instead around collaborative relations and is characterised by discussion, negotiation and compromise' (p. 111).

The reproduction phase, divided into transcription and duplication, involves a combination of trained technical workers using highly advanced technologies in order to go through various stages such as editing, recording, mixing, filming, plate-making etc. (during the transcription phase) as well as other 'mechanical' processes such as making copies from a master, printing, pressing, packaging and labelling, binding etc. (during the duplication phases). Both these stages involve a combination of routinized labour with 'considerable dexterity and a broad knowledge of operational possibilities' (Ryan, 1992, p. 113). It could be argued that during this phase, workers need to introduce aspects of originality and creativity that will add to the value of the final product.

The circulation phase according to Hesmondhalgh, consists of marketing, advertising and packaging, publicity, distribution and wholesaling (broadcasting is included here) and, significantly, market research (p. 68). While the circulation phase is a significant component of all sectors of contemporary economies, in the cultural industries its role is accentuated due to the rapid deterioration of cultural goods once they enter the market. Television in particular, requires an immediate impact due to its short-lived nature (see section on television production). Since the execution and transcription stages are more a matter of professional technical capabilities and experiences this thesis will not address these stages in detail, but rather analyse creativity at the conception stage of production. It will however take into consideration the new technological aspects involved in the field, the reception of audiences, and of how the circulation phase might play a role in the conception stage.

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[11] It should be noted that Ryan places the transcription stage into the reproduction phase and not the creation phase

1.2.3   Diversity in Cultural Production

Cultural diversity is seen as an imperative democratic value. In a recent convention, UNESCO (2005) identified cultural diversity of paramount importance for the following reasons:

- Cultural Diversity is a defining characteristic of humanity
- Cultural Diversity creates a rich and varied world
- Cultural Diversity flourishes within a framework of democracy, tolerance, and social justice
- Cultural Diversity is strengthened by the free flow of ideas

Since such a large portion of our time is spent consuming media and since diversity through media is of such importance, media organisations can play a central role in promoting cultural diversity in contemporary societies. UNESCO emphasise the importance of media diversity in the following way: 'reaffirming that freedom of thought, expression and information, as diversity of the media, enable cultural expressions to flourish within societies' (2000, p.3). This echoes the view held by Dennis McQuail (1992). As he argues, media contributes to diversity in three ways: (1) by reflecting differences in society; (2) by giving access to different points of view; and (3) by offering a wide range of choice (p. 144). Like UNESCO, Europe has cultural diversity high on its list of priorities. Medina (2004) points out that The Council of Europe states, 'cultural diversity is an integral part of European cultural identity' (p.10). Additionally, in the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' on measures of promoting democratic and social contribution of digital broadcasting, cultural diversity was described as an 'essential public interest objective' (McGonagle, 2008, p. 3).

Because of the significance of cultural diversity and of the media's role in promoting it, all European Union member states adopt regulatory measures in order to see that media diversity is upheld. Measures are implemented so as not to allow excessive media concentration in one area but at the same time allowing organisations to expand (Iosifidis, 1999; Medina, 2004). This is because while a consensus exists against excessive media concentration, there are those that argue that a free-market approach rather than government intervention is the most suitable option to promote diversity. The UK's Office of Communication review of media ownership rules in 2006 (2006b), acknowledges the balance required in allowing organisations to grow without diminishing their diversity; they state the following:

> 1.2   The Media Ownership rules are designed to strike a balance between ensuring a degree of plurality on the one hand and providing freedom of companies to expand, innovate and invest on the other. The first is vital for democracy since plurality of ownership helps to ensure that citizens have access to a variety of sources of news, information

and opinion. The second also benefit citizens and consumers by providing a basis for delivering high quality programmes, greater creativity and more risk-taking[12].

While different schools of thought have contradictory opinions as to how to achieve media diversity, they all share the view that media diversity 'should be a primary goal of communications policy' (Iosifidis, 1999, p. 153).

The connection between media diversity and media production

At the heart of media diversity is media production. Medina (2004) for example notes, 'diversity can be analysed in terms of media structure, media content and media audience' (p. 21) whereby the first two terms concentrate on media production. Similarly, Iosifidis (1999) states that media diversity, among other things, consists of, 'plurality of contents' (p. 156), also highlighting production of media. Iosifidis sets apart diversity in media production in three ways. These are, (1) different kinds of formats and issues (different kinds of genres), (2) contents of persons and groups (different opinions of coverage from all groups in society as well as catering to all groups from all geographic areas), and, (3) how they are represented (diversity as reflection of society). Ofcom (2006a, p.4) identifies diversity in production as having the following aspects:

- diversity of social cultural and geographic perspectives;
- diversity of corporate scale and structure (in-house or external, large or small)
- diversity of channels; and
- diversity of commissioning within channels.

In order to be sure that the above issues are addressed in the media across the European Union, member states have long supported a strong public service philosophy of its broadcasting landscape making diversity an essential part of its mandate. This philosophy continues today as witnessed in the following paragraph from the Council of Europe's Committee of Minister's Recommendation on public service media remit in the information age (Council of Europe, 2007):

> In their programming and content, public service media should reflect the increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural societies in which they operate, protecting the cultural heritage of different minorities and communities, providing possibilities for cultural expression and exchange, and promoting closer

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[12] While stronger television organisations can indeed lead to better quality of programmes due to larger budgets offered for each programme (see for example chapter four's review of the golden age of British broadcasting), and most certainly can allow for more risk-taking, Ofcom's comment on greater creativity is more ambiguous. How for example can larger organisations that have expanded due to concentration offer greater creativity?

integration, without obliterating cultural diversity at the national level

In the UK, Ofcom's PSB Review has set out four public purposes (see chapter five) that clearly show the value UK PSB policy places on diversity in television production. As noted in Ofcom's Review of the Television Production Sector (2006a, p. 22), 'a key objective for content producers is to help deliver diversity in television programming'.

1.2.4   Theoretical Approaches Towards Cultural Production

Inquiries in cultural production span across different theories and academic disciplines. As Nicholas Garnham (1990) has stated, 'we have a scattering of studies of the cultural production process' (p. 11). This is so because industries (and individuals) that deal with the production of culture have grown to such an extent that this in itself has been reason enough to draw attention from across different areas. Several scholars have argued that the boundaries between each field are blurring when it comes to mapping cultural production. Much has been written in the 1990s and early 2000s for example, on the connection between political economy, (that primarily deals with production) and cultural studies, (that more thoroughly addresses issues of consumption). More recently Hesmondhalgh has written on the evolution of political economy and how it is converging with sociology of culture (2007). Still, according to some scholars, efforts to ground an overarching conceptual framework remain fragmentary and incomplete (e.g. Born 2000; Pratt 2002). Pratt concedes, that in regards to cultural industries of which cultural production plays a pivotal role (p. 230),

> A key challenge for researchers is to develop and appropriate conceptual and organisational framework within which to focus and situate analyses of this territory. Questions of organisation, management and governance are fundamental to understanding the cultural industries; they require the development of a strategic framework of knowledge concerning the dynamics of the creative process in knowledge economies.

What follows therefore is an attempt to analyse each theory separately in order to review the literature regarding cultural production (also an approach used by other scholars such as Cottle, 2003; and particularly Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

Classical Economics

Classical economics, traditionally a rigid discipline, is becoming more accepting towards other areas of study. Although its roots lie in utilitarianism philosophy based on financial satisfaction (Mosco, 1996), current classical economics is gradually seeking satisfaction variables other than those concerning monetary issues. For example, London School of

Economics economist Richard Layard (2006) draws on different disciplines and in particular cognitive psychology to analyse the complex issue of happiness. As he argues, while GDP's across developed nations have grown, happiness levels of individuals have remained stagnant. On an organisational level too there are changes in how economists approach research inquiries. For example, there is now more emphasis on corporations becoming more socially responsible in the face of global changes rather than merely on concentrating wholly on the bottom line, financial rewards and shareholder satisfaction (see for example Peach, 1987; and Argenti, 2003).

Similarly, in regards to cultural industries, Hesmondhalgh argues (2007), 'the equation of human happiness with the optimising of economic satisfactions…provides a limited bases on which to proceed in assessing the cultural industries.' (p. 30). Classical economists, on the whole, seem content with addressing cultural industries like any other growing economic sector, thus failing to take into consideration the peculiarities of cultural production (e.g. media ideology). This is emphasised in Mosco (1996), who states classical economics is often regarded as an approach that lacks the critical judgement required when dealing with the subtle issues regarding communications. It further lacks the ability to look at issues of power and consumption involved in media (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Miége (1989) states that 'neo-classical economics [does not] link the development of cultural consumption to the conditions of capitalist production and reproduction…and reduces the problem of cultural commodity to that of the appearance of new needs' (pp. 22-23). Admittedly, we must not chide all economists for failing to recognise such issues that have been at the centre of attention for political economists, cultural studies scholars and sociologists of culture for many years. As already mentioned, the more flexible approach now used by classical economists allows them, when studying media organisations, to draw from both communications studies and sociology of organisations studies. For example, recent attempts have been made to broaden the scope of classical economics when studying cultural industries notably by Richard Caves, (2000, 2005) and Harold Vogel (2007). Both have made significant contributions towards the study of cultural industries economics, albeit still failing to address certain areas of importance. Following is a review of Caves (2000).

In *Creative Industries: Contracts Between Art and Commerce* (2000), Caves makes a significant attempt to introduce the complexities of cultural work and how it differs from other economic sectors. In fact, this distinction regarding the creative industries is a major theme that runs throughout the book. For example, cultural producers, Caves notes, create cultural goods not only for the market (like other sectors) but for themselves and for recognition *and* distinction from other artists; he calls this *'art for art's sake'*[13]. Caves draws considerably from sociologists' of culture (e.g. Howard Becker, Pierre Bourdieu, Richard Paterson), in order to highlight these differences. As he states from the outset of his study (p.vii),

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[13] This point is also noted in chapter two as a significant difference between creativity and innovation.

I also discovered that sociologists have made important progress on several lines of empirical observation. In particular, they have exposed the networks of informal contracts that knit together the participants in most creative industries.

Caves highlights two important areas in his analysis of the creative industries. These are those regarding cultural production contracts (the *motley crew*), and the connection between production and consumption in the culture industries (the *nobody knows* factor).

His analysis of contracts is significant because of what he calls the need for a *motley crew* when complex cultural products are being made. Without all the members of this crew, the cultural commodity cannot exist. As Caves states, 'subtract one input, and there is no project: each participant 'makes the whole project' (p.13).[14] Additionally, Caves argues that due to the complexity of such contracts, they become capricious and might not protect the involved parties; therefore, reputation plays a vital role in the success of cultural production as well as in reducing the risks and costs involved.[15]

In one of the most interesting aspects of the book, Caves' gives us a clear and interesting perspective of cultural industry production and consumption. While he compares production and consumption of cultural goods in the same way as economists compare all production and consumption (demand and supply), he also recognises that cultural goods are consumed in complex, distinctive and unpredictable ways. As he states, research and pretesting, scientific tools used in abundance and with a great amount of success in other sectors, 'are largely ineffective…because a creative product's success can seldom be explained even ex post by the satisfaction of some pre-existing need' (p.3). He calls this throughout his work as *the nobody knows* factor. In other words, creative industry owners have no idea how the cultural goods will fair in the market due to the unpredictable behaviour of audiences.

The most conspicuous drawback in *Creative Industries* is Caves' failure to examine the field of television production. This is important since although the contribution made by Caves is significant, he excludes arguably the most salient and pervasive of the cultural industries, choosing rather to address such cultural production areas such as radio, publishing, art, crafts, music and especially film[16]. Caves' book also fails to address a number of important issues that directly affect the cultural industries. For example, while the study is entertaining and useful, he fails to draw on the contribution made by political economists and their

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[14] Contract theory is useful in the study of the making of programmes at the BBC where all the parties involved go through various stages in order to create the programme. This is highlighted with the commissioning process (see chapter six), whereby a series of contracts are required and used (for example, the genre brief, the code of practise etc.)

[15] Once again, this point made by Caves can be seen in practise at the BBC with many commissioners throughout this study defending their reasons as to why they will only use programme-makers of proven track records.

[16] In fairness, this is something he does five years later in a study that concentrates solely on television production in the US (2005)

acknowledgement of technological and political factors that impinge on the cultural industries and on cultural producers (this is something he includes in his later work on television).

Additionally, the structure of the book is somewhat confusing since rather than divide the chapters by the various industries he analyses, he chooses to organise the book in a disorderly manner. He starts for example, by introducing the artist as apprentice and then moves on to their relationship with intermediaries (gatekeepers). Thereafter he introduces us to various industries, (Hollywood, publishing, music), before once again returning to issues of media consumption, and how critics and certifiers are used in cultural industries. When one manages to come to grips with the confusing order of the book, it becomes clear that Caves is structuring the book by the level of complexity of making contracts between artists and cultural industry owners. He starts from the easier and less complex contract of artists and art dealers (sometimes just a verbal contract), to the extremely complex film industry contracts. Within this context especially, it is rather unfortunate that television production was not used at all in the book. Nevertheless, it has to be conceded that it is well-worth the effort to take account this scholarly attempt when mapping the field of cultural production, mainly because of the entertaining use of narrative, the large amount of information regarding creative industries and especially because of his overall contribution towards the field.

Liberal-Pluralism

While classical economics fail to recognise the subtleties of cultural industries, liberal pluralists seem to understand and recognise these subtleties but at the same time appear comfortable with them. Liberal pluralists seem content to take cases at face value, often highlighting only the positive outcomes of political, social and technological changes, and of a free-market system. This point is highlighted in John Downey's account of market liberalism (2006). He singles out (p.15), Fredrich Von Hayek as one of the key advocates of this approach, stating that Hayek (1944),

> 'argued two things: that free markets are the most efficient way of allocating resources, thus ensuring economic vitality and prosperity; and that markets are the best way to ensure freedom and democracy as they provide a plurality of views and prevent the state from restricting the liberty of individuals in society'

While not as liberal as the above, Jeremy Tunstall's *Television Producers* (1993) large empirical study on series television producers falls into this category since it fails to look at how a more commercial BBC (a theme of this study), might undermine its ability to produce programmes of public value. Yet while Tunstall's account fails to offer an explanatory critical account of the British television sector, it does manage to offer a very clear exploratory account of the sector during a period of extreme turmoil. Tunstall produces a detailed

account of how programmes are created from the perspective of one of television's main organisational forms - *the television series producer*. Although lacking in theory, the importance of this study, apart from its sheer scale and richness in information, is that it was conducted shortly after the 1990 Communications Act and therefore offers a seminal contribution towards television production during a period when many producers were willing to candidly discuss their concerns – and fears. Tunstall explains, the above Communications Act became a catalyst for the television industry in the UK, liberalising and deregulating the industry, and in doing so transforming it in such a way that favoured the independent production sector (see chapter four and five).

The 1990 Broadcasting Act, what Steven Barnett (2006) calls, 'the legacy of a 1980s ideological shift which ushered in a more deregulated and market-based broadcasting system' (p. 6), resulted in the establishment of a new model of television; this is what Tunstall calls, *'the packager model'*. This model consists of small multichannel stations accumulating anywhere between 0.3 percent audience share to slightly larger shares that do not necessarily depend on advertising money in order to stay afloat (for a contemporary discussion on these stations see Griffiths, 2003). The main characteristic of these small stations is that their content and programming strategy usually revolve around one main genre and therefore purchase their content in bulk from the independent production sector. The packager become the new addition to the already existing *'publisher model'* and *'integrated-factory model'*. The 'publisher model' was created after Channel 4's launch in 1982. Since channel 4 did not own studios of its own, it 'commissioned' television programmes from the newly established independent production sector. The commissioning editor became the new 'cultural intermediary' (see section on television production); a profession that grew tremendously in importance in the changing organisational environment of the time. Finally, 'the integrated-factory' has existed in Europe since the creation of European television. The integrated-factory model is found in a vertically integrated television organisation that owns the production, scheduling and distribution of the programme. All three models coexist today in an increasingly mature and complex television market, essentially attesting to Bourdieu's theoretical claims about the relationship between the structure and dynamics of fields and the growing complexity of contemporary society (Bourdieu, 1993).

Jeremy Tunstall's study has been imperative to this study since to a certain extent, it can arguably be considered as its precursor. *Television Producers* however is different in that it is an exploratory account spanning across the whole television industry and not only the BBC. Tunstall offers an inside perspective of the industry in its entirety; he divides the study into seven distinct genres and successfully argues that with the liberalisation of television in the UK, tighter budgets have become the norm. As he argues, during the period of complete integrated-factory dominance, or in other words, the duopoly period of BBC and ITV, producers had little idea of how money was spent (this point too is underlined in chapter 4).

In making this point, Tunstall correctly notes that license fee money was not always well-spent. Today's television budgets are more decentralised and controlled within departments (or genres), and this is more in line with BBC's promise to offer value for license fee money.

While Tunstall's large empirical account of television producers has been extremely useful for the construction of this thesis, it does lack in offering a critical perspective of the changes occurring in British television. This is despite the author's obvious understanding of these changes. Tunstall's main thesis seems to be that with the inception of the 1990 Communications Act, the seeds have been sown in making the BBC a 100 per cent publisher model. This fact is manifested by yet another transition in television that will eventually phase out the integrated-factory model. Tunstall seems at ease with such premises, excluding from his scholarly work the potential dangers of large global independent production companies controlling the production market in the UK.

Radical Media Sociology

Radical media sociology, according to Hesmondhalgh (2007), predominately deals with issues of power; this is an attribute commonly associated with political economy. What differs however is that radical media sociology fails to look at cultural production through 'an overall understanding within contemporary capitalism' (Hesmondhalgh 2002, p.37). Jason Toynbee (2006) makes an important point regarding one radical media sociologist Todd Gitlin: 'Gitlin is undoubtedly in broad agreement with critical political economy of media…yet in one important sense his conclusions lead away from the latter's structural-economic approach' (p. 114). Below is an account of Todd Gitlin's *Inside Prime Time* (1983) the book Toynbee refers to; also reviewed here is Blumler and Spicer's *Prospects for Creativity in the New Television Marketplace: Evidence from Programme-Makers* (1990) that also falls into this category.

Although *Inside Primetime* is somewhat outdated, it remains highly influential and frequently cited in cultural production studies. This is because it offers an in-depth account of how television executives functioned during the peak of the three US networks' oligopoly period. In particular, there are two main chapters that have been widely used. These are the chapters that deal with the making of two specific series, *American Dream* and *Hill Street Blues.* These chapters have contributed to the knowledge of how television programmes are made during this period. However, it is Gitlin's introductory chapters that have made the biggest contribution, and remain historically significant particularly for this study. It is from these introductory chapters that the precariousness of cultural production becomes evident. What Gitlin succeeds in doing is to shed light on the secretive nature of the world of television production in an almost poetic narrative tone. By using phrases such as, 'network lore is momentary' (p.23), 'even novelty is stereotyped' (p. 71), and by using analogies from Woody Allen's *Annie Hall,* it is easy to forget that this is an academic assignment. It remains

however just that. Gitlin highlights the importance of ratings for television executives and 'the need to know' if a programme will do well (identifying common elements with Caves' study on the Cultural Industries). His chapters on concept and pilot testing, and ratings analysis, remain hitherto an under-researched area[17]. As such, an important theme running through the book that was significant in the construction of this particular study is the understanding that due to the lack of trust, broken promises, the need to deliver and uncertainty of television economics, decision-makers tend to choose programme-makers that have a proven track record. As will be surfaced throughout this study, development of television programmes has more to do with the *execution* of ideas than with the *generation* of ideas. Gitlin's work therefore, contributed by making aware this important fact.

Further, Gitlin offers a well-constructed critique of television production. His contribution however, written over twenty years ago, is outdated particularly because of the growth of cable and satellite technologies. In addition, Gitlin's study is based in a large free-market economy that has no real conception of public television the way European markets have. In dealing with the USA's three large networks that work essentially via a publisher model whereby all production is commissioned from Hollywood production studios, it does not leave enough room to truly compare and ground this study. This is because the UK audiovisual sector, as noted above, includes integrated models of television such as BBC and ITV. Additionally, as Toynbee and Hesmondhalgh have mentioned in their overall analysis of radical sociology, it fails to recognise communications within a broader societal level.

Blumler and Spicer's study of how American television programmes are made and what the prospects for broadcast creativity are, offers an original approach to television production. This qualitative study, conducted at a time in the United States when cable and satellite platforms and stations were just beginning to enjoy widespread popularity, is incisive and significant, albeit unfamiliar to many. The study reflects an important period in American television history. Conceptualising the study, the two scholars argue that television is:

> examined for the distribution of audience shares, the flow of advertising and other revenues, the commercial and regulatory prospects of the new media enterprises, organisational trends (e.g., concentration and vertical integration), production costs, and 'level playing field' issues…*Missing however, has been consideration of how multichannel expansion has affected the conditions under which programs are made. Yet, this is fundamental, since, as Westen (20, p36) has pointed out, what finds its way into schedules 'depends on what types of creativity in program ideas and themes [are] allowed and encouraged by those who are producing and financing the programs. (p. 78)*

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[17] The few seminal contributions in this area are Gunter and Wober (1992), Gunter (2000), Napoli (2003), Born, (2004), Webster, Phalen, & Lichty (2006) and Toynbee (2006)

Although Blumler and Spicer's study is almost two decades old, it remains important mainly for the following two reasons. First, as the above paragraph states, it shows that studies on programme-making are in short supply (even today), and second, like Gitlin's empirical study, it reinforces the decisions made to use similar methodological approaches in this thesis hence validating the choice of methodologies used here (see chapter three).

Blumler and Spicer's study advocate a change in US television which 'expands and restructures US public television' towards a model similar to that in the UK (p.100). Throughout the study, the authors address the positive and negative aspects of a multichannel environment that coexist with the (at the time), three major networks. They argue that despite the fact that budgets might be lower and quality sometimes deteriorates, producers feel that more work can be commissioned since the outlets are substantially greater. This translates to better job security for programme-makers. Additionally, an important conclusion from their research is that occasionally, producers were relieved to work in less bureaucratic environments that existed in smaller multichannel stations. This can lead to 'a less drawn development process' (p.85) and as such, creativity can flourish. However, the authors also warn that regardless of the changes in a multichannel environment, 'plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose' (p.96), or *the more things change, the more they stay the same*. The authors consequently conclude that creativity is not always fostered since multichannels are also growing in size and therefore programming strategies are increasingly looking similar to the major networks. 'Some (programme-makers) saw relatively little difference among the various outlets in their readiness to foster creativity' (ibid.). As independent production companies continue to expand and grow in the UK, they too will become bureaucratic and more prone to stifle creativity. If anything, the existing integrated bureaucracies (e.g. BBC and ITV), have more experience in fostering creativity.

Blumler and Spicer make an important contribution to the creative processes of television programme-making, but do so without taking into consideration important external factors such as technology and regulation. Therefore like Gitlin's *Inside Prime Time*, the contribution they make does not consider broader societal issues that undoubtedly play an important role in issues such as creativity within the television marketplace.

Cultural Studies

Cultural studies scholars became very active from the early 1970s onwards. Many scholars working in this field whom had graduated from the celebrated Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham (for example, Charlotte Brunston, Larry Grosswell, David Morley), created quite a stir within the field of sociology, albeit the closure of the centre several decades later (see Webster, 2004, pp. 852 – 853). Although cultural studies covers a broad field of study, in regards to communications and media, it is often

identified with studies of consumption. It is important to note that the approach has a lot in common with political economy and the 'production' of media. Douglas Kellner (1996) points to the interdependency of political economy and cultural studies, and subsequently argues that the 'bifurcation' of political economy and cultural studies is a 'false dichotomy' (pp. 101 – 103). Stuart Hall, a founding father of cultural studies argued an encoding-decoding process in media studies. However, many cultural studies scholars, influenced by the 'postmodern turn' (ibid. p. 104) during the 1990s, concentrated more on the *encoding* aspect of his model. Emphasis was placed on consumptions and pleasures, argues Kellner. The differences of the two approaches can be identified through a historical analysis. Traditionally, political economy derives from the social sciences whereas cultural studies derives from humanities (Garnham 1997, Kellner 1996, Murdock and Golding, 2005). Researchers from a political economy of communications perspective seek to study and analyse cultural production and the external factors that affect production (e.g. regulation and re-regulation, history, technology, economics) from an *outside* viewpoint. As Kellner notes, cultural commodities are produced 'within a specific economic system, constituted by relations between the state, the economy, social institutions and practices, culture and organisations like the media' (p. 105). Cultural studies on the other hand, takes an *internal* perspective and looks at how meaning is constructed and how audiences create meanings of culture. Both however, have a common goal in taking a critical stance towards the media and in distancing themselves from more liberal-pluralist viewpoints since ideologically, they hold a similar broad neo-Marxist view of society (Graham and Murdock, 2005).

The one area that cultural studies has made a significant contribution in conceptualising cultural production is in audience research and the consumption of media texts (Williams, 2003). Ang's *Desperately Seeking the Audience* (1991) demonstrates that the concept of 'audience' is more elusive than the field of media economics and audience measurement organisations claim it to be. Ang uses the BBC to draw attention to her thesis. Echoing the political economist Nicholas Garnham (1983), (further support of how the two approaches bear more similarities than differences), Ang argues that Public Service Broadcasting (and especially the BBC), is losing its imagination, its will to endure ongoing internal struggles and disputes, but more importantly, it is losing its will to define *the audience as public* due to the complexities surrounding such a difficult concept.

By using a historical analysis of BBC programming policy, Ang explicates how the organisation gradually became more inclined to schedule entertainment content since audiences were not willing to 'be disciplined' as John Reith would have wanted them to (see chapter 4 of this study). Reith's attempts were to steer the BBC's audience in a certain direction by means of trying to discipline them in a paternalistic manner. However, as competition grew, audiences started tuning to radio stations from the European continent (e.g. Radio Luxemburg), and then to ITV with its subsequent launch in 1955. Ang notes:

> The BBC recognised the success of programming strategies of the *commercial* radio stations. American formulae, styles and formats were gradually adopted, such as continuity, regularity and slickness of presentation (p.112)

Gradually, the BBC accepted that audiences could not be controlled to watch and listen to programmes the way Reith had envisioned. In realising this, the BBC changed its approach towards audiences and became more 'empirical' (p. 110) by attempting to understand more about audiences by commissioning different research projects until finally they created an internal division headed by Robert Silvey. Ang notes that ever since the BBC created this division, it gradually succumbed to compete in a commercial environment where ratings are paramount.

Ratings discourse, argues Ang has become an entrenched part of television. This argument is her central thesis. Audiences are losing their identity (if there is indeed an 'audience' she argues), since the institutional point of view (PSB included), is pursuing a discourse 'devoid of any subjective peculiarities' (Belanger, 1993). This loss of identity is occurring vis-à-vis television discourse since empirical evidence of audiences is *post hoc* and restricted to statistical figures that do not offer enough information regarding the audience. Ang therefore argues that methodologies need revising. Ethnographic work on audiencehood she argues further, can offer more than just what is offered by ratings discourse.

In concluding, Ang notes the BBC has steadily changed its interventionist approach to creating a disciplined audience by trying to 'match or anticipate' what audiences wanted (p. 113). This essentially led to the BBC being caught between two worlds. On the one hand they wanted to remain true to the traditions of a public service ethos, and on the other to retain their audience in light of increased competition. This is a predicament that has followed the BBC ever since. Both the BBC and ITV consequently entered the discourse of audience measurement, or 'ratings discourse' (p. 114), that now encapsulates the industry as a whole in the digital age.

The contribution made by Ang in regards to this thesis therefore is twofold. Firstly, she offers a perspective of how the BBC pursues its programming policy since its inception. In other words, programming that had been more 'paternalistic', gradually changed to that of a lighter approach that seemed more similar with its commercial counterparts (a significant component of this thesis that is scrutinised further in chapter 4). Secondly, Ang's theoretical and critical standing offers a proposition that will be analysed within the empirical fieldwork of this thesis. In other words, this thesis seeks to analyse how the BBC perceives its audience today. What kind of research is used and why. In getting a clearer picture of this proposition, we might better understand the view the BBC has of its audience.

Political Economy

Although political economy dates back to 18th Century philosophers from Scotland and England (Adam Smith and David Ricardo), it is the 'younger' discipline of classical economics that has been more frequently used when analysing contemporary markets and organisations (Mosco, 1996). Despite the popularity of classical economics, from the 1960s until the 1990s, cultural production was generally studied through the lens of a traditional political economy of communications approach. As Hesmondhalgh points out, 'political economy is often used as a shorthand term for studies of production' (2002, p. 42). According to various scholars (e.g. Negus, 2002a; Hesmondhalgh 2007), political economy can be divided into two different approaches. These are the *Schiller – McChesney Political Economy* and the *Cultural Industries Political Economy* (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, pp. 30 – 35). Although the differences are explained below in more detail, it is first worth noting that they share the same general beliefs regarding cultural production. Specifically, both branches of political economy take a common critical stance when studying cultural production. As such, political economy distances itself from classical economics by addressing issues of power and attempts to understand the ethical dilemmas involved when studying organisations that produce culture. In a well-cited text by Golding and Murdock (2005), it is noted that the main differences between political economy and classical economics are that political economy is holistic, historical, looks at issues of public intervention as a benefit to society rather than a hindrance, and asks what the best choices are for the public interest (see also Hesmondhalgh, 2007). While the two political economy approaches share these significant philosophical characteristics, following are their main differences.

Schiller – McChesney Political Economy

Due to the media's prominence in shaping contemporary societies (see Gauntlett, 2005 for a comprehensive account of how the media affect societies), one concern of the Schiller - McChesney branch of political economy is that media production and distribution is gradually being concentrated into just a handful of media conglomerates (Chalaby, 2003; Bagdikian, 2004; Hesmondhalgh 2006b, 2007). As such, political economists attempt to offer ample empirical evidence as to the dangers of market concentration and diversity in the media (Iosifidis 1999), as well as other ominous macro-level growth patterns (see for example, Chomsky and Herman, 1988; Schiller, 1989; Murdock and Golding, 1999; Bagdikian, 2004).

As many political economists argue, from the 1970s onwards, media organisations grew in size due to increased deregulation and liberalisation policies (for example, the US Telecommunications Act of 1996), that led to a wave of mergers and acquisitions in the industry. Consequently, Herman and McChesney (1997) have conceded that the media are now divided into two tiers. Currently, the first tier consists of a group of only seven media organisations with total annual revenues of 180 billion dollars and each individual

organisation with no less than annual revenues of over 15 billion dollars (Hesmondhalgh 2007). The second tier consists of several dozen media organisations (including the BBC), with annual revenues of no less than one billion dollars each (Chalaby, 2003). From the second tier, a number of media organisations are emerging that are based outside the USA. These organisations are regional players that are yet to challenge the primacy of first tier media organisations but are nevertheless growing in significance (Chalaby, 2006). It is significant to keep track of the emerging players such as independent production companies and how they might break into this elite group.

Some political economists that fall into the *Schiller – McChesney* branch have taken an even harsher critical stance when analysing the media. A leading figure of this resolute subdivision of political economy is Dallas Smythe (Toynbee, 2006). Advocating a stringent model of political economy that highlights the economic base as a determinant (profits above all), Smythe believed the commoditisation of cultural industries has resulted in many detrimental effects for democratic societies (1977). He pointed out that under capitalist media organisations, audiences and readers that consume media texts *work* on behalf of media owners. Encompassing an encoding – decoding model of communications, he sums up his main thesis in the following way,

> all non-sleeping time of most of the population is working time...advertisers buy the services of audiences with predictable specifications who will pay attention in predictable numbers and at particular times to particular means of communications (p. 3-4)

Although he wrote his main thesis in the 1960s and 1970s, he recognised the burgeoning fragmentation of audiences that are being demographically divided and targeted in terms of 'age, sex, income level, family composition, urban or rural location, ethnic character, ownership of home, automobile, credit card status, social class' and other audience commodity specifications (ibid.). The demographic segmentations he wrote of entail even more importance today since television stations are not only divided into different timeslots that cater to different 'working' audiences, but are also divided and devoted *entirely* to one specific demographic group; such examples are seen in the creation of thematic stations (e.g. *The History Channel, Comedy Central*; see the analysis above on Tunstall's integrated-factory model and packager model).

Yet while the *Schiller – McChesney* political economy approach offers valid arguments regarding the significance of media transitions, it fails to address various micro-level issues involved in cultural production, feeling more at ease with taking an overarching macro-level approach. In Robert McChesney's *Corporate Media and the Threat to Democracy* (1997) for example, it is noted that the consolidation of media organisations has affected journalism to such an extent that 'highly partisan journalism tended to be bad business' (p.13), since it could affect potential readership figures and therefore advertising revenue. True to its

discipline, the McChesney paper takes a historical and holistic perspective comparing the highly partisan journalism of the 1800s with today's commercially influenced journalism, noting that 'press releases and PR-generated material today account for between 40-70 percent of the news in today's media' (p.15). The study also does a good job in criticising ownership patterns of media organisations. Similar to the latter work of Ben Bagdikian (2004), and offering a number of examples as to why this has occurred, McChesney notes that more media power is concentrated in fewer organisations calling the sector a 'highly concentrated, unaccountable economic power' (p.45). However, McChesney fails to take note of a number of issues. For example, he does not take into consideration the heavily consumed entertainment genres, the constraints and difficulties of the creative processes, and in understanding the tensions between cultural producers and media owners at a micro-level. These issues are better addressed in the cultural industries political economy approach discussed below.

Cultural Industries Political Economy

As Negus (2002a) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) note, the cultural industries political economy approach derives predominantly from the work of Bernard Miége (1989) and a series of essays from Nicholas Garnham (1990). As will be shown below, the cultural industries approach allows for a more flexible stance to be taken regarding cultural production, but at the same time manages to sustain its critical stance. Nicholas Garnham for example, accepts the criticism made regarding political economy's economic determinism (e.g. Robins and Webster, 1988), and argues that 'political economy is always concerned with analysing a structure of social relations and of social powers', (1990, p.7). In doing this Garnham is calling for a political economy approach that is more open to other determinants. Yet while conceding that other social factors play a role, he places them in a 'hierarchy of determinants', arguing that these determinants 'are increasingly mediated through a monetary-based exchange system…based upon a historically specific relation between capital and labour' (ibid.). Cultural industry political economists therefore, advocate an approach that is not as stringent and wholly dependent on the economic base.

Summarizing the work of Garnham and Miege, Hesmondhalgh identifies six specific elements of this approach (2007). Following is an account of these elements and how they have been used in order to conceptualise this thesis.

1   Contradiction

Hesmondhalgh states, 'the cultural industries approach's emphasis on problems and contradictions…provides a more accurate picture of cultural production' (pp. 35-36). This approach portrays a realistic picture of what is occurring in cultural production on a micro-level as opposed to traditional political economy because it addresses the agency occurring

internally within media organisations. Ryan (1992), echoing Garnham (1990), makes the point that although many of Garnham's views are outdated and 'reflect nineteenth century concerns' (p. 4), his arguments concerning mass media as a contradictory process are valid. Three points are of concern here: 1. Actual and ideological resistances to the industrialisation of the artisanal modes of cultural production, 2. Conflicts between national and international capitals, and 3. Third World demand for a new World Information Order (p. 38). In researching the BBC's television production process for example, contradictions are witnessed through the increasingly competitive nature between in-house production and the independent television production sector. Chapter four and five look in closer detail as to how the sector was established and supported by government policy in order to compete on a global level and in so doing, disempowering the BBC's own production arm.

2   The specific conditions of cultural industries

Hesmondhalgh notes that while the Schiller – McChesney tradition identifies the differences between classical economics and political economy, it fails to identify the differences between culture industries and other industries. The cultural industries approach takes these differences into consideration and therefore makes a stronger defence as to the use of political economy rather than classical economics to analyse and research cultural production. Garnham argues that because the use-value of cultural goods is limitless, it is hard to attach an exchange-value. Ryan (1992) similarly argues, 'unlike many other types of workers, capital is unable to make the artist completely subservient to its drive for accumulation…since art is centred upon the expressive, individual artist, artistic objects must appear as the product of recognizable persons' (pp. 41-42). At the heart of cultural production is the fact that such products have intrinsic values for those producing them (see chapter two on definitions of intrinsic value). Due to the inimitable nature of broadcasting for example, various *new public management* techniques (see chapter two), such as internal competition might work for various public administrations but might need to be reconsidered when applied at the BBC due to the uniqueness of stimulating the creative process[18].

3   Tensions between production and consumption

Hesmondhalgh notes that unlike traditional political economy, cultural industries political economy recognises the connection between production and consumption and the tensions that can arise between the two. Production and consumption should be seen as two parts of the same process as has already been supported in this chapter. It takes into consideration the audience as much as the producer. This thesis will attempt to analyse the connection

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[18] During John Birt's reign at the BBC, the organisation went through a series of new public management changes that were met with significant producer resistance that occurred because according to the producers, management had no idea how the creative process worked and how important these goods meant to them (see chapter four of this thesis; Barnett and Curry 1994; Born, 2004; Harris and Wegg-Prosser 2007).

between the two by looking at how the BBC uses consumption patterns in the creative process (highlighted in chapter six).

4.   Symbol creators

Hesmondhalgh points out, 'the cultural industries approach puts *symbol creators* – the personnel responsible for the creative input in texts, such as writers, directors, producers, performers – in the picture. Conversely, they are almost completely absent from the Schiller-McChesney tradition' (2007, pp. 36-37). This point bears similarities with the sociology of culture approach (see below). It is important to understand for example the significance of new television cultural intermediaries such as commissioners (see below), and how they affect the creative process. When John Birt was replaced by Greg Dyke at the BBC (see chapter four), he immediately realised the significance of placing people with television backgrounds into the picture of how creativity should be stimulated.

5.   Information and entertainment

This approach places all genres and not just journalism and current affairs under the microscope in order to understand the creative process (unlike the Schiller-McChesney approach). Similarly with Georgina Born's *Uncertain Vision* (2004), this thesis considers the creativity of all programmes and looks at the role television as a whole plays in the formation of contemporary societies and of the effects television can have on public opinion.

6.   Historical variations in the social relations of cultural production

Hesmondhalgh notes that historical variations are important for all political economy but this approach considers it more sensitive and relevant to contemporary changes in cultural production[19] (see the methodology chapter for more on the significance of historical analysis).

Cultural Industries Political Economy Example

One recent example of how political economists are moving towards a more cultural industries approach is Iosifidis' study of public service broadcasting strategies in the digital age (2007). Specifically, Iosifidis has attempted to analyse how six public service broadcasters in the European Union are adapting to changes in the audiovisual sector. These changes are occurring due to digital switchover (this in itself is an element showing the value of other determinants other than the economic base). Iosifidis categorises six overarching changes that have led to new challenges facing contemporary public television.

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[19] It is for this reason that this chapter devotes a whole section on the historical perspective of cultural production as well as on the history of the BBC (see chapter four).

These are, technological, political, economic, regulatory, market concentration and socio-cultural. In order to comprehend how public service broadcasters are responding to these changes and what strategies are required of them, Iosifidis takes on a marginally cultural political economy approach[20]. Additionally, the study analyses the programming strategies and restructuring efforts of each of the six public service broadcasters in order to both explore and explain how public service organisations can cope in the new digital era. In concluding, Iosifidis notes that Public Service Broadcasting is at an important junction. As he emphasises, public service broadcasters are now competing directly with private channels and therefore programming strategies on both public and private channels is looking distinctly similar (a statement echoing Ang, 1991). The dilemma occurs in contemporary PSB because of a recurring political economy question that Iosifidis resurfaces: *'What should the mission of PTV (public television) broadcasters be?'* (p. 178). Additionally, public channels are continuously faced with the challenge of producing content that has pubic value characteristics but at the same time a clear and universal definition of public service broadcasting in the digital age remains lacking (on this note see also Born and Prosser, 2001). A start, according to Iosifidis, is for PTV production to amend the currently erroneous Rheithian PSB heritage. In other words to 'not merely inform, educate and entertain but also to empower citizens' (p. 179). This falls also in line with the paradigm shift from public service broadcasting to public service media (see Lowe and Bordoel et al., 2007).

Sociology of Culture

Studies from this particular field attempt to address how creativity can be demystified and achieved by looking closer at organisational forms and at how management processes occur within such organisations. While the sociology of culture has drawbacks in understanding cultural production within 'a wider economic, political, and cultural contexts' (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p. 38), it nevertheless, does much to support that creative processes should be seen as social processes (a theme also running throughout this thesis). The approach therefore has contributed significantly to our understanding of how creativity can better be managed in organisations; by doing so also contributing to the growth of the creative industries.

According to Hesmondhalgh, many American scholars have been influenced heavily by the 'Weberian' tradition of social rationalisation in order to address how culture is produced (e.g. Hirsch, 1972; Ryan and Peterson, 1982; see DiMaggio, 2001 for a more overarching analysis of this tradition). In the UK, Raymond Williams' *Culture* (1981) has been influential towards the dissemination of this approach albeit Williams' status as one of the founding

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[20] I say marginally because although his informants are not cultural intermediaries or symbol creators, Iosifidis' decision to research PSB internally and look at professionals such as schedulers and researchers highlights the changing attitudes from traditional political economy to cultural political economy. Respondents of Iosifidis are playing an ever-increasing role in the development process and in the overall strategy of television.

fathers of Cultural Studies. As Williams argues (pp. 9-32), sociology of culture must 'concern itself' with the following seven points:

1   The social processes of all cultural production.
2   The institutions and formations of cultural production.
3   The social relations of the specific means of production.
4   The ways in which culture and cultural production are socially identified and distinguished.
5   The specific artistic forms.
6   The processes of social and cultural 'reproduction'.
7   The general and specific problems of cultural organisations.

In a paper calling for television studies to draw on the sociology of culture (Born, 2000), it is noted that the approach can be used because of how it addresses issues of human agency and reflexivity. These characteristics according to Born, are considered paramount in television production discourse. Much of this is seen in Born's large-scale study on the BBC (2004) that is analysed further in chapter four. Born notes that television studies must also be concerned with what she calls, 'external discourses' (p. 407) such as auditing, accountability, audience research, and marketing and how they also play a role in the creative process. All these themes are central themes running through this thesis as evidenced in chapter four (history of BBC creativity) and chapter six (the BBC today).

It is interesting at this point to note the similarities between the sociology of culture and the cultural industries approach of political economy. Indeed, it is noted in Williams, political economy is 'necessary' and should be 'complementary' to a sociology of culture (1981, p. 32). Bill Ryan's study of Australian media, *Making Culture From Capital*, (1992), is a good example of how the two approaches converge in order to conceptualise cultural production. Drawing on management theory (Clegg, 1975; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980), sociology (Giddens, 1984) and political economy (Garnham, 1990), Ryan uses his 'insider' background to record the subtle 'modes of rationality' (a phrase used by Clegg) occurring during the production stage of many Australian media products. At the outset, Ryan advocates Garnham's argument that cultural production needs to be researched from within a political economy framework arguing that 'processes of mental production have been transformed to a greater or lesser degree into capitalist community production (p.4). Yet Ryan uses an approach different to that of the *Schiller – Mcchesney* political economy. In his attempt to argue that contemporary cultural commodities have formulaic tendencies, rather than taking a macro-economic perspective regarding say the concentration of the media, he prefers a micro-economic account of the organisational forms of media organisations. By breaking down the creative process during media production, he concludes, the creative process - historically a process considered elusive and non-linear - under capitalist modes of production becomes *formatted* and therefore the final media products are more inclined to be

standardised and formulaic (p. 146). Furthermore, Ryan makes three significant points in his study by drawing on multiple disciplines. First, cultural production needs to be addressed within a historical perspective; second, the production stage of media is broken down into various phases; and third, the creative process is something that occurs by what he calls a 'project team' (similar to Ryan and Peterson's – sociology of culture study on how country music is produced through a *decision chain* consisting of different phases and different creative talent, 1982, p. 12). Ryan's first two points were addressed in this chapter at prior moments; however, it is equally relevant to address the issue of the project team for it allows the creative process to be demystified, placed in a social setting and therefore managed more efficiently. Ryan defines the project team in the following way (p. 125),

> [...] a structure of positions in the creative stage of production. As such it is not necessarily coterminous with the creative department of an organisation, nor is it restricted to its staff. Being corporate production, creation may spread across several firms. The task of creation sometimes involves general management in so far as they contribute to conception as artistic leaders...the project team represents the collective (artistic) labourer in production, a complex structure of roles defined in functional terms.

Ryan in other words is signifying the importance of different groups of people, some based within an organisation, and some within a broader context, in order to achieve a successful media product (refer to Caves' notion of *Motley Crew* – see above).

1.3 TELEVISION PRODUCTION

Television is the largest of the cultural industries that 'produce social meaning' (Hesmondhalgh, 2002, p.11). The British television market, at over 17 billion euro, is the largest in the European Union (Iosifidis, Steemers, and Wheeler, 2005). It should come as no surprise therefore that the number of hours British audiences spend consuming television is the highest in Europe. Consequently, television plays a significant role in shaping British public opinion and serving the interests of viewers both as consumers and citizens; the significance of television production therefore, should not be underestimated (Born, 2000). In labelling the viewer as both consumer and citizen, Ofcom notes, 'if the interests of viewers as both consumers and UK citizens are met by the programming output they see on their television screens, then we can conclude that the television production sector is fulfilling its purpose' (Ofcom, 2006a).

As shown in this chapter thus far, a significant amount of literature on television production has previously been addressed on the literature review regarding cultural production (sections 1 and 2). In large part, this is because the legitimacy of establishing a television production theoretical strand depends on the overarching literature on cultural production. In order to avoid redundancy therefore, this section will concentrate on what is specific for

television production and the two different aspects of what makes television production unique. These are (1) the tensions between commerce and creativity in television, and (2) the different institutions and genres involved in television production of original programmes.

1.3.1.   Tensions Between Commerce and Creativity in Television

Tensions between creativity and commerce are a central theme of television production discourse. Numerous studies on the BBC have shown this to be true for the public service broadcaster as well. Burns (1977), Curran and Seaton (1997), Küng-Shankleman (2000), and Born (2004) all refer to enduring tensions between commerce and creativity in how programmes at the BBC are created. Specifically, Curran and Seaton note, 'running a modern broadcasting organisation almost inevitably develops a tension between industrialisation and craft production' (p.222). For this reason, BBC producers in the 1960s and 1970s were deliberately separated from management. Producers during the period, often considered the golden age of broadcasting (see chapter four), were largely autonomous, and often perceived management as 'lepers' (ibid.). The following part of this section looks at how and why these tensions exist in television production and introduces the concept of 'cultural intermediaries' and how they are used to alleviate tension and stimulate creativity.

Due to television's ability in streaming images 24-hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, television managers are under constant pressure to produce or purchase programmes at a rate that will allow them to retain their audiences (Williams, 2003). Additionally, television programmes, like many other media products, are known to have a short life-cycle (for example, newspapers, books and films are rarely consumed more than once) (Aris and Bughin, 2005). Television programmes are especially vulnerable since they are produced to attract a daily audience the majority of which do not directly pay for the programme and are therefore less loyal than with other media. Audiences are inevitably free to choose from a growing number of television channels[21]. Television owners attempt to prolong the life of programmes by using techniques such as episodes and series (Barwise and Ehrenberg 1988). Furthermore, once a television programme is distributed, there is plenty of uncertainty involved regarding the success or failure of that programmes (Napoli, 2003; Caves, 2005) (see Toynbee, 2000 for popular music unpredictability; Ryan 1992, Caves, 2000 for all media). Emphasising this point, Ryan notes (1992),

> Media companies must organize production to generate a constant flow of originals to the reproduction process: *they are locked into recurrent cycles of production.* This means constant cycles of reinvestment in artistic labour, an imperative which

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[21] New on-demand technologies are of course improving the choices audiences make, and the BBC is at the heart of such changes. Television viewers can now enjoy not only the choice of what channel to watch but also what programme to watch during their own made schedules (see chapter five for more information regarding BBC iplayer).

also interacts with the organisational irrationalities of
creativity.
(p. 58)

Because of the unpredictability involved and due to the nonstop streaming of television programmes into our homes, television producers are under constant pressure to continuously create original programmes. It is crucial therefore that programmes make an immediate impact in the market. Television programmes must attract audiences straight away since they rely on daily ratings and not on drawn out sales figures such as box-office returns. Consequently, television success seldom relies on word of mouth alone (unlike books and films), and requires marketing, genres and a star-system, often more than other media forms, in order to minimise risk (Ryan, 1992; Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002; Napoli, 2003; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). If a programme does fail however - like many do - television owners are still required to continue developing a 'constant flow of originals' (Ryan, 1992, p. 60). Küng-Shankleman (2000) notes that in broadcasting there is a '[   ]…pressure for constant product innovation [whereby] each product is effectively a prototype or one-off' (p. 46). This cyclical process merely accentuates the tension between commerce and creativity. Additionally, as mentioned in section 1.1, cultural producers are also perceived as 'divine' and require their own 'time' to create. It therefore involves more implicit time pressures to produce original programmes. Regardless of whether the tension between creativity and commerce exists in television due to time constraints, to the artists' need to 'transcend the earthly' or both, it remains a very manifest tension. Therefore, managing the creative process, searching for the best ideas and subsequently minimising these tensions and gaining the most out of a possible programme requires the television organisation to be structured in a way that is considerably different from the 'Weberian' bureaucratic structures that have prevailed in many organisations since the industrialisation of societies (see chapter two).

The 'new' television cultural intermediary

In order for creativity to be nurtured during cultural production, creator(s) require autonomy, nonconformity and indeterminacy (Davis and Scase, 2000); these are traits that are systematically suppressed in bureaucratic models of organisations. In fact, Davis and Scase argue that the most creative cultural workers such as novelists, scriptwriters, composers, and musicians prefer to work as freelancers in order to completely avoid any organisational bureaucratic structures (p.76). Nevertheless, the distribution of television programmes is still under the authority and control of large organisations and not of programme-makers. Creativity in television therefore, on an organisational level, can be stimulated by the introduction of new managerial approaches and with specific organisational forms that specialise in dealing with both managerial and artistic constraints.

In order to be sure that a continuous flow of television programmes are created with the least amount of tension between symbol creators and large television organisations, specific occupational forms have been created - particularly in recent years. These occupations exist to build a mutual understanding between the 'artists' creating the work, and the managers whose job it is to see that finances are in good order (or in other words, that money is being made, and / or that the programmes are being watched). Imperative therefore in the assuaging of the tensions between creativity and commerce is a specific subdivision of the 'cultural intermediary' (Ryan, 1992; Negus 2002a; Jeffcutt and Pratt 2002). Used here in a 'Bourdieuan' sense, occupational forms present in this group can for example, be agents who work on behalf of freelance creators, account executives that work in advertising agencies, and significantly for this study, channel controllers and genre commissioners working in the field of television.

It is noted in Ryan (1992) that the cultural intermediary (he prefers the phrase 'creative manager'), has historically derived from the artistic side (pp. 121-124). As the cultural industries continued to grow, these managers became closer attached and related to the financial and high management levels of the organisations. Nevertheless, they have never ceased to misplace their affinity towards the artist. The result is that these particular cultural intermediaries are well-placed to negotiate the best possible outcome on behalf of both the artist and organisation. This has also being true for the television commissioner.

It is important at this point to trace the history and note the various definitions of the phrase cultural intermediary, since using it without doing so might lead to further confusion than that in which it already instils (see Hesmondhalgh 2002, p.53). Bourdieu's term 'cultural intermediaries' (1984) is now a phrase extensively used by theorists struggling to explain the field of cultural production and the growing number of occupational groups that deal with the presentation and representation of symbolic goods (Nixon and Du Gay 2002, and Negus, 2002b). The evident confusion of its use has led to the phrase often being changed from its original definition in the writings of Bourdieu, to something that fits the work of those using it (Hesmondhalgh, 2002; 2006). Additionally, theorists tend to change the phrase completely but keep something of its original definition; this only leads to further confusion (for example, DiMaggio's *'broker'*, Lash and Urry's *'service class'*, Miége's *'editeur'* and Ryan's *'creative manager')*. One scholar that has been extensively cited because of his use of the term is Featherstone (1992). Using the phrase on a more overarching level in order to explicate a postmodern consumer culture rather than merely within cultural production (and consumption), he argues that this emergent group has shifted the balance in favour of those with cultural capital as opposed to economic capital. What is interesting with Featherstone's thesis is his analysis of the 1960s cohort, with their openness 'to emotional exploration, aesthetic experience, and aestheticization of life' (p.45). From this cohort onwards, societies have come to appreciate cultural production more since they are also producers as well as consumers. The artist is constantly perceived as the hero. An effect of this has been that

the distance between the artistic and the business community is constantly diminishing (see also Florida, 2002). Furthermore, even from the original description used by Bourdieu, the word 'new' attached to 'cultural intermediaries' has been identified as confusing and problematic since as Nixon and Du Gay (2002) and McFall (2002) point out, exactly 'how new are these occupations and when did they expand?' (Nixon and Du Gay, 2002, p. 497). According to Hesmondhalgh (2002), the 'new' refers to the newer bourgeois professions associated with the mass media whereas the 'old' refers to the 'critiques and experts on serious legitimate culture.' (p. 54).

The 'new' attached to the phrase is significant in today's field of television production. By adding 'new' this shows the growing complexity of the field of television production that is currently occurring. This fact also falls in line with Hesmondhalgh's argument that we are currently living in what he calls, 'the complex professional era' (2007, p.52-53). In my mind, the television cultural intermediary twenty years ago accounted for the television producer (see Bourdieu, 1984); however the *new* cultural intermediary in television production working in the complex professional era is not the producer but the commissioner, and for that reason is imperative for this study. Paterson's study on work histories in television (2001) notes, 'Power now resides with commissioning editors whose transactions are increasingly tailored through market research' (p.495).

1.3.2   Television Institutions and Original Programmes

While television organisations have grown significantly over the past thirty years, so has the number of small corporations that cater to these large firms. It is noted in Hesmondhalgh (2007), that this is occurring because 'the conception phase of texts (discussed above), 'remains small-scale and relatively inexpensive and still takes place in relatively autonomous conditions' (p. 174-175). Additionally, five more reasons have occurred that have allowed smaller cultural organisations to flourish (ibid.):

1. New media technologies and intensified business interests
2. A rise in entrepreneurialism
3. Venture capital support
4. Disintegration of dominant vertically integrated organisations
5. Marketing of cultural industry organisations

Point four, the disintegration of dominant vertically integrated organisations, is crucial for this thesis as will be shown in the historical account of the BBC in chapter four. Significantly, chapter four highlights the growth of the independent production sector that now caters to British television. Hesmondhalgh makes an interesting point that 'these small firms are potentially more dynamic and able to innovate than the larger conglomerates but they are increasingly involved in close relationships with the corporations that subcontract to them'

(2007, p. 176). Based on this assumption, a fourth model has been introduced to the three existing organisational models, or institutions involved in television production. As noted in a previous section of this chapter these are the *integrated-factory*, the *publisher*, and the *packager* (see review of Jeremy Tunstall's Television Producers, 1993 above). The fourth model, as mentioned by Küng-Shankleman (2000) is the *independent producer* although independent producers are not directly involved with broadcasting programmes but rather with producing them (p. 57). All four institutions are distinct in character since they have different common purposes, values, and models of practise (Schlesinger, 2004). Nevertheless, the way television programmes are made involves a complex relationship between these institutions. This is particularly the case since 1982 with the establishment of Channel 4 that commissions all its programmes from the independent production sector, and the 1990 Broadcasting Act[22], that introduced the 25 percent quota and the growth of independent producers (see chapter four and five). Specifically, independent producers make programmes that are commissioned to them from the integrated-factory institution (e.g. The BBC, ITV) and the publisher institution (e.g. Channel 4) and increasingly from digital channels, following a sequence of: *proposal* (submission of idea to broadcaster), *development* (finalising the proposal), *approval* (submission of programme proposal and confirmation by commissioning editor) and *contract* (final terms are made, such as prices, rights, net profits share et cetera) (Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, 2008, pp. 4-5).

In addition to the four institutional models of television, Tunstall (1992) further divides television production into the following seven genres (also noted in Küng-Shankleman, pp. 58-59). These are:

1. Documentary
2. News and Current Affairs
3. Sports
4. Edinfotainment (magazine-style programming)
5. Drama / Fiction
6. Comedy
7. *Light Entertainment*

It should be noted however that programme genres are becoming increasingly irrelevant and difficult to study due to the success of new genres, hybrid genres and more complex forms of programming (Schlesinger, 2004).

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[22] "The Broadcasting Act 1990 (Sections 16(2)(h) and 25(2)(f)) requires all Channel 3 licensees, Channel 4 and Channel 5 to ensure that in each year not less than 25% of the total amount of time allocated to the broadcasting of qualifying programmes is allocated to a range and diversity of independent productions." - Independent Television Commission, ITC Notes.

Original Programmes

All definitions of creativity include the word 'original' (see chapter two). *Original* is also a significant aspect of this thesis, so much so that it is included in its title. It is appropriate therefore to encompass how this thesis conceptualises the notion of *original* television programmes. Ofcom's Second Review of Public Service Broadcasting 'identified that UK-originated programming is a priority for audiences' (Ofcom, 2009b, p. 32). Ofcom (2009) defines original content as such, 'new UK content rather than repeats or acquisitions' (p. 16). Citing Barrowclough (1998), Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, (2008) note that the production process of original programmes is divided into five related stages: finance, resources, programme production, channel generation and channel distribution (figure 1.1). Television programmes are made either in-house in the integrated factory or increasingly within independent television production companies. Packager and publisher models do not get involved with the actual production of television. A 100 percent publisher such as *Channel 4* and *Five*, rather than owning studios and producing their own programmes, commission them from the independent production sector (see chapter four and five).
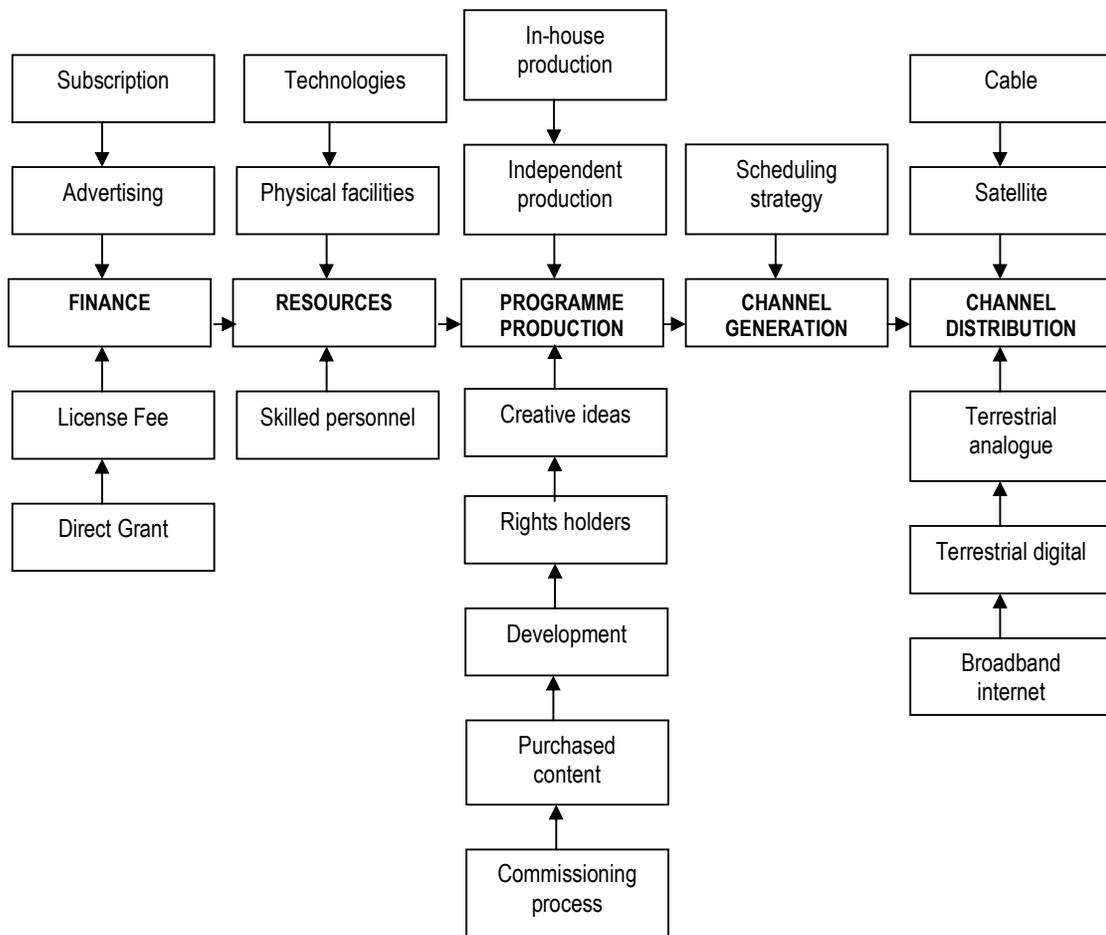
Figure 1.1 The Broadcasting Production Process (Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, 2008)

Commissioning involves 'new' cultural intermediaries getting into short-term alliances with independent production organisations and agreeing an idea for an original programme. At the BBC, due to its integrated-factory attributes, commissioners are broken off from in-house production and therefore commissions can be won in-house or from the independent production sector apparently without any bias. The programme as such is considered as an original. When a television broadcaster wants to fill its schedule with new content but chooses to have it commissioned by an independent production company, various terms of trade agreements are put into place between the broadcaster and the production company (see chapter five for an analysis of the BBC's commissioning process). The original programme should not be confused with 'new programming' that might also include new series of already existing programmes.

Ofcom and PACT (Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television), are used as watchdogs for the whole process of how original programmes are negotiated and agreed upon, therefore the terms of trade and codes of practise are analysed further in chapter five. In addition to commissioning original television programmes, all television broadcasters consist of acquisition departments in which programmes are not commissioned or produced in-house but are rather purchased *ready-made* from independent producers (usually from Hollywood), essentially skipping the resources and programme production stages as shown in figure 1. 'Ownership rights' of acquisitions are usually short-term whereas commissions last longer (seven years). So if Channel 4 broadcasts a sitcom from the US (e.g. *Friends* or *Seinfeld*), it has essentially bought the rights to show it on a short-term basis. If Channel 4 is in talks to produce a programme with an independent production company regarding say a new family drama to be shown every Saturday night at nine p.m., then it is considered a commission.

CONCLUSION

Cultural production discourse spans across different theoretical strands and different historical moments as well as across different sectors of the economy. As a backdrop to the above discourse are the people that produce cultural products. Often perceived as geniuses, other times as pawns of capitalist production, cultural producers struggle to balance their intrinsic creative ambitions with their careers that are all too evidently placed today in an exchange-value environment. Such an environment does not always coincide with their aforementioned ambitions often causing various tensions to surface. This chapter has attempted to conceptualise cultural production by first addressing the notion historically. In this section, the chapter highlights four periods that all characterize cultural production differently. Each subsequent period makes cultural producers appear more like geniuses.

The next section has attempted to address four significant traits of contemporary cultural production the most significant of which are the different theoretical strands that attempt to

conceptualise contemporary cultural production. While the chapter attempts to draw on all mentioned theoretical strands noting various literatures that have been significant from each theory, it makes no attempt to hide its closer affinity with cultural political economy and the sociology of culture. The two approaches are more appropriately equipped in understanding the latent traits of cultural production. Specifically, these involve the various difficulties of placing cultural workers within organisational formations, the problems involved in the actual creative process of all kinds of creative types and significantly, placing the creative process within a social sphere and not something that is done individually. The two approaches converge in many of these significant areas and as such make them ideal in drawing on in order to face the ontological and methodological questions this particular thesis is attempting to address.

The third and final section reviews the individual characteristics of television production. Specifically it looks at why tensions exist between creativity and commerce and the organisational divisions of labour that exist in television to alleviate these tensions. It next attempts to look at the recent changes occurring in the field of television production particularly with the introduction of a new organisational model known as the independent production model. The section also reviews the broadcasting process and how and where original television programmes are placed within the process. By introducing these overarching themes of both cultural production and more specifically of television production, the chapter sets the scene for the rest of the thesis.

Chapter Two

Conceptualising Organisational Creativity Management

INTRODUCTION

Whilst chapter one focused on cultural and television production, chapter two turns its attention to organisational creativity management. Interest in creativity derives from numerous academic disciplines such as communications, organisational studies, psychology, sociology and urban studies. There are two main reasons for the present attention afforded to creativity (see figure 2.1). The first is that a growing number of knowledge-driven societies are determined on becoming *'creative societies'*. A 'creative societies' discourse, to a large extent, stems from the theoretical strand regarding information societies (Webster, 2006). Researchers of 'creative societies' prefer to concentrate on how contemporary societies aim to 'shift creatively' as a whole (Bilton, 2007, p. 15), and on how creativity has become an integral part of their lives. In Richard Florida's popular work on the rise of the creative class (2004) he notes,

> Society is changing in large measure because we want it to…lately a number of diverse and seemingly unconnected threads are starting to come together…that driving force is the rise of human creativity as the key factor in our economy and society. Both at work and in other spheres of our lives, we value creativity more highly than ever and cultivate it more intensely.
> (p. 4)

The second reason why interest in creativity has grown – as implied in the above citation – is the transformation of many societies into '*creative economies'*. Researchers here choose to concentrate solely on macro and micro economic policy, rather than study societies more generally (Asimakou, 2009). Cohesively, 'creative economies' thrive on new ideas through intellectual property (such as those using patents and copyrights) and research and development. For this reason Bilton (2007) argues that creativity 'should not be the privilege of a few officially designated businesses and missing from everywhere else' (p.3). Managing creativity is just as vital for an automotive engineering firm or a pharmaceutical firm as it is for an advertising agency or an independent television production firm (Howkins, 2001). Undoubtedly, the literature on creative economies is of particular importance for this study, since organisations practicing 'creative management' approaches together make up the sum of a creative economy.

'Creative economy' discourse involves two noteworthy strands that seem to be growing in importance. The first, known as 'creative management', concerns a paradigm shift in

organisational management studies built around creativity (Henry, 2006; Xu and Rickards, 2007). 'Creative management' argues that stimulating organisational creativity is the most efficient way to increase productivity. This is so because past management paradigms (bureaucracy, scientific management, total quality management et cetera), have become obsolete in today's global environment and therefore the 'creative management' paradigm is seen as 'a concept with 'potential for rethinking organizational theory' (Xu and Rickards, 2007). Interestingly, the 'creative management' paradigm is seen as a way to increase productivity within organisations from all sectors and not only from the narrowly defined 'creative industries'.

As the 'creative management' paradigm gathers momentum across the economy as a whole, the emergence of the 'creative industries' as a major sector of global enterprise has also contributed towards creativity's significance. It therefore encompasses the second component of the 'creative economy' (Bilton and Leary, 2002; Bilton, 2007; Andriopoulos & Dawson, 2009). The importance of creativity within 'creative industries', as the phrase itself implies, has *always* existed since creativity is imperative for producing successful symbolic products of expressive value such as television programmes, buildings, software or advertising logos (Davis and Scase, 2000; Pratt 2002; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). This is mainly because creativity in such industries has an explicit function that results in the 'generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS, 2007; Bilton, 1999; Bilton 2007). Due to the demand for 'creative industry' products over the past 20 to 30 years, there is now a sense of urgency for knowledge-driven governments to gain a significant competitive advantage within the sector (Banks, Calvey, Owen, and Russell 2002; Hesmondhalgh 2007). While various scholars have been quick to identify the problems surrounding 'creative industries' and policy mismanagement (see section on 'creative industries' below), 'new labour's' decision to support the sector since 1998 has hitherto paid dividends (at least quantitatively) since the UK's 'creative industries' are the largest in the world relative to GDP (Staying Ahead, 2007).
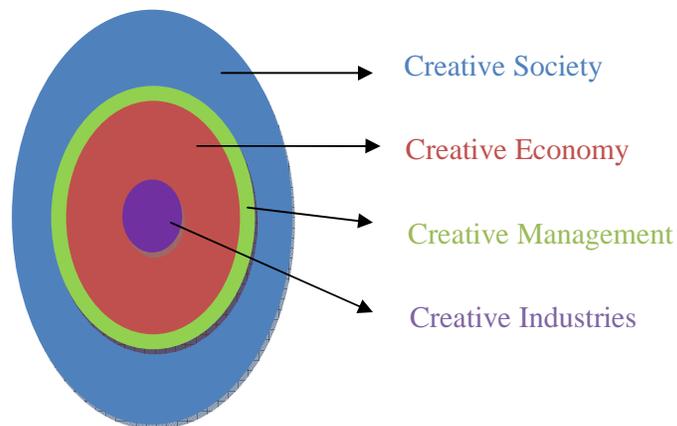
Figure 2.1: Levels of Creativity: Highlights the different levels of creativity. Overarching the creative economy is the creative management paradigm

The 'creative management' paradigm, as well as the growth of the 'creative industries', both play a central role in understanding the significance the BBC currently places on creativity in programme-making. Throughout its history, the BBC has consistently attempted to apply the most recent and fashionable managerial techniques. As noted in Born (2004, p.69), the BBC is 'increasingly influenced by management theories'. Burns (1977), Curran and Seaton (1997), and Born (2004), have all reported on the BBC's reliance on a plethora of management consultants in order to improve the efficiency and accountability of the organisation. Today is no different as will be shown in chapter six, with many reports and studies on the BBC attempting to apply the current 'creative management' paradigm. The BBC has taken this paradigm seriously by going through a major restructuring effort based on what the organisation appropriately calls *creative future*. Not only does the BBC wish to implement creativity strategies as its main function (that of creating programmes), but it is also aspiring on driving creativity throughout all areas of the BBC. Greg Dyke, former Director General of the BBC, seemed to have recognised the importance of creativity even before the Royal Charter included it in the BBC's public purposes, and the BBC itself included it in its annual report of 2006. In an interview he gave to Georgina Born in 2002, after the organisation had gone through a decade of intense bureaucracy, self-regulation, auditing and accountability (2004), he stated,

> In the nineties, one of the stated aims of the BBC was "to be the best managed organisation in the public sector". I have to admit that wouldn't have got me out of bed in the morning. So let me offer you a new vision. We want the BBC to become the most creative organisation in the world, and I don't just mean in the production and programme areas, I mean right across the BBC, everywhere – including the commercial parts, finance, strategy, public policy and HR. Creativity is as important in those areas as in the obvious areas like production.
> (p.467)

The BBC is also one of the largest of the 'creative industries' in the UK (and in the world). As the 'creative industries' have grown in importance so has the role of the BBC, not just in order to cater for a British audience but also to support the creativity of television production as a whole across British industry. In a speech given by James Purnell, at the time Parliamentary under Secretary of State for the Creative Industries, he stated,

> We must not forget that the reason the BBC is one of the world's best brands is its creativity. In preparing the White Paper, we need to think, about the BBC's creativity, and in particular what the government can do to support it. And of course, just as important is the role the BBC can play in supporting the creativity of British industry, whether by investing in British film

or working with the independent production sectors in
television, radio and on-line.
(DCMS, 2005).

Similarly, the then Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport Tessa Jowell, in an interview with the Daily Telegraph argued, 'The money that goes to the BBC through the licence fee is venture capital for the nation's creativity and that's how it should be spent.' (BBC, 2002). Therefore, as the nation's primary public service broadcaster and as one of the largest media companies in the UK, the BBC has been given added responsibility in stimulating the nation's creativity. Significantly, when the BBC stimulates creativity for the development of original programmes it is simultaneously fulfilling the role of stimulating British broadcasting creativity as a whole.

This chapter seeks to dissect the 'creative management' paradigm and the 'creative industries' as part of its broader aim of conceptualising organisational creativity. Specifically, the chapter is divided into four sections. It opens with an analysis of the most significant erstwhile management paradigms of the past century by drawing on the work of various organisational theorists, notably DiMaggio (2001) and Xu and Richards (2007). As will be shown, with each managerial paradigm shift, creativity has become more relevant for organisations wishing to sustain competitive advantages (section 2.1.1 – 2.1.4). The next part of this first section looks specifically at the 'creative management' paradigm, the most current paradigm in managerial studies, and the reasons behind its growth (2.1.5-2.1.6). Because this section deals with management models, and since the BBC is also a public service broadcaster, the following part *(2.1.7)* looks at a theory of public management known as New Public Management (NPM) that has drastically affected the organisation's creativity (Born 2004; Collins 2006; Harris and Wegg-Prosser, 2007).

Section two moves on to analyse the importance of the 'creative industries'. Specifically, this section looks at the shift from cultural to creative industries *(2.2.1)* followed by the UK's 'creative industries' policies *(2.2.2)*. It analyses why added significance has been placed on these industries in the UK, particularly since 'new labour's' introduction of the DCMS Mapping Document on the Creative Industries in 1998. The third section of the chapter opens by looking at various techniques of how organisations attempt to stimulate creativity by drawing mainly from the seminal work of Mark Runco (2007) and Chris Bilton (2007) *(2.3.1)*. Additionally, it looks at why it is important to bridge the gap between 'creative' and 'managerial' personnel. This is followed by an analysis of the connection between competition and creativity *(2.3.2)* since this is seen as a vital characteristic of the creative process and how creativity is stimulated. Finally, the chapter's fourth section seeks to analyse current definitions of creativity by drawing on the work of seminal creativity theorists notably from within the discipline of psychology. This section starts with what creativity is *not* *(2.4.1)* by analysing various concepts that are mistakenly used interchangeably with creativity. Following, the section looks at what creativity *is (2.4.2)* by drawing on various

seminal accounts of creativity. Significantly, this part of the section analyses Csikszentmihalyi's social-system model since it offers a clear picture of how creativity can de defined.

2.1 MANAGEMENT MODELS AND THE GROWTH OF *CREATIVE MANAGEMENT*

For a large part of the twentieth-century, organisations did not value creativity as an attribute that could be managed and turned into economic capital. Factors that were considered significant – particularly during the first half of the previous century - are seen today as attempts that stifle creativity (Clegg, 1990; Davis and Scase, 2000). In order to stimulate creativity on an organisational level, as will be shown in detail further below, at the very minimum it is required that employees be autonomous, work to resolve friction, generate ideas and collaborate in teams often in a non-linear pattern. In the *Grundrisse*, Karl Marx argued that the rise of capitalism led to the dehumanisation of labour and the suppression of creativity (due to theories of management such as Weber's bureaucracy – see below). Consequently, Marxists and Neo-Marxists from the second-half of the twentieth century, elaborated on the erosion of human autonomy in the workplace. Mergers and acquisitions, and shareholder control, have been identified by DiMaggio (2001) as the most common Marxist attacks regarding the capitalist system. Vis-à-vis pressure placed on organisations, DiMaggio highlighted the new responsibilities of managers: 'the executive is a portfolio manager whose major responsibility is to analyse the performance of each company's divisions or profit-centres, and to sell off any that are underperforming relative to alternative investments' (p.21). The free-market climate allowed capitalism to flourish, and this further forced investors to apply more pressure on managers to cut costs. With such measures applied across organisations, and with a global environment that grew exceedingly competitive, many businesses found an excuse to weaken trade-unions. This led to the growth of management consultants (pushed on by shareholders) to enter organisations in order to apply techniques that minimised costs, increased efficiencies and made organisations more accountable. These techniques were associated in some form with Max Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy. As shown in chapter four, even though it is a public service broadcaster, this is precisely what happened at the BBC during the 1970s, and particularly during the 1980s and 1990s. Additionally, due to the efficiency schemes occurring across organisations and in light of the 'prolonged slump in the 1970s and 1980s' (ibid.) and of the growing globalisation of finance, many organisations began to build 'interfirm alliances'. This point too is crucial in regards to the BBC, since with the inception of the 25 percent quota in 1990, the BBC had to enter into alliances with independent production companies. As the BBC was restricted to produce programmes for UK citizens and follow a public service ethos, independent producers had one eye on becoming global enterprises (Chalaby, 2005, 2006).

As globalisation grew, managers began to share techniques, exchange ideas and rely on different approaches to achieve better efficiencies (Clegg, 1990). Academic researchers and

practitioners began to challenge the theory of bureaucracy in order to shed light on whether contemporary organisations are 'of a fundamentally different order' (DiMaggio, 2001, p.13). As they argued, attributes of Weber's model of bureaucracy cannot exist in all organisations and especially in organisations where the tasks are not routine tasks but individual tasks. In order to ascertain how management theories have progressed since the industrial period, Xu and Rickards (2007) offer a historical timeline that concludes with the genesis of the 'creative management' paradigm. In spite of the paradigms current embryonic state, Xu and Rickards note that it represents the last in a series of five paradigms that have been incorporated across organisations during the past century or so. Of a similar mind was Henry (2001) who stated, 'there has been a paradigm shift in the nature of management and organisation, in which creativity, innovation and knowledge now have a central role' (p.22). Yet it should be noted that many theories from past paradigms overlap each other and in some cases are inconsistent with analyses deriving from other management theorists. For example, the second paradigm (occurring during the early 20th century) includes *total quality management* although management consultants and academics have researched and used the theory as late as in the 1990s (Knights and McCabe 2003). Nevertheless, Xu and Rickards' contribution is in offering a clear analysis of managerial models taken through a historical perspective, consequently rationalising the growth of 'creative management'. Following the review of the five management paradigms and of the reasons why organisations have moved towards this direction, this section will conclude with a description of a public management philosophy known as New Public Management. This is because while numerous theories predominately used for private organisations have been applied at the BBC, many of which will be analysed below, the organisation remains a *public* institution. As such, decision-makers that have managed it have attempted to apply public management techniques as much as private, most common of which is New Public Management.

2.1.1   19th-20th Century Rational Management and Bureaucracy Theory

Organisations of preindustrial societies took little notice of how they could improve efficiencies; it was not until the industrial age that managers began thinking more rationally about how to make organisations more functional and efficient (Stager, 2006). Consequently, organisational theorists recognise the period as one of 'Rational Management', a management paradigm that involved the applied practices of Scientific Methods of Management and Fordism (Davis and Scase, 2000; Knights and McCabe, 2003) established by managers such as Henry Ford (Ford Motors) and Alfred Sloan (General Motors), and management theorists' Frederick Taylor (1911), Henri Fayol (1949) and Elton Mayo (1933; 1975). Accumulated, these theories involved the analysis of various methods that made factories more efficient by applying strict control measures over employees in order to achieve the highest levels of productivity possible. A significant contributor towards this paradigm is Max Weber. Weber was in fact, considered 'one of its legitimate forebears'

having established the Theory of Bureaucracy (Clegg, 1997, p. 28). Weber noted that for organisations to function efficiently they needed to work mechanically. Specifically,

> The fully developed bureaucratic mechanism compares with other organisations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production…Precision, speed, unambiguity, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs – these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration, and especially in its monocratic form.
> (Weber, 1948, p. 214).

According to Weber, the key to successful and efficient organisations was to keep employees from having a sense of self when at work, and to rather have them function as part of a whole for the well-being of the organisation. Control mechanisms identified by Weber asked workers to, 'leave their ordinary ties at the firm door' (DiMaggio, 2001, p.14-15). According to DiMaggio and Davis and Scase (2000), bureaucracy theory can be summarised as follows:

1. Bureaucracies are governed by calculable and transparent rules that are universal to all employees.
2. Bureaucracies separate the person from the position and give formal job descriptions based on specialisation and hierarchy.
3. Bureaucracies deal with vast amounts of book keeping and written communication and formal records in order to 'collectivize memory'.
4. Bureaucracies are based on lifetime job security and making compensation and job advancement based on how well each worker fulfils their roles.

2.1.2   Early 20th Century Total Quality Management.

This paradigm, considered a bridge between Fordism approaches and 'creative management' approaches (Xu and Rickards, 2007, p. 219), draws mainly from the work of W. Edwards Deming, Joseph Juran, Philip B. Crosby, and Kaoru Ishikawa (Knights and McCabe, 2003). The most significant of these scholars is Deming who applied statistical models on product quality in Japan. He later returned to the United States where he wrote his influential book *Out of the Crisis* (1986) in which he introduced his 14 points for total quality management (TQM). In short, this management paradigm prioritises product and quality output often at the expense of other characteristics. In fact, its shortcomings are precisely this, that TQM 'ignores political tensions of control and resistance that pervade most organisations' (Knights and McCabe, 2003, p. 50). While many organisations implemented TQM with the helpful guidance of management consultants throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, it gradually began to lose its appeal due to its entire devotion on

quality controls (ibid.). As businesses in the 1980s began to stagnate, alternative and flexible models were sought and subsequently used.

2.1.3   Mid-20th Century Humanistic Management.

According to Xu and Rickards, this stage became ubiquitous due to efforts made by social psychology theorists entering the domain of management theory (notably, Kurt Lewin, 1951). *Human relations* and *socio-technical* are the two main theoretical models deriving from this paradigm (Knights and McCabe 2003). The theories recognised the asocial weaknesses and 'mechanistic assumptions' of both TQM and scientific approaches (Knights and McCabe, 2003, p. 52). Consequently a significant aspect of this paradigm was in motivating employees through different mechanisms such as job rotation, job satisfaction, empowerment and teamworking. Teamwork in particular is crucial in our analysis since it is through teamwork techniques that creativity begins to truly prosper in organisations (Bilton 2007). As Knights and McCabe (2003) argue, power, knowledge, autonomy, individuality and subjectivity - all aspects of the humanistic paradigm - were important 'because they were so influential in the development of subsequent teamworking ideas' (p. 117). Drawbacks existed however as the case of teambuilding in Swedish automobile industries illustrated. Although employees were given more autonomy, production did not seem to increase (Knights and McCabe, 2003; Xu and Rickards, 2007).

2.1.4   Late 20th Century Organisational Creativity.

Due to the limitations of prior paradigms, a set of theories deriving mainly from Japan throughout the 1990s has looked to find solutions for inadequate management processes. Concepts such as benchmarking, outsourcing and the learning organisation have all been used during the end of the last century in order to make organisations more competitive (Xu and Rickards, 2007, p. 220). However, due to postmodern notions spreading across academia throughout the same period, many social scientists were quick to criticise these concepts as 'fads' (ibid.). Nevertheless, two important theories of the paradigm managed to stand-out. These are the *lean production theory and knowledge management* theories. The lean production theory used particularly by Japanese organisations, called on employees 'to learn far more professional skills and apply them creatively in a team-setting rather than a rigid hierarchy (Womack and Jones, 2003, p. 14). They were asked to find better solutions of manufacturing in order to get rid of waste and increase the flow of production (ibid.). Therefore, this theory counted on cooperation between employees as the key to its success. Indeed, the notion of being lean was not limited to products and services but to utilizing employee know-how (Knights and McCabe 2003, p. 118).

Building on this notion, a new and significant management theory known as knowledge management (KM) has gradually entered the field of management studies. As Knights and

McCabe argue, 'KM has been seen as perhaps one of the most important management panaceas for the new millennium' (p.145) and this is reflected in the large amount of books and journals devoted to the theory. The theory resurfaces the *technological determinism* argument in contemporary societies since its approach is embedded mainly in information technology departments (but also within human resource departments). According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), the main aspects of this broad theory deal with finding the best methods of codifying and disseminating knowledge across organisations in order for it to be used by all employees. As the two scholars argue, Japanese companies advanced their position mainly because of the 'skills and expertise at organisational knowledge creation' (p. 3). KM deals primarily with making *tacit knowledge* (the hidden personal knowledge of individuals that is hard to access), into *explicit knowledge* (knowledge that can be retrieved and analysed easily). While KM has enjoyed wide acceptance in many areas, there are also significant drawbacks such as the issue of tacit knowledge being considered part of the unconscious state and therefore individuals cannot transform it to explicit knowledge (Knights and McCabe 2003, pp. 146-149). Using the successful Japanese automotive industry as an example, many western researchers have praised *lean productions* and *KM* as two management practices better suited for large organisations to grow efficiencies and remain competitive in an exceedingly global environment (Knights and McCabe 2003).

2.1.5   The Fifth Paradigm - 21st Century Creative Management

Historical analysis of the four above paradigms is significant because many of the characteristics of these paradigms have, quintessentially, led to the 'creative management' paradigm witnessed today. As Xu and Rickards argue, 'creative management incorporates humanistic, socio-technical and knowledge management components' (p.216). Consequently, 'creative management' is an attempt to apply the most important aspects of the behavioural approaches and humanistic theories in combination with the more technologically determinant knowledge management approach.

Ironically, attempts to define the term 'creative management' share similar difficulties with attempts to define 'knowledge management'. For example, both terms are elusive and impossible to quantify (as opposed to scientific methods and quality control methods). Also, similarities between *knowledge / information* are comparable with *creativity / innovation* in that both are inaccurately used interchangeably with each other (see below on differences between creativity and innovation). Additionally, until recently neither creativity nor knowledge had been juxtaposed with management. Creativity, as will be analysed below, has been studied predominately by social scientists, most notably within psychology; conversely, with the exception of the advertising industry and to a lesser extent the field of marketing, creativity has mainly been ignored within business discourses. Consequently the new management paradigm has burgeoned in much the same way knowledge management

had, spreading through various academic literature (most notably with the introduction of Nonaka and Takeuchi's 1995 book, *The Knowledge-Creating Company, How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation).* Richard Florida and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's work on creativity has brought the study of creativity to a broader audience (strengthened also through their conferences shown online on various websites such as *authors@google* and *ted.com*), whereas more recently other works such as Jane Henry's *Creative Management and Development* (2006) and Chris Bilton's *Management and Creativity: From Creative Industries to Creative Management* (2007)*,* promise to further disseminate the significance of creativity within organisational studies. Furthermore, Teresa Amabile a prominent psychologist with years of creativity research behind her, and currently a member of Harvard Business School, further strengthens the creative management paradigm. As noted in her biography on her Harvard Business School webpage, 'Originally focusing on individual creativity, Amabile's research has expanded to encompass team creativity and organizational innovation.' (Harvard Business School, 2009) Additionally, the burgeoning of the 'creative industries', as shown in the following part of the chapter, has also contributed towards establishing the 'creative management' paradigm throughout the whole economy.

2.1.6   Reasons Behind the Growth of 'Creative Management'

Although there is no doubt creative management is becoming ubiquitous, one must ask what the reasons for its growth are. While there are many, the most explicit is *global competition*. Due to a changing global work environment that has occurred because of liberalisation and deregulation, new markets are opening up across different areas of the world (Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002; Haavisto, 2004). Henry (2001) emphasises this in the following way:

> 'The current political trend of deregulation and privatisation has exacerbated the pressure for change…organisations are faced with ever-increasing competition and an increasing pace of change…to survive, organisations have had to become more responsive, and flexible enough to react quickly to environmental changes and, in high-wage economies, creative enough to add value through continual innovation. It is now creativity, knowledge, innovation and learning that add value, rather than land, labour and capital.' (p.8)

As a result of global competition, the efficacy of organisations in contemporary societies lies in either substituting labour with technology, substituting high paid employees with cheaper labour (often in another geographic area), (Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002), or getting the most out of educated personnel by increasing organisational creativity (hence 'creative management') to generate and exploit ideas. In Richard Florida's portrayal of the 'creative economy' (2004), he highlights the need for organisations to continuously generate new ideas as follows:

> Workplaces are changing because the emphasis is on creative work. And in the quest to elicit creativity, the typical workplace tends to become both more stressful and more caring. Stress increases because the Creative Economy is predicated on change and speed. If a firm is to survive, it must always top what it did yesterday. The employees must be constantly coming up with new ideas; constantly finding faster, cheaper or better ways to do things – and that's not easy. It's brutally stressful. (p. 132)

Creative management therefore deals first and foremost with generating and exploiting new ideas in order for organisations to remain competitive in the ever-growing free-market global economy. But while global competition is the main cause for the growth of creative management, there are others that have contributed as well. Andriopoulos and Dawson (2009, p. 76-79) note the following six:

1. *Technology* – there is no doubting the significance of technology as a driving factor for the need for more organisational creativity. Castells (2003) notes of the new geographical networked landscape that connects all internet users together, arguing that the 'internet galaxy' will affect all aspects of society. Leadbeater (2009), and Manovich (2008), echoing similar views, note that the internet will change how societies *create* due to how 'we think'. There is, according to Leadbeater, a disempowerment of large multinationals and transnationals due to the way internet users utilize the technology as an open source, public sphere tool, hence challenging everything corporate, and sharing services in virtual communities triggered by Web 2.0. With such citizen empowerment, organisations must find ways to create and innovate just as fast, and keep up with the power of everyday citizens.

2. *Unpredictable and Demanding Customers* – Based on Leadbeater's thesis of the empowered internet user, one could argue that users can observe, compare, and disrepute products and services to each other as they wish. The growth therefore in the diversity of customers (from all over the world), and of there ever-increasing needs, 'drive organizations to change from stabilized bureaucratic forms to more adaptive modes of organizing in order to better meet the changing needs of existing and future potential customers' (Andriopoulos and Dawson 2009, p. 78).

3. *Knowledge* - Citing the work of Castells (2001), Andriopoulos and Dawson emphasize the pace at which organisations can increase, develop and sustain their knowledge and use it to their benefit. As the authors note, 'organizations have increasingly adopted team-centred structures in order to improve the way in which knowledge is developed, disseminated and applied in their working environments' (p.78).

4. *Change* – Being in a 'permanent state of flux' is now a common saying in organisational studies. But mainly due to the other six reasons analysed here, this point has indeed become a reality.

5. *Higher Employee Expectations* – 'Highly skilled employees working within creative environments increasingly look for autonomy so that they can exercise personal initiative' (Andriopoulos and Dawson, 2009, p. 78-79). With an increase in job mobility - and therefore employee comparisons of organisations - this trend will surely continue.

6. *The Importance and Dominance of Design* – With a plethora of literature on brand building and with more people becoming aware of design elements (see Featherstone, 1991 on the growth of design conscious cohorts from the 1960s onwards), creativity will be required to stand out from the rest of the competition. *Apple's i-pod* for example is not the only mp3 player and was not the first either, but it has certainly managed to become a market leader particularly due to its superior design.

Notwithstanding the undeniable pace with which creative management is growing, it is still in an embryonic state (as shown by the way creativity is often used interchangeably with other words). Clearly, defining the paradigm in the same way as defining Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy, is hitherto unattainable due to its current pre-scientific condition. If management scholars are to support the 'creative management' paradigm as the best way forward for organisations, they need to agree on common answers to conspicuous questions, while simultaneously offering scientific validity on the subject matter. For example, questions such as what are the best practises in order to stimulate creativity, and how organisations can apply these practises, need to be cumulatively addressed. Undoubtedly, these questions reinforce the importance of defining creativity and how individual personalities and the interactions between employees and their environment can best be approached (Runco, 2007). When aggregated, these questions, along with their answers, will make up the *scientific* 'creative management' paradigm. Xu and Rickards (2007) argue that although in a preliminary stage, the paradigm should be disseminated as a *universal social-system* in which all employees are seen as capable of contributing towards creative processes. Furthermore, they argue that for 'creative management' to work, an environment that allows for development conditions to occur is required. These include 'training, suggestions systems, group activities and special project teams' (p. 223). Yet, with the exception of these elusive techniques, Xu and Rickards' analysis of the 'creative management' paradigm fails to offer any substantial way forward of how creativity can best be managed. It remains rather a philosophical calling whereby their most significant contribution has been in identifying the progression of management paradigms. Part three

seeks to look at how organisations attempt to manage and stimulate creativity even though research in this area still remains insufficient.

2.1.7   New Public Management

As creative management has grown across organisational studies over the past decade or so, another form of management with a particular emphasis on how government areas are run, has also made important strides during a similar period. Specifically, publicly run organisations that exist to serve citizens such as those involved with health, education, welfare, foreign policy et cetera, need to be managed differently to private sector organisations. The current form of management used in public organisations is called *new public management* (NPM). NPM is part of a changing paradigm in public reform that emphasises financial accountability and efficiency. It includes within its definitions the notions of public management and public governance as opposed to the 'non-politically correct' *public administration* (Matheson and Kwon, 2003, p. 19). A noticeable difference between these two forms is that public administration emphasises rules and centralised bureaucracy whereas NPM is considered a more decentralised and flexible model.

Osborn and McLaughlin (2002) argue that public services in the UK have gone through four stages that have led to new public management. These are the *minimal stage* (late 19th century), in which government intervention was deemed a 'necessary evil'; the *unequal partnership stage* (early 20th century), in which governments were seen as playing a more important role in societal issues along with other institutions (e.g. private sector); *the welfare state* (1945-1980), considered the 'high point of public administration', in which the government became involved in all aspects of social life; and finally the *plural state* (1970s onwards), whereby governments were perceived as greedy and non-efficient. During the plural state (especially during the 1979-1997 conservative government rule), emphasis was placed upon market disciplines while simultaneously disempowering public service. While NPM, (the model that characterised the plural state) - empirically speaking - is different for different governments[23] in different locations, overall it can be defined as a 'shorthand for a group of administrative doctrines in the reform agenda of several OECD countries starting in the 1970s' (Ocampo, 1998, p. 249). NPM's main characteristics are as follows (Ocampo, 1998, p. 249):

1. Strengthening steering functions at the centre
2. Devolving authority, providing flexibility
3. Ensuring performance, control, accountability
4. Improving the management of human resources
5. Optimizing information technology
6. Developing information and choice

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[23] The US re-invention process, the UK next steps, the New Zealand and Australian versions of contractualization, the Canadian, La Releve', the Irish Strategic Management Initiative, the German 'Lean State' etc. (Matheson and Kwon, 2004, p. 42)

7. Improving the quality of regulation
8. Providing responsive service

In the UK, as private sector organisations grew from the 1980s onwards, governments were keen to reform key public sectors while at the same time keep close ties with large private sector organisations. This form of social democracy, or 'neo-liberalism' as Hesmondhalgh (2005) points out for the UK, 'takes for granted marketisation and the erosion of the public domain (ibid., p. 99), and leans towards increased globalisation and focus on economic factors of social life. Consequently, NPM policies in the UK are clearly connected with private sector organisations. 'Such notions are perfectly acceptable, within certain limits, to businesses,' Hesmondhalgh concedes, 'especially as more and more public-sector work is outsourced to the private sector (and this has been a key policy of labour).' (p. 100).

The BBC is not immune to this form of management and in fact has often been considered an organisation that leads the way in how public service organisations should be managed. The BBC began practising NPM applications in 1968 when the management consulting firm *Mckinsey Consultants* was hired to apply managerial techniques that were designed to improve its efficiency (Burns, 1977). However, according to Born (2004), it was during John Birt's term that NPM 'came to be exemplary' (p.214). For example, the BBC's Statement of Promises for 1997-98 reads, *'Our Commitment to you, we promise to be accountable and responsive'* (cited in Born 2004, p. 232). Consequently, the BBC is a 'social microcosm' (ibid., p.67), holding the mantle of public sector organisations because as she continues, since the 1980s, citizens look more to 'private sector organisations for models of good practise'. Echoing this assessment, Curran and Seaton (1997) argue that 'the BBC had grown fast and gone on growing, because it was always an organisation that took management seriously...praised and copied as a valuable new way of running an enterprise' (p.221). As such, NPM has been recognised as a significant managerial form that was used to make the public service broadcaster more efficient and well-managed[24]. Yet NPM has also been criticised as a 'reborn' scientific management model similar to Taylorism (Wegg-Prosser, 2007). In fact, the managerial techniques that were practised throughout the 1990s at the BBC with John Birt at the helm (see chapter four), have been used as an example of how the BBC *failed* to take into account humanistic elements involved with managing an organisation, and is therefore seen like its 'public administration' precursor (Born, 2004; Wegg-Prosser, 2007).

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[24] Chapter four and six seek to analyse how NPM has been used at the BBC and how such activities coincide or conflict with creativity processes that are of such importance in the field of television production

2.2 CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

2.2.1 The Shift from 'Cultural' to 'Creative' Industries

As 'creative management' has gradually gathered momentum across the economy as a whole, 'creative industries' themselves have steadily 'moved from the fringes to the mainstream' (DCMS, 2001). The growing importance of 'creative industries' in the UK reflects a broader-ranging support of cultural policy within the European Union (Bilton, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). European cultural policy dates back to the 1955 European Cultural Convention and the 1961 Council for Cultural Co-operation. Today, Europe takes pride in its ongoing support and advocacy of cultural diversity and cultural policy. For several decades the European Union has introduced various programmes on different levels across the member states[25] not least of which is the recent decision made by the European Commission to declare 2009 as the Year of Creativity and Innovation (europa, 2008). In the UK, since 1998, the term 'cultural industries' (still used in many European countries to identify issues of cultural policy) has been changed into what 'new labour' has coined the 'creative industries', albeit without sufficient explanation as to why. Quantitatively, the 'creative industries' venture appears to have paid dividends in the UK, and the cultural - creative shift, has caught on in other economies, notably Singapore, New Zealand, China and Australia (Bilton, 2007). In the UK, the creative industries (a list of 13 diverse fields – see below), outperform all their European counterparts and make up 7.3 percent of the UK economy, while growing at almost twice the rate of the rest of the economy (Staying Ahead, 2007). The BBC plays an important role in contributing to such statistics. One BBC radio 1 executive stated to Georgina Born (2004),

> The Oasis story is a good example: Radio 1 picked them up in 1990 when nobody else would play them; the sound they made seemed ragged and noisy. Then what have you got? A world phenomenon, a brand that's generating huge income for the UK, and we've served our part in that triumvirate of the business.

2.2.2 UK 'Creative Industries' Policies

The core creative industries are currently worth over $2.2 trillion or 7.3 percent of the world's global economy and growing at a rate of 5 percent per year (Howkins, 2001). A research report conducted by The Working Group on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport states, 'the UK has the largest creative sector in the EU, and relative to GDP probably the largest in the world' (DCMS, 2007, p.15). These figures highlight the importance of the sector in the UK. This also reflects the recent attention the creative industries are drawing from various academic scholars. For example, Charles Leadbeater's term 'thin air' economy (2000), Flew's (2005) 'knowledge economy' and John Howkins 'creative economy' (2001), all

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[25] see for example, http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php

underline the significance of societies 'based not on raw material but on the increasing value of ideas and intangible assets as a source of competitive advantage vis-à-vis tangible physical assets' (Flew, 2004, p. 162).

Following the 1997 UK elections, the new 'New Labour' government immediately began work on establishing a 'Creative Industries Task Force' (CITF) supported and chaired by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Chris Smith. Smith argued at the time, 'It is incumbent on the government, in partnership with industry, to take active steps to promote economic growth in the creative and cultural sector' (DCMS, 1998). According to CITF the 'Creative Industries' are defined as, 'those industries that are based on individual creativity, skill and talent. They are also those that have the potential to create wealth and jobs through developing intellectual property '(ibid.). These industries consist of the following sectors: advertising; architecture; art and antiques markets; computer and video games; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; music; performing arts; publishing; software; television and radio (ibid.).

Since CITF was created, it has introduced a number of major publications, programmes, incentives and reports that have paved the way towards the growth of the creative industries. The 'Creative Industries Mapping Documents' of 1998 and 2001 stand out as its most significant publications. Following the replacement of Chris Smith with Tessa Jowell, and thereafter James Pernell (for a brief period) and Andy Burnham, the successors have followed a similar line implementing the 'The Creative Economy Programme' in 2005. The programme sets the bar even higher than the CITF by aspiring to make the UK 'the world's creative hub'. The programme looks at how creativity can be stimulated across the whole 'creative industries' and has been significantly influenced by the Working Group's *Staying Ahead: The Economic Performance of the UK's Creative Industries* (2007) study. This particular study highlights a number of issues and peculiarities within the 'creative industries'. One area it attempts to demystify and improve from the CITF is that of the problematic issue of 'creative industries' definitions. *Staying Ahead* uses the notion of *Expressive Value* to distinguish the 'creative industries' from others. As the study explains, 'Expressive Value can be understood as every dimension (in the realm of ideas) which, in its broadest sense, enlarges cultural meaning and understanding.' (p.96). Citing David Throsby (2000), the study subsequently breaks down expressive value as follows:

- Aesthetic Value
- Spiritual Value
- Social Value
- Historical Value
- Symbolic Value
- Authenticity Value

Staying Ahead continues its dissection of the 'creative industries' by drawing on problems specific to these industries, notably those recognised by Richard Caves in *The Creative Industries: Contracts Between Art and Commerce* (2000), such as *nobody knows, motley crew, sunk costs, Art for Art's sake* and *creative processes* (see Chapter One for a review of Caves). Scholars such as Caves, Bilton (2007), and Hesmondhalgh (2007), have identified the importance of networks and creative clusters within these industries and not just individual creativity which had been a major criticism of CITF definitions of creative industries. The Creative Economy Programme has consequently attempted to address these issues in order to achieve its goal of becoming the world's creative hub. Significantly, the DCMS has also highlighted the importance of creativity within the economy as a whole and not just within the 'creative industries' therefore attesting to the significance of 'creative management' analysed above. In *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy* (DCMS, 2008a), it states, 'expressive value was most concentrated in the core creative fields but shows how it permeates into the cultural industries, creative industries and the economy as a whole' (p.2). According to the Creative Economy Programme, seven reasons are required in order to make the UK the world's creative hub. These are (DCMS, 2007):

1. Education and skill
2. Competition and intellectual property
3. Technology
4. Business support and access to finance
5. Diversity
6. Infrastructure
7. Evidence and analysis

'New Labour' has achieved a considerable amount in order to make the UK a world leader in the 'creative industries' over the past decade. However, while the 13 sectors making up the 'creative industries' seem firmly placed to continue to prosper due to its support from UK cultural policy, a number of scholars have identified various shortcomings of these policies. For example, both Bilton (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007), have argued that the growth of the 'creative industries' in the UK should not only concentrate on commercial success as the policies brought forward by the DCMS during the past decade do little to address the social aspects of cultural policy. Additionally, citing Garnham (2005), Hesmondhalgh argues that the 'New Labour' initiative to support the 'creative industries' does little to address the issue of circulation, distribution and access *(celebration)* and rather reinforces the process of production and the support of the artist *(excellence)* (pp. 145-146).

2.3   STIMULATING ORGANISATIONAL CREATIVITY

2.3.1   Techniques Stimulating Organisation Creativity

Whether for the 'creative industries' or for other sectors of the economy, organisational creativity works on two different, yet overlapping levels of management (Henry, 2001). The first deals with making the organisation more open and, 'refers to more creative and innovative ways of organizing companies designed to sustain creative and innovative endeavour through a more participative and open approach' (p.23). The second looks specifically at 'managing innovation', and is linked with new product development. The BBC undoubtedly works on both levels. The broadcaster, as shown in the chapter on television production, must continuously generate new television programmes and formats (this is an example of 'managing innovation'). It has always been the case that producing original programmes is an essential requirement for all public service broadcasters. Other examples of how the BBC practices Henry's second level of management include innovating in audiovisual technologies, constructing innovative audience research methodologies, finding ways to distribute audiovisual content across the world more efficiently, new television production techniques, new online technologies that work in an increasingly unpredictable future, and new managerial techniques (*Producer's Choice, The Window of Creative Competition* – see chapter's four and six).   Yet the major shift towards complete organisational creativity has occurred only recently. The organisation, from 2004 onwards, has sought to pioneer in new management areas that elevate creativity across all its divisions and make creativity a significant component of its overall culture, therefore qualifying for Henry's first level of management. Examples – analysed in detail in chapter six - include schemes such as *building public value* and *creative future*. What follows in this section is an analysis of both levels, as seen by various creativity theorists.

Creativity management techniques 'are seen to have replaced operational efficiency and strategic planning as the primary source of competitive advantage' (Bilton and Leary, 2002, p.49). Yet methods of managing creativity have for many years been more commonly developed within the disciplines of psychology and sociology (e.g. Amabile, 1996 for psychology; Bilton, 2007 for sociology). This is so because within these disciplines creativity is understood as a social-system and this in turn has helped demystify the myths surrounding creativity. Henry notes that from the 1950s to the 1990s, creativity was seen as an individual trait and only recently has it started to be perceived as a 'social context' (2001). Consequently, based on the more recent belief that creativity is based on social contexts, Bilton has put forward seven hypotheses of how organisations should start managing creativity. These are (p. 6):

1. *Organisations should tolerate diversity, complexity and contradiction*
2. *Creativity derives from a combination of different types of thinking*

3. *Communicating the best creative ideas is as important as the creative idea itself*
4. *Creative thinking takes place neither inside the box nor outside the box, but at the edges of the box*
5. *Boundaries and constraints are a necessary part of the creative process*
6. *Diversity, compromise and collaboration are no more less important to creative work than singularity of vision and purpose*
7. *Creativity is embedded in a cultural context*

While these features offer some insight in our understanding of creativity they should only be considered a starting point. According to psychologist Mark Runco (2007), organisations attempting to stimulate creativity must invest in changing the overall *climate* of the organisation[26]. In other words, organisations need to completely reform themselves toward a philosophical belief system based solely on creativity (pp. 168-171). The organisation must *holistically* focus on challenging employees, accept risk, allow friction and debate, advocate communications, and importantly, find ways to support, and encourage new idea generation. Furthermore, organisations practicing creative management approaches must verbally and formally communicate to employees the importance of idea generation. After all, the concept of creativity within organisations is based on the generation of ideas that can in turn give the organisation a competitive advantage (Bilton, 2007).

Based on a large-scale study of 129 research and development scientists from different sectors, Amabile (1996) identifies nine stimulants of creativity and nine inhibitors of creativity (pp. 231 – 232). These are:

Stimulants to Creativity:

1. *Freedom*
2. *Good project management*
3. *Sufficient resources*
4. *Encouragement*
5. *Organisational characteristics promoting cooperation and collaboration*
6. *Recognition*
7. *Sufficient time*
8. *Challenge*
9. *Pressure (a general desire to accomplish something important)*

Obstacles to Creativity:

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[26] Citing Isaksen et al. (2000-2001, p. 172), Runco defines organisational climate as, "the recurring patterns of behaviour, attitudes and feelings that characterize life in the organisation…" (p. 164).

1. *Organisational characteristics with excessive red tape, lack of cooperation, inappropriate reward system*
2. *Lack of freedom and constraints*
3. *Insufficient resources*
4. *Poor project management*
5. *Inappropriate evaluation*
6. *Time pressure*
7. *Overemphasis on the status quo*
8. *Competition (interpersonal or intergroup competition within the organisation fostering a self-defensive attitude)*
9. *Organisational disinterest*

Teams and Brainstorming

In order to generate ideas, specific methods can be used such as *optimal teams* and *brainstorming* (Runco, 2007). Optimal teams require heterogeneous and fairly small groups of people meeting in order to find the best creative solutions. West and Sacramento (2006) identify 12 points in order to maximize creativity and innovation in teams (pp. 26-38). These are:

1. *Ensure the team task is intrinsically motivating*

Allowing team member to have autonomy in deciding the means to achieve their task; make the task significant for the members;

2. *Ensure a high level of extrinsic demands*

Create conditions within which teams are exposed to high but not excessive levels of external demands;

3. *Select a team of innovating people*

Include team members who are open, think in novel and non-conventional ways, who are persuasive, knowledgeable about their field, confident, with high tolerance of ambiguity and who are self-disciplined;

4. *Select people with diverse skills and background*

Select a team with a diverse range of skills and professional backgrounds. Additionally, Runco notes it is more efficient if the team consists of both young (novice) and old members (wiser), combining fresh new ideas with experience;

5. *Provide organisational rewards for innovation*

Research indicates that rewards can compliment intrinsic motivation and it is important to rewards the effort of innovation and not the success. In other words, even if the effort does not lead to an innovation, rewards should still be given;

6. *Create a learning and development climate in the organisation*

Encourage team innovation by developing supportive practices;

7. *Develop a climate for innovation*

As already mentioned as a major characteristic of creative management by Runco (2007), developing an overall climate or culture throughout the organisations that seeks to promote creativity and idea generation is imperative for stimulating creativity;

8. *Establish team norms for innovation*

Following from the previous technique, establishing norms for innovation requires organizations to be verbally and practically innovative since as noted by West and Sacramento 'such group processes powerfully shape individual and group behaviour and those which support innovation will encourage team members to introduce innovations' (p.34);

9. *Encourage reflexivity in teams*

Organisations and teams need to collectively reflect on what their strategies, goals and objectives were in order to benefit from creativity;

10. *Ensure a clarity of leadership and that the leadership style is appropriate for encouraging innovation*

Leaders play an important role in how creativity is stimulated and managed. They must be knowledgeable and use judgement cautiously. The groups' attitudes and abilities are usually based on the leaders;

11. *Manage conflict constructively and encourage minorities to dissent within teams*

West and Sacramento note that managing conflict is 'fundamental to the generation of creativity and innovation' (p.36). They nevertheless note that moderate conflict should be

encouraged as it leads to debate and hence to the consideration of alternative interpretations of information;

   12. Don't just bond…bridge

The authors here emphasise the importance of encouraging different teams to work together and share best practices across different departments within an organisation. As they argue, inter-group work can be encouraged by downplaying the boundaries between each group;

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a specific method of team-meeting that is used in order to generate a large amount of ideas. The technique was originated in 1938 by Alex Osborn of the advertising agency Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn (known today as BBDO) (Stein, 1975; Andriopoulos and Dawson 2009). Stein (p.25), citing Osborn, notes that the sessions were called *brainstorming* 'because 'brainstorming means using the brain to storm a problem' (Osborn, 1963, p. 151). Osborn was apparently dissatisfied with the way meetings were held at the advertising agency and how junior executives were not given enough opportunity to express their ideas. According to Andriopoulos and Dawson, 'this triggered him to come up with rules designed to improve team problem-solving, by giving people the freedom to speak their minds (p. 151). Osborn created four rules involved in the brainstorming session: (1) Avoid judgment (criticism is ruled out), (2) focus on the quantity of ideas and not their quality, producing the most amount of ideas possible (quantity is wanted because through it quality is achieved), (3) try finding ideas via 'piggybacking' or 'hitchhiking', as Runco notes (2007) (combination and improvement are sought) and finally, (4) participants should welcome 'free-wheeling' in which the more out of the ordinary the idea the better. Brainstorming therefore is a meeting that has one main objective - to generate ideas. The process of evaluating the ideas that were generated as a result of the brainstorming session is left for another meeting by another group (Stein 1975, p. 35). As Stein notes, 'however this group is constructed it should be composed of individuals who will have direct future responsibility for the problem' (ibid.). While idea generation is the main focus of the brainstorming session, Andriopoulos and Dawson note an additional seven objectives of brainstorming. These are (p. 154):

   1. *Support organisational memory*
   2. *Impress clients*
   3. *Improve morale*
   4. *Gain better understanding of each other*
   5. *Enjoyment*
   6. *Personal growth and well-being*
   7. *Think up improvements*

Throughout the years different authors have searched for ways to improve brainstorming sessions (e.g. De Bono, 1990). Some methods include using a skilled facilitator, conducting warm-up and homework preparation sessions, and making the session no longer than 30 minutes. Research shows inconclusive results as to whether brainstorming actually works (Bilton 2007; Runco 2007). For example, Bilton mentions a study in which quantity did not equate to quality, whereas Stein points to two studies in which quantity of ideas correlated extremely high with quality. It nevertheless remains a frequently used creative stimulation technique.

Although teams can contribute towards creative solutions there are at least three disadvantages of team sessions (whether brainstorming or any other kind), that managers need to be aware of. These are *social loafing, groupthink* and *blind conformity* (Andriopoulos and Dawson, 2009). S*ocial loafing* whereby individuals within the team are inhibited to express ideas due to a lack of motivation and of not feeling appreciated (Jackson and Williams, 1985) is cause for serious attention when brainstorming or when given group tasks. *Groupthink* is when groups become 'victimized' by knowing each other too much and are overly friendly leading to 'group cohesion' and homogeneity in the ideas. Similarly, *blind conformity* is when members in a group agree with other members in order to feel accepted by the rest of the group. The difference between blind conformity and groupthink is that the group members might not be well-acquainted with one another (Andriopoulos and Dawson 2009, pp. 143-144). Some ways of avoiding these group drawbacks are to use techniques such as *virtual teams* (Runco, 2007), or what Andriopoulos and Dawson call *electronic brainstorming* (p. 159). The rationale behind virtual teams / electronic brainstorming is that all the team members remain anonymous, 'thereby lowering the potential costs to original ideas' (Runco 2007, p. 169).

Bridging Creative Personnel with Managerial Personnel

While the techniques analysed above are being disseminated at a fast rate both across business schools and within a wide range of current literature, other issues are, 'still being worked out' (Florida, 2004, p. 132). Consequently, for 'creative management' to be appreciated as a true paradigm there are a number of difficulties that need to be met. One significant difficulty in understanding and managing creativity is the gap between 'creative' personnel and 'managerial' personnel. Hitherto, conventional wisdom regarding this gap is that creative personnel cannot be managed. It is not surprising that much of the tension arising from creativity and commerce starts with business managers demanding rigid deadlines from the creative (unmanageable?) personnel[27]. Yet although bureaucratic characteristics of erstwhile organisations certainly inhibit organisational creativity, creative workers respond and perform better in organisations with clear values, clear rules and fair

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[27] Chapter four's history of the BBC looks at how the bridge between management and creative personnel was built with the introduction of the 'commissioning editor' as an intermediary between the two.

treatment. The misunderstanding is identified in Florida (2004). As he notes, the reason why certain managers fail in managing creative personnel is because creativity is a non-repetitive action that cannot be 'Taylorized'. Florida notes further (2004, p. 133), 'people don't want to be abandoned and they don't want to be micromanaged. They don't want to take orders, but they want direction'. This echoes Runco (2007) and Bilton's (2007) argument that managers still have a clear role to play if they are to stimulate organisational creativity. In order to get the most out of organisational creativity, Bilton (2007) argues that both managers and 'creative personnel' need to have a firm understanding of the creative process. Employees that are experienced with creative processes seem more inclined to understand that creativity is not achieved via a linear process but rather one that involves different thought processes. One way of understanding the creative process is offered by the 19th Century mathematician Henri Poincare (Amabile, 1996; Bilton, 2007). Poincare came to the conclusion that there are four different parts of the creative process: *Preparation*, whereby the analysis of the issue at hand begins (e.g. a problem is defined); *incubation* in which the sub-conscious needs to work on the solution as much as the conscious; *illumination* or, creative breakthrough; and *verification* in which the idea is then passed through a process of inspection. This creative process has become the basis for all social-system models of creativity and will be analysed further below. If managers become familiar with the different processes involved in creativity rather than believing in the genius-myth, creativity will flourish (Bilton, 2007).

2.3.2   Creative Stimulation and Competition

One under-researched area that has a significant role to play in creative stimulation is that concerning the connection between creativity and competition. From the literature hitherto, while important strides have been made in understanding the connection between the two, results remain inconclusive. Interestingly, much of the research has been restricted to studies on either young children or college students given various artistic tasks in controlled and competitive environments (e.g. Amabile, 1982; Shalley and Oldham, 1997). In order to understand the connection between the two, it is required to call upon *cognitive evaluation theory* (Deci and Ryan, 1980). The theory states that all our external behaviours are linked with either a controlling or an informational aspect. Inconsistent results in studies on creativity and competition derive from the fact that competition can make individuals behave in both ways, that is, either by taking an informational role or a controlling one. These two aspects have a direct affect on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when we are involved with something for our own personal reasons such as for recreation, autonomy, and self-satisfaction (engagement in the task or for the sake of the task itself) (Amabile, 1987), whereas extrinsic motivation is when we do something for external factors such as for financial rewards and recognition (Deci and Ryan, 1980). According to various studies, intrinsic motivation enhances creativity whereas extrinsic motivation constrains it (e.g. Amabile, 1987, Shelly and Oldham, 1997). In order for competition to work in favour of

the creative performance of individuals, it needs to have a more relevant informational character rather than a more relevant controlling one. This consequently leads to more intrinsic motivation. For example, a person competing with others in order to know where he / she stands (informational), will produce more creatively than if the same person competes for awards and prizes (controlled), due to the former having greater intrinsic motivation. Supporting this theory, Shelly and Oldham argue (1997, p.338),

> when the controlling aspect is more salient, intrinsic motivation is expected to decrease, because an individuals behaviour is maintained or modified (i.e. controlled by the presence of an external factor)...when the informational aspect is more salient, the presence of the external condition is viewed as providing information to the individual about his or her competence, and intrinsic value is expected to be enhanced.

Some studies that showed competition as having a detrimental affect on creativity used a methodology that showed competition as having a salient controlling aspect. For example, Amabile's (1982) study on school girls working on art projects around a common table were told they would later be judged by adults and awards would be given to them. This salient controlling aspect had a negative affect on creativity. Conversely, as cited by Shelly and Oldham (1997), in studies that perceived competition as having a positive affect on creativity it was the informational aspects that seemed more salient (e.g. Raina, 1968; Torrance, 1965). Individuals in these studies were less concerned with winning prizes for controlling aspects such as rewards, but were informed they would be told how they compared against others in the same study. Here, the informational aspect is salient and it is for this reason that creativity was stimulated.

While studies such as the ones mentioned offer insights regarding the connection between creativity and competition, they are however restricted to laboratory research. More recently, a series of field research has attempted to analyse the creativity / competition link (Runco, 2007). One such study looked at how competition pushed *The Beatles* in becoming one of the most admired and creative pop bands in history (Clydesdale, 2006). The study showed that the combination of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation can improve creativity in the real world. Clydesdale argued that on the one hand, *The Beatles* were competing with *The Beach Boys* to be named the most well-known band in the world (extrinsic due to controlling aspect), and on the other hand Paul McCartney and John Lennon were competing with each other while also collaborating and enjoying the benefits of each others creativity (intrinsic due to informational aspect). As Clydesdale noted, both these bands pushed their creativity to the limit in order to reach their own targets.

In concluding, it can be argued that while there have been many studies regarding the connection between creativity and competition, research thus far remains inconclusive.

However, various recent studies show that creativity might be stimulated by using various competitive techniques that combine informational and controlling aspects of behaviour. This might have been the case for the BBC during its golden era in the 1960s (see chapter 4) when producers were competing with ITV but also with other departments internally. The benefits of competing internally however were based on the fact that knowing another BBC producer won a pitch to create a programme would benefit the BBC as a whole. Funds were available for all producers to make programmes and therefore competition was more informative rather than controlling. In the 1990s when competition grew further due to a multichannel environment and the independent quota, losing a pitch meant precisely that - losing a pitch. Controlling aspects were higher; the stakes too were much higher, and the extrinsic motivation was (and still is), considerably high. This might have had a detrimental effect on creativity.

2.4   DEFINITIONS OF CREATIVITY

2.4.1   *What Creativity is Not*

Having analysed why creativity has grown in significance, and having looked at techniques as to how creativity is stimulated, the chapter now turns its attention to its various definitions. Most scholars working on creativity admit to the difficulties in defining the concept of creativity since it is often used interchangeably with entities such as genius, innovation and problem-solving (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Runco, 2004). While the notion of the genius (what Runco calls the great person theory), and of problem-solving are easier to comprehend, that of innovation is more complicated due to its recurrent comparisons with creativity. Below is an analysis of these three concepts before looking specifically at creativity definitions[28].

The Great Person Theory

The genius capable of 'spontaneous creativity' (Bilton 2007, p.10), also called the 'Great Person Theory' by Runco (2007, p. 223), suits business managers because it can create celebrity artists that guarantee more financial success for future creative products, rather than consider someone as merely a hard worker and a part of a supporting social system. Specifically, 'the great person theory' adds value to the persona of the 'great person' and consequently to the value of his or her products and contribution. Hollywood has used the *star system* for years (Belton, 1994; Hesmondhalgh, 2007) and many Wall Street CEO's are often given celebrity status (e.g. see Cha, 2005). Artists too such as Salvador Dali for example, have used the 'great person theory' in order to promote themselves (Bilton, 2007). Although very talented and brilliant people obviously exist (and Salvador Dali is undoubtedly

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[28] It should be noted here that Chapter One's analysis of cultural production also reviews the myth of the genius on creative work based on a historical account as seen predominately by Raymond Williams (1980)

one such person), most research shows that we must consider the societal context within which brilliant people work in. Looking at the invention of the airplane, Runco notes (p. 214),

> The Wright Brothers were working in a time and place that was ripe for invention. It is impossible to understand their creativity without taking into account the historical and cultural context of that time. Indeed, a full understanding of creative work must always acknowledge historical and cultural context.

Runco uses *Zeitgeist* (German word for 'spirit of time') to name these historical periods. The most prominent zeitgeist linked with high levels of creative achievements is that of the Renaissance (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Bilton, 2007), whereby many examples of high creativity have been recorded. One example is that of Florence during the period 1400-1425; as noted by Csikszentmihalyi (1997), during this golden 25-year period of the renaissance, there was a great artistic surge in Florence. Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello, Masaccio and others were all creating fine works during this z*eitgeist*. Csikszentmihalyi argues that the *zeitgeist occurred* not because of some 'freak genetic mutation' during this period, but rather due to changes from outside the individual creative personality. At the time more information became available to artists in Florence. Yet what truly created this artistic surge was that the 'field of art became particularly favourable to the creation of new works at about the time as the rediscovery of the ancient domains of art…urban leaders decided to invest in making Florence the most beautiful city in Christendom - in their words, *a new Athens'* (pp. 33-34).

The 'Great Person Theory' loses credibility when we consider periods such as the renaissance. Such *zeitgeist* encouraged high numbers of inventions, creativity and self-expression. Additionally, when we consider such periods we also witness many examples of near-simultaneities and near-synchronisms. Citing the work of Boring (1971), Runco argues that these concepts occur 'when two or more individuals or teams discover something at nearly the same time without working together' (pp. 222-223). Examples of near-synchronisms are calculus, black holes, the light bulb, logarithms, and motion picture.

Problem-Solving

Citing a classic creativity study by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi on art students at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1976), Caves (2000) notes, 'the original and talented artist is the one successful at spotting novel problems and solving them in fruitful and compelling ways' (p.22). While this is true, creativity might also involve problem-*finding* as much as problem-solving (Runco, 2004). A problem, defined as a situation with a goal and an obstacle is considered just one aspect of creativity (Runco, 2007). When an artist wishes to express him/herself, this might in fact be considered problem-finding (ibid.). Interestingly, defining the problem plays an important role in the quality of defining the solution. This is

witnessed in the 'creative industries' whereby the preparation of a good brief (finding a problem) is paramount in order to create the product (an advertising campaign, or a television show).

Innovation

Possibly the most common word used in place of creativity is innovation. The 2005 Cox Review on Business in the UK offers the mundane explanation that creativity is, 'the generation of new ideas, either new ways of looking at existing problems, or of seeing new opportunities perhaps by exploiting emerging technologies or changes in the market' whereas innovation is, 'the successful exploitation of new ideas. It is the process that carries them through to new products, new services, new ways of running the business, or even new ways of doing business' (Cox, 2005). Although these definitions do manage to highlight innovation as a more 'business-oriented process' than creativity, it does little to differentiate the two.

A better definition derives from psychology. Specifically, psychologists' argue that while creativity - like innovation - is both original and relevant, 'innovation represents one application of creative thinking' (Runco, 2007, p. 381). Runco's use of West and Farr's (1991, p. 16) definition of innovation illuminates exactly how alike the two concepts are: *'the intentional introduction and application within a role, group, or organisation of ideas, processes, products or procedures, new to the relevant unit of adoption, designed to significantly benefit role performance, the group, the organisation or the wider society'.* While as shown in the above definition, creativity and innovation share the two components of originality and relevance, creativity differs in that someone can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Innovation on the other hand is a process that is only extrinsically motivated. Someone innovative will not create something for their own 'intrinsic' reasons (such as to feel autonomous). The innovator conversely has a distinct external reward in mind when creating. In cultural production such as television production, a writer might not create a screenplay to innovate but rather because they were intrinsically motivated.

2.4.2   What Creativity Is

As shown thus far, one way of defining creativity is to look at two components that are endorsed by all creativity theorists; those of *divergence* (novelty) and *relevance* (value) (Amabile, 1996; Kaufman and Baer, 2004; Bilton 2007). D'Agostino notes (1984) there are three kinds of novelty that are required for something to be creative. First, 'no method or set of rules or recipe available to the producer before its production could have *sufficed* to *determine* the activities of that producer' (p. 89). In other words, rules need to be 'stretched' otherwise it cannot be labelled creative. Second, for a creative act to be novel, it needs to be something *unpredicted* before its creation. Only after the creative act can it be described

and analysed. Third, the creative act must be different from previously created acts from *the same domain*. Creative *relevance* is somewhat easier to comprehend. According to Koestler (1964), relevance occurs when 'a product is creative (or only to the extent to which) it can serve as a model for others' (p. 380). In other words, creative acts need to be put in practice on their domains, to be used.

With these two components in mind, creativity broadly falls into two distinct perspectives. The first is the individual (mythical) perspective, already analysed, whereby creativity is considered a process inspired by a sole creator often perceived as a genius. The second is the socio-cultural (practical) perspective in which creativity is seen as a more social activity (Amabile, 1996; Mayer, 1999; Bergh and Stuhlfaut 2006; Runco, 2007). It can be argued based on these facts, that creativity can be stimulated from different levels. These are, individual levels in which many scholars attempt to increase individual creativity through various mind-challenging techniques (such as the work of Edward De Bono on lateral thinking), and group creativity whereby creativity is sought to be stimulated in groups of teams, from interpersonal groups to organisational creativity (seen in a previous section of this chapter). While addressing creativity at an individual level is important, creativity theorists are gradually accepting the social contexts of creativity and are therefore seeking to improve of these techniques (Henry, 2006). Amabile (1996) advocates the social contexts of stimulated creativity after having studies hundreds of cases of individuals and organisations. As she points out, 'most of this evidence comes from autobiographies, letters, journals, and other first-person accounts by scientists, artists, writers, and others generally acknowledged for their creative achievements' (p. 6).

The reason why the socio-cultural perspective offers a more viable definition of creativity is because it better explains the difficulties with analyzing divergence and relevance. For example, knowing an idea is novel 'may require guesswork as much as mature judgement' (Negus and Pickering, 2004, p. 9), and while all things creative are original not all things original are creative. When looking at creativity as something which is novel, Boden (1994) argues that the idea can either be *P*-creativity (individual novelty) or *H*-creativity (societal novelty). Questions arise therefore as to what or who makes an idea an *H*-creativity idea. *Relevance* on the other hand involves a different set of problems. Knowing something has value requires it to 'pass social evaluation' (Csikszentmihalyi 1997, p. 23). Whether an idea is relevant or not therefore requires more than the input of the individual or team creator. It is noted in Eysenck (1995, p. 37),

> When Shakespeare broke the rule of the consistencies (of time and place) in his plays he was certainly original, but was his originality relevant? What would relevance mean in this context? Who would decide? He was certainly condemned for his breach of convention by continental critics, until Lessing argued in his favour.

In order to conceptualise creative achievement, Eysenck concludes that it is based on a multiplicative function of *cognitive*, *environmental* and *personality* variables as shown in figure. 2.2. The *environmental* variable further illustrates the significance of factors outside the realm of individual achievement.

Cognitive Variables	Intelligence Knowledge Technical Skills Special Talents	
Environmental Variables	Political-religious Cultural Socio-economic Educational	CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT
Personality Variables	Internal motivation Confidence Nonconformity	
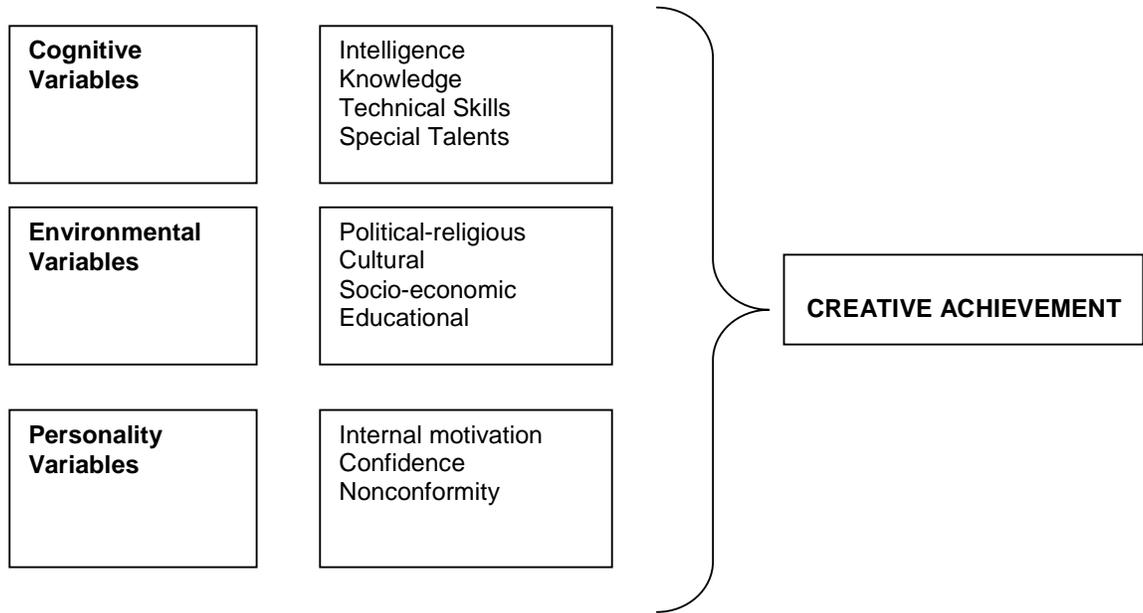
Figure 2.2 Eysenck's Creative Achievement model (adapted from Eysenck, 1995, p. 39)

Csikszentmihalyi's Social-Systems Model

While Eysenck's model is a good example for understanding creative achievement, it includes individual variables that are beyond the abilities of organisations to manage, and therefore stimulate. One particular socio-cultural perspective that *can* offer a solution to these problems is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *social-systems model*. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) argues strongly that creativity can flow stronger if it is managed more efficiently within a context outside the individual. As he points out from the outset of his book on creativity flows (p.1),

> An idea or product that deserves the label 'creative' arises from the synergy of many sources and not only from the mind of a single person. It is easier to enhance creativity by changing conditions in the environment than by trying to make people think more creatively.

The social-system model shaped by Csikszentmihalyi is used increasingly by scholars as a theoretical framework in order to study different aspects of creativity (see for example, Gardner, 1993 for the creative lives of 'geniuses'; Bergh and Stuhlfaut, 2006 for advertising,). The theory is based on three mechanisms: the *domain*, the *field* and the *person*

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1997). Each of the three mechanisms plays a pivotal role in the creative process. The *domain*, according to Csikszentmihalyi, is a set of rules such as mathematics, music, tae kwon do, television production. The *field* consists of all the gatekeepers in a certain domain. They decide whether the idea is creative enough and therefore if it should be included in the domain. Members of a field might include critics, teachers, collectors, television producers, commissioning editors et cetera. Finally, the *person* or creator uses the symbols of the domain to create a novel idea that is consequently analysed by the field before deciding on whether to include it as part of that same domain. Subsequently, the definition of creativity according to Csikszentmihalyi *(p. 28)* is:

 "Any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain or that transforms an existing domain into a new one…"

In order to conceptualise this thesis a more specific definition of creativity and television needs to be addressed. By applying Csikszentmihalyi's model of creativity to the field of television, we can modify the definition as follows:

"Any idea for an original television programme by producers, writers, directors et cetera (creators) that might transform a set of rules regarding television production, television genres, scripts and screenplays (domain) as decided by commissioners, researchers, controllers et cetera with the authority to state what eventually gets produced (field)."

Consequently, when looking at original television programmes, the field, the domain and the creator can be defined as follows:

DOMAIN / SET OF RULES	FIELD / GATEKEEPERS	CREATOR
Television Production / Television Genres / Scripts / Screenplays /	Genre Commissioning Editors / Genre and Channel Controllers / Audience Researchers / Schedulers / Strategists / General Public / Regulators	Producers / Writers / Directors / Actors and Actresses /

CONCLUSION

Summarizing Creativity

With all the above definitions of creativity reviewed, a summary can be made of creativity in the following way (it should be noted that the authors that advocate these findings throughout their work are listed next to each point):

- Creativity deals with idea generation (Bilton)
- Creativity deals with idea exploitation (Bilton)
- The idea must be *original* as tested by different means (Amabile, Boden, Bilton, Csikszentmihalyi)
- The idea must be *important* as tested by different means (Amabile, Boden, Bilton, Csikszentmihalyi)
- Creativity (creative achievement) is based on cognitive abilities, environmental variables, and personality traits *acting in a synergistic manner* (Eysenck)
- Competition does not always stimulate creativity and needs to be used with care otherwise it might in fact stifle creativity (Runco, Deci and Ryan)
- Creativity is a non-linear process based on four stages - preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification (Pioncare)
- Creativity is a process that can be both implicitly and explicitly motivated (Runco)
- Creativity is a process that functions within a social-system (Bilton, Csikszentmihalyi, Runco)
- We can define what is creative by breaking down the social-system into a *domain* a *field* and a *creator* (person) (Csikszentmihalyi)

This thesis does not address how *individual* artists involved in original television production are *inspired* and motivated to create. Nor does it seek to study what the best techniques are that can harness and nurture the *creative* personality of a programme-maker. Studies such as these are interested in issues like individualism and how to improve *domain*-specific knowledge on a personal level (see for example, Fletcher, 2004 and a series of over sixty books by psychologist Edward De Bono). However, the thesis is particularly interested in conceptualising organisational creativity (this includes group creativity). In order to do so, creativity needs to be conceptualised as a social-system.

Creativity's growing significance is based on two different principles. The first is that of the 'creative society' in which knowledge-driven societies aspire to construct creative citizens in all levels of life (Florida, 2004). The second is the 'creative economy'. This chapter, and thesis as a whole, looks more at the 'creative economy' aspect of creativity. Although the growing importance of the 'creative industries' and the 'creative management' paradigm are both significant aspects of 'creative economy' discourse, they cannot necessarily be compared with each other. In fact, Bilton (2007) argues that the 'creative industries' have grown to such an extent that the category 'threatens to engulf most of the world's economy' (p. 161). As Bilton sees it, the two are merging because so many creative occupations 'lie outside the creative industries' and vice versa (ibid.). Other on the other hand, (e.g. Moultrie and Young, 2009), argue that strategies used for many years in creative industries can be used to enrich the creative management paradigm. Whichever way one sees it, what is for sure is the growing importance of managing creativity in all kinds of organisations.

Having analysed the 'creative management' paradigm and the 'creative industries', the chapter looked closer at various ways creativity can be managed and stimulated, albeit the embryonic stage of such techniques. The BBC is seen as a pioneer of new management theories and also a significant constituent of the 'creative industries'. As such, how the BBC attempts to stimulate creativity of television programme-making will contribute both to the discourse on 'creative management' and to the growth of the 'creative industries'.

Chapter Three

Methodology and a Natural History of the Research

INTRODUCTION

Silverman (2005) argues that in order to write a methodology chapter for qualitative empirical research, 'a bland account in the passive voice is an entirely inappropriate format' (p.303). Included in the methodology chapter should be, 'a natural history of the research' (ibid). In other words, in order not to 'bore' the reader, Silverman, as well as Alasuutari (1995) and Yin (2003), advocate a 'detective story' in which fieldnotes are included in the chapter.

As a result, the following chapter is broken into three parts. In the first section, manifestly called *The Methodology*, a conventional methodology description is offered. Specifically, this section includes the following:

3.1.1	**Personal Context**	
3.1.2	**Why this is a Qualitative Study**	
3.1.3	**Why this is a Case Study**	
3.1.4	**Propositions**	
3.1.5	**The Units of Analysis**	
3.1.6	**Validity, Reliability and Generalisation**	
3.1.7	**Data Collection**	

In the second smaller section, the chapter looks in closer detail at the importance of historiographies particularly when studying organisations. The final section, called a *natural history of the research*, a description of the research is offered by following the aforementioned advice of Silverman, Yin and Alasuutari. This includes fieldnotes and personal notes that were used throughout the period of writing the thesis.

3.1   The Methodology

The methodology section begins with a description of the personal reasons as to why I chose to undertake a study on creativity at the BBC; Silverman (2005) calls this, '*The Personal Context'* (p.307). Maxwell (1996) offers the same advice similarly labelling it 'The personal purpose' (p.15). Following the personal context, justifications are made as to the research methods that were chosen for the thesis. This is based in two parts, *Why this is a Qualitative Study* and *Why this is a Case Study.* The remaining five sections are based on the design of this particular case study.

3.1.1   *The Personal Context*

By including a 'personal context' in the methodology chapter, an ontological explanation is offered as to why I have chosen to research broadcast creativity at the BBC. In so doing, I am legitimatising my methodology by explaining my broad research interests on *a personal level* - based on experiences and occurrences in my life. The personal context should be used to clarify my own personal aims and reasons for undertaking this thesis; more generally, to answer the question, *what is the research for?* Maxwell (1996) believes such an account can strengthen the research design by realising that self-reflection has 'important consequences for the validity of the conclusions' (p.15).

My interest in television production derives from the milieu of my childhood. My father had been an actor in Cyprus working in theatre, cinema and television. As a child I remember people from the arts were either always at our home or we were at theirs. Thespians were the most common guests and friends of the family. Directors, writers, painters, producers and musicians were not excluded however from the group. I would sit quietly and unnoticed, listening to them discuss about scripts and stories, and possibilities of 'getting the work done'. On some occasions I would mutely observe their round-table script readings and listen to their worries and frustrations. While most children spent their summer Sundays at the beach, I would choose to stay home and watch my father while he wrote and edited screenplays or rehearsed lines of upcoming projects. For me, the most interesting [and entertaining] part of my father's work was when he discussed television with his colleagues. There was always talk of the *'pilot'* or the *'concept'*; sometimes, I would notice that something as elementary as the '*logline'* would take days to perfect. *Would it work? Would Mr. or Mrs. so and so agree to it? How could we increase our chances of getting the 'nod'?* For the most part, these queries remained unanswered. It was all based on trial and error and the only thing that mattered when pitching an idea, even for the Public Service Broadcaster[29], was whether the programme had a chance of achieving high *ratings*. Producers spoke of ratings frequently, so too did television executives; actors and actresses on the other hand, dreaded it. They were, more than any other group, suspicious of the creeping commercialisation of Cypriot television. According to actors and actresses of that generation, although more television would help stabilize their careers in what at the time was a very precarious industry, most of them had started their careers in theatre and quality was important to them; they welcomed the prospect of stability but feared the survival of quality drama programming, Greek Tragedies - *god forbid*, of theatre itself. They brought up issues such as audience loyalty to 'quality' literature, and the unfortunate consequences of commercial television (ratings) that lead to the dumbing-down of audiences. Admittedly, all of this flagged my curiosity.

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[29] At that period the only available broadcaster in Cyprus was the publicly owned Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CYBC). CYBC is a dual-funded organisation. That is, a tax system similar to the license fee, and advertising. The first private channel, Logos, was launched in Cyprus in 1992 (see Nicoli, 2009).

A decade or so later while studying in the United States, I would bring up issues of consumerism and the dumbing-down of audiences to my lecturers; my words would usually fall on deaf ears. The curriculum did not necessarily involve such discussions. There were a few exceptions; sporadic discussions of Ben Bagdikian's *Media Monopoly* (1983 first edition), Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (1985) and Herbert Schiller's *Culture Inc., The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* (1989) spring to mind. However, these exceptions were far and few between. The curriculum was, in my humble opinion, unfairly tipped towards the private sector; everything in communications was taken at face value. Advertising is advertising, ratings are ratings, public relations is public relations and media economics is as it is, and that was that. We were being trained to take on a future role in an emerging global capitalist information society without necessarily engaging actively in asking why things were as they were. When I sometimes attempted to raise these issues in class discussions, I often felt like the wet blanket since I was merely interrupting the class from more 'productive' discussions. I felt I needed more; and my curiosity stood firm. I spoke to a lecturer at the time and he gave me a few suggestions about what I should do to assuage this inner desire for answers. One suggestion was to enter a more balanced graduate programme. Therefore, after conducting some research while simultaneously working briefly in advertising in the USA to earn some money for graduate school, I ended up in the Communications Policy programme at City University, London.

At City University, I was fortunate to be taught by Jeremy Tunstall, Ali Rattansi, Howard Tumber and Petros Iosifidis. During my time there, I came across Ien Ang's, *Desperately Seeking the Audience* (1991) (reviewed in detail in chapter one). Reading the book essentially led to this thesis. Ang accentuated many of my own thoughts about the capricious nature and evident weaknesses of the ratings system, and by extension, of media economics more generally. Unlike my undergraduate education, things were not taken at face value. I became intrigued with how Ang separated the *institutional* from the *academic,* especially when it came to audience research. One significant area raised in Ang's book was the burgeoning threat of new technologies on Public Service Broadcasters all over the world. Ang's arguments were echoing those of three other significant writers that inspired me from my time at City's graduate programme; specifically, Nicholas Garnham, Peter Golding and Graham Murdock. Their writings intrigued me. What I found most appealing from their work was how they critically took on the wave of liberal regulatory decisions occurring throughout the 1980s and 1990s and how that was affecting the communications industry. I was happy to be in the programme digesting all this enlightening information, but the more I progressed, the more disheartening it all appeared to me. The decline of public service broadcasting seemed inevitable and along with it, its core Reithian values – to inform, to educate and to entertain. Since my father had worked for most of his life in public service broadcasting, coming to grips with its decline saddened me. Admittedly, my affinity towards PSB played an important role in my decision to pursue a PhD later on.

Vis-à-vis my graduate work, I became content and returned to Cyprus armed with my newly acquired knowledge. I felt it balanced out my prejudiced, consumer-oriented undergraduate degree. I began work in the field of advertising and marketing almost immediately with the help of my experience from having worked for a stint in advertising in the US and from holding a Master's degree from London. I now began to witness how the 'ratings game' worked from the inside. It was Ian Ang's thesis all over again, this time empirically and firsthand. This exacerbated my urge to learn more about the feeble media industry from a critical perspective. It brought to the surface feelings I had had as a graduate student. I continued to read work on the changes occurring in communications as well as on international political economy (e.g. Jeffry Frieden's excellent *Global Capitalism*, 2002). It was dawning upon me that I wanted to take this a step further. I decided to return to London to talk to various universities about what I needed to do to become a research student. I had exchanged an email with Sonia Livingstone at the London School of Economics and I was going to try and meet up with her as well as with scholars from other universities. I naturally decided however, to start my expedition for a PhD programme by going back to City University. As it turns out, this was a significant decision. I remember it been early September and the university was fairly quiet. I was extremely fortunate to find Professor Frank Webster sitting in his office working oh his PC. I had remembered Professor Webster from his book, *Theories of the Information Society* (1997, 2006 second edition), that I had used extensively during my time as a graduate student. Although we did not have an appointment, Professor Webster was kind enough to discuss with me in depth what it took to become a research student and what I needed to do to prepare. He totally won me over and my decision was made (admittedly an unusual route to finding a supervisor). With Petros Iosifidis and now Frank Webster at City University, it became my only choice. I returned to Cyprus with thoughts of a proposal and methodologies going through my mind.

Possible research projects ranged from advertising organisations and how they function, to ratings and its methodological weaknesses (a theme echoing Ang's work, 1991, 1995). The more I read however, the more interested I became in television production and the creative work done behind the scenes. In a way, it was a *nostalgic urge* to study how professionals similar to my father, work in today's more fast-paced and competitive television environment. This is the art/capital contradiction (see chapter one and two of this thesis) mentioned throughout Ryan's work (1992). I found Todd Gitlin's *Inside Primetime* (1983) in particular, very interesting and started looking at how I could do something similar. I was gradually moulding some significant questions and hypothesis. Specifically, how do television organisations attempt to minimise the uncertainties involved in television production? And how do they make their choices to give certain programmes the 'green light'? I knew from my own experiences, that the industry's reliance on audience research in order to answer the aforementioned question was growing. Marketing and promotional techniques too were gradually playing a more significant role in assuaging the industries insecurities of launching

new programmes every year. I drafted a proposal and sent it along with an application to City University.

Initial Period of Research

I left my job and moved to the UK to begin my research at City University without much research experience and maybe even more ominously, very few contacts in the UK. It is because of this that one might begin to realise the oddity of my thesis topic. Why does a Cypriot that lives and works in Cyprus, wish to conduct research and write a PhD thesis on the BBC? Furthermore, with so much written on the BBC, how could I possibly make a contribution? Choosing a research topic on Cyprus would have been fundamentally easier due to my contacts in the Cypriot media I had managed to accumulate over the years. I was adamant however on conducting fieldwork in the UK. I had decided early on to do this since I believe the British broadcasting sector is effervescent, creative and yet in a strange way, very elusive. Any research I pursue in Cyprus after such a challenge will, I believe, be comparatively easier to conduct.

Admittedly, my initial proposal was not on how the BBC stimulates creativity of original television programmes. As I mentioned above, my initial research queries were on how the industry *as a whole* in the UK seeks to diminish the uncertainties involved in original programme development. After a year of reading the literature and methodology surrounding these topics, I had decided on breaking down my thesis along the following lines:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction
- Chapter 2 – Methodology
- Chapter 3 – The Independent Production Sector
- Chapter 4 – The BBC and Channel 4
- Chapter 5 – ITV and Five
- Chapter 6 – Conclusion

After approximately one year of further conceptualising the research and covering ground on the literature review, I felt ready for fieldwork. While preparing for the fieldwork, I had been notified of a vacancy at Nicosia's Intercollege (now University of Nicosia) in the Department of Communications. As I was told at the time, they were looking for someone with experience similar to mine; if I could prove I was working towards a PhD and I did well in the presentation and interviews, I would have a chance to be hired. In Cyprus, with only six universities of which only two have a communications programme, I felt it was an opportunity I could not let pass by. I prepared for the presentation and to my good fortune I was offered the job. In hindsight, I can say that both the department and my supervisors at City University supported me when I told them about the situation. Subsequently, I have now

being teaching at the Communications Department of the University of Nicosia for the past four years.

The Fieldwork and Reconceptualising my Thesis

While teaching, I felt I could carry out the research during Christmas, Easter and summer breaks. Indeed, this is how I managed to complete my fieldwork. I began in August 2006, and from then on every opportunity I got (breaks), I returned to London to continue. As I began working in this manner I soon came to realise that I would have difficulties gaining access during the 'set' period I had to undertake the interviews. I had managed to do so initially through several contacts my supervisors gave me. I believed that by snowballing my way into the industry I should not have any serious problems with access. While very rarely did I get turned away, many potential informants would say they were busy, and to therefore contact them again at a later date. As it turns out, this later date usually meant I could not be there since the semester would begin for me and I would therefore return to Cyprus. Although I had conducted a few important interviews outside the BBC, (notably David Bergg – Head of Strategy at ITV, and Justine Kershaw – at the time, Controller of Factual at Five), it was becoming clear to me that researching the *whole* audiovisual sector and how they stimulate creativity was not within my capabilities while also holding a full-time post in Cyprus. I spoke to my supervisors about my reservations and they also agreed I should reconceptualise the thesis. As I continued with the fieldwork, I managed to get an interview with Ms. Emma Swain, at the time commissioning editor of Specialist factual at the BBC (now Deputy Controller of Knowledge), and I began looking more closely at the BBC's commissioning process. I had read the work of Georgina Born (2004), and also some work on new public management (Hood, 2001; Harris and Wegg-Prosser 2007), and decided to look further at the possibility of conducting the thesis on only the BBC and not the industry as a whole. As I read more, I grew more confident that I could reconceptualise my thesis in this manner. Conducting a PhD on the world's most well-known public service broadcaster was not a bad alternative. As mentioned above, I am an enthusiast of public service broadcasting and on a personal level I felt comfortable adapting the research. Consequently, I forwent the initial idea of conducting a research on all free-to-air television and independent production, and began refocusing my strengths towards the BBC; it would become a single case study of how the BBC stimulates creativity of its development process of original television production.

3.1.2   Why this is a Qualitative Study

The next logical step in structuring a thesis once a research topic and its main questions have been decided upon and the research has been conceptualised (see chapters one and two), is to choose the research approach (Silverman, 2005). While some scholars (for example Mason, 2002), note that although various 'younger' disciplines with firm

interdisciplinary biases such as media studies and cultural studies tend to rely *a priori* on qualitative approaches, this study should not automatically fall into this category without offering supporting facts.

Consideration was taken of the fact that there are no 'best' or 'ideal' approaches (Arbor and Bjerke, 1997). What essentially drives what will be the most fitting research methods are the questions it seeks to answer (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2005). As Mason (2002) remarks, 'once you have formulated your research question, your research is already set on certain tracks in relation to its design and strategy…you are likely already to have begun thinking about what methods you might use to generate data' (p. 25). Additionally, each research design is based on a philosophical platform of whether it should be positivist or interpretative. Rubin and Rubin (2005) point out, 'a research philosophy indicates how research ought to be conducted, by whom, and with what degrees of involvement or dispassion' (p.21). One of the key points they argue is seeking to find the answer to the question, 'what does the truth mean?' (ibid.). This study answers this question with the realisation that the truth regarding the development process of original television programmes and how creativity is stimulated is seen differently by different people. In other words, there is no objective truth. This research will lend support to the diverging opinions regarding whether the decisions being made at the BBC will improve the creativity of original television programmes. It does so by answering the question, how does the BBC stimulate creativity of original television programmes. Had this study been conducted by another researcher, different conclusions might have been reached. Subsequently, the research design is based on an interpretative constructionist approach. It is for this reason that I believe all steps regarding how to strengthen its validity (for example by including the aforementioned personal context), needed to be taken.

One of the most important issues when deciding which theoretical framework one should approach when researching social phenomena is how the source material will be treated by the researcher. Alasuutari (1995) argues that the researcher that uses qualitative methods sees the participant as an 'informant' giving meaning to something and not like 'respondents' who are obliged to answer a fixed set of questions (a questionnaire) that are usually already given a standard set of options to choose from. Maxwell (1996) similarly argues that one of the main strengths of qualitative methods is "understanding the meaning" of the informant's perspective (p.17). Consequently, most qualitative research deals with a selected number of informants (as opposed to a proportion of the population). However, before further highlighting the aptness of qualitative research approaches towards this study's research questions, attention needs to be drawn to the significance of both quantitative approaches and triangulation research. Patton (2002) comments that the main advantage of quantitative research is that it allows a researcher 'to measure the reactions of a great many people to a limited set of questions, thus facilitating comparison and statistical aggregation of the data' (p.14). Based on the strength of reaching large sample sizes and using probability sampling,

quantitative approaches are rightly considered as being adequately representative of gaining information with varying confidence levels of large populations. This significantly strengthens the generalizability of a study. Conversely, qualitative approaches have been criticised for their lack of generalizability (e.g. Berg, 2001; Patton, 2002). This is so because the numbers of informants in qualitative approaches are typically so few, that running any kind of inferential hypothesis tests on them would result in high percentages of error in regards to them being representative of any population. For example, if one were to study the phenomenon of football fandom by conducting interviews with a small number of fans, one might point to the fact that the number of informants is not a representative number therefore leaving the issue of generalizability open towards criticism. One might rather triangulate the use of open-ended interviews with large-scale questionnaires in the form of a survey of hundreds of fans. Triangulation research (a metaphor derived from map-making and navigation techniques), or in other words, using multiple data-collection technologies, multiple theories, multiple methodologies or combinations of the above research activities, would better serve any research effort (Berg 2001).

There are occasions whereby the choice of whether to use a qualitative or a quantitative approach is more straightforward. The following study is one such example. This is so because the questions involving this study are applied wholly towards the BBC. The study is implicitly about a specific context within the UK's public service broadcasting system. Consequently, since there is only one public service broadcaster in the UK[30], the number of possible informants that deal with this context within this system is considerably small. It could be argued therefore that this makes any statistical efforts superfluous. There simply are not enough informants; therefore probability sampling is not required to facilitate the research by means of quantitative methods. As a result, this thesis relies solely on *nonprobability sampling.*

Apart from the above conspicuous reason as to why this study has used nonprobability sampling, there is also one more imperative rationale that answers why this study is qualitative in nature. In regards to primary data collection, the *types* of questions that were asked cannot be built on closed-ended, rigid, structured and, most importantly, standardised questions or quantitative scales but rather require a 'flexible' and 'non-rigid' approach characteristic of qualitative accounts. 'Qualitative research aims to produce rounded and contextual understandings on the basis of rich, nuanced and detailed data' Mason argues (2002, p.3). In these cases, Patton (2002) stresses the need for *'purposeful (or purposive) sampling'* in which it 'is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, and not empirical generalization from a sample to a population' (p.40). What is required of this study is to look at a *specific* case that requires the input of *specific* television elites amongst the BBC hierarchy. The analysed data therefore is the outcome of gaining access to professionals that carry years of experience in how television programmes are made at the BBC. The

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[30] Not withstanding the public service obligations of other television organisations (ITV, Channel 4, and Five)

information received is the result of having formulated specific questions customised to each informant's own responsibilities, and, only after having gained their trust (for example by assuring then that the purpose of this study is not to gain any kind of competitive advantage from them). This is, as they were informed, I would want to interview them for writing a PhD. Study, conducted purely for 'academic reasons'. Regardless of this approach, many informants were reluctant to share information since it was 'unique, rich nuanced and detailed', just like Mason describes qualitative research is required to be.

From the secondary data attained for this study, what is significant is that all the data is itself predominantly qualitative in nature, such as *Delloite and Touche's* study on the commissioning process (2006), The *Work Foundation's* study on creativity at the BBC (Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, 2005), and The BBC Trust's investigation of the *Window of Creative Competition* (2009). To conclude, in my mind, making this study qualitative was self-explanatory. This is so because the types of questions asked require nonprobability, purposive sampling. For all these reasons a quantitative approach would be inappropriate. The next step was to decide what kind of qualitative study it would be.

3.1.3   Why this is a Case Study

Within qualitative approaches exist a number of methods that allow the researcher to gather data, and then subsequently interpret and analyse it. Some of the main methods used today are action research, content analysis, discourse analysis, historiographies, case studies and ethnographies (Berg, 2001; Silverman, 2005). Each of these approaches use different techniques and tools in order to gather the data (e.g. focus groups, interviews, direct observation, participant observation etc.). The two approaches that could have been used for this study are either ethnography or case study research. This is because the study is about how individuals in an organisation go about conducting their everyday routine responsibilities in a particular setting (developing television programmes). In other words, it is about what people that share a common interest do. These two qualitative approaches[31] are the ones that best deal with peoples actions within specific settings.

If this were a study on the BBC during an earlier period and not a study of a contemporary issue, it might have been appropriate for the whole study to have been a historical account similar to Martin Harris and Victoria Wegg-Prosser's study (2007), *Post Bureaucracy and the Politics of Forgetting: The Management of Change at the BBC, 1991 – 2002.* While historical accounts are made throughout the thesis and particularly in chapter four, this study is predominately a contemporary account of how the BBC stimulates creativity and therefore a complete historiography was not a viable option. Alternatively, if complete access was offered at the BBC, this study might have relied more on ethnographic tools such as direct or participant observation.   Unsurprisingly, Georgina Born's influential study (2004)*, Uncertain*

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[31] It should be noted that case studies can also be quantitative but not very often (Yin, 2003)

Vision: Birt, Dyke and the Reinvention of the BBC was an ethnography. The reality however is that access was extremely difficult and therefore applying the techniques used in ethnographies was impractical. Subsequently, the most fitting research strategy was that of the Case Study. Interestingly, it is worth noting that according to Yin, histories are similar to case studies and ethnographic tools such as participant-observation, are often incorporated in case studies. This is precisely what this study will do as noted in the historiography section following.

Since gaining a strong foothold over the last forty years or so, case studies have been used across a large number of disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, education, history, law, political science and others (Grunbaum, 2007). One of the more simplistic descriptions of the case study method is that of Hammersley and Gomm (2000). As they note, the case study differentiates from other methods by way of its in-depth study of one, or only a few cases. They also note that the case study method seems problematic due to its overlapping term with other methods and of its non-restrictive meaning (for example, lawyers and detectives deal with 'cases' as much as case study investigators). This thesis relies heavily on Robert Yin's *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (2003).* Yin's reading is often considered the most seminal in regards to the approach (Berg, 2001; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2003; Wimmer and Dominik, 2003; Stake, 2005). Grunbaum (2007) notes, 'Yin is one of the more influential contributors of this approach' (p.85). As a result, Yin's definition of case study research is used as a benchmark by all of the above scholars. The definition (2003, p.13) is as follows:

> A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. In other words, you would use case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions - believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study

The above definition adequately summarizes the research conducted for this thesis. Chapter one identified that the conception stage that occurs in television production is a complex and multifaceted procedure. This stage can be defined here as the context mentioned in Yin's definition of case study research. Creativity and how it is stimulated on the other hand can be defined as the phenomenon. In other words, the contextual conditions [the conception stage of original television programmes at the BBC] are highly pertinent to how creativity is stimulated. The following research consequently fits well with Yin's description of case studies. It is also crucial to note anew that this study is a 'contemporary phenomenon'. This is the most significant aspect that differentiates a case study from a historiography. Chapter four, the history of the BBC and how creativity was perceived throughout the organisation's existence, is used merely as a tool to better understand contemporary features.

The strength of case study research is its ability to incorporate what Yin calls, 'a full variety of evidence' (p. 8). This leads to Yin's next part of his description of the case study (14).

> The case study method relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis

Once again, this definition is pertinent of this study. In order to research the conception stage of original television programmes at the BBC, a series of interviews were conducted (described in detail below) and secondary data in the form of current documents (see data collection section of this chapter) were compiled and analysed. Additionally, articles from *Broadcast Magazine* were analysed particularly from 2004-2009, mainly because it is the central journal of news, opinions and general information for the UK audiovisual sector. Other media and trade magazines were also examined during the same period, albeit less systematically.

Other definitions of the case study method are similar to Yin's, although not as complete. In an attempt to crystallize the often confusing case study method, one scholar (Grunbaum, 2007) highlights certain differences between Yin's definitions with those of other case study scholars. For example, Eisenhardt (1989) defines the method in the following manner: 'the case study is a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings' (p. 534). On the other hand, Merriam (1988) notes, 'the qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit' (p. xiv). Finally, according to Grunbaum, Stake (1995) defines the case study as, 'a study of particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances' (p. xi). Grunbaum further identifies certain common themes running across all definitions (pp. 82-83). These are:

- the study is always related to individuals;
- these individuals are studied in their natural environment;
- the study is a contemporary complex issue;
- the study is holistic;
- the study is primarily qualitative;
- the study can be explanatory, descriptive and/or exploratory;
- the researcher has no control over the case;
- the study is based on numerous data sources;
- rich contextual accounts are produced.

A complete analysis and critique of the case study method is beyond the scope of this study; however the above common themes that are endorsed by Case Study advocates are themes running through this particular study.

Specifically what kind of case study is this one?

According to Stake (1994), there are three reasons why a researcher would conduct a case study. These are intrinsic, instrumental or collective reasons. An intrinsic case study is one whereby the case is important intrinsically and for its uniqueness and not necessarily in order to apply theoretical claims upon it. Instrumental case studies on the other hand are cases that serve a supportive role that can be applied to particular theoretical questions. Similarly, collective case studies are conducted in order to 'enhance the ability to theorize about a broader context' (Berg, 2001, p. 229). As Stake points out, researchers often have multiple interests and therefore case studies can be both intrinsic and instrumental. This has been the case with this particular study. My interest in studying the BBC has been both intrinsic due to its uncommon characteristics (for example, not many public service broadcasters use a license fee as a funding mechanism), and the considerable weight the BBC signifies across a global broadcasting landscape (as well as the personal reasons analysed above); but it has also been instrumental in that it attempts to apply the outcomes of the study upon various theoretical claims (these have been explained and analysed in detail in the prologue, and in Chapters One and Two as well as the conclusion).

In regards to the different types of case studies available, Yin (2003) notes that three different forms exist. These are exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Additionally, these three kinds of case studies can either be single or multiple case studies. The *exploratory* case study usually seeks to develop hypothesis for future research and often starts with 'what' questions. The *explanatory* case study seeks to look at 'causal studies'. In other words, the type of questions asked here are usually 'how' or 'why' questions. Explanatory cases studies are similar to histories in that a historiography attempts to explain causes and connect them, where as a chronicle (much like an exploratory case study), merely catalogues the events (see E.H. Carr's *What is History?,* 1961). Finally, the *descriptive* case study[32] requires the researcher to 'describe' the case without necessarily having to explain why. Yin notes that many case studies can have more than one quality, citing William F. Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943) as an example of a case with both descriptive and explanatory attributes. This study's main question is, '*How* does the BBC stimulate creativity during the conception stage of original television programmes? Rather than just describing however, an attempt is made to offer causations and explanations and therefore it should be considered an explanatory case study.

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[32] in Yin's third edition, 2003, he fails to give the descriptive case study the same kind of attention as the other two types

It should be noted here that the study will be a single case study, that of the BBC. The reason, as mentioned throughout this thesis, is because the BBC exemplifies the qualities of public service broadcasting and therefore makes an ideal case on its own. Yin notes that once one has decided whether a case study is to be a single or a multi-case study, the next step is to differentiate between whether the study is *holistic* or *embedded* (p.41-46). A holistic study is one in which you take a 'global approach {that} allows an investigator to avoid examining any specific phenomenon in operational detail' (p.45). Conversely, an embedded case study is one in which these specific details are precisely what is analysed by making them subunits of the main unit of analysis. For example, if this study were to look closer at genres at the BBC and how creativity is stimulated in each genre, it would use an embedded design. The following figures (3.1a, 3.1b) show by using a diagram similar to Yin's (p. 40), the design of this research if it had been an embedded case study (figure 3.1a) and as a holistic single-case study (figure 3.1b).

CASE (unit of analysis) PSB - *BBC*

CONTEXT: Conception stage of original television programmes

E.g. Creativity within comedy

E.g. Creativity within drama
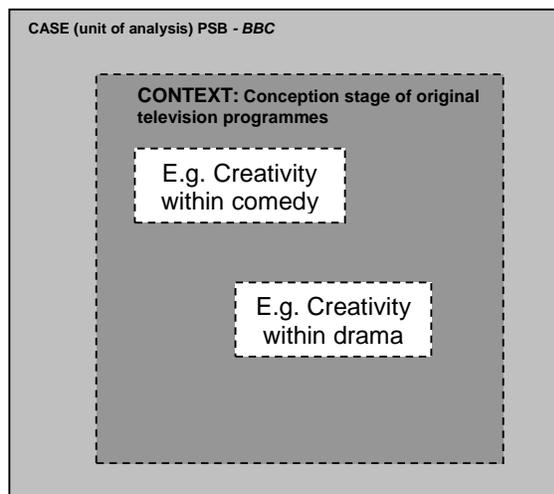
Figure 3.1a
A single case embedded design (Yin's type 2 case study)

	Conception stage		Creativity within each genre

CASE (unit of analysis) PSB - *BBC*

CONTEXT: Conception stage of original television programmes
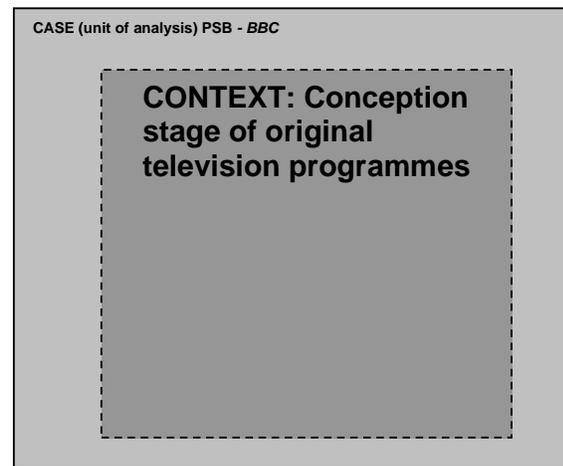
Figure 3.1b
A single case holistic design (Yin's type 1 case study)

	Conception stage		Dashed line covering all the BBC's
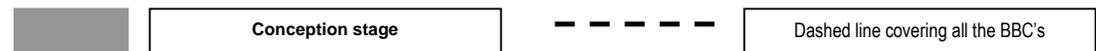
The weakness of embedded accounts is that a researcher runs the risk of losing focus of the main unit of analysis (ibid.). Looking at a unit of analysis holistically is one of the strengths of qualitative research (Patton, 2002, p. 228) and of case studies in particular (Yin, 2003). As Patton argues, 'the program, organization, or community, or just the individual people, becomes the case study focus in those settings' (ibid) (more analysis advocating a holistic design is offered below in the units of analysis section). *In summation, this thesis is an explanatory holistic single-case study (Yin, 2003) that is both intrinsic and instrumental* (Stake, 1994).

3.1.4   Propositions of the Research

One of the most common routes when designing case studies is to follow Yin's five component elements (Berg, 2001; Grunbaum, 2007). These are (p. 21):

- A study's Questions;
- Its propositions;
- Its unit(s) of analysis;
- The logic linking the data to the propositions
- The criteria for interpreting the findings

As already noted, Yin illustrates the importance of introducing theoretical propositions when designing a research proposal and using them to guide data collection and analysis. Hence, the creation of propositions results in a case study that is conceptualized within a structured process. Since this research topic is elusive and relatively under-researched, proposition-building (based on prior research and theoretical claims), has resulted in a better constructed research topic. As Yin argues, 'each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of study…only if you are forced to state some propositions will you move in the right direction (p. 22). Proposition-building has assisted in the construction of the interview questions and ascertained anew the core question. This question driving the research is: *How does the BBC stimulate creativity during the conception stage of original television programmes?* Deriving from this question and with the use of the literature available (as reviewed in chapters one and two), the following four propositions were made:

1. ***Organizational creativity in television production is a social process* that can be influenced by external factors both within an organisation and across the field as a whole.**

Creativity does not derive purely from the individual work of one person (Bourdieu, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Bergh and Stuhlfaut, 2006). The BBC from 2000 onwards, with the appointment of Greg Dyke as Director General, and then Mark Thompson in 2004, has seen to it that creativity flows through all corners of the organisation. Restructuring has occurred

at the BBC placing greater emphasis on technology and online communication therefore all reinvestment has gone into getting more creative output for all platforms. At the same time, various regulatory factors have been applied in an attempt to increase UK broadcast creativity.

> 2. *The methods used to stimulate creativity are not based on 'exact' science; just as a method that is thought of as likely to stimulate creativity might in fact stifle it, there is a risk that the BBC becomes less rather than more creative. When analyzing various internal policies in detail this might be the case at the BBC. Consequently, one could argue that creativity could eventually be seen as a catalyst for making the BBC a 'publisher' without its own in-house production.*

While some methods at the BBC might unquestionably stimulate creativity, others such as the *Window of Creative Competition* (WoCC) might be detrimental to BBC television production.

> 3. *An increased level of marketing, market research, lifestyle research and audience behaviour data is used in order to find niches in the industry and promote programmes across different platforms. Similar methods are now used in the creative process and even during the conception stage.*

Caves' work on audience economics (2000) has shown that research is used to spot 'gaps' in the market that audiences might be willing to consume. Hesmondhalgh (2007) has echoed similar assumptions. As he notes, 'the way that the cultural industries conceive of their audiences is changing. There is greater emphasis on audience research, marketing and on addressing 'niche' audiences' (p. 2).

> 4. *Writers, producers and other creatives (artisans) working in television are increasingly being given more guidelines / briefs <u>before</u> coming up with 'ideas' for new programmes.*

Adopting the work of different scholars, this proposition states that the conception stage of television production *might* have to do with more than just whim, imagination, background, creativity, and inspiration of the artist (Elliot, 1972; Gitlin, 1983; Tunstall, 1990; Blumler and Spencer, 1990; Ryan, 1992). Analysing this, one could argue therefore that creativity and the creation process in television is increasingly becoming a corporate decision as it is anything else. The ubiquity and significance of television in contemporary societies that are today on the verge of 'digital take-up' only exacerbates the complexities involved in an already multifaceted industry.

3.1.5   The Units of Analysis

Although Grunbaum (2007) argues that current definitions regarding units of analysis are vague and require further explanation, Yin explains that units' of analysis can define what the case is. Some scholars go as far as noting that the unit of analysis *is* the case (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 25; Berg, 2001, p.231). Therefore, care is required in how the researcher approaches the units of analysis since according to Yin, different units of analysis 'call for slightly different research designs and data collection strategies' (p.24). For example, were this thesis designed with the BBC's commissioning process as the primary unit of analysis rather than the conception stage, a broader scope of investigation would be required. As argued in chapter one, the conception stage is one part of the commissioning process and therefore would account for only one of several other segments[33]. By concentrating on the conception stage and making it the primary unit of analysis, it enabled me to apply the *phenomenon* (how creativity is stimulated) in a specific and narrow context (the conception stage of original television programmes).

As noted above, the following study could have taken two different routes in its design. These were the holistic and the embedded approach. As will be shown in chapter six, the BBC is divided into different organisational divisions. One of these is *BBC Vision*, the department responsible for commissioning and in-house production. *BBC Vision* is further divided into four primary genre *categories* that are divided into specific genres (see table 3.1 and table 6.2).

Fiction	Entertainment	Knowledge	Other Genres
Drama	Entertainment	Arts, Music and Religion	Children's (CBBC)
Comedy	Daytime Entertainment	Current Affairs	Children's (CBeebies)
Film		Daytime Factual	Open University
Programme Acquisition		Documentaries	Sport
		Factual features and formats	
		Learning	
		Specialist Factual	

Table 3.1 – BBC Vision Organisational Breakdown

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[33] It should be noted here that chapter six discusses all aspects of the commissioning process at the BBC not all stages are analysed in equal measure

Had this been an embedded approach it seems the more logical approach would be to breakdown the thesis into the four genre categories (fiction, entertainment, knowledge and other genres) (see figure 3.2). This would give more emphasis on the differences of how creativity is stimulated by genre category. In essence, it would have become a comparative analysis of each genre. This is how Jeremy Tunstall divided his study on TV Producers (1993). Another option would be to concentrate on one genre alone therefore contributing towards the underdeveloped discourse on genre theory.[34] For example, studying the conception stage of drama at the BBC might have made for a plausible thesis. According to Creeber et al. (2001), drama can be further divided into soap operas, postmodern dramas, contemporary teen dramas, telenovelas, costume dramas (period dramas), the mini-series, drama-documentary on so on. All of these subsets of drama could have made for separate chapters of the thesis.
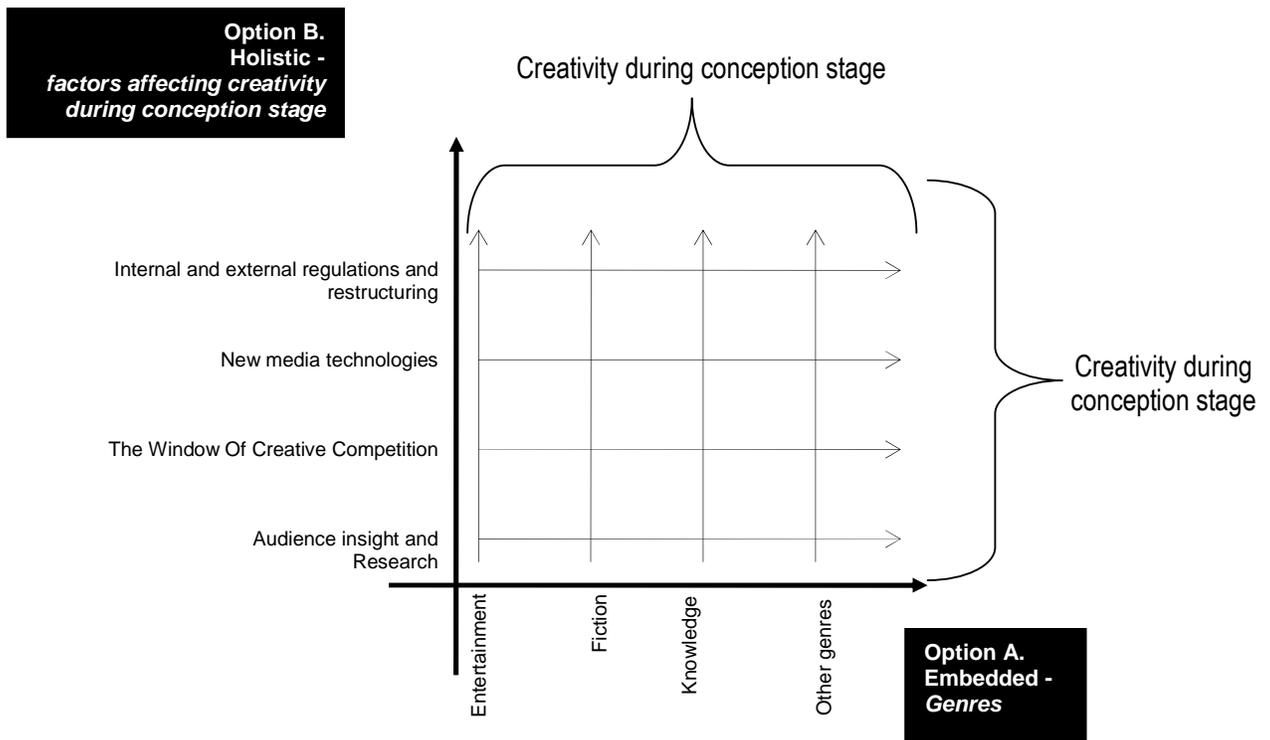
Figure 3.2 The Two Design Approaches
Option A. shows how BBC vision is today divided in different genres, whereas (embedded) Option B. shows the different *holistic* factors affecting the conception stage

A holistic approach such as this one, concentrates on studying all genres together as a whole. This choice was made for the following reasons. First, emphasis is given in this study, on analyzing how the BBC stimulates creativity *as a whole*. While different genre

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[34] Genre theory in my opinion is an underdeveloped discipline within the field of communications.

controllers and producers from different genres might have their own ways of stimulating creativity, this thesis looks at how management attempts to stimulate all areas of production within the BBC. The commissioning process for example is similar regardless of genre. So too is the window of creative competition. Since the WoCC is implemented across all four genre categories, the analysis needed to be done in the same way. If an embedded approach were used with a specific genre taking precedence, an analysis of the whole WoCC would not have been feasible. Apart from the WoCC, other factors stimulate creativity across the whole organisation and required similar attention. This are, rules and regulations occurring across the UK audiovisual sector that affect the BBC's ability to increase its creativity, emphasis on audience research, and the added significance the BBC has given towards technologies. Second, the holistic approach gives more emphasis on contributing to a cultural political economy and production of culture approach (see chapter one), rather than genre theory. By constructing a thesis that analyses topics of importance for both cultural political economy and production of culture, the main questions, goals and objectives of this thesis can more effectively be addressed. And third, had this been an embedded case study, I would be under more pressure to acquire access from specific informants working within each genre category. Due to the limits of a PhD study, I fear this might not have been feasible.

3.1.6   Validity, Reliability and Generalisation

A case study, like any other research method, requires criteria for judging the quality of the design. The four tests used to judge the criteria are (Yin, 2003: p. 33-36):

- Construct Validity
- Internal Validity
- External Validity (generalisation)
- Reliability

Construct Validity

This first test involves creating 'operational measures for the concepts being studied' (ibid, p.34). Yin suggests three methods, or tactics that the investigator is required to meet to be sure of construct validity. These are:

1. Using multiple sources of evidence.
2. Establish a chain of evidence, and
3. Have a draft report reviewed by key informants.

Using multiple sources of evidence is endorsed by many scholars and not just Yin (see also Maxwell, 1996). One way of cross-referencing multiple sources is to use both primary and

secondary data. Specifically, as aforementioned, semi-structured interviews with key informants were used as a primary data collection method along with a rich variety of secondary data (refer to the data collection section below). This was not hard to achieve since the BBC is obliged to have a transparent and open philosophy concerning its activities. For example, the BBC has a very detailed section regarding its commissioning process online. For this reason the data was derived heavily from their website particularly in order to construct the questions of the interviews. Additionally, as mentioned, many external reports and media were used as part of the secondary data that acted as multiple sources of evidence. By using these sources interchangeably, the validity of the research is significantly strengthened since the data from one source is used as a way of cross-checking the data of another.

The second attempt to support the construct validity is to establish a chain of evidence. Yin notes that establishing a chain of evidence requires the case study researcher to record his or her activities in such a way that will allow an external observer 'to follow the derivation of any evidence, ranging from initial research questions to case study conclusions' (p.105). An effort was made therefore to document all the data collection methods, retain a research journal, and make checklists, databases, lists of contacts, references and informants all easily accessible.

Regarding the final method proposed by Yin to increase construct validity, that is, to have key informants read reports of the case study, while surely a good method of validation, efforts to do so were not made. The informants used for the primary data work in a fast-paced field and have all made it clear that they are extremely busy. While efforts to force upon them any of the research have not been made, they were informed that if they wish to read a final draft of the research, a copy could be sent to them. By doing so and then asking for their comments, this might strengthen the construct validity.

Internal Validity

Yin notes that internal validity requires the investigator to establish causal relationships 'whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions' (p.34). Internal validity is important especially for explanatory case studies (such as this). This is because explanatory case studies as noted, are causal; they attempt to address why one factor accounts for another. Since a case study is set in its natural setting and takes place while the investigator is scrutinising the case, causal case studies will require making inferences and implying things without actually being able to observe them (p. 36). This becomes a concern and jeopardises internal validity. The tactics noted by Yin to overcome this problem require the investigator to act on the following (p.34):

- Do pattern-matching

- Do explanation-building
- Use logic models

Pattern-matching and explanation-building both involve comparing (matching) empirical data derived from the research with predictions (in the form of the research propositions). Yin states, 'if the patterns coincide, the results can help a case study to strengthen its internal validity' (p.116). It is imperative therefore to assemble questions based on the propositions of this study. The propositions in turn must be based on the theory used to build the case study. Attempts have been made therefore to link these questions to the propositions of the case study noted above thereby increasing the internal validity. Appendix B shows a list of questions that were asked to the different informants. Below each question is a number representing the proposition the question is attempting to answer as well as to whom it was asked.

Logic models is a specific kind of pattern-matching technique that works in a sequence. For example, considering the proposition, 'creativity is a social process', by applying the logic model it would count for the following:

- The concept of creativity as a social process states that ideas can come from anywhere and can be defined and redefined at any moment;
- The BBC therefore has created a website that allows anyone to send in ideas;
- This in turn will allow better ideas to reach commissioners and;
- will eventually lead to more creative original programmes.

The above sequence of events is derived from the proposition, creativity is a social process. At all times during the research, this proposition needs to be identified and matched (or challenged if it is not).

Reliability

Reliability involves demonstrating that the research design (data collection procedures, research design et cetera), can be repeated with the same results if it were redone. According to Yin, a research project is reliable if another investigator followed the same procedures as the original research and the project could still come to fruition. I have considered this throughout the writing of this chapter, and of the thesis more generally. In addition, the natural history of the research analysed below should further augment the reliability of this study. The section will show the steps I have taken in order to complete the study and could be used as a blueprint for future research. It should be noted however that as is mentioned in the interview techniques section, the primary data was gathered largely based on access and therefore like with many qualitative studies, this needs to be taken into consideration.

External Validity (Generalisation)

According to Yin, external validity, 'deals with the problem of knowing whether a study's findings are generalisable beyond the immediate case study' (p.37). This case study is not to be used for 'statistical generalisation'. As mentioned in a prior section of this chapter, due to the uniqueness of the unit of analysis (the BBC's conception stage of original television programmes), it does not call for generalising the outcome of this study with other broadcasters, or even other public service broadcasters for that matter. In other words, I wish to 'particularise' (Stake, 2000, p. 23). The kind of generalisation pursued in this study is called a 'naturalistic generalisation'. Naturalistic generalising is a concept first used by Stake who argued for a different kind of generalisation to that of its traditional 'statistical' sense. As Stake notes, 'case studies will often be the preferred method of research because they may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader's experience and thus to that person a natural bases for generalisation' (p.19). In other words, case study research should be written in a way that will be understandable to a wide audience and not necessarily with a 'scientific discourse' that will merely be read by a scientific community. This form of particularising will help to naturally generalise the outcome of the research.

Yin advocates another form of generalisation for case studies, 'in which previous developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study' (2003, p. 32). This, according to Yin is called *'analytical generalisation'* (ibid). Analytical generalisation allows the case study to strengthen existing theoretical frameworks. For this study, the conclusions reached should be used to strengthen the theories regarding creativity, cultural / television production, cultural political economy and new public management, and overall to lend support to the ongoing debates regarding how best to stimulate broadcast creativity.

3.1.7   Data Collection

From Yin's six *sources of evidence* (p. 85-97) that are required to generate data for case studies, three in particular were used for this study. These are interviews (primary), documentation, and archival records (these, as shown in table 3.2, are divided further into research reports and websites) (secondary). The three sources of Yin that are not used are participant observation, direct observation and physical artifacts.

Primary Data

McRobbie (2000) argues, 'production studies require intense periods of immersion in the field of study', noting that interviewing media professionals is, 'a slow and unpredictable process [with] the difficult business of getting access' (257). Despite the difficulties - especially in the filed on communications - Rubin and Rubin note (2005), 'qualitative

interviewing projects are especially good at describing social and political processes, that is, how and why things change' (p.3). Consequently, most television production researchers have used interviews in order to comprehend the inner workings of the industry. For example, Jeremy Tunstall's work (1993) on television producers relied on interviews with over two hundred and fifty television producers across seven different genres. Ryan (1992) also conducted large-scale interviews with media workers in his account of Australian media production. Data-gathering for Todd Gitlin's well-cited television production study *Inside Primetime* (1983), was achieved through interviews with a number of high-positioned television personnel in order to capture the essence of how these workers function behind the scenes for the creation on programmes in the USA. Similarly, Blumler and Spicer (1990) drew on interviews of over one hundred and fifty informants working in the US television industry in order to observe the creative prospects of television in a multichannel era. As they implicitly explain (p.79),

> Our methodological approach was predominately anthropological. Interviews (usually tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed) had no standard structure, lasted between one and two hours, and were conducted with anonymity, like informal conversations, steered by our inquiry questions and preoccupations.

As a result of the above examples, a similar path was taken for this study. As Yin points out, 'each case study…either should be similar to those previously studied by others or should innovate in clear, operationally defined ways *if using methods that are distinctly different from those previously conducted*' (p.24, emphasis added).

Apart from the fact that most studies on television production have used interviews, on a personal level I find the method ideally suited for me mainly because of my experiences thus far. I believe I have a firm grasp of global television from my time working in the media; I had the opportunity at the time to travel to such places as India, the Middle East, North America and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, having worked in the media for several years, I have a clear understanding of the discourse used and what media professionals find important. Additionally, shortly before starting my fieldwork for this study I was fortunate enough to be involved in a European research project with my supervisor Petros Iosifidis that resulted in the book, *Public Television in the Digital Era: Technological Challenges and New Strategies for Europe* (2007). Part of my responsibilities was to conduct open-ended interviews with public service broadcasters in Ireland, Sweden, Spain, and significantly, at the BBC itself. Currently I am also conducting interviews with media personnel in Cyprus regarding digital switchover. The above opportunities and experiences accumulated, have acted as an important precursor for this study. This I believe has given me the assurance one requires when using the techniques of qualitative interviewing.

The Actual Interviews

Although I used purposive sampling for my primary data collection, I did so through snowballing that lead to what is known as *convenience sampling* (Berg, 2001, p. 32). In other words, ideally I would only have used purposive sampling (interviewing specific informants) to conduct my primary data collection but sometimes this was not possible. Therefore, due to difficulties of access, I used convenience sampling of the purposive sample. For example, in some cases, rather than be able to interview the head of production of factual, I alternatively interviewed the next convenient person (an interview with assistant of head of production of factual). All interviews were primarily open-ended and semi-structured. I would start the interview in an unstructured manner allowing the interviewee to freely elaborate on their responsibilities and who they were. As the interview progressed, I would try and direct the interviewee to be more specific in his or her account.

Since this thesis is grounded on the notion that creativity is stimulated at the BBC in four main ways (see propositions above), this is essentially what drove the structure of the interviews *(refer to appendix B).* The interviews differed depending on the post the interviewee held. I looked at how creativity is practised by commissioning editors, strategists, and others involved directly with development. In regards to *regulations*, I spoke to strategists but mostly also through secondary data. The BBC's *audience research* unit (audience insights) was very insightful in how research is used during the development process. Finally, I interviewed specific informants from the creative archive and technology department who gave me information on how *technology* is used. Although each interview was structured towards each informant, this did not mean that questions did not overlap. Questions regarding how technology is used for example were asked to all informants.

Appendix A (interviewer information) shows a list of all the interviews I have conducted. As I have mentioned in the personal context section, the original research was for the UK audiovisual industry as a whole. As a result, some of the interviews I conducted with organisations other than the BBC acted like pilot interviews although some of the information acquired was useful and therefore used. Most interviews were held at the interviewee's place of business while some were over the telephone (from City University); due to the inconvenience of residing in Cyprus and working on a research project based in London, I also held several telephone interviews from Nicosia rather than not conduct the interview at all. Both my supervisors encouraged me to do so since I had already visited the BBC premises on several occasions and the majority of the interviews were held face-to-face. In hindsight, in my opinion the telephone interviews were just as informative and insightful as the personal interviews (and occasionally even more so). I believe this is so because the interviewee might not have felt as sceptical to 'open up' over the phone. All interviews

(telephone interviews included), were digitally recorded, transcribed and stored on a digital file in which I could refer to for future analysis.

Appendix C (permission agreements) shows the signed agreements I used with the informants although on most occasions they were not required since my informants would agree to be named without having to sign the agreements. *Appendix D* (Letter of Communication) shows samples of how I got in touch with various informants and then used snowballing techniques to further pursue my interviews.

Secondary Data

The remaining sources of evidence I used were in the form of secondary data. Significantly, the BBC has a large amount of information in the form of documentation and archival records. Since the BBC is a public organisation it is required to be transparent and keep clear records of all its information. Consequently, all documentation such as announcements, speeches, annual reports and other reports are conveniently available online on the BBC's websites. The most important document I used throughout the case study was that of the BBC's commissioning website. The website offers a large amount of data that allowed me to become acquainted with how the BBC deals with developing original programmes. The website is the tool used by anyone wanting to send in ideas of new programmes. Nonetheless, it should be noted that despite the usefulness of these documents in gathering information and 'augment evidence from other sources' (Yin, p. 87), researchers must be aware of the bias involved in such data. Rowlinson and Procter (1999), while advocating the use of such records and of case studies more generally, argue that researchers are required to use such data with care. Citing Ott (1989, pp. 109-110), the two authors note 'official organizational publications such as brochures, annual reports, and press releases…typically reflect what a team of executives and public relations people want to convey publicly'. For this reason, newspaper clippings and articles appearing in the mass media were also used and analysed. Although they also are loaded with ideological biases, they often balance the documents coming directly from the organisation itself.

From the numerous archival records and research reports that were gathered for the study, the most important ones for this study were two research studies commissioned on behalf of the BBC. The first is The *Work Foundation's Tipping Point: How Much is Broadcast Creativity at Risk?* (Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, 2005)*;* the other was a research report conducted by *Deloitte and Touche LLP* called *The BBC Independent Television Commissioning Process* for the BBC (2006). Both are analysed and cited throughout the study. Ofcom's reviews on public service broadcasting were also extremely insightful, as was Ofcom's television production review. The reports the BBC Trust conducted and commissioned for the *WoCC* proved to be valuable sources of information regarding the new policy. Apart from the significance of the list of research reports, I also used data that was given to me by my informants. For example, after discussing how the BBC uses audience

research in order to stimulate creativity, the head of audience insights was willing to share with me different audience data they themselves used. The BBC's press office preserves all speeches and press releases and thus also proved to be a very useful source for constructing this case study. Finally, *Broadcast*, the industry journal and the plethora of other local media used such as *the guardian's* website, offered excellent sources of more often than not, balanced information that allowed me to remain unbiased and not lose focus of the main purposes of the study.

Since the study uses plenty of historical evidence and has devoted one of its chapters entirely on a history of the BBC (chapter four), the next section seeks to address the significance in using historiographies and how one must perceive history both as a whole and of organisational history.

Data Collection Method	Source of Evidence	Actual Source	Primary or Secondary research
15 Open-ended semi-structured interviews	Interview	Informants 6 from BBC and 6 from other audiovisual sector	Primary
BBC Press Releases	Archival Record	BBC.com (BBC Press Office)	Secondary
BBC management announcements	Archival Record	BBC.com	Secondary
BBC Commissioning Website	Online Website	BBC.com (partially password protected)	Secondary
Review of the BBC's Royal Charter: Te BBC's Response to the DCMS Consultation	Research Report	BBC.com	Secondary
BBC Annual Reports 2005-09	Archival Record	BBC.com	Secondary
Deloitte and Touche LLP: BBC Independent Television Commissioning: September 2006	Research Report	BBC.com	Secondary
Mediatique: From the Cottage to the City: The Evolution of the UK Independent Production Sector: September 2005	Research Report	BBC.com	Secondary
The Operation of The Window of Creative Competition: First Biennial Review by the BBC Trust: July 2008	Research Report	BBC Trust	Secondary
PriceWaterHouseCoopers: BBC Window of Creative Competition: Report for the BBC Trust: July 2008	Research Report	BBC Trust	Secondary
PACT: Response to BBC Trust. Review of the WOCC: April 2008	Research Report	BBC Trust	Secondary
Larkhill Consultancy Limited: BBC Trust's Review of the WOCC. Result from Interviews with Stakeholders: July 2008	Research Report	BBC Trust	Secondary
Series of research reports from BBC audience insights	Documentation	BBC Audience insights (confidential BBC documents)	Secondary
The Work Foundation: The Tipping Point: How Much is Broadcast Creativity at Risk?: September, 2005	Research Report	The Work Foundation	Secondary
A Public Service for All: The BBC in the Digital Age: March 2006	Research Report	Department of Culture, Media and Sport	Secondary
AnalysysMason: Fostering Creative Ambition in the UK Digital Economy: Analysis and Development of Policy Recommendations: May 2009	Research Report	Department of Culture, Media and Sport	Secondary
Review of the Television Production Sector	Research Report	Office Of Communications	Secondary
PACT: Response to Ofcom Review of Television Production Sector: March 2006	Research Report	Office of Communications	Secondary
Communications Market 2005: Television (4)	Research Report	Office of Communications	Secondary
Ofcom Review of Public Service Broadcasting One and Two, Phases 1-3, 1-2, 2004-09	Research Report	Office of Communications	Secondary
Broadcast magazine (professional journal)	Archival Records	Broadcastnow.com (password protected)	Secondary
Local Press	Archival Records	UK Newspaper clippings	Secondary

Table 3.2 – Data Collection Table

3.2 HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY AND ORGANISATIONAL STUDIES

In order to outline a case for how the BBC stimulates broadcast creativity of its original television programmes, an examination of various historical contexts are required. History, (past events and facts), historiography (the attempt to describe, connect, analyse and theorize past events), and organisational studies, have gone through a series of processes (and criticisms) to finally reach approval across different disciplines. E.H. Carr's call for a new form of analytical history in the 1960s struck a chord among burgeoning groups of students across numerous disciplines (particularly of young historians) wanting to grasp what they saw as a quickly changing world order, and by doing so find meaning in their own lives, both professionally and personally. History became significant. Yet throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s the discipline suffered due to the complexity with how it was written and presented - with a discourse that was fuelled by quantitative asocial characteristics (Evans, 2002). Media studies also, (with the possible exception of James Curran's work), seemed to suffer the same fate since the orthodoxy of the period for the discipline led to what Bailey (2008) calls 'historical amnesia'. The historical aspects of media studies were, on the whole, ignored by cultural studies[35] and it was left to less popular branches of media studies to render support to history. Yet Williams (1981) concedes, 'any adequate sociology of culture must, it seems, be an historical sociology' (p. 33). Similarly, Garnham (1990) persuasively argued that to understand major contemporary communications systems, political economists need to 'make an unavoidable theoretical digression in order to base subsequent discussion firmly within the necessary historical materialist perspective' (p. 21). Yet it is not only sociologists of culture and political economists that advocated the discipline but key sociologists also supported history as a major tool in analyzing contemporary phenomena. Elihu Katz reminded us (2009) of the seminal work of Paul Lazarsfeld and his emphasis on the use of history in order to generate 'hypotheses'. Anthony Giddens (2006) makes the point that historical analysis is now a central theme in all sociology, emphasising that history is 'a way of contributing our understanding of institutions in the present' (xxi) and that by 'understanding history [one] can develop a sense of overall movement or line of development a society is following and people can then actively seek to promote it further' (p.46). Foucault too in an interview discussing the history of psychiatry (1983) noted, 'a real science is able to accept even the shameful, dirty stories of its beginning' (p. 15).

When in the late 1990s history and historiography turned towards postmodernism, the emphasis on literary theory did not necessarily help revive the interest it had enjoyed in the 1960s. Yet the postmodern turn helped the discipline find new interest particularly with how histories are written. It particularly led to what we now perceive as reflexive historiography. While reflexive histories have their weaknesses, it seems to have allowed other disciplines to embrace histories and help make them become more ubiquitous. And in media studies Bailey notes, 'one might even go as far as to say that media history has undergone

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[35] There were exceptions such as Stuart Hall's broadcasting history analysis (1986)

something of a renaissance, to the point where one can now, arguably, talk about the subject as a mainstream field of study (2008, p. xxi). Fuelled also by James Curran's call (2002) to present media history as a series of competing narratives, media history today stands firmly as a major branch of media studies (see for example Bailey et al, 2008). Yet as reflexive histories and histories within the field of media studies have generally increased, according to some historiographers business histories still remain a rarity (Jacques, 2006; Taylor, Bell and Cooke, 2009) and therefore more is required to be done to significantly advance organisational studies. As Jacques notes (p.44),

> Much work needs to be done to demonstrate the constructive role historical research can play in helping theorists to develop more informed views of practise and thus, more effective theories. This can be so whether by 'effective' one means 'explanatory', useful or 'emancipatory

So while history on the whole has gone through a resurgence, organisational histories remain infrequent. One organisation that has – fortunately - had its fair share of histories and might therefore be considered an exception to the above is the BBC (notably, Briggs, 1961; Burns, 1977; Barnett and Curry, 1994; Born, 2004). This is possibly due to its public service nature as well as its vital role in promoting a welfare state throughout the twentieth century. Consequently, since there has been an abundance of recorded history on the BBC, this thesis will devote an entire chapter on its 90 year history (with an emphasis on creativity and programme-making). Yet the chapter is not intended to supersede the long and significant list of publications already available on the organisation's history, but rather to add insight on the role of programme-making and creativity and to connect that history with today's current situation. Specifically, what is attempted to be achieved from the historical accounts throughout this thesis is to record and connect the *changes* (chosen in a subjective manner) that have affected creativity in programme-making.

It should be noted therefore that the following chapter is an overture for understanding what is presently occurring at the BBC regarding how audiovisual creativity is stimulated. It should also be noted, supporting Asa Briggs' (1961) emphasis regarding historical accounts as having to be subjective, that the following chapter is merely *a* history and not *the* history of programme-making and creativity at the organisation. It can just as easily be argued that different interpretations of history exist and, as noted by the famous historian E.R Carr, when attempting to answer what history is, the historian's own experiences and own reasons for immersing in the history of his or her study are usually taken into account. History after all has shifted from a positivist discipline to a thoroughly interpretative one (Rowlinson and Procter, 1999). This study, attempting to analyse how broadcast creativity is stimulated at the BBC during the Mark Thompson reign, requires an understanding of the organisational contemporary culture present, and as Rowlinson and Procter note, 'the concept of culture implies an interpretative approach to business history that should move it away from

deterministic explanations of corporate success and failure towards an emphasis on the meaning and interpretations of actors that help constitute organisations over time' (p. 384). Ultimately, Asa Briggs argues that not only must a study be in-depth and subjective, but that valid institutional histories must not be confined to what he calls a 'house history'. As such, organisational historiographies must identify different movements occurring within a certain period and attempt to connect them with the institution. The following chapter on the BBC's history therefore takes a holistic view of the organisation and how external factors have affected its history. For example, O'Mailey's *Closedown* (1994) has been seminal in understanding how policy changes have affected the BBC throughout the 1980s and 1990s. When analyzing the following chapter it will become clear that it follows one of the many competing narratives Curran had called for when addressing media history (2002). Specifically, the history chapter takes on a radical narrative that draws 'on the intellectual traditions associated with Western Marxism and political economy…a relatively recent mode of production that is characterized by the ascendancy of market economics…' (Bailey, 2008, p.166). The radical approach taken in the next chapter is epitomized particularly from its stance when analyzing the period 1979-2000 when the BBC was placed under serious threat from a free-market philosophy taken by the then conservative government. Finally, it should also be noted that while the majority of historical reference is in the following chapter on the BBC, other historical analyses have been used throughout the thesis particularly the history of cultural production from the patronage era to the corporate complex era in chapter one, and the history of managerial models that has led to the creative management paradigm in chapter two.

3.3 A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE RESEARCH

From the outset of this chapter it was argued that qualitative researchers are encouraged to include in their methodology chapter their own fieldnotes and show the reflexive nature of how they approached the study (Silverman, 2005). Mason (2002) argues that researchers should constantly 'take stock of their actions and their role in the data process' (p.7) and I believe that in writing a research diary this has allowed me to do so. Following therefore, is parts of the natural history of the research that allows the reader to become more acquainted with the study while simultaneously finding out the strengths and the weaknesses of the methodology.

I have been keeping a research diary since August 6th 2005 (admittedly only using it occasionally). The research diary has been important for one main reason. It has allowed me to organise my thoughts more efficiently. Throughout the research I have had to write in order to retain all the thoughts and ideas going through my mind. I decided early on to breakdown the notes as advised by Schatzman and Strauss (1973). Specifically they note the fieldnotes need to be ordered in four different groups. These are:

1. *Observational Notes (ON):* These record events experienced principally through watching and listening. They contain as a little interpretation as possible and are reliable as the observer can construct them.
2. *Methodological Notes (MN):* A statement that reflects an operational act completed or planned; an instruction to oneself, a reminder, a critique of ones own tactics. It notes timing, sequencing, stationing, stage setting or manoeuvring. Methodological notes might be thought of as observational notes on the researcher himself and upon the methodological process itself.
3. *Theoretical Notes (TN):* Self-conscience controlled attempts to derive meaning from any one of several observational notes.
4. *Analytical Notes (AN):* The analytical memo enables the researcher to elaborate upon the inference or to tie up several inferences in a more abstract statement.

The first phase of the fieldwork commenced August 2006. I have been working full-time in Cyprus since January 2006 and this has placed time constraints regarding my ability to conduct the fieldwork. I can only conduct fieldwork in July, August, December and for a short time during Easter. The first phase of the research was conducted in August 2006 then I returned to London in January once the research had been reconceptualised to make the BBC the only case I would study. Then in January 2007 the second phase started. I could concentrate more on the BBC from this phase on. Not all was lost however from interviewing other organisations. A lot was learnt regarding how other typically smaller broadcasters work in comparison to the large public service broadcaster. The third stage is what I like to consider as ongoing. I went back to the BBC in the summer of 2008 and met with some more people but during this period I tried hard to get access to some major players at the BBC. I sent various emails to Jana Bennett, Director of *BBC Vision*. I got through to her PA a few times but nothing materialized. I also tried to speak with Alan Yentob, and an interview was arranged but, they were to get back to me and I am still waiting.

Phase One: August 2006

I arrived in London with a few interviews already arranged. My methodology chapter was complete up until a point that was possible. I had worked on my research design, questions and propositions and that had helped me to construct the questions for the interviews. Additionally, I had written most of the literature review, albeit in a draft form, and had studied much regarding ITV, BBC, Five, independent production organisations and other work on the industry. My first interview is with the Head of Scheduling at Five (a contact I made through my supervisor). She's really friendly and I'm hoping to get more interviews at the broadcaster from her. My 'star' informant is Head of Strategy at ITV. A few days after my interview at Five I would go there. I also have an interview arranged with a strategist from BBC. Overall not a bad way to start my fieldwork.

(Fieldnotes - MN, August 4th 2006)

In one of Yin's protocol's for field procedures (2003: p.73), he warns that unanticipated events might happen (stating the obvious). When I first read that, I hoped I wouldn't fall into that category when I start my fieldwork. Unfortunately, as if my worst fears were foreseen by fate, the following happened:

Well guess what, I have been happy and feeling quite fortunate the whole morning. The reason is because Mr. Bergg's PA emailed me setting up the meeting with Mr. Bergg for next week. My luck however ran out this afternoon. By the time I got home I found another mail from Bergg's PA saying that something urgent has happened and we will have to reschedule for August 23rd. I felt bad because I was leaving for Cyprus on the 25th and I was planning on snowballing through Bergg. That same day while listening to the news, I heard ITV's CEO Mr. Charles Allen will be handing in his resignation due to poor ratings. The worst in fact, in the company history! A few days later, true to the news story, Mr. Allen had indeed resigned. And this, I assume, is the reason Mr. Bergg rescheduled.

(Field notes - MN, August 8th 2006)

I'm sitting on a bench opposite Empire at Leicester Square. In 15 minutes I am to start my first interview with SD Head of Scheduling at *Five*. I'm feeling comfortable with the questions…(three hours later) the interview went exceptionally well. She was very insightful and also gave me *Five* policies and documentation that I need to read ASAP. Additionally, she introduced me to JK Controller of Factual[36]. We ended up talking for about an hour about the creative process. She was very willing to openly express her feelings about the commissioning process. I got a lot of input into how she believes indies 'treat' *Five* being a smaller broadcaster (unlike as she said some other broadcasters). We talked about the documentary *Extraordinary People* and how that was created. She also arranged an interview for me with another controller but on the 18th…*Five* reminds me a lot of broadcasters in Cyprus. It's a small and lively place where creativity flows better than at large structured organisations. People talk to each other through open space areas and within two hours I have arranged through snowballing three interviews with some very interesting members of television production. I wonder, are all those structures at large vertical organisations…are they really necessary.

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, August 14th 2006)

I've had a sort of breakthrough. While reading Yin and some other methodological texts I've come to realize that this should be an explanatory account of the creation process. It won't

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[36] She has since left Five to form her own Production Company with Five's former Director of Programmes.

be a multiple case study; each chapter can be a separate unit of analysis. One chapter will be BBC, the other ITV and so on…I'm a bit concerned with the lack of responses from the independent production sector…they aren't even returning my emails. Maybe I can just make this about broadcasters. But indies are so imperative to the whole creative process. The broadcasters are OK. All of them are willing to help. Maybe indies are just too busy to bother with researchers and / or too cautious to give out vital competitive information regarding how they stimulate creativity…I'm sitting in BBC centre's reception area. There are screens everywhere showing different BBC channels such as CBBC, BBC Three, Four and others. It's very busy since there are tours going on all morning. I've just reread my questions I prepared for WG, the strategist. I'm hoping he gives me some insight on the BBC's commissioning process. The commissioning process (CP) is undoubtedly gaining in importance in television production. Why haven't I found much written on it? It's apparent that the CP is intertwined with the creation process…

(Fieldnotes – ON/MN/TN, August 15th, 2006)

I'm on my way to Lincoln to interview an independent producer referred to me by Frank (Webster). I went up there with a friend and we walked around until it was time for me to have my lunch / interview with NG. We were to meet in a pub. As it turned out the place was great but the acoustics were bad. It was noisy and I was worried the recording would be useless so I multitasked by listening and scribbling notes…NG turned out to be quiet a character. He was sharp and humorous and found the study I was working on very interesting and that gave me confidence. We talked about some of his projects and the difficulties in producing work in today's competitive environment. I got, through NG, an inside account of how producers struggle to get work. They teach, write and do other things until the right job comes about…

(Fieldnotes - MN, August 17th 2006)

I'm on the tube back from my last interview this August. I have a lot of work to do. My last two interviews have been extremely important. The commissioning editor at the BBC and ITV's Head of Strategy have really given me things to ponder until my next set of interviews. Commissioners are definitely key figures in the creative process. It seems they are central to channelling ideas and choosing ideas and creating teams that work on honing ideas into television programmes. Not much luck with indies. PACT responded to my emails telling me they can't meet now. I need to discuss some things with my supervisors. Maybe they can help with these issues of access. I'm reading some more of Georgina Born and I'm thinking of more of how I can make this about public service broadcasting. It would be interesting but I'd have to change so much. I need to speak with Frank and Petros.

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, August 23rd, 2006)

Phase 2: January 2007, August 2007

I'm getting ready to go to BBC to interview PG, a technologist. It snowed last night and it's freezing. I have a bad cold. I thought of calling him to ask if I can conduct this interview over the phone; I won't risk it, I might lose the opportunity if he says no…

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, January 24th, 2007))

It's almost 10 a.m. I'm on the way to White City for an interview with JB head of audience research. I'm really looking forward to this interview because I've heard he's really informative and willing to help. It's an interview that's different from many of the others since it essentially looks at a different proposition to what I have hitherto analysed. It tries to get insight in how research plays a role in the creative process; it looks at how much of a role that plays – essentially how audiences can play a part - in making a better programme. I have always wanted to look at this. I'm curious as to how much information he'll give me. It's not the holy grail but then again it might be close. I've spoken to some strategists and others regarding this but nothing to audience researchers.

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, August 25th, 2007)

Phase 3: August 2008, Summer 2009

I met SD, Chief Economist. He was very friendly but we met at the Starbucks outside BBC's TV Centre. There's so much noise so I took plenty of notes and I'll transcribe this ASAP. SD was a contact from Petros and he gave me insight into how the BBC deals with the policies coming in from different external sources. BBC Trust for example and Ofcom publish a lot regarding how the BBC should function and it's SD's responsibility to address this. He seemed, as many of my BBC informants do, to be very well aware of creativity issues at the BBC. He also promised to send me some unpublished articles on television production and highly recommended Born's *Uncertain Vision* (2004). I told him I have read it and will use it extensively so we talked about that a bit.

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, June 30th, 2008)

I have a breakthrough with Alan Yentob. This is great news because he is, in my opinion the most able to inform me on how creativity is stimulated at the BBC. He is essentially 'in charge' of creativity at the beep and also still produces some great documentaries. I'm in touch with his PA…I didn't get Bennett so this would be great! I need to ask him about the

Creative Network and *The Creativity And Audiences Training Board* and the Writers room. I have little info on all these. He is involved directly with these. I hope this materializes.

(Fieldnotes – MN/TN, June 15th, 2009)

I spoke again with JB, researcher at audience Insights. I needed to confirm some things regarding how audience research is structured at the BBC. He was once again helpful. No luck with Yentob. That's so unfortunate since he would have been great to interview.

CONCLUSION

In order to construct the thesis a combination of Case Study analysis (particularly Robert Yin's *Case-Study Research: Design and Methods, 2003)* and historiographies were used for its methodological approach. As such, the thesis draws on a wide range of primary and secondary sources both to construct the historiographies and the case study. As shown throughout the chapter, many social science methodologists advocate that researchers must personalise their studies and include personal reasons for conducting the study. Mine can be traced back to my childhood as this was when I became fascinated with how my father, as an actor, would have long discussions with colleagues regarding the future of television, and why some programmes are preferred over others.

The case study is a holistic single-case explanatory study that looks at creativity as the contemporary phenomenon of a social context – that of the conception stage of original television programmes at the BBC. Its four main proposition are that organisational creativity is a social characteristic that can be affected by external factors, that risks are involved in how the BBC is attempting to stimulate creativity, that market research and marketing is used during the conception stage and that guidelines as to how television programme-makers create their programmes are often given to them beforehand. Data collection has varied from in-depth open-ended semi-structured interviews to a large amount of documentation and archival records as my primary and secondary data collection methods during the period June 2005 – July 2009.

One last note that is required to be mentioned involves the weaknesses of the research. In order to acknowledge the weaknesses, I have asked myself, *if under ideal situations I had the power to conduct the research as I wanted to and with more control, how would it differ to what I have done?* Attempting to answer this question has led me to identify three main weaknesses. These are, firstly, I frequently did not gain access to the appropriate informants and secondly, by using participant and direct observation during commissioning meetings and development brainstorming sessions the insights gained would have been undoubtedly more in-depth than through the interviews I held (like Georgina Born had managed to achieve). Thirdly, I believe the informants were occasionally unwilling to

candidly 'open-up' when asked some of the more detailed questions regarding the creation process. While the reasons behind their reluctance are obvious, (fear of organisational advantage compared to competitors, fear of saying too much et cetera), this depreciated the overall value of the study.

Chapter Four

The Road Towards Creativity:
The UK Audiovisual Sector and the BBC (1922-2004)

INTRODUCTION

The media have gone through significant transformations over the past thirty years. These transformations, occurring on both a global and national level, have transpired on account of increased global competition, continuous deregulatory media policy, and improved technological advancements manifested by the augmentation of satellites and digital networks across the globe. Since the BBC stands as both the largest and oldest public service broadcaster in the world, these transformations have had an unquestionable affect on the organisation; and it is that of deregulation that has had the biggest impact. The disempowerment of public organisations across western governments particularly from the mid-1970s onwards (Ferlie *et al.,* 1996), has hugely affected the BBC's ability to make television programmes. Harris and Wegg-Prosser (2007) have noted of the period,

> The Thatcher government, seeking to encourage liberalisation, market competition and media coverage, found an obvious target in the BBC. One government commission considered the possibility of outright privatisation (Home Office, 1986), but this was averted when the 1990 Broadcasting Act ruled that 25 per cent of BBC output should be outsourced from independent producers.
> (p.292)

While the BBC's history is filled with illustrations of how creativity has been both inhibited, and stimulated, the 'Thatcher' period stands out as the most taxing for the BBC's creativity, and according to Barnett and Curry (1994), a period that involves one of the most successful lobby stories of the post-war era. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the organisation's history (and the history of other areas of UK broadcasting that have affected the BBC), by breaking it down into three significant chronological periods and not only from 1979 onwards. By drawing on various significant historical accounts on the BBC (particularly O'Mailey, 1994; Barnett and Curry, 1994; Curran and Seaton, 1997; and Born, 2004), emphasis will be placed upon how creativity in programme-making has been achieved during all the BBC's history. The narrative used is this chapter is radical (see Curran, 2002; Bailey, 2008); the chapter in other words, advocates that the media, historically, does not function autonomously but rather are influenced by a number of both external and internal factors.

For this reason, although broken down historically, the tripartite of media policy, globalisation and technological advancements will act as common harbingers of change throughout all three periods. Finally, it should be stated that the chapter seeks to contribute towards a better picture of the BBC's contemporary setting that constitutes the next two chapters on how the BBC stimulates creativity of its original television programmes (chapter five on the UK television production landscape and chapter six on how the BBC functions from 2004 onwards). Specifically, this chapter is divided into the following three periods:

1. *1922-1979.*

This phase marks the commencement of the BBC, first as a company and then as a public service broadcaster acting under a Royal Charter. It covers a vast chronological period and includes many different factors that have consequently affected the BBC's programme-making policies such as the paternalistic approach of its first Director General John Reith, and its role in the Second World War (4.1.1). It looks also at how the BBC established itself (4.1.2) and grew after the Second World War consequently leading to what many historians consider the golden era of British audiovisual broadcasting (4.1.3). Finally, it looks at how from 1968, but more so towards the middle of the 1970s, a new managerial approach of public broadcasting had crept into the BBC's thinking, emphasising accountability and financial discipline (4.1.4). These factors will act as a viable basis for the remaining two periods that are marked by the government alienation of the BBC, and the ruthlessness with how the restructuring of the 1990s led to what creative personnel in particular found the most onerous to adhere to.

2. *1979-*1992.

When the Conservative Party gained power in 1979, Margaret Thatcher wasted little time in placing the BBC under close examination and financial pressure. The Annan Report, published shortly before 1979, was used as *the* driving factor that led to the launch of channel 4, the fourth terrestrial channel in the UK. The channel became the first publisher broadcaster and relied exclusively on commissions from the newly established independent production sector (4.2.1). Channel 4 helped establish the new sector during its precarious initial steps by commissioning programmes from a wide range of independent production companies and the period is therefore seen – due to such diversity - as a relatively rich period in broadcast creativity. As Channel 4 was been launched, the government was also using advancements in technology as a further reason to pursue a market-driven audiovisual policy (4.2.2). This part of the chapter seeks to analyse how these factors decreased the capacity of BBC's own programme-making. Finally, the section closes with an analysis of the seminal Peacock Committee and how the Conservatives pushed through the 25 percent quota; it further explains why, because of the quota, a pro-conservative board of governors was formed at the BBC,

who through *producer choice* created the most dramatic changes the corporation had ever witnessed (4.2.3).

3. *1992*-2004.

This twelve year period is marked by the actions of two substantially different Director Generals, John Birt and Greg Dyke. From 1993 to 2000, John Birt drastically changed the organisation in the following ways: The introduction of *Producer Choice* in the early nineties; the restructuring of the BBC in the mid-nineties that separated Broadcast (distribution) from production; and the continuous disempowerment of its in-house production departments due to the 25 percent quota (4.3.1). In the meantime, the British audiovisual sector as a whole was rapidly been retransformed due to the mushrooming of multichannel television. These technological changes resulted in the stable loss of audience shares of terrestrial television broadcasters. When Greg Dyke took over the BBC he immediately sought to address the BBC's declining ratings by reversing many strategies set out by Birt. With a background in commercial television production, he introduced many new measures that attempted to streamline creativity while simultaneously maintaining the BBC's investment in making the UK a leader in digital communications (4.3.2).

4.1   1922 – 1979

4.1.1   The early years

Broadcasting has always been the most heavily regulated media. There are three reasons why this is the case (Goodwin, 1999). The first is due to the technological limitations involved in the sector. The growth of radio in the early twentieth-century and then television during the mid-twentieth century occurred on account of innovative engineers finding ways to produce an analogue image of the original and then sending it on carrier waves on the electromagnetic spectrum. By using the lower part of the spectrum (radio waves), analogue images of the original were able to be distributed to all households that were equipped with an antenna and a radio or television set. While the technology turned out to be a success, and subsequently spread across the world at an exceptionally fast rate making broadcasting an indispensable part of modern life, it had one limitation. The broadcasting station required a large amount of spectrum frequency to transmit its analogue signals. Consequently, since the electromagnetic spectrum is a finite attribute (known as spectrum scarcity), and since it is not necessarily owned by anybody, there was a clear need for it to be regulated. Regulatory responsibility was taken by the governments of each country. Without government intervention, Goodwin argues, 'everyone who wanted to use this scarce resource would result in 'chaos of the airwaves'. So radio and television became a 'natural monopoly' which needed to be either owned, or at the very least, allocated and regulated by the state' (p.131).

In the UK for example, in 1922 almost 100 applications were sent to the Post Office (that took on the role of regulator at the time) from various manufacturers that wanted a broadcasting license to help speed up the sale of radio receivers (Curran and Seaton, 1997). The second reason why broadcasting was heavily regulated is due to the impact the technology had on human behaviour. In the 1920s the media was seen as 'a magic bullet' in which messages were 'shot' into the minds of extremely passive audiences (Williams, 2003). If comic books, posters, newspapers and flyers could affect the behaviour of societies' perceptions of war (among other things), radio, and certainly television later on, would be even more influential. The third and final reason is because at the time when broadcasting was spreading, it was common practise for governments to follow interventionist policies throughout the world. The BBC was created shortly after the First World War during a period when government intervention was not only a norm, but deemed necessary. Anything new would be under the control of the state (Goodwin, 1999). Curran and Seaton (1997) citing the economist Lincoln Gordon note, 'by the 1920s, public boards had become all the rage, politicians of every creed when confronted with an industry or a social service which was giving trouble or failing to operate efficiently – create a board' (p.113).

The newly established British Broadcasting Company took to the airwaves in November 1922. The company was set up by a consortium of manufacturers (including the inventor of wireless technology Guglielmo Marconi), after recommendations by the Postmaster General who sought to find a solution to spectrum scarcity rather than deal with the impossible task of giving everyone a separate frequency license. The company, it was agreed upon, would be supported by a small license fee (ten shillings paid to the post office) and from a small tariff (royalties) on the radio sets that were required to listen to programmes. As mentioned earlier, its initial mission was to create programmes that would lead to the sale of radio receivers. While many people did indeed begin listening to the BBC, sales were not enough. This is because many people found ways of making their own radio sets but also because radio was listened to in groups. From its inception therefore, the British Broadcasting Company would require a strong leader capable of finding other means of resources other than radio receiver sales. This was subsequently left to the BBC's first Managing Director, John Reith. Reith left a big mark on the organisation, a mark undeniably still witnessed today. A tough, authoritarian Scottish Calvinist Engineer 'devoid of humour' (Born, 2004), Reith was determined to make the BBC an organisation that functioned similarly to the Bank of England and The Royal Academy rather than a normal business; Reith in other words, wanted the organisation to function under a Royal Charter. Due to Reith's persistence and persuasive abilities, the British Broadcasting Company changed into the British Broadcasting Corporation on the backdrop of the 1923 Sykes Committee (the first of many state committees dealing with broadcasting). The Sykes Committee proposed that broadcasting should be a public utility (Barnett and Curry, 1994) and in 1926, with the full backing of post office officials, the wireless manufacturers association and the Prime Minister, the BBC - as its known today - was formed (working under a Royal Charter). According to Nicholas, the

BBC became 'a model of public service broadcasting for the rest of the world…incorporated by a Royal Charter' (2006, p. 1).

During the BBC's early years, Reith tried hard to establish a paternalistic policy that sought to educate, inform and entertain the audience (in that particular order). He firmly believed that the BBC knew best what audiences should be given. Additionally, Reith pushed for a mixed programme policy that attempted to unify the nation. Although the policy was seen by many as elitist, Reith succeeded in creating what is now regarded as the first homogenous audience in the UK. It is worth noting Curran and Seaton's analysis in length,

> Reith's programme policy depended on an assumption of cultural homogeneity: not that everybody was the same, but that culture was single and undifferentiated. He had been determined to avoid the mediocrity which he believed would accompany freedom of choice. 'It is occasionally indicated to us that we are apparently setting out to give the public what we think they need – not what they want' he (Reith) wrote in 1924. 'But few know what they want and very few what they need.'…their purpose was to give authority to cultural values, not to represent listeners' interests.
> (p. 151)

During John Reith's period in office, the BBC attempted to create programmes that unified the nation while simultaneously keeping its independent from the state. Several years later, when competition began to take a toll, the organisation started commissioning audience surveys as well as various other audience research projects in order to understand what the audience wanted. Audience research at the BBC began under the guidance of the organisation's first Listener Research Director Robert Silvey, (Gunter, 2000; Nicholas, 2006). To this day it continues in various forms (see chapter six) and is now a central activity of the creative process. During Reith's reign however, the BBC's programming policy was not interested in knowing what the audience felt and what it wanted. Reith, with the support of almost all his colleagues, believed that finding out what audiences wanted through audience research would only detriment the organisation's educational duty of giving the audience what Reith felt the audience needed. As such, its programming schedule at the time consisted of messages from the monarch, or broadcasts from important national events, coronations, political speeches or from the BBC's broadcasts of the national symphony orchestra. As it was a new medium, many intellectuals were interested in contributing towards entertaining, informing and educating the nation; eminent writers, scholars, artists and other such performers would all add to Reith's vision of public service broadcasting.

While the BBC's policy of mixed-programming during these early years would allow certain creative processes to be pursued, it was also a period of intense censorship where decency and taste issues were frequently brought up (Curran and Seaton 1997; BBC, 2008a;

Holmes, 2009). According to the BBC's own website, creative staff, most of whom were men (see also Curran and Seaton, 1997, p. 125), were required to inhibit their creative talents because of decency and taste provisions. The BBC website states, 'Taste and decency became an issue early on for the BBC. Comedians overstepped the mark at their peril, and jokes about religion, drunkenness and many other sensitive subjects were banned' (BBC, 2008a). Reith himself was notorious for the mistreatment of his staff when it came to issues of decency. In one case, according to Curran and Seaton, P.P. Eckersley, a programme innovator of 'enormous talent', was apparently, 'obliged to resign because he was cited in a divorce case' (p. 124). The BBC's creativity was further damaged because the organisation, supported by the government, decreased the amount of radio stations that could have been established during this period. During these early years of broadcasting, various amateur and local radio stations began cropping up throughout Britain; the BBC however, took control of all these stations arguing that radio is a 'centralised medium'. Thus by 1930 radio was left 'in the hands of five BBC regional centres' and that of BBC London (Born, 2004 p. 30). These actions decreased cultural diversity in the UK and subsequently diminished the BBC's own creativity at the time.

4.1.2   The BBC Becomes Established

Listeners in the 1930s began tuning into commercial stations such as Radio Luxemburg and Radio Normandie rather than listen to the BBC. In light of the competition, the BBC's programming policy needed re-strategising. As a result, towards the end of John Reith's reign as Director General, the BBC was broadcasting more entertainment programmes than any other European station (Curran and Seaton, 1997; Born 2004). Audience opinions suddenly became more important and new departments within the organisation (other than production), became more involved in the creative process. According to Nicholas (2006), the BBC was always interested in knowing what audiences liked and disliked and what their habits were. However, due to Reith's insistence to give the audience an idealistic and paternalist programming mixture based on assumptions and speculations rather than empirical evidence, audience research was not introduced until a decade after the BBC's inception. As Ang notes (1991), 'the discourse was prescriptive not descriptive' (p.110).

Although radio competition was becoming a concern for many BBC controllers, the organisation was also apprehensive of how a more powerful medium – television - might spread across the UK. Yet with the outbreak of the Second World War, television augmentation was put on hold on account of national security. This, inevitably, was to be a radio war. Enemy stations such as Radio Hamburg were broadcasting a combination of entertaining shows and German propaganda. The BBC therefore needed to respond and consequently found itself with a new set of responsibilities. Throughout this dire period, apart from increased competition, lighter entertainment programming became justified in order to boost the nation's morale. However as lighter entertainment programming grew, so

did the BBC's bureaucracy. Collaborating closely with the Ministry of Information, the BBC, during the war, grew in size and new departments were created under a centralised body. At the same time, new technologies and relentless efforts were made to make radio more immediate and current. Journalists went through military training in order to report more detailed and immediate stories from the field, and producers of famous programmes would send teams to find out up-to-date information about the rhetoric of the day that was in turn used in scripts in an attempt to attract more audiences. Overall, the BBC came out from the war bigger, stronger and more reputable. Despite an increase in entertainment content, its mixed programme policy remained intact - and importantly - the organisation was now run in an extremely bureaucratic manner particularly when compared with before the war.

4.1.3 Post-War BBC and the Golden Era of Television

Following the war, the freeze on television was removed and television sets began to spread across the UK giving even more impetus for what was now a huge bureaucratic public organisation. In a lecture in 1993, John Birt described post-war BBC (aiming specifically at the production departments), in the following way,

> 'Auntie – like so many other large organisations in the private and public sectors in the post-war years – became a command economy; a series of entangled, integrated baronies, each providing internally most of its needs…nothing was transparent…Byzantine in many of its structures' (Born, 2004, p. 100).

Curran and Seaton (1997) have argued similarly that organisational structures created during the war continued to exist even after the war ended. In their view, the BBC consisted of, 'structural fossils in important areas of policy, surviving immutably in peacetime, but with no particular relevance to the post-war world' (p. 151). When the war came to an end the Labour party overthrew Churchill's conservative government, and William Beveridge was given the responsibility to introduce *the welfare state* in Britain. Special reports were consequently made on national health, social security, insurance, and of course, broadcasting. Being a liberal, Beveridge was critical of the BBC. The Beveridge report on the BBC saw the organisation as overly bureaucratic, complacent, secretive, London-centric and inefficient (Curran and Seaton, 1997, p. 162). He did however want the BBC to continue functioning as a public service broadcaster and therefore recommended that the Charter be renewed. Significantly, he included in his report that commercial television might lead to a better British broadcasting environment consequently setting the tone for what was to follow.

The arrival of commercial television came soon after the conservatives were voted back in power in 1951. The ensuing 1954 Television Act argued that a new television license funded by advertising but with public service duties should be launched in order to compete with the BBC (Crisell, 1997). As such, ITV became the first commercially funded television in 1955

and although it was funded by advertising, it was modelled on similar principles as the BBC's, with PSB obligations of its own. These obligations were to be administered by the also newly established Independent Television Authority that worked similarly with the BBC Board of Governors.

The impact ITV had on the BBC and on the creativity of programme-making in the UK was immense. Even though ITV's growth was slow, within several years it had attracted a 70 percent audience share (Darlow, 2004). Its success was largely due to the fact that it was run by show people, and as such it aired lighter entertainment programmes than the BBC. Consequently, working-class audiences in particular, were drawn to the new commercial channel. Black (1972, p. 109), sheds light on the contrasting perceptions of the two broadcasters, 'the energetic…showbiz visionaries [of ITV] elbowing aside the complacent bureaucrats of the BBC'. Yet with the help of ITV, television households grew at an exponential rate and this in turn lead to new funds for the BBC through the license fee. Motivated by ITV's success, producers at the BBC helped the organisation to create new forms, genres and ideas backed of course by large amounts of funds. Producer Anthony Smith (1994), mentioned in Born (2004), concedes that producers with access to large amounts of funds was the main reason why television programmes flourished in the 1960s. As he notes, 'The great innovations in television have come about because of the existence of well-funded groups of producers, both in the BBC and ITV' (p. 99). Due to the accessibility of these funds, producers were free to take more risks and experiment with new ideas. The freedom producers had pushed their creative limits across all genres (ibid.).

Television had come of age. Many historians consider the period 1960-1975 to be the golden era of British television (Burns, 1977; Curran and Seaton 1997; Born 2004). Darlow (2004) notes 'at the end of his life Dennis Potter would describe the period from the late 1960s into the 1970s as television's 'golden age…looking back today, it does indeed seem a golden age' (p. 21). Curran and Seaton note of the epoch, 'despite the overwhelming bureaucracy, a remarkable generation of television producers and directors started working during this period. They were to dominate the entire output of British Television, on both channels, for the next twenty years.' (p. 164). During the sixties, the BBC brought to its audiences programmes such as *That was the Week that Was* (1962), *Doctor Who* (1963), *Top of the Pops* (1964), *The Wednesday Play* (1964) and *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969). Macmurraugh-Kavanagh (1997) emphasizing the significance of *The Wednesday Play* states (p. 367),

> 'It has been accorded a privileged and even mythologized position within the development of television drama. Famed for producing ground-breaking television events…critics such as George Brandt conclude that "much of the history of British Television drama is tied up with this programme spot"…in short it is taken to connote both the Golden

Age of British television drama and a lost era of
public service vision and integrity'

The seventies continued with *Newsround* (1972), *The Ascent of Man* (1973), *Faulty Towers* (1975) and *I, Claudius* (1976) to name a few. While ITV can be identified as the main motivational factor of the BBC's creative surge during this period (it should be noted that ITV too had its fair share of creative programmes), various historians have also identified other reasons that have affected the high level of creativity at the BBC during the period. Curran and Seaton point to the fact that the BBC's move from radio to television left many within the organisation disinterested. Hence they argue, 'even the Corporation's lack of interest had benefits. Because it was seen as relatively unimportant it was left alone…this allowed programme-makers far greater initiative' (p. 164). Producers seemed to be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated since they found themselves indirectly competing against each other and with producers from ITV. However, even competition with ITV occurred in a genial manner since many ITV producers had previously worked at the BBC only to make the switch due to better salaries offered at the commercial broadcaster. As such, the BBC 'faced its own likeliness' (Born 2004, p. 37). Born made the point that during the duopoly of ITV and BBC, there was a 'benevolent environment' within television production that led to greater creativity (ibid.). Specifically,

> It rested largely on the integration of production and broadcasting; each influenced the other process, and production bosses had some creative autonomy and some say in decision-making…both bodies were well financed and of a size and scale that ensured a strong training base for the British industry.
> (p. 37)

Producer autonomy and hegemony played an important role is creating the golden era. Creative personnel worked on developing original programmes relatively unburdened with the responsibilities of having to account to managerial staff and ultimately change their ideas. Within the creative departments, 'bureaucracy', 'was pushed aside' at the expense of producer autonomy (Curran and Seaton, 1997, p.165). Burns (1977) noted that producer autonomy was the main reason why programmes were of a high quality during this period. Creative staff and managerial staff were 'segmented'. This was something that was practised since 1933, 'when the Corporation was split in two, the 'creative side' and the 'administrative side'' (p. 217). The result of the separation effectively led to what Burns coined a 'cultural bureaucracy'. 'The Management structure' according to Burns, 'was in fact, designed…in much the same terms as…large industrial and business corporations' (p. 212). Yet although the BBC was perceived a bureaucracy because of the complexity of its management structure (between 1960 and 1975 the BBC's staff grew from 16,000 to 25,000), 'creative structures' existed that worked in isolation without having to deal with the bureaucratic hassles of management. Furthermore, many programme-makers were given managerial posts during the period (Hugh Green, Bill Cotton, Michael Grade). Hugh

Carleton Green, who at the time became the BBC's Director General, had two objectives, to regain audience share to a more respectable 50 percent and to persuade the Pilkington Committee, that had been set up to inquire into a possible third channel, to hand the BBC a second channel (as the third broadcaster in the UK) (Darlow, 2004, p. 22). Darlow notes that the 400 new posts created with the creation of BBC Two, allowed the new recruits 'time' and an enthusiasm for a continuous debate about the nature of broadcasting' (p. 23). Importantly, after BBC Two was created, administrative staff was seen as subordinate to creative staff. This was a conscious and desperate measure taken in order to support programme-makers and regain audience share. As shown in the sections that follow, programme-maker autonomy was to change drastically in the years that followed.

4.1.4   *Accountability at the BBC*

The onset of the 1970s global financial crisis inevitably affected inflation (and therefore the BBC's license fee). During roughly the same period various lobby groups began pushing for a more accountable BBC led by the daily newspaper, *The Sun* that had been recently bought by Rupert Murdoch (Darlow, 2004). Consequently, the early part of the 1970s saw a turn in how the BBC was managed. The management consultancy firm McKinsey and Co. was brought in to oversee that financial discipline was applied across all areas of the organisation. As a result, producers and other creative staff were greatly affected. Freelancers during this period grew to a large extent. At the time, over 100 freelancer directors were used by the BBC's Single Plays Department (ibid, p. 80). A method of planning and scheduling called the 'planning cycle' was introduced that allowed better monetary controls since programme-makers had to now be more responsible 'for keeping within the agreed budget' (Barnett and Curry, 1994, p. 100). This was an area that had until that time worked without any accountability mechanisms. The annual 'planning cycle' completely changed how programmes were made at the BBC during the 1970s (Burns 1977, pp. 234-239). Interestingly, a similar planning cycle still exists today (see chapter six for contemporary programme-planning at the BBC). The 'planning cycle' allowed controllers to schedule programmes that were to be shown the following year (or two). The cycle 'which converted conventional programme planning into continuous production lines (strands)' (Burns 1977, pp. 238-239), worked well since everything now had to be accounted for. It gave channel controllers the flexibility to mediate between different production departments or 'outputs' for new programme ideas. An important part of the 'planning cycle' was the introduction of the biannual 'offers meetings' (also still practised). During these meetings estimated costs were required for each programme or each original idea (known as offers). At the 'offers meeting' all original ideas had to be discussed and agreed upon by both controllers and producers. Burns' description of the planning cycle shows that changes in programming took a turn for the worse mainly due to pressures in financial and human resources. However, idea generation of original programmes was not jeopardised because producers still had a certain level of autonomy in programme development (with the

exception of having to be somewhat more accountable to people within management). What allowed the changes to work is that management became aware with how producers worked and what the difficulties of the creative process were (unlike during the 1990s). Meetings between the two groups were considered constructive and there was mutual respect between creative personnel and the more administrative side of the BBC. As Harris and Wegg-Prosser (2007) have argued, (echoing Burns), the planning cycle 'offers meetings' of the 1970s were managed 'by people who claimed the same professional identity and interests as producers themselves' (Burns, 1977, p. 239). The results, despite pessimism from various quarters (see Barnett and Curry, 1994, p. pp. 96-102), were impressive. Some programmes produced during the period were, *Search of the Nile* (1971), *Shoulder to Shoulder* (1974), the outstanding (in my opinion) *Pennies From Heaven* (1978), and many others. Conversely, during the John Birt era (as analysed further below), broadcasting and production were completely divided, and managers with no television background were given authority to hold production accountable for programme-making decisions.

4.2   1979 – 1992

4.2.1   Channel 4 and the Growth of the Independent Production Sector

When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979, the relationship between the BBC and the government came under severe strain. Thatcher's administration, remembered as an aggressive pursuer of free-market idealism, consequently lead to less state intervention in as many areas as possible and while Goodwin (1999) argues that television was not a major concern of Thatcher's conservative government, it 'could scarcely escape' Thatcher's right-wing policies (p. 133). Curran and Seaton (1997) describe the period, 'for broadcasters who had taken 'public service' for granted, life suddenly became uncomfortable' (p.209). O'Malley's assessment (1994) of the BBC during this period was even more ominous. As he argued, by the 1980s with the Thatcher administration firmly in place, the relationship between the government and the BBC came close to a complete break down.

During the late 1970s, ITV and BBC had an approximately equal audience share of the television market. This was a result of the BBC been given a second channel in 1964 following the Pilkington Committee's 1962 criticisms of ITV for not providing enough public service broadcasting and rather concentrating on American imports and studio based quiz shows and talk shows. ITV and BBC however were becoming too powerful and two lobby groups in particular criticised the duopoly of becoming too complacent, therefore pushing for a more open and deregulated sector. One group, a growing number of discontented programme-makers, recognised the opportunity to create an independent production sector in what was fast becoming a global market filled with fragmented and fickle audiences (see chapter five for more details on UK television exports). British audiovisual programme-makers, realising the success of their American counterparts, pushed strongly for the sector

to expand. As they argued, the UK had been left behind in the global expansion of cultural production and the growth of multichannel television (see Barnett and Curry, 1994, pp. 56-72). The other lobby group pushing for more deregulation was a growing and dissatisfied left-wing alliance that argued for more pluralism and diversity within the sector. To them, television seemed to be controlled by greedy, elitist and predominately white male personalities that were too closely attached to government (Tunstall 1993; O'Malley 1994; Born 2004). According to Born, this group 'called for a more plural, democratically accountable and bottom-up alternative system' (p.43). As a result of the pressures from these two groups, a broadcasting committee led by Lord Annan was put together in 1974 in order to completely review and then revise the audiovisual sector.

The final report issued by the Annan Committee in 1977 argued that a new channel must be created that would commission all its programmes completely from an independent production sector rather than from in-house production. This would make it a 100 percent publisher channel. It should, it was argued, be a channel that pursued minority programming that other channels did not, or could not pursue according to their remit. The 1981 Broadcasting Act was implemented within two years of the conservative party's control of government.   As a result of the Act, a fourth channel (Channel 4) similar in remit to the one argued by the Annan committee was created. The channel helped stimulate a new independent production industry while simultaneously pushing new areas of creativity due to greater social diversity. Although Channel 4 was a public service broadcaster, its remit was to provide alternative programming to what was already offered.

Yet while the decision to create Channel 4 established a 'space' that was preferred by talent and therefore quickly became 'synonymous with creativity' (Born, 2004, p. 47), the independent production companies producing Channel 4's programmes struggled to establish themselves. Barnett and Curry (1994) note that the same producers that were involved in creating Channel 4 soon realized that, 'they had to create new outlets for their work if they wanted their businesses to develop' (p. 58).   The programme-making entrepreneurs subsequently met on frequent occasions in order to find these new avenues. At one meeting, as Barnett and Curry note (1994, p. 59), and it is worth noting in detail,

> {...} in the Covent Garden offices of Warner Sisters, featured a brainstorming session...someone proposed the startling idea of a production quota – actually forcing broadcasters to commission a minimum number of programmes from outside. Even as the suggestion was made there was laughter: determined as they were to think the unthinkable, this was one idea which stretched even this groups sense of the possible. According to one participant, 'I think some people in the room fully expected the idea to have been forgotten by the time we held our next meeting.'

Yet as shown below, the idea proposed at that meeting was exactly the kind of thinking the government at the time wanted to take action on in regards to the 'cozy duopoly'. The creation of programmes commissioned from low-cost independent production companies became the driving factor to cut costs at the BBC shortly thereafter, and make it a partial publisher rather than a wholly in-house vertically-integrated creator of programmes (see next section).

While their motives were clear, the first generation of independent producers worked in an environment of low profits and low margins and hence it could be argued that these programme-makers took the risk to work outside broadcaster control not in order to be rich, but to have freedom and autonomy when creating television content. Although financial motivations existed, the chances of success in starting-up such companies and surviving were extremely low. The sector therefore was considered a 'cottage industry' during its inception. The precarious nature of the industry during its initial years is reflected in a report commissioned by the BBC (Mediatique, 2005), but also shows the amount of diversity that was present in the independent production sector at the time.

> In its first full year, Channel 4 spent £90m on programming, including acquisitions of Hollywood product (this is now nearly £500m). In Channel 4's financial year to March 1987, a year before the first voluntary independent quota was agreed, Channel 4 bought programmes from 360 independents. Of these, only 13 received revenues of more than £1m, and 239, or 66%, made just one programme for channel 4 that year. A similar 67% received less than £100,000 each in revenues from Channel 4.
> (p. 6).

Despite the low margins and profits, anyone with a telephone and computer could start an independent television production company due to very low barriers to entry (ibid.). In other words, while considered a risky investment, it nevertheless opened up the industry to new ideas from wide-ranging demographic groups that wanted to work in a creatively autonomous environment. It allowed people with ideas to take risks and find ways to exploit their ideas through barriers that were not as high as those within broadcasting in-house production departments. According to Block et al. (2001), by 1994 there were 1200 members of the *Producers' Alliance In Cinema and Television* (PACT). Most independent production start-ups that were created during this period were intrinsically motivated to do so. This might explain why some of the earliest programmes on Channel 4 were considered to be the most creative of the station's history.

4.2.2   The Attack on the BBC due to Technological Advancements

It was not only programme-makers lobbying for the 25 percent quota that played a role in the free-market policy changes that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. Deregulation of the UK

audiovisual sector during this period also stems largely from changes in communications technologies. Due to the financial crisis of the early 1970s, the economy needed a boost in order to rejuvenate markets across the world. The technological advancements occurring in the information and communications sector were supported by many powerful countries across the world as a plausible solution to the financial crisis (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). In Robin and Webster (1988), it is noted that technological advancements occurred due to a 'strategic exploitation of microeconomics…as an economic and political escape route of the present crisis (p. 47). Nowhere was this more apparent than in the UK. Technological growth favoured the market-driven approach that the Thatcher administration so avidly pursued. Thatcher and her cabinet argued fervently that the development of cable and satellite technologies would inevitably change the communications industry and help in the creation of more jobs. O'Malley notes, 'the government stressed the centrality of technical change to justify the nature of its intervention in broadcasting policy' (1994, p. 14). Spectrum scarcity, and therefore market failure, was no longer considered an issue. In a multichannel environment it was argued, channels would proliferate and there would be an assortment of television catering to a wide range of preferences that did not require rigid regulatory policy. Goodwin (1999) notes, 'The rapid introduction of both satellite and broadband cable were justified as fostering the UK electronics industry' (p. 134). Audiences too were willing to spend plenty of their free time consuming media products and with the eventual growth of cable and satellite channels, VCR sales and other similar technologies, a viable basis was created for programme-makers to expand their businesses. The information and communications technologies argument favoured several groups throughout the 1980s. Backed by the advancements in technology, these groups, listed below, were particularly active in their efforts to weaken the BBC's position in the audiovisual landscape (to O'Malley, 1994):

- *The advertising industry*, in particular D'Arcey MacMnus Masius (DMM) and *Saatchi and Saatchi*. *Saatchi and Saatchi* for example, had at the time an excellent relationship with the conservative party having helped them come to power in 1979 by running their promotional campaign. These groups had explicit reasons for wanting the BBC to be privatised since it was seen as an ideal place for advertisers to promote their products and services. This group therefore lobbied aggressively for the BBC to accept advertising. It also constructed two influential publications propagating why the BBC should indeed accept advertisements. Additionally, results of various opinion polls by these agencies were presented in national newspapers in an attempt to influence public opinion.

- *Right-wing think tanks* such as the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), the Conservative Philosophy Group (CPG), the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and the Adam Smith Institute (ASI). According to O'Malley, the IEA in particular was seen as very influential in it arguments against the BBC. As he argues,

'Margaret Thatcher remained close to the IEA throughout her premiership and appointed a supporter of the Institute, Alan Peacock, to chair the Committee on the Financing of the BBC in 1985' (p.17). The Peacock Committee is renowned for stopping just short of allowing advertising on the BBC (Curran and Seaton, 1997; Doyle and Paterson, 2008). It did however lead to severe changes at the organisation during the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (see below). Additionally, David Graham, a key figure from the programme-makers lobby, was a member of IEA and knew Alan Peacock personally (Barnett and Curry, 1994, p. 59).

- *The National Press* led mainly by newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch. It is well-documented in various literatures that Murdoch and Thatcher were close allies who helped each other pursue their own respective agendas during this period, one of which was to weaken the BBC (O'Malley 1994; Barnett and Curry, 1994; Curran and Seaton, 1997; Stokes and Reading et al. 1999; Hesmondhalgh, 2005).

4.2.3   The Peacock Committee and the 1990 Broadcasting Act

Thatcher's free-market audiovisual policy reached a climax when she set-up the Peacock Committee in March 1985. Thatcher, who 'wanted swift action' (O'Malley, 1994, p.91) to be taken at the BBC, set up the committee as a response to the aforementioned groups calling for changes within the broadcasting sector and the BBC in particular. The committee was created to look into broadcasting issues such as the funding of the BBC, the liberalisation of cable and satellite technologies, and the complete privatisation of both radio and ITV. To head the committee, the economist Alan Peacock had been handpicked by Downing Street. From the other six members of the committee, four of them were active members of the conservative party, while the remaining two were placed in the committee 'to balance the politics' (O'Malley 1994, p. 93). A little over a year later, the Peacock Committee concluded its inquiry and recommended amongst other things, the following significant points (BBC, 2008b):

- License Fee continues indexed to the Retail Price Index (RPI)
- Radio 1 and 2 privatisation
- More broadcasting hours
- Independent production quotas
- ITV companies franchise auction
- Removal of cable and satellite broadcasting restrictions.

Allowing advertisements to be placed on the BBC as an alternative to the license fee was never recommended like many at the time had predicted. This is so mainly due to the

overwhelming amount of institutional and individual submissions that were sent to the Peacock Committee arguing against advertising (90 percent of total submissions). The majority of these arguments noted that allowing advertising at the BBC would not guarantee the continued quality of BBC programmes and that 'advertising would have a disastrous cultural effect on the BBC, weakening regulatory bodies, lowering standards and threatening diversity' (O'Malley, 1994, p. 99). If anything, it proved that the overwhelming majority of British citizens felt that the organisation was producing programmes of a high standard and did not want to see that jeopardised. According to Curran and Seaton, another reason why advertising was not recommended was because during the end of the 1980s the economy was in bad shape and therefore it was in nobody's interest to introduce a new means of advertising revenue that would further fragment the market.

The recommendations put forth by the Peacock Committee had a significant impact on UK audiovisual programme-making; the introduction of a quota on all broadcasters to commission work from the independent production sector and the liberalisation of multichannel television due to restriction removals on cable and satellite were the two most significant of these recommendations. The combination of these two factors would mean that there would be greater demand of television content created by new thematic channels, but also that a stronger and burgeoning independent production sector would cater to these demands. Regarding the strengthening of the independent production sector, it is worth citing O'Malley (p. 110) in length his analysis of the Peacock recommendations,

> 'Recommendation 8: The BBC and ITV should be required over a ten year period to increase to no less than 40% the proportion of programmes supplied by independent producers.' This was designed 'to increase competition and multiply sources of supply.' To prevent competition being stifled by the independent sector's becoming concentrated in a few companies, the report suggested that 'provisions against concentration in that industry along the lines which The Fair Trading Act 1973 provides for newspapers' should be brought into force.
>
> This recommendation reflected the view that independent production was a means of opening up the duopoly, promoting efficiency and greater diversity of programme supply. The success of Channel 4's experimentation with independent production influenced this proposal. The problem with the recommendation was that the 1973 Fair Trading Act had not prevented concentration in the newspaper industry…The report makes no reference to this political factor when discussing concentration.

The inevitable growth of independent production companies due to such palpable political support, significantly stimulated the creativity of the UK audiovisual sector since as argued earlier, it introduced more people in the field of television production from more diverse backgrounds and with more opportunities to exploit their ideas. However, the point O'Malley

makes regarding the possible concentration of the independent production sector is significant and is underlined further in the following chapters since we are now witnessing O'Malley's reservations through the existence of large production companies known as *super indies.*

At around the same time as these recommendations (1988), the conservative government's attacks on the BBC continued with the sacking of the then Director General Alastair Milne over various rifts with the government and the BBC board of governors (Barnett and Curry, 1994). Milne, after thirty years at the corporation, was asked to leave the premises 'by teatime' by the then BBC chairman Marmaduke Hussey (Curran and Seaton, 1997, p.281). It was, after all, a period when the BBC governors became increasingly politicised as shown by Curran and Seaton's comments.

> During the late 1980s and 1990s it was widely believed that the governors of the BBC were working behind the scenes to make programme makers not so much yield to government pressure as to make it unnecessary.
> (p. 218).

Yet the internal rifts, the pinnacle of which was the sacking of Milne and the placement of Michael Checkland as DG and John Birt as his deputy, could ironically, be the reason why the BBC still exists today as a thriving public service broadcaster. For example, between 1987 and 1996 the organisation shed 33 percent of its staff (Ursell, 2000, p. 807), and Checkland and Birt introduced such stringent accountability measures, cost-cuts and various other auditing micro-management policies, that the organisation was left relatively unscathed from the government during the 1990s (see next section).

As shown below, programme-makers were affected the most during this conspicuous shift in power. Born (2004) mentions that about the time of Milne's firing, editorial independence became compromised and lead to strikes and power struggles at the BBC. This is precisely what Milne was trying hard to prevent before his dismissal. Milne had attempted 'to provide a climate of confidence in which programme-makers can do their best work' consequently preventing the problems which inevitably arose after his sacking (Curran and Seaton 1997, citing Milne's own memoirs, p. 217). Producer Tony Garnett, defined the period in the following way, 'It grew up under Thatcher as the bosses recovered their self-confidence and new management was encouraged to crack the whip.' (2009).

While the BBC was going through possibly the worst period in its history, the government was busy deregulating the whole broadcasting industry. Following the recommendations made by the Peacock Committee in 1986, the Home Affairs Select Committee published a report on broadcasting that was in turn followed by The White Paper, *Broadcasting in the '90s: Competition Choice and Quality.* Along with the Peacock Committee, these two

publications became the foundation of the seminal Broadcasting Act of 1990. The most important aspects of the Act are as follows:

- All broadcaster were required to commission 25 percent of their total programmes from the independent production sector
- Channel 4 would begin selling its own advertising from 1993
- A new license would be given to a fifth free-to-air station
- ITV licenses would be auctioned to the highest bidder

Although the 25 percent quota was not as high as the 40 percent recommended by the Peacock committee, it was nevertheless considerably higher than most European countries. Specifically, the *Television Without Frontiers* Directive, 89/552, the European legal framework for the audiovisual sector adopted on October 3rd 1989, obliged broadcasters to commission work from the independent production sector. The directive stated specifically that 'at least 10% of transmission time or of programming budget of television channels be reserved for independent productions'. Furthermore, it considers that a producer is independent when no more than 50 percent of its ownership belongs to a television company (article 5) (Medina 2004, p. 25). While the decisions made in the Broadcasting Act of 1990 were clearly intended to stimulate competition and arguably the most significant measure was that of the ITV auctions, it was the 25 percent quota that contributed the most to the many internal changes that were to follow at the BBC in the years that immediately followed.

4.3   1992 – 2004

4.3.1   Birt's BBC

After the sustained attacks the BBC endured during the 1980s, the environment in the 1990s became considerably less hostile. One BBC journalist noted that during the 1980s, 'crises were always breaking out', whereas during Birt's reign 'everything was much calmer, there was a steady drip, drip of pressure' (Curran and Seaton, 1997, p. 223). As mentioned, the internal changes that occurred at the BBC during the beginning of the 1990s moved the organisation off the government's political agenda. Barnett and Curry (1994) note that John Major, the new prime minister that took over from Thatcher, admired the BBC and understood the role the BBC had to play both nationally and throughout the world. Most importantly, with the pro-conservative Hussey and Birt at the helm of the BBC, and with the introduction of the 25 percent quota, the organisation was now able to be 'steered out of trouble'. Curran and Seaton have argued that while Hussey, Checkland and Birt were considered villains at the BBC they became, ironically, the organisation's heroes. The three together had implemented such stringent managerial policies that they managed to save the organisation millions of pounds. Specifically, from 1991 to 1996, Birt claimed to have saved over 500 million pounds (Born, 2004). This fact alone was probably enough to earn the BBC

its charter renewal in 1996. However, savings at the BBC were implemented at the expense of the BBC's core channels, BBC 1 and BBC 2 (as well as in radio). As such, the decade will be remembered not so much so for the cost-cutting measures made during the period, but rather as one in which the creativity of its programme-making was tremendously undermined. 'In the early 1990s, the term 'Birtism' became synonymous with the perception of low quality programming driven by the requirement of least cost production', argue Block et al. (2001, p. 11). Similarly, well-respected producer Tony Garnett (2009) noted,

> The BBC did become a recognisably modern outfit, at least if you looked at the management charts. The pyramid was tall, reporting was clear right up to the Director General, and power was where it should safely be, with the grown ups in senior management. There was only one problem. This sort of control is the enemy of creativity. The more you have, the more difficult it is for artists to do original work.

In comparison with the control mechanisms of the 1970s, management implemented measures of accountability but also gave producers the freedom to continue making programmes – essentially to keep up creatively with ITV (Burns, 1977). That was a period in which the quality of the programmes was more important than the price of making the programmes. While the then changes did indeed affect producers, it allowed them at least to continue working in a relatively autonomous manner. Conversely, the BBC of the 1990s - steered by John Birt - was on a mission to conspicuously disempower the organisation's ability to develop and produce television and radio programmes (Barnett and Curry, 1994; Born, 2004; Harris and Wegg-Prosser, 2007). The decade is a glowing example of the tensions' that can break out between creativity and commerce and the sustained agency of programme-makers within the field of cultural production. Curran and Seaton question the decision to disempower the organisation's creativity in the following way (p. 230),

> 'There was, in the early 1990s, a sense of a crisis of confidence within the organisation. What was the BBC for, if not for programme-makers of this ingenuity and integrity [referring to such programme makers as Mark Tulley, Dennis Potter and David Attenborough] to make programmes that entertain, educate and inform?'

When John Birt was made Director General of the BBC in 1993 (according to Hussey, Checkland did not seem capable of pulling off the restructuring job required at the BBC), he introduced a series of changes that shifted power at the organisation from the hands of programme-makers to those of management (in contrast to the golden era). Pushed on by new management trends from *Deloitte, Coopers & Lybrand, Pricewaterhouse, Ernst & Young* and *Kinsley Lord*, the BBC became more centralised, leaner and more efficient. However, what led to the shift in power was not the efficiencies that were practised per se, but the fact that, 'management consultants…tend to accentuate the role of managers'

(Curran and Seaton, 1997, p. 223), and while this might be suffice for other sectors, in broadcasting it created a series of problems. During the 1990s, job vacancies at the BBC were filled with administrative staff, and many management consultants' that were initially outsourced, eventually took up permanent posts at the BBC. According to Born (2004), in 1993 MBA courses were created specifically for BBC managers (p. 215). Managers were been paid more than producers and using up expenses at the BBC that producers would have to consciously consider twice before requesting. One drama producer makes this point clearly with the following example of an experience he had at a particular production shoot in Ireland (cited in Born, 2004, p. 140),

> 'To save money we managed to persuade them [Oscar-winning talent] to fly from Stanstead rather than Heathrow, and to stay in relatively cheap hotels. Then, when the difficulties blew up, this delegation of BBC accountants flew out to Dublin; needless to say they flew via Heathrow and they stayed in a hotel that we had actually rejected for our cast as being too expensive!…The four of them and a secretary! And I had to ask, why the secretary?'

One of the first measures Birt implemented at the BBC was to change its overall culture. This was achieved predominately through 'Producers' Choice' in 1991. The scheme dates back to late 1980s as part of a 'Resources Review' effort from Hussey and Checkland to cut costs by 15 percent. It was later named 'Producers' Choice' and significantly changed the BBC by creating an internal market. Barnett and Curry (1994) note that discourses at the BBC during the period leading up to Producers' Choice remained substantially Thatcherite in nature, albeit her absence from government. Producers' Choice main goal was to make costs transparent and make producers accountable for the resources they were allocated. Production departments were decentralised in a way unlike the centralised processes that occurred during the 1960s and 1970s where these departments would often cross-subsidize each other. This is what Born called, 'a redistributive logic' in which if a programme went over budget it was compensated by another (p.108). During that period, accountability of budgets was non-existent, or 'shrouded in mystery' (Born, 2004, p. 106). With 'Producers' Choice', all production departments worked on a profit and loss scheme and it was made clear by the plethora of accountants brought in to organise the internal market, that departments with losses would be closed down (Barnett and Curry, 1994). 'Producers' Choice' therefore gave producers the choice to buy from external suppliers as much as from internal. It became a trading system that allowed production departments to charge for their technical and craft services. Essentially it was an artificial internal market that encouraged producers to look for services from wherever they wished. Yet the strategy was unfair on in-house production since the internal market could not sell its services externally. 'The resource departments should not be allowed to attract business from outside the BBC, except in fairly unusual circumstances' concede Barnett and Curry (1994, p. 187). The unequal market made external suppliers cheaper and consequently a more attractive choice

for producers. According to Curran and Seaton, 'Producers' Choice' had other covert purposes rather than just creating an internal market in which producers could choose from. As they note, 'it [Producers' Choice] was intended as a mechanism that would discreetly dispose of parts of the organisation' (p. 226). Indeed, during this period, production departments were minimized from 36 to 18 (Born, 2004, p. 100). Long-standing traditional studios were closed down or sold; overall the climate was been prepared for the BBC to enter a commissioning era whereby programmes would be made by the independent production sector that was all too eager to do business with the organisation. As a result, a central commissioning department was created and development funds were handled by controllers.

In order to implement Producers' Choice a series of seminars and workshops were held so all departments could be comfortable with the internal market. Some of these were organised directly by New Public Management specialists. Barnett and Curry note, 'one of the most interesting of these was held at a South London hotel in late 1992, under the auspices of The Office for Public Management, a firm of public sector consultants' (p. 186). 'Producers' Choice', was a great example of New Public Management, but it had serious drawbacks due to the fact that broadcasting requires a unique style of management in order to produce creative programmes. One ominous outcome of 'Producers' Choice' was the lack of in-house development funds that would (in the past) have been be used in order to 'give seed money to new ideas and new writers' (Born, 2004, p. 134). 481 business units were initially established, however due to the confusion (rather than choice), they were finally cut down to 200 (when Dyke took over in 2000, it was further reduced to 50) (Harris and Wegg-Prosser, 2007). 'Producers' Choice' caused many other irregularities. For example, it cost more to rent a CD from the BBC's library than to buy it new; or personnel were made redundant only to be rehired as outsourced services (sometimes at a cost more expensive than before) (Barnett and Curry, 1994, p. 188). Despite the irregularities and undermining of in-house production, accountants stood firm in their support of 'Producers' Choice'. They saw creative personnel as being too insensitive to public funds and too 'financially illiterate' to handle the budgets allocated to them. As one BBC finance executive pointed out in an interview to Georgina Born (2004, p. 101-104), 'Once they saw the true cost they could make decisions. That was the principle and that was why it was called Producer Choice'.

As the internal market was been implemented and BBC prepared itself for the 25 percent quota, four significant and related areas affected the creativity of producing original programme. The first was less producer autonomy. Producers would have to rely on more audience research, an action still very much in use today. Although audience research was always used at the BBC (with the exception of the BBC's early years), intensification of audience research was clear, conducted particularly in order to make programme-making more accountable. One producer argued at the time, drama output was 'reactive' and led by what 'ought' to be made rather than being led 'proactively by creativity' (Born 2004, p. 250).

Whether or not audience research contributed towards creativity and the creative process, in combination with 'Producer Choice', it succeeded in severely decreasing producer autonomy. It was not so much used to educate producers as it was to allow managers to disapprove of various programmes. Additionally, producer autonomy was affected by the growing feud between accountants and creative personnel during this period. Born (2004) includes many examples of the feud in her ethnography on the BBC during the Birt years. Due to 'Producers' Choice', accountants were hired to work side by side with producers and to get them to comply with various budgetary responsibilities that were created with the internal market. As one financial executive put it, (explaining to Born the difficulties they faced when working with producers), 'I had to yell at them…this is a profit-and-loss account, this is a balance sheet, this is how your activity fits in' (p.104). Rather than concentrate on programme-making producers were dealing more with the herds of accountants telling them how to balance spreadsheets.

The above point clearly overlaps with the second aspect as to how idea generation and programme-making was inhibited during this period at the BBC. Ironically, with the implementation of 'Producers' Choice', rather than decrease bureaucracy due to the decentralisation of the various departments, it increased it on account of all the paperwork involved with the new internal market. As Born argued, all economic activity had to be accounted for and this led to tremendous amounts of red tape. At the time of Birt's exit, there were 11 accounting systems at the BBC and 24 percent of license fee income was used for running the BBC's administration (Born, 2004, p. 468). Producers once again found themselves working on spreadsheets more than on scripts. Not all complied however. Many producers resisted and this eventually led to 'civil war' (p.115) at the BBC. This point in particular, is a clear example of the intrinsic motivation involved in audiovisual creative processes, since it was a clear example of people who were not willing to compromise their autonomy even at the expense of losing their job.

The third aspect had to do with the gradual waning of one important facet of the creative process – *downtime*. Downtime was a period in which producers were not assigned to a production project and could therefore concentrate more on ideas. As shown in chapter two, Poincare's description of creativity notes that part of the development of ideas involves a period of *incubation* whereby the subconscious is 'allowed to work' on idea generation. In television, downtime could be considered the point of *incubation.* During the 1990s, in-house production at the BBC worked on production continuously, moving from one project to the next. As a former head of a production department argued (cited in Born, 2004, p. 113),

> 'We never had any downtime, no time when staff were not assigned to a particular programme, and very little 'think time' for new ideas. We were surviving on the commitment and good will of the staff, who were knackered.'

Conversely, an older producer cited in Born, points to prior periods at the BBC (p. 97) showing the startling contrast in the two,

> 'They could be sitting around when there was no filming going on for several months on full salary, making massive amounts of overtime as well'.

Finally the fourth aspect deals with the unexpected restructuring that took place at the BBC in 1996 that consequently led to the reduction of development funds for in-house production departments. The restructuring also led to six new separate directorates two of which were to be the new production and broadcast directorates. Born notes of the split between the two departments as follows (p. 100),

> 'At a stroke the former structure, which embodied cooperation and dialogue between channel controllers and in-house producers, was replaced by one in which their relations were governed by the concept of the market'

The split resulted in further empowerment of controllers at the expense of programme-makers. Controllers were given permission to make all the decisions on the development funds that were divided into different schemes. Programme-makers, literally did not know where to go to pitch ideas. It all became too formal and bureaucratic thus resulting in missed opportunities to exploit programme ideas. This is in stark contrast with Dyke's vision of the BBC where ideas were encouraged to run smoothly across all departments and where he believed firmly in the creativity of the organisation (see below).

The above four points led to producers (particularly talented ones), to migrate to what was seen as more fashionable production environments (the independent production sector), rather than produce in-house. Others left the BBC in order to create their own companies. A belief grew that innovation and talent was bred more in the independent production sector albeit many producers learning their trade at the BBC, fuelling further a self-fulfilling prophecy of finding better creativity outside the organisation. Due to this fact particularly, Birt succeeded in moving the BBC one step closer to commercialisation.

4.3.2   Dyke's BBC

When Greg Dyke took over as Director General of the BBC in 2000, he inherited a whimsical organisation that was about to enter an era dominated by multichannel television. The challenges Dyke faced were ubiquitous. For one thing, it was a time when the organisation had no guarantees of increased public funds for the next several years. Fund shortages essentially required Dyke to find alternative ways of cutting costs concurrently increasing the BBC's commercial activities. Dyke also discovered that employees at the BBC during this period were conspicuously low on moral, and hence motivation was lacking. In Dyke's own

biography he points out, 'while John Birt had achieved a lot in modernizing the BBC since becoming Director-General in 1993, it was a deeply unhappy organisation' (2005, p. 139).

Despite these problems, Dyke's most pressing challenge involved stopping the ever-decreasing ratings of the main channels. Table 4.1 constructed from various BARB (2005) (*Broadcasting Audience Research Board*) audience share figures, shows clearly the fall in free-to-air television audience shares. As free-to-air viewing dropped (with the exception of the newer channel *five*), multi-channel television (other viewing)[37] continued to grow at an exponential rate (126 percent increase from 1998 to 2004).

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	% change from 1998 to 2004
Channel	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
ALL/ANY TV	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
BBC 1	**35**	**34**	**30**	**31**	**30**	**29**	**27**	**-23.58%**
BBC 2	**11**	**9.5**	**8.9**	**12**	**12**	**11**	**9.2**	**-14.02%**
TOTAL BBC1/BBC2	**46**	**43**	**39**	**43**	**42**	**40**	**36**	**-21.18%**
ITV (incl. GMTV)	29	29	29	24	22	22	22	-23.00%
CHANNEL 4/S4C	9.2	9.4	9.9	8.8	9.1	9.2	9	-2.17%
Five	4	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.8	4.8	20.00%
Other Viewing	12	14	18	20	22	25	28	126.02%

Table 4.1   Audience shares 1998-2004

Upon close inspection it can be seen that from 2000 when Dyke took over, audience shares at BBC 1 and 2 improved drastically in comparison with their main rivals *ITV* and *Channel 4*.

The unforeseen success the BBC was enjoying during this period of terrestrial broadcast turmoil is on account of a number of significant changes Dyke had made during his tenure at the BBC. He established for example, the *One BBC* fourfold objectives: more effective control of overheads; the simplification of the internal market system; the dismantling of the production/broadcast split in certain areas; and the increase of focus on audiences, creativity and collaborative work (Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, 2008, p. 18). Consequently, coming from a background in programme-making (as opposed to Birt's engineering training), he placed considerable emphasis in reinvesting money back into production. Organisationally, he tried to reduce bureaucracy by creating a less hierarchical, top-down administration and reverse the climate that was created from the internal market. In his first two years at the helm, programme spending rose to 450 million pounds, the largest increase in the BBC's history (Born, 2004, p.469; Harris and Wegg-Prosser, 2007, p. 297). He condensed bureaucracy and earned the respect of his employees by reducing the 200 plus business

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[37] Occurring partly because of *BSkyB's* deep pockets due to being part of *NewsCorp* media group, that in turn allowed them to win the rights for the lucrative premier league and champions league football competitions

units created during 'Producers' Choice' to 50, and the 11 different accounting systems to just one. Significantly, he was a firm believer that creativity flows within the whole organisation. As noted in Born of the period, 'collaboration was enhanced by cross department initiatives designed to foster the sharing of ideas' (p. 469).

Another important adjustment Dyke made was dismantling the broadcast / production split that had been created during Birt's 1996 restructuring changes. By doing so he made it clear that in-house departments should play a more active role than during the previous decade. He gave in-house departments' budget guarantees and openly stated that in-house would be favoured above independents. This solidified their position and consequently allowed programme-workers to concentrate on fostering creativity. One of the most significant changes Dyke made was to create the position of 'commissioning editor' as a bridge between broadcast (e.g. the controllers) and production. The addition of a commissioning editor of genres completely revised the centralised commissioning process that had been established during Birt's reign and allowed the organisation to handle commissions similarly to the more flexible Channel 4 that had years of experience as a publisher-broadcaster. As noted in Schlesinger (2004) in his analysis of public service broadcasting, 'this [Channel 4's relationship with independent producers and commissioning editors] provided a starting point for subsequent relationships between other broadcasters and independents' (p.7). It took complete decision-making power out of the hands of controllers; decisions would be shared with the genre commissioning editors the majority of whom were senior producers that acted as 'creative experts' and maintained an overview of production in each genre (Harris and Wegg-Prosser, 2007). Some controllers, e.g. Peter Salmon (controller of BBC 1) was seen as an 'isolated figure' (Robins, 2000), having to make far too many decisions that inevitably affected creative decisions. Dyke's programming changes involved both commissioning editors and controllers having to tick off programmes in order for them to be developed. As noted in Born, 'all commissions had to be agreed by a controller making a 'dual tick' system. The precise balance of forces in each genre was decided pragmatically' (p. 469). The commissioning editor became the 'cultural intermediary' that in turn became part of a burgeoning complex television production field. The new position alleviated the tensions between management executives and programme-makers (see chapter one) and allowed creativity to flow better.

The Audiovisual Landscape in 2000

In 2000, a significant change occurring in broadcasting was the growth of digital platform companies that bought content in bulk (see Tunstall, 1993; and chapter one). As shown in table 4.1 terrestrial channels were losing their share to thematic channels that were shown on digital platforms. Dyke responded to the growth of platforms by playing an active role in creating the now successful free-to-air platform *Freeview*. The digital terrestrial television platform has enjoyed the highest take-up rate of any digital platform in the UK and has

played a vital role in the UK's attempts to switchoff its analogue signals (Iosifidis, 2005). Additionally, Dyke created several thematic channels at the BBC, hence creating a larger portfolio of channels. Specifically, he proposed five digital radio networks and four free-to-air DTV channels. However, unlike other thematic channels, BBC 3 (mixed genre entertainment-led youth channel) and BBC 4 (broadcasts cultural, science and arts programmes), and two children's channels (CBB and Cbeebies), have acted 'as testing ground for new ideas and talent, with successful shows crossing from BBC 3 to BBC 1 and BBC 4 to BBC 2. According to the BBC's website, 'BBC Three is television's boldest single investment in the future of Britain's creative talent and brings a distinctive new voice to a generation of young adults.' (BBC, 2006f, see also chapter six). In an attempt to pursue its public values for a younger generation, the new channels would be free-to-air (pushing the growth of *freeview*), and contain a high proportion of original British programmes, and 'each channel would contain a range of genres, in contrast to the niche-channel pay-TV model' (Born, 2004, p. 487). However, the added channels at the BBC has meant that the organisation has been spread even thinner and the demand for greater creativity in originals has grown more during the Mark Thompson era.

Another element of the early 2000s was that broadcasters were losing younger demographic groups at the expense of broadband internet. As such, many broadcasters sought to enter the digital era by creating cross-platform content offering programmes on their main channels as well as on the internet (and furthermore as we are witnessing today, on mobile television). The BBC was not excluded from this group of broadcasters. To the many critics of PSB, it seemed that with Dyke at the helm, the BBC was moving into too many commercial ventures. Dyke was showing entrepreneurial skills that were becoming too ominous for the market as a whole. It was OK for the BBC to grow, but not to grow too large. During roughly the same period, huge changes were occurring in the regulatory framework of the UK communications industry. The 2003 Communications Act was introduced creating the *Office of Communications* – Ofcom (see next chapter). Five separate communications industries' regulators were merged into one. Ofcom officially took up its duties in December 2003 and became responsible for a converging communications industry worth approximately £44 billion (bfi, 2005, p. 82). In their discursive analysis of the 2003 Communication Act, Livingstone, Lunt and Miller (2007) argue that one reason why five legacy regulators converged into one 'super-regulator' was due to the increased commercialisation of the BBC in the digital broadcasting age (p. 616).

> 'The growing power of the BBC, especially but not only with respect to its non-broadcasting activities, was seen to distort the market. Add to this the chorus of voices questioning the funding for PSB...uncertainties over the viability of platform specific regulation in an age of convergence, and an overt sovereign consumer – and it seemed clear that broadcasting regulation required a major thinking'

Following the Hutton review, he and BBC Chairman Gavyn Davies, resigned, causing an outcry from many BBC employees. However, the appointment of Michael Grade as Chairman (Grade worked alongside both Birt and Dyke at LWT), and Mark Thompson as Director General promised to be a 'potentially more talented combination even than Dyke / Davies' (Born, 2004, p. 504). Indeed, Dyke himself had supported both Grade and Thompson arguing that Thompson's big impact as controller of BBC 2 and Director of Television will help him and the BBC to thrive in the years to come (Dyke, 2005). In a speech Thompson (2004) gave soon after his appointment, he set forth his agenda by first adhering to Dyke's achievements but also pointing to the mountainous task that lays ahead for the BBC in a digital media landscape.

> Greg believed in a BBC with far less process and bureaucracy and with fewer layers and less hierarchy, because he knew that all those things got in the way of best programme-making and the best use of all that amazing BBC talent.
>
> But the task of transforming the BBC is not complete.
>
> There's a new mood of openness, honesty and collaboration in today's BBC – that's really struck me over the past five months – but if you take a cold look at some of the tangible barriers to creativity, especially at our processes, I would say that surprisingly little has changed from the BBC I knew five or even 25 years ago.
>
> Things which should be so simple still somehow end up being complicated.

Chapter six looks at how Thompson's BBC has tried to maintain Dyke's vision at the BBC particularly by mixing broadcast creativity with accountability. With the implementation of *Building Public Value*, *Creative Future* and with a flatter organisation, Thompson's initial actions have indeed tried to implement simplicity as he mentions above, and consciously stimulate creativity. Yet, the *Window of Creative Competition,* as will be shown in chapter six, continues to disempower in-house production and while not exactly as Draconian as *Producer Choice,* its outcome is no different.

CONCLUSION

During the BBC's initial years, the organisation was devoted to giving its audience what it believed they needed. When competition arrived however, its paternalistic approach changed, giving more regard to what audiences wanted. The BBC came out of the Second World War stronger and larger and when ITV was introduced in 1955, the two organisations helped each other create a vibrant television environment, now considered by many a *golden era* in British television. However, from 1979 onwards, Thatcher's conservatives

were determined to privatize the BBC almost succeeding on various occasions. Thatcher's government signalled a series of deregulatory policies that accounted for significant shifts in UK television as a whole - and not just at the BBC. Some of the more positive policies made were the addition of a fourth terrestrial channel (Channel 4 in 1982), the growth of audiovisual thematic channels and multichannel platforms due to technological advancements, and the formation of an independent production sector followed by the ensuing requirements of all broadcasters to commission 25 percent of their programmes from these independents. The 25 percent quota has arguably led to the most substantial changes within the BBC's own in-house production department (the implementation of *producer choice* for example). Yet while these policies had a detrimental effect on the BBC (work insecurities, redundancies), they have arguably led to a more diverse audiovisual environment. Other decisions however were a clear statement of intent against the BBC. A lower than expected license fee increase, the Peacock committee, the placement of a pro-conservative board of governors and the managerial pressures pursued during John Birt's reign throughout the 1990s, are seen as the most significant and damaging causes.

John Birt's thirteen year tenure at the BBC, seven of which were as DG, while criticized by many, can also be considered as a period that led to such a large amount of accountability, savings and efficiency, that it put the conservatives off the BBC's case, essentially - and ironically, saving it from privatization. This led Greg Dyke to admit that John Birt 'had saved the BBC from Mrs. Thatcher by making it more efficient' (2005, p. 144). Greg Dyke continued the Birtist policy of supporting an all-encompassing digital environment but at the same time he did so by adjusting many of Birt's organisational policies throughout the 1990s that had for so long, placed producer autonomy in the backseat. Dyke, being a 'TV man', recognised that when producers are given autonomy good quality television prevails, whereas when management consultants and accountants are in control of production decisions, creativity is inhibited. Consequently, empowerment of management executives results in producer agency, as was witnessed throughout the 1990s. Bilton (2007) appropriately sums up the two Director Generals in the following way (p.69),

> 'To a considerable extent their aims were complimentary, not contradictory. Both were iconoclasts, challenging programme-makers by making them more accountable, whether creatively or financially...Birt sought to open up the BBC to market forces, while Dyke sought to open up the BBC to a different kind of competition through bottom-up criticism.'

However, television programme-makers do not live in a vacuum and are affected by the outside world. In order to find a solution to balancing producer autonomy with keeping things accountable, Dyke reinvented the commissioning process with the creation of the 'commissioning editor'. While Dyke did plenty more in his relatively short tenure at the BBC (e.g. *Freeview*, BBC thematic channels), it is his involvement in the creation of the

'commissioning editor' that has revolutionized how creativity is handled in today's more accountable television production environment and arguably his greatest achievement. What follows are two chapters that seek to examine the new environment in which the BBC works in, with the creation of Ofcom, and with the placement of Mark Thompson as Director General.

Chapter Five

The Television Production Landscape *Post* 2004: External Policies Affecting BBC Creativity

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INTRODUCTION

Having in the previous chapter addressed BBC creativity from a historical perspective, this chapter and the one that follows, explore BBC creativity from 2004 to the present. The year marks an important turning point for UK television for three main reasons. First, as mentioned in chapter four, Greg Dyke resigned as Director General of the BBC. New Director General Mark Thompson has sought during his period in office, to leave a lasting impression yet simultaneously keeping a similar managerial approach with that of Dyke's. Efforts for example, have been made to restructure the organisation in a more accountable way while at the same time more emphasis is given on managing creativity in a scientific and mindful manner. Second, it was a period in which digital media was no longer considered 'new media'; the 'new', as such, had already arrived by 2004 and with it, new creative processes have arisen. Thematic channels shown on digital platforms outgrew terrestrial channels in terms of audience consumption, audiences were becoming more accustomed to online technologies, and professional audiovisual content produced and consumed only for television and / or radio was no longer the norm. All these points led to more active and aware audiences and more progressive programme-making (for example more use of technology and audience research). Third, in 2004 The Communications Act of 2003 and the consequent launch of Ofcom came into effect.

Chapter five investigates the television production sector following the creation of Ofcom and highlights the ramifications of the super-regulator in regards to television production creativity, and more specifically how it has influenced the BBC's own efforts in stimulating creativity. Consequently, this chapter focuses mainly on the analysis of significant reports and documentation regarding creativity and television production. Most notably, it highlights the work done on creativity in the two Ofcom PSB reports (hitherto in five phases), the PSB Annual Reports (three in total), and on the regulator's review of the television production sector published in 2006. The chapter concedes that while Ofcom's role has resulted in a stronger UK production sector that now caters to both the UK and global markets, it has come at a cost for the BBC's in-house production studios and this is a potentially ominous outcome that has not hitherto been looked at in sufficient detail. Chapter six shifts its attention to how the organisation itself attempts to stimulate creativity from an internal viewpoint (hence addressing the first two aforementioned points). Splitting the chapters in

the following way emphasises the significance of recent external policies in how the BBC manages its own creativity.

5.1 The UK Television Production Sector After The Communications Act 2003

One of Ofcom's most striking yet underestimated consequences has been the gradual loss of independence the BBC had until that point held. Two Ofcom functions in particular have directly influenced the broadcaster and its efforts in producing creative programmes. The first involves how the super-regulator assesses and defines public service broadcasting[38] and innovation (5.1.2- 5.1.4); the second and most important according to various scholars (Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten, 2008; Doyle and Paterson, 2008), is in how Ofcom has implemented codes of practices in order to protect the independent production sector from the negotiating power of the main UK broadcasters (5.1.5). This section analyses these two points and their consequences. Before the analyses, the first part of this section briefly addresses the rationale behind the Communications Act of 2003 (5.1.1). The final subsection looks at the growth of the 'super indies', and how a separation of at least two-tiers has been created across the independent production sector (5.1.6).

5.1.1 The Rationale of the 2003 Communications Act

The 2003 Communications Act attempts to strike a balance between increased liberalisation and increased media diversity. It ensures for example that, 'public service broadcasting principles remain at the heart of British broadcasting' (Iosifidis, 2007, pp 85-.86), while at the same time it has 'freed up the communications industry far more than was expected' (ibid.), leading among other things, to the significant merger of Granada and Carlton. According to various scholars (e.g., Hesmondhalgh, 2005), upon closer inspection, the Communications Act can be seen as a catalyst for a pro-market, pro-globalisation turn in British communications policy. Michael Darlow, a well-known programme-maker, (and a significant member of the lobbying group that persuaded the government to establish the 25 percent quota – see Barnett and Curry, 1994), has criticised New Labour (2004) of acting towards the benefit of US interests and of creating a regulator (Ofcom) that will inevitably lower the quality and diversity of UK television. Des Freedman (2009) points to the fact that since the creation of Ofcom, the broadcasting industry has become 'market-driven' and is now 'highly unlikely' to allow public service broadcasting the same amount of 'creative and financial freedom' that was granted to Channel 4 (p. 112). As he concedes, Ofcom has been created in order to 'foster a knowledge driven economy based on exploitation of culture and creativity' (ibid.).

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[38] 'Ofcom has a duty to assess the designated public service broadcasters, taken together, in terms of their delivery of the public service purposes as set out in the 2003 Communications Act.' (Ofcom 2009b, p. 9). In the case of the BBC, these channels include BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three, BBC Four, CBBC, CBeebies, BBC News an BBC Parliament focusing however on generalist channels (ibid.).

In order for one to understand the logic of why Ofcom was created, a clearer picture of its genesis is required. The basic principle behind the creation of a super-regulator was first set out by Collins and Muroni (1997) who persuasively argued that merging the main five regulators due to the converging nature of the communications industries would allow the industry to flourish. As a critical mass based on this belief grew, the Communication Act 2003 set forth the necessary steps to make Ofcom a reality. Ofcom was eventually created after the accumulated efforts of the following four groups (Smith, 2006, p. 937):

(1) UK commercial media interests and their attempts to use convergence to justify deregulation; (2) New Labour's commitment to free market principles and policy innovation; (3) A regulatory 'turf war' between the ITC and Oftel; (4) Bargaining between rival departments within the Labour government.

Point four, Smith notes, implies that the *Department of Culture, Media and Sport* (DCMS) from 2003 onwards would be directly involved with how PSB's are run. As analysed in chapter two, the DCMS is responsible for nurturing the 'Creative Industries'. Consequently, one significant point here is that since all PSB's in the UK - including the BBC - are now under the remit of Ofcom and the DCMS, they could be influenced more by the ambitions of the DCMS in its push to foster the 'creative industries' not only in the UK but across the globe. This is partly achieved by how the Communications Act has led to a stronger independent production sector. It is no coincidence therefore that the Public Service Broadcasting Reviews have sought to open up the debate around the future of PSB and how a public service *publisher* is better suited for the digital age (see below). Yet as the BBC continues to strive under Mark Thompson and create cross-platform professional content (see chapter six), its significance, and that of PSB as a whole in fostering a creative Britain, remains hitherto intact. In a study by *Analysys Mason* (2009) commissioned for the DCMS on fostering creative ambition in the UK's digital economy, the importance of television production was highlighted in the following way (p.2),

> UK originated television content has been very successful both domestically and internationally. At the heart of this success lies the industry's terms of trade, independent quotas and the BBC window of creative competition (WOCC), all of which have contributed to the development of a thriving, entrepreneurial and independent television production sector. As consumer attention is increasingly diverted to the Internet, ensuring this success can be replicated in the broader more fragmented online world becomes an increasingly difficult challenge.

As the above account shows, television is seen as a significant player in fostering the creativity of the UK's digital economy (a point also stressed in the government's large-scale report on *Digital Britain*); in point form, the main drivers inciting television production in

becoming such a vital part of the digital economy and of the 'creative industries' have been the following:

- The *terms of trade* known as the *codes of practise* regulated by Ofcom (analysed below)
- The *25 percent compulsory quota* formalized in the 1990 Broadcasting Act (see chapter four)
- The *WOCC* (analysed in detail in chapter six).
- The setting up of channel Four in 1982 (see Barnett and Curry, 1994; Doyle and Paterson, 2008; and Chapter four of this thesis).
- The promotion of regional production across the UK that helped support the independent production sector (Doyle and Paterson, 2008).

These points show that the BBC plays a central role in the DCMS's overall strategy to boost the 'creative industries' predominantly by means of the 25 percent quota and the WOCC.

5.1.2   Ofcom, Innovation and Public Service Broadcasting

As a result of the 2003 Communications Act, all PSB's are required to continue providing content that is diverse, accurate and impartial in news, reflect national concerns and produce content from across the UK. The above points reinforce what have for many years been seen as some of the main characteristics of PSB. In order to oversee this responsibility, the act requires Ofcom to conduct a statutory review on public service broadcasting at least once every five years. It has thus far conducted two reviews and in both, evidence exists that Ofcom supports the core PSB principles. The first review, from 2003 to 2005 was broken down into three phases. In the review, PSB, and particularly the BBC, received a strong show of support. Ofcom however, eventually sees the BBC as becoming a PSB monopoly, and therefore it recommends the creation of a Public Service Publisher (PSP). As is noted in the review, PSB will become an obsolete function and a publisher that commissions work from the independent sector would better serve UK citizens (see Freedman, 2009) and should therefore be created alongside the BBC. Yet in 2008, 'Ofcom announced the abandonment of plans for a PSP' (ibid., p. 104), noting that a PSP provider of public service content was no longer required.

In the second phase of the second review, *Putting Viewers First*, published several years later (2009), Ofcom point to the significant speed at which the television industry is changing and free-to-air channels are declining, but continues to reiterate that the BBC needs to be at the heart of UK PSB (Ofcom, 2009a). According to research conducted for the second review, PSB ideals remain an integral part of broadcasting, and it was argued that audiences were willing to pay more to ensure, through increased competition, a thriving PSB sector in

the digital broadcasting era (ibid.). It is important to analyse, at this point, how Ofcom defines PSB.

According to the first review (Ofcom, 2004), there are four enduring *social purposes* and seven *necessary characteristics* of PSB. In the same review, PSB is seen as serving both consumers and citizens. The purposes and characteristics have remained almost the same throughout the PSB reviews (as well as Ofcom's PSB Annual Reports). Specifically, the *social purposes*, as noted throughout the first review are as follows:

1. to inform ourselves and others and to increase our understanding of the world through news, information and analysis of current events and ideas;
2. to reflect and strengthen our cultural identity, through high quality UK national and regional programming;
3. to stimulate our interest and knowledge of arts, science, history and other topics, through content that is accessible, encourages personal development and promotes participation in society; and
4. to support a tolerant and inclusive society, through the availability of programmes which reflect the lives of different people and communities within the UK, encourage a better understanding of different cultures and perspectives and, on occasion, bring the nation together for shared experiences.

PSB therefore needs to be supported and ensured to exist in the digital world, conclude Ofcom. Yet, as Hesmondhalgh (2005) argues, 'there are signs that Ofcom will act in the interest of large private media businesses and marketisation in the cultural sphere' (p. 101). The reason is because while license fee settlements allowed the BBC to push forward in the digital era, it was also asked to generate income from its commercial activities as well as to help push UK audiences towards a digital environment (ibid; Smith and Steemers, 2007; Holmwood, 2009)

Perhaps more important for this particular thesis, are the seven Public Service Broadcasting *necessary* characteristics identified by Ofcom throughout its PSB reviews. These are:

1. *High Quality:* Properly-funded and well-produced;
2. *Original:* new UK content, rather than repeats or acquisitions;
3. *Innovative:* breaking new ideas and re-inventing genres and formats, avoiding duplication;
4. *Challenging:* making viewers think, questioning established views; and
5. *Widely available:* if content is publicly funded, it needs to be made as widely available as possible. In practice, that means it must be free at the point of delivery, even where some digital models of delivery do not provide a universal service in the same fashion as analogue broadcasting.

6. *Engaging:* It must remain attractive to viewers if it is to have reach and impact

7. *Impartial and Accurate:* This must be across the schedule as a whole, in order to set standards that the rest of the industry will follow.

Points two and three vis-à-vis originality and innovation (innovation is used here I believe, in similar vein with creativity), identify the responsibility Ofcom places upon PSB's to stimulate creativity both in terms of genres and formats. These two points reflect Ofcom's remit in stimulating not only the creativity of broadcasting in the UK, but through the notion of creativity and innovation, in stimulating the whole communications market. Due to the significance placed on innovation by Ofcom, it has been involved in various research initiatives on innovation and production. What follows is an analysis.

5.1.3 Ofcom Research on Innovation

As early as the first phase of the first PSB review (2004), innovation and creativity were seen as vital components of broadcasting and creativity it seemed became the new buzzword in television production. Schlesinger (2004) noted, 'creativity has been signalled as an important new watchword to encapsulate public purposes and popularity; it will operate as a loose criterion of PSB achievement.' (p.1). Regarding the BBC, emphasis on creativity is reproduced on an organisational level as one of its public purposes of the new Royal Charter in which the organisation is given the responsibility of 'stimulating creativity and cultural excellence'. In regards to Ofcom, the research undertook in Phase 2 of the first review was concerned with ascertaining the factors that either encourage or discourage innovation. The research involved a series of interviews with programme-makers and commissioners. The results were as follows (Ofcom, 2004, p. 112):

Factors that it is felt may discourage innovation	Factors that it is felt may encourage innovation
Real decision-making power lies in the hands of too few people (this is across the board but the BBC came in for particular criticism)	Investment in and commitment to research and development (by the independent sector and by broadcasters)
Advertisers press for 'more of the same'	Devolved commissioning (with commissioners controlling their own 'pot of money' and able to back their own hunches), within the overall channel strategy
Smaller programme budgets and stringently defined 'slot prices' discourage innovation, because the amount of money available to producers restricts their ability to experiment	A healthy independent sector in a position to negotiate with broadcasters
There is insufficient money available for research and development	The 'right to fail' without subsequent professional or commercial punishment
Most independent production companies operate with such tight profit margins that they are unable to invest in development. They are also in no financial position to negotiate with broadcasters	Creative space to give new programmes the chance to succeed
Multichannel television leads to 'me too' commissioning	Proactive broadcasters who spot and encourage new talent
There is a shortage of talent or a dearth of training within the television sector. This has led to a small pool of people with the ability to develop and/or produce factual programmes or write dramas	A 'chain of trust' between the commissioner and the producer extending all the way to the contributor
The vulnerability of innovative programmes in the schedules due to competitive scheduling	A 'binary relationship' between the commissioner and the programme-maker, allowing creative conversations

As seen in these conclusions, many of the factors that Ofcom recognised as encouraging innovation are similar to those reviewed in chapter two as stimulants of creativity. Others however are exclusive to television production; for example, a 'healthy independent production sector', and the value given to commissioners in the creative process of television programmes.

Wanting to investigate innovation further, Ofcom extended the above research in their 2006 television production sector review (Ofcom, 2006a). In this particular research study, emphasis was given on the connection between independent production and innovation. In order to get a clearer picture on what stimulates innovation and creativity in television production, questions that were asked in the previous study were this time redirected towards programme-makers from the independent production sector. The results were as follows (Annex 7 (9), p. 132):

- The external sector is highly competitive and only the best and freshest ideas will win through and be commissioned
- External production companies tend to be founded by entrepreneurial individuals who reject the comparative security of working within a broadcaster in favour of working in the independent sector. These individuals have historically instilled a risk-taking culture into their companies
- The management style of external production companies encourages entrepreneurial behaviour
- External production companies are primarily staffed by freelancers who bring a steady influx of new ideas
- Freelancers strive to make as strong an impact as possible in the limited time they have with a company
- Innovation can arise out of necessity. For example, the need for the small producers to deliver content cheaply and quickly
- Some external producers are prepared to 'put their production fee on screen'
- Small external production companies are prepared to work on 'riskier' ideas as they do not need to justify the investment this entails to shareholders

5.1.4   Assessment of Ofcom's Results on Innovation / Creativity

The above results, while significant, seem to have several drawbacks and noticeable contradictions with the results of this thesis. Firstly, they assume *a priori* that competition, regardless of what kind and of how it is implemented, can and does stimulate creativity no matter what. Yet as shown in various studies (reviewed in chapter two of this thesis), at least when it comes to creativity, this assumption might not hold true and in fact in some cases it was shown that competition might even stifle creativity. Secondly, as noted in chapter four, while the independent production sector did indeed grow into an

entrepreneurial haven where creativity could flourish, due to consolidation occurring in the industry and the pressures of succeeding in a global audiovisual market, this point might not be as true today as it once was, at least when it comes to UK audiences. As consolidation and competition increases, and with profit margins extremely low in the independent production sector, it might in fact be the case that independent production companies are taking less risks rather than more. Richard Paterson's research (2001) on individuals working in television production argues that there is a limited space for experiment and risk-taking due to the precariousness and competition involved in the field. As he convincingly argues (pp 517-518),

> Workers have to choose sometimes between short-term fulfilling jobs and longer term security where the choice is not creativity but a level of certainty. Individuals are sometimes left to decide between the risk in innovating or taking on a challenging project in a small company unable to offer work beyond the existing commission, and the predictable but definite and often longer term contract…The primary purpose and career goal of individuals is often to make good programmes, but this is against a backdrop of fierce competitive pressures in the job market.

Several years after Paterson's original study, Doyle and Paterson (2008) conducted similar research and found little differences concerning the insecure nature of most independent production companies. As they argue (p.30),

> A more fragmented industry structure has led to a situation in which many UK producers feel more isolated and lack the proximity advantages conducive to creativity…a majority of programme-making companies in the UK are very small operations where, for example, lack of opportunities to exchange ideas and lack of nurturing environments for the development of new creative talent are real problems.

Thirdly, although innovation might indeed arise out of necessity as noted in Ofcom's research, the opposite can just as easily be argued. As seen in the review on creativity (chapter two), and throughout other areas of this thesis (chapter four and six), many programme-makers refer to both 'downtime' and resources as important facets of the creative process. As Teresa Amabile notes (2008), 'managers who do not allow time for exploration or do not schedule in incubation periods are unwittingly standing in the way of the creative process' (p.21). Therefore, since many independent producers are under pressure to come up with ideas quickly in order to generate income (often to survive), it can be argued that creativity might be stifled. Ursell (2000), looking at issues of exploitation and commodification in television production, notes of the limited available free time programme-makers have had from the 1990s onwards. The following response by an Ex-BBC producer supports her argument (pp. 815-816):

I had one project after the other where the only way you could
get it done in time was to work a 16-hour day. If I was lucky I'd
get home at midnight. I'm supposed to be a mother...I can't
see that I've got a future.

Ofcom clearly supports the growth of the independent production sector. Its growth however comes at the expense of in-house production (particularly with the implementation of the WOCC – see chapter six), and the continuing consolidation of the sector (see subsection on super indies below). If programme-makers working in indies are preferred to in-house production studios, as Ofcom's research states, then an immediate question is why is in-house production required at all? This question, ominously, remains unanswered by Ofcom.

5.1.5   Codes of Practice of the Commissioning Process

It is becoming apparent throughout this thesis that the single most significant change affecting the creativity of UK television production has been the stable growth of the independent production sector. Its growth, as analysed in the previous chapter, is especially evident from 1982 onwards with the creation of Channel 4 and with the 25 percent quota introduced in the 1990 Broadcasting Act. During the same period, there has been a remarkable rise in thematic channels in the UK that, along with the five terrestrial analogue channels, all commission and acquire content from the independent sector. Yet despite the growing number of channels in the UK (and more recently an increasing demand from outside the UK), the sector is predominately a buyers market. The reason is because although demand is growing from thematic channels and out-of-UK broadcasters, the majority of demand comes from a small number of broadcasters. Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten (2008) argue this point by pointing to a 1997 survey by the European Institute for the Media, stressing, '58% of officially independent production companies only produced for one channel during the four-year period under scrutiny and 84% did not produce for more than two channels. The same survey found that 78% only produced in one genre and 94% did not produce in more than two genres' (p. 13). Equally, PACT (2006) underlines that from the £2.6 billion UK market in original commissions, the main networks account for 79 percent of all viewing and 95 percent of new non-news commissioning spend (p. 8). The main networks as noted by PACT are mainly the traditional analogue channels that consist of BBC One and Two, ITV, Channel 4 and Five.

The Communications Act of 2003 has sought to address this distortion and protect the independent production sector by intervening in how terms of trade are set between broadcasters and independent producers during the commissioning process. The catalyst in the Act's intervention policy is Ofcom. Specifically, the 2003 Communications Act incorporated recommendations set out in 2002 by The Independent Television Commission (Ofcom's predecessor in regards to television regulation), to incorporate Codes of Practice

between independents and broadcasters during the commissioning process. As noted in the Act (OPSI, 2003, Section 285, (1)),

> The regulatory regime for every licensed public service channel includes the conditions that OFCOM consider appropriate for securing that the provider of the channel draws up and from time to time revises a code of practice setting out the principles he will apply when agreeing terms for the commissioning of independent productions.

Ofcom's response to the above responsibility bestowed upon them is as follows (2006a, pp.6-9):

> The new Codes, which were introduced in 2004, sought to set a transparent basis for commissioning deals to mitigate the exercise of broadcasters' negotiating strength. Ofcom is obliged to approve the Codes and provide guidance on their development or amendment…It is also felt that the new environment will make production companies more attractive to investors. As such, the Codes have helped to underpin growth in the sector.

Ofcom in other words, intervenes in order to help secure the continued growth of the independent production sector by increasing its negotiating strength. The regulator, mainly through the implementation of the codes of practise, sees to it that broadcast creativity is stimulated by supporting the television production industry and by doing so attracting new talent and new jobs in the sector. The Codes, argue Ofcom (ibid.) 'continue to be an important intervention to protect producers, and therefore to safeguard the variety and availability of content which satisfies the interest of viewers' (p. 74).

Prior to Ofcom's intervention, negotiations between independents and broadcasters varied. According to Deakin, Lourenco and Pratten (2008), the two main methods were either through a 'licensing' option, in which the costs of the production were borne by the suppliers and therefore resumed the rights from the broadcaster of the programmes after a certain period of time, or the 'full funding/cost-plus' contract, in which the broadcaster paid the full costs of production plus a producer fee. The 2003 Act opted for the licensing option that undoubtedly benefits independent producers. Specifically, from 2003 independent producers can retain the rights to the programmes although they are paid by the broadcasters to produce it. The broadcasters are allowed to own the programme for a certain period of time in which they can exploit the rights. When this period ends, the independents regain rights and are free to exploit the programme as they see fit with the broadcaster receiving a share of the revenues (*Analysys Mason*, 2009).

5.1.6   The Super Indies

Ever since Ofcom implemented the codes of practice intervention policy, the overall growth of the independent production sector has been evident. Additionally, the growing trend has continued due to demand that has come from both inside and outside the UK. *Analysys Mason* (ibid.) notes 'the independent TV sector, supported by the terms of trade agreed in 2003, has grown by an average of 15.6% per annum between 2005 and 2007, reaching a total turnover of GBP 2.14 billion in 2007, of which 20% is generated by international sales (predominately to the United States)' (p. 9). Based on these figures, there is now clear evidence that several independent companies are growing extremely large due to mergers and acquisitions that have occurred during the past five years. Reaching a peak of over 800 independent production companies in the UK, that figure is now closer to approximately 400 active companies (Doyle and Paterson, 2008). Consolidation in the industry has created several of what insiders in the UK broadcasting landscape now call *super-indies* (e.g., Broadcast, 2008c). As Michael Darlow notes (2005), 'the independents most likely to benefit [from the Communications Act 2003] are the bigger, business oriented companies, producing high volume, internationally saleable product, not smaller, more personal producers who make mainly one-offs or short series tailored to British audiences' (p. 81).

Some examples of super-indies are *All3Media* after having acquired *North One, Objective, Maverick, Lion*, *Company, Cactus, Bentley, Lime* and *Mersey TV.* This has resulted in the company producing over 660 hours of programmes with a turnover of over £93 million and over £202 million in 2004, with hits such as *Hollyoaks*, *5th Gear* and *Midsomer Murders* in 2007; *Endemol UK* that includes *Brighter Pictures*, *Cheetah Television* and *Zeppotron* and produced an astonishing 8929 hours of programming in 2004 with a turnover of over £90 million in 2004 rising to £160 million in 2007 with popular shows such as *Big Brother, Ready Steady Cook* and *Ground Force;* and *HIT Entertainment* owned by the venture capital company *Apax Partners* with global hits such as *Bob the Builder, Barney* and *Thomas the Tank Engine* and in 2004 had a turnover of £169 million (and whose chairman is former BBC Director General, Greg Dyke).

Super-indies such as the aforementioned are producing first-run original television programmes at an extremely fast rate.   While most commissions have come from the main terrestrial channels, particularly the BBC, the super-indies are continuously striving to find new sources of income. Some of these include responding to demand from a growing number of thematic channels, DVD sales, and distribution on new media platforms (Mediatique, 2005; Ofcom, 2006a). Yet the most promising new source seems to be increased demand from international sales, albeit – and possible because of - the continued dominance of American audiovisual content (Chalaby, 2006; Doyle and Paterson, 2008). According to *The Broadcast Indy Survey 2008*, 89 percent of indies have managed to sell programmes internationally (Broadcast, 2008c, p. 3).

TERRITORY	2005	2006	% +/-
USA	166	215	30%
CANADA	20	25	26%
GERMANY	30	24	-20%
FRANCE	33	37	10%
SPAIN	11	14	25%
ITALY	15	17	16%
SCANDINAVIA	26	37	42%
REST OF WESTERN EUROPE	42	47	12%
EASTERN EUROPE	13	20	54%
AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND	53	60	12%
LATIN AMERICA	8	11	30%
ASIA	37	45	23%
NOT ELSEWHERE CLASSIFIED	40	42	6%
TOTAL	494	593	20%

Table 5.1: Sales figures of television programmes by territory, 2005-2006 (£million) (source – DCMS, 2006 based on a survey for PACT, 2006)

Significantly, the regulatory changes that have occurred means that the extra revenues generated by the sector now count for more than they had in the past, since the indies can take advantage of the licensing option now in place. This is because secondary and tertiary rights now belong to them, and not the broadcasters that commission the programmes.

While super-indies continue to grow and prosper, many small independent production companies struggle to survive due to low margins and high risks involved in creating television programme concepts and ideas (Bilton, 1999; Ursell, 2000; Paterson, 2001; Born, 2004; Mediatique, 2005). *The Broadcast Indy Survey 2008* notes (2008c) 'overall growth in the sector has been flat…and this year's survey paints a dismal picture of the general state of health of indies...it's the consolidators that are growing' (p.3). While low margins and high risks are significant obstacles, the most pressing difficulty is that smaller independent companies without a track record seem to find it harder to acquire commissions from the major broadcasters. The reason is because broadcasters from across all terrestrial channels are reluctant to commission ideas from unknown producers. One BBC commissioner noted,

> if it comes from a place that doesn't have a track record or experience, they still need to get in bed with someone who shows they can deliver this, if it comes from somebody completely fantastic who's done it before, then it's more attractive… (interview notes, 2006)

Similarly, another commissioner from Channel Five pointed to the importance of 'delivery' and idea 'implementation' rather than just idea 'generation, stating simply,

> It's all about trusting a supplier that can deliver… (interview notes, 2006)

The above findings therefore confirm those published by Deakin et al. (2008). In their interviews with industry experts, they noted the importance of repeat trading and long-term output deals with proven independent producers in fostering creativity and fruitful

collaborations. Yet choosing independent producers that can 'deliver' and that have a proven track record means these organisations strengthen their hold on new commissions. The BBC tries to address this issue by commissioning from a wide selection of producers in comparison to other broadcasters (*Deloitte & Touche LLP*, 2006). In 2004 the BBC used 185 external suppliers while ITV1 and Five commissioned from 92 and 75 external suppliers respectively (Ofcom, 2006a, p. 69). Nevertheless, it is the super-indies that prosper the most since they are preferred by broadcasters due to the fact that they have continuously managed to deliver programmes. Choosing super-indies is often at the expense of new entrants that government policy goes to such strain trying to support. Moreover, as the super-indies continue to thrive they become better placed at attracting well-known talent, including experienced and trained producers. One of the main problems of small independent companies is that the programme-makers are not trained and experienced enough. One experienced freelance producer noted, 'we were trained, people stood above us and told us what to do' (Interview Notes, 2006). In an industry that is clearly becoming two-tiered, it will become harder for the smaller companies to justify their existence without attracting talent, proving they are capable and actually making new commissions. These fears are reflected in the *The Broadcast Indy Survey 2008.* The Survey specifically notes the following chief concerns of independent production companies (p. 13):

- 31.6% - Falling Budgets
- 28.4% - Getting Commissions
- 13.7% - Broadcaster Instability / Commissioners moving
- 11.6% - Managing Growth / moving onto new platforms
- 11.6% - Consolidation / Super-indies
- 9.5% - Attracting / Restraining Talent

CONCLUSION

In studying broadcast creativity, there are serious and ominous issues to consider due to the changes that have occurred in the television production landscape in the UK. The creation of Ofcom, following the Communications Act of 2003 has led to a public service system that has been placed under the watchful eye of the super-regulator (whether directly or indirectly). The regulator, through its reviews and annual reports of public service broadcasting, has moved to create an audiovisual landscape that clearly favours the independent production sector (Freedman, 2009). The two main reasons supporting this view are the following. Firstly, research conducted by Ofcom on innovation and creativity supports the view that competition is a necessity in order for television production to become more creative; and that competition can be achieved by strengthening the independent production. Secondly, codes of practice between independent producers and broadcasters have been formed in such a way that allows the independents to retain rights to programmes that in the past better suited the broadcasters.

Various statistics regarding television production look gloomy. The four-year period 2004-2008 witnessed a 15 percent decrease in first-run originations. Additionally, average viewing hours has also decreased by 15 percent for the same period as audiences are finding other ways of consuming audiovisual content (Ofcom, 2009b). These include digital video recorders and new media technologies such as *BBC iplayer* (see chapter six). Confidence is at an all time low according to a survey by the trade journal, *Broadcast* (2008c). Additionally, the continuous reluctance to give opportunities to new or small external suppliers will undoubtedly stifle UK broadcast creativity albeit the more balanced terms of trade between external suppliers and broadcasters. As consolidation in the industry continues, many independent producers are striving to become preferred suppliers. Commissioning editors, on their part, are not willing to offer commissions to programme-makers they are not sure will deliver on developing a programme that is ready for distribution, regardless of the quality of ideas that are presented to them. As a result of the aforementioned, the initial objectives behind supporting an independent production sector based on plurality of suppliers, loses its credence.

Chapter Six

Creativity and Accountability at the BBC: 2004 and Beyond

INTRODUCTION

Chapter six turns its attention to how the BBC stimulates creativity from 2004 onwards. The year marks the arrival of Mark Thompson, who took over from Greg Dyke as Director General; at the same time, Michael Grade was appointed Chairman[39]. Since this period, the BBC has gone through a plethora of organisational changes, many involving conscious decisions to foster creativity. Additionally, numerous changes were made on account of the upcoming renewal of the Royal Charter, which was eventually implemented in January 2007.

The chapter is divided in four sections. Each one seeks to dissect where and how creativity is stimulated across the organisation as a whole, but particularly within programme-making. The first section looks at *Building Public Value* and *Creative Future*, the two reform measures that have acted as foundations for making the BBC a more creative organisation. The following sections look at the consequences of these reforms. Section two looks at the reformation of the organisation, and of how technology in particular has been identified as a major driver of how the BBC attempts to prepare for what is seen by many as a precarious future media landscape (6.2.1). For this reason, the BBC has turned its attention to producing content on what the organisation calls a 360 degree environment (6.2.2). Section three looks in close detail at *BBC Vision*, the department at the BBC that is responsible for commissioning new programmes. It is within *Vision* that broadcast creativity is directly stimulated (6.3.1). Subsequently, this part of the chapter analyses the commissioning process (6.3.2), and looks in detail at how the *Window of Creative Competition* is put into practice as part of that process. The final section looks at audience research forms and how the BBC uses audience planning and research to stimulate the creative process (6.4.1-6.4.2). This section also includes a mini case study to illustrate the growing significance of audience planning at the BBC (6.4.3).

6.1   *BUILDING PUBLIC VALUE* AND THE *CREATIVE FUTURE* INITIATIVE

Michael Grade, 'a politically neutral, lifelong television man' (McGown, 2005, p. 18) was appointed chairman of the BBC on April 2nd, 2004, while Mark Thompson, 'a longstanding BBC man with extensive recent experience in commercial television at Channel 4' (ibid.) followed suit as the organisation's new Director General on May 21st of the same year. The

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[39] Michael Grade eventually left the BBC in November 2006 to take up a post at ITV plc.

two men took over the BBC during what seemed a relatively stable period for BBC staff, particularly when compared with John Birt's reign several years earlier. Despite the presumed stability, it was in fact a precarious period for the organisation and for public service broadcasting more generally. The organisation's charter was up for renewal, and 2004 saw strong growth in pay-TV subscriptions (10.2 percent up from the year before), helping commercial television grow to an all-time high (Ofcom, 2005). Additionally, as shown in the previous chapter, Ofcom's first PSB review brought the core values of public service broadcasting to the fore. Ultimately, 2004, and the next few years, would be a period that would see significant – and positive some would argue - changes as to how the BBC would be governed. Following the new charter, the Board of Governors was replaced by the BBC Trust and Executive Board; this is a crucial change in how the BBC functions. The two bodies are now more separate, allowing the Trust to oversee the actions of The Executive Board more independently; thus addressing what was seen by critics as a 'cosy' relationship between the Board of Governors and BBC management (Robins, 2000).

Within only two months of Mark Thompson's reign, on June 29th 2004, the BBC published its *Building Public Value* manifesto, seen by many as a move to strengthen its position before the upcoming charter renewal (e.g. McGown, 2005). In the manifesto, the BBC points to nine parts that strengthen its position as a public service broadcaster in the digital age. Along with the BBC's *Review of the Royal Charter* (2004a), the *Building Public Value* manifesto seeks to cement the BBC's position as a significant media player during a period of what the organisation itself calls the second digital revolution[40]. As Mark Thompson noted, 'The second wave of digital will be far more disruptive than the first and the foundations of traditional media will be swept away, taking us beyond broadcasting…I see a unique creative opportunity. This new digital world is a better world for public service content than the old one' (BBC, 2006b). Thompson's quotes echo those of many significant media scholars such as Sonia Livingstone and Charles Leadbeater. In Livingstone's empirical study on New Media and Young People (2003), she points to how young audiences perceive media and consume media today in lieu of what she calls a digital 'environment'. The home is being transformed into the site of a multimedia culture, integrating audiovisual, information and telecommunications services. Children are increasingly watching professionally made audiovisual content (often while consuming other forms of cultural products or chatting amongst each other), on the PC rather than the television. Additionally, audiences are expected to be entertained by actively taking part in the content they consume. In a similar vein, Leadbeater looks at how audiences, and citizens more generally, are becoming more empowered and active due to online technologies (2009). The internet and the growing amount of online communities will significantly change how citizens, politicians, private

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[40] According to the BBC's Building Public Value, the first revolution consisted mainly of digital uptake while the second digital revolution consists of 'the rapid growth of broadband, bringing with it easy access to a potentially limitless range of programmes, services and content on demand. Interactivity, effortless communication and sophisticated consumer content creation will all become ubiquitous in digitally-enabled homes' (BBC, 2004b)

organisations and public enterprises will function and collaborate. Emphasizing the engaging nature of the internet, he notes (p.240),

> The web invites us to think and act with people, rather than for them…The principle that we should think 'with' stands in stark contrast to the kind of outlook, organisation and culture spawned by the mass production and mass consumption of the twentieth century

Significantly, both *The BBC's Royal Charter Review* and *Building Public Value* highlight the need for sustaining and stimulating broadcasting creativity in a world in which audiences will become more demanding and active in their choices. Specifically, The Royal Charter Review outlines the following broad points as to how the BBC can stimulate creativity (2004a, p. 17-18):

- The license fee allows the BBC to create risks in ways which other broadcasters will not.
- Working with many external producers
- Highest spending per head on new programming of any country in the world
- A commitment to new writing via what the BBC call, *writersroom.*

Similarly in *Building Public Value* the BBC notes that it seeks to stimulate creativity in the following ways (2004b, p. 12-13):

- Eliminate derivative programmes and focus on originality and excellence
- More opportunity for drama particularly single and event dramas
- Develop and invest in comedy
- Focus on the discovery of new talent and ideas in popular entertainment and sport
- Defy standard programme categories to open up challenging subjects to large audiences – from arts and history to science, religion and music
- Maintain investment in music-making, arts and documentary coverage
- Increase investment on BBC Four
- Stimulate the creativity of audiences, giving them a chance to tell their stories and make their own programmes

Creativity therefore has become vital for the BBC. The renewed Royal Charter includes it in the BBC's public purposes and the BBC has responded by placing it high on its agenda. In the 2006/07 Annual Report, the BBC notes of the creative commitment it made regarding the Royal Charter agreement. Specifically, in response to the public purpose 'to stimulate creativity and cultural excellence, The BBC explains (2007a):

Maintaining a world-class reputation for creative and innovative content that breaks new ground and sets trends whilst at the same time support the creative economy by engaging and developing the best talent.

Based on the significance the BBC and the renewed Royal Charter have placed on creativity, the organisation has assembled an 'editorial blueprint' called C*reative Future* which has been used to implement the *Building Public Value* nine-part manifesto (BBC, 2006c). *Creative Future* was the result of ten cross divisional teams conducting large-scale research for over a year in order to get a firm understanding of how audiences both young and old will use and comprehend future media technologies and content (ibid.). *Creative Future* is the BBC's adoption of 'creative management' practices (see chapter two). In looking at an overarching strategy based on changing the climate of the organisations into a more creative one, Bilton notes (2007), 'What managers can do …is to build a collective culture where individuals are motivated to care about the bigger picture, beyond their own immediate task and function' (p.37). This emphasises the importance of introducing a collective organisational *creative* goal in order to achieve a more creative environment and attitude. In a seminal speech Thompson gave to all BBC staff regarding C*reative Future*, he notes, 'everywhere in the BBC creativity has got to become a priority for us – it's vital if we are serious about Creative Future' (Thompson, 2006). That speech kicked off a wave of 'creative' changes at the BBC. Among other things, it involved significant organisational structure changes, placed more emphasis on technology and audiences to enhance the creative process, and has launched two divisions that promote creativity led by Alan Yentob, the organisations long-term servant and Creative Director. The divisions are called *Creative Network* and *The Creativity And Audiences Training Board*. Other *Creative Future* initiatives involve opening the lines of communications amongst BBC staff with regular Q&A's, audience festivals and a storytelling day noting, 'we want everyone, whether they work directly in content or not, to have a chance to take part in these two events' (ibid., p. 3).

Yet in order for the BBC to embrace the second digital revolution and make the most of the 'creative opportunity', it has had to come at a cost. As the BBC Director General proclaimed at the time, 'here the question is whether we can make the licence fee go further with our existing output so that we can redirect the extra into new programmes and new services' (Thompson, 2004). Similarly, as noted in *Broadcast* (2005), 'BBC chairman Michael Grade has vowed not to let his legacy be one of cutting back on creativity, despite announcing more stringent measures to hold the corporation into account'. Hence, Thompson and Grade, (and thereafter Michael Lyons, who replaced Grade in November 2006), brought forward a succession of redundancies and efficiency schemes and in so doing managed to save millions that were reinvested into programme-making and technological divisions. According to the 2006/7 Annual Report, the organisation lost 1891 posts but saved £228 million in two years (BBC, 2007a, p. 5). While this was indeed the case, job cuts, voluntary and non-voluntary, came predominantly from BBC's content and output divisions (BBC, 2005). The

BBC Trust noted that 572 headcount reductions were made from in-house production divisions from 2005 to 2008 (BBC Trust, 2008). Jana Bennett, *BBC Vision's* Director emphasised the need for the reductions to take place in order to reinvest those savings in significant areas the BBC is moving or has already moved into. As she declared, '15% budget savings over the past three years helped pay for the transformational iplayer and paid for the launch of a programme page on the web for every programme so no programme need be lost when viewers press search' (Broadcast, 2008a). While cutting down on production divisions in order to increase creativity seems ironic, these decisions were made to prepare the BBC for the increased level of outsourcing it was about to get involved with particularly with the implementation of the *window of creative competition* (see description below). More recently, with the economic crisis affecting all sectors of the economy, the BBC has continued to seek ways to increase efficiencies in the digital era. Specifically, it has launched a plan called 'Fewer, Bigger, Better' to further cut costs. The plan was to decrease a further 5 percent year on year budget cut to a total of £1bn out of the BBC's budget over the next five years. *Broadcast Magazine* summarized the cuts in the following way, 'over the last four years, the BBC has cut its annual budget by £350m and reduced its headcount by 7000. It has also targeted an additional £535m saving by 2013 as part of *Fewer, Bigger, Better*' (Rushton, 2008).

6.2   THE BBC'S NEW STRUCTURE AND THE GROWING SIGNIFICANCE OF TECHNOLOGY

The BBC's restructuring strategies are based on implementing the changes foreseen by *Creative Future*. As the organisational chart shows (see figure 6.1 below), the BBC is now structured in a straightforward, circular and decentralised manner. Thompson noted in 2004, 'a simpler, less complicated BBC could afford to have leaner, more focused central divisions.' (Thompson, 2004). The BBC's recent structure reflects how contemporary 21st Century organisations are transforming. Leadbeater notes (2009), in 21st Century organisations, 'hierarchies are now flatter, job descriptions vaguer, the working day more flexible, the working week more extendable, careers more unpredictable...getting more productivity, innovation and quality seems to require ever greater pain to make organisations leaner and meaner' (pp.88-89). In other words, organisations have become more decentralized. Lash (1988) had predicted organisational decentralization in what many at the time had called a postmodern turn in organisational structures (as opposed to twentieth century modernistic bureaucracies) (e.g. Clegg, 1990). Lash argued that during the twilight of the twentieth century and entering the new millennium, organisations have a tendency to 'de-differentiate'. This is defined by Clegg as, 'the reversal of that differentiation process which observers such as Weber saw as central to the processes of modernity' (pp. 180-181). In the 2007/08 Annual Report (2008c), news presenter Mishal Husain highlights how the flatter cross-platform, unpredictable nature of work at the BBC's new structure is put into practice and hence how de-differentiating is occurring at the broadcaster. 'I work across

news programmes on television and radio, though my main home at the moment is our international channel BBC World News' (p. 5).
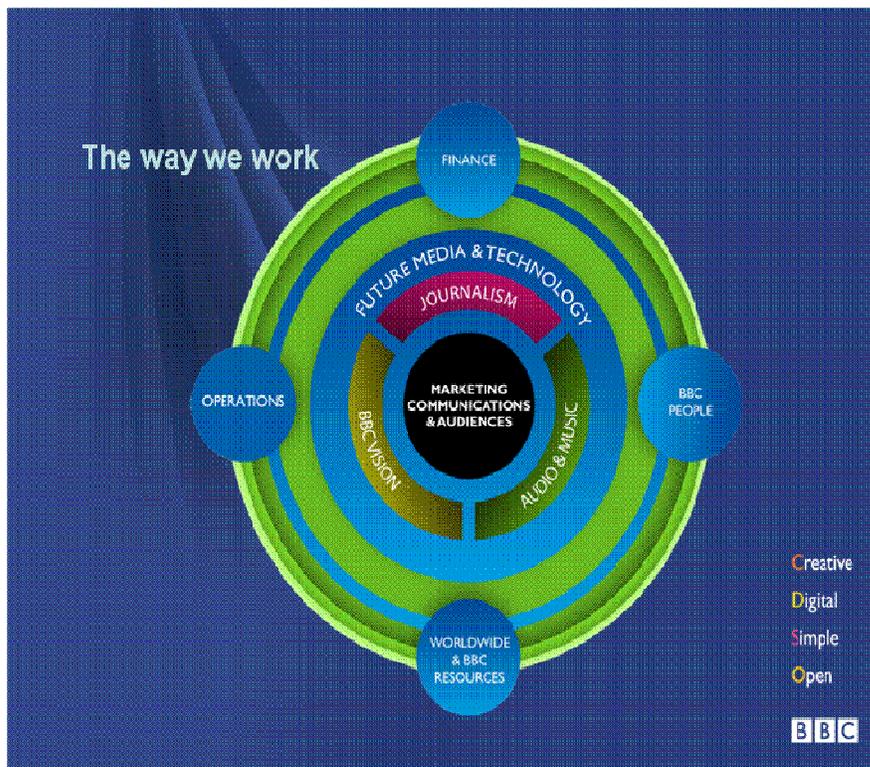

Figure 6.1 BBC organisational chart
(source: bbc.com)

6.2.1   *Technological Initiatives at the BBC*

The BBC's new structure places technology at a premium. As seen in figure 6.1 it overarches all creative departments and allows the BBC to be better prepared for the feeble future of media organisations. The media are faced with an increasingly erratic and technology-driven landscape in which they will find difficult adapting to, particularly those that are dependent on advertising (the BBC is not directly affected by advertising but more criticism heads in its direction when advertising budgets decrease in other media organisations). Therefore, the BBC's decision to invest in technology is undoubtedly warranted. Audiences - and citizens more generally - communicate with each other in an entirely different manner than during the erstwhile linear environment. This environment is laden down with on-demand active usage from an increasingly fragmenting audience. The Head of Audience and Planning at the BBC reflects on this point in the following way.

> There's a whole generation of people who understand the world we're in and that the old days where we had three channels and we could put on a documentary about atomic science and you get an audience of 4 million, that's long gone and if put a

documentary of atomic science now, Christ you have to work hard to get an audience, and everyone knows that now, fragmentation, explosion of other ways of learning about atomic science; television is just one and probably not the easiest way of telling a story about atomic science. There's Wikipedia and 1000 other web sites if your interested (Interview Notes, 2007)

On-demand viewing leads to users skipping advertisements and allows them to share from each other in online communities through open source technologies. Furthermore, mass online innovation and creativity is becoming the norm where users do things for one another for recognition and support, and are hence more intrinsically motivated. This is generally known as the Web 2.0, social media landscape (Leadbeater, 2009). Web-users exchange ideas, share information, become journalists, and innovate without having to physically meet each other. Accordingly, Leadbeater (2009) makes an appealing comparison of the industrial age with the information age,

'The factory encouraged us to see everything through the prism of the orderly production line delivering products to waiting consumers. The web will encourage us to see everyone as a potential participant in the creation of collaborative solutions through largely self-organizing networks' (p. 8)

Technology therefore affects all aspects of the BBC in order to meet these new communications trends. The BBC's technology division is named *Future Media & Technology* (according to the BBC 'future' is a more appropriate preface to 'media' than the more frequently used 'new'). License fee money has been reinvested in technologic initiatives such as *BBC iplayer, BBCi, BBC HD, the BBC website* and more recently, *Project Canvas*. *BBC iplayer* (the organisation's on-demand service via the internet), and *bbc.co.uk,* have enjoyed huge success as an increasing number of users are drawn to use them. The BBC is also trying to broaden *BBC iplayer* by allowing audiences to access the service via the television so viewers that do not have internet access (but rather an 'online' set-top-box), will be able to use the BBC's on-demand services. The initiative is known as *project canvas* (Sweney, 2009). In order to follow through on such ambitious projects, the division is assigned with an undeniably high budget (approximately quarter of a million pounds). For this reason, all BBC technologists have been relocated in *Future Media & Technology*. (informitv, 2006).

Since *Future Media & Technology* overarches all creative divisions of the BBC, the borders between technologists and the other divisions are becoming increasingly blurry. As illustrated in the new structure of the organisation, *Journalism*, *BBC Vision*, *Audio & Music* are all required to work closely with BBC technologists. Consequently, *Future Media & Technology* has three controllers that are assigned to each of the three cross-media content groups. Employees with significantly different backgrounds are now required to work

together on what can be seen as 'creative' meetings on how content is produced. Prior head of *Future Media & Technology* Ashley Highfield noted in the Annual Report 2007/08, 'Creativity, ingenuity and innovation don't just start and end with the content' (2008c, p. 29). The significance of meetings with groups of people with such diverse backgrounds should not go unnoticed; Bilton (2007) seeks to emphasise the significance of such collaboration by pointing to the fact that creativity is 'brokered' when,

> 'connecting disparate talents not only with each other but also with co-creators, recourse providers, critics and audiences ...the brokering function extends beyond the initial phase of assembling the team or group, into an ongoing readjustment and interaction, reinjecting diversity and manipulating creative tensions in the group' (p.36).

6.2.2   360 Degree Programming

Since audience consumption habits continuously shift and increasingly depend on new technologies, programmes are commissioned with cross-platform (360-degree commissioning, as it is known inside the BBC) in mind. What makes a programme a creative one is becoming more challenging due to technological shifts involved in audiovisual consumption and the consequent expectations of the audience. Cross-platform commissioning makes it easier for producers wanting to pitch ideas that will work not only on television but also online and on mobile devices. Television in other words, has become but one of several audiovisual platforms. Commissioners therefore need to bear in mind other platforms whereby audiences view audiovisual content. These include 'mobisodes', podcasting, live streaming and other such technological innovations regarding media consumption. Commissioners, controllers, *and* technologists are all involved in trying to find new formats, as much as new programmes. For this reason these divisions increasingly have to rely on each other to achieve their goals. According to a technologist at the BBC, commissioners that are responsible for BBC content are more conscious of both 'time-shifting and place-shifting users' (interview notes, 2006).

All BBC television programmes now have websites of their own. Subsequently, online technologies are frequently used as complimentary tools to audiovisual showings of programmes (e.g. the documentary *Planet Earth* has a vast array of clips and information online, complimenting the programme). But using the web as a complimentary service of linear viewing does not illustrate the real picture of how online communities are actively becoming involved with the content. For example, Simon Nelson, Controller of Portfolio & Multimedia at *BBC Vision,* discussing the cross-platform project *Signs of Life* in a speech during *Vision's* Multiplatform Day argues that audiences are progressively interacting with original content (BBC, 2007b) and therefore placing cross-platform higher up on *BBC Vision's* agenda. Specifically Nelson notes the following:

It's a ground-breaking online drama where players move between watching the drama unfold and interacting with the plot. Where the emotional themes of each episode can be explored via interactive personality tests and the results saved by players and shared via widgets on their own social networking pages.

While audiences in the traditional sense, are decreasing, fragmenting and becoming more fickle (Webster, 2006), they are however becoming increasingly active users of digital content. In fact, audiences are now becoming part of the creation process itself as in the case of *Signs of Life*. Significantly, this reflects how important sharing and collaboration has become for a newer generation of online users, and why cross-platform is of such significance to the BBC when it comes to producing original content.

6.3 *BBC VISION AND COMMISSIONING ORIGINAL PROGRAMMES AT THE BBC*

6.3.1 *BBC Vision: An Overview*

Creative Future's objective of reinventing the BBC into the 'most creative organisation in the world' has led to the formation of the new broadcasting and production unit, *BBC Vision*. Launched in November 2006, it is the largest 'integrated multimedia broadcast and production group of its kind in the world' (BBC, 2006c; BBC, 2006d). The name *Vision* is intended to demonstrate the BBC's commitment towards the digital landscape[41] where audiovisual content is consumed on different platforms and not just on 'television'. The unit has consequently replaced the old model of commissioning for analogue television to one in which controllers and commissioners are urged to commission programmes across different platforms. According to Jana Bennett (2006), *BBC Vision's* Director, the new structure will push commissioners to be more responsive to audience expectations and therefore allows *Vision* to become a 'one-stop shop' for pitching ideas. One genre commissioner is now responsible for all platforms. So for example, the drama commissioner is required to make decisions on online drama programmes, mobisodes (for smart phones) as well as for television.

Although cross-platform commissioning is quickly becoming the conventional method for producing audiovisual content, *Vision's* main priority is in commissioning programmes for television. This includes *BBC One, Two, Three* and *Four* as well as *Cbeebies, CBBC* and *BBC HD*. *BBC One,* offering a broad range of quality programmes, remains the flagship of the organisation. *BBC Two* on the other hand, attempts to bring more factual and specialist genres as well as more inventive comedy to a wider audience. According to the 2007/08

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[41] Not only digital television but a digital landscape in a more overarching manner (see Smith and Steemers, 2007 for a more comprehensive review of BBC's role in UK digital switchover).

BBC annual report (2008c), *BBC Three* 'is dedicated to innovative British content and talent, providing a broad mix of programmes aimed primarily at younger audiences' (p. 25) whereas *BBC Four* 'aims to be British television's most intellectually and culturally enriching channel offering a distinctive mix of documentaries, performance, music, film and topical features.' (ibid.) *Cbeebies* offers high-quality to pre-school children while *CBBC* is aimed at 6-12 year olds. *BBC HD* showcases a range of programmes in high-definition quality.

With so many channel options, the BBC often uses *Channels Three* and *Four* that are not terrestrial stations, as experimental stations. This is done to 'test the waters' as it were with new content and new talent; if programmes do well on these channels, they can be moved to the mainstream stations, *One* or *Two*. One BBC staff member noting the advantage of having four channels, stated, '[ ]…there isn't the sense internally that we have many growers there going from BBC3 to BBC2 to BBC1 or even BBC2 to BBC1' (Rushton, 2009a). A commissioning briefing by Janice Hadlow, controller of BBC Two, emphasises the strong relationship she wants *BBC Two* and *BBC Four* to have, by pointing to the fact that the two channels need to, 'sing from the same song sheet' (Lanfear, 2009). Interestingly, the connection between all these channels can create a form of competition in which the *informational aspect* is more salient, thereby increasing the intrinsic motivation of the staff involved in the channels. This can arguably enhance the creativity of all stations.

Though broadcasting and production are placed together in one division, commissioning teams remain physically separated from production (genre commissioners are located at a 'commissioning centre' in BBC TV Centre). This is because commissioners are required to choose objectively from the long list of ideas of original programmes that they are sent either by in-house production or independent producers. One significant approach the BBC has used to accept and control programme ideas is through the launch of the e-commissioning system that began in March 2007 (analysed in further detail below). The online system, according to the BBC, is to make the commissioning process quicker, and to minimize bureaucracy. As noted by Jana Bennett, 'Vision moves fully into multiplatform commissioning this April and capturing every proposal on this website means that we can spend more time developing the very best creative ideas.' (BBC, 2007c).

Controllers and commissioners together decide on what ideas are eventually made into programmes based on the editorial plans that are written out across each genre. BBC *Vision* has four genre divisions and commissioning groups are placed in each one. The divisions are *Fiction*, E*ntertainment*, K*nowledge* and *Other Genres* (see table 6.1 for a breakdown of the genres with examples of programmes within each genre).

GENRE	Examples of Programmes
FICTION	
Drama	*The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency, Merlin*
Comedy	*Beautiful People, Outnumbered*
Films	*Billy Eliot, An Education*
Programme Acquisition	*Heroes, The Lives of Others*
ENTERTAINMENT	
Entertainment	*Strictly Come Dancing, The Apprentice*
Daytime Entertainment	*Something for the Weekend*
KNOWLEDGE	
Arts, Music & Religion	*The Heart of Thomas Hardy*
Current Affairs & Investigation	*Russia: A Journey with Jonathan Dimbleby, The Conspiracy Files: 9/11*
Daytime Factual	*Wanted Down Under*
Documentaries	*Who Do You Think You Are?, Stephen Fry: HIV and Me*
Factual Features & Formats	*World's Strictest Parents*
Learning	*Blast*
Specialist Factual	*Earth: Power of the Planet*
OTHER GENRES	
Children's (CBBC)	*Transmission Impossible, Blue Peter*
Children's (CBeebies)	*Andy Pandy, Autumnwatch*
Open University	*The Money Programme, Life in the Undergrowth*
Sport	***2009 World Championship Snooker***

Table 6.1: BBC Genre / Commissioning Breakdown with Programme Examples

6.3.2   The Commissioning Process

The commissioning process, taking place in each genre division, is broken down into the following four overlapping phases (*Deloitte & Touche LLP*, 2006).

- Strategy and Planning
- Solicitation and Development
- Negotiating and Commissioning
- Production and Delivery

Although *Deloitte* conducted its research before the implementation of the WoCC (analysed below), the structure of commissioning has remained relatively unaffected as shown in the similarities of the more recent *PricewaterhouseCoopers* diagram (2008) regarding the commissioning cycle (figure 6.2).
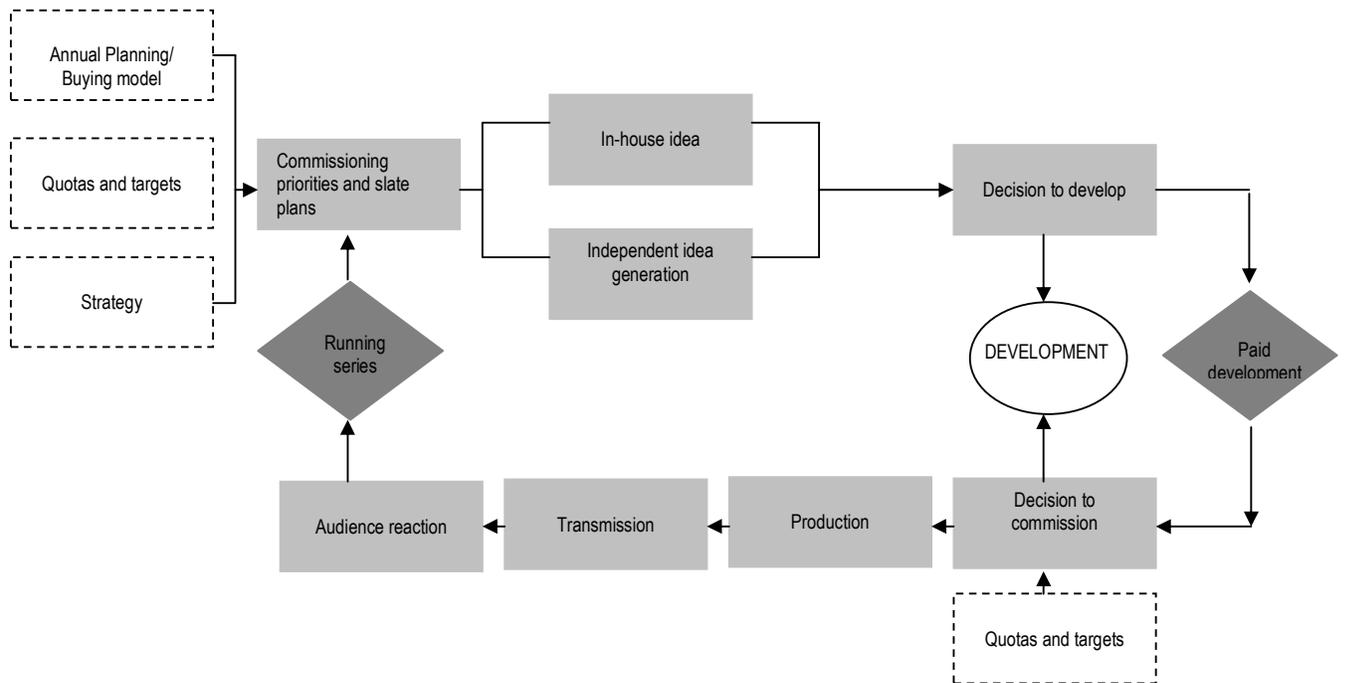
Figure 6.2. The Commissioning Cycle at the BBC
Source: Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2008

Following is a detailed look at how *BBC Vision* functions during the first two phases since these are the ones that this thesis is particularly interested in. The final two phases are briefly touched upon in order to highlight certain important characteristics of the conception phase of television production, and for an overall better understanding of the whole commissioning process.

1. Strategy and Planning

The most important feature of the *Strategy and Planning* phase consists of decisions on how to allocate approximately one billion pounds worth of programming budgets. These decisions are based on surplus resources from the previous year and on licence fee agreements with the government. The BBC Trust also frequently offers advice to the editorial board in these decisions based on various *Value for Money* tests and studies they conduct on a regular basis. Once the budgets are agreed upon some time in April, and before the financial year ends, the *strategy and planning* phase then looks at how programming budgets are allocated to channels, genres and specific slots. For example, for factual television in 2008-09, *BBC Vision* decided on producing 1600 hours, an increase of 36 percent when compared to the time before *BBC Three* and *Four* were launched (Bennett, 2007).

Apart from allocation decisions regarding genres, channels and slots, decisions are made on programmes that will continue running from previous seasons and on which slots will open up for the independent quota (25 percent), the in-house production guarantee (50 percent) and as of 2007, the *window of creative competition* (WoCC) (a 25 percent competitive window that is open to the best ideas from either in-house or independent producers - analysed below). The above allocation is known as the annual planning process, or the 'buyer model' (refer to figure 6.2), and is similar to the planning cycle analysed in Burns (1977) and in Born (2004), and discussed in Chapter four of this thesis. According to the BBC, 'this takes the channel and genre strategies and builds them into a detailed plan, or 'shopping list', of what kind of programming we are looking for, at what price, in each TX slot' (BBC, 2009a). In the *PricewaterhouseCoopers* report (2008) regarding the WoCC, it is noted, 'considerations such as efficiency agenda (need to control costs), network supply targets and quotas, regional quotas, and audience trends are taken into account in drawing up a fairly detailed plan of what programmes should be commissioned from which supply base' (p.19). As already noted, that supply base is broken down into three areas, the 50 percent in-house guarantee, the 25 percent quota whereby programmes are commissioned from the independent sector, and the open creative window that in-house and external suppliers try to earn commissions from.

Effectively, an annual schedule (or draft schedule that is subject to monthly, weekly and even daily changes), is agreed upon by senior executives including schedulers, audience researchers, genre and channel controllers, commissioning editors, executive producers as well as other strategy support executives. For instance, empty slots might exist for entertainment programmes on *BBC One* based on the draft schedule for independent producers. As noted in the *PricewaterhouseCoopers* report, 'it might indicate that a new drama series for a weekday evening could be commissioned from an independent producer outside of London, or that a one-off event will be produced in-house in London' (p.19). However, the annual plan needs to be relatively flexible and it therefore goes through constant changes such as 'talent availability' of specific programmes, genre or channel strategy changes, audience research and other factors of a similar nature.

In order to fill slots with programmes, briefs of programmes are made and published on the BBC's commissioning website. Additionally, commissioning priorities are made available to both in-house and external suppliers via briefings and on the commissioning website. In the BBC's commissioning priorities for a *BBC One* entertainment programme (BBC, 2007d), the following description is announced in order for in-house producers and independent producers to generate the best ideas,

Brief for Entertainment Programme on BBC One

Shape
30 minute or 60 minute factual entertainment shows.
There are opportunities both pre and post watershed.

Requirement
With the arrival of *The Apprentice* on BBC ONE
the bar is set high for factual entertainment. Shows
need to create a big splash both on TV and
beyond, and have real conviction. This scale and
ambition is more important than subject matter –
and they'll need a strong narrative to bring
audiences back week after week. We've already
commissioned a show on weddings and *Celebrity
Masterchef* is returning so we're casting our net wide
for subject matter that can be spun in an original way.

Audience
Again this is about appealing to mainstream audiences.
Think of topics, talent and treatment that will appeal to
both men and women and across age groups. There's
no formula – *The Apprentice* and *What Not To Wear*
both achieve this in very different ways.

In order to create a structure of how to allocate such a large amount of public money into unpredictable audience viewing habits, different mechanisms have been used as benchmarks. As noted in the BBC's code of practice, indicative prices need to be set within different genres. The BBC uses these tariffs in order to divide genres into different price ranges. BBC genre tariffs allow those involved in the commissioning process to have a starting point in what programmes are required and what budgets are available for each programme. Additionally, tariffs are set without any regard to whether a programme will be made in-house or commissioned by an independent production company. Tariff's are reviewed every two years and are fixed by the Director and Finance Director of BBC Vision (*PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP*, 2008, p. 35). One such example is the Cost Per Viewer Hour (CPVH) that is used with the commissioning tariff. For example, Drama has 7 different tariff categories that differ in price range based on Cost Per Hour. Following is an example of Drama category 5 and 6:

High cost Drama

Indicative Tariff Range: £700k - £900k

Within this range, programmes tend to fall into the following categories:

Category	Specification
Drama 5 £700k - £790k per hour	High levels of cast; stunts; foreign locations and period settings all drive this category. Cast will be large and talent established

Drama 6 £800k - £900k per hour	Heavy combination of multi-location; period; high cast and short runs in serials and event singles. CGI and effects may be significant here.

(source: bbc.com)

The significance of *strategy and planning* is that it establishes a blueprint for what and how many programmes will be made and in which category. It essentially allows those involved in generating ideas to start with some form of direction rather than from a blank page. However, asking to pitch for a programme in a specific slot does not mean the idea of the programme is close to being finished. BBC controller of comedy commissioner Lucy Lumsden notes, 'we never put down [prescribe] a subject matter – the whole point is that we welcome a range of ideas…20% of the strategy is, here are the bits of the schedule that we need to fill' and 80% is 'What have you got?'' (Rushton, 2009b).

Strategy and Planning is extremely hard to carry out since those responsible during this phase are essentially attempting to match costs with *anticipated* viewing figures (see Caves, 2000 and Napoli, 2003 for more on the unpredictable nature of media consumption). As on-demand platforms such as *iplayer* become available to a broader audience via both television (*project canvas*) and the personal computer, *strategy and planning* will inevitably have to change its current structure. Prime-time viewing, daytime viewing and other aspects of the daily schedule will erode, and therefore audience insights will become more important. Planning a specific number of programmes per year that will fit into a predetermined schedule will hold less value. As audiences will be given more freedom to build their own schedule, the BBC issuing briefs for example for the 9 p.m. slot, will not hold the same weight as it does now. *Strategy and planning* will have to be based on how many programmes will be made in different genres and at what price range without taking into consideration daily schedules but rather on what programmes audiences want to watch and when they want to them.

The Window of Creative Competition

Possibly the most important aspect of the *strategy and planning* phase that is used in order to stimulate creativity is the implementation of what is known as the *window of creative competition* (The WoCC). The window constitutes the BBC's attempt to open up a large amount of public funds intended for television programmes, to competition between in-house and external suppliers and as the BBC itself notes, 'to ensure that the best ideas are commissioned for BBC's audience irrespective of who makes them' (BBC, 2007e). Like *Producers Choice*, it also constitutes a recent empirical example of *new public management (NPM)* (see chapter two of this thesis; Hood 1991; and Ferlie et al, 2002). The WoCC dates back to 2004 when BBC management was working on its *Building Public Value* document and at ways to make license fee money more efficient. Subsequently after the implementation of *Building Public Value,* a group of BBC executives began work on what

was known as the *BBC Content Supply Review.* This review was created 'in order to set out the BBC's future strategy for content supply' (*PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP*, 2008, p.10). The review was approved by the then BBC Governors (BBC, 2006a) and recommendations were consequently made to them. The key changes approved by the Board were as follows (BBC Trust, 2008, p. 21):

- Independent and in-house productions commissioned by the same commissioning editor to ensure a level playing field
- A more streamlined commissioning structure with fewer layers
- Creation of executive producer roles under commissioners to manage output from independents
- Appointment of specialist commissioners outside London
- New arrangements for communication with in-house and independent producers
- Introduction of response time commitments fro in-house producers in line with those in place for independents
- Strengthening of 'genre commissioning' with genre commissioners given the final authority for individual commissioning decisions

As such, the commissioning process was restructured to introduce the WoCC and implement the above changes. Ultimately, the WoCC was created to make television production more creative by allowing numerous organisations to compete for television commissions and as a result make the license fee better value for money. The WoCC is worth 25 percent of the BBC's production budget, or approximately two hundred and fifty million pounds. With 25 percent of production funds already guaranteed due to statutory obligations created during the Broadcasting Act of 1990, the WoCC has given the independent production sector an opportunity to increase the amount of funds it receives from the BBC to a total ceiling of 50 percent (see figure 2.). Essentially, the WoCC requires BBC controllers and genre commissioners (the two main divisions of labour responsible for choosing which original television programmes are produced), to choose from either in-house production or external suppliers.

Figure 6.3 The Window of Creative Competition (WOCC)
50% of production is still guaranteed to be commissioned internally. 25% is guaranteed to be produced by the independent production sector due to statutory obligations. Consequently, there is now a remaining window of 25% worth of BBC production that is 'up for grabs'; competition now exists between the independent production sector and in-house production.

(source:bbc.com)

In many respects the WoCC has stimulated and supported the television production sector by giving external suppliers an opportunity to compete for large commissions that were previously unavailable to them. Significantly, it should be noted that Ofcom's television production review (2006a) recognized that the BBC is actively seeking to increase its external suppliers through the WoCC. As the Ofcom review states, 'the BBC may become an increasingly important access point to the market for small producers' (p. 70). Consequently, the BBC has responded, commissioning programmes from 289 external suppliers in 2008/09 compared to the 279 it used the previous year. The results of the WoCC have been interesting. Thus far, external producers have surpassed in-house producers by landing three-quarters of the funds available in the WoCC (Rushton, 2009a). John McVay PACT's chief executive is undoubtedly satisfied with how the indy's have faired hitherto, stating, 'Commissioners are doing what they are supposed to do – which is taking the best programmes' (ibid.). As a result, the BBC Trust *Biennial WoCC Review* (a review the Trust is obliged to carry out at least once every two years), concludes that until now, the WoCC seems to be functioning well.

Despite the obvious advantages of the WoCC, such as the increased diversity of suppliers given access to television programming budgets, there are various issues regarding its logic that need to be addressed. These are as follows:

1. Henry (2001) notes that freedom 'refers to employees having the confidence to take initiatives' (p.35), whereas Andriopoulos and Dawson (2009) state that high levels of freedom and autonomy directly correlate with high levels of creativity. The *WoCC* means fewer opportunities for in-house production. It is possible therefore that at least during the first years of the *WoCC*, as in-house producers adapt to the changes, freedom and autonomy might decrease because they are simply winning less commissions. This might lead to producers pitching for less risky programme ideas, and are trying less experimental techniques and ideas. As things stabilise and the BBC gets use to competing for slots, there is possibly more freedom for in-house programme-makers to experiment and take risks. This could be the reason why the BBC fares better in 2009/10 than in 2008/09 in regards to the *WoCC* (Rushton, 2010).

2. From Amabile's (1996) characteristics that either stimulate of stifle creativity, encouragement is given the most emphasis. Encouragement is directly connected to motivation which is considered of such importance in creativity theory. Since creative processes are driven more by intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation, programme-makers are more likely to produce new and useful ideas if they are encouraged for what they have already achieved as this is linked to intrinsic motivation. Unfortunately for in-house production, it is difficult to encourage employees and work in an environment that is rewarded by means of

encouragement when they are being made redundant because of the fewer commissions won as a result of the *WoCC*. Again however, as things stabilise and fewer redundancies are made due to an averaging-out of the commissions won and lost in the *WoCC*, encouragement could increase. It should in fact be an advantage of in-house production to be more stable and secure than the independent sector, and this should relate to more opportunity to encourage creative excellence.

3. Ever since the *WoCC* began in 2007, in-house producers have had fewer funds available to develop original programmes. Since having available more resources is directly linked with more creativity (see Amabile's stimulants list), as a result, it can be argued that employees are less creative. It could also result in producers pitching for programmes they know will have a better chance of being commissioned rather than going for something completely out of the ordinary since even they might be hesitant to try something different. If it does not work they are left with no resources to try again. The apparent pecuniary stability of the in-house guarantee should allow programme-makers to be different, to act different and think different from independent producers. This is simple enough, and its benefits in creating a more diverse and creative broadcasting ecology are easy to understand. However, it is important also to bring to the forefront research which argues that even the *perception* of 'the adequacy of resources may affect people psychologically by leading them to beliefs about the intrinsic value of the projects that they have undertaken' (Amabile, Contil, Coon, Lazenby and Herron, 1996, p. 1161). In television production it might be a good idea for programme-makers to feel they have space and the perception of resources in order to stimulate creativity and bring to life new and useful ideas.

4. West and Sacramento (2006), looking at how creativity and innovation develop, note 'several studies suggest that, in general, creative cognition occurs when individuals feel free from pressure, safe, and experience relatively positive affect ... moreover, psychological threats ... are associated with rigid thinking' (p. 27). Amabile's view on pressure is slightly different. As she argues, pressure can allow creativity to flourish. This happens when pressure is governed at a moderate level and therefore becomes challenging. There is a point however that Amabile and colleagues call 'excessive workload pressure', which undermines creativity and which is more in line with West and Sacramento's thinking. How much pressure exactly the *WoCC* puts on in-house programme-makers is something that requires further investigation since television production is by nature a sector in which pressure, either in the form of time, budgets or other kinds, is common.

5. Despite the obvious advantages of the *WoCC*, such as the increased diversity of suppliers given access to BBC television programming budgets, there are various issues regarding its logic – that of competition driving creativity - that need to be addressed. Notably, there is a disproportionate level of competition between in-house and external suppliers. The two 'sides' arguably do not compete on a level playing field. BBC's in-house production, with *BBC Vision* as its only client, is asked to compete against an influx of ideas deriving from a burgeoning sector of roughly 400-600 active organisations. This alone, is enough to increase the controlling aspects and therefore make programme-making more of an extrinsically motivating activity rather than an intrinsically motivating one. Furthermore, if BBC commissioners and controllers reject an idea that has been pitched from an independent production company, the company is free to take its idea elsewhere therefore alleviating the pressure when pitching to the BBC. Conversely, if an idea is pitched to BBC commissioners and controllers from in-house studios and is rejected, then it becomes of no use since in-house studios cannot pitch or produce programmes for other broadcasters. At best, it might be shelved until another commissioning editor arrives at the BBC.

It should come as no surprise therefore that most of the WoCC programming opportunities are won by the independent productions sector. Although in-house producers are guaranteed a 50 percent production quota (a large amount by any standard), when it comes to competing for slots within the WoCC, they are placed at a tremendous disadvantage. Not only do they have to compete against literally hundreds of companies, but they cannot send their ideas to other broadcasters if BBC commissioners do not want them. It is undoubtedly such pressure that can seriously inhibit the creativity of individuals that West and Sacramento discuss above. One individual working in in-house production mentioned,

> 'commissioners not only want ideas to address the briefings they give, but they also want the unknown, to be surprised...so within a production team we try to capture great ideas however they emerge' (interview notes, 2007).

The quotes taken from the informant emphasises the new levels of competition and pressure that now exist in the WoCC era. Yet, with continued reductions in in-house staff, and working with such conspicuous disadvantages, it seems likely independent producers will continue to win the majority of commissions available in the WoCC. Arguably therefore, the existence of in-house production is placed under greater threat even with a guaranteed 50 percent structure in place. This is particularly the case for genres in which talent (onscreen and off) is of greater importance. For example, comedy and drama are extremely susceptible to the threats of the WoCC, since talent across these genres will go to where the better deals are made for them, and if in-house production does not have enough negotiating power to attract the best talent, the 'tipping point' mentioned throughout this thesis will occur.

2. Solicitation and Development

The research conducted by *Deloitte & Touche* regarding the commissioning process separates *solicitation* from *development* in the following way. *Solicitation*, is defined as 'identifying new ideas through communication channels with independent and in-house talent'. *Solicitation* therefore is about generating ideas and harnessing them. *Development* is defined as, 'building the initial idea into a specification from which a television programme can be produced' (p.16). This part of the chapter will predominately analyse the solicitation component since it is this aspect of the commissioning process that the thesis is more generally interested in researching. Ideas, it is accepted throughout the industry, can come from anywhere. One commissioning editor's response, when asked where television ideas come from was as follows:

> It varies a lot from light-bulb in the bath type to people being inspired by things and thinking like seeing an article in a newspaper and thinking there's something there to people like myself issuing briefs asking for specific things, to people coming together in teams around a bit of audience insight, around you know consumer behaviour or consumer appetite. There's a huge variety of how ideas are generated I'd say. (Interview Notes, 2006)

Another executive from ITV noted on the same issue,

> I've been involved in commissioning on the sidelines since 1994 now, and it's just a question of clever, inspirational, experienced enthusiastic people getting together as much as possible and kicking ideas around.' (interview notes, 2006)

E-Commissioning

Due to the unpredictable nature of where ideas come from a system needs to be in place that broadcasters can take advantage of when they do appear. As shown below, the BBC receives hundreds of ideas for every genre. These are submitted electronically on the BBC's website by in-house and independent producers as they are both required to use the e-commissioning website when submitting idea proposals. This, according to the BBC, will allow *BBC Vision* to filter the thousands of ideas they receive and therefore spend more time discussing the creative aspects of promising proposals (BBC, 2007f). This is an example of how technology is playing a more significant role in the conception stage of original programmes. New ideas can be filtered, processed and tracked faster, and there is now more transparency in how ideas are managed between genres. The e-commissioning website has lead to the BBC's gradual move from rounds of commissions in which various slots are made public for producers to match with specific ideas, to what is called a rolling

commissioning policy whereby producers can send in their proposals and ideas any time throughout the year on the e-commissioning system. It has become an 'ongoing fluid process' as a BBC strategist mentioned (interview notes, 2006); or 'a rolling process' (BBC Code of Practice), as opposed to quarterly summits or the biannual offers meetings analysed in chapter two. As the same strategist continued

> It's a competitive market in terms of ideas. Accepting ideas continuously as an ongoing process, it is hoped, will allow for better ideas to be chosen throughout the year rather than having too many ideas during one summit and not enough the next (Interview notes, 2006).

Yet although ideas can be accepted this way, a risk exists in that too many commissions might be agreed upon early in the fiscal year; therefore the 'ongoing process' might do more harm than good since budgets might become insufficient for the latter period of the year. However, as discussed earlier, the annual planning process whereby scheduling the right programme to the right scheduling time was in the past seen as imperative, in the digital on-demand era, a calendar year – or season might not be as important. What will be required is the need to know whether a certain idea will work regardless of *when* it is shown for the first time. Audience insights and testing the concept of the idea therefore will be vital (see below).

As noted in the *PricewaterhouseCoopers* report on the WoCC, 697 ideas were sent to Children's genre whereas 71 were commissioned; in comedy, 227 ideas were sent with 63 commissioned, in drama 956 ideas were sent while 81 were commissioned. If ideas get filtered well enough, the e-commissioning approach can be particularly useful as a level playing field in idea evaluation. Recognizing that ideas can be generated by anyone, and that truly good ideas are in short supply, the BBC through the commissioning website attempts to make the process easy for all suppliers regardless of who they are. By filtering ideas this way, BBC commissioners and controllers, can spend more time in the meetings that matter rather than having to filter the best proposals themselves in time-consuming meetings. It is in these meetings that ideas are harnessed and allowed to move on to the next step of their development. The e-commissioning website states,

> Rather than replacing any of the creative conversations BBC Commissioning teams have with producers, the system is designed simply to make the process of filtering and comparing ideas much easier. As a result, creating more time for creative discussion around the best of those ideas.

The BBC, via its commissioning website, also assists normal citizens with little or nor television background that have good ideas, to be matched with producers either in-house or independents.

Yet as noted in the *Pricewaterhouse* report, many discussions are held beforehand between programme-makers and commissioners that already know each other. This supports the comments made by many informants working in television production that most ideas are generated from suppliers that are known to them; this is because idea implementation or '*delivery*' is at least as important as idea generation. Commissioning editors in particular are reluctant to commission work from unknown producers or producers they are not sure will deliver the programme as promised. As one editor mentioned,

> It's not only about choosing an idea, it's about choosing an organisation you know can implement the idea they pitch to you...It's invariably from a supplier because it's not enough to have a good idea, it just isn't. You need to be able to realise that idea. You need to be able to deliver that idea. Ideas in and of themselves are not that difficult to come up with. Commissioners come up with them all the time. But it's marrying ideas with delivery and talent on and off screen. That's when it gets really hard and that's where the benefit of experience is huge (interview notes, 2006).

Another BBC strategist noted in a similar vein, 'it's more about implementation and execution of an idea rather than coming up with an idea' (Interview notes, 2006) whereas one producer mentioned (interview notes, 2007), 'having a good track record is just as important as the idea itself'. What all these quotes essentially show, is that broadcasters implement what is called a *preferred supplier* model; commissioners and controllers choose the producers they feel safe with and know can deliver on ideas. A preferred supplier model has significant advantages for the commissioner apart from knowing a programme will be delivered as promised. These are economies of scale with a particular supplier (when making more than one programme together), less administrative burden, and the notion that closer relationships leads to a better interpretation of the commissioners' requirements (*Deloitte & Touche LLP*, September 2006, p.16). Nevertheless, a preferred supplier model can be seen as a significant drawback to creativity since implementation of ideas is preferred over diversity of ideas. Therefore, if the BBC wishes to commission the best ideas regardless of whether in-house or from the independent sector, and maintain as broad a supply base as possible, a preferred supplier philosophy might lead to contradictions; more importantly, it might lead to promising ideas not being pursued. The WoCC, as analysed above, can be seen as an example that attempts to broaden the diversity of suppliers. The BBC could do more to promote promising ideas regardless of the difficulties in bringing the ideas to fruition from unknown programme-makers. Although certain procedures do exist whereby talented individuals can be trained (such as the BBC *writers room*), if commissioners identify a good idea but feel the producer might not deliver on it, mechanisms should be in place to see the idea through, at least until it is a pilot, or even a treatment. This is a role the BBC's own in-

house production sector could initiate rather than sending the originator of the idea to an independent production company.

Creative Meetings

Television executives from different channels and organisations all note of the importance of getting the right people together in order to achieve the best television programmes. Indeed, this is precisely what Teresa Amabile stresses in her work on stimulating organisational creativity. 'The most common ways managers kill creativity is by not trying to obtain the information necessary to make good connections between people and jobs' (2008, p.20). An ITV executive explicitly pointed out that these meetings are absolutely crucial. It is worth citing him in detail:

> The most important conversations that take place on this floor are those between the director of drama and the director of programming, and the director of entertainment and the director of programming and the director of factual and the director of programming and the director of acquisitions and sports and the director of programming because those are the people that's job is to build the schedule and if there's not enough time for those conversations to take place, or there's not a good relationship between those people then you don't get good programming and if there is a good relationship and there's a clear vision where the channel needs to go to and at the same time you have quiet a structured process in place where people do spend time almost locked in a room so they have to talk without any interruptions, no emails are coming in with the overnights to ignore, then you get good programmes coming out'. (Interview Notes, 2006)

Similarly, a commissioning editor at the BBC emphasised,

> 'The more good people you have in a room the better it is and by good people I mean people who have a real feeling and sympathy for the audience experience and the purposes of the BBC. You don't want more than 6 people in the room but the higher the proportion of people who have a real feeling of what the point of the BBC is and for the audience experience the better chance you have of getting an idea, from here's a thought, to here's a great television programme.' (Interview notes, 2006)

In a speech Jana Bennett gave on enhancing and encouraging creativity in large organisations (2008) at the 2008 Manchester Media Festival, she emphasised the importance of bringing different people together from different production backgrounds in order to push the boundaries of television creativity. Adam Kwaje, producer of *Bugbears* calls this, 'creative speed-dating' (ibid.). Although many of the projects made this way

remain small in terms of audience ratings, they show the commitments and risks the BBC is taking in new creative areas of television production. As noted in the aforementioned speech,

> Who would have thought that shiny floor entertainment could ever get it together with khaki clad naturalists? Who ever imagined you could hear "now from the makers of Planet Earth and Strictly Come Dancing"? Well it's happening.

Controllers, Commissioning Editors and the Dual-Tick Approach

As mentioned in chapter four, the responsibility of deciding which programmes are eventually commissioned from the hundreds of ideas coming through, lies with both the genre commissioning editors and channel controllers through a dual tick approach. Applying Csikszentmihalyi's social-systems creativity model (see chapter two), these two divisions of labour are the primary members of the *field* mechanism as well as the new cultural intermediaries involved in making original television programmes. The genre commissioning editor and channel controller are the most significant 'intermediaries' between creative workers and management. Opinions however, vary as to whether the two posts allow creativity to flow better during the development of original programmes. In a well-known (within the industry) email sent by producer Tony Garnett to the BBC (2009), he contends that such a large amount of executives, borne from the Thatcher period, can only stifle creativity. 'The reality' he argues, 'is that over the last 25 years producers have lost their role. All the important decisions have been stolen by executives, not because they are now making the shows, but because they have the power' (ibid.). Continuing, he avers that while some executives are talented enough to become producers, most of them delay and stifle the work of the more creative artists / writers working on the projects. Most of them are too interested in audience insights and keeping their jobs. While undoubtedly one-sided in his support for a more non-conforming approach towards creative personnel (advocating that the BBC should 'let the children play'), the comments of such an experienced and well-respected producer need to be taken seriously; the questions he raises need to be taken seriously. They concern severe issues such as delays between television pitches and actual production due to multiple layers of executives, too much reliance on audience research and ratings, and not enough trust in letting directors, producers and writers find their own style of television production in shorter drama series.

Garnett's email has caused widespread debate, and opinions vary as to whether he is right or wrong. In response to Garnett's attack on the BBC a series of distinguished TV drama writer's came to the support of the organisation (Guardian, 2009). Steven Moffat, writer of *Doctor Who* and *Sherlock Holmes* noted (ibid.),

Totalitarian? The BBC? Seriously? The other day I had to BEG a meeting with [BBC1 controller] Jay Hunt, just so I could explain what we're spending all her money on in *Doctor Who*. She said it all sounded very nice and sent me off to play...That's more than creative freedom, that's being turned loose in the wild. Frankly, I'm scared and want someone to tell me what to do. I might even have an epiphany.

While the dual tick approach to commissioning programmes seems effective, it might - as Garnett notes - cause delays getting the 'green light' to start a programme. This is because while the BBC is committed to responding within a short period of time (ten days) to an idea submitted on the e-commissioning website, it takes considerably longer for the programmes to actually be given an approval for production. One drawback of development therefore is the delays caused by the often contradicting roles of the commissioner and the controller. One commissioning editor at the BBC noted the different responsibilities they have (interview notes, 2006),

The controller looks at the mix and the scheduling and the positioning and the talent for their particular platforms; I look at the strategy and playout and plan of my genres across all platforms, and we jointly agree specific projects for their platforms.

Since the controller's main responsibility is to oversee the channel 'mix' that is suitable for the audience of the channel, and the commissioning editor is more interested in his / her genre strategies, this divergence of objectives might lead to conflicts. The controllers have one eye on the strategy and planning of the yearly schedule, while genre commissioners wish to commission the programmes they find suitable regardless of availability of slots. While they both need to tick off on a programme in order for it to be developed, there still seems to be a hierarchical order and this fact inhibits commissioners from taking risks. One BBC staff member in an interview given in *Broadcast* notes, 'the comedy commissioners have become the servants of the channel controllers' (Rushton, 2009c) while a freelance producer noted, 'controllers have enormous power', and noted also the high turnover of commissions not allowing them to make enough of an impact (Interview Notes, 2006). But Ben Stephenson, Controller of Drama at the BBC in an interview given in *The Guardian* notes, 'I don't develop anything myself. I talk about it, but if there is a commissioning editor who has an idea and I think it's a bit strange but they are passionate about it, they will develop it' (Frost, 2009).

3. Negotiation and Commissioning

The two main elements of this part of the commissioning process are the Programme Production Agreement and the Commissioning Specification. The Production Agreement is a

control mechanism of the commissioning process, and has been agreed upon by both the BBC and PACT in 2004. The purpose of the agreement is to legally implement the Terms of Trade and Codes of Practise in doing business with the independent production sector (see chapter five). A vast range of legal issues are covered in these agreements such as rights ownership, editorial control, tariff prices (analysed above) and so on. The importance of the commissioning specification lies in its attempt to summarise the results of the development in a template format. Included in the specification are the title, the genre, how many episodes will be made, a creative brief, music brief and a production brief. The negotiating and commissioning phase of the commissioning process is less creative than the previous two phases, but is nevertheless essential in order to deal with the financial and business affairs. Therefore, *BBC Vision* has a number of legal advisors, and business strategists in order to foresee this phase, essentially allowing the development phase to be handled by the commissioners and controllers.

4. Production and Delivery

This phase consists of the pre-production, the production and the post-production phase. During this phase, the BBC has a number of technical checks in place in order to bring the project to an acceptable distribution standard. Essentially, once a commissioning specification is agreed upon, this phase then deals with the actual making of the programme. Although this phase does not directly affect the conception stage, as mentioned earlier, many commissioners are reluctant to choose an independent producer unless they know for sure that they are capable of delivering the idea to completion. This is because in television production, creativity is required to be stimulated until the completion of the production. Certain production elements such as sound engineering and editing are an integral part of completion. A strong and vibrant BBC in-house production division can make a significant contribution to training and nurturing such divisions of labour.

6.4   THE USE OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH IN STIMULATING CREATIVITY AT THE BBC

6.4.1   *Audience Research Forms and Industry Audience Research Characteristics*

Audience research can be divided in different forms. These are:

- *Academic audience research*
  - (such as those undertaken by academics like Marie Gillespie, Ien Ang, James Webster, Patricia Phalen, the late Dallas Smyth, Elihu Katz, The Columbia school research of Paul Lazarsfeld, Dennis McQuail, David Morley, Stuart Hall et cetera)
- *Industry audience research, or market research*

- o (for example Broadcaster's Audience Research Board, known as BARB, BBC Pulse Survey, ad hoc research conducted by media organisations)
- *Audience research for policy purposes*
  - o (for example as commissioned by Ofcom or the Department of Culture, Media and Sport)

These three forms can be further divided into various categories such as reactive or proactive research, qualitative or quantitative, various audience research paradigms that have shifted throughout the last 60 years such as the passive / active divide, research *on* industry audience research (e.g. Ang's, 1991 and Webster, Phalen and Litchy's 2006 analyses and critiques on ratings measurements) and so on. Although all these categories and forms have different purposes and ideological beliefs behind why they are done, they have two common characteristics. Firstly, all forms of audience research seek to understand the trends, viewing habits, behaviours et cetera of the same audience. Secondly, and as noted in Toynbee (2006), '*uncertainty* lies at the heart of the mass communications process' (p. 93). In other words, all audience research types seek to understand the unpredictable nature of audience consumption.

While all three forms of audience research are important, this thesis is predominately involved in the analysis of industry audience research since, for various reasons that will be analysed below, this is what the BBC uses. Industry audience research for audiovisual media has traditionally been involved in finding ways to measure audience size and share (audience ratings) in order to give an indication to advertisers as to how much they should be charged when placing advertisements in programmes (see Beville, 1988; and Napoli, 2003). As audience ratings continues to be the most used type of industry audience research (regardless of its misgivings), it has expanded in other areas and is now used by different organisations and for different reasons, most notably by media organisations that are involved in creating the content. The ultimate goal of industry audience research conducted or commissioned by media organisations is to improve audience appreciation of the content as much as possible (Gunter, 2000). The reason is evident. The larger the size of the audience that enjoys the programme, the more the media organisation can charge advertisers for placing advertisements of their products and services. As McQuail illustrates (1997, p. 65),

> In circumstances of intense intermedia competition and constant change it is not enough to have 'historical' knowledge of audience size and competition. It is also necessary to anticipate and lead audience tastes and interest. This is primarily a matter of professional skill, intuition, and luck, but it can be assisted by a deeper knowledge of what makes audiences kick.

The BBC, while not involved directly in charging advertisers for consumption of their content, it still needs to justify its existence by assuring - through ratings and audience appreciation scores - that audiences consume its content (Born, 2004). A quote taken from *broadcast* (2007) illustrates this,

> It was a dream come true for BBC1 on Saturday night as it came out victorious in a head-to-head talent show battle with ITV1. The corporation's main channel managed to attract 5.2 million (26.8%) in its search for the next stage Joseph in *Any Dream Will Do* at 7.25pm, while ITV1's *Grease is the Word* fell short with just 4.1 million

Within the context of programme-making, media organisations are involved in audience research both reactively, in which research is used on existing programmes, and proactively, whereby research is used to come up with specific ideas for future original programmes. Consequently, industry audience research is used by media organisations during all three stages of production (creation, reproduction, circulation) (see chapter one). The BBC Head of Audience and Planning confirmed this in the following way,

> We're involved throughout that process in each stage, across the whole process so we are constantly looking at BBC 1 and its future, we are looking at what therefore the big creative challenges are coming out of that, big strategic challenges, what are the creative challenges, right the way through to how can we help develop the next series or how can we help a team develop a new Sunday night drama…but also help the programme team develop the second series or 3rd series, so we work on *Eastenders* and *Holby* (Interview Notes, 2007)

More specifically, reactively, research data can be used in the following two ways. First, ratings figures can be used in order to find the best possible timeslots and techniques for scheduling programmes (e.g. bridging, tentpoling, hammocking et cetera.); and second, audience appreciation tests of sample audiences can be conducted in order to get further insight into how existing programmes can be improved after the programme is already transmitted. Proactively, audience research can be used before the programme is transmitted and distributed to an audience. Hence supporters of audience research argue that when research is used proactively it can stimulate the creative process (Freeman, 2004) rather than rely on the 'whimsy of the network baron' (Tunstall, 1993, p.185). One area that falls in both reactive and proactive industry audience research is *pretesting* media content on 'sample' audiences in order to get feedback and 'generate predictions of the media product's performance' (Napoli, 2003, p. 40). Pretesting is usually done in mini-theatres, or increasingly in in-home cable testing environments (Gitlin, 1983; Napoli, 2003).

6.4.2   Audience Research at the BBC

As noted in chapter four, the BBC has been involved in industry audience research since the creation of the BBC Listener Research Department in 1936. In 1950 the department was transformed into the BBC Audience Research Department 'in deference to the growing importance of television' (Nicholas, 2006); over 70 years on, the progression of that department has shifted once again to include digital audiences. According to the BBC, it now has the following three responsibilities (BBC, 2009b):

1. Shapes the strategic direction for the BBC's audience research, planning and analysis activities
2. Leads thinking about audiences in the new digital age to enable the BBC to become a truly audience-facing organisation
3. Oversees the overall strategy for establishing audience understanding at the heart of the BBC and content development

The audience research department is placed within the *Marketing, Communications & Audience* division[42] that is located at the core of the new BBC structure (see figure 6.1). Within this department the BBC has increased its reliance on proactive research earlier in the creative process by creating an audience planning division that uses 'audience insights' researchers to help in programme-making. When the division was created, Andy Duncan, at the time head of *Marketing, Communications and Audience,* emphasised the significance of using research during the creative process (BBC, 2003),

> We believe the expertise and insight that this new team will bring to our programme development teams will encourage greater creativity in everything that we do

The head of audience planning also emphasises the proactive nature of this division,

> What planning intends to do is to use the audience more as creative stimulus and inspiration and early in the creative process, than simply use the audience as an evaluative tool once the content has gone out which obviously can give you clues about what to do next, it can give you lots of insights about the audience but it tends to be quite dry and quite evaluative (interview notes, 2007).

Another BBC report on audiences underlines how important research has become in the creative process (BBC Audiences, 2004).

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[42] Apart from conducting audience research, the other two main objectives of this division are to brand the BBC through all other divisions and to control all corporate communications internally and externally

> A dedicated team of 'audience planners' uses our understanding of audiences to inform strategies for the development of new and existing programmes, to help programme makers translate those strategies into programme ideas and to work with channel controllers to solve specific scheduling issues. In addition, this team helps ensure that the wider social and cultural context and emergent trends are fed into the programme development process. A recent example is the *If...* strand, where an audience planner worked with the programme early in the development process. Current projects include the search for a replacement for *The Simpsons* on BBC Two and the development of *The Culture Show*.

Hence a large part of what this division does is to look at both reactive (what the informant implied by using research as an evaluative tool), and proactive audience research. Consequently, audience research should be seen as playing a major role in the creative process of original television programmes at the BBC. These very conscious research efforts are echoed by the BBC's Director General himself (Thompson, 2006),

> MC&A [Marketing, Communications and Audiences] give us our audience insights and those insights need to be at the start of the creative conversation – informing our thinking and choices – and our output. So I see MC&A as a creative division, shaping, building and driving our future relationship with all our different audiences.

Despite the BBC's commitment to use audience research this way, numerous producers and programme-makers remain sceptical of its benefits so early in the process. One freelance producer noted that while audience research is growing – noting, 'mostly commissions come from channels themselves saying what they want' (Interview Notes, 2006), he disagrees with the reliance of it stating, 'people lie all the time when they know its research' (ibid.).

Many, like the above freelance producer, argue that creative decisions should be left to the creative team involved in the production of programmes. A television executive arguing that comedy should be more intuitive noted, 'too much effort goes into trying to work out the science of it and into safe casting and safe writing and producing – so actually what you end up with is more of the same' (Rushton, 2009c). Similarly, *Mr. Bean* producer Peter Bennett-Jones warns, 'commissioners can attract the best content by focusing on the new and the exceptional, not by being prescriptive and primarily research-based in decision making' (Bennett-Jones, 2007). Drama at the BBC is another genre that has been criticised by producers and programme-makers for being 'audience research driven', 'top-down' and bureaucratic. Apparently too many decisions have to be made from too many people (including also researchers), in order to commission good quality drama (Garnet, 2009; Rushton, 2009c).

When asked, the Head of Planning admitted that a split exists between supporters of proactive industry audience research and non-supporters; but overall he felt programme-makers were warming up to it.

> [ ]...[we try and] get people to directly engage with the audience as part and parcel of the way ideas are developed here and that has become reasonably well accepted here, not accepted by everyone but reasonably well-accepted as the right way to go in a tough broadcast environment where you need to fight hard for audiences now, and they need to fight hard to engage them...that's a journey we're on, but people are more up for it now then they ever have been (interview notes, 2007)

People working directly in the commissioning process seem to confirm this and to have accepted the role researchers play in the creative process. A commissioning editor noted the following,

> [ ]...all of the commissioning teams have people with dedicated marketing support across the platforms they work on and dedicated audience analysts and audience research people so that the audience teams are split into people who, if you like, crunch through data, and tell us after the event what we can learn from a piece of programming. Who watched it? What did they think of it? Would they like us to do some more like that? Audience insight people who will say there seems to be a real trend in people doing X and Y or you know we're noticing that people are more...people have this particular view about parenting, or about immigration or about terrorism. It sort of trends into consumer attitude or behaviour and then its presented to us and it might be around demographic, this is what preoccupies people who are under 30, how they consume media, most of them have an i-pod, most of them have got a blog, most of them are on MSN chat, you know, and you use that stimulus for ideas (interview notes, 2006)

Audience planning is used therefore as a means to stimulate ideas of those people that have to come up with ideas or fine tune existing ideas. Planners might even take part in the actual team meetings that are created to generate ideas.

> I guess our job as planners is to try and bring the audience back into the organisation or bring stimulus into the organisation about the audience and the world around us that can be seen as a really valuable tool and valuable ingredients in the creative process...we have people sitting in development teams helping to stimulate debate, brainstorms, bring stimulus in, bring the audience alive to people...
> (Head of Audience Planning, interview notes, 2007)

Yet while audience insight tries to assist in idea generation they are more inclined in trying to subtly persuade programme-makers rather than force it upon them. This was made clear by the informant. He used the word '*springboard'* to get his meaning across as to how his team tries to stimulate programme-makers in generating ideas.

> You just try and give people the right springboard, you try and say, look, be as creative as you can be but you can be creative in a way that's more likely to engage the audience if you start here, rather than starting with nothing or just with your own creativity but the audience can be a really powerful springboard...advertising creative people are use to seeing the stuff that planners do as the springboard, they don't try and find the answer in it, they use it as a springboard. I think a lot of programme-makers don't know how to do that yet, we try and find ways of helping them on that journey, so a lot of people they either ignore it or they take it quiet literally, which we're trying to get people through the way in which we work with people through brainstorm techniques or whatever to see it as a springboard to creativity and not as something to read literally. (ibid.)

The techniques audience insights use to generate ideas vary. While been careful not to give away information that might be too sensitive, the Head of Planning mentioned,

> so what we try and do is just try and get programme-makers often against their will to try and come unstuck from a completely fresh place put different things together and see what emerges, so we construct quiet um detailed brainstorm sessions, creative sessions which try and get people to think differently about solving the problem, um and so we are in a bit of development at the moment on trying to create this new format on BBC1 and I think a pilot has just being commissioned through that process so you know it does work but its tough (ibid.)

He also noted that research can vary from reactive to proactive. He mentioned both BARB and the BBC Pulse Survey (uses an online panel that tracks people's enjoyment of programmes), as sources of information that are analysed and discussed with programme-makers. But stimulating creativity can come from anywhere and this team does its best to bring in sources of inspiration,

> we try and bring in stimulus from anywhere we can find it, so once you identify the nature of the problem you begin to understand the type of stimulus that might help you solve that problem so you bring in stimulus from books you've read or trend stuff that's stuff there to help, that's out there that's happening, you can use as stimulus in a brainstorm session or just encourage people to think differently about the problem so people don't get locked just in a world of telly (ibid.)

6.4.   Case Study on How Audience Planning Can Successfully Stimulate Creativity

The following case study illustrates how Audience Planning helped stimulate creativity of Factual Programming on *BBC Two*. Specifically, the case study shows how an acute insight into *BBC Two* audiences can assist programme-makers generate particular ideas for future projects. It shows clearly the continuous circuit of production and of the creative process.

The problem *BBC Two* was facing was the following: 'By the summer of 2006 the audience for factual programming on BBC2 was aging rapidly. The channel had a serious problem that needed addressing.' (BBC, Marketing, Communications and Audience, 2007). The following chart showing the last five years of all free-to-air terrestrial demonstrates the aging demographic of BBC2 factual viewing audiences.

BBC factual is ageing rapidly – particularly on BBC2
(not just factual)
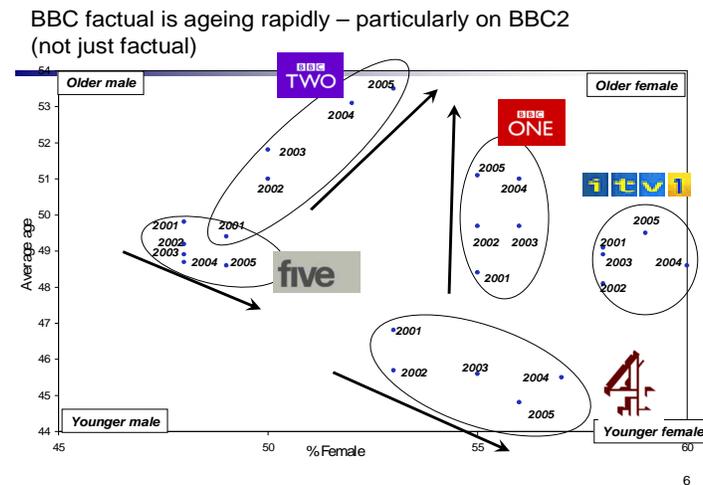
Figure 6.4 Average Age and Percentage of audiences on main terrestrial channels
Source: BBC, Marketing, Communications and Audience

Analysis of the data showed that when the channel opted to attract a younger audience it lost its main audience of 55+. There were however programmes that managed to attract a broad audience both in terms of audience share and appreciation index scores (AI positive). These programmes were isolated, and then analysed in detail to find their common characteristics. The Head of Planning noted the following as to how they try and achieve this.

> [ ]...you try and get some clues as to the type of things that work and why they work and then what we've done is brought in a lot of stimulus from outside...we've put together a bunch of different sessions that are now running both in terms of briefing the suppliers in terms of what the channelling commissioners are looking for...there are lots of different tools and techniques we have to try and get people to think in a creative way about solving this problem and to break out of what is very tempting for people making television which is to take clues from

> things that have worked so we can take a bit of that and a bit of that and put it together then we'll create something that's gonna work, but its quiet hard to be original…

Consequently, this is how they proceeded with the problem facing *BBC Two*. When audience planners were comfortable that they had isolated the 'ingredients' of the programmes they felt worked for broad audiences, they then briefed commissioners, controllers, in-house production teams and external suppliers accordingly. As noted by Audience Planning (ibid.),

> The factual Audience Planners would work closely with their Genre Commissioners and Audience Researchers to understand what programmes were working with Broad audiences. The challenge then became how to replicate the success of the Broad titles that were both share and AI positive, reduce the number of Old titles and Current titles, and develop a few more Young titles.

The results were encouraging for the channel. The process of isolation and learning helped *BBC Two* to attract younger ages as well as increase its overall appreciation index. It is important to note here that audience insights shares its information and analysis with whoever might help create more creative programmes despite the disadvantage placed on the BBC's in-house production teams. Its role, as witnessed from the case study, is to help stimulate the creativity of the original television programme regardless of who is at the meeting.

> We are working on a process which has involved the channel, the commissioning teams, has involved briefings to indys, has involved now working with development teams, not just in London but around the country, to try and help and supply them to come up with new formats (Head of Audience Planning, interview notes, 2007)

It was the *springboard* the Head of Planning had mentioned that assisted the development teams to come up with specific creative ideas that worked for the channel. It should not be offensive for programme-makers that are against looking at the data. The Head of Development at current affairs seemed content with the methods used.

> The insights gained by the Factual Strategy have helped us in development understand how to attract board audiences to often quite tough subjects. By looking at ideas in terms of talent, topic, tone and treatment and understanding how moving those levers can bring new audiences to hard current affairs, Daniel and his team have helped us really move current affairs in new directions while retaining all the journalistic rigour of traditional BBC current

affairs (BBC, Marketing, Communications and Audiences, 2007).

Glenwyn Benson, Controller Knowledge also gave her vote of confidence to the audience planners.

> Dan has helped our commissioning team to revolutionise its ability to deliver the channel priorities, particularly on BBC TWO. He has provided razor-sharp analysis and in depth analysis and understanding which, crucially, can be understood and used easily by commissioners, and production and development. He is an outstanding audience insight professional, who we value incredibly highly (ibid).

CONCLUSION

Mark Thompson and the current management team at the BBC have invested heavily in making the public service broadcaster more creative, and more equipped technologically for what many experts feel is the early stages of an ominous period for media organisations. Upon his assignment as Director General, Thompson wasted little time in implementing *Building Public Value* and *Creative Future*. In terms of organisational restructuring and *indirectly* stimulating creativity, it has meant a leaner and flatter organisation where different departments can cross-pollinate each other in terms of knowledge, diversification and experience. It means a team of people that all seem to acknowledge the value of effectively managing creativity and accountability, particularly with the recent *Fewer, Bigger, Better* scheme. A significant aspect of the Mark Thompson era is that more emphasis is given to audience needs; it does not seem far fetched to say that audiences are been considered as partners in the creation process. There is now a realisation across the BBC that audiences have been empowered to a point that, if it is not taken into account, the BBC is in jeopardy of losing its identity. Jana Bennett calls these times 'seismic changes' (2009), contending, 'if the first stage of multi-channel was a move from scarcity to choice the next will be from choice to control for the audience'.

In terms of how it *directly* stimulates creativity, the BBC has continued to disempower its own in-house production by placing more commissioning power into the hands of independent producers via the *Window of Creative Competition*. Other significant areas of investment in creativity have been a more transparent and continuous, rolling commissioning process, and various creativity incentives such as the *Writers Room, the Creative Network* and the *Creativity and Audiences Training Board*. And last but certainly not least, the BBC has opted to stimulate creativity by relying heavily on audience research; so much so that it has become a part of the creative process itself. It uses both reactive and proactive methods to achieve this purpose.

Following is a list of identified areas the BBC has attempted to stimulate creativity of original programmes.

1. Submission of ideas through an easy to use and transparent online process called *e-commissioning*
2. Initiatives used directly to stimulate creativity – these are: *Creative network, Creativity and audiences Training Board, Writers Room,* The *Window of Creative Competition (WoCC)*
3. A flow of creativity across all the BBC with more involvement from different departments
4. A rolling commissioning process
5. A more tolerant and cooperative atmosphere and constructive team discussions between the people that matter when commissioning original television programmes
6. Audience Research and Planning as part of the creative process

While the above list undoubtedly shows a true commitment and willingness to knowingly stimulate organisational creativity, many of these methods remain questionable (particularly the WoCC), while others (audience research, the commissioning process) continue to generate systematic attacks, especially from various creative quarters of television production.

Chapter Seven

C O N C L U S I O N

INTRODUCTION

In the concluding chapter of their historiography of the BBC, Barnett and Curry (1994) warn that predicting the organisation's future can be 'a hazardous activity' (p. 246). The danger in doing so they argue, is on account of the many variables that affect the public service broadcaster – these are social, political, technological, and economical. Yet since it is the oldest and most well-known public service broadcaster in the world (Born, 2004), and since its role in British life is so important, it continues to be placed under a microscope, and predictions of its future will carry on regardless of their accuracy.

The purpose of this final chapter is twofold. Firstly, it is to offer a synopsis of the thesis and highlight the main areas that have been relevant to include. Secondly, it puts forward various concluding statements regarding the state of the BBC today, and various predictions of the near future; therefore this thesis inescapably participates in its own 'hazardous activities'.

1. SYNOPSIS

This thesis has sought to explore creativity management in original television production at the BBC. Accordingly, the two main discourses it has attempted to make a contribution towards are those of *television production* and *creativity management*. Having first set the scene in the prologue, the thesis next offered a literature review of both television production and creativity management. While a different course could have been taken, based on the overall design of the research, it is these two that I believe are the most significant within the context of this thesis. For example, a chapter devoted on reviewing the literature on public service broadcasting might have been more suitable; the reason the alternative options were chosen is not because a PSB review is of less importance, but rather because the reader of this thesis should already be familiar with the large volume of work already available on PSB. While PSB definitions therefore are obviously a primary concern, they do not take theoretical precedence.

Consequently, chapter one analysed the complex issue of cultural production and television production. When compared with other characteristics of the communications process, production is possibly the least researched, mainly due to a postmodern turn that has captured media and communications studies from the mid 1990s onwards. The chapter

began by looking at the history of cultural production. It is at this point that an association is seen between cultural production and creativity discourses, since a lot of the work addressed here is on the individual creator, or creators, of works. It sought also at this point, to shed light on how cultural products have historically been affected by commerce, particularly from the mid-twentieth century onwards. It then looked at the various theories involved with cultural production before looking closer at television production and original programmes.

Chapter two concentrated on creativity management and of its growing importance, not just for cultural / creative organisations - that have always sought to properly manage creativity - but also across the economy as a whole. Following, it looked at the several issues concerning creativity such as its connection with competition and how creativity can be better managed within organisations. It is by understanding these points in particular, that the main concerns of how the BBC is managed are surfaced.

Chapter three took on the unavoidable and significant task of justifying the methodological context of the thesis. It looked at two approaches, the case study, and historiography, in order to rationalize the structure of the thesis. It particularly draws on the work of Robert Yin (2003), who is seen as the key scholar on case study research. Chapter three includes the propositions of the thesis, a table of the data collected, the units of analysis, and parts of the research diary used throughout the course of the work done on the thesis. The chapter also offers a description of history, historiography and organisational historiography in order to rationalize the hefty use of history in this study.

Chapter four, five and six look directly at the BBC. Specifically, four is a history of the BBC with an emphasis on programme-making and creativity. With the use of some of the major historiographies written on the BBC, the chapter was used as a prelude for the following two chapters that deal with contemporary issues regarding the organisation. Chapter four looks particularly at how the BBC was managed (and how programme-making was affected) during the Thatcher-era, and how that period contrasts with how the organisation functioned in the 1950s, 1960s and part of the 1970s. Chapters five and six were based on how the BBC functioned from 2004 when Mark Thompson was placed at the helm of the organisation. Chapter five is the shorter of the two chapters and analyses how external factors such as the new regulator Ofcom, has affected how the BBC functions. It addresses the current state of the independent production sector that is of major importance in how the BBC commissions and produces original programmes. Chapter six looks at how the BBC, from 2004 onwards, is shaped to stimulate creativity in original television programme-making. It analyses the managerial schemes that have taken centre stage, and how they have had either positive or negative influences on creativity. These schemes include *Building Public Value, Creative Future*, *Fewer, Bigger, Better*, the restructuring efforts that include the creation of *BBC Vision,* the greater significance given to audience research, and importantly, the introduction of the *WOCC*.

2. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Exactly how the BBC stimulates creativity is central in the paradigm shift from public service broadcasting to public service media (PSM) (Tambini and Cowling, 2004; Lowe and Bardoel, 2007). What takes explanatory precedence in the concluding statements of this thesis is to offer insight into BBC creativity in original television programmes. By doing so, an attempt is made to alleviate the rupture which exists today between those that see the forces occurring at the BBC as either stimulating or stifling creativity. What follows therefore are the key areas that have stood out as a result of creativity in television production at the BBC. These revolve around giving more emphasis on audience-driven initiatives, the WoCC and the disempowerment of in-house production.

The BBC and Creativity

Since the appointment of Mark Thompson as Director General, creativity and how it is managed, has become a major priority. Thompson has not hesitated in making major changes at the BBC in the name of creativity (e.g. Building Public Value, Creative Future, The WoCC), and despite attacks coming from many quarters, he has managed the changes well. The organisation is in a stronger position than it had been in 1979 when Thatcher was voted in; it is in a stronger position than in 1993 when John Birt took over, and arguably, it is even in a stronger position than when Greg Dyke left in 2004. The BBC also fares better than most commercial media organisations in how it will face the challenges of the digital age. Its investment in technology and audience research shows that it understands the growing needs and demands of what Van Der Wurff (2007) calls 'society-active audiences' (p.105). It is through technological advancements that ordinary citizens have become a part of what Manuel Castells calls throughout his work 'collective consumption', but we can argue that the same technologies are now allowing a form of 'collective production' as well. Technology has led to a digital environment whereby audiences are truly active and completely comfortable with disintermediation technologies such as personal video recorders (PVR) (See Barwise, 2004). The BBC has done well to move successfully into areas of non-linear media. Mark Thompson had foreseen many technological changes as early as 2004 when he implemented *Creative Future*. In the speech he gave to his employees marking the launch of *Creative Future*, he stressed, 'we need to meet – and exceed – audiences' rapidly changing expectations' (Thompson, 2006). These are audiences that are disloyal to any one media organisation, are more fragmented than they have ever been, and are increasingly seeking new ways to be entertained, informed and educated. As a result, Thompson has sought to solidify the BBC's reputation in an elusive period for all media organisation's.

The BBC is still seen by its audience as a meaningful organisation that produces creative programmes, and while there are serious concerns over its future programmes - particularly among specific demographic groups – the organisation is willing to address these concerns.

> Although the provision of high-quality entertainment is seen as a relative strength of the BBC, there remain concerns about the delivery of fresh and new programmes. Only half of those we surveyed in 2008 agreed that the BBC does so, falling further still for younger men. We have agreed with the Executive that providing distinctive content is a high priority in the coming period. We are pleased to see this ambition beginning to be reflected in the BBC's programme plans for the coming year (BBC, 2008c, p. 25).

Conflicting Perspectives and the WoCC

Despite the palpable measures that have improved creativity, there is one disquieting factor from the data gathered and analysed for this study that justify the concerns of those that fear the deterioration of BBC creativity. This involves the WoCC. Studies analysing the implications of the WoCC are conspicuous only by their absence, and with the exception of one report written before the WoCC's implementation (Hutton, O'Keeffe, Turner, 2005), the scheme, now in full fledge at the BBC, has not been identified as a danger to creative programme-making. Yet based on the outcomes of this study and the number of disadvantages identified and analysed in chapter six, the WoCC, like *Producer Choice*, is risking a legacy of excellence in programme-making that dates back over 60 years. It is not that the WoCC has come through the back door. It has rather been welcomed by many quarters because it exists to allow better programmes to be made. A first look at why the WoCC was implemented, that is, competition drives creativity and more external suppliers under more pressure to create innovative programmes, it seems like a wise managerial policy; yet, when placing the WoCC within the framework of creativity theory, the questions raised in chapter six need to be addressed. For this reason, the WoCC could be seen more like a Trojan horse implemented to disempower BBC in-house production.

Throughout the primary research conducted for this study, all informants have been sensitive and careful when answering questions regarding the WoCC. This is possibly due to the fact that they too were not well acquainted with the WoCC during the period of the interviews, or possibly because they were merely reluctant to express their views on it. It might even be that everyone at the BBC involved in television production are in such a confused state that they are unsure of where their duties lie. Are they for example, in producing excellent programmes for the BBC or for making the BBC a patron of creativity of the production sector? According to Thompson, it is the latter that is occurring when it comes to BBC programme-making. Through the WoCC, the organisation has made it clear it wishes to stimulate the creativity of the nation, and not the BBC. As he notes,

> The licence fee is an integral and critical element in this country's investment in the creative industries and specifically in content creation. More than a third of the licence fee goes straight out of the BBC each year in external contracts with independent producers and other suppliers. Most of what remains pays directly for creative talent and creative content from *Comic Relief* to *Newsnight*. (2009).

An initial understanding of the WoCC's logic shows that it undoubtedly gives BBC commissioners and controllers the luxury of choosing original programmes from a broad selection of organisations. This can only be seen as a positive outcome for both viewers of public television, and the independent production sector. A clear conception of the creative process however leads one to take issue with the *WoCC,* and a pressing question therefore arises as to its true motives. *Is the WoCC really a mechanism for stimulating creativity of the BBC and UK television, or is it a framing catalyst used to disempower in-house production?*

In answering the above question two further questions come to mind.

- *Should it be the responsibility of the BBC to incubate the independent production sector?*

- *Does more competition lead to more creative television?*

- *Are creativity theories considered?*

Following is an attempt to answer these questions.

1. *Should it be the responsibility of the BBC to incubate the independent production sector?*

Ofcom (2006b, p. 4) makes the point that,

> A healthy production sector is one that promotes and encourages creativity and innovation – our analysis in this area suggests that there is no one model that delivers creativity and innovation, and that both broadcasters and producers have an important role to play.

The above statement highlights the symbiosis between UK broadcasters and the independent production sector. It is true that a thriving independent production sector capable of producing programmes like for example, *Celador's Who Wants to be a Millionaire?,* is constructive and beneficial for all, since overseas programme exports from the UK can have countless advantages for the British economy and the creative industries more specifically. As a public service broadcaster, this is why the BBC is committed to supporting the independent sector and especially the smaller companies that are still finding their way. Doyle and Paterson (2008) note, 'a majority of programme-making companies in

the UK…lack opportunities to exchange ideas and nurturing environments for the development of new creative talent' (p. 30).

However, while the BBC's role in supporting the independent production sector is no doubt conducive, it should not be at the expense of a weakened in-house production unit. There are two reasons for this. First, since independent production companies are increasingly producing programmes that are made for a global audience with an underlying purpose to generate profits (as seen in chapter five), even with specifically written briefs from public service commissioners, the programmes will eventually be owned by the production companies. With this in mind, independents will look at making the programmes attractive to global audiences more than to local audiences. Therefore, public funds generated by the license fee that are used to create national cultural goods will end up benefiting the private sector and not the public that paid for it. While Chalaby makes a strong case for European broadcasters to look beyond their '19th-century-style imperial rivalries' (2006, p. 49), and out of their nationalistic heritage in order to compete on a global scale, producing creative PSB television programmes in order to cater to global audiences alone, is unfathomable. Despite BBC's successful expansion across global digital platforms (see Chalaby, 2009, pp. 108-111), it has been the organisations' focus on local audiences that has allowed it to stand out in quality television production. Rather than allowing super-indies to create content (that they will eventually own) for global audiences, the answer might be in giving producers autonomy and guarantees (BBC in-house producers included), time and budgets, along with diverse support structures like audience and lifestyle data for producing programmes that cater to local audiences.

Second, dismantling in-house production will eventually lead to lower standards in production. The BBC needs to be both a patron of the independent production sector, and set a benchmark for excellence in creative television programme-making. Achieving high benchmarks in television production requires an environment that is safe for producers to take risks and one in which programme-makers can be trained and nurtured. Georgina Born (Born, 2005, p. 279) emphasises that the ultimate motive for independent producers is 'to proffer commissions and populist programming' oriented towards making profits for independent production companies and are therefore not likely to offer proper training opportunities to their staff. Such training has been what Born calls, 'the basis of quality and innovation in television production'. The consequences of under-trained staff, Born notes further, has led to a series of scandals throughout the 1990s. The recent scandal involving the programme, *A Year with the Queen,* produced by an independent producer, further justify Born's concerns.

2. Does more competition lead to more creative television?

Research on creativity and competition shows inconclusive results regarding whether competition can improve creative output. Despite this, policies that increase competition seem to be the dominant rationale across UK audiovisual regulators. Doyle and Paterson (2008) argue, 'UK government policy has historically leaned towards supporting the production sector solely through boosting levels of competition' (p. 30). Phase 2 of the PSB review (Ofcom, 2009a) states (p.35),

> Competition for the BBC in the provision of public service content – that is, plurality – is a means, not an end in itself. Audiences tell us they value having alternatives to the BBC because they believe that plurality ensures they are exposed to different perspectives and voices, multiple providers can meet public purposes more effectively than a single institution, and competition drives up standards and encourages innovation.

This also seems to be the prevailing logic of BBC management. In an interview Jana Bennett gave to *Broadcast Magazine*, she notes, 'innovation by one producer breeds envy among others and that's a really great dynamic to have within the industry' (broadcast, 2008b). Historically, one could argue that competition, to a certain extent, can increase broadcast creativity as was the case with ITV and BBC during the 1950s and 1960s. Yet the high level of competition which exists today in broadcasting seems to result in extremely low profit margins for many independent producers and with the exception of the *super indies,* has been counter-productive. With so many producers fighting for survival, and with in-house production staff also living in precarious times due to the fact that they are competing against the whole independent production sector especially via the WoCC, this leads to less risks, less experimentation and eventually, less creativity in programme-making (see also Born and Prosser, 2001; Born, 2002). If the BBC is to follow best practices of the creative process as argued by creativity theorists, it must respect the different stages that are involved in that process. Significantly, this includes an incubation period that many programme-makers have coined as the 'downtime' process of television production. In a competitive environment in which programme-makers are not guaranteed free time, autonomy and budgets that in-house production has historically offered, creativity will stifle. Furthermore, as the independent production sector continues to grow and consolidate, some companies will increasingly be able to attract better talent eventually making the case for BBC's in-house production obsolete since less quality production will be produced in-house. A promising programme-maker working at the BBC under these conditions would probably think twice about sharing his / her best ideas and rather wait for the inevitable to happen and share those ideas once he / she is working independently. Finally, we could include here that the current competitive nature of broadcasting is forcing producers and talent to commit even more unprincipled activities that has led audiences to lose trust in broadcasters (Gibson, 2007). The Jonathan Ross / Russell Brand incident in October 2008 is a case in point as the two comedians' crude phone messages left on Andrew Sachs' answering machine show.

3. Are creativity theories considered?

Chapter six offered a number of reasons as to why the WoCC is unbalanced and unfair, and is in favour of the independent production sector. Specifically, these are as follows:

- Freedom and autonomy
- Encouragement
- Fewer funds and resources
- Free from pressure and in fact, there might even be added pressure since when BBC producers pitch if they fail to persuade commissioners to go ahead with the idea, they cannot pitch elsewhere
- As mentioned above, unfair competition (BBC studios versus 400-600 independent producers)

It seems these points are not taken into consideration.

CONCLUSION

Possibly the two most important people in public service broadcasting today are Mark Thompson and Jana Bennett. Both, without a doubt, are keen and committed on producing creative television programmes comprised of public value. Bennett (2008) notes,

> So as I look around *BBC Vision*, at our commitments to public service and Value For Money and at the necessary editorial systems and processes we have in place, I am also looking for the gems of the future: the *Top Gear*, the *Strictly* and the *Doctor Who* of five years hence.

Both are driven on supporting the schemes they themselves have implemented at the BBC to stimulate creativity. Technology has developed into a crucial aspect of television production. From transparent commissioning processes to interactive production, the BBC's presence in new media technology is omnipresent. Mechanisms for supporting diverse meetings with creative personnel are also in place, reminiscent of the 'cultural bureaucracy' of yesteryear. The difference with past creative meetings however is the involvement of commissioning editors acting as bridges between *BBC Vision* and production units either internal or external. While problems between controllers and commissioners often occur, the dual-tick system in place today seems to allow room for creative discussions to transpire. Audience research since 2004 has become *central* to how programmes are made at the BBC. Researchers, and planners as they are called, find themselves briefing producers, commissioners and controllers and while some programme-makers are reluctant to use the data, their role is indispensible under Mark Thompson. Finally, through the WoCC the BBC has attempted to make producers compete for a significantly large amount of programming budgets that hitherto, finds external suppliers winning most commissions. It is in my mind,

an unsurprising outcome for reasons explained above and in chapter six. Through the WoCC and the Public Service Broadcasting Reviews, it seems new labour has done little to support public service broadcasting. Conversely, it has demonstrated that by using creativity as a pretext, it favours a market approach fuelled by commercial enterprises and competitiveness (see also Barnett, 2004; Hesmondhalgh, 2005). Mark Thompson has stated, 'we need a BBC with more room for creativity and with commissioning and production more aligned…with a level playing field for indies and a *WOCC* which really does deliver the best ideas, but with BBC Production a full part of the bigger BBC story' (Thompson, 2006). Whether the BBC actually manages, or indeed is allowed to maintain this balance of a strong in-house production division and a strong supporter of independent production will I believe, be the biggest challenge the BBC faces, until of course, the next one.

Finally, looking at the broader picture and conceptually reflecting on the thesis, one could argue that it has affinities with political economy and sociology of culture approaches, although exact theoretical matches should not be expected. As Lauden (1977) argues, theories seldom predict empirical results.

> Although rare, it sometimes happens that a theory exactly predicts an experimental outcome. When that desirable result is achieved, there is cause for general rejoicing. It is far more common for the predictions deduced from a theory to come close to reproducing the data which constitute a specific problem, but with no exact coincidence of results…for problem solving purposes we do not require an exact, but only an approximate, resemblance between theoretical results and experimental ones (p. 23)

Political economy and sociology of culture are theories that invite supporters to actively criticise whatever it is that is being evaluated and to start their inquiry with one main assumption, that the economic base is the most important determinant in contemporary societies, (a perspective especially true in political economy). It has been argued that broadcast creativity at the BBC is being used as a pawn to shrink the organisation at the expense of the independent production sector. The WoCC is a good enough reason for political economists to state that public service values are covertly being undervalued, since the genius of the WoCC is that it is all done in order to stimulate creativity. Through the WoCC, no longer will in-house public service studios be required, as the market will prove to be more capable of producing creative programming. This is truly the economic determinant case argued at its best. Through the WoCC, PSB as we know it might not matter at all. This is because distributing content has become far less important than the content itself. Owning control over spectrum frequencies is not as important as it once was. We are at a stage when audiences are truly free to choose to watch what they want, when they want and even where they want.

In *The Guardian's* Media top 100 list of 2010, Mark Thompson, the BBC Director General is positioned third overall, and first in the UK. While Thompson's high ranking represents the current strength of the BBC, the daily also brings to the surface the challenges the broadcaster faces (The Guardian, 2010):

> As the BBC's commercial rivals search for ways of making money with digital content, Thompson's challenge is rather different - making the case for a continued, free-to-air presence on television, radio and online, paid for by a universal license fee. It is set to be one of the great debates of the next 12 months, and will determine Thompson's legacy as director general.

The challenge for a continued free-to-air presence indirectly emphasises the possibility of an ominous future for the BBC. As digital technologies continue to progress and proliferate, how, and on what devices we consume audiovisual content, will change. Television is becoming merely one of many options audiences now use in order to view their favourite programmes. In fact, with the BBC's *iplayer* and *project canvas* ventures, the organisation seems to be revolutionizing in meeting audience viewing trends. And it is precisely this kind of technological discourse that the majority of current scholarly work on public service broadcasting is addressing (see Tambini and Cowling, 2004; Lowe and Bardoel, 2007; Iosifidis, 2010). The central theme of the discourse is the change from public service broadcasting to public service media. This is defined as 'widening their [PSB] remit to be available in more delivery platforms for producing and distributing public service content' (Iosifidis, 2010, p. 1). Similarly, Jakubowicz (2010) defines PSM as 'a multimediality due to technological, media and organisational convergence' (pp. 14- 15), whereas Looms (2006) states PSM is 'all things- all people-on all platforms, anytime' (p. 95).

While PSM as a theoretically grounded approach is still in its infancy and is therefore rife with technological deterministic narratives, an awareness of its logic is crucial in understanding the significance of the *WoCC* and of its possible repercussions. Commissioners at the BBC now strive to create content that will be watched on smart phones, notebooks, desktops and other platforms and not only on television. Indeed, there is even a concept at the BBC that is used for this form of commissioning - 360-degrees commissioning. Furthermore, possibly more significant than the cross-platform characteristics of PSM is the time-shifting capabilities that digitalisation makes possible of audiovisual content. Media receivers such as *apple TV, Microsoft XBOX 360 Elite, Sony Playstation 3 Slim,* flat-screen TV sets with Ethernet ports on them to connect with the internet, as well as personal digital recorders, now make audiences completely active. The programme itself one could argue is more important than the distributor of the programme (e.g. the broadcaster). This means one thing. The significance of those that have the rights to audiovisual creative work will become more important than those that currently distribute the content. The reason is because the technology now available burns the bridges between content producer and audience member. If *apple* for

example makes a deal with a super indie to show its content through its *itunes* on devices such as *apple TV*, *ipad*, *iphone* and others, then why would a broadcaster, in the traditional sense, be required? Or for that matter, with a media receiver that converges the internet with the home's television set, would the independent producer not stream its content directly from its own website and therefore reap the rewards itself? Furthermore, if new digital platforms become available, the BBC must re-negotiate with independent producers for all the shows that they commissioned for the new platform. This paper therefore argues that portentous times are approaching for broadcasters that do not own their own creative content. The *WoCC* has increased the commissions available to independent producers and therefore has disempowered the BBC's in-house production studios.

Creating successful programmes that you own is crucial in the digital era therefore. Having total power over how to produce new content is also crucial. If the BBC is not producing its own programmes, it will suffer in the long-run, and so will its creativity. The fact that from the 1980s, the BBC is producing fewer programmes it owns, a fact exacerbated by the WoCC, only reinforces the precarious future that lies ahead. Without owning any rights to professional content, will the BBC matter? This thesis argues that it might not and the reason, ironically, will be because of the organisation's attempts to stimulate creativity.

E N D

Appendices

Appendix A – List of Conducted Interviews

~	Interviewee	Organisation	Position	Date	Time (all UK time)	Location
1	Susana Dinage	Five	Head of Scheduling	14/08/2006	10am	Five Offices
2	Justine Kershaw	Five	Controller - Factual	14/08/2006	11am	Five Offices
3	William Gresswell	BBC	Head of Strategy, TV and Sport	15/08/2006	11am	BBC - TV Centre
4	Krishan Arora	BBC	Independents Executive	18/08/2006	10am	City University
5	Chris Shaw	Five	Senior Programme Controller	18/08/2006	2.30pm	Five Offices
6	Nick Grey	Freelancer	Producer / Director	17/08/2006	2pm	Lincoln
7	Emma Swain	BBC	Specialist Factual	22/08/2006	3pm	BBC - TV Centre
8	David Bergg	ITV	Head of Strategy	23/08/2006	12pm	ITV
9	Paul Gerhardt	BBC	Creative Archive Project Leader	24/01/2006	11.30am	BBC - Broadcast Center
10	Alix Tidmarsh	B8Media	Consultant / Producer	01/02/2007	10am	City University
11	Louise Cowley	BBC	Development Executive with Factual & Learning Development	06/02/2007	11am	Cyprus
12	Justine Baramiam	BBC	Head of Audience Insights	25/09/2007	1 pm	BBC - TV Centre
13	Krishan Arora (follow up)	BBC	Independents Executive	20/07/07	12 pm	Cyprus
14	Shaun Day	BBC	Chief Economist	30/06/08	10 am	Starbucks @ BBC – TV Centre
15	Justine Baramiam (follow up)	BBC	Head of Audience Insights	21/09/09	11 am	Cyprus

Appendix B – Semi-Structured interviews –
Main questions asked and matching them to propositions (pattern-matching).

Four Propositions:

1. *Organizational creativity in television production is a social process that can be influenced by external factors both within an organisation and across the field as a whole.*
2. *The methods used to stimulate creativity are not based on 'exact' science and therefore there is a risk that the BBC becomes less creative rather than more creative. Creativity as such, could be seen as a catalyst for making the BBC a 'publisher' without its own in-house production.*
3. *An increased level of marketing, market research, lifestyle research and audience behaviour data is used in order to find niches in the industry and promote programmes across different platforms. Similar methods are now used in the creative process and even during the conception stage.*
4. *Writers, producers and other creatives (artisans) working in television are increasingly being given more guidelines / briefs <u>before</u> coming up with 'ideas' for new programmes.*

Broad Questions for semi-structured open-ended interviews with BBC professionals

1. May I ask what your daily responsibilities are?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

2. In a research report by Delloitte & Touche, the commissioning process is identified as the following 5 stages:

- *Strategy and Planning*
- *Solicitation and Development*
- *Negotiating and Commissioning*
- *Production and Delivery*
- *Performance Measurement*

Is this how the process functions? Can you identify any changes to this?

(propositions 1,2,4, strategists)

3. How does the BBC television strategy work? Is there a yearly draft schedule with empty slots to be filled?

4. Can you explain the development process of new programmes at the BBC? Is it an idea (pitch), a log line, a treatment, a pilot et cetera?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

5. Who is involved with the development process at the BBC?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

6. Can you take me through the commissioning process and explain how the development process is connected with it?

(proposition 1-4 general question)

7. Are the tariff guidelines used? How rigid are they? Do they help in getting in the best ideas, and if so and how?

(proposition 1-4 strategists, commissioners, controllers)

8. How are shows put on the air? Who helps decide that a D3 drama should be scheduled in a certain slot and an FL5 after it say?

(proposition 1-4, strategists, commissioners, controllers)

9. What are your responsibilities in relation to other departments involved in the development process (controllers, programmers and of commissioners)?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

10. Are there differences between genres regarding the development process?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

11. What else has the BBC done in order to help stimulate creativity during the development process? For example, can you improve how pitches are presented and ideas are communicated to you?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

12. How do you think the development process is different at the BBC than from other free-to-air channels?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

13. How are proposals / briefs and / or tenders made for new shows? What's the process?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

14. How much producer / writer autonomy is there in how programmes are made? Are more shows being created how programmes to fit a slot from an already made brief?

(proposition 1,2 general question)

15. How is creativity fostered in broadcasting new programmes?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

16. How is an idea generated?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

17. How does the *e-commissioning* function now incorporated in the commissioning process assist creativity?

(proposition 1, 3, commissioners, strategists, researchers)

18. Can you identify the differences between in-house and independent production during the development phase?

(proposition 1-4, commissioners)

19. Could it be the case that the BBC has too many procedures for independent producers subsequently forcing them to therefore take their proposals elsewhere?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

20. What are the differences in the commissioning process of in-house production and independent production?

(proposition 1-4, commissioners, controllers)

21. Can you tell me more about commissioning specifications?

(proposition 4, commissioners, controllers, strategists)

22. Are prices agreed upon before production? If so, does this stifle creativity?

(proposition 4, commissioners, controllers, strategists)

23. During the development process, how is creativity allowed to flow freely? Can you think of anything that might help make this even more efficient?

(proposition 1-4, commissioners, controllers, strategists)

24. What else does the BBC do in order to stimulate creativity? For example, The Writer's room, BBC new talent (is it efficient), the 'pitchback' and helping newer independents.

(proposition 1-4, general question)

25. How many ideas do you receive in a year? How many are chosen and how do you know you have chosen the best ones?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

26. Is it true that the BBC commissioning process is moving towards a preferred supplier's model? What can be done in order to foresee a diverse choice of suppliers is ensured?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

27. Are there any tensions between channel controllers, genre controllers and commissioners regarding which proposals are chosen?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

THE WOCC

28. Is the WOCC working well?

(proposition 2, general question)

29. How do you manage to choose between independent production and the in-house production? Have there been any difficulties?

(proposition 2, general question)

30. How does allocation work? Will you choose from already allocated slots that will be up for competition?

(proposition 2, general question)

31. Has the WOCC managed to bring out the best in in-house production? Can you give me examples if this is the case?

(proposition 2, general question)

32. DO you think there is a risk in-house production finally becoming obsolete? If talent is being pulled away from in-house to large broadcasters for example, will this not create difficulties for in-house production? Is there a tipping point?

(proposition 2, general question)

33. Will the rights issue become more of a concern?

(proposition 2,4 general question)

34. How do you think creativity is connected with competition?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

35. Why is in-house production required? Are there genres and programmes that do not make sense economically but fulfill the BBC's public service remit?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

36. Do you believe by 2017 the BBC will be a publisher – broadcaster?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

Outside Factors

37. What outside factors affect the development process?

(proposition 1-4 general question)

38. How are new platforms and technologies changing what's created on TV?

(proposition 1,3,4 general question)

39. In Creative Future, the BBC states it will *commission 360 – degree cross-platform content*. Can you expand on this a bit more?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

40. Does audience research help what's on TV, and if so how?

(proposition 3, general question)

41. How is market research and audience behaviour data used?

(proposition 3, general question)

42. At what levels is audience research used? For example, is audience research used before the yearly schedule is complete in order to fill out slots?

(proposition 3, general question)

43. What kind of methodologies are used? Focus groups, ethnographies etc.?

(proposition 2, 3, general question)

44. Is research used on concepts, pilots and minipilots?

(proposition 3, general question)

45. What do you think the digital switchover will do for television and the development process? How will things change? How will they change for the *BBC*?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

46. How is TV changing? How is TV content changing?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

47. Can you tell me in what ways you might be restricted by regulations?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

48. In what way is the BBC's restructuring affecting the development process? E.g. BBC vision

(proposition 1-4, general question)

49. Can you explain how producer's choice works?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

50. Can you refer me to specific publications on the WOCC?

(proposition 2, general question)

51. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

(proposition 1-4, general question)

Appendix C – Permission Agreements

Permission for interview to be used in PhD thesis

Project:
Creativity Management in Original Television Production at the BBC.

Interviewee Name:_____

Group / Organisation / Affiliation: _____

Position Held: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Location: _____

Please tick appropriate box:

      I grant permission for my interview to be quoted in thesis
(Name as would like to be on Thesis :_____)

      I grant permission of my interview to be quoted in the thesis after checking how I am to be quoted;

      I grant permission for my interview to be used and quoted anonymously.

Other: _____

Agreement for use of interview to be used in PhD thesis

Project:
Creativity Management in Original Television Production at the BBC.
.

I, **Nicholas Nicoli**, agree to restrict use of the interview with

_____ of the aforementioned thesis on the

following conditions:

      He / She is quoted as: _____

      To send quotations to the above so they can check how they are quoted

      To use interview data anonymously.

      Other: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Signed:…………………………………………

(Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the interview or the thesis).

Appendix D

Sample Letters of Communication to Potential Informants.

1. Susan Dinnage (Head of Scheduling at Five)

Dear Susanna,

My name is Nicholas Nicoli and I'm working on my PhD with Petros Iosifidis and Frank Webster as my supervisors. I hope you remember me. We met both times you came to give a presentation at City University.

I hope you are well and things at the station are going OK. It seems Five is busy launching two new stations…Good luck, they both seem promising.

The reason of my correspondence is to see whether you would allow me to interview you for my research. I am planning to start my fieldwork in August (I'll be in London the whole month – I reside in Cyprus now). I know you work under a hectic schedule and that's why I am hoping to do my interviews in August (under the assumption that you are not as busy then as other months).

It would truly mean a lot to me to interview you and others you could recommend me at Five. The interview would be between 30 minutes to an hour tops and I would gladly come to the station any time at your convenience.

I am attaching an abstract of my thesis so you have a clearer picture of what I am researching. The research is purely for academic purposes and for completion of my PhD. I am completely flexible as to whether you would like to remain anonymous or be quoted in any way. If you would like to receive a copy of the work upon completion I can do so. I believe it will be useful for people in the industry.

Kind regards,

Nicholas Nicoli

Susan's reply:

Hi Nicholas,
Yes, of course I remember you. And lucky you being based in Cyprus these days!
I'd be happy to meet up if it would be useful. I'm on holiday from 25th August so sometime before then would be best. You may be aware that we are building up to the launch of two new channels here so things are pretty frantic diary-wise but if you let me know you're availability, we'll sort something out.
Unfortunately, we are without a Head Of Insight and Consumer Research at the moment but I could speak to our Viewer Insight Manager if it would be useful for you too meet her too?
Best wishes,
Susanna

(I Interview Ms. Dinnage on August 14th, 2006 at her office.)

2. Nick Gray (Freelance Producer / Director)

Dear Mr. Gray,

My name is Nicholas Nicoli and I'm working on my PhD thesis at City University, London with Professors Frank Webster and Petros Iosifidis as my supervisors. A while ago Frank recommended that I get in touch with you with the hope of possibly getting an interview.

You see, I am planning to start my fieldwork in August (I'll be in London the whole month – I reside in Cyprus now). I assume you work under a hectic schedule and that's why I am hoping to do my interviews in August (under the assumption that you are not as busy then as other months).

It would truly mean a lot to me to interview you and others you could recommend me in the industry. The interview would be between 30 minutes to an hour at the most, and I would gladly come to see you any time at your convenience.

I am attaching an abstract of my thesis so you have a clearer picture of what I am researching. The research is purely for academic purposes and for completion of my PhD. I am entirely flexible as to whether you would like to remain anonymous or be quoted in any way. If you would like to receive a copy of the work upon completion I can do so. I will be sending copies to all my interviewees if they wish to have the work; I believe it might be useful for people in the industry.

Kind regards,

Nicholas Nicoli

Nick's reply:

Dear Nicholas

I will be very happy to help any student of Frank Webster. Your abstract looks very interesting.

I am away for the first two weeks of August, and you are welcome in Lincoln any other time.

Attached is my filmography, and notes for a lecture I gave to students at the University of Lincoln a couple of years ago about a series called GROWN UP GAPPERS that I contributed to. You might find it relevant.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes, and good luck for your project, Nick

Nick Gray
Producer/Director

(I Interview Mr. Gray on August 17th, 2006 in Lincoln UK.)

2. Sophia Harvey (PA to David Levy - Controller of Public Policy for the BBC)

Ms. Harvey responded that she had moved on from PA to Mr. Levy and forwarded my request to Ms. Jenny Rata (that was at the time PA to Mr. Levy). This is why she has replied.

Dear Ms. Harvey,

My name is Nicholas Nicoli and I'm working on my PhD at City University with Petros Iosifidis and Frank Webster as my supervisors. I hope you remember me. I think we met when I came to interview Mr. Levy a while back for an upcoming book on PSB and digital strategies by Professor Iosifidis. I was Petros' research assistant.

I hope you are well and things at the BBC are going OK. I was hoping Mr. Levy's offer to help me with my research still stands.

The reason of my correspondence is to see whether Mr. Levy would be willing to refer me to colleagues at the BBC that are involved with the development process of new programmes. For example, schedulers, programmers, commissioners et cetera.

I am planning to start my fieldwork in August (I'll be in London the whole month – I reside in Cyprus now). I know people involved in the creation process work under a hectic schedule and that's why I am hoping to do my interviews in August (under the assumption that they are not as busy then as other months).

It would truly mean a lot to me to interview anyone Mr. Levy believes will be of value to my work. Each interview would be between 30 minutes to an hour tops and I would gladly come to the station any time at the convenience of the interviewees.

I am attaching an abstract of my thesis so Mr. Levy has a clearer picture of what I am researching. The research is purely for academic purposes and for completion of my PhD. I am completely flexible as to whether or not the interviewees would like to remain anonymous or be quoted in any way. If Mr. Levy or any of the interviewees would like to receive a copy of the work upon completion I can do so. I believe it might be useful for people in the industry.

Kind regards,

Nicholas Nicoli

Ms. Rata's reply:

Dear Mr.Nicoli

Yes, I can confirm receipt of your email. I have passed it on to David Levy and I expect to be in the position to formally respond within the next day or two. So sorry I cannot be of further assistance at this stage - but suffice to say David will contact you shortly.

Kind regards,

Jenny

(Mr Levy referred me to William Gresswell, Head of Strategy, TV and Sport, whom I interviewed August 15th 2006 at his office.)

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