



Science Communication and Public Engagement

The adaptation of H.G. Wells' novel 'The War of The Worlds' in 1938 showed the power of radio to capture listeners' imagination through science-fiction - and in doing so demonstrated how mass media could be used to communicate science to different audiences. For decades, print and broadcast media have used different genres to portray the sciences, and the popularity of TV programmes like the BBC's Blue Planet and the longevity of Horizon illustrates a current demand for science broadcasting. But with the digital revolution and the emergence of social networking will professional science broadcasting still retain significance in the future? Is there a role in this new digital world for printed journals and other forms of 'traditional' media? Dr Richard Holliman leads discussions exploring the history of science broadcasting and looks at whether emerging forms of user-generated content provide new opportunities for scientists to engage with members of the public. This material has been taken from the Open University course SH804 Communicating Science in the Information age.