



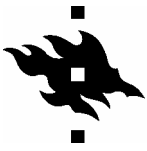
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# Mapping Media and Communication Research: France

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Abstract:

The purpose of the project Mapping of Media and Communication Research in France is to provide an overview of the current issues, main trends, and future challenges to communication research in France. The focus is on academic research, which is defined as "Sciences de l'information et de la communication" (Infocom/SIC), or Information and Communication Sciences. The discipline was institutionally established by the CNU (Le Conseil National des Universités) in 1975. But Infocom research did not start to expand until the 1990s. The question of communication has been studied within several "old" research disciplines for a longer time (such as sociology, political science, history, economy, law, anthropology, literature studies), and the current profile of Infocom is multidisciplinary.

The number of education and research institutions in Infocom all over France is myriad. The research is carried out in the universities, polytechnical institutes, research centres, and laboratories. Most of the funding comes from the state, and the rest from calls for bids, and research contracts with organisations in the public sector. The collaboration of academic research with private companies is not common in the field of Infocom in France.

The Infocom research themes, theories, and methodological approaches are multidisciplinary, and thus quite varied and heterogeneous. The articulation of various approaches is the speciality of Infocom. Among the few major trends is the Theory of Usages, now applied especially to studies in new communication technology. Critical studies of cultural industries are also strong, and the fields of journalism and audiovisual communication have relatively long traditions, with teaching institutions existing before Infocom was established. Also the cultural approaches such as semiology and discourse analysis have a stable position.

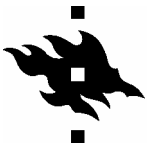
Owing to the delay in developing the research in communication as an independent field, the definition of Infocom is an ongoing debate: whether its independent disciplinary status should be consolidated, or whether it should continue being a research object or theme for all the traditional disciplines. Despite its institutional status in the CNU, the Infocom is not represented among the disciplinary departments of the highly prestigious national research centre (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, or CNRS).

Keywords: France, communication, media, academic discipline, research institutions



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## Introduction

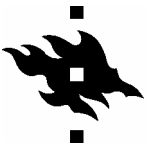
“Mapping Communication and Media Research” is an international project based in the Communication Research Centre (CRC, University of Helsinki) whose purpose is to examine the contents and trends in current research in communication and media in seven countries. These countries include Finland, the United States, Germany, France, Japan, Estonia, and Australia. The project is funded by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation, which has funded a similar project on communication and media research in South Korea.

The objective is to provide a general overview of communication and media research in the aforementioned countries. The project maps the main institutions and organisations as well as the approaches and national characteristics of communication and media research in each country. The focus of the project is on the years 2005 and 2006, but some parts of the project have sample data from a longer period. Data gathering and analysis were carried out during the autumn of 2006 and the spring of 2007. The source materials include secondary data from previous studies, existing statistics, and primary data drawn from interviews with key persons in communication and media research universities and organisations. There are also specific case studies describing the special challenges of each respective country in every subproject.

The project’s main research questions are as follows:

- What kinds of communication and media research are carried out in a specific country?
- How do different approaches relate to each other?
- What is the relationship between communication research and the communication industries and what kinds of practical applications does the research have?
- On what is communication and media research focused in each country and what is the direction for the future?

Each country provides a unique context for communication and media research. Thus, research has been organised in different ways in each of the countries examined. In addition, the definitions and conceptualisations of communication and media research vary among contexts and countries. Therefore, meaningful comparisons of research among different countries prove to be a difficult task. For example, the national media statistics of the countries studied are often based on incompatible data and methods. Therefore, this report will not provide statistically comparable data



on the communication and media research of the target countries. Because of these kinds of difficulties in comparability, every subreport provides country-specific explanations for the concepts used and for its samples and methods.

To enhance meaningful comparisons among the subreports, the research questions, research principles, and the structures are the same for each. The same organisation, themes, and questions have also been used in the interviews. Each report starts with an introductory chapter. This chapter will briefly describe the target country and its media landscape – i.e., its communication and media systems and markets.

The most important part of the project is the interview study of key persons. The interviews produce primary data not only about the facts of communication and media research in each country but also evaluations and visions of the status and future of the research. These interviews create the backbone of the project; they constitute a unique collection of statements given by recognised researchers.

The report on Media and Communication Research in France is prepared mainly on the basis of 19 interviews with key informants; 17 interviews were made with French professors or scholars and two interviews with executives in public organisations. The thematic, in-depth interviews give basic knowledge, views, and evaluations of the present state of academic research in the field of Infocom in France. These interviews are treated as unified data, and the individual informants are not distinguished in the body of the text. The interviews are treated as unified data and therefore the individual informants are not distinguished in the body of the text. The additional data include Internet searches on institution web pages, academic literature, journals and reports, and a content analysis of five French academic journals. The gathering of data and the writing of the report were made during a five-month period in the spring of 2007.

In France academic research in communication is carried out in universities and polytechnical schools, and in the research centres and laboratories of the National Research Center (CNRS). Academic research is based on public funding, and it is clearly separate from research carried out in private research agencies. Research agencies are mainly focused on applied research, providing data for industrial purposes. The main focus of this report is on the present state of academic research,



which in France is institutionally organised under the name Information and Communication Sciences “Sciences de l’information et de la communication”, known as SIC or Infocom.

The report is organised in five chapters: the French media landscape, research institutions and organisations, main approaches in information and communication sciences, national characteristics of the discipline, and future challenges. The first chapter sketches a brief overview of the French cultural context and, the media system. The chapter starts with a short history, including political and economic background that have influenced media policies and regulation. The chapter ends with statistics on media reception and consumption in France. The second chapter presents an overview of the most important research institutions and organisations in the field of information and communication research, including the most important academic research departments and laboratories, foundations, associations, and academic journals within Infocom. Also, some of the most important private research agencies and companies are introduced. The last section of the chapter presents the basic funding sources for Infocom. The third chapter gives an account of the main approaches to information and communication sciences. From previous studies made by French scholars as well as our quantitative content analysis of five scholarly journals, it is clear that, and the interviews, the field of Infocom is heterogeneous and the country does not have any dominant tradition. Some more general orientations can, however, be seen. These include: studies of new communication technology, cultural approaches to communications, and mass media research including audiovisual and press emphases. The fourth chapter is dedicated to presenting some of the national characteristics that are particular to French communication research. Finally, the fifth chapter ends the report with challenges for the future and visions for Infocom in France.

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Helsinki, 6 June 2007

Liina Puustinen

on behalf of the reserach team

## 1 The French Media Landscape (Aura Lindeberg)

The chapter on French media landscape begins with a short history of the country and its political and economic background, which provide the context for media policies and regulation. This is followed by sections presenting the most important institutions, and media markets. The chapter ends with statistics on media reception and consumption in France. The most visible particulars are the strong position of the cinema industry and the recent strong expansion of the Internet, mobile phones, and new technology.

### 1.1 The French Context



Figure 1. (Embassy of France, <http://www.info-france-usa.org/atoz/geo.fra.asp>)

Metropolitan France is one of the biggest countries in Western Europe with an area of 543,965 km<sup>2</sup> and overseas territories of 674,843 km<sup>2</sup>. The total population of the country is 64,102,140 inhabitants. (Wikipedia, France.)



## History in Brief

The name France comes from Latin, *Francia*, meaning “the land of the Franks”, although there are also other theories of the name’s origins. The territory of France has been inhabited since before the first century BC by different tribes. The borders of modern France are approximately the same as those of ancient Gaul, which was inhabited by Celtic Gauls. Franks, who governed the land in the fourth century AD, were among the first tribes to convert to Catholic Christianity after the fall of the Roman Empire. At the treaty of Verdun (843) the land was divided into three parts, of which Western Francia occupied approximately the same area as modern France. After the Franks, the territory was ruled among others by the Carolingian Empire, which ended in 987 when Hugh Capet was crowned King of France. His descendants unified the country through dynastic arrangements and a series of wars. (Wikipedia, France.)

The monarchy was in its heyday in the 17th century with the reign of Louis XIV. At that time, France had Europe’s largest population and significant influence over European politics, economy, and culture. The monarchy ended in 1789 with the French Revolution and the execution of King Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette. The idea of the Revolution, “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”, are still the motto of the French government today. The Revolution was followed by the First French Empire, led by Napoleon Bonaparte. After a short-lived Second Empire, France was defeated in the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 and the Bonaparte family monarchy was replaced by the Third Republic. Though ultimately, victorious in the First World War, France suffered enormous human and material losses that weakened it for decades to come. The 1930s were marked by a variety of social reforms introduced by the Popular Front government. (ibid.)

The French Fourth Republic was established after the Second World War and struggled to maintain its economic and political status as a dominant nation state. France attempted to hold on to its colonial empire, but soon ran into trouble. In 1946 an attempt at regaining control of French Indochina resulted in the First Indochina War. Only months later, France faced a new, even harsher conflict in its oldest major colony, Algeria. After the conflict with Algeria, the weak Fourth Empire was followed by the Fifth Empire. (ibid.)

France had colonial possessions from the beginning of the 17th century until the 1960s. In the 19th and 20th centuries, its global colonial empire was the second largest in the world after the British Empire. Currently, the remnants of this large empire are the islands and archipelagos located in the



North Atlantic, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific, the North Pacific, and the Antarctic Ocean, as well as one mainland territory in South America. All of these areas enjoy full political representation at the national level and varying degrees of legislative autonomy. In the late 20th century, France played an important role in economic and political integration in Europe. France is a founding member of the European Union and the United Nations, a member of the G8 -countries and one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

#### Political System and Cultural Characteristics

The French Republic is a unitary semi-presidential republic with strong democratic traditions. The executive branch itself has two leaders: the President of the Republic and the Government, led by a president-appointed Prime Minister. The French political system is characterised by two opposing groups: a left wing concentrated around the French Socialist Party (*la Partie socialiste Française*), and a right wing, whose leading parties are *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR) and *Union pour la mouvement Populaire* (UMP). Also, the far-right *Front National* (FN) has stable support among the French population. (Election-Politique.com.)

French has been the only official language of France since 1992. This makes France the only Western European nation to have only one, officially recognised language. However, there are over 70 regional languages spoken in metropolitan France as well as in the overseas departments and territories. Until recently, the use of languages other than French in schools was discouraged by government authorities, but other languages are nowadays taught at some schools to varying degrees. (Wikipedia, France.)

France is a country, in which Church and State are separated and freedom of religion is a constitutional right. In a poll taken in January 2007, 51% of the French identified themselves as Catholic. (Ibid.) The Government recognises only religious organisations, not religious doctrines, and religious organisations have to refrain from intervening in policy-making. Tensions occasionally erupt over presumed discrimination against minorities, especially against Muslims.

#### Population

With an estimated population of 64 million people, France is a diverse country. About 56% of the French population claim to have foreign background, making France one of the most ethnically diverse countries in Europe. The reason for this is immigration: old and more recent immigrants



have come to France from the five continents. In 2005, the greatest number of France's immigrants came from China and the United Kingdom. France has 4,9 million immigrants, of whom 2 million have French citizenship. The country is also the largest asylum destination in Europe. Population growth is by natural growth, and so too is immigration. In 2003, France's natural population growth (excluding immigration) was responsible for almost all natural population growth in the European Union. (Migration Policy Institute 2006.)

## Economy

The French economy is the second largest in western Europe, even though the country has a high unemployment rate, one of Europe's lowest retirement ages, and a 35-hour working week. The country is also the fourth largest exporter of goods and the third largest exporter of services in the world. (*The Economist Magazine*.) France's economy combines private enterprise with Government intervention. The Government has considerable influence over key segments of infrastructure sectors. It keeps majority ownership of railway, electricity, aircraft, and telecommunication companies, although now it is slowly selling off holdings, for example, France Télécom and Air France.

### 1.2 Media Policies and Regulations

The French are well known for traditions of attachment to the central State and codified Law – and broadcasting policies are no exception. The Government is responsible for defining broadcast policy, drafting laws, and issuing decrees to implement these laws. Parliament passes laws and controls the funding of public broadcasters, and the High Council for Broadcasting (*Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel* or CSA) is in charge of granting licenses to private broadcasters, appointing the heads of public broadcasters, and overseeing all activities of all broadcasters. The CSA also commands and gives financial support for academic research projects for communication.

#### Common Obligations

Although there are specific obligations for public and private broadcasters, all are somewhat bound by the same obligations. For public TV and radio channels these obligations are written down in their terms of reference (*cahier des charges*); for commercial channels, they are found in the licensing contracts. This highlights the fact that public channels are bound to the State and follow the



implemented decrees, whereas commercial TV and radio operate on agreements made between them and the CSA. (Television Across Europe 2005, 653-659.)

The common obligations include ensuring pluralism and diversity of opinions, protecting young viewers, and limiting the scale of advertising. A substantial part of French regulation policy is designed to defend French identity and cultural diversity through programming quotas and restrictions, and it has a unique system of supporting the production of French language movies and audiovisual works. (Ibid.)

#### Cultural Diversity

Defending and promoting French culture is a cornerstone of French broadcasting regulation. All governments have shared the view of media products being different from other merchandise, because media promote the country's identity. In Europe, this led to the EU's "Television without Frontiers"; directive, which in 1989 recognised the principle of quotas. At the national level, this means obligations and restrictions as well as provisions to encourage national, French-language productions. These quotas mean that approximately 60% of movies and series broadcast in France have to be European, and 40% from French-speaking countries. The radio stations have a quota system that promotes French singers, requiring 40% of songs to be in French or in a regional language. (Television Across Europe 2005, 695.)

Recently, the representation of the society's cultural diversity has also become an issue in French broadcasting as part of a general political agenda. The diversity of French society is poorly reflected on French television, but regulation is very difficult to implement. One reason for this is the French constitution in which all citizens are considered equal, whatever their origin. Ethnic groups must not be identified and cannot be counted, and only negative discrimination can lead to legal action. However, in January 2004 France Télévisions came up with a plan that includes better representation in programmes and debates of foreigners living in France participating in programmes and debates. These actions promoting people with an immigrant background are rising in the field of broadcasting, yielding a more positive attitude towards diversity.

#### Advertising on TV and Radio

Public TV and radio stations have two sources of income: license fees (a yearly payment of 116,50 euros per household) and advertising, where regulation differs from the commercial stations'



advertising regulations. Advertising time is limited on French television. Private broadcasters have the right to advertise for 12 minutes per hour, with the average being six minutes per hour. For public broadcasters, the ceiling has been lowered to eight minutes per hour. Advertising bans are on tobacco, alcohol, and medical products as well as on guns and weapons and certain other products or services. Since January 2004, print media has been allowed to advertise on television. Advertising is only a minor source for public radio stations – it represented less than 5% of the total revenues of the entire Radio France group in 2002. (Television Across Europe 2005, 645-650.)

### 1.3 Broadcasting and the Press

The evolution of French broadcasting is closely tied to the history of French politics. The last half-century can be divided into three periods in broadcasting: State television (1959 – 1974), commercialised State television (1974 – 1982), and market television from the year 1982 on. (Television Across Europe 2005, 647.)

In the 1960s, the State tightly controlled broadcasting. The dominating thought behind broadcasting was a public service ethos and an administrative logic. Broadcasting was kept in line by a single body, the Office of French Radio and Television (*Office de la radio-télévision française*), which operated first under the Minister of Information (and later under the Minister of Culture). The ORTF had a triple monopoly over broadcasting: it controlled signal transmission, programming, and production. During the era of State television, television broadcasting was viewed as an instrument for promoting education and culture. Commercial broadcasting was rejected, as it was thought to consist of lowbrow programming, and catering only to the tastes of the majority. There was only a small amount of audience research. (Ibid.)

The system changed in 1974, when Valéry Giscard D'Estaing was elected President of the State. The new Government decided to breaking the ORTF into seven individual public companies. The result was three television companies (*TF1*, *Antenne 2*, and *FR3*), one radio company (*Radio-France*), a company in charge of the technical process of broadcasting (*Télédiffusion de France*), a production company (*Société française de production*), and the INA (*Institut National de l'Audiovisuel*), an institute to maintain public broadcasters' programme archives, provide professional training of employees, and foster research in the field. (Ibid.)



The reform of 1974 opened the market for different audiences through broadcasting and advertising revenues, but it did not expand political independence. The Government still had the right to nominate broadcasting executives. In 1981 the third period started when the Socialists rose to power. With the election of François Mitterrand to President, it was expected that the party would revive the old model of public broadcasting. Quite to the contrary, economic difficulties combined with other European models led the French Government to liberalise broadcasting. (Ibid.)

In 1981, local private radio stations were allowed, and in 1982 the State monopoly on Broadcasting was removed by the Law of Audiovisual Communication. In 1984, local radio stations were allowed to advertise (under the pressure of economic lobbies and listeners). In the same year, the first license for first pay-TV was given to Canal+, which became the first private station in French broadcasting history. (Ibid.)

In 1986, the co-existence of private and public stations was set up by a general regulatory framework. In 1989, *TF1* was privatised. The liberalisation of production and transmission sectors led the broadcasting system to have four different marketplaces: programmes, commercials, delivery and television services. Today, television is viewed as an industry that provides services and its audience is seen as consumers who buy television services. However, regulations exist and public service obligations may apply in some circumstances. (Ibid.)

#### The Print Press in the 20th Century

After the Second World War, the French printed press was divided into two markets. The success of illustrated general or specialised periodicals threatened the newspaper market. At the same time, another factor was changing the market of the printed press: appearance and fast growth of radio in the 1930s and after the Second World War, and later on, television. Print journalism's monopoly on collective information was coming to an end. Instead, newspapers started to concentrate on local news and other things. However, the development of the market led to a situation where the major companies were the only ones capable of providing acquisition and control. This provoked the downfall of small newspapers with a weak circulation. (L'Internaute magazine, histoire de Presse.)

According to a study by the European Journalism Centre, in the year 1946 over 175 regional newspapers existed. Although the position of regional newspapers is today quite stable, only 55 were left in 2004. This is partly due to the fact that newspapers are losing readers to periodicals and



monthly publications, but also because most of the existing papers belong to the same few major editorial groups. The significant drop in national newspapers happened in the early 1970s towards: circulation of the three biggest newspapers dropped from 4, 000, 000 to just above 2, 000, 000.

Today, the French print press is still in a state of turbulence. For newspapers, especially the growth of Internet use and the appearance of free newspapers (*Metro*, *20 Minutes*) have reduced circulation numbers. Particularly in the Paris area newspapers are losing readers: the numbers have dropped by 12% between 1997 and 2003 – a loss of 800, 000 readers.

#### 1.4 Media Markets

##### Channels and Networks

In French television broadcasting there are six nationwide channels, of which three are owned by the French public television station, *France Télévisions*, and three are commercial. In radio broadcasting, *Radio-France* runs several national networks of radio stations. *France 3* also provides 13 regional channels, and TV channel *M6* has 12 branches in 12 cities around the country. In addition, there are about 100 local TV channels in operation. Non-Metropolitan France, that is, the departments and territories overseas, are served by commercial operators.

The public TV channels are *France 2*, *France 3* and *France 5*, which shares the frequency with the *Arte* channel, a French-German partnership channel. The public channels had a 45% audience share in 2002 (Finnish Mass Media 2004, 259). *France 2* (19.2%) is a general interest channel, offering a wide range of programmes: debates, quality drama, documentaries, and cultural programmes, all for the great public. The channel preserves the tradition of a public service channel: offering stimulation and culture and preserving French national identity. It competes closely with the commercial channel *TF1*. *France 3* (14.7%) focuses on both regional and national issues. Employing over a thousand journalists in different French cities, the channel broadcasts regional and local news bulletins and programmes produced by 13 regional directorates and 37 local bureaus. It also produces various programmes highlighting popular culture and sports. *France 5* (6.8%) is an educational channel, focusing on education, training and employment, airing in dept news shows, debates and documentaries. Shares the channel with *Arte* (3.1%), the French-German partnership channel offering quality documentaries and cultural programs. *Arte's* emissions take place between 19.00 – 03.00. (MediaMat Annual 2006.)



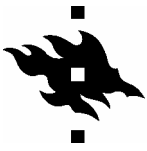
The national commercial channels are *TF1*, *M6* and *Canal+*. Each belongs to a larger broadcasting group that is involved in production, video-publishing, and cable and satellite operations. *TF1* (31.8%) is a general-interest, family-oriented channel, offering popular amusement: series, quizzes, soap operas and talk shows. *TF1* reaches one third of the population on average and enjoys a dominant position in French TV broadcasting. *M6* (12.5%) targets audiences under 35 years of age airing popular series, Hollywood movies, pop music, and star shows. *Canal+* (3.4%) channel is actually a pay-TV channel with nearly 5 million subscribers nationwide, and its programs are mostly encrypted, although it offers some decoded programs each weekday, such as *Les Guignols de l'Info*, a popular political satire. (Ibid.)

The most recent addition to the list is a mix of public and private-based, all-news channel *France24*, which started its broadcasts on 6th December 2006. Aired on the Internet, and on cable and satellite systems, *France24* can be viewed all around the globe. The idea is to be "CNN à la française", in other words, to compete with the leading news channels, such as CNN, BBC World, EuroNews, or Al Jazeera. Its transmissions are mostly in French, although some are in English. In the future, *France24* will add also Arabic and Spanish-language transmissions to its range. ([www.france24.com](http://www.france24.com).) (for Programme contents on television, see Appendix 1.)

## Radio

French radio is also divided into a dual public/commercial system. On the national level, there are three different operating radio companies: *France Radio*, *RFO* and *RFI*. Radio France runs several national radio station networks, such as *Radio France*, with general interest programming; *France Info*, an all-news station; *France Musique*, with classical music; and *Radio Bleue*, which targets senior citizens. There are also a few all-music stations in some cities. Given the lack of commercials, these radio stations sound very different from their commercial counterparts. (Television Across Europe 2005, 673.)

In a February 2007 barometer, *NJR* was the most popular radio channel in France with an audience share of 30%, followed by *Chérie* and *RTL* (Media Radio 2007). The public service radio channels have altogether an audience share of approximately 25%. (Finnish Mass Media 2006, 263.) Other major commercial stations of general interest are *Europe 1* and *RMC Info*. The most popular thematic channels are *NRJ*, *Fun Radio*, *Skyrock*, and *Nostalgie*.



### Ownerships in Commercial Broadcasting

*Groupe Lagardère* owns *Europe 1*, which in turn owns *Europe 2* and 95% of *RFM*, nine thematic television channels, and a range of distribution and production companies. *Vivendi Universal* owns the *Canal+* Group, participating in film distribution and production. *Vivendi* also publishes magazines, periodicals, books, and music. In 2002 *Vivendi* was the world's third largest media company by media turnover and activities. *Groupe Bouygues* owns 41.3% of the TF1 group; the conglomerate also owns and participates in TV channels including *TF1*, *LCI*, *TF6*, *Eurosport*, *Odyssee*, and *TV Breich*. As for radio, the *RTL* group owns *RTL France*, *Fun Radio*, and *RTL 2*, as well as 48.3% of the TV channel *M6*, which in turn owns different channels and media companies. *NJR*, *Chérie FM*, *Nostalgie*, and *Rire et Chansons* – all radio channels – are owned by the *Groupe NJR*. (Television Across Europe 2005, 633; Finnish Mass Media 2006, 253.)

### Newspapers and Periodicals

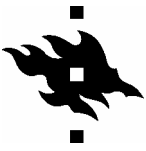
French daily newspapers have distribution of around 8,700, 000 copies, a relatively small number compared to other large Western European countries. Worldwide, France is situated in 31st place, with 167 newspaper exemplars per 1000 inhabitants. There are three national newspapers circulating in France: *Libération*, *Le Monde*, and *Le Figaro* (listed in order of political tendency from left to right). All are operating from Paris and cover only 25% of the daily newspaper market. The percentage is quite low, given France's longstanding centralist tradition in other societal fields. Of these three major papers, only *Le Figaro* is a broadsheet, *Libération* is tabloid-sized, and *Le Monde's* size is somewhere in the middle. (Portail-Presses.com 2004.)

Other nationwide publications are *Les Echos* and *La Tribune*, financial papers, and those specialised in sports, *L'Équipe* and *Paris Turf*. None of the French daily newspapers is of the sensationalist yellow press. There are also 55 regional newspapers, whose sales are much more stable than the sales of national papers. The Largest regional newspapers are *Ouest France*, based in Rennes; *Sud Ouest* in Bordeaux; *Le Voix du Nord* in Lille; *Le Progrès* in Lyon; and *Le Dauphiné libéré*, in Grenoble. (Ibid.)

### Daily circulation of selected newspapers in 2004:

<i>Le Monde</i>	330, 768
<i>Le Figaro</i>	329, 721
<i>Libération</i>	139, 479
<i>L'Équipe</i>	355, 135

(Portail-Presses.com 2004.)



## Periodicals

The French do not read newspapers as often as their neighbouring nations, but they are among the biggest readers of periodicals, with magazine reading increasing until 2002 (with 1200 per thousand people). However, the number has been decreasing since 2002. The magazine sector has a circulation of nearly three billion copies per year. (French Media Landscape 2007.)

In the magazine market, there are 590 weekly or biweekly publications, 1,350 monthlies, and 1,570 quarterlies. There are also successful exemplars of general interest magazines, such as *Paris Match* (707,000), *Le Nouvel Observateur* (544,000), and *L'Express* (544,000); some 170 local weekly newspapers; and the relatively mild tabloid press with for example *France Dimanche* (575,000), *Ici Paris* (442,000), and *Voici* (575,000). However, the periodical publications with the biggest distribution are all television magazines: *Télé 7 Jours* (1,873,000), *Télé Z* (1,815,000), and *Télé Loisirs* (1,521,000). (Portail-Presses.com 2004.)

*Le Canard Enchaîné* (430,000), a satirical and investigative weekly magazine should also be mentioned. It is known for not having any advertisements and its owners do not belong to any political or economic group. *Le Canard* focuses on scandals in the governmental, juridical, administrative, and business circles in France. Fairly anti-clerical and left-wing, *Le Canard* is well informed about what is going on in the French political world. (Ibid.)

## Ownerships in the Press

There are only a few major press groups left, which publish newspapers and magazines, and the French print press world is characterised by battles between them. The Dassault Group, active also in the aviation and military industry, owns 83% of Socpresse which publishes for example *Le Figaro* and many other local titles. Dassault's major opponent is the Lagardère Group, which owns the largest magazine publisher in the world, the Filipacchi Médias Group, and major French publishing houses.

Other French newspaper groups are Le Monde Group, publishing 43 titles and publishing *Le Monde*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, and *Le Courrier International*; Ouest-France Group, publisher of *Ouest-France* and owner of 40 weeklies; Amaury Group, publisher of *Le Parisien / Aujourd'hui* and *L'Équipe*; and Bayard Presse, owner of a hundred small magazines and publisher of *La Croix*. (European Journalism Centre 2007.)



### Internet and Mobile Services

Compared to other European countries, the French were quite slow to use the Internet, a lag that has been blamed on their unique system of Minitel, which lasted well into the late 1990s. Today, however France holds the second place in European Internet connections. The number of Internet users is still growing fast, and high-speed connections are becoming more and more usual. In October 2006, 52.9% of the population had been connected to the Internet during the previous month. The number had increased by 9% from October 2005. (L'Observatoire des usages Internet 2006.)

Especially among the young, the Internet seems to be rapidly taking over traditional media. All major TV and radio channels and newspapers have their own websites and have prepared for the change to the digital age remarkably well. The biggest operator is *Orange* (formerly known as *Wanadoo*), with 46% market share, followed by *Free*, with a share of 19%. (Ibid.)

### Mobile Phones

Mobile telephone communication is becoming increasingly popular in France. In all, there were approximately 45 million mobile telephone owners in 2005 the biggest operator being *Orange* (by 47.8%); the second biggest *SFR*, with 35.8%; and the third biggest, *Bouygues Télécom*, with 16.9% . (Journal du Net, Chiffres clés opérateurs mobiles 2006.) According to *l'Arcep* (*Autorité de régulation des télécommunications*), the French Telecommunications Regulator, a fast-growing field in mobile communication is multimedia services – there has been a 25% increase in one year ( June. 05 – 06), with 13 million multimedia service subscribers in 2006.

### Cinema

The French system for financing films is unique in Europe. Major TV channels (*TF1*, *M6*, *France 2* and *France 3*) must allocate 3.2% of their turnover to cinema (including at least 2.5% to French films). For each channel, this represents 20 to 30 films and 30 to 50 million euros. Fifty percent of the films broadcast must be French films. For example, *Canal+* is obliged to devote 20% of its turnover to buy the rights of films. (Observatoire Européen Audiovisuel 2007.)

France is the only Western country where foreign films represent less than 50% of the market. The market share of national movies is 39% and the yearly audience of films in cinemas is around 195 million. With each cinema ticket, an 11% tax is allocated to the "*Fonds de Soutien*", which is a



financial State advance on all French films, open also to foreign films provided they are co-produced with a French producer. As a result of this policy, the French film industry comes third in the world after the US (with 500 films per year) and India (with 800 films per year). France is clearly the strongest movie producer in Europe with more than 160 films a year and the largest market share of nationally produced films in Europe. (Ibid.)

## Books

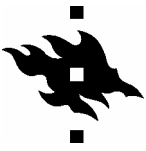
According to the statistics of French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the production and marketing of books is doing well in France. The total value of the book market is nearly 2, 750,000 euros (2005). In 2006, the market of books in volumes decreased by 0.7% from the previous year. The final number of individual copies sold in 2005 was 460,500,000 copies, with an increase of 2% compared to the previous year. 28.3% of all books sold were paperbacks. The average edition of a single book was 7,587 copies. The book market is divided among books shops (26.7%), specialised big companies such as *FNAC* (21.7%), and non-specialised companies (20.7%). The Internet does not yet play a big role in the French book market: only 5.4% of books are sold via the Internet. (Ministère de Culture et Communication 2007.)

### 1.5 Media Reception and Consumption

The French are not falling behind their European neighbours within media consumption. A long tradition of cinema and film-making is still apparent in the media consumption statistics, but newer forms of media such as the Internet and DVDs may decrease the consumption of traditional films in cinemas.

Compared to the European average, the French spend 9 minutes less time in front of the TV each day. The European average is 3 hours and 33 minutes. The number of newspaper readers is still declining. The national newspapers especially are losing readers – one possible reason for this may be the appearance of free newspapers (*20 Minutes, Metro*) in the largest cities. By comparison, magazine and book markets are doing well; as over 50% of the French population report reading regularly both different magazines and books. (MaTelevision.com, Audience television 2007.)

The newest forms of media, the Internet and mobile services, are growing fast particularly among the young. Yet only 43% of the total population have an Internet connection at home ( January



2007). (Journal du Net, Population d'Internautees 2007.) The influence of the Internet is expected to grow significantly in the coming years.

#### Television and Radio

94.8% of the total population of France own a TV (L'INSEE 2004) and an average Frenchman watches television 3 hours and 24 minutes a day (Médiamétrie Annuel 2006). People over 50 watch approximate 3 hours and 39 minutes of TV each day. In the age group 15 – 49, the time spent watching TV each day is beneath the average: 3 hours and 4 minutes. French children of the age 4 – 14 watch TV an average 2 hours and 6 minutes daily.

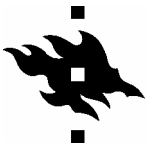
On a yearly level, the viewing time is divided among fiction TV (23.2% of total viewing time), magazines or documentary programs (19.8%), news and information (15.6%), games (10.5%), films (6.3%), and sport programs (4.6%). (MaTelevision.com, Audience chart 2004.) According to the Médiamat yearly study, France's most popular TV program of 2006 was the World Cup football match on *TF1*. Broadcast on 5 July 2006, it had an audience of 22, 199, 760 spectators.

Radio is an important medium in France: A study by the European Journalism Centre in 2005 showed that 98.3% of French households own at least one radio, and 84.4% of the population above the age 13 listen to the radio on a daily basis. The average time spent listening to the radio is 174 minutes on weekdays. (MediaRadio, Chiffres Clés 2007.) Radio is also the medium that reaches people outside their homes: according to European research, "Radio Key Facts 2000", 10% of the French listened to radio at their workplace and 15% in their cars.

In 2006, the French company Médiamétrie researched new ways of listening to radio: 43.2% of the French over 13 years old listen to the radio via Internet. 10.9% use an mp3- player to listen to radio; and 4.8% have tried to listen to the radio through their mobile phones. (Médiamétrie 2006.)

#### The Press

The numbers of newspaper readers in France have been decreasing for years. In 2003, 17.5% of the French (approximately 8, 300, 000) read a national newspaper every day – one out of five in the French population. Over half of newspaper readers are men – in 2003 the percentage was 61% and quite young: 33% of readers were under 35 and two were out of three under 50 years old. The



average reading time for national newspapers was 31 minutes per day, and 71% read the daily paper before 2 p.m. each day. (Portail Presse 2003.)

For regional newspapers, the number of readers is greater: approximately 18 million Frenchmen read one regional newspaper each day. Regional papers reach 61% of the population in Bretagne and 58.6% of the people in Alsace, but only 17.4% of the population in the Ile-de-France (Paris) area. In 2003, 19.8% ( 7, 275, 000 persons) of French read a weekly publication regularly. In this field, over half of the readers (52.3%) are women, and 55.6% are less than 50 years old. (Ibid.)

#### Periodicals

Of the audience of over 15 year old, 61.4% read at least one magazine every day. On a monthly basis, 97.6% of the same population say they read at least one. The average Frenchman reads 7, 26 different magazines monthly and returns to the same magazine approximately 4,6 times. TV program magazines are consulted approximately eight times per month and other weeklies 2,2 times per month. Magazine reading takes place mostly at home (84.9%), or sometimes at friends' or relatives' homes (6.6%), occasionally at the workplace (3.7%) or in a waiting room (2.3%). (Portail Presse, L'Audience de la presse magazine 2004-2005.)

#### Internet and Mobile Services

In January 2007, there were approximately 28 million Internet users in France. 53% were men and 47% women. 43% of French people have an Internet connection at home, and in four out of five cases the connection is a high-speed one. In the age group 35-49, 29% were Internet users in 2006. Among the group of 15 to 24 year olds, 24% used the Internet. In the group aged 50 and older, 22% were Internet users. (Journal du Net, Population d'internautes 2007.)

The French use the Internet mostly at home or at work: in 2006, 84% said they were using the Internet at home; and 38% used it at work. Only 12% used the Internet at schools or other educational institutions and 6% in public places. The Internet was mostly used to search for information (64%), to consult an Internet bank (53%), or to use instant messaging (42%). 19% have downloaded MP3-files and 13% have played online games.



The Internet is not a favourite place to shop yet: 30% of French people do trust online transactions, and 32.3% have bought a product or used a service on the Internet. (Journal du Net, Les usages du Web par les Internauts 2007.)

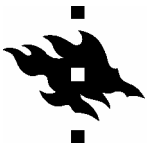
#### Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are also becoming more and more popular. Nearly 80% of French homes have at least one mobile phone. 92% of French young people (aged 11 - 20) think that mobile phones are part of modern everyday life, and 78% of young people think that a mobile phone is actually more than just a simple phone. (Journal du Net, Profil des utilisateurs de mobile 2006.) According to a MédiaMétirie study of converging media use, the use of mobile phones to surf the Internet is increasing: more than one of two mobile phone users have access to the Internet on their mobile phones, and more than 1 in 10 users have a 3G-phone. 60% of French mobile phone users have downloaded a logo or a ringing tone, and 38% have used an information service by means of their mobile. (MédiaMétirie, Nouvelle synthèse des Médias 2007.)

#### Cinema and Books

In 2006, 60.2% of the French over the age of six had seen a film in a cinema during the previous 12 months. There was a slight increase from the previous year in the numbers: in 2005, the percentage was 58.6. The most frequent cinema audience consisted of 15 – 24 year old, well educated people living either in the Paris area or in cities with more than 200, 000 inhabitants. However, a large percentage of the French cinema audience comes from a large number of occasional members – those who go to the cinema less than once a month. In 2006, there were 21.6 million of these, an increase of 1,4 million from 2005. In 2006 the cinema audience consisted of 49.3% men and 50.7% women, and the biggest socio-economical group was students. (MédiaMétirie, 75000 cinema Enquête 2006.)

The French are also quite enthusiastic about books; 79% of French over 15 have read at least one book in the last 12 months (comic books included), while 38% have read 1 to 9 books, 25% have read 10 to 24 books, and 15% have read more than 25 books. In all age groups, women tend to read more than men – in a survey done by l' INSEE, 50% of men said they did not read at all, compared to 29% of women. Apart from buying books, the French also use libraries. In 2004 there were 164,9 million books borrowed from municipal libraries and 13,4 books borrowed from university libraries. (L' INSEE France en faits et chiffres 2006.)



## 2 Research Institutions and Organisations

This chapter starts with an overview of the French university system, which is mainly based on public funding. The academic institutions have an independent status, but ultimately they are under state control through evaluation and through a governmental institution that supervises the quality of academic research and makes nominations for vacant positions. The second section in the chapter presents a short history of the discipline of Infocom, since its founding in 1975; the field really began to develop, however, in the 1990s. The definition of the field is still very broad and includes approaches from disciplines that in some other countries would be separated from communication and media studies. The third section introduces the most important academic institutions in the domain of information and communication sciences. It is characteristic that they all have an “interdisciplinary” profile. Also the foundations, institutions, and associations in the field are presented. The fourth section gives an account of private research agencies and companies, which are separated from the academic world – with the exception of France Telecom R&D. The fifth section gives an overview of the wide range of academic journals in the field of French Infocom. The sixth and the last section of the chapter explains the three main sources of funding for academic research in the field of communication and media. These are the State, public calls for bids, and contract research.

### 2.1 The French University System

Academic research in media and communication in France takes place in universities and polytechnical schools (*grandes écoles*). Both are public-funded institutions, but the polytechnical schools are fewer in number and often have a higher status. University is open to all citizens, whereas the polytechnical schools are able to select their students, and therefore able to limit the number of students per teacher. The faculty in both universities and polytechnical schools conduct both teaching and research. The higher university posts are called *professeurs des universités*. Most of the post doctoral posts are teacher-researchers (*enseignant-chercheurs*), which are called *maître de conférence*. Moreover, there are assistant posts such as ATER (*Attachés temporaires d'enseignants et de recherche*), which are reserved for doctorants and post doctorals students.



The French universities, academic research groups, and laboratories are financed and regulated by the Ministry of Research (*Ministère de l'Éducation, l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche*), which defines and institutionalises all the scientific disciplines through a national council of universities called *Le conseil national des universités* (CNU).

Separated from the universities are the public scientific research centres, *EPSTs* (*Etablissements publics, scientifiques et techniques*), whose purpose is to focus only on research. One of the main EPST's is the National Centre for Scientific Research (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, or *CNRS*). It is a government-funded research organisation under the administrative authority of France's Ministry of Research. It is the most valued research institution in the land and has a total of 30, 000 researchers in six research departments, two national institutes, 19 regional offices to ensure decentralized direct management of laboratories, and 1,256 research and service units (90% of which are joint laboratories) (<http://www2.cnrs.fr>).

CNRS is composed of sections in which most academic disciplines are represented. "This breakdown is adapted regularly to changes in science and disciplinary fields via adjustments to the number of sections, and their headings. There have been 40 sections since 1991. The 40 sections evaluate the work of researchers and research units." (ibid.) However, information and communication sciences do not have a section within the CNRS.

Often university teachers and professors have an affiliation to one of the research laboratories of CNRS through their research interests. Faculty are employed directly by their universities but for collaborative research they use the laboratories of the CNRS. There are also so-called mixed research units (*Unité mixte de Recherche*, or *UMR*), in which the staff and funding are drawn from various resources. The research laboratories are often "*les laboratoires mixte*" financed by several institutions. Some research laboratories are recognised by the CNRS, which gives them some funding and research staff. There are also researchers who are employed directly by the CNRS, who do not have any teaching obligation. This is considered a good position, since it enables individuals to focus on scientific research and publishing. But in the teaching posts contact with students is also valued.



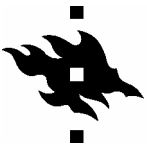
## 2.2 A Short History of Information and Communication Sciences

At the institutional level the history of communication studies is relatively short in France. The birth of the discipline was connected to the development and increase in the professions of information and communication at the beginning of the 1970s (Jeanneret 2001, 5). However, research in communication emerged already in the 1960s, thanks to a few pioneers such as Georges Friedman, Roland Barthes, and Edgar Morin. Friedman studied technological means of communication and mass media culture; Roland Barthes analysed advertisements and mass media semiologically; and Edgar Morin began studying the cinema and cultural industries from a sociological point of view. In 1962 the three of them created a centre for studying mass communication *Le Centre d'études des communications de masse* (CECMAS) within the famous *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS) in Paris. (Morin 2004, 77-78; Averbek 2005, 3.)

Even before CECMAS, the first of the forerunners in the institutional field was the *Institut Français de Presse* (IFP) at the University of Assas, also in Paris, which was founded in 1951. The IFP had its origins in historical and juridical background and focused on a social science approach to communication studies beginning in the 1970s, whereas CECMAS developed a semiotic and culturalist approach. The CECMAS approach has significantly influenced and given emphasis to contemporary communication research. (Averbek 2005, 3.)

In the 1970s a group of founders of the academic discipline of information and communication started seeking institutional recognition for a certain number of teachers working in the field. Among the pioneers were Robert Escarpit, Jean Meyriat, Roland Barthes, Fernand Terrou, and Abraham Moles, a group representing diverse scientific fields. On their initiative the CNU, which then was called CCU (*Conseil consultatif des universités*), started preparing for the founding of a new section in the council of academic disciplines. Meanwhile, the scholars held their founding meeting in February 1972 in the *Maison des sciences de l'homme* (MSH). In this meeting it was decided to call the field *Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication* (SIC or Infocom), Information and Communication Sciences. After several institutional procedures Infocom was officially established as an academic discipline by the CCU in January 1975. (Averbek 2005, 3; Boure 2006, 251; Lancien et al. 2001, 37-38; for more on the history of Infocom, see Boure 2002, 2005, and 2006.)

Shortly after the new discipline of Infocom was founded the first universities implemented teaching programmes at the graduate level. These universities were l'EPHE (which is now called *École des*

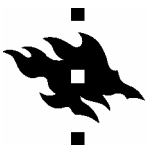


*hautes études en sciences sociales*), Bordeaux III, Grenoble III (GRESEC), Paris II (IFP), and Nice. The University of Bordeaux was the first one to give the *maîtrise* degree in communication, in 1971. The doctoral diploma had to wait, until 1984, when the third cycle of Infocom became institutionalised. (Lancien et al. 2001, 37-38; Cardy & Froissart 2006, 259).

In 1978 the research association in the field, *Société française des sciences de l'information et communication* (SFSIC), was founded. Since then, the SFSIC has organised conferences every second year to bring together researchers, teachers, professionals, and doctoral students of Infocom. (Lancien et al. 2001, 39.)

Nevertheless, the research on Infocom was quiet throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In 1982 two French researchers, Armand Mattelart and Yves Stourdzé, raised the question the delay in carrying out French communication research compared to the Anglo-Saxon countries. They made a report, entitled *Technologie, culture et communication*, on the state of Infocom in France, which had been commanded by the Ministry of Research and Industry. The authors complained that despite all the economic, industrial, and cultural input, the field of communication was still hardly visible in the organisational structure of French academia. This absence was contrasted to the pervading presence of communication and new information and communication technology in contemporary society, in political debates, and in everyday life. The researchers expressed concern over the technological hype taking over serious reflections on social implications of technology. The authors proposed a series of suggestions for organising the field. (Lancien et al. 2001, 39; Pineau 1999, 6; see further Mattelart 2001.)

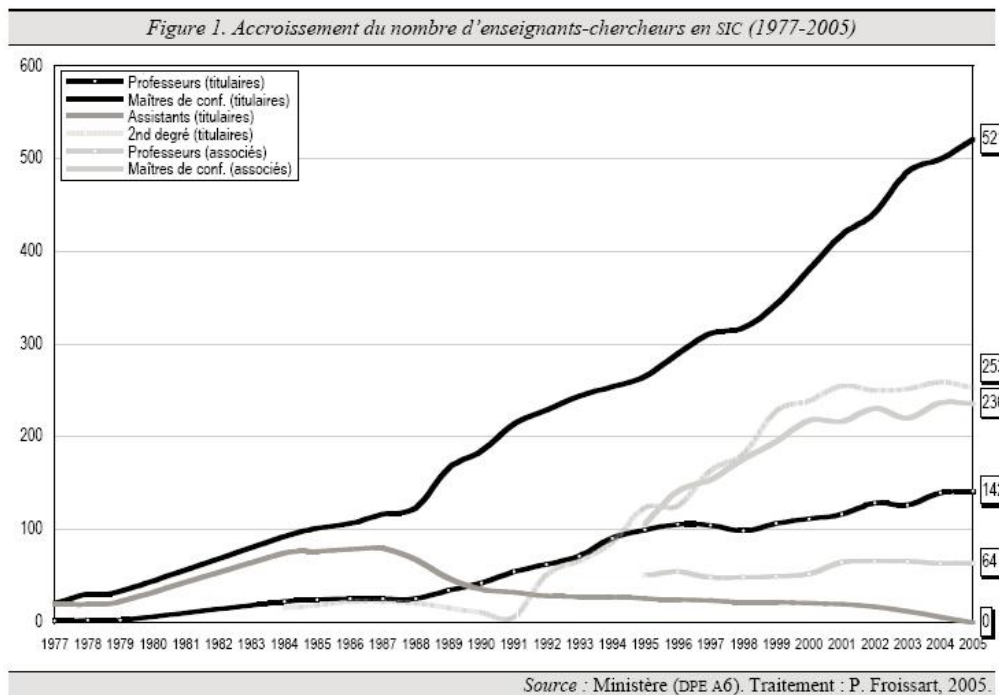
Ten years later, in 1993, the evaluation report on the field of Infocom by *Le Comité national d'évaluation* (CNE) claimed that progress had been made, despite the scattering of research over several sections and the refusal of the national research centre CNRS to provide any place for researchers in information and communication. The number of researchers and university departments had augmented. But even today the CNRS has not recognised communication as an independent field of research among its disciplinary sections. The importance of communication has not been ignored, but media and communication have continued to serve as objects of research for many studies within several traditional research disciplines rather than as a discipline in itself. (Lancien et al. 2001, 39. )



Within the CNRS there has been research in the field of communication, for example, since 1988 in the *Laboratoire communication et politique* of CNRS, and between 2001 and 2006 in *Sciences et techniques de l'information et de la communication* (STIC). (Ibid. 39-40). At first the focus of STIC was to explore the issues of communication from the technological point of view, but in 2006 the laboratory began cooperation with the Social Studies and Humanities Department of CNRS, and became called GDR TICS (*Science de Technologie de l'Information et de la Communication et Société*). Recently, in October 2006, the new *Institut des sciences de la communication du CNRS* (ISCC) was inaugurated ([www.iscc.fr\\_eng.html](http://www.iscc.fr_eng.html).) However, many distinguished scholars in the field are not satisfied with creation of the institute, which has a lesser status than a laboratory. There is still debate around the full recognition of Infocom, which emphasises the social and humane aspects of information and communication.

The growth of the discipline of Infocom can be seen in the number of teacher-researchers, which was very low in 1975. From 1977 to 2005 the number of posts in Infocom has augmented annually by 10%, starting from 43 teacher-researchers in 1977 up to 663 in 2005 (521 maître de conférences and 142 professors)(see Figure 2). The number of academic posts in Infocom has surpassed such fields as philosophy and political science, and is close to sociology and linguistics. (Cardy & Froissart 2006, 261-262). Still there are fewer professorial posts (21% of all posts) compared to the average (31%), for all disciplines, which means that the resources in the field are still very much tied to teaching. (Ibid. 267.)

Figure 2.



(Cardy & Froissart 2006, 262.)

As to gender in the academic posts of Infocom, in 2005 52% of teacher-researchers were male and 73% professors were male. Thus, female professors are in the minority (27%). Yet, this is still closer to equality than the median in French universities (Ibid, 277.)

CNU - Le Conseil National des Universités

Before applying for doctoral posts (*maître de conférences, professeur des universités*) in the universities or research centres, French doctorates have to pass a qualification examination given by the national council of universities, *Le Conseil National des Universités* (CNU). The CNU members are designated by the Ministry of Higher Education, *Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur*. The task of this council is to define the existing academic disciplines and to accept the teacher-researchers to each field of science. The CNU has 77 sections representing all the academic disciplines, out of which *Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication* is the 71<sup>st</sup>. The council of the 71<sup>st</sup> section is responsible for defining the field of Infocom selecting the teacher-researchers on the basis of their applications. The CNU then gives a certification or proficiency rating to each applicant, so that they can apply for posts as *maîtres de conférences* or professors. (CP-CNU 2006, 4.) This means that the doctorates cannot apply for the academic posts in France without certification rating from the CNU. The certification is



valid for four years; if the applicant does not find a post, then she/he has to reapply for the certification.

In 2006 there were 230 applications for the certification of *maitres de conférences* and 60 were accepted. The same year there were 41 applicants for the proficiency rating for professorships and 13 were accepted. (Ibid, 10.) This shows that the selection is strict and creates competition among the applicants. To be qualified, the applicants must pass two "filters": first, the certification for the discipline (Is the applicant's research to be defined as communication research or research in another discipline?). Second, the applicant's research qualifications are evaluated. The definition of the discipline and the criteria for evaluating the qualifications of the different levels of teacher and researcher posts are open to the public at the website of the 71<sup>st</sup> section of CNU. According to the document on the qualification session in 2007, the discipline of Infocom is defined as follows:

- studies of information and communication, the nature of phenomena and its practices, and the various approaches that are applied to research in the areas including
- process, production, usage, consumption, and reception of information and communication, processes of mediation and mediatization
- studies of the individual and institutional actors in the field of information and communication, the professionals (the journalists in particular), and their practices
- studies of information, its contents and systems and from the angle of representations, significations or practices connected to them
- studies of the various aspects of media, communication, and the cultural industries.

The field is defined as interdisciplinary, and thus the methods and approaches may be diverse. But every study should be based on one of the already defined and existing methodologies. It is not enough that the researcher uses media or communication products as research data or material, but the composition of the study needs to have an angle specific to information and communication studies. Neither does any practical work on media and communication as such qualify as research in Infocom. (CP-CNU 2006, 2; CNU 71 Sciences de l'information et de la communication 2007.)

It is a French peculiarity that the information sciences and a range of culturalist traditions are combined in media and communication studies. This causes a great heterogeneity in the field and complicates its definition. Therefore, to clarify, research on the following topics is included in the domain of Infocom: economic intelligence, territorial intelligence, collective intelligence, medical information, geographical information, automatic data processing of languages, lexicography, infometrics, online services (e-learning, e-commerce, e-governing, etc.), man-machine interfaces, the



semantics of the Web, statistics management etc., cinema, audiovisual spectacles, arts, literary products, editing, design, etc., museums, libraries, archives, other cultural institutions etc. (CP-CNU 2006, 3.)

The board of the Infocom section of CNU consists of 24 persons. Two-thirds of the board members are elected by those on the list of the syndicates of national education. There are quotas for sex, geographical region, different sectors of the discipline, and also different types of academic institutions. The remaining one-third of the board members are nominated by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. However, the academics charge that these nominations often vary, depending on the political orientation of the French government. The CNU has been created to fulfil the function of protecting the university system from favouritism, nepotism, and localism. But governmental politics influence the functioning of the CNU and indeed, all fields of research. Owing to the political nominations, the representativeness of the quotas of the CNU councils are not always balanced; moreover, critics say that personal contacts influence the Ministry's nominations, and the persons elected often have a visible weakness in the scientific arena.

The last presidents of the 71<sup>st</sup> Section of CNU, Bernard Miège, Jean François Tétu, and the current president Viviane Couzinet, have been working to make the process of evaluation more transparent. Infocom has not been indexed in the national research databases; therefore the current president, Couzinet (who comes from information sciences) is working to have the publications of Infocom indexed in INIST (*l'Institut pour l'information scientifique et technique*), which produces databases for all the research in France.<sup>1</sup>

#### Researcher Training

In undergraduate-level French university teaching in the fields of social sciences and humanities is based mainly on mass lectures and courses. There is a lack of resources in under graduate level teaching, while the numbers of students are large. The university's focus is on fostering and developing the doctoral education. Ph.D. students pursue their dissertation work under the supervision of professors; thus *maîtres de conférences* do not have the right to supervise doctoral students (this situation is different from other countries). There are particular workshops and

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<sup>1</sup> There is a *Pascal* database for publications in the hard sciences and *Francis* for humanistic and social sciences. A section of Sciences de l'Information will be in *Pascal* and also in *Francis* by the summer 2007, and it will integrate journals in communication as well. But at the moment only the works and journals in information sciences have been indexed in the database, not those in communication and media studies.



symposia organised for doctoral students. In some departments the doctoral students may get financial help to attend national or international doctoral summer schools or conferences.

There are only a few academic posts for doctoral students (e.g. the post of *monitorat*, equivalent to a research associate), and the doctoral students employed by the university do a lot of teaching besides working on their Ph.D. research. Scholarships are rare, but some private firms give grants or employ doctoral students in company projects. Also the departments and research laboratories may apply for projects in the national or international calls for bids and hire doctoral students. In general, the French scholars interviewed say that it is difficult to find financing for doctoral dissertation work, and the financial circumstances of Ph.D. students are often unstable and insecure. Some of the doctoral students work in the industrial sector at the same time they pursue their dissertations. But the university fees are very low since the universities are funded by the state. The number of doctoral and post doctoral students has augmented in the field of Infocom. The writing of the dissertation is expected to take three years, but for many, four to six years are needed.

### 2.3 Academic Research Institutions

There is also important research being conducted within the sociological research unit of France Telecom R&D, which nowadays functions on a commercial basis. Moreover, there are networks of researchers as well as private research and consultation agencies. The ministries or other institutions in the public sector may also command reports or surveys to serve the purpose of informing politicians and give justification for their governing actions. (Lancien et al. 2001, 42.)

It is usual for communication research to be found in many departments and research centres that do not have communication as their main focus. The fields that touch upon the questions of communication range from humanities to engineering sciences; they can be found among the disciplines of social studies, political science, history, economy, law, anthropology, literature studies, industrial arts, educational sciences, geography, philosophy and psychology. (See *ibid.* 43.) Such variety makes an exhaustive mapping of the research institutions impossible within the parameters of this study, and only some of the most important institutions are presented here.<sup>2</sup> The information

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<sup>2</sup> Some efforts have been made to provide more systematic information on institutions involved with Infocom in France on the website <http://www.webinfocom.msh-paris.fr/index.htm>, but the site is still under construction.



on the most important institutions was gathered mainly through interviews with French scholars and web searches.

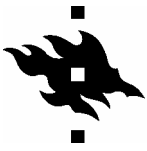
#### Important Academic Research Institutions

Many of the universities and research institutions are centred in the capital area, as is usual in many other countries. But there are quite a few important research units in other parts of France as well. The leading institution in the field of information and communication, the laboratory of GRESEC, is located in the city of Grenoble, which is situated in the Alps region. Bordeaux has the longest tradition of higher education in communication, and there are lively research groups in the universities of Avignon, Caen, Lille, Lyon, Metz, Nice, Rennes, and Toulouse. Only a few of the most important institutions are presented here (for a more extensive list, see Appendix 2).

The national research centre CNRS has several laboratories that are involved in communication research. Most of them are situated in the capital area of Paris. *GDR TICS (Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication et Société)* is a research group focused on technologies of information and communication which takes into account social practices. This group was created as a joint venture of the departments of SHS (*Sciences Humaines et Sociales*) and STIC (*Sciences et Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication*) in 2002 and was re-organised in 2006. Its goal is to facilitate interdisciplinary exchange between the social and technical sciences; it also analyses the economic and social transformations associated with the diffusion of technology of information and communication. The group unites mainly the laboratories of economy, sociology, management, and information and communication. It is also associated with researchers in anthropology, history, law and political sciences. (<http://gdrtics.u-paris10.fr/index.php>.)

Other laboratories for example, include ITEM (UPR 7, *l'Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes*), which uses the approach of linguistics and literature studies, and LAU (UPR 34 *Laboratoire d'Anthropologie urbaine*), which focuses on urban anthropology and communication studied as part of urban culture and society. There is also some research on information and communication sciences in the laboratory of *Politique, pouvoir et organisation* (see section 40).

French communication scholars had been expecting CNRS to establish a laboratory for information and communication ever since the 1980s. In November 2006 *L'Institut des sciences de la communication*



*du CNRS* (ISCC) was finally established. The founder, Dominique Wolton<sup>3</sup>, is the former director of the laboratory *Communication et Politique* (UPR 36, CNRS), which focuses on political phenomena and their mediation from the perspective of political science (The laboratory is now directed by Isabelle Veyrat-Masson). The new institute of communication has set itself a goal of developing the field of research in communication studies, creating posts, and research laboratories in connection with French and international universities, and supporting and validating the previous research on communication without disciplinary status. On the institute's web site it is stated that communication concerns the great majority of scientific departments of CNRS and that social and humanist sciences have an active role to play in this research. The five main focus areas proposed for the institute are:

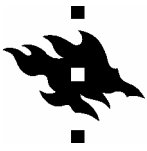
1. Language and Communication
  2. Political Communication, Public Sphere and Society
  3. Globalisation and Cultural Diversity
  4. Scientific and Technological Information
  5. Science, Technology and Societies
- (for a more detailed account of the focal areas, see [http://www.iscc.fr/index\\_eng.html](http://www.iscc.fr/index_eng.html))

The new institute has developed a questionnaire for evaluating and validating the *Sciences de la communication au CNRS*, and it has organised colloquia and workshops concerning the relationship between the institute and Infocom in France. (<http://institutdelacomunication.atspace.org/>)

CNRS is also participating in providing resources for several research centres and groups that are joint ventures with the universities, called mixed units (*unite mixte*). An example of a mixed unit is the interdisciplinary research laboratory LATTS (*Le laboratoire Techniques, Territoires et Sociétés*), which mainly uses a general social studies approach, but also works on questions in communication. LATTS is financed by CNRS and, *l'Université de Marne-la-Vallée* (which is situated in the suburban area of Paris), and by *l'École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, ministère de l'Équipement*, of CNRS, (sections *Espaces, territoires et sociétés et Politique, pouvoir et organisation*). It has gathered some 30 researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds (in town planning, economy, ergonomics, geography, management, history, political science, sociology) and 30 doctoral students. The laboratory's emphasis is on technology and sociology. LATTS works more with companies than

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<sup>3</sup> Dominique Wolton is also the editor-in-chief of the journal *Hermès*, which started life as a publication of the laboratory of *Communication et Politique*.



with universities, and concentrates on such themes as usages of new technology in companies and professional life. (<http://latts.cnrs.fr/site/index.php>)

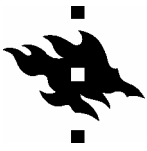
Departments and research groups at universities and polytechnics in the Paris region are several. The French press institute *IFP (Institut Français de Presse)* in *Université Assas-Paris 2* is the oldest research institution focused on media in France. The institution's main focus was on journalism, but since 1951 the focus has been broadened to other genres and more broadly on mass media (TV, radio, new media, and communication technology), all the media phenomena. The IFP has five disciplines law, economy, sociology, history, and semiology, therefore, the curricula and the research approaches used interdisciplinary. The institution has several master's programmes that follow the main focus of the research; they also have a professional master's programme in journalism. IFP also has a research laboratory *CARISM (Centre d'analyse et de Recherche interdisciplinaires sur les médias)*, which has the status of *équipe d'accueil*, funding standard recognised by the Ministry of Research. The laboratory unites 25 teacher-researchers from IFP, researchers with external funding, and approximately 100 doctoral students. The institute and *CARISM* are directed by Josiane Jouët, who is known for her research on media usages. The research areas research in *CARISM* are divided into four: 1. the system of media production, 2. the globalisation of the media and communication, 3. mediatisation of the public space, and 4. convergence of usages of information and communication technology.

The university of *Paris Nord (Paris 13)* has a department of *Sciences de la communication, Sciences humaines et des humanités*, which is considered one of the most important institutions of Infocom in France. Its focal areas are communication, cultural industries, public space, media and information society. Its director, Pierre Moeglin, is one of the pioneers in Infocom and considered to be one of the leading figures in communication research in France. The institutions works in co-operation with *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Paris Nord (MSH Paris Nord)*, and with the *Université Paris 8*, department of *Culture et Communication (UFR CC, headed by Martine Poupon-Buffière)*. Within the department of CC is a research laboratory of *CEMTI or Centre d'Etudes sur les Médias, les Technologies et l'Internationalisation*, which until 2004 was directed by Professor Armand Mattelart<sup>4</sup>.

The *CEMTI* research group combines researchers and teachers from *MSH, Paris 8*, and other institutions, e.g., *Paris 13*, as well as researchers from foreign countries. *CEMTI* emphasises analysis

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<sup>4</sup> Mattelart is one of the few French scholars in the field of Infocom who is known worldwide and whose works have been translated into several languages.



of media and communication within a social context and from multiple perspectives. Since 2001 the research group CEMTI has been an *équipe d'accueil*. The area interests of CEMTI and its co-operation partners are:

- History, politics and media analysis
- Territories and globalisation
- Cultural industries and industries of information, the arts, and education
- Usages and new technologies from various perspectives (TICN Technologies d'information et de la communication numériques)

(<http://com-media.univ-paris8.fr/recherche.htm>)

The Université *Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris 3)* has three departments in the field of communication studies: communication, arts & culture, and cinema. The research group of CIM (*Communication, information, media*) is a *équipe d'accueil* recognised by the *Ministère de la Recherche* (Ministry of Research) since 1994. CIM unites researchers and doctoral students from the department of communication, other academic institutions, and other research centres. CIM's profile is broad and follows the lines of the definition of the CNU of the 71<sup>st</sup> section of Infocom. It also combines other disciplines (such as psychology, semiology, philosophy), which deal with communication questions. The crossing of disciplines is encouraged and the main topics of research are, among others history, geopolitics, media education, identities, the traditional and new media, representations, reception, communication aesthetics, and languages of communication. CIM is directed by Dr. Michael Palmer who is specialised in media history.

Communication studies are also represented in the department of English within the section language and area studies in *Sorbonne 3*. The department has a long tradition of film studies and recently it has broadened its perspective into communication studies, the focus being on a cultural approach to media. The department also has a highly international profile compared to many other French institutions and it has participated in many European and international co-operation projects (led by Professor Divina Frau-Meigs).

*CELSA (École des hautes études en sciences de l'information et de la communication)* was created in 1957. It functions as a polytechnical institution within the University of Paris-Sorbonne (*Paris 4*). The objective of CELSA is to train media professionals that possess a broad knowledge base in humanist and social sciences. The curriculum is designed for professional as well as academic needs. CELSA



grants diplomas for students up to the doctoral level and has a staff consisting of a total of 800 persons who carry out both teaching and research.

The *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* has a research centre *CEMS (Centre d'étude des mouvements sociaux)*, which mainly focuses on questions of public space, collective action, and social relationships. CEMS also conducts research that is considered important in the field of communication, for example, the studies of television and television audiences led by Dr. Dominique Pasquier.

Outside the capital of France, the most well-known research institution is situated in Grenoble: the laboratory of *GRESEC (Groupe de recherche sur les enjeux de la communication)*. The laboratory is part of the *Institut de la Communication et des Médias (l'Unité de Formation et de Recherche (UFR) des Sciences de la communication)* within the *Université Stendhal, Grenoble*<sup>3</sup>. The institute was officially founded in 1975, when Infocom was established as a discipline by the CNU. The most famous professor of GRESEC is Bernard Miège, who is among the most cited of Infocom scholars in France and who is also known abroad in the field of cultural industries and the Habermasian theory of public sphere. The "Grenoble school" has a central position in researching the field of cultural industries in France, and much of its influence comes from German and American studies. The research corresponds to Anglo-Saxon idea of developing the ideas of the Frankfurt school. Miège has served as the director of the Grenoble research group for many years, but recently retired. Today the laboratory is directed by Professor Isabelle Pailliant.

The laboratory has about 30 teacher-researchers (5 professors, 25 *maîtres de conférence*), 60 professional teachers (*intervenants*), 600 students and doctoral students (60). The main orientation of GRESEC follows the emergence, development, and social implications of modern communication media. This orientation also takes into account the changes in the social and cultural mediations that are increasingly commercial and industrial, interactivity, multi-modality, and the signification of devices offered to user-consumers. The laboratory is organised around four main focus areas:

1. Industrialisation of information and culture (ICI). The evolution of information and culture from various aspects (cultural, socio-political, social, and economic), the social logic directing the social actors. The progressive emergence of the networks of communication accelerated by the movement of industrialisation and branding.
2. Changes in the public space: communication, territories, and organisations (MEP). Public space, techniques of politics of communication. The field work is varied, ranging from local



- media to political communication of territorial collectivities to scientific communication and corporate communication.
3. Multimedia and interactive writings : production and uses. (EMIPU). Digital technology of information and communication (TICN), especially the domain of learning
  4. Information and communication (CRISTAL). Automatic processing of language, essentially French, linguistic approach. ([http://w3.u-grenoble3.fr/gresec/.](http://w3.u-grenoble3.fr/gresec/))

In the city of Lille, the Université Charles de Gaulle has an interdisciplinary research group around questions of communication, called GERIICO (*Groupe d'études et de recherche interdisciplinaire en information communication*). The research centre (*équipe d'accueil*) combines teacher-researchers, researchers, and doctoral students from three departments within the Université Charles de Gaulle, Lille 3. These departments are UFR l'Information et Communication, UFR IDIST Information, documentation and UFR Arts et Culture. GERIICO is composed of 33 teacher-researchers, 36 doctoral students, and 25 associated members from other universities, and laboratories working in co-operation with the group. The main research themes are: 1) The dynamics of technological devices and their uses for communicative purpose, and in their social contexts, 2) Regulation, innovation and creation, e.g., new web communities, new media structures, public space, 3) Cultural mediatization, mediated phenomena; language, discourses, cultural, and political dimensions. The profile of GERIICO is interdisciplinary and covers a broad field of approaches typical of Infocom in France. However, the emphasis is on cultural communication, social practices, discourses, and language; the information sciences are also biased. On the basis of the main themes the research group has been organised into teams, each addressing a set of themes:

Team 1. Mediatics – keywords: Mediation/mediatization, public sphere, devices, discourses, information, social actors, territories, identities, cultures, society. Analysis of media and public sphere, sociological aspects, and empirical work; also cultural mediation including analysis of the mediation of the national heritage combined with museology, cultural practices, media culture, and new behaviours on the web

Team 2. SID – knowledge, information, documents. Library documentation, questions of circulation, appropriation, and access to knowledge, usages, and contexts.

Team 3. COPI – Communication, organisation, innovation processes. Organisational environments including companies, universities, and working places.



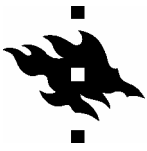
The area of Lyon has several universities where communication research is taking place. At *L'Université Jean Moulin, (Lyon3), Faculté des Lettres et Civilisations, Information-Communication* hosts a research group (*équipe d'accueil*), called UFERSIC (*Unité fédérative d'équipes de recherche en sciences de l'information*) which has been formed in the merger of the ERSICO teams from Lyon 3, SII from l'Enssib and RECODOC from l'Université Lyon 1. UFERSIC focused on systems of information and communication within organisations. Also, the *Université Lumière Lyon2* has a research group called *Équipe Médias et Identités (équipe d'accueil)*.

In Toulouse there is a research group (*équipe d'accueil*) known as LERASS (*Laboratoire d'études et de recherches appliqués en sciences de la société*) within the university of *IUT Paul Sabatier, Toulouse 3*. LERASS unites researchers in Infocom in the region of Toulouse. It involves 80 people divided into six research teams, three of which are focused on information and communication. The other three teams are in the fields of economics, social psychology, and one is a multidisciplinary unit. The three groups studying Infocom are:

- Media polis: focuses on communication and territories; the public sphere, informational and communicational media, symbolic mediations.
- CTPS (communication, work, social practices): focuses on communication, articulation, public debates, risks.
- MICS (*Médiations en information et communication spécialisées*): focuses on informatics from a communication perspective. Areas of emphasis include: interaction of actors in specialised information; networks of scientific media and professional media; documents, images, and mediation; expertise and risk.

The Director of LERASS is Professor Viviane Couzinet, who works in the information sciences. She is also the current president of the 71<sup>st</sup> section of CNU. LERASS publishes a social sciences journal, *Sciences de la société*, supported by CNRS and the *Centre National du Livre*. The journal is known for having many articles in the domain of Infocom.

In Provence *L'Université d'Avignon* has a research laboratory called *Culture et Communication*, which carries out research on the forms of cultural mediation. The laboratory works on various types of cultural institutions (live performances, cinema, books, multimedia, expositions, cultural heritage, museums, etc.), studying their organisation, texts, uses, and modes of reception by audiences. The laboratory of Culture and Communication is connected with the departments of the *UFR (Sciences et Langages Appliqués, or SLA)* and the *Département Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication*. The director and leading figure of culture and communication is Professor Jean Davailon, a



museologist. The main focal areas are: Cultural heritage and objects; mediations of knowledge, culture and their interpretations; the forms and publics of festivals and cinema; epistemological and methodological reflections on the communication approach. The laboratory publishes a journal entitled *Culture et Musées*. (<http://www.univ-avignon.fr/fr/recherche/laboratoires/strlab/structure/laboratoire-culture-et-communication-ea-3151.html>)

#### 2.4 Foundations, Institutes and Associations

MSH Paris Nord (*La Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Paris Nord*) is part of the National Network of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Institutes (MSH), which was created in 1999 with financing from the Ministry of Research and Technology (*Ministère de la Recherche et de la Technologie*)<sup>5</sup>. The purpose of MSH is to help structure research in the fields of social sciences and the humanities. MSH aims at facilitating the work of research and access to information and resources for researchers, students, and all those concerned with that particular research domain by providing the structures for research, but it is not a research funding body. ([www.msh-reseau.pdf.fr](http://www.msh-reseau.pdf.fr), 3-4.) MSH *Paris Nord* works in close co-operation with the universities of *Paris 8*, *Paris 13* and CNRS. MSH *Paris Nord* has two main research orientations: 1) culture and the arts industries, and 2) health and society. The former has research projects connected to information and communication sciences. The orientation of culture and arts industries segment is led by Pierre Moeglin, professor of Infocom in the University of *Paris 13*. Together with similar groups at *Paris 8* and *Paris 13*, team has defined seven research areas which are:

1. Virtual environments and creation
2. Language industries
3. Socio-economics of culture and communication
4. Aesthetics, arts and industries
5. Creation, practices, audience
6. Globalisation, regulation, innovation
7. Anthropology of communication

(<http://www.mshparisnord.org/>; [www.msh-reseau.pdf.fr](http://www.msh-reseau.pdf.fr), 22.)

*SFSIC (Société Française des Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication)* is the French Association for Sciences in Infocom. SFSIC was created in 1974 at the same time as the discipline of Infocom was

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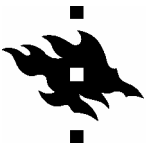
<sup>5</sup> Initially, the *Maisons des Sciences de l'Homme* was created as a foundation by the well-known cultural historian, Fernand Braudel.



made official by the CNU. It gathers 450 researchers from the universities and institutions in the field (such as INA and CNRS). The association provides a forum for reflection and sharing ideas concerning the big questions in information, communication, and new technologies in the contemporary world. SFSIC has a large network with foreign and international associations (e.g., ICA and IAMCR), and co-operation, with for example, the Brazilian media research association Intercom and with Eastern Europe, Hungary, and Romania. The association has an informational function for the French community of researchers in Infocom; they circulate a weekly *SFSIC-Infos*-newsletter to their members with news about forthcoming conferences, events, doctoral workshops, and publications. The SFSIC also functions as a partner of the Ministry of Education where university teaching in the field is concerned. The French scholars of Infocom interviewed say that the role of SFSIC has lost some of its importance in gathering together the broad and thematically heterogeneous community of French scholars in Infocom. The most active sector of the association has been the group of Organisational Communication (Groupe org&co), which is a growing field of research within the Infocom in France. (<http://portail.sfsic.org/>; see Frandsen & Kolsrup 1993, 45.)

*CLEMI (Centre de liaison d'enseignement et des médias d'information)*, the Centre for liaison between teaching and information media, is part of the French Ministry of Education. It offers training sessions, educational programmes and events, opportunities for exchange and networking, and pedagogical publications. It trains teachers in news media systems, and puts teachers and pupils in connection with news media professionals in order to build common projects and set up actions (e.g., The Press and Media Week at School, a project engaging millions of pupils, thousands of teachers, and media professionals every year). Moreover, the CLEMI promotes media education and media literacy in the schools by producing and distributing pedagogical tools in the form of books, booklets and multimedia support. The centre works through teams in 30 regions, involving media professionals, researchers, parents, and educational organisations in informal settings. CLEMI has a documentation centre specialised in the field of media education that elaborates press files and carries out analyses of topics related to the news. CLEMI has an international network of correspondents on the topic of media education, including representatives in the European Union, foreign governmental organisations, and non-governmental organisations. (<http://www.clemi.org/organisme/anglais.html>; Clemi 2004.)

*INA (Institute National de L'Audiovisuel)* is the national organisation for audiovisual media financed by the State, with centres in seven cities. INA has an industrial and commercial role (*Établissement Public*

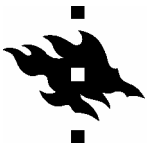


à *Caractère Industriel et Commercial* or EPIC) that was set up through the reform of the audiovisual sector implemented in 1975. INA functions mainly as the national archives of French television, radio and film, and provides data and tools for researchers. However, INA does not have its own research teams. INA does have the power to supervise its activities through State representatives and members of parliament who serve on the Board of Directors, through questions to parliament, inquiries and reports. INA has set following main missions: 1) preservation of the national audiovisual heritage; 2) using this heritage to the full and making it more readily available; and 3) keeping abreast of changes in the audiovisual sector through its research, production, and training activities. (<http://www.ina.fr/>)

*CNC (Centre national de la cinématographie)* is a publicly-financed institution whose main function is to provide documentary resources, including statistics on numbers of cinema audiences, production and exportation of films, televised films, and videos. It also gathers data from the economics of cinema, technology, telecommunications, the Internet, and mobile telephones. The documentary centre is located in Paris. The CNC has a research team (*service des études, des statistiques et de la prospective*), which employs nine persons who are mostly involved with statistics and documentation. The research is commissioned from the outside and is done in collaboration with several private institutions that produce survey data, e.g., MédiaMétrie, JVA, and Novatris. CNC has also co-operation with academic researchers in terms of giving access to data and publishing research reports and books. CNC has international contacts with many European partners. (Danard 2007; <http://www.cnc.fr/>)

*CSA (Le Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel)* is an independent administrative authority (since 1989) whose role is to regulate the various electronic media in France, such as radio and television, including through eventual censorship. The CSA does not have a research section, but it commissions research from both academic and private research institutions. The same is true of *OJD (Office de la Justification de la Diffusion)*, which is also an institution of judicial control of private and public media.

*IDATE (Institut de Développement de l'Audiovisuel et des Télécommunications en Europe)* is a mixture of public and private, a centre (since 1977) for exchange and research in the sectors of telecommunications, the Internet and media. IDATE offers a platform for exchange between company heads, public policy-makers, and the academic world. The institute has specialised teams in



different sectors that conduct various types of studies and run consulting services for their clients including market reports, international benchmarking, and public policy assessments. They also foster practices in the new communication technology (such as mobile services, corporate telecoms, networks, television, the Internet, e-business). The IDATE Foundation is composed of 30 international firms, and their leading representatives organise monthly IDATE club seminars, an annual international conference, and the publication of DigiWorld yearbook. ([www.idate.org](http://www.idate.org))

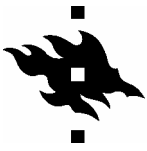
IREP (*Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes Publicitaires*) is an association for inter-professional exchanges in advertising, communication, media, and marketing. IREP promotes studies in advertising and communication, and exchanges between researchers, advertisers, academic scholars, and the general public interested in advertising and questions of communication. It organises an annual study of advertising markets and their perspectives, seminars and events, and provides a documentation centre open to practitioners and academic researchers. (<http://www.irep.asso.fr/index.htm>)

## 2.5 Research Agencies and Companies

The sociological laboratory of France Telecom is one of the few research groups within the commercial sector that also produces considerable academic research on social aspects of communications. Other commercial research institutions in France focus solely on commercial research.

*France Télécom R&D, Laboratoire Sociologie des Usages et traitement Statistique des Informations* was set up in 1982 by sociologist Patrice Flichy, who is known for fostering the orientation of social usages of communications in France. The laboratory started as part of the public national telecom company France Télécom's research unit CNET (*Centre national d'études des télécommunications*). France Télécom is now working on a commercial basis and the research unit has changed its name to France Telecom R&D (Research and Development). It has 16 research units working for the company's needs, most of which are for technological development and innovation.

In the beginning the sociological team was called *Usages socio-techniques*. It was quite small, and its purpose was to study the social uses of telecommunications, for example, telephone conversations and social implications of innovations in telecommunications equipment and its convergence with audiovisual technology such as the videophone, and Minitel, one of the predecessors of the Internet in the 1980s and based on electronic messaging. Since its early days, the laboratory has been re-

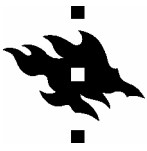


organised several times and combined with other scientific approaches like ergonomics, ethnology, and linguistics. Currently it is combined with economics, and it has an established position within France Telecom R&D. Its fewer than 50 researchers (approximately 30 permanent researchers, 15 doctorants, 4 to 5 post doctoral researchers) comprise only a small minority of the R&D unit's 4,500 employees. The researchers and doctorants in the laboratory are mostly sociologists specialised in telecommunications. The laboratory was led by Patrice Flichy for 15 years, who also started the journal *Réseaux*. Flichy was succeeded by Francois Licoppe; the present director is Valerie Beaudoin.

The tasks of the sociological laboratory are first, to work in co-operation with marketing and strategists; second, to work with technologists towards new innovations such as testing new devices with consumers; and to produce academic research by putting to use the data gathered for the purposes of industry. The research themes include uses of the telephone, mobile telephones and the Internet (e.g., blogs, new forms of using mobile telephones in public spaces, testing mobile telephones equipped with a wireless Internet connection), relations between companies and clients, relations between humans and machines, issues of trust and privacy.

([http://www.francetelecom.com/en/group/rd/.](http://www.francetelecom.com/en/group/rd/))

In the private sector there are agencies and companies that produce communication research for the media, public sector administration, and private companies. The most well known are *MédiaMétrie*, IFOP, IPSOS, and TNS Sofres. *MédiaMétrie* is the major provider for audience measurement and survey data of the major audiovisual and interactive media types. The company was set up in 1985 on public initiative to meet the requirements for the developing broadcast media environment. The clients are institutions and companies of both the public and private sectors. *MédiaMétrie* has expanded its services to the Internet and new media by offering the products and services made necessary by changes in public behaviour in the field of audiovisual broadcasting on the international market. In 2003, *MédiaMétrie* had a turnover of 37 million euros and a 321-strong workforce. The *MédiaMétrie* Company Foundation, "communication and prospective", was set up in 1995 to reflect *MédiaMétrie's* desire to invest its potential in general-purpose projects likely to promote research, develop training, and promote ethics in the media sector. The *MédiaMétrie* Company Foundation is particularly interested "in 'teaching' the audiovisual media and in promoting innovative projects likely to offer children and teenagers a better knowledge of these media in an academic context." (<http://www.mediametrie.fr/>)



*IFOP* produces studies of public opinion, consumption, marketing, media marketing, and cultural panels ([http://www.ifop.com/europe/groupeifop/gr\\_fr.htm](http://www.ifop.com/europe/groupeifop/gr_fr.htm)). *IPSOS* has a very similar profile to *IFOP*. It also provides studies on political opinions, elections, and societal tendencies, as well as media and the Internet (<http://www.ipsos.fr>). *TNS Sofres* is the biggest provider of market research in France and offers a range of qualitative and quantitative services in consumer, social, and industrial research spanning all business sectors. *TNS Sofres* mainly serves the main industry sectors with consultancy in marketing and communication issues. The areas of expertise are communication and advertising (branding, corporate images, public relations, press analysis, advertising testing, etc.); market, opinion, and consumer research (usage and attitude studies, consumer panels, politics, and social research, media measurement, etc.); brand management; CRM (customer relationship management); industry expertise; research methods and high tech solutions (qualitative and quantitative customised surveys, syndicated research, continuous studies, panels with large national and international samplings, data collecting tools). (<http://www.tns-sofres.com/>). (See a more complete listing of private research agencies in MédiaSIG2006.)

## 2.6 Academic Journals

Academic journals in the field of information and communication were rare in France before the 1990s but since that time the number has expanded. Today the range of journals in the domain is broad and they are mainly focused on special research orientations, apparently due to the heterogeneity of the field. There are no equivalents to the *Journal of Communication, Media, Culture and Society* or *Communication Research*, which are some of the most well-known generalist international reference journals in the English language. A lot of the French research on communication is also published in the journals of several other disciplines. (Meadel 1999, 17-18.)

*Communications* was founded in 1962 by the famous semioticians Roland Barthes, Claude Brémont, and Edgar Morin. The journal had its golden period in the 1960s and 1970s, and many articles became classics, for example, Barthes' *Rhetorics of the Image* in 1964 (no. 4) and Brémont's *Narrative logic* in 1966 (no. 8). The themes of the journal were in the areas of semiology and media sociology. (Frandsen & Kolstrup 1993, 52.) Later in the 1970s the journal abandoned its focus on communication and interest was turned more towards anthropology (Meadel 1999, 3-4). Now it is published by *Le Centre d'Etudes Transdisciplinaires Sociologie, Anthropologie, Histoire (EHESS)*, a research group associated with CNRS. The issues are organised around a specific theme. The editors-in-chief



are Nicole Lapierre and Edgar Morin.

(<http://www.ehess.fr/centres/cetsah/Communications/com.html#communications>)

The social sciences journal *Réseaux – Communication, Technologie et Société* was launched in 1983 by Paul Beaud from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, and Patrice Flichy, head of the sociology lab at CNET France Télécom. The home base of the journal was the CNET until 2001, with Flichy being the editor-in-chief. *Réseaux* is focused on the broad field of communication and in particular on telecommunications and social practices related to technology. The journal covers topics in mass media (particularly television), informatics, new media theories, history of technology, interpersonal communication, media strategy, etc. There are both French and international members on the editorial board. Moreover, *Réseaux* tried out an English language version called *The French Journal of Communication* in 1993-1998. It was published by Luton University Press and appeared twice a year with selected and translated articles from the original journal. (Flichy 2007;

<http://www.enssib.fr/autres-sites/reseaux-cnet/>;

[http://www.cairn.info/revue.php?ID\\_REVUE=RES](http://www.cairn.info/revue.php?ID_REVUE=RES)) *Réseaux* is one of the most well-established French journals in the field of communication, even though its bias is sometimes considered more towards sociology than towards Infocom.

*Études de Communication - langages, information, médiations* is published by the research lab GERIICO at the *Charles-de-Gaulle University – Lille3*. Like the laboratory, the journal has an interdisciplinary approach to communication phenomena. The journal follows the activities of the association SFSIC and also publishes texts written by communications professionals in the areas of technology, the dynamics of uses of the communication media, the processes of regulation, the dynamics of innovation and creation, the process of mediatisation and mediation, etc. (<http://www.univ-lille3.fr/revues/etudesdecom/edc1/cadres.html>)

*Quaderni* is published by the *Département des Sciences Politiques*, at the University of the *Sorbonne-Pantheon Paris1*, and since 1987 has been directed by Professor Lucien Sfez. The journal promotes the idea of communication as the “new religion” of contemporary society; therefore the focus is on communication and its connections with technologies and power. (<http://quaderni.univ-paris1.fr/>)

*Hermès – Cognition, Communication, Politique* started as a publication of the CNRS *laboratoire Communication et Politique*. Dominique Wolton, who became the head of the new CNRS Institute for Communication Sciences in 2006, has been the editor since 1989. *Hermès* is an interdisciplinary



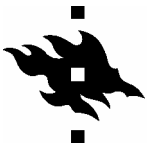
publication with the following focal areas: public arena, theory of political communication, identity in communication, audience reception and intelligence, communication in political theory and the complex relationships between individuals and the masses, and the growing complexity of intercultural processes. The issues of *Hermès* have been indexed along with titles and abstracts and appear the journal's website in English as well as French, but the articles are in French only. ([http://www.wolton.cnrs.fr/frame\\_hermes.htm](http://www.wolton.cnrs.fr/frame_hermes.htm))

*Questions de communication* is a semestrial journal published with the support of *Centre de Recherche sur les Médias (Université de Metz)* and of *le Groupe de Recherche en Information, Communication et Propagandes (Université Nancy 2)*. It has a pluralistic and multidisciplinary approach to the field of Infocom, with an emphasis on epistemological, cultural, and intercultural themes. The journal has a significant number of international correspondents and is also interested in communication and cultural phenomena outside France. The written language, however, is still French. The editors-in-chief are Béatrice Fleury-Vilatte and Jacques Walter.

*Communication & Langages* was created in 1968 by F. Richaudeau, before the discipline of Infocom was institutionalised. The journal is not officially tied to any institution, and it is published with the support of *le Centre National du Livre*. The journal is among the reference journals listed by the 71st section of CNU Infocom ; it offers a broad scope of themes of information and communication, including mass media, multimedia, advertising, education, and graphics. It explores the social, economic, semiotic, and technical dimensions of communication. The journal is indexed in the national journal database *Francis* devoted to social sciences and humanities. The editors are Yves Jeanneret and Emmanuël Souchier. ([http://www.armand-colin.com/revues\\_info.php?idr=18](http://www.armand-colin.com/revues_info.php?idr=18).)

*Mots. Les langages du politique* is a production of *École normale supérieure: Lettres et sciences humaines, Lyon*. It is a more general social studies journal at the confluence of language sciences, political science, and the sciences of information and communication. The focal area is thus varied and issues are often organised around a specific theme. The journal is supported by the CNRS and included on the list of the 71<sup>st</sup> section of the CNU. Abstracts and article key words are available in English and in Spanish. ([http://icar.univ-lyon2.fr/revue\\_mots/](http://icar.univ-lyon2.fr/revue_mots/))

The journal *MEI "Médiation et information"* has published 25 issues since 1993, and is edited by L'Harmattan (Paris) with the support of *Centre national du livre*. It was created by Bernard Darras (*Université de Paris 1*) and Marie Thonon (*Université de Paris 8*) who are the journal's co-editors-in-



chief. MEI addresses communication studies through various approaches and themes. It is a thematically organised reference book, which comes out twice a year. Every issue is directed by an invited editor who gathers the works of some ten researchers. MEI also has a mission to promote research on mediation, communication, and information sciences in the international sphere. However, this sphere is limited to the Francophone world: the editorial board and scientific committee is composed of researchers from eleven French, Belgian, Swiss, and Canadian universities. The publication is composed of three parts with the first dedicated to interviews, the second to articles, and the third part to a synthesis of works by young researchers. (<http://www.harmattan.fr>)

*Les Enjeux de l'information et de la communication* is an online journal published by GRESEC, a laboratory of the *University of Stendhal-Grenoble 3*. The journal publishes ten articles more or less a year, and there is open access to the full texts on its website. The themes of the articles are specialised in the field of information and communication with an orientation towards the new communication media within their social contexts. The themes illustrate the four focal areas of the GRESEC laboratory and the contributors range from doctorants to senior researchers. The editor-in-chief is Bernard Miège. ([www.u-grenoble3.fr/les\\_enjeux](http://www.u-grenoble3.fr/les_enjeux))

Another online journal dedicated to information and communication is *Solaris* published by the research group on information and documentation sciences GIRSIC (*Groupe Interuniversitaire de Recherches en Sciences de l'Information et de la Documentation*) at URFIST (*Unité Régionale de Formation à l'Information Scientifique et Technique*) in Paris. (<http://biblio-fr.info.unicaen.fr/bnum/jelec/Solaris/index.html>; Meadel 1999, 18.)

The Journals Acknowledged by CNU

The 71<sup>st</sup> section of CNU has a list of journals that are acknowledged as journals of reference in the discipline of information and communication. Articles published in these journals are counted in the evaluation of candidates applying for qualification for *Maître de Conférences* and *Professeur des Universités*. The journals are in two categories ; the first includes academic referee journals, and the second contains professional journals that publish scientific articles.

The first group of scientific journals are the following; *Communications*; *Communication et langages*; *Communication et organisation*; *Culture et muse*; *Études de communication*; *Hermès*; *Les enjeux de*



*l'information et de la communication; MEI; Mots, les langages du politique; Protée; Questions de communication; Recherches en communication; Réseaux; Revue canadienne de Sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie; Sciences de la société.*

The second group of professional journals is mainly for the information and library sciences included in the field of Infocom: *Documentation et bibliothèques (comité de lecture; Documentaliste – Sciences de l'information (comité de lecture); Revue des revues (comité de lecture); Argus; BBF (Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France)*.<sup>6</sup> (<http://cnu71.online.fr/33-revues.html>)

The articles published in the acknowledged journals are used as criteria to ascertain whether a candidate possesses sufficient knowledge of the field of Infocom and has visibility within the French community of Infocom. In principle, publications in foreign journals are counted as meritorious as well. However, some French academics criticise of the evaluation system based on CNU list for discouraging scholars from publishing in other languages and for contributing to the insularity of the French scientific community.

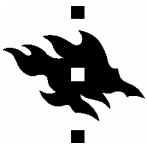
There are some journals of other Francophone countries included in the CNU list that may be considered international publications. The Belgian journal *Recherches en communication* is edited in the *département de communication de l'Université catholique de Louvain*, and the journal's broad scope covers the area of Infocom. There is the Canadian *Revue canadienne de Sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomi*. Not included on the list but often found in university libraries in Infocom departments is the Canadian journal *Questions de Communications*. Journals of film studies, including such classics as *Les Cahiers de l'Audiovisuel* and *Cahiers du cinéma*, belong to the area in their own, which, in France, is a separate field of research from Infocom.

#### Scientific Magazines and Professional Journals

The bibliographical bulletin *Mémoire de Trame* is published by a library, *Tekhné*, specialised in communication and located in Paris. The bulletin gives an overview of the latest publications in the field. There are also a number of popular journals targeting both academic and professional audiences. The National Audiovisual Institute INA publishes the journal *Dossiers de l'Audiovisuel*, which has an orientation based on academic research but is addressed to a larger audience of

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<sup>6</sup> The list was established in May 2006 and the list of the journals that publish occasionally articles in the field of Infocom is forthcoming.



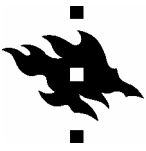
researchers and professionals. The articles are short one to two-page essays or reviews without references. The thematic areas include media systems, television, radio, film, and new communication media. (<http://www.ina.fr/produits/publications/da/>)

*Médiaspouvoirs* is a partly academic and professional journal on mass communication perspective, which targets a broad audience of professionals and academics. The editorial board consists of media researchers, journalists, and sociologists. *Médiaspouvoirs* has been published since 1985, and the focus is on media policy, media economy, and media strategy. The journal provides useful insight into the French media system. (Frandsen & Kolstrup 1993, 52; Meadel 1999, 18.) ([http://www.difpop.com/web/catalogue/revue3.asp?bouton=3&nom\\_cat=M%E9dias+-+Communication&nom\\_revue=M%E9diaspouvoirs.](http://www.difpop.com/web/catalogue/revue3.asp?bouton=3&nom_cat=M%E9dias+-+Communication&nom_revue=M%E9diaspouvoirs.))

*Brises* is a publication of the CNRS Institute, *l'Institut de l'information scientifique et technique (INIST)*, which deals with organisational communication and information in its social context. Established in 1981 *Brises* reflects on companies, and organisations, internal and external communication, management, and the technological challenges within organisations. The writers of the articles are professionals from both the commercial and the public sectors as well as academic researchers. (Raynard 2007, <http://www.enssib.fr/autres-sites/reseaux-cnet/58/livpra58.html>; Frandsen & Kolstrup 1993, 53).

*Communication et Stratégies* has been published by IDATE since 1991. It is an English-language quarterly with analyses in the fields of telecommunication, data processing, and media, public policies, industrial organisation, firm strategies, etc. It targets to the international business audience, particularly in Europe. The focus is on industry's issues, socio-economic analyses of telecoms, IT, and audiovisual sectors. The scientific committee and editorial board consist of international business heads and academic scholars. (<http://www.idate.fr>)

Professional magazines in the audiovisual media section are *CinémAction* and *Médiascope*, both of which are published by *Centre régional de documentation pédagogique de Versailles* with the goal of promoting dialogue between media research, teaching, and journalism. Also to be mentioned is *Télérama*, a weekly television and radio programme guide, which can be bought at any newsstand or kiosk. The magazine includes some critical articles on media phenomena.



## 2.7 Research Funding

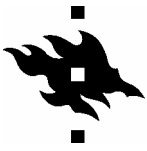
French university teacher-researchers need to fulfil five aspects of academic activity: research, teaching, popularisation of science, service to public institutions, and collaboration with the economic domain. All of these aspects should be taken into consideration in the work of academic institutions and a certain balance found with each of them. The financing of academic research in information and communication sciences mainly comes from three sources: the state, calls for bids, and research contracts with public or private organisations.

### Public Funding

The Ministry of Higher Education makes the decisions about annual budgets for university departments, polytechnics, research groups, and CNRS laboratories on the basis of the ratings given by an evaluation committee composed of academic and political members. The CNRS laboratories are in a privileged situation with a permanent budget, and the academic research groups labelled *équipe d'accueil* also receive financing from the Ministry. However, the size and constitution of the research group is defined in a way that favours uniting several teams under the same administrative umbrella. Often an *équipe d'accueil* combines researchers and doctorants from several universities and institutions within the field. Governmental policy seems to be geared to cutting down the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the diverse research groups in separate institutions.

A common complaint of French scholars in Infocom is that research financing is not sufficient – this is a common problem in every discipline (and in other countries where the academic institutions are mainly funded by the state). The poor financing of research is visible especially the fields of social sciences and humanities. One of the researchers interviewed says that there is a silently accepted culture of poverty, "*La culture de pauvreté*", among university researchers in France, which means that scholars in the humanities and social sciences accept the underfinancing of the university sector:

It is a double bound system. First, the social studies and humanities are underfinanced compared to other disciplines. This can be seen when you walk down the hallways at the Sorbonne; the walls have holes and the rooms are dark because nobody has replaced the light bulbs. The buildings are poorly maintained, and this is only the visible evidence of the poor financing... but surely it is a structural problem at the governmental level. Second, the researchers think that this is normal, and they accept it.



For an outsider the hierarchical distinction between social studies and humanities versus the natural and technological sciences is strikingly visible in terms of the architecture of the buildings, and the spatial working conditions of teachers and researchers. There is a clear difference between polytechnical schools and mass universities. For example, the *École des Mines* in Paris is situated in a respectable, old, neat and well-maintained building next to Luxembourg park. The hallways have wooden panelling; there is a green patio near the entrance, and a natural museum in the middle of the building. The researchers have their own rooms, where they have computers and bookshelves. Sorbonne 3 by contrast, is located in a decaying building from the 1970s; the hallways are rather dirty and the paint is peeling off the walls. The teachers and researchers do not have rooms of their own at the university – nor does even the head of the department; instead there is a common office for the teachers and administrative staff of each department. The “office” consists of a few cubicles with computers where the teachers can take turns having their consulting hours. This makes the faculty do the actual research work and teaching preparation at home.

However, this hierarchical difference between university facilities and polytechnics is most striking in Paris, where the rents are very expensive anywhere in the city area. Thus, the working conditions seem better in other parts of France. One can also see an improvement in facilities in those departments or laboratories that work on contracts with external partners, who bring more money to the research units.

#### Calls for Bids

Trends in the development of the financing system is towards diminishing State funding and encouraging research institutions to seek external funding through national and international calls for bids. Two years ago the French government started the ANR - *l'Agence nationale de la recherche*, a new institution of public administration for financing research projects (somewhat equivalent, for example to the Academy of Finland). ANR was officially launched in January 2007. The ANR works under the supervision of Ministry of Research and the political framework of the French government, and its objective is to increase the number of research projects in all domains of academic research. The purpose of ANR is to promote the development of basic academic research as well as applied research, innovation, and application of technologies and to foster partnership co-operation between the public and private sectors.



The institution annually organises thematic calls for projects, and projects are evaluated and selected on the basis of applications. ANR grants funding for both public research institutions and companies, with a double mission to produce new knowledge and promote the interaction between public and private research laboratories. For the year 2007 ANR has allocated 825 million euros for research projects whose maximum duration is four years. ANR launches approximately 40 projects every year, and its thematic calls for research projects are divided into seven scientific fields. The research on communication can mostly be found in the section of humanist and social sciences, or of matter and information (*Matière & Information*); the former has had seven research calls for bids since the year 2006 and the latter, 28. ([www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr](http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr).)

The thematic formulation of research projects reflecting on current social issues favours multidisciplinary projects and sometimes even international co-operation projects. For example, some of the research calls in the year 2007 in the sector of humanities and social sciences have been for "French-German projects in humanist and social sciences", "Companies and economic organisations", "the South today". In the year 2006 there was a project call for "Conflicts, war and violence". There are also calls for programs with an open topic ("*programme blanc*"). (Ibid.) Thus, it is evident that the new policy of the French government encourages the co-operation of public and private research. From French communication scholars' point of view, ANR has a great influence in fixing the agenda of research by prioritising some of the main topics and themes while disregarding others.

French university scholars see many opportunities for working in European research projects with EU funding. But many complain about the heavy administrative paperwork, which makes them reluctant to participate, especially since working in international projects is not required for establishing a reputation in the field. As mentioned earlier, publications in languages other than French do not increase the merits of scholars seeking to apply for academic posts in France from the CNU. This policy is not encouraging French scholars to focus on international projects, a policy completely contrary to some other European countries, Finland included.

Still, researchers who have experience in EU projects have found them to be useful at the level of intellectual exchange. One of them says, "We have a formidable field for collaboration and discussion with colleagues in different countries, just to see why they view things differently, and why they do research differently. I think it's great. It is a true European co-operation." However, the



researchers also say that application procedures for such projects are very long and that schemes for the bids are often quite narrow, or very pragmatic – with expectations of direct results, or without any epistemological approach. “The problem is that the costs are narrowed to meet the first objective of the bid. The system does not take advantage of the richness and multiplicity of the research in European universities and research groups.” Finally, French scholars believe that EU funding has not significantly improved the situation of academic financing in their country.

As the amount of state funding of universities diminishes research financing will become less and less automatic and based more on projects channelled through institutions such as ANR and CNRS. CNRS is also an important financing organisation that sets up calls for bids for researchers working outside CNRS; meanwhile the new institute for communication, ISCC, has recently announced its first call for projects. INA is also important in the domain of audiovisual media, while CSA functions as a funding organisation for academic research projects. Moreover, the importance of contract research is growing.

#### The Contract Research

The third portion of financing for research institutions comes from research contracts, an issue not without problems in the world of French intellectuals, of whom most would prefer that the French university financing system remain public. But that would also mean accepting “the culture of poverty”.

The idea of the independent academic intellectual is strong in France, and the notion that the public financing of academic research secures a researcher’s freedom to be an objective critic of society is deeply rooted. “The contract is also a constraint”, says one head of a research group. Thus, there is some reluctance to undertake research in co-operation with external partners and especially with the business world. The tradition of leftist ideology, in the field of humanities and the social sciences views the purpose of an academic as serving for the good of citizens, not capitalism. Critics charge that state funding makes it possible for researchers to remain in their ivory towers or, as one interviewee put it, “their peculiar interest does not require them to leave the ivory tower”.

Yet, scholars emphasise the importance of the exchange between research and society, and between theory and practice, not only for financial but also for intellectual reasons. Academic culture is changing, and the number of contract researches has been growing, especially during the last ten



years. It has become more or less routine in all the laboratories to develop a policy on contract research. This is partly due to the criteria set forth in the evaluations of the Ministry of Education (made every four years), where co-operation between public and private sectors is recommended. Contract research has proven to be necessary in obtaining funding for doctoral research. It enables the young researchers to professionalise their research and gives them better chances to find jobs. However, companies often prefer more technical or practical dissertations, and they also need to be convinced that it is necessary to make theoretical analyses of the process of communication.

Overall, there does not seem to be any fundamental opposition to co-operative academic and contract-based research. Indeed, there are a few institutions that have a longer tradition of contract research, and interestingly enough, they are also among the most respected institutions for their theoretical work. For example, the Centre for the Sociology of Innovations, *Centre de Sociologie d'Innovations (CSI)* in the *L'école des Mines* in Paris, which does also research in the field of communication, conducts a great deal of research on a contractual basis. So does the most well-known researcher in the group, Bruno Latour, who is internationally recognised for his strong theoretical works, which have been translated into several languages. The same applies to the GRESEC in Grenoble and its famous long-term leader Bernard Miège. Contract research is part of the laboratory culture: empirical data and experience gained in partner projects are seen as enriching theoretical research, because the empirical findings validate the theoretical concepts. In the 1980s the big contracts with France Télécom helped to stabilise posts in the laboratories. GRESEC has contracts, for example, with different governmental ministries (e.g., education, culture, and road security), territorial collectives and the county hospital, as well as with a local telecommunications operator (for second- and third-generation mobile phone services) in the private sector. Financing from contracts has allowed the research laboratories to employ more researchers, obtain financing for doctoral students, provide students with contacts in the empirical field, and send them to both national and international conferences. GRESEC has also been able to establish a documentation centre for communication studies, and the external funding has allowed them to organise workshops and scientific encounters, in a word, to animate the scientific community.

Other research groups like *Communication & Culture* in Avignon receive some two-thirds of their funding from bids and contracts. The emphasis in Avignon on museology and cultural communication is already closely connected to the general practice, and the laboratory there works with museums, which may be public or private, and other institutions of high culture, such as the



famous theatre festival of Avignon. The Avignon group also works with the city and tourist office to develop of the information concerning French cultural heritage. Similarly, GERIICO in Lille 3 has contracts with municipal authorities in culture and tourism. Many of these groups are concerned with the development and uses of new technology in the field.

The research laboratory CIM in Sorbonne 3 has worked with INATEC, which is a major public service depository for film and television programmes, audience reception studies, and the monitoring of European elections in conjunction with European countries. In the research fields of media studies there are researchers who work in co-operation with television channels, news agencies, or regional newspapers. Researchers connected to CIM have also worked with Unesco on international projects on topics such as "Potentially harmful content in media" (with a focus on young people), and "Media education kit for media literacy."

One of the downsides financing through contract research is that the administration is top heavy. Compared to other disciplines Infocom has been founded to respond to social problems, so it is naturally less well financed for theoretical and philosophical projects than other disciplines such as philosophy and sociology. But Infocom is evolving and nowadays it is easier for its researchers to find financing. Still, the majority of research contracts to universities in the field of Infocom are made by institutions in the public sector and by the state administration. There is much less contract research in the private sector, and it is biased towards certain fields where the traditions have been most firmly established, such as telecommunications. But increasingly the growing field of organisational communication is arranging contracts with the private sector.

According to French scholars, there is a gap between the cultures of the academic and the business worlds, and therefore, academics experience less controversy in working with the public sector. Private companies also have some doubts about the academic way of doing research, and the parties may have differing expectations. The view of French scholars is that co-operation with the private sector needs to be developed.

The tradition of working with the private sector is more common in the field of advertising and marketing. But already in 1963, the famous semiologist Roland Barthes was doing research on advertising with *Publicis*. The sociological research laboratory of France Télécom has been a major contributor to research contracts with the universities. The most famous projects are done within the domain of the sociology of usages led by Josiane Jouët. The present-day *Laboratoire Sociologie des*



*Usages et traitement Statistique des Informations* of France Télécom has partnership agreements with certain universities and with professors, who are directing dissertations of the doctoral students hired by the laboratory. For example, France Télécom has a convention of research with the research centre CARISM of IFP (*Institut Français de presse*) to study the different forms of sociability around information and communication. Doctorants working in the lab are paid for pursuing their Ph.D.s while working at France Télécom, which allows them to have better financing and better facilities (such as a computer and an office) than do university scholarships, which are rare. Many of those who have started their careers at the laboratory have ended up having a post at the university. There are also university professors (now three in all) who have come to work in France Télécom for three to four years, and who will then return back to the university. The company laboratory also makes research contracts with university research groups or laboratories.

Some important applications of academic research in France are made in the domains of cultural industries and internationalisation. The issue of cultural politics is also significant big in public discussion, to which the research of Infocom has made a contribution and whose debate has influenced research. Important applications of research have also been made in the fields of audience studies, social appropriation, and media usages. Scholars emphasise the need for academics to have opportunities for both applied and basic research. There is a need for strong academic work and basic research, so that academics would have something to give to industries, with the co-operation beneficial to all parties. Practical research, on the other hand, needs to be strongly anchored in theoretical knowledge; otherwise it might end up a float.



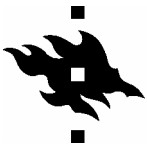
### 3 Main Approaches to Information and Communication Research

This chapter presents some suggestive findings of the main approaches and themes in the domain of Information and Communication Sciences in France. The first section reviews a few previous studies on the main orientations of Infocom. The second section presents the results of a quantitative analysis of the themes in a sample of five academic journals of Infocom during the past five years. And the third section discusses the themes and methodological approaches brought up in the interviews. All of the data suggest that the field of Infocom is heterogeneous with various themes and approaches. However, a few broad themes can be distinguished: the studies of new technologies, “culture and communication”, and studies of mass media (audiovisual and press). The prevalent theoretical and methodological approaches are the theory of usages, cultural approaches to communications, semiology, discourse analysis, and political economy of communications.

#### 3.1 Previous Studies of the Main Themes

Information and communication studies in France is already broad by its institutional definition in the 71<sup>st</sup> section of the CNU. The founders of the discipline came from the fields of documentation and scientific information (Jean Meyriat), articulation of cybernetics and political information (Robert Escarpit), and the semiological critique of mass media (Roland Barthes). This heterogeneous alliance planted the seeds of the present field’s diversity and richness. The combination of information, documentation, and library sciences with communication and media studies, including all of its various approaches, makes the field a patchwork. Should the French scholars of Infocom move into the international Anglo-American world, they would be dispersed among such disciplines of information science, media studies, communication science, cultural studies, sociology, political science, literature studies or semiotics. (e.g., Jeanneret 2001, 5.)

A few efforts were made previously in mapping the field’s main approaches and themes. The most extensive research is still in progress, namely the project of the German scholar Stefanie Averbeck (2005) on Communication Theories in France 1975-2005. A French professor, Robert Boure, has also written several accounts of the historical origins of Infocom (see Boure [ed.] 2002; Boure 2005; 2006). The most recent attempt to map the current state of the discipline was done by French researchers Helene Cardy and Pascal Froissart in 2005 (2006; see also 2002). The main focus of their



study is on people, the social corpus of Infocom, but they also analysed the most common research themes in the field. The first part of their data consists of profiles of the teaching posts found in university recruitment announcements in the news bulletin *Journal official* in 1998-2005, in the database of the Ministry of Research. The second part of their data consists of a directory of 229 researchers who were members of the association SFSIC during the period 1999-2002. Cardy and Froissart admit the limitations of their data, as recruitment announcements reflect internal strategies of the departments, and the directory is limited to those who were members of the association. But the study still gives an indication of the various approaches to Infocom in French universities. The themes it defines are the following:

- A. New technologies in information and communication (NTIC)
  - technologies: informatics, multimedia, hypertext, audiovisual, techniques, PAO.
  - new usages: new media, networks, innovation, the Internet, information systems, uses of technologies of information and communication, digital media.
- B. Socio-economic approach
  - cultural politics, local politics, international politics, social politics, socio-economics, socio-political approach to communication, communication in local politics, communication politics, economy of media, institutional communication, public space, surveys.
- C. Discourse analysis
  - analysis of mediated productions, semiology, studies of static and moving images, visual communication, discourse analysis of media, documentary cinema, argumentation, rhetorics, representation, mediology, advertising, media education
- D. Epistemology of communication, questions of the discipline
  - general information and communication, communication and society, media art, theories of communication, mediation, cinema and communication, social analysis of communication, theories of reception, journalism sociology, history of media, communication and history, history of the press
- E. Information and documentation
  - information and documentation, bibliology, systems of documentary information, archives, library science, professions of editing, mediology, editing, scientific and technical information
- F. Expression and journalism
  - techniques of expression (written, oral, audiovisual, etc.), workshops, written communication, journalistic writing, the editing process, realisation of multimedia products, management of networks, etc.
- G. Organisational Communication
  - communication in companies, internal communication, organisations, advertising, interaction, management, communication associations, commercial communication.
- H. Didactics
  - teacher training, pedagogy, educational sciences, education, distance learning, transmission of knowledge, learning, evaluation.
- I. Museology, mediation

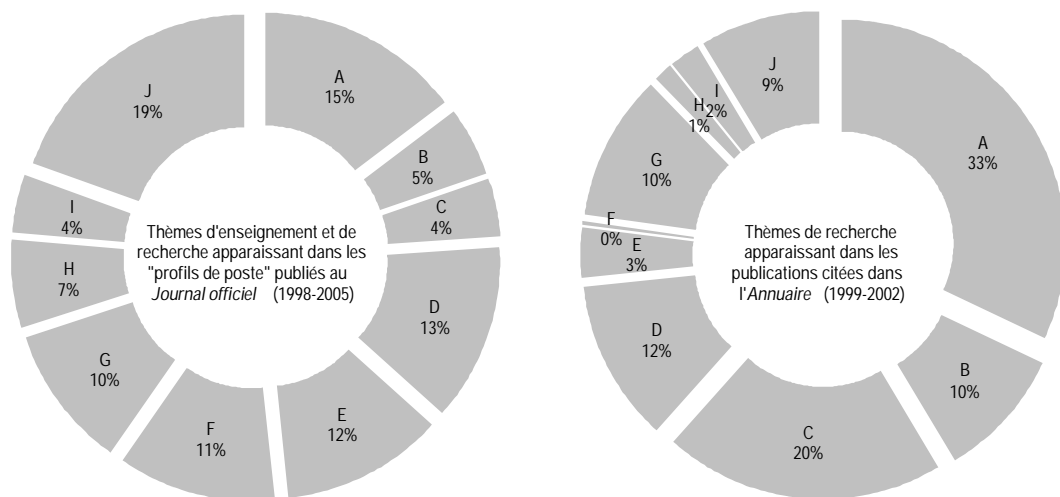
- cultural mediation, museology, socialisation of knowledge, sociology of culture, theories of mediation, strategies of mediation, scientific mediation, popularisation.

J. Miscellaneous

(Cardy & Froissart 2006, 275, 280.)

The proportions of each thematic area in both data samples are indicated in Figure 3. (The results of the work announcements are on the left and the directory is on the right.)

Figure 3. Thèmes de recherche et thèmes d'enseignement et de recherche



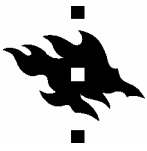
Grille d'analyse simplifiée

A. NTIC	E. Info. & doc.	I. Muséo., médiation
B. Socio-économie	F. Expression, journal.	J. Divers, autres
C. Analyse discours	G. Comm. orga.	
D. Info. & comm.	H. Didactique	(cf. détails en annexe)

[ $n_1 = 582$  ;  $n_2 = 229$ . Sources : *Annuaire de la recherche en information et communication* (SFSIC, 2002) ; Ministère (DPE A6). Traitement : H. Cardy & P. Froissart, 2005.]

(Cardy & Froissart 2006, 275.)

Interpreting two types of data, the thematic areas of research and teaching in the post announcements show important differences. Thus, the fields of research given by the individual researchers in the directory differ from the available posts. According to this data, there is twice as



much research on new technology as there are posts; and the 4% proportion of new posts for discourse analysts does not correspond the 20% of available researchers. (Cardy & Froissart 2006, 275.) However, the study does not distinguish between theoretical and methodological approaches versus research topics, which makes the two types of data incomparable.

Two other previous studies for mapping the main approaches of Infocom in France were made in 2001, one by Yves Jeanneret, and the other by a group of researchers led by Thierry Lancien. Jeanneret prepared a report for the association SFSIC on the research situation after the twelfth Conference of the Information and Communication Sciences of Unesco, in Paris 2001. On the basis of varied data consisting of an ensemble of synthesis and commentaries (e.g., anthologies or reviews of the field, important journals, and material on the activities of the SFSIC), he identified the following eight main themes:

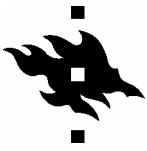
1. Documentary practices, usages of information, organisation of knowledge
2. Mediation of knowledge and cultures
3. Analysis of media and mediated actors
4. Semiology of messages and ordinary discourses
5. Political economy of the cultural, informational, and educational industries
6. Communication and politics
7. Usages and appropriation of communication and information technologies
8. Organisational communication

(Jeanneret 2001, 11-15.)

Lancien and colleagues assembled their classification on the basis of the names and definitions of research centres and laboratories of the CNRS, polytechnical schools, and university research centres that provide graduate level teaching. They divided the research field into the following six themes: traditional media, new media, culture and communication, education, organisational communication, territories, and art. (Lancien et al. 2001, 44.) (for more detailed definition of the areas, see Appendix 3.)

### 3.2 Thematic Areas on the Basis of Journals' Content Analysis (Elina Perttula)

Thierry Lancien (2001) has also made a quick content analysis based on a sampling of 78 issues in the four journals: *Les dossiers de l'audiovisuel*, *Hermès*, *Quaderni* and *Réseaux*. The main finding was that most dominant themes were "Questions of signification" and "Relation to technology". The main approaches of the research themes in these journals were the following:



Questions of signification	(23)
Relation to technology	(13)
Economy of the sector	(10)
Return to history	(4)
Information society	(1)
Communication and politics	(5)
Communication and territory	(5)
Communication and social	(7)
Communication and culture	(2)
Other socio-political questions	(4)
Problematising Infocom	(1)
Education and training	(2)

(Lancien et al. 2001, 53.)

Inspired by this sampling, we have made a quantitative content analysis of five Infocom journals from past five years (2001-2006) with a total of 871 articles. The aim of the analysis was to outline current thematic areas in the field of information and communication science in France. The journals were chosen from among the most important in the field of Infocom in France. The journals were the following:

1. *Hèrmès* 2001-2006 (issues 29-46)
2. *Réseaux* 2001-2006 (issues 109-139)
3. *Communication & Langage* 2001-2006 (issues 127-150)
4. *Les enjeux de l'information* 2001-2006
5. *Études de communication* 2001, 2003-2005 (issues 24-27)

The content analysis was carried out within the limitations of the data, which consisted for the most part of the abstracts and journal contents in electronic form found on the Internet. Some of the issues are excluded, due to the inadequacy of the journals' Internet pages. Within this framework, the discipline of information and communication in France appears to be simultaneously incoherent and diverse. Twenty-six categories of thematic approaches were distinguished. The themes, and the number of articles dealing with the themes in each journal during the five year period, are listed in Table 4 and explained below.



Table 4

**Thematic analysis of five journals**

	Hermès	Réseaux	Communi- cation et Langages	Les enjeux de l'inform- ation	Études de Communi- cation	Total
1. Technology and communication	18	71	21	5		115
2. Cultural identities	56		3			59
3. Economical approach	21	29	4	5		59
4. Culture, territory and communication	50		2			52
5. Information society	22	13	7	9	1	52
6. Politics and communication	32	5	8	1	1	47
7. Journalism and press	23	10	7	3	3	46
8. Audio-visual communication and arts	10	6	22	1	4	43
9. Organisational communication	13	22	3	5		43
10. Public sphere	30	12				42
11. Miscellaneous	6	6	19	1	5	37
12. TV and radio research	16	12	4	3		35
13. Mass-culture, media and communication	26	3	2			31
14. Epistemology of the discipline	14	1		5	9	29
15. Social practices	16	7	2	1		26
16. Literature	5	3	14	1	1	24
17. Reception, public	12	6	2			20
18. Education and learning	12	2	3	1		18
19. Questions of democracy	12			1	1	14
20. Globalisation	13		1			14
21. Social psychology and communication	13					13
22. Semiotics	3		4	3	2	12
23. Territory					10	10
24. Regulation of media	3	7		1		11
25. Historical approaches	7	2	2			11
26. Advertisement & Marketing	3	1	2	2	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>872</b>

*1. Technology and communication*

The area of technology and communication is quite broad and is focused on devices and innovations and their socio-cultural dimension. The area includes research on technology, digitalisation and convergence of communication, new technology (NTIC), and the Internet. The dominant themes are devices and techniques, together with usages and socio-cultural aspects of these themes with emphasis on the technological aspects. Examples of its themes include:

- Internet usage, social networks, usage of new technology, and use of personal websites and personal blogs
- navigation, graphics, typography editing, writing, and learning (which overlaps with education)



- socio-cognitive reflections on communication and new technology, e.g., reading, writing, and managing information
- The Internet, information media, web journals, and web journalism
- new media professions and work and the rise of experts (also close to the area of education)

### *2. Cultural identities*

This area is dominated by ethnic and anthropological approaches to questions of identity constructions, cultural stereotypes, and ethnicity, within the context of media and mediated culture. It consists of theoretical and empirical studies of local, regional, and national identities focusing on the Francophone world. The notions of otherness and multiculturalism are salient in this category of research.

### *3. Economic approach*

The area of economic approaches is wide. Dominant themes are the economy of the media structure, the communication industry, and theoretical reflections on the political economy. The area also covers questions of new economy and relations to new technology and networks as well as to the cultural industry.

### *4. Culture, territory, and communication*

The area of culture and territory is closely connected to the French history of colonisation; thus the focus is on being in a Francophone world. Questions such as multiculturalism, linguistic imperialism, and nationalism are included, as are economic and political standpoints. This area widens the questions of cultural identities (no. 2) and is also connected to questions of globalisation and technology. The emphasis in the articles in this area was on cultural diversity, and connections to political, juridical, and economic questions.

### *5. Information society*

The questions around the flux of information, networks, mediation, and numeric infrastructure are included in the research area of the information society. These themes are reflected in socio-cultural, political, as well as economic points of view. Many studies in this area were focused on Internet-related knowledge and information.

### *6. Politics and communication*

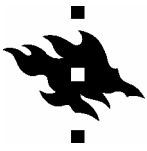
The articles included in this area analysed the relationships among politics, media, and society. Questions of politics as communication, mediated politics, and political communication were dominant. These questions were discussed in several contexts, including populism, propaganda, and mass media. Also relationships between politics and journalism were emphasised.

### *7. Journalism and the press*

This area focused on journalistic practices and reflections on the contents of journalism, especially connected to the changing communication environment and new technology. Editorial policies and journalistic professionalism were important in this section, which covers both print and audiovisual media. The themes discussed included cultural features in the profession of journalism and reflections on professional identity.

### *8. Audio-visual communication and the arts*

This broad area contains artistic practises, museology, the history of images as well as representations in cinema (and a few articles on music). Such themes as production, diffusion,



copyrights, and distribution were discussed in connection with questions of new technology and new media. Relations to digital and plastic images as well as visual representations in media were also emphasised.

#### *9. Organisational communication*

The area of organisational communication included research on public and private organisations. The economic approach and connection to new technology were essential in these articles. Key discussion themes included reorganisation and the new modes of administration contrasted with communication strategies of companies or public organisations. Also included were such topics as public relations and computer-supported communication.

#### *10. The Public sphere*

The articles in this area approached the public sphere in a global world both from theoretical and empirical perspectives. The area contained such topics as public opinion, audiences and their connections to democracy, media and economics, journalism, media events, etc.

#### *11. Miscellaneous*

In this area were gathered article titles without abstracts or those impossible to classify into any of the main areas.

#### *12. Television and radio research*

This area covers the field of television and radio broadcasting, including studies of contents as well as usage and reception.

#### *13. Mass culture, media and communication*

This area contained articles dominated by the analysis of representations in and of mass media, with the methodological focus being on content analysis. Sociological studies of mass culture were also included. One of the special topics here was the analysis of media events.

#### *14. Epistemology of the discipline*

Self-reflection on communication as a paradigm is a distinctive theme in this area. There were articles discussing both theoretical and empirical questions in the context of the philosophy of science, practices, and connections to other disciplines (for example, the relationship with sociology).

#### *15. Social practices*

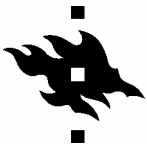
This area contained sociological analyses of social networks and socio-cultural approaches to modern societies. Questions of ritual and ritualisation of social life in relation to individuals, communities, and cultures were emphasised.

#### *16. Literature*

Reflections on literature, books and new technology, publishing and literacy critique were the main focus of this area. Articles discussing connections to new technology were also included.

#### *17. Reception and the public*

This area contained classical audience research and studies of media reception, rhetorics, and publics.



### *18. Education and learning*

In the articles of this area the pedagogical approach to education, learning, and teaching was closely connected to new technology. Standpoints included multiculturalism and schooling, new technologies and education, education as a science, the virtual university, cognitive processes, and new technology.

### *19. Questions of democracy*

The topics of interest here were communication and democracy. The articles in this area analysed communication and democracy and dealt with such questions as society, state, citizenship, the people and their connections to media and journalism. Also included were historical reflections on these thematic orientations.

### *20. Globalisation*

The emphasis in this area was on the social implications of globalisation, new technology in a global era, politics, the relationship between the French-speaking world and globalisation, media and globalisation. Special topics of interest included globalisation and the information society, global networks, and the economy.

### *21. Social psychology and communication*

This area contained articles discussing social cognition and psychological approaches to communication. Questions concerning social networks, social communication, and construction of social representations were emphasised; also included were psychological reflections on communication and the role of the media in social life. Special topics of interest included analysis of communication science from a socio-psychological perspective.

### *22. Semiotics*

The emphasis in this area was on socio-semiotic approaches to media contents, and studies of representations connected by and in the media. Different semiotic or semiological approaches were used in the analyses of advertisement and other media contents, especially images.

### *23. Territory*

The area of territory covered articles discussing such topics as city planning, urbanism, public politics, and the city. These questions were approached mainly from economic, political, and technological perspectives.

### *24. Regulation of the media*

Regulation of the media contained articles on juridical questions, copyrights, regulation of content, censorship, etc.

### *25. Historical approaches*

This area included articles dealing with historical approaches to the media, culture, and society as well as to communication science, topics such as "the History of colonisation", and "the History of the Francophone movement" were of special interest here.

### *26. Advertisement and marketing*

This area was characterised by theoretical and empirical standpoints. It included marketing, public relations, advertisement, new technology. Psychological aspects were also included.



Within the 26 diverse thematic areas there were two broad orientations that seemed to dominate and overlap with the different themes and approaches: *Information and communication technology* and *Culture and Communication* (including cultural approaches to communication). The two main orientations reflect the myriad phenomena typical of the contemporary era. More distinct but much smaller areas were mass media and organisational communication.

The themes mainly wandered over the changes in culture, new technologies, and global networks. New technologies and global networks, which transcend time, space and distance, and the mixing of cultures due to immigration, have brought about notions of globalisation and cultural identity. The concept of culture is central in French public discourse. High culture is considered something belonging to every citizen the symbol of French identity, the theme of culture thus has an unquestioned value in French society. But, the notion of culture is also considered in its larger sense, meaning various ways of living, being, and giving meaning to life and work.

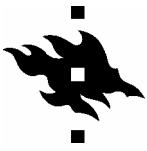
### 3.3 Themes and Approaches in the Interviews

Many of the same themes and approaches occurred in the interviews conducted with 18 French scholars. All emphasised the inter- and multidisciplinary of approached in Infocom, and/or the articulation of different approaches being characteristic of the field. The interviewees were asked to mention 1) the main themes (or objects of research) in Infocom in France, and 2) the dominant methodological and theoretical approaches.

The themes/fields of research mentioned were:

- Technology, technological evolution of communication devices (in particular, new technology such as telecom and the Internet)
- Social usages of communication machines
- Cultural industries (including media)
- Globalisation and international communication
- Media and journalism (television, press, etc.)
- Mediation of the culture (e.g., questions of identity)
- Scientific information, structure of documentation
- Organisational communication (in both public and private organisations)
- Political communication (questions of public sphere, media, and power)
- Automatic processing of language
- Circulation and mediation of knowledge, diffusion and popularisation of knowledge,
- Museums and cultural heritage
- Communication and development (colonial history and present diasporas)

The most common theoretical and methodological orientations were the following:



- Theory of usages
- Political economy of communication
- Discourse analysis
- Anthropology of everyday communication
- Semiology, semiotics, analysis of symbols
- Socio-economics
- Political sciences
- Information sciences
- Sociological approaches, "media sociology"
- Anthropology of everyday life (Goffmanian approach)
- Ethnography (participatory observation, interviews)
- Marketing and management sciences (connected to organisational communication)

*Elaboration of some of the important methodological and theoretical approaches:*

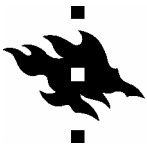
The Theory of Usages is wide spread and mentioned as a French speciality. This theoretical orientation has been developed especially by one of the pioneers of Infocom, Robert Escarpit, who combined the ideas of Richard Hoggart "*the uses of literacy*" and the American tradition of Uses and Gratifications by e.g., Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz. Escarpit widened the perspective on the reception of communication into a more complex model, and integrated several active parties into the earlier, more simplified view of the communication process. (Averbeck 2005, 5.) The theory of action and the notion of appropriation by Michel de Certeau have also been influential for this orientation. (Ibid. 14-15.) Thus, the French theory of social usages emphasises the active role of the audience/reader/user in the communication situation. The theory of usages is often applied to several fields mentioned above: technology, mobile phones, documents, information, libraries, companies, television, press, etc. In particular, the French are proud of having developed the sociology of usage for information and communication technology, starting from the research and development of Minitel conducted in the research centre CNET of France Télécom. Now the social usages theory is also applied to studies of mobile phones and the Internet.

*Political economy of communication* is a tradition that draws on the theories of the Frankfurt School and of that of public sphere by Jurgen Habermas. The notion of cultural industries (see Debord 1967) is highlighted in this theoretical orientation and was developed in France in particular by "the school of Bernard Miège". Questions of globalisation, media, and economy of media are often considered from this perspective.

*Discourse analysis* is widely used as a methodological framework and a tool in French communication studies. This methodology is based on language analysis by linguists, structuralists, and the ideas of e.g., Pecheux, Foucault, Laclau, and Mouffe. This methodology is often used for analysing language in the media.

*Anthropology of everyday communication* is also a common approach to the themes of Infocom. The orientation of anthropology of communication has been influenced by e.g., Palo Alto and the Chicago school.

*Semiology*, the analysis of symbols, has been influenced by e.g. Algirdas Greimas, Roland Barthes, and other semiologists of the Paris school. The semiological approach is considered a French originality, because the orientation started in France.



The present emphasis on the methods used in Infocom is on qualitative approaches. The methods used to be more focused on textual analysis of media contents but nowadays there is a growing trend towards ethnographic approaches such as individual interviews, focus group interviews, participant observation, etc. There is also more qualitative research being done within private research agencies that previously focused on statistical surveys with large samples (such as MédiaMéttrie, IPSOS). Overall, the dominant paradigm in France is social constructivism, based on the idea of the social construction of reality. Simply put, the media and information and communication devices are seen as part of constructing the social reality of everyday life.



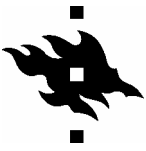
## 4 National Characteristics of Communication Research in France

Many traits make communication studies in France unique in comparison to other countries. The growth of the research field is fairly recent in France, and scholars still seem to face some challenges over the legitimacy of the institutional status of Infocom. The first significant national characteristic is therefore the debate on the identity of the discipline. The second, is the degree to which French culture and language shape the questions, the methods, and the whole practice of doing research. Third, French culture is individualistic strongly imbued with the idea of the independent intellectual, who is also a respected figure in society. The idea of independence and self-sufficiency applies both to the individual and at the national level and is characteristic of the working culture. Fourth, in terms of relations to other countries the French have developed their research in co-operation with the Francophone countries and have a certain aversion to Anglo-Saxon countries. However, there is a trend among the younger generation of French researchers to be more open to influences from Anglophone and other non-French cultures.

### 4.1 The Debate on the Identity of the Discipline

The question of the institutional status of information and communication sciences has been an ongoing debate at national conferences over the years. The debate still reflects the short tradition of the discipline. Even though Infocom was founded in at institutional level already in 1975, it took almost twenty years for research in the field to really flourish. However, questions of communication have been studied all along within the old disciplines from various perspectives. It was not until the turn of the millennium that researchers of Infocom started to claim questions of communication as their property. At present this debate has been accentuated with the establishment of a new institute with a special focus on communication in October 2006 by the prestigious national research centre CNRS (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*). Even now, Infocom is not represented among the disciplinary departments of CNRS. The institutional position of the discipline seems to be crucial in the authoritarian French culture. The ultimate question seems to be over the hegemony of the research field.

A typical issue brought up in the interviews with the French Infocom scholars was the status of the discipline (see also Averbeck 2005, 7). There was no disagreement about the multidisciplinary and



transversality of the approaches to Infocom, nor on the importance of the question of communication in the contemporary global world. But the debate is evolving around whether Infocom should be a) an independent discipline with pluralistic roots and multidisciplinary approaches, or b) a phenomenon to be seen merely as an object of research that could be studied by all the traditional disciplines (such as sociology, political sciences, philosophy, etc.).

On the one hand, defenders of the independent discipline view say that Infocom can and should consist of multidisciplinary theories and approaches, but there is a particular angle of communication on all the issues. This is what is called "*la pensée communicationnelle*" by Bernard Miège (2005), and it means that "Infocom research should not be a reproduction of what is done elsewhere and simply applied to a new object of research". The particularity of Infocom is the special articulation of approaches, "to make an ensemble of questions and understanding communication as a global phenomenon." Infocom is needed to gather these views and develop concepts for theorising and researching communication processes that may take place in any field in society.

On the other hand, those who wish to keep communication common ground for all disciplines say: "Infocom is not a discipline, that's a mistake. It is an object of research. They argue that to gain a theoretically and methodologically solid education, a researcher must have the education of one "mother-discipline", such as sociology, history, or political science. Even now many of those who work in the field of Infocom have backgrounds in some other discipline (see Cardy & Froissart 2002, 354). The researchers in Infocom sometimes say they feel closer to colleagues from other disciplines than to colleagues in Infocom.

But a third, moderate group says that the legitimacy of the discipline is no longer the problem. "SIC is an interdiscipline, which has become a discipline". The younger generation who have started their studies with programmes in the field do not pose the question of legitimacy in the way. For the first 20 to 30 years of the Infocom existence, scholars were busy building curricula for student education and relationsps to information and communication professionals; they worked to create posts and developed research to be recognised in academia. But now the discipline is in a phase when consolidation of the theoretical and epistemological base is needed. This requires common goals and teamwork among the researchers of Infocom.



It easily happens that there are groups of researchers working in their own domain, and they do not co-operate with others. There is a bit too much fragmentation and dispersion, also competition within the field.

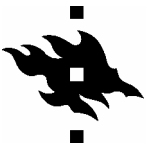
#### 4.2 The Culture of the Independent Intellectuals

The ideas of the French revolution – liberty, equality and fraternity – still form the moral background of the French government. These ideas can also be found behind the national committee for universities (CNU): CNU was established in order to avoid the favouritism, nepotism, and localism in the university institution. Still, many French scholars complain that many institutional procedures (from founding institutes to nominating persons for evaluation committees) work through personal contacts and not through objective criteria. They charge that this happens in all institutional areas – universities, polytechnics, and the government.

Individualism is said to be a feature characteristic of French culture. Infocom researchers are often “loners”, and the idea of working in teams and having to compromise their ideas for the team does not sit well with the French. The social tradition does not support collaborative work, as in other parts of Europe, or the United States, or as in other research traditions. The problems in teamwork also lie in the structure and in the authoritarian culture of managing research teams. The director of the project holds “a patriarchal vision as the leader” and others are supposed to follow his orders.

The idea of the independent intellectual having a high social status in French society is strong. Public funding of universities makes this possible, as academics are able to work as independent critics of society. Some say that there is a separation between the university and the rest of the society, and it is easier for French intellectuals to stay in their ivory towers. However, ultimately the university institutions are dependent on government funding, for which they are evaluated in every four years. The State has also started requiring universities to build connections to the professional world.

There are many reasons for the delay of the French to develop strong research traditions in communication. One has to do with the public discourse about media, which in general is very critical. Not only researchers but also politicians cheerfully bash the media. And this sometimes makes media companies even less willing to extend facilities to researchers. (For example *Le Monde* is known to be quite selective about whom to allow access to their archives). But university researchers or CNRS are not seen as the major critics of the media, since other media like *Le Monde diplomatique* are especially critical towards television. For the citizen, a critical approach to the media is fostered



in schools and universities, where media education has become an important field. And nowadays newspaper publishers worry about reports on why young people do not read newspapers.

Another reason for the lag in French communication studies may be that among intellectuals in France there is contempt towards television. This attitude derives from the 1960s intellectual and political climate when television arrived for the masses and, further, was seen as representing American cultural imperialism.

The contempt for television also has to do with defending French culture, and French cultural industries, from American and Anglo-Saxon influence. Cultural identity is a heated issue in the public discussion, as was evident in the presidential campaign during the spring of 2007, when minorities and the left wing were contesting Nicolas Sarkozy's comments about cleaning up suburban ghettos. The debates expressed fears about the decline of French identity, owing to the mixing of cultures. The issue of mixture of the ethnic cultures, "*métissage culturel*", is a social problem because of which the French are having to redefine the idea of Frenchness.

However, multiculturalism has been partially acknowledged in the process of taking the responsibility for the nation's colonial history. In today's French media more minorities are visible, including coloured news anchors or television talk show hosts of colour. Also gays and lesbians are seen in the media. Still, the cultural mixing with the global media culture and especially the dominance of American media is an uneasy issue. As a counter-effect, the French place a high value on their cultural heritage, especially the fine arts, literature, and cinema. The rejection of the Anglo-Saxon world is not only limited to cultural policy, but also many researchers in the older generation are very dubious about absorbing intellectual influence from Anglo-Saxon research traditions.

French researchers have always been particularly interested in the image, but they have preferred the noble image, which is the cinema. French cinema has the status of a national heritage and it is used in support of the country's cultural identity. This is one of the reasons why television studies have not developed as much as in Britain and America. The studies of images and cinema are traditionally approached through aesthetics and semiology, whereas Anglo-American television studies have a social studies emphasis. Nowadays television research is more developed in France and is focused merely on the political dimension of television (also interesting television studies on entertainment have lately been conducted by e.g., Dominique Pasquier). Cinema studies are still more focused on arts and aesthetics, whereas television studies are more oriented towards social sciences. The



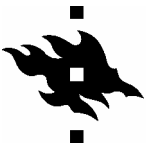
emphasis in the media studies in France was traditionally on the print press and journalism. Now the Internet is a very popular object of study and is considered a more high-brow medium, even though the lingua franca of the Internet is English.

#### 4.3 The French Language - "A Delicate Question"

The French scholars of Infocom find it problematic that their research is not known around the world. Even though, famous philosophers and sociologists, such as Bourdieu, Foucault, and de Certeau, are often cited by researchers abroad in the field of communications, because these authors have been translated into English and other languages.

The French communication scholars interviewed noted that twenty years ago, the French defended their rights to speak their language in round tables at international conferences, but nowadays they have started to accept the idea that they need to learn any foreign languages to be able to exchange new ideas and work in a global environment. Still, language is a "delicate question" to French intellectuals. It remains a great frustration to have to use English to gain access to the international community, says a French scholar who also works in English. Another professor says: "We read the Anglo-American literature but they don't read us." But in truth, translation seems to be a problem in both directions. Not many works of French scholars have been translated into English, and there is not much foreign literature being translated into French. The scholars admitted that they are not visible in international journals, but neither are French journals read by English-speaking researchers.

In French university libraries it is clearly visible, that few books in the English language are available. The exceptions are the libraries of language departments, which have developed their international research co-operation much further than others. Communication and media are especially studied within English departments, as the language and cultural symbols are the basic components of the media culture. Also, there are a few exceptional scholars, such as Armand Mattelart and Bernard Miège. Mattelart (who is actually Belgian) started his career in Chile. His works have spread to many countries and have been translated into many languages, including Spanish, English, and even into Finnish. Miège is definitely more widely known in the Francophone world, but he too has participated in several international co-operative projects and quite a few of his works have been translated into other languages.



#### 4.4 Cultural Differences – Obstacles?

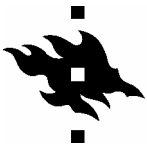
French scholars are eager to give reasons why the majority of French researchers resist writing, speaking or publishing in English or other foreign languages. First, there are the cultural differences: the language is connected to the culture and also structures ways of thinking and doing research. The differences in theoretical orientations are seen as obstacles to mutual understanding between the French and their the foreign colleagues. Many of the French scholars say that Infocom in France is not comparable to other countries, that the structure of the discipline and the theoretical basis are different, and therefore it is hard to have an intellectually rewarding dialogue. “For example, the Germans’ approaches are different, emphasising more the theory of media.” By contrast, structuralism and discourse analysis are the important issues in France.

The scholars say that universities’ international co-operation usually works well at the level of student exchange and in the pedagogic area, but there is no true intellectual scientific exchange. “The exchange is instrumental and artificial; people keep on talking their own scientific language even though they verbalise the same spoken language.” Even those French scholars who have a lot of experience at international conferences say that “the English language in conferences allows us to know who’s researching what, but that is all”. And sometimes international conferences are just “a form of academic tourism.” As for the difficulties in writing in English, the French say:

French is an abstract language, and it pushes one towards theoretical thinking about media. But it makes it almost impossible to cross the border into English, which by contrast, is very practical. It is difficult for the French to speak English well enough that is understandable to English speakers.

The second group of reasons why French university researchers publish very little in foreign languages is institutional. In many French universities there is no policy or budget for translations. Moreover, publishing in a foreign language does not really bring the scholars any credit when they apply for posts within French academia. The evaluation criteria set by the CNU emphasise national research, and there have even been applicants who have been rebuked for having too many publications in English or in other countries (even if written in French) and not enough in France.

It’s a very ambiguous situation! They give a very contradictory message: you need to be seen internationally, but if you do it too much you are not French enough. If you want to be international you have to walk a thin line, and publish everything in both languages, but it requires a lot of time.



A third reason is also structural: the French Infocom is not known around the world because it is so young. It was only recently that research started developing in France, and then scholars of Infocom have been busy building up the discipline inside French universities. Their priority has been to develop curricula, educate students, set up research projects, and organise the scientific community. Therefore, a number of French scholars of Infocom have published a good deal in their own language, but they have not yet had the energy to bring their ideas to the international community.

The fourth argument is that the Francophone world and culture is already large enough and strong enough to stand on its own, with a large scientific community and great theoreticians. As one professor says:

The French are to a certain extent isolated from the Anglo-Saxon world because of the simple fact that their language area is big enough that they can live without speaking English. French researchers can go to Belgium, Quebec, Switzerland, and they are not obliged to speak English. It's a French micro-world.

Yet many scholars regret that researchers and students do not know Anglo-Saxon literature, and vice versa the French Infocom literature is not known in the Anglo-Saxon world. The French also say that the culture and the academic culture are closer to them in the Latin countries than in the Anglo-Saxon countries. Therefore, they prefer international contacts with the Latin countries to relationships with the Anglophones.

However, the young generation has grown up in a different cultural climate, is more eager to learn foreign languages, and is open to foreign influences. The attitude towards internationalisation is also changing at the institutional level. Nowadays in ministerial assessments, French scholars are expected to show publications in other languages and international exchanges. And the new funding agency ANR has called for some projects in English. Also, universities have started setting language requirements for students; for example since for the last four or five years the University of Avignon has imposed on its Master and Doctoral level students a requirement for a minimum of 30% of English references in their thesis and dissertations. Many French universities have well functioning exchange programs and some research co-operation with many foreign countries. University departments are active in organising workshops, conferences, and other academic encounters both at the international and the national levels.



French language and culture have been quite self sufficient, but the French are now becoming more open to the world. There is a new generation of French researchers who speak English, participate in international networks and associations for communication research<sup>7</sup>, and travel to international conferences, including English-speaking ones. Those researchers have made the choice to compete at the international level, and they also write in English or have their works translated and published in other countries. Many of the young French scholars consider internationalisation of French communication research an absolute necessity.

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<sup>7</sup> As an example, IFP (Institut Français de Presse) and Sorbonne 3 in Paris are among the organisers of the IAMCR Conference to be held in Paris in July 2007.



## 5 The Future of Information and Communication Research

As for the future of information and communication sciences, French scholars believe that the new communication technology will prevail as an important field of study. The Internet, mobile phones, and also the questions of globalisation, cultural identity, cultural minorities, and social problems are emerging themes. The field of organisational communication is growing, and museology combined with cultural communication is also an emerging subfield. Moreover, the Anglo-American tradition of cultural studies has found its way to France.

### 5.1 Emerging or Growing Research Areas

Most French scholars in information and communication sciences say that the major future trend is the penetration of technology into everyday life. Mobile phones have a growing role all over the world. The Internet will probably be used by all population categories, as television is today. This will bring up questions of mobility, nomadism, and new communities – probably even a new arrival of communitarism. The theory of usages is expanding further, e.g., to organisational communication and to education. The arrival of the Internet has destroyed some of the old separations in communication research, such as the separation of mass media from documentation and advertising. All of these are merging on the Internet, and the convergence of various genres and media is part of present everyday life. The Internet has also highlighted the importance of research into author rights and copyrights. Overall, Infocom scholars are calling for social analyses of technology and the avoidance of technological determinism.

The question of power in communication has become important, and answering it is likely to bring about theoretical approaches to analyse power and communication. Organisational communication is also an expanding field. In particular, the areas of internal communication within the workplace and research on public institutions are growing. Also the exchange and intermingling between marketing and culture is an emerging theme. In the professional sphere, the separation between the communication of economics and the communication of culture no longer applies: commercial logic is penetrating to all levels of society, and public and cultural organisations also have to be able to do marketing; on the other side marketing managers need to understand the culture and the cultural behaviour of markets.



Museology is a small but developing area within the field of cultural communication, and it has an acknowledged place in the institutional Infocom. Museums and performing arts are seen as media in themselves, and nowadays the use of new media technology has become usual in museums. The work on cultural communication can bring important accounts of the popularisation of science to a large public. The research area of museology and cultural communication has generated a number of contract researches for institutions concerned with the national heritage and fine arts, such as museums and tourism. Therefore, this area has good prospects for inspiring more Ph.D. dissertations, while the cultural sector also employs some doctoral students and post doctoral researchers.

The internalisation and globalisation of media and communication are already major fields of research within the Infocom, and they are also seen as major trends in the future. These phenomena will keep current the questions of interculturality and cultural diversity. In France immigrants from the former colonies (the Maghrebin countries and some African countries) make up a vast minority in the country and present society with a growing social problem of cultural diversity. Thus, the social question of minorities in general has given impulse both to theoretical reflections and to empirical research. There is an emerging field of studies precisely directed to the changing European public sphere.

The question of gender is not evident in the field of Infocom in France, although it is remarkable elsewhere, e.g., in the field of cultural studies in Anglo-Saxon research. But in reviewing the Infocom journals during the past few years, a gender studies approach seems to be emerging. (However, the question of gender is already a field of research within the other French social studies, such as sociology and anthropology). And not surprisingly, the international themes of terrorism and security as reflected in and constructed by the media have emerged.

The question of individualisation of the practices of communication and culture is important. As the practices of mass media become individualised, the media divide into more personalised consumer segments. There will be demand for political economy, especially cultural industries, including reception studies.



Some scholars have pointed to the need to develop further the epistemology of sciences. Texts and writing have a central place in the making of science, since knowledge is constructed through communication (writing, interviewing, reading, etc.). Some of the key questions are how does communication participate in the development of knowledge in the social sciences? What is the relationship between communication and knowledge in scientific work? The encounter between scientists and the 'real people' has been researched very little, and it is considered an area important for future development.

French scholars believe that the cultural studies approach is retuning to its origins. The Birmingham school has been fed by ideas of French thinkers like Levi-Strauss, Greimas, Barthes, de Certeau, Foucault, Bourdieu, and others. And the French will re-learn culture studies via the Anglo-American influences. However, this process is very complex. (See Appendix 4 below for Johanna Sumiala-Seppänen's essay on Cultural Studies in France.)

## 5.2 The Future of the Discipline

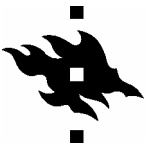
How will the discipline of information and communication sciences develop in the future? Many of the French researchers interviewed forecast that the pluralistic model will continue. There will not be any dominant school, but rather a constant rotation. Some think that Infocom should not become bigger, but keep its energy concentrated. Some scholars see the likelihood that within a few years the discipline of Infocom will no longer exist, as it will have been integrated into other domains of research, such as linguistics, sociology, history, political science. This view is mostly expressed by those whose education was in field other than Infocom, and they identify more closely with their "old" discipline. These people do not have a need to strengthen the common identity of the discipline, but to keep it dispersed – as an object of research shared by all the traditional sciences. They see a risk – that in closing within the definition of a core discipline, some of the richness of approaches would be lost.

This reflects the discussion about the legitimacy of the field. Infocom is a young discipline without classical, or strong traditions (such as Durkheimian sociology or Marxian economy), and its scope is very broad and heterogeneous. However, other, older disciplines have similar problems caused by the dispersing of various approaches.



Others view the future of Infocom differently. Infocom is a field that has arisen to introduce something new and to explore the issues of contemporary culture. According to this view, Infocom will always be a mixture of approaches, and its methods can be applied to other fields. But there is a place for a specific communication perspective. Infocom is needed to educate people for the myriad professions of communication and also as a means of studying those professions, as well as for studying the various phenomena of media and communication. Academics consider it necessary to strengthen contacts with the practitioners of communication.

At the institutional level, the French scholars worry about the future owing to the restructuring process of universities and the quality of public funding. The new institute of communication in CNRS opens some new perspectives for the future. But the new institute is not unanimously supported by the majority of French scholars in Infocom. The institute has recently launched its first call for projects, but many important scholars with a secure position are reluctant to join, because they do not see the interests of their sub-disciplines represented. For example, the questions of cultural communication and intercultural communication are missing. The founders of the institute have not recognised the work done by the people who have built the field of communication in the universities. Moreover, Infocom is still not recognised at the level of the disciplinary departments of CNRS. The institute is a lighter, administrative unit compared to departments and laboratories. Founding an institute does not require as profound an administrative procedure as a research laboratory, which is founded on the basis of peer evaluation within the discipline. Critical voices say that the founding of the institute only masks the absence of the social studies approach to communication within CNRS.

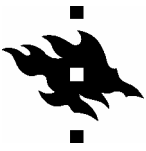


## 6 Conclusions

The field of communication research is fairly young in France. It took more than twenty years until its research started expanding and developing after the discipline was institutionally established in 1975. The reasons for this were, on one hand, that the energy of the teachers and researchers working in the domain was tied to founding departments, planning curricula, and teaching students in the new discipline. On the other hand, the fact that the questions of information and communication have been, and are still, studied within the traditional disciplines slowed down the rise of the new field.

Due to the delay in developing research on communication as an independent field, the identity of Infocom is an ongoing debate: whether its independent disciplinary status should be consolidated, or whether it should continue being a research object or theme for all the traditional disciplines. At present, this debate was accentuated when the highly prestigious national research centre CNRS (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*) opened a new institute with a special focus on communication in October 2006. Yet, Infocom is still not represented among the disciplinary departments of CNRS.

However, at present, departments, research groups, and laboratories devoted to Infocom are numerous all over in France, and the discipline seems to be there to stay. Organisations like the association SFSIC and the 71<sup>st</sup> section of CNU are working to strengthen the identity of the discipline. Still, all of the research institutions of Infocom define their profile as multidisciplinary. Therefore, the themes and approaches of the Infocom are dispersed. This heterogeneity is both a richness and a challenge. Various perspectives can show the same communication phenomena from different angles and bring new knowledge. This is highly beneficial for development of all the sciences. On the other hand, due to the multidisciplinary profile, the discipline is fragmented into several cliques. Therefore, the researchers may not find it easy to understand each other, and there is also the danger of important issues being left out when a discipline lacks a more systematic view of its research area. But the academic community is now working to develop cohesion within the field by fostering a base of theoretical notions and articulating approaches common to all the information and communication sciences.



Despite the fragmentation of the themes in Infocom, some broader orientations can be seen. The most popular theme at the moment is new communication technology. This area includes studies of the Internet, mobile phones, and other new technologies. The French were developing their own Minitel system until the mid 1990s, but were finally compelled to admit its technical limitations compared to the Internet and the World Wide Web. At the beginning of the millennium they started investing in developing the Internet, and the number of connections expanded enormously. At the moment France ranks second as the European country with the greatest number of home Internet connections. The new communication technology is being widely researched, but Infocom scholars are concerned that the social aspects of new technology may easily be left aside as the technical sciences prevail in the field. There is a strong call for investments in studies of the social implications and contexts of the new communication technology.

The French specialty in terms of theoretical and methodological approaches is the theory of usages, which is often applied to studies of the new technology, but also to many other media such as press, television, libraries and museums. A major influence for fostering the research into new technology and the theory of usages has been the sociological laboratory of France Telecom (nowadays called the *Laboratoire des Usages et traitement Statistique des Informations*). The company's research and development laboratory is exceptional in the way it functions: it produces not only applied research for commercial purposes, but also brings in valuable academic research. The laboratory has many co-operative projects with universities and polytechnical schools.

The questions of globalisation and cultural identity are also important topics for research, which are often studied within an orientation focused on cultural industries or cultural communication. The critical approach has a steady position in French intellectual thinking, and theories of the political economy of communication and theories of public sphere and democracy are popular. The media and communication system is studied as part of the cultural industry or public space, thus not necessarily as an independent research object. Important institutions in this area are the *GRESEC* in *Grenoble 3* and the co-operation project of *Paris 13 Nord, Paris 8, and Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Paris Nord*.



The tradition of journalism studies is strong in France, and institutions for journalism education and research already existed before information and communication studies were established. One of the most important in this field is *Institut Français de Presse* (IFP), which started with a narrower focus on the press and expanded to all mass media including the new media. Audiovisual studies also have a long tradition, but mostly within the humanities-oriented cinema studies. Semiological approaches are still prevalent in the field of audiovisual research, and the audiovisual media have been studied as part of the cultural industries. The central coordinator of audiovisual research is the INA (*Institut National d'Audiovisuel*).

The French research, Infocom, is centred on the Francophone world, and therefore, it is not widely known in the international, Anglophone scientific community. Traditionally, French researchers do not publish much in other languages nor read much other than literature published or translated into French, with the exception of a few scholars who have emphasised the importance of international exchange, such as Armand Mattelart and, to some extent, Bernard Miège. Because of these few scholars, the orientation of cultural industries may be the best known field in French Infocom outside the Francophone world. The institutions focused on cultural industries are also known for having developed networks to industrial life. Most of the research units of Infocom are accustomed to working with contract research, mainly, with the organisations in the public sector. Co-operation with the commercial sector is not common, except for projects with France Telecom, but co-operation is also developing in the emerging field of organisational communication, which is closer to marketing and management research.

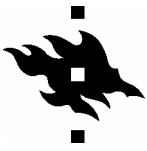
Moreover, France has a strong research tradition in culture, which is combined with multidisciplinary Infocom. The key idea in the French cultural approach is the process of signification: all cultural activity is mediated through symbols and representations; thus, communication is not only a part of culture, it *is* culture. The differing fields of literature studies, research on image, audiovisual media and the arts, as well as the information and library sciences take their points of departure from the same theoretical and methodological approaches of semiology and discourse analysis. The common denominator is found in the constructionist idea, namely that reality is socially constructed and that language plays a crucial role in the construction of reality. Therefore, all the various approaches of research on cultural phenomena neatly find their



place among mass media and other forms of communication within the field of information and communication sciences.

However, French cultural research is not the same as the Anglo-American and international tradition of cultural studies originating from the Birmingham school. The relationship between the French and cultural studies is complex, and not until recently have these two traditions begun to have some true dialogue. There is a handful of young French scholars who have brought up the issue and are drawing on both traditions in their writings. For decades, the language barrier together with several other cultural, institutional, and political reasons have kept these traditions apart. The cultivation of the French language is an important factor in French national identity, and speaking foreign languages is still a delicate question.

Finally, the current era of globalisation and the Internet are orienting French information and communication scholars outward to the world. The new generation of scholars seems to be more eager to learn languages and less tied to preserving the purity of the French culture and language.



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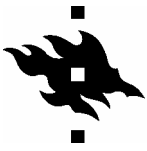
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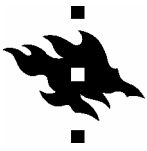
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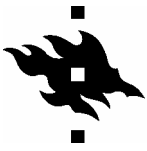
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## Appendices

### Appendix 1.

#### Program contents of television channels

*France 2* – in 2003, a total of 8,760 hours of programmes: in percentages, information, 17.98; fiction, 17.74; entertainment, 14.02; magazines, 14.02; documentary, 7.04; youth, 5.05; sports, 5.99; cinema, 3.64; religious broadcasts, 2.68; theatre, and music 0.78; and promotions or advertisement, 9.51%. (MaTelevision.com 2007.)

*France 3* – in 2004, 21,690 hours of programmes, of which 63.11% through regional antennas and 37.31% on national antennas. Of the national antenna programmes, 10.09% were magazines and documentaries; youth programmes, 5.02%; information, 6.04%; fiction, 4.2; play-entertainments, 2.6%; sports, 2.71%; other types of programmes, 7.13%. (Ibid.)

*ARTE* – programming information is given in euros. Of the channel's total budget (352.6 million euros), programmes receive 235.7 million. Themed programmes receive 30.8 million; cinema, 31.1; documentaries and magazine programmes 79.4; fiction 31.5; spectacles 19.3; informative programmes 16.7; other types of programmes 12.5 million of the budget. (Arte 2005.)

*Canal +* – in 2004 diffused 8,760 hours of programmes (42% cinema, 16.3% sports, 17.5% entertainment, 15.9% fiction, 3.2% documentary, and 5.1% of other programmes. (Ibid.)

*M6* announces its programme contents in a day-based system: in 24 hours, its transmissions were 44% fiction, 40% music or entertainment programmes, 9.5% magazines or documentaries, 3.5% full-length films; 0.3% sports; other types of programmes were 0.2% of the total. (M6, 2006.)



## Appendix 2

Academic institutions with research on communication in France (not a complete list)

### Caen

l'Université de Caen

- l'ISMRA GREYC, Groupe de Recherches En Informatique, Image, Instrumentation de Caen,
- UPRESA (CNRS)

### Grenoble

Grenoble 3

- GRESEC

### Paris

CNRS

- GDR TICS (Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication et Société)
- ITEM (UPR 7, l'Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes)
- LAU (UPR 34, Laboratoire d' Anthropologie Urbaine)
- Politique, pouvoir et organisation (section 40).
- ISCC (L'Institut des Sciences de la Communication du CNRS)

Université Marne la Vallée

- LATTS (Le laboratoire Techniques, Territoires et Sociétés)

Ecole Nationale Supérieure des mines de Paris-CNRS

- Centre de sociologie de l'innovation (CSI).

CELSA (École des hautes études en sciences de l'information et de la communication)

Paris Nord (Paris 13)

- (UFR ) of Sciences de la communication, Sciences humaines et des humanités,
- Paris XIII Nord à Villetaneuse

-LabSIC - Laboratoire des Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication de l' Université de  
L' École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales

- CEMS (Centre d'étude des mouvements sociaux)

L' Université Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris 3)

- CIM (Communication, information, media)

IFP (Institut Français de Presse) in Université Assas-Paris 2

- CARISM (Centre d'analyse et de Recherche interdisciplinaires sur les medias)

Université Paris 8

- Culture et Communication (UFR CUCOM)

- CEMTI Centre d'Etudes sur les Medias, les Technologies et l'Internationalisation

### Lille

Université Charles de Gaulle, Lille 3

- GERIICO (Groupe d'etudes et de recherché interdisciplinaire en information communication)
- UFR l'Information et Communication
- UFR IDIST Information, documentation
- UFR Arts et Culture

### Lyon

L'Université Jean Moulin, Lyon3

- Faculté des Lettres et Civilisations, Information-Communication

- UFRSIC (Unité fédérative d'équipes de recherche en sciences de l'information)

Université Lumière Lyon2

- Equipe Médias et Identités



Bordeaux  
Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine  
- Le Groupe de Recherches et d'Etudes sur les Médias (GREM)

Metz  
Université Paul Verlaine-Metz  
- CREM Centre de Recherches sur les

Nice  
Université de Provence  
- CREPCOM

Rennes  
Université Rennes 2  
- CERSIC ERELLIF

Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin  
- LAREQUOI

Toulouse  
IUT Paul Sabatier, Toulouse 3.  
- LERASS (Laboratoire d'études et de recherches appliqués en sciences de la société)  
Université Toulouse - Le Mirail  
- GRESOC Groupe de Recherche Socio-Economiques  
- LARA, (L'ESAV).

Avignon  
Université d'Avignon  
- Laboratoire Culture et Communication

Schools of Journalism:

- Centre Universitaire d'Enseignement du Journalisme, Strasbourg
- CELSA, L'Université Paris-IV-Sorbonne.
- EJCM : Ecole de Journalisme et de Communication de Marseille
- IUT de Tours - Département Information-Communication Option journalisme
- Institut de journalisme Bordeaux Aquitaine (ex-IUT de Journalisme de Bordeaux)
- Université Stendhal - Institut de la Communication et des Médias (ICM), Grenoble-Echirolles
- IUT de Lannion Département Information et Communication. Option journalisme
- Institut Français de Presse, (IFP) Paris 6



## Appendix 3

The main themes in Infocom in France in 2001  
by Thierry Lancien and colleagues (2001, 44):

I The audiovisual media, press, and radio are included in the research field of traditional media. The research on radio has been scant (see also Tétu 2004, *Hermès*). This field of traditional media is further divided into eight areas:

1. Public space and communication
2. Economy of the sector
3. Reception and the public
4. Discourse analysis
5. Sociology of the content of the audiovisual production
6. History of media
7. Usages
8. Professions

II New media research field includes research on new communication and information technology (NTCI), multimedia, and the Internet. The dominant areas are usages and techniques, and the technological aspect is prevalent (which is not the case in traditional media research field). The field of new media is often situated at the crossroads of other sections such as education, art, and territory. The field is further divided into seven areas:

1. Usages
2. Techniques
3. Public politics
4. History of the sciences and communication technology devices
5. The juridical questions
6. Economy
7. Reception

III The field of research of culture and communication is divided to following areas:

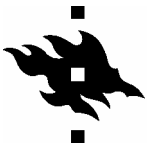
1. Technical modernisation and cultural changes
2. Cultural industries
3. Representations
4. Multiculturalism
5. Documentary cinema
6. Image
7. Identity

IV The field of research of education is connected to technology, objects, and the field of significations. This field of research is growing, and it consists of four areas:

1. Transmission of knowledge as a result of technological development
2. Networks of dissemination of knowledge
3. Mediation of expert knowledge
4. Professions of documentation and teaching

V The field of research of Organisational communication includes research on public and private organisations. This field consists of following research areas:

1. Advertising
2. Marketing
3. Reorganisation and the new modes of administration



VI The field of research of Territory is also present in the university and CNRS. Three main areas can be identified:

1. Planning of territory
2. Public politics
3. The city often

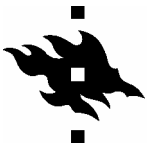
VII The field of research of Art and hypertext also raises questions of technology, objects, and the field of signification. Some of the areas (3 and 6) also cross into the field of history.

1. Esthetics of the numeric image
2. Artistic practices on the Internet
3. History of images
4. Museology
5. Music
6. Social history of music
7. Literature and interactivity.

As for shortcomings, the group of French researchers listed the following topics:

- social inequalities in terms of new technologies
- comparative European and international studies
- information society: transparency, secrecy, security
- audiovisual production: the public national and European supply, analysis of the supply
- women, minorities, and the media
- social movements and media (including the Internet)
- architecture

(Lancien et al. 2001, 44-49.)



## Appendix 4

### Cultural Studies in France – Receptions and Rejections (Johanna Sumiala-Seppänen)

*Conformément à son endémique et regrettable manque de curiosité internationale, la tradition universitaire française n'a même pas réagi au développement mondial des Cultural Studies qui se sont répandues dans le monde anglo-saxon avant de gagner la planète. Insularité française, aristocratie académique, monolinguisme, protectionismes disciplinaires, goût affiché du surplomb, peur de la contagion par les objets, conception élitiste, libéral et patrimoniale de la culture, préférence pour les sujets nobles qui ennoblissent, mépris pour sciences appliquées et impliquées, préférence pour les débats franco-français, ont contribué (et contribuent toujours) au renfermement de l'université sur elle-même (Darras 2007: 2-3).*

One of the peculiarities of communication studies (Infocom) in France is its complex relationship to intellectual influences coming from outside of French academic life. This essay discusses the challenges and difficulties in adapting and transforming “foreign influences” to French thinking by analysing French reception and reactions to one of the most influential, contemporary Anglo-American academic traditions in the field of media and communication studies called Cultural Studies.

#### 1 British foundation

The field, called Cultural Studies was originally established in Birmingham, England in 1964 under the Directorship of Richard Hoggart. Hoggart's pioneering study, *The Uses of Literacy*, published in the mid-1950s, offered a groundbreaking analysis of how cultural and social developments were transforming and reshaping the cultures of the “traditional” working class. Other important works laying “the curriculum” of the field were Raymond Williams's *Culture and Society* (1958) and *The Long Revolution* (1961) and E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1968). A common element to those early studies was that they all brought disciplined thought to bear on the understanding of their own times. All of them, in their various ways, confronted post-war British society, formed a constitutive part of the agenda of the early “New Left” setting the terms of the post-war “cultural debate” or “culture wars” and by doing so, defined the space in which Cultural Studies emerged, defined its objectives, and set its agenda (Hall 1980/1996: 16-17). In that definition Cultural Studies was “an ‘engaged’ set of disciplines, addressing awkward but relevant issues about contemporary society and culture” (Hall 1980/1996: 17). Cultural Studies was primarily concerned with “neglected” materials drawn from popular culture and the mass media, fields that were believed to provide important evidence of the new stresses and directions of contemporary culture. Its empirical focus



was on tracing the articulations through which societies produced culture and how culture in turn shaped society through its influence on individuals and groups, how cultural artefacts (texts and images) articulated social ideologies, values, and representations of gender, race, and class, and how these phenomena were related to each other.

In other words, scholars in the newly established Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies aimed at inaugurating research in the area of contemporary culture and society by focusing on cultural forms, practices, and institutions and their relation to society and social change. They situated culture within a theory of social production and reproduction and specified the ways that cultural forms served either to further social domination or to enable people to resist and struggle against this domination. Furthermore, they conceived society as a hierarchical and antagonistic set of social relations that were characterised by the oppression of subordinate classes, genders, races, ethnicities, and natural strata (Hall 1980/1996; Kellner 1995; Tudor 1999).

## 2 Early French influences

The intellectual ideas of British Cultural Studies did not, however, grow in a vacuum. Quite the contrary, the ability of scholars in Cultural Studies to adapt new ideas and to use the intellectual raw materials at hand to theorize about culture and society was based heavily on their openness and curiosity about continental thinking, which offered intellectual and conceptual tools to reshape the central issues of Cultural Studies and challenged them to work further on the problems of non-reductionist theory of culture (Hall 1980/1996). In this connection, "new French theory" was as especially important influence providing fresh syntheses of Marxism, psychoanalysis, semiotics, and feminism. The discoveries by thinkers like Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Jean Baudrillard, Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, and Julia Kristeva were enthusiastically taken up and further elaborated by the British and American new left, the new generation Cultural Studies scholars. In the 1980s this influence mutated into what has been called post-modern theory, turned its interest into fragmentation of the subject and the disintegration of political and social practice (Kellner 1995: 23). In recent decades the intellectual heritage of British Cultural Studies has spread widely, especially in the Anglo-Saxon academic world, including to the Nordic countries, where the Anglo-American and Anglo-Saxon influence has been especially strong in recent years.



### 3 Reception in France

Since the 1960s, the French reaction to Anglo-American Cultural Studies has been – to say the least – ambivalent. There are several reasons for this ambivalence, many of them having to do with contextual differences – meaning societal, ideological, and cultural differences between the United Kingdom, the United States, and France. Below I will discuss French reactions to and rejections of Cultural Studies by focusing on contextual differences that reflect French reception and by pointing out the competing intellectual traditions affecting the reception/rejection of new ideas.

It goes without saying that intellectual ideas always develop in a certain historical, political, and cultural context, and this is also true in of Cultural Studies. A common historical feature to the United Kingdom, the United States, and France was that they all experienced an era of heated cultural and political debate during the 1960s, between the liberal new left and the conservatives. The cultural and political atmosphere was favourable for the creation of new forms of society and culture, and it was rich in producing new countercultures and alternative forms of everyday life. In Paris, France "*l'effet 68*" and its Marxist critique of cultural industries (e.g., Guy Debord, 1967 and the situationist movement) left a strong mark on the generation of post-war intellectuals who were setting the stage for further cultural debate. However, as a general difference between French and Anglo-American cultural criticism, the French view of culture was more elitist-based, more protectionist; and it was not so much oriented towards criticising the normative distinction between high and low culture, as it was protesting against the negative influence of mass-produced cultural industries in more general and abstract (often Marxist) terms. One of the key figures in this debate was Pierre Bourdieu, whose criticism of mass media and popular culture was well known in France. (Interestingly enough, Bourdieu's role was not widely recognised in Anglo-American circles during the first decades of Cultural Studies.) As a consequence, popular culture, low culture, and mass media were basically denied status in France as objects of cultural analysis (see e.g., Darras 2007).

From the 1980s onwards, the societal differences between the United Kingdom, the United States, and France became even greater with effects on academic interests in these countries. During the 1970s, worldwide economic recession burst the bubble of post-World-War-II affluence, and talk of a "post-scarcity society" was replaced by discourses calling for the scaling down of expectations,



limits on growth, and the need for reorganisation of the economy and the state. In the 1980s, both in the United Kingdom and the United States, such reorganisation took place under the rule of conservative governments, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and President Ronald Reagan in the United States. The need for leftist criticism in the 1980s in both countries grew out of the conservative soil of the political conditions of those nations, whereas France was being ruled by a socialist François Mitterand. The differences in political and historical contexts reflected the intellectual need and the interest in participating in the national debate. Whereas British and American Cultural Studies emphasised the need to analyse popular culture production, representation, and reception of different ethnic and cultural minorities – to focus on the Other, – the political orientation of French intellectuals was headed more towards universal ideas and principles of the Republic and being a citizen (*citoyen*) (see e.g., Darras 2007).

The French idea of universalism was further strengthened by the language policy of the State. A widely known characteristic of French intellectual life, strongly supported by the political and academic elite, is the emphasis on exchanging ideas through writing, arguing, and reading in French. This policy with its active practice has been effective in leaving out much of the non-French influence, Cultural Studies not excepted. From the perspective of dialogue and debate, the question of language can be seen as one of the main sources of protectionism and exclusiveness, producing a culture of self-centeredness and self-containment and thus deepening the gap between the Francophone and Anglophone worlds in terms of intellectual exchange.

However, even more than active rejection, there was an absence of dialogue and debate growing out of the soil of ignorance and a lack of interest in the intellectual trends outside France. This has been partly due to the competing intellectual tradition(s) in France.

### 3.2 Competing intellectual traditions and new openings

In France there is a long tradition of sociological and anthropological studies of culture that has played an important role in the history and development of French thought (e.g., Durkheim, Levi-Strauss, Bourdieu). In recent decades the work of Michel de Certeau on "*la tradition culturelle*" has been especially important in building intellectual bridges between Cultural Studies and French thinking. One of de Certeau's most influential works has been *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) (in French,



*L'Invention du Quotidien*), in which Certeau focused on how individuals navigate unconsciously (to use the Freudian term) in their everyday lives (Maigret 2003: 157-158).

From the perspective of transforming and translating new influences, the last two decades in French intellectual history have been years of tentative openness. This is partly due to the development of French communication and media studies (Infocom) legitimising its status and objects of study: (mass) media and (popular) culture in a French context. But it is also partly due to the challenge raised by the new generation as well. There is a young generation of media sociologists interested in "*sociologie de la culture*, and *sociologie des mouvements sociaux*", who have achieved new positions in French intellectual life. Scholars like Dominique Cadon, Sabine Chalvon-Demersay, Éric Macé, Éric Maigret, Dominique Mehl, Patrick Mignon, and Dominique Pasquier have started to take seriously the intellectual challenge of Anglo-American Cultural Studies. With this new generation, there is a new kind of awareness of intellectual trends outside French academic circles. All this has opened new debates over the ideas about culture, media, society, identities, and subjects. But even more importantly, this new generation is beginning to challenge French academic life to a new kind of self-reflexivity and self-criticism crucial for the development of French scholarly identity in relation to one of the most influential intellectual trends in recent decades: Cultural Studies (Maigret 2003; Maigret & Macé 2005).

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