



Educational Resources (OER), have been defined as

...teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property licence that permits their use or re-purposing by others. Open Education Resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software and any other tools, materials or techniques used to support access to knowledge. (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, 2008).

To join the OCW Consortium an institution has to have developed ten or more 'items' of educational resource, as listed above, and if you browse the OCW Consortium website, you'll not only get a guide to how to participate, but you'll get the idea of the reach, scope, limitations and generosity of spirit as well as the global, educational ambition of this movement, if that's what it is. What is perhaps surprising are the countries featured and how they break down. At the time of writing (and this does change quite quickly) Spain have the most institutions offering OER with 38, the USA has 22, Taiwan has 9, Republic of Korea has 8, and Australia, Austria, China, South Africa, Israel and the Palestinian Territory (Occupied) all have 1 each. The United Kingdom currently has four - the Open University, The University of Nottingham, The Mathematical Institute at Oxford University and The People's Open Access Health Initiative.

'Access to knowledge', 'advancing education' and 'empowering people' globally are clearly Good Things To Be Doing. Universities do, and are seen to be doing, Good Things in the World and, at the same time, more and more people are eager to pay real money for a University education. The duties and responsibilities of wealthy Universities to contribute to the social and cultural wealth of a global society are partially fulfilled in this way. The various and worthy agendas of 'Lifelong Learning', 'Widening Participation' and Distance Learning can be facilitated and developed through the production of OER. Recent analyses of social trends (Wikinomics (2006), *The Long Tail* (2006) and *Free* (2009) by Chris Anderson, *Here Comes Everybody* (2009) by Clay Shirky) suggest that giving stuff away actually gets returns. The interest in OER worldwide by anyone with access to a computer has become a phenomenon although the precise figures for take-up are difficult to obtain. What is clear is that this would seem to match a similar explosion in University enrolment; in 2007, there were a recorded 152.5 million students worldwide representing a 50% increase compared to 2000 (<http://www.unesco.org>). Predictably, a further breakdown of these figures shows an imbalance along the lines of the 'digital divide' with the wealthier, post-industrial nations being more involved. Admissions to British Universities have increased by two thirds since 1991/2 (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk>).

Many institutions are developing online teaching resources as a part of curriculum delivery and these are used as Distance Learning packages, aspects of Virtual Learning Environments including presence in the virtual world *Second Life* and as offerings to a wider public as OER/OCW. Any institution with ten or more of these resources can register with the OCW Consortium and benefit from the association with the overall project as well as raise their institutional profile. This indeed is one of the benefits which the OCW Consortium claims will come from membership, along with what they refer to as 'Faculty Benefits' - essentially, networking and the archiving of

academic materials. In other words, everybody wins - it's not only good, it's good business.

At York St John University a team have been working on 'writing' a first year media module 'Reading the Media' as both an online resource for students and also as an OER offering for anybody. The project is nearing completion and if anybody would like to see it, please contact me and I will provide the password details.

A shorter version of this article appears in the Media magazine Neutral which can be found at <http://www.neutralmagazine.com>

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# Doing Media 2.0

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**Keywords:** Media 2.0, module design, audience, curriculum, new media

#### Abstract

This article describes and evaluates a curriculum intervention - the development of a new module, 'Media 2.0' in the context of the broader debates in what Lister and Dovey call 'a very uneven field' (*Networks 07*).

To avoid reproducing the debate throughout the Media degree as peripheral, the subject team designed a new module to ensure a foundational context for students in which to reflect on their 'prosumer' activity as well as what happens to 'the media' as a result.

This article describes the rationale and the outcomes in the context of the 'ecological' debate as presented at the *Challenge of the New Media: Teaching and Learning in the New Media Ecology* forum organised by ADM-HEA/ University of the West of England (UWE) held at the Watershed in Bristol on 12 December 2008 and invites readers to share their own interventions in comparison to this example.

#### Britney 2.0?

Alistair Campbell, in the midst of Britney Spears's lowest point (sectioned, shaved head, loss of access to her children) asserted that she had ceased to be a human being and was now primarily a 'news commodity'. The two lists below represent how we might have studied Britney as a text/cultural product in the pre-broadband era and how we must now understand her. What this shows is that the semiotic exchange of Britney can no longer be 'read' without attention to the proliferation of citizen media - how we can both become the paparazzi (by snapping celebrities with our cameraphones) and interact with the news agenda through blogs and social networks.

Britney 1.0	Britney 2.0
News values	Online news
Infotainment	Rolling news
Celebrity culture	Blogs
Gender	Youtube
Ideology	Lack of regulation
Media regulation	Notions of truth
Deregulation	People responding
News agendas	People creating

Here then, the audience becomes 'hyperdiegetic' and the mainstream media is interwoven with citizen journalism. A perhaps more serious example would be the relationship between the camera phone agenda-setting and the mainstream press in the aftermath of the G20 protests and police behaviour. This inter-relationship of media and everyday life is well illustrated by Gauntlett's lego garden/allotment analogy (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWNXg7Vt-ig>) and is very well discussed by Lister et al (2009, p.35) in relation to the co-existence of the 'presence' of media with networked consumption.

#### Media 2.0?

Elsewhere, we have argued that 'Media 2.0' offers a new politics for Media Education - a kind of 'back to the future' for Cultural Studies where we focus more on people and less on texts (McDougall, 2008). Clearly this is a contested claim, as was abundantly clear at *The Challenge of the New Media* (see *Networks 07*) at which Will Merrin was set up as something of a 'straw man' ('it matters when he is wrong' was Lister's summation), perhaps ironic when the keynote accused Merrin of doing the same to the orthodox paradigm now 'under review'. >>



Screen dump from Moodle



Screen dump from Moodle

But readers will by now be familiar with the debate around 'Media Studies 2.0' and what response can and should be made by academics designing modules in the academy. So there is no call for a further rehearsal of the debate here other than a restating of some key questions. What craft and theoretical context does the 'prosumer' need to learn? How is employability related to 'playback'? How can assessment be at once in keeping with the convergence/participation culture and at the same time fit with programme specification criteria, 'levelness' and the need for archiving, restricted access and intellectual property safeguards? How can the democratising impulse of 'Media 2.0' be harnessed to emancipatory ends for learners? Or is Media 2.0 simply a matter of content - a phenomenon to be studied (as a temporal shift) and to be contested?

#### Module Design

At Newman University College, we have been engaged in these debates since David Gauntlett passed on Will Merrin's (2008) provocation to a broader audience. Papers have been presented at the aforementioned *Challenge of New Media* conference, at MECCSA, Transforming Audiences and at CEMP's Media Education Summit. Students at Newman have been obliged to engage with the debates in relation to gaming in particular. And various social networking tools (a Facebook group for information flow about lecture times and assessment dates, a Moodle forum running alongside every module and an invitation to students to follow module leaders on Twitter where they can be provided with leads to relevant case studies on a daily basis) are already established as an annex to learning and teaching. But a less peripheral intervention was required and subsequently, in January 2009, level 4 students were enrolled on a new mandatory module - 'Media 2.0'.

Previously, a broad module with a focus on what people do with Media - *Media, Community, Audience* - was taken alongside *Media Literacies*, which has a more foundational and textual focus. But the student engagement with the Media 2.0 debate in both of these modules led to a view that first year undergraduates ought to explicitly focus on 'Media 2.0' as a condition in a more sustained way. This development has seen the former replaced by Media 2.0, which combines a broad exploration of audience theories with a direct scrutiny of how broadband exchange and technological advances have transformed the landscape.

The module's aims are to:

- Introduce students to the theoretical hypothesis that there has been a profound shift in how mass media are circulated, distributed and utilised

and to:

- develop a sufficiently informed understanding of the impact of web 2.0 on media audiences to allow students to offer a critical analytical response to the media 2.0 thesis

The module is assessed through the development of an online space (not defined as a text, or a product) where the visitor will be introduced to the Media 2.0 debate. This approach allows for the 'archive' to act as a formative tool for future cohorts, notwithstanding issues around ownership and authenticity. Students are asked to explain the media 2.0 thesis from an informed perspective, and collaboratively demonstrate a critical analytical point of view in response to this. Furthermore, they are required to engage with a range of the very tools that the module discusses, and thus assessment is through a wiki, utilising a range of web 2.0 platforms (e.g. YouTube, podcasting, file-sharing sites).

The module begins with an introduction to the now traditional idea of web 2.0 (which is itself questioned) and accompanying themes of identity and community. It was felt that an outline of the proliferation of web tools and technological advances would be far too dull - as such, students are still introduced to ideas through sessions that still follow traditional media themes - Communication, the Press, TV, Film, Radio, Music, etc. However, each is suffixed with the ubiquitous '2.0' (e.g. 'Film 2.0: *From Screen to Stream*'; or 'Communications 2.0: *From dot dot dot to tweet tweet tweet*'). However, through constant discussion of the ideas of fragmentation, trans-mediality, and convergence, the very boundaries of these sessions themselves become blurred. The module allows us to explore the transformation of traditional media forms (e.g. should internet radio, with accompanying webcasts, still be called radio at all?), as well as discuss new media productions (e.g. mobisodes).

Thus, not only are students introduced to new patterns of organisation and production, they are asked to explore potential new relationships between users and technology.

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How can the democratising impulse of 'Media 2.0' be harnessed to emancipatory ends for learners?

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#### Paradigm Shifts?

Cultural ideas - such as the shift from find to filter - and issues of control, copyright, and end of the artefact are recurring themes. Interestingly, students very quickly began to explore ideas of the media as creative exchange, and showed particular enthusiasm for phenomena such as memes and mash-ups - what Tim Berners-Lee calls *inter-creativity*. As such, students questioned not just *how* and *when* but the way in which they consumed (or even prosumed) media, and their own levels of autonomy.

The staff rationale for the development of this mandatory course was partly to avoid the need for the debate to be had in every module. For example, level 5 students take two very different modules - *Media and Power* (a sociological/political consideration) and *Media Futures* (taken in Second Life). In each, there is a need to engage with the debate - is the media more democratic due to citizen journalism, is the proliferation of news blogs a hegemonic response, can experience replicate reality, is virtual reality a medium, do we need new concepts to analyse immersive videogames? And for every production outcome, the traditional model of an imagined mass media audience is replaced by the compulsion to secure genuine dissemination online. The foundational premise of the Media 2.0 module will now act as a 'hub' for the rest of the degree (literally, in the sense that the module materials are available to all enrolled through Moodle).

We are not aware of any other Media degree courses that are so visibly 'forcing home' the idea of Media 2.0 as a temporal shift as well as an area for debate. We are sure there will be some concern - at first we conceived of the module as an option, but rethought this in order to move away from the 'new media' problem (which was Merrin and Gauntlett's starting point - that the internet has radically transformed all media and is pretty far from new). And we should make clear that no student is obliged to sign up to the rejection of 'Media Studies 1.0' - indeed, why should a first year undergraduate be interested in such naval gazing? Furthermore, the shelf life of the module is limited - a new ecology soon becomes the 'order of things' and mutation is short-lived so we will need a new approach for the turn of the new decade. But we were keen to navigate this terrain in a new way, by 'mainstreaming' it into the curriculum and we would be interested in hearing about other programmes that are making similar interventions.

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