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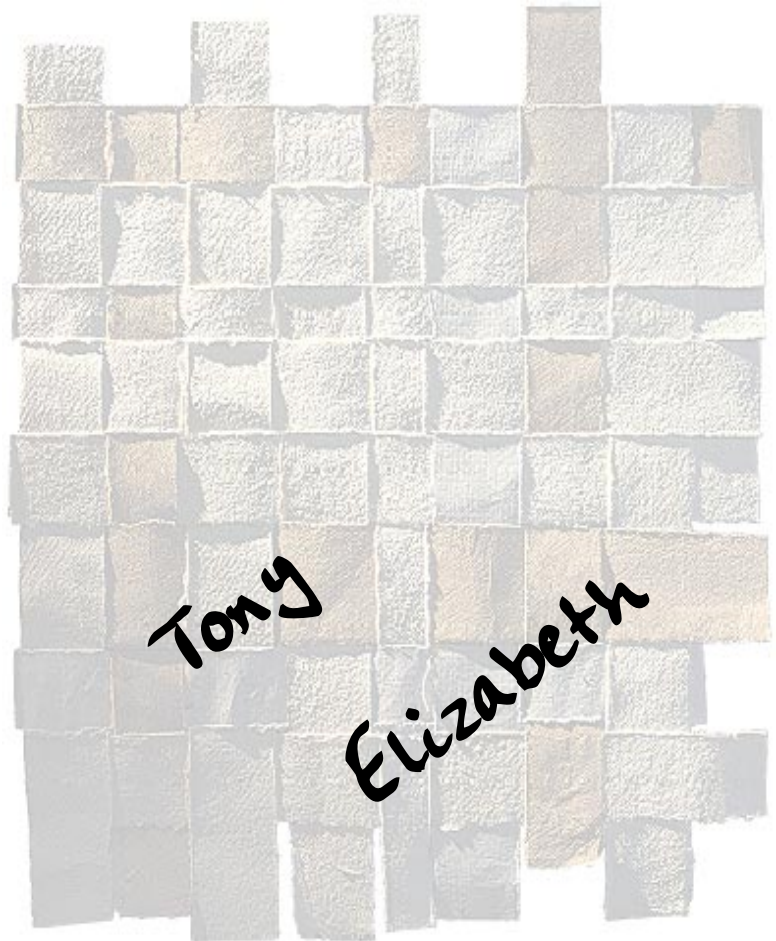
national  
**everyday cultures**  
programme

**newsletter**

**no. 2, August 2000**

**Editor: Elizabeth B Silva**  
**Assistant Editor: Pam Walker**

## *Greetings*



**Prof Tony Bennett** Director, NECP  
**Dr Elizabeth B Silva**, Research Director, NECP

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### **Newsletter design and layout**

**John Hunt**, Project Officer, Social Sciences Faculty

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## **Making the Programme Known**

In the six months since our first Newsletter we have produced a leaflet outlining key details of the Programme. This was sent to a mailing list of about 1,000 names.

The weaving pattern used as the NECP logo symbolizes the different strands making up the NECP and its composition as work-in-progress. The leaflet details the national network comprised of the Associate Lecturers, the Research Collaboration Committee and the External Advisory Committee. It also specifies the research areas covered by the programme, which evolved from the regional briefing meetings we undertook from October to December 1999. The thirteen research areas are:

- Cultural Statistics
- Visual Cultural Practices
- Technology and Home Life
- Music and Dance
- Commercial Cultures
- Cultures of Care
- Gender Cultures
- Culture and the Economy
- Diasporic Cultures
- Lifecourse and Lifestyle
- Politics and Cultural Practices
- Sports and Leisure Activities
- Cultural Industry Policies

The NECP is now supported by a new part-time researcher, Sophie Taysom, who started work in June 2000.

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## **Inaugural Symposium**

The official launch of the programme with an 'Inaugural Symposium', was also well publicised via postal and on-line distribution of information to our mailing list. We produced a flyer and a poster for this. We reproduce, below, an edited version of an article about the event, written by Elizabeth B Silva, Research Director of the National Everyday Cultures Programme, published in *Society Matters*, No 3, July 2000.

### ***Nation, Culture, People***

#### **Inaugural symposium of the National Everyday Cultures Programme (NECP)**

An intellectually stimulating and creative day-event took place at Walton Hall on Friday, 19 May. Over 180 people joined together in the Berrill Lecture Theatre at the Open University to launch the research programme on National Everyday Cultures. Nearly one third of participants were from the OU network of researchers; many based in one of the 13 regions. The majority were academics from other universities and policy makers from various culture-concerned agencies also participated.

Research on Everyday Cultures has emerged from recent growing interest in academic scholarship and in policy concerns with understanding how everyday practices are informed, structured and given meaning. The collaboration network, the interdisciplinary concerns and policy focus are the basis of the programme. We were pleased to see this beginning to work in practice at the symposium, both at the formal level of paper presentations and discussions and also at the informal level of networking.

The symposium addressed six themes central to the concerns of the National Everyday Cultures Programme. 'Culture and the Everyday' was the first theme. Tony Bennett, OU Professor of Sociology, discussed the tendency of traditional approaches to studies of the everyday to deny subordinate groups the means to organize their own lives and to acquire a self-consciousness. He argued for the need to question these perspectives while taking account of an environment of increasing cross-cultural flows. Dr Elizabeth Silva, Senior Research Fellow in Sociology at the OU, spoke about the material and the moral in everyday life by looking at the gendered location of family life in contemporary society. She argued that traditional views of 'the family' have isolated intimacy from other changes in society. She stressed that researchers and policy makers

need to take seriously people's stories about what they do to get by and about what they need to live well. These stories both reveal and produce culture.

The second session was about 'Relocating Britain'. Patrick Wright, Professor of Modern Cultural Studies at Nottingham Trent University, talked about 'The Question of Heritage'. He traced the changed debate since the early 1980s, when British tradition appeared connected to historic conservation, until now, when the scene has shifted to a context of 'devolution', claiming for a redefinition of Englishness. A question for research is to pursue what bearing these developments have in the present. 'Racialising Culture is Ordinary' was the theme addressed by Dr Gail Lewis, lecturer in Social Policy at the OU. She spoke of the significant micro-social interactions of everyday practices that constitute racialised belongings. Using her own clear analytic eye, she gave us stories of personal biography within a sharp theoretical framework. She claims we need to pay attention to the ordinariness of racialising practices in the agendas of public policy and institutional practice.

'Lifecourse and Lifestyle' was the subject of the third session. Dr Ann Phoenix, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the OU, talked about the schooling everyday cultures of 11-14 year old boys. She explored how the notions that 'real' masculinity involves toughness, sporting prowess and a casual attitude to schoolwork serve to produce and reproduce gendered and racialised school cultures. Andrew Blaikie, Professor of Historical Sociology at the University of Aberdeen, discussed ageing and popular culture. He argued that traditionally ageing has been regarded as both structurally overdetermined and culturally impoverished. To remedy this situation we need to apply theories and methods capable of accommodating the dialectic (and disjunction) between personal identities and popular perceptions that frame emergent 'cultures of ageing'.

The fourth session on 'Everyday Life and Family Practices' started with a paper by David Morgan, Professor of Sociology at the University of Manchester. He explored the meanings of everyday life as 'events', as the 'repetitive' and as 'normative'. He argued that the mutual reinforcement of family practices and everyday life may be challenged or undermined under conditions of post modernity. Dr Gillian Dunne, Senior Research Fellow at the Gender Institute at the LSE, discussed post-heterosexual family practices, exploring some of the ways in which lesbian and gay communities have lived intimacy and family life. She argued that these

offer alternative models when mainstream cultural certainties based on traditional heterosexual frameworks are being eroded.

The theme for the fifth session was 'Class, Culture and Place'. Mike Savage, Professor of Sociology at the University of Manchester, talked about Place and Class Identities by looking at the idea of local class cultures. He explored the culture of the 'Northern English Middle Class' and argued that whereas class cultures are mobile and stretch across and between places, they encode relational spatial meanings which differentiate them from other places. Doreen Massey, Professor of Geography at the OU, spoke about 'the event of place', raising new questions about the relations between social group and spatial location. She argued that the idea of place as event opens up questions of place as possibility and as ethical responsibility.

The last theme was 'Cultural Policy and Everyday Life'. Naseem Khan, Senior Policy and Planning Officer at the Arts Council of England, questioned the tension between privacy and visibility, as well as between intrusion and legitimate enquiry, that official policy making brings about in dealing with immigrant communities. She argued for the consideration of these within wider issues of empowerment in democratic societies. Angela McRobbie, Professor of Communications at Goldsmiths College, explored the emergence of 'new social bonds' in a context where everyday life no longer specifies a space/time separate from work and employment.

The keynote speaker, in the closing session (chaired by Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research Professor Alan Bassindale) was the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Chris Smith. He voiced strong words of support for the National Everyday Cultures Programme. He stressed its importance for government policy and his delight in being invited to the OU to launch the programme.

The day was long and full of challenging and very creative thinking. 'We have been here for over 8 hours and I could still take much more of this kind of work', said someone as she was leaving. We received many positive remarks immediately after the event and in the following days. This was a day we were all looking forward to. Many people were involved in the preparations, sitting on the various committees that form the organizational structure of the NECP and with the events of the day, both practical and academic. It has now happened. It was a full and most enjoyable day and we are all feeling the journey so far has been worth it - and we are just beginning, of course.

### Funding of Associate Lecturers Participation in the Inaugural Symposium

36 Associate Lecturers were awarded total funding of £2,915.54 from the NECP to participate in the Inaugural Symposium. We were able to fund all those Associate Lecturers who requested funding. The regional distribution of Associate Lecturers awarded funding was as follows:

Region 1	5
Region 2	4
Region 3	4
Region 4	1
Region 5	7
Region 6	2
Region 7	3
Region 8	2
Region 9	1
Region 10	3
Region 11	1
Region 12	2
Region 13	1

### NECP Research Fund

We have now implemented the Seed Funding Process following the timetable detailed in Newsletter No.1. This consisted of a two-stage process.

In February the 140 Associate Lecturers in the NECP Research Network were sent documents to enable them to bid for funding for research projects in their own area of interest. This documentation consisted of (1) Application for Research Development Funding (2) Guidelines for Application for Research Development Funding (3) Advice for Preparing a Research Application. This set of material outlined details of the two-stage funding process.

By the deadline of the first stage of the funding process, 20 March 2000, we had received 21 applications. From these, 11 applicants were selected for invitations to go forward to the second stage. A new application form for an extended research proposal submission was sent to those 11 Associate Lecturers listed as principal applicants.

By the deadline of the second stage of the funding process, 19 May 2000, we had received 9 applications. We are funding 8 of these projects. The funded projects involve 11 Associate Lecturers, as principal applicants and co-applicants. The projects receiving a research award from the NECP Research Development Fund are:

#### ***My Funny Holiday Clothes: Women and Identity on Holiday***

An investigation of women's aspirational realised identities on holiday as expressed through clothing choices.

Principal Applicant: Dr Maura Banim  
Co-Applicant: Dr Alison Guy  
Start Date: 1 August 2000  
Length of Project: 7 months  
Value of Award: £2,550  
Region: 9

#### ***Constructions and Transmission of Asian Femininity***

An exploration of Punjabi women's perceptions and experiences of womanhood in Britain and the process of notions of femininity across generations.

Principal Applicant: Dr Surinder Guru  
Start Date: 1 September 2000  
Length of Project: 6 months  
Value of Award: £4,094.20  
Region: 4

#### ***Culture, Social Networks and Participation: North London's Turkish Communities***

This work addresses culture and ethnicity and their effects on public participation in urban regeneration initiatives. As a case study it focuses on North London's Turkish communities.

Principal Applicant: Dr Gary Pattison  
Research Assistant: Dr Solmaz Tavsanoglu  
Start Date: 1 August 2000  
Length of Project: 6 months  
Value of Award: £3,948.48  
Region: 2

#### ***The Cultural Practices of Children in an Urban Context***

Using insider accounts and participant observation this research will construct an account of how children produce urban space and how urban space shapes children's cultural and spatial practices.

Principal Applicant: Dr Karen Wells  
Start Date: 1 October 2000  
Length of Project: 6 months  
Value of Award: £4,880  
Region: 1

***Interviews with Male Climbers: Identity and Masculinities***

The research will consist of a number of qualitative interviews with male climbers to explore issues of identity, masculinity and difference within the sub-culture of climbing.

Principal Applicant: Ms Victoria Robinson  
Start Date: 30 November 2000  
Length of Project: 8 months  
Value of Award: £2,200  
Region: 7

***Cultural Identities and the 'Region': Issues of Scale and Legitimation in the South West***

This research attempts to identify the assumptions about spatial cultural identities that inform regionalisation projects at three different scales in the South West of England.

Principal Applicant: Mr Bernard Deacon  
Start Date: 1 November 2000  
Length of Project: 7 months  
Value of Award: £4,535.50  
Region: 3

***Environmental Concern, Behaviour and Everyday Culture***

This research investigates the ordinary, everyday, popular processes of cultural consumption from an environmental and 'welfarist' perspective.

Principal Applicant: Dr David Pell  
Co-Applicants: Mr Thomas Bates and Ms Isobel Shelton  
Start Date: 1 August 2000  
Length of Project: 6 months  
Value of Award: £3,500  
Region: 5

***Poetry and Everyday Culture in Ireland (Ulster)***

This research will investigate the actual place of poetry in the everyday culture of one part of Ireland.

Principal Applicant: Mr Chris Agee  
Research Assistant: Mr Martin Mooney  
Start Date: 30 November 2000  
Length of Project: 8 months  
Value of Award: £4,760  
Region: 12

Project abstracts will be posted on the web site shortly.

Total funding committed is £30,468.18

The Programme will not run another invitation to bid for funding of this kind in the near future. This does not mean, however, that this process will not be implemented again. Funding priorities at the moment need to address other projects of more general interest for the programme and those that can bring in wider participation by Associate Lecturers.

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**Progress of projects**

The seven projects currently underway within the programme (see Abstracts in Newsletter No.1) are at different stages and have progressed as described below.

***National Everyday Cultures: The Social Relations of Everyday Cultural Practices***

Researchers: Tony Bennett (Convenor)  
David Hesmondhalgh  
Linda Janes  
Norma Sherratt  
Elizabeth Silva  
Andrew Trigg  
Kath Woodward

An application for large-scale funding was made to the Economic and Social Research Council with support from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the four national Arts Councils and the British Film Institute. The ESRC has advised that while it wished to fund the project it is unable to do so at present owing to insufficient funds. A revised application is currently under development.

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**Associate Lecturers in the 'Experts' Network**

The Open University has a database of 'Experts' whom the Media Relations Department can contact for information about particular topics of interest.

We think this provides a good opportunity for the Associate Lecturers network to become more closely involved with the wider university community. We enclose with this Newsletter an 'Expert Form' for you to detach, fill in and return in the envelope enclosed. Of course, this is only an invitation for you to join in.



***Audio-visual Media Use, Leisure Practices and Diasporic Cultures***

Researchers: Dina Abbott  
 Roger Bromley  
 Ken Thompson (Convenor)

This project is about media use and leisure practices of diasporic cultures. The pilot study is being funded equally by The Open University and Nottingham Trent University. Currently the pilot is based in Nottingham where 40 sets of mother-daughter intergenerational groups of Asian women have been interviewed on their perceptions and use of media and leisure practices. Two interviewers have been appointed to help with this work, both active community members. The decision to appoint community members (rather than social science graduates) was based on the idea that they already had extensive knowledge of local communities as well as the necessary language and translation skills required.

An initial analysis of the data gathered has shown some interesting findings, which could, arguably, throw new light on at least three areas. These include findings on how women of different ages and generations perceive and define their own worlds of leisure, especially as leisure practices are often confined to the home and dictated by strict religious and social taboos. At the same time, there are sharp contrasts with the world the women meet through their television sets and home computers. Secondly, the data has provided insight into how the younger generation has found 'hidden and secret' ways to develop their own leisure practices even within the confines of strict parental control and tradition. Thirdly, there are several methodological issues that have arisen such as the practicalities of asking the older generation (who often do not speak English or even possibly cannot read or write) to compile weekly viewing diaries. Then there are the ethical issues of keeping hold of information extracted from the younger generation despite pressure to reveal this from the mothers!

Thus the initial methods have been reviewed and the project is now entering the second phase where the next set of 40 mothers and daughters are to be interviewed shortly. A part-time research assistant has also been appointed to help with the data analysis. It is hoped that some of the findings will be discussed both at a workshop at Nottingham Trent University and at The Open University, Milton Keynes sometime in the Autumn.

***Visual Sociology***

Researchers: Elizabeth Chaplin  
 Peter Hamilton (Convenor)

Elizabeth Chaplin has started her study, 'A London Street in the Year 2000', working with gardens and homes in a South London street. Some ethical issues, such as ownership of images, were discussed and resolved, as well as protocols for permission to use research material. Peter Hamilton is shortly to start his parallel study of allotment societies in Oxford.

***Technology and Home Life***

Researcher: Elizabeth B Silva

This project comprises two sets of data: (1) Archival material on patterns of innovation of household technologies and gender relations in the home. (Funded by the ESRC: award R000221700) (2) An ethnography of 20 households with school aged children (Partially funded within the ESRC 'Virtual Society?' research programme: award L132251048).

I am extending the data sets with resources provided by the NECP. I have contacted a few Associate Lecturers to expand the ethnography of family study. I have a preference for the regions of North Yorkshire, Lancashire, Greater London or East Anglia. I have so far not found anyone available with skills in ethnographic methods to carry out the work with me. If you find yourself interested, please contact me via the NECP email.

Analysis of this material – from both data sets – are published in / or are papers presented at:

**'Transforming Housewifery: practices and dispositions in the uses of technologies'** in E.B.Silva and C.Smart (eds) *The 'new' family?*, London: Sage, 1999: 46-65. [This is about cooking and washing technologies, based on archival material]

**'The politics of consumption @ home: practices and dispositions in the uses of technologies'**. Paper presented at the British Sociological Association, Sociology of Consumption Group, January, 2000. Published in *Pavis paper no.2*. [Based on the ethnographic study]

**'Routine Matters: Everyday Life in Families'**, Paper presented at the British Sociological Association Annual Conference, University of York, April 2000. [Based on the ethnographic study]



**'The Material and the Moral in Everyday Life'**, Open University. Paper presented at the Inaugural Symposium of the National Everyday Cultures Programme, May 2000. [Based on the ethnographic study]

**'Domestic Dilemmas: Ethics in Everyday Living'**, Paper presented at the 'Gendering Ethics, The Ethics of Gender Conference', Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, University of Leeds, June 2000. [Based on the ethnographic study]

**'The cook, the cooker and the gendering of the kitchen'**, *The Sociological Review*, forthcoming 2001. [Based on archival material]

***Media Use in Welsh Households***

Researcher: Hugh Mackay

This project is to be funded jointly by the NECP, Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C, the Welsh Fourth Channel), BBC Wales and the Western Mail (Trinity Mirror).

It aims to investigate ethnographically how uses of the various media, print and broadcast are shaped by the dynamics of households and by everyday routines and practices; how household members' uses of the media are changing; and the tensions that are raised by new media technologies. It will explore the implication of the media in constructions of identities in Wales and for senses of place. The project will explore uses of Welsh language media in households with mixed linguistic members (i.e. some Welsh speaking, others not) and the use of Welsh and English language media in multi or bilingual households and by individuals with varying Welsh language competence.

This project will begin in late 2000.

***Music and Dance in Everyday Culture***

Researcher: David Hesmondhalgh

This project will begin in March 2001

***The Serious Amateur Photographer: Culture, Status and Taste***

Researcher: Jessica Evans

This project is planned to start in late 2001.

**Workshops on Everyday Cultures**

A new workshop series on Everyday Cultures is planned to start in October 2000. The aim is to address theoretical and methodological issues regarding the study of everyday cultures, involving particular themes of everyday culture and drawing on the broad literature on everyday cultures and everyday life. Methodologies for the study of everyday cultures will also be discussed.

The workshop sessions (lasting for about one hour) will encompass a variety of perspectives including cultural studies, literature, sociology and feminist approaches.

The 2000/01 series includes:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 18 October 2000  | Tony Bennett 'Studying Everyday Cultures: The Invention of the Modern Cultural Fact'  |
| 29 November 2000 | Elizabeth Silva 'Studying Technology and Home Life'   |
| 17 January 2001  | Dina Abbott, Roger Bromley & Ken Thompson 'The Project on Audio-Visual Media Use, Leisure Practices and Diasporic Cultures' |
| 28 February 2001 | Peter Hamilton & Elizabeth Chaplin ' Visual Cultures: A London Street and Allotment Societies in Oxford'                    |
| 4 April 2001     | To be announced   |
| 16 May 2001      | To be announced   |

Associate Lecturers on the NECP research network are welcome to attend these workshops, to be held at Walton Hall. Those wishing to attend need to cover their own expenses.

Please contact **Pam W alkein** advance.

## The Web and Working Papers

The National Everyday Cultures Programme web site is now up and running and we plan to use it as an instrument of work and communication within the programme. We will publish on the web the abstracts of the 15 research projects the programme is currently supporting. Of these, 8 are the projects being run by Associate Lecturers.

Papers arising from the research projects, as well as others of relevance, such as some of those presented at the workshops on Everyday Cultures will also be posted on the web site. For more information about the web site please contact David Hesmondhalgh at the Pavis Centre.

The Pavis Centre has launched a new working paper series to publish work-in-progress and more finished work. The Pavis Papers include the following titles:

### Pavis Paper No 1: Elizabeth B Silva

'The Politics of Consumption @ Home: Practices and Dispositions in the Uses of Technologies'.

### Pavis Paper No 2: Tony Bennett

'Intellectuals, Culture, Policy: The Technical, the Practical and the Critical'.

**Forthcoming papers** include Stuart Hall on 'Multiculturalism' and David Hesmondhalgh on 'Changes in the Cultural Industries'.

To obtain copies of the first two papers please send a cheque for £3 per paper, made out to 'The Open University', to the Pavis Centre for Social and Cultural Research at the address given below. Please remember to state clearly the paper number(s) and quantity you require.

If you would like to submit a paper for publication, please send it to David Hesmondhalgh at the Pavis Centre.

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**Contacting the NECP:** The National Everyday Cultures Programme has its own email address managed by Pam Walker and Karen Ho at: [socsci-necp@open.ac.uk](mailto:socsci-necp@open.ac.uk)

#### Postal Address:

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## Presence in the media

In the period preceding the Inaugural Symposium, a press release was published in the Open Eye Newspaper, on 4 April, based on an interview with Tony Bennett and Elizabeth Silva. Tony Bennett also gave a live interview to Three Counties Radio during April.

Following the Inaugural Symposium Tony Bennett and Elizabeth Silva had a live interview with Laurie Taylor on Radio 4's 'Thinking Allowed' programme on 7 June.

The keynote speech given at the Inaugural Symposium by the Rt Hon Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, was published in Open Eye on 4 July.

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## General Information

The next Newsletter will be published in June or July 2001

## Forthcoming Events

### *The Pavis Lecture*

**Professor Stuart Hall** will give the first Pavis Lecture entitled 'The Multicultural Question' on **Thursday 19 October 2000** at 4.00 pm in the Berrill Lecture Theatre, Open University, Milton Keynes. [All welcome.](#)

### *Professor Bennett's Inaugural Lecture*

**Professor Tony Bennett** will give his inaugural lecture entitled 'The Evolutionary Museum and Colonial Science: Race, Time, Memory' on **Thursday 2 November 2000** at 3.30pm in the Berrill Lecture Theatre, Open University, Milton Keynes. [All welcome.](#)

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**Pavis Centre Events for 2000/01** to be held at Walton Hall, Milton Keynes (convenor/organiser in brackets)

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**6 October 2000** – Critical Boundaries ESRC funded seminar (Elizabeth Silva) Pre-registered, limited participation on a first come, first served basis

**19 October 2000** – First Pavis Lecture (David Hesmondhalgh)

**24 November 2000** – Mutuality Workshop (Dan Weinbren) Further details available through the Pavis Centre

**8 December 2000** – NECP Research Development Seminar (Elizabeth Silva). Participation by invitation only

**May/June 2001** – Formations of Class, Culture and Gender Group Workshop (Linda Janes)

## Workshops on Everyday Culture

(Details and Timetable on Page 7)

