

2. Full Report of Research Activities and Results

Background

The 1930s was the 'age of the dream palace', a period when cinemagoing as a leisure pursuit was more popular in Britain than ever before or since, and the British were among the world's most avid filmgoers: it has been estimated that at least two-thirds of the population were frequent and regular cinemagoers; and in 1934, there was an average of 22 cinema visits per year for every man, woman and child in the land. With cinemagoing a key component of the leisure culture of the era, the competences of a culture of film fandom were instrumental in the formation of an entire generation.

However, while there has been considerable research in the history of British cinema, scant attention has been devoted to British cinema culture. For example, very little research on cinema audiences and no investigations of film audiences and film reception were carried out at the time; and none have been attempted since. Little reliable information exists on the films and stars favoured by British audiences; rather less is known about variations in tastes and preferences within the British audience; and, beyond anecdote and conjecture, virtually nothing of the place and the meaning of cinema in people's day-to-day lives, of how cinema figured in the ordinary cinemagoer's fantasies, aspirations, and constructions of self. Nor has there been any attempt to look at the connections between cinemagoing and broader social and cultural practices and discourses--other leisure and consumption activities, for example, or ideologies of class and gender.

This project aims not only to fill a gap in the history of popular culture, but also to document this moment, before it is too late, from the standpoint of those most closely involved--the filmgoers themselves.

Objectives

Broadly speaking the aim is to produce an ethnohistory of a popular cultural practice by investigating the ways in which cinema and filmgoing figured in the daily lives of people in Britain during the 1930s; and by theorising filmgoing and 'fandom' in this period in relation to their broader social, cultural and discursive contexts.

More specifically, the project's objectives are:

1. To gather data, in various forms, on cinemagoing and other popular leisure pursuits of the 1930s--habits, tastes, preferences--across Britain, and to document regional, gender and class variations in these; and
2. To devise and put into effect a set of 'ethnohistorical' methodologies appropriate to the collection, analysis and interpretation of oral history and archival source materials.

Methods

The substantive and methodological objectives of the project have been met by means of a two-pronged research strategy, involving library and archival research, and 'memory work' with surviving cinemagoers of the 1930s.

Library and archival research

The general character of cinema culture throughout Britain has been investigated through reference to secondary sources, including published social histories and popular culture and leisure; to recent and current work in the history of film reception, local and national, in Britain; and to primary sources, published and unpublished. A distinguishing feature of this project is its systematic deployment, as historical source materials, of fan magazines and other contemporary published material aimed at cinemagoers. Before the ESRC-funded phase of the project began in 1994, the director had spent a period of study leave investigating such material, including all the periodical film fan literature published in Britain during the 1930s, and relevant items in the non-cinema popular press. This work continued during the ESRC-funded period, when the Director made visits to the Library of the British Film Institute; the British Library (including its Newspaper Division at Colindale); the Library of the Institute of Education, University of London; and the Library and Information Service of the British Film Institute.

Information relating more specifically to the reception of films was sought in film industry publications, especially those directed at cinema managers and exhibitors; and, though such material is scanty, from audience research and cinemagoer polls conducted during the 1930s. A minor, but significant, source of information on audience responses is diaries kept by filmgoers, and there is also a small amount of contemporary academic research on cinema audiences, most of it prompted by concerns about cinema's possibly harmful effects on young people.

The intention is also to investigate the relationships between cinema culture, the reception of films, and the textual characteristics of popular films. In order to do this, it is necessary first of all to determine which films were

popular with British audiences of the 1930s. Although this task is more complex than it might seem, a list of such films has been compiled. Some of them have been viewed in the National Film Archive, and videotape copies of several others have been obtained for study.

The connections between cinemagoing, cinema culture and everyday life have been explored through inquiry into ancillary leisure pursuits and popular cultural practices of the 1930s, such as dancing, music hall, popular literature, fashion and beauty. This was achieved primarily through reference to published secondary sources.

Information on local cinemas and filmgoing has been sought in libraries and archives--including local history collections, local archives, regional film archives, and national archives containing material relating to the areas where interview fieldwork was carried out (see below): . The Director made visits to the Mass-Observation Archive at the University of Sussex for information on cinemagoing in Bolton; the Cinema Museum in London; the Local History collection at Glasgow's Mitchell Library; the Scottish Film Archive; the Bolton Local History Collection; the Local History and Performing Arts Collections at Manchester Central Library; the North-West Film Archive; and the East Anglian Film Archive. The Research Fellow visited the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich and the Local History Library in Harrow. These collections proved invaluable for background information on such matters as local cinemas active in the 1930s, dates of opening of new cinemas, films exhibited and local responses, visits of screen personalities to the area, and so on.

Memory work

Valuable as they proved to be, archival sources produced very little information on 1930s cinema culture from the point of view of cinemagoers. Moreover conventional wisdom, if little reliable research, assumes that if there was a national cinema culture, it concealed significant differences between regions and social classes. For these reasons, it was planned to augment archival research on the cinemagoing habits, tastes and preferences of 1930s cinemagoers by consulting the filmgoers themselves. This 'memory work' component of the project was conducted in two parts: oral history interviews, and a postal questionnaire survey. While important questions of methodology surround the use of data based on memories of long past events, this does not necessarily compromise them. On the contrary: 'memory work' of this kind is revealing in its own right, yielding insights into the nature of remembered events and the ways in which memories are narrated. Methodological self-reflexivity was built into the project's objectives and research design.

Interviews

In order to document a range of cinemagoing experiences from the consumer's standpoint, and to test and explore assumptions about regional differences within British cinema culture, oral history interviews with surviving cinemagoers of the 1930s were conducted in four British locations. *Greater Manchester* was a large urban industrial centre in the 1930s, with many cinemas, old and new, and incorporates Bolton, site of the Mass-Observation 'Worktown' studies of the late 1930s; the London suburb of *Harrow* underwent considerable growth during the decade, when it was transformed from a semi-rural area to a prosperous metropolitan suburb boasting several new 'supercinemas'; the predominantly rural counties of Norfolk and Suffolk (*East Anglia*) enjoyed a variety of settlement patterns, including small towns and seaside resorts as well as villages of various sizes.

The interview project was piloted in *Glasgow*, where informants were drawn from people who had either contacted the director before the start of the ESRC-funded phase of the project, or were pre-existing contacts of the Research Fellow (who had conducted oral history research in the city before joining the project). Beginning in late November 1994, a total of 44 people were interviewed. From material gathered in the initial *Glasgow* interviews, an interview schedule was compiled and 17 interviewees selected as core informants for the *Glasgow* area. Between February and September 1995, interview contacts were established in the three fieldwork locales in England. Contacts with potential informants were made in a variety of ways: through contacts with local residential homes and day centres for the elderly; via appeals in local press and radio and in specialist publications for the elderly; and through contacts with local history societies and WEA groups. On receiving offers to take part in the project, the Research Fellow telephoned each volunteer, eliciting information on year of birth, age at first visit to the cinema, place of abode during the 1930s, terminal education age, jobs and occupations. From this information, a list of core respondents was drawn up for each area, using rough quotas for gender (two female respondents for every male), and social class. With two exceptions, volunteers born after 1926 were excluded. Although some Jewish informants were interviewed, the achievement of a fully satisfactory ethnic balance proved problematic. Interviews in the three English locales were conducted by the Research Fellow between April and December 1995.

A total of 78 core informants (50 women and 28 men) were interviewed: 17 in *Glasgow*, 22 in *Greater Manchester*, 21 in *East Anglia*, and 18 in *Harrow*. The oldest informant was born in 1897, the youngest in 1928, and the median year of birth was 1919. Of the 78, 44 were categorised as working class, 4 as working/middle class, 29 as middle class and 1 as upper class. Ten informants were individuals who had been in contact with the Director or the Research Fellow prior to the project, 33 had responded to media calls for interviewees, 13 were volunteers from local history or WEA groups, and 22 were volunteers from day centres or residential homes for the elderly. Forty-

four informants were interviewed individually, the rest in groups of two or more. The vast majority (70) informants were interviewed twice, 3 were interviewed once, and 5 three times or more. A plan to conduct an additional round of interview fieldwork towards the end of the research period was abandoned due to lack of time.

The majority of interviews took place in informants' homes, and a few were conducted in day centres or in group meeting places. The first interview, during which informants were asked to sign a release form, covered cinemagoing history, favourite films and stars, fan behaviour, and leisure activities. Questioning was open and non-directive, however, and informants were free to 'stray' to topics outside the schedule. While first interviews produced background information and context, second and subsequent meetings, with rapport established, revealed more complex and intimate information. Detailed fieldnotes were made.

Transcription of interviews was started early in the project by the Research Fellow, and began in earnest in October 1995 with the appointment of a half-time project secretary. In all but a few cases (where sound was of very poor quality, for example) all interviews with core informants have been transcribed, most of them in full--a total of 186 interview hours.

Concurrently with the planning, conduct and transcription of interviews, and in line with the initial objective of investigating methods of databasing archival and oral history material, procedures for analysis of interviews were planned and implemented. After many blind alleys, the Director 'discovered' Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS), which is practised in certain forms of social scientific inquiry; researched the field; reviewed the QDA software packages available; and attended a short course on CAQDAS at the University of Surrey. Although not ideal for the project's purposes, the QDA package NUD*IST was selected as the most user-friendly option, and the Director and Research Fellow attended a NUD*IST training course in Glasgow.

After a close reading of several interview transcripts, the Director proposed a coding schema capable of accommodating at least three levels of analysis: base coding, the coding of explicit data, and the coding of discursive or subtextual material. The first two levels cover informant demographics and the overt content of informants' accounts; the latter, which attends to what is not necessarily spoken but is nonetheless readable allows for exploration of interviews as discourse. A NUD*IST coding schema was devised in line with this plan, and the Research Fellow undertook analysis of interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials. At the end of October 1996, work on the transcripts of 56 informants had been completed. The project director has taken over interview analysis, and work continues. Meanwhile, interview material has been drawn upon for conference presentations and working papers (see below).

Interviews, of course, deal with events that took place sixty or more years ago. The information interviewees give and the stories they tell necessarily involve acts of remembering, and their accounts are *memory texts*. Interviews are being analysed in full awareness of questions concerning the evidential status of interviews, and of methodological questions raised by accounts which rely on remembering--around forgetting, selective remembering, hindsight, and so on. The relationship between actual events and memories of those events is not taken as mimetic; memory is regarded as neither providing access to nor representing the past 'as it was', and the past is seen as mediated in the activity of remembering. In other words, these accounts are treated not only as data but as *material for interpretation*. In this sense, the project concerns itself as much with how people tell stories of their youthful picturegoing as with what they say about it; with how oral life stories are constructed and narrated; with how memory is produced in the act of telling stories about one's own past or a shared past; and with whether and how cinema figures in and constructs memories. The concern is as much with memory as with cinema, therefore--or rather with the interweaving of the two as 'cinema memory' , or 'cinema remembering'.

Questionnaire

In the search for interviewees, the project received hundreds of inquiries and offers of information: it had generated much more interest than could be accommodated through interviews alone. Although not part of the original research proposal, it was decided to invite those of our correspondents who could not, for various reasons, be interviewed to take part in a postal questionnaire survey. The Director designed a brief questionnaire covering, in simplified form, the key areas covered in the interview schedule, and a total of 226 questionnaires were sent out in May and December 1995: of these, 186 were returned, a response rate of 82.3%.

Although no gender balance was planned or intended, respondents were divided more or less equally in terms of gender. The majority were born between 1915 and 1924, the median year of birth being 1922--a rather younger group of people than the interviewees. Just over half had left school at the minimum leaving age, and on finishing full-time education the largest single group entered jobs classified as skilled (these include clerical and secretarial occupations). While people who took part in this survey appear to be somewhat more highly educated, and to have worked in jobs requiring greater skill and/or more training than would be the norm for their generation, differences from the general population of their age group are not great, and the group may be regarded as reasonably representative of 'ordinary' picturegoers of their generation. During the 1930s, the typical respondent would have been in adolescence, living in a town or city, and still at school or newly in the workforce in a clerical, white collar or craft job.

Casual research assistance was obtained for the coding and analysis of questionnaires. All responses, including film titles and qualitative responses, were coded; and analysis performed with the assistance of the data analysis package SPSS 9 (see Nominated Publications).

Results

Library and archival research

The few studies of cinema attendance conducted in the 1930s indicate that 'going to the pictures' was a regular, almost an everyday, habit for large sectors of the British population. That cinemagoers in Britain preferred Hollywood to British films is well known. More interestingly, though, it emerges from the present research that within this overall preference for Hollywood, British filmgoers' tastes in films and stars were quite distinctive--and indeed rather surprising from today's standpoint. By correlating information gathered from various primary sources--film fan magazines, trade periodicals, contemporary studies of the cinema audience, and so on--certain Hollywood films emerge as special favourites with British audiences: prominent among these being Arrowsmith, Lives of a Bengal Lancer, Mr Deeds Goes to Town, Three Smart Girls, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The same procedure reveals that among Britain's preferred stars of Hollywood films were Ronald Colman, Clark Gable, Gary Cooper, Shirley Temple and Deanna Durbin. According to box-office indicators, the biggest moneymaking stars in British films were Gracie Fields and George Formby.

Although popular films of the 1930s might embody values which today seem laughable, they are worthy of examination for what they reveal about the qualities and 'structure of feeling' of everyday life and popular culture of the period. For instance, as part of the present project, the enormous popularity of singing star Deanna Durbin and her films has been analysed in a study of cinema culture and femininity in the 1930s (see Nominated Publications). Further film analyses are planned.

Little reliable information on regional differences in British cinemagoers' tastes and preferences was found in contemporary sources, though there is a certain amount of more or less anecdotal evidence in support of the conventional wisdom that Hollywood films were especially favoured by working-class cinemagoers and those living outside the south of England, and that players like Gracie Fields and George Formby enjoyed a more regional than national appeal. Film historians are currently attempting to fill this gap by scrutinising industry data on films exhibited across Britain for indicators of regional variations in tastes.

Memory work

While questionnaires and interviews usefully serve to test the validity of archival findings, they are better regarded as a means of adding the cinemagoer's viewpoint to the story, lending it depth and texture. However, both interviews and questionnaires undoubtedly yield a considerable amount of substantive data.

Questionnaire

For those who took part in the questionnaire survey, cinemagoing was a habit acquired early in life: the median age of first cinema visit was six. For the majority of respondents, the main picturegoing years of their lives began and ended in the 1930s. In consequence, 'going to the pictures' is remembered by this group as an activity associated with childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. Asked how often they went to the cinema in the 1930s, nearly 60% recalled going twice weekly or more--a figure, interestingly, which accords almost exactly with contemporary statistics on cinema attendance.

Going to the pictures was a sociable pastime: respondents went most often with family or peers, somewhat less frequently with sweethearts, and relatively rarely on their own. They were guided in their choice of films largely by favourite stars, though nearly a third admitted to seeing whatever was playing at the local cinema. It appears that in making the choice of which film to go see, a place--a particular cinema, that is--often figured more prominently for this group than what was showing.

Asked what they liked about their favourite cinemas, the vast majority of respondents used words suggesting such qualities as comfort, luxury, modernity--all in contrast with the less attractive realities of daily life. However, in letters and notes enclosed with their questionnaires, some respondents drew a distinction between luxurious picture palaces on the one hand and the more downmarket 'fleapits' on the other, often evincing affection for both.

Favourite film stars were, in rank order, Deanna Durbin, Clark Gable, Gary Cooper, and Ronald Colman. These findings bear interesting comparison with--and indeed generally support--data on popular 1930s stars culled from contemporary written sources. Favourite films (respondents were asked if they recalled any film or films which made a strong or lasting impression on them, and 171 of the 186 said 'yes') also tend to confirm archival findings: the most frequently cited title was Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, with Lives of a Bengal Lancer in second place.

Although obviously culturally competent in matters cinematic, few respondents were really avid fans. While over a third of respondents collected star photographs or autographs, for most this had nothing to do with following any particular star; and only four respondents belonged to a fan club. Cinemagoing, furthermore, was certainly not the only thing respondents did in their spare time. Asked if they had enjoyed any leisure pursuits besides the pictures, all but four said 'yes'. The four favourite activities were, in order of preference: listening to the wireless; reading; sports or outdoor activities; music hall, plays or theatre.

For this group of people, then, cinemagoing appears to have been less about particular films, or even films in general, than about experiences surrounding and part of the activity of 'going to the pictures'; about the place of this activity in the context of their daily lives, interactions with family and friends, and comings and goings within and beyond their neighbourhoods. Going to the pictures is remembered alongside and as part of other social activities, hobbies, and leisure pursuits.

Interviews

Although it would be unwise to generalise from such a small group of informants, local and regional variations in cinema cultures--most evident, perhaps, in differing tastes, preferences and attitudes towards cinemagoing--do emerge from the interviews. As far as tastes are concerned, interviews tend to confirm the view that British audiences preferred Hollywood films to the home-grown product; though it is interesting that certain stars of British-made films (Madeleine Carroll and Robert Donat in particular) were nevertheless widely liked. Particularly interesting is informants' emphasis on the activity of cinemagoing and the cinemas they remember going to: these things were much more vividly recalled than individual films or even--with the exception of one or two avid fans--stars.

Summaries of findings from each phase of fieldwork offer a useful overview of information gathered about informants' youthful cinemagoing, and of similarities and differences between those living in different parts of Britain. Although impressionistic, these accounts are informed by close familiarity with the interview material and, besides summarising many hours of interviews, convey the 'feel' of the different fieldwork locales. A more systematic analysis of interviews will be possible when coding of transcripts is completed.

In *Glasgow*, informants offered vivid and fond memories of favourite cinemas: there was a cinema on every street corner. There was a strong 'folk memory' of the Paisley cinema fire in 1929. Some informants were real enthusiasts--two sisters kept registers of film stars and fought over star photos in Picturegoer, and one kept a diary of films seen. Stories of gaining admission

to cinema with 'jeely jars' (jam jars) instead of money; and of letting friends in by the side door. Many informants very interested in music and sound, with a number of fans of opera and film musicals. British films universally disliked, though opinions divided on the British stars George Formby, Gracie Fields and Anna Neagle. Stars mentioned appreciatively included Ronald Colman, Clark Gable, Deanna Durbin and Edward G. Robinson.

In *Greater Manchester* audiences learned about films through following adverts in shop windows or, in Bolton, a street of cinema billboards. Informants read British and American film magazines and attended a range of cinemas throughout Greater Manchester on a localised basis. In several cinemas it was possible to buy cheap seats behind the screen; one Manchester picturehouse was an ice-rink in winter and floored over for summer cinema viewing. Alternative entertainment specific to Manchester included the Saturday 'dance train' to Blackpool.

Significant biases showed towards stars: Nelson Eddy and Jeannette MacDonald were especial favourites; two informants are active in the Eddy appreciation society. Jewish informants particularly liked Charlie Chaplin. Edward G. Robinson, Spencer Tracy and James Cagney were seen as highly 'skilled'; Bette Davis was sometimes appended to this group. Boys mimicked the mannerisms of George Raft; girls daydreamed about dancing with Raft. Recurrent fantasies included being on screen with Nelson Eddy, and rising above the mill like Gracie Fields. Fields was disliked by several informants because of her screen voice.

Actors' voices helped determine responses. Deanna Durbin's Canadian speaking voice was appreciated; Robert Donat was perceived as a Mancunian with a 'lovely' voice. Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce were dismissed as 'cricket playing twits'. Distinctions were drawn between accessible English stars like George Formby and Hollywood stars, who inhabited another, 'glamorous' plane. Several women were drawn to male stars with moustaches, like Clark Gable and Ronald Colman. Blonde actresses were appreciated by men for their 'sex appeal': 'sweet' Madeleine Carroll remembered for showing her stocking tops in The 39 Steps. Stars sometimes disliked included Ginger Rogers and the 'sick-making' Shirley Temple.

In *East Anglia* distinctive tastes and preferences were apparent: Ginger Rogers and, to a lesser extent, Fred Astaire were the most popular stars. Also favoured were English stars like Charles Laughton in The Private Life of Henry VIII and the 'ladylike' Madeleine Carroll. Other favourably mentioned stars included Deanna Durbin and Bette Davis. English comedians were enjoyed, including Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge, and George Formby (who was well known for keeping a boat on the Broads). Western stars like Tom Mix were liked during childhood. American films were considered 'more modern', and musicals much preferred to the 'dreary' British offerings (despite the liking for certain English stars).

Going to the pictures in East Anglia was much more of an occasion than in our other study areas, often as part of a day out which might involve a visit to a football match, or an evening's dancing. Informants were willing to walk for up to an hour, cycle up to 20 miles, or use a bus to visit distant picture-houses. People dressed up for cinemagoing, copying the style of the stars with, for women, Ginger Rogers providing a role model. The personal lives of the stars were much more of an interest, too, in East Anglia than elsewhere. One couple of informants met exchanging Picturegoer, and American film magazines were freely available in East Anglia. Many informants are still avid readers of film biographies. In a variation on the 'jam jar' motif, one Norwich cinema accepted a rabbit skin for entrance.

In *Harrow*, people travelled some distance to attend the cinema, using the underground system throughout Harrow, Pinner and Wembley, and the free cinema bus in South Harrow to 'the Cosy'. A wider class range was interviewed here than elsewhere, incorporating one upper-class informant who attended the cinema, incognito, with a housemaid.

Unlike other areas, there was no consensus regarding favourite stars, although recurrent mention was made of Clark Gable, Ronald Colman, Astaire and Rogers, Laurel and Hardy, Bette Davis and Deanna Durbin. One informant, who won a Picturegoer contest, met Madeleine Carroll, overall a popular actress in Harrow. Jessie Matthews was frequently mentioned as a local girl although only the working-class informants seemed to appreciate her performances. English films were shunned in favour of American productions. The less well off informants, intriguingly, liked a similar range of stars to Glaswegians, including Edward G. Robinson. George Formby and Gracie Fields were in general disliked.

Cinema memory

At the overt level, several aspects of cinema memory emerge from the stories of informants throughout Britain. For example, memories of youthful picturegoing are more often than not centred on the activity of 'going to the pictures' rather than on favourite films and stars. Picturegoing recollections have a range of contents, from anecdotes about not having enough money for admission and ingenious ways round this small difficulty (versions of the 'jam jar' story are repeated all over the country) to vignettes of former neighbours, friends and picturegoing companions.

Less overt, but nonetheless a marked feature of the interviews is a strong sense of *place* conveyed by informants: above all of the neighbourhoods in which they lived and the location of cinemas within them. Although informants all have their own styles of story telling, there are recurrent patterns in their organisation and narration of place-related cinema memories. Informants frequently provide mental maps of the

neighbourhoods where they went to cinemas in their youth. Maps may vary in style and detail, but their function is always to provide a setting for the memory stories which follow--in this they work exactly like establishing shots in films. The memory stories appear to fall into two main types: stories about going to the cinema *then*, in the past; and stories about local topographies and changes that haven taken place , told from the standpoint of *now*, the present. As places within these remembered topographies, cinema buildings function in in a variety of ways. For example, because of the decline in cinemagoing and the disappearance of so many cinemas, they are a figure for a sense of loss--especially of childhood, innocence, youth. Or they may simply function as part of past life remembered as a quite ordinary and familiar , and relived with considerable pleasure.

As part of the work on cinema and memory, a study has been made of a particular motif--the 'unlocked door'--which arises in virtually all the interviews. The 'unlocked door' is a key symbol for our informants. Representing a golden age of security when there was a strong sense of community and morality was absolute, the unlocked door is repeatedly invoked in contrast to modern anxieties (regarding crime and social disintegration, for instance). The past appeals as a place of safety and security, epitomised by the unlocked door. In its broadest meaning, the unlocked door is a liminal motif. It acts as a threshold between past and present, linking the individual with past social, as well as physical, environments. Informants' youthful cinemagoing played a vital role as possibly the crucial single element in a dynamic cultural complex. In addition, the 'unlocked door' is linked to personal development: the open door of childhood and adolescence leads to the world of adult sexuality. The past is associated, for our informants, with public and personal loss; and the unlocked door functions as a powerful point of entry into the past.

As analysis of interview transcripts proceeds, there will be scope for further work on cinema and memory.

Activities

Conferences The Director convened panel session at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the Society for Cinem Studies in Dallas. Comprising film and social historians from three continents (Mary Beth Haralovich, USA; Jill Julius Matthews, Australia; Annette Kuhn, UK), the session was entitled 'Historiographies and national cinema cultures: a methodological debate'. At the 1996 Screen Studies Conference, a plenary session and a small exhibition were devoted to 'Cinema Culture in 1930s Britain', and several interviewees from the Glasgow area attended.

Exhibition With the assistance of a student placement, an exhibition was put together, and had its first outing at the 1996 Screen Studies conference. It has been stored in a state ready for loan to other venues.

Archive Interview tapes and transcripts, letters from informants, photographs, and donations of cinema memorabilia received by the project have been accessioned and stored and an electronic database created. In consequence, materials gathered in the course of the project are ready for use by future scholars.

Outputs and Impacts

Two research papers have been produced and disseminated, one of them under consideration for publication in an academic journal. A chapter published in a book ('Cinema culture and femininity in the 1930s') is based in part on archival research conducted before the start of the ESRC-funded project. Six different papers have been delivered, and another accepted for delivery, at conferences in four countries. A number of papers have been delivered at research seminars in the UK, and a graduate course based on the project taught at the University of Stockholm. The project has been widely publicised in British press and broadcast media, mostly local; and project staff acted as consultants to 'Rendezvous at the Roxy', a BBC Scotland television programme on the history cinemagoing in Scotland made in celebration of the centenary of cinema.

Future Research Priorities

There is now to hand a substantial body of data on 1930s cinema culture; and analysis of this rich, varied and voluminous material has barely skimmed the surface. Considerable work remains to be done on analysing and interpreting this memory material, addressing such questions as cultural memory; memory and narrative forms; cinemagoing and the construction of memory; the nature of memory-images and their relation to remembered cinema-images. Within this broadly discursive schema, it will be productive also to investigate the connections between cinemagoing, cinema culture and everyday life, taking into account ancillary leisure activities and popular cultural forms of the 1930s. Projects in these areas planned or in progress include:

- a study of the film Maytime in the context of cinema memory;
- an analysis of the cultural instrumentality of popular 'films of Empire', such as Lives of a Bengal Lancer;
- a detailed investigation of constructions of space in cinema memory

There is considerable scope also for drawing on this material for outputs of a non-academic nature, such as CD-ROMs, radio and television programmes, and so on.

Finally, it is a priority to arrange a home for the cinema culture archive (see above), to ensure that this valuable material is made available to future scholars.