

***Conflicts of Memory*:**

**Mediating and Commemorating**

**the 2005 London Bombings**

**Project Concluding Symposium**

**University of Nottingham**

**4-5 December, 2010**

**Background:**

This event marks the culmination of a three year AHRC-funded project: Conflicts of Memory; Mediating and Commemorating the 2005 London Bombings led by Professor Andrew Hoskins (Nottingham), Professor Steven D. Brown (Leicester), and Dr. Nuria Lorenzo-Dus (Swansea). The project team includes two AHRC-funded PhD students: Matthew Allen (Leicester) and Annie Bryan (Swansea).

The closing symposium will:

1. Disseminate provisional project findings
2. Facilitate further project engagement with academics, practitioners, and stakeholders to debate and shape an interdisciplinary research agenda in the fields of psychology, sociology, linguistics, media, communication and cultural studies, international relations, journalism and security studies
3. Help illuminate and shape the paradigmatic shift required in and across these fields to provide a critical framework for interrogating the shifting nature and significance of individual, social and cultural memory of conflict in a new media/memory ecology

**Acknowledgments**

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The Arts and Humanities Research Council (Award number: AH/E002579/1)

[www.ahrc.ac.uk](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk)

The Centre for Memory Studies, University of Nottingham

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/CFM/CentreforMemoryStudies>

The Centre for the Study of Post-Conflict Cultures, University of Nottingham

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cfm/centreforpostconflictcultures>

The Department of Culture, Film & Media, University of Nottingham

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cfm>

The SAGE journal of *Memory Studies*

<http://mss.sagepub.com>

The SAGE journal of *Media, War & Conflict*

<http://mwc.sagepub.com>

Palgrave Macmillan: *Memory Studies*

<http://www.palgrave.com/culturalmedia/memory.asp>

Routledge: *Media, War & Security*

<http://www.routledge.com/books/research/media_war_and_security_MWS/>

Professor David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nottingham

Beverly Tribbick, University of Nottingham

Professor Bernard McGuirk, University of Nottingham

Stefanie Petschick, University of Nottingham

Andrea Hajek, University of Warwick

**Venue information**

**Location:** Machicado Suite, Willoughby Hall, University Park Campus, University of Nottingham

Directions:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/about/datesandcampusinformation/mapsanddirections/mapsanddirections.aspx>

Park Campus Map:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/economics/grangercentre/conference/up-map.pdf>

**Programme Overview**

**Saturday 4th December**

Session 1

9.00am Introduction: **Andrew Hoskins** Department of Culture, Film & Media, University of Nottingham.

**AHRC Project Panel Presentation of Findings**

**Nuria Lorenzo-Dus** Language Research Centre, Swansea University

**Annie Bryan** Language Research Centre, Swansea University

**Steven D. Brown** School of Management, University of Leicester

**Matthew Allen** School of Management, University of Leicester

**Andrew Hoskins**

and:

Recorded interview with: **John Tulloch**

A short recording of an interview (given for this symposium) will be played with a survivor of the London bombings. Prof. Tulloch gives his perspective on the ongoing Coroner’s Inquests being held at the Royal Courts of Justice, where he was called to give evidence as a witness.

11.15am **Coffee**

Session 2

11.45am **Keynote Lecture:**

**Anna Reading** Centre for Media and Culture Research, London South Bank

‘The London Bombings, Mobile Witnessing, Commemoration and the Dynamics of Globital Time’

1.15pm **Lunch**

Session 3

2.00pm

**Barry Richards** Media School, Bournemouth University

‘Media myths and political fantasies: 7/7 and the British Far Right’

Session 4

2.40pm

**Emily Keightley** and **Michael Pickering**, both from the Department of Social Sciences, Loughborough University

‘The Indefensible Rhetoric of Collective Trauma’

3.40pm **Coffee**

Session 5

4.00pm

**Stefanie Petschick** Department of Culture, Film & Media, University of Nottingham.

‘Subject Constitution Through Commemorative Practices and Discourses: The Hypothesis of a Dispositif of Memory ‘

**Andrea Hajek** Department of Italian, University of Warwick

5.00pm Close

**Sunday 5th December**

Session 6:

9.30am **Keynote Lecture:**

**Gillian Youngs** Institute of Advanced Broadcasting, University of Wales, Newport

‘Making the Pain Count: Policy and Embodied Politics and Memory in the New Age of Terror’

11.00am Coffee

11.30am Session Seven

**Amy Holdsworth** Department of Theatre, Film & Television Studies, University of Glasgow

‘Marking Time: Forms of Television Memory’

**Ben O’Loughlin** Department of Politics and International Relations, Royal Holloway University of London.

‘Reporting 7/7 before, during and after: from database to narrative?’

**William Merrin** Department of Political and Cultural Studies, Swansea University

‘This is the time. And this is the record of the time’: The digital archaeology of 7/7’

1pm **Andrew Hoskins**  Closing Remarks

Lunch/Close

**Keynote Speakers and Abstracts**

***Dr Anna Reading, London South Bank University***

**The London Bombings, Mobile Witnessing, Commemoration and the Dynamics of Globital Time**

Most cultural theorists argue that time in the digital and globalised media era is accelerating, with the future and past collapsed into an extended present. At the time of the London Bombings this would seem to be the case with mobile witnessing through the use of mobile camera phones providing co-present personal communicative memory of the events by survivors and witnesses, rapidly transformed by mainstream media organisations into mediated witnessing which within days was being reassembled as part of a process of commemoration through on-line memorials. Five years on from the terrorist attacks, however, it is now possible to see that there is an unevenness in the dynamic relationships between mobile witnessing and commemoration. This is indicative not of the collapsing of time in the digital media era but rather suggests that we need to attend to the multiple valencies arising from digitisation and globalisation, resulting in a complicated folded sense of ‘globital time’. This sense of folded time and the importance of recognising the persistence of ‘betweeness’ constitutes a core dynamic in understanding what elsewhere I have termed ‘the globital memory field’ with important implications for understanding the broader relationships between media, memory and conflict.

**Anna Reading**, PhD is Head of the Centre for Media and Culture Research at London South Bank University. She is the author of several books and numerous papers on media and cultural memory. She is the author of The Social Inheritance of the Holocaust: Gender, Culture and Memory (Palgrave, 2002) and is co-editor of Save As…Digital Memories (Palgrave, 2009). Her recent work is developing the concept of the globital memory field as well as the question of memory, justice and a right to memory in different international contexts. She a joint editor of the journal, *Media , Culture and Society*, and on the board of the *Journal of Memory Studies* and the *Journal of Media Education Research*. readinam@lsbu.ac.uk

***Professor Gillian Youngs, University of Wales, Newport***

**Making the Pain Count: Policy and Embodied Politics and Memory in the New Age of Terror**

This paper revisits in the context of the new age of terror long-standing feminist debates about the role of embodied politics and their relevance to policy concerns. Pain is characteristic of terror whether we are talking about victims of it, military activities to counter it, or the enduring suffering it inflicts on families and communities. How is the memory of pain lost or eradicated from political motivations? How do we make the multiple forms of pain, immediate and ongoing, deeply meaningful in political and policy terms? What kinds of embedded historical issues relating to political memory stand in the way of possibilities for doing so? How can these be addressed and what are the hurdles that must be overcome in order to move in this direction? These are the kinds of major questions this paper addresses. It argues for fundamental questioning of some of the characteristics of politics in theory and practice and their associated links with policy making. It explains that the disembodied nature of the political realm is far from accidental and has a clear history that extensive feminist scholarship has critiqued from a variety of perspectives. This disembodiment is fundamental to the processes that empty pain out from political memory. The gendered public sphere constructs in theory and practice a world where it is almost impossible to make the pain count in terms of building new forms of politics and policy that would work towards preventing and eradicating it. The challenges are immense and they require a systemic understanding that does not reduce concerns about gender to women’s issues, important as these are, but recognizes that it is a transformative social and political category. As such the disembodied masculinist public sphere politics of the past could be transformed into an embodied public sphere politics where pain could be made to count as a motivation for efforts towards a more peaceful world. This would involve the memory of pain as a force for political change.

**Gillian Youngs** PhD has recently been appointed to a University of Wales Alliance Research Chair. She is Prof. of Digital Economy and Academic Director at the Institute of Advanced Broadcasting, University of Wales, Newport. She is leading an ESRC Research Seminar Series ‘Digital Policy: Connectivity, Creativity and Rights’ 2011-13 with colleagues from Universities of Leicester, Oxford and Leeds. She led an ESRC Research Seminar Series ‘Ethics and the War on Terror: Politics, Multiculturalism and Media’ with colleagues from Universities of Oxford and Birmingham 2006-9. Her publications include: *International Relations in a Global Age* (Polity, 1999); *Global Political Economy in the Information Age* (Routledge, 2007); the edited volume *Political Economy, Power and the Body* (Macmillan, 2000); the co-edited volume *Globalization: Theory and Practice* (Continuum, 2008), first published in 1996 and now in its third edition. She is currently completing *Virtual Globalization: Digital Economy* (Routledge). Her recent publications on the war on terror include: ‘The “new home front” and the War on Terror: Ethical and Political Reframing of National and International Politics.’ *International Affairs* 86(4) 2010, 925-937; ‘Media and Mediation in the ―War on Terror: Issues and Challenges.’ *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 2009 2(1), 1-8; ‘Cosmopolitanism and Feminism in the Age of the War on Terror: A Twenty-first Century Reading of Virginia Woolf‘s *Three Guineas*.’ In M. Nowicka and M. Rovisco (eds) *Cosmopolitanism in Practice*. Farnham: Ashgate. 2009, 145-159.

**Speakers and Abstracts** (in order of presentation)

**Saturday 4th December**

9.00am-11.am

**AHRC Project provisional findings panel**

**Nuria Lorenzo-Dus**

**Annie Bryan**

**Steven D. Brown** is Professor of

School of Management, University of Leicester

**Matthew Allen**

School of Management, University of Leicester

**John Tulloch** (pre-recorded interview)

11.45am **Keynote Lecture: Anna Reading** (see above)

2.00pm

**Media myths and political fantasies: 7/7 and the British Far Right**

***Barry Richards, Professor of Public Communication, Bournemouth University***

This paper will consider the response of the British National Party to the 7/7 bombings, in the context of the history of the Far Right in the UK and of what might be called its 'organising fantasy', the central theme of its rhetoric. This fantasy (part of which has a basis in the realities of deindustrialisation and globalisation) concerns the dispossession of the white working class. The relationship of this fantasy to the 7/7 bombings, and to the media discourse around them, will be considered, and linked to the more recent emergence of the English Defence League.

2.40pm

**The Indefensible Rhetoric of Collective Trauma**

***Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering, Loughborough University***

Trauma is one of the most overused words in the critical lexicon. Its meaning is grossly inflated, and its applications are wild and promiscuous. This creates problems of definition, description and analysis, particularly in relation to collective memory. The term is loosely used as a synonym for individual suffering, sometimes even for experiences which are felt to have been in some way difficult or trying, but its cavalier use is even more problematic when it is taken up as a term for characterising a sudden event or episode in public life, or held to be appropriate as a leading feature of a particular cultural formation. We are, for example, currently said to be living in a traumaculture which is identified most broadly by rupture and its reverberations and more specifically by such phenomena as the deliberate use of shock in art and advertising, the marketing of misery in publishing, and an academic preoccupation with questions of memory, trauma and identity. As well as focusing critically on the glib and profligate application of the term ‘trauma’ in both popular and academic discourse, we shall argue in this paper for the importance of distinguishing between the involvement of imagination in attempts to understand the consequences of trauma and grapple with the problem of its incommunicability, and the use of the term as a rhetorical device in the representation of shared experience. The paper will suggest that it is ethically desirable that we move beyond notions of collective trauma in order to engage more specifically with the lived practices of remembering painful pasts.

**Emily Keightley** is Lecturer in Communication and Media Studies in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University. She has published in relation to both conceptual and methodological issues in memory studies. Most recently this includes ‘Remembering Research: Memory and Methodology in the Social Sciences’ (*International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 2010) and ‘Trauma, Discourse and Communicative Limits’ (*Critical Discourse Studies*, 2009, with Michael Pickering). She is currently working on the book *Creative Memory* with Michael Pickering which explores and re-conceives the relationship between memory and imagination. She is also editing a collection on the mediation of time in modernity.

**Michael Pickering** is Professor of Media and Cultural Analysis in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University. He has published in cultural studies and the sociology of culture, media and communication studies, and social and cultural history. His recent books include *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (2001); *Creativity, Communication and Cultural Value* (2004); *Beyond a Joke: The Limits of Humour* (2005), co-edited with Sharon Lockyer; *Blackface Minstrelsy in Britain* (2008), *Research Methods for Cultural Studies* (2008), and *Popular Culture*, a four-volume edited collection (2010). As well as the book with Emily, he is currently working on a history of music in the workplace.

4.00pm

**Subject Constitution Through Commemorative Practices and Discourses: The Hypothesis of a Dispositif of Memory**

***Stefanie Petschick,******Department of Culture, Film & Media, University of Nottingham.***  
Approaches to collective memory that attempt to draw attention to the constructedness of social forms of remembering have pointed out its “multidirectional” character - that is its quality as being constantly negotiated in a malleable social discourse. In other contexts it has been regarded as being constituted through “vectors”, such as media representation. Extrapolating this relational character of memory, regarding it as a function in the matrices of power, this paper seeks to interrogate the concept further. Turning the question around and asking what is the subject effectively produced by commemorative practices and discourses in the wider dispositif of memory, exclusive group memory, in particular national subjectivity will be problematised. Therefore the history-memory dichotomy will be revisited, drawing on Michel Foucault’s genealogy of counterhistory and Judith Butler’s problematisation of the paradox of positing concepts as being pre-discursive.

**Stefanie Petschick** studied English Studies, Sociology and Journalism at the University of Leipzig, Germany and the University of Exeter, UK. She currently is a doctoral candidate in Critical Theory at the University of Nottingham's Department of Culture, Film and Media. Her research interests are in the fields of post-structuralist thought, memory, nationalism and Feminism/ Queer Theory.

**Negotiating memories of conflict: The Italian student protests of 1977 in the media (1977-2007)**

***Andrea Hajek Institute of Advanced Study (IAS), University of Warwick***

Over the past few decades, the mass media have increasingly come to dominate the (re)construction and diffusion of knowledge, thus challenging the authority of official historiography and contributing to a more plural, though often highly conflicting perspective on the past. The case of Italy and its collective memory of the violent 1970s - nicknamed the ‘years of lead’, where ‘lead’ is a metaphor for bullet - is exemplary, and in this presentation I shall consider one particular incident that occurred in the most violent phase of the ‘years of lead’: the death of a left-wing activist during clashes with police in the popular university town of Bologna, on 11 March 1977. I shall focus on the way this highly traumatic moment - which strongly divided the local community, and changed its history and (political) identity for good - has been mediated through the years: more specifically, I shall demonstrate how different media initially contributed to the creation of an exclusionary, hegemonic narrative of the incidents of March, which was subsequently renegotiated during the annual commemorations between 1977 and 2007.

**Andrea Hajek** is an Early Career Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study (IAS), at the University of Warwick (UK). She holds a degree in French, Comparative Studies and Italian Studies (University of Utrecht, Netherlands), and has only recently submitted a PhD thesis in the Italian Department of the University of Warwick, on the public memory of the Italian student protests of 1977. Other topics of interest include Italian terrorism in the 1970s, intergenerational memory and visual culture. She has published a number of book reviews, as well as articles on terrorism in Italian historiography, the student movement of 1977, and Italian contemporary fiction. She is senior editorial assistant for the Sage journal of *Memory Studies*.

Eportfolio: <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/ep/pg/itrgac>

5.00pm Close

**Sunday 5th December**

9.30am **Gillian Youngs** University of Wales, Newport (see keynote abstracts above)

11.30am

**‘Marking Time: Forms of Television Memory’**

***Amy Holdsworth, Department of Theatre, Film & Television Studies, University of Glasgow***

As part of the symposium’s focus on media and commemoration this paper will concentrate on television’s role in the construction of cultural and autobiographical memory. Through a series of examples from a range of films and television programmes, I will explore key theories of television memory and the ways in which television is used to ‘mark time’. From the immediacy of the ‘breaking news’ event to the ‘calendrical time’ of televisions rituals and routines – the medium’s various temporalities have produced different ways of understanding its relationship to memory. As with wider discourses of cultural memory, models of trauma and therapy tend to dominate, and whilst I will attend to these discussions I will also consider televisions rituals of commemoration and its forging of memory within the routines of the everyday and the domestic. Through an examination of television, what this paper proposes is the necessity of taking into account both the diversity and the specificity of different media forms in relation to our discussions of memory.

**Amy Holdsworth** is lecturer in Film and Television Studies in the newly formed School of Culture and Creative Arts at the University of Glasgow. She has published work in the *Cinema Journal*, *Screen* and the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* and is currently completing a monograph entitled *Television, Memory and Nostalgia* to be published by Palgrave as part of their series ‘Memory Studies’.

**‘Reporting 7/7 before, during and after: from database to narrative?’**

***Ben O’Loughlin Department of Politics and International Relations, Royal Holloway University of London.***

In the last decade, Hayles, Manovich and others have suggested that digitized media accelerate a transition in media form from narrative to database, resulting in different relations between audience/user and the event being constructed through that form. In parallel, a focus on data accumulation and cataloguing has been present in exploration of the concepts 'archive' and 'template' by Hoskins in his analyses of the assembling representations of events offered by news media, inflected through specific journalistic norms, values and techniques. Both of these bodies of work problematise the status of 'narrative' as both object of study, and mode of study, in our understanding of contemporary news media. At the same time, however, government and security agencies have explicitly sought to craft and project strategic narratives concerning the 'war on terror' and 'battle of ideas' with Al-Qaeda, based on the assumption that this communication work can produce persuasive effects in target populations. Such narratives, we might expect, have been deployed before, during and after events such as the 7/7 bombings. This paper explores these competing dynamics through an analysis of the BBC News' coverage of the 7/7 bombings, focusing on the premediation or simulation prior to the attacks ('London under Attack' documentary), coverage on the day of 7 July 2005, and subsequent anniversary and documentary analyses. How did the BBC draw upon its digital database and narrative-generating capacities? Do databases enable narrativisation or disrupt the times and spaces required for narratives to be meaningful? How did database and narrative forms enable the question of the bombings' causes and effects to be treated?

**Ben O’Loughlin** is Reader in International Relations and Co-Director of the New Political Communication Unit at Royal Holloway, University of London. His current research focuses on 'the new mass' and 'semantic polling', digital diplomacy, and the transformation of legitimacy and authority in the new media ecology. He is a founding co-editor of the Sage journal *Media, War & Conflict*. He is the co-author (with Andrew Hoskins) of both *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War* (2010) and *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse* (2007). His projects have been funded by the Technology Strategy Board, Nuffield Foundation, ESRC and CPNI. See newpolcom.rhul.ac.uk/npcu-blog <<http://newpolcom.rhul.ac.uk/npcu-blog>> . To contact: <Ben.OLoughlin@rhul.ac.uk>

**‘This is the time. And this is the record of the time’: The digital archaeology of 7/7’**

***William Merrin Department of Political and Cultural Studies, Swansea University***

In her 1982 song ‘From the Air’, Laurie Anderson has the captain of a crashing plane repeatedly (and bizarrely) intoning to the passengers, ‘This is the time. And this is the record of the time’. What gives this its curious power is how the live announcement highlights the simultaneity of the disastrous event and its record, allowing us its posthumous experience both as an event from the outside in its aftermath, and seemingly from its heart, in its real-time unfolding and recording.  
  
This implosion of the event and its record emerges with modern reproductive technologies – photography, film, radio and television – but these remained limited by issues of access, practice, distribution and mediation. Networked digital technologies, however, have made this implosion an everyday occurrence. Today’s events are immediately captured, broadcast, distributed, commented upon, shared and debated in real-time by both participants and non-participants, with their record interweaving with the ‘official’ mass media output. If we want to understand events today, therefore, we face the problem of the changing record: of the expansion of recorders and recordings; the changing nature of the commentary; and the new places of preservation. The implosion of the event goes hand in hand with the explosion of the record as the temporal contraction is accompanied by a spatial informational expansion, leaving us with the deeply buried, scattered and uncollected record of the live happening. To write the history of the event today, therefore, is to attempt a different kind of history. Drawing upon blogs, social network and sharing sites, forums and wikis, this paper takes 7/7 as a case study of the implosive recording and the digital excavation of the event.

**William Merrin** is Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at Swansea University, with a specialism in media theory, media history and digital media. He is the author of *Baudrillard and the Media* (Polity, 2005), co-editor of *Jean Baudrillard: Fatal Theories* (Routledge, 2009) and serves on the editorial boards of *The Journal of Baudrillard Studies* and *Media, War and Conflict*. He was the creator of the concept of ‘Media Studies 2.0’ which offered a critique of broadcast-era media studies and its histories and is currently writing *Media Studies 2.0: A New Introduction* for Polity. His Media Studies 2.0 blog is here: <http://mediastudies2point0.blogspot.com/>

He is also a collector of pre-cinema artefacts and a member of the Magic Lantern Society.