Abstract:
How do citizens respond to and engage the performance of political power in the context of mainstream media? Through an analysis of two television programmes aired during the UK Brexit referendum campaign of 2016 a picture emerges of citizenship as the performatively disrupting the performance of power. In the programmes the then UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, met members of the public for a mediated discussion of key issues in the Brexit referendum. Their interactions are analysed here as a confrontation between the performance of citizenship and power reflecting activist modalities of disruptive citizenship played out in the television studio. The article ends with reflections on questions about political agency as individualistic forms of disruptive political autonomy.

Bio:
Peter Lunt is professor of media and communication and the University of Leicester. His research interests include media audiences, public participation in popular culture (talk shows and reality TV), media regulation, consumption research and the links between media and social theory. He has been interested in consumer studies or consumption research for over twenty years. In the late 1980s and early 1990s he was interested in what appeared to be a growing link between consumption and identity and particularly the way that regulatory changes were opening up personal finances allowing an increase in personal debt and accompanying shifts in social attitudes and ethical responses to consumer society. In audience studies and the study of popular culture he has worked mainly on the talk show genre which anticipated the increasing mediation of public participation which has developed in reality TV and new media. He originally (also with Sonia Livingstone) was interested in the links between the mediation of public engagement and political culture and the changing conception of public service media. He is still writing about talk shows and in recent years have been interested in sensational talk shows such as the Jerry Springer Show and the Jeremy Kyle Show. He is also working on other popular culture TV genres including makeover TV and am working (with Claire Lynch at Brunel) on the relation between identity, memory and history in “Who Do You Think You Are”?