

LIQUID THEORY TV

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Liquid Theory TV: click on the image above to watch the first episode

Liquid Theory TV is a collaborative project put together by Gary Hall, Clare Birchall and Pete Woodbridge aimed at developing a series of IPTV programmes. The name IPTV is derived from internet protocol packet-switching and stands for Internet Protocol TeleVision. In its broadest sense IPTV is the term for all those techniques which use computer networks to deliver audio-visual programming. YouTube can be thought of as an emerging grass-roots IPTV system, for instance, especially as its audience increasingly uses it to distribute audio-visual content *they have created*, rather than merely sharing their favourite video clips from films and TV programmes that have been produced by others (Pesce, 2007). As such, IPTV is rapidly coming to rival the main terrestrial and satellite broadcasters. In fact many see it as having the potential to affect the audio-visual media industries as profoundly as the web is currently affecting those associated with print media.

The reason we wanted to experiment with producing an IPTV programme is because it seems to us that Britain at the moment contains surprisingly few spaces open to the dissemination of what, for shorthand, might be referred to as 'intellectual' ideas. The mainstream media are predominantly liberal, humanist, middle-brow and journalistic in approach, their discussions of art, science and culture being primarily opinion-based and focused on biographical details. Meanwhile, publishers are barely producing books for third year undergraduate students, let alone research monographs aimed at other scholars. There thus seems to be a need to invent new ways of communicating intellectual ideas both 'inside' and 'outside' of the university. We wanted to explore IPTV's potential for this, and for doing so relatively easily and cheaply: not so much because we believe academics should try to find means of connecting with audiences outside the institution, audiences that scholarly books and journals cannot (or can no longer) reach,¹ but because different forms of communication 'do different things' and 'have the potential for different effectivities' - even for leading us to conceive what we *do* as academics differently (Wise, 2006: 241).

Endnotes

¹ For more on the problems with this conception of the role of the intellectual, see Hall (2004).

References

- Hall, G. (2004) 'Why You Can't Do Cultural Studies *and* Be a Derridean: Cultural Studies After Birmingham, the New Social Movements and the New Left', *Culture Machine* 6. Available at <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/5/30>
- Pesce, M. D. (2007) 'IPTV: Order, Chaos and Anarchy', Smart Internet Technology CRC (March). Available at <http://www.smartinternet.com.au/ArticleDocuments/121/IPTV-Final-March-2007.pdf.aspx>.
- Wise, J. M. (2006) 'Cultural Studies and Rem Koolhaas' Project on the City', in G. Hall and C. Birchall (eds), *New Cultural Studies: Adventures in Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.