ACROSS MODERN TELEVISION, THE AVALANCHE OF NEW CHANNELS SHOWS LITTLE SIGN OF INTRODUCING AN AVALANCHE OF CHALLENGING NEW PROGRAMMES. IN A WORLD WHERE TELEVISION RISKS BECOMING LITTLE MORE THAN A FORMULAIC RATINGS MACHINE, IT IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAT CHANNEL 4 STANDS OUT.

We aim to be a place of individual authorship, a consistent source of surprise, invention and brainfood. We are for viewers who expect to be challenged, provoked and entertained by new ideas and new talent; who want programmes that are worth watching. The following review of our programming in 2000 (pages 10 to 25) shows that Channel 4 is delivering on its promise to viewers with the broadest and most interesting schedule of any broadcaster in Britain.
**The Year in Review**

**Documentaries**

By allowing a sense of individual authorship, linked with campaigning commitment, Channel 4 has continued to produce the kind of contemporary documentary programmes which have all but vanished from other channels. Some of the results have made for uncomfortable but compelling viewing. Leo Regan’s highly personal film on racism 100% White documented the lives of a group of neo Nazis he had photographed ten years before. Another programme in the feature-length documentary strand True Stories was Babitsky’s War, one of a series of three films on Putin’s Russia, and a powerful account of the kidnapping of a Russian journalist in Chechnya by the Russian Army after he exposed too much about the horrors of war in that region. And in Mr Death, Errol Morris told the extraordinary story of an American engineer’s attempt to prove that the Holocaust never happened.

Cutting Edge lived up to its name with a series of sharp and promptly became an and and cleverly combined the popular and the intelligent whilst tackling contemporary social issues. Slavery was a campaigning feature-length documentary from the makers of The Dying Rooms about the growth of the modern slave trade. As a result of the programme, a working party was set up by the cocoa industry to attempt to eradicate slavery from its production processes. A Very British Murder was a major series exploring contemporary British murder cases, which included the first on-camera interview with Tony Martin, the Norfolk farmer who murdered a burglar in his home. The Gambler followed inveterate chancer Jonathon Rendall on a global gambling spree. The Man Who Bought Mustique was a humorous portrait of the irascible Lord Glenconner returning to the Caribbean island of Mustique to hold court with Princess Margaret. In 2000 Channel 4 launched Alt tv, a peaktime initiative to find the next generation of factual programmes and documentary filmmakers.

**Features**

Channel 4 put renewed emphasis in 2000 on finding documentary subjects within popular culture and was rewarded with two of the most talked about programmes of the year. In Victoria’s Secrets, Victoria Beckham turned interviewer in the rarified world of celebrity and witnngly, or unwittingly, offered an insight into the everyday aspects of fame. The programme was Channel 4’s fourth highest rating programme of the year with 4.6 million viewers. Coked Up was a short season of programmes looking at the prevalence of cocaine use within modern, British society. Bold, uncensorious and timely, the season generated debate and an enthusiastic critical response.

Nigella Lawson was launched as a fully-fledged face of Channel 4 and a new genre in archive programming and was one of Channel 4’s top 30 rated programmes in 2000. Time Team proved its enduring popularity and maintained its audience share in an increasingly competitive market to become one of Channel 4’s top 10 rated programmes in 2000. Time Team also produced four days of live archaeology from Canterbury over the August Bank Holiday weekend and successfully established a new Time Team documentary strand with The Mystery of Mine Howe and The Mystery of Seahenge. Both performed well in peak, as did various Time Team specials.

**Can You Live Without…?** was a first-time collaboration between Channel 4’s Features and Current Affairs departments, which investigated whether people could cope without the ‘essentials’ of everyday life including make-up, cars and TV. Celebrity Frock Ups launched a new genre in archive programming and was one of Channel 4’s top 20 programmes of the year, proving that half-hour programmes can still punch through in an increasingly competitive schedule.

In daytime, both newly commissioned property show A Place in the Sun and Great Estates proved consistently popular and earned an outing in the peaktime schedule.
INTOXICATING VIEWING

Good journalism costs time and money. It takes commitment. While other broadcasters seem unwilling to pay that price, Channel 4’s journalism just keeps on getting stronger. The reward has been a 15% increase in news audiences and the satisfaction of stories that change Government policy and influence national debate.

News and current affairs have always been one of the primary signifiers of Channel 4’s public service purpose, a true piece of distinction between the channel and other commercial broadcasters. In 2000 the strength of the channel’s journalism was shown in even sharper relief.

The year on Channel 4 had, as a spine, a series of campaigns mapping the social pressure points of Britain – Adoption, Eating Disorders, Teenage Sexuality, Why Doctors Make Mistakes, and Stress. Combining current affairs with education and a real campaigning edge, seasons of this type have become a Channel 4 hallmark, illustrating the channel’s commitment to having a positive impact on the lives of its viewers.

Channel 4’s current affairs output was at the forefront of the best television journalism in 2000. Channel 4’s current affairs flagship Dispatches scored some notable hits, exposing British Airways’ pilots drinking to excess before flying passenger flights in Flying Under The Influence. The follow-up coverage from the programme prompted the Government to speed through legislation on alcohol limits for pilots. In Children of the Secret State, Ahn Chol risked his life to bring to world attention the shame of the brutal North Korean regime that is abandoning its children to starvation, disease and even cannibalism.

Coverage of international affairs was also prominent on Channel 4 in 2000. In August the channel found itself bound up in a major political international incident when a camera crew from Insight News, filming in Liberia for Sorious Samura’s Africa – the centrepiece of Channel 4’s Africa season – was arrested and thrown in jail on the instructions of President Charles Taylor. After a week of diplomatic activity and international pressure, the four men were released and returned to recount their captivity at a press conference at Heathrow. The Africa season also featured The Hunger Business, looking at the failures of international aid programmes.

Unreported World told four vivid stories about the effects of globalisation from the flash points of a rapidly shrinking world.

Innovation was a distinctive part of the bulletin’s purpose, a true point of distinction between the channel and other commercial broadcasters. In 2000, with Naomi Klein’s visually arresting 25 minute film on global branding provoking debate when it was shown shortly after anti-capitalist demonstrations in France, Channel 4 News also broke new ground in court reporting, using actors to re-enact the evidence on each day of the court case surrounding the Siamese twins, Jodi and Mary. Baby Hale unpacked the first, definitive anatomy of the fall of Milosevic.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Channel 4’s commitment to finding the next generation of comic talent paid dividends in 2000 with the launch of four brand-new series to instant acclaim.

The highlight of an outstanding year for the entertainment department was the phenomenal impact of Ali G, with Sacha Baron Cohen’s comic creation graduating to front his own vehicle, *Da Ali G Show*, which secured some of the best ratings of the year. Despite giving just one interview – to the Staines and Egham News – Ali G became the year’s most written about television character, provoking an outbreak of Gangsta patois in the national press and a rash of Tommy Hilfiger-clad lookalikes.

Equally gratifying were the ratings and critical success of *Trigger Happy TV*, fronted by Dominic Joly and reinventing Candid Camera for a new generation. Peter Kay, another graduate of Channel 4’s new talent showcase, *The Comedy Lab*, revealed his huge potential in *That Peter Kay Thing*, which was judged Best New Comedy at the British Comedy Awards for its sharp but affectionate portrayal of northern life.

*Black Books*, co-written by and starring Dylan Moran, was that rare thing – a sitcom that made the reviewers (and the viewers) laugh.

Chris Morris delivered his latest insight into the human condition in *Jam*, a dark comedy widely acknowledged as an original and groundbreaking piece of television.

So Graham Norton continued as the lynchpin of Channel 4’s Friday night schedule – a triumph of ratings and a reinvention of the talk show. *Top 10s* delivered similar success on Saturday nights by mining a rich vein of nostalgia.

Channel 4 also scored notable hits with younger audiences, with *Shipwrecked* kicking off the reality TV phenomenon early in the year. *T4* became television’s premier brand for teenagers and at the start of 2001 added early Friday evenings and Saturday lunchtimes to its regular Sunday morning slot.

Music continued to grow in stature and airtime on Channel 4 with *4Music* the only regular, credible music programming on terrestrial TV. A number of entertainment specials throughout the year, including David Blaine, Rory Bremner, *100 Greatest TV Moments* and *John Lennon Night*, reinforced the range and quality of comedy and entertainment output.
CRICKET JUST GOT BETTER

The buzz is back in English cricket. The revitalised performance of the national team has coincided with revitalised television coverage on Channel 4. Channel 4 has helped rekindle the public’s enthusiasm for cricket, with concerts, events, eye-catching promotions, grassroots and schools initiatives and great television coverage all helping to introduce new fans to the joys of the summer game.

A chorus of questions greeted Channel 4’s acquisition of the rights to Test match cricket in 1998, with critics lining up to ask how the traditional image of the game was consistent with the channel’s remit to be different. By the end of a compelling summer of cricket and Caribbean culture last year, the doubts had been replaced by praise from all quarters.

Marketing Week led the way: ‘When Channel 4 wrested the cricket rights from the BBC two years ago, it not only introduced new ways of covering the game, but also promised to help market cricket to a new, younger and more multicultural audience. This season – the second – has shown that promise coming to fruition.’

Innovation was again at the heart of Channel 4’s coverage of the five match Test series against the West Indies in 2000, with the production and commentary team once more winning plaudits for their technological wizardry and fresh but knowledgeable approach to the game. During the year, Channel 4’s Test Cricket coverage picked up a BAFTA for Best Sports Coverage, two Royal Television Society awards and a variety of other prizes. But true to the spirit on which all its successes have been built, Channel 4 added another dimension to its coverage of the nation’s summer game.

In partnership with the England and Wales Cricket Board, Channel 4 has launched a £2 million Community Cricket initiative, giving a fresh spin to the game for primary and secondary school girls and boys, including dozens of inter-school tournaments. One-day workshops in inner-city schools and classroom packs have allowed teachers to use cricket scores, teamwork, the history of the game and the geography of cricketing nations in a variety of lessons. Special roadshows across the country combined music with screenings of matches, while on television, fast bowler Darren Gough presented two series of his Cricket Academy for young players.

As part of its commitment to bring new, young audiences to the game, Channel 4 toured the country with its Beach Cricket Roadshow. Over 26,000 children around the country took part in this grassroots programme and received coaching from, among others, the West Indies players themselves. Channel 4 also sponsored a project to create a new inner-city cricket facility in the London Borough of Lambeth.

The reward for Channel 4’s imaginative investment in the Caribbean Summer was a 42% share of the viewing audience during Test match cricket coverage and 70% of the ABC1 male market. Channel 4’s dedicated website cricket4.com notched up seven million page views during August.

Caribbean Summer showed Channel 4 at its best – bold, innovative, exuberant and truly cross-platform. It turned a traditional sport into a modern cultural event that sprang out of the schedules in the quiet television days of summer and hooked an army of new cricket fans.
ARTS AND MUSIC

Channel 4 continued to build its reputation as a major patron of cultural life in Britain with a new initiative to showcase architecture alongside its arts and literary coverage of the Turner and Booker prizes. A series of documentaries on the buildings nominated for the RIBA Stirling Prize in 2000 culminated in a Channel 4 sponsored awards ceremony with viewers invited to cast votes for their favourite building via channel4.com. The Shock of the Old, Piers Gough’s idiosyncratic guide to the story of architecture, provided the channel with another distinctive voice. His mixture of authority and fun was quintessentially Channel 4.

Following the success of This Is Modern Art in 1999, Channel 4 again cleared its Sunday night schedules for another major, authored arts series. Howard Goodall’s Big Bangs rose to the challenge of exploring the complexities of musical history and theory in a way that invited the audience in, but did not dumb down, and was rewarded with a powerful critical response. Alain de Botton explored how the teaching of great thinkers can make people happier in Philosophy: A Guide to Happiness.

Starstruck was a witty and engaging series on the pleasures and pitfalls of the acting profession, showing it is possible to make arts programmes with genuine audience appeal that retain intelligence and style. In Movie Virgins two very different tyo filmmakers struggled to break through into cinematic success.

In 2000 Channel 4 was at the forefront of original live arts programming, encouraging fresh and filmic ways of bringing performance to the screen. Andrea Andermann’s groundbreaking version of La Traviata was filmed live in real Parisian locations and scheduled across a weekend. Zoé, an opera performed by teenagers, was aimed boldly at a young audience and illustrated Channel 4’s continuing commitment to new music and new talent. Channel 4 scored another major coup by bringing the acclaimed Royal Shakespeare Company’s production of Macbeth to the small screen using a hand-held documentary style of filmmaking that emphasised the rawness of the play.

Our arts coverage was endorsed by the ITC, who stated in their review of our performance: ‘given the difficulty of attracting audiences to the arts on television, the channel’s achievements in 2000 were impressive’.

HISTORY

The major history event of the year was Elizabeth, presented by David Starkey, which attracted audiences of more than three million and provoked front-page comment as a result.

The Holocaust on Trial blended drama, analysis and testimony of victims to place in context the arguments surrounding historian David Irving’s controversial views of the Holocaust. Made while his libel trial was proceeding and shown shortly after, it was a commission only Channel 4 would have had the courage to undertake and which went to the heart of the best TV history – helping us understand how we got here.

Wallis Simpson: The Demonised Duchess, The Real Queen Mother and Crawfie, The Nanny Who Wouldn’t Keep Mum, formed a three part series marking the Queen Mother’s 100th birthday in characteristically angular Channel 4 style.

When Money Went Mad transposed the story of the 18th century’s South Sea Bubble financial disaster against current anxieties about dot.com mania and was one of the most original history programmes of the year.

RELIGION

As television moves towards greater self-regulation, Channel 4 is poised to stand out in the schedules and hold the attention of viewers. One such was James Runcie’s My Father, a frank and intimate portrait of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Runcie, filmed only weeks before his death. Witness contributed some distinctive one-off films to the schedule including The Cult That Couldn’t Stop Killing and Living on Light.

SCIENCE

One of the most stylistically innovative programmes of the year, The Day the World Took Off, employed a team of historical investigators to explore the origins of the Industrial Revolution and Britain’s role within it.

Neanderthal captured press attention by bringing to life the language, rituals and habits of man’s closest ancestral relative. Escape from Colditz covered the wartime history of the notorious Prisoner of War camp and set modern day army recruits the task of replicating the inmates’ celebrated escape attempts. Scrapheap Challenge returned with its combination of adventure and technological challenge.

Anatomy of Disgust explored the essence of the most powerful of human feelings while the Royal Institution’s Christmas Lectures made their debut on Channel 4 with Professor Kevin Warwick’s Rise of the Robots.
With the benefit of hindsight, Big Brother may look to have been a sure-fire winner from the start, but in truth it represented a significant risk for Channel 4. The channel’s reward for staying true to its spirit of innovation and committing itself fully to the experiment was to create the TV event of the year and the ultimate example of talked about television.

The format was in many ways the simplest aspect of Big Brother. Ten people in a house for nine weeks, their every move – almost – captured by a sophisticated multi-camera set up, with one member of the house voted out each week by the viewers at home and the last one standing collecting a £70,000 prize. But the logistics involved in turning that idea into some 50 episodes across 63 days, with 24-hour live webcasts throughout, required months of preparation and constant monitoring.

A site was secured in Bromley by Bow, the house was built, miles of cable were laid, a studio built on site and a production team of more than 150 was hired by the producer, Endemol UK. Over 40,000 people applied to be in the Big Brother house – after regional auditions and a series of rigorous tests a shortlist was chosen.

The introductory show on 18 July peaked at 4.1 million viewers (20% share of the available audience) between 9 pm and 10 pm, with subsequent weekday episodes at 11 pm settling in with audiences of around three million viewers. But press interest in the show – fed by a 24-hour hotline – was already growing out of all proportion to the initial ratings. A huge word of mouth effect was also building up behind Big Brother as viewers followed every move in the house via the Big Brother website. Within a week it had become the UK’s most popular site, averaging 2.5 million page impressions per day.

These factors collided on 17 August, when Big Brother’s most compulsive character ‘Nasty’ Nick Bateman was evicted for cheating. The website recorded 7.5 million page impressions and a world record jump for an individual site as viewers watched the day’s events unfolding live on the internet. Nick’s antics were splashed across the front pages of every national newspaper the day after – excluding The Financial Times, which devoted most of page 3 in its next edition.

After 6.9 million viewers tuned in to see Nick’s post eviction interview on 18 August the ratings never looked back and peaked at 9.9 million during the final show. 38 million people watched Big Brother at least once and an average of 4.7 million (26.3% of the available audience in the timeslot) watched each episode. 38 million people watched Big Brother at least once and an average of 4.7 million (26.3% of the available audience in the timeslot) watched each episode. Nearly 80% of 16 to 34-year-olds tuned in to the show at least once. Big Brother broke records online and off screen, with more than 200 million page impressions – making it Europe’s number one website – and 7.4 million people voting in the final phone poll between Anna, Darren and the eventual winner, Craig, making it the biggest ever UK televote.

Beyond the numbers, Big Brother reinforced Channel 4’s position as a pioneering broadcaster. By being unpredictable, risky, ambitious, engaging and interactive it was broadly recognised as the first mass appeal, interactive, cross-media concept. The programme will be remembered as one of the most integrated producer/broadcaster projects ever embarked upon. For Channel 4, the press and publicity department deployed every member of staff and handled more than 15,000 calls from UK and international journalists. The commissioning team moved to the production site; the legal team, advertising and commercial development, marketing and engineering, information systems and Channel Four Interactive all collaborated closely with their counterparts at Endemol UK and the production team to ensure the project’s success.

The last word must go to The Guardian. ‘Big Brother has completed Channel 4’s transformation from an eccentric outsider to a powerful pioneer at the heart of British broadcasting.’
In 2000 Channel 4 undertook a root and branch review of its education policy and provision. The result was the creation of a new internal division, 4 Learning, bringing together all the channel’s educational interests and activities – the schools’ programme service, schools’ publishing, stand-alone websites and programme support for adult education programmes.

This organisational development is enabling 4 Learning to move forwards in a fully multi-media future, using new ideas and technologies to give more people a window on a bigger world. It will also ensure that all of Channel 4’s education activities are infused with the same sense of purpose.

That purpose was clear across the full range of Channel 4’s educational output in 2000. The channel’s innovative approach helps many young people and adults overcome the barriers they feel stand between them and educational achievement. Most of all, Channel 4 believes it has a particular role in assisting people at times of transition in their lives. Not only does the channel produce five of the top ten primary schools programmes, it also supports young people who are leaving school, becoming sexually active, getting a job. These choices and dilemmas are a cue for Channel 4 to be imaginative, ambitious and useful in its education proposition.

Launched in January 2000, homeworkhigh.com was one of Channel 4’s most significant successes in any medium during the year. Offering 9 to 16-year-olds online help with their homework, the service now regularly receives more than two million hits each week. homeworkhigh.com is the only free online homework service that guarantees answers to accepted questions by the end of the session. Over 100 qualified teachers work across six subjects offering expert help in real time, but encouraging children to work out their own solutions. The service has built up a databank of 35,000 previously answered questions that can be accessed at any time. The website has become the most talked about homework help service and won many prestigious awards in 2000 including a BAFTA for Best Online Education site.

In 2000, a new stand-alone website, channel4.com/brilliantcareers, was launched to help introduce people to work in the creative industries. As well as factual information the site gives access to digital mentors and profiles of creative industry experts to inspire and educate.

The channel’s Generation Sex season of programmes focused on the knowledge gap in British sex education. Online – and confidentially – teenagers were able to put questions to qualified advisers on the issues that concerned them. Some 850,000 leaflets were distributed in schools and in popular teen magazines, and over 13,000 calls were taken on a supporting helpline.

In 2000 Channel 4 devoted 286 hours of its peaktime schedule to first run education programming and won over 20 major awards. The channel’s educational ambitions are not confined to certain genres or formats, but inform every part of its editorial output. Dramas like Never Never, dealing with debt and loan sharks, or story lines in Brookside, all add to and are informed by the channel’s attitude to learning. Some of the channel’s outreach work is linked to programmes not traditionally thought of as ‘education’, like a multi-million pound investment in inner-city grassroots cricket, and trailblazing series such as Generation Sex and The Day the World Took Off.

Health continued to be another major area for Channel 4’s education work across all media in 2000. Responding to the fact that the British work longer hours than anyone else in Europe – the Stop, Go Home season examined a stressed-out nation’s obsession with work. The channel also tackled Eating Disorders in a well-received season of programmes, which included The Real Lena Zavaroni, Diet Diaries and Three Thin Ladies.

Working with new technology Channel 4 can now respond to learning needs in the way that suits the learner, whatever age. Through a multi-media service of television programmes, online resources, CD-ROMs (and, shortly, DVD-ROMs) the channel combines ambition and expertise to create winners such as Number Crew, Maths 4 Real and Your Family Counts – all part of a campaign which established 4 Learning as a major influence in the teaching and learning of mathematics, both in the formal education sector and in improving numerical skills for adults.
Channel 4 continued to make substantial progress in 2000 in its work in the nations and regions of the UK, investing £102 million in original production outside London and transmitting programmes supplied by 153 regional companies.

Channel 4 Interactive joined forces with the Nations and Regions team to host ‘Cross Creative’, a two-day laboratory in Glasgow bringing games developers, web designers and TV producers together to discuss their cross-platform ambitions with broadcasters. Channel 4 has already taken a few of these projects further. 4car.co.uk – a joint venture with Ideal World – is proving to be a popular online destination for car enthusiasts and a joint venture for games on mobile media was struck with the Dunfermline-based WAP producer, Digital Bridges.

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A number of the channel’s major popular factual strands were made outside London such as Location, Location, Location from Glasgow-based Ideal World and Embarrassing Illnesses by Maverick in Birmingham.

Channel 4 again led other television companies in the Campaign for Racial Equality’s Race in the Media Awards, picking up three prizes including Best Drama for Nightshift, a drama devised in conjunction with Asian teenagers in Birmingham.

To commemorate Black History Month 2000, Channel 4’s Untold season looked at the little explored contributions of black and Asian Britons to major events in this country’s history, through a series of programmes including Extraordinary Ancestors. Communities from across the UK investigated the histories of their own areas to create the first ever online black and Asian history map of Britain on Channel 4’s website. Key discoveries were the subject of short films.

Three dramas stood out as having major regional significance. The return of Queer as Folk captured gay lifestyle against the backdrop of post-industrial Manchester. The Secret Life of Michael Fry presented a unique if controversial portrait of life in mid-Wales. And the legal series North Square was set in the aspirational Leeds of today.

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Notable programmes on specific issues of race included Darcus Howe’s White Tribe, a provocative and incisive polemic on what it means to be white in multicultural, post-devolution Britain, and The Difference, a groundbreaking series exploring the latest research into links between race and genetics. Both typified the channel’s reputation for angular and risk-taking factual programmes.
In 2000, Channel 4 supported 30 initiatives designed to find, develop and celebrate talent, both on and off-air. These had a combined value of more than £3 million and included: MESH, the first national scheme to develop new talent in computer generated digital animation; 'So You Think You’re Funny’, a competition to find the best new stand-up comedy talent in the UK; and ‘Cross Creative’, a pioneering programme of workshops for new media companies in Scotland. Channel 4 also supported more than a dozen schemes for developing scriptwriting and comic talent, on and off-air, four major animation programmes, and a series of development and production deals aimed at ethnic minority filmmakers.

Channel 4 regularly sponsors cultural events that aim to discover and showcase talent across different creative areas. Some of these are major events, which make a substantial contribution to Britain’s cultural life, such as the Turner Prize and the Edinburgh International Film Festival. But they include smaller, cutting-edge events ranging from the Canongate Literary Prize for new writing, to Fashion East, a show of the best four up-and-coming fashion designers held during London’s Fashion Week, and FilmFundas, a unique festival of the work of young Indian film directors.

Last year Channel 4 also co-funded 30 industry-wide training initiatives. These included specialist courses for deaf and disabled trainees, bursaries for students in creative and craft disciplines related to all forms of media, and a variety of experimental digital labs.

Channel 4 is a major sponsor of The Research Centre for Television and Interactivity, which is run from its Glasgow office. In 2000 one of its most successful schemes was the Researcher Development Project – funded in partnership with the producers’ association PACT – which invested £300,000 in 12 successful regional companies in order to improve their research and development. As a result of the scheme, £3.5 million of new network commissions have been won by the selected production companies. In 2001 there are plans for Channel 4 to become the sole sponsor and to extend the project to 16 companies, increasing its scope and broadening its range to encourage more ethnic diversity. The scheme has also been refined to specifically benefit producers in Northern Ireland. In September, four companies benefited from a Channel 4-led initiative to improve network production in the region, in partnership with Northern Ireland’s leading economic development agency LEDU.

In-house Talent

This wide ranging commitment to identifying and building talent around the country is mirrored by systematic attention to the quality of Channel 4’s own staff and the need to open up career opportunities that help them and the channel grow. In 2000 Channel 4 became the first major broadcaster to achieve the Government approved Investors In People standard, in recognition of its commitment to improved staff training and development. During the year Channel 4 provided more than 1,400 training courses, ranging from Deaf Awareness to Negotiation Skills. A new, revamped intranet site providing news, information and online learning modules for staff; a new policy of funding study leave; and the Step4ward career development programme for assistants, are further examples of Channel 4’s commitment to its in-house talent.

Supporting Viewers

Channel 4 also supports the talent and ambitions of its viewers and service users. In 2000 Channel 4 operated 140 separate programme-related websites giving viewers information and advice and, altogether, ran 350 learning-related projects in support of particular programmes. The Time Team Club is one of the biggest history societies in the UK.