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COMMUNICATIONS VOLUME 26

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Deb Aikat, a former journalist, has been a faculty member of Media and Journalism in University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA, since 1995, his research has been published in book chapters and refereed journals. An award-winning researcher and teacher, he theorizes digital media. The Scripps Howard Foundation recognized him as the inaugural winner of the “National Journalism Teacher of the Year award” (2003) for “distinguished service to journalism education.” He worked as a journalist in India for Ananda Bazar Patrika’s *The Telegraph* newspaper and reported for the BBC World Service. He founded in 2015 the South Asia Communication Association, which unites professors and professionals in examining South Asia and its diaspora worldwide. He completed in 1990 a Certificate in American Political Culture from the New York University. He earned in 1995 a PhD in Media and Journalism from Ohio University’s Scripps School of Journalism.

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Noah McClain is Assistant Professor of Sociology. His PhD (NYU) research examined dilemmas associated with security efforts in the New York Subway system, as they manifest in the work of subway employees, in organizational processes, and in light of the arcane technology of a century-old underground railroad with millions of daily passengers. The project encapsulates his central interests: the impact of technology on society, life in cities, work practices, formal organizational contexts, and human interaction with material and technical instruments. Through these themes, his past and ongoing research also examines technology in daily life, social inequality, everyday life in prison and out, the ways that rules are used in organizations, and transactional systems of shared or free goods. He has served as a postdoctoral research fellow and faculty member of the Bard Prison Initiative, and Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University.

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Heloisa Pait investigates the challenges posed by the introduction of new means of communication for democratic life, with emphasis on the personal dilemmas individuals encounter when presented with unknown sociabilities. In her doctoral dissertation at the New School for Social Research, she investigated the personal challenges television soap opera writers and viewers faced in trying to make mass communication a meaningful activity. She has written on the reception of international news, on media use by Brazilian youth, and on the disruptive role of the internet in the Brazilian political environment. With her students, she investigates

conceptions of memory and media use, the role of media in notions of secrecy in international relations, and the nature of public protests in Brazilian cities. Dealing with a broad range of subjects, her recurrent issue is the efforts individuals make to engage in communication with others, an activity always disrupted and reconstructed – revealed – by every material transformation of media. She is a Fulbright alumna and member of the advisory board of Open Knowledge Brazil and actively participates in Brazilian public life. Her fiction work has appeared in American and Brazilian publications.

**SENIOR DIGITAL CULTURE EDITOR:
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**SENIOR CRIME AND MEDIA EDITOR:
JULIE B. WIEST**

Julie B. Wiest, a sociologist of culture and media, applies mainly symbolic interactionist and social constructivist perspectives to studies in three primary areas: (1) the sociocultural context of violence, (2) mass media effects, and (3) the relationship between new media technologies and social change. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Tennessee and MA in Journalism and Mass Communication from the University of Georgia. Before academia, she worked as a print and online journalist for nearly a decade.

**SENIOR TECH ETHICS EDITOR:
KATIA MOLES**

Katia Moles was trained as a social ethicist at the Graduate Theological Union and UC Berkeley where her work examined the policy implications of culturally embedded framings of sexuality and reproduction within larger ethical and

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Noah McClain is Assistant Professor of Sociology. His PhD (NYU) research examined dilemmas associated with security efforts in the New York Subway system, as they manifest in the work of subway employees, in organizational processes, and in light of the arcane technology of a century-old underground railroad with millions of daily passengers. The project encapsulates his central interests: the impact of technology on society, life in cities, work practices, formal organizational contexts, and human interaction with material and technical instruments. Through these themes, his past and ongoing research also examines technology in daily life, social inequality, everyday life in prison and out, the ways that rules are used in organizations, and transactional systems of shared or free goods. He has served as a postdoctoral research fellow, a faculty member of the Bard Prison Initiative, and Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEMATIZING COMMUNICATION RESEARCH IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

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In this volume of *Emerald Studies in Media and Communications*, we examine spaces of communication research from global perspectives. Entitled *Geo Spaces of Communication Research*, the volume lays out research across three sections: Section 1: Political and Policy Media Spaces, Section 2: Communication Research and Journalism, and Section 3: Communication Research Methods. Each of these areas allows us to probe communication in the public sphere particularly in the emergent digital commons. The assemblage of research calls upon different research methods, theories, disciplinary frameworks, and case locales. This rich collection thereby allows us to probe these foci from a diversity of perspectives that also complement the volume's larger mission to deepen our knowledge of communication research spaces.

The first section, Political and Policy Media Spaces, deals with IT policy, digital infrastructures, and political communication. The initial chapter, entitled "Small Internet Providers as Agents: Internalizing Digital Infrastructure in Brazil," is written by Sonia Virginia. Moreira, Nélia R. Del Bianco, and César F. Martins. It draws on administrative and policy documents to map the presence of such entities across Brazilian municipalities. These entities use a mix of physical infrastructure such as metallic cabling, satellite coverage, and fiber optic

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networks to provide fixed broadband service to customer markets that might be less economically attractive to larger providers. As the overview demonstrates, these small providers operate alongside larger internet providers in the country, filling vital gaps in internet access. As the authors Sonia Virginia Moreira, Nélia Del Bianco, Cêzar F. Martins write:

Small providers have been growing over recent years and are now present in 70% of Brazilian municipalities These companies are responsible for increasing the number of municipalities served ... small providers contribute to the dissemination of fiber optic technology, important for modernizing the internalization of Internet access in locations that have previously fallen outside the market of large operators.

Looking toward the future, it is hard to conceive of a path toward universal internet access in Brazil which does not involve these small-scale providers. At the same time, the Brazilian authorities must tailor policies geared toward facilitating the survival and growth of these providers.

In the subsequent chapter, the campaigns of Trump in 2016 and Bolsonaro in 2018 are compared and contrasted in terms of the thematic structure of their social media postings. Entitled “An Analysis of Bolsonaro and Trump’s Social Media: Agenda Setting in Presidential Campaigns in Brazil and the U.S.,” the chapter is authored by Élide Borges Rodrigues Gomes and Tatiana Monteiro Reis. Drawing from the early theories of Lippman and others on public opinion as well as more recent work by Bardin, the chapter carries out a thematic content analysis of a large volume of Tweets generated by the two campaigns as well as media coverage of the two campaigns. Identifying these Tweets as to their theme and foci, the analysis reveals considerable similarities between the two sets of social media postings. This was particularly evident in the case of political opponents:

It is noteworthy how rarely either candidate broached the topic of government policy proposals in their tweets (Trump 2% and Bolsonaro 10% of all content posted during the one-month period). Instead, the research showed how both former presidential candidates focused on maligning their political opponents

In addition, both candidates spent considerable energy in their Tweeting to take aim at what they framed as a hostile news media. A relatively small proportion of Tweets were dedicated to substantive issues and government policy. As the chapter indicates, there were reciprocal effects of the social media campaigns and the media coverage in both countries, such that “each candidate’s tweets also influenced content produced by media organizations on various occasions.”

The next chapter probes the discursive frames apparent in social media after one of the most consequential disasters in the history of Brazil, the collapse of the Samarco mining dam in 2015. Bringing together theoretical perspectives from social media content analysis as well as crisis communication, Juliana M. Trammel’s chapter is entitled “A Disaster After the Disaster: A Comparative Framing Analysis of the Samarco Dam Collapse.” This chapter charts the frames and communication flows evident in the wake of the disaster on Brazilian social media. Through inductive content analysis coupled with textual network analysis performed through the mapping interface NodeXL, the investigation examines

the thematic structure and messaging flows characterizing the Samarco public relations campaign on social media platforms, specifically Twitter and Facebook. Contrasting these two platforms, the analysis illustrates that exchanges on Facebook stemmed from relationships rather than mass media outputs as was the case for Twitter. Moreover, while mass media outlets dominated discourse on both platforms, and did not always align with the positive public pronouncements generated by Samarco, most of the critical discourse was organically generated by the public. As this shows, the reliance on social media platforms did not necessarily allow for a diversity of voices to share the stage during the crisis episode. A more responsive crisis communication strategy would be to respond directly to the concerns of “impacted stakeholders,” and allow for the expression of “alternative voices and viewpoints during a crisis.”

The final chapter in this section of the volume deals with the discursive repertoires used by left-wing Brazilian activists on Facebook between 2013 and 2017 through a multipronged analysis of Facebook content and interviews with activists. Authored by Julien Figeac, Nathalie Paton, Angelina Peralva, Arthur Coelho Bezerra, Guillaume Cabanac, H  lo  se Pr  vost, Pierre Ratinaud, and Tristan Salord, this chapter is entitled “Digital Participation of Left-Wing Activists in Brazil: Cultural Events, Mobilization, and Networked Protest.” The study unveils the dual role played by social media activity and content for these groups: a coordinating or mobilization role and a cultural or expressive role. As far as coordination goes, social media activity and content generation appear to facilitate group coordination, particularly as “talk about cultural events ... creates the conditions for the coordination of (future) social movements.” Where the quantitative lexical analysis is concerned, the themes foregrounded in the social media content include themes around general political ideologies and resisting oppressive and coercive state actions. With respect to the second type of social media content, the activists’ posts pertained to the organization of “cultural activities, such as concerts and exhibitions” as well as public protests. The thematic diversity of expressive content appears to vary over time, in a pattern opposite to that of the content related to mobilization. In sum, the chapter provides evidence that mobilization-related content climbs during periods of active protest. However, social ties that form the backbone of movements are generated both during periods of protest and by expressive content generated during periods of less active mobilization. As formulated in the chapter, “This research thus shows that forms of cultural expression and the coordination of cultural events are both central in the online action repertoires developed thanks to social media.”

We now turn to the volume’s second section, Communication Research and Journalism, that engages timely topics in media and journalism in Brazil. Here we begin with a chapter entitled “Local and Regional Journalism in the Interior of Brazil: Contexts, Developments, and Emergent Themes” by Jacqueline da Silva Deolindo. In this chapter, the analysis tackles the socioeconomic and market environments which shape the structure and performance of print and online media outlets in the non-metropolitan cities located in the Brazilian state of Rio de Janeiro. Using primary data on the business models, consumer

markets, and market positioning of the target media outlets, the chapter tracks the “emergence of small daily online journalism ventures” which serve these markets. We find that the more successful media outlets pay attention to product differentiation and endeavor to serve markets which are both geographically and sociodemographically distinct. In sum, the conclusions point to substantial room for the expansion of both print and online regional news media outlets in Brazil. One of the potential pathways, for example, would involve “collaborative journalism and media partnerships” through which multiple outlets combine their expertise.

Following this examination of business models and markets in news media, the next chapter turns to the linguistic and messaging aspects of science journalism. Written by Margarethe Born Steinberger-Elias, this chapter zeroes in on the role of redundancy and paraphrasing in science journalism aimed at lay readers. The chapter is entitled “On the Role of Redundancy in the Popularization of Science: An Analysis of Brazilian Journalistic Texts on Covid-19.” Applying a battery of linguistic techniques to two bodies of naturally occurring Brazilian journalistic text, the chapter “reveals two categories of redundancy: paraphrastic and polysemic.” While paraphrastic redundancy can be identified through the “concomitant language reformulation” of distinctive words, sentences, or larger grammatical units, the markers of polysemic redundancy are “cognitively predictable semantic association in socio-cultural domains.” Based on the analysis of these bodies of journalistic text, it is hoped that in the future a “transformative use of language practices in Brazilian schools could inaugurate a new way of thinking and learning, more based on search and discovery than on content reproduction.”

The following contribution provides an account of multiple transnational collaborative journalism projects. The chapter entitled “Reshaping Journalism Practices Through Collaboration: An Analysis of Three Collaborative Projects in the Americas” is written by Lucia Mesquita, Gabriela Gruszynski Sanseverino, Mathias Felipe de Lima Santos, and Giulianer Carpes da Silva. It presents detailed case studies of three such collaborative projects, all of which involved large numbers of journalists affiliated with multiple new media outlets across multiple countries. The three projects involve three collaborative journalism organizations which in turn involve large numbers of journalists from multiple new outlets: The Panama Papers project associated with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ); the “América Latina, Región de Carteles” project from Connectas, and the Comprova Project associated with the 2018 Brazilian presidential election. Combining content analysis of news articles with in-depth interviews of key journalists working on these projects, the chapter explores the complex international division of labor which characterizes such projects. Many key features of such projects are detailed in the chapter, including the horizontal structure of decision-making, the extensive use of digital communication platforms, and the overarching mission to render powerful social actors accountable to the global community. It is argued that the practices fostered by such projects may lay the groundwork for an emergent form of collaborative journalistic practice in the public interest appropriate to the new “network-based and platformized society.”

Next is the third and final section of the volume, *Communication Research Methods*, that explores the evolution of research methods to study these phenomena. This section commences with a chapter by Aline Maia providing a series of reflections on comparative ethnographic fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro Brazil and New Orleans, USA. Focused on multi-sited ethnographies, Maia shares an autoethnographic account of participant observation in these two vibrant cities. Entitled “In the Field in Brazil and the USA: Doing Ethnography in Communication,” Maia’s research probes the effects of the African Diaspora among youth cultures in these two cultural centers. The author chronicles deeply personal experiences as an ethnographer who follows feminist principles, particularly “commitment to the ‘other,’ effacing hierarchies between researcher and participant, while continuing to be attentive to power dynamics in the field.” Maia explores the distinctive ethical and moral considerations which follow from the author’s commitment to seek “attunement with the ‘other’” during her fieldwork. The chapter pays particular attention to the sometimes apparent tensions between the “commitment to honor the trust” which informants place in the researcher and the “scientific commitment that guides researchers to be as accurate and forthright as possible in the process of obtaining and presenting information about people and their practices.” Maia’s insights constitute an important piece of reflection on what it means to conduct ethnographic research from a feminist standpoint in two cultural contexts.

The final chapter, by Jeremy Schulz, Laura Robinson, and Katia Moles, explores the development of visualizations as cultural objects. Viewing visualizations as a blend of knowledge production and artistic expression, the chapter is “Visual Evidence as Social Science: The Ethics of Culture and Place.” The authors draw connections between disciplinary visualizations and art practices as situated within distinctive social, institutional, and cultural environments. In doing so, they outline some of the ethical considerations and key features of these art worlds relevant to visualizations across disciplines. The examination of art objects points to the fact that both art objects and data visualizations, like any visual representation, constitute cultural objects which belong to interpretative communities akin to Becker’s art worlds. Drawing on work by cultural sociologists and anthropologists, the chapter points out how cultures of reception and institutional intermediaries, such as museums, have historically shaped the construction of artworks, which are never produced or interpreted in a vacuum. The chapter closes with a call to expand our understanding of visualizations as subject to dynamics similar to those shaping art worlds. Such visualizations, it is argued, constitute key components of social research practice increasingly oriented toward a digitally connected public hungry for visual interpretations of contemporary social developments. The authors close with the claim that an understanding of art objects and socially situated art practice both hold great importance for understanding the ethics of visual representations in social sciences.

In conclusion, as we have seen, contributors from three continents have probed arenas of communication research across the three areas explored in this volume: Political and Policy Media Spaces, Communication Research and Journalism, and Communication Research. By bringing these angles of vision together the volume

covers a wide range of substantive foci relating to communication, including histories and economies of journalism and media, language practices, comparative marginality, politics and media, and artistic expression. In so doing, the studies provide insight into how media acts as a lens for individuals, groups, and societies to understand the social world, as well as how emergent methodologies are evolving to better explore these phenomena. The richness of this collection illustrates the wealth of knowledge being created by each new generation of media and communication scholars to address the complex evolution of political and policy media spaces as highlighted in “The Brazil–US Colloquium Past, Present, and Future” by Sonia Virginia Moreira that closes the volume.

SECTION 1

POLITICAL AND POLICY MEDIA SPACES