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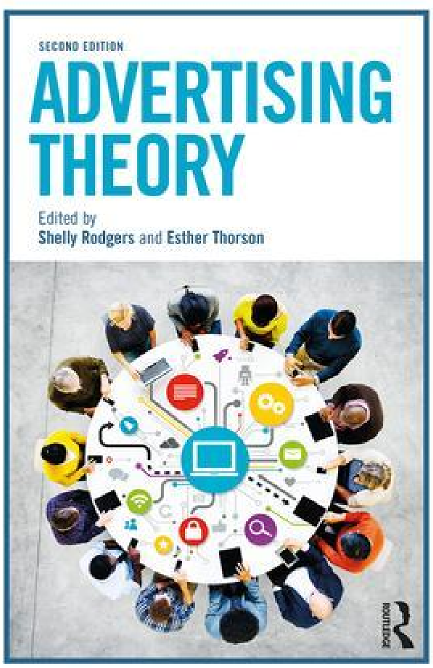

This chapter is excerpted from

Advertising Theory

by Shelly Rodgers, Esther Thorson.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING THEORY

IIntroduction

Theories are the building blocks of any discipline. Our theories direct our research and even our thinking about a topic. We use theory to help explain observed phenomena, and to predict what might happen in the future. Yet all too often, we don't give sufficient thought to where our theories should come from and what they should include.

The vast majority of advertising research and theory stems from persuasion models (Pasadeos, Phelps, & Edison, 2008; Kim, Hayes, Avant, & Reid, 2014; Dahlén & Rosengren, 2016). In fact, the prior edition of this book utilized McGuire's (1973) persuasion matrix as the organizing structure for its chapters (Rodgers & Thorson, 2012).

McGuire's model combines Lasswell's (1948) model of the communication process with steps in the persuasion process reflected in Hierarchy of Effects models (see Barry, 1987). The focus on communication and persuasion perfectly maps onto common definitions of advertising such as: "Advertising is paid, mass-mediated attempt to persuade" (O'Guinn, Allen, Semenik, & Scheinbaum, 2014, p. 7), and "Advertising is a paid, mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future" (Richards & Curran, 2002, p. 74). However, recently a number of authors have begun to recognize the limitation of these definitions and models and how it may impact the development of the field (Nan & Faber, 2004; Faber, Duff, & Nan, 2012; Dahlén & Rosengren, 2016).

Definitions and models that focus exclusively on just some aspects of advertising leave other potentially important elements under-appreciated or ignored. The goal of this updated chapter is to illuminate some of these key concepts that deserve greater attention in the development of advertising theory. With this update, we add research that is beginning to address what makes advertising, as a field, distinct. We also discuss how insights from other fields (e.g., neuroscience) are being applied to advertising problems, and how changes in technology and media use can be seen in terms of advertising theory.

Is Advertising Different from Communication?

By relying on Lasswell's components of the communication process, McGuire fails to distinguish advertising from other forms of communication. In previous works, we have pointed out how recognizing the ways advertising differs from other forms of communication can help identify important areas for theory building in advertising (Nan & Faber, 2004; Faber et al., 2012).

Academic disciplines can be subdivided into two categories—level fields and variable fields (Paisley, 1972). Level fields are disciplines that develop around an interest in a specific level of analysis. Anthropology (societal or cultural level), sociology (group level), and psychology (individual level) are examples. Level fields tend to be the first divisions in science (Berelson, 1963).

Variable fields develop later when a significant number of researchers become interested in a specific phenomenon. Political science, archeology, linguistics, education, marketing, journalism, and advertising are examples of variable fields. Level fields tend to develop earlier and center on specific levels of analysis. Thus, it is within these disciplines that both methodological techniques and basic theories generally develop (Paisley, 1972). The goal of these fields is to provide theoretical generalizations that are true across a wide variety of situations. This high level of generalizability or broad application makes these theories of great value in science (Reynolds, 1971).

Unlike level fields, theory building in variable fields is much narrower, stressing the particular variables thought to be most critical in the specific phenomenon being studied (Paisley, 1972). Rather than desiring to create theories with broad abstract generalizations, variable fields should be concerned with identifying the boundary conditions where a broader theory might not be true. To do this, a variable field needs to recognize what makes it unique and to identify the variables that it can contribute to testing, building, and qualifying broad theories developed in level fields.

As a variable field, centered around advertising, it is important to consider what makes us distinct from other fields. These distinctive elements are crucial to consider as we test and build broader theories developed in level fields (e.g., psychology, anthropology). Nan and Faber (2004) suggested four such variables for advertising to consider in theory building. These were consumer skepticism, repetition, message coordination, and clutter.

Any persuasive message, by its very intent to persuade, may arouse psychological reactance, which is a motivation to reject the persuasion attempt through source and/or message derogation (Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Dillard & Shen, 2005).

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Advertising messages are particularly likely to induce reactance and skepticism, not only because of the perception of their overt persuasive intent but also because that intent is often seen to be self-serving (i.e., achieving greater profits). Consumer skepticism toward advertising has been well documented from the skepticism toward a persuasive message may be seen as a type of psychological reactance, leading to questioning the motives of, and claims made by, the persuaders (see Boush, Friestad, & Rose, 1994). 1930s onward (Calfee & Ringold, 1994; Obermiller, Spangenberg, & MacLachlan, 2005; Matthes & Wonneberger, 2014)

Skeptical consumers can dismiss the arguments made in an advertisement by ignoring them, generating counterarguments, and/or engaging in source derogation. This skeptical perspective is important to consider in developing advertising theory and when using advertising to test broader theories. For example, it may point to the importance of perceived veracity or truthfulness as a moderator or outcome variable. Additionally, several recent studies have begun to explore the conceptualization of trust in advertising (Soh, Reid, & King, 2009; Hung, Li, & Tse, 2011; Cho, Huh, & Faber, 2014). Trust may be particularly important for newer forms of consumer communication such as social media, consumer reviews, YouTube postings, and pass-along advertising through email and Twitter. As people become more aware of things like paid reviews, sponsored social media influencers, and purchased followers and bots, trust and skepticism will be increasingly important to understand.

While skepticism of advertising is somewhat universal, the degree to which people are skeptical is influenced by cultural values and the role and practice of advertising in different countries. U.S. consumers were found to be more skeptical of advertising than people in East Asian countries (La Ferle & Lee, 2003). In another study, Ukrainian consumers, who recently experienced a reintroduction to Western-style advertising after years of communism, were significantly more skeptical of advertising than either U.S. or Western European consumers (Lutchyn, Faber, Dell'Orto, & Duff, 2010). This was attributed both to exposure to advertising for questionable products (e.g., "get rich quick" schemes) and to disappointment from unfulfilled economic expectations.

Another important component for advertising theory suggested by Nan and Faber (2004) is repetition. Research has typically shown that repetition creates an inverted "U"-shaped relationship with advertising and brand preference. Initially, repetition leads to increased preference (i.e., ad wear-in), but additional repetitions ultimately create more negative (wear-out) effects (Batra & Ray, 1986). However, repetition may have a more linear effect on variables such as brand knowledge and trust. For example, repetition has been found to increase belief in a message (Hasher, Goldstein, & Toppino, 1977), and may, thus, help to overcome skepticism. For a recent review of effects of repetition in advertising research, see Schmidt and Eisend (2015).

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Repetition is also important in helping advertisers to develop associations between brands and specific attributes, benefits, or emotions in the minds of consumers. Coca-Cola, for example, has tried to associate its brand with warmth and happiness. It does this using traditional advertising, viral videos, non-traditional advertising, and even studies released to the media about the state of happiness today.

People generally do not automatically associate two ideas the first time they appear together; it is only with repetition that two ideas will become associated. Associative learning theory provides useful concepts to incorporate into advertising theories. Additionally, given the potential impact of repetition, it may be useful to reassess advertising theories developed on the basis of single-message exposure to see how repetition might moderate these relationships.

Advertising repetition is concerned with the presentation of the same ad message repeatedly. A related, but equally neglected, characteristic of advertising is message coordination. Message coordination is rooted in the idea of Integrated Marketing Communication (Keller, 2001; MunozLeiva, Porcu, & Barrio-García, 2015), and Integrated Brand Promotions (O'Guinn, Allen, Semenik, & Scheinbaum, 2014). In a coordinated communications program, one main message is communicated through different content and/or media to achieve unified short-term and/or longterm communication goals.

The fact that consumers are exposed to coordinated brand messages through different communication options raises the question of how such experiences might affect brand beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Extant research expounds on the impact of exposure to coordinated messages on brand memory (Keller, 2001). While multiple exposures through different channels may facilitate brand learning, exposure to different brand information through various communication options may also lead to memory interference. There is a limited, albeit growing, body of research on the implications of message coordination for advertising effectiveness (Edell & Keller, 1989; Stammerjohan, Wood, Chang, & Thorson, 2005; Kim, Yoon, & Lee, 2010). However, such knowledge can be critical in testing theory and making it relevant to the actual practice of advertising. For example, Kumar and Gupta (2016) proposed that if consumers interact with a brand in more communication channels, their engagement level with the brand will deepen.

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The importance of repetition and message coordination in advertising highlights the major distinction between viewing advertising as a solitary, stand-alone stimulus versus seeing it as an ongoing campaign. Campaign outcomes are generally assessed over a protracted time frame (generally from about three months to a year or longer). Academic research in advertising, however, often looks only at a single exposure to a single stimulus. To make advertising theory more relevant to advertising practice, we need to consider multiple exposures over an extended time period and from various sources. Advertising's focus on extended, coordinated campaigns rather than single messages can be one of its greatest contributions to the testing of basic social science theories.

A final feature that characterizes advertising to a much greater degree than other forms of communication is clutter. Scholars have recognized clutter as a fundamental aspect of the media environment for contemporary advertising (Ha & McCann, 2008). Clutter can come from the editorial content an advertisement is embedded in, advertisements from competing brands, or other advertisements in general. Because of individuals' limited capacity for information processing, clutter generally decreases advertising effectiveness by reducing attention and memory (Webb & Ray, 1979). Clutter may also induce negative affect due to psychological reactance (Clee & Wicklund, 1980), which may lead to lower evaluations of the ad.

Clutter is not a desirable characteristic, but some types of clutter are less detrimental than others. Kent (1993) distinguishes between noncompetitive clutter (i.e., ads from noncompeting brands shown in close proximity) and competitive clutter (i.e., ads from competing brands appearing together). Compared to noncompetitive clutter, competitive clutter leads to more memory interference and less favorable brand evaluation (Keller, 1991). This is one reason why many advertisers require that their media placement contracts state that no competitive brands will be advertised within a given amount of space (pages) or time from when their ad is run. However, some of these same advertisers, in an effort to better reach their target audience, place their ads in a media context related to their product category (e.g., a food ad in a cooking website). More research on these potentially competing effects could tell us a lot about the relative strength of each. While these four characteristics—consumer skepticism, repetition, message coordination, and clutter—are important attributes of advertising and could contribute a great deal to theory development, our previous review found that they are rarely included in the advertising research published in the top U.S. advertising/marketing journals (Nan & Faber, 2004) and self-brand connections (Escalas, 2004).

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Advertising as Persuasion

Defining advertising as persuasive communication has led to an overemphasis on attitude change theories. For instance, attitude change has been examined extensively and attitude theories are dominant in the advertising literature (Pasadeos, Phelps, & Kim, 1998; Kim, Hayes, Avant, & Reid, 2014). However, the advertising literature also points to critical limitations on the ability of advertising to change attitudes or behaviors. In a classic article, Ehrenberg (1974) claimed that advertising is generally a weak force and its role is primarily reinforcing rather than persuading. He makes an important distinction between stimulating primary versus selective demand. Primary demand refers to the total sales of all brands in a given product or service category (e.g., sales of all cars) while secondary or selective demand refers to the sales of a specific brand within that category (e.g., sales of Toyota cars). Except for the introduction of a new product category, very little advertising is directed at stimulating primary demand (Berkowitz, Kerin, Hartley, & Rudelius, 1992), and total advertising expenditures do little to affect total category sales for mature categories (Albion & Farris, 1981; Broadbent, 2008). A good example is the "Got Milk" campaign, which despite being incredibly popular, well remembered, extremely well liked, and the winner of numerous advertising awards, failed to reverse the declining consumption of milk (Marketing News, 1998; O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2009). Instead, what Ehrenberg argues is that advertising typically influences selective demand for a specific brand at the expense of competing brands. Most consumers have a few different brands that they will purchase over the course of an extended period of time (Ehrenberg, 1974; Jones, 1995). Research using panel data has found that the greatest impact on brand selection comes from seeing an ad for that brand relatively near to the actual time of purchase (Jones, 1995; Ephron, 1997). This isn't to say that advertising doesn't build awareness, knowledge, and interest in a brand (it certainly can and does); rather, the more common and important purpose of advertising is to serve as a short-term reminder to help reinforce brand loyalty and influence purchase behavior. To the degree this is true, it would seem that we should place a greater focus on theories of salience, reinforcement, and habit in developing advertising theory and less emphasis on attitude change. Theories regarding habit may be particularly useful in explaining consumer behaviors since many frequent purchases occur relatively automatically (Dijksterhuis, Smith, van Baaren, & Wigboldus, 2005). Think about buying a loaf of bread when you are at the grocery store. Most likely, you can walk directly to the bread aisle and reach out and grab the brand you usually purchase. You don't need to consciously think about this purchase unless your usual brand is sold out or has been moved.

Thus, habits allow us to act relatively automatically while freeing up time to let us think about other things. Recent research has suggested that habits are triggered by environmental cues and that advertising may be able to help build the association between a brand and relevant environmental cues (Lutchyn & Faber, 2016).

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Compared to attitude, other outcome variables have also been underexamined in advertising research and theory. These include items such as attention, comprehension (and miscomprehension), and delayed retention. To his credit, McGuire includes all of these elements as steps along the way to attitude change. Furthermore, he indicates that each step can be influenced by communication variables in different ways. The problem in using this as a guide to developing advertising theory, however, is that it leads us to using those variables as steps toward achieving attitude change and ignoring other outcomes.

For example, most advertising studies take place in laboratory settings where people are asked to attend to ads or media content while other activities are artificially limited. This allows control of extraneous influences and focuses just on the variables of interest. Although this is beneficial in research, assuming attention has already been achieved en route to attitude change, it does not allow for an understanding of what happens when these prior steps are not achieved. While research occasionally examines factors that enhance attention and comprehension, little consideration is given to the impact of ads that are unattended or miscomprehended. This is true despite the fact that lack of attention is likely to be the norm rather than the exception with advertising.

Think back over the past 24 hours and try to remember all of the ads you encountered. Now think about how often you remember an ad but aren't sure what brand it was for. These simple exercises should make us realize how often inattention and poor comprehension occur in advertising. Indeed, studies show that in now-common situations such as multitasking with media, memory for ads decreases (Jeong & Hwang, 2016). As the use of media continues to change, theory building in advertising needs to give greater consideration to what occurs when ads are not fully processed or consciously recalled.

We exist in a complex environment and our senses are constantly bombarded with sights, sounds, smells, and physical sensations, all competing for limited attentional resources. As a result, consumers must continually screen their environments, actively attending to some stimuli while ignoring many others.

The first goal of advertising is to gain attention. This can involve the use of attention-getting devices (e.g., animation, personalization) or obtrusive methods (e.g., pop-over ads). However, consumers have different goals that often include actively avoiding ads. Thus, most often, we are either passively exposed to ads while browsing or multitasking, or actively trying to ignore ads. Advertising research and theory need to incorporate consideration of what happens when ads in our environment are actively avoided.

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One potentially important outcome variable that might be affected is memory accessibility. Memory accessibility refers to the ease and speed at which one thinks of a specific response when prompted by a cue. For example, what brands come to mind when you think of "brands of cereal?" The first brands you think of have high top-of-mind (T-O-M) awareness, which is a way to measure how well brands rank in the minds of consumers. Companies that focus on brand awareness tend to also rank highly in "Top of Mind Awareness" (O'Guinn et al., 2009).

In some purchasing situations, high T-O-M awareness is essential. For example, if you are craving French fries, you are likely to only select from among those restaurants that immediately come to mind (e.g., McDonald's, Burger King, Five Guys). This is different from going to buy frozen French fries at the supermarket where you can look at all of the brands on display and not have to recall a specific brand from memory. However, even in the grocery store, high T-O-M awareness can be important because brand names we can recall easily are perceived to be more popular and desirable (O'Guinn et al., 2009).

The primary way advertising enhances T-O-M awareness is through repetition. One relatively unknown insurance company quickly achieved high T-O-M awareness by using a trade character (a duck) that keeps repeating its name throughout the commercial (Aflac). Jingles, slogans, and alliterative sounds are also successful methods for increasing brand awareness. Greater understanding of memory and linguistics may help advertising theorists to postulate other successful strategies for enhancing awareness.

Implicit Versus Explicit Memory

Most advertising theory has been concerned with explicit memory. Explicit memory involves retrieval of previously encoded information through conscious recollection. However, explicit memory is not the only kind of memory. An implicit memory is a memory that is not consciously retrieved but may still exert effects on thinking and behavior. Recall and recognition, the most common memory measures in advertising research, both assess explicit memory. Implicit memory, on the other hand, is typically measured by how accessible information is when people are given an ambiguous stimulus. For example, one common implicit memory task asks people to complete a word fragment by filling in the missing letters (Tulving, Schacter, & Stark, 1982). Several different words could complete the task and the word the participant selects is considered the word that is most accessible from memory.

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Research has shown that implicit memory is affected by the advertising or brands people have either frequently or recently encountered, even though they may have no conscious memory of this exposure (Shapiro & Krishnan, 2001; Yang, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Dinu, & Arpan, 2006). Research in consumer behavior has indicated that implicit memory for advertisements can enhance attitude toward the ad (Yoo, 2009), and implicit memory of a brand name increases the likelihood that the product will be included in a consideration set (Shapiro, 1999). In one interesting demonstration of the impact of memory due to incidental exposure (search: "Derren Brown Advertising Task on YouTube"; https://youtu. be/YQXe1CokWqQ), Derren Brown appears to show that an advertising campaign developed by a professional copywriter and art director is affected by what they happen to pass on their way to the office because it makes those images more easily accessible in memory.

Other research has shown that well-developed associations may be able to be activated by brand exposure even when it occurs without conscious awareness. In one study, participants were exposed to either the Apple or IBM logo at a speed so rapid they could not consciously tell that these logos had appeared. Afterwards, people completed a creativity test; those exposed to the Apple logo performed better than those exposed to the IBM logo (Fitzsimons, Chartrand, & Fitzsimons, 2008). However, this only worked for those who already had the association that Apple was a creative brand.

Hence, it may be important to learn what ad situations and elements affect implicit memory. In some cases, brief partial exposure may be sufficient to affect memory, but in others it may not. Take a can of CocaCola as an example. Now imagine the can covered with a white sheet of paper so that all that can be seen is a small portion of the upper part of the can. Despite the fact that most of the object cannot be seen, most people recognize the brand very quickly. This is because Coke uses a distinctive logo, color, and packaging, and people see them repeatedly over time. Seeing even a tiny part of this image is enough to make the brand highly accessible in memory. Yet, for a less recognizable or distinctive brand this may not be the case. More extensive theory and research may help to determine what advertising elements influence various types of memory and how each form of memory affects brand behavior. Research on issues like these would help to build a more complete theory of advertising.

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Not every brief or incidental exposure to advertising is good for a brand. When people are given the task of finding specific information from articles on a news website, they actively avoid ads on that page and are unable to recall or recognize these ads (Duff, 2009; Duff & Faber, 2011). However, unlike many implicit memory studies, here the impact of avoiding ads is detrimental to the brand. Despite having no explicit recognition of the ads, when asked to rate the brands, people in these studies have more negative attitudes toward the brands in previously ignored ads than those who were not exposed to the ads.

Additionally, in subsequent exposures, they take longer to notice the previously exposed brands than people who hadn't avoided the ads. The difference here is the audience member's goal during ad exposure (Duff, 2009). When we actively avoid or inhibit ads to better achieve a desired task, we associate that inhibition with the ad and this can lead to negative effects for the brand. This phenomenon is known as "distracter devaluation." These findings help to inform theory and also have practical implications for ad placement cost models such as cost-per-thousand (CPM) in which each potential exposure is counted regardless of what the consumer is doing during that exposure.

Conclusion

Most current advertising theories tend to focus on the effects of advertising on attitude change. Certainly, there is a place for developing such theories. However, as we have tried to point out, this over-emphasis ignores many of the most common and important aspects of advertising. Greater focus on theories examining advertising awareness, brand associations, memory accessibility, reinforcement, brand loyalty, and brand engagement would help us to more adequately address the outcomes of advertising exposure. Additionally, there is often a significant delay between ad exposure and the time of actual brand choice (cf. Baker & Lutz, 2000). Therefore, advertising theories need to incorporate factors affecting information retrieval along with those influencing the encoding and processing of information. Future theory development should also take into account the unique attributes of advertising. In doing so, we can enhance advertising's relevance to other social science disciplines while also addressing the key aspects of the phenomena advertising scholars study. We have pointed out some of these elements, but others also exist. As the practice of advertising changes, some of the important dimensions that characterize it are likely to change as well. User-generated content, social media, and narrower targeting may make it worthwhile for us to look more toward interpersonal communication theories and diffusion of information for ideas.

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For example, thinking about how behavioral targeting of ads may affect people who know they are being targeted, Summers, Smith, and Reczek (2016) looked at how ads may be perceived by the audience as social labels. Advances in neuroscience and brain physiology are also likely to enhance our knowledge and, therefore, theories of advertising (cf. Koenigs & Tranel, 2008; Ohme, Reykowska, Wiener, & Choromanska, 2009). Evolutionary psychology (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013) also provides a powerful theoretical lens to understand the social impact of advertising. Emerging areas affecting advertising such as search engine optimization, big data mining, and the Internet of Things may push us to incorporate more theories and research from fields such as computer and data science, engineering, and informatics. These are exciting times for the development of advertising theory, which provide rich opportunities for the creative integration of a wider range of different disciplines into the study of advertising

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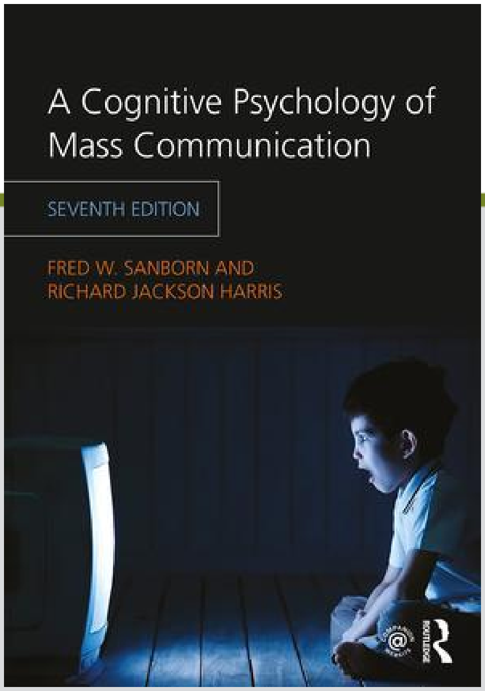
CHAPTER 2

Mass Communication in Our Digital Society

The Changing Media Landscape



This chapter is excerpted from

A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

by Fred W. Sanborn, Richard Jackson Harris

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Q: Why did TV viewers in 2013 see images of the White House surrounded by terrorists accompanied by emergency alert audio stating, "this is not a test"?

A : Viewers were seeing a commercial for the fi lm Olympus has Fallen. The ad was so similar to a real Emergency Alert System warning that the Federal Communications Commission leveled millions of dollars' worth of fi nes against broadcasters such as NBCUniversal, Viacom, and ESPN who aired the ad (Wyatt, 2 014) .

Q: How much material is on the World Wide Web?

A : No one quite knows for sure. One 2017 estimate indicated that there were at least 4.8 billion indexed web pages, a number which excludes much of the activity on social media apps such as Twitter and Facebook ("The Size," 2017). In fact, the growth of the web has been so rapid that the number of available web addresses dwindled from more than one billion in 2006 to 117 million in 2010, forcing a new Internet protocol addressing system to be developed (Worthen & Tuna, 2011).

Q: How have mobile phones revolutionized developing countries?

A : Developing countries with poor infrastructure have found mobile phones much more reliable and attractive than traditional, wired phones and Internet service. In numerous countries like Botswana, Rwanda, Ivory Coast, Paraguay, and Venezuela, mobile phone users outnumbered conventional phone users by 2000 (Romero, 2000). In 2016, one study (Manyika, Lund, Singer, White, & Berry, 2 016) estimated that 80% of people in developing countries had access to mobile phones, and many of them were using apps on those devices as a means to pay for goods and services. One such app, M-P esa, has taken the place of cash and traditional banking services for many in the developing world.

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In 1969, a young news reporter from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was sent to cover the Vietnam War. Not being very experienced or knowledgeable about what he was observing, he led off his fi rst televised report of an American attack on a Vietcong stronghold with, "My God! It's just like watching television" (Bogart, 1980).

In 2001, 13-y ear-old Jason Lind of Torrington, CT, was hospitalized with second- and third-degree burns aft er he and a friend poured gasoline on his feet and legs and set him on fi re, in imitation of a stunt seen on MTV's popular show Jackass . In the wake of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, Edgar M. Welch of Salisbury, NC, drove 350 miles to a pizza restaurant in Washington, DC. Once there, he fi red an assault rifl e. Although he didn't hit anyone, Welch said he was taking it upon himself to investigate a child sex- slave ring allegedly connected to Hillary Clinton. Welch believed this false conspiracy as a result of fake news stories that were circulating on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. "I just wanted to do some good and went about it the wrong way," Welch later said (Goldman, 2016 , ¶2).

In different ways, these examples suggest the main theme of this book: that our experience with media is a major way that we acquire knowledge about the world. How we act on this knowledge then has consequences in terms of attitudes and behavior. We may call this a cognitive approach to mass communication because the emphasis is on the way that our minds create knowledge, a mental reality, about the world constructed from our experience with the media. Th is mental reality then becomes the basis for developing our attitudes and motivating our behaviors and thus has a great impact on our lives. Instead of the media being a more or less accurate reflection of some external reality, it has become the reality against which the real world is compared. Th e media view of the world has become, in many cases, more real than the real world itself!

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Prevalence of Mass Communication

Mass communication in the form of print media has been with us almost since Gutenberg's invention of movable type and the printing press in 1456. However, the nature of mass communication, indeed of life in general, was radically changed in the twentieth century by the rapid penetration of electronic media, starting with radio in the 1920s, followed by television in the 1950s, video and cable technology in the 1980s, the Internet in the 1990s, and social media since 2000. Television in particular has transformed the day- to- day life of more people in the last 60 or 70 years than has perhaps any invention in human history. Radio and print media have been greatly changed, though by no means replaced, by TV as well. Computer- mediated communications are well on their way (if not already there) in eclipsing television in transforming society.

Americans spend more time watching television than doing anything else except working and sleeping, though Internet use is catching up fast, especially among youth (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015 ; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010 ; Nielsen Company, 2016). Th e lines between Internet and television are also increasingly blurred, with many receiving a large portion of their television content via online streaming services. Nevertheless, every week residents of the United States spend about 15– 30 of their average 39 hours of free time in front of a screen watching television content, making TV by far the most popular leisure activity (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015 ; Nielsen Company, 2016 ; Roberts, 2000). All other sources of leisure, such as spending time with friends, helping others, reading books, playing sports, and taking vacations, lag far behind. Besides changing the way we spend our time, media have also revolutionized the way we think and the way we view the world. Th e Internet and its various computer- mediated communication modes are currently revolutionizing our lives.

The many effects of media on our perception and our cognition are particular emphases of this book. Th e media are not only the magic windows through which we view the world, but also the doors through which ideas enter our minds as we interact with them.

Media are far more than mere conduits of knowledge, although that role is not a trivial one. We have come a long way from Gutenberg to the millions of newspapers, magazines, television channels, radio stations, and websites in the world today. To prepare to look at the eff ects of all of this, in this chapter we introduce the concept of mass communication and look at our use of the media from a cognitive psychological perspective.

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Today no place on earth is beyond the reach of mass media. For political reasons South Africa was for a long time the last large nation without TV, holding out until 1976 (Mutz, Roberts, & van Vuuren, 1993) . Th e remote island nations of Cook Islands (1989), Fiji (1995), and St. Helena (1995) were among the last nations to welcome TV and the Internet (Wheeler, 2001), and the isolated mountainous Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan may have been the very last to receive television and the Internet, finally becoming wired to both in 1999.

In the 1970s, a unique study was done in Canada to assess the eff ects of the introduction of television. Three towns in interior eastern British Columbia were very similar except for the fact that one ("Multitel") received several Canadian and U.S. TV channels, another ("Unitel") received only one channel, and the third, because of its particular isolated valley location, received no television signals ("Notel"). Th is study compared children and adults in the three towns before and aft er television was fi nally introduced to Notel. For example, children's creativity scores were higher before TV in Notel than in either (1) the other towns before TV or (2) any of the three towns aft er TV. See Macbeth (1 996) for a summary of the fi ndings and Williams (1 986) for a collection of papers reporting the results of this research in more detail. For a similar though more recent examination in a smaller place, see Charlton, Gunter, and Hannan (2002) for a study of the eff ects of the introduction of television to the remote South Atlantic island of St. Helena in 1995. Th ese will probably be the last studies of that sort which can ever be done because no such TV- less (or Internet-less) places still exist.

What Is Mass Communication?

What makes mass communication "mass"? First, unlike interpersonal communication, the audience of mass communication is large and anonymous, and oft en very heterogeneous (Wright, 1 986) . Groups of individuals can be targeted, but only with limited precision. Second, large audiences are pursued using a linear process by which communication sources (like a TV network) originate a message that is then communicated to masses of people (like a TV audience) (DeFleur, 2010). Third, communication sources are institutional and organizational (Wright, 1 986) . Some communication sources such as television networks, movie studios, newspaper chains, wire services, or the conglomerates that own such businesses (and their accompanying websites), are among the largest and wealthiest private corporations. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the basic economic function of most media in most nations is to attract and hold as large an audience as possible for the advertisers (Wright, 1986). In one way or another, advertising pays a very high percentage of the costs of newspapers, magazines, local TV and radio stations, television networks and cable channels, and the

Internet. Even public television and government-subsidized networks like the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), or the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) are increasingly dependent on commercial revenues. For a discussion of the differences between interpersonal communication, mass communication, and mediated communication, see Close- up 1.1.

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.1 THE BLURRY LINES OF MODERN COMMUNICATION: INTERPERSONAL, MASS, OR MEDIATED MESSAGES?

As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, one of the goals of mass communication is to reach a large audience. In contrast, interpersonal communication has traditionally been thought of as communication between two people, like friends having a conversation (Perloff, 2015a), or sometimes as between one person communicating to a group, like a professor delivering an interactive lecture to a class; the key to interpersonal communication seems to be interaction. In addition, interpersonal communication has been customarily thought of as taking place face-t o-f ace. But what about celebrities who have huge social media followings like Katy Perry with almost 100 million Twitter followers in 2017 (Twitter, 2017)? Or politicians like Barack Obama and Donald Trump, who also have tens of millions who follow their every tweet? Such individuals frequently use their social media platforms to reach a vast audience. In fact, that is often the point, as when Beyoncé chose Instagram to announce her new album in 2013 (Sisario, 2013) and her pregnancy in 2017 (Coscarelli, 2017), knowing that the messages would get lots of buzz, including coverage by more traditional media outlets.

In a thoughtful examination of the intersection of old and new media forms, Perloff (2015a) argues that interpersonal communication now may include one person using social media to deliver a message to others, if there is some interaction among individuals. Mass communication, then, can be thought of as when messages emanate from traditional organizations (such as cable news channels) that have established avenues for reaching a large audience. Finally, mediated communication involves "…any social or technological procedure or device that is used for the selection, transmission, and reception of information" (Altheide, 2013, as cited in Perloff, 2015a). This kind of communication would include most, if not all, forms of social media (which might also be considered interpersonal mediated communication if social interaction occurs). Confused? So are some scholars. Perloff also points out that not all communication researchers agree on such distinctions and that things get increasingly cloudy when one considers that a great deal of mediated communication (i.e., social media) includes information that originates with mass communication outlets (i.e., reports from traditional sources such as newspapers, cable news channels, and TV networks).

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Despite some within the industry espousing high- sounding rhetoric about serving the public, the bottom line of commercial mass media is money, which comes from advertisers at rates directly determined by the audience size and composition. Th e size of the audience in turn determines the content. Th us, there is tremendous pressure for media to be as entertaining as possible to as many people as possible. Th is imperative to entertain also holds for non- entertainment content like news, sports, or advertising. All of this is not to say that editors and programmers are not concerned about responsibly meeting the needs of the public. In many cases, they are, but such needs must necessarily be considered within the constraints of the economic realities of the media industry. If there is no audience, there is no money to support even the best programming. Th is is true at both the national and local levels, with local media outlets oft en as concerned as, or more so than, national sources about ratings, circulation, and the number of Internet "hits."

Oft en, economic pressures, and sometimes political and ideological ones as well, infl uence the content of media. For example, magazines that accept tobacco advertisements print fewer stories about the health risks of smoking than those that have no cigarette ads (Lee & Solomon, 1 991; Strasburger & Wilson, 2 002) . Similarly, the ABC television network, which is owned by Disney, has killed news stories refl ecting negatively on Disney theme parks (Steyer, 2002). Indeed, with more and more media mergers (as when cable company Comcast purchased broadcast company NBC, which had previously purchased movie company Universal Studios), it has become increasingly diffi cult for media consumers to know how the corporate sources of their media may (or may not) be infl uencing media content.

Incidentally, media content standards change: 60 years ago we did not hear the words "damn," "hell," or even "pregnant," although we might have heard "nigger," "wetback," "jap," and other highly infl ammatory ethnic slurs in the early days of radio or TV. Real or feared reaction from advertisers is another subtle source of self-c ensorship. Television networks and stations are loath to risk off ending those who pay the bills for their livelihood. Advertisers occasionally threaten to withdraw their ads in protest. In 1979 General Electric was unhappy with ABC's Barbara Walters's plans to interview Jane Fonda about her antinuclear activism and pulled their ads in protest. However, ABC still aired the interview. Advertisers with many products to sell (and accompanying ad budgets) may hold infl uence that many of us don't realize. According to Gloria Steinem, co- founder of Ms. magazine, Procter and Gamble (maker of many, many familiar household consumer products) even issued an edict to publishers of women's magazines that "its products were not to be placed in any issue that included any material on gun control, abortion, the occult, cults, or the disparagement of religion" (Steinem, 1990 , p. 26).

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Concern over public reaction may be another source of self- censorship. All but one U.S. commercial network once refused to run an anti-s moking public service announcement (PSA) that showed a fetus smoking a cigarette in the womb. In 2005 all U.S. networks but the History Channel refused to run a PSA by the United Nations Mine Agency, which showed suburban school girls playing soccer when a landmine suddenly blows up, followed by screaming and a man carrying his daughter's lifeless body, and then a dark screen with the words "If there were land mines here, would you stand for them anywhere?" (Huus, 2005). I n addition to its mass nature, there is also "communication" in mass communication.

In all communication there is a reciprocity that necessitates some kind of response from the audience. Even though the media user, especially the TV viewer, is oft en characterized as extremely passive, mindlessly absorbing the program content, such a picture is far from accurate. Although the meaning of a particular program certainly depends on the content of that program, it also depends on what is in the mind and experience of the viewer. A TV movie dealing with rape will have a very diff erent eff ect on, indeed, a diff erent meaning for, a viewer who has herself been a rape victim than for someone else with no such personal experience. A violent pornographic website may incite one man to sexual violence because of the way his mind interprets and interacts with the content of the video, whereas another man who sees the same video may be repulsed by it, showing no sexual arousal or antisocial behavioral response (see Close- up 1.2 for a discussion of movie ratings related to sex and violence).

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.2 THE MPAA RATINGS: DOES SEX OR VIOLENCE CARRY MORE WEIGHT?

Ever since their introduction in 1968, the Motion Picture Association of America's (MPAA) ratings for movies have been controversial. The ratings have usually been made by 10 to 13 people on a board called the Classifi cation and Ratings Administration. Although the raters are said to be parents, their identities are typically kept secret. The chair is the only publicly known member, and he or she hires all the others (Dick, 2006). Over time, there have been some adjustments to the ratings categories, most notably the addition of the PG-1 3 category in 1984 and the replacement of the pornography-t ainted label of X by NC-1 7 (no one under 17 admitted) in 1990. The ratings are made based on violence, sex, nudity, language, and thematic content, although the specifi c rating criteria have never been made public and are not always applied consistently. By 2000, over 60% of fi lms submitted were rated R, almost none NC-1 7, and very few G. Sometimes a rating is negotiable; a studio will appeal an R rating or remove or edit an offending scene to obtain the PG-1 3 rating. The latter rating is often considered the commercially most desirable, since it neither excludes anyone nor has the "kiddie movie" stigma of G and even PG movies. There is widespread belief than many fi lms that previously would have been R are now PG-1 3 and many PG fi lms would have been PG-1 3 some years ago.

One specific continuing controversy concerns the relative weighting of the different factors, particularly sex and violence. Although the MPAA denies it, there is good reason to believe that sexual content and language carry greater weight than violence. Indeed, many PG and even G movies contain considerable amounts of violence, though a partial nudity scene may earn a fi lm a PG- 13 rating. Leone (2002) provided some empirical support for this by fi nding that scenes present in an NC- 17 or unrated versions of a fi lm but removed from the commercially released R- rated version were more sexually explicit and graphic than they were violently explicit and graphic. Four times as many fi lms are rated NC- 17 for sex than for violence (Dick, 2006) and the amount of violent content allowed in PG- 13 rated movies appears to have grown over the past 15 years (Romer, Jamieson, & Jamieson, 2017).

In the fi nal analysis, however, parents must use the movie ratings as part of their own parental mediation. It is important to look at not just the rating but what it is for (most DVD boxes, parental websites, and some fi lm reviews give this information). There may be an occasional R-r ated movie you would want your 12-y ear-o ld to see and some PG-1 3 movies you wouldn't want your older child to see.

For additional discussion of MPAA ratings related to sex and violence, see Chapters 9 and 10 , including a discussion of the era before these ratings in Close- up 10.1.

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Th e nature of the media consumption experience must also be considered. Watching television, going to the movies, or listening to the radio may be done alone or in small groups. Using the Internet or reading a magazine are typically, though not always, solo activities. Th e social situation of who else is watching, listening, or reading and how they react greatly aff ects the media consumption experience. Consider the diff erence between watching an exciting ball game alone, with a group of friends, or with a group rooting for the other team. Your enjoyment and the level of fear you feel while watching a horror fi lm can be aff ected by whether someone who is watching with you shrieks in fun, cries in severe distress, laughs, or makes no obvious reaction at all (Zillmann & Weaver, 1 996) . In one study looking at anticipated enjoyment of watching diff erent types of movies with diff erent viewers, college students found watching a sexual R- rated movie with their parents was by far the most uncomfortable combination (Harris & Cook, 2 011) . Similarly, within families, television may either promote family harmony and interaction or be a divisive force, depending on how it is used (Bryant & Bryant, 2001).

The Media of Mass Communication

Th rough the years, various forms of media have emerged as technology has advanced in delivering mass communication. One distinction that is oft en made is print media (newspapers and magazines) versus electronic media (fi lm, radio, television, Internet). Another classifi cation is traditional (or "old," or "legacy") media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, and television versus "new media," which is online, on- demand, and interactive (Giobbi, 2014). Of course, these days such distinctions have become increasingly blurred, as when readers view a newspaper online and comment on an article or when television viewers live stream a show and comment on that program via Twitter. Now let us turn to how various forms of media have been used for the purposes of mass communication and how we tend to use those media.

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Newspapers

Arguably the earliest form of mass communication, newspapers, at least in a primitive form, began soon aft er the introduction of the printing press around 1450 (Giobbi, 2 014) . In the United States, the heyday of newspapers (in terms of prestige and revenue) was the mid to late twentieth century. However, the circulation of daily newspapers in the United States has been falling for many years, down from 62.3 million in 1990 to 46.2 million in 2010 (Pew Research Center, 2011). Since then, circulation has continued to drop on average 2–3 % per year (Pew Research Center, 2 016) . However, newspapers have seen growth in online readership, particularly with those who read content on mobile devices (Pew Research Center, 2016). Still, newspapers have also taken a hit in the past decade with decreased advertising revenue. Th is is especially true of the once- lucrative classifi ed advertising market, which has largely moved online with free website services such as Craigslist. Th is decreased revenue has resulted in fewer and fewer newspaper employees industry-w ide (Pew Research Center, 2016).

More than television or magazines, newspapers have a local identity and are the preeminent source for local news, advertising, and sports. In fact, sports sections tend to be the most read parts of newspapers. Even as the number of dailies continues to fall, the number of weekly newspapers keeps growing. Indeed, the largest decreases in circulation in the past few years have been primarily in big city daily papers (Pew Research Center, 2 011, 2 016) , some of which (e.g., Detroit Free Press, New Orleans Times- Picayune) began curtailing their print editions. In the United States, newspapers are almost totally regional, with the important exceptions of Th e New York Times, Th e Wall Street Journal, and USA Today, although large national papers are the rule in many nations (e.g., Guardian or Th e Times in the United Kingdom, Le Monde in France). In spite of their r egional nature, newspapers are becoming increasingly similar, a trend attributable to a consolidation of media ownership to fewer and fewer sources and especially to an increasing reliance by most newspapers on a few international wire services like Associated Press (AP), Reuters, and Agence France Presse (AFP) as news sources.

Demographically, groups who read more newspapers are generally those who watch the least TV: those who are older, White, better educated, and of a higher socioeconomic status. Newspaper readers like to keep up on the news. Th ey are more likely than nonreaders to also view TV and Internet news. Th ose who consume news usually use multiple sources; alternatively, those who do not read newspapers usually do not watch TV news either (Pew Research Center, 2011 , 2016).

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Magazines

Print magazines are the most narrowly targeted of the traditional media, having become increasingly so aft er an earlier period of popular general- interest magazines (e.g., Life , Look , Collier's , Saturday Evening Post) ended in the 1960s. An estimated 11,000 magazines were published in the United States in the mid- 1990s (Wilson & Wilson, 1 998) , mostly devoted to special interests. However, traditional national weekly news magazines were suff ering; by 2011 U.S. News and World Report had abandoned its print version, and Newsweek was sold by Th e Washington Post Company for $1 and the assumption of its debt (Pew Research Center, 2011) .

Magazines combine newspapers' permanence and opportunity for greater in-d epth coverage with television's photographic appeal. Reading magazines is primarily an adult activity, although there are children's magazines such as Boys' Life , Sports Illustrated for Kids , Teen Vogue, and National Geographic Kids that are useful in developing children's reading and print media habits. For girls, certain magazines such as Seventeen and, later, Glamour , Vogue , and Cosmopolitan are an important part of the female adolescent experience and are major contributors to the socialization of girls as women in Western society (see Chapter 5). Th e emphasis in these kinds of magazines tends to be on fashion, attractiveness, romance, and sex. Th ere really are no comparable gender- role socializing magazines for boys, although many of them read Sports Illustrated for Kids .

Radio

One of the fi rst electronic forms of media, radio, rapidly permeated society in the 1920s, much as television would do 30 years later. Th e current network TV format of prime- time entertainment programming was borrowed from radio, which later reorganized into a primarily music- and- news format in the 1950s aft er TV co- opted its programming agenda. More than television, radio is highly age- and interest-s egmented (e.g., top 40, classical, country & western, Christian, oldies rock, easy listening, news and talk). Increasingly, the lines between online and terrestrial radio are another area of media that are blurred. One 2017 U.S. study reported that 53% of respondents listen to online or streaming radio programming (such as Pandora and iHeartRadio) at least once a week. However, traditional AM/ FM radio was still the most widely used audio medium (Infi nite Dial, 2017).

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Worldwide, radio is the most available mass communication medium. It is crucially important in isolated societies because it depends neither on literacy nor electricity nor the purchase of a relatively expensive television set, computer, or mobile phone. Although there are premium satellite and streaming Internet radio services available, most radio receivers are cheap and run well on batteries. Compared to television or print media, programming is very inexpensive to produce, especially talk and music formats. Talk radio, of course, can be anything from ennobling to dangerous. One of the most shocking abuses of radio was the Rwandan station that broadcast calls for genocide and fomented hysteria, culminating in the disastrous Hutu– Tutsi civil war and genocide of 1994 to 1995, chillingly recreated in the 2004 fi lm Hotel Rwanda . However, more oft en radio serves as an important part of the social fabric, tying diverse constituencies together; even that infamous Rwandan radio station later starting broadcasting a soap opera designed to encourage dialogue between Hutu and Tutsi (Phillips, Urbany, & Reynolds, 2008). See Close- up 1.3 for an example of the role of radio in a country sorely lacking in modern infrastructure.

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.3   RADIO IN NAMIBIA

Sparsely populated and largely undeveloped, the southern African nation of Namibia was plundered under German and, later, South African colonial rule before its independence in 1990. Its only large city is its capital, Windhoek (pop. 150,000). According to Wresch (1996), Namibia radio had a call-i n talk show, The Chat Show , from 9 to 10 a.m., in which listeners called in with specifi c complaints about treatment from a business, the government, or the police. The announcer played a humanistic therapist kind of role, listening to and summarizing the caller's concerns. After the show ended, station personnel would call the government agencies or businesses who received complaints. They recorded the offi cials' responses to the complaints and played those back, along with the original complaint, when the second installment of the show aired three hours later. However, in 2009, the state- run Namibian Broadcasting Corporation decided to pull the plug on The Chat Show , a move that was panned by several human rights groups.

In rural Namibia, radio serves an even broader communicative function. In areas with virtually no phones or mail service, one can relay messages through the local radio station, which will broadcast (free of charge) that a particular listener should, for example, call his grandmother or pick up the textbook for his correspondence course. Even if the intended recipient is not listening, someone who knows him or her usually is and the message is delivered (Wresch, 1996).

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Television

A lthough experimental sets appeared in the late 1930s, television was essentially unknown by the general public at the end of World War II. Whereas only 0.02% of U.S. homes had TV in 1946, that fi gure rose to 9% by 1950 and 23.5% by 1951. By 1962, TV ownership had exploded, with 90% of U.S. homes having a set. By 1980, televisions were found in about 98% of U.S. homes, a fi gure that has remained constant since then; today, there are an average of 2.3 TV sets in each American home, a number that has declined slightly in recent years, most likely due to the ability to view TV programming on devices other than televisions (Andreasen, 1 994; Nielsen Company, 2 016; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2017).

A lthough most of the television programming in the early years was by networks or local stations, the rapid growth of cable and satellite technology in the 1980s and 1990s greatly expanded the off erings, with a corresponding decline in the broadcast network market share. Associated with television sets were video cassette recorders (VCRs), which were in 98% of U.S. households of families with children by 1999 (Jordan, 2001). However, in the new millennium, an increasingly popular technology, the digital video recorder (DVR), was present in 50% of households by 2016 (Nielsen Company, 2016). Also by 2016, Americans were increasingly "time shift ing" their television viewing by accessing TV content online via the Internet or through cable video- on- demand services (Nielsen Company, 2 016) . Th is has led some viewers to engage in "binge viewing," watching entire seasons of some shows in one sitting (Jurgensen, 2 012) . It has also led to some measurement challenges for companies like Nielsen that track TV viewership (Steel, 2 016) .

Although access to computers and mobile devices is high even among young children, a 2013 U.S. study found that TV is still a dominant medium in that age group, with 58% of children under 8 watching television at least once a day, most for around an hour a day (Common Sense Media, 2013). By 2008, 60% of U.S. adolescents and 30% of preschoolers (26% of those under 2) had television sets in their bedrooms, and 76% of American households paid for a television subscription through cable, satellite, or telephone companies (Carlsson-P aige, 2 008; Horrigan & Duggan, 2 015; Kotler, Wright, & Huston, 2001 ; Nielsen Company, 2016). Figures for European children and families tend to be slightly lower overall but vary greatly by country (Austin, Barnard, & Hutcheon, 2015 ; d'Haenens, 2001).

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Th e television phenomenon is almost as pervasive in developing countries as it is in the Western world. Even the worst urban slums in developing countries sprout a myriad of television antennas and satellite dishes. Th e number of TV sets per 1,000 people worldwide doubled from 117 to 234 between 1981 and 1997 ("Th e Faustian Bargain," 1997), although they are hardly distributed evenly across the globe. For example, in 1996 there were 906 TVs per 1,000 people in the Netherlands and 850 per 1,000 in the United States, but only 5 per 1,000 in Bangladesh and 9 in Kenya (Wresch, 1 996) . Time spent viewing television also varies by region, with North Americans watching the most, and African and Asian countries watching the least (Austin, Barnard, & Hutcheon, 2015). Nevertheless, this worldwide television reach has led to a global audience for some events. For instance, audiences as large as three billion people tune in for sporting events such as the Olympic Games and World Cup soccer fi nals on TV. See Close-u p 1.4 for a look at an anthropologist's views of the stages of a society's acceptance of TV.

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.4 STAGES OF TELEVISION IMPACT

Drawing on his studies of television use in several Brazilian communities with varying lengths of exposure to television, cultural anthropologist Kottak (2009) identifi ed fi ve stages of societal interaction with television. In Stage 1 the medium is new and strange and attracts people with glued gazes— no matter what the content is. "The medium rather than the message is the mesmerizer" (Kottak, 2009 , p. 139). Stage 2 is usually the next 10 to 15 years, when people begin to interpret TV's messages and selectively accept or reject them. Due to its high status, television ownership displays conspicuous consumption and becomes a source of privileged information. In Stage 3, the community is saturated with television, and the length of exposure increases. By Stage 4, adults have spent their whole lives in a culture permeated by television, whose lifelong impact on members of society is taken for granted. Finally, Stage 5 occurs with the widespread appearance of cable TV and video capability. At this stage, there is much more individual control of TV, in terms of both time shifting and abundant selection of programming. Marketing is increasingly directed at homogeneous segments, not to the mass audience.

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Th e bulk of mass communication research has studied television, because we spend so much time watching it. Adults in the United States watch about fi ve hours of television per day (not counting the TV content they may be accessing via mobile devices) (Nielsen Company, 2016). A TV set is turned on in the average U.S. household between 7 and 8 hours each day, with the typical child age 8 to 18 watching over 2.5 hours per day. Th roughout childhood, it is estimated that the average U.S. child sees nearly 15,000 sexual references, innuendoes, and jokes per year, with only 1.1% of those dealing with abstinence, birth control, pregnancy, or sexually transmitted diseases (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010 ; Strasburger & Donnerstein, 1999). By the time a child reaches the age of 18, he or she has seen an estimated 200,000 televised acts of violence (Huston, Wright, Rice, Kerkman, & St. Peters, 1990).

Group Differences

Th e amount of television viewing changes through the lifespan. It rises sharply between ages 2 and 4. It then levels off until about age 8, rising again by age 12. It then starts to fall during the high school and college years and young adulthood, when people are busy with romance, studying, working, listening to music, and parenting young children. Th ere is another rise, however, in the older adult years aft er one's children are grown. In fact, seniors watch more television than most groups. Other groups who watch television more than average are women, poor people, and ethnic minorities (Nielsen Company, 2 016; Roberts, 2000). It is interesting that many of the groups who watch the most television are the same groups that are the most underrepresented in TV programming, where characters are disproportionately middle class, White, male, professional, and affl uent. We return to this issue in Chapter 5 .

Time- of- Day Differences

T elevision viewing also changes sharply throughout the day. Typically the largest network TV audience is during "prime time"— 8 to 11 p.m. Eastern and Pacifi c times in North America (7 to 10 p.m. Central and Mountain). Th ese are the hours that earn the highest advertising charges and the greatest investment and innovation in programming. Th e most obvious pinnacle of such eff orts may be seen in the prime-t ime "sweeps weeks" in February, May, July, and November, in which Nielsen audience size over a four-w eek span is used to calculate advertising charges for the next several months. Th ese are the weeks when the networks outdo themselves presenting blockbuster movies, specials, and landmark episodes of top- rated series.

Video

Starting from Sony's slow introduction of $2,000- plus Betamax machines into the U.S. market in 1975 (fi ve years later, less than 1% of U.S. homes owned a VCR), growth took off in the early 1980s until, by 1995, 85% of U.S. homes owned a VCR (Hull, 1 995) . Th ese days, the presence of VCRs has dropped greatly, most likely having been replaced with DVD players, DVRs, and streaming Internet television and movie viewing (Nielsen Company, 2010 a, 2016).

Although bitterly opposed to videotape at fi rst, Hollywood studios later forged a very symbiotic and lucrative relationship between theater movies and home video. VHS and, more recently, DVD and streaming rentals and sales have brought huge additional income and interest to the fi lm industry. Th e widespread renting of movies has raised some new issues, however. Although the U.S. fi lm rating system (G, PG, PG- 13, R, NC- 17) can have some eff ect in theaters, it has had very little impact at DVD rental kiosks, or online, where 13- year- olds generally have no trouble accessing an R- rated movie. More recently, increasing numbers of fi lms have been produced solely for DVD or online distribution, or released in "unrated" or "director's cut" versions, bypassing both theaters and the need to have any rating at all. Such distribution channels have been an additional boon to home movie viewing, since they are generally marketed with additional "special features," such as deleted scenes, interviews with stars and directors, and background information on fi lming. A growing trend is the tendency to view movies via cable on-d emand and online streaming services. Indeed, this trend has largely been responsible for the weakened presence or demise of brick- and- mortar video rental stores such as Blockbuster (Kehr, 2011).

One segment of television still distressed by video technology is advertising. Time shift ing, which enables viewers to record TV shows and watch them later while fast- forwarding through the ads, has spurred new creativity in the ad industry in an attempt to produce ads that viewers will be reluctant to fast-f orward through. Th ere are also increasing attempts to create commercials whose highlights can be noticed while fast- forwarding. It is no accident that the ads have come to look more like the programming, using artsy montage and cinema v é rit é techniques. In addition, on- demand services oft en prevent skipping ads or require an extra fee for doing so.

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Some television markets have grown exponentially in recent years. China is now by far the largest TV market, with well over 350 million homes having access (174 million having cable), reaching most of its 1.3 billion population. China moved from only 18 million people having access to TV in 1975 to 1 billion 20 years later, putting it fi rst in the world in the number of TV viewers. In contrast, the United States had only 98 million homes with TV, and third-p lace India 79 million (Madden, 2 010; Th omas, 2003). Th e rapid growth of markets in developing countries will have far-r eaching advertising implications in future decades.

An important emphasis in future media research, as indeed in all social science research, will be on cross- cultural dimensions. Virtually every society in the world is becoming more multicultural, in part due to the increased ease of access to online information. We are all exposed to media from many diff erent national and cultural sources, and it is necessary to understand how diff erent cultures perceive the same message diff erently. Useful collections of papers on comparative and cross-c ultural media research include: Esser, Bernal- Marino, and Smith (2016), Kamalipour (1999), Korzenny and Ting- Toomey (1992), and Kottak (2009). It is a common experience in much of the world to be able to watch a foreign language television program or fi lm that has been dubbed or subtitled in the local language. For a discussion of how people process subtitles, see Close-u p 1.5.

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.5 READING, IGNORING, OR NOT HAVING TO DEAL WITH SUBTITLES

In much of the world a considerable amount of television originates in a place where a different language is spoken. Thus, the program is either dubbed or subtitled in the local language. Dubbing allows one to hear one's own language, though it may not match the lips of the characters on the screen. However, reading subtitles, while simultaneously processing the visual content and ignoring the sound track in an unfamiliar language, involves a set of cognitive skills that requires some practice to do effectively (Harris, Borror, Koblitz, Pearn, & Rohrer, 2017 ; Perego, del Missier, Porta, & Mosconi, 2010). Belgian psychologist d'Ydewalle and his colleagues (e.g., de Bruycker & d'Ydewalle, 2003 ; d'Ydewalle & de Bruycker, 2007 ; d'Ydewalle, Praet, Verfaillie, & Van Rensbergen, 1991) have measured eye movements as indicators of people's relative attention to subtitles and visual content. They found that people look at subtitles in their own language and may fi nd them distracting in cases in which they know both the languages involved (Lavaur & Bairstow, 2011). Belgians are very familiar with reading subtitles; most of their movies and much television is foreign and subtitled, sometimes bilingually in two subtitled parallel lines in French and Dutch (the country's two languages).

Movies and TV shows with subtitles can even be used to learn a language (d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999 ; Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999). For example, the Italian newsmagazine L'Espresso promoted itself by giving away "MovieTalk" CD- ROMs of old Beverly Hills 90210 and Columbo episodes to use for English lessons. In addition to the original voicing, users had the option of pressing another button to hear a slower, less slurred, and more precise voiceover (Stanley, 2000).

The United States is unusual among nations in having virtually no subtitled television available. Presumably because so much domestic programming, almost all in English, is available, U.S. audiences have never had to become used to reading subtitles. Subtitled foreign fi lms are shown, but with rare exceptions only as art fi lms to highly specialized audiences. The conventional industry wisdom, accurate or not, is that American audiences will not watch foreign language subtitled fi lms or television. This largely untested assumption may exclude much high- quality and potentially popular television from American viewers.

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Changing technology is accelerating fundamental structural changes in television. Broadcast network TV (e.g., ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, in the United States), which accounted for over 90% of the audience as recently as 1978, has slowly but surely seen its audience decline as proliferating cable and online channels have vastly increased the number of off erings available. Th e psychological impact of all these choices is less clear; it is not obvious how receiving 500 channels will change one's TV viewing. VCRs, DVRs, on-d emand cable services, and the Internet have greatly increased audience control in program selection and timing, as well as introducing the option of at least partially avoiding commercials. Although the days of the mass audience are not over (top- rated broadcast network TV shows, especially live sports such as NFL football, remain a very widely shared experience), the movement in the direction of more precisely targeted audiences is probably unstoppable.

Other changes in television can be expected to grow. It is common now for TV viewers to watch their favorite shows across various platforms (televisions, smartphones, tablets), sometimes pausing programming on one device and resuming it later on another. Interactive TV projects allow viewers, for example, to press one button to see the original live feed and another to call up additional background information during newscasts or sports events. Pressing yet another button can bring up a close- up shot of an athlete during a ball game, whereas another can provide an instant replay or start the game over. Increased opportunities for connecting one's computer, television, mobile phone, tablet, and music system together will continue to change the face of mass communication and further blur its distinctions from social media and entertainment.

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

Computer-Mediated Communication

Th e origins of what we think of today as "the Internet" can be traced to the Cold War. Concerned that a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union would cripple U.S. communications capabilities, computer scientists in the government and universities in the 1960s began working on a way for computers to communicate across distances (Hafner & Lyon, 2 006) . When e-m ail and the World Wide Web became available to average citizens in the 1990s, an information revolution began, and we are still seeing that revolution unfold before our eyes. Indeed, it is progressively more diffi cult to draw clear boundaries of what is included in mass communication when it comes to computer-m ediated communication (CMC). Many varieties of CMC, such as the Internet, World Wide Web, instant messaging, e- mail, streaming content, social networks, and blogs, have characteristics of both traditional print and broadcast media. Th e boundaries between mass and personal media are also growing increasingly fuzzy (see Close-u p 1.1). Personal messages or videos may be sent to mass audiences or posted on the Internet. Movies may be viewed on television and, increasingly, be sent like a message to others. With the advent of online media, entertainment, most notably fi lm, is looking like and is handled more like mass communication.

Th e capacity for very wide circulation of material on the Internet allows it to share many characteristics with traditional print and electronic media. When large documents are released to the public, they are routinely posted fi rst on the Internet. A major gaff e on camera by a politician or movie star is watched and re-w atched on YouTube for the next several days. Whenever people want more information about anything, they go online and Google the topic or check Wikipedia.

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Another capability which computers bring to mass communication is the ability to digitally alter photographs. With modern technology, photographs can be so totally changed as to be completely unrecognizable. Th ey can also become associated online with an article or story unrelated to their original context, a common technique of fake news (see C hapter 7) . Th e ethical boundaries are blurry here. Although few would have problems with digitally cropping a photo to remove irrelevant background, how about digitally composing a photo to put people together who never were in that particular place at the same time? No doubt a national leader would object to an altered photo that showed her shaking hands with a terrorist, but what about altering a student group shot for a university recruiting brochure to make it more ethnically diverse than the original photo was? Th is actually was an issue at the University of Wisconsin-M adison, where an African American student was digitally pasted into a photo of a football crowd scene to make it more ethnically diverse (Boese, 2006 ; Jacobson, 2001). Is this misrepresentation in a recruiting brochure? Th e student was in fact a UWM student and could have been at that football game, although in fact he wasn't (see Wheeler, 2 002, for a careful discussion of this issue).

Do such alterations matter? Yes, they do. Experimental participants acting as newspaper editors reviewing a story about a hurricane saw a picture of either a village before the hurricane hit or the same devastated village aft er. Although there was no mention of personal injuries or death in the story, about a third of those who had seen the "aft er" picture falsely remembered the story as having mentioned injury or death, compared to only 9% of those seeing the "before" photo (Garry, Strange, Bernstein, & Kinzett, 2007). Doctored photos can also aff ect one's memory for public events widely covered in the news. Sacchi, Agnoli, and Loft us (2 007) showed Italians either the original photo of a lone protester facing a line of tanks in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protest in Beijing or a doctored photo of the same with masses of spectators watching. Participants in the study were also shown one of a comparable pair of photos of a 2003 Rome protest of the Iraq War. People who saw the doctored photos remembered the events as involving more people with more confrontation and damage to persons and property.

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As with print and broadcast media, the theories and research methodologies of mass communication (see C hapter 2) have increasingly been used to study CMC (Mundorf & Laird, 2 002) . However, because boundaries between traditional and online media are now blurred, media scholars are working to adapt. Specifi cally, Perloff (2015a) points out that in many instances interpersonal communication is now also mass communication. For example, it is common for viewers, watching a live broadcast of a television show, to tweet their reactions to friends and followers while also monitoring the reactions of others. More importantly, platforms such as Facebook and Twitter sometimes have become news sources when users post videos detailing newsworthy incidents such as police brutality (Victor & McPhate, 2016). Indeed, "in an age of citizen journalism and Twitter, receivers have become senders" (Perloff , 2015a , p. 532).

Walther, Gay, and Hancock (2005) discuss fi ve qualities of the Internet that are particularly worthy of study and theory. Th e multimedia aspect of the Internet is not unique to CMC but is a central part of it. CMC stimuli may contain any or all of the following: written words, spoken words, pictures, sounds, video, and social interaction of the user with other users. How these various channels are processed in parallel, or as task-s witching, off ers a major research challenge, made all the more daunting by the fact that users oft en are doing other, non- CMC activities at the same time!

Hypertextuality is perhaps the most unique characteristic of the Internet. Th e availability of multiple links to many other sites and stimulus sources makes the Internet perhaps the most profoundly nonlinear of the mass media. How people choose to navigate through the various links, how websites can be designed to facilitate navigation in the most effi cient way, and how people mentally combine information from the various sources are all hugely important topics that need much further study. It is not clear how the nonlinear nature of most websites either facilitates or inhibits learning. Some research has suggested that print format or linear web designs lead to better factual learning but nonlinear web formats contribute to a better understanding of connections among facts (Eveland, Cortese, Park, & Dunwoody, 2004 ; Eveland & Dunwoody, 2 001, 2 002) .

Interactivity also is not unique to the Internet but is a major attribute of many of its uses. Whether it is talking to friends through instant messaging, mobile phone texting, Facebook postings, or shopping online, interaction with the media is far more fundamental in CMC than with the traditional print or broadcast media. How do electronic conversations diff er from face-t o-f ace or written ones? How are experiences like shopping, information seeking, auctioning, or even visiting, diff erent, perhaps even fundamentally so, on the Internet?

A fourth characteristic, packet switching, has received the least behavioral research attention, according to Walther and colleagues (2005). Th is has to do with the fact that the Internet sends digital bits, encoded with identity and routing information, as well as content, over multiple paths, such that it can be retrieved in multiple ways through multiple links. Th is is useful, for example, in keeping access open in the face of hardware or infrastructure crashes or in subverting authoritarian attempts to block Internet access. However, it poses challenges in other ways, such as making it diffi cult to block child pornography, online predation, cyber- bullying, fake news, and electronic piracy. Generally the packet switching technology is well ahead of the regulatory process and oft en far ahead of the behavioral research in understanding how such processes work.

Finally, the characteristic of synchronicity is important. Four types of CMC synchronicity (Strasburger & Wilson, 2002) are a part of the world all children grow up with now, though only a short time ago none of them even existed. One- to- one asynchronous communication includes traditional e-m ail. Improved technology now allows the sending of visual, voice, video, and all sorts of written material via e-m ail. Many- to-m any asynchronous communication involves electronic bulletin boards and distribution lists, in which a receiver signs up for a service or logs on to a program to access messages from a particular group, usually focused on some specifi c topic. If a user must seek out a site in order to asynchronously access information, it may involve one-t o- one, many- to- one, or one- to- many source–r eceiver relationships, most oft en involving visiting a website. Also, synchronous communication includes texting, instant messaging, and the use of video services like Skype. Th ese are very popular forms of communication among preteens and teens but are also increasingly used by most segments of society. However, even the line between synchronous and asynchronous communication is blurry now, in that social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook allow users to either follow posts in real time or catch up later. Whether one is communicating by CMC in a synchronous or asynchronous manner can aff ect the way people process information and perform a cognitive problem- solving task (M ü nzer & Borg, 2008).

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Th ere are interesting age diff erences in the use of CMC. Although the stereotypes of the adolescent computer geek and the technologically clueless older adult still exist, increasing numbers of older adults are eff ectively using the Internet. One survey found that 67% of those in the United States over 65 used the Internet (compared with 90% overall). However, most of those seniors indicated that they were not that confi dent in using technology, particularly newer devices (Anderson & Perrin, 2017). Older adults are more likely to use the Internet for information seeking on topics of interest to them, as well as frequent use for shopping and auctions (Hilt & Lipschultz, 2004). Th ey are less likely than younger groups to use CMC for social media purposes (Anderson & Perrin, 2017).

Not surprisingly, the young are especially frequent users of CMC, with 99% of those 18–2 9 saying that they use the Internet (Pew Research Center, 2 017) . Among teens 13–1 7, 92% said they go online every day, 24% of whom indicated they do so "almost constantly," many with the aid of smartphones (Pew Research Center, 2 015) . Th e most common uses of the Internet among teens are for texting, social networking, and gaming (Pew Research Center, 2015). By 2003, teens aged 13 to 14 reported spending more time per week online (16.7 hours) than watching television (13.6 hours) (Weaver, 2 003b) . Oft en the Internet becomes the primary media source of information.

Teens and young adults also make huge use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. According to Facebook's own statistics, as of 2017, there were over 1 billion daily users and almost 2 billion monthly users of the site worldwide (Facebook, 2 017) . Another survey found that 76% of Americans (65% of those over 18) reported using at least one social networking website (Perrin, 2015). In fact, according to at least one estimate, by 2010, Americans spent more time on social networking sites than in any other online activity (Nielsen Company, 2010b). Interestingly, implicit rules have evolved for behavior on these sites (Walther & Bunz, 2005). Th ere is also a correlation between the amount of time adolescents spend on these sites and the likelihood that their social well-b eing will be aff ected by information received from the site (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2 006) . On sites like Facebook, there are multiple cues (photos, wall postings, profi le, etc.) to give information about a user, and we are only beginning to understand how people combine that information to form impressions of others in the absence of traditional interpersonal face- to- face cues (Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, & Chamorro-P remuzic, 2 012; Lee, 2 007; Walther, Van de Heide, Kim, Westerman, & Tong 2 008) . Th e ways that one's personality aff ects one's level and quality of self- disclosure on social networking sites has also received some preliminary study (Schouten, Valkenburg, & Peter, 2007). Still, the psychological ramifi cations of social networking sites, including cyber- bullying (Barlett & Gentile, 2012), are only beginning to be understood.

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Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

There is disagreement in the literature about whether Internet use is associated with social isolation or loneliness (Cole, 2000 ; Kraut et al., 1 998; McKenna & Bargh, 1 999; McKenna & Seidman, 2 005; Sheldon, Abad, & Hinsch, 2 011) . Overall, Internet use is typically more social than television viewing, in part due to social options like instant messaging and Facebook. At least one study found that young adults were happier following instant messaging communication than following comparable face-t o-f ace interaction (Green et al., 2 005) . There is also evidence that attempting to present oneself as extraverted on a blog, compared to writing private text documents, leads people to actually see themselves as more extraverted (Gonzales & Hancock, 2 008) . Compared to face-t o-f ace (FTF) interactions of two people, those who instant messaged each other drew interpersonal perceptions about the other person equally well, and even clearer social roles of dominant and submissive emerged in the CMC condition. These findings suggest that CMC is neither totally lacking in social cues, nor is it the "great equalizer" in terms of status (Boucher, Hancock, & Dunham, 2008). The strongest evidence for social isolation comes in the minority of the population who spend a very large number of hours online, perhaps due to a preference for online interaction fostering compulsive Internet use, which in turn results in negative social outcomes (Caplan, 2 005) . Effects of Internet use on social isolation are much weaker or nonexistent for moderate users. See Close-u p 1.6 for more about the issues of making friends online.

❖ CLOSE- UP 1.6 MAKING PERSONAL CONNECTIONS ONLINE

Are relationships that are formed online, through e- mail, chat rooms, or social networking sites, inherently shallow, impersonal, and even hostile and dangerous? Or, do they allow a liberation from the confi nes of physical locality and superfi cial aspects like physical appearance? In an early survey study of online relationships of people in a variety of newsgroups and Usenet hierarchies, 60% of respondents reported making some sort of personal relationship online (Parks, 1996). Women were somewhat more likely than men to have such electronic friends, though age and marital status did not matter. Almost all had corresponded with their friend via e-m ail and about a third each had used phone, letter, or face- to- face contact as well. These relationships developed in many of the same ways that traditional relationships do.

In the realm of romantic relationships, a 2016 survey revealed that 15% of adults reported having used online dating sites, while 41% of adults in the United States indicated that they knew someone who had used an online dating website. About 29% said that they knew someone who was in a long-t erm relationship that started on such a website, a fi gure that had doubled since 2006 (Smith, 2016).

In a study comparing self- disclosure online and face- to- face, McKenna and Seidman (2005) found that people shared more of their true selves online than face-t o-f ace and liked an Internet partner more than a face- to- face partner. Of course, individual differences are important. People more strongly prefer online relationships if they are socially anxious or lonely or if their circumstances of current roles or relationships constrain face- to- face encounters. Far from keeping people from interacting personally, computers may thus sometimes enhance the development of friendships, free of the usual constraints of the fi rst reactions to physical appearance and personal mannerisms.

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Numerous questions about CMC remain. Why do people e- mail, text, or use Facebook, and how do these newer media complement or replace traditional communication means like the telephone and writing (Dimmick, 2 003; Ramirez, Dimmick, Feaster, & Lin, 2 008) ? What is gained psychologically from instant messaging, texting, blogging, tweeting, and using Facebook? How do people search websites and evaluate the worth of the information they fi nd? How do they make friends online?

Media Applications

Chapter 1: Media Literacy as a Compass for the Media Landscape

W hen considering all that has been discussed in this chapter regarding the prevalence and power of media, additional questions may arise. For example, how do we navigate the increasingly complex world of mass communication? How can we discern real news from fake news? How do we arm children with the tools they need to deal with violent or sexual media they may encounter? One well- known movie mogul may have the answer. In a 2004 interview, Star Wars fi lmmaker George Lucas aptly suggested the great need for media education:

W hen people talk to me about the digital divide, I think of it not being so much about who has access to what technology as who knows how to create and express themselves in this new language of the screen. If students aren't taught the language of sound and images, shouldn't they be considered as illiterate as if they left college without being able to read or write? Unfortunately, most learning institutions fi nd that idea very diffi cult to swallow. They consider the various forms of non- written communication as some type of therapy or art. (Media deconstruction, 2012 , p. 2)

Th ere is a critical need for greater media literacy in modern society. Media literacy may be defi ned as a set of critical thinking skills involving the "ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and process media" (Steyer, 2 002, p. 195). Its goals are to teach people to use media consciously and selectively and to think critically about media messages and images. Media literacy may be conceptualized in diff erent ways, including as a public policy issue, an educational curriculum issue, a responsible parenting issue, or as an area of scholarly inquiry from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (Christ & Potter, 1 998) . See Potter (2 001) for a comprehensive formulation of media literacy, Potter (2004) for a more theoretical approach, and Jeong, Cho, and Hwang (2012) for a meta- analysis of media literacy intervention programs

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Consistent with recent theory and research on mass communication, the contemporary emphasis in media literacy is more on the empowerment of consumers rather than on protection from some monolithic, pernicious infl uence. Realistically, no one can be completely shielded from media and popular culture, nor should we want to be; media are omnipresent, enduring, and oft en very useful and rewarding parts of our lives. Rather, we must learn to live not only with traditional print and electronic media, but also with all the rapidly evolving new technologies of mass, personal, and computer- mediated communication, especially the Internet, social media, and other aspects of cyberspace. In all of this, the purpose of media literacy is to give us more control over our interpretations of media (Potter, 2001).

Scholars identify diff erent types of media literacy. Meyrowitz (1 998) , for example, suggests three. Media content literacy focuses on characters, themes, information, behaviors, and so on. Media grammar literacy looks at learning the features of each particular medium. For example, as children mature and experience more TV, they acquire the knowledge of how to interpret the cuts, fades, dissolves, and general montage techniques used in the editing of fi lm or TV. Very young children may misinterpret things that they see on television because they fail to understand these techniques. Th e third type of literacy, medium literacy , involves learning the specifi c conventions, modalities, and processing requirements for using each particular medium.

Different media require the use of diff erent sensory modalities and parts of the brain. Specifi c conventions of visual literacy require diff erent skills and understanding than what is required for understanding purely verbal media (Messaris, 1994 , 1997 , 1998). For example, television to some extent and especially some computer-m ediated communications like hypertext on the Internet are notoriously nonlinear in character, in contrast to radio and print.

Media literacy interventions can have two broad categories of intended outcomes: media-relevant outcomes and behavior- relevant outcomes (Jeong, Cho, & Hwang, 2012). Media-relevant outcomes focus on knowledge, particularly on understanding that there are oft en motives behind media. One example of media- relevant outcomes is knowing the persuasive intent of ads and the techniques that advertising uses to persuade (Austin, Pinkleton, Hust, & Cohen, 2 005; Buijzen, 2007).

Another media- relevant outcome is infl uence, understanding that media aff ect audiences in a variety of ways, from cultivating world beliefs to changing attitudes to teaching behaviors (Duran, Yousman, Walsh, & Longshore, 2008). Th e fi nal media- relevant outcome is the outcome of realism, referring to the understanding that media represent, to varying degrees, factual and/ or social reality (Austin, Pinkleton, & Funabiki, 2 007) .

Behavior- relevant outcomes include understanding the consequences of performing a behavior or holding particular attitudes about it, for example, knowing that accepting the assumptions of a certain type of political ad could lead to voting against one's own interest (Banerjee & Greene, 2 006, 2 007) . Th ese types of outcomes also include perceptions of one's own self-e ffi cacy (perceived ability to perform some behavior) and the perception of the behaviors of others in regard to media (Austin et al. , 2005).

Overall, media literacy interventions have been quite successful in a number of areas such as teaching about topics of violence (Cantor & Wilson, 2003 ; Scharrer, 2006 ; Webb, Martin, Afi fi , & Kraus, 2010), body image and sexuality (Allen, d'Alessio, Emmers, & Gebhardt, 1 996; Richardson, Paxton, & Th omson, 2 009; Wilksch & Wade, 2009 ; Yamamiya, Cash, Melnyk, Posavec, & Posavec, 2005), advertising (Livingstone & Helsper, 2 006) , news (Loth, 2012), and health promotion (Bergsma & Carney, 2 008) . Of course, the eff ectiveness of media literacy interventions is also aff ected by several moderating variables (Jeong, Cho, & Hwang, 2 012) . For example, the agent or source of the teaching and the setting in which it occurs may be factors. Th e source may be a teacher, a parent, a peer, or an author of a curriculum (Webel, Okonsky, Trompeta, & Holzemer, 2 010) . Also, the audience is important. A program for children of a certain age will be more eff ective if it deeply understands the cognitive processing skills and psychological needs of children of that age.

One of our hopes is that this book will help arm you with tools that will provide you with a greater media literacy. Th e words "arm" and "tools" in this section of the chapter may seem extreme, but the power of the media is immense. However, our ability to understand and eff ectively deal with the media is even more powerful. Th is book invites you to fully equip your media literacy toolbox.

Mass Communication in Our Digital Society

The Changing Media Landscape

Overview of the Book

This chapter has introduced mass communication from a psychological perspective. Th e next chapter explores, in some depth, the types of research methodologies that have been used to study media. It also looks at the various theoretical bases of research on mass communication, drawing on models from the diff erent disciplines of communication, psychology, and other fi elds. Th e general, though not exclusive, emphasis is on a cognitive perspective. Chapter 3 then examines several psychological constructs important in understanding our interaction with media. Th e overarching theme of how we construct meaning from media and how that constructed meaning becomes our perceived reality is introduced. Chapter 4 takes an in- depth look at how our emotions interact with media. Two particular areas of media are explored as they relate to emotion: sports and music. Media coverage can encourage competition, cooperation, gender- role development, hero worship, and the enjoyment of sports violence. Th e second area— music— is a very important medium, especially for teens and young adults. Th e uses and gratifi cations of music consumption are examined, as well as specifi c issues like the nature of content in lyrics and how popular music has (and has not) changed over the years.

Chapters 5 to 1 1 are topically organized to explore several specifi c content areas. C hapter 5 explores the issue of group portrayals in the media. Th e emphasis here is on how media portray various groups of people and what the eff ects of such presentations are. We will see how media stereotypes may become a perceived reality in the minds of the public, especially in cases when the viewer has limited life experience with members of a particular group. Are men and women portrayed in stereotyped fashion? What about families? What are the eff ects of such portrayals on the socialization process of children? Also examined are African Americans, whose depictions have been more carefully studied than any other group in the history of TV. Th e portrayals of Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Arabs, older adults, sexual minorities, people with physical and psychological disabilities, and those in various professions are also examined. What are the eff ects of unrealistic or even nonexistent portrayals on the public’s perception of these groups?

Chapter 6 examines the world as created by advertising. Advertising is a type of information to be processed—o ne very important way we learn about the world as well as its products. Techniques of persuasion are examined, focusing on various types of psychological appeals, especially as they involve persuasion through the creation of a new reality which then becomes real for the consumer (e.g., a reality full of danger in which one needs to buy locks and weapons, a reality in which most people are very thin and suntanned, a reality of status-c onscious people that one has to continually impress with one's dress and possessions). We particularly examine the cognitive view of advertising, with a focus on the psychology of deceptive advertising. Th e issue of advertising to children is treated in some depth, identifying some surprising and disturbing trends and connections. Next, the issue of subliminal advertising is discussed to see if it is possible to persuade viewers at subconscious levels through subtle messages or embedded sexual fi gures in art work. Finally, we look at the emergence of advertising in new places, such as classrooms, product placements, the Internet, and prescription drug advertising.

Chapter 7 examines how the media's coverage of news aff ects our understanding and attitudes about events in the world. News is perhaps the area in which people are most likely to believe that media merely refl ect and report the reality that is out there. Drawing especially on agenda- setting theory, we make the argument that such is not the case, that in fact news reporting is by no means such a reality transmission, but is necessarily a constructed interpretation of reality, oft en based more on what is newsworthy than on what is really important. Even by choosing what to cover and what not to cover, media are setting an agenda. Th is necessarily involves only a partial presentation of reality, but this partial reality becomes the basis of our knowledge about the world, even affecting foreign policy.

Chapter 8 continues to examine news by looking at how politicians manipulate media coverage to convey their own intended reality. As practically all of our information about political candidates and offi ceholders comes through the media, the importance of mass communication in this area can hardly be overstated. Such issues as image building and the construction of an electronic personality are discussed. Th e impact of televised candidate debates is examined. A fi nal topic in politics and media concerns the appeals and eff ects of political advertising, including the controversial negative or attack advertising. Types of appeals in political advertising and their eff ects on attitudes and voting behavior are examined.

Mass Communication in Our Digital Society

The Changing Media Landscape

Excerpted from A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication

In Chapter 9 we look at media violence, the most heavily researched issue in mass communication. Diff erent eff ects of television, movie, and video game violence are examined, including induced fear, modeling, catharsis, desensitization, and the cultivation of fear. In addition, we explore what types of people are drawn to enjoy violent media and what diff erent factors may interact with media violence to enhance or lessen its impact. Long-t erm eff ects of watching television violence and recent research on the eff ects of playing violent video games are also examined. Th e question of the eff ects on children of viewing violence turns out to be more complex than is frequently admitted by partisans on either side of this controversial issue, although the weight of the total body of research comes down strongly on the side of demonstrating negative eff ects. Th ese eff ects are substantial but usually in interaction with each other, suggesting a perspective looking at multiple risk and protective factors to predict negative eff ects of watching violence.

Chapter 10 examines the history, character, and eff ects of sexual content in media, looking at both mainstream and sexually explicit media. Th e creation and transmission of sexual values through media, as well as the socialization in regard to sexuality and the behavioral eff ects of media sex, are addressed. Research on the eff ects of sexual violence, both in pornography and in mainstream movies, is considered in some detail, pointing toward the conclusion that viewing sexual violence may be more damaging than viewing either sex or violence alone.

Turning in a more positive direction, the fi nal chapter, Chapter 11 , examines the media's prosocial uses, beginning with children's prosocial television. We start with a detailed look at Sesame Street, one of the longest-r unning and most evaluated TV shows in history. Other specifi cally prosocial TV shows are examined more briefl y. Th e second part of the chapter deals with explicit attempts to use media to teach skills or persuade people to change their attitudes or behaviors in a more health- or safety- oriented direction. One section discusses principles of social, as opposed to product, marketing. Th e media's role in public health marketing campaigns to increase prosocial behaviors like stopping smoking, increasing exercise, or wearing seatbelts is also considered. Public service announcements (PSAs) and other social marketing uses of media face greater obstacles in many ways than does commercial advertising. A second part of this section looks at the use of mainstream entertainment media for explicitly prosocial ends (entertainment education), a format very common in developing countries and increasingly so, albeit in more subtle ways, in Western countries.

Further Reading

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Useful Links

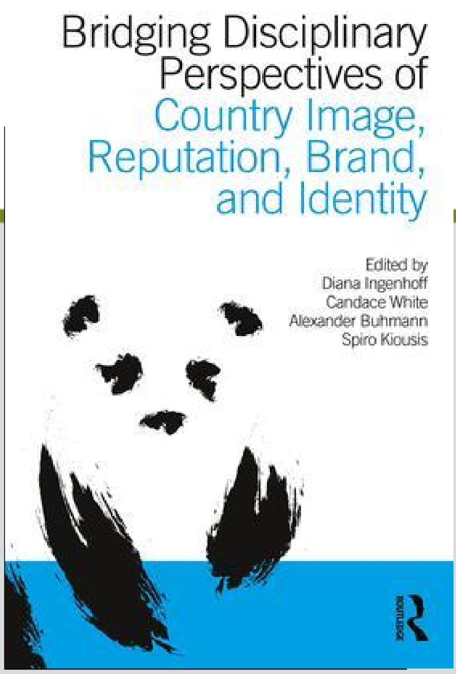
Center for Media Literacy: www.medialit.org/ Common Sense Media: www.commonsensemedia.org/ Federal Communications Commission: www.fcc.gov/ Motion Picture Association of America: www.mpaa.org/ National Association of Broadcasters: www.nab.org/ Pew Internet and American Life Project: www.pewinternet.org/ For more resources, please visit the companion website: www.routledge.com/cw/harris

CHAPTER

3

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

Charting the landscape in research on country image, reputation, brand, and identity: A trans-disciplinary overview



This chapter is excerpted from

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

by Diana Ingenhoff, Candace White, Alexander Buhmann, Spiro Kiousis

Learn more

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

Charting the landscape in research on country image, reputation, brand, and identity: A trans-disciplinary overview

Excerpted from Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation,

Introduction

In times of globalization, countries are increasingly observed by global media and publics. Countries are rated and compared according to their economic development, political stability, effectiveness, and morality of their national and international politics, and the attractiveness of their scenery and culture (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). The fact that perceptions of countries are both the cause and outcome of social and psychological processes that relate to a multitude of economic, cultural, and political effects has led to a plethora of studies in diverse academic disciplines such as psychology (e.g., Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlinVolpe, 2004; David & Bar-Tal, 2009; Huddy, 2001), business studies and marketing (e.g., Lu, Heslop, Thomas, & Kwan, 2016; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Suter, Borini,Floriani,DaSilva,&Polo,2018),sociology(cf.Werron,2014),politicalscience (e.g.,Leonard,Stead,& Smewing, 2002;Schatz&Levine,2010;Smith,1991),and communication science (e.g., Buhmann, 2016; Ingenhoff, 2017; Jones, Aelst, & Vliegenthart, 2013; Kiousis & Wu, 2008; Kunczik, 2002; Wanta, Golan, & Lee, 2004), focusing on the interrelated constructs of country image, reputation, brand, and identity. Among these disciplines, research about the formation and effects of these constructs remains largely segregated, and there is still a great need for more integrative efforts "that would merge the available knowledge across the various fields" (Papadopoulos, 2004, p. 47).

This handbook contributes to this much-needed integrative perspective for the study of perceptions about countries and their effects. By showing different disciplinary approaches and discussing how concepts developed from different scholarly perspectives can be applied to answer a broad range of research questions on country perceptions, this volume aims to contribute to the emergence of a more coherent and interdisciplinary field of study. To this end, the book aspires to begin to weave diverse transdisciplinary perspectives into some more overarching interdisciplinary conclusions (see Chapter 16).

In this book, we bring together the state of the art and recent research advances in studying the formation and effects of country perceptions from the fields of business studies (e.g., international marketing and destination branding), social psychology (e.g., intergroup relations, collective and national identity research), sociology and political science (e.g., international relations, political anthropology, sociology of competition, public diplomacy), and communication science (e.g., mass media, social networks and media effects research, international communication, public relations and communication management). Thus, the volume maps a diverse field of research that focuses on four interrelated constructs: country image, country reputation, country brand, and country identity.

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

Charting the landscape in research on country image, reputation, brand, and identity: A trans-disciplinary overview

Excerpted from Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation,

As we are bringing together a wide array of research perspectives on these constructs, the book places related research interests across disciplines in a common context. This interdisciplinarity imposes the challenge that we can hardly assume a shared or common understanding of these central constructs. As a first broad attempt to bridge disciplinary siloes and work toward common approaches for more cross-disciplinary work and integration of research findings and insights, this handbook is not intended to impose any standard, but to provide an inclusive picture. However, in opening the book, we may enter into this endeavor from a coarse conceptual grid, on which different constucts and research approaches may be placed (see Figure 1.1). This grid uses the primal perspectives (national versus international) and the constitutive processes (perception versus communication) as basic criteria of demarcation of constructs.

In this grid, country image and identity are understood primarily as "perceptive constructs," while country brand and reputation are approached as "constructs of representation," which are formed primarily within public communication processes. Furthermore, country image and reputation are seen to emerge first and foremost within the sphere of a country's international publics – image on the subjective level, reputation as an emergent public estimation, and both commonly conceptualized as attitudinal constructs. Thus, situated primarily "outside" the realm of the country or nation, these constructs can be distinguished from country identity and brand, which are, in turn, seen to be rooted more strongly in national self-conceptions.Besidesdrawingtheselinesofdemarcation,thesuggestedgridalso highlights that these four key constructsremainclosely andmutuallyinterrelatedas: (a) public communication is individually perceived and individual perceptions become part of public discourse; and (b) the constructed lines between the national and the international are permeable in both directions.

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

Charting the landscape in research on country image, reputation, brand, and identity: A trans-disciplinary overview

Excerpted from Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation,

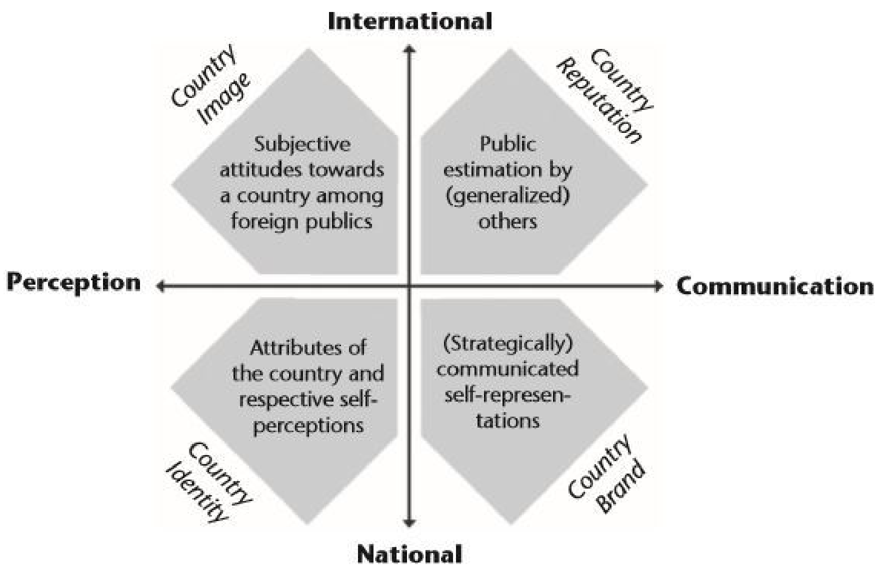


FIGURE 1.1 A coordinative framework of country image, reputation, brand, and identity (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015)

The chapters in this volume are written by scholars from around the world, bringing together perspectives from researchers working e.g., in Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States and with scholarly trajectories spanning four continents. With its interdisciplinary approach, the book is intended for a diverse set of readers. It addresses an international audience of scholars, librarians, postgraduate students, and upper-level undergraduate students a▮liated to study the broad range of disciplinary perspectives focused on in the volume. Furthermore, the book provides state-ofthe-art knowledge for professionals working in applied fields such as public diplomacy and international relations, international marketing or communications, and corporate diplomacy and advocacy, who are involved in practices such as country promotion, nation branding, public diplomacy, international agenda-setting, or conflict resolution.

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation, Brand, and Identity

Charting the landscape in research on country image, reputation, brand, and identity: A trans-disciplinary overview

Excerpted from Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives of Country Image Reputation,

Such practices are becoming more and more popular as political leaders as well as business managers are increasingly concerned about how their country is perceived by foreign publics and how it is portrayed in foreign mass media. Professional communication agencies are hired to employ techniques of nation branding by drawing on a country's unique identity to facilitate a better image and reputation abroad. In integrating different approaches and advancing the study of country perceptions as an interdisciplinary field, the book provides basic research that opens up new perspectives to practical challenges in public diplomacy, international relations, country promotion, branding, and related fields.

The Main Research Perspectives

The chapters of the book are divided into four main sections that lay out the major lines of research from the main disciplinary perspectives engaged in studying country image, reputation, brand, and identity: business studies, social psychology, sociology and political science, and communication science. The chapters within each of the four sections present recent advancements in researching the formation and effects of country perceptions by leading scholars from that particular discipline. The focus of all chapters across sections, however, also encompasses clear interdisciplinary elements, with authors discussing and commenting on the potential of transferring and adopting concepts and approaches across disciplines to answer current field-specific or overarching research questions related to the formation and effects of country perceptions. The book closes with an epilogue that comments on the state of the art in interdisciplinary research on the constitution and effects of country perceptions, discusses the potential and challenges of transferring knowledge across the different fields, and suggests points of departure for future research, specifically regarding interdisciplinary work.

Business Studies

From the perspective of business and international marketing, country perceptions are researched mostly with an interest in questions regarding consumer behavior. Different concepts have been developed in the subfield with a focus on nation brands as well as country-of-origin effects. Nicolas Papadopoulos (Chapter 2) takes a marketing perspective to review the most recent approaches in studying country images, and discusses their implications especially for government, business, and research. The author traces how research and practice in related areas have developed independently of the other – especially where they revolve around the notion of place-based marketing – and argues for a stronger intergration of these fields.

Erik B. Nes (Chapter 3) complements the international marketing perspective with an overview of the role of country image in this field, including a history of the research pertaining to country-of-origin effects. Nes specifically traces how earlier research focused on the image of the country of origin as an indicator of product quality, while the more recent efforts focus more on demand effects of the emotional aspects of country image (e.g., regarding feelings of animosity or affinity toward a country of origin, and the impact of such feelings on demand for products from the country). Based on this overview, the author demonstrates and discusses how issues in country-of-originrelated marketing are linked to theories in other disciplines, such as social psychology, sociology, economics, political science, or public diplomacy. Finally, he provides suggestions for future interdisciplinary research.

William Newburry and Mohan Song (Chapter 4), from a wider business disciplinary perspective, focus on the constructs of nation brands, productcountry images, and country rankings in order to trace how these three constructs are interrelated across different business disciplines, discussing distinctions among the constructs as well as areas where the constructs overlap. The authors show that businesses often do not realize the importance of countrylevel constructs until they compete internationally, and emphasize how these higher-level constructs potentially influence parallel firm-level constructs. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research, several of which stress the importance of interdisciplinary studies.

Social Psychology

From the perspective of social psychology, country perceptions are widely analyzed regarding individual cognition, emotion, and behavior. The field has developed concepts of country image and country self-image (i.e., country identity) in the two subfields of intergroup relations and collective identity research. Pierre Bouchat and Bernard Rime (Chapter 6) introduce the perspective of collective memory and national identity research, emphasizing the importance of the evolution of the societal context in the study of collective memory and national identity, as well as the relevance of a social psychological approach for appraising these phenomena. The authors exemplify this with a case on the generational evolution of collective memories in Belgium, showing how memories of the past and national identity are characterized by dynamic relations. Their analyses also look at the process of the transmission of collective identities to new generations and the transformation of feelings of victimhood and the identification with Belgium in general.

Fabrice Desmarais and Toni Bruce (Chapter 7) focus on the link between print media, global sport mega-events, and national publics in creating meaning and interest around patriotic national publics via representations of a "threatening opponent." Specifically, the chapter explores the significance of such representations during a global sports event during which the reputation of the host country is at stake, arguing they should be understood as part of a centerperiphery discourse in which the nation uses negative representations of the other to galvanize itself. Based on an analysis of media representations of the French rugby team during the 2011 Rugby World Cup hosted by New Zealand, the authors illustrate the conceptual intersections of country reputation, country brand, and country identity.

In the final chapter of this section, Martina Hřebíčková and Sylvie Graf (Chapter 8) introduce an understanding of country image and country identity from the perspective of personality research, showing how national stereotypes rated by people from the same country (in-group stereotypes) are part of country identity, while national stereotypes rated by people from other countries (out-group stereotypes) relate to country image. Further, the chapter develops a comparison between both in-group and out-group national stereotypes with personality traits of real people to determine if national stereotypes are accurate. In doing so, the chapter shows that representation of both country identity and country image are shared widely across different countries, even though they may not correspond with reality.

Sociology and Political Communication

From the perspective of sociology and political science, country perceptions are widely studied regarding matters of international affairs and competition, as well as political identity and behavior. Concepts of country image, identity, reputation, and brand have been developed and applied mostly in the subfields of international relations, the sociology of competition, and political anthropology. Tobias Werron (Chapter 9) traces a sociological perspective on the global construction of national reputation. Departing from Max Weber's distinction between the "prestige of power" and the "prestige of culture," he argues that the variants of national reputation that we find today can be analyzed as products of global communication processes that have been institutionalized since the mid to late nineteenth century. At the heart of these processes, he places the formation of global media publics and the rise of third parties (such as international organizations, political journalists, social scientists, art critics, or sport journalists) that specialize in the continual public observation, comparison, and evaluation of nation-states and other international actors. By doing so, these observers establish new, universalistic criteria for reputation based on performance, rather than on political power or cultural tradition, which produces distinct new types of national prestige. In its conclusions, the chapter discusses possible implications of this sociological perspective for interdisciplinary work on the related phenomena of country reputation, image, brand, and identity.

Frank Rusciano (Chapter 10) shows how national identity can be analyzed as a negotiation process between two overarching concepts: Selbstbild (or national consciousness) and Fremdbild (or international image). The chapter examines the negotiation of national identity according to aspects of national consciousness, including nationalism, patriotism, and pride, and aspects of international image, including how citizens feel their nation compares to other countries. Furthermore, it introduces the concept of "global rage," defined as a loss of economic and political power relative to other nations, to assess the relationship between a nation's image and global rage. This link is empirically explored using data from the Brexit and Trump elections. The analyses show that global rage, and the correlated elements, are reasonable predictors of support for the referendum and the candidate. The chapter concludes by discussing possible implications of global rage for studying national identity and political communication.

Tianduo Zhang and Guy Golan (Chapter 11) demonstrate the application of country image in the context of mediated public diplomacy theory-building. Specifically, the authors introduce a conceptual framework that delineates the process of mediated public diplomacy as issues management, which involves negotiation among mediated public diplomacy of a country, rival mediated public diplomacy, and foreign publics regarding the representation of controversial and highly visible international issues. The representation of the issues is important because it influences foreign publics' assessment of country image. The country image will in turn serve as the new baseline of future mediated public diplomacy effort. The model is proposed based on theoretical and practical linkages between mediated public diplomacy and issues management.

Di Wu and Jay Wang (Chapter 12) complement this perspective on public diplomacy by taking stock of recent research on country image and advancing a relational and network research agenda for a richer understanding of nation branding practices in public diplomacy and a broader conceptual lens for examining international political communication. Starting from a conceptual comparison among country image, reputation, identity, and public diplomacy, the chapter provides a review and outline of the key themes in recent literature about nation branding and image management. The authors introduce concepts and frameworks from relational and network approaches in public diplomacy, as well as the organizational ecology perspective in organizational studies, and show how these conceptual perspectives can be applied to advance research on country image and branding.

Communication Science

From the perspective of communication science, country perceptions are mainly studied related to discursive phenomena and networks in organizational and mass-mediated communication. Related phenomena have attracted attention in analyses on international communication, media content and effects, and – to a lesser extent so far – public relations and communication management. Wayne Wanta (Chapter 13) starts from a perspective of the agenda-setting function of the news media, which examines: (a) the process in which the issues that receive the most news coverage become the issues that the public perceives as most important; (b) specific attributes that are linked to objects in the news; and (c) bundles of multiple attributes in the news media. Based on this view, the author argues that the same process can be applied to news coverage of countries. Reviewing relevant empirical work, the chapter shows how countries that receive extensive media coverage become countries that the public perceives as highly important. Furthermore, the more negative coverage a country receives, the more the public perceives the country in a negative light. The author argues that such insights hold added significance because of the ever-increasing importance of international news. A consistent trend in international news research is that the news media concentrate international coverage on natural disasters and other negative news. Thus, as international news coverage increases in quantity, so too will negative perceptions of countries.

Efe Sevin (Chapter 14) focuses on how audiences build communities around brands, specifically developing a perspective on social media as platforms for both the practice and study of brand communities. Based on this view, the author presents empirical insights from social network analyses that show that virtual brand communities around countries have weak ties and sparse structures. The author argues that such characteristics have the potential to expand the outreach of official country messages and to increase the believability of country images. The findings about social networks and networking arguably go beyond digital communication technologies as they can be extended to the way perceptions of countries are formed through relationships built and messages shared in networks.

Diana Ingenhoff, Tiando Zhang, Alexander Buhmann, Candace White, and Spiro Kiousis (Chapter 15) draw on a recent integrative concept, the 4D model of the country image, and a subsequently developed instrument to empirically advance this multidimensional model by exploring the value drivers of the construct, using samples from the United States, Switzerland, and China to tap into different cultural clusters. By applying partial least squares structural equation models (PLS-SEMs) and multi-group analysis, the authors examine how much weight participants in the study assigned to different dimension of the 4D model. The chapter shows how perceptions of the different country image dimensions differ among cultural contexts, and how such differences in the composition of country image influence behavioral outcomes. Also, the study demonstrates the mediating role of the emotional country image dimension, and that judgments toward a country are strongly based on aesthetic beliefs and affects rather than on functional and social beliefs. That indicates that country image judgments of distant countries rely mostly on stereotypes if there are few direct experiences with or only a little knowledge about the country available.

Bridging Disciplinary Perspectives

Candace White, Spiro Kiousis, Alexander Buhmann, and Diana Ingenhoff (Chapter 16) look at the interdisciplinary perspectives of the authors and take a transdisciplinary approach to look holistically at the four overlapping constructs of country image, reputation, brand, and identity to provide points of departure for future research to move interdisciplinary research forward. Variables found throughout the chapters that warrant further study include the effects of different cultural perspectives, the importance of emotion and affective components on the formation of attitudes, the role of social and mass media, the effects of globalization and the backlash to it, and the relationship among the constructs focused on in this book and the practical domain of public diplomacy.

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CHAPTER

4

JOURNALISTS ADAPTING

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Analyzing Analytics

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Excerpted from Analyzing Analytics

Web analytics has been described to me by at least two top-level editors at an American newsroom as the "editorial crack." With numbers on the dashboard changing in real-time and headlines going up and down a list of most viewed articles, viewing web analytics can be exhilarating. "You can sit here," a managing editor told me from his desk, "and watch it, popping all night."

Using web analytics is like playing an online game, with the top scorers prominently displayed on the homepage. The managing editor starts his day by opening web analytics in his personal laptop at home, so he'd know the numbers even before leaving for work. It's like a gambling machine—you take a guess which story will get the most views, and then wait to see the numbers if you got it right. Tools that allow the collection, storage, and analysis of big data have made analytics a norm across major industries (Columbus, 2017). When we conducted a survey way back in 2012 among members of the American Society of News Editors, our results showed that even at that time, 96.5% use web analytics in their newsrooms (see Tandoc & Jenner, 2016).

While most of them—about 55%—pay for third-party analytics services, such as Chartbeat, some 41% use free web analytics tools, such as Google Analytics. Online newsrooms not using web analytics are now an exception rather than the rule. Numerous studies have documented the use of web analytics in newsrooms across different media systems, such as in Australia (Hanusch, 2017), Austria (Schlemmer, 2016), Canada (Neheli, 2018), China (Wang, 2016), Greece (Giomelakis, Sidiropoulos, Gilou, & Veglis, 2018), Kenya (Bunce, 2017), the Netherlands (Welbers, van Atteveldt, Kleinnijenhuis, Ruigrok, & Schaper, 2016), Sweden (Karlsson & Clerwall, 2013), and the United Kingdom (Schlesinger & Doyle, 2015). These studies demonstrate how web analytics has become deeply embedded in online news routines around the world.

But while web analytics provides journalists with a wealth of information about their audiences and what their audiences do with news content, it still does not provide a complete picture (Wiggins, 2007), leaving some room for editorial guesswork. How web analytics transforms—or not—how day-to-day journalism is conducted still depends on how journalists adopt and adapt analytics (Tandoc, 2014).

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Adopting and adapting

While many studies have explored how journalists use web analytics in their work and with what impact, only a few studies explored why journalists use web analytics to begin with. In this period when web analytics has become universal, such a question is easy to take for granted. But the reasons for adopting analytics are important in understanding how it is being used and how it is disrupting traditional journalism. For example, Boczkowski (2005) argued that technological adoption does not directly change journalistic routines. Instead, how a technology is understood in the newsroom and how it is integrated into its organizational culture largely determine the extent of its impact.

It became clear to me during my observations in newsrooms in the United States that for most big news organizations, the primary motivation for adopting web analytics is economic. Legacy news organizations seeing their audience numbers decrease pin their hopes on their online platforms to bring in audiences and revenues (Tandoc, 2014). Knowing what audiences want and what they do with news content is seen as an important strategy to increase audience numbers online. So while third-party web analytics services are not cheap, having web analytics still became a priority to survive. And while it is true that for most newsrooms, online news has not adequately offset the dwindling revenues from traditional news, growing audiences online as a form of cultural capital is still seen as important, so that when the time comes that a profitable business model online is found, such cultural capital can be converted into economic capital (Tandoc, 2015). This organizational mind-set is seen in how some news organizations set newsroom targets to grow audience numbers year by year. For many news organizations, using web analytics is about not being left behind.

For individual journalists, the reasons for using web analytics can vary. A survey of 360 American journalists conducted in 2015 found that journalists' personal attitudes toward the use of audience feedback, their perception of their knowledge and skill in using technology, as well as their organizational policy affected the extent to which they For individual journalists, the reasons for using web analytics can vary. A survey of 360 American journalists conducted in 2015 found that journalists' personal attitudes toward the use of audience feedback, their perception of their knowledge and skill in using technology, as well as their organizational policy affected the extent to which they.

Editorial guesswork

Web analytics is not a foolproof system. Web analytics data are based on "cookies" from websites that are deposited in a computer when a website is rendered by a web browser (Benkoil, 2010). But computer users can delete cookies before logging out or choose private browsing with some web browsers, so when these users log in on the same website again, they might be counted as a new user. On the other hand, when several people share the same computer, they might be counted as just one visitor. Online sites have considered user registration to address these issues with tracking visitors, but many users also get turned off by having to register (Bermejo, 2007).

Another issue is the selection of metrics to monitor and prioritize. What data should constitute key performance indicators? The industry of web analytics has shifted its standard from hits, to page views, to unique monthly visitors, to average time spent. However, each of these metrics has inherent weaknesses in terms of accurately capturing what it is that journalists hope to learn from web analytics (Krall, 2009).

A hit gets recorded when a requested page or an element on a page is downloaded to the user's browser. Hits are often inflated, because a single web page can contain multiple elements and therefore record multiple hits (Khoo et al., 2008). Page views refer to the number of times a page is viewed by a user, including multiple views of the same page by the same user (Khoo et al., 2008). A survey of 2,700 journalists and newsroom managers in 130 countries found that of the various available metrics from web analytics, newsrooms use page views the most (ICFJ, 2018). Unique visitors refers to the number of unique users visiting a site, measured based on anonymous cookies related to a user's browser, often aggregated based on a specific time span, usually on a per month basis. A user making multiple visits to the same site using the same computer within the month is counted as one unique visitor for that month. However, a user visiting the same website using two different computers within the month is counted as two unique visitors. Because of the limitations of these metrics, other publishers have pushed for considering time spent as the golden metric. Time spent refers to the amount of time a user spends on a page. For example, content-hosting site Medium measures "total reading time" to gauge reader engagement with its content (Davies, 2013). Still, the debate continues about which metrics accurately measure audience engagement and therefore should be prioritized (see Table 4.1).

While these gaps in web analytics are filled by other audience information systems, such as surveys and customer databases (Wiggins, 2007), they also leave wide spaces for editorial judgment. “Web analytics reveals what users do, but not why they do it” (Wiggins, 2007, p. 20).

Table 4.1 Commonly tracked web metrics

Term	Definition
Unique visitors	This refers to the total number of unique users that have visited the page or site at a specified period, usually for a month.
Page views	The number of times a page is loaded or reloaded in a browser. A single user can have multiple page views.
Time spent	This refers to the amount of time a visitor spends on a page or the site.
Bounce rate	This refers to the percentage of single-hit or single-page visits, or when a user opens a single page on the site and exits the site right after.
Return visits	This refers to the percentage of visits from returning users out of the total visits to the site.
Devices	Web analytics tools provide a breakdown of users based on the device they use to view the site: Desktop, tablet, or mobile.
Referrals	This refers to sources that refer traffic to the site, such as search engines and social media.
Social media	Web analytics tools also track social media engagement, such as number of Facebook shares or Twitter retweets.

Note: Newsrooms track numerous metrics to have a better understanding of their audiences. This list includes only some of the most commonly tracked web metrics. Newsrooms monitor specific sets of metrics depending on their goals or strategies. For example, a newsroom that aims to meet goals of increasing traffic will likely focus on the number of unique visitors and return visits. Bounce rates will also be important, as examining a page with a high bounce rate might help reveal an issue that needs to be solved to help retain users to the site.

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Shoemaker and Reese (2014) also argued that: "Audience research may give media workers ideas about the general interests of viewers, listeners, and readers, but it cannot help much in their daily choices" (p. 170). The need to fill these gaps in audience research rests on the shoulders of journalists, highlighting the tension between knowing what the audience wants and imposing one's news judgment and the prescriptions of the journalistic doxa.

Using web analytics

A systematic way to understand how web analytics is used in day-today journalism is to examine how it figures in each of the different stages of news construction, from accessing information to selection and filtering, processing and editing, distribution, and interpretation (Domingo et al., 2008; Tandoc, 2014).

The access and observation stage refers to how journalists get to know or encounter newsworthy events or issues that can potentially be covered or reported about. Reporters are assigned to specific beats or topics, where they are expected to gather leads to potential stories. While the stereotypical image of a journalist is one who is busy responding to newsworthy events that unfold, most newsworthy events being reported are actually pre-scheduled (e.g. court hearings, press conferences, sporting events), and many news articles are pursued, discovered, or followed up on by journalists themselves (Boorstin, 1973; Gans, 1979). But in the age of web analytics, news editors also encounter newsworthy events or issues based on audience metrics, such as by looking at lists of trending topics on social media or lists of top- performing articles. In many newsrooms, editorial meetings conducted to plan the day's coverage start with a quick review of stories and topics that are trending, which are generated based on audience metrics (Tandoc, 2014; Welbers et al., 2016). Some newsrooms also track the analytics of their competitors to keep an eye on popular stories.

The selection or filtering stage refers to the point when journalists, after the initial encounter with events or issues, select which stories to pursue. In traditional journalism, this stage purely refers to selecting stories to report about. Since conducting interviews, writing articles or scripts, and editing require resources, selection is a crucial stage. Newspapers also have a limited number of pages and television news programs have a limited amount of airtime, so news coverage has to be carefully planned and selection has to be stringent. But in the age of digital journalism, such space limitations no longer exist.

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There is also an abundance of content, supplied by news wires as well as by non-journalists volunteering user-generated content. Thus, selection has increasingly shifted from selecting stories to pursue to selecting articles to publish. In the age of web analytics, story selection is increasingly influenced by audience numbers. Topics that are trending on social media get written about. Stories that are getting good numbers tend to be displayed more prominently and get follow-up stories.

Web analytics programs also make recommendations on which stories to select for which spot on the homepage, complete with an estimated number of additional traffic each recommendation can bring to the site (Tandoc, 2014). The process of deselection has also emerged. This is when editors need to decide which of the articles they have selected for publication on the homepage will be replaced by a more recent article or a better-performing one (Tandoc, 2014). Deselection is almost exclusively decided based on numbers. When the number of unique visitors to the site starts to dip, online editors take that as a cue to start moving things around on the homepage to stabilize site traffic. This includes deselecting a story that is no longer performing well based on numbers.

The processing or editing stage refers to reshaping news content. Traditionally, it refers to the stage when news articles are submitted by reporters to editors, who then edit the copy for both style and substance. For a newspaper, this is an important stage to make sure no typographical or factual errors end up on the printed copy. But in the age of digital journalism, a published article can be edited again. This has led to prioritizing speed over accuracy, especially on social media (Bruno, 2011). In the age of web analytics, published stories can be re-processed, especially if they are not performing well based on numbers. For example, some editors also update stories by adding a photo, an infographic, or a video to help the article perform better, especially after learning from experience with web analytics that adding visual complements to news stories can increase click-rates (Tandoc, 2014). Some analytics programs also provide a headline-testing service, where an editor can write two headlines for one story, then for a short time, the system randomly exposes readers to one of the two versions and then provides the editor a recommendation on which headline worked better in terms of getting users to read. Backed by audience data, the recommended headline always wins.

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The distribution stage refers to how a news article gets disseminated to news audiences. While the traditional conceptualization of gatekeeping as a process culminates in news selection, with journalists selecting which articles to push out, publication no longer guarantees reaching an audience, especially in this period of information oversupply online. Web analytics influences news distribution in two ways. First, many news sites include lists of popular stories, automatically populated based on audience metrics, that serve as news recommendation tools for other users (Thorson, 2008). This practice, however, has slowed down, as online editors realized that keeping an automated list of most popular stories keeps the site stagnant—being in the list helps promote a story to other users, so the more likely it stays in the list, which then keeps the list almost the same throughout the day. A static list, however, is less likely to encourage repeat visits, since users will just find the same set of articles listed.

Second, news organizations have become very active in promoting their content on social media, as social media sites have become significant drivers of site traffic. While some newsrooms have set up a system where every article they upload on their site is automatically promoted on their Twitter accounts, such practice makes the tweets sounds impersonal, which is contrary to how social media works. Instead, many newsrooms seek to be strategic in pushing content out on social media, making sure they push out the right content at the right time on the right platform (Duffy, Ling, & Tandoc, 2017; Giomelakis et al., 2018; Hanusch, 2017). Selecting which articles to promote on social media is also often determined by audience metrics—popular stories tend to get promoted even further. A survey of 2,700 journalists and newsroom managers in 130 countries found that the most common use of web analytics is "to drive to their websites" (ICFJ, 2018, p. 50). This is often done by promoting articles that are already popular or are projected to be popular. Some newsrooms also allot resources to advertise some of their articles on Facebook, usually by paying for what Facebook terms as a "boost." Some editors consult web analytics to decide which articles to boost on Facebook.

The interpretation stage refers to making sense of the news. Domingo et al. (2008) operationalized user participation at this stage in terms of user comments to news articles, either within the news site or on other platforms, such as on reader forums or even social media. User comments also provide journalists with feedback about stories or about their news coverage. However, some journalists have negative perceptions of qualitative audience feedback (Anderson, 2011). Some publications have even closed down their comments section, citing how uncivil reader discourse can become. With user comments often ignored, journalists rely heavily on quantitative feedback from web analytics.

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However, aside from figuring into the different stages of news construction, web analytics has also penetrated newsroom management. For example, some news organizations now use web analytics to measure the performance of their journalists. It has become common in many online newsrooms to introduce a reporter as someone who brings in the most page clicks. In his fieldwork at the Philadelphia Inquirer way back in 2008, Anderson (2011) came across a journalist carrying printed pages of a web analytics report that included a list of authors sorted based on click counts. The journalist said: "We're probably headed toward a new model where reporters get paid by clicks" (Anderson, 2011). That same year, Gawker Media launched a new system to award pay bonuses to writers based on the popularity of their posts (Boutin, 2008); it later experimented with a pay- perclick model and paid participants $5 per 1,000 unique monthly visitors (Fischer, 2014). A reporter working for an online-only news outlet in Hong Kong recalls a "comprehensive value system" from her previous workplace in China, where "if the page views of your story is high, you can get more points and that connects to the bonus."

Finally, web analytics also affects how news managers make sense of their audiences. Through web analytics, journalists get some clues to their readers' reading habits, such as how they encounter news articles (e.g. via social media or search engine), how they consume news (e.g. via mobile phones or using a desktop), and what time of the day they usually read news, among others. For example, an online editor in Singapore working for a television company's news site said they used to take it slow during weekends to let their journalists take some rest. "But when we saw that the reading patterns on the weekends seem to be slightly different from the weekdays—that mixed up our offerings. Then we decided to change our release times." This meant some adjustments when it comes to deployment of editors and reporters.

Web analytics also provides details of readers' geo-location. Such audience data has allowed news managers to segment audiences. For example, newsrooms can distinguish between loyal and local readers that consume stories on local politics, and one-time visitors that found the site through one viral story (Tandoc, 2014). While one-time visitors help increase audience size for the news site, they may not be the kind of audiences that local advertisers want. So for a small news site whose revenues come mainly from local advertisers, targeting local and loyal readers through localized content becomes the priority.

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Such information about the audience also helps newsrooms to expand their target market. For example, a large news organization in Singapore discovered through web analytics that it was also getting a lot of clicks from China, but that readers in China navigate the site differently from readers in Singapore. Since Singapore is a relatively small market, it is a city-state of about five million people, being able to attract readers from China will be good for business. So, the news organization maintains different layouts for Singapore and China (Rahil, 2018). The website content is the same, but the design for readers in Singapore includes more visuals, while the design for readers in China focuses on text and includes a lot of hyperlinks (Rahil, 2018).

Changes and continuities Of course, usage patterns evolve over time. As web analytics becomes deeply embedded in news routines, the extent and ways it is used change as well. Newsroom ethnographies that documented web analytics use across different newsrooms, conducted at different time points, reveal how web analytics use has evolved (Anderson, 2011; Duffy et al., 2017; Ferrucci & Tandoc, 2015; Neheli, 2018; Nelson & Tandoc, 2018; Petre, 2018; Tandoc, 2014; Usher, 2013). For example, observations conducted at the same newsroom in the United States three years apart revealed continuities in usage patterns, such as in using analytics to test headlines and track page views (Nelson & Tandoc, 2018). "The immediate objective of growing traffic and the strategies to achieve it remain the same," the study observed (Nelson & Tandoc, 2018, p. 12). However, some journalists have become more reflective when it comes to realizing the dual goals they now have to pursue: Stories that do well based on traffic, and stories that are good for democracy (Nelson & Tandoc, 2018).

It will also be helpful to compare specific usage patterns over time. In the course of my research on web analytics in journalism, I have also tracked usage patterns through surveys of journalists. I have done two of such surveys in the United States. The first one was conducted in 2013 for my dissertation and involved 206 online editors (Tandoc, 2015). The second one was conducted in 2015 for a collaborated project and involved 360 online journalists (Tandoc & Ferrucci, 2017). It is crucial to note that these two samples are different—the first one focused only on online editors and excluded reporters, while the second one did not distinguish between editors and reporters, as long as they worked for an online newsroom. Still, a quick comparison of the results offers some idea on how specific usage patterns might be evolving (see Table 4.2).

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Both surveys asked respondents to indicate how often they used web analytics data for each of at least 16 different uses, a scale I developed based on my interviews with journalists and observations at three online newsrooms (Tandoc, 2014). Overall, in both 2013 and 2015, the use of web analytics to track audience size was the most common. Tracking which stories are doing well, monitoring the performance of an article one has written or edited, and determining where traffic comes from were among the highest ranked uses. These uses are some of what I had considered as traffic-oriented use, or using data from web analytics to monitor traffic (Tandoc, 2015).

Table 4.2 Using web analytics

Specific use	*2013*	*2015*
To determine which stories are doing well	79.3	77.2
To monitor how the story I wrote/edited is doing	53.5	69.7
To determine where traffic is coming from	63	64.3
To determine which stories are not doing well	64.3	59
To know which topic areas to increase coverage in	30.9	49.7
To determine what stories to do follow ups on	35.6	44.6
To determine story placement in the homepage	42.6	43.9
To monitor if the site is working properly	42.5	43.6
To improve user experience	42.3	41.8
To decide how to write the headline	29.2	35.7
To decide which stories to cover	14.6	35.5
To help design the website	27.9	23.1
To determine how to cover a story	13.5	22
To plan deployment of reporters	14.9	19.5
To help evaluate the performance of employees	9.7	18.8
To know where to increase coverage in terms of geographic location	11.5	18.8

Note: The figures represent percentage of respondents who reported using web analytics for each specific use "often" or "very often." The 2015 survey involved 360 online journalists in the United States, while the 2013 survey involved 206 online editors in the United States.

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What is interesting is the increase in the frequency of using web analytics to determine topic areas to pursue and specific stories to follow up. In the 2013 survey, 30.9% of the respondents said they used web analytics often or very often to determine which topic areas to increase coverage in, while in the 2015 survey, 49.7% reported engaging in such use often or very often (see Table 4.2). Similarly, using web analytics often or very often to determine which stories to cover increased from only 14.6% in 2013 to 35.5% in 2015. These uses are what I referred to as content-oriented use, or using web analytics to make editorial decisions, such as planning coverage and allocating newsroom resources (Tandoc, 2015). There also seems to be a marked increase in the extent to which web analytics is used for newsroom management. In both surveys, I asked respondents how often they use web analytics to "help evaluate the performance of employees." In 2013, only 9.7% responded often or very often—this increased to 18.8% when I asked the question again in 2015.

Earlier studies on how journalists used web analytics documented usage patterns at the very last stages of gatekeeping (Anderson, 2011; Lee, Lewis, & Powers, 2014; Vu, 2013). Monitoring traffic, rewriting headlines, and determining story placement on the website are editorial decisions made after stories have been planned, selected, and written. However, recent studies have also focused on the increasing use of analytics to determine topics to pursue or plan the deployment of resources (Welbers et al., 2016; Wendelin, Engelmann, & Neubarth, 2015), decisions that are made at the earlier stages of gatekeeping (Tandoc & Jenner, 2016). As expected, the ways in which web analytics is used in the newsroom are evolving. But it also means that its impact on news work is also changing.

Shaping usage patterns

While many online newsrooms use web analytics, how they use it and how they make sense of audience metrics vary. While web analytics plays a major role in some newsrooms, it exerts a weak influence in editorial decisions in others. Individual journalists also use web analytics in different ways and degrees. For example, interviews with 67 foreign correspondents in East and West Africa identified three types of journalists when it comes to web analytics use: The first group refers to data-driven correspondents, or those who use web analytics data routinely in their work (Bunce, 2015). The second group, which accounts for the majority of those interviewed, refers to data-informed journalists who have only a little knowledge about audience data from their organizations, but are sometimes guided by their editors, who routinely access analytics, in pursuing popular topics (Bunce, 2015). Finally, a small minority can be considered data denialists or those "oblivious to readership data" and who are not informed about audience data nor feel guided by audience metrics in their work (Bunce, 2015, p. 23).

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Excerpted from Analyzing Analytics

Studies have documented different factors that affect the extent to which web analytics is used in the newsroom. Some have focused on the role of individual journalists. For example, while those in managerial positions (e.g. chief editor, managing editor) focus on tracking longterm metrics, such as monitoring unique visitors per month, online editors focus on real-time metrics, such as page views per article, that are useful for day-to-day operations (Tandoc, 2014). In terms of frequency of use, a survey of 358 journalists in Australia found that while 33.2% use web analytics at least once a day, with about 10% reporting they use analytics several times per hour, mid-level officers, such as news directors and section editors, use web analytics more often than did reporters or newsroom managers (Hanusch & Tandoc, 2017).

Other studies also noted differences between news organizations when it comes to web analytics use. For example, Karlsson and Clerwall (2013, p. 74) found that while commercial outlets tend to monitor analytics in real time, public service media outlets use web analytics "more as an after-the-fact evaluation rather than as a real-time assessment." The availability and accessibility of web analytics tools also influenced the extent to which they are used. For example, web analytics is used more frequently in news organizations that display the metrics openly, such as through large monitors erected in the middle of the newsroom, than in newsrooms that provide limited access to analytics, such as through occasional emails to journalists (Welbers et al., 2016).

Online newsrooms affiliated with a traditional platform with a longer history also find themselves having to align their news judgment with that of their traditional legacy platforms. For example, a social media editor in Singapore said: "At the end of the day, your online [and offline] product cannot be too divorced from each other, they must have a common identity, so it cannot be your online site is so salacious and your print so proper; the standard must be equal" (Rahil, 2018).

While many studies have examined the use of web analytics in digital-native and traditional newsrooms, less attention has been paid to examining how news wire agencies use web analytics. What is different is that for wire agencies, such as the Associated Press and Reuters, their main audiences are other news outlets subscribing to their feeds. However, many wire agencies have also started their own websites where readers can directly access some of their articles, allowing them to track audience data. Some wire agencies, such as the Australian Associated Press, use analytics tools to monitor how their content is used by news outlets that subscribe to their service (Schlemmer, 2017). However, access to this tool is only for editors. "I don't want to give the journalists the wrong idea," said Tony Gillies, AAP's editor-in-chief. "I don't want journalists thinking of how to change their work. I don't want them under added pressure, worried they have not written as many stories as the person next to them" (Schlemmer, 2017).

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Excerpted from Analyzing Analytics

A news organization's market orientation also matters. A comparison of two newsrooms in the United States found that "the strongly market-oriented newsroom used analytics extensively while the weakly market-oriented newsroom used analytics less frequently, with only a few editors accessing their analytics usually once a week" (Ferrucci & Tandoc, 2015, p. 70). Interviews with American journalists from news organizations with different levels of market orientation also found that while in weakly market-oriented newsrooms, web analytics data is mostly used to reorganize the website, in strongly market-oriented newsrooms, "more editorial decisions about what to cover were made based on these data" (Ferrucci, 2018, p. 14). While journalists at Al Jazeera recognized how important web analytics are, they often also disregarded audience metrics when it came to making editorial decisions (Usher, 2013). Since Al Jazeera is funded by its government, the pressure to increase web traffic is almost non-existent, compared with commercial newsrooms.

A less explored, but nonetheless important, factor in understanding how web analytics is used in newsrooms is the social context where the newsroom and its journalists operate. For example, interviews with journalists in Singapore, a small but economically advanced nation also known for its closely regulated media system, found that while journalists in the country are aware of how web analytics is used in newsrooms in Western countries, they use web analytics more carefully (Rahil, 2018). For example, chasing clicks must be balanced with the need to treat sensitive topics, such as politics, race, and religion, more cautiously. If these are at odds, journalists prioritize caution over clicks (Rahil, 2018).

Editorial crack

Describing web analytics as the "editorial crack" is both funny and provocative (Tandoc, 2014). It is a good metaphor, capturing how using web analytics can be addictive, that some journalists even access their news organization's web analytics dashboard on their mobile phones (Petre, 2018). But where does the metaphor stop, for while crack, the slang for cocaine, is addictive, it is also dangerous and can impair thinking?

Crack, as a noun, also refers to a gap or narrow space created when something breaks. In a period when traditional journalism seems to be breaking—traditional revenue sources are drying up; non-journalists are performing journalistic acts; fake news competes for audience attention— web analytics can be the crack that allows external forces to penetrate the journalistic field. But does this fill the gap or widen it instead?

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Some sound the alarm on the potential negative impact on journalism of how web analytics is being used, making journalists more reliant on audience preferences in their day-to-day decision-making (Anderson, 2011; Tandoc & Thomas, 2014), but some question whether web analytics exerts any significant effects on news construction to begin with (Zamith, 2018). Web analytics has become embedded in work routines in many newsrooms around the world, reaching the state of "taken-for-grantedness" (Ling, 2012). This is when web analytics finally becomes invisible in the newsroom, and when its impact becomes all the more significant.

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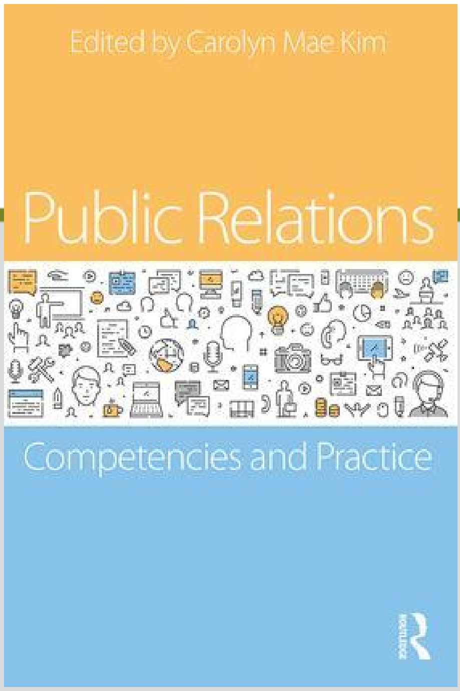
CHAPTER 5

Public Relations

THOUGHTFUL AWARENESS AND INSIGHTFUL ACTION IN A CHANGING WORKPLACE



This chapter is excerpted from

Public Relations: Competencies and Practices

by **Carolyn Mae Kim**.

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BUSINESS LITERACY

THOUGHTFUL AWARENESS AND INSIGHTFUL ACTION IN A CHANGING WORKPLACE

Excerpted from *Public Relations:Competencies and Practices*

Technological advancements are affecting every profession. Public relations is particularly impacted because PR is one of society's bellwether fields. When paradigms shift, they shift for us first.

During the 20th century, the public relations profession grew rapidly as PR people became established as go-to sources of information for newspaper and broadcast reporters who worked within a traditional news cycle. Public relations professionals sent press releases to journalists, telephoned with necessary supporting information, held talking head press conferences, and then in most cases stood back and watched from the sidelines. The news stories and promotional messages that resulted from PR activity filtered down like the leaves of autumn, falling gently and predictably from traditional media sources to the intended audiences.

The advent of the Internet and resulting social media technology changed everything. Today, in many respects, the traditional media relationships are gone. Media consumers are in control. PR people no longer push information out to media gatekeepers and on to consumers; instead, audiences and publics identify the information they want and then pull that information, on their schedule, and in the amount they want, from the sources they determine to be most trustworthy.

This requires public relations practitioners to take an integrated media approach. Indeed, PR people have been ramping up their concept knowledge and hands-on skills to remain competitive in the message dissemination/ strategic communication business. A significant problem, though, is that while PR people have focused on staying ahead of the curve on communication strategy and technologies, in many respects they've neglected basic business skills.

To be blunt, college graduates are entering the public relations workplace today with little or no knowledge of the basic business of business . They don't know the terminology. They don't know the etiquette. They don't know how to pick up a telephone (the office phone, the one plugged into the wall with a cord) and call another professional to get business done.

Employers have identified this significant problem (Nichols, 2017 ; Belkin, 2015). But the situation is not necessarily only that new college graduates don't have the right skill set. It's an issue of both concepts and skills. In fact, in 2018 the Commission on Public Relations Education identified business literacy as a core competency that public relations students should acquire while training to enter the industry.

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Excerpted from *Public Relations:Competencies and Practices*

This chapter will first briefly examine the paradigm shift happening within the business world and within PR as a profession. Then, it will present the idea of thoughtful awareness, which is linked to concepts such as professional and ethical sensitivity and strong interpersonal engagement. Finally, the chapter will illustrate how insightful business leaders are working with college students to acclimate to the realities of the business world—realities through which the thread of public relations runs.

The chapter ends with learning outcomes that are relevant for every public relations student hoping to transition from the college experience to a great career in PR. Additional resources are offered to support that journey.

Paradigm Shift

A paradigm shift involves a new way of thinking about the opportunities and challenges that life presents to us. Relationships we thought were solid were permanent are radically different, or have been eliminated altogether (Meredith, 2015). With the increasing speed of technological and social change, we see paradigm shift everywhere. In fact, it is estimated that 65% of children entering school today will be working in jobs that do not exist in the current economy (Belli, 2017). The world is changing, and, with it, business, jobs, and roles are rapidly developing into a new terrain.

This just indicates how the paradigm shift affects everyone's life, and public relations practitioners are right in the middle of it in one way or another. To address paradigm shift, and to work effectively within it, PR people use storytelling skills previously reserved for journalists and artists. PR work involves crafting stories illustrating the ways organizations, brands, and ideas meet people's existing and emerging needs. No longer chained to the news release and the press conference—and no longer wanting to be—public relations people present their stories across multiple media platforms—a concept known as Transmedia Storytelling (Rutledge, 2017).

Together, audiences and publics are the engine that drives Transmedia Storytelling. That's because in the new information paradigm, people are equipped with the technology that allows them to decide what information they want to be exposed to, and how they want to be exposed to it. Although, really, people aren't just exposed to information. In Transmedia Storytelling, they participate in it . They're stakeholders in the information chain itself (Granitz & Forman, 2015).

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This outstanding YouTube video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=CP-zOCl5 md0) created by FCB Global, shows how Transmedia Storytelling requires strategic thinking and creative applications that formerly fell within the domains of advertising and marketing.

In just under 5 minutes, the video shows how Transmedia Storytelling takes different media elements—audio, video, mobile applications, print narratives, and even comics and video games—and assembles them like pieces of a puzzle to tell a compelling story of relationships between people, brands, and ideas.

The technological and social change that supplanted press releases with interactive multimedia narratives is still with us and is accelerating. But that doesn't mean public relations people don't need to understand the basics. In fact, it's more important than ever for PR professionals to have a deep knowledge of how people think and how thinking turns into attitudes and actions. PR pros must be able to identify, locate, and persuasively communicate with niche influencers that drive social media. It's the old Two Step Flow theory, but in hyperdrive (Schafer & Taddicken, 2015).

Within the past few years, public relations agencies began realizing that the old line-and-staff organizational structure that worked for decades was no longer adequate. Major international agencies such as GolinHarris—now Golin—imploded on-paper hierarchies and tore down their wood-and-plaster office walls, bringing PR professionals into tighter multi-skilled collaborative working groups (Barrett, 2011 ; Lanks, 2014).

A 2009 survey by Korn/Ferry and the Public Relations Society of America found that public relations professionals "are taking the lead over marketing and other departments in managing an organization's use of social media channels" (The 2009 Digital Readiness Report , para. 4). The survey concluded that social networking, blogging, and microblogging may be even more important than traditional media relations skills.

Just as the paradigm of communication from PR people to audiences and publics has been turned inside out, the traditional 20th century teaching and learning paradigm for university students and teachers is no longer valid. Sitting in a class, listening to lectures, and then taking tests doesn't adequately prepare anyone for a career in public relations or elsewhere. The paradigm of passive instruction has been supplanted by the paradigm of active learning (Tagg, 2003).

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But don't for a minute think that, amidst all these newfangled paradigm shifts, the basics of doing business in PR are somehow less relevant. Dave Fleet, a senior vice president for Edelman, identifies 14 qualities that new public relations professionals ought to embody. Concept knowledge and hands-on skills are present in all of them (Fleet, 2009).
Other professionals are also sounding the alarm. They're warning university students not to neglect organizational and interpersonal learning in the path to technological proficiency.

In 2010, the MetLife Insurance Company Foundation sponsored a research effort that included a survey of 301 Fortune 1000 executives about the importance of relevant career preparation for undergraduates. Ninety-four percent of the respondents ranked teamwork skills as absolutely essentia l to career development. Critical-thinking skills and problem-solving skills were also ranked absolutely essential by 99% of respondents (MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2010).

Basic Business Capabilities
Anyone hoping to graduate from college into a successful and rewarding PR career needs to develop some basic business workplace capabilities. Mastering these will build the appropriate foundation for effective teamwork, critical-thinking, and problem-solving:

• Direct experience with the terms and tools of business. Whether through previous employment, internship, or volunteer experience, college graduates need a grasp of the vocabulary and the devices of commerce. What are retailers and wholesalers? What are vendors? In bookkeeping, how are debits different from credits? What is a request for proposals, a purchase order, or an invoice? These and other basic concepts must be understood by anyone hoping to work in business before joining the workplace .

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• Direct experience with the systems of business. Graduates must appreciate and employ the networking and related structures that dictate how business gets done. Not long ago, a university professor assigned a team of undergraduate PR students to a project where they needed a cost estimate for a purchase. The lead student on the team refused to make a telephone call to the pre-arranged supplier, and instead insisted on sending a text message to this business person whom she had never met . She sent a text and waited 2 weeks without response, then threw up her hands and told the professor the effort was doomed. Meanwhile, the supplier, anxious to make a sale, finally telephoned the professor, wondering why he had not been contacted. (The text message had been sent, undeliverable, to a landline office phone.) The project eventually succeeded, but only because the professor insisted that the student and her team proactively use the telephone as a voice communication device to conduct business.

• Mature, professional writing and speaking. Employers frequently report that, like , public relations graduates go into interview situations and, like , use language that, like , sounds like it came from a movie about, like , teenage girls, like , hanging out in a mall. Like, whatever . If reading that sentence struck a chord, perhaps it's time to adopt more professional communication skills. PR graduates must write flawlessly, because proficient writing is the most desired skill of employers in the industry (Gaschen & Swanson, 2014). Many employers will administer a writing test before even interviewing applicants for entry-level positions. The most influential PR writing is proactive and uses positive verbiage (DiStaso, 2012). Speaking skills are important, too. The most credible PR voice sounds mature, and mature doesn't mean old. It means competent. Sophisticated. In writing, speaking, and use of terminology, a PR person's skills must be second to none.

• Have heightened professional and ethical sensitivity and ability. Today's graduates must be able to see beyond the obvious. This involves tasks both mundane and exotic. Be able to plan and conduct a business meeting, with an agenda and follow-ups. Be sensitive to workplace conflict that's obvious, as well as conflict that's beneath the surface. Bring disagreeing people together. Find compromise. Implement solutions. The ability to mentor and be mentored is equally indispensable (Hays & Swanson, 2015).

• Intercultural competency. Employers are crying out for public relations graduates who have cultural competency and bilingual fluency (Elejalde-Ruiz, 2015 ; Torres, 2013). Major employers in the media sector have even taken to "importing" workers from other countries because they can't find culturally capable graduates from U.S. colleges and universities. PR is a profession where success is often unreachable without demonstrating the capability to work across cultural, linguistic, geographic, and geopolitical borders.

• A realization that the best actions aren't always the most popular or exciting. It's easy to see famous public relations spokespeople on television or in social media advocating ideas that are insensitive or stupid, and think this is okay. It's not. The vast majority of public relations work isn't in front of a camera and it doesn't involve posting snappy retorts on social media. In fact, PR and media people who take the snappy retort approach typically get chastised, and routinely get fired (Coelho, 2017 ; Ronson, 2015) Most public relations work—and most business work—is unglamorous, and happens behind the scenes. This is where careers are built or destroyed.

Insightful Action

At the core of what Ruebén Martinez and other forward-thinking business leaders want for today's college graduates is insightful action. This means to thoughtfully plan one's actions, to be clear on why those actions being taken, and to have considered all the short-and long-term consequences. One way of bringing about insightful action is through a spirit of mindfulness.

Mindfulness has been interpreted in a variety of ways. At its most basic, it involves "being awake and aware—being tuned in to yourself, to others, and to the environment" (Boyatzis & Yeganeth, 2012 , p. 4). To be mindful means to be thoughtful in the present moment. It means focusing on the processes of life and work more so than the outcome (Serafin, 2007). It's about the trip, and not about the destination.

Mindfulness is not a religion, though it has its roots in Buddhist meditative practices. It is not a health care regimen, though many medical professionals support its use. Mindfulness is the act of being physically still, open to new ideas, and liberated from the "tyranny of old mindsets," as extensively chronicled by groundbreaking researcher Ellen Langer (1989).

The opposite of mindfulness is mindlessness. People who are mindless are more focused on doing than being. A mindless workplace is a place of stress, confusion, and disorder. People who work there take actions that are, in the words of David McRaney's (2011) book, "not so smart."

To our detriment, our society often encourages mindlessness. This is because mindless behavior easily transitions into boorish overconfidence, aggression, and "looking out for number one." All of these behaviors make for exciting reality television and superbly shareable social media posts. People enjoy seeing and retelling stories of mindlessness. The problem is the most mindless people are often the most selfish and antisocial. Intensely focused on a particular outcome, they do not consider the impact of their actions on other people.

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Ultimately, mindless behavior is unproductive. It cannot foster creativity, collegiality, and respect over the long term. Sooner or later, mindless behavior ends in personal and professional burnout, as many highpressure CEOs have learned (Nisen, 2013).

So, how does insightful action come about? How does one maintain assertiveness and confidence while staying mindful? The short answer is to make good choices.

First, understand the mind. Realize that sometimes the ideas that pop into our heads aren't the best ones. Invest time thinking about thinking, so that ideas that are relevant, potentially productive, and mindful are the ones that get priority.

In any situation, embrace complexity and ambiguity. Our world is filled with complicated relationships and intertwined systems. Challenges are many and solutions are not clear. This is a reality that should be accepted and even welcomed. What this means for public relations people is that, in some PR situations, careful attention is more important than immediate action. Sometimes, what matters most in a business relationship is just to show that we care (Swanson, 2014). That caring may involve seeking collaborative, non-linear approaches.

The path from A to Z doesn't always run though L, M, and N. Could another path be attempted? A mindful communications professional accepts the fact that no outcome is ever assured, and planning only one way to get there is a recipe for failure.

In any situation, avoid trying to be a hero. Wheatley and Frieze (2010) in their work, Leadership in the Age of Complexity: From Hero to Host

contend that a mindful leader does not act like a hero. A hero frequently and foolishly is deluded into thinking the uncontrollable can be unilaterally controlled. By contrast, a mindful leader doesn't work solo. A mindful leader encourages positive collaboration and participation among followers. This concept was observed in 2013 when "heroic" owners of an Arizona restaurant took to Facebook to unjustifiably brag about their accomplishments. When customers took issue, the owners proceeded to rhetorically beat their chests and threaten physical violence against their "stupid people" customers and the public at large and was called as "the most epic brand meltdown on Facebook ever" (Broderick, 2013 , para. 1).

Lastly, balance work and life. It's easy to become caught in western cultural expectations that dictate a technical, rational approach to work at the expense of all else. These same expectations assign value by quantity of output instead of quality of interaction. A mindful PR professional learns to balance work and life by saying no to requests that do not need to be fulfilled and communication that does not need to be made.

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Conclusion

There are huge changes going on in our society. Public relations as a profession stimulates those changes and is mirroring them.

Paradigm shift—a new way of thinking about challenges and opportunities—will only accelerate in volume and intensity in the years to come. Every college student who plans to work in the PR field must be ready for lifelong learning in a career in which relationships will always be in flux.

At the same time, some things will remain constant. Public relations employers will always value entry-level employees who have direct, relevant business experience. Regardless of the development and use of new communication technologies, calm thinking and mature writing and speaking skills will never go out of style. PR people will always need to communicate simply and confidently, in ways that are crystal clear and error-free.

As paradigm shift pushes our society to become more contentious, PR people will need a heightened sense of ethical and professional sensitivity. Our profession is about bringing people and organizations together for mutually beneficial relationships. PR people must see beyond the hype and social media squawking and find ways to unite audiences and publics to build solutions. This will happen in a marketplace that's increasingly bilingual and intercultural.

Today's PR students should resist the notion that history is "boring" and look to those who built this profession—and business leaders of today, people like Ruebén Martinez—for practical guidance. The media may make it appear that our society is guided by people who boast, brag, and bamboozle. But that's not true. The real leaders are the people who, every day, approach their work as hosts and not heroes. Carefully, mindfully, and with a sense of urgency, they make relationships better for businesses and the people whose lives are affected by the actions of business.

This is what public relations is all about. This is thoughtful awareness and insightful action.

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Key Learning Outcomes

Now, and throughout professional life, every college graduate in public relations should:

1. Be able to articulate personally and for others why the public relations profession is changing and how professionals need to grow with industry changes.
2. Demonstrate mastery of the interpersonal and business concepts and skills that allow collaboration with professionals from a variety of backgrounds to solve problems.
3. At a moment's notice, be able to provide successful examples of strategic and thoughtful multimedia communication.
4. Demonstrate verbal and linguistic fluency and show how that fluency results in business success, particularly when communicating across cultural boundaries.
5. Work mindfully, not to just do public relations work but to embody the habits and attitudes of an ethical public relations practitioner.

Suggested Readings

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Professional Insight

Chapter 6: An Interview With Ruebén Martinez

Ruebén Martinez
, moved by a passion for reading, founded Martinez Books & Art Gallery in of his Santa Ana, CA, barbershop. It became a cultural center where people could be empowered to read and pursue higher education. Today Martinez owns bookstores and airport shops all over the U.S., is a co-founder of the Latino Book and Family Festival, and a Presidential Fellow of Chapman University, where he encourages students to pursue teaching careers in high-need areas .

Ruebén Martinez is a California educator, philanthropist, and businessman who embodies the term "self-made man" and has spent most of his adult life helping young people succeed in business. Martinez grew up in a small Arizona mining town where the path to adulthood had just one destination—a job in a dirty, dangerous copper mine.

From a young age, Martinez took an interest in books and read everything he could get his hands on. His parents didn't share that interest. One Saturday afternoon when Martinez was 10 years old, his stepfather found him reading a book and immediately ordered him to go outside and do chores. Coming back to the house, Martinez saw the book he had been reading was gone. It had been tossed into the wood stove and burned.

At 17, Martinez packed a bag and headed west. "I came to California, went to Long Beach, took my shoes off and buried my feet in the sand. I've been here ever since," he says.

Despite the sunny skies and a rapidly expanding economy, life in Southern California in the 1950s was hard for Latinos. Most had no opportunity to go to college. Career prospects were limited to hard labor on a farm, toiling in a factory, or working as a gardener or housekeeper. Martinez worked a succession of blue collar jobs while raising a family. He saved up the money to go to night school to become a barber. He then opened his own barbershop and spent 40 years cutting hair and encouraging patrons to pick up a book from a growing collection on his shelves.

Over time, Librería Martinez Books & Art Gallery in Santa Ana, CA, became recognized as a centerpiece of the community, a place where Latino families and children met to read, converse, and pursue dreams of higher education. The store became known nationwide as a showcase for Latino authors and artists. In 2004, Martinez was the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant Fellowship. The selection committee cited Martinez for "fusing the roles of marketplace and community center to inspire appreciation of literature and preserve Latino literary heritage."

brings anyone down, and leads to opportunities to associate with the wrong kind of people. That, in itself, he concludes, can derail an otherwise promising career.

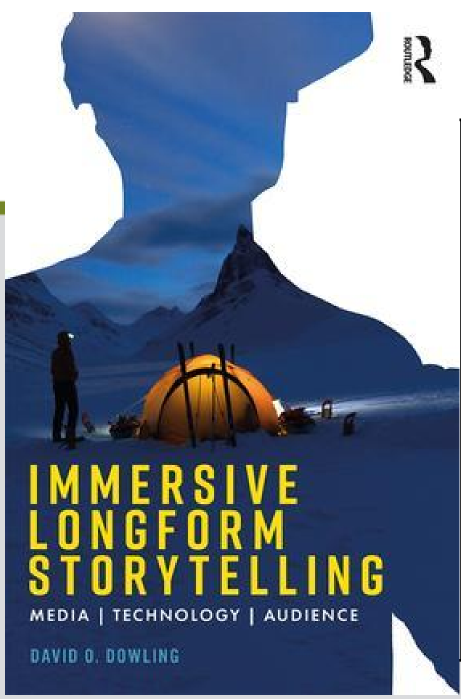
"Tell me who you hang out with," Martinez tells PR students with a twinkle in his eye, "And I'll tell you who you are."

CHAPTER

6

MULTIMEDIA NARRATIVES

THE "SNOW FALL" REVOLUTION AND BEYOND



This chapter is excerpted from
IMMERSIVE LONGFORM STORYTELLING
by David O Dowling.

Learn more

MULTIMEDIA NARRATIVES
THE "SNOW FALL" REVOLUTION AND BEYOND

Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

After the New York Times' late 2012 publication of "Snow Fall: Avalanche at Tunnel Creek" dramatically inaugurated a new era of immersive reading online, digital publishers recognized the real reason why longform had failed to thrive in the early 2000s. "We always used to say you couldn't read longform online," according to Rob Orchard, editor of the highly acclaimed British quarterly Delayed Gratification. Because early news templates divided stories into multiple pages to maximize advertising space—which left the internet itself teeming with shallow content and distraction technologies vying for the reader's attention— the assumption was "you needed print in order to concentrate." Now as new digital affordances have given rise to the latest wave of enthralling multimedia narratives that capture rather than divide reader attention, "that's not the case anymore," as Orchard notes, "and I think it was a very simple question of getting the design right" (Kuntze 2016). The early internet's ad-laden click-heavy customs were indeed anathema to deep reading online. But since the Times' breakthrough, a profusion of immersive media products leveraging its signature self-contained design have emerged with embedded photos, maps, and videos in app-like environments. Their multimedia elements are now integrated with written text, working in concert to intensify reader concentration (Dowling and Vogan 2015). Such advances in digital design have delivered precisely the opposite of what we have feared about the death of deep reading in the digital age. Contrary to what we have assumed, technological improvements borrowing heavily from the visual storytelling techniques of cinema have deepened the way we engage with narrative, transforming news consumption from article reading to an immersive multimedia experience. Digital longform's repertoire of rhetorical expression has never been so rich, and thus suggests how "The diversity of games that narrative can play with the resources of its medium is one of the many reasons that make the intersection of narratology and media studies, an area still largely unexplored, into a productive field of investigation" (Ryan 2005: 21). This chapter tracks the fierce evolution of digital longform, also referred to as multimedia features and digital news packages, which has joined podcasting as one of the fastest-growing online genres of the twenty-first century. Design innovations have transformed both digital publishing and online reading, which has revolutionized written text by wedding it to—rather than pitting it in opposition against—graphics, sound, photography, and video to realize unprecedented powers of expression through immersive storytelling.

MULTIMEDIA NARRATIVES
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Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

Blurred Boundaries and Broken Rules

The digital production of the New York Times'"Snow Fall" epitomizes the recent departure from the print tradition of the single-byline story. John Branch acknowledged his debt to the team of graphic designers, computer engineers, photographers, videographers, and data visualization specialists who contributed to the Pulitzer Prize-winning piece (Q. and A. 2012) that was lauded for its "deft integration of multimedia elements" (as quoted in Haughney 2013). Branch, of course, relied on his team of producers not only to create each visual element— from Swiss Institute scientists contributing data sets on avalanche dynamics to graphic artists designing digitally animated maps—but also a sta▮ of editors to integrate them into a coherent narrative. "Snow Fall" designer Graham Roberts's description of the project as the employment of "a new format of publishing longform stories that attempts to seamlessly combine the written story with multimedia elements" (Roberts 2013) indicates the vast amount of editorial intervention necessary for the successful synthesis of those elements. Platforms such as Byliner and Atavist still market celebrity authors, such as John Krakauer and Michael Sharer, thus adhering to traditional single-contributor bylines. The persistence of journalistic tradition of single bylines indeed earned Branch most of the notoriety for "Snow Fall," as he was the named recipient of the Pulitzer, whereas Roberts remained relatively anonymous among the team of other designers and computer engineers.

The increasingly collaborative nature of online narrative journalism suggests a shift away from the assumption that fine storytelling is necessarily the product of a single creative genius or lone-wolf reporter operating in isolation (Kovacs 2016). This opens up exciting new possibilities for creative collaboration, as Branch recognized of the monumental achievement of "Snow Fall" (Q. and A. 2012). Foucault's "What is an Author?" and Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author" help illuminate this shift toward the collaborative production of literary journalism, which now weds written and visual aesthetics with computer engineering design. Just as production processes are becoming more networked as the products themselves become increasingly multimodal, their consumption has become distinctly more social. Narrative journalism in the digital age is now more mobile, sharable and open to discussion than ever, as "audiences show an increasing preference for online content," making the latest serious journalism either a combination of online and traditional or only online (Bakker 2014: 596). The socialization of literary journalistic production has become radically pluralized much in the way that readership has through communities such as Longreads.

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The pastiche of sources any author inherits—identified by Roland Barthes (1977), who deconstructs the romantic myth of the isolated writer as individual genius—points to the wealth of influences and data the writer must patch together. Like Barthes's concept of the author as the sum total of his/her intellectual inheritance, craftily rearranged in a unique expression, so too is the longform journalist in the digital age not only drawing from narrative and aesthetic precedent—whether reflecting or refracting it—but producing in a digital environment that requires teamwork and collaboration with data analysts and designers. "To give a text an author," writes Barthes (1977), "is to impose a limit on the text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing. When the author has been found, the text is 'explained'—victory to the critic" (147). It is telling indeed that the myth of single authorship has now yielded to Webby and Addy awards going to teams rather than individuals. The internet has destabilized the professional identity of narrative journalism, steering it closer to a model of film production, in which various designations including screenwriting and directing receive recognition rather than a single isolated figure.

In addition to the blurring of the category of solo by lines into production teams, the strict division separating business from advertising in news organizations has also eroded with the advent of new digital forms (Banet-Weiser 2012; Einstein 2016). Joe Sexton, who initiated "Snow Fall" from the sports desk of the Times, earned accolades despite claiming to have little technological savvy. Yet whatever digital expertise Sexton lacked, his business acumen in promoting the piece was strong enough to lead him to Twitter as the promotional medium to spark pre-publicity interest in "Snow Fall." In an interview at Harvard University, Sexton recounted how he had violated several cardinal rules of the profession in order to publish the piece. In the years prior to the project, he had been experimenting with alternative storytelling as a method of promoting and marketing the Times. Among other bold deviations from convention was his placement of a massive photo across the fold of the sports section depicting Walden Pond at dusk with a lone long-distance swimmer gliding through the glass-like water in the foreground corner. The reflective feature profile of Olympian Alex Meyer, a particularly Thoreauvian and self-reliant member of the Harvard swim team, defied the standard coverage of recent scores and highlights, venturing into the obscure yet rich territory of more thoughtful reflective content (Crouse 2011). This ambitious maverick project foreshadowed the colossal one ahead.

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The stories Sexton ran began stretching the limits of not only the sports section, but also the standard divisions of news categories. "How are you going to fit 16,000 words in six chapters on a ski tragedy," of three backcountry skiers who lost their lives in an avalanche in western Washington, "in your story? What section will that be in?" Sexton's colleagues asked him. "Forget the sections," he replied. "We are going to create our own section." In the process, Sexton had made a crucial administrative step allowing for his production team to reinvent ossified routines of journalistic production by breaking "every rule at the New York Times that existed and didn't exist" in this "unnecessarily restrictive" news organization he described as "simultaneously majestic and hopelessly f—d up." Graphics editor Steve Duenes showed Sexton a story by ESPN on Doc Ellis's no-hitter he pitched for the Pittsburgh Pirates while hallucinating on LSD. After seeing its psychedelic aesthetic expressed through an integrated design featuring elaborate drawings and interactives, Sexton felt emboldened to pursue a similar project (Nieman 2013).

Times upper administration was initially hesitant to enlist their support. Then-editor-in-chief Jill Abramson struggled to justify the story as news, since it was neither political nor had any immediate timely connection to an issue related to the latest headlines, a core journalistic element of even the lengthiest features. Any initial concerns regarding the story's departure from traditional definitions of news were soon quelled, however, by the record-breaking reception of the piece. Its 3.5 million page views boasted an average visit that was ten times longer than the industry norm at the time, making it one of the most forwarded pieces in internet history. Abramson's internal memo to the Times staff heralded the achievement as "a cool moment in the evolution of our online storytelling" (Romanesco 2012). According to Sexton, the confluence of image and word was the key to its success. "My favorite map is the one that enables you to follow individual skiers down Tunnel Creek, and they would move in time with your reading," a key feature that successfully met the narrative challenge of covering the experiences of sixteen skiers as they outraced the on-rushing avalanche, not knowing how many had survived, unaware until well after the tragedy that three of their group had died. These were "storytelling challenges far more basic than sexy web-stuff" (Nieman 2013). The discovery of one of the victims is immortalized in an embedded video shot with a Go-Pro mounted to the helmet of a surviving skier who is overwhelmed with emotion upon finding the metonymic ski pole revealing the location of his companion's body beneath the snow.

Sexton explained that sequencing and embedding the multimedia elements posed an editorial challenge that was fundamentally narrative rather than purely technological. With proper restraint, a powerfully immersive experience designed to sustain and lengthen reader attention could be achieved. "Part of the rationale for doing it this way was to get away from the distraction of having to leave the written story to go somewhere completely elsewhere and experience a video or a graphic." Instead the idea was to enable readers "to experience those things—at least theoretically—seamlessly" (Nieman 2013). Indeed, blending those elements into a coherent whole in its own self-contained package carried the benefit of shielding the reader from the distractions of the open web.

This “closed system” is “non-referential” (Lassila-Merisalo 2014) in the sense that it creates a cognitive container characterized by an internally coherent news package. Digital longform maintains the feel of a container associated with print newspapers, in which headlines and visuals are arranged to complement one another, as opposed to the distracting nature of the internet, in which headlines are crafted to vie for attention independently as disaggregated autonomous units circulating online (Dowling and Vogan 2015). Interestingly, “Snow Fall” reached the majority of its readers as a shared story through social media, and thus as precisely such disaggregated news. Yet unlike the conventional news template, its multimedia were not indiscriminately tacked on, but carefully integrated into the narrative world as a system of mutually reinforcing referents. By circulating mainly as an autonomous story disaggregated from its publisher’s main landing page, “Snow Fall” represented an ideal opportunity to convey the New York Times brand. Furthermore, its distinct advantage was its vertical rather than horizontally oriented page layout. In digital longform, the visual hierarchy and semantics of multimedia sequencing pull readers down, rather than across, the page to a variety of headlines, so that written and graphic content combine as the main signifying features (Hernandez and Rue 2016; Hiippala 2016).

This immersive design’s cinematic qualities are not without their commercial appeal. In a promotional maneuver common in the film industry yet unprecedented in journalistic media, the Times produced a Hollywood-style trailer to promote “Snow Fall.” Upper administration, however, expressed concern that this first-ever video trailer to promote a single story would only play into the hands of their competitors. “News organizations are strikingly bad at promoting themselves because they believe it’s somehow untoward or unbecoming as their stock price [plummets],” Sexton recalled. After seeing the trailer, his senior editors advised him not to share any portion of it or “word would get out,” clearly a vestige of a bygone era in which editors feared being scooped. Of course, news of the avalanche had already been covered six months prior by local news media, whose stories circulated globally online when the event occurred. Violating their directive, Sexton resolved to send the trailer out late the night before its scheduled release the next day, allowing the promotional clip roughly thirty hours to go viral and stir a sensation on the internet. The Times’ reporters boasting the largest following on Twitter, such as Nick Kristof, then tweeted out the news of this revolutionary piece that foretold the future of digital narrative and multimedia storytelling (Nieman 2013).

Sexton confessed that he intentionally had them tweet out the trailer overnight to circumvent his senior editors, who wanted none of this valuable material prereleased. He returned the next morning to find the “senior editor seething, ‘What the f—did you do?’” to which he replied, “I just gave it to the Twitter guys.” Senior management then demanded the entire project be released immediately.
However, “the server they had built for the trailer had collapsed,” and they were unable to release the entire story despite the mounting legions of readers on Twitter clamoring for it. The technical difficulties that caused the delay actually worked inadvertently as an ingenious marketing method to whet the appetite of the audience, thereby increasing demand and circulation through social media prior to the publication of the story by 3PM. “The clouds had been seeded, people were actually looking forward to something.” But senior management saw Sexton, according to his recollection, “as the most heretical person who ever lived,” absurdly asking, “Why would we promote our work?” In retrospect, Sexton knew that “Had we just launched it at three that afternoon” without the Twitter promotional trailer, “it would have looked nice on the homepage and everybody would have felt good about themselves,” but the fanfare would not have reached a fever pitch in anticipation of the release. This release of “Snow Fall” was the first ever work promoted on Twitter in advance of its publication, now a much more common, if not routine, practice among news organizations intent on generating publicity for a particular feature (Nieman 2013).

Digital longform’s implications for media convergence thus expand beyond the internally coherent multimodal storytelling of its content to its industrial function within the context of the digital environment for news branding promotion. Not only does the piece openly borrow cinematic tropes such as establishing shots and wipe transitions through graphic animated fly-over mapping, looping videos, and parallax scrolling; its pre-publication marketing also deployed a cinematic trailer. But far from entering the film industry, the Times was instead intent on borrowing its narrative power not only to enhance its journalistic storytelling, but to promote its brand. Indeed, Sexton’s concern was to market both “Snow Fall” and the Times brand. In the process, he had defied two cardinal rules of journalistic practice: never leak a story prior to publication and never transgress the sacred divide between editorial and business (Dowling and Vogan 2017). His success that eventuated in shattering both taboos in effect proved to the news industry that the ontological world of the digital ecosystem had advanced to a stage that warranted an entirely new epistemological approach to journalism.

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Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

Reclaiming the Written Word in Multimodal Narrative

The subject of "Snow Fall" lent itself well to the digital longform, primarily due to the highly televisual nature of the sport of downhill skiing. Branch and Sexton's team of producers accordingly capitalized on that appeal through embedded footage of spectacular backcountry descents through powdery forests and treacherous cliffs reminiscent of the best Warren Miller ski films that glory in the kinetic visual aesthetic of the sport. When faced with less-televisual subject matter on topics drawn from politics rather than the world of sports, publication in a multimedia format presents producers with a unique challenge.
The Guardian faced precisely this challenge, for example, when approaching the highly technical and politically abstract topic of privacy and personal data in "NSA Files: Decoded." Then-editor directing production Gabriel Dance confessed that, like Joe Sexton, he violated a core principle of journalistic production practice. Normally art follows copy in the advertising industry, just as reporting and writing in the world of journalism precede the placement of photos and multimedia around the text. Dance took the reverse approach and directed the assembly of the multimedia elements and digital design before the writing (Hernandez and Rue 2016: 74).

Charged with the colossal task of building a multimedia feature showcasing the Guardian's rich repository of evidence provided by Edward Snowden, Dance immediately recognized that his subject matter might pose difficulties for such a project, especially given the interactive and visually appealing standard for the form set by "Snow Fall.""We didn't really have any lovely video or photos to run with it, so we knew the design would be more important," he explained. A "fundamentally text-first approach" applies "annotations (video, photo, document, etc.) that would appear alongside the text as you got to a particular point in the story" (quoted in Hernandez and Rue 2016: 75). But this traditional approach soon failed them because of the unusually large quantity of interviews and primary source documentation they needed to display. Shortly into the threemonth project, the team abandoned the writing until they had fully assembled the piece as a multimedia interactive experience, a method diametrically opposed to new production practice rooted in the primacy of the written word. Deviation from the industry standard of placing the written story first (Lassila-Merisalo 2014), however, proved vital to their success. "The real reason the project came together as well as it did," according to Dance's formulation,"is that the thing that was done last, and let me emphasize last, was the words" (quoted in Hernandez and Rue 2016: 75)..

The Guardian team initially did not anticipate writing the text of "NSA Files: Decoded" inthewakeoftheconstructionofthedigitaldesignandinstallationofall animating media elements. Instead, this unconventional approach emerged organically out of a re-discovery of writing's unique power as an adaptive medium. The flexibility of the written word in digital spaces carries great potential for generating cultural capital (Lanham 2006; Usher 2016). Writing text first and assembling multimedia elements in the margins later struck them as counterintuitive at the storyboard stage. Compared to the demands of multimedia production, "the written words are by far the most fungible part of the project," they discovered. One can "rewrite a lead pretty quickly" and "into and out of things in the blink of an eye." Text can be produced instantly on demand compared to media such as video. If a particular video were missing it could not be created on the spot, and thus the project would be forced to do without. "Video takes a long time to recut and render," unlike writing, just as "interactives are not easy to change when they are done" (quoted in Hernandez and Rue 2016: 75).

Although it would appear that the written word was subordinated to a secondary role to the multimedia elements of "NSA Files: Decoded," the Guardian team paradoxically discovered a new appreciation for the power of words in connecting those elements with a through-line of narrative coherence. "It was a revelation that speaks to the power of words," Dance recalled, "that they are so flexible and so strong and so malleable that the idea of making them the last thing you do is anathema to most journalists." The work of journalism prior to the advent of digital longform has been understood as "primarily copy" (quoted in Hernandez and Rue 2016: 75). Dance is adamant that although placing writing behind multimedia in the sequence of production was the lynchpin of the project's success, no single medium predominated in driving the narrative. His point runs counter to many fears of language decay in the digital ecosystem, as noted by Baym (2015: 72). The piece, he argues convincingly, is not primarily text, just as it is "not primarily anything" but an integration of "12 interactives, 18 videos and 4000 words and none of them work without the rest of them," given the holistic interdependence of each part to the total reading experience (quoted in Hernandez and Rue 2016: 75).

The Guardian ironically upheld the journalistic code of “story first” (LassilaMerisalo 2014) precisely by leaving writing last. On the surface, the project would appear yet another example of “language decay” in the digital age, the process by which digital communication technologies appear to be displacing the written word. Baron (2008) has argued that transformations in language use in the online world have raisedfearsoferodingwritingstandardsdue tothe perception that users rarely dwell on the written word. Although computers have hastened the writing process,Baron(2008)maintainsthatthedigitalenvironmenthasnotactuallyeroded language usage because nonstandard uses are mostly adaptations to technological a▮ordancesandsocialcontexts,which “atmostisaveryminordialecticalvariation” (163). The discourse of fear, language decay, and shortening attention spans nonetheless persistsindepictionsofelectronic messagesonnew media asvacuous(Baym 2015: 35). Such consternation regarding shortening attention spans, however, is largely a means of “managing anxiety over social and technological change,” as Newman (2010) points out. The discourse regarding new media and shortening attentionspans,furthermore,“reassertsthesuperiorityofadultculture(longer-form, more contemplative) over youth culture (faster-paced, more distracting) and of a traditional establishment culture (print culture, the culture of educational institutions) over a threatening emergent culture,” particularly “electronic visual culture” now realized more than ever on the internet (Newman 2010: 593).

This binary pattern, however, predates advances in digital longform design that have brought the written word into prominence in digital spaces developed specifically to enhance their power. Marshall McLuhan habitually saw electronic media during the mid-twentieth century as mutually exclusive to the print and the written word, setting the context for understandings of longform journalism as anathema to the visual aesthetic of television. In particular McLuhan (1976) argued that “attention saturates very quickly on television and attention span is brief” in support of his understanding that television posed a direct threat to the culture of print media literacy. Today’s multimedia narratives designed to attract and sustain reader attention stand as evidence refuting understandings of the short attention span as an inevitable consequence of an accelerated media culture. Immersive digital longform narratives that built upon the multimodal template established by “Snow Fall” have been shown in recent studies to be appealing to Millennials (Marino 2016; Marino et al. 2016)

One of those interventions utilized eye-tracking technology to demonstrate that Millennials spend nearly the same amount of time on written text as video (Marino et al. 2016), a finding that radically undercuts previous eye-tracking studies by Poynter. The studies by Poynter, which found readers typically did not read the text of online news stories, seemed to reinforce fears of language decay and the erosion of the intellectual mind associated with deep reading. But their studies took place during the 2000s (2000, 2003, and 2007), when online news templates contained hyperlinks and banner/pop-up ads. These were highly distracting formats compared to the relatively ad-free cognitive containers of the most recent digital longform designs. Following a horizontal pattern, readers raced from headline to cutline to photo, caption, and finally to video, where they spent most of their time (Quinn 2007). Attention to the written body of the story was tracked only briefly down the left column, skipping the vast majority of the writing. Visual culture, according to these findings, appeared to be replacing written culture through accelerated digital technologies.

The written word now plays an integral role in multimedia features, not only as the diegetic narrative voice that sets the tone, but also as the voices of the subjects themselves. New York Magazine's 2016 American Society of Magazine Editors (ASME) multimedia winner "One Block," for example, showcases the words of its subjects transcribed verbatim from oral interviews. This cultural geography of the gentrification of an African American Brooklyn neighborhood provides a window into race relations since its depiction in Spike Lee's Do the Right Thing. The narrative is told through the voices of the neighbors, whose stories appear in their own transcribed words with phrases linked to internally embedded charts, graphs, profiles, or links to other neighbors. Augmented by a timeline of the house's history of owners, this collection of unmitigated testimonials pulls the reader directly into the experience of gentrification from the perspective of the original community members (Gibson et al. 2015). Within Hernandez and Rue's (2016) taxonomy of digital news packages, the piece exhibits characteristics of both Comprehensive (informational explication known as the "explainer story" in industry parlance) and Immersive (powerful interactives and narrative transportation) multimedia journalism. Each neighbor's story builds on the themes and concerns of the previous one, establishing a basis for a profound macro-economic analysis attentive to the social and cultural repercussions of the neighborhood's gentrification.

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Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

Through the new hybrid medium of immersive digital longform, “One Block” (Figure 1.1) illustrates the complexity of the remediation of pre-digital communication forms through converged media technologies (Deuze 2006). In the story, face-to-face oral communication is retrieved, enabling an ancient medium to reassert itself in a world where digital media predominate. The web has long borrowed from television, film, photography, and print. But those forms, along with oral communication, now “blend and incorporate styles from conversations andwritingwiththestylisticandformalsyntaxof film,television,musicvideos,and photography” along with other genres and practices. Audiences literate in the “visual lexicon” of Instagram, which characterizes communication on social media platforms, now combine that literacy with older forms (Alper 2014). Telepresence, defined as “the perceptual illusion of nonmediation” (Lombard and Ditton 1997), supports theclaimthat,compared to the written word alone,images—whether still or animated—“can feel more real than text” (Van House 2011: 131). When the image works in concert with the written word, telepresence takes on entirely new meaning. With unprecedented power to evoke greater depth of meaning both within andbeyond the imagestheyaccompany, written textinmultimediafeatures has become the digital analogue of medieval illuminated manuscripts and the painted lyrics of William Blake’s Songs of Innocence and Experience.

As with these texts, even language without the accompaniment of produced images has had a deep affiliation with visual reality. Indeed, the late-eighteenthcentury periodical press gave rise to the sketch as a genre that became popular in literary miscellanies in England, and later in the USA through figures such as Washington Irving, famous for his fictionalized version of the form titled The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. The literary sketch was practiced by travelers as a way of capturing their impressions of scenes through ekphrasis, a process of generating images through highly visual linguistic description.

FIGURE 1.1 “One Block,” *New York Magazine*, 2015

Ekphrasis lent itself well to the literary miscellany, precisely because it provided visual sketches to augment verbal ones in an early multimodal narrative method weaving writing with visual art (Enyedi 2016).

In the twentieth century, storytelling could proceed without the word in narrative masterpieces such as Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, Walker Evans's photo essay of dust bowl migrants. Although Evans's haunting portraits of a gritty family of survivors can function independent of the written text, James Agee's commentary on the images captures the complex dialectic between word and image in nonfictional narrative. Crucially, Agee's written text aims to unlock the images from discursive categorization: "We are trying to deal with our subject not as journalists, sociologists, politicians, entertainers, humanitarians, priests, or artists, but seriously," especially in service of capturing "the direct emotion, experience, and thought" of each (Agee and Evans 2001: 10; Lehtimaki 2010: 190–191). Later in the twentieth century, experimentation in film's narrative power totally free of spoken or written language is epitomized by the achievement of Koyaanisqasti (Native American for "Life out of Balance"), a profound meditation on the clash between mechanized society and the natural world. When asked why the film features only Philip Glass's soundtrack to the exclusion of any dialogue, director Godfrey Reggio explained in 1982, "It is not for lack of love of language" that it has no words, but because "our language is in a state of vast humiliation" that "no longerdescribestheworldinwhichwelive" (Carson2002).Onecanonlyimagine Reggio's virtuoso visual storytelling in today's immersive embedded multimedia formats in which language now plays a vital new role. In the hands of masterful documentarians such as the National Film Board Interactive's Katerina Cizek, language is creatively deployed in rhyming voice-over narration for her 2013 "A Short History of the High Rise," inspired by children's pop-up books. Piano accompanies the singsong verse of the narrative, delivering this apocalyptic nursery rhyme on the sobering costs of the development of the skyscraper, one of our most ubiquitous tokens of modern civilization.

This history of vacillation between language and the visual image in narrative media raises important implications for the future of journalism, not all of them dire. Indeed, with the written word playing a new and different role to amplify, expand, connect, and extend multimedia elements in online pieces, the question of its relative value arises, especially as it would appear to be in a losing battle for reader attention with immersive media armed with the power of telepresence. Yet the written word, according to the theory of media convergence, is not diluted in works like "One Block," nor is it overlooked as in early web template designs. In addition to the aforementioned eye-tracking studies that now demonstrate users are actually reading in a sustained manner online (Marino et al. 2016; Marino 2016), digital longform aggregators such as Longreads and Longform have bloomed into full-blown communities of online reading aficionados. Immersive non-distracting design has given rise to fresh uses of old media blending the written word in online forms in which "multimodality is the method not only of representation and storytelling, but of meta-semiotic reflection and critique" (Hallet 2014: 165).

Evidence abounds indicating that SMS platforms such as Twitter can drive offline reading of print through online reading groups such as #1book140, a topic taken up in further detail in a later chapter. Attentional focus, according to Ciccoricco (2015), is not compromised by multimodal forms. What does compromise attentional focus for online readers is digital design templates that include a great deal of hyperlinks and advertisements inviting readers to leave the page. Multimedia narrative modeled after "Snow Fall," however, does not have such "leaks." The diversity of its multimedia elements might lead one to suspect that the reading environment may scatter rather than distill attention. This is not the case, as "amid the alarm of attentional breakdowns, contemporary cognitive science" has proven that there is no simple on-off switch for attention, but rather a series of types of attentional focus. Most offline activities in everyday life, from playing tennis, to preparing a meal, to writing an essay, "require engagement in different tasks that recruit a different part or parts of the brain in order to execute them." In this sense, "the attention is always divided, and this is a biologically necessary state of affairs." Multimedia narrative avoids overloading the executive decision-making portion of the brain precisely because of its immersive design in which one medium typically yields to the next in succession, or in some cases are simultaneously overlaid, as in textual explanations scrolling over cut scenes in the Guardian's "Firestorm." The primacy of narrative, or "story first," in this sense is always already multimodal, yet in a manner that does not pose the reader in a struggle to "inhibit or override all other competing signals in favor of a prioritized one" (Ciccoricco 2015: 71).

Telepresence through the image actually reinforces the power of the written word that Gabriel Dance emphasized was essential—despite being last—in the process of producing "NSA Files: Decoded" for the Guardian. The aim is to have the audience experience facts, to strip away the constraints of media convention to achieve greater intimacy and nearness to the subject, as in Agee's description of Evans's photos (Lehtimaki 2010). As such, the dialectic between word and image comments on the process of its own production because it highlights rather than hides the gaps between the text and the lived experience of its subjects. As media falls away the sense of being there increases. The materiality of visual media brings us traces of the real, whereas the written word engages in the mentality of an abstract sign system. Although creative techniques such as montage, framing, retouching, and digital manipulation "expose as constructed the sense of the photograph's privileged relation to the real," there persists an "almost automatic association of the photograph with the real, the authentic, and the referent proves difficult to break" (Horstkotte and Pedri 2008: 14). In the context of journalistic narrative, the image not only provides a dramatic sense of visceral nearness to the subject that heightens dramatic effect, but also carries an authenticating role vital to journalism's core

MULTIMEDIA NARRATIVES
THE "SNOW FALL" REVOLUTION AND BEYOND

Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

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The embedded GIFs, videos, and photos in the multimedia feature enables a uniquely powerful narrative opportunity drawn from what Barthes (1977) calls "a natural being-there of objects" whereby "nature seems spontaneously to produce the scene represented" (45). Herein lies the immersive quality of the multimedia narrative genre, yet one different from 360 VR or an IMAX film precisely in both the presence of written text and book-like sticky navigation bars allowing access to chapters or sections. The written word intellectualizes visual embedded elements, without which they become naturalized subjects. The written word in "NSA Files: Decoded" functions to enrich, stabilize, and connect the meanings of the piece's many interview videos, providing precisely the explication that enables the reader to anatomize the piece's own process of production, particularly through the sequence of key figures accessed in the Snowden network. As an explanatory story in the category of the "Comprehensive" multimedia news package as defined by Hernandez and Rue (2016: 121), readers are invited behind breaking news headlines into the highly complex series of events surrounding the release and impact of NSA files.

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In one important sense, works such as the Guardian's "Firestorm," New York Magazine's "One Block," and Atavist's "Love for My Enemies" qualify Barthes's observation regarding the paradox of media technology's evolution: "The more technology develops the diffusion of information (and notably of images), the more it provides the means of masking the constructed meaning under the appearance of the given meaning," he explains (Barthes 1977: 46). By immersing the reader in the historic Brooklyn neighborhood with an opening point-of-view shot simulating a drive down the street of the "One Block" that is the subject of the piece, the "constructed meaning" is all but invisible through the illusion of being there. The arrangement of the story takes the reader from door to door, literally, through cut-scenes of each neighbor opening their door and stepping onto their porch. These visual direct addresses to the audience then yield to even greater intimacy, because once "inside" the home, users discover text that may appear constructed by journalists. Yet this too is naturalized, as the words are those of the resident him/herself, transcribed in full and unadulterated by the journalistic or editorial intrusion (Gibson et al. 2015). But crucially, the "given meaning" of those artifacts is not rendered without the active participation and interaction of the user, unlike Barthes's passive twentieth-century viewers of advertising and film.

The effect of "One Block" is to transform the reader into the reporter, entering him or her into the process of narrative construction from this assemblage of gathered data. This renders "endless ways to read the story," without one being more accurate than another, in which "you're the reporter poring over your notes and annotations." The reader is thus positioned as "the one who has to make a mental map of these characters' relationships to one another—and what they mean for this small pocket of New York City in the midst of great change" (Eck 2016). Prescribed narrative now yields to this even more open-ended storytelling form, which immerses the reader in primary source evidence with totally autonomous navigation. Diegetic narration is thus ostensibly absent, yet everywhere present in the tacit connections the reader can discern between artifacts such as oral transcripts and charts depicting the social ramifications of the neighborhood's profound economic transformation. Like an Eisenstein (2010) montage, no transitions are explicitly supplied given the careful juxtaposition of shots to evoke specific associations. Similarly, the reportorial evidence of "One Block" is strategically embedded to reward immersive autonomous exploration of this rich repository.

The community’s collective narrative in “One Block” is bound up in socioeconomic circumstance. The backstory behind each resident’s narrative of their life on the block emerges through internal links to data visualizations, photos, and graphics a meditation on their socio-cultural pasts and precarious economic futures in light of the immanent encroachment of affluent whites seeking real estate in Brooklyn, as signs of its increasingly fashionable status among urban elites. Undergirded with such data—detailing the rise of prices for local goods and services, the numbers of residents forced to move by year, the rapidly changing racial profile of the block—the transcribed verbal testimony in effect deconstructs the given, and thus naturalized, quality of the external images the reader first experiences through immersive point-of-view video (Gibson et al. 2015). The identity of the neighborhood, the reader learns, is not the solid set of row houses it appeared to be, but instead is revealed to be radically unstable and highly contested as gentrification overwhelms and uproots its original longstanding social and ethnic culture. Barthes’s (1977) formula thus requires updating, given the new power of multimedia storytelling to make the illusory immersive quality of telepresence (that makes the constructedness of the content all but vanish) work not against, but in concert with the deliberate exposure of the journalistic process of production, especially through its dependence on large raw data sets to construct meaning.

Binge Reading

The design of “One Block” emphasizes intimacy with the subjects, but not at the expense of an astute and meticulously researched macro-economic argument that has profound implications for urban development’s impact on the racial profile of original local communities. One is tempted to go next door in the digital space of the story and visit another resident to learn of their unique, yet deeply shared, past and future life on the block. The stories are linked, precisely because the neighbors’ lives have organically intertwined for decades. The cut scenes of each homeowner opening their door invites the reader in and encourages continuous exploration of the community. The metaphor of visiting neighbors from house to house as a means of delving into their narratives serializes the experience into sections or chapters. In this sense, the organization of “One Block” echoes digital on-demand television’s format conducive to binge watching (Mittell 2015; García-Martínez 2016). As with re-cap openings in television series, each chapter/house of “One Block” can stand alone for individual consumption but is more likely to be viewed in conjunction with others in the series. Each denizen’s narrative, along with embedded multimedia features, is rendered in a size compact enough for sharing on social media.

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Excerpted from *Multimedia Narratives*

A testament to the power of digital longform journalism lies in its versatility to range from a single-scroll multimedia documentary consisting of only one chapter such as “Love for My Enemies” to a 40,000-word seven-part epic such as “The Mastermind.” Both pieces, interestingly, are Atavist publications, the former offering a “spare weave of film and prose,” as one admirer tweeted, utilizing a nearly even balance of the two media in roughly 1000 words. A hybrid of documentary film storytelling and magazine feature writing designed for digital consumption, “Love for my Enemies” centers on the process of reconciliation of two survivors with their oppressors from the 1994 Rwandan genocide, one whose face was mutilated and was left for dead, and another whose infant was killed with a machete while in her arms. Its spare style is ideally suited to its resonant spiritual and psychological implications that evoke political humanitarian concern on a global level through this extraordinary act of forgiveness. The piece by German documentarian Lukas Augustin and writer Niklas Schenk is a finely crafted blend of interview footage, text, maps, and interactive profiles whose meaning is evocative in the manner of an allegorical parable, a technique built on implication rather than the exhaustive explication marking the Comprehensive classification of multimedia news packages (Hernandez and Rue 2016: 121).

In contrast to the spare visual poetry and suggestive brevity of the highly cinematic “Love for My Enemies,” which was produced with funds from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, “The Mastermind” operates on an epic scale. Bearing the characteristics of the true crime genre recently popularized through digital on-demand series such as Making a Murderer, “It is 40,000 words and you can read most of it in a morning,” the interviewer of author Evan Ratliff confessed on a podcast discussing the seven-part story on Longform. “I will attest it was ‘binge reading,’ exactly like when you cue up a new show on Netflix,” he said, a point anticipating the piece’s eventual purchase by the Russo Brothers (producers of the film Captain America: Winter Soldier) (Ratliff 2016a). The Russo Brothers, who have emerged recently among Hollywood’s most powerful filmmakers, preemptively purchased the rights to reproduce “The Mastermind” as a digital on-demand television series in pursuit of the expanding market share of the true crime genre established by Making a Murderer and Dan Zupansky’s True Murder podcasts. They have since struck a deal with FX to launch the project (Busch 2017). Longform’s interview of Ratliff, who regularly serves as a co-host on the platform’s podcast series, opens with his humorous confession of “self-promotion, insider baseball, conflict of interest,” which is not a cavalier disregard for ethics, but a full disclosure of interests and alliances suggesting the piece’s function as sponsored content (Ratliff 2016a). The disclosure of interests in this case is revealing of the binge reading comment, one likely included to whet the audience’s appetite for“The Mastermind” (Figure 1.2) as a digital on-demand television series on Netflix or similar platform.

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In addition to Atavist's digital publishing software kits and training service, Ratliff's transmedial franchizing of his platform's products in book form (a print anthology of the digital magazine's best multimedia pieces appeared under the title Love and Ruin) and now for digital on-demand television is suggestive of the new opportunities in the expanding market for narrative journalism. The method of reporting also reaches across media, inviting online audience interaction. Some interviews for "The Mastermind," for example, did not occur until after two episodes were published in order to draw attention to the process of production and solicit reader suggestions for key interview sources and other data. Ratliff's model was Serial, the NPR podcast whose listeners similarly leveraged social media to contribute key data to support its reportorial process. Ratliff's subject is Paul Le Roux, author of Encryption for the Masses and E4M, an open-source free Windows disk encryption software program. Born an orphan in Bulawayo, Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, Le Roux avoided the death penalty despite setting up at least seven murders, and would eventually sign a proffer of immunity in exchange for pleading guilty to two charges the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) obtained through their sting operation. He

FIGURE 1.2 "The Mastermind," *The Atavist Magazine*, 2016

directly led eleven into DEA stings, and another seven indirectly. The DEA had likely brokered a deal by which to release him from murder charges in order to use him as an informant to attempt to wipe out his larger network (Ratliff 2016b).

Le Roux started online pharmacy and gambling companies, which were all brilliant in their construction. At one point he had a militia in Somalia, which he intended to use to invade the Maldives (a tiny island nation 2000 miles east of Somalia in Africa) and to install a dictator so he could have a safe haven to run his giant online crime syndicate, which trafficked in pharmaceuticals, logs, gold, and arms. One of his more notorious schemes was to murder a former DEA agent as one of his stings. His hitman, Joseph Rambo Hunter, was arrested in 2013 in a DEA murder sting operation, wearing a Homer Simpson t-shirt. For Ratliff, his initial reporting was often a “late night internet thing” with “an infinite amount of research that could be done without ever talking to anyone” from Hong Kong court files to tracking his shell companies and drilling down on the backgrounds of the people listed on their Boards of Directors. Eventually, the reporting demanded flights to the Philippines and Israel for interviews (Ratliff 2016a).

Whereas LeRouxhimself wasunavailable since heisserving a twenty-five-year sentence, several of the roughly 1000 people who worked for him were eager to reveal their stories in person to Ratliff. In this case, the reporter’s risk lay in dedicating a major portion of his life to a story about a figure who routinely arranges for the murders of people who expose him. Ratliff (2016a) thus used neutral sites such as Starbucks for meeting places with individuals he tracked down on LinkedIn. Much of his reporting was absurdly easy, as he was surprised by how many people listed criminal organizations on LinkedIn (which he later advised them to remove). These individuals provided pseudonyms for the story, however, and communicated through encrypted emails, many telling Ratliff, “my safety is in your hands” and “don’t burn me. ” The fate of Dave Smith, murdered for siphoning off the gold he was charged with trafficking, was the sort informants feared, as conflicting stories on the circumstances of his death all pointed to Le Roux’s notoriously swift retribution (Ratliff 2016a).

“The Mastermind” is a complex narrative involving extraordinary layers of detail, characters, and subplots, especially since Le Roux’s network was so vast. The narrative divides itself neatly between Le Roux’s early flirtation with crime via his online pharmaceutical scheme, a middle stage where his criminal dealings escalate to his improbable—and megalomaniacal—plan to take over Maldives (a plot whose intricacies rival those of a Russian novel) (Ratliff 2016b). Ratliff’s concern was to “protect his informants” while maintaining the truth claim of the piece as legitimate journalism, which posed a dilemma: “If you make it seem too anonymous, it’ll seem like you’re making it up” (Ratliff 2016a).

More than another installation in the "true crime" genre, "The Mastermind" details one of the largest and least-reported organized crime syndicates of the twenty-first century. Ratliff's decision to publish a story of this magnitude as a multimedia narrative online suggests the reach and influence of this digital genre. As the magnum opus of one of the pioneers of online longform storytelling, the piece's production process reflects a colossal, almost Melvillian scale of ambition. Ratliff wrote seven five-to-eight-thousand-word stories over the span of two months, at one point generating 4500 words in a white heat on one particularly prolific day (Ratliff 2016a). The over-arching narrative structure developed in advance focuses first on the building of Le Roux's empire then turns to his intermediaries before the denouement. Each episode works up to 2012, figure by figure, ultimately leading to Le Roux's arrest (Ratliff 2016b).

Whereas "Love for My Enemies" interweaves the quest for reconciliation of two genocide survivors in one unified single-scroll section, "The Mastermind" operates on a much larger scale, offering a complex web of narrative strands that harkens to the Russian novel tradition of works such as Tolstoy's Anna Karenina. Multi-strand narratives are common in novels, and increasingly popular in digital on-demand television series such as Lost and, more recently, Arrow, but are relatively new to nonfiction storytelling. They trace several long-term chains of events involving disparate groups and far-flung locations that run parallel to each other and frequently intersect. Ratliff's "not strictly chronological" (Ratliff 2016a) storytelling resembles a technique media scholars recognize as "simultaneous narrative" (Keen 2015: 100). "Employment of anachrony indicates the use of disorderly (anachronous) narration," according to Keen's (2015) de finition, and can include "a whole range of devices from flashbacks to flash-forwards and extreme disordering that resists re-constitution into a straight-ahead plot" (100).

In conjunction with this complex narrative structure is the form's disclosure to the reader of the process of production. This direct address to the reader, Ratliff says, "was a huge step to say 'there are some things I couldn't verify, but I 'm choosingtotrustthem.'"Workingwithhiseditorsanddigitaldesigners,herecalled "In some cases we decided to say to the reader, 'we chose to trust this person because he gave me documented evidence of copies of fake passports, birth certificates, Paul Le Roux's real birth certificate.'" Whereas "fidelity to the truth" was paramount, the production team agreed to include in the text "acknowledgement that the facts are often not easily obtainable." Ratliff explained the implications for precisely the self-reflexive journalistic style that I argue is an emerging feature recognizable in serious multimedia nonfiction narrative.

Maybe that leads to more of a first-person, long-winded version of it to say "I found this here, I found this for this person" but the point of that is to make it explicit, relatively as transparent as you can make it. (Ratliff 2016a)

The reporter's subjectivity clearly enters the piece and thus the process of reporting and production is revealed to the reader. To be immersed in journalistic multimedia storytelling is to be not only aware of, but in some cases, participate in the reportorial process, in effect contributing to the means of narrative transportation by mending the seams of a seamless parallel universe. The reader's immersion is less escapist fantasy than real-world challenge to navigate real events —and their deeper core of truth—alongside producers who themselves are immersed. The following chapter turns our attention to the intense online dialogue, and its potent capacity to form online communities, that audiences seek after immersing themselves in longform narrative of social and political consequence.

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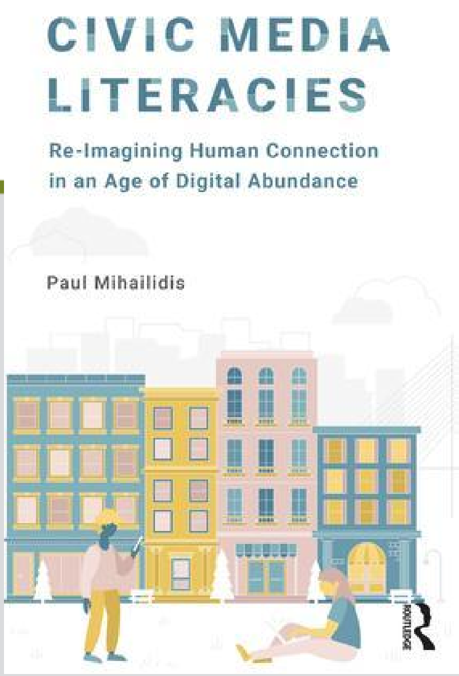
CHAPTER

7

Civic Media Literacies

Re-Imagining Human Connection in an Age of Digital Abundance, 1st Edition



This chapter is excerpted from

Civic Media Literacies

by **Paul Mihailidis**.

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Civic Media Literacies

Re-Imagining Human Connection in an Age of Digital Abundance, 1st Edition

Excerpted from *Civic Media Literacies*

In their new initiative on young people and civic agency,1 Danielle Allen and her team at Harvard developed "10 Questions for Change Makers," where they hope to help young people interested in social change "shape your strategy and to check whether you're doing everything in your power to achieve maximum impact."2 The 10 questions (see Figure 7.1) serve as principles for change makers to "get smarter about the best use of digital tools and platforms for their specific efforts" and to "cultivate nimbleness in the people who use these principles—not entrenched practices but the capacity to adjust and pivot as circumstances change, which they always do."3 Allen and her team describe the potential for their initiative to "serve as a tool for reflection and contemplation of possible consequences for each civic role young people might take on. This process can help young people develop into more equitable, efficacious, and self-protective civic actors themselves, whatever the type."4 These principles help us better understand the range of intentions and motivations that propel action taking, and what to consider in leading or supporting civic change making.

A range of new initiatives are making strong inroads in helping to equip young people with the skills and dispositions they need to be more "equitable, efficacious and self-protective civic actors." These initiatives span from pedagogical frameworks and activity guides to activist toolkits that help young people learn to use media for more intentional change making. These initiatives span from prescriptive to expansive, from didactic to aspirational. If a common drive unites them, it is their aim to help citizens engage in the world with meaning, knowledge, and purpose. The Media Education Lab, for example, launched Powerful Voices for Kids (PVK) in 2010. PVK is designed to "strengthen children's ability to think for themselves, communicate effectively, and use their powerful voices to contribute to the quality of life in their families, their schools, their communities

FIGURE 7.1 Are You a Change Maker?

Source: https://yppactionframe.fas.harvard.edu/action-frame-0

and the world."5 The initiative incorporates a series of resources, tools, and learning plans to better help young people find and use their voice. In 2017, the Learning About Multimedia Project (LAMP) launched, 22x20,6 a media literacy initiative to help the 22 million young people eligible to vote in 2020 to harness media to make their voices heard and effectively participate in the 2020 US national elections. The News Literacy Project, in 2016, launched Checkology,7 an online classroom that helps students develop skills to credibly vet information: distill fact from fiction, and reporting from speculation. Organizations such as UNESCO, the Newseum, the Poynter Institute, and the Journalism Education Association all offer their own curricula that promote more engaged citizenship for young people. These initiatives embrace media tools and platforms to help "give power" to people of all ages to better participate in local, national, and global communities.

This chapter will explore the design principles that guide the development and implementation of civic media literacies, focusing on how the constructs I have presented in this book can map onto diverse spaces of formal and informal learning. The considerations presented in this chapter are informed by the many existing initiatives in media literacy, digital citizenship, and civic engagement that cultivate a sense of critical engagement in contemporary society. The processes presented below aim to provide community stakeholders, educators, and activists with a set of considerations for how to approach their work with clear focus on social change making. Much like the questions posed by Danielle Allen and her team, the considerations here build from a conceptual framework to offer a set of core questions and considerations when approaching work in media and civic change making. These questions and considerations harness potential, possibility, and wonder of media to bring people together in pursuit of civic betterment.

Media Literacy Competencies Matter—A Lot

In classrooms and communities across the world, educators and stakeholders are implementing dynamic and rigorous media literacy initiatives that are having real impact on the ways in which young people are using media to participate in their communities. These skills and competencies are vital to media literacy, and a necessary component of the value-driven, agentive approaches to media interventions that I detail here. Civic media literacies will not succeed without media- and tech-savvy people who know how to employ and deploy media for civic ends. In the last few years, a range of publications has shown the ways that media use can expand citizenship and have built a more concentrated effort in this space.8 In their call for an expansive approach to understand the practice and pedagogy of DIY media,9 Yasmin Kafai and Kylie Peppler argue the need not only to "ensure that every young person has access to the skills and experience needed to become a full participant in the 21st century," but also that they "can articulate their understanding of how media shapes perception, and is knowledgeable of emerging ethical standards that shape their practices as media makers and participants in online communities."10

In exploratory research on the connections between media education and what they call civic capability, Julian McDougall et al. explore foundational connections between media literacy and the potential for civic change.11 Their results show that media education can support more direct civic outcomes, but approaches to media literacy pedagogy must focus more intentionally on "converting capabilities into 'valued functionings'12 that go beyond the provision of resources and 'training' towards a social justice framework focused on transformational skills, confidence, and attitudes."13 Their research reaffirms the need to think more expansively about how we embed skills in process that embrace social impact as an outcome.

Of course, media literacy initiatives that focus explicitly on civic participation are not without their risks. As explored in early chapters of this book, citizenship is complex, and the means for participating are contextual. In their 2015 report, The Civic Web, Shakuntala Banaji and David Buckingham caution us to be mindful of the complexities associated with civic participation terminology and definitions, and to take in the account "the diversity of young people, the Internet, and civic participation,"14 when attempting to formalize approaches and analyses to civic engagement. In the conclusion to their edited volume, Youth Cultures in the Age of Global Media, Sara Bragg and Buckingham reiterate the potential for a focus on civic participation to be oppressive and lack meaning for those whose participation is being analyzed and dictated.15 The caution here is warranted. As we think of designing civic media literacies, we should not presuppose any particular dictates, outcomes, or actions. Rather, like Danielle Allen's principles for change makers, these design considerations embrace the complexities of citizenship, and acknowledge Peter Dahlgren's notion that participation becomes civic.16 In this way, the design approaches here allow the necessary space to map value-driven concepts like care and imagination into media literacy practices without reducing approaches to activities that advance any specific set of reductive intentions, and that favor outcomes over process.

Civic media literacies embrace process and potential over product and outcomes. Focusing on processes allows for interventions to take many shapes and forms, and to apply skills and competencies where relevant and necessary. In this way, the approaches laid out in this chapter are expansive: they push the boundaries of what people can do to subvert dominant practices that exist, and build initiatives that embrace the values of being in the world toward a common good.

A Pathway to Design: Inquiry, Process, and Inclusion

In Chapter Six, I introduced a set of anchoring questions for each part of the civic media literacy continuum (voice, agency, participation), and for each of the civic media literacy constructs (caring, critical consciousness, imagination, persistence, emancipation) that enact agency. In Figure 7.2, I offer a set of practical, inquiryoriented principles for designing civic media literacy interventions. These principles offer a set of questions for thinking about how elements of the continuum relate to civic initiatives, and how certain civic media literacies can be prioritized. These questions also help stakeholders develop strong approaches in designing

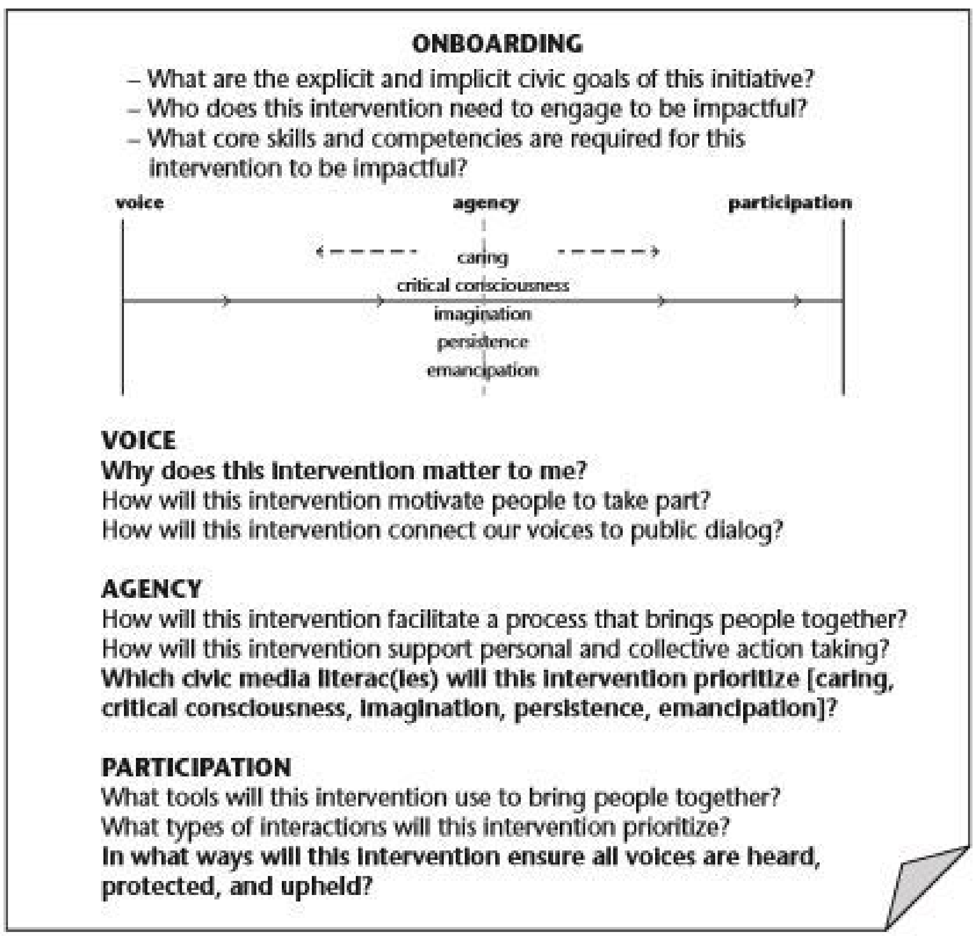

FIGURE 7.2 Civic Media Literacy Design Guide

Source: Author

and implementing civic media literacy initiatives that focus on equity, inclusion, and the promotion of democratic values, whether in classrooms, communities, or organizations.

In a direct way, the design guide prompts questions about how interventions in classrooms or communities can enable agency and civic impact. The questions neither ask for specific outcomes, nor require defined actions. Rather, they reinforce the focus of civic media literacies to be about common good and activating media inquiry and creation that embraces human-based approaches to solving civic problems.17 Along the lines of Allen's principles for change makers, this set of questions reflects principles for designing formal and informal media literacy experiences. They place learners at the center of the process and collectively ask us to consider how media inquiry can facilitate agency in support of reform, equity, and positive social change.

The design guide questions are complemented by process questions (Figure 7.3) that help designers of media literacy interventions respond to the practical

1. What will this intervention aim to produce?
2. How will we judge impact?
3. How long does this intervention need to last?
4. Who or what needs to be part of the intervention to ensure a healthy process?
5. In what ways will this intervention ensure equitable participation?
6. What resources are needed for this intervention?
7. What are the trade-offs associated with this intervention?

FIGURE 7.3 Civic Media Literacy Process Questions

Source: Author

aspects of building formal or informal pedagogies or community interventions. Process questions inform some of the more tactical approaches to scaling media literacy initiatives, from how a lesson will build over the course of weeks, to how a community can activate an initiative with markers for short-term and long-term feedback.

Process questions are not presented in any specific order, and should be revisited throughout a civic media literacy intervention. Answers to these questions may change during and throughout an intervention, and should embrace expansive ideas in addition to practical inquiry. These questions are also not reserved exclusively for those who create the interventions themselves. A rich history of practice and scholarship in co-design shows that interventions designed with stakeholders can create strong engagement and impact in projects.18 This applies to co-design in both formal pedagogy settings19 and alternative learning environments.20 Codesign with stakeholders leverages buy in and enables dialog and discussion to be built around the interventions themselves. In their work on partnering with communities, Ceasar McDowell and Melissa Yvonne Chinchilla write of civic inclusion as paramount to successful community interventions:

> Civic inclusion requires that all individuals learn to engage with established organizational structures, and that institutions become adept in serving an increasingly heterogeneous membership . . . civic inclusion recognizes that an individual's ability to engage in civic action is impacted by his or her resources and that, as a result of such constraints or due to social and culture differences, individuals participate in varying ways. Additionally, civic inclusion emphasizes the importance of sustained engagement patter and the role that relationship building plays in enabling these.21

Inclusion is central to the work of civic media literacies, as it brings learners and stakeholders into the process from the beginning, building commitment and ownership into the learning experience. As McDowell and Chinchilla remind their readers, technologies can help bring people together, but they oftentimes overlook the human need to bridge social divides and shift the "locus of design" from the creator of media to the participant.22 Design focusing on the participant—often referred to as human-centered design or participatory design—embraces a wide range of approaches "in pursuit of practical solutions of pressing concerns to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities."23 The design approach, in this sense, is intended to provoke change.24

Civic Media Literacies

Re-Imagining Human Connection in an Age of Digital Abundance, 1st Edition

Media literacy pedagogies and practices have, for some time, embraced action research and participation as part of their core missions. Texts in media literacy have long embraced processes of student involvement and participation in the design, implementation, and outcomes of media literacy experiences.25 Studies have found that media literacy pedagogies create a sense of investment and interest in participation in civic and learning agendas that empower young people,26 and can motivate the participatory potential of youth media practice to cultivate strong forms of civic engagement.27 In the design principles and process questions I have put forward here, I hope to articulate an approach to co-designing media literacies that facilitate greater civic capacity. This pathway does not need to be inclusive of all media literacy initiatives, but it does need to include those that focus on enabling agentive civic actors. This is also not about scale, but rather about engagement and efficacy. Where possible, civic media literacies make the gap between awareness and action taking ever smaller. As Gerodimos and I wrote in 2016:

> Civic engagement in digital culture is not a linear process moving along a predetermined path. It depends on the extent to which citizens learn to use media to step out of their routines and comfort zones, experiment, fail, innovate, interact, argue, and learn.28

To a degree, many media literacy practitioners would argue that they do evoke such processes in their pedagogy, and they would be right. What I'm articulating here is a process by which this approach is made transparent and reinforced throughout media literacy interventions that build from the perspective of civic change, and work backward to experiences that reinforce this approach. Ahead, I apply this guide to three specific domains: classrooms, communities, and civic institutions. Considering how civic media literacies map onto these spaces can show practical ways to build civic media literacy interventions that prioritize voice, agency, and participation, and that co-design experiences focused on the value constructs first, and skills and competencies thereafter.

Civic Media Literacies in Spaces

Although civic media literacy interventions can apply across spaces and modalities, here I want to highlight three specific areas on which media literacies are often focused: classrooms, communities, and civic organizations. As stakeholders in these spaces construct interventions and consider what their civic goals are, certain approaches emerge specific to these spaces. The following is a set of considerations for each.

Space #1: Classrooms

The classroom, and specifically, primary and secondary education, is often the main focus for media literacy pedagogy. A range of powerful and impactful curriculum offerings exists to help educators build media literacy initiatives in their classrooms. Organizations such as the Media Education Lab, Common Sense Media, Project Look Sharp, UNESCO, the National Association for Media Literacy Education in the United States, the Association for Media Literacy in Canada, and a host of others have built and offered lesson plans, curricular resources, and teacher training in media literacy. Much of this work provides platforms for teachers to bring media literacy learning into their classrooms. Although there is much work to do to bring media literacy to scale, a vast and diverse amount of resources readily exists. The issue, then, is not about resources but about implementation. Media literacy still sits on the margins of formal primary and secondary education. Although policy-based inroads are being made to mandate media literacy in K–12 classrooms,29 there remains some skepticism about what formalizing media literacy will do to curricular efforts, in addition to the admission that formal education bureaucracies are not equipped to keep pace with the changes in media, technologies, and emerging digital norms.30 Many civic education initiatives, like Generation Citizen,31 focus on civic action but don't prioritize media as part of that process. Although they are successful in their approaches, civic media literacies offer a way for classrooms doing media literacy work to embrace civic processes.

Common media literacy interventions like deconstructing advertisements or learning about sources and credibility should not be considered ends in and of themselves. Rather, if embedded within a civic process, teachers can create more agile and applied initiatives that complement foundational deconstruction and interpretation skills. A lesson about deconstructing advertisements becomes a lesson in imagination, where alternative narratives are created to appropriate norms of consumer culture. Critical consciousness approaches to deconstructing advertising may ask students to think about what kinds of dialog and advocacy can reform situations where we feel restricted or co-opted by advertisements. More importantly, these re-imaginings are embedded in the values that guide a civic process. The learning experiences should not be one-off engagements, but connect to a larger outcome, goal, or journey where the learning is part of a larger mission. This embeddedness allows civic media literacies to guide critical deconstruction, interpretation, or reflection. In her new book, Create to Learn, Renee Hobbs describes the power of creation in media and digital literacy:

> When you learn something just for school, to pass a test, or because it's expected of us, that knowledge is often flat and one-dimensional. What makes learning fun is the feeling of being connected to other learners, being part of a community or group. When you are part of a learning community, you are motivated to ask questions find out information and i deas, debate issues of concern, and contribute you own ideas and opinions.32

Hobbs's argument for creating to learn is embedded in the civic processes I describe in this book. Making these processes explicit can better position creation as part of a process that brings people together and focuses on the values associated with creation, and not simply the act itself.

The classroom is a tricky place. Teachers are often burdened with increasing class sizes, more tests to teach to, and more content to fit into already short time periods. There is little time and support for building new lessons, technologies, and initiatives in classrooms. Within this challenging landscape exists potential for media literacies to have impact. Recent research shows the potential for formal spaces of learning to facilitate dispositions in young people to be more savvy in media consumption and interpretation, and civically active and engaged.33 Designing media literacy interventions will always be challenging in formal schooling. There are more burdens on public schools, with fewer and fewer resources. Civic education, meanwhile, is finding renewed value and resonance amid the increasing polarization and partisanship seen across societies in the United States, and the world. A 2016 report titled A Crisis in Civic Education34 outlines research showing just how much civics education has been compromised, and what needs to be done to repair it. Peter Levine's 10-point plan for civic renewal, outlined in the conclusion of We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For, highlights civic education as a core need for an engaged and participatory citizenry. Civic media literacies may be able to bridge the conceptual gap between civics education and media literacy. They are, for all intents and purposes, the same, and they should be articulated as such.

Space #2: Communities

Communities have long been spaces for media literacy initiatives at the margins of formal learning. Communities, both physical and virtual, are increasingly mediated in their communication infrastructure, and how they organize around logistics and advocacy. The emergence of accessible connective technologies, although not flattening access entirely, have provided new spaces for participatory community media practices that, according to Mimi Ito, "actively encourage members to make and share creative products and practices that matter to them."35 Henry Jenkins, in his report Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century, defines participatory culture as:

> a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created).36

Jenkins's media literacies for a participatory culture are not meant to replace but extend what he terms "mass media literacies."37 Sasha Costanza-Chock et. al. support Hobbs's call for more creation-based learning, which they apply to social justice and youth organizing outside of formal education. They argue for media literacies in communities that "not only provide job skills and badges, [but that aim to] transform consciousness, skills and creative capacity."38

Media literacies in non-formal spaces of learning are necessarily civic. They are about building the capacity of people to critique and create media to be better engaged in and with communities. In this era of increasingly personalized information ecosystems, and research showing less time spent in physical space with others, there has been increasing calls to explore how media impact the efficacy of communities. In his introduction to Mediated Communities: Civic Voices, Empowerment and Media Literacy in the Digital Era, Moses Shumow uses the example of the 2014 water pollution crisis in West Virginia to articulate just how important media were in mobilizing the collective efforts of the community. Writes Shumow:

> Imagine young parents at home, smelling strong fumes coming from the water they are about to use to give their newborn a bath, and not knowing, based on what they're being told by authorities, whether or not it is safe. And so they turn to an online community. There, this family quickly connects with others nearby who share similar fears and concerns; they find curated text messages that have been gathered and posted as well as the most recent updates on the situation, as citizens share any and all information they may have, and use those same channels to reach out to politicians, law enforcement, and government officials. In this situation, agency that was at first denied to affected citizens through institutional inaction is reclaimed through mobilization and organization facilitated by social networks built around shared concerns.39

Evoking Castells's concept of the "networked society," Shumow argues for the need to "explore the ways in which communities are being reshaped and activated in the digital age through citizen engagement and empowerment, organized around new communication technologies and networks."40 In his argument to shift the focus from community media to mediated communities, Shumow argues for the need to rethink media not as tool for communities to use, but rather how civic life has be reshaped through mediation.41

Shumow evokes David Morley's "spaces of belonging" to think about how and where media and information uses impact physical spaces and the material context of being in space.42 The ways in which media now facilitate community engagement necessitate a need to articulate the civic value of media platforms, and their potential as much as their pitfalls. In the small town where I live, northeast of Boston, Massachusetts, active and vibrant Facebook pages help the facilitation of free exchanges of goods and services no longer needed by people in their own homes. These platforms serve a function that benefits the social capital of the town. At the same time, communities leveraging technologies for responding to potentially harmful political decisions or civic issues often struggle with how to allocate limited resources to leverage impactful advocacy. Oftentimes, they fall into agency gaps, or focus on building technologies before they work to identify and scale community initiatives.

Unlike the structure and organization of the classroom, communities are places where networks work in loose and often smaller committed groups to advocate for certain goals or outcomes. Whether engaging in performance, art, or expression, civic media literacy design interventions can reinforce the process of community betterment, help communities embrace their members, and facilitate a process focused on values and motivations before technologies and mechanics.

Space #3: Civic Institutions

The third and final space to consider for civic media literacy design is in institutions. Earlier in this book, I spent time unpacking the culture of distrust that has for some time enveloped civic institutions in the United States, and around the world. Institutions are core to democratic processes and functioning civil society. They are also under increasing pressure to adapt to digital technologies that have disrupted their basic modes of interaction with the public. As they struggle to respond to this digital culture, and to implement communication and information infrastructures, they become greater targets for digitally savvy networks that actively work to scrutinize, discredit, and undermine them.

Gordon and Mugar believe that civic organizations "are at a crossroads as they struggle with their relevance in an increasingly networked and individualistic society."43 They see a "deep skepticism" toward civic organizations, emerging from new technologies that are destabilizing the processes and practices that institutions have long relied on to engage with their constituencies. Although no single reason can be attributed to this deep distrust, Gordon and Mugar's research with organizations across the United States44 shows that digital media have contributed to a culture where technological efficiency has been prioritized over relation, which is what strong institutions are able to embrace. Their report responds to the crisis of trust and engagement with civic institutions by offering a framework for understanding how such civic organizations can embrace the transformative practice of relation in their work. In this framework, civic media practices have little to do with tools, and are driven by value-centered approaches to work. Embracing Tronto's approach to a caring ethic,45 mapping strong civic media practice aspires toward strong social infrastructure,46 and objectives that embrace longitudinal and sustainable impact from civic media practices. The activities recommended in their report—network building, holding space for discussion, distributing ownership, and persistent input—collectively mirror activities associated with strong democracies in general, but point to specific practices that civic organizations can enact to encourage sustainability and strong social infrastructure.

Fast-evolving technologies create challenges for how institutions respond to their core practices. There is no single civic institution that bears this burden in particular. In a 2016 report titled Digital Crossroads: Civic Media and Migration,47 colleagues and I explored how organizations where using digital media to respond to the migration and refugee crisis in Western Europe, emerging from the disruption in the Middle East, and Syria in particular. In speaking with over 20 organizations working on the plight of refugees, we found that media was central to their work, and specifically finding ways for institutions to build storytelling capacities that were relational, persistent, and transformative. We wrote:

> The ability for organizations to effectively use media is at the heart of what the interview participants understood as powerful storytelling. Leveraging digital media technologies to better understand the plight of refugees can allow for greater dialog among organizations and their constituents, while at the same time provide effective responses to the reliance on data and other de-personalizing narratives.48

The Digital Crossroads report highlighted core digital and media literacy practices that institutions needed to respond to the refugee crisis. These skills—humanistic storytelling, community participation, monitoring online dialog, and navigating social networks—mirror the needs of institutions beyond just global refugee and migration issues. The skills were complemented by a suggestion for how institutions can approach storytelling initiatives in their practices (Figure 7.4). These considerations help institutions move from a set of skills or competencies to dispositions that embrace value-driven approaches to their communication practices. Digital Crossroads, exploring the role of digital and media literacies in these practices, found that skills were not used appropriately without strong infrastructure for building relations, dialog, and sustainable practice.

Civic media literacies for institutions focus on care, relation, and strong social infrastructure. In research with civic institutions in the United States, and those working in Europe on refugee and migration issues, the ability for institutions to set a vision for bringing people together and embrace human connectivity was what made their initiatives impactful. Media and digital literacies support these

1. **Digital media are about potential, not about product**—The value of digital media is the ability for platforms, tools, and spaces to offer connections, to bridge divides, and to bring humans together. They offer a potential for exploration and discovery, empathy and caring. The potential drives use, not the product that results from potential.
2. **Tell stories from within, not from beyond**—Stories that document information are useful inasmuch as they provide content and context. Stories that relate experience, create understanding. Digital media open up the potential for this to occur.
3. **Stories are more meaningful than tools**—Tools might make things easier, but they alone do not make meaning. Tools must support the intentions of the story, and not the other way around.
4. **Reframing narratives means moving beyond dominant structures**—As much as large media outlets and platforms provide wider audiences to reach, they also reinforce the perspectives of the outlets themselves. Humanistic stories must emerge outside of these frames, or they risk be subsumed by the intention of the dominant structures within which they exist.
5. **Stories must be designed from the margins**—Refugee and migrant populations are almost exclusively on the margins of the societies they enter. Stories designed from the perspective of the dominant societies have the potential to further divide and dehumanize the plight of migration. Stories must come from the margins, not end at them.

FIGURE 7.4 Considerations for Institutional Storytelling Initiatives[49]

Source: Mihailidis, Paul, Liat Racin, and Eric Gordon. "Digital Crossroads: Civic Media and Migration." (2016): 60. www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/51152

designs, but ese practices, the work of institutions may be reserved to a focus on tools, and a continual cycle where initiatives lag behind the realities and needs of the communities they serve.

Looking Forward: Design Considerations

This chapter has set out to articulate an application of the concepts I've put forward in this book. The design guide and its application can hopefully kick-start conversations and initiatives like those of Martha Payne, Marshall Reid, Mundano, Mohsin Mohi-Ud-Din, and many others. There is a sense of agility in the ways in which people employ and deploy media for civic impact. Attempting to formalize that can be problematic and reductionist, risking diminishing the necessary ambition that comes with building and following instincts with passion and perseverance. The intention of presenting a practical set of principles and questions is not to reduce creative or emergent media practices, but rather to advocate for an approach to civic media literacies that builds from the conceptual and provides a pathway for practitioners to consider the wider civic aims of their work. In my work over the past decade leading and supporting media literacy initiatives around the world, I've realized that human motivation and perspective are what guides most successful interventions, and this is something that is often glossed over. This chapter, and book, is a call to nudge media literacies toward a space where initiatives are conceived throughout as deeply civic, and where knowledge and action collide.

Considering how the principles apply to classrooms, communities, and institutions gives insight into how stakeholders can use such guiding questions in their planning and implementation. The goal is to consider how we can position media literacies to embrace relevance and power in digital culture. I realize that there is no one formula for implementing these concepts. The intention here is to inspire and spur new approaches to how we prepare people for lives of meaningful participation in daily life. In her work on citizen media in armed conflict zones of Colombia, Clemencia Rodríguez describes just how important it is to empower communities to use media for their individual and collective needs. Although her exploration is in the context of armed violence, Rodríguez argues, "We need to rethink the functions of media in terms of communities' communication and information needs in order to understand the complex and multidimensional roles citizens' media can have in context of armed violence."50 In the context of armed conflict or not, Rodríguez prioritizes embracing the complexity in which citizens apply media to solve problems, protect themselves, and share necessary information beyond the mainstreaming functions of dissemination and reception. This is a core element of what media literacies can and should do when they embrace civic complexities.

In a way, I hope the design considerations presented here provide a springboard for those in classrooms and communities to re-center their practices around turning knowledge into action: to build pedagogies and practices that embrace citizens coming together to use media to facilitate individual and collective problem solving. New technological structures will continue to evolve and pressure media systems, and citizens, to respond. Communities will continue to face challenges with limited resources, and teachers will never have enough time and space to do all that their jobs ask of them. The civic media literacy concepts and guide provide a way to re-insert human connectedness a culture of digital abundance. As communities ask technologies to do more and more, they become a greater part of our lives, with more promise and potential, but also more risk, as we have seen over the last year.

To conclude, I wanted to provide three simple rules for civic media literacy design, that can remind us to prioritize the human, and civic, associated with media literacies:

1 Prioritize process over technology

2 Prioritize people over products

3 Prioritize values over skills

This does not mean that media literacy practice to date has not prioritized human engagement. It also does not mean that we need to remove technology, or go back to a world of town meetings, regular gatherings at coffee shops, and an abandonment of technology (although recent research on young people and mobile phones may force conversations on their invasive place in the lives of young people). Rather, this means continue to leverage technologies, networks, and platforms for media literacy interventions that focus on critiquing and creating media for explicit intention, passion, and devotion. For it is the plight of our systems and structures to promote what W.E.B. Du Bois articulated as "the training of a self whose balanced assertion will mean as much as possible for the great ends of civilization."51 Perhaps this is a grand ambition for civic media literacies. But it is a goal that I believe is necessary for a time where mediated realities continue to define and redefine how we articulate our value in daily life.

Notes

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46 In their report, Gordon and Mugar expand on social infrastructure by writing: "Social infrastructure is defined as the 'people, places, and institutions that foster cohesion and support' (Klinenberg, 2013). It takes different shapes depending on the specific project, including relationships with community groups, leaders, deep and valued knowledge of a community, or access to shared spaces."
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