

LEVERHULME
TRUST



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

MEDIA BUILDING

ARCHITECTURE, COMMUNICATIONS & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
FROM FLEET STREET TO FACEBOOK

8-9 JULY 2020, UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD, MEDIACITYUK

Deadline for 400-word abstracts: 16 December 2019

<https://mediabuilding.weebly.com>

In 1702 Elizabeth Mallett founded the *Daily Courant* at her modest bookshop on Fleet Street in London. Two centuries later, the street had become the spatial nerve centre for a range of local, national and international networks of communication that were replicated on “newspaper rows” across the globe. As media influence grew, so too did the size and scale of its buildings, with American publisher Joseph Pulitzer contending that ‘a newspaper plant...should be something to be gaped at.’ Structures such as Pulitzer’s own *New York World* building, the striking neo-gothic spires of the *Chicago Tribune* tower, and the sleek art-deco exteriors of the *Daily Express* buildings in London and Manchester offered their own expressions of media power, modernity, and the aesthetics of mass communication, providing what Aurora Wallace describes as a “definable shape...a hook on which to hang some news about the media itself.”

This conference, located at the heart of MediaCityUK, invites contributions which explore the intersections between media culture, architecture, and the built environment. We are interested in the relationship between media content and media space, and the ways in which this relationship has changed over time. What would press barons such as Pulitzer, who saw their buildings as “the central and highest point(s) of New World Civilization”, have made of Facebook’s Menlo Park Campus; an arguably more impressive yet radically different vision of media power, sophistication, and influence? How might publishers such as Lord Beaverbrook, the ‘first baron of Fleet Street’, have reacted to its decline and dispersal during the latter decades of the twentieth century? More broadly, how have media buildings informed and given form to a range of sociopolitical, cultural and ideological constructs, becoming a “delivery mechanism” for ideas about objectivity, authority and identity? And what can the past and future of media architecture tell us about the changing nature of media production, distribution and consumption in the twenty-first century?

Potential topics and case studies could include:

- The history and impact of the “newspaper row” (Fleet Street; Park Row; Picayune Place; etc)
- Media power, message and the modern skyscraper (China Media Group HQ, Beijing; the *New York Times* building, Manhattan; *Der Spiegel* building, Hamburg; etc)
- Media cities and mediated cities (Facebook Menlo Park Campus, Silicon Valley; MediaCity, Salford Quays; Media City Park, Dubai; etc)
- Liminal spaces, private architectures, media publics (blogging and the coffee shop; radical media and the built environment; media cultures in the ‘post-newsroom’ age; etc)
- Reuse, relocation, and the afterlife of media architecture (the *Daily Express* building, Manchester; the *Tribune* building, Chicago; BBC/Channel 4 move from London to the North, etc)
- The relationship between media building design and professional ideologies of journalism/newswork (soft power and media architecture; the ‘newsroom’ as a social and cultural construct; etc)
- Race, Ethnicity and Media Buildings (the *Defender* building, Chicago; the *Daily Forward* building, New York; etc)
- Media architecture and the end of empire (*Times of India* building, Mumbai; National Media Group, Nairobi; Broadcasting House, London; etc)

Abstracts of **no more than 400 words** should be sent to conference organisers Carole O’Reilly [c.oreilly@salford.ac.uk] and E. James West [james.west@northumbria.ac.uk] no later than **16 December 2019**

A limited number of travel awards are available to subsidize conference attendance by PGRs, ECRs and temporary faculty. To be considered please submit an estimate of travel expenses with your abstract.