

Phin Adams – Cuba, Dissertation Research, Summer 2013

At the beginning of the summer, I discovered that my initial intentions to write a dissertation on religious comedy would not be possible. There was not enough literature on the subject. I then had the idea of looking at broadcasting and religion, after discussing it with my Director of Studies. There was considerable research that had already been carried out.

This meant that a change of location was necessary. I chose Cuba as an interesting starting point for looking at broadcasting. The intention was to do a comparison between U.K. broadcast of religion and other religious broadcasting across the continent. It was through visiting Habana FM that I learnt about the nature of broadcasting in a country so diverse as Cuba. Here the station would broadcast on FM across Cuba and had a diverse programme output with some licence to specialise in religion, although there were some restrictions regarding this.

By visiting this station and exploring its transmission in the southern parts of Cuba, I was then inspired to come up with a title which would compare the objectives of religious broadcasting in the U.K. and the U.S.A. The main focus will now be on the U.S.A on the basis that in Cuba I observed a large number of restrictions in terms of what was allowed to be broadcast. Programmes had to be approved by the Cuban government, unless they were conducted on pirate stations.



Relations with the United States and Cuba are still tense and it was by learning about this, as well as looking at religious output as a whole in this area, that I began to explore the contrasting output in Cuba and the U.S.A. and in the U.K.

Focusing on a comparison between religious broadcasting in the U.K. and the U.S.A. has proved to be enjoyable thus far. Before I went to Cuba, I did some groundwork in the U.K. and explored religious output of BBC local stations BBC Cambridgeshire and BBC Bristol. This provided a lens through which to compare religious broadcasting in Cuba and then look at religious broadcasting in the U.S.A. Cuba was a very useful starting point to wider research.

By going to Cuba, I explored the field of religion in more depth. The initial intention was to compare U.K. broadcasting with Cuban broadcasting, but having gone to Cuba I have found that a more interesting comparison would be between the U.S.A and the U.K.

The title was submitted for approval by the faculty board on Monday 14th October and I have now been allocated a supervisor.