



**Department of
Media and Film Studies
Annual Report 2019-2020**

Introduction

The Media Studies department at Ashoka University is led by journalists, commentators, researchers, academics and investigative reporters who have wide experience in teaching, reporting, writing and broadcasting.

The academic team led by Professor Vaiju Naravane, teaches approximately 25 audio-visual and writing elective courses in a given academic year in the Undergraduate Programme. These range from news writing, audio-visual production, social media, media metrics, film appreciation and cinema, digital storytelling to specialized courses in research methodology, political coverage and business journalism. In a spirit of interdisciplinarity, these courses are cross-listed with other departments like Computer Science, Creative Writing, Political Science or Sociology. The Media Studies department also collaborates with the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change to produce meaningful communication messaging to further development goals.

The academic year 2019/2020 was rich in terms of the variety and breadth of courses offered and an enrolment of 130 students from UG to ASP and MLS. Several YIF students also audited our courses.



Besides academics, the department also held colloquia on various aspects of the media that explored subjects like disinformation and fake news, hate speech, changing business models in the media, cybersecurity and media law, rural journalism, journalism and the environment, or how the media covers rape and sexual harassment. Faculty published widely, were invited speakers at conferences and events and also won recognition and awards. The department organized field trips that allowed students to hone their journalistic and film-making skills in real life situations.

Several graduating students found employment in notable mainstream media organisations and production hubs whilst others pursued postgraduate studies at prestigious international universities.

Introduction the Media Studies Faculty

Vaiju Naravane

Head of Department, Media Studies

Professor of Journalism and Media Studies, Ashoka University

Fellow of the World Press Institute, Saint Paul, Minnesota



For the past three decades she has held senior positions covering Europe, notably for The Times of India, Radio France Internationale, AITV and The Hindu. For eighteen years she was The Hindu's Paris-based Europe Correspondent, covering the fall of communism, the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact and the enlargement of the European Union.

Prof. Naravane has taught Journalism and Contemporary Indian Literature at the prestigious Institut d'études politiques, better known as SciencesPo, both in Paris and Le Havre and was the Director of Information of the Geneva-based World Health Organization. She is Foreign Fiction Editor at Albin Michel in Paris

and is currently working on her second novel. Prof. Naravane obtained degrees in the Humanities and Journalism from Pune University and spent a year travelling and writing in the USA as a Fellow of the World Press Institute, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Tisha Srivastav

Assistant Professor of Film & Media Studies, Ashoka University

M.A. School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London



Tisha Srivastav, is an Assistant Professor in Film & Media Studies. She received her Master's Degree in Global Media and Post-National Communication from School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London. She has been a practicing journalist for over 24 years. In her previous full time roles, she has headed the Video department for Yahoo India, been part of NDTV 24x7's Documentary Features team as well as part, of the award winning team for India's first ever TV environmental features show, Living on the Edge. She has also spent six years traveling across India, four of which were with another woman

in a Maruti Van in the mid-1990s.

Connecting the lesser known with the mainstream is an abiding interest in communication, as is a long time love of the Himalaya.

Maya Mirchandani

Assistant Professor of Broadcast Journalism and Media Studies, Ashoka University

PG Diploma, London School of Economics



Maya Mirchandani is Assistant Professor of Broadcast Journalism and Media Studies at Ashoka University. For nearly three decades, she was a practicing journalist with NDTV, reporting on Indian foreign policy, conflict and national politics. Maya has won the prestigious Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism twice, the Red Ink Award for reporting on human rights as well as the Exchange for Media Broadcast Journalism Award for best international affairs reporting. More recently, Maya has been involved in research on 'Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism' (P/CVE) at the Delhi based think tank, Observer Research Foundation. Her research looks

for ways to build counter narratives to prevent radicalization and extremist violence through dialogue and community intervention. The analysis of hate speech and the impact of counter speech messaging on social media is also a core focus of her research.

Maya obtained degrees in History from Delhi University and Mass Communications from Sofia's in Mumbai. She also received a post-graduate Diploma in World Politics from the London School of Economics in order to guide and better inform her international affairs reportage. She continues to be an active journalist and media commentator with regular columns and a weekly video blog called Wide Angle with Maya Mirchandani for TheWire.in where she debates and discusses issues of foreign policy, national security and human rights.

A K Ranjit

Studio Manager & Instructor in Documentary Production, Journalism and Media Studies,
Ashoka University

MBA (IS), Sikkim Manipal University



A K Ranjit is a veteran media professional with wide experience of live broadcasting and has been associated with the launch of several leading TV News channels including WION, NewsX, NewsX HD and Star News as a set designer and technical adviser. He has an MBA in Information Systems from Sikkim Manipal University and an Advanced Diploma in ARENA Multimedia Animation & Graphics. Ranjit has taught audio-visual production, design and graphics at the Indian Institute of Learning Management (IILM), Jamia Millia Islamia University, Footwear Development and Design India (FDDI) and Satyam Fashion Institute.

Siddhartha Dubey

Visiting Faculty of Writing and Designing for Web, Ashoka University

M.S. Journalism, Columbia University



Siddhartha Dubey is a former television journalist who has worked in newsrooms in New York, Singapore, London and Mumbai for over twenty years. He started off his journalism career as a coffee/ errand boy at a community newspaper in London and left the profession as the lead anchor and senior editor at a major national business news TV station in Mumbai. Siddhartha did his bachelors at St. Stephen's College in Delhi University and his masters at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University in New York City.

Siddhartha teaches online and business journalism at Ashoka University. His classes are practical and hands-on. Students begin writing and absorbing digital concepts from the get-go

and are tasked with researching and reporting stories which they file on paper, online and on-the-go.

Neha Dixit

Visiting Faculty, Reporting and Investigative Journalism, Ashoka University



Neha Dixit is an independent journalist based in New Delhi, India. She covers politics, gender, and social justice in South Asia. She has worked with multiple mediums and reported for Al Jazeera, Washington Post, Caravan, Wire, and others. She has won over a dozen international and national journalism awards including International Press Freedom Award 2019, Kurt Schork Award in International Journalism 2014, Lorenzo Natali Prize for Journalism from the European Commission, 2011, Chameli Devi Jain Award for Outstanding Woman Journalist 2016 among others. She is a contributor to the UNESCO Casebook of Investigative Journalism 2011, Zubaan anthology on Sexual violence in South Asia, and First Hand:

Graphic Non-Fiction in India and others.

Abhimanyu

Assist Studio Manager, Ashoka University



Abhimanyu is a TV and multimedia news professional based in Delhi. He has been a prime-time news producer for leading TV channels, especially WION, the country's only broadcaster specializing in international news. He has worked with leading web portals as Desk Editor, such as TheQuint and Youth Ki Awaaz where he also reported on various political and socio-cultural issues. He completed his Post-graduate Diploma in Broadcast Journalism (Major in Political Journalism) from the Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media, Bengaluru.

Courses for the Academic Year 2019-20

1. Media, Culture and Society (FC-0401)

FACULTY: Maya Mirchandani, Neha Dixit, Siddhartha Dubey, Tisha Srivastav
Students will master the basics of media literacy.

2. Introduction to Travel Writing (CT-1064)

FACULTY: Tisha Srivastav
Students are introduced to India travelogues and genres of travel writing.

3. The Craft of Writing: Literary Journalism (CW-2015/ MS-2191)

FACULTY: Arunava Sinha
Students explore Literary journalism through text, video and podcasts.

4. Audio Visual Production (MS-1001)

FACULTY: A K Ranjit
A stepping-stone for all other technical media studies courses like Radio and TV Production, Web Journalism and Documentary Filmmaking.

5. Introduction to Newswriting and Reporting (MS-1101)

FACULTY: Neha Dixit
Writing formats like a news report, features, profiles, analysis, investigative reports, the narrative, graphic non-fiction, are explored. Through editing workshops and a newsletter, the story is given a final shape, like in an actual newsroom.

6. The Art of Editing (MS-2302)

FACULTY: A K Ranjit
The art of composing space (either as totality or a fragment, continuous or discontinuous) and time (both linear and non-linear) through the arrangement, assembly and interaction of images (static or dynamic) and sounds (on screen and off screen).

7. Web Journalism and Social Media (MS-2501)

FACULTY: Siddhartha Dubey
It would be passé to say that the future of journalism is Online. Nothing more needs be said.

8. A Filmmaker's Companion – curated with the Film Companion (MS-3401)

FACULTY: Vaiju Naravane
Professionals from the film world share their experience and knowledge with our young and talented minds interested in making, watching and critiquing films.

9. Seminar in Film: Bollywood and Gender (ENG-331/ MS- 210)

FACULTY: Geetanjali Chanda
This seminar on how Bollywood looks at women and patriarchy is organised with the English Department.

10. Broadcast Journalism - News (MS-2013)

FACULTY: Maya Mirchandani
Students learn how to write their own video news stories, report live effectively, write anchor scripts, produce a 20-minute news bulletin and practice live in the studio.

11. Long-Form Writing (MS-2015/ CW- 2013)

FACULTY: Siddhartha Dubey

The focus is developing a writing style (voice), learning writing techniques and executing written pieces using creativity, research and reporting. We will study contemporary long-form news writing in Indian and global publications and develop our own human interest pieces.

12. The Feature: Storytelling in Audio and Video (Podcast and Broadcast) (MS-216)

FACULTY: Tisha Srivastav, Vaiju Naravane

How to tell a story through sounds and pictures. Developing a narrative, embellishing it with appropriate sounds and images to create atmosphere and deliver the necessary charge of truth and conviction.

13. Disinformation, Propaganda and Rumour in the Digital Age (MS-3000)

FACULTY: Maya Mirchandani

This course aims to study the history of disruptive media technologies and their impact on mass media. Students are introduced to learn coding behaviour of fake news sites through software.

14. Opinion and Editorial Writing (MS-3010)

FACULTY: Vaiju Naravane

This course explores the great tradition of opinion writing and commentary in traditional print and evolving online formats in order to gain an understanding of contemporary social, professional and intellectual concerns in the practice of journalism. Students sharpen their abilities to think and analyse critically, write clearly and understand what it means to be socially engaged.

15. Documentary and Video Storytelling: Concepts, Elements and Execution (MS-212)

FACULTY: Veda Shastri

This course will teach the techniques of digital video storytelling and documentaries. Students will also be taught to evaluate which style of video storytelling to use with examples from digital and social video, long-form documentary and immersive media such as 360 video and VR.

16. Conflict Narratives in the Media (CTS-1063)

FACULTY: Maya Mirchandani

Students learn to determine complexities of reportage through the use of varying frameworks of reportage - human rights, peace building and national security. They learn to identify bias, and the need to maintain both empathy and ethics while either providing or consuming the news around war, terrorism and disasters.

Independent Study Module

1. Film and Documentary Production: A Practical Approach (MS-3099-1-1)

FACULTY: A K Ranjit, *Students will be guided with practical handling of audio-video production.*

2. Creative Visualisation: Telling Stories Through Photography (MS-3099-2-1)

FACULTY: A K Ranjit, *Visualization of the world through photography.*

3. Brand Strategy Communication (MS-3099-3-1)

FACULTY: Siddhartha Dubey

4. Digital Photography (MS-3099-4-1)

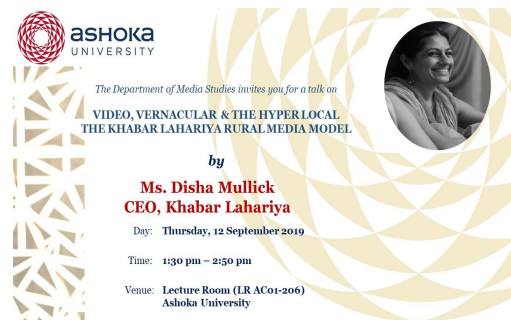
FACULTY: A K Ranjit, *This Course give a technical knowledge about formats like portrait, landscape, and other forms of composition in photography.*

Media Studies Colloquium Series

The Department of Media Studies organized a series of lectures/seminars for the students by distinguished speakers from academia as well as by practicing journalists from major media houses in the Monsoon and Spring semesters. The first lecture was held on 12 September 2019. For the Academic Year 2019-20, the department successfully organized 9 lectures under the Colloquium series.

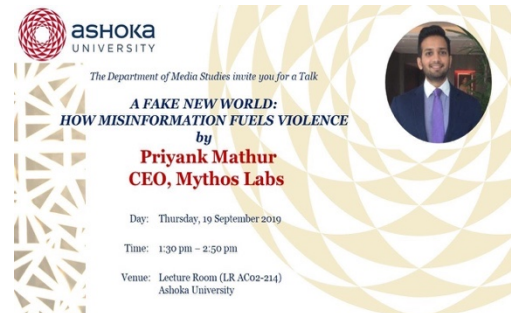
Video, Vernacular and the Hyper Local: The Khabar Lahariya Rural Media Model

By Disha Mullick, CEO Khabar Lahariya, 12 September 2019
In an engaging seminar, Ms Mullick discussed a successful rural journalism project run entirely by a women's group that publishes in Hindi and Bundeli.



A Fake New World: How Misinformation Fuels Violence

By Priyank Mathur CEO, Mythos Labs, 19 September 2019
In this seminar, Priyank Mathur, who has wide experience in working on cybersecurity with entities like the US State Department discussed the role of hate speech and disinformation in creating instability and partisanship.



Radio as a Medium to Generate Debate in Indian Democracy

By RJ Sayema, artist and radio presenter, 26 September 2019
The well-known radio broadcaster and RJ discussed connections with audiences and radio as a means to generate healthy debate to further democratic norms



Changing Revenue Models in Media and Press Freedom

By Abhinandan Sekhri, CEO, Newslandry 24 October 2019
Sekhri, one of the founders of Newslandry, a site dedicated to media matters, discussed the advent of social media, web journalism and citizen journalism, how these have affected the financial health of traditional media outlets and the consequent repercussions on press freedom.



The Anatomy of Hate

By Revati Laul, author and reporter, 14 November 2019

Starting with the Gujarat riots of 2002, Revati Laul, author of 'The Anatomy of Hate' explored the motivations of those who participated in the killings. She traced the history of hate speech in India from 2002 to the present.



Chinese Media as 'Soft Power'?

By Professor Daya Thussu, Hong Kong Baptist University, 26 November 2019

Parallel to China's growing economic might, the country's soft power is increasingly visible. Focusing on China's growing digital presence and influence, Professor Thussu suggested that the ascent of China contributes to a further de-americanisation of the discourse on soft power.



Misinformation – The India Story

By Pratik Sinha, Founder, ALT News, 22 December 2019

The Founder of India's premier fact-checking site discussed the difficulties and challenges posed by fake news and the resources at the disposal of fact-checkers to run stories down to their origins.



Practising ethical journalism in the new media landscape

By Ritu Kapur, CO-founder & CEO, 25 February 2020

Ritu Kapur discussed the kinds of pressures experienced by journalists in the practice of their craft in a globalised world. She spoke of ethical dilemmas faced by journalists and asked if there was something known as journalistic ethics.



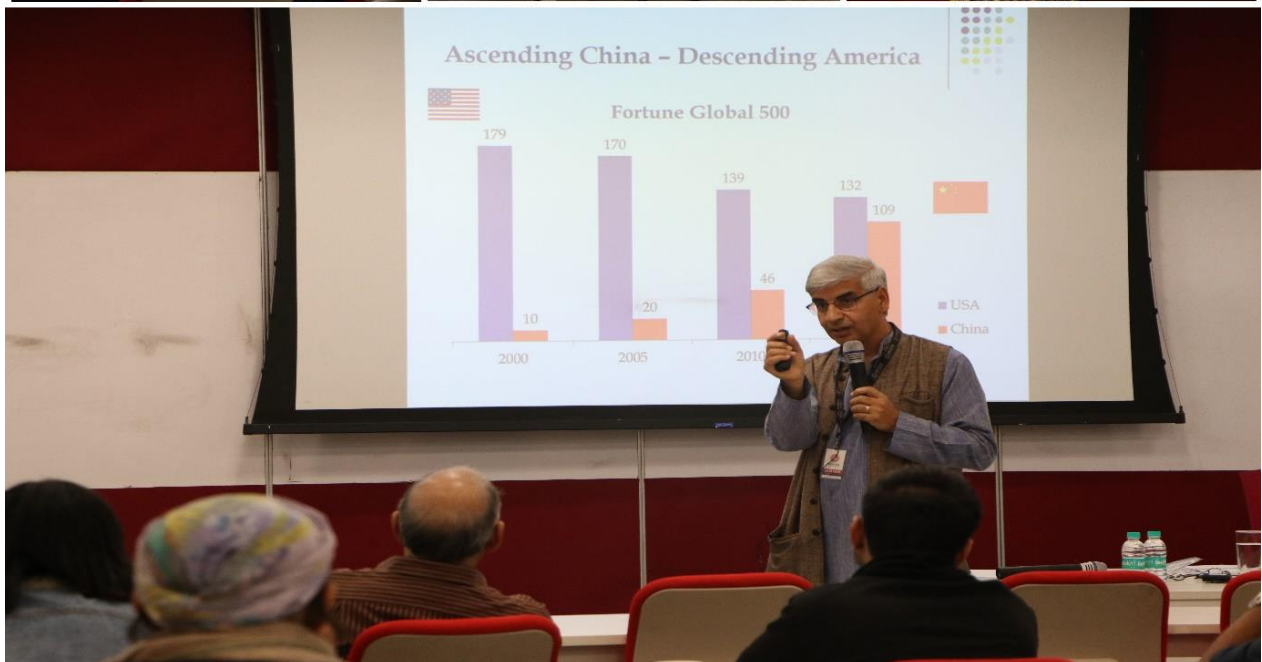
How Twitter is changing the nature of Journalism

By Pamela Phillipose, Public Editor, The Wire, 4 March 2020

How has traditional journalism been affected by the advent of social media and citizen journalism? When anyone can call herself a journalist, what is the role and relevance of established media houses and media professionals?



*Photos from
the Colloquium
Sessions*



Field Trips

Neha Dixit



Rai Police Station, Sonipat on 2ND March 2020.



CAA protests site at Hauz Rani on January 31st 2020



Modi Election Rally in Faridabad October 2019

Tisha Srivastav

Daniells Gallery, Drishyakala, Barrack Museums, Red Fort, Delhi – 6

(Daniells work, part of the syllabus on the visual history section in the Introduction to Travel Writing Course)

Siddhartha Dubey

U.S. Embassy, New Delhi - *Meeting with Greg Porter, State Dept., Public Relations Office*

Student Voices

Student achievements

1. Esha Datanwala, admitted to The New School, New York
2. Ishan Bansal published 'What Delhi elections mean for the role of women in Indian politics' for the Oxford blog
<https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/what-delhis-elections-mean-for-the-role-of-women-in-indian-politics/>

Pieces published by current Media studies students in Spring Semester 2020 in mainstream media

First year student, **Radhika Banerjee's** piece on the discussion on Nayanjot Lahiri's new book on the Ashoka University campus. Published in the Haryana edition of the Tribune. (Early February)
Radhika Banerjee was enrolled in the Introduction to Travel Writing Course offered by the Media and the Film Studies department in Spring Semester 2020. <https://m.tribuneindia.com/news/a-hitchhikers-guide-to-indias-past-37226>

Second year student **Mihika Rungta**, as part of her first year Critical Thinking course (Introduction to Travel Writing 2019) published an abridged version of her final submission for the course, on Holi 2020.

<https://livewire.thewire.in/gender-and-sexuality/jiski-laathi-uski-holi-when-politics-of-braj-blends-with-festive-colours/>

Filmmakers's Companion is curated with Anupama Chopra's Film Companion platform. Students produced short films of a very high calibre with *Vaiju Naravane*

- **Home Alone: A Day in the Life of a Human Cub/Chick**, by [Jaskiran Kaur Gill](#)
- **Reflections**, by [Ameya Sule](#)
- **Day 2**, by [Ayush Ghosh](#)
- **'Qabil's Quarantine'** by [Kanishk Devgan](#)
- **Slice of Life** by [Veeha Verma](#)

Magazine, [Head Over Heels!](#) Students – *Kangan Dhawan, Jasmehar Kaur Sethi, Srishti Nagpal with A K Ranjit*

Short Film '[Misery](#)' Student *Avinash Mishra with A K Ranjit*

Informative films

['Dear Education System'](#) Student *Ayush Agarwal with A K Ranjit*

[#QueerTalk](#) [#LGBTQ](#) Student *Mihika Rungta, Abhishek Khar with A K Ranjit*

AV Production Monsoon 2019 Batch Students with A K Ranjit

#ShowtimeWithShinde

| Episode 1 | [Life of an Economics Major !!](#)

| Episode 2 | [क्या अब अग्निपथ होगा या बंजारा ?](#)

AV Production Spring 2020 Commercial Ad shot on Mobile

Commercial Ad for [PASEO \(Paper Towel\)](#) Student *Aadya Jaswal with A K Ranjit*

Commercial Ad for [\(Shoe\)](#) Student *Ashana Mathur with A K Ranjit*

Commercial Ad for [\(Perfume\)](#) Student *Reya Daya with A K Ranjit*

#FreeTibet Activist and [Poet Tenzin Tsundue on living in exile and Freedom of Tibetan movement](#)
interviewed by Student Nebiyat Seifedin with A K Ranjit

Series name: **Rise of the Quaranteen**

Series strapline: *In this six-part series, 1st year students amplify a disruptive homecoming, with imagination, anxiety and e-mpathy. These mini-essays were part of a longer submission for a Travel Writing Course offered by the Media & Film Studies Department. They are to be published in the Livewire section of the online news site The Wire in June 2020.*

Series curators: Students - Akanksha Mishra, Radhika Banerjee with Tisha Srivastav.

Story 1 **Rise of the Quaranteen:** Destination ONLINE

In the first of the series, enter Aakanksha Agarwal's terrifying pandemic driven dystopia, when the family has been online too long and they are having more than facial recognition issues.

Story 2 **Strands of the stranded**

Akanksha Mishra's lockdown diary. When first announced, her parents were mid- transfer across two Indian states, she was mid-semester in her college hostel in a third one, her sister's, where she moved in, was in a fourth. Any notion of home, offered shelter disruptively

Story 3 **Honor among thieves?**

Cefil Joseph Soans concocts a deceptive yarn as a news reporter for a fictional news outlet. In which he connects with thieves, under lockdown.

Story 4 **On a late summer night in New Delhi**

In the fourth tale in the series, Sanchita Sahoo's family in lockdown picks a Chaucerian gaming strategy, to decide who gets kitchen duties

Story 5 **Corona's crisis**

If the coronavirus were conscious, would it feel uncertain about where it would end up the next day? Radhika Banerjee taps in to the unknown in this bizarre, fictional short from the perspective of the coronavirus itself.

Story 6 **Rise of the Quaranteen: Dreams & Nightmares**

*In the sixth and final chapter of **Rise of the Quaranteen**, Gautham Sundar, while privileged to be home, imagines walking in the footsteps of a migrant worker in this piece. A sensitive, empathetic take.*

Research

Media Action Against Rape (MAAR)

A joint research partnership led by



with four other academic institutions across India

Scope:

Bournemouth University and UNESCO joined hands for a research and capacity building project called Media Action Against Rape (MAAR) in New Delhi. Funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), MAAR is an ongoing two-year long study of how rape and sexual violence is reported in India. It maps the journalistic challenges of reporting rape and sexual violence across India. The project began in June 2018, with the purpose of understanding two aspects:

- **How is rape and sexual violence re-presented/depicted in the Indian news media?**
- **What goes behind that depiction — what are the challenges and issues that journalists face when reporting sexual violence?**

Research Material Produced:

In the 2019 round of publication, the MAAR project worked with a team of **33 young reporters**, drawn from Ashoka University (Sonapat), Bastion (New Delhi), DocFort Meducation (Bangalore), Manipal University (Manipal), St Joseph's College (Bangalore), and Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts (Pune), supported by UNESCO New Delhi.

In all, **40,164 words** of original journalism across 41 stories was published this year. This includes some outstanding in-depth [Q&As](#), [feature stories](#), and the unique [I Think](#) interviews. 2019's coverage is 12,000 words more than what was produced for the December #16Days in 2018. In addition, 8 video stories went up on the NewsTracker [YouTube channel](#) done solely by Ashoka's Media Studies students. Led by A.K. Ranjit, the Media Studies Faculty turned one of their in-course assignments into interviews around the subject of rape. Readers, so far, have spent approximately **150 hours** on the site, reading the new #16Days content.



Prof. Vaiju Naravane, Head of the Media Studies Department, Ashoka University

"For both faculty and students at Ashoka this has been an enormously useful and enriching pedagogical experience, one that has forced students out of their theoretical and academic comfort zones to confront reality. This experience has allowed some very sheltered students to explore an issue that is controversial, frightening and emotionally charged, exposing them to different facets of the very complex societal and psychological factors that lead to sexual harassment, assault or rape."



Dr. Chindu Sreedharan Principal Academic in Journalism and Communication Bournemouth University & Co-led, MAAR

"Some of the journalism produced by the students was truly outstanding, exploring some unusual linkages—for instance, economics and sexual violence, and literature and gender. The co-creation of content between Bournemouth and institutions in India bring to light some complex issues rarely discussed in conventional media spaces."

(For a detailed report see Annexures)

Partnerships

1. **A Filmmaker's Companion**

This course is the result of regular contacts in Mumbai between Vaiju Naravane and Anupama Chopra from the Film Companion - This 13-week course has a 3hr masterclass each, by the best names in each department of the Hindi film industry. It gives a well-rounded introduction to undergraduate students (9 most filmmaking courses are post-grad in India) and has now been introduced in Spring 2020 semester. (For a detailed report see Annexures)

2. **A Master's Program in New Media & Digital Futures**

In order to make an advisory group for the Master's program by 2020, early meetings to discuss possible roundtable discussions with industry specialists, tech leaders and institutional partnerships were initiated. We ended the monsoon Semester with the first and second roundtable planned for the spring semester. (For a detailed report see Annexures)

3. **Climate Change Project**

Professor L. S. Shashidhara, Dean, Research, Ashoka University reached out to the Media Studies department to support a UNESCO project in implementing a climate change centred lesson plan for curriculum in colleges and schools in India. Early discussions were completed in the Monsoon Semester and a media roundtable planned for Spring 2020. (For a detailed report see Annexures)

4. **Collaboration with CSBC**

The Media Studies department actively collaborated with the University's Centre for Social and Behaviour Change on course content, production of radio messages on family planning for government agencies and a seminar on a future Masters programme. (For a detailed report see Annexures)



Distinguished speakers of the First MA Roundtable held on 9 January 2020 at CSBC Centre, New Delhi

Media Lab

Ashoka's well-equipped Media lab allows for the practical application of a wide range of audio-video production concepts which help a student develop skills such as the production of videos and podcasts, documentary films, television/online stories, event coverage videos while giving them product marketing skills. The media lab has production and post-production equipment.

Production Facilities

- Broadcast HD Cameras,
- DSLR Cameras
- Live Production Control Room
- Teleprompter,
- Location and studio lighting
- Sound equipment: Professional and boom, handheld and lav mics
- 3 axis mobile gimble camera stabilizers
- Camera sliders for pans and time-lapse
- Green screen (portable for location work)
- Audio voice over booth
- Post-Production Facilities
- Apple Desktops with latest versions of Adobe Creative Cloud
- Database of stock music (Foley)



The Media Lab with its large studio aims to give maximum exposure and hands-on experience to students. The studio includes a Chroma screen, a live broadcast set-up with studio lights and a teleprompter, and adjoining control room, switching screens and streaming devices.

A.K. Ranjit, as the head of the Media Lab, mentors the students and helps them acquire technical skills in audio-video production and broadcast. The practical handling of equipment, independently running the production control room, audio-video sessions, understanding and practicing broadcasting and editing with both commercial and free software are some of the skills students learn.



Inter-departmental support given by the Media Lab

Summer Course (Documentary and Video Storytelling: Concept, Elements and Execution)
Global Education & Strategic Programs, Vanita Shastri/Veda Shastri
course code MS-212-OC 2 July – 6 August 2019
DSLR Camera Kits, studio and outdoor recording and video editing training sessions

Gandhi @150: His Times, Our Times Department of History
28 September 2019
Video recording and still photographs taken of the event.

Understanding Land, Forest and Adivasis – Gladson Dungdung Department of Environmental
Studies 25 September 2019
Video recording and still photographs taken of the event.

'Kashmir- A Monstrous Betrayal of the Constitution by Prem Shankar Jha (Economist,
Journalist and Author) Trivedi Centre for Political Data (TCPD)
04 September 2019
Video recording of the exclusive interview with Prof Vaiju Naravane (3 Cam Shoot) in our
studio.

Union Budget 2019 by Professor Pulapre Balakrishnan, Department of Economics
The Wire
05 July 2019
Video recording (in our studio) and edited video file shared with The Wire
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7_dhDOOhhXc

Prof Gilles Verniers in conversation with Tom Ginsburg
TCPD
August 2019
Video recording of the interview (2 cam shoot in our studio) and edited video shared with
TCPD

Onam celebration Ashoka University 13 September 2019
Promotional video editing and composition help provided by AK Ranjit for the event

ELM Video Project YIF
13 December 2019

The Triumph of Animal History by Dr. Philip Howell
The Environmental Studies, Media Studies and History departments 23 September 2019
Still photographs taken of the event.

"Is Nuclear Arms Control Dead?" by Ambassador Rakesh Sood, Department of International
Relations 20th November 2019 Video recording and still photographs taken of the event.

Book Launch -- Against the Wind by Rajni Kumar
Harper Collins India (India International Center)
10 November 2019
Video recording and still photographs taken of the event.

Strengthening ties between Ashoka University and CSBC internal on two years MA Program
CSBC
30th October 2019
Helped in making Power Point Presentation, Still photographs taken of the event.

On Freedom - A public lecture by Professor Cass R. Sunstein Center for Social and Behaviour
Change
08 August 2019
Video recording and still photographs taken of the event (2 Cam Shoot and Video Editing
compilation of the coverage). Provided to Ashoka Communications for the university website.
Video editing at Media Studies Lab by AK Ranjit (Link-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SoL3YxPoTw>)

'Cinema and Communication- Through the Practitioner's Gaze YIF (Winter Break)
17 December 2019
4 -DSLR Camera, Tripod, Tascam, Media Lab Editing Machines to edit Stop Motion Film,
video editing assistance by A K Ranjit

Media and Film Studies Convocation 2019
Department of Media and Film Studies 03 June 2019
Event Coverage and Live Interview with Parents for Media Lab

Audio Project of 'Antara' - Contraceptive Injection by CSBC Department of Media and Film
Studies 03 September 03, 2019
From Audio recording to editing, Voice-over Artists, Complete Packaging of Jingles.

Conferences, Seminars and Lectures by Media Studies Faculty in India and abroad

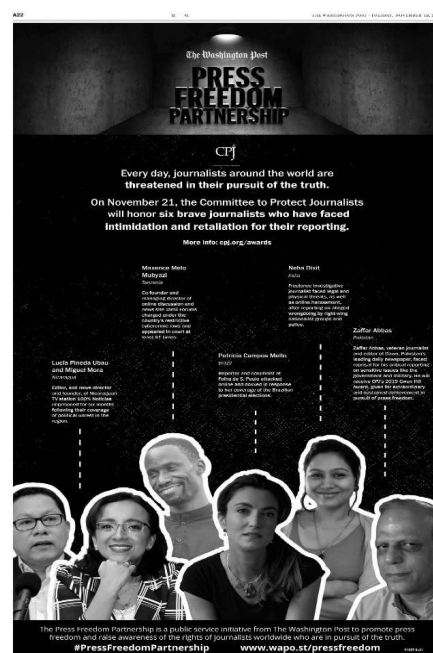
Events organized/presented by Vaiju Naravane

- Book launch: 'Against the Wind' with author Rajni Kumar; *November 2019, IIC, New Delhi, India*
- The Media in India: Hopes and Challenges; *December 2019 – University of Oran, Oran, Algeria*
- The Future of Indian Democracy; *December 2019 APM and the University of Algiers, Algeria*
- The Future of Indian Media Under the Modi Regime; *October 2019 -- Sciences-Po, Paris, France*
- Constitutional Safeguards for India's Media – Myth or Reality; *October 2019 – Maison de l'Inde, Paris, France*



Events attended/presented by Neha Dixit

- UN Press Freedom Day; *1-3 May 2019 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*
- 'The good, bad and ugly of democracy in India', The Economist's Open Future Festival; *5 October 2019 – Hong Kong*
- 'How Free Is the Fourth Estate? A Discussion about India's Media Environment'; *The Wilson Center, 18 November 2019 – Washington DC, United States*
- Journalism Landscapes in India; *20 November 2019 – Columbia School of Journalism, New York, United States*
- Feminist Media Coverage in India; *22 November 2019 – Barnard College, Columbia University, New York, United States*
- Eroding Press Freedom in India; *23 November 2019 – PEN America, New York, United States*
- Patterns of Political Violence; *2 November 2019 – University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada*
- Webinar on COVID-19 by CPJ and Newslaundry on safety advisory and toolkit for journalists reporting during the Covid 19 pandemic, *April 3, 2020*



Events organized/presented by Maya Mirchandani

- TedX Ashoka University: Fighting Fake News and Misinformation
- Tackling Insurgent Ideologies. International conference on Countering Violent Extremism; *August 2019 – New Delhi, India*
- The Nexus Between Counter- terrorism and Disinformation; *Global Security Forum August 2019 – Doha, Qatar*
- Beyond Fake News- the fight for information integrity; World Leadership Alliance, Club de Madrid. *22 October 2019 – Madrid, Spain*
- Kashmir After 370 – A Battle of Narratives? Observer Research Foundation; *November 2019 – New Delhi, India*
- Tech Against Terrorism. Global Internet Forum for Counter- terrorism *November 2019 – New Delhi, India*



Events organized/presented by Siddhartha Dubey

- Sixth News Agencies World Congress (NAWC), Presentation on fake news in India & panel discussion; *11-15 June 2019 --Sofia, Bulgaria.*
- Maria Abi-Habib, South Asia Correspondent, New York Times, talked about her experiences covering terrorism in the Middle East
- Nidhi Dutt, Cutting Chai Productions, explored aspects of storytelling



Events organized/presented by Tisha Srivastav

- [International Network of Engaged Buddhists](#) Conference series on social change. October 2019 – Bir, Himachal Pradesh, India
- Julie Kagti, CEO Curtain Call Adventures, spoke on the realities of a travel start-up in India's Northeast



Awards and Distinctions

Neha Dixit

International Press Freedom Award 2019 by Committee to Protect Journalists

Video link -[International Press Freedom Award 2019, Committee To Protect Journalists](#)



Her story '[The Chronicle of Crime Fiction That is Adityanath's Encounter Raj](#)', published in *The Wire*, special mention in the investigative category.

Merit, [23rd Human Rights Press Awards, Hong Kong Press Association 2019](#)

The same story also got her a [Special Mention, ACJ Award for Investigative Journalism 2019](#)

Maya Mirchandani

Changemakers Award: Celebrating 50 Years of Women in Media, *September 2019 – SCM Sophia & Avid Learning, Mumbai, India*



Impact, Engagement and Knowledge Exchanges

Publications

Vaiju Naravane

Au Cachemire l'hindouisme sabre au clair. Le Monde Diplomatique, October 2019.

<https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2019/10/NARAVANE/60460>

Hinduismo desacomplejado en Cachmira Le monde diplomatique Español November 2019

<https://mondiplo.com/hinduismo-desacomplejado-en-cachemira>

Mots cles : Conflit du Cachemire 1949 –

<https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/index/sujet/cachemire>

Maya Mirchandani

“Contesting the Dragon: When India and ASEAN Converge”: China Ascendant”. Pant, Harsh V. Ed. Harper Collins. July 2019.

“Of Blood & War’ and ‘November Rain’ (two poems): Modern English Poetry by Younger Indians”. Sen, Sudeep, Ed. Sahitya Akademi - November 2019.

Newsrooms and Refugee Crises- Humanity vs. National Security: The Role of the Media as a Stakeholder in the Implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees. [The Global Compact on Refugees, Indian Perspectives and Experiences](#), published by UNHCR and released at the end of January 2020.

“Fighting Hate Speech, Balancing Freedoms- A Regulatory Challenge”. Released has been published in [Volume 9 of the Journal of Indian Law and Society](#), [Fighting Hate, Balancing Freedoms- A Regulatory Challenge](#)

A Woven Life: Jenny Housego with Maya Mirchandani (Roli Books, April 2020) Roli Books, [Kindle edition of A Woven Life](#)

Populism, Propaganda and Politics: Narendra Modi's Electoral Playbook - Journal Herodote (Paris). Released, June 2020.

[Meet Badlu Khan, a Symbol of the Syncretic India the Hindu Right Wants to Erase](#): The Wire.in Published March 9, 2020

[How Trump Visit Could Leverage CAA And Kashmir Against PM Modi](#) NDTV.com February 19, 2020

Kashmir, India and the United States: Does Economics Trump Human Rights? Georgetown Journal of International Affairs- ETA publish date April 2020.

[In times of fake news and manufactured outrage, how do we reclaim empathy?](#) Scroll.in February 10, 2020

Neha Dixit

The women at the front lines of India's citizenship law protests

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/women-front-lines-india-citizenship-law-protests-191223061447173.html>; *Al Jazeera*, December 23, 2019

Teach them a lesson': Indian women accuse Delhi police of abuse

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/lesson-indian-women-accuse-delhi-police-abuse-200214073937259.html>; *Al Jazeera*, Feb 17, 2020

Book: *Bad Women of Bombay Films: Studies in Desire and Anxiety*, **Chapter:** 'Outcast(e)/Outlawed: The Bandit Queen (1996)' <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030267872>, published by Palgrave Macmillan, January, 2020

Tisha Srivastav

What stirs in art's outreach at this pandemic hour? <https://thewire.in/the-arts/arts-music-ppe-pandemic>; *The Wire*, May 2020

In the Media

Vaiju Naravane

- **BBC World Service Radio.** Weekend Guest – live 2 hours with Julian Worricker. *September 2019*, London, UK.
- **Arte Television.** 28' with Elizabeth Quin. *October 2019*, Paris France
- **France Culture Radio : La Matinale with Guillaume Erner.** *October 2019*, Paris, France
- **RFI Radio France Internationale : Le Rendezvous des Tchacheuses with Emmanuelle Bastide** *October 2019*, Paris, France
- **Televised Interview with Prem Shankar Jha:** Kashmir- A Monstrous Betrayal of the Constitution
- **France Inter Radio:** Spéciale Inde with Ingrid Therwat and Shumona Sinha *November 2019*, Paris, France
- **France 2 Television La Matinale with Marie Margopoulus** *November 2019*, Paris, France
- **Radio Alger : Le cinéma Indien- comment ça change?** *15 December 2019*, Algiers, Algeria

Maya Mirchandani

- Nothing Is Normal in Kashmir, Except the Normalization of Conflict: *TheWire.in* --17 September 2019
- *The Danger of Cheering the Telangana Police*: *ndtv.com* – 7 December 2019
- Video interview with Kannan Gopinathan 'Dissent Should Be Seen as an Alternate View of What's Good for the Country' *theWire.in* – 27 August 2019
- Interviews on Kashmir, Right Wing Violence, Propaganda and Indian Foreign Policy in the following publications: *TheQuint.com*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Straits Times* and *the Financial Times*
- Media contributions on Kashmir, the Kartarpur Corridor, Indian Foreign Policy (Iran/Pakistan) and Hate Speech and Propaganda. Outlets: *Channel News Asia*, *Mirror Now* and *NDTV*.
- '*Shikara*' - *The Opening of Dialogue?* | Interview with Rahul Pandita, *Wide Angle*, *The Wire*
- Interviews given to *BBC World Service*, TV Appearances on *NDTV* prime time debates, *Live Delhi* Election Result coverage for *TheWire.in*

Neha Dixit

- Democracy Now with Amy Goodman December 18, 2019, on Citizenship Amendment Act in India
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdqyrvp0O5I>
- Democracy Now with Amy Goodman Feb 27, 2020 on communal violence in Delhi
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17QfIJfXm4M>



Siddhartha Dubey

- NBC News Digital on March 30, 2020 on the show *Coronavirus - World in Lockdown* talking about the impact the lockdown was having on the economy, migrant labor and cities



Media Action Against Rape (MAAR)

A joint research partnership led by



with four other academic institutions across India

Scope:

Bournemouth University and UNESCO joined hands for a research and capacity building project called Media Action Against Rape (MAAR) in New Delhi. Funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), MAAR is an ongoing two-year long study of how rape and sexual violence is reported in India. It maps the journalistic challenges of reporting rape and sexual violence across India. The project began in June 2018, with the purpose of understanding two aspects:

- **How is rape and sexual violence re-presented/depicted in the Indian news media?**
- **What goes behind that depiction — what are the challenges and issues that journalists face when reporting sexual violence?**

For a detailed report please see Annexures.

Apart from content analysis, on-ground events leading up to the upcoming report which will include guidelines for rape reportage, the project also runs **NewsTracker**, a Medium-based publication, to write about the representation of rape and sexual violence in the Indian news media. The NewsTracker believes that journalists have a crucial role to play in combatting sexual violence. They can question stereotypes; influence attitudes, beliefs; as well as help us rethink the way we read, write, think about rape and the solutions. It is co-published by Bournemouth University and Ashoka University in collaboration with UNESCO. MAAR aims to build capacity to engender sustainable impact – specifically, for rape reportage, journalism education, and resilience against gendered violence towards women.

Professor Vaiju Naravane guided the project work for Ashoka and was the financial partner for the MAAR project.

Research Material Produced:

In the 2019 round of publication, the MAAR project worked with a team of **33 young reporters**, drawn from Ashoka University (Sonapat), Bastion (New Delhi), DocFort Meducation (Bangalore), Manipal University (Manipal), St Joseph's College (Bangalore), and Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts (Pune), supported by UNESCO New Delhi.

In all, **40,164 words** of original journalism across 41 stories was published this year. This includes some outstanding in-depth [Q&As](#), [feature stories](#), and the unique [I Think](#) interviews. 2019's coverage is 12,000 words more than what was produced for the December #16Days in 2018. In addition, 8 video stories went up on the NewsTracker [YouTube channel](#) done solely by Ashoka's Media Studies students. Led by A.K Ranjit, the Media Studies Faculty turned one of their in-course assignments into interviews around the subject of rape. Readers, so far, have spent approximately **150 hours** on the site, reading the new #16Days content.

A few outstanding stories:

i) *Saumava Mitra's* two-part essay on [The many things wrong with the visual representation of rape](#) is of particular pertinence to journalists and journalism educators, not just in India but elsewhere as well.

ii) *Zinnia Sengupta's* interview with Madhavi Menon on [crime, gender and literature](#), and Ananya Gouthi's conversation with economist Lekha Chakraborty on [gender-sensitive budgeting](#) explore some unusual linkages between the news media and gender.

iii) *Aarati Ganeshan's* analysis on [how the Indian media sympathises with rapists](#), Pranati Viswesaran's [பாலியல் + சும் பவம் ≠ rape](#), Tejaswini Srihari's argument for a [language of compassion](#), and Urvashi Butalia's thoughts on [survivors and silences](#) provide more food for thought on reporting sexual violence.

the interview with Sandhya Menon by *Sanjana Thandaveswaran* and *Sharin Dsouza* made for a very interesting read ; it is fascinating to hear the lessons of #MeTooIndia through the personal [reflections of an activist](#) who has been on its forefront from the start. For the full offering of the stories we published this round, do see the [#16Days section](#).

Prof. Vaiju Naravane

Head of the Media Studies Department,
Ashoka University



Prof. Vaiju Naravane, Head of the Media Studies Department, Ashoka University said, *"For both faculty and students at Ashoka this has been an enormously useful and enriching pedagogical experience, one that has forced students out of their theoretical and academic comfort zones to confront reality. This experience has allowed some very sheltered students to explore an issue that is controversial, frightening and emotionally charged, exposing them to different facets of the very complex societal and psychological factors that lead to sexual harassment, assault or rape."*

Dr. Chindu Sreedharan

Principal Academic in Journalism and Communication
Bournemouth University & Co-led, MAAR



Dr. Chindu Sreedharan, who co-led the project said, *"Some of the journalism produced by the students was truly outstanding, exploring some unusual linkages—for instance, economics and sexual violence, and literature and gender. The co-creation of content between Bournemouth and institutions in India bring to light some complex issues rarely discussed in conventional media spaces."*

Roundtable on a new two-year Masters Programme entitled “New Media and Digital Futures”

9 January 2020 at CSBC Centre, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi

The Department of Media Studies organised a consultative meeting on a new two-year Masters Programme entitled “New Media and Digital Futures” proposing to establish as of autumn 2021. In order to offer a coherent Masters programme curated and taught by the Department of Media and Film Studies would like to hold a series of consultations with data scientists, media and communications specialists, academics and industry leaders. Such a programme will be the first of its kind in India and will give students a head start in their chosen professions. This programme will have significant inputs from the Computer Science Department, and will combine research and analysis, problem-solving capabilities, technical skills and a familiarity with a fast- changing technological landscape.



The first meeting was held on 9 January 2020 at the offices of Ashoka’s Centre for Social and Behaviour Change (CSBC) located at B 8/7, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. Professor Vaiju Naravane, HoD, Media studies presented proposed curriculum as a working paper for feedbacks and expert opinions.

The distinguished participants for the roundtable of discussions were the following:

Name	Designation/Organization
Malabika Sarkar	Vice Chancellor, Ashoka University
Harsh Shah	Sr. VP of Client Services, Dentsu Webchutney
Priyank Mathur	Founder, Mythos Labs
Durga Raghunath	Sr VP of Growth, Zomato
Vithika Yadav	Country Head (India), Love Matters
Pria Somiah	Executive Director, Miditech TV
Vishwanath Nagaraj	Ex. Head (Team India), Thoughtworks Inc.
Bijoy Venugopal	Ass. Director of Corp. Comms, Flipkart
Dr. Sri Kalyanaraman	Founder & Director, Media Effects & Technology Lab, University of Florida

Climate Change Communication – A Media Roundtable

24 February 2020 at CSBC Centre, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi

Cohosted by Department of Biosciences & Media & Film Studies (All India panel curated by Tisha Srivastav of Media & Film Studies & hosted by Professor L. S. Shashidhara, Dean - Research, Ashoka University)



Purpose

- 1) To make field communicators already invested in content, narrative, creative style, technology and climate change, aware of a unique UNESCO - Ashoka effort, the international climate change education project. Media opportunity of making lesson plans, for both students and teachers, bringing accurate science to all classroom learning on climate change. The aim is that these media products can be part of teaching material in schools and colleges, seamlessly integrating in current syllabi/curriculum. Scientific accuracy verified by Team UNESCO – Ashoka.
- 2) To bring the science of climate change to bear on all communication efforts, while partnering to make popular media products for climate change communication.
- 3) To be an incubation ideas and partnership lab, helping build a culture of open source communication on climate change
 - a) One, that is scientifically accurate
 - b) Available in many Indian languages.
 - c) Culturally alive cognition and creativity modules, appropriate for all ages.
 - d) Empowers youth (school and university level) and teachers in community- centered initiatives to collect scientific data (citizen science) and/or to participate in the education and communication of fellow citizens about local issues surrounding climate change and environmental degradation.

Note on the Roundtable: A four-hour brainstorm was divided into two sessions of 1 and a 1/2 hrs. each. Primarily, in the first half, the academic scientific community had an introductory dialogue with the high-quality work being produced by environmental communicators from all over India. Introduction was then given to the climate change communication project by Professor Shashidhara, with visual examples of lesson plans shared by Professor Rahul Kishore and

Professor Iain Stewart. This was followed by each of the panelists introducing through examples of their media work, the challenges, creativity and possibilities of communication material for their specific audiences, across age groups and diversities. If Hemant Babu, who created English gaming-based curriculum plans for his rural tribal school in Maharashtra highlighted the space of play and interactive learning, Rita Banerji and Pooja Gupta demonstrated what it means to learn about the jungle by going into it with the still and video camera, as rural youth. Pooja Gupta highlighted the effective use of animation in breaking lessons down into storytelling and Nithya Subramanian showed how complicated information can be visualized as a narrative.

The second session focused on insights and learnings from this wide array of environmental information.

Key outcomes

Field communicators need accurate scientific input. Science academics need the creativity of original communicators. Both sides present, willing to work together by sharing actual examples, learnings and building responsive media material.

Climate change is a complex story that needs all media tools and skills to make the narrative understandable and relatable. Employ as per complexity of topic.

Interactivity must replace lecturing or one-way communication in media material and visual representation is a key part.

Several of the panelists are now working on lesson plans in a direct partnership with Professor Shashidhara. Many of them have contributed media material in several languages, of lessons already produced, including for CoVid 19.

This was the first of several other brainstorm planned for climate change communication.



Science Communication Master class by Professor Iain Stewart

March 5 2020. Thursday. 4:30 – 6:30 pm, Media Lab

President of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Professor of Geoscience Communication at the University of Plymouth (UK) Professor Iain Stewart, a member of the Scientific Board of UNESCO's International Geoscience Programme is also Visiting Professor at Ashoka University's Department of Environmental Sciences. This Scottish geologist is also presenter for a number of BBC Science programs, including the BAFTA nominated *Earth: The Power of the Planet* (2007)

In a continuing partnership between the Department of Media & Film Studies and Department of Biosciences, Professor Stewart led a Science Communication session of two hours with Media Studies students. At the Media Lab on campus in early March in the spring semester. The session introduced students from varying Social Science backgrounds to how they could come to Science Communication, exactly from who they were or their academic or personal interests are. For example, Professor Iain Stewart shared how when he moved from his purely academic life in Geological Sciences after twelve years, in 2002 to presenting for the BBC, he was stumped by BBC's response – 'You want to make a program on stones?' But it got him thinking as did his producer, who had just gotten off making an observational documentary on a hotel in Liverpool, UK. How can geology speak to today? What is geology? How do scientists communicate with the public or not communicate?



By his own admission, Prof Iain Stewart workshops on Science Communication are most often with Life Science students, so a two-hr. lecture to a largely non-science class was a welcome change for him. For a bunch of Media Studies students this was absolutely new too. A passion filled afternoon, with Q & A on seeing life through rock-tinted spectacles, the master class included clips from his award-winning programs and a range of ways science communication could be simplified to be part of everyday conversations. Something that Media Studies students receive as part of their training in rigorous journalism and making compelling narratives for the public.

While this is the first of many silo defying sessions hosted by the Media & Film Studies Department, we are also taking the partnership forward by co-teaching undergraduate courses, organizing roundtables on climate change communication and leading in a conversation where the sciences and the arts speak freely to each other, in the academic year 2020-2021.

Filmmaking Companion Course

Spring 2020

A Filmmaker's Companion, a unique offering by the Media Studies Department in collaboration with film critic and author Anupama Chopra's popular portal Film Companion, ran its first iteration in Spring 2020 with a batch of 23 students. Notable luminaries from Bollywood like Juhi Chaturvedi, Swanand Kirkire, Raj Nidimoru, and Deepa Bhatia were invited to Ashoka to give three-hour-long lectures on several aspects of filmmaking like writing, lyric-writing, direction, and editing respectively.

The course kicked off with a class on the overview of cinema with Prof Suresh Chabria, former professor at FTII and former director of National Film Archive of India. The course's most significant takeaway for the students was the technical skills imparted by the professionals through hands-on training on subjects like cinematography (Jay Oza), sound editing (Anish John), production (Sukant Panigrahy), film editing (Deepa Bhatia), and music composition (Alokananda Dasgupta). Insights into the daily working of Bollywood projects helped students gain practical knowledge about filmmaking along with de-glamorizing the Bombay film world. Interacting with experts from different fields also opened up new avenues for the students to pursue careers in. The workshops also helped students realize that filmmaking is a collaborative process that requires various elements to come together in multiple ways. The last two classes on film appreciation and the art of storytelling by Anupama Chopra and Prof Alka Hingorani respectively brought in the necessary theoretical understanding to the course.

"You really opened up the film world for us, everything you used was accessible, especially for regular people, but your session really helped burst so many bubbles," wrote one student after the workshop with Guneet Monga. Another student writes, "I already wanted a career in film but the course helped me visualise it better."



Even though shifting the course online after the Covid-19 outbreak worked exceptionally well, physical exercises could not be conducted as planned. It also hampered all group activity, and the final assessment submission had to be changed from a group film to individual films. Each of the students submitted a 3-minute film that they shot within the confines of their homes due to the strictures imposed during the lockdown.

Most of the workshops incorporated 2 hours of lecture, followed by an hour of Q&A. Workshops that included a clear-cut structure tackling particular aspects of filmmaking in different sections were found most beneficial by the students. For example, by devoting stipulated amounts of time to different sections like on-location sound recording, equipment, dialogue editing, track laying, and mixing, Anish John was able to convey his ideas in a coherent manner. Student engagement was also far superior for workshops that involved more examples and exercises designed for student participation. In this regard, for Sukant Panigrahy's workshop, students were assigned a theme and were asked to create a production set-up in groups of 6. Avinash Tiwary's workshop on acting also involved doing various face and speech exercises that saw enthusiastic student participation.

Alumni Testimonials

Taran Deol

Sub-editor, The Print,

Alumna, Media Studies Ashoka University



I took a media course only in my second semester. By then, the kind of writing I had learnt in school and my first semester courses, my style of writing was very restricted. My first media course taught me how to write like a journalist and basically unlearn academic writing. Being in Ashoka, I was constantly balancing between journalistic writing and academic writing. So I guess it taught me to think about one topic in two different ways. I also took the multimedia courses (journalism + broadcast) which taught me to be self-sufficient. So now, when I go out to report, I don't necessarily need a camera person. I can shoot by myself, and if required, edit as well.

Thirdly, all the courses I took over four years have instilled a habit of reading the paper. And not just one paper, I try to look at a few, to see how the same issue is reported differently. Reading and being up to date with what is happening is the very basis of journalism and in every course I took, I was reminded of it.

It also made me more confident to ask questions. No matter how stupid. Whether I'm asking my senior editor or someone I don't know at all for a story.

Amrita Singh

Feature Writer, Business Standard,

Alumna, Media Studies Ashoka University



The media courses at Ashoka University are designed to acquaint an aspiring journalist with different forms of media. With each course, I became more familiar with the ethics and practices of journalism along with understanding how different forms of media can help disseminate types of information. Thanks to these courses, I can write both short and long pieces, create short films, face the camera with ease and play with data. But most importantly, each course taught me to question the status quo, as with such holistic knowledge comes the great responsibility of asking the right questions.

Angana Chakraborty
Reporter, The Print,
Alumna, Media Studies Ashoka University



The Media Studies course at Ashoka University has been immensely beneficial in my career as a journalist. Right from the hand-on assignments to the media lab, the courses helped develop my understanding about all the types of media — from broadcast to print. When I'm on the field today, I keep going back to the lessons that were imparted in the classroom. They've been essential in shaping my fundamentals of reporting.

Chahat Rana
Health Correspondent, Indian Express
Alumna, Media Studies Ashoka University



Apart from being taught by renowned journalists and accomplished media persons, what was truly rewarding about the media studies major at Ashoka is how immersive it was. Beyond learning the basics of news writing, reporting and audio-visual editing, almost every course had a hands-on module, which pushed students outside the campus to complete field reporting projects, whilst familiarizing them with what the life of a journalist truly entails. One of the most challenging and memorable courses I opted for was a documentary filmmaking course, where we went on weekend trips, near and far, to parts of rural Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to capture stories on rural healthcare. On one such trip, we documented a primary health centre at Shravasti - an

impoverished district in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Apart from the grueling task of filming for hours at length under the hot sun, the trip made me realize how important it is for journalists to think on their feet, adapt to changes and still manage to narrate a compelling story. Every day, we went to the field with a fixed perception shaped by theoretical knowledge, but the reality of what we attempted to capture did not mold to our perception. The class also piqued my interest in public healthcare policy in India and now I work as a health correspondent for the Chandigarh bureau of the daily, Indian Express.

Even the location of the University provides opportunities for budding journalists to venture out into the rural heartland of Haryana and capture stories of great social-political significance. It was exciting to be a part of class on political reporting during the 2019 general election. I just had to step out into the neighboring village of Asawarpur to attend the political rally of a local politician. Access to faculty members who are active professionals and have connections within the media world, also helped me land summer internships in prominent media houses. A summer internship with Indian Express eventually led to the job I currently have.

Simrin Sirur

Reporter, The Print

Alumna, Media Studies Ashoka University



Two years into my job as a reporter and it still feels new to me. That's mostly because there's always something to learn and do better the next time you interview/ research/ write a story. Some of the most useful lessons in the media department were the ones that let you encounter that feeling first hand, by going out to do a ground report or make a documentary film (courses taught to me by Neha Dixit, Vaiju Naravane and Hariharan Krishnan). In truth, nothing can fully prepare you for what you will encounter as a reporter, both practically and emotionally. What helped the most from my time with the media department was learning the skills of film making, and learning to map out every stakeholder needed as your story came along. I also encountered some of my sharpest critics during my media classes -- whether in the form of a call out on my privilege or on the quality of work -- and this is what probably helped the most. I wasn't used to this given the English department (where I completed my major) functioned very differently. But as a journalist you will be criticized by everybody (and seen as a nuisance by some too!). Take whatever negative feedback you get because it will sharpen your skills and keep you vigilant of your own work. Nothing is more important.

Naman Khandelwal

Learning and Development Specialist, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories,

Alumnus, Media Studies Ashoka University



Happy to inform that I am currently working at Dr. Reddy's Laboratories as a Learning and Development specialist. I took the course "Audio and Video Production" in my 4th year at Ashoka and only regret not taking it earlier.

At the time of taking the course I looked at it as a hobby and never did it occur to me that I will be using audio and video editing skills in my job. However, I am grateful that because of the skills that I learnt in the course, I have moved a lot of the video production of the company (Communication from senior leaders mostly) internally, saving the company a significant amount of time and money as we don't have to depend on an external vendor now.

Because of this, the Chairman appreciated me and called out Ashoka for the diverse skills that Ashoka teaches to its students. I just wanted to share that with you and I hope to see many more people take this course. Thanks for guiding me through this course.